Mark Adams

A Survey
He Kohinga
Whakaahua

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ART GALLERY
TOI O TĀMAKI

Mark Adams

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He Kohinga Whakaahua

Sarah Farrar

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ngā whakaahua ātaahua e horahia ake nei
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ki ngā uri whakatupu katoa
o Aotearoa e.
Tēnei te mihi maioha ki a Mark Adams
te tohunga tango whakaahua,
e koro, tēnā rā koe,
tū mai rā i te taumata teitei
o tāu mahi huatau.

E whakaata mai ana i tēnei pukapuka me tēnei whakaaturanga ngā kaponga o ngā mahi a Mark Adams, i hua mai i te tūhono me te mātai i te rima ngahuru tau te roanga.

Ko tōna tīmatanga i te māhakitanga o tōna hapori kaiā i Te Waipounamu, me te aha e kitea ana te taura here i renarena i te roanga o ngā rautau e rua, i roto i ngā mahi a Adam. Ko ētehi taura piringa ka kumea anō e ia; ko ētehi atu ka tangatanga, ka makere atu rānei. He taura whenua, he taura tangata, he taura maumahara, he taura moehewa, he taura auaha, he taura wepu, he taura ki ngā whare whakaoho tūranga kōrero kura huna, he taura ki te iwi ātahu rangitahi, he taura ki ngā taonga pupuru kōrero, he aho ki te ihi, ki te wehi, ki te mana me te tapu o ngā takiwā hoki.

Ka pūrangiaho mai te whiriwhiringa o ngā taura here i te mātaitanga whānui nei, me tētehi pūrongo e pā ana ki te tukanga a Adam me tōna tōnuitanga hoki; he karu hōmiromiro ka tāmau atu ki te kai i tā te karu i mau ai, ko te hiringa i te mahara tērā. Ka waihape mai ko te mahi nui, ka tūtaki atu ki te kano tinihanga, parea atu ana ko whakaaro-iti me whakapaipai, nāwai rā ka hinga i ngā whakawai o ngā takiwā, o ngā taonga, o ngā hoa mahi, me te oho ake ki te tūturu o ia piki amokura, i tōna wā.

Ka puea mai i ngā mahi a Adam te manawaroa i te kaha o ngā here me te nui o te hari; ka huraina hoki ko tōna mataara ki te tiki, ki te ngaki — ki te whai tikanga.

He tangata whakaiti a Adam, he ngākau hūmārie ka tau noa, ka kuhu noa, ka mātai

noa atu rānei ki ngā hui tōrangapū nui, ki ngā hui ahurea, mai te ngoto o ngā mahi porotū me ngā tukitukinga i te tiriti, ki te hekenga o te toto, ki te mamae, ki te rerehua hoki o te mātai me te āta kapo i ngā āhuatanga o te tikanga tuku iho o te tatau o Hāmoa. Huhua noa atu ngā tatūnga o tēnei tikanga. He wāhi tapu ki te hunga rāwaho; heoi anō, i tēnei terenga motuhake i whai wāhi ki te rohe o Rotorua, ka whakapātaritari tonu atu ngā whakaaro o ngā kaitiaki o te taonga nei, o rāwaho mā hoki. He tangata e mōhio ana ki ngā wāhi o ngā whare i kawea a ia i roto, i muri rānei, kia pai ai tana kite; he tohu tēnei i te pīngore o ōna here ki ērā whānau, ki aua kaipupuru tonu.

Ko ngā hononga tuatahi i Rotorua i haumanungia e tōna toi me tāna āta whakapākehā ngā whare whakairo o te tohunga whakairo, o Tene Waiterec, i wawā i te rohe, i rara i te ao. Ka tuku tonu atu a Adam ki te tino tukanga e taumanu anō ai rātou ki te hau o te kāinga.

Ko te nuinga o āna mahi e whakaatu ana i tana hono ki ngā takiwā motuhake, ki ngā papawhenua tapu, ā, ka hīnātore, ka puta mai tētehi rongo mōrea i ngā mahara e pupurutia ana; ko ngā tauranga o Kuki, ko ngā wāhi matapaki me te whakatau i te Tiriti, me te haurongo hoki o *Whenua i Maharatia, Haehae ka Takata*.

I te roanga o te mātaitanga whānui, ka mōhiotia te wā; ka whakairia, ka rawekehia, ka whakapakokotoa, ka pakiwaituhitia, ka māwhiti a Adam i ngā whanaketanga, ā, ka tū, ka whakaāio anō ki te mea kua tohua kia tāmaua tōna mauri. Ku oti te wā, kua whakatōroangia te wā; kua ū te mauri ki taua wā tonu.

Ka tukutahi ki te kapo whakaahua i tōna horapa me tōna whānui, kātahi a Adam ka aro ki te moroiti, ki te maiangi me te pākiki; he mea iti, he taonga hoki kua kākahuria ki te tākai tawhito, ki te tākai pūranga, kua whakakāpatahia rānei. Ka tūhuratia e ia ngā rangahau whare pupuru whakaahua me te mahi tahi ki ngā kaimahi takatū me ngā pūkenga o ngā whare pupuru taonga hoki.

