

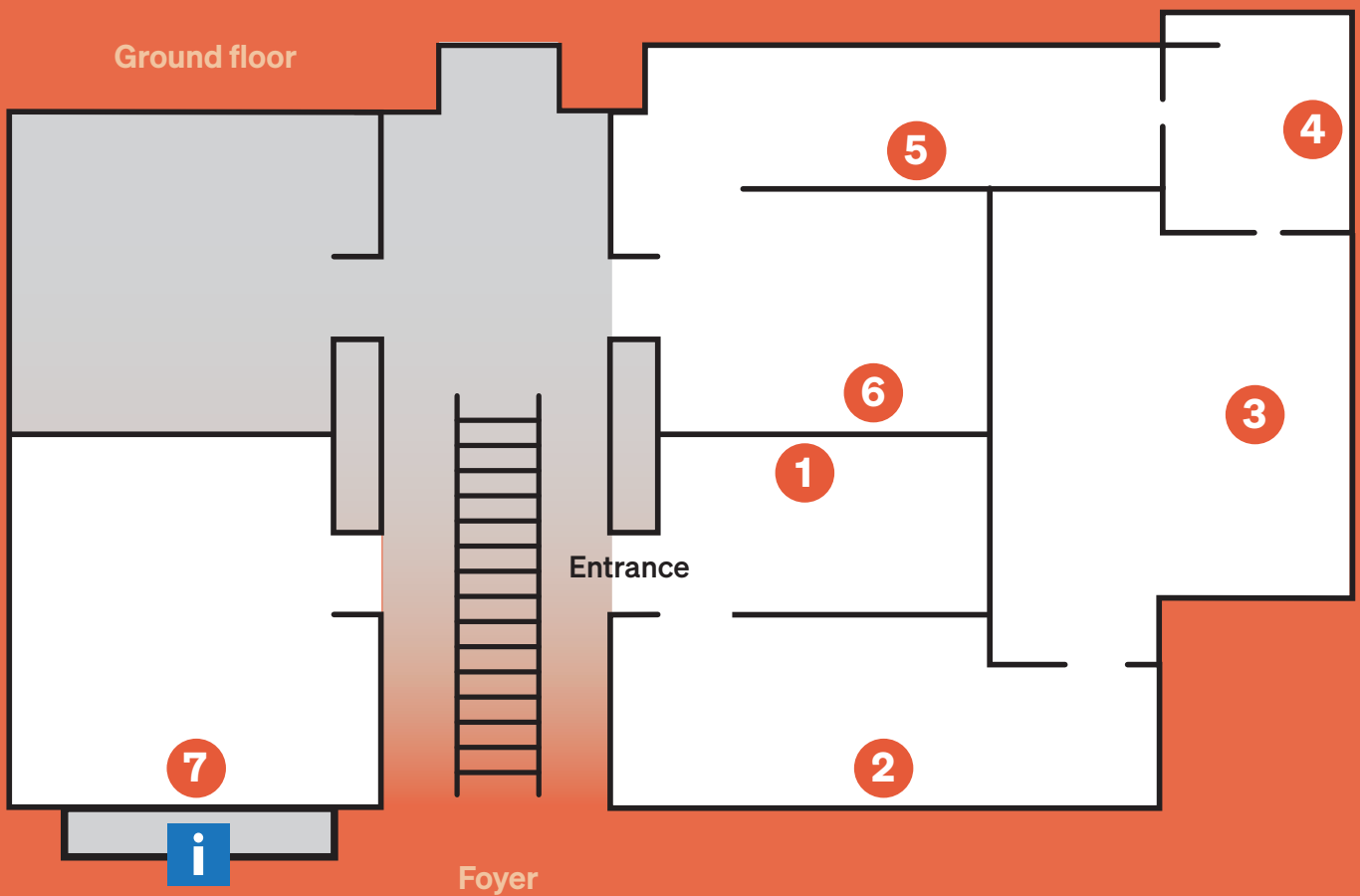
**CHRISTCHURCH  
ART GALLERY  
TE PUNA O  
WAIWHETŪ**

**Teacher's  
Guide**

**RALPH HOTERE**

**ĀTEETE**  
**TO RESIST**

Use this workbook to guide your students through *Ralph Hotere: Ātete (to resist)*. Follow the map below to find the artworks. Use the talking points and questions to explore the work of one of Aotearoa's most significant artists. Complete the activities back in the classroom.



