

HARAKEKE RARAKA

Facilitator

Amber Bridgman, Ōtepoti Dunedin, New Zealand

Independent Fashion Designer, Artist and Traditional Weaver

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Abstract

Fashion Designer, Artist and Traditional Weaver Amber Bridgman, is of Kai Tahu, Kati Mamoe, Waitaha, Rabuvai and Aboriginal descent. Amber is the wahine behind KAHUWAI, a Māori-owned and operated clothing and traditional Māori Arts label that explores identity and whakapapa through its unique Māori designs in Aotearoa New Zealand. Amber Bridgman's workshop at the 25th annual IFFTI conference focused on Māori raraka (weaving) using fresh harakeke (a variety of flax plant). Amber shared local and ancient Māori traditional weaving and textile production practices to many enthusiastic attendees. The workshop participants learned how to prepare muka, the fibre extracted from harakeke, and how to weave the muka into a kete (purse / bag) and ipu (vessel). Amber shared traditional harvest and cultural practices, and tikaka (cultural conventions), that underpin mana whenua (people of the land), te ao Māori (the Māori world view), and mahi toi Māori (Māori arts).



Figure 1. Amber Bridgman demonstrating raraka.



Figure 2. Amber Bridgman and workshop attendees.



Figure 3. Workshop attendees weaving.



Figure 4. Amber Bridgman and workshop attendees.



Figure 5. A completed kete.

Photo credits

Figures 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5: Chris Sullivan - Seen in Dunedin.