

ANDREW WOOD

*Frangipani on the Grand Canal:
The Art of Yuki Kihara¹*



Although progress is slow and often token or an act of commodified exoticism, there is a growing visibility of indigenous artists in what I am going to call the Dickie-Danto axis. That is, George Dickies' definition of an "artwork" as, "1. an artifact 2. on which some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld) has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation"² and "artworld" in this context is Arthur Danto's coining of a critical/institutional context, an "atmosphere of art theory"³—i.e. the white cube and surrounding culture. There has also been much progress in the visibility of art by and about trans and non-binary gender identity on that axis, in the context of contemporary art that goes back further than one might think. Putting aside the predatory and exploitative lens of Andy Warhol, the Berlin-based collaborative duo Eve & Adele have been around since 1989. Chris E. Vargas' *Trans History in 99 Objects Series* project has been going since 2015⁴ and in 2019 the thoroughly establishment McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas, presented a landmark exhibition, *Transamerica/n: Gender, Identity, Appearance Today*, showcasing forty years of trans and trans-inspired art from fifty-nine international artists.⁵ What *hasn't* had much penetration into the Dickie-Danto axis is where indigenous and trans/non-binary identities intersect, the difficult to define category of traditional alternative indigenous gender identities.

From the outset it is important to acknowledge that this is a grouping of convenience, common to many indigenous cultures, but also unique to those cultures in the individual details. They do not map one to one onto Western ideas about gender diversity, often have distinct niches within their home cultures as a recognised third gender or gender-liminal identity, and often suffer from being trapped between the rock of Christian hostility brought by colonists and missionaries, and the hard place of assimilation by Western trans/non-binary political activism and theory. The term "two spirit" with its shamanic associations has gained currency in Native American discourse. In the Polynesian Pacific, the two most familiar terms are the Sāmoan *fa'afafine* (loosely, "in the manner of a woman", sharing a root with the Tongan *fakaleiti*, Cook Island *akava'ine*, Niuean *fiāfiāfine*, Tokelauan *fakafāfine*, Tuvaluan *pinapinaaaine*, Wallisian *fakafafine* and Gilbertese *binabinaaine*, and cognate with Hawai'ian and Tahitian *māhū*, "in the middle")—people who are biologically male but adopt a traditional female role in the community, often performing femininity, and the less known modern repurposing of the Māori word *takatāpui* (traditionally an intimate companion of the same sex), which is less precise as it covers the gamut of LGBTQIA+ identities, encompassing the modern categories *whakawāhine* (trans women) and *tangata ira tāne* (trans men). Pacific art historian Karen Stevenson notes that, "the role of *fa'afafine*, traditionally, was quite important in Polynesian societies. Most labour tasks were divided by gender (not sexuality). If a family did not have a daughter (or enough daughters) to complete all of the women's tasks, a son would be used. In essence he would be raised as a girl."⁶

Admittedly, this is an appreciable background exposition, though necessary, as I would like to get as far away as possible from casting this in an anthropological and/or clinical gaze, nor will I defer to Western gender protocols where they are at odds with those Sāmoan or Pasifika,⁷ or the artist's own preferences.⁸ *Fa'afafine* have a slightly higher visibility on the Dickie-Danto axis than one might expect: the American Sāmoan writer, artist and filmmaker Dan Taulapapa McMullin, who has a considerable exhibition history in the United States, and the Melbourne-based performance artist Amao Leota Lu. In New Zealand there is the FAFSWAG collective which encompasses a number of gender identities, of whom the photographer Pati Solomona Tyrell (he takes a playful approach to gender, though not *fa'afafine*) was nominated for a prestigious Walters Prize in 2018, and most prominently, Yuki Kihara, the first Sāmoan artist to have a solo exhibition, *Living Photographs*, at

