‘Oku taumu’a ‘a e Objectspace ke ne langa’i ha to e filihi fo’ou fekau’aki mo hono ngaohi mo e ‘aonga ‘o e ngaahi ngāue mo faka’aonga he mala’e ‘o e ngāue fakamea’a mo e tākupesi he ngaahi tukufakaholo ngaohime’a ‘oku lolotonga hoko ‘i Aotealoha Nu’usila he ‘aho ni. Neongo kuo mau ‘osi ngaahi tūkufakaholo ngaohime’a ‘a ngaahi tukufakaholo ngaohime’a ‘o ngaahi tukufakaholo faka-‘lulopo mo e Mauli ka ‘oku hoko ‘a e Nimame’a‘a: ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatata’i’akau mo e langaleisi ko e fuofua poloseki lahi ia ‘a e Objectspace ‘oku te fakafou ha ngaohime’a mei he Moana Pasifiki, pea ko ia ai ‘oku mau fu’u mutu’aki fiefia mo māfana ke fakahoko. ‘Oku fa’a fakafekau’aki ‘a e tuimatata’i’akau ‘i Nu’usila ni mo ha kautaha ka e hangē ko ha poloseki ‘a e Objectspace kimu’a ko e No Rules: Rediscovery Embroidery [Hala Tu’utu’uni: To e Vakai’i ‘o e Tuimatata’i’akau] oku hanga heni ‘e he Nimame’a‘a ‘o sivisivi‘i ‘a e Nimame’a tuimatata’i’akau ‘i ko e ‘aati.

Na’e fetu’utaki ‘a e Objectspace ki he ongo fokotu’utu‘u faka’ali’ali ‘aati ko Kolokesa Uafā Māhina-Tuai mo Manuēsina ‘Ofa-Ki-Hautolo Māhina he 2010 fekau’aki mo hano fakakauku‘i ha poloseki ke fakahoko he 2011. Na’e talu mei ai mo ‘emau fengāue‘aki fiefia pe ‘oku mau lau ko e koloa ke vikia kinaua ko ‘ena fili ha ngaahi ngāue faka’ofi’ofa fau mo fatu ha fakamatalatohi te nei lahi, ‘o to e mahu’ingāmālie ange ‘i hono fokotu’u ‘a e ngaahi ngāue ‘i he fa’unga ‘o ‘aati faka-Tonga. ‘oku mau to e faka-hihiki ‘i ‘a e kotoa ‘o e kau ngaohi ‘o ngaahi ngāue [kau nimame’a] ‘oku fakamau’ali he Nimame’a‘a; ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatata’i’akau mo e langaleisi; ‘a ia ko Kolokesa Kulfefu, Tu’utanga Hunuhunu Māhina, Manuēsina Tōnata, Lingisiva ‘Aloua, Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu, Falesiu Siu mo Lupe Mahe. ‘E malava ke tokanga’i ‘e he kau ‘a’ahi ko e ngaahi ngāue ko ia he Nimame’a‘a ko e ngaahi ngāue ‘e o faka’ofa’ofa mo e poto’i ngaohime’a ‘a ‘oku fakafou mai he fakamatalatohi ‘a e ongo fokotu’utu‘u faka’ali’ali ‘aati ‘a e amata ke mahu’ingāmālie kiate kita’utu ‘a e founa ‘oku kehe ai ‘a e ngaahi ngāue ni mei he ngaahi nimame’a tuimatata’i’akau mo e nimame’a langaleisi ‘i Nu’usila he ‘aho ni. ‘Oku matu’aki kehe, mo langilangi makehe, ‘a e ngaahi ngāue ni tu’unga he kanoloto ‘o e ngaahi ‘aati ‘a Tonga hono fakahoa mo e tu’unga ‘e he Nimame’a tuikakalo mo e nimame’a langaleisi ‘oku lolotonga hoko ‘i Nu’usila he ‘aho ni. Neongo ‘oku nau ‘asi faiiatau mo e ngaahi ngāue ko ‘eni ‘i ha ‘uhinga ‘e taha ka ‘oku kehe ‘enau to’onga he loto kalatua ‘a Tonga mei he fōtunga ‘o e to’onga ‘e he nimame’a tuimatata’i’akau mo e nimame’a langaleisi ‘oku fakatoka ‘o e kalatua ‘i Nu’usila. ‘Oku ‘oatu ‘e he Objectspace ‘a e fakama‘ili lotohongia ‘i he ‘uhinga ko ia ki he ongo fokotu’utu ‘a faka’ali’ali ‘aati.


Philip Clarke
Talēkita
Objectspace aims to provoke new assessments about the making and functioning of works and practices within the fields of craft and design across a number of the making traditions present in Aotearoa New Zealand today. While we have largely presented projects that focus on contemporary European-derived and Maori making practices, *Nimamea’a: The fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet* is Objectspace’s first major project focused on making from the Pacific, and we are delighted to be able to do so. Embroidery practice in New Zealand is usually associated with a guild context, but like an earlier Objectspace project, *No Rules: Rediscovering Embroidery*, *Nimamea’a* examines embroidery within an art context.

Objectspace approached curators Kolokesa Uafā Māhina-Tuai and Manue-sina ‘Ofa-Ki-Hautolo Māhina in 2010 about developing a project for presentation in 2011. Since then we’ve really enjoyed working with them and it is a great pleasure to congratulate them on their wonderful selection of works and fine writing which contextualises the works within the framework of Tongan art. We also congratulate the makers of the works featured in *Nimamea’a: The fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet*; Kolokesa Kulikefu, Tu’utanga Hunuhunu Māhina, Manue-sina Tō nata, Lingisiva ‘Aloua, Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu, Falesiu Siu and Lupe Mahe.

Visitors can recognise the works in *Nimamea’a* as objects of beauty and skilled-making but it is through the curators’ fine writing that we can begin to appreciate how these works are different from other embroidery and crochet work produced in New Zealand today. These works have a completely different, and high, status within the arts of Tonga compared with the status of embroidery and crochet within the contemporary arts of New Zealand. While these works might look familiar in one sense, as objects they operate in quite a different way, within Tongan culture, to the way embroidery and crochet generally operate within mainstream New Zealand culture. Objectspace extends its sincere thanks to the curators of *Nimamea’a* for providing this insight to us all.

In addition to the curators of *Nimamea’a: The fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet* I would like to thank; Lupe Mahe, Falesiu Siu, Lingisiva ‘Aloua, Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu, Manue-sina Tonata, Kolokesa Kulikefu and Mele Ha’aamo ‘Alatini for lending works to the exhibition; Hufanga Dr ‘Okusitino Mahina for his translations; Ema Tavola of Fresh Gallery for introducing me to Kolokesa Uafā Māhina-Tuai and Manue-sina ‘Ofa-Ki-Hautolo Māhina; Auckland Museum, Manukau School of Visual Arts, Glenys Brookbanks and Nadene Carr for their support; and Alan Deare of Area Design for designing the publication.

**Philip Clarke**
Director
**ARTISTS**

**Lingisiva ‘Aloua:**
Lingisiva was born in Tefisi, Vava’u, Tonga in 1945. She migrated to New Zealand in 1986 and currently lives in Mt Roskill. Her skills and knowledge of sewing, crochet and embroidery was learnt from her eldest sister Manuēsina Tōnata. Lingisiva is still actively practicing sewing, embroidery and crochet and has passed these skills on to her daughter-in-law.

**Kolokesa Kulikefu:**
Kolokesa was born in Tongatapu, Tonga on December 24 1948. She migrated to New Zealand in 1977 and now lives in Mangere. She first encountered embroidery, knitting and crocheting as a young student at Queen Sālote College in Tonga. It was not until her early 20’s, when she had left school, and worked at a shop, that she took on embroidery more seriously. She also joined a local women's arts group who were all knitting, embroidering and crocheting and they would meet regularly where they shared and exchanged their knowledge and skills. When Kolokesa migrated to New Zealand she continued the art and practice of embroidery, knitting and crocheting. She also joined a similar women's arts group here in New Zealand with friends which disbanded at the end of the 1990's. Kolokesa is still actively practicing embroidery and crochet and is encouraging younger family members to learn the art form. She is currently a member of a Mangere based Tongan women's arts group called Kulupu Falehanga ‘i Teleiloa.

