

TIRI: TE ARAROA — HE ARA KI TE REO

Words, stories and pathways into the world of Woman Far Walking

He kupu whakataki | An invitation

You do not need to understand every word of *Tiri: Te Araroa Woman Far Walking* to enter her world.

Throughout the play, te reo Māori sits alongside English through everyday speech, whakataukī, haka, waiata, karakia, whakapapa and place names. Sometimes the meaning is explained. Sometimes context carries it. Sometimes a word or phrase is allowed simply to remain itself.

This resource does not translate *Tiri* line by line. Instead, it offers somewhere to go when a kupu, waiata, image, person or place sparks your curiosity, and you would like to draw a little closer.

HE KUPU | WORDS TO BRING YOU CLOSER

Ahikā

The keeping alive of connection to land through continued presence and responsibility. The image comes from fires being kept burning. In *Tiri*, the fire begins as something she literally tends as a child and becomes a larger symbol of continuity and belonging.

Ahikāroa

The long-burning fire; enduring connection and responsibility to whenua across generations. When *Tiri* returns to the valley, she ultimately becomes its ahikāroa.

Aroha

Love, affection, compassion and deep regard.

Haka

A Māori form of embodied expression combining language, voice, rhythm and movement. In *Tiri*, haka carries teaching, sexuality, identity, resistance and political expression.

Harakeke

New Zealand flax. Harakeke is important materially through weaving, but also metaphorically as an image of whānau and generations.

Kākarepō

Rendered in the play as “goblin.” Tiri uses the word repeatedly for the strange Pākehā newcomers encountered by her ancestors and later for colonial intruders more broadly.

Karakia

Prayer, invocation or ritual recitation.

Kaumātua

An elder or older person who may carry experience, knowledge, standing and responsibility within their people.

Kūpapa

Within the historical context of the play, Māori who fought alongside Crown or government forces.

Mana

Authority, standing, influence and potency. Its meaning is broader than any single English equivalent.

Mana Motuhake

Independent authority, autonomy and self-determination.

Matakite

A seer or visionary. Tiri seeks a matakite to understand why she continues to live while everyone around her dies.

Mate

Death, the dead, or to die, depending on context. Throughout the play it sits in tension with ora — life.

Mauri

Life force, vitality or essential living essence. As a child, Tiri is told to become the keeper of te mauri o te ahi — the mauri of the fire.

Moko kauae

Moko worn upon the chin by Māori women. Tiri later marks Te Tiriti and its history upon her own face.

Mokopuna

Grandchild or descendant. Mokopuna are central to Tiri as carriers of whakapapa into future generations.

Mōteatea

Traditional Māori sung or chanted poetry. Tiri opens the play by greeting another dawn through mōteatea.

Morehu

Those who remain; survivors.

Pā harakeke

The flax bush as an image of whānau and generations. Tiri describes herself as the strong kōrari still standing while so many around her have gone.

Pākehā

A Māori term commonly used for New Zealanders of European descent. Within Tiri's narration it also becomes shorthand for the colonial power she has spent much of her life resisting.

Pepehā

A way of locating identity through whakapapa, people and place.

Pōhiri

A greeting, invitation or call of welcome.

Rangatahi

Young people or the younger generation.

Raupatu

Conquest, taking or confiscation of land.

Ringatū

The Māori faith associated with Te Kooti. Ringatū faith and devotional language are woven through Tiri's experiences of war, resistance and survival.

Tapu

Sacred, restricted or set apart.

Tikanga

Customs, values and culturally grounded ways of acting appropriately within relationships and circumstances.

Uri

Descendant or offspring.

Utu

Reciprocity, recompense, consequence or the restoration of balance. Its meaning is much broader than the English idea of "revenge".

Waiata tangi

A song of lament or mourning.

Wairua

Spirit, spiritual essence or the spiritual dimension of existence.

Whakapapa

Genealogy and lines of descent, but also the relationships connecting people with ancestors, whānau, whenua and succeeding generations.

Whanaunga

Relative or kin.

Whānau

Family and extended family.

