



TE RAUKURA

History

This building was given its name of Te Raukura at an opening dawn Ceremony on Waitangi Day, Sunday 6 February 2011. Previously the building was known as Te Wharewaka. Te Raukura is of special significance to descendants from Taranaki iwi of Te Atiawa, Taranaki, Ngati Ruanui, Ngati Tama and Ngati Mutunga. Previously the area where the building is located was harbour frontage to Te Aro Pā, one of the largest Māori communities in Wellington up until the 1880's. The building sees the re-establishment of a Māori presence on Taranaki Wharf, notably absent on the waterfront since that time.

The Building

There are three parts to Te Raukura — the Wharewaka (waka house), Whare Tāpere (conference/events and entertainment house), and Wharekai (eating house). The elements of the building include whakairo or carvings and modern renditions of traditional design which transform the building symbolically into a ceremonial waka (canoe) linked to the ancestor Kupe and the voyaging traditions of the Pacific peoples. *Within the whare, Rongo, the god of Peace, reigns. It is in this atmosphere, under a cloak of peace, that people interact with one another and with the spirits of their ancestors. p. 92 Te Marae, Hiwi and Pat Tauroa, Reed, 1986.*

Te Wharewaka

The Wharewaka (waka house) is open to the public during the day and on permanent public display through the glass sides of the building. Waka can be launched into the lagoon for ceremonial occasions via the slipways. Waka ama will be used on a more regular basis for training and competition.

The Korowai

A distinctive aspect of Te Raukura is the concept of the exterior korowai/ cloak. The korowai is developed in the design as an outer layer giving protection in a manner similar to that which the korowai gives to the human body. The cloak covers the body of Te Raukura, draping down its sides. It has been designed to allow transparency and facilitate access into and out of the building where desired and to provide enclosure elsewhere. It also provides environmental control to the building, creating shade to reduce solar gains and to provide shelter. The sculptural form of the cloak creates a constantly changing visual expression to the building. The sides of the cloak have been shaped to create forms symbolic of waka sails, reinforcing the maritime heritage of the project.

Maihi and Amo

The maihi (bargeboards extending from the building) represent sides of a waka. They are a blend of tōtara boards lashed in the nature of a waka and having the symbolic rauawa or topstrakes of a carved waka





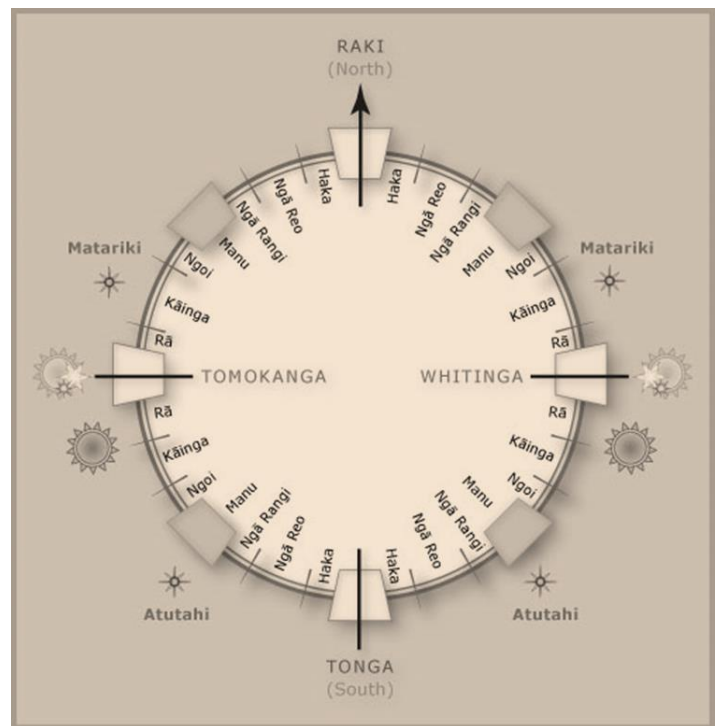
rendered in laser cut aluminium. The lashing ends will blow in the winds like raukura feathers. The pattern is repeated in the two amo which support the maihi and attach to the front columns of the building.

Pare – tomowaka and tomowhare

The entrance to Te Raukura and Te Wharewaka have carved totara pare or lintels over the doorways. The design for these pieces including the maihi and the amo were done by Rangi Kipa and involved a number of carvers and Richard Carroll (Carroll’s Joinery Ltd) in the execution of the work.

Star Compass on the Ātea - Aronga Mana

Inlaid into the forecourt of Te Raukura is the Ātea, the traditional Polynesian star compass. The Polynesian star compass has its origins in traditional voyaging navigation by waka hourua which locates the stars and constellations as the broach the horizon. The waka themselves are used as a star compass. The 360° horizon around the canoe was divided up into different sectors named ‘houses’ and these were marked on canoe railings. Navigators would know that the arcs of the sun and other stars cross the sky at different heights depending on the time of year. This canoe is travelling due north at the spring equinox, when the sun rises due east and sets due west. At night the rising and setting of stars were used to align the canoe in a direction of travel. For example, when Star A set, Star B was used, and so on through the night until the earth’s own star, the sun, rose. The sun was used at dawn and dusk.



The design is based on a simple tāniko figure which is three colours, black, white and red by the artist Eruera Te Whiti Nia of Rarotonga. The construction method for the compass used specially cast coloured concrete pavers set into the cast in-situ slab for the ātea. The surrounding pattern was achieved with concrete saw cuts into the slab. The design features patterns termed, Niho taniwha – teeth of the taniwha – the pattern is one of welcome for visitor. The pattern also relates to Maunga Taranaki – Taranaki mountain and the connection of Taranaki Whānui. The star compass design provides the cultural linkage between the Kupe statue and the building. Kupe could be seen as the external tauihu or ‘prow’ of the building which itself could be viewed as a Waka.

Statue of Kupe

The statue of Kupe, in front of Te Raukura, shows the legendary Polynesian explorer with his wife, Hine Te Apārangi, and his tohunga, Pekahourangi.

