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To cite this article: Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll (2019): Museopiracy, Third Text, DOI: [10.1080/09528822.2019.1652424](https://doi.org/10.1080/09528822.2019.1652424)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09528822.2019.1652424>



Published online: 10 Sep 2019.



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Museopiracy

Redressing the Commemoration of the *Endeavour's* Voyage to the Pacific in *Processions for Tupaia*

Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll

Gustave Dore, *New Zealander sketching the ruins of London*, (detail), 1872

1 On Cook in Australia, see Maria Nugent, *Captain Cook Was Here*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2009. The perennial celebration of the moment Cook first landed in 'Botany Bay' (now Sydney), Australia Day, the national holiday and celebration of the foundation of the settler nation state, has in the recent past become known as 'Invasion Day', and then 'Survival Day'. Moving beyond guilt in the discourse of invasion and survival may reflect the ways in which, I will argue in a forthcoming book, we have all never been pre-modern. I have written elsewhere about mobilising shame through embarrassing facts presented, for example, on the Immigration Detention Archive project, published as Mary Bosworth, Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, Christoph Balzar, *Bordered Lives*, Sternberg, Berlin, 2019. About the problem of artists as *deux ex machina* in the museum decolonisation process, see Khadija von

Introduction

A commemoration of colonial history – that doggedly traditionalist format, which for now persists anachronistically into the twenty-first century – should counter the reified authenticity that is sought from pre-contact, pre-modern British imperial subjects.¹ When staged in the centre of empire, commemoration of whiteness can decolonise the perpetrator in a process of humbling, thereby contributing to healing the colonial wound. What has not been discussed in the scholarship and commemorative practice of James Cook's first expedition to the Pacific is the expanse of relationships, which are here explored as the phenomenological and political redress of Tupaia and Joseph Banks.² Tupaia was a Ra'iatean priest who boarded the *Endeavour* in Tahiti, providing essential translation, diplomacy and cartography during the voyage.³ Tupaia's drawings, alongside Banks's diaries, reveal a tapestry of diplomacy and cross-cultural participation that can shift our understanding of colonial relationships away from the idea of static domination into which colonial relationships have tended to ossify.⁴ Centring on ceremonial acts and the little researched role of Tupaia,⁵ the *Cook's New Clothes* project, a collaboration between scholars, tailors and Maori artists, sought to reassert the significance of fabric, both to the first encounter, and of their making today.

In three parts, this article focuses on the historical context, the theorisation of a method of 'museopiracy', and an artwork in which a film of the processional performances resulting from the project steers the narrative about a counter-monumental act. This was based on research towards restitution, strategies for exhibiting empire, and infrastructural activism. These research goals question the idea of the grand British Empire that is still so central to historical institutions, which remain structurally

- Zinnenburg Carroll, 'Object to Project: Artist's Interventions in Museums', in Christopher Marshall, ed., *Sculpture in the Museum*, Ashgate Press, Farnham, 2012, pp 216–239.
- 2 This research stems from piratologist Simon Layton's reading of Banks's journals as part of the Sackler-Caird Fellowship we shared at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London, 2017–2019.
- 3 My research on Tupaia began in the Maori community in Gisborne, Aotearoa, with Jody Toroa and Steve Gibbs, who introduced me to Tupaia from their oral histories of the encounter of their Maori ancestors with Cook when he first landed at three different points along that coast of the North Island (now 'poverty bay').
- 4 The reporting in the Australian daily newspapers such as *The Age* and *The Australian* over the past years provides countless examples of uncritical celebration of the founding father of Australia. The cottage in which James Cook was born was even transported to Melbourne and installed as 'the oldest building' in the country. Recent conspicuous state spending on Cook commemoration includes the rebuilding of the *Endeavour* for a circumnavigation of Australia in 2020. See also Alison Liz Larkin, 'Stitches in Time: Recreating Captain Cook's Waistcoat', public lecture, Society of Antiquaries, 10 March 2015. On the art history of material from Cook's voyage, see Bernard Smith, *Art as Information: Reflections on the Art from Captain Cook's Voyages*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, for the Australian Academy of the Humanities, 1979.
- 5 Lars Eckstein and Anja Schwarz, 'The Making of Tupaia's Map: A Story of the Extent and Mastery of Polynesian Navigation, Competing Systems of

racist and resistant towards change and contemporary life. Engaged in decolonising the museum, museopiracy signals a turn to transparency, movement, performance and experimentation, historical redressing, mourning, healing laughter, and embarrassment about empire. Simon Schaffer and Richard Drayton have interrogated the static and conservative temporalities and monumentalities of the histories of science and colonialism in ways that are useful for defining a strategy for exhibiting empire.

Mobilising 'healing laughter', Drayton writes about my work, is necessary for exhibiting empire, for it is a gloomy existence if the dark, ironic, emotional modalities cannot be harnessed to further effect.⁶ One comic irony in relation to the case study presented here is that only a few months after we produced the artwork, the *gilet jaunes* protests began to use the very same fluorescent vests. These protests, about various causes of the working class globally, quickly became associated with the symbolic bright yellow vest. In turn, the artwork we made in London just a short time earlier is now visually associated with those highly politicised and publicised protest movements. This reception history is beyond our control as authors, and it is amusing to reflect on the incendiary nature of the museum's health and safety requirement, which, had the event happened only six months later, would have seemed much more politicised than the dogskins that caused such a furore with our piece at the time of its production. Beyond the passionate, the tragic and the comic, what is at stake politically in the project, and is outlined here, is a change in history writing, and in the institutions that are the keepers of master narratives. It is into those spaces and stories that the figure of the undead ghost of Tupaia intervenes.

