

★ **Toi Te Mana: An Indigenous History of Māori Art**

Deidre Brown

Ngarino Ellis

Jonathan Mane-Wheoki

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Toi Te Mana is a definitive survey of Māori art written by three Māori scholars and artists—Deidre Brown, Ngarino Ellis, and Jonathan Mane-Wheoki.

The assumption of art history—that an artwork is more than a beautiful object; that, in fact, art reveals historical truths and cultural beliefs—is brought to fruition in this study of New Zealand's native Māori inhabitants. Māori art reflects a belief in the cyclical, spiraling nature of time and a rich tradition of stories about the inception of the universe (when a child separated Father Sky and Mother Earth), and it is a means of communicating across generations.

Here, the breadth of Māori artistic practices, from shipbuilding to urban graffiti, is placed within a continuum of Māori heritage. A traditional cloak can embody a tribe's *whakapapa*—its inheritances and genealogies—within the pattern of the weave and the materials used. Large, gorgeous images capture centuries-old objects, abstract modern installations, and everything in between, tying visual detail to cultural significance with textual analysis. This is a passionate work of scholarship that will capture the minds of students and practitioners of Indigenous art.

WILLEM MARX (January / February 2025)

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