Find out more about *Ralph Hotere: Ātete (to resist)*.



Read about the exhibition in the Gallery's *Bulletin* magazine.



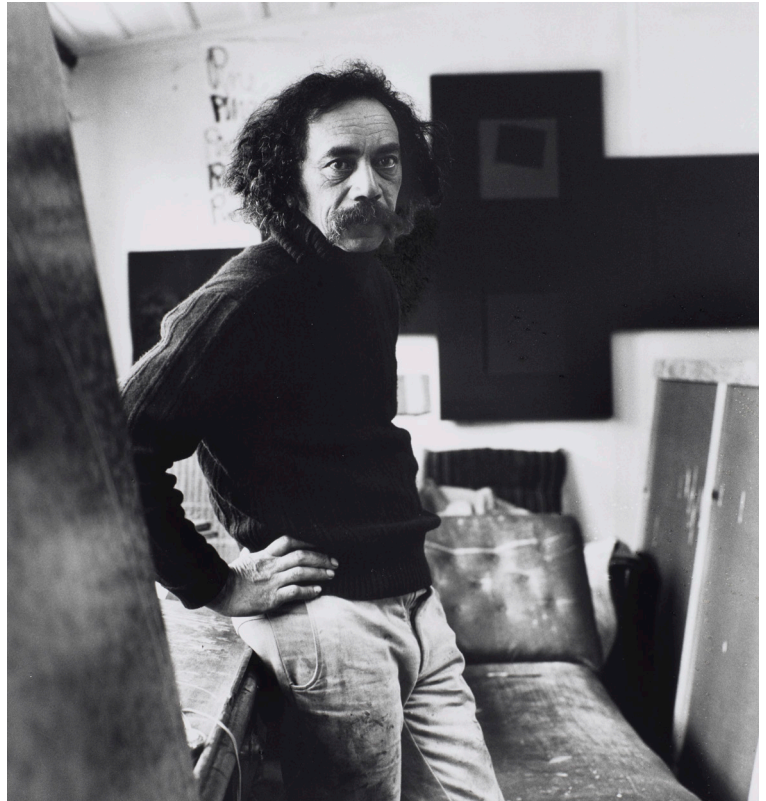
**No touching!**

Art can be fragile. Please remember to actively encourage your students not to touch.

## About Ralph Hotere

Ralph Hotere (1931–2013) grew up in Mitimiti, in the far north of Aotearoa New Zealand. His iwi is Te Aupōuri. Hotere studied art in Dunedin, then in 1961 he won a scholarship to study at the Central School of Art in London. He won many awards for his art. From the 1970s, he lived in Port Chalmers in Dunedin. His work dealt with environmental issues, politics, poetry, religion, colonialism and racism. **Ralph Hotere: Ātete (to resist)** celebrates his incredible artistic achievements.

*Ralph Hotere: Ātete (to resist)* is a partnership project between Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū and Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Image: Marti Friedlander *Ralph Hotere (detail)* 1978. Photograph. Reproduction courtesy of the Gerrard and Marti Friedlander Charitable Trust



## 1 Red Square Four 1965

The works in this room show Ralph Hotere's interest in abstraction. Abstract art uses shapes, textures and colours in a way that doesn't represent an object or thing. Instead, artists explore line, form and colour to express themselves.

When Hotere was in Europe from 1961 to 1965, he saw paintings by artists like Henri Matisse, Ad Reinhardt, Antoni Tàpies, Rembrandt van Rijn and his teachers Cecil Collins and William Turnbull. This exposed him to new techniques and approaches in art.