Commemoration

'The Native' is a diehard alterity. As much as I erased it from press releases about *Cook's New Clothes*, it always crept back in to give emphasis, in the BBC voice, to the other, those 'with accents from New Zealand and Australia'.⁷ The figure of the fictional native was captured by Gustave Doré, a French artist of the nineteenth century, in his engraving *New Zealander Sketching the Ruins of London*. Dressed for his grand tour to the past empire of England, this figure sits on ruins in Greenwich, sketching the skyline of London, where St Paul's Cathedral has caved in to time's inevitable power of change. Just as British proto-tourists sketched the ruins of ancient Rome in Doré's vision, in the reverse of empire, it is the figure from the New World of *Aotearoa* (New Zealand) that has come to study the specimens of past glory. There is a romantic melancholy in this image, which has, ironically, contemporary resonance for some British viewers who today still yearn for the power of empire. *New Zealander Sketching the Ruins of London* embodies a speculative fabulation of how to both celebrate and mourn the end of empire (in the same way that *Cook's New Clothes* reimagined the figure of the contemplative Maori artist at the very same spot on the Thames, actively subverting the *Endeavour* voyage legacy).⁸



Tupaia, *Chief Mourner's Costume*, drawing on paper, 1769, British Library

Wayfinding on James Cook's *Endeavour*, and the Invention of an Ingenious Cartographic System', *The Journal of Pacific History*, 2019 (forthcoming). There is not a large bibliography of secondary literature on Tupaia. See Eckstein, op cit; Anne di Piazza and Erik Pearthree, 'A New Reading of Tuapai's Chart', *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol 116, no 3, 2007, pp 321–340. Harriet Parsons, *Collaborative Drawing on Captain Cook's Endeavour Voyage, 1768–1771: An Intellectual History of Artistic Practice*, doctoral thesis, University of Melbourne, 2019.

6 See Richard Drayton on *Botanical Drift: Protagonists of the Invasive Herbarium*, Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, ed, Sternberg Press, Berlin, 2017 (back cover)

Tupaia produced drawings that Banks collected, and among them is the 'chief mourner's costume', a cloak made of tapa and capped with a *parae* (headdress) of shimmering feathers and mother-of-pearl, the 'cosmological function' of which was 'to dazzle, bewilder, [and] overwhelm' all those who crossed paths with its wearer.⁹ A priest and expert in rituals, Tupaia closely observed and even painted the mother-of-pearl disks, using watercolour to capture the light and detail of the oyster, turtle and coconut shells. To dazzle, bewilder and overwhelm was also the desired effect of the fluorescent vests that we carried as processional banners.

After joining the *Endeavour* as it left Tahiti and the Society Islands, Tupaia began to mediate the protocols of Cook's encounters, advising him and his men on how to dress when meeting the chiefs and elders with whom they came into contact. Meanwhile, Banks wrote at length about their fashions, dress and dances, with a phenomenological appreciation of the interplay between fabrics, sounds and gestures. Banks's journal constitutes a lens through which to view the Pacific as a site of continual dressing – in which fabrics were woven in ways that literally bound cultures together, forming the basis for interaction and exchange. Banks can be seen to be interested in negotiating the delicacy of cross-cultural situations. His phenomenology is not just in the register of appreciation, nor is it illuminated by hybridity and transculturation debates.



Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Cook's New Clothes: Second Procession for Tupaia*, 2018

7 Tim Manns's programme on BBC Radio Devon (a Saturday morning show on religion and ethics around the world, live interview with the author, 30 September 2018) insisted on referring to 'the natives', and in the Plymouth audience one participant made a comment on our exotic accents.

8 I am grateful to Simon Schaffer for bringing this engraving to my attention.

9 Parsons, *Collaborative Drawing on Captain Cook's Endeavour Voyage, 1768–1771*, op cit; Nicholas Thomas, *Artefacts of Encounter: Cook's Voyages, Colonial Collecting and Museum Histories*, Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2016, p 215

10 There is a vast literature on cloth in anthropology. See Annette B Weiner and Jane Schneider, eds, *Cloth and Human Experience*,

The situation of Banks and Tupaia on board the *Endeavour* between Tahiti and Batavia is also different to C A Bayly's interest in the alleged increase in uniformity. In Banks's attempt to know what to give away and what to wear to appropriately dress the self, there seems a serious attempt to understand ceremony and to learn from Tupaia.

Maori oral history maintains that when Tupaia, Banks, Cook and the rest of the *Endeavour* crew arrived in 'Poverty Bay', the Maori asked them for tapa cloth.¹⁰ In the *Procession for Tupaia*, tapa cloth from Tahiti was therefore included among the gifts. The technique of making tapa was ritualised in ways that recounted particular genealogies and kinship groups, designed literally to weave ancestors to the living. The *aho*, or wefts of thread that passed across the warp fibres, evoked one's ancestral lineage, moving up along the cloth in overlapping folds, which were often made to cascade in a representation of time.