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the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 2008, and selected as the New Zealand representative artist for the 2022 Venice Biennale. She is represented in many prestigious collections around the world and is currently Thonelaar van Raalte Research Fellow (2017-20) of the National Museums of World Cultures in The Netherlands. Additionally, Kihara is a curator, writer and public speaker in international demand. As the Venice Biennale, in the cringe-inducing terminology of the media, is “the Olympics of the art world”, the choice of Kihara is a charged one, and politically astute on the part of Creative New Zealand and Australian curator Natalie King. (King, it will be remembered, curated Tracey Moffatt’s exhibition at the Australian pavilion in 2018). It is a context that will have profound importance for Kihara’s career, and she has the hustle to make the most of it. It behoves a closer examination of the artist’s work and the cultivated persona attached to it. The infamous hustle is an important part of that persona, which Kihara attributes to having a polytechnic training in fashion design rather than the traditional art school system. In response to a question about what she learned from *not* going to art school, she said:

How to generate a practice with more than one outcome. I find the pedagogy in art schools heavily theoretical whilst polytechnics are more pragmatic. I think the teaching in art educational institutions should be shaped in response to who is it for; what outcome and what audience each student is aiming for rather than making students aim for an audience expected by the art world.⁹

Kihara consistently identifies herself as an outsider in relation to the Dickie-Danto axis, *fa’afafine* in a predominantly binary world, Sāmoan/Japanese in New Zealand, in a European-dominated art world, self-made, and while I don’t dispute that, given the way an artworld hungering for novelty has sought her out, on top of exhibiting at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and selection for Venice, international biennials and triennials and multiple exhibitions, at what point does one become an insider? Who is the audience for these assertive messages? Perhaps we need to think more in terms of the *vā*, the Sāmoan concept of a space between, described by Sāmoan New Zealand writer Albert Wendt as, “Not a space that separates but relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-All, the space that is context, giving meaning to things.”¹⁰ Kihara’s art and activism is often critical of New Zealand’s white hegemony and exploitation of the Pacific and the marginality of Pasifika peoples within it. Paradoxically, it is New Zealand’s legal protections of artistic and intellectual culture that has nurtured it. Art is ever paradoxical.

Central to Kihara’s practice is the body as a space between contested multiple discourses and agendas, first coming to public attention with typical bluntness with the photographic series *Fa’afafine: In the Manner of a Woman* (2004-5). The monotone photography is relatively functional, although inverting Marshall McLuhan (“the message is the medium”¹¹), its technical concerns less important, evoking the ethnographical and erotic interests of photographers working in Sāmoa, like Thomas Andrew and Alfred John Tattersall during New Zealand’s colonial administration (which lasted from 1914 to 1962), and playfully referencing the tendency of such photographers to pose their ‘dusky maidens’ according to Western art-historical and erotic tropes. The eponymous work in the series is a triptych self-portrait of Kihara deliberately embodying male, female, the in-between and the other. It is a striking image of the artist, bare breasted and grass-skirted, and skirtless (tucked and untucked), resplendent in all the clichés of nineteenth century exoticism, a South Seas princess-cum-orientalist odalisque with a dash of Gauguin, assertively meeting the Western gaze with one of her own, like Manet’s *Olympia* (1863), (incidentally inviting comparisons

with Yasumasa Morimura's 2018 version of same). As Kihara observes, "Colonial administrators and missionaries enforced rules on Sāmoans to appear civilised, including wearing clothes. Only in the photography studio were we asked to take off our clothes and become the noble savage, dusky maiden, heathen cannibal, for the gaze of photographers who wanted to make money from the postcard boom."¹²