Nōna anō te haepapa ki te tākiri i te kahu o Wikitōria e mau ana e ia, mā roto i tana para i te ara o te whakahaumanu me te whakaputa anō i ngā karahuinga taonga tūtahanga, i te taha o tētehi ringatoi kahurangi Māori.

Tāria te wā, ka hau mai anō he kura hōu.

E ngā whakaahua ahurei e tū mai nei, whakatau mai rā . . .

I Te Kuirau, Aotearoa, i te marama o Whiringa-a-nuku 2024

Foreword

Gaze upon these works spread out for us,
treasured images to be enjoyed
by generations yet to come,
by future peoples of Aotearoa.
Congratulations to Mark Adams,
esteemed photographer,
fine image maker,
for reaching this majestic summit
in your creative work.

Over five decades of encounter and observation are presented in this book and exhibition, a survey of the work of Mark Adams.

From his beginnings in a stolid early settler background in Te Waipounamu South Island, Adams' work reflects a series of significant relationships that endure and flourish across two centuries. Some relationships he revisits; others fade away or pass. They are relationships with the landscape, with the people, with memories and passing fancies, with artmakers and activists, with repositories of arcane knowledge both living and static, with talismanic and transient beings, with objects that hold stories, with places of mana and power and magic.

This survey is a lucid account of those relationships, and a record of Adams' process and his productivity; of his gifted lens embracing and taking whatever is in focus, holding that moment of light and memory. Much of the work is done later, as he confronts the nature of artifice, dismisses the superficial and decorative, and risks immersing himself more deeply in the sometimes troubled complexities of the places, objects and people he works with, recognising the authenticity of their stories, in their time.

Adams' work reveals a sustained sense of connectivity and joy; it also reveals his consciousness of access, of privilege — of taking that necessary time.

As a self-deprecating and gentle fellow who seemed to fit in or fade into the background, Adams participated in or witnessed and

recorded a number of salient political and cultural events, from intense protest and street confrontation to the blood, pain and beauty of observing and recording traditional Samoan tatau. This occurred on more than one occasion. It is a privilege of access denied to most outsiders; even in the ironic series made in and around Rotorua, his images are a provocative mix of insider and outsider perspectives. An informed viewer knows that he was taken inside, or around the back, to get that particular view; again, this reflects the buoyancy of his relationships with those whānau or individuals.

The early Rotorua connections are revived by his skilled and sensitive renditions of the carved houses of tohunga whakairo Tene Waitere that are scattered around the region, and the world. Adams contributes to the process of their actual reclamation.

Much of his métier also offers a wider view in his engagement with specific localities and landscapes, enfolding within each image a residual sense, a glimmer, of the events that they hold; Cook's sites, the places of debate and decision for the Treaty, and the heartfelt *Land of Memories*.

Throughout the survey, there is an awareness of time; suspended, manipulated, frozen, reanimated, Adams moves between periods and pauses, meditating on the object marked, then seizing its essence. Time stops, stretches; that moment remains.

Concurrent with such sweeping and expansive image-making, Adams turns to the minute, delicate and curious; tiny objects, small taonga encased in vitrines, archival packaging, or in storage. He explores the challenge of photomuseology, working closely with curatorial and academic museum staff.

He takes responsibility for decolonising himself, demonstrated through an original process of reclaiming and repatriation with a celebrated Māori artist and jeweller, with whom he produced an utterly singular suite of works.

And there is more to come.

E ngā whakaahua ahurei e tū mai nei, whakatau mai ra . . .

Te Kuirau, Aotearoa, October 2024

Between there/then and here/now: The photography of Mark Adams

Sarah Farrar

We each have preferred maps, learned maps — what we believe our cultures, our nations, ourselves were and are. Our maps may be our neighbours' fictions; we read one another through what we believe, through the mirrors of who and what we are.
— *Albert Wendt, 1991*[1]

In December 2000, the photographer Mark Adams was in London, staying in the home of the Australian anthropologist Nicholas Thomas and his wife Annie Coombes while they were away travelling in the Pacific. Adams had a number of northern-hemisphere projects under way, including tracing and photographing artworks of the Pacific in various European museum collections and even — in the form of Samoan tatau — on the skin of some Europeans themselves.

He was also planning to take some photographs at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, south of London on the Thames. Greenwich is historically important as the point at which the prime meridian was fixed, the line of zero degrees to which all the other lines of longitude refer. It is the home of Greenwich Mean Time, the system of timekeeping adopted as a global point of reference based on the local mean time at the observatory.[2]

As Adams later wrote in his book with Thomas, *Photo-museology*: 'I started taking these photographs in the winter afternoon's declining light and finished in the dark. I had ordered a minicab from Stroud Green Road in Finsbury Park, having asked them to take me to Greenwich Park and wait for me for about four hours so I could take a series of photographs, and how much it would cost. A figure was agreed, the driver arrived, and we drove off and under the Thames via the Rotherhithe tunnel.'[3]

Adams explained to the driver that he was a New Zealand artist and was photographing the zero meridian. 'He said he was a writer from Ethiopia . . . I had read of war in Ethiopia — did he come to get away? Yes, he was a refugee, he said; he had lost friends and family in the fighting.' They stopped near the gate to Greenwich Park and Adams gave the driver a ticket to the nearby Maritime Museum: 'British imperial history while you wait.' Adams recalls being completely alone in the park 'apart from a couple walking a dog; they appear like ghosts in one of the images'.[4]

In *18.12.2000. 0 degrees. Greenwich Park. Greenwich. London. England. 360-degree panorama* — Adams' panoramic view of Greenwich — the Royal Observatory, Queen's House and the National Maritime Museum are located at either end of the 10 panels. The changing light over the length of the work reveals the counterclockwise movement of Adams' camera as the 360-degree view was taken. The result is an eerie and rather desolate scene, with meandering paths, distant grand buildings, skeletal trees and leaden winter skies. What did Greenwich represent to Adams? Why was a Pākehā artist from Aotearoa New Zealand drawn to photograph this particular site?