**Lupe Mahe:**
Lupe was born in Tongatapu on July 5th 1966. She migrated to New Zealand in 1986 and currently lives in Pakuranga. She learnt basic skills of the fine arts of nimamea’a in her second year at high school at Queen Sālote College in Tonga. She was 13 years old and there was a class called home economics where they were taught various arts practices. She also learnt from her mother. Her love and passion for the various art forms of nimamea’a continued into her adult life where she enjoys making ta’ovala and kiekie for her husband and children, other members of her family and friends. She is a member of the Otara based Tongan women’s arts group, ‘Toakase Women’s Group’ where she shares her knowledge and skills with others in the groups as well as learning from them. She is a counsellor by profession but an artist at heart.
Tu’utanga Hunuhunu Māhina:
Tu’utanga is 58 years old and was born on July 15 1953 in Tongatapu, Tonga. She migrated to New Zealand in 1978 and now lives in Mount Eden. She learned sewing as a student at Queen Sālote College in Tonga. With sewing being a big passion her skills further developed through various jobs when she migrated to New Zealand. Upon moving to Australia, she further developed her skills by gaining a certificate in garment making. Tu’utanga learnt the fine art of embroidery in New Zealand by being a member of various Tongan women’s arts groups. Tu’utanga continues to practice embroidery and is actively honing her skill of sewing through her current occupation and through various community night classes. She is currently a member of a Mangere based Tongan women’s arts group called Kulupu Falehanga ‘i Teleioa.

Falesiu Siu:
Falesiu was born in Tongatapu, Tonga on February 21st 1972. Her skills and knowledge in the fine arts of nimamea’a started off with learning from her mother ‘Alisi Taipaleti and her late maternal grandmother Lafimoa Lafitani. She then learned new skills when she migrated to New Zealand in 1997. She also gets together weekly with Kuluveti Latu where they make ta’ovala and kiekie. It was through Kuluveti that she learned how to crochet the white kiekie that she made for her daughter Kalonikakala. Kuluveti also showed her how to create the kiekie she made for her daughter ‘Alisi applying the same technique she used to make her ta’ovala. She is a member of the Otara based Tongan women’s arts group, ‘Toakase Women’s Group’ where she shares her knowledge and skills with others in the group as well as learning from them.

Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu:
Noma was born in Tefisi, Vava’u, Tonga on February 21st 1956. She migrated to New Zealand in 1986 and currently lives in Mt Roskill. She learnt basic sewing skills while in high school and her skills and knowledge of crochet and embroidery was passed on from her mother, Manuēsina Tonata. Noma is still actively practising her skills of sewing, embroidery and crochet – making outfits not only for herself but also her children and grandchildren.

Manuēsina Tonata:
Manuēsina was born in Tefisi, Vava’u, Tonga in 1928. She migrated to New Zealand in 1989 and currently lives in Mt Roskill. She was urged by her mother to attend an all-girl Catholic School and it was there that she learned sewing, embroidery and crochet. Manuēsina has passed on some of this knowledge and practice to her two younger sisters and also her eldest daughter. She still continues to practice embroidery and crochet.
Teunga lotu, 2010
Ngaohi ‘i Mt Roskill, Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu. Na’e ngaohi ‘a e kofu kongaua ni ke tui ‘e Noma ki he misinale ‘a e sissi. Na’e fe’unga mo e māhina ‘e taha hono ngaohi mo tuimatala’i’aku.

Church outfit, 2010
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland, New Zealand by Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu. This two piece outfit was made to be worn for Noma’s church misinale (an annual day of money donation to assist in running the affairs of the church) in 2010. It took one month to make and embroider the floral pattern on the dress.


Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland, New Zealand, the church outfit by Noma ‘Ofa-Ki-Nu’usila Talakia’atu and the crocheted slip by Manuësina Tōnata. This green two piece outfit was made to be worn for Sepitema, a specific day in September, that is dedicated to women with a status equivalent to that of a male lay preacher, on which they renew their covenant with God. It took approximately one day to make and crochet the two piece outfit. The crocheted slip worn underneath took two months to complete. This ensemble is a good example of the ‘Tefisi Style’ particularly in the choice of sheer fabric so that the detailed crocheted slip can be seen through.
Teunga lotu, 2011
Ngaohi ‘i Mt Roskill, ‘Aokalani,
Nu’usila ‘e Lingisiva ‘Aloua.
Na’e ngaohi ‘a e kofu ni ke tui ki he faka-Sepitema,
‘a ia ko e ‘aho ‘o e kakai fefine ‘oku tu’unga tatau
mo e kau malanga tangata ke fakafo’ou ai ‘enau
kovinanite mo e ‘Otu’a. Na’e tui ‘e Lingisiva ‘a e
kofu lanu ‘uli’uli ko ‘ene tauanga’a he pekia hono
tuonga’ane mo e palesiteni honau siasi. Na’e
fakatau ‘a e sakettu’a/kofutu’a, pea toki lālanga
‘a e leisi he tapa ‘e Lingisiva. Na’e toki tanaki ha
nimaloloa ‘i loto he nimamu’tu, ‘a ia ko ‘ene ngaohi
kotoa, ‘o ngāue’aki fakaikiki ‘a e sīfoni he tapa.
Na’e fe’unga mo e ‘aho ‘e ua hono ngaohi.

Church outfit, 2011
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland,
New Zealand by Lingisiva ‘Aloua.
This outfit was made to be worn for Sepitema,
a specific day in September, that is dedicated to
women who have reached a status equivalent to
that of a male lay preacher, on which they renew
their covenant with God. Lingisiva wore black to
mourn the passing of her late brother and of the
president of their church. The overlay jacket/dress
was purchased and the edges crocheted by
Lingisiva. An additional longer sleeve was added
underneath the shorter sleeve. The slip was entirely
constructed by her with red chevron detailing around
the edges. The outfit took approximately two days
to complete.

Kofuloto leisi, 1990’s
Ngaohi ‘i Mt Roskill, ‘Aokalani,
Nu’usila ‘e Lingisiva ‘Aloua.
‘Oku tui loto ‘eni ‘i loto ha kofu. Na’e ngaohi
‘a e kofuloto ni he māhina ‘e taha.

Crochet top, 1990’s
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland,
New Zealand by Lingisiva ‘Aloua.
This top is worn underneath a dress.
It took one month to complete.
Kofuloto leisi, 2009
Ngaohi 'i Mt Roskill, 'Aokalani, Nu'usila
'e Manuēsina Tōnata.
'Oku tui loto 'eni 'i ha kofu. Ko e kofuloto fakamui-mui 'eni na'e ngaohi 'e Manuēsina, 'a ia na'e fe'unga mo e māhina 'e ua.

Crocheted slip, 2009
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland, New Zealand by Manuēsina Tōnata.
This slip is worn underneath a dress. It is the most recent garment that Manuēsina made and took two months to complete.

Kofuloto matala'i'akau moe leisi, 1986/87
Ngaohi 'i Tefisi, Vava'u, Tonga
'e Manuēsina Tōnata.
'Oku tui 'eni 'i loto 'i ha kofu. Na’e fe’unga mo e māhina 'e taha hono ngaohi.

Floral embroidery with crocheted edging slip, 1986/87
Made in Tefisi, Vava'u, Tonga by Manuēsina Tōnata.
This slip is worn underneath a dress. It took one month to complete.
**Kofuloto matala’i’akau, 2002**
Ngaohi ‘i Mt Roskill, ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Manuēsina Tōnata.
‘Oku tui ‘eni ‘i loto ‘i ha kofu. Na’e fe’unga mo e māhina ‘e ua hono ngaohi. ‘Oku ngāue’aki he kofu ni ‘a e kupesi ko e pekepeka, ‘a ia ko e fanga ki’i manupuna iki.

*Embroidered slip, 2002*
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland, New Zealand by Manuēsina Tonata.
This slip is worn underneath a dress. It took two months to complete. This slip uses a design referred to by the artist as pekepeka – in reference to bats or small birds in flight.

