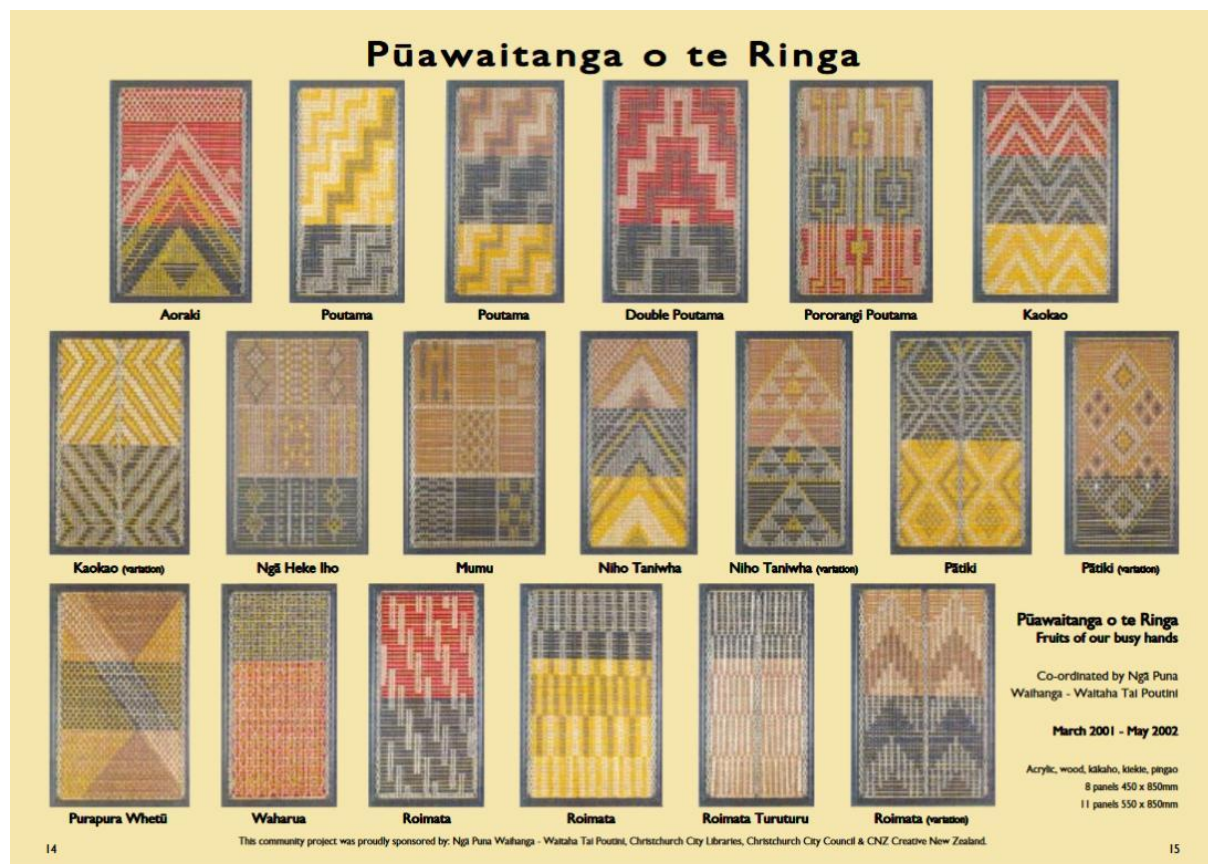


The Tukutuku Panels

[The Tukutuku Panels | Christchurch City Libraries](#)

Tukutuku patterns vary considerably from iwi to iwi throughout the land. Certain designs are associated with particular iwi, some may have different names in different regions, or the names may be spelled in various ways. Many forms are related to mythologies, the stories about them vary from iwi to iwi. Some of the traditions are recorded here; this information has been drawn heavily from the works of Te Rangi Hiroa, and of John M. Mepham at Tokomaru Bay. Hiroa has suggested that the simpler forms are probably the older designs, later patterns developed pictorial forms, such as ancestral figures or other shapes. The Pūawaitanga o te Ringa designs make no claim to be authoritative but have been inspired by traditional patterns; only the Aoraki panel has a simplified pictorial form.



Aoraki

The Aoraki panel was designed to acknowledge Ngāi Tahu as Tangata Whenua. Chevrons of the niho taniwha pattern create the form of the mountain Aoraki, which might well be seen as a taniwha by the disrespectful or the unprepared. Stitches of white kiekie indicate the mountain's snowy covering while the repeated chevrons signify the layers of its geological structure. The mountain reaches up to the purapura whetu stars in the sky. Two small white niho taniwha triangles on either side of the mountain allude to the southern alps; and in the foreground, three triangles of pīngao represent tussock covered foothills.