In examining the visual evidence his panorama offers, we might ask if the work reflects Adams' own 'dead reckoning', to use the old sailors' term for calculating one's position and distance travelled. Is Greenwich perhaps a point of departure

Above: Mark Adams, *18.12.2000. 0 degrees. Greenwich Park. Greenwich. London. England. 360-degree panorama.*

— the place from which Adams' work sets out and around which it orients itself? Conceptually, it could be considered the artist's own 'zero degrees'.

I, too, have stood in the northern hemisphere, considered *here* and *there*, *now* and *then*, and tried to find my bearings. In my case, I was with art historian Jonathan Mane-Wheoki (Ngāpuhi, Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kurī) at the Dutch Nationaal Archief in the Hague, looking at Isaac Gilseman's 1642 illustrations of New Zealand. I was seeing with the reframed view I'd gained as a Pākehā art history student at university years earlier while taking Mane-Wheoki's 'Worlds of Art' paper, which introduced global art history from a distinctly local New Zealand perspective.

Gilseman's sketches of the coast, bays and hills of 'Nieuw Zeeland' included the first known European depictions of Māori people. As I viewed the drawings in that archive in the Netherlands, and especially when I contrasted them with the enormous, panoramic Dutch landscapes in a nearby museum, I felt my distance from Aotearoa acutely. Almost two decades later, working on this book and exhibition, Mark Adams' photographs kept bringing me back to that conjuncture, that moment of confrontation between who I was and where I was in the world, and how I came to be there.

* * *

At the time Adams made his Greenwich panorama, he and Nicholas Thomas had been engaged in a five-year project to document sites visited by British explorer James Cook during his three voyages. When Cook embarked on his first 'south sea' voyage from Plymouth in 1768, his instructions from the British Admiralty were to accurately record the 1769 transit of Venus from Tahiti, information which would assist scientific calculations about the scale of the solar system. Using the transit to help measure the distance between the Earth and the Sun would help solve the so-called 'longitudinal problem', which prevented ships' navigators from precisely locating themselves according to latitudinal and longitudinal lines. If longitude and a true meridian were established, then sailors could chart their voyages with greater confidence and accuracy — something Polynesian navigators were already doing using star charts. Helped in part by Cook's measurements, international agreement on the location of the prime meridian at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich was reached in 1884.

In addition to the role longitudinal calculations played in navigation, the measurements made on Cook's first voyage also helped make timekeeping more precise. Standardised timekeeping, based on Greenwich Mean Time, was adopted in Great Britain in the 1840s as a consequence of the industrial revolution, urbanisation and the development of the railway networks. These standards went on to become part of the expansion of empire, as 'railway time'

was introduced in other European countries and their colonies. In other parts of the world, time was, and continues to be, calculated differently, often according to a lunar rather than a solar cycle, such as the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar, in Aotearoa.

The second, initially secret, instruction Cook received in 1768 was to search for the great southern continent that was believed to exist. Some southern lands did, of course, exist — in the form of the island continent of Australia, which Europeans knew then as Nieuw Holland, various islands of Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, the archipelago of Aotearoa, and the later discovered Antarctica. But just as European navigators knew nothing of the genius of star charts, so they also did not know that the land that came to be called Australia had been occupied by people for many thousands of years (since time immemorial, as many First Nations peoples conceptualise it) or that Aotearoa was home to many different iwi with established papa kāinga, ancestral settlement areas.

While Cook and others managed to debunk the myth of the existence of a single great southern land and advance Western scientific understanding about navigation, their travels also had a cataclysmic and irreversible impact on the people and places they encountered. The ensuing repercussions have been rethought and unpacked by the Indigenous and European peoples affected, including artists and historians such as Mark Adams and Nicholas Thomas, ever since.

Adams and Thomas's project to explore sites visited by Cook had begun in 1993, when they first met in Auckland. By this stage, Mark Adams had been photographing sites of cross-cultural conjuncture in Aotearoa for almost 20 years and Nicholas Thomas had published several books examining the complex dynamics of the arriving colonists and Indigenous cultures of the Pacific.[5] They decided to visit Tamatea Dusky Sound in Fiordland and Tōtaranui Queen Charlotte Sound in Marlborough in search of material traces of Cook's visits. The photographs taken on the first trips, in 1995, marked the beginning of an enduring collaboration between them that continues to the present day.