**Ta’ovala, 1989**
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Lupe Mahe.
Na’e lalanga ‘a e ta’ovala ni ‘e Lupe lolotonga hono feitama i ‘eni tama fika ua ko Sālote Teisa Mahe he 1989. Na’e ngaohi ‘a e ta’ovala ni ma’a hono hoa ko Niko Mahe ke ne tui ki he lotu. Na’e fe’unga mo e māhina ‘e ua hono ngaohi. Na’e ngaohi mei he nge’esi tangai suka. Na’e fakatau ‘a e suka he 1980 ta’u he tangai kilo 20 he lanu ni. Na’e tānaki ‘e Lupe ‘a e nge’esi tangai suka, ‘a ia na’a ne vete fakafo’ifilo, ‘o ne toki lalanga ‘a e ta’ovala. Kuo hokohoko atu hono tui ‘a e ta’o vala he’ene tama fika tolu ‘oku ta’u 11 ki he lotu.

*Waist mat, 1989*
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Lupe Mahe.
This ta’ovala was crocheted by Lupe Mahe when she was pregnant with her second child, Sālote Teisa Mahe, in 1989. She made it for her husband Niko Mahe who wore it to church. It took her about two months to make. It is made from recycled synthetic sugar sacks. In the 1980’s sugar was sold in 20kg sacks of this colour. Lupe collected empty sacks, pulled them apart into synthetic strings and then crocheted rosettes which she then joined to make the ta’ovala. The ta’ovala has now been passed down to her third son who is eleven years old and he wears it to church.
Ta'ovala, 2001
Ngaohi 'i 'Aokalani, Nu'usila 'e Lupe Mahe.
Na'e ngaohi 'a e ta'ovala ni he 2011 'e Lupe ma'a hono hoa ko Niko Mahe. Na'e fe'unga mo e uike 'e tolu hono ngaohi, pea kuo hokohoko atu hono ngâue'aki 'e hono foha lahi 'oku ta'u 11 ko David Mahe 'o ne tui ki he lotu. Na'e ngaohi mei he filipe lanu kilimi. Na'e lâlanga 'a e ongo tafa'aki 'o e tapa ki 'olunga mo e ongo tafa'aki, pea na'e ngaohi 'a e sino'í i ta'ovala 'a e slinga ko e no'ono'o pe sia ('a ia ko e ma'u mei Niua) pea 'oku ngâue'aki hono fakapona 'a e ala 'e he nima. Na'e fakatau 'a e filipe mei he Turners Auctions 'a ia 'oku ke i ma'a ma mei mei Niua) pea 'oku ngâue'aki hono fakapona 'a e ala 'e he nima. Na'e ngaohi 'a e ta'ovala mei he kiekie motu'a mei Tonga na'e vete 'e Lupe. Na'e fe'unga mo e mâhina 'e taha hono ngaohi.

Waist mat, 2001
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Lupe Mahe.
This ta'ovala was made in 2001 by Lupe for her husband Niko Mahe. It took three weeks to make and has now been passed down to their 11 year old son David Mahe who wears it to church. It is made from creamy coloured raffia ribbon. It is crocheted along the edges of the top and two sides and the body of the ta'ovala has been created using the technique of no'ono'o or sia (a technique that comes from the island of Niua) and involves knotting together of the fibres using one's hands. The raffia ribbon was purchased from Turners Auctions where Lupe has found that it is still cheap but is of a better quality that the ribbon found at two dollar shops. The pueki shells inserted on the bottom half of the ta'ovala are recycled from an old kiekie (waist ornament) from Tonga that Lupe took apart. It took one month to make.

Ta'ovala, Ti-sema 2010
Ngaohi 'i 'Aokalani, Nu'usila 'e Lupe Mahe.
Na'e ngaohi 'a e ta'ovala ni 'e Lupe 'I Ti-sema 'o e ta'u ni ke ne tui ki he malanga pôle'o, 'a ia ko e malanga mavae 'o e ta'u motu'a mei toa'u fo'ou. 'Oku fa'a kamata ma'u pe 'a e malanga he 9.00ef, pea mo ha kau malanga 'e tokotahaua. Na'e kau 'a Lupe he kau malanga pôle'o pea ko 'ene fuofua kau 'eni ha malanga pôle'o. 'Oku mêmipa 'a Lupe he Siasi Metotisi Tonga ko Lotu Hûfia, 'a ia 'oku tu'u 'i Otara 'i 'Aokalani. Na'e ngaohi'aki 'a e ta'ovala 'a e toenga kosikosi kapeti mei he falengâue 'i Penrose, 'Aokalani. Na'e fil 'e Lupe 'a e lanu ke hoa mo hono teunteu, 'a ia na'e kosikosi lanu hinehina mo 'ulilul. 'Oku ne manako ma'u pe ke ngaohi ta'ovala ke hoa mo e lanu hono teunga. Na'e fe'unga mo e uike 'e tolu hono ngaohi.

Waist mat, December 2010
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Lupe Mahe.
This ta'ovala was made by Lupe in December last year so that she can wear it for malangapo-le'o, a service held on the evening of the last day of the year where the congregation farewell the old year and welcome the new year. The service usually starts around 9.00pm and involves twelve preachers. Lupe was one of the twelve preachers and this was her first time to be involved in a malangapo-le'o. Lupe is a member of the Tongan Methodist Church Lotu Hûfia, based in Otara, Auckland. The ta'ovala is made out of black and white outdoor carpet yarn off-cuts from an outdoor carpet factory in Penrose, Auckland. The colours used were selected by Lupe so that they matched her outfit which was white with black trimming. This is something that she likes to do when making ta'ovala where she will select colours based on what she is going to wear with it. It took three weeks to make.
Ta’ovala, Septemba 2010
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Lupe Mahe.

Waist mat, September 2010
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Lupe Mahe.

Ta’ovala, Ma’asi 2011
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Lupe Mahe.

Waist mat, March 2011
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Lupe Mahe.
Ta’ovala, Sune 2011
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Lupe Mahe.

Waist mat, June 2011
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Lupe Mahe.
This ta’ovala was made by Lupe in June 2011 for her husband Niko Mahe. Niko first wore this ta’ovala for sakalameniti or holy sacrament which takes place at church on the first Sunday of every month. The small orange and natural coloured square/diamond shaped motifs are made using a papa or a square shaped device. They are then joined together by crocheting. The triangular motifs along the bottom edges was created separately then sewn on to the body of the ta’ovala. The triangular motifs were created using the technique of no’ono’o or sia (a technique that comes from the island of Niua) and involves knotting together of the fibres using one’s hands. The ta’ovala is made with orange and natural Indonesian flax purchased from Turners Auctions in Mt Wellington, Auckland. It took two weeks to make.

Ta’ovala, 2002
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Falesiu Siu.
Na’e ngaohi ‘a e ta’ovala ni ‘e Falesiu he 2002. Na’e ngaohi ma’a hono hoa ko Sāteki Siu, pea na’e fe’unga mo e māhina ‘e ua hono ngaohi. Na’e ngaohi mei he nge’esi tangai suka ko e ‘omai mei Tonga. Na’e vete ‘e Falesiu ‘i Nu’usila ni pea ne toki illanga mei ai ‘a e ta’ovala.

Waist mat, 2002
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Falesiu Siu.
This ta’ovala was made by Falesiu in 2002. It was made for her husband Sāteki Siu and took two months to make. It is made from synthetic sugar sacks that were sent from Tonga. Faleisu then took it apart here in New Zealand and then crocheted the ta’ovala.
Kiekie, Nōvema 2010
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Falesiu Siu.

Waist ornament, November 2010
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Falesiu Siu.
This kiekie was made by Falesiu in November 2010 for her 11 year old daughter ‘Alisi Tāufa. ‘Alisi wears the ta’ovala to church. It took Falesiu one week to make. It is made from brown and brown/white carpet yarn.

Ta’ovala, ‘Epeleli 2011.
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila ‘e Falesiu Siu.
Na’e lālānga ‘a e ta’ovala ni ‘e Falesiu ‘i ‘Epeleli ma’a hono fo ha ta’u 9 ko Xaviour Tāufa Na’e tui ‘e hono fo ha he faka-Mē, ‘a ia ‘oku fai he Sāpate ‘uluaki ‘o Mē, ‘o fakataumu’a ko e ‘aho ‘o e fānau ‘a e siasi. Na’a ne ‘osi ngaohi ‘a e ta’ovala faltatau mo ‘eni ki he fānau tangata ‘e tokoono ke tui he faka-Mē, pea mo e taha ma’a hono hoa ke ne tui. Na’e ngaohi mei he afo fakanatula ‘InitoNisia na’e fakatau mei he Turners Auctions ‘i Mt Wellington.