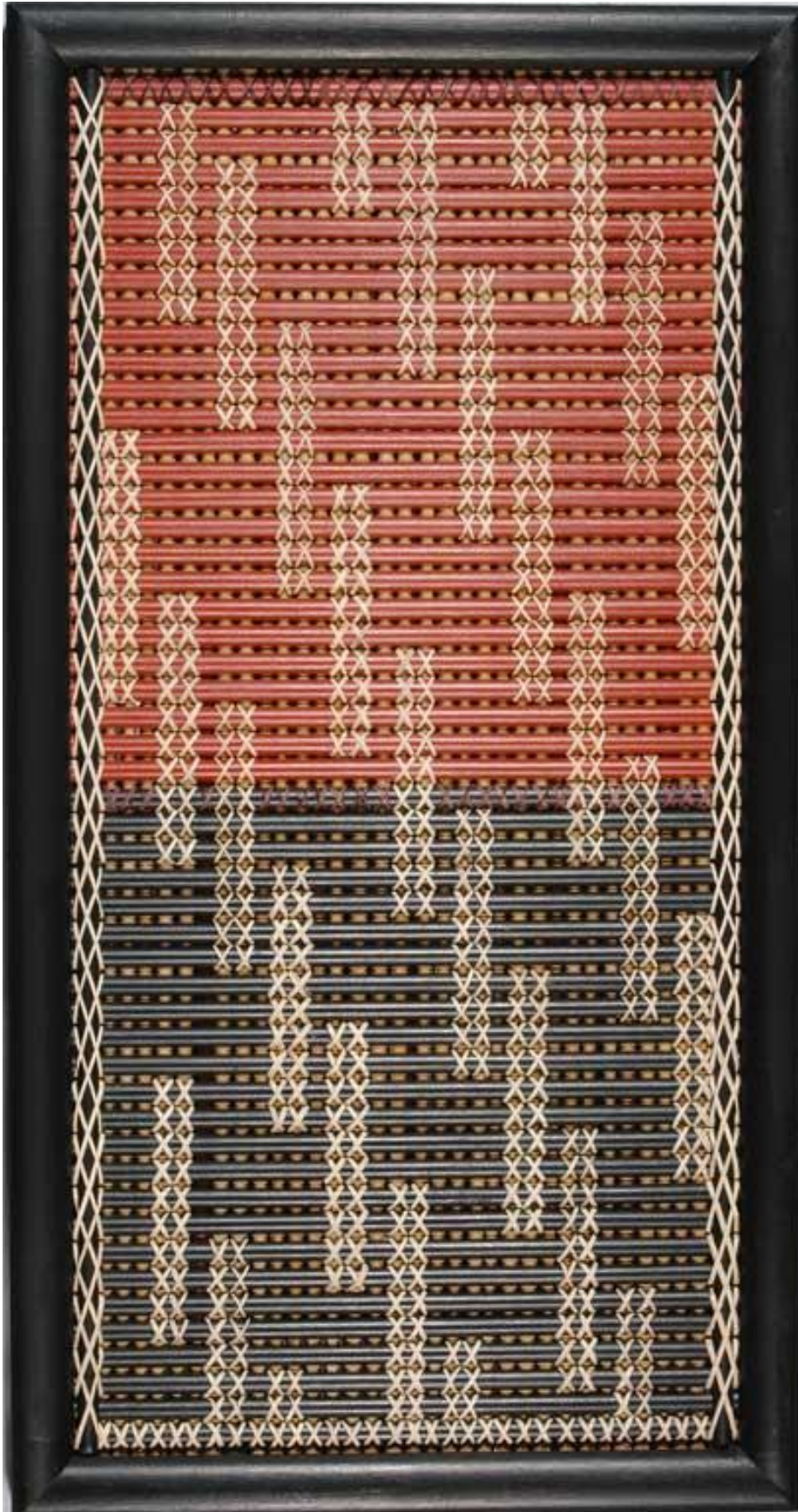
Kaokao

The kaokao (bend or side of the ribs) designs of Te Arawa and East Coast iwi are formed by zig zag lines that create chevrons that can be horizontal or vertical, open with paces or closed repetitive lines. It is sometimes seen to represent the sides and arms of warriors as if caught in haka action.



Niho Taniwha

Niho Taniwha has been identified as a pattern of Te Arawa and Waikato iwi. The teeth-like triangular shapes of niho taniwha are 'dragon's' teeth; they are usually arranged in vertical rows with the apex at the top.

