

Approaches to Authentic Artistic Collaboration

- **Collaborating on a new artistic production is similar to pōwhiri.** It is about discovering one another (ko wai koe?) and what we can each offer to the project (kaupapa).
- **Build relationships with mana whenua, the local residing iwi of the area.** Mana whenua know the stories, whakapapa and energy of the region. They can advise on any potential conflict or cultural challenges within kaupapa Māori collaborations. Mana whenua bring a depth to collaboration and the opportunity to connect with another community of potential audiences.
- **Connecting with Māori involves a different way of meeting one another through both creative hui and rehearsal processes.** This includes karakia and acknowledgement of the ancestral realm surrounding the work we do. This also provides an opportunity to work within a creative paepae - where the collective of artists collaborate to build the vision for the work. Working through both a Māori and European collaborative lens requires extra time, but the resulting depth can be far more satisfying.
- **Budget for good food to share.** With satisfied stomachs, participants are relaxed and keen to collaborate. This is personified by Rongo-Mā-Tāne, the Ātua who represents both cultivated food and peaceful existence.
- **The personification of Māori Ātua (Māori gods) help to understand human nature and the personalities encountered in collaboration.** For example, a Tangaroa (Ātua of the sea) personality is able to navigate the group's needs and calm the fiery and single-minded Tū-mata-uenga (Ātua of war) personality. The Tāne Mahuta personality (Ātua of the forest and community) is naturally collaborative, uniting the group's skills to enhance collaboration.
- **There is typically a spiritual (wairua) component to collaboration with Māori.** Connecting with both the people and the project's own personal mauri (life force) will confirm whether the collaboration can achieve a unique connection that creates an energy of its own. This manifestation of energy is where the potential of cultural transcendence occurs and brings both wairua and mauri into a potent mix of energies. This opens up the channel to commune with our ancestral heritage and gain insight, guidance and wisdom from those who have walked the path before.