Erika Wolfe identifies Kihara's persona in these images as a *tāupōu*, the "ceremonial titled village virgin of high rank."¹³ To paint a more evocative picture, a *tāupōu* is usually the daughter of a high chief, trained from a young age to dance the *taualuga*, the centrepiece of Sāmoan traditional performance. The *tāupōu* often outranks many men in the Sāmoan village system, combining the roles of hostess, mistress of ceremonies and diplomat, adept at controlling and guiding the male gaze. As Wolfe notes, this was frequently misinterpreted by missionaries and colonial agents in an eroticised way,¹⁴ a projected Western fantasy of loose Pacific sexual mores that begins with French explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville describing Tahiti as a "New Cythera" in 1768, and reaches apotheosis with Margaret Mead's book *Coming of Age in Samoa* in 1928. Some of these attitudes also persist in the erotic-exotic cringe-voyeurism depiction of *fa'afafine* in Western media, as is the case with Australian director Heather Croall's documentary *Paradise Bent: Boys Will be Girls in Samoa* (1999), complete with coconut brassieres as a touristic gaze edges *fa'afafine* into the realm of a tiki-lounge drag show.¹⁵ A Pasifika renaissance in New Zealand has permitted (and I use that word deliberately, given the dominance of colonial cultural authority) more nuanced representation, as in David Fane's, Oscar Kightley's and Nathaniel Lees' 2012 play *When the Frigate Bird Sings*. Set in Auckland, the play centres on Vili, who is *fa'afafine*, and her struggle between tradition in wanting to take care of her father and brother after the death of her mother, and wanting to have a life of her own in the context of Auckland's LGBTQIA+ nightlife and other *fa'afafine* who have adapted to it.

To be Sāmoan in New Zealand is already complex. It is a subject that has been explored by a number of New Zealand artists of Sāmoan descent, including Michel Tuffery, and Lonnie Hutchinson who balances it with her Māori identity. At the end of the nineteenth century Sāmoa was gripped by civil war and then carved up by the colonial powers of Great Britain, the United States and Germany. At the end of the First World War, Germany was forced to cede Western Sāmoa to New Zealand. Sāmoans resented New Zealand control, particularly following the huge losses of life due to mismanagement of the 1918 influenza pandemic, leading to the Mau Movement against New Zealand rule, and police and military atrocities committed against Sāmoans (New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark formally apologised to Sāmoa for New Zealand's involvement in these events in 2002).¹⁶ Mass migration from Sāmoa to New Zealand for better economic opportunities began in the 1950s and continued after Sāmoan independence in 1962. In the 1970s Sāmoans, who overstayed their visas, were subjected to the notorious "dawn raids" by police and other law enforcement. Some Sāmoan New Zealanders joined the "Polynesian Panthers" movement, inspired by the Black Panthers in the USA, supporting their community and informing others of their legal rights. Some Sāmoan-born residents were granted citizenship under the New Zealand Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act 1982 and since 2002 Sāmoan immigration to New Zealand has been regulated by quota.¹⁷ Sāmoan New Zealanders, despite being one of New Zealand's larger demographics (182,721 identifying in the 2018 census, from a population of just under five million¹⁸) and a Pacific people with high public and cultural visibility, sit awkwardly outside the official Māori/European biculturalism established by the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. *Fa'afafine* sit at an even more complex degree of intersectionality, often fleeing the growing Christian conservatism in Sāmoa post-

independence, and the legacy of Western missionaries, particularly following New Zealand's Homosexual Law Reform Act 1986. It is only since the 1990s, however, that *fa'afafine* in New Zealand have been able to create a space for themselves where formerly the defaults were mediated by Western notions of transgender identity, drag shows and sex work. At the age of fifteen Kihara migrated to Wellington from Sāmoa in 1990, to further her studies in fashion design, and early on began producing t-shirts about power structures and the pride and frustration of Polynesian youth in the Western urban environment. One of these t-shirts was purchased in 1995 by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, in Wellington, while she was still a student.¹⁹ The *tāupōu* reference in *Fa'a fafine: In the Manner of a Woman* is more obvious in images where Kihara wears the *tuiga*, the elaborate headdress of the *tāupōu*, but when explained to Wolfe a broader interpretive schema of the work and her instrumentalisation of her *fa'afafine* identity materialises within it:

*As an artist and a fa'afafine (in this case as a "Pacific Island woman of transgender experience"), the idea of beauty and harmony across the Pacific and specifically to Samoa is possessed through a dual combination of both male and female energy. Hence, the reason why people like myself are allowed to exist within the context of my Samoan culture is for living in the va or space between men and women... Through Samoa's encounter with introduced religion, colonialisation and globalisation, the dual energy has been challenged by the Western binary opposition of gender and sexuality. My fa'afafine series exposes and shatters these colonial constructs imposed upon many indigenous cultures in the Pacific.*²⁰