As part of the project, which came to be known as *Cook's Sites*,[6] they travelled both together and separately to places visited by Cook in the wider Pacific, including Point Venus in Matavai Bay, Tahiti; Botany Bay in Australia; and Kealakekua Bay in Hawai'i. After Thomas was appointed to academic positions in London and Cambridge, their research extended its scope to the United Kingdom and across Europe, where it included visits to museum displays relating to Cook's voyages and the dispersed collection of objects acquired by him and his crew.

Rather than seeking to memorialise Cook's journeys and so-called 'discoveries', Adams and Thomas sought to 'come to grips with the ways in which Cook's intrusions . . .

Below: William Hodges (1744–1797), *A View in Dusky Bay, New Zealand*, after 1773, oil on panel, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1961.

inaugurated a colonial history' in the Pacific region.[7] 'If nearly all social relationships entail both reciprocity of some sort and asymmetry or exploitation,' Thomas wrote in 1999, drawing on American literary theorist Mary Louise Pratt's theory of 'contact zones', 'this double-sidedness is surely magnified in cross-cultural relations.'[8]

* * *

The works of the artists on board Cook's ships — William Hodges, in particular — have had a profound impact on Mark Adams' image-making.[9] On his return to London after serving as the official artist on Cook's second voyage to the Pacific, from 1772 to 1775, Hodges created many further paintings based on the drawings, oils and watercolours he had made on the *Resolution*.

Shortly after embarking on the *Cook's Sites* project, Adams decided to make responses to key Hodges paintings which he considered represented the beginning of the Pākehā strand of art history and 'the arrival of European vision into this archipelago'.[10] Hodges was 'the first professional European artist making images here', Adams says.[11]

The first Hodges painting Adams considered was *A View in Dusky Bay, New Zealand*, a tondo, or circular painting, which depicts a Kāti Māmoe man on Mamaku, or 'Indian Island' as Cook named it. Naturalist George Forster recorded the Europeans' encounter with this man, to whom Cook called, offering gifts of handkerchiefs and paper. Initially the man was fearful, but

Above: Mark Adams, *02.08.1998 to 10.08.1998. 360-degree panorama. After William Hodges'* A View in Dusky Bay, *1773. Mamaku Indian Island. Tamatea Dusky Sound. Te Waipounamu South Island.*

after he came closer, Cook 'took hold of his hand, and embraced him, touching the man's nose with his own which is their mode of salutation. His apprehension was dissipated by this, and he called to the two women, who came and joined him, while several of us landed to keep the captain company. A short conversation ensued, of which little was understood on both sides.'[12]

A View in Dusky Bay became the point of departure for Mark Adams' first panorama work. The photograph reinterprets the viewpoint in Hodges' painting, which Adams believes to have been based on a scene Hodges viewed from a telescope while being rowed ashore. 'The painting is like a photograph with a long lens,' he says.[13] Both the painting and the panoramic photograph are held by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, and when they are placed together the juxtaposition is one of the most striking of any pairing in the gallery's collection.[14]

Over a period of 20 years, Adams made four trips to Tamatea Dusky Sound, locating and photographing the sites visited by Cook and Hodges between 26 March and 11 May 1773. He attempted the panorama three times; during a fortnight spent camping on Mamaku the images were taken over a period of several days using a nineteenth-century 8 × 10-inch plate camera with modern lens and film. 'It was snowing to sea level and raining more often than not,' Adams recalls, noting that the weather in Tamatea 'is part of the subject'.[15] Others of his photographs (see pages 226–27 and 316–17) take this even further, their atmospheric weather conditions strongly evoking the Romantic tradition of 'the sublime', which in addition to informing Hodges' paintings, was also a feature of nineteenth-century painting and photography in New Zealand, as seen in the multitude of views of Rahotu Mitre Peak in Piopiotahi Milford Sound.[16]

Unlike his antecedents, however, Adams has positioned himself on the same rock on which the Māori figure in Hodges' painting is thought to have stood, creating an eight-part 360-degree photographic panorama that shows instead what the figure on the shoreline in Hodges' painting would have seen. It is, in effect, Adams' way of pointing the camera back at Cook and his crew on the *Resolution*.[17] 'Pākehā,' Adams says, are often 'invisible to themselves. This causes lots of problems. In order to see Pākehā I'm looking at Māori or at Polynesia or Oceania, in order to see us.'[18]

* * *

At this point in tracing Mark Adams' conceptual zero degrees, we should address his biography. In answering 'No hea ia?' or 'Where is he from?', we will come closer to understanding 'Ko wai ia?' — 'Who is he?'[19]

Mark Bentley Adams was born in Christchurch in 1949, the son of Linnea Adams (née Blandford; 1925–2003) and John Adams (1925–1998). His parents met during the Second World War, when they worked together as clerks at Sargood, Son & Ewen Ltd, an import and warehousing

Left: Mrs Blandford (née Whitfield) of Wheatsheaf Inn, Corbridge on Tyne, England. Studio photograph taken in Newcastle on Tyne, 1880s. As a young art student in the 1960s Mark Adams rephotographed this portrait from a family album using the school's 4 × 5-inch Linhof camera. This was his first large-format photograph.