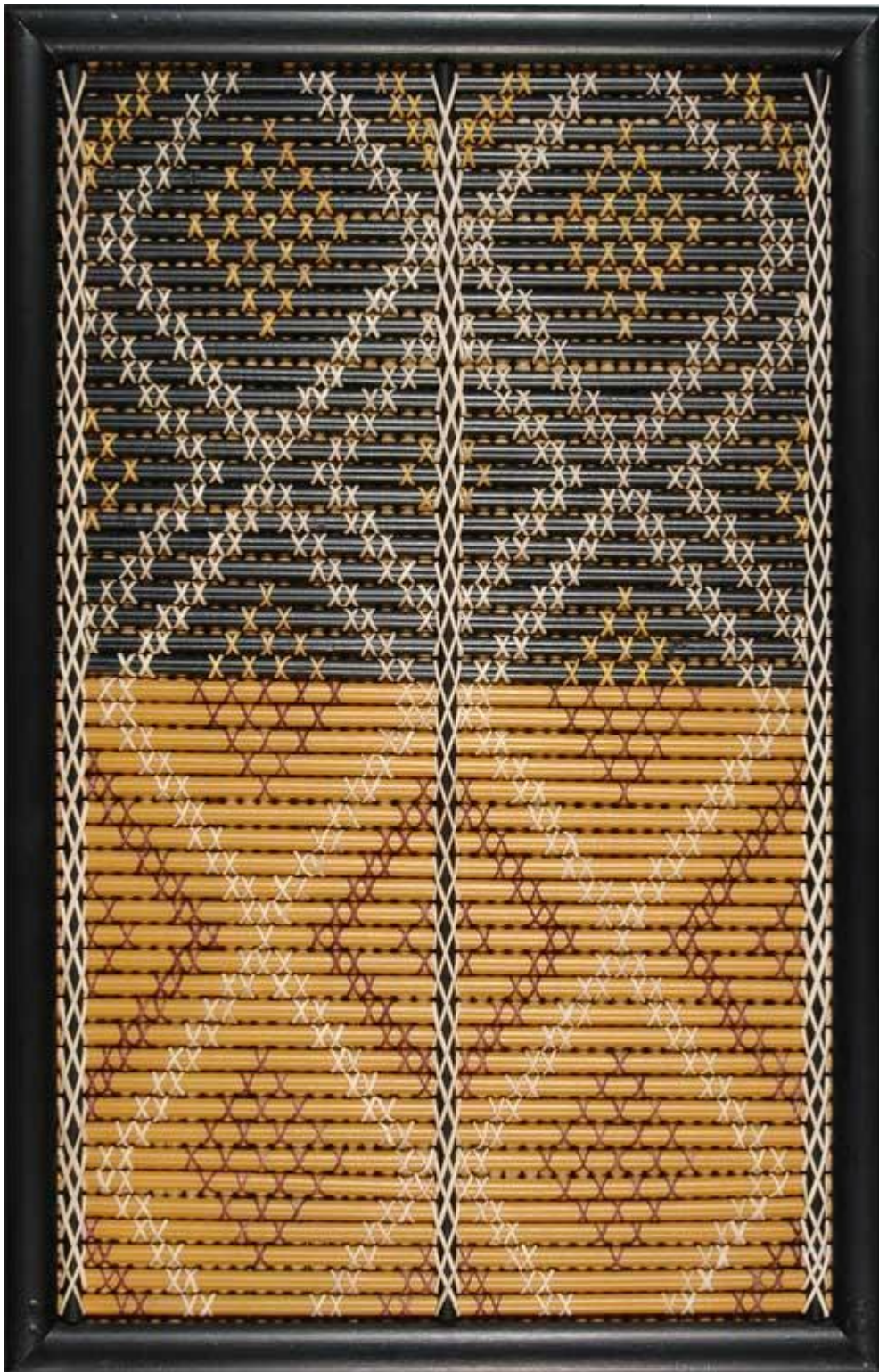


Roimata

Four panels show variations of the roimata (tears) pattern, based on vertically stitched rows, frequently in pairs, that are separated in the same number of non-stitched rows. An Arawa design known as roimata toroa (albatross tears) has alternate parallel rows in vertical blocks, while in a similar Whanganui design was shown as tuturu (leaking water) or turuturu (falling raindrops).

