

## This response uses information gathered during a class field trip to Hotunui in Auckland Museum

*Grandson:* What is the purpose of the tukutuku panel?

*Grandpa:* The tukutuku panel is placed between the two pou figures to compliment and reinforce the stories told in the carvings and also the kowhaiwhai patterns on the rafters above, on the interior of the whareniui. In addition to this, the tukutuku panel decoratively enhances the interior of Hotunui. The straight lines of the poutama designs and the hard edges of the panels contrast with the organic forms and spirals of the kowhaiwhai designs and the relief of the whakairo.

*Grandson:* What is your favourite kowhaiwhai pattern in Hotunui and why?

*Grandpa:* Well, the kowhaiwhai patterns in Hotunui are present on the rafters of the whareniui and on the wooden planks that goes across the top of the tukutuku panels. The kowhaiwhai patterns that are placed on the top of the tukutuku panels all have the same patterns painted on them. However, the kowhaiwhai patterns that are on the rafters of Hotunui have different patterns. My favourite pattern resembles the Mangotipi design, a pattern that comes from the white pointer shark, and it has been painted on one of the rafters of the whareniui. The main reason that I like this particular design is because of the sophisticated patterns that are present on it. The patterns involve symmetry, translation and rotation. These elements of design make each kowhaiwhai patterns in the whareniui interesting and unique. It makes people want to see each one of them close up to see what kind of patterns are present on them.

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*Grandson:* What are the colours that were used in the kowhaiwhai patterns?

*Grandpa:* Three traditional colours were used to paint the kowhaiwhai present in hotunui. These colours are red, black and white and they come from the story of creation. Black represents "Te Po" or the darkness, red represents the blood that was spilled and white represents "Te Ao Marama" or the light. Even though there is an absence of form in every kowhaiwhai pattern present in the whareniui, the warm colour of red that has been painted on some of the areas in the design projects those particular areas forward. This technique was used to manipulate the eyes into thinking that form was present on the kowhaiwhai patterns, in addition, the colour black makes some areas of the pattern recede. One thing that you need to remember, grandson, is that these kowhaiwhai patterns were made in 1878. This means that the colours are not as vivid as it would have been in the past. As an effect of this, people would not have the same reaction when they look at the kowhaiwhai patterns today, compared to looking at the more vivid colours on the patterns in the past.

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*Grandson:* What are the techniques that were used to create the kowhaiwhai patterns/

*Grandpa:* Since there is an absence of form in kowhaiwhai patterns, an important technique that the artist had to focus on when creating the kowhaiwhai patterns was the application of colour. The use of colour and the effect of negative spaces in the designs are two aspects of the patterns that are significant. Because most of the kowhaiwhai patterns that are present in the whareniui are present on the rafters, it is very hard to notice them and they tend to be viewed from quite a distance. As an effect of this, it is sometimes the shape of the negative spaces, or background colour, that the viewer's attention is drawn to. Therefore, I believe that the artist who created the kowhaiwhai patterns took this into account in order to achieve maximum effect.

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