Right: Berry & Co., *Henry James Pope*, c. 1910. MS-Papers-1064-01, Coughlan Family Papers, Alexander Turnbull Library.

company. Linnea's father disapproved of John, whom he initially viewed as 'a warehouseman with no prospects'.[20]

Adams' mother's side of the family came from England via the West Indies, a family history intrinsically enmeshed in what historian Tony Ballantyne has described as the 'webs of empire'.[21] Adams' maternal grandfather, Wiltshire Stokely Blandford (1887–1968), was a first-generation New Zealander. His parents had emigrated to Australia, then New Zealand, in the 1880s, after marrying in Yorkshire. In 1898, when Wiltshire was eleven, his father, George Blandford, died in a fire at Wellington's Royal Oak Hotel.[22] This was particularly hard on Wiltshire's mother, Annie Blandford (née Doorly; 1857–1952), who had been widowed before when her first husband died mere months after their wedding.

Annie was a talented pianist who had studied at the Royal College of Music in London and given concerts in Sydney; by 1900 she was reported as being an acclaimed music teacher in Dunedin.[23] One of 13 children, she had been born in Jamaica where her father, Major Martin Doorly, who was himself born in Barbados, was stationed. Mark Adams recalls looking with curiosity at family photograph albums that showed relatives at home in Jamaica, and while he was at art school he rephotographed a portrait of his elderly great-great-grandmother, Annie's mother-in-law.

Through his grandmother, Norah Blandford (née Pope; 1900–1992), Adams is related to James Henry Pope (1837–1913), a British teacher who emigrated to Dunedin via the Victorian goldfields in 1864 and took a job at the High School of Otago (later Otago Boys' High School). Pope would become a prominent New Zealand educationalist; in the 1880s he was appointed as the inspector of native schools. He became a fluent te reo speaker and worked closely with Māori communities across the country, earning the name Te Popi. A *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography Ngā Tāngata Taumata Rau* entry states that he was 'one of the best-informed Pākehā of his time on Māori lore and traditions'.[24] Adams became aware of this great-great-grandfather from early adulthood, and was fascinated by his engagement with Māori.

Adams' father's side of the family was also from England. Luke Adams (1838–1918) emigrated to Christchurch in 1873 with his second wife, Mary Annie Stow (1845–1936), and their children. A potter, he set up the Christchurch ceramics company Luke Adams Pottery Ltd with his three eldest sons. It operated until 1965, making it the longest-running pottery company in New Zealand.[25] Luke Adams won awards for his work at the 1880–81 Melbourne International Exhibition and the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London in 1886.

Adams' direct family, however, did not work in the family business. Instead, his grandfather, Walter 'Pa' Adams (1890–1976), who had fought in Flanders during the First World War, was a caretaker of a sawmill in Mananui, south of Hokitika. Both Adams' grandfather and father were keen photographers, and examples of their work are in Adams' personal collection. Among Pa Adams' photographs is a view of Rapanui Shag Rock, between Christchurch and Sumner, which Adams photographed in partial close-up in 1988.

After an early period when his family lived with his maternal grandparents in nearby Cashmere, Adams grew up in North New Brighton with his younger sister, Gail Temple Adams. It was a 'very quiet' beachside suburb, a mixture of beachside holiday cottages owned by middle-class people from town and small

Left: Walter Adams, *Shag Rock, Christchurch*, silver bromide photograph c. 1924–25.

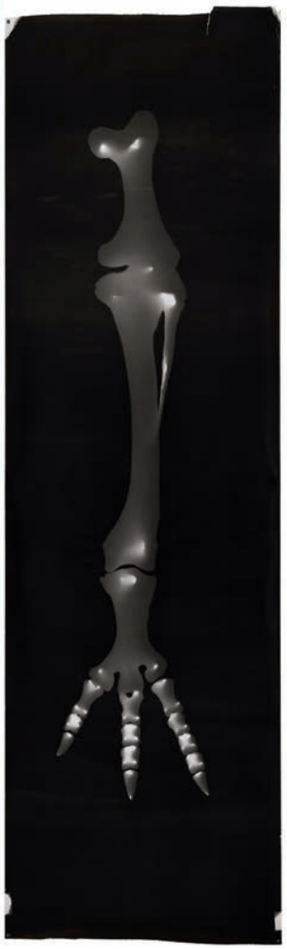
Right: Mark Adams, *25.05.1988. Rapanui. Shag Rock. Ōpāwaho-Ōtākaro hapua. Heathcote-Avon Rivers mouth. Ōtautahi Christchurch. Te Waipounamu South Island.*

homes that working-class families, such as Adams' own, lived in all year round. It was, the photographer says, 'an idyllic childhood', full of books, music and outdoor adventures: 'there was lots of kind of semi-wilderness areas like plantations, swamps and estuaries of the two rivers, the Avon and the Heathcote. We used to go fishing and boating on the river.'[26]

Mark and Gail attended the local North New Brighton Primary School. Among Adams' classmates was Diane Hulme, the younger sister of celebrated writer Keri Hulme (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe; 1947–2021), who lived down the road. Books were always among his birthday presents — Adams recalls one illustrated by Russell Clark about the sacking of Kaiapoi Pā, north of Christchurch, by the Ngāti Toa leader Te Rauparaha, told from a child's perspective.[27] It struck a chord: whenever they were passing through the area, his grandfather Wiltshire Blandford would point out Kaiapoi Pā as an important site for local Māori. There were copies of William Williams' Māori dictionary at home and Adams remembers his grandfather taking him in 1960 to the central Christchurch suburb of St Albans to see the newly opened Te Whatu Manawa Māoritanga o Rehua, the first whare whakairo to have been erected in Te Waipounamu for more than 100 years. 'I can remember walking up the drive past some guys outside the hostel next to the whare and Poppa asking if it was okay to go and see Rehua, which we did,' he says.[28]