Whenua

Land or territory. Within Tiri, whenua sits at the centre of identity, conflict, belonging and continuity.

NGĀ KĪANGA | WORDS THAT CARRY MORE THAN ONE STORY

He rā e tō, he rā e ara mai anō

A sun sets; another rises again.

The phrase returns throughout Tiri. Another sunrise can represent renewal and survival, but for a woman who has watched generations die, another dawn can also mean the burden of still being here.

Ko au te kōrari pakari o te pā harakeke

Tiri describes herself as the **strong kōrari within the flax bush**.

The image speaks both to strength and isolation: she remains standing while so many of the people who once surrounded her are gone.

Te mauri o te ahi → Ahikā → Ahikāroa

The fire that must not go out.

As a child, Tiri is entrusted with keeping a literal fire alive for the weavers.

Later she asks:

Ko wai e tahutahu ana i te ahikā?

Who is keeping the fire?

By the time she returns to the valley, the fire has become an image of responsibility, people, place and continuity.

Tiri begins as the child who tends the fire. Eventually, she becomes the one responsible for keeping it burning.

Kia hiwa rā

Be alert. Be watchful. Take heed.

A recurring warning and call to attention throughout the play.

Ko te tangata he toa. Ko te wahine he toa.

The man is a warrior. So too is the woman a warrior.

Later, when Tiri tells Tilly she fought “like a man”, Tilly answers that she fought **like a woman, a wife and a mother.**

Female strength in *Tiri* does not need to become male to be powerful.

He nui ngā mata o te taiaha

The taiaha has many faces, sides or aspects.

Tilly explains:

“There’s the public story and then there’s the personal story.”

The phrase offers a way of reading the entire play. History has public accounts, but it is also lived through memory, whakapapa, grief and personal experience.

Me mate ururoa, kei mate wheke

Broadly: **Die like the shark, not like the octopus.**

An expression of tenacity and determination: resist rather than surrender easily.

Whakamanahia Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Honour and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Across Tiri's lifetime, Te Tiriti moves from the name given to her by her father to an enduring demand carried through succeeding generations.

Ka Mate / Ka Ora

Death / Life.

The familiar opposition within *Ka Mate* echoes one of the central tensions of the play: death and survival, loss and continuation.

At the end of *Tiri*, that question moves toward the generations who come next.

NGĀ WAIATA, HAKA ME NGĀ KARAKIA | VOICES CARRIED THROUGH TIRI

Opening mōteatea — “Kāore te pō nei mōrikarika noa...”

Tiri greets another dawn through lament. It immediately establishes both her extraordinary longevity and her weariness with continuing to live.

Taku pōhiri e rere atu rā

Tiri sends her greeting outward across the landscapes of Aotearoa. Her story is located through whenua and whakapapa before it is located through history.

Turuki, Turuki / Paneke, Paneke

A recurring rallying refrain associated with movement, collective action and confrontation.

Rimurimu, teretere

A recurring waiata tangi carrying Tiri's grief. Its imagery contrasts a world that appears calm outside with the storm being carried within.

E ako au ki te haka

The haka through which Tiri's mother teaches her movement, voice and embodied knowledge. It is a scene of intergenerational transmission: mother to daughter, through watching, repetition and the body.

Kīkiki kākaka

An explicitly erotic haka appearing as Tiri remembers youthful desire and

her first relationship. It reminds us that the elderly woman before us has also been a girl, lover, sexual woman, wife and mother.

Kororia ki tō Ingoa Tapu — Āmine

A Ringatū devotional expression recurring through Tiri's relationship with Te Kooti. It places faith within the war narrative rather than outside it.

Whakamoemititia Ihowa / Waiata a Rāwiri rāua ko Horomona

Devotional material appearing after the horror of Ngātapa. Its language moves through praise, parents, children and teaching — returning the story toward what one generation gives another to carry.

Hoki wairua mai rā

A lament and call toward the dead during the influenza sequence. Māori lament overlaps with Tiri's own raw questions about why those she loves continually leave her behind.

E te Hokowhitu-a-Tū

Waiata accompanying the Māori Battalion and Second World War material, carrying ideas of strength, unity and collective responsibility.