Kihara continued to use photographic tableaux to interrogate the trope of the Victorian colonial gaze in a further three bodies of work: *Tauuluga: The Last Dance* (2006-11), *Siva in Motion* (2012) and *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* (2013). In these works Kihara appears in a Victorian mourning gown (a reference to the photograph *Sāmoan Half Caste*, c. 1890, by the Victorian New Zealand photographer Thomas Andrew), evoking the image of the Pacific body colonised by nineteenth century colonial nudity taboos, as well as a symbolic mourning for Pacific autonomy and pre-colonial life. Wendt describes this colonisation of the Pacific body:

*I reminded them that before the missionaries and the other Victorians made us ashamed of our lack of clothing we wore little clothing (in Papalagi [European] terms) but we believed ourselves 'clothed'. I reminded them that the tatau for men and the malu for women – in our dance team at least five of the male dancers had tatau and two women had malu – were considered 'clothing', the most desired and highest-status clothing anyone could wear. When warriors went into battle with their penis sheaths and tatau they were 'clothed', fully clothed, fully armoured.*²¹

Kihara calls this black-dressed persona "Salome" – she first appeared in the dance/performance part of *Tauuluga: The Last Dance* that the artist performed at the New York exhibition, dancing the *Tauuluga*, not in light traditional garments and playfully accompanied by two subordinate male dancers, but alone and in a restrictive black bodice and long gown.²² The biblical character of Salome in the story of John the Baptist's beheading, has been through many iterations in the arts – seductress, manipulated naïf, etc. Kihara identifies with Salome as a woman who influenced politics through dance,²³ the colonised and constrained *tāupōu* forced in an act of Bhabhaian mimicry to imitate the appearance and manner of the oppressor in order to survive.²⁴ Here we may also invoke the Sāmoan concept of *taufa'ase'e*, the game of deception that protects



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the secret, such as that played on Mead, rendering her research nonsense. The settings deliberately discard the stereotypes of the idyllic island paradise. In the series *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* (2012) – the title being a reference to the Gauguin painting of the same name – Kihara photographs a Sāmoa devastated by Cyclone Evan in 2012, still recovering from Tsunami Galu Afi in 2009. The exotic/touristic photographs taken by New Zealand photographer Alfred Burton in 1884 are a compositional touchstone, Burton having travelled to Sāmoa on the Union Steam Ship Company's first Pacific cruise, but as Kihara keeps her back turned to the camera, I am more often reminded of the lone romantic figure contemplating the power of nature in Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* (c. 1818). Sometimes these images – whether this is deliberate or not I cannot say – become frustratingly unreadable, either bogged down in a palimpsest muddle of tropes and allusions, or in their spartan inscrutability as in the de Chirico-esque ruined emptiness of *Roman Catholic Church, Apia* (2013). The architectural ruin does a lot of the work. Perhaps this is a conscious gesture of defiance to the hegemonic Western gaze rather than a reaching of stylistic limitations or a tipping into visual clichés, and this is more a matter of Kihara not giving a damn what her audience thinks and/or the ignorance of that audience, than her misjudgement of it. If that reduces its effectiveness, so be it – the drama of the image remains unaffected.