Banks was struck by how tapa cloth could be 'put on in a thousand different ways', and his report had none of the Victorian prudishness and moralism about the primitivity, also associated with dressing in animal skins. He returned repeatedly to dogskin, as 'the great pride of their dress', fringing as it did the cloaks worn only by chiefs and holy men.

It seems plausible that the one that Banks himself famously wore in the portrait by Benjamin West was neither given to him nor purchased but had most likely been presented to Tupaia, in recognition of his *mana* and spiritual authority. Since Tupaia had in turn not been given a uniform on

Smithsonian Series in
Ethnographic Inquiry,
Washington, DC, 1991.



Emma Waltraud Howes in Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Botanical Drift*, 2013

board *Endeavour*, the idea emerged of making a naval uniform out of dog furs like the valuable cloaks.

In the Maritime Museum's collection the cloak that was closest in cut to Tupaia's cloak was a raincoat made to go over naval uniforms,¹¹ creating the silhouette associated with images of shrouded figures, on board vessels seaward bound from the Thames to the heart of darkness, or indeed on funerary vessels. Cloaks are an ancient and transnational form. The word 'cloak' comes from the medieval Latin *clocca*, and from

11 Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions 1748–1857*, National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London, 2007, p 175

Klocke, the German word for ‘clock’; being the shape of a bell, a pre-digital clock, the cloak is the embodied timekeeper. (The human body turned to bell, ringing in time, was an association I used in an earlier cloak choreography in Kew Gardens, where I commissioned a cloak costume from Kimberit, which was then worn in a performance by the dancer Emma Howes, improvising movement with wind, plants and atmosphere.)

Cook’s New Clothes engaged with upcycling and infrastructural activism. The various health and safety regulations, including the enforcement of fluorescent safety vests for the National Maritime Museum in London, became the basis for a set of processional fibre sculptures carried in the performance. The processional mass of fluorescent vests, emulating Pacific styles with materials woven into their mesh, resembled hybrid sea creatures, billowing in the waters and winds. The National Maritime Museum’s moratorium on the parading of fur, which stemmed partially from a concern for the ethics of London dog lovers, but mainly from a general turn in public opinion against the use of fur in clothing, led me to commission two Indigenous Australian scholars – environmental historian and human geographer Tamara Murdoch, and art historian Jessyca Hutchens – to research the histories of the dingo, which they presented as a performance lecture before the procession.¹²

The idea of redressing Cook’s highly politicised legacy in the Pacific, which is indexical of colonialism, also redresses the lack of a cloak in Cook’s collection, given that a cloak would have been the most respectable gift made to him in the Pacific.¹³ Our belated manufacture of a new cloak for Cook is made instead of recycled plastics, taken from the ubiquitously patterned ‘refugee bag’, a kind of plastic tartan which has littered the shores of the Pacific since the beginning of the refugee crisis. To proclaim that Cook is naked is to open up the opportunity to redress his figure, and those with him on the *Endeavour* voyage. The shadow of Cook on the voyage is Tupaia, an Indigenous islander chronicled by Banks as being particularly elegantly dressed, the two of them donning their best outfits as they walked through Batavia (now Jakarta, Indonesia) together. Tupaia had replaced the voyage artist, translator and navigator, and his passing suddenly in Batavia on the return voyage is the basis for the commemorative procession that is also part of *Cook’s New Clothes*.

The central object in *Cook’s New Clothes* is a uniform for Tupaia, sewn by a tailor in Australia based on patterns that British naval lieutenants wore at the time, but replacing the wool with the dingo fur that Pacific peoples most prized.¹⁴ These cross-dressings that cross materials and techniques also redress cross-cultural moments in history. Cross-dressing subverts not only gender roles, but the fixity of cultural designs on ‘authentic’ and ‘traditional’ textile production, in favour of the more playful contemporary textile practices by which islanders and colonial centres exchanged cloaks and uniforms. It thereby disrupts a hermetic and unitary identity, to acknowledge that both wearers are imbricated one over the other, and can be sutured together in ways that produce new designs. Rather than recapitulating existing animosities, these new designs inscribe the asymmetrical power relations established during colonialism. Joseph Banks, the voyage botanist and bon vivant, dressed up in the other’s symbolic regalia. Having left Plymouth with an array of courtly costumes, he was well prepared to meet the

12 Tamara Murdock, and Jessyca Hutchens, ‘Stubbs’s Dingo’, *Cook’s New Clothes*, Bloomsbury Press, London, 2020 (forthcoming)

13 ‘Secret Voyage: Lieutenant Cook awaits fair winds. Search for unknown continent south of the equator’, *London Gazette*, 19 August 1768, <http://www.oocities.org/thetropics/7557/gazette.html>, accessed 17 March 2019

14 The choice of tailor came from research into Australian convict tailoring and the positive reception of it even in the highest echelons of London’s Savile Row. See Keith Levitt, cited in Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, Simon Layton and Hana Qugana, eds, *Cook’s New Clothes*, Bloomsbury Press, London, 2020 (forthcoming).

priest and nobleman Tupaia, and to share and exchange clothing, as they moved through the city of Batavia.¹⁵