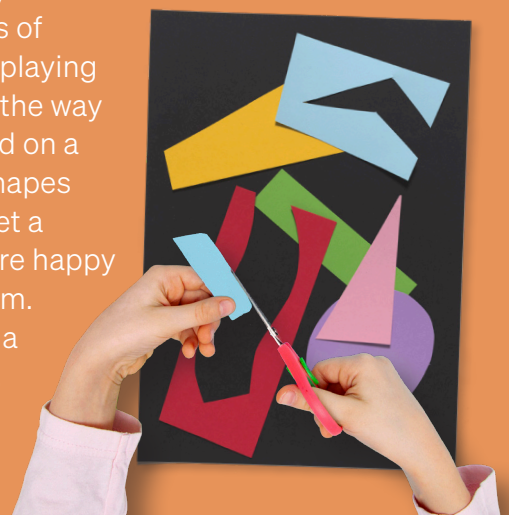
### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the painting.

- What does this work make you think about?
- What do you notice about the way the colours and shapes are arranged?
- What do you notice about the other works in this room?
- Which one is your favourite? Why?

### Activity for your classroom

Create a collage by cutting out a series of paper shapes and playing with composition (the way things are arranged on a page). Move the shapes around until you get a composition you are happy with, then glue them. Try this activity on a black background.



## 2 Godwit/Kuaka 1977

There are many black or dark works in this space. Black is an important element of Hotere's work. It represented many things for the artist, including te pō / night-time views over Otago Harbour, or sadness and mourning. It is also a celebration of the reflective beauty of polished black surfaces, or the way light is absorbed by matt black acrylic paint on canvas.

This painting is 18 metres long. The kuaka, or bar-tailed godwit, is a migratory bird that flies thousands of kilometres every year from the Arctic to Aotearoa without stopping. In Hotere's iwi, Te Aupōuri, the kuaka is a symbol of strength in unity: when threatened, these large flocks of birds lift off as one.



Image: Ralph Hotere Godwit/Kuaka 1977. Enamel on board. Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Auckland International Airport Ltd, 1997

### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the painting.

- What do you notice about the colours in this painting?
- How do they change along the length of the work?
- What parts of the text do you recognise?
- What does black make you think about?

### Look/listen

Hotere's father taught him the Te Aupōuri tauparapara (chant) stencilled in the centre of the mural. The words reflect on the journey of the kuaka and its connection to Te Aupōuri history. The chant plays regularly throughout the day – if you listen carefully, you might hear it.

### Activity for your classroom

Make an artwork that takes a journey through colour to darkness and back to colour, for example the journey of the sun and moon through day and night. Add a flock of kuaka or other migratory birds to your work.



### 3 Black Phoenix 1984–8

Ralph created this work from a burned fishing boat called the *Poitrel*. The whakataukī (proverb) carved into the wood translates:

*When one red fern frond falls, another red fern frond rises to takes its place.*

In Greek mythology, the phoenix is a bird that is reborn from its own ashes (like Fawkes in *Harry Potter*). When Hotere's Te Aupōuri ancestors were under attack, they burned their homes to escape under the cover of thick, black smoke. Like the phoenix, they would rise again!

#### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the sculpture.

- What does the way the pieces are arranged make you think about?
- How do you think Hotere made the band of golden yellow through the centre of the work?
- Why do you think he added this? Does it remind you of anything?

#### Activity for your classroom

Give an object a new life. Hotere often used found materials like sheets of iron, timber and window frames to make his art. What can you find that has been discarded and might be useful to paint on or create a sculpture with?



### 4 Sangro Litany 1979

Hotere's older brother, Jack, died as a soldier in World War II (1939–1945). In 1962, Ralph visited Jack's grave at the Sangro River War Cemetery in Italy. From headstones, he copied the ages of the Māori Battalion soldiers who, like Jack, were killed crossing the Sangro River in late 1943.

The loss of Jack was devastating for his whānau. Hotere's despair at losing his older brother, and at the absurdity of war, can be seen in these *Sangro* works.

#### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the painting.

- How does this painting make you feel?
- What do you notice about the way Hotere arranged the numbers on the canvas?
- Describe the colours and way paint has been applied.
- What other details can you see?