Adams, otherwise, had little contact with or exposure to Māori history and culture in his childhood apart from an annual school visit to the Canterbury Museum. On one visit his class was given a talk by the archaeologist Jim Eyles (1926–2004), whose discovery of an intact moa egg at Wairau Bar as a 13-year-old had prompted the unearthing of what is now believed to be the earliest Māori settlement site in Aotearoa. On another visit to see the museum's Wairau Bar display upstairs, Adams recalls his class glimpsing an Īnia Te Wīata (Ngāti Raukawa) carving. These childhood experiences stayed with him.

At Shirley Boys' High School, Adams had the good fortune to encounter the passionate



Above: Daniel Louis Mundy, Canterbury Museum founding director Julius von Haast with moa skeletons at the museum, 1867. 589-76, Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland City Libraries Tāmaki Pātaka Kōrero.

Right: Areta Wilkinson and Mark Adams, *16.08.2016. Moa leg. Von Haast. Ōtautahi Christchurch. Collection of Museum of Zoology. University of Cambridge, England*, silver bromide photogram, 1815 × 590 × 60 mm, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2018.

and talented art teacher Digby K. F. Graham, who exposed his students to recent developments in international modern art such as abstract expressionism and pop art, and who encouraged Adams to apply for a fine arts degree at the University of Canterbury. Under Graham's tutelage and through exposure to international art magazines, Adams shifted from making technically accomplished figurative paintings of ships to abstract paintings and sculptures.

From 1967 to 1970 Adams studied for the three-year Diploma of Fine Arts course at Canterbury, where he was taught by Tom Taylor, Don Peebles, Eileen Mayo and Doris Lusk. Strong traces of Lusk's paintings of the 1950s, such as *Akaroa Harbour*, 1949, are present in Adams' photographs, especially of South Island locations such as of Ōnawe Pā in Akaroa, which he photographed in 1979.

In his second year of art school, Adams has said, he 'woke up one morning and had to choose between painting and sculpture or something else. I decided I wanted to do photography. I had no idea why . . . I just did.'[29] Ilam did not have a photography lecturer at the time, but fellow student Tom Palaskas taught Adams how to develop film and print. 'I taught myself how to use cameras. Then I discovered the art school's 4 × 5-inch Linhof plate camera and taught myself how to use that. That changed everything. That was the future. Large-format photography. Analogue.'[30]

Describing the attraction of this camera and method, Adams states, 'When you use a big camera and . . . sheet film, you actually don't take very many photographs. You edit everything in your head as you go.'[31] He explains, 'I loved the way it slowed you down and made you consider, very carefully, the sort of photographs you were taking and their formal qualities.'[32] Rather than seeking to capture 'the decisive moment' in the tradition of Henri Cartier-Bresson, this was a slow and considered process that was well suited to Adams' temperament, which, he says, 'isn't to fire away at things or pull things out of the general flow of life'.[33]

Adams' contemporaries at Ilam included Jim Barr, Graham Bennett, Chris Booth, Philip Clairmont, Neil Dawson, Bret de Thier, Allie Eagle, Ken and David Griffiths, Murray

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1.
Mark Adams, quoted in ‘Photographing Tatau and the Politics of Friendship: Peter Brunt Interviews Mark Adams’, in *Tatau*, eds Sean Mallon and Roger Blackley (Wellington: Adam Art Gallery, 2003), 9.

2.
Peter Brunt, ‘The Portrait, the Pe‘a and the Room’, in *Tatau: Samoan Tattoo, New Zealand Art, Global Culture*, by Sean Mallon, Peter Brunt and Nicholas Thomas, photographs by Mark Adams (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2010), 37. Emphasis in original.

01 Portraits of artists 1971–1978

In 1971 Mark Adams photographed the painter Tony Fomison for *Canta*, the University of Canterbury's student magazine. It was the first of many portraits he made of Fomison until his death in 1990; they are now among Adams' best-known works. Adams once described the images as 'an extended portrait'.[1] Returning to a particular subject again and again, and often many years later, is a feature of his practice.

The subjects of his early large-format portraits were often fellow artists, photographed in their own homes or surrounded by their work. Adams made a portrait of Samoan tufuga tatatau Su'a Sulu'ape Paulo II, his wife, Epifania, and their young son, Va'a, at home in Māngere in 1978. He went on to photograph Sulu'ape Paulo at work for the next 20 years.

Also in 1978, Adams photographed schoolteacher and carver Ihaka Paraone, also known as George Ihaka Brown, at his rural home in Clevedon, south of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. These photographs represent the beginning of Adams' sustained documentation of Māori art and its contexts.

