



*Ngā kakano The Seeds*, by Johnson Witehira 2017, (detail photograph by Helen Lloyd) Public Mural on 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington.

## Teachers' Resource Card

### *Mural Tour and Screen-printing Workshop*

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Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

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# Mural Tour and Screen-printing Workshop

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### About the programme

Take a closer look at the mural *Ngā kakano The Seeds* by Johnson Witehira which wraps around the outside edge of Te Ngākau Civic Square. Think about why and how the artist has created this public artwork. Examine the Maori motifs and characters and discuss what they can tell us about our local history in Te Whanagui-a-Tara. Students will learn how to cut and use a stencil to make a screen print inspired by the mural.

### About the mural

*Ngā Kakano The Seeds* is a 70-foot-long vinyl mural commissioned by the Wellington City Council, displayed on hoardings surrounding the council offices while it undergoes earthquake strengthening. The mural was created in 2017 by Māori artist and graphic designer Johnson Witehira. It features graphic representations of tūpuna Māori (Māori ancestors). These include the navigator Kupe and those who came with and after him, Kuramarotini, Toi, Whatonga, Reretua, Hotuwaipara, Tara-ika, Tautoki and Wakanui.

Johnson Witehira's kaupapa is to make Māori culture more visible. He has said "Often I find myself standing on a Wellington street and I'll be hard pressed to see anything Māori. Street art is a great way to reach the public and being able to put my art out there means I can bring it to the people".

The mural was developed in conjunction with the local iwi Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika. It can be understood as a powerful expression of Maori resilience of whakapapa and of continuity.

The title *Ngā Kakano: The Seeds* refers to an important Māori whakataukī (proverb):

***E kore au e ngaro,***

***He kākano i ruia mai i Rangiaētea***

*I will not be lost, I will not perish,*

*For I am a seed that was sown in Rangiaētea*

### Vocabulary

**Public art** - an artwork situated in a public space, often commissioned specifically for the site. Public art can be permanent or temporary and can take many forms such as monuments, memorials, murals, posters, performances.

**Mural** - an artwork painted or applied directly on a wall or other permanent surfaces.

**Whakapapa** - genealogy, proclaims Māori identity, places oneself in a wider context, and links oneself to land and tribal groupings and the mana of those.

### Pre-visit Activities

**Discuss** examples of murals you have seen. Are there any in your local area? Why might people make public art directly onto walls and buildings? What benefits and challenges can you think of when creating a mural?

**Watch** a video of Johnson Witehira talking about *Ngā kakano The Seeds*.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPpmpfPT4a0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPpmpfPT4a0)

### Post-Visit Activities

**Look** around central Wellington to see other examples of murals. Check out the Wellington City Council website Paki Tara-Toi Art on Walls, to plan your route.

[wellington.govt.nz/services/community-and-culture/arts/outdoor-public-art/murals/central-city/te-aro](http://wellington.govt.nz/services/community-and-culture/arts/outdoor-public-art/murals/central-city/te-aro)

**Plan** a mural for an area within your school grounds or building. What logistics will you need to consider? Will you opt to include visual references to some aspects of your local area's history? Read this American art teacher's blog for some handy tips to help with your plans.

[theartofeducation.edu/2016/06/21/12-key-steps-leading-amazing-mural-projects/](http://theartofeducation.edu/2016/06/21/12-key-steps-leading-amazing-mural-projects/)

**Investigate** other work by Johnson Witehira.

- See *Maoriland Adventure* in the exhibition *Every Artist* at City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi.
- Look at more examples at [wjohnsonwitehira.studio/](http://wjohnsonwitehira.studio/)
- Read about another local mural by the artist [stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/capital-life/10224677/Mural-lifts-profile-of-Maori-art-on-street](http://stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/capital-life/10224677/Mural-lifts-profile-of-Maori-art-on-street).

**Design** your own typeface. Take inspiration from Johnson Witehira's Māori typeface *Whakarare*. Read about how and why he designed it here:

[eyeondesign.aiga.org/the-first-typeface-designed-specifically-for-the-maori-community-is-changing-how-new-zealand-views-its-own-cultural-identity/](http://eyeondesign.aiga.org/the-first-typeface-designed-specifically-for-the-maori-community-is-changing-how-new-zealand-views-its-own-cultural-identity/)

**Learn** more about the history of Te Whanagui-a-Tara and some of the figures featured in the mural.

[teara.govt.nz/en/nga-waewae-tapu-maori-exploration/page-8](http://teara.govt.nz/en/nga-waewae-tapu-maori-exploration/page-8)

**Create** a visual pepeha by collaging, drawing or painting images which show the features of where you are from and the people you are related to. Look at this website to help you start investigating your pepeha. [pepeha.nz/](http://pepeha.nz/)

**Visit** Te Aro Pā to view the archaeological remains and take a tour to hear the story of the people who lived at the Pā and their journey to Wellington.

[wharewakatours.maori.nz/walking-tours/](http://wharewakatours.maori.nz/walking-tours/)