Waist mat, April 2011.
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Falesiu Siu.
This ta’ovala was crocheted by Falesiu in April 2011 for her 9 year old son Xaviour Tāufa. It was worn by her son for fakamē or White Sunday which takes place on the first Sunday of May of each year which is entirely dedicated to the children of the congregation. She made six ta’ovala similar to this one for her five boys to all wear for fakamē and also one for her husband to wear. It is made from natural coloured Indonesian flax purchased from Turners Auctions in Mt Wellington.
Waist ornament, May 2011
Made in Auckland, New Zealand by Falesiu Siu.
This kiekie was made by Falesiu in May 2011 for her 17 year old daughter Kalonikakala Ta-ufa. It took one week to make and is worn by Kalonikakala to church. It is made from white carpet yarn.

Embroidered sheet, 1973/74
Made in Tatakomotonga, Tongatapu, Tonga by Kolokesa Kuli-kefu.
This sheet was embroidered in the village of Tatakomotonga, Tongatapu, Tonga. Kolokesa made this sheet in anticipation of the birth of her niece Mele Ha’amo’a Alatini born on the 15th of December 1974. It has been used in various contexts, as a blanket for Mele Ha’amo’a in hospital and when going to church and also to cover her bed when expecting visitors.
Embroidered sheet, 1996
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland, New Zealand by Manue-sina To-nata.
The artist refers to the designs as pekepeka in reference to bats or small birds in flight. This sheet has been used for decoration on several different occasions. In January 2005 it was used along with her other tupenu matala‘i‘akau to decorate the church where her grandson ‘Okusitino Ha‘unga was married. In October 2007, it was used to decorate the house for her late husband Sione To-nata’s 90th birthday and again to decorate the house for his funeral in March 2008.

Embroidered pillowcase, 1995
Made in Mt Roskill, Auckland, New Zealand by Lingisiva ‘Aloua.
The design for this pillowcase comes from a collection of designs that Lingisiva has accumulated from Tonga. This pillowcase features the Tongan proverb, ‘Ko si‘oto vaka ni ‘e taufonua ‘a fé?’ which literally translates as ‘when will my boat ever reach land.’ This proverb is used by men when courting women where they are symbolically asking when will they win her heart.
Tangaipilo matala’i’akau, 1990’s
Ngaohi ‘i Mangere, Nu’usila
’e Kolokesa Kulikefu.
‘Oku ngāue’aki he tangaipilo ni ‘a e kupesi matala’i’akau penisī. Na’e fakatau mai ‘a e seti tangaipilo ni mei he falekoloa’aati mo e tātupenu kuo ‘osi tā pe ai ‘a e kupesi ni. Na’e ngāue’aki ‘a e seti tangaipilo ni he tā mo e vā na’e puke ai ‘a e tamai ‘a Kolokesa ko Suliasi Kulikefu Tupou kimu’a he’ene mate hono taititali ‘o e kau ‘aahi mahaki. Na’e to e ngāue’aki ko e teuteu mo henga hono foha he’ene mali ko Mālani Kulikefu’s ‘i Tīsema 2007.

Embroidered pillowcase, 1990’s
Made in Mangere, Auckland,
New Zealand by Kolokesa Kulikefu.

This pillowcase set features pansy flower designs. The pillow case was bought from an arts and craft store with the design already drawn on. This set was used in January 2001 by Kolokesa’s late father, Suliasi Kulikefu Tupou, during the period just prior to his passing when he had regular visitors to see him. It was also used to decorate the pillows for her son, Mālani Kulikefu’s, bed when he got married in December 2007.

Tupenu moe tangaipilo matala’i’akau, 1993/94
Ngaohi ‘i ‘Aokalani, Nu’usila
’e Tu’utanga Hunuhunu Māhina.


Embroidered sheet and pillowcase set, 1993/94
Made in Auckland, New Zealand,
by Tu’utanga Hunuhunu Māhina.

This is the very first sheet and pillow case set that Tu’utanga made. The red crochet around the edges of the sheet was made by a family friend, a Cook Islands lady, Tele Katoa, who is married to a Tongan. At the time Tu’utanga was part of a women’s art group where she made the sheet and pillowcase and exhibited it during their ‘a’ahi – a day allocated to displaying works that the group had made for the year. Afterwards it was stored away safely until it was given to her eldest daughter, Mele Ha’amoao ‘Alatini, when she got married in December 9 2006 as part of her wedding dowry. This set is now safely treasured by Mele Ha’amoao ‘Alatini, hoping one day she can pass it on to her daughter.
**Embroidered sheet and pillowcase set**,  
August 2009 – August 2010  
Made in Auckland, New Zealand  
by Lingisiva ‘Aloua.  
This embroidered sheet and pillow case set was made between August 2009 and August 2010. The motifs featured are a composition of a colourful floral arrangement. It is embroidered in a style described by Lingisiva as ‘tuikape’ or ‘tuitata’o’ (literally to sew firmly) and creates an effect where the floral designs are firm and tight.

**Embroidered sheet and pillowcase set**,  
May 1998 to January 1999  
Made in Auckland, New Zealand  
by Lingisiva ‘Aloua.  
This embroidered sheet and pillow case set were made between May 1998 and January 1999. The motifs featured are roses. It is embroidered in a style described by Lingisiva as ‘tuipupula’ (literally meaning ‘sew swollen’) and refers to the multi-dimensional look of the rose flowers that it creates.
NIMAMEA’A: ‘AATI TONGA ‘O E TUIMATALA’I’AKAU MO E LANGALEISI
fai ‘e Kolokesa Uafå Måhina-Tuai &
Manuēsina ‘Ofa-ki-Hautolo Måhina