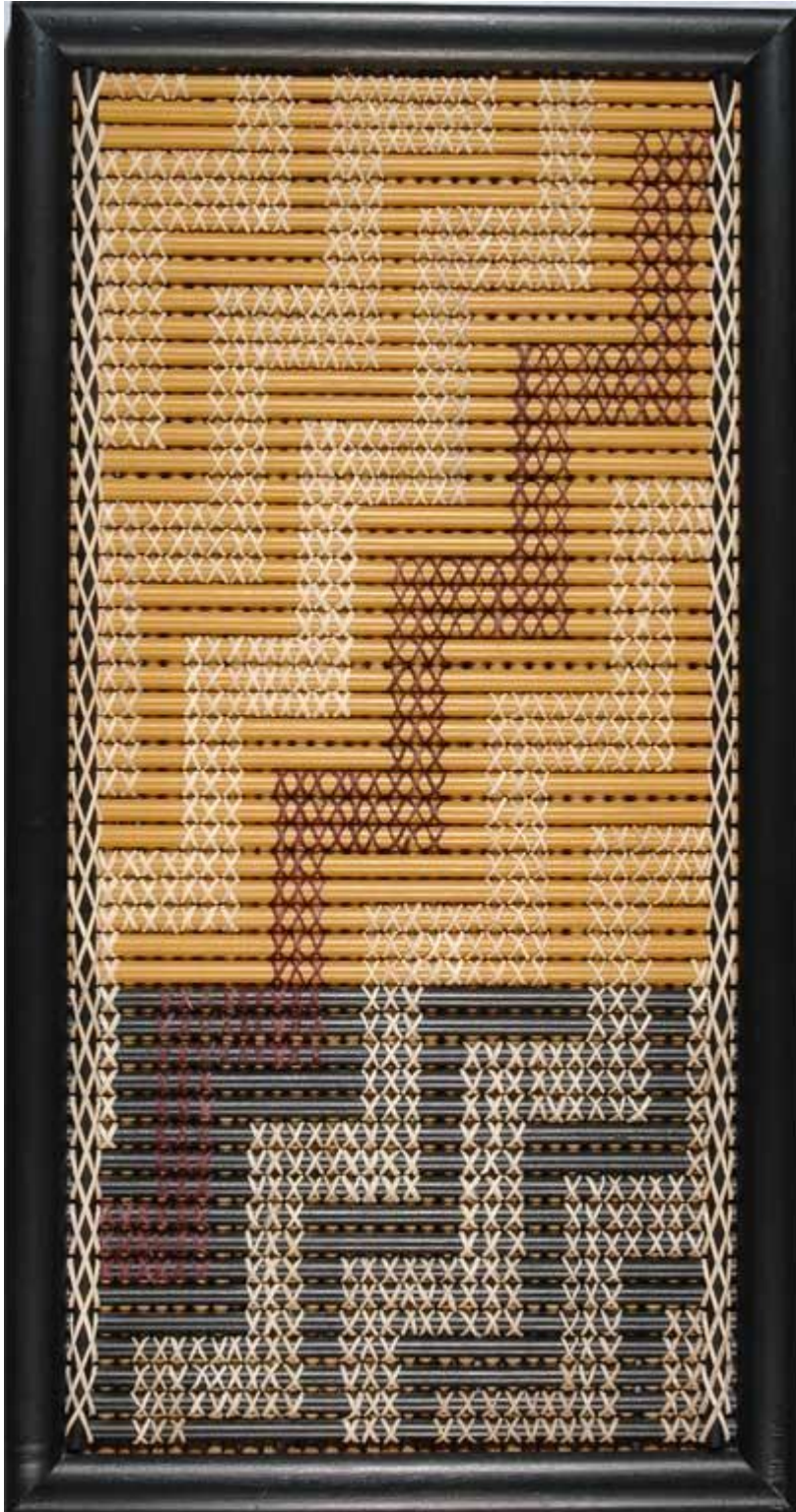
In the Ngāti Porou story of how the kumara came to New Zealand, the ancestor Pourangahua left his wife on the East Coast when he returned to Hawaiki to obtain the tubers. There, his tohunga Ruakapanga not only gave him baskets containing the kumara tubers but also two sacred birds, to help him return. He instructed Pourangahua that he must give prayers of thanksgiving on his safe arrival back in New Zealand, as well as prayers for the safe return of the sacred birds back to Hawaiki, and for a bountiful kumara harvest. However, in his joy at being reunited with his beautiful wife, Pouranahua forgot his instructions. Later, he found the albatross birds weeping, their tears falling onto their breasts. One had been crying

so long that its tears were just dripping, short tears. The other cried long tears - roimata toroa. Accordingly, for Ngāti Porou, the roimata turuturu design shows long and short tears.