Museopiracy

Pirates study treasure, develop strategies for looting, and are therefore well suited to working with museums.¹⁶ Piracy is always defined as materially and not politically motivated. It is focused on a space that the state does not control (the high seas, radio waves, and also, I will argue, the art space). Taking control over the space of the imperial museum, in which we have no governance input, we pirated the material and intellectual property therein. Seen as a storehouse of treasures by many whose wealth was depleted by colonialism, the museum as institutional vessel represents a stranded colossus full of stolen treasures. A maritime museum is thus even more a vessel for voyages, wealth and the representation of maritime mastery. Museopiracy, then, is what I see formulated by our group of pirates in the National Maritime Museum, London. Officially, we are an artistic research project run by a group of artists collaborating in the Royal Museums Greenwich, yet within that my focus is on the impact of pirates, as the embodiment of disobedience, on state treasure chests. Rather than focusing on particular objects in the collections, a method of pirating (otherwise called our historical research) underlies this reflection on the effects of the museum on foreign and disobedient communities, or what I am here calling museopirates.

Museopiracy has its roots in a movement of interventionist practices applied in ethnographic collections since the 1990s. As articulated by Fred Wilson, Julie Gough and other artists, these involve using institutional critique to highlight the inherent racism in the state museum. The movement has typically focused on object-oriented research in museums: Wilson on the artefacts of the slave trade in the United States, Gough on Tasmanian Aboriginal collections and so forth.¹⁷ By contrast, museopirates seek to take the vessel itself, not just the artefact.

Creating a lived relation with the museum and its collection, museopiracy is a process of therapeutic pirating that gives more than it takes – that inserts rather than extracts.

Museopiracy critically reappropriates parallel strategies such as biopiracy, from which pharmaceutical companies profit. It posits that the piracy from which the museum profited is turned around through institutional disobedience. Piracy emerges from what Paul Goodwin has described as a necessary disobedience.¹⁸ ‘To England will I steal, and there I’ll steal’: Goodwin’s curatorial practice turns the Shakespearean phrase into ‘to the university will I steal, and there I’ll steal’ by playing with arts funding schemes in Britain, in order to redirect resources away from ostensibly neoliberal interests in capital accumulation by universities and museums, and benefit artists and cultural workers struggling under the current funding structure.

The marriage of playful fabulation with serious historical revisionism in *Cook’s New Clothes* is evocative of the kind of ‘museum detox’ that Goodwin asserts is necessary for the institution. Even so, using the artists’ subversive potential to lighten the burden of museum guilt

15 Part of the research for the soundtrack of *Cook’s New Clothes* concerned what Batavia would have sounded like at this time and what music might have been played at a funeral for Tupaia. The composition is one that I commissioned from Mo’ong Santoso Pribadi, an Indonesian musician, for Tupaia’s dirge.

16 On the redress of looting most recently, see Sarr, Felwine and Benedicte Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage: Toward a New Relational Ethics*, Drew S Burk, trans, French government report, available at https://www.about-africa.de/images/sonstiges/2018/sarr_savoy_en.pdf, accessed 30 December 2018. See also Colin Renfrew, *Loot, Legitimacy and Ownership: The Ethical Crisis in Archaeology*, Bloomsbury, London, 2000. On piracy see Simon Layton, *Piratical States: British Imperialism in the Indian Ocean World*, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.

17 On Wilson and interventions, see Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, ‘Object to Project: Artist’s Interventions in Museums’, in Christopher Marshall, ed, *Sculpture in the Museum*, op cit, pp 216–239. For Gough, see Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *The Importance of Being Anachronistic: Contemporary Aboriginal Art and Museum Reparations*, a collaboration between the journal *Discipline* and Third Text Publications, 2016.

18 Paul Goodwin, ‘Exhibiting Empire’ conference, British Museum, 2018

movements of the cloaked. In the process it felt as though historical relations were transported and washed, moved from land to sea. The significance of the cloak rests in the absence of one in Cook's own collections of gifts received, and speculation over the cloak given by Maori to Tupaia, then appropriated by Banks when Tupaia passed away in Batavia, eventually finding its way to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.

In the film of the *First Procession for Tupaia*, a shorter version of this text is used as a voiceover in parts, in order to give it direction.²² In that procession, the coat for Tupaia is ferried like a felled beast on a stake between two carriers, shrink-wrapped in plastic. Why, if it is so valuable, does the dogskin coat come in a vacuum-sealed container, sealed off from contact with the museum? It is transported without touching any surfaces, but carried nevertheless to the boats to be present as a central object in the procession.

The most contentious part of *Cook's New Clothes* was the use of fur culled in Australia from wild dogs known as dingos. Dingos in Aboriginal and Maori cultures are highly sacred. The basis of 'Mozzie' artist Keren Ruki's work for years, their coats are sourced from a trapper who catches dingos as part of an environmental programme to protect other animals. The prospect of parading dingo fur in Greenwich, however, made the National Maritime Museum anxious. Situated in a London borough where dogs more aptly belong to the sacred domestic sphere of the bourgeois home, the museum feared it would cause public outrage, expressed through right wing main stream media such as the *Daily Mail*. Despite being halfway through the project, in which the dingo cloak was already playing a critical part, the museum explicitly banned dingo fur from its property.