‘Aati Faka-Tonga
‘Oku vahevahe ‘a e ‘aati faka-Tonga ki he fa’ahinga ‘e tolu, ‘a ia ko e tufunga, faiva mo e nimamea’a. ‘Oku ‘uhinga ‘a e tufunga ki he ‘tå-‘o-e-funga’ / faka’ilonga ‘o e funga’ pē ‘tå ‘o e fuo’ / ‘fa’u ‘o e fuo’; faiva mo he ‘fai-‘o-e-tå-he-vå’ pe ‘liunga ‘a e tå mo e ‘feluaki’ ‘a e vå; mo e nimamea’a ki he ‘nima-lelei’5, ‘a ‘uhinga ki he nima ko ha me’angåue lelei mo mohu he fa’ume’a. Ko e fakatātā, ‘oku kau ‘a e tufunga tāvalivali and tufunga tātatau, mo e ngaahi tufunga kehe pē, ki he tufunga. ‘Oku kau ‘a e faiva hīva mo e faiva haka, mo e ngaahi faiva kehe pē, ki he faiva. ‘Oku kau ‘a e nimamea’a lālānga, nimamea’a koka’anga mo e nimamea’a tuikakala, mo e ngaahi nimamea’a kehe pē, ki he nimamea’a. ‘Oku fekau’aki ‘a e fa’ahinga ‘aati ‘e tolu mo e vaengafa ‘a tangata mo fakene ‘i Tonga, ‘o lahūlāhi tufunga mo faiva ‘a tangata ka e lahūlāhi fafine ‘a nimamea’a. Kaekehe, ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e ngaahi ‘aati ‘oku fetuialiki ai ‘a tangata mo fakene5, ‘o hangē ko e ngaahi faiva mo e nimamea’a ‘e ni’ihi. ‘Oku to e vahevahe ‘a e ngaahi fa’ahinga ‘e tolu ‘o e ‘aati ‘o felavei mo e sino6. ‘Oku makatu’unga ‘a e tufunga mo e nimamea’a he sino, ‘a ia ‘oku fa’u fakatouli‘oua kinaua ‘i ‘tu’a-he-sino, ‘o hoko ‘a e sino ko ha me’angåue ki hono fa’u’. Ka ‘i he tafa’aki ‘e taha, ‘oku makatu’unga ‘a e faiva he sino, ‘a ia ‘oku fai hono fa’u he funga ‘o e sino, ‘o ‘tefito-he-sino’ ko e vaka ‘oku fai’aki hono fa’u6. Na’e tuku’au mai ‘a e ‘ilo mo e poto ‘o e ngaahi ‘aati ni he ngaahi ha’a, ‘o tukufakaholo mai ko e ngaahi ngafa fakafonua3. ‘Oku tokekeheke ‘a e ngaahi ‘aati ni ‘i honau fuo mo e uho pea mo e vaka pē hala10, ‘aia tatau mo honau ‘aonga11. Na’e fakatounofo pē ‘a e ‘anga mo e ‘aonga ‘o e ngaahi ‘aati, ‘o fa’u kinautolu ko e ngaahi ngāue faka’ofo’ofa mo ‘aonga lahi12. ‘Oku ‘uhinga ‘a e anga ki he kanoloto ‘o e ‘aati, pea hanga ia ki hono fa’u, ‘o hangē ko e tatau, potupotutatau mo e målie pe faka’ofo’ofa. Ka ‘i he tappa ‘e taha, ‘oku ‘uhinga ‘a e ‘aonga ki he klītu ‘a e ‘aati, ‘o hanga ki he ola pea mo hono ‘aonga pe ngāue ‘a e ‘aati. ‘Oku fisifisimu’a mo kinokinoifia ‘a e fa’unga ‘o e ‘aati faka-Tonga, ‘o tuhī ki he ‘ene matalahi, fenāpasi, felava mo e felāve ‘i hono anga. ‘Oku lahūlāhi ke tu’uma’u ‘a e ngaahi ‘aati he vaa’i kuonga, ‘o tukuheke ange ‘a e me’a mo e funga fo’ou ‘oku hū mai ko e fakalakalaka ‘a e teknoliosia. ‘Oku tupu ‘eni mei he lahūlāhi ke tu’uma’u ‘a e ngaahi fakakaukau mo e foungafai fekau’aki mo e ngaahi vaetolu lalahi ‘o e ‘aati. ‘Oku fahangahanganga ‘a e ngaahi fakakaukau mo e foungafai ni mo hono fakakalasi ‘o e ‘aati faka-Tonga he ‘aho ni ki he ‘taufatungamatou’a [customary], ‘tuputupu’a [heritage], ‘lolotonga [contemporary], mo e ‘mōteni [modern]. ‘Oku hoko hono ngāue ‘a e ngaahi fakakaukau muli ni ke fakamatala’i ‘a e ngaahi ‘aati ni ke vaetu’ua ai kinautolu, ‘o ne fakatupu ai ‘a e ta’emahino mo e ma’uhala. ‘Oku tupu ‘eni mei hono vae ‘a e angama ‘o e fakakaukau mo faka’aonga faka-Tonga ‘o e ‘aati, ‘a ia ‘oku matahahi, fenāpasi, felava mo e felāve ‘i hono anga ka ‘i kai faka-Uēsīte, ‘o fakataautaha mo fakamavahevahe ‘ene to’onga.
Nimamea’a: ‘Aati Faka-Tonga

‘Oku hoko ‘a e tuimatala’i’akau mo e langaleisi ko e fakatātā ‘o e ongo ‘aati muli kuo hū mai ki he ngaahi ‘aati faka-Tonga ‘oku hingoa ko e imamea’a, ‘o ‘ilio ‘a e ‘ulauki ko e nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau ka e ui ‘a e ua ko e nimamea’a langaleisi. Kuo hanga ‘e he kakak fefine Tonga ‘o ohi mai he ngaahi kunga peau nau o’i mai ‘a e ongo ‘aati ni he founga fo’ou, ‘a ia kuo na hoko ai ‘o ‘ilio he ngaahi tapa lahi ‘o e mo’ui fakafonu.

Na’e kaunga lahi ‘a e uaii ‘o e kau misinale ki hono fakataukei ‘a e tuimatala’i’akau mo e langaleisi ki he kakai fefine Tonga. Na’e toki fokotu’u kimui ‘a e ngaahi poto ni ki he silapa ako ‘a e ngaahi ako ‘a e Katolika mo e Metotisi ki he tamaiki fefine, ‘a ia na’e ako ai ‘a e ni’ihi ‘o e kau ‘atisi he faka’alai ali ni he poto he tuimatala’i’akau mo e langaleisi. Na’e hokohoko atu ‘enau faka’aonga’i ‘a e ngaahi poto ni hili ‘enau ako ‘o fai ki he ‘enau matu’ou’a, pea kuo nau to e fanofano atu ‘a e ngaahi poto mo e ‘ilo ko ia ki he ni’ihi kehe.

Neongo hono tali na’e fua ‘omai ki Tonga ‘a e nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau mo e nimamea’a langaleisi ko e ongo ‘aati faka-Ue-site ‘e he hoa ‘o e kau misinale, ‘oku lava pē ke tau pehē ‘oku hoko ia ke ne faka’asili mo fakaalai ‘a e ngaahi fakakaukau mo faka’aonga faka’aati lolotonga faka-Tonga 15. Ta u fakatātā, ‘oku hoko ‘a e nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau 14 ko e fōtunga fo’ou pē ia ‘e taha ‘o e nimamea’a tuikakala 15. ‘Oku ngāue’aki ‘a e nimamea’a tuikakala ‘a e ngaahi me’a faka’ā takai, ‘o hangē ko e matatala’i’akau namu lelei, fua’i’akau, kili’i’akau, mo e lau, ke tui’aki ‘a e ngaahi kupesi ‘o e kahoa mo e sisi pē teunga tau’olunga. Ka ko e nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau ko e fōtunga pē ia ‘e taha ‘o e nimamea’a tuikakala, ‘a ia ‘oku ngāue’aki ‘a e ngaahi me’a fo’ou, ‘o hangē ko e hui mo e filo lanu kehekehe he konga tupenu hina. Pea ko e nimamea’a langaleisi 16 ko hono to e fao’i pē ia ‘o e nimamea’a lālāanga 17, ‘o ngāue’aki ‘e he ua ‘a e ngaahi me’a he ‘ātakai ki hono lālāanga’aki ‘e he nima ka e ngāue’aki ‘e he ‘uluaki ki hono tu’aki ‘a e hui mo e filo 16.

‘Oku fakatoutatau pē ko e langaleisi mo e tuimatala’i’akau ki hono to e fao’i ‘o ‘a e ‘ātai ‘o e lālāanga mo e tuikakala pē ko e ngaahi ‘aati toki fakahū mai mei muli ka ‘oku ‘ikai ke na kehe ai mei he teito’i anga ‘o e ‘ātai faka-Tonga, ‘a ia ‘oku felavai mo felāve’i ‘ene founga, ‘o na fakatou fa’o lōua pē ‘i loto. Kuo hanga ‘e he kau ‘ātisi fefine ‘o fālute fakatou’osi ‘a e nimamea’a langaleisi mo e nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau ‘o hoko ko honau ‘konga. Ta u fakatātā, ‘oku potopotou’i ‘a e mugi ‘ātisi fefine Tonga hono teuteu’aki ‘a e mugi mo e tupenu hina [’o kau ai mo e tupenu hina] ‘ufi’ufi moheunga mo e tangai pilo ‘a e ngaahi kupesi tui pea fa’a kau ai mo hono lālāanga leisi fakafauikī. ‘Oku lahi hono ngāue’aki ‘a e kupesi matala’i’akau ka e to e kau atu pē ki ai mo ngaahi kupesi manupuna, mata, lea heliaki mo e fetu’u.

‘Oku ‘ikai ngata pē ko e ‘ufi’ufi moheunga tui mo e tangai pilo tui ko e ngāue ‘aati fakanimamea’a ka ‘oku to e hoko pē ko e koloa ‘a faini. ‘Oku ngāue’aki ‘e fefine ‘a e ngaahi me’a faka’aati ni he ngaahi ouau faka-Tonga, ‘o hangē ko e fefakafetongi’aki koloa he fai’aho mo e mal i. ‘oku
'ikai ngata pē ai ka 'oku to e ngāue’aki makehe ki hono teuteu 'o loto Falelotu he ngaahi Sāpate tu'utu'uni, ko 'api pē ha feitu'u 'i ha putu pē ngāue’aki 'i 'api ki ha me’a mahu'inga 'oku hoko.