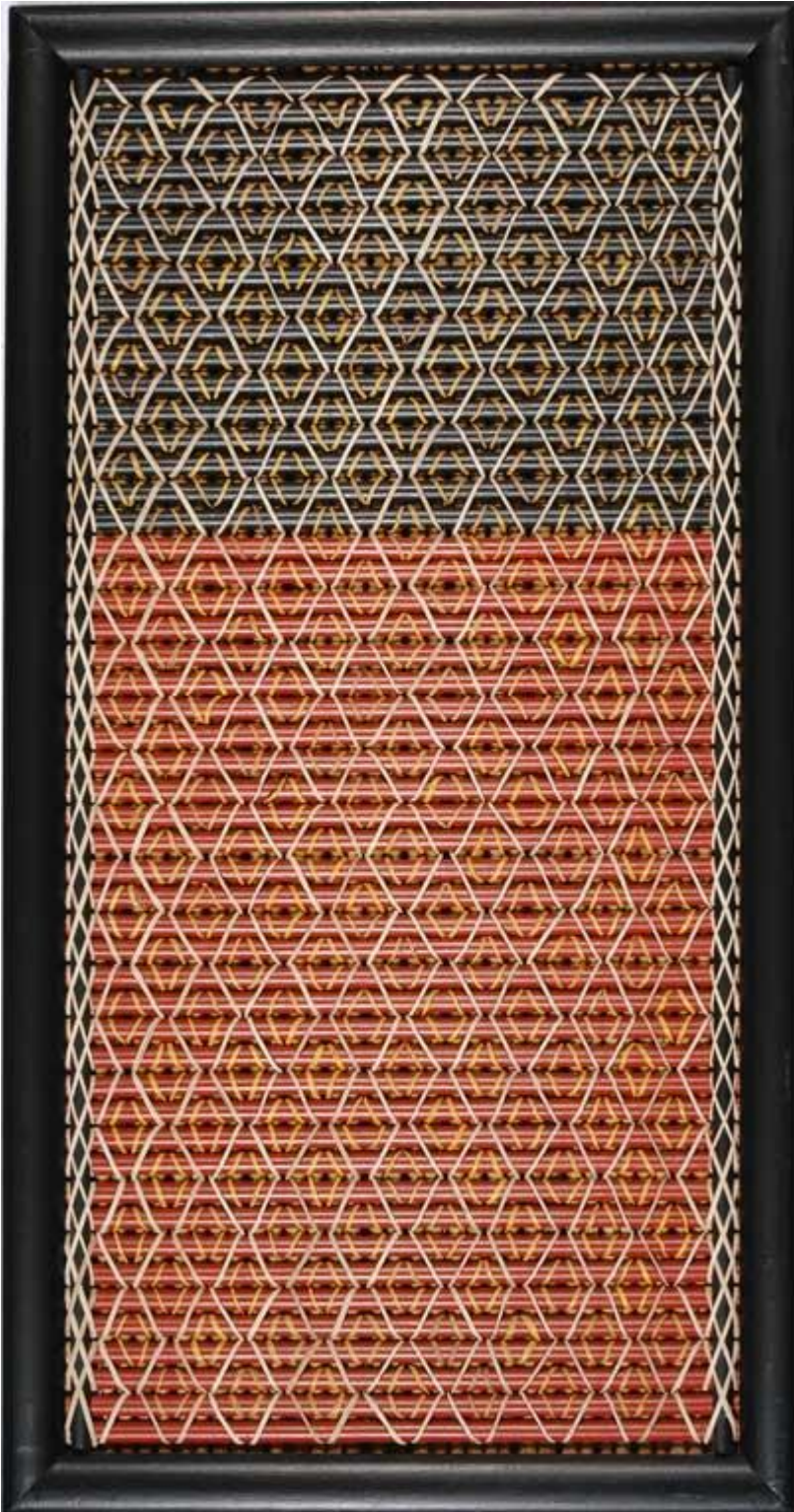
Pātiki

Pātiki or pātikitiki (flounder) designs are based on the lozenge or diamond shape of the flounder fish. They can be quite varied within the basic shape. According to Ngāti Porou tradition, the pātikitiki significance relates to being able to provide 100% - not only for the husband, or the whānau, but for the whole iwi. It acknowledges the fact that women were always looking for ways to supplement their food supplies, even in the dark when the flounders came, while their men were sound asleep.