We see something of that reduced effectiveness in Kihara's 2017 photographic and looped video series *A Study of a Samoan Savage*. These works, a response to Western media-promoted reductive stereotypes of Sāmoa men as rugby warriors, again invoke the colonised Pacific body through the prism of early motion photography à la Edward Muybridge, and anthropometry (the quasi-pseudoscience of studying ethnic types through anatomical measurement – New Zealand Māori photographer Fiona Pardington explores adjacent territory in her 2011 series *The Pressure of Sunlight Falling* recording the phrenological life casts taken of Pacific peoples during French explorer Jules Dumont d'Urville's 1837-1840 voyage). Kihara's model is New Zealand Sāmoa artist Iaone Iaone, in a collaboration of sorts, representing the Polynesian demigod-trickster-culture hero Māui. Māui/Iaone enacts movements and strikes classical academic attitudes while being analysed with rulers and wicked-looking callipers. The message is straightforward, but is somewhat overwhelmed by Iaone's magnificent physique and performance of insouciant virility. It becomes difficult to see the wood for the trees, or the allegory for the nude, and one is left wondering why, when there's nothing to indicate it in the image, Iaone needs to be Māui in the first place when he's quite capable of being an idealised Polynesian alpha everyman in his own right. It may be deliberate that Iaone's body is doing most of the work – mocking the fetishising Western gaze. I'm not sure that I can bring myself to agree with gallery director Adnan Yıldız's assertion that: "Yuki Kihara's *A Study of a Samoan Savage*, with its multiple layers of presentation and meaning, not only brings for the dark history of our colonial past, but also sounds the alarm for a future scenario founded on racial prejudice, one which may not be far away. Through the subtle tone of the relationship created with its audience, it offers an anarchic transition between past and present."²⁵

For one thing, the racist future is already here – it is merely, to paraphrase William Gibson, not evenly distributed.²⁶ Indeed, acknowledging the Polynesian *vā i tā* approach to time (altogether too complicated to go into here, but essentially comprehending time in spatial terms and allowing for an understanding of past and future being simultaneous with the present)²⁷ and the late-colonial history which is still with us, and to paraphrase James Joyce, is the nightmare from which we are trying to awake.²⁸ It never went away. Just to be excessive, as Christopher Marlow has Mephistopheles say, "Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed/In one self-place; for where we are

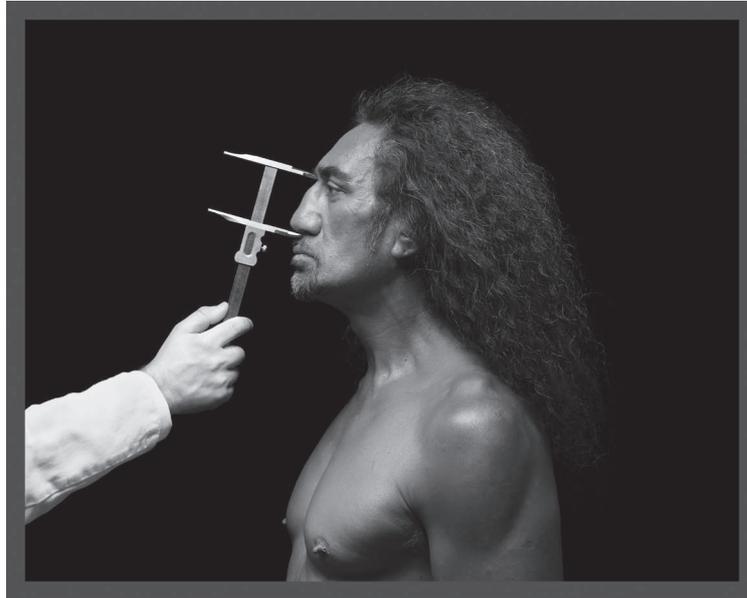
is hell,/And where hell is, there must we ever be.”²⁹ It is precisely because all the devils are already here, that Kihara’s *Study of a Samoan Savage* has all the subtlety of a half-brick in a sock applied to the back of the head—it is urgent, simple and immediate because the stakes are so high. Kihara is not one to mess around.

