

A H I K A A

Ngā Kaihanga Uku and Friends

8 Nov – 8 Feb 2026

Driving Creek

Curated by Chantel Matthews

Artwork Enquiries: callum@drivingcreek.nz

Ahi Kaa brings together members of Ngā Kaihanga Uku, the Māori Clay Artists Collective, alongside invited artists and friends. Established between 1987 and 1991, Ngā Kaihanga Uku was founded by Baye Riddell, Manos Nathan, Colleen Waata-Urlich, Paerau Corneal, and Wi Taepa to forge a uniquely Māori approach to clay, fostering collaboration and connection among indigenous clay artists.

The exhibition celebrates this legacy of sharing knowledge, resources, and artistic vision. Taking inspiration from the ethos of Driving Creek and its founder Barry Brickell, Ahi Kaa is a testament to the enduring bonds within the clay community. The works on display reflect a deep respect for whenua (land), whakapapa (ancestry), and the traditions that have been kept alive and reimagined by each generation.

Ahi Kaa honours the fire that sustains creative practice—symbolizing both the physical process of working with clay and the spiritual warmth of cultural continuity. In gathering together, artists reaffirm their commitment to keeping the fires burning for future generations, ensuring that the art of uku remains vibrant and evolving.



Amelia Blundell

Kora, 2025, Approx 240mm Diameter

\$380 ●

In our mahi toi the fires that feed and warm us are often the fires of those who inspire and help cultivate our creativity.

Many people will refer to these beginnings of their creative passions as a spark ignited from the work, whakaaro, or gifts of others. This piece pays homage to those enduring fires and people who existed in such ways that many sparks continue to appear and dance between the flames of their legacies.



Amanda Kemp

Whenua vessels, 2025, Dimensions variable

\$420 Set (2 sets available)

Uku vessels in which to house flora from your sacred whenua-land.



Avara Moody

Whenua o Kapanga, 2025, 180mm x 180mm x 80mm,

Materials: Unfired whenua (earth and clay) spheres and fired black stoneware base. \$450

Formed from riverstones and whenua of Kapanga, these earth pigment spheres embody the rich colour and texture of place – a material record of the land that has sustained and inspired generations at Driving Creek. Sourced and ground by hand, the pigments reflect a deep relationship between people and whenua, carrying within them traces and stories of the rivers, forests, and clay that continue to shape this unique creative community. Ngā mihi to the Kauae Raro Research Collective for generously sharing their knowledge over the past few years and inviting and guiding many of us to connect with whenua in new and old ways.



