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Apirana Taylor

In These Winds

In these winds blow many songs

in the call of the Cheyenne, Sioux and Cherokee

in the red shadow of the Commanche moon
across the plains of bleached buffalo bones

in these winds blow many songs

in the *haka*¹ of the Maori
in *karakia*² to the gods

in these winds blow many songs

calling us together

to dance to the rising sun
our *haka* of the *wairua*³

the call of warrior people
*tihei mauriora*⁴.

¹ *Haka* (dance).

² *Karakia* (incantation).

³ *Wairua* (spirit).

⁴ *Tihei mauriora* (the first breath of life).

Karanga

When on to the *marae*⁵ I'm called
 my heart hears the words, *karanga mai, karanga mai*⁶
 taken back I am by the first woman
 to the first woman to the first call
 to the *manu tiorooro*⁷ singing
 to the twelve heavens, *haere mai ra haere mai ra*⁸
 thus begins the journey back to the beginning
 sailing the *waka*⁹ to the *mauri Maori*¹⁰
 on the *marae atea*¹¹ where the dust of *Tumatauenga*¹² whirls
 in the *waiata*¹³ of *korero*¹⁴ seeking *te ao marama*¹⁵
 opening like a bud
 the people weave the light
 from threads of memory
 stories stitching weaving
 everyone together with laughter tears and *korero*.

Microscope

To write of beauty
 and seek
 in the pool
 to view the tiny
 amoeba
 with wonder
 on its journey.

⁵ *Marae* (a courtyard or open space in front of Maori traditional ancestral houses, the centre of daily life and also the place of Maori spiritual sustenance and rituals).

⁶ *Karanga mai* (to call). In this poem it is a spiritual call called only by women sent out to the twelve heavens.

⁷ *Manu tiorooro* (a singing bird, this refers to a female composer of songs).

⁸ *Haere mai ra* (welcome).

⁹ *Waka* (canoe). Canoes are of sacred significance to Maori

¹⁰ *Mauri Maori* (Maori spiritual life force).

¹¹ *Marae atea* (place of light and understanding).

¹² *Tumatauenga* (God of man, war, and challenge).

¹³ *Waiata* (song).

¹⁴ *Korero* (conversation).

¹⁵ *Te ao marama* (world of knowledge).

Apirana Taylor is a Maori poet, playwright, novelist, short story writer, actor, painter, story teller and musician from Aotearoa/New Zealand. His Tribes are Ngati Porou, Te Whanau a Apanui, Ngati Ruanui and Te Ati Awa. He is also of Pakeha (European descent). He has published several books of poetry, three books of short stories, a novel and a book of plays. His second novel entitled *Five Strings* will be published in 2016. He has held writers residencies at Massey University and Canterbury University and has taught creative writing. He frequently tours nationally and internationally as poet often accompanying his work with contemporary and traditional Maori music.

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