

artist statement

Te AWAHOU COLLECTIVE

ARTWORK

Tracy Underwood

(Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te
Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangi)

Te Whare Tipu, *The house of
growth* 2026

Harakeke, dye, wood, embossed
cotton fibre paper

Pokinikini fans are layered in vertical
columns, each one rising from the
last. The muka opens upward and
outward, like an inner journey of
growth, carried forward through
whakapapa.

DIMENSIONS:

H: 1247 mm

W: 75 mm

D: 70 mm

Kotahi Tonu Wairua o Nga Mea Katoa

Tracy Underwood

I whakapapa to Ngāti Tūranga at Himatangi. For a time, I studied Māori Visual Arts at Massey University, but I am largely self-taught. My community-collaborative public artworks received a Culture and Heritage Civic Award in 2021, and across all my work I strive to convey wairua and whakapapa.

In my own practice, I am drawn to pokinikini: tough and unbending outside, soft yet strong within, where the muka lies. Harakeke is traditionally woven. I take a different path, opening the tube and spreading the muka into fans, some pale, others dyed. It is a demanding material, and it pushes me toward forms I have not seen before.

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Working together in one Spirit