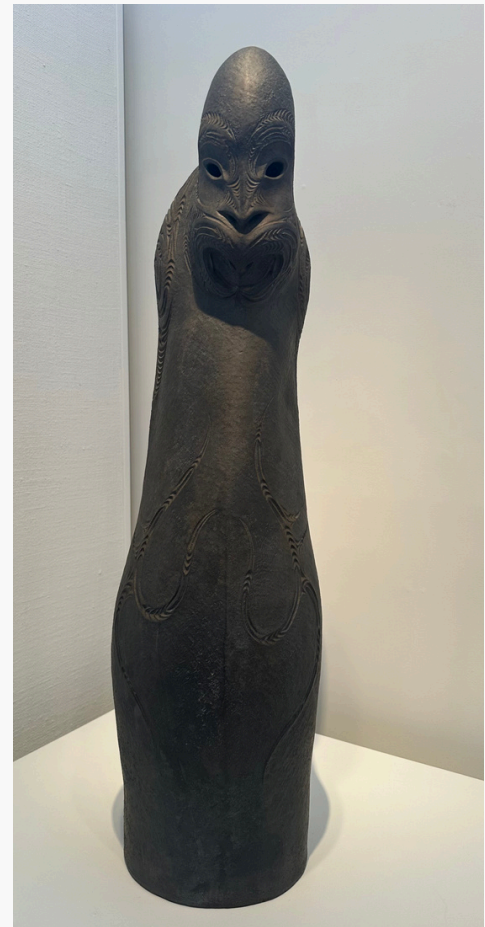
Amorangi Hikuroa

Tūtei ii, 2024, Kaitiaki series

Sculptural clay, Oxide glaze

930mm x 250mm x 250mm variable. \$6400 ●

Tūtei, the sentinel. A watcher that stands guard. A kaitiaki keeping safe those who keep the land. Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) is a core value of those who would be the Ahikaa. Those that keep the fires, those that hold the land for their people. Keeping their Tūrangawaewae safe. A place of belonging. An ode to uphold the land and to maintain the balance of existence with Te Taiao.



Baye Riddell

Kaitiaki o Te Ahi - Keeper of the Fire approx

640mmH x 210mmW

\$2500 ●

From my ipu pungarehu series this is a vessel for keeping ashes. It symbolises te ahi ka roa - the life we live and the legacy we leave.

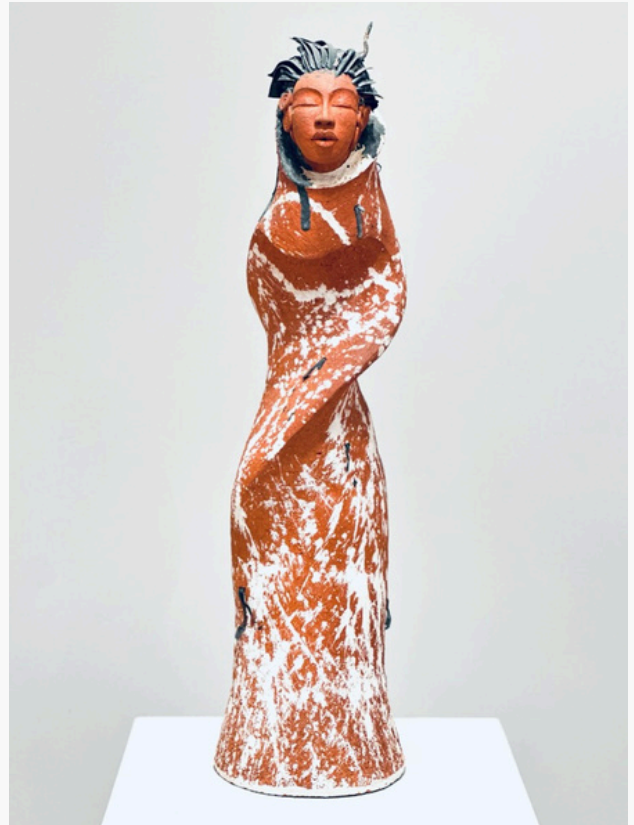
Carla Ruka

Māori Angels Series - Dancing with the railway,

Approx 780mmH x 200mmW

\$4,200

Crafted during the 2016 Ngā Kaihanga Uku wānanga, this piece emerged from the very earth of Coromandel, adorned with the unearthed treasures of the railway, broken shards, metal scraps, nails, screws.

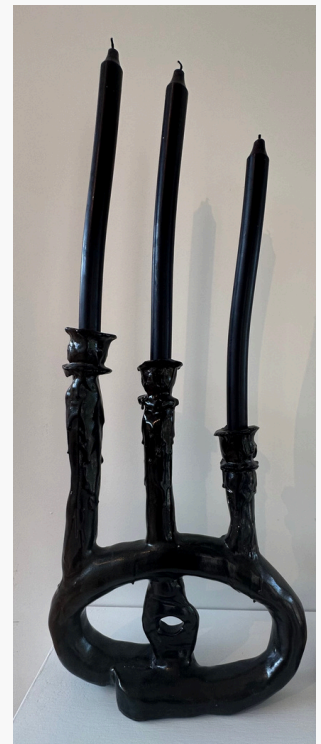


Chantel Matthews

Date Night, 2025, Uku, Glaze mixed with the water from my whenua, Whaingaroa te moana, approx 379mmH x 270mm W

\$600 ●

Inspired by Mahuika (Atua of Fire) and Barry Brickells vessels, I created this candelabra. Black candles gifted by my friend Michelle Huizinga symbolise Protection, absorbs negative energy and purifies space. Together they create a positive spark.



