Where it is all AT

Tracey Tawhiao

Reconciliation is a renewed state of harmony or agreement that exists between previously opposing groups. Conciliation is to bring people to harmonious agreement.

Harmony exists when the tension between two poles makes the guitar string sing. Someone must be playing the string to hear when the tension is at its most creative.

Creation and Recreation in New Zealand is me painting out the news and showing the new headlines. Others are fighting to reconcile indigenous rights with public ownership.

Public is such a general word it hangs so much on Democracy. So full of hypocrisy. Our national museum is a Māori forced to wear a Pākehā’s clothing like the jandal in there.

Moffat a photographic prophet and Reihana a living Pākana have canceled the native with the native better than Gauguin reconciled himself with them. They had him to stand on.

When I hear them talk of MY people I know they are not talking to their own people. I know not why people talk to people who never answer back it’s how the string stays slack.

We have to talk about the colonial cringe, the atoll and other negative things but can we reconcile our need to cry with our need to be brave and show our strongest faith in fate.

Of the 2,000 world nuclear explosions, the French did 175 in the Pacific. The most significant in 1966 when there was a blow back from Mururoa towards Sāmoa.
People are not systems and nuclear bombs are increased evidence of human failure to grasp how powerful we really are and how long we have taken to come this far.

Systems are not people but methods of containing power where it thinks it best belongs and infiltrating competition because money is always where the war begins and ends.

Not enough pie and an authority demanding that HE create the solution best for all. Equals a reason for people to go out with arms prepared to fight and kill and die.

Marie Antoinette said many things but about Versailles she said, “It’s not too much, is it? Letting everyone down would be my greatest unhappiness.” Reconcile headless woman.

I can see you looking at me. I know you can see me like I never can. I look back at you to see me. I am reconciled to the fact that seeing is not being and being is where it’s all AT.

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This poem was composed for and presented during a conference held at the University of Le Havre in France in December 2006. A companion paper by Tracey Tawhiao, titled “Te Papa Museum New Zealand: Conversation with a Maori Artist,” was published in volume 1 of the conference proceedings, Conciliation et Réconciliation: Stratégies dans le Pacific (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2008).

Glossary

jandal: New Zealand term for rubber sandal (elsewhere called flipflop or thong)
Moffat: Tracey Moffat, multimedia artist, Australia
pūkana: to stare untamed, dilate the eyes; done in Māori haka (dance performance)
Reihana: Lisa Reihana, multimedia artist, New Zealand