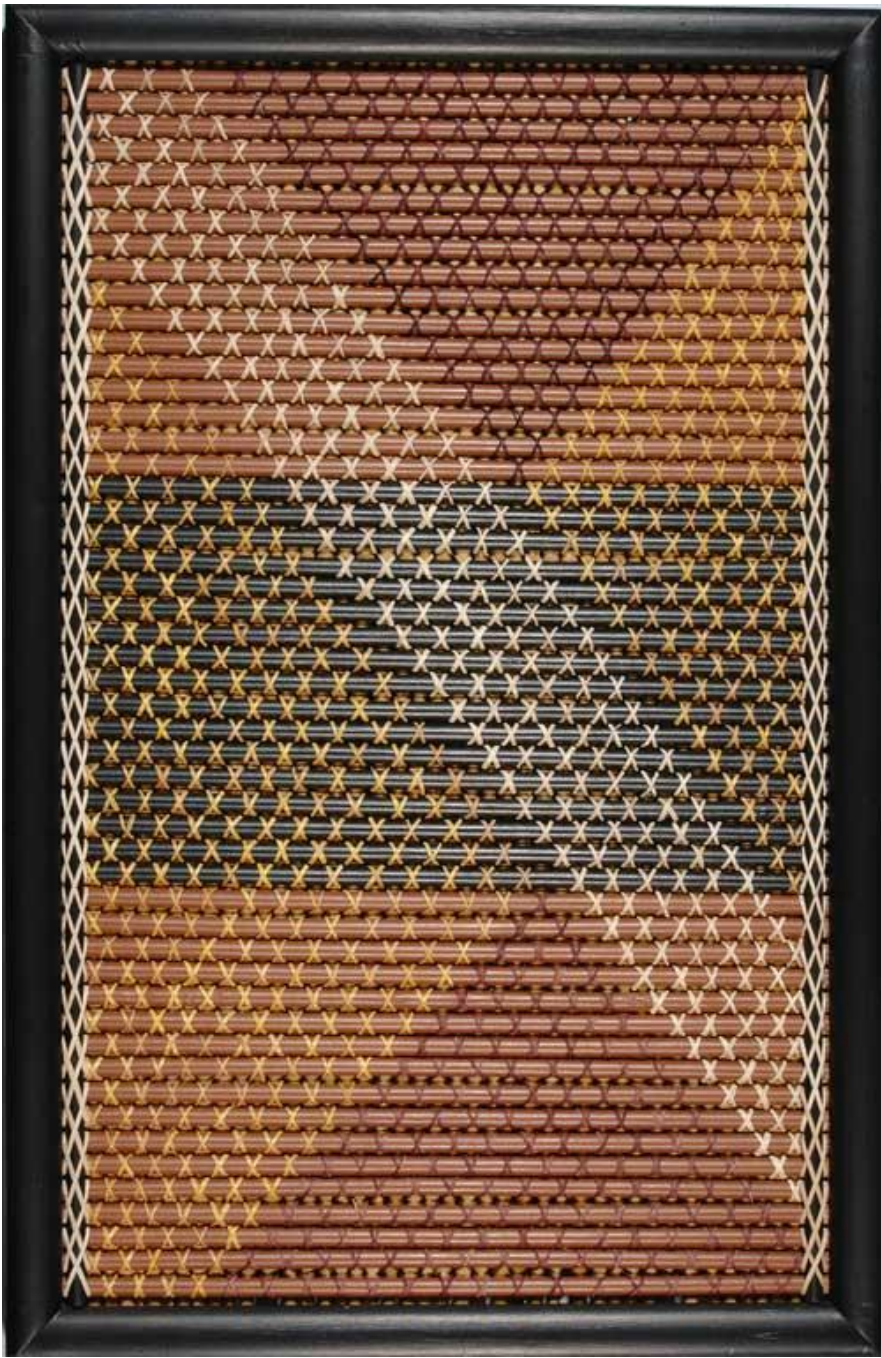
Poutama

The pillar shows three interpretations of the stepped poutama pattern, signifying the growth of man, striving ever upwards. In meeting houses, the panels are usually mirror imaged so that the steps climb upwards from both sides to reach the summit at the centre.