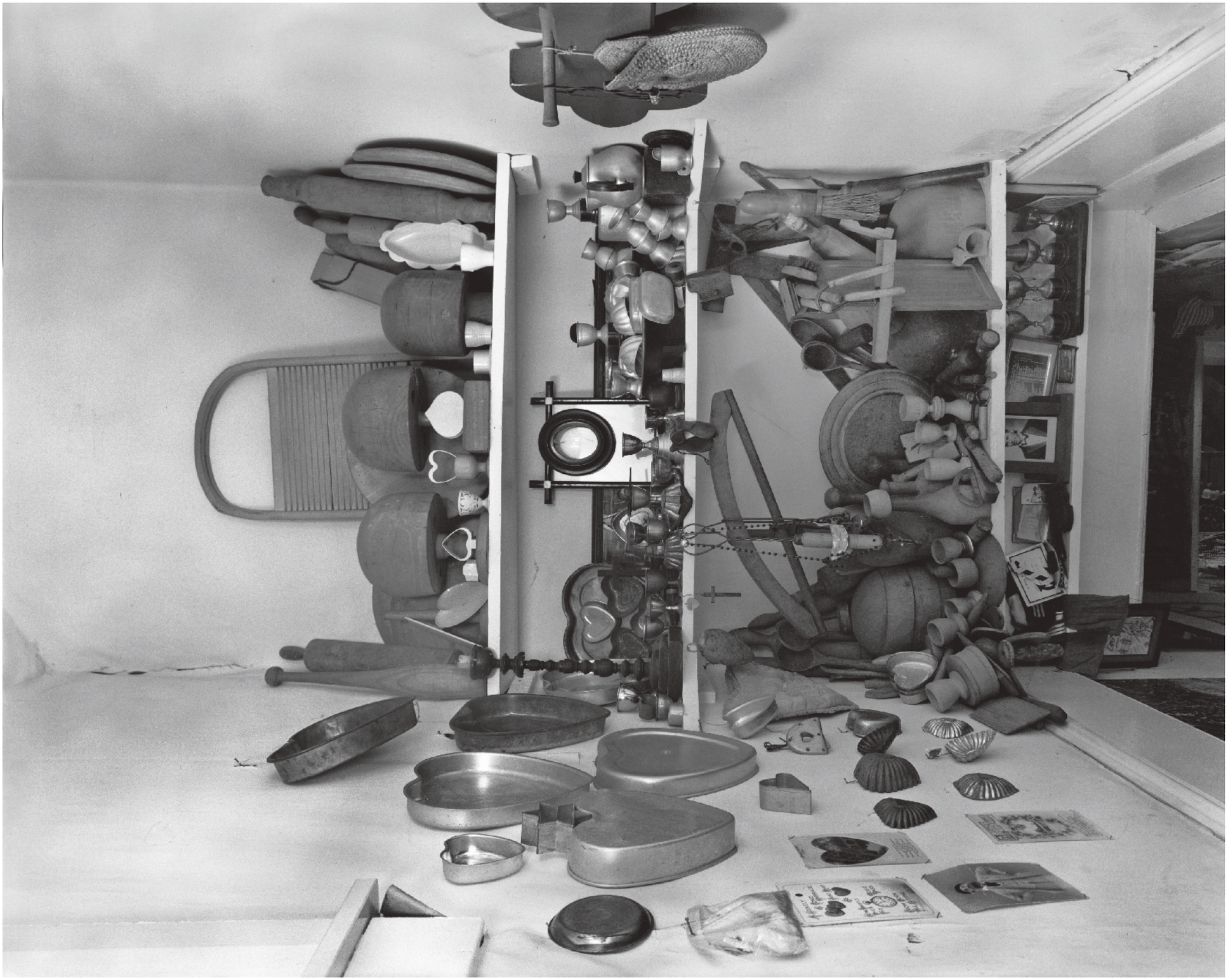
The artist portraits are not only photographs of people. The rooms, objects and environments that surround them are just as important. As art historian Peter Brunt observes: 'While remaining a *portrait*, these studies drop the usual conventions of depicting face and body and focus on the *things* the subject has gathered around himself in the spaces where he lives.' The photographs of Fomison, for example, convey him 'as someone who is dispersed in the things he has acquired, inherited, bought, selected and brought back to construct his personal dwelling place'.[2] For Adams, this is essential context rather than background detail.

1971. Beveridge Street. Ōtautahi Christchurch.
First portrait of Tony Fomison

1972. At Tai Tapu. Horomaka Banks Peninsula.
Portrait of the painter Tony Fomison

1974. The parlour. Gunson Street. Freemans Bay. Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Tony Fomison

1979. The stairwell. Gunson Street. Freemans Bay. Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Tony Fomison



1.
Mark Adams, interviewed by Hanna Scott, 2007, as part of the Studio La Gonda: A Large Format Legacy oral history project, 2007-08 OH-1397-003, Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections. Author's transcription.

2.
Ibid.

3.
Peter Brunt, 'The Portrait, the Pe'a and the Room', in *Tatau: Samoan Tattoo, New Zealand Art, Global Culture*, by Mark Adams, Sean Mallon, Peter Brunt and Nicholas Thomas (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2010), 42.