'Oku to e ngāue’aki 'a e nimamea’a langaleisei mo e nimamea’a tuimatālā’i’akau ki hono teuteu’aki 'a e teunga mo e kofuloto 'o fafine. 'Oku 'i ai ha kau fafine mei he kolo ko Tefisi mei Vava’u 'i Tonga kuo nau nau fakalaka'i he founa makehe mo fo’ou 'a e founa teuteu 'oku 'iloa ko e 'ākenga Faka-Tefisi' 15. 'Oku hanga 'e he ākenga ko 'eni 'o ngāue’aki hono fakataha'i fakatoulōua 'a e langaleisei mo e tuikakala pē langaleisei 'ata'atā, 'a ia 'oku takitaha fai tau'atāina 'a e fefine 'ene founa fālāngā, 'o 'īkai ngata pē he'enau kehekehe ka e to e faka’ofo’ofa foki. 'Oku anga’aki 'e he founa 'ākenga Faka-Tefisi' ha kofu mo ha tupenu 'oku ngāue’aki 'a e tupenu leisi pē sīfoni. 'Oku tu'i loto ha kofuloto 'oku aata mai ki tu'a he tupenu kofu. Ka 'i'kai pē ke lālāngā leisi 'a e tapa 'o e kofuloto 'oku tu'i matala'i'akau 'ata'atā pē; pea ka 'i'kai 'oku lālāngā leisi 'a e konga ki ‘olunga. 'Oku fusu mai leva ko ha ākenga fehilihi’i. 'Oku 'iloa 'a e 'ākenga Faka-Tefisi' 'i 'Aokalani pea 'oku fakafeke'aki ia mo e kau fafine mei he kolo Tonga ko 'eni. Kuo hoko leva 'a e ākenga ni ke ngāue’aki 'e he kakai fafine kehe. 'Oku tu'i 'a e ngaahi kofu he ākenga ni ki he lotu mo e ngaahi me'a 'o hangē ko e mali mo e fai'ahō.

'Oku to e ngāue’aki 'a e langaleisei 'e he kakai fafine Tonga ki hono ngaohi 'o e tā'ovala mo e kiekie. 'Oku tu'i 'a e ta’ovala fakatoulōua 'e tangata mo fafine mo e kiekie 'e fafine pē ko e konga ‘o e vala fakafonua 'o Tonga, pea 'oku tu'i kinaua ko e faka’ilōngaa 'o e faka’apa’apa. 'Oku tu'i kinaua ki he lotu mo e ngaahi me'a mahu’inga, 'o hangē ko e mali, fai'ahō mo e papī. Na'e fua ngaohi’aki 'a e ta’ovala mo e kiekie 'a e ngaahi me'a mu'a fakanatula ka 'i he lolotonga ni 'oku ngaohi’aki fakatoulōua kinaua 'a e ngaahi me'a fakanatula motu’a mo e ngaahi me'a fa’u fo’ou. 'Oku hoko 'a e lahi mo ma’ama’a 'a e ngaahi me'a ke 'ikai to e fakangatanga 'a e fo’ou mo faka’ofo’ofa ‘a e ngaahi ta’ovala mo e kiekie he 'a no ai. 'Oku to e manako ‘a e kau ātisi fafine ke ngaohi ha ngaahi ngāue faka’ofo’ofa mei he ngaahi me’a kuo 'osi ngāue’aki, 'o hangē ko e nge’esi tangai mo e veve ‘a e kakāi, 'a ia 'oku mo’oni ai 'a e lea heliaki ‘iloa ‘oku pehē, ‘ko e veve ki he tangata ‘e taha ko e koloa ia ki he tangata ‘e taha.”

'Oku makehe mo fo’ou ‘a e ngaue’ ‘a fafine, ‘o ‘i'kai ngata pē he me’a ‘oku nau ngaue’aki ka e kau ai mo e fili ‘enau kupesi. Na'e ngaohi ‘a e ta’ovala mo e kiekie he faka’ali’ali ni mei he filo kapeti li’aki pea mo e nge’esi tangai li’aki.

Kautaha Nimamea’a ‘a Fafine

'Oku ‘i ai ‘a e lea heliaki faka-Tonga ‘oku pehē “'Oku tōkanga 'a tangata pea 'oku manga ka e falehanga 'a fafine pea 'oku hanga” 20. 'Oku tuhu ‘a e lea heliaki ni ki he vaengafa tupu’a he vā 'o tangata mo fafine 'i Tonga. 'Oku feka’u’aki ‘a e ngafo ‘o tangata mo e ngoue ka e felāve’i ‘a e ngafo ‘o fafine mo ‘api, ‘o hangē ko e lālāngā mo e ngaahi nimamea’a kehekehe pē. Ko e ‘manga’ mo e ‘hanga’ ko e fa’ahinga fua, ‘a ia ‘oku fua’aki ‘a e ngaue ‘a tangata ‘a e ‘manga” ‘o e va’e ka e fua’aki ‘a e ngaue
‘a fafine ‘a e ‘hangā ‘o e nima. ‘Oku tuhu ‘a e lea heliaki ni ki he ngafa tefito ‘o fafine he’ene ngāue ‘i ‘api ka e to e kau ki ai mo e nimame’a, ‘a ia ko e taha ‘etua ‘aati.

‘Oku matu’aki mahu’inga fau ‘a e ngafa ‘o fafine ‘i hono tokangaekina mo fakatolonga ‘etau ngaahi ‘aati nimame’a, ka ‘oku ‘ikai fa’a fakamahu’inga ‘i ‘tu’a mei Tonga. ‘Oku ‘i ‘ia ‘a e ngaahi ‘aati ‘e ni’ihi he malumalu ‘o e nimame’a ‘oku fakamahu’inga ‘i ‘o lahi ange he ngaahi ‘aati ‘e ni’ihi, ‘o hangē ko e nimame’a koka’anga. ‘Oku ‘ikai ha to e tala ‘a ko e kakai fefine Tonga ko e kakai ‘oku nau mālohi he ngaohi ngatu ‘i hono fakahoa ki he toenga ‘o e Moana Pasifiki. Kaekhe, ‘oku ‘ikai fa’a fakamahu’inga ‘i ‘a e nimame’a langaleisi mo e nimame’a tuimatala’i’akau ko e me’a faka-Tonga ‘o hangē ko hono fakamahu’inga ‘i lahi kinaua he Moana Pasifiki. ‘Oku ‘uhinga pehē ‘oku matu’aki mahu’inga ‘a ‘a e ngaahi faka’ali’ali ‘o hangē ko e Nimame’a: ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatala’i’akau mo e langaleisi, ‘o ‘ikai ngata pē hono taukave’i ko e nimame’a tuimatala ‘i’akau ko e nimame’a langaleisi ko e konga ia ‘o e fakakaukau ko faka’aonga faka-Tonga pē koloa tukufakaholo fakalukufu’a mo hono fakafafa’ahinga ‘o e nimame’a ‘a ‘oku nau to e hanga ‘o faka’ali’ali honau mahu’inga he ngaahi me’a fakafonua kehekehe.

‘Oku hoko ‘a e ngāue ‘a e kau ‘ātisi fefine Tonga ‘o ‘ikai ngata pē he fakataautaha ka e fakakautaha, ‘o hangē ko e kau kinau faka’ali’ali ‘a ‘a ko e kautaha ‘oku nau ngāue fakataautaha ko e koku’anga. ‘Oku lahi ‘a e ngaahi kautaha ‘a fafine kua fokotu’u ‘i Nu’usila ko e kula l：“fakakolo, fakakomiuniit pē fakasiasi, ‘a ia ‘oku kau ‘a ‘a e ngaahi he’ene ngaahi ngāue. Ko e kau fefine ‘oku faka’ali’ali ‘enau ngaahi ngāue henī ‘oku ‘ikai ngata pē ko e kau ‘ātisi fē kinautolu ‘iata kinautolu ko ‘oku nau to e kau he ngaahi kautaha nimame’a ‘oku nau fakatahataha he funga ‘o e faone ‘a e kau he ngaahi ‘a i ‘a faone ‘e ngaahi ‘a e ngaahi ‘a e ngaahi ‘a i ‘a faone kinautolu faka‘ahinga mo ngaahi he ngaahi kinautolu he ngaahi. ‘E kaunga lahi ‘a e Nimame’a: ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatala ‘i’akau mo e langaleisi ki hono faka’ilonga ‘i ‘a e ofa, manako, mateaki, fifti mo e poto ‘o e fefine ‘ātisi Tonga ‘o e nimame’a. Ko e kau paionia, tauhi mo e faikao kinautolu ‘o e nimame’a pe ‘a e faone ‘o e nimame’a ke hokohoko atu hono ngāue ‘i, fakalaka’i mo fakatolonga ma’ae sivilaise

