

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AT WHIRINAKI WHARE TAONGA

EDUCATION VISITS TERM 3 2026



Whirinaki Whare Taonga is Upper Hutt's own art and culture hub. We are committed to offering FREE engaging and accessible visual and performing art experiences for local students and have a range of exciting world class programmes.



Message from the
Learning Programmes
Specialist, Karen Nel

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Last term, students explored boardgames and the work of war artist Nugent Welch. In Term 3, our focus shifts to Te Ao Māori, identity, and belonging through the exhibitions Tū Tonu Ōrongomai and Oho Mai, and the work of Darcy Nicholas. Students will create a mixed-media artwork inspired by their own identity, whakapapa, and sense of belonging.

Te Ao Māori,

OPTION 1

DARCY NICHOLAS

Land of My Ancestors

TERM 3 and 4

25 Jul – 18 Oct 2026



Students will explore whakapapa, identity, and belonging through the powerful artworks of Hutt valley artist Darcy Nicholas, discovering how artists use symbols, colour, and storytelling to share personal and cultural histories.

Curriculum links: Te Reo Māori, Visual arts and Social Studies

OPTION 2

TŪ TONU ŌRONGOMAI

TERM 3 and 4

17 Aug – 22 Nov 2026



Students will explore contemporary Māori art and the many ways artists express culture, identity, and connection to place through painting, sculpture, raranga, and other creative practices.

Curriculum links: Te Reo Māori, Visual arts and Social Studies

OHO MAI

The Awakening

TERM 3 and 4

8 Aug – 18 Oct 2026



Students will explore the history of Ōrongomai Marae and discover how communities preserve stories, culture, and identity through people, places, traditions, and shared experiences.

Curriculum links: Te Reo Māori, Visual arts and Social Studies

OPTION 3

COMBINED SESSION : Three exhibitions comes together through shared themes of whakapapa, identity, storytelling, and connection to community and whenua. Students will discover how Māori artists and communities use art to express memory, culture, belonging, and personal identity. 17 Aug-18 Oct

LET'S PLAY!

TERM 3

Until 9 Aug 2026



Are you a Snakes and Ladders Superstar? A Chess Champion? A Monopoly Master? Welcome to the colourful and creative world of board games at Whirinaki.

Celebrating the joy, excitement (and occasional frustration) of playing board games, this exhibition includes hands on games for students to play and information on family favourites such as Monopoly, Scrabble and Connect Four, as well as traditional games like chess.

Boardgames in gallery: Snakes and Ladders, Scrabble, connect 4, Chess, Chinese checkers, Checkers