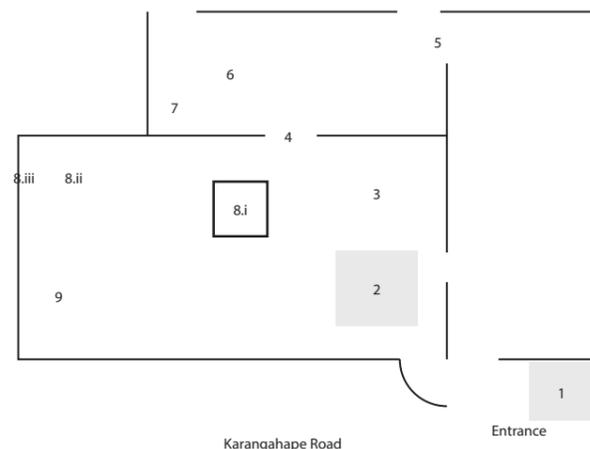




Image courtesy of the artist.

Wai Ching Chan is an Auckland based artist who recently graduated from Bachelor of Fine Arts in Honours at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. Her research has been informed by discourses around cultural identity, diaspora, displacement and post-colonialism. Reflecting on her relationship to Aotearoa, she hopes to recalibrate her art practice through the journey of learning as a tauiwi.



The River Remains; ake tonu atu

Wai Ching Chan

[1]
wúqióngwújīn wújīnwúqióng
Manila Rope
5 metres long

[2]
What can I give you in return... (長長久久)
Mop string, Kākano o te miro o Whangateau (cotton seed),
Miro o Whangateau (otton)
9metres in length

Public Programme

Saturday 16 September 2pm - 3pm
Group Artists Talk

Tuesday 2 October 6pm - 8pm
1 + 1 = Many of Us: Knotting Workshop
with Wai Ching Chan and Olyvia Hong

Thursday 11 October 6pm - 9pm
Artweek: Electric Night

The Button Knot: Holding what was separated together
The 'Caisson' Knot: Establishing connection to the 'world' and us
The Endless Knot: Typically seen as the 'Good Luck Knot'; ultimate, eternal blessings, friendship and connection.

Beliefs disregarded as superstitions are here taken as a formal language, conveying goodwill and blessings. Symbolism and metaphors are carried in the knots - the ropes linking past, present and future; they are the material fragments of heritage, remembrance and connection in action.

I travelled, I arrived. Ship rope - to pull me closer to the land, to help me put down my anchor.

We were once the 'boat people' - the only thing I know of my ancestry. I knew that the school year would be ending when it was 'snowing cotton'. In Hong Kong, each school I attended had its own cotton tree. The tree became a guardian, to me, a companion planted especially for my journey of learning. I met it's cousin at Whangateau when I was having a weaving wānanga with my hoa Arapeta.

Cotton blossoms, a new door opens. I am now continuing my journey, steadily. Mop strings for practices, practice make perfect.

I returned to a language I know, with an inspiration from the meaning for Aho, the two pieces function as a love letter to our society, with the hope to transcend the constraints of time and space.

Knots were used for note taking before other writing systems were developed. I want to know remember the meaning of knots, these are something we need to remember. These knots, their traditional meanings and function, are often misconstrued as merely decorative arts. Their inherent purpose of binding us to 'eternality', 'everlasting friendship' and 'unionizing human to nature' are almost forgotten.