Aofangatuku
‘Oku tefito ‘a e faka’ali’ali ni ‘i he nimame’a tuimatala ‘i’akau mo e nimame’a langaleisi. ‘Oku malava ke fakamahu’inga ‘i hona anga faka’ali’ali mo fa’akoa anga taautaha mo lukufua ‘i he ‘ata fālaihe ‘o e ‘aati faka-Tonga mo hono vahevahe ki he faiva, tufunga mo e nimame’a. ‘Oku tupu mei hono mahino ‘i ‘a e fa’unega ‘o e ngaahi ‘aati faka-Tonga [ka e tefito ki he nimame’a] pe ‘a e ngaahi ‘aati fo’ou mei muli ki he vahe taktaha ‘a e mahu’ingamalie ‘a e ‘aati faka-Tonga nimame’a tuimatala ‘i’akau mo e nimame’a langaleisi. ‘E kaunga lahi ‘a e Nimame’a: ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatala ‘i’akau mo e langaleisi ki hono faka’ilonga ‘i ‘a e ofa, manako, mateaki, fifti mo e poto ‘o e faone ‘a i ‘a faone ‘a e ngaahi ‘a i ‘a faone ‘a i ‘a faone kinautolu faka‘ahinga mo ngaahi he ngaahi. ‘E kaunga lahi ‘a e Nimame’a: ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatala ‘i’akau mo e langaleisi ki hono faka’ilonga ‘i ‘a e ofa, manako, mateaki, fifti mo e poto ‘o e faone ‘a i ‘a faone ‘a i ‘a faone ‘a i ‘a faone kinautolu faka‘ahinga mo ngaahi he ngaahi. ‘E kaunga lahi ‘a e Nimame’a: ‘Aati Tonga ‘o e tuimatala ‘i’akau mo e langaleisi ki hono faka’ilonga ‘i ‘a e ofa, manako, mateaki, fifti mo e poto ‘o e faone ‘a i ‘a faone ‘a i ‘a faone ‘a i ‘a faone kinautolu faka‘ahinga mo ngaahi he ngaahi.
7. Vakai ki a Māhina, Ka’ili & Ka’ili [2005], Māhina, M. ‘O. [2006].
10. ‘Oku ‘uhinga tatau ‘a e ‘hala mo e ‘vaka,’ ‘o hangē ko e lea heliaki ko e “Tvolo hala / vaka he sikotā” (Ka’ili, T. Talanoa, 13/01/2011.)
12. Māhina, ‘O. [2008a mo e 2008b].
14. ‘Oku ‘uhinga ‘a e lea langa, lalanga pē lā langa ki hono fakafelavai ‘o e khoi mo e vā, ‘o hangē ko e nimame’a langaleisi mo e nimame’a lālanga.
15. ‘Oku ngā‘u‘aki he nimame’a tuimatala’i’akau mo e nimame’a tuilakalaka.
16. ‘Oku ma’a ‘a lea ‘leiisi’ mei hono faka-Tonga ‘o e lea ‘lingilisi ko e ‘face.’
17. ‘Oku ‘uhinga ‘a e lea langa, lalanga pē lā langa ki hono fakafelavai ‘o e khoi mo e vā, ‘o hangē ko e nimame’a langaleisi mo e nimame’a lālanga.
18. ‘Oku ngā‘u‘aki he nimame’a tuimatala’i’akau mo e nimame’a tuilakalaka ‘a e mata’i’hui [mata’o-e-hui] pe, ko hono tatau, ko e ava’ihui [ava’o-e-hui] ko ha me’angāue ki hono fakafelavai ‘a e filo ‘i hono tui ‘o e ngā‘ahi kupesi mataла’a’akau, fu‘i’akau, kili’i’akau, mo e lau ‘i hono fa’u ‘o e ngā‘ahi kupesi. ‘Oku hoko mo e me’a tatau he nimame’a langaleisi, ‘a ia ‘oku ngā‘u‘aki ‘a e mata’i’hui pe, ko hono ‘ata, ava’ihui ki hono fakafelavai ‘a e ngā‘ahi filo.

Ma’ungatala:


Kuchler, S and G Were. (Eds.). (2005), (pp. 141-166). Oxford:Berg


Māhina, ‘O., Ka’ili, T. O.. ‘Oku ‘uhinga ‘a e lea mataла’a’akau ki he mata’o ‘e ‘akau,’ ‘a ia ‘oku tokí tui fakatala he fūtonga ‘o e kupesi, ‘o tokí ‘iloa leva ko e kakala.


Tongan Arts:

Tongan art is divided into three categories, tufunga (material), faiva (performance) and nimamea’a (fine) arts. ¹ Tufunga literally means ‘beating-the-surface’ / ‘marking the surface’ or ‘beating of form’ / ‘creating form’, ² faiva literally means to ‘do-time-in-space’ or the ‘intensification’ of time and ‘reconstitution’ of space; ³ and nimamea’a literally means ‘fine-hands’, ⁴ which is a reflection of the delicate and meticulous nature of the hands as a means of production. These categories are further divided into various practices. For example, tufunga includes, but is not restricted to, tufunga tāvaluvalu (painting), tufunga lalava (kafa-sennit-lashing), tufunga langafale (house-building) and tufunga tātatau (tattooing). Faiva includes, but is not restricted to, faiva ta’anga (poetry), faiva hiva (music) and faiva haka (dance). Nimamea’a includes, but is not restricted to, nimamea’a lālanga (mat-weaving), nimamea’a koka’anga (barkcloth-making) and nimamea’a tuikakala (flower-designing). The three categories of art are connected to the ‘gender’ divisions of functions between men and women in Tonga where tufunga and faiva are predominantly male dominated and nimamea’a are predominantly the domain of women. However, there are examples where these gender divisions can overlap, ⁵ such as women artists involved in faiva performance arts as well as being involved in nimamea’a or fine arts.

The three categories of art are also classified in relation to the body. ⁶ Tufunga and nimamea’a arts are ‘tefito-he-tu’a-sino’ or ‘non-body-centred’ meaning the production of art are situated outside of the body, where the body is simply utilised as an instrument. ⁷ Faiva on the other hand are ‘tefito-he-sino’ or ‘body-centred’ meaning the production of performance arts are made by the body and centred on the body, where the body is the medium in the process of production. ⁸ The refined knowledge and skills associated with these three areas of art were hereditary professions and practiced as specialised forms of social activity. ⁹ All three categories vary in terms of their fuo (form), uho (content) and vaka or hala ¹⁰ (medium) and have multiple functions. ¹¹ In classical Tongan arts, the ‘quality’ and ‘utility’ of art were combined to produce both beautiful and useful works, and quality is always given priority over the utility. ¹² Quality is comprised of what is internal or intrinsic to art and is connected to the process of producing of art, such as tatau (symmetry), potupotutatau (harmony) and malie or faka‘ofo‘ofa (beauty). Utility on the other hand is comprised of what is external or extrinsic to all arts and is connected to the outcome and in turn the use or function of art.

The framework of Tongan art is highly sophisticated in terms of its plural, holistic, circular and inclusive nature. Over time and space the three categories remain the same despite the incorporation of new materials, art practices and advances in technology. This is because the conceptual essence and framework pertinent to each of the three categories remains largely the same. Such a framework defies the use of terms such as ‘customary’, ‘heritage’, ‘contemporary’ and ‘modern’ to classify Tongan art
today. The use of such terms to describe Tongan art imposes foreign concepts that are in opposition to the conceptual framework of Tongan art and results in the compartmentalising of art forms which can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. This is due to a severance of the natural cyclical flow of the Tongan concept and practice of art which is plural, holistic, circular and inclusive in approach rather than the individualistic and exclusive Western concept of art.

**Nimamea’a: Tongan Fine Arts:**

Embroidery and crochet are examples of two introduced art practices that have been incorporated into the Tongan arts category of nimamea’a, with the former known as nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau and the latter as nimamea’a langaleisi. Tongan women have adopted and over time adapted these two practices in unique ways, so that they now feature prominently in various Tongan cultural contexts.