Waharua

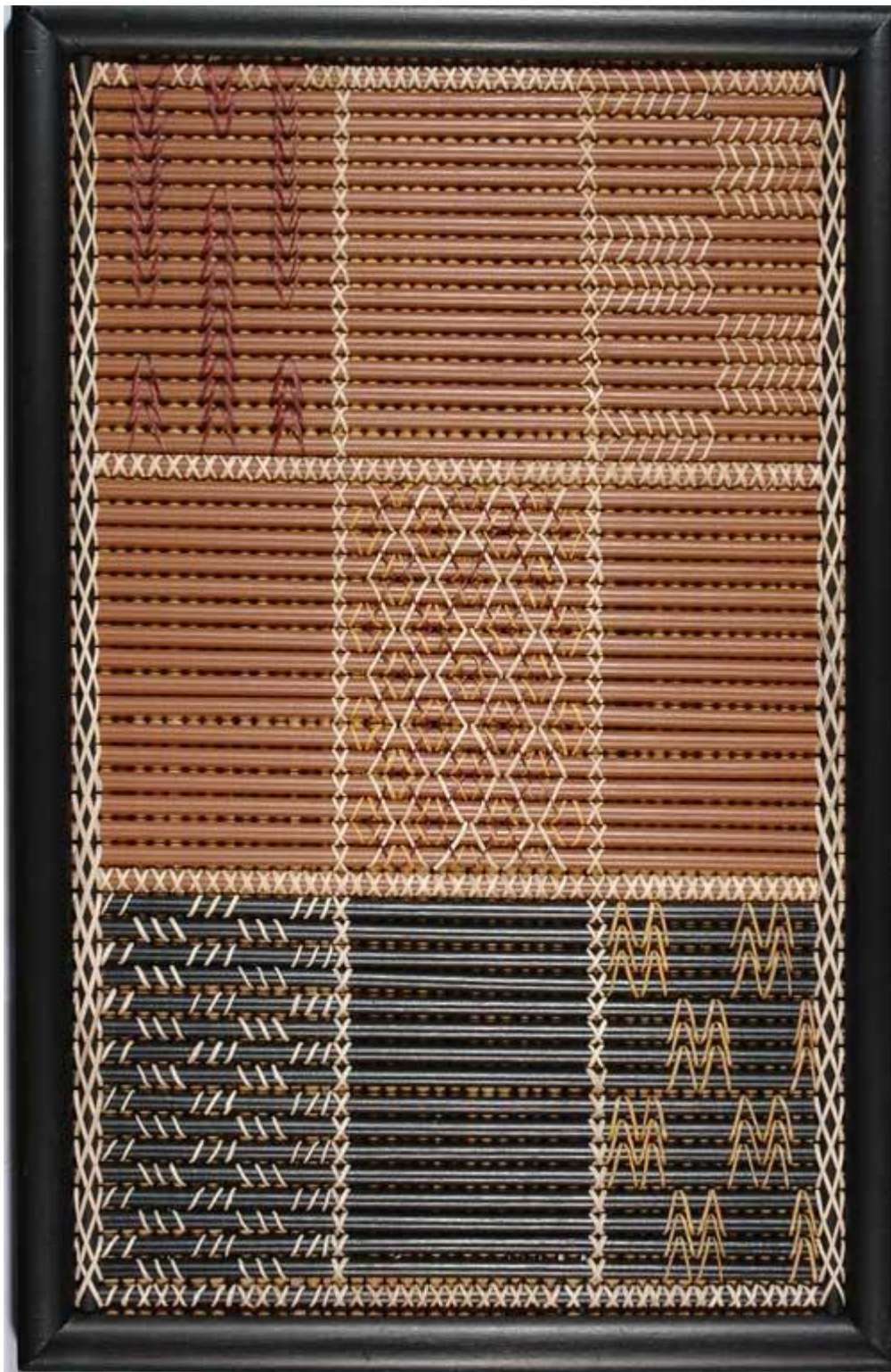
In the Urewera, the waharua is sometimes known as double mouth but on the East Coast its name is whakarua kopito, which alludes to deepening the position of the pito or navel. Its significance relates to the bravery of warriors, indicating that if they are to be wounded by an enemy it should be in the area of the navel so that when they return home their people can see that they were facing the enemy when struck.



Purapura Whetu

Purapura whetu (star seeds, or sometimes, star dust) is the Arawa name for a simple cross-stitch pattern that used to be known as pukanohi (herring's eyes) on the East Coast, and kowhiti (to cross) in the Whanganui region. Another form, possibly older, with every space filled with a cross stitch is an Arawa version called Te Mangoroa (the long shark, being the Milky Way). Hiroa said the Whanganui elders believed this was one of the few original designs, but the patterned was abandoned because it was monotonous and the name lost. The term kowhiti was applied to the all-over design when alternate light and dark coloured stitches, created an open effect. This form was also known in some regions as roimata tears. One traditional meaning of this pattern is that to survive as an iwi, a hāpu, a whānau, you must have numbers, just as the stars of the Milky Way, otherwise