4.
Mark Adams, interviewed by Hanna Scott, 2007.

From late 1974 to 1982, Mark Adams lived in and around Whangārei with his first wife, Carol Foster, and their daughter, Anastasia. 'That was the period when everything started to gel,' he said in 2007.[1]

During this time, he explored the motu from Te Hāpua in the Far North to Rakiura Stewart Island in the south. He was also reading widely about New Zealand and Pacific art and history. 'I started photographing pa sites, churches or anything that was kind of obviously visibly cross-cultural,' he has explained. 'I was photographing contexts I could see, places like Ruapekapeka, middens . . . sites in context like a farm hillside with kumara lines, a roadside with a big midden spilling out of it.'[2] Adams was drawn to places where Pākehā settlement could be seen to have encroached on whenua Māori — sites 'riven by divided memories'.[3]

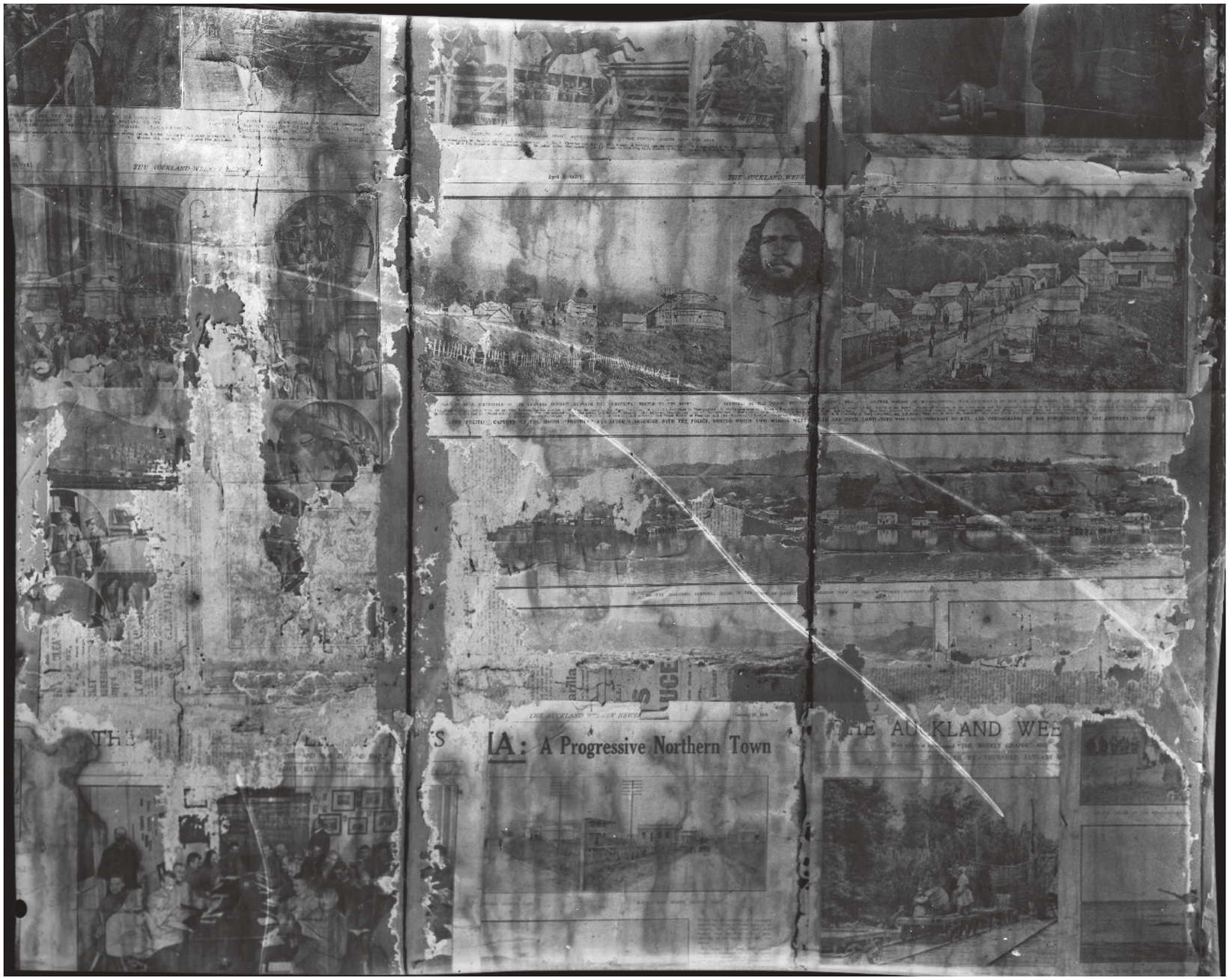
Adams knew several Māori activists in Northland, and began attending the annual protests at Waitangi alongside the Waitangi Action Committee and participating in land marches. He took black and white photographs documenting these events. One image, featuring the activists Titewhai Harawira, Donna Awatere and others, accompanied the first of Awatere's game-changing 1982 *Broadsheet* articles on Māori sovereignty.

'I was doing that on the one hand,' Adams has recalled, 'and then on the other I was doing this large-format stuff, which was looking at the bigger cross-cultural history in much more oblique sorts of ways.'[4]

15.01.1970. Princes Street. Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Spiro Agnew visit. Anti-Vietnam War protest

1988. Hori Korei. George Grey monument. Albert Park. Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

1977. Church of St John the Baptist. Te Waimate Mission.
Te Tai Tokerau Northland



18.02.1978. Rua Kēnana. Tangihua Road.
Te Tai Tokerau Northland