In response, I took the prohibitions, rules and emails I received from the museum as instructions for the performance, and as ethnographic data to be archived and turned into a repertoire of acts of institutional disobedience (leading on from ethnographic conceptualism as a form of institutional critique).²³ This is much more easily said than done; the process of decolonisation is thwarted at every step. On another occasion (in July 2018), the Maritime Museum advised that we would 'need to wear safety vests during [the] performance... to cross the road', to which the *Cook's New Clothes* collaborative responded: we take this prescribed and ugly fluorescent vest that signifies the official security, the workforce in Europe (as well as the labouring Indigenous body building infrastructure in the Pacific, and more recently the labour rights of protestors in France), and weave it into a Pacific-style cloak. The aesthetics of health and safety culture in Britain has taken the life that dwells in accident and risk, and turned it into administrative labour to be outsourced. The vests became the materially abject refuse of the cloaks, for which fluorescent standard-bearing mounts were made, to hold the processional banners.

'We are treated like feral animals,' says one of the filmmakers I invited into the museum to do camerawork on the project. A structure so imperial it needs the insertion of feral artists to affirm the pristine edifice as a separate order. Disobedience is produced by staunch resistance by the museopirates counter to the assertion of the supremacy of 'the artefact', of the Queen's House within the museum by the governance structure of the museum. Although artistic voices had been invited to be heard, within

22 The first of a series of short experimental films that make up a multi-channel video installation premiered at *The Atlantic Project* (September to October 2018) curated by Tom Trevor. See Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Cook's New Clothes: First Procession for Tupaia*, 12.04 minutes, HD video. <https://vimeo.com/298609717>, accessed 1 December 2018. *The Second Procession for Tupaia* premiered at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (ICA) cinema in the *Frames of Representation* festival, 20 April 2019.

23 Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, 'Fight the Dragon Long, the Dragon You Become: Performing Viewers in the Graffiti Monument', *Laboratorium*, vol 2, 2013, pp 101–127

24 Steve Gibbs, 'Assimilation as a Colonial Construct', text shared with the author in an email on 24 November 2018, in full as follows: 'This highlights the challenges and consideration that indigenous people face when venturing into museums of the coloniser. Ihu ki te Moana: Assimilation as a colonial construct. The irony of Ihu ki te Moana where we created work that represented our ancestral past. Into the structures of a wooden 18th century bookshelf. Restrictive rules of engagement. The bookshelf became the metaphor of constraint. We accepted to place our work (1000 years of traversing the South Pacific and settlement in the last place on the planet) within the confines of a bookcase. It was always going to be a challenge that we were happy to meet. After all it was an opportunity to represent ourselves as the living descendants of those people who encountered Tupaia and Cook in 1769, in a historical place as well as create work that has relevance to today. The works were a mix of contemporary mediums that included laser-cut acrylic, natural fibres, semi-precious metals, glass bell specimen jars, nails, tapa cloth, glass beads, acrylic paint. Translating traditional Iwi histories and ideas into a coherent relevant visual presentation using our own Iwi tribal visual language that was spread across eight connected compartments that make up a bookcase. We were part of a bigger installation in a space dedicated to the Pacific called the Pacific Gallery. As expected it was a document to the voyages of the British, in colonising the south Pacific. The main focus was on captain James Cook and his voyages. His death and a range of tribal items that he collected on

the imperial envelope of the museum it was also often made clear that the valuable artefact was the architecture. As a result, the artists were repeatedly halted in their process and reminded that the historical artefact must never be compromised and that everything is subordinate to it.²⁴ This produces a devaluation of the living and of contemporary art, something that the project directly addressed by foregrounding precisely these, 'turning' (in the words of Julia Binter) 'the way history is narrated in the museum upside down'.²⁵

The law of respecting museum prohibitions becomes part of the choreography. Just as the king was naked and no one was allowed to say so, the Cook commemoration lays bare legacies of colonialism centred on this colonial hero. The limitations set by the institution amass in the gaps between the silo departments of education, art and research. Each department's programme runs separate workshops and activities with the same Pacific community simultaneously. The burden of representation on this community is high, but the responsibility for delivery in the museum is distributed. This leads to convenient lapses in responsibility from its different departments when requests for visa letters, filming permissions, oversight of research in museum collections, and support with event planning are onerous. Press and marketing departments also play conspicuously powerful roles in attempting to sell us our own images, and in hiring out museum spaces to corporate events at the same times that they have promised them to us. To minimise the exposure of our procession for Tupaia, they omit it from the museum's website and list of events. When the *Guardian* reporter Jack Latimore tweeted about it supportively as a protest of the Cook commemoration in London, I swiftly received an email from the museum with a long policy attached that effectively prohibits me from speaking to the press and mentioning the museum's name. It hopes thereby to avoid all reviews, traumatised by critics' successful takedown some years ago of its exhibition on the Atlantic slave trade, which was amplified by media coverage.

