

## PREFACE

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*A Marata Tamaira*

Tūngia te ururua, kia tupu whakaritorito te tupu o te harakeke.

*Clear away the undergrowth so that the new flax shoots can emerge.*

**T**he *space between* is a prevalent metaphor in the Pacific, including within its scope indigenous concepts such as *vā* (in Samoan and Tongan culture) and *wā* (in Māori and Hawaiian culture). It has been referred to as an intermediary site—a liminal zone marked not only by tension and transformation but also by confluences and connections.

In contemplating the space between, I cannot help but consider my own location in that nebulous realm. I am the product of a bicultural union: On my father's side, my genealogy is rooted in the central North Island tribe of Ngāti Tūwharetoa, and on my mother's, my ancestry extends to the cities of Bath and Bristol in England. During the early 1970s when I was growing up, the ethnic divide between Māori and Pākehā was still clearly evident. Prejudice existed on both sides and, more often than not, the offspring of Māori-Pākehā unions bore the brunt of those strained relations. The pejorative term *half-caste*—on par with the terms *mulatto* and *métis*—was used to describe those of mixed descent. The label implied a certain inadequacy or deficit as far as our identities was concerned, and connoted a cultural limbo. The stigma of being labeled half-caste muddled peoples' ability to self-identify and precipitated for many, including myself, a sense of cultural dysphoria. Although from a phenotypic standpoint I looked undeniably Māori, I was nevertheless raised Pākehā. As a result I felt alienated in both cultures. The space between is uncomfortable. The space between is deeply personal. It is also transformative. In the last several years, I have grown to accept my in-between status. I have even found it to be in many ways liberating; I have the advantage of moving between cultures, although that requires constant negotiation on my part.

*The Space Between: Negotiating Culture, Place, and Identity in the Pacific* constitutes an eclectic blend of theoretical, personal, and artistic expressions, produced by graduate students within and outside of the Pacific. Subsumed under five broad and overlapping headings, the works in this collection are interdisciplinary in nature—drawing from academic fields such as history, art, art history, and Pacific studies—and offer insight into how the space between reflects Pacific realities, past and present. In “Working in the Space Between,” Graeme Whimp surveys ten Pacific Island artists living in New Zealand and offers the concept of *interstitiality* as a theoretical tool for analyzing the dynamic space

in which those artists exist and work. Complementing Whimp's broad overview, Bernida Webb-Binder's article focuses specifically on Lily Laita's exploration of Pacific identity and the *vā* (space between) in her painting *Va i Ta Taea Lalata E Aunoo Ma Gagana*.

In "Locating Identity," Katherine Higgins and artist Andy Leleisi'uao contribute a collaborative piece in which they introduce the concept of *Kamoan*, a term coined by Leleisi'uao to describe New Zealand-born Samoans. Their article considers the application of the term in conjunction with the artist's 2007 exhibition *Lost Kamoans*, and discusses the challenges and opportunities Kamoans encounter as they negotiate between the two cultures of New Zealand and Sāmoa. Makanani Parker's reflection piece brings into sharp focus the author's estrangement from her Hawaiian language and culture, and the life-changing journey that reconnected her with her indigenous identity. Tafea Polamalu's poetry reveals his feeling of being "lodged between worlds" as an American-born Samoan and the effect this has had on his sense of identity and belonging. Polamalu switches from poetic prose to the painted medium to represent his Samoan ancestral connections.

In "Cultural Confluences," Jennifer Ashton transports us back in time to 1840s Hokianga and offers a compelling analysis of cross-cultural encounters between Māori and European settlers during that transformative period in New Zealand's history. Scott William Mackay focuses on the merging of politics and poetry in the works of two celebrated indigenous poet-activists from Australia and New Zealand: Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Hone Tuwhare. The section "Relations of Association" is devoted to the work of young Chamorro scholars including James Perez Viernes, Craig Santos Perez, Kisha Borja-Kicho'cho', Angela T Hoppe-Cruz, and Michael Lujan Bevacqua. Together, the authors provide a critical perspective on Guam's complicated and problematic relationship with the United States—particularly with regard to US colonialism and militarization in the island—and reflect the powerful sense of cultural pride they feel in being Chamorro. The final section, "Between Ocean and Land," begins with B Pualani Lincoln Maielua's article, in which she explores one of the most fundamental elements of representation: the power to name. The author critiques the use of the European term *Pacific* and exhorts the inhabitants of the region to use their own indigenous names; she offers the Native Hawaiian term *Moanaākea* as one of many alternatives. The poets in this section—Pelika Bertelmann, Julia Wieting, and Lufi A Luteru—acknowledge the power of the land and ocean, pride in their cultural identity and, in the case of Luteru, a student's farewell to a beloved teacher. Luteru also provides us with a painting revealing her connection to her Hawaiian ancestors. Early on, I decided to include a feature artist as part of this collection. Roxanne Chasle's work draws attention to Hawai'i, situated as it is

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between wholesale tourism, military activity, and development, and attempts by concerned parties, in particular Native Hawaiians, to conserve and maintain the archipelago's environmental and cultural treasures and indigenous way of life.

The central goal of this project was to provide a forum for graduate students to explore a common theme and to have their ideas disseminated to a wider audience. In the CPIS Occasional Paper titled *Indigenous Encounters: Reflections on Relations between People in the Pacific*, editor Katerina Teaiwa pointed out the need for nurturing “a critical mass of younger writers, artists, and scholars in and of the [Pacific] region” (2008, 5). As the first all-student collection in the Occasional Papers series, I believe this publication is a significant step forward in building the critical mass Teaiwa called for, by clearing—as the whakatāuki (proverb) above suggests—a space for new shoots to emerge.

This publication would not have been possible without the many individuals who so generously contributed their time and assistance. First, I am indebted to CPIS Director Vilsoni Hereniko for entrusting me—a first-time editor—with the task of bringing together this remarkable collection of student works. My gratitude also extends to Jan Rensel, the managing editor of *The Contemporary Pacific*, for her consultation regarding the copyediting of the contributions. A very warm kia ora koutou to the five reviewers who offered their valuable feedback on submissions during the early stages of the project: April Henderson, Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor, Brandy McDougall, Lola Quan-Bautista, and Tevita O Ka'ili. I would like to acknowledge the Center for Pacific Islands Studies and the Journals Department of the University of Hawai'i Press for so generously funding this worthy undertaking. Many thanks to Vilsoni Hereniko, Tara Kabutaulaka, and Jan Rensel for their diligent review of the final manuscript, to graduate assistant Kisha Borja-Kicho'cho' for her assistance with proofreading, L J Rayphand for his technical support, and to Tisha Hickson, Terence Wesley-Smith, and Julie Walsh Kroeker for their sustained interest in the progress of this publication. My gratitude also goes to Carl F K Pao for help with the layout of the interior art, Stacey Leong Mills for her brilliant work in designing the publication's cover, and Jan Mills at Hagadone Printing Company for facilitating the printing of this work. Finally, a heartfelt mahalo nui loa to the contributors of *The Space Between* for their patience and commitment as the publication slowly but surely took shape. It is my hope that each of you will continue to grow as scholars and artists, making valuable contributions in your chosen fields of research and practice, and that as you grow you will in turn provide nourishment and support to those tender shoots that are yet to emerge. This space is for you.