As noted above, Kihara’s formal training is in clothing design, and although this informed earlier works, often with reference to Western clothing as an act of colonisation as in her early t-shirts, the *mu’umu’u* or Mother Hubbard dresses and Salome’s Victorian mourning gown in *Taaluga: The Last Dance*, that background is powerfully present in サモアのうた (*Sāmoa no uta*) *A Song About Sāmoa* (2019). Whereas previous work has tended to express more general messages, *A Song About Sāmoa* is much more personal and autobiographical, strongly referencing Kihara’s Japanese-Sāmoan hybridity. The installation, part of a five year project to produce twenty kimonos which debuted at Milford Galleries in Dunedin in New Zealand’s South Island, consisted of five kimonos made from *siapo* (bark cloth, the Sāmoan equivalent of Tongan tapa cloth) decorated with a combination of *upeti* (*siapo* leaf/flower patterns), *seigaiha* (Japanese pattern of semicircles representing sea waves), and figurative imagery of the islands, sea (stylised in the manner of Hokusai with a Pasifika twist), and a cross-section of underwater life in the surrounding reefs. When placed in a row these form a continuous scenic strip. Kihara was inspired by finding her paternal grandmother’s kimono in storage and being intrigued by it being in brown and earthy tones like *siapo*. Both kimono and *siapo* are traditionally heavily coded and full of messages about gender, identity and status.³⁰

Previously, Kihara hasn’t referenced much about her Japanese side, preferring to focus mainly on her Sāmoan identity in her work. The title サモアのうた (*Sāmoa no uta*) derives from a popular Japanese song taught to children in elementary schools. “The lyrics,” says Kihara, “describe Sāmoa as a single island and a paradise on earth settled by ‘noble savages’ — a typically romantic, Orientalist imagining of neighbouring Pacific Island nations held by Japan dating back to the seventeenth century.” She goes on to say:

*The exhibition consists of Japanese kimonos made from Samoan tapa presented as sculpture; accompanied by a silk kimono formerly worn by my Japanese grandmother Masako Kihara; and a photograph of Masako and Nobuo Kihara (my grandfather)... For me, the Samoan tapa and the Japanese kimono are customary regalia which are repositories of ancestral stories. They extend my interest in textiles. The series sheds light on the lived experience in the Pacific while reframing the vā or relationship between Japan and the Pacific — specifically Sāmoa.*³¹

The work consciously draws a connection between the Sāmoan *vā* and the Japanese concept of *Ma*.³² *Ma* is the aesthetic and philosophical concept of negative space between structural or compositional elements that is experienced by its absence, a liminal space. Sāmoan poet and writer Albert Wendt made a conceptual connection between the two ideas,³³ and Kihara further links this to the Sāmoan concept of *vasa* or open ocean, “For Sāmoa the *vasa* is land, an oceanscape that is not a barrier but an opening to another world.”³⁴ This connects well to the ideas explored by the Papuan-born Tongan-Fijian writer and anthropologist Epeli Hau’ofa in his landmark 1993 essay ‘Our Sea of Islands’³⁵ in which he reimagines the Pacific Ocean as a great blue continent uniting Polynesian and Melanesian cultures rather than separating them as do Western colonial geographical divisions. Kihara’s kimonos are technically exquisite and very powerful, and that sort of virtuosity in combination with the more overt activism in Kihara’s other work, and the kind of budget the



New Zealand Government makes available for Venice will make an excellent basis for a Biennale project. Earlier I intimated Kihara's selection for Venice as politically savvy, and this is true. It is expedient for New Zealand to exploit exoticism as much as artistic sophistication in stamping its brand in Venice. Gender, identity and colonialism are also very much of the zeitgeist. That is small nation realpolitik. New Zealand has tried to maintain an inclusivity of Māori artists in its Venice representations since its first invitation, previously sending Peter Robinson and Jacqueline Fraser (2001), Michael Parekōwhai (2011), and Lisa Reihana (2017), so it is agreeable to see other ethnic groups being represented. At the same time Kihara's selection acknowledges the ugly history of New Zealand's own little Pacific empire and ongoing legacy of hegemony, bringing Pasifika and Sāmoan identity and experience to the centre of that Dickie-Danto axis, even as it blows that axis apart. It also highlights the little-considered danger of assimilative Western ideas about gender and sexuality to those indigenous.