From this perspective, *Cook's New Clothes* reads like a reparatory measure, the criticality of which was treated with suspicion by the institution that had itself chosen to do the work of compensation. The lack of Pacific community voices in the Pacific Gallery needed to be redressed. Yet in contrast to the monumental representation of imperial wealth – the very form that *Cook's New Clothes* sought to question for the Cook commemoration – the museum struggled to see any value in those voices, and in our outputs. The museum's agents subjected the formats of performance art, socially engaged practices, and relational aesthetics, including workshops, discussion forums, mobile and ephemeral contemporary art practices, to constant reporting and managerial interference in the budget. Being unable to afford to do things that the institution did not deem valuable provided another way to shut down certain activities, by, for example, neglecting to budget for catering at meetings with Indigenous people, let alone invite them to the prestigious private viewing of the gallery to which they had contributed. Instead, the latter event was catered in an ornate 'nature' theme in order to compliment the 'traditional' Pacific dances performed by barely clad women, all of which stood in stark contrast to donors in suits. Former curator at Blacktown Arts Center in Sydney, Paschal Berry, recently commented on how this arts institution had to completely rethink its catering to accommodate communities of

his three voyages of discovery. This type of exhibition is the first of its kind in any museum in Great Britain.

The key aspect to our installation was making sure we were able to have adequate lighting for our installation. The concept was to create a sense of water – the ocean and our strong connections to it. He Mana Moana. Thus the liquid blue.

However, the illumination became an issue as the volume of lighting we required to adequately light up our bookshelf spaces exceeded what was allowed. We had 170, the allowed light was 75.

The issue was the perceived damage from light on the surfaces of the artworks.

This was discussed and as the works were ours we were happy for the light to be at the higher level. But the last say was not the impact of light on the artworks, but the impact on the wooden bookcase itself. The bookcase was the Artifact. Our works were always secondary to the space we were working within. We were assimilated into that space. Our visual voice was muted. Oh what fools we are ...'

- 25 Julia Binter, *Cook's New Clothes* participant comment. See also Julia, Binter, 'Beyond Exhibiting the Experience of Empire? Competing Chronotopes in the Museum', in this issue

- 26 Sophie Ruigrok, 'The Atlantic Project: Excavating Plymouth's Failed Utopias', *Frieze*, 9 October 2018, <https://frieze.com/article/atlantic-project-excavating-plymouths-failed-utopias>, accessed 8 February 2019. See also <https://www.theatlantic.org/khadija-von-zinnenburg-carroll-and-keren-ruki>, accessed 8 February 2019

colour. This was accomplished, in the first instance, by allowing for more diverse sources of food to enter the museum. But in Greenwich, a contract with the British catering company Benugo precluded Indigenous people from bringing offerings of fruit and flowers to Tupaia as they wished. Not only did the museum construe the dingo skins as a health risk, but just before the gallery opening and procession, the conservation department required us to freeze everything we ordered or brought from Australia, even the wool – a policy it did not extend to the woollen pullovers worn by British visitors to the Pacific gallery. Only after gaining permission to freeze our objects in their entirety, were we allowed to proceed.

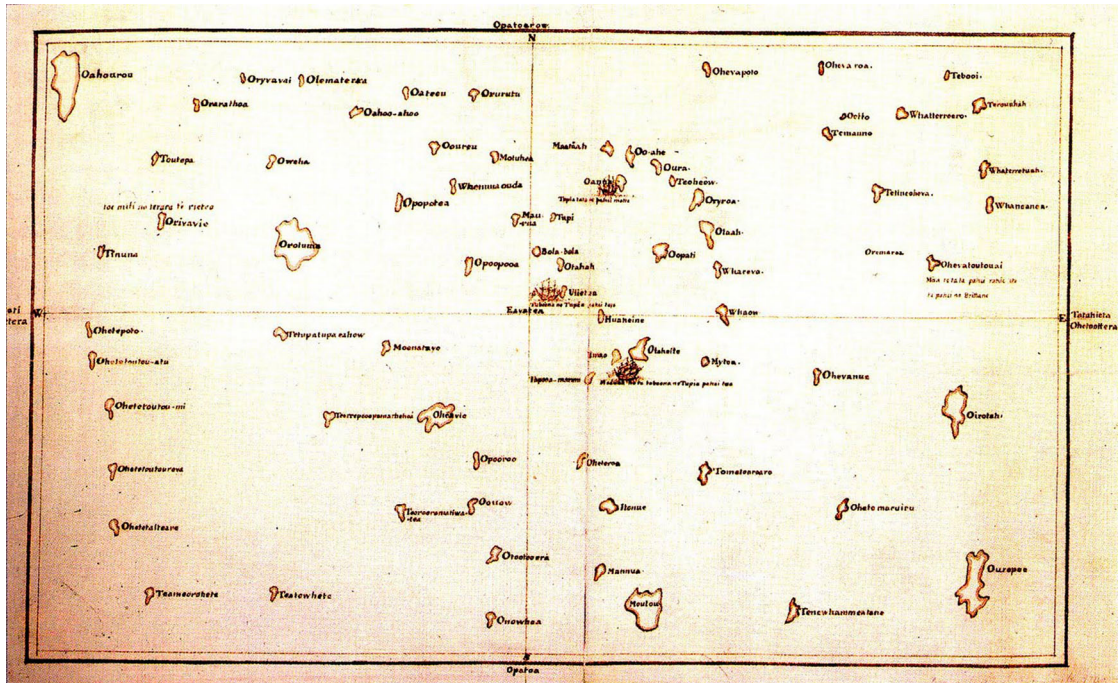
The dreaded excuse of having to conform to the demands of 'health and safety' protocols is always a way to say 'no no no, NO'. The amount of control over museum grounds extended to neighbouring real estate. We had initially conceived (and diligently planned for) the processional performance to take place on an axis in line with the museum's view to the water, but the grounds management refused to open the necessary gates for it to do so. Despite overcompensating with twenty fluoro vests, hoisted high and acting as a traffic stop, crossing the road again served as an excuse. The only moment in which the artwork we spent two years making, and much longer preparing, received any praise and acknowledgement was when we successfully stopped the traffic with the high-vis fluoro vests on standards. The museum outreach officer was evidently impressed and pleased and said 'brilliant' at our enactment of health and safety.