Dave Austin

E AHI WHAI, 2025, Approx 1000mm Hx 800mmW, 300mmD, materials will be clay with a wood base and muka weaving hanging from the wings, pit fired
\$2675

AHI because I will be pit firing the work and references the brief.
WHAI because the stingray has significant meaning referencing protection, resilience, and strength. something Barry and Driving Creek represents and my own journey with uku.



Dorothy Waetford

What might a Matariki cooking pot smell like? 2025,
Handmade bricks, unfired, bisque-fired pot sitting on
a tongi made of kiekie and pingao, including: wooden
utensil by Driftwood Kitchen Coromandel,
Dimensions variable
\$1630

Drawing from te kete aronui - the basket of
knowledge spreading aroha, peace, arts and crafts
which benefit the Earth and all living things, in
particular, knowledge that comes with careful,
continuous observation of the taiao (environment).
A simple bisque fired pot with hand-made, unfired
Ōtito bricks - evoking fireside cooking delights,
connecting people, places, cultural traditions and
narratives.



Elijah Haki Revell

Te Ahi kaa mau, approx 220mm D
\$1000

An Ahi kaa is someone who has a sense of belonging
and connection to a place and people. For us as Māori
it's based around our marae and kainga, whanau,
hapu and iwi.

An ahi kaa is always there keeping the home fires
burning. From that Nani who runs the kitchen to the
Koro who always digs the graves to your partner who
has a meal prepared when you return home. These
are all ways in which ahi kaa manifest.

My piece "Te Ahi kaa mau" refers to the fire within,
that burning passion that ignites the spark in others,
an eternal flame passed down from one to another for
we are all just vessels for a time.



Fleur Palmer

Mahuika, 2025, 40x40x60, Pit fired raku clay, Volcanic rock, Dimensions variable

\$3800 ●

This is Mahuika, the Māori atua of fire. She is peering into a fire bowl. The elongated head evokes a Ngāpuhi style. Her eyes contemplate the breath of flame within her ipu.

Pit-firing makes the fieriness of Mahuika an integral part of her own creation, imbuing her with carbon blackness to evoke an alchemical dialogue between earth, fire, and smoke.

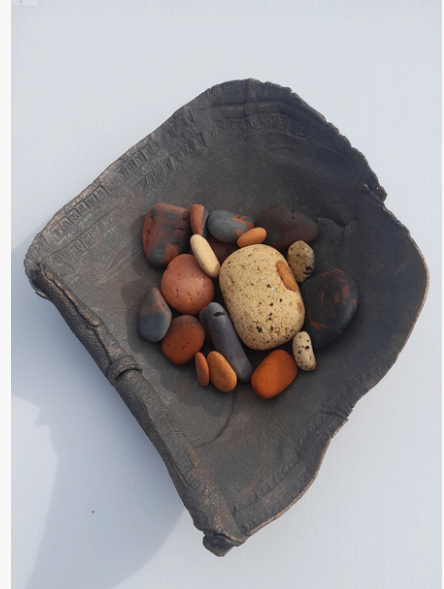


Gemeaux Riddell

Pupuritia (Hold fast) Dimensions variable

\$1000

Nurturing the mauri of the whenua, confluence of visions, coming together, continuum.