The Venice Biennale is a reciprocal and critical context that brings with it incredible resources and intense scrutiny. The "ethical" (some might say activism, others, political correctness) emphasis of curatorship and criticism of art by indigenous and diasporic communities in the last fifteen years is something of a double-edged sword. While focusing on the political and identity issues surrounding such work is of course valid, the soft-peddalling around whether the artwork itself is successful has suffered. That is not fair on artists of colour on the Dickie-Danto axis, and an example of, if we may repurpose a phrase from Michael Gerson, a former speechwriter for US President George W. Bush, "the soft bigotry of low expectations."³⁶ Emphatically that does not mean reverting to a petulant paternalistic reactionary reversion to only talking about the object independent of context. David Garneau, artist, curator, writer, and Associate Professor of Visual Arts at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, a Canadian of Métis descent,³⁷ writes:

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Non-critical art writing about indigenous art favours with recognition only those aspects of indigenous persons that are other to the dominant. It encourages indigenous folks to occupy the appearance of a position rather than to earn one. The refusal to engage Indigenous art and persons critically positions us as permanently in a representational rather than a dialogic mode, as transmitters rather than generators of knowledge... Critical art writing is needed if we are to deepen the discourse around indigenous art beyond private judgement, competent understanding, polite appreciation, the commercial market, grant-writing rhetoric and as illustrations of existing theory. However, if non-indigenous folks are to do so without instrumentalising, being patronising or other flavours of rude, and if indigenous people are to engage this work at all, we need to develop non-colonial forms of critical art writing.³⁸

These observations on the way indigenous art is written about applies equally to the way it is curated and exhibited. Ultimately we must ask how Venice will see the artist, as an exotic distraction or an artistic force to be reckoned with.

Notes

¹ My title, inspired by the title of Kihara's 2017 exhibition *Yuki Kihara: Coconuts that Grew from Concrete* at Artspace in Auckland, in turn inspired by Tupac Shakur's 2000 album *Roses that Grew from Concrete*, in reference to her selection to represent New Zealand in the 2022 Venice Biennale, the Frangipani flower common in Samoa with its connotations of femininity and beauty, which in turn was named after a sixteenth century Italian-French nobleman, the Marquis Muzio Frangipani, who invented a bitter almond perfume which the flower reminded botanists of. The Frangipani is returning to Italy

² George Dickie, *Aesthetics, An Introduction*, Cambridge UK: Pegasus, 1971, p. 101

³ Thomas Adajian, 'The Definition of Art', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 23 October, 2017; <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/art-definition/>

⁴ See <https://www.motha.net/transhirstory-in-99-objects>

⁵ See <https://www.mcnayart.org/exhibitions/current/transamerica-n-gender-identity-appearance-today>

⁶ Karen Stevenson, *The Frangipani is Dead: Pacific Art in New Zealand 1985-2000*, Wellington: Huia, 2008, p. 211

⁷ The official designation for people living in New Zealand who have migrated from the Pacific Islands or who identify with the Pacific Islands because of ancestry or heritage, most usually Polynesian

⁸ For a thorough, non-anthropological treatment of *fa'afafine*, see Yuki Kihara and Dan Taulapapa McMullin, *Samoan Queer Lives*, Auckland: Little Island Press, 2018

⁹ Mark Amery, 'Things I learned from not going to art school: Yuki Kihara, New Zealand's next artist in Venice', *The Spinoff*, 30 November, 2019; <https://thespinoff.co.nz/art/30-11-2019/things-i-learned-from-not-going-to-art-school-yuki-kihara-new-zealands-next-artist-in-venice/>

¹⁰ For this and definitions of other Samoan concepts, see Albert Wendt, 'Tatauing the Post-Colonial Body', *Span* 42-43, April-October 1996, pp. 15-29

¹¹ "The medium is the message" is a phrase coined by McLuhan in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, New York: Mentor, 1964

¹² Adam Gifford, 'Shigeyuki Kihara: A lament for the lost', *New Zealand Herald*, 8 September, 2012; https://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/news/article.cfm?c_id=1501119&objectid=10832438

¹³ Erika Wolfe, 'Shigeyuki Kihara's Fa'a fafine, In the Manner of a Woman: The Photographic Theatre of Cross-Cultural Encounter', *Pacific Arts* (New Series), vol. 10, no. 2, 2010, p. 23

¹⁴ Ibid.