#### Look

Across the bottom of the canvas, Hotere has stencilled phrases from a Māori chant that calls for the return of the kuaka – a symbol for the spirits of the dead – to familiar shores.

#### Activity for your classroom

Art is a powerful way of expressing emotion. Think about a time of strong emotion in your own life, and create an artwork to represent it. Think about the colours and marks that you'll use to show different emotions.

## 5 Te Whiti o Rongomai c. 1972

Hotere often used his work to strongly protest against acts of violence and racism, and threats to the environment.

Hotere's series about Te Whiti-o-Rongomai draws our attention to the invasion in 1881 of the settlement of Parihaka, an important example of peaceful resistance or protest against the colonial confiscation of Māori land in Aotearoa. When the invading colonial soldiers arrived at Parihaka, they were peacefully greeted by tamariki with waiata and poi. Imagine how brave the children must have been to face hundreds of armed troops!

### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the artwork.

- Why is protest important?
- What sort of things would you protest against in the world today?
- What do you notice about this work? What details can you find?
- How have the shapes, letters and words been arranged?



### Look

The use of text in te reo Māori and English was an important part of Hotere's work. Works by New Zealand poets such as Hone Tuwhare, Cilla McQueen and Bill Manhire can all be found throughout this exhibition.

### Activity for your classroom

These works make us think about the importance of knowing and speaking our histories in order to determine our futures. The peaceful resistance by the people of Parihaka is one of the most important moments in this country's history, for Māori and Pākehā. Find out more about Parihaka, and create your own artwork about it. Think about what images, words and colours you could use.

#### Online resources




-  [National Library / Topic Explorer / Parihaka](#)
-  [School Journal / Ngā Tātarakihi o Parihaka](#)
-  [School Journal / Stand Up: A History of Protest in New Zealand](#)

Image: Parihaka Pa. Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand: Assorted photographs. Ref: 1/2-056542-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

## 6 Aramoana – Pathway to the Sea 1982

Hotere's work often focussed on his connection to the local landscape and his active participation in the community. During the 1970s, there were several proposals put forward to build an aluminium smelter on ecologically sensitive land near the coastal settlement of Aramoana. Hotere, who lived nearby in Carey's Bay, was an active opponent of the smelter.

### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the artwork.

- What materials has Hotere used? Why do you think he chose those materials?
- How has Hotere created the different layers, marks and textures?
- How do you think this artwork shows Hotere's feelings about needing to protect Aramoana?
- Many artists use their work to protest or resist against something – how might that help?



### Activity for your classroom



What is a place that is important to you? Create a collage or drawing about it.

Are there any places in your local area that are facing issues that you could draw attention to? How could you make an artwork to get a message across to people? What words and images could you use?

## 7 P.R.O.P 1991

*P.R.O.P* is an example of two artists (Ralph Hotere and Bill Culbert) working together to produce an artwork. These friends made a number of works together and became one of Aotearoa's most important artistic partnerships.

Ōtepoti (Dunedin) was significant to both artists, and their collaborative works often responded to political or environmental issues affecting the region. *P.R.O.P* was made to protest the plans of Port Otago to demolish the headland at Observation Point in the late 1980s / early 1990s. The name *P.R.O.P* comes from the campaign group Preserve Observation Point.

### Questions to ask students in the exhibition

Spend a minute quietly looking at the sculpture.

- What does the work make you think about?
- What materials have the artists used?
- How is the work arranged and displayed?
- What other details can you find?
- How do you think this artwork relates to the artists' concerns about the environment?



### Activity for your classroom



**Collaborative drawings:** Arrange students into pairs or groups, each person picking a different coloured marker. Students pass the paper around their group, each adding to the drawing without speaking to each other.

**Reflect:** What does your drawing look like? Did you each do your own part, or did you add onto what others had drawn? To work well collaboratively, you need to respond to what others are doing. Repeat the process a few times and ask students to compare their drawings – do they become more collaborative?

Think of another sort of artwork to make together. Will it have a theme? What materials will you use? How can you make the most of each other's skills?

# CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETŪ

**Ralph Hotere: Ātete (to resist)**

27 March – 25 July 2021

Free entry

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