Ka Mate

Appears across different periods of Tiri's life and political struggle. The haka remains recognisable while its context continues to change, making it a living carrier of cultural and political memory.

Kapanapana — “Ēi, ka panapana...”

The final haka/waiata of the play, carrying collective energy, pain, resistance and Tiri's pōhiri outward.

NGĀ TĀNGATA, NGĀ WĀHI ME NGĀ KŌRERO | PEOPLE, PLACES AND HISTORIES

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Tiri is named for Te Tiriti.

Across the play it becomes her name, her father's hope, a source of political struggle, something inscribed upon her face through moko, and finally a responsibility carried into the future.

Te Tiriti is not simply background to Tiri's story. It is one of the threads holding her entire life together.

Arikirangi Te Tūruki Te Kooti

A prophet and leader whom Tiri follows after his return from imprisonment on the Chatham Islands.

Within the play, Te Kooti brings together faith, resistance and warfare. He establishes Ringatū and gives Tiri the role **Te Ringa Kirikawa o Te Atua — the left hand of God.**

Matawhero

The play deliberately presents competing accounts of the violence at Matawhero.

Tilly describes a massacre. Tiri insists:

“He riri tauā. It was a military attack.”

The disagreement itself is important. It reminds us again that **he nui ngā mata o te taiaha** — one history can have many faces.

Ngātapa

A clifftop fortress where Tiri’s identities as warrior, mother, believer and survivor collide.

Tiri remains with the weak and wounded while others escape. She survives devastating violence surrounded by the bodies of the dead, including her own children.

Kahukura

Tiri’s valley.

It is where she serves the sacred weavers, keeps the fire, leaves, remembers and eventually returns.

Kahukura becomes the place through which her childhood responsibility for the fire grows into **ahikāroa — enduring responsibility across generations.**

Hikurangi

One of the mountains named in Tiri’s pepehā. She also associates Hikurangi with the sacred waka Nukutaimemeha and the rising of the sun.

Uawa

Part of Tiri's geographical identity and the place where she recalls her grandmother witnessing the arrival of Cook.

Uawa therefore connects whakapapa, place and colonial encounter.

Hine-nui-te-pō

Within *Tiri*, Hine-nui-te-pō becomes a way of personifying death.

Tiri waits for death, challenges it and becomes angry when it repeatedly takes those she loves instead of her.

Eva Rickard and the Māori protest movement

As Tiri moves into the twentieth century, Mere pulls her into Māori land protest and political activism. The struggles of Tiri's youth have changed form, but they have not disappeared.

The Springbok Tour

The play places Māori protest alongside opposition to apartheid, combining *Ka Mate / Ka Ora* with the call "**Amandla Soweto!**"

Hana-Rawhiti

Near the end of the play, contemporary protest is brought into *Ka Mate* through actions referencing the tearing of the Treaty Principles Bill.

The moment sits beside Tiri's insistence that there is little point asking about the future if rangatahi are not at the table.

The future belongs to them.

THREE THREADS TO LISTEN FOR

The Fire

Mauri → Ahikā → Ahikāroa

Who keeps the fire alive?

What begins as a childhood task becomes a question of who carries a people, a place and a whakapapa forward.

The Sun

He rā e tō, he rā e ara mai anō

The sun keeps rising.

For Tiri, another sunrise can mean both renewal and the burden of surviving everyone she loves.

The Mokopuna

Whakapapa → Morehu → Uri → Mokopuna

People die. People scatter. The valley empties.

But descendants continue.

Tiri gradually shifts survival away from the idea of one body refusing to die toward what continues through other people.

ME WHAI ATU KI HEA? | WHERE CAN I GO NEXT?

Something in Tiri sparked your curiosity? Follow it.

This resource is a beginning rather than an endpoint.

You might continue exploring **te reo Māori**, **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**, the **New Zealand Wars**, **Te Kooti and Ringatū**, **Te Tairāwhiti** histories, **waiata** and **mōteatea**, **haka**, or **whakapapa**.

Tiri does not ask you to understand everything before you enter. It simply gives you somewhere to begin.