



EUGENE KARA

Multi-Disciplinary Maaori Artist, Bronze Casting Specialist

Co-Founder of Te Ahi Koomau Foundry, New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, Te Puia

Ngati Koroki, Kahukura, Ngati Tipa, Ngati Koata, Ngati Kahungunu, Ngati Pahauwera, Te Atihaunui a Paparangi, Nga Rauru, Tuwharetoa, Te Arawa

Eugene Kara is based in Rotorua, Aotearoa and has been active in the Arts sector as a practitioner and advocate for over 20 years. Eugene's experience has seen him work as a Head Caster, Lecturer, Head of Department, Programme developer and Advisor.

Eugene's own practice as an artist and sculptor has seen him develop works for both gallery and outdoor spaces. Shown in numerous exhibitions, nationally and internationally his works are in a number of private and public collections. Some of his public work can be seen at the Mighty River, Karapiro Domain, in Cambridge. The University of Waikato, Bronze statues. Waikato expressway, an 8-meter-tall sculpture made from stone and bronze.

In 2013, Eugene was appointed Head Caster at The New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute (NZMACI), Te Puia, Rotorua. The role comprise of two parts - to establish a high performance bronze foundry and cast in bronze, a full scale Whatarangi (Maori food store house). The Bronze Whatarangi project involved multiple parties and took over three years to create. During this time, Eugene established the first Maori foundry and casting facility in Aotearoa. The foundry was aptly named "Te Ahi Komau". Te Ahi Komau has four specialty casting studios which will widen the scope of material and visual culture for Maori to explore.

Eugene's highlights within the education sector include, stakeholder engagement to develop programmes that responded to the needs of the local community and advocacy for Maori aspirations. One of which was leading the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Waiariki Institute of Technology and Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design. The MOU enabled graduates from the Waiariki level 7 Diploma of Art programme to enter study on the Whitecliffe Master in Fine Art Degree programme through distant learning. A groundbreaking move for the region, which contributed to the growth of the arts and creative services to the local region.

Eugene is currently developing strategies within the creative sector and actively seeking opportunities for future collaborations that reflect and grows our vibrant cultures.