Missionaries’ wives were responsible for introducing embroidery and crochet to local Tongan women. These skills were later incorporated into the educational syllabus of Catholic and Methodist schools for girls, which is where some of the artists in this exhibition were first taught the skills of embroidery and crochet. Once they learned these skills they continued to practice after leaving school, into their adult life, and have passed on their knowledge and skills to others.

Although it is accepted that the art of embroidery and crochet were originally Western forms of practice brought to Tonga by missionaries’ wives, it can be argued that these practices enhanced and expanded existing Tongan art concepts and practices. For example, embroidery or nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau is a new expression of nimamea’a tuikakala, or flower designing. Nimamea’a tuikakala involves working with natural materials such as sweet-scent flowers, fruits, barks and leaves to create beautiful floral designs for necklaces, waist ornaments or dance costumes. Nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau is a form of tuikakala that involves working with new materials such as a needle and different coloured thread on a white canvas. Nimamea’a langaleisi or crochet on the other hand is an expansion of nimamea’a lalanga or weaving, where the latter involves weaving of natural materials using one’s hand and the former using needle and thread.

Whether the argument is that langaleisi and tuimatala’i’akau are a development of already existing art practices of lalanga and tuikakala respectively or that they are introduced art practices does not make a difference to the character of Tongan art as the circular and inclusive nature of Tongan arts accommodates both possibilities. Tongan women fine artists have embraced the two art forms of nimamea’a langalesisi and nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau and have made them their ‘own’. For example these artists masterfully adorn plain (and usually white) bed sheets and pillow cases with beautiful and intricate embroidered designs and in some cases featuring fine crochet detailing. The designs are often floral
but there are exceptions such as those featured in this exhibition with the inclusion of birds, faces, proverbs and stars.

Embroidered and crocheted bed sheets and pillowcases are not only fine works of art but are also part of Tongan women’s material wealth. As items of wealth they play an important cultural and artistic role in various Tongan ceremonies involving gift-giving and receiving, such as birthdays and weddings. Other than featuring in such contexts, they are normally reserved for special use such as to decorate the interior of a church for a commemorative Sunday, decorate one’s home or specific venue for the funeral of a loved one or used within one’s own home on very special occasions.

Nimamea’a langaleisi or crochet and nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau or embroidery also feature in Tongan women’s clothing and undergarments. A group of women from the village of Tefisi, Vava’u in Tonga have developed, with a sense of creativity and originality, a particular style of garment, known as ‘Tefisi Style’. This style incorporates either a combination of both crochet and embroidery or just crochet, blended with a freestyle construction using only particular types of material which is then further individualised with each woman adding their unique flair. A typical ‘Tefisi Style’ garment is comprised of a dress and wraparound of sheer fabric such as lace or chiffon. Worn underneath is a slip or undergarment that can be seen through the sheer fabric. This undergarment would either be crocheted around the edges with embroidery; or only just feature embroidery; or the top half would be completely crocheted. The overall look is a layered style. The ‘Tefisi Style’ is known within the Tongan community in Auckland and is associated with women from this Tongan village. However, other Tongan women have been influenced by this particular style. These outfits are worn to church and special occasions such as weddings and birthdays.

Nimamea’a langalesisi is also used by Tongan women for the creation of ta’ovala (waist mat) and kiekie (waist ornament). The formal wearing of ta’ovala, by both men and women, and kiekie, by women only, are part of Tongan national dress and are worn usually as markers of respect. They are worn to church and special occasions such as weddings, birthdays and christenings. Ta’ovala and kiekie were once only made with natural fibres but now they are made with both natural and synthetic materials. With access to readily available and cheap materials there are no creative boundaries to the making of ta’ovala and kiekie today. These artists also love to create beautiful works using recycled materials such as synthetic sacks or reusing other people’s rubbish and validating the popular saying that “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure”. Tongan women take on an innovative approach not only with their materials but also with their choice of designs and patterns. The ta’ovala and kiekie featured in this exhibition are made out of discarded outdoor carpet yarn and recycled synthetic sugar sacks.
Tongan Women's Fine Arts Groups:

The Tongan proverb “‘Oku tōkanga ‘a tangata pea ‘oku manga ka e falehanga ‘a fafine pea ‘oku hanga” is translated as “Men possess the gardens measured by the feet but women possess the house measured by the hands”.20 This proverb alludes to the customary division of labour between men and women in Tonga. Men’s work is associated with working the land and women’s work around the home including weaving and other forms of fine arts. ‘Manga’ and ‘hanga’ are Tongan forms of measurement where men measure their work with ‘manga’ using their feet and women measure their fine arts with ‘hanga’ using their hands. This proverb alludes to the key role that women play with regards to work around the home but also with nimamea’a, our fine arts.

The role that Tongan women play in maintaining and preserving the fine arts is very significant, but not always recognised outside of a Tongan context. There are art practices within the category of nimamea’a that are more recognisable than others such as nimamea’a koka’anga, the fine art of ngatu-making or Tongan barkcloth-making. Tongan women are prolific makers of bark-cloth and Tongan ngatu are easily distinguishable from others made throughout the Moana Pacific. However, other art practices such as nimamea’a langaleisi and tuimatala’i’akau are not as easily recognisable as Tongan as the arts of embroidery and crochet are widely practiced throughout the Pacific. That is why exhibitions such as Nimamea’a: the fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet are important in not only making a statement that embroidery and crochet are part of Tonga’s art thinking and practice or collective heritage and in particular the classification of nimamea’a or fine arts, but also to illustrate that they are items of wealth that feature in various Tongan cultural contexts.

The continued practice, maintenance and preservation of Tongan fine arts are attributed to Tongan women artists that work on their own or in groups such as a kautaha koka’anga – a collective group that get together to make ngatu or barkcloth. In New Zealand there are various women’s groups that are formed as part of one’s village, community or church which includes art in its activities. The women featured in this exhibition are all individual artists in their own right but they are also members of women’s fine arts groups which get together regularly for fellowship as well as to create works of art.

Conclusion:

This exhibition focuses on the fine arts of nimamea’a tuimatala’i’akau or embroidering and nimamea’a langaleisi or crocheting. Their specific and general aesthetic, practical qualities and values can be appreciated more critically in the broader context of the framework of Tongan art and its categories of faiva, tufunga, and nimamea’a. It is only through an understanding of this framework of Tongan arts (in particular nimamea’a) and how new art practices are incorporated within each category can one truly appreciate the fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet. Nimamea’a:
The fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet will contribute to highlight the love, passion, dedication, ingenuity and innovation of Tongan women fine artists. They are the pioneers, custodians and teachers of Tonga’s nimame’a or fine arts and are the living treasures upon which Tongan fine arts continue to be practiced, maintained and preserved for posterity.

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Hala is another Tongan word for medium as in “Te-volo hala he sikota-” (the devil appears in the medium of a sikota-bird) (Ka’ili, T, personal communication, 13/01/2011.)

The Tongan word tui means ‘pierce,’ as involved in the fine arts of tuimatatala’i’akau and tuilikakala.

The word ‘leisi’ as in the nimame’a langalesi is the Tonganisation of ‘lace.’

The Tongan words langa or lalanga, as used for nimame’a langaleisei or crocheting and nimame’a lalanga or mat-weaving, means ‘weave.’

In fine arts such as tuimatatala’i’akau or embroidering and tuilikakala or flower-designing, the mata’hui [eye-of-the-needle] or, its opposite, ava’hui [hole-of-the-needle] is used as an artistic device for the intersection of cotton threads in the production of flower designs or intersecting flower pedals, fruit-strips, bark-strips, and leaves in the production of kupesi or geometric designs. The same applies to the fine art of langaleisei or crocheting, where the eye-of-the-needle or hole-of-the-needle is used for the intersection of cotton threads.


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Manuēsina ‘Ofa-Ki-Hautolo Māhina hails from Tefisi, Vava’u and Tatakamotonga, Mu’a, Tonga. She has a background in Pacific fashion, specifically Tongan fashion and style. At a young age Manuēsina was introduced to the ‘wonders’ of the sewing machine, as well as being exposed to the unique and innovative fashion of Tongan women here in New Zealand which has continued to fuel her interest and passion in the area. Manuēsina has been a member of various Tongan women arts groups over the years and is currently a member of the Kulupu Falehanga ‘i Teleioa Group where she continues to be inspired by their creativity and innovation in keeping the Tongan fine arts truly alive and thriving in New Zealand.

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