This account is a condensation of a stack of 410 emails between the museum and myself. While engaging in this administrative parley, I began to reflect on infrastructural activism. I decided on a method that makes limitations productive, and that, rather than accepting the ban on materials as a halting of the project, instead to make it central to thinking about how the repressive forces of an institution work in a dispersing the lack of responsibility and interest throughout its structures. The institution protects itself by the indirect and impersonal method of ignoring the requests of those who want to engage in decolonising the museum.

Procession

Standing on Devil's Point in Plymouth, with a group of people, moved, as we look out to sea. We gathered a week later on September 30th, 2018, in the place from where the *Endeavour* left, and there is a sense of departure to a history in need of healing. This performing and witnessing together on site, on the very spot – with all its attendant senses of origin, colonial power and pain – makes it moving. It is not an experience of viewing a representation, as the curator Tom Trevor says, but is the process of enacting decolonisation. This article traces this process of coming full circle, via the museum to the failure of utopias sought, which was the larger framing context of The Atlantic Project in Plymouth.²⁶

Two hundred and fifty years on from the 'First Voyage' of James Cook to the Pacific, *Cook's New Clothes: Processions for Tupaia* marked the occasion in September 1768 when botanist Joseph Banks and artist Solander boarded Cook's ship, the *Endeavour*, in Plymouth, through a two-part procession on the banks of the rivers Thames and



Tupaia, *Map of the Pacific*, drawing on paper, 1770, British Library

27 Tupaia's cartographic and navigational prowess have been the subject of recent scholarship by Lars Eckstein and Anja Schwarz, op cit. Tupaia's map is the one drawing that has a significant bibliography of secondary literature, including Gordon L Lewthwaite, 'Tupaia's Map: The Horizons of a Polynesian Geographers', *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, vol 28, 1966, pp 42-53; and Nicholas Thomas, 'Introduction: Tupaia's Map', *In Oceania: Visions, Artefacts, Histories*, pp 1-20. Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina and London, 1997.

Tamar. A film and the collateral of these events were then installed in the vast bowels of the Melville Building in the port of Plymouth from which Cook departed England for the Pacific. The halls of this naval store, from which the supplies that stocked the *Endeavour* have long since been removed, are now saturated in the unwholesome smell of a toxic maritime storehouse. In the installation, we amplified the raw emptiness of the first two rooms with a sound installation, composed by Jessyca Hutchens, of howling dingos. In the third room, a captain's coat made of dingo fur hung from a gallows four metres high. In the fourth and final main hall, a black box cinema played the film of the Thames segment of the procession along with the objects carried in the processions.

During the procession, a spectral body appears by the water, is cloaked and leads the crowd that has assembled. With offerings for Tupaia, they are led on board the *waka* (canoes) skippered by three crews of Pacific rowers, with whom the ghost travels. In homage to Tupaia's aptitude for map-making and navigational prowess,²⁷ each site the expedition visits is carefully chosen, and the ground prepared with drawings by artist Nikolaus Gansterer, mapping the journey on which the ghost takes them. Almost everyone is playing an instrument made from recycled plastics. Salvador Brown sings mourning songs in Maori. All is washed by the constant rain. There is catharsis at the end of these stations of the procession at which actions are performed by Kirill Burlov, Ruby Hoette, Gansterer, Mo'ong, Ruki, myself, and others. Fellow travellers walk between us, drawn by the music and the ghost of Tupaia.



Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll with Keren Ruki and Ruby Hoette, *Dingoskin Naval Uniform for Tupaia*, Installation view in *The Atlantic*, Plymouth 2018, curated by Tom Trevor, photograph by Dom Moore

The actual maritime people involved were utterly non-neurotic and focused on the task of navigating their twelve-man canoes along the Thames to moor in Greenwich and join the procession. Their precise calculation of times and weather accommodated even the stormy conditions that we faced in the first procession. Despite the exertion and complexity, and the lack of budget or help from the museum for arranging the mooring, there was a completely inspired and motivated collaboration with these rowers. They built a platform between their boats on which we could lay the cloak, carry the ghost, make drawings, make offerings, prepare speeches, and film with the sway of waves and wind. The storm that hit the first procession in London created a maritime atmosphere of being exposed to the elements, bracing oneself against the rain and wind and cold. Those that did come were rewarded with a cathartic experience by the time we reached the Queen's House again.

The procession was a format that I chose because it encompasses aspects of both the funerary procession and the political march.²⁸ Processions act as community-building performances that are both personal and political, referring to the funerary assembly on the one hand, and state commemoration on the other.²⁹ Processions share similarities within this form, and in *Cook's New Clothes* they are adapted to represent the funeral of Tupaia and the commemoration of the *Endeavour*. This dual-purpose functions like figure and shadow: Cook and Tupaia at either

28 The procession was originally design theorist Ruby Hoette's idea for *Cook's New Clothes*.

29 I am grateful to Ludovica Fales for making this observation.



Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Cook's New Clothes*, installation view in *The Atlantic*, Plymouth 2018, drawings by Nikolaus Gansterer

30 Performance Studies and the anthropology of performance have mined this productive porous boundary between social action and performance in many texts, including Katerina Martina Teaiwa 'Saltwater Feet: the Flow of Dance in Oceania', in Sylvie Shaw and Andrew Francis, eds, *Deep Blue: Critical Reflections on Nature, Religion and Water*, Equinox, London, 2008, pp 107–127; Paul Rae, 'Wayang Studies?', in James Harding and Cindy Rosenthal, eds, *The Rise of Performance Studies: Rethinking Richard Schechner's Broad Spectrum*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2011, pp 67–84; Donovan O Schaefer, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power*, Duke University Press,

extremes of the historical record, one extremely visible and the other almost entirely erased. Depending on where one observes the commemoration from, the importance of Tupaia and of Cook changes. Whether viewed from Pacific or European vantage points, the procession embodies both in all of its ambivalence. Carrying forms of historical pain and mourning, held in the absent bodies and the still present colonial histories, the procession is a movement that unfolds without defined ends. As it gathers its own momentum, those swept along with it find that they are, days later, still processing. As one participant put it, the dead we commemorate walk back into our lives through our dreams and imaginations. As we stand on Devil's Point again, together, we imagine the boat as it left the naval supply yards, filled with stock that would be depleted, materially and morally, over the coming years.

The task of commemorating the problematic set of endeavours within this voyage – and the one of finding and colonising new lands in particular – is loaded by a search for new stories, stories of agency rather than those that give rise to the building of yet more bronze monuments of Cook from another time and place. Quite the opposite of bronze monuments, performance is an art form that can be mobilised for social action.³⁰ Those who joined in the procession might be changed by the collective action. Without having to see or understand everything that was happen-



Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Cook's New Clothes: First Procession for Tupaia*, Queens House to Thames, Greenwich London 2018, video still, camera by Ludovica Fales

London, 2015. See also Katerina Martina Tiewa, in Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll and Jesse Shipley, *Penang, Failure at 5 O'Clock*, video, 15:53 minutes, Malaysia, 2018. <https://vimeo.com/286726291>, accessed 8 February 2019.

ing, the mass of people demonstrating togetherness felt included in a ritual, and some of them returned afterwards to tell me which experiences had moved them.³¹ Similar to public protests, processions create a sense of solidarity with like minds, in embodied and emotional ways. Ours also drew many people on the street: some asked who had died,³² and we could begin to tell little-known histories of the Pacific.

In *Art in the Time of Colony* I argued that colonial time was necessarily anachronistic for those of us working in those archives as artists, appropriating and undermining the linear time, and modernist progression that lay over the cyclical *Everywhen* of other forms of feeling time, that is, one in which everything is simultaneous. The chronopolitics that each postcolonial subject resides in is because of this double movement, where the time we live in comes into focus and yet there are spectres of another time that guide the ways in which we move. These chronopolitical guides are spatial and political. We are forced to navigate imperial structures. Within those structures are the organising principles that demand chronology. These value older more stable colonial forms over ephemeral protests against them.

Time unravels us, and what we make as artists, since as soon as a work enters a flow, it is canonised, reinterpreted, and its influences are, or are not, attached: for example, this work with fluorescent vests gathered in 2017 and then performed in 2018, before the first *gilet jaunes* protest in France and finally around the world. Now, watching the video in 2019, it is impossible not to think of the protest movement and wonder what the relationship is between the two. Nothing to begin with. But time makes something out of nothing.

Time also creates distances between experiences, materials, colonial encounters, their revision and decolonisation processes, all of them subject to the tyranny of chronopolitics, which is slower and more deadly.

What we do now as a protest will inevitably not be sufficient for what is required in the future. While processions are an old form, and their ability to galvanise community perhaps is inherent in that, on the other hand, they are ephemeral, and the chronopolitics of the imperial structure remains in the wake of Tupaia.

Naomi Vogt has written about the productive confusion in the London *Procession for Tupaia*, in which her own knowledge of rituals was activated by the open structure of the procession, and she found herself moving so as to respect the central object of the cloak by never having her back to it. Within the larger context of contemporary art, which creates rituals often in ironic or socially engaged practices, Vogt writes about this example as:

a particular form of instruction [that] can never coincide with a didactics or demystification, like an outwardly turned exposé or the inductive wall texts of museums. As the initiators of Tupaia's procession reported, this did not fail to irk the hosting institution, which was in demand of exegesis, insistent on 'locking meaning into the event'. Reciprocally, participating in a mysterious yet highly formalized event just outside a cluster of royal museums is no innocent juxtaposition. The ways of knowing and classifying knowledge that were developed by the museums of European modernity stand in sharp contrast with the blind embrace of a new rite without guarantee of enlightenment or even explanation. At the same time, the absence of a carefully

31 Participants' quotes are published in *Cook's New Clothes*' edited collection, op cit.

32 For two Chinese tourists, for example, the form of commemoration of the dead was immediately apparent.

