

SKIN D.E.E.P.: KIRITUHI

Practitioner exhibitors

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Reviewers

Tūhura Otago Museum team and Margo Barton

Gallery

Atrium Level 1, Tūhura Otago Museum

Keywords

Kirituhi, Body Modification, Body Adornment, Digital Fabrication, 3D Printing

Abstract

The SKIN D.E.E.P. (Digital Ephemeral Epidermal Patterns) series manifested as digitally fabricated exo-skeletal appliances imprinting the dermis. The project utilises the body as a medium not to only express ourselves but to deliver agency via temporary modification of the visible skin.

Upon reflection of the kaupapa of the 25th Annual IFFTI Conference, being Ara Honohono / Connecting Pathways, we developed an extension to the series titled: SKIN D.E.E.P. KIRITUHI. Inspired by two of the kaupapa āpiti of ‘He tāoka tuku iho: The treasures passed down to us from the ancestors’, those tried and true wisdoms of old; and ‘Kahikatea tū i te uru: Strength in numbers.’ The specific prompt resonated with us: fashion as voice and an agent— for indigenous peoples, for the under-represented, for change, for power and influence. How can we be open to different voices and learn from each other? Māori Tā Moko represents an aesthetic and visual language that is a beautiful expression of identity. There is a rich history and cultural meaning intertwined in this sacred Māori art. Our piece explores the theme of ‘Diversity of Voice’ as well as connecting ‘Lines to the Past, Present, and Future.’

In researching Tā Moko, we discovered the term ‘kirituhi’, which translates to ‘skin art.’ This is a term used when tattooing those of non-Māori heritage and allowing them to wear traditional Māori patterns without the issue of cultural appropriation. For the work, we printed three-dimensional (3D), geometrical patterns of abstracted minimal elements inspired by traditional Tā Moko designs.

Wearing the 3D-printed armband allows for an imprint to emboss the skin. After the band is removed the skin produces an ephemeral imprint of the design. During the time when the print dissipates, we hope for a reflection on honouring the tradition and cultural heritage of the indigenous.



Image 1. 3D printed armband. Margarita Benitez and Markus Vogl.



Image 2. Embossed skin. Margarita Benitez and Markus Vogl.