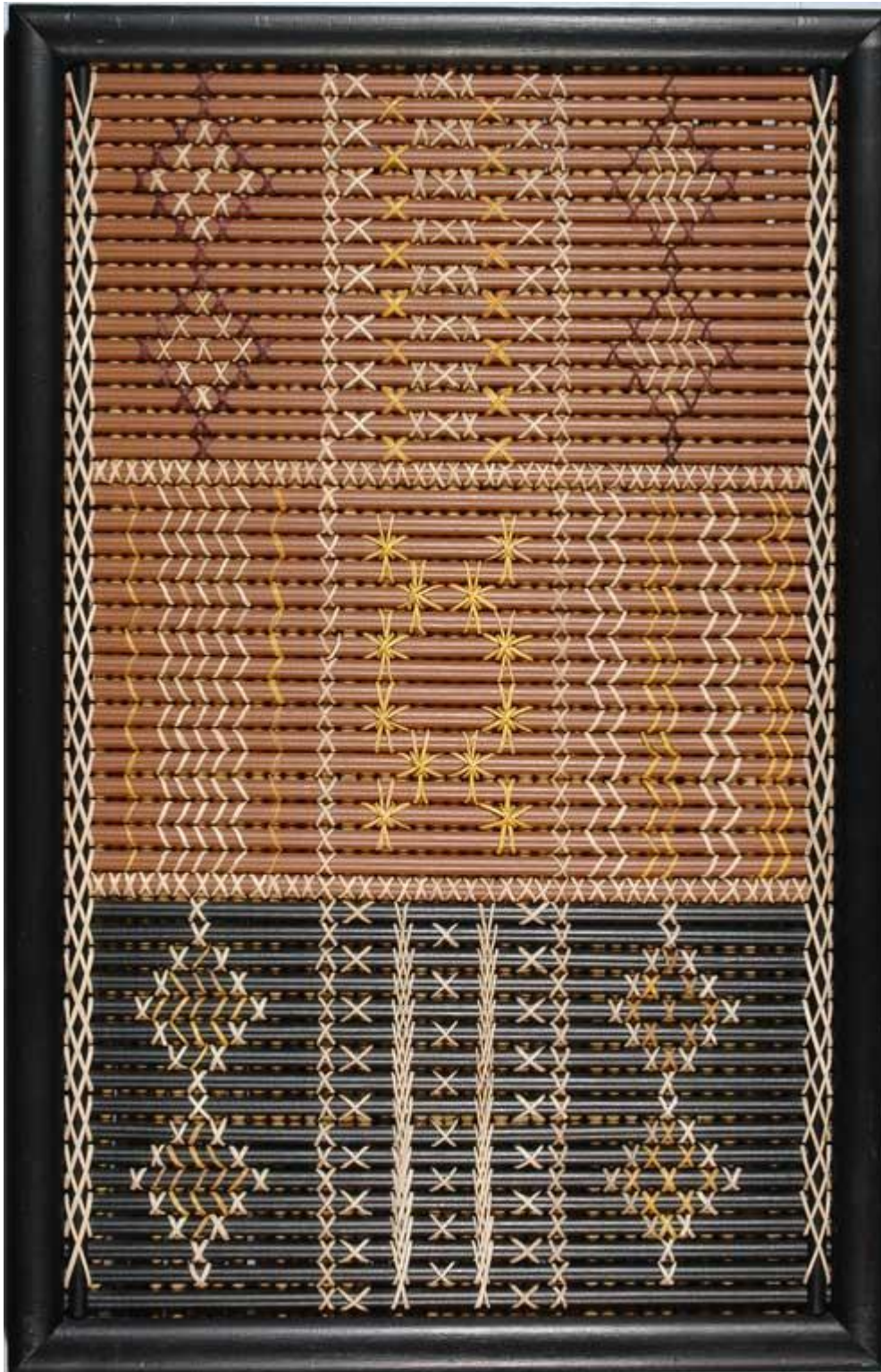
you may be wiped out.



Mumu

The mumu alludes to the style of panel which the Whanganui iwi divided into rows of three elongated blocks. The resultant areas are filled with similar types of pattern. In this example, the central section is filled with a version of waharua. The four corners are filled with single stitch patterns, based on traditional bird footprint designs. The horizontal or vertical chevrons were identified on the East Coast as tapuae

kautuku (bittern's footprints) and waewae pakura (swamp hen's feet).



Ngā Heke Iho

The name of this panel, Ngā Heke Iho, alludes to the falling of women's tears, in remembrance of Helen. The panel is in the mumu form, but its patterns are intended to show the creativity that can be achieved by using tukutuku techniques. The central section is filled with Mae's Stars, a stitch created by tutor Mae Taurua. The corner blocks have versions of the pātiki form. In the side sections, flowing zigzag lines remind us of the pink braided hair extensions worn by our friend; while the remaining blocks are variations of roimata patterns.

- Pūawaitanga o te Ringa - Fruits of our busy hands
- Co-ordinated by Ngā Puna Waihanga - Waitaha Tai Poutini
March 2001 - May 2002
- Acrylic, wood, kakaho, kiekie, pingao
8 Panels 450 x 850 mm
11 panels 550 x 850 mm

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