Hana Pera Aoake
Confluence (Barry's wairua) 2025, stoneware,
porcelain, earthenware, found and broken ceramics
Approx 260mmH x 200mm W
\$850

I started to talk to things around the driving creek when I was there that seemed like it was Barry. His sandals and books with his handwriting inside his mauri is so strong. I had whole conversations by myself with him.. with pictures of him.. It sounds weird but it was like he was always there

I think of my ceramics as pirate punk lol... I've been shown a few things but I just hand build and see if it works like a crazy experiment that's very physical and about pulling different tensions together like raranga trying to keep the aho reasonably tight.



Karuna Douglas
7 Clay leaves, 2025, Dimensions
variable
\$1095

Kaeleb Kereopa-Ngatai
Hononga, 2025, Approx 260mmH x 140mmW
\$650

A representation of the living, those who have passed, and the unbreakable connection between the two. The vessel embodies you – surrounded by friends, family, and ancestors – with the fire within symbolising the life force that drives you. The outer cracks reflect the pain and hurt we experience throughout life, each mark a reminder of growth, resilience, and the strength that shapes who we are today.



Mike O'Donnell

The Keeping of the Story, Alive, 2025, Kai / Seed Vessel, seed stone, Te Kakano a Rangiatea, Water Carrier, Waitaha Nui. Water Bowl / story Stone/ Te Timatanga Hou (A new beginning)
My book .. "Whakapapa of a White Man" Dimensions variable

\$1200 ●

Having had a very long and close relationship with Barry as a clay worker, approx 57yrs he always encouraged me to work myself out through the clay in the way I was dispositioned to be. In this frame of our relationship I submit a small installation of vessels which are the Reply to his statement when he requested of me,

*'Would You care for the spirit of Driving Creek.'
To which I replied,*

'That would be impossible Barry, you cast such a huge shadow and when you go it will take many to fill the space.' At that moment, Barry lifted one of my Kai vessels from the shelf, and said,

"Mike, it is in the face of difficult times, when we are challenged to keep the vessel alive."



Rhonda Halliday

He Ahi Kaa o Te Kapanga / The fire keepers of Driving Creek, 2025, Clay, hand built, burnished, low bisque and smoke fired, Approx 240mm diameter.

\$1200

This piece adopts a multi-layered approach that begins by acknowledging the tangata whenua, the traditional custodians of Driving Creek, Te Kapanga*.

My home is in Te Taitokerau, which translates to “the tide of a hundred worms.” The design respectfully represents our Northern “muddies” and honours those who have come before us and paved the way. As it meanders up the hill side it transforms into the tracks forged by Barry and pays homage to him and the kaitiaki that live there.

In the early 1970s, Barry Brickell relocated to this area and made significant contributions towards the restoration of its forests and trees damaged by prospective farmers. He recognised abundant clay deposits on this property and utilising his expertise in engineering and hand-building, he established Driving Creek Pottery. His kiln building and clay knowledge was well respected by many potters and aspiring “muddies”. Barry naturally assumed the responsibilities of kaitiaki and ahi kaa, serving as a dedicated caretaker of the land while eagerly sharing his passion for the environment and working with clay.

*Pioneers of Kapanga – thetreasury.org.nz



Sandy Te Awhitu Kerr
Ōngarue, 2025, 35cm high × 25cm wide,
approximately 2 kg. \$420

A mana whenua response, forty years on, to
Barry Brickell's *Some Stations on the Main
Trunk Line, Station XI (Ōngarue, 1985)*.



Todd Douglas
A pot called Barry, 2025, 470mm H x 400mm
Dia, Large vase with carving detail. \$3900



Wi Te tau Taepa

Why stand a pot up when you can lie it down? Then it now has two purposes.

Raku Pot, Approx 500mmH x 400mmW

\$6440



Wi Te tau Taepa

"I couldn't bring the mountain so I just brought a small rock." Small pot - Ipu iti, approximately 130mmW x 80mmW

\$3150



Wi Te tau Taepa

"I told those kids not to go into the caves and draw graffiti" Small round pot - Akaroa, Rock drawings, slips and glaze, approx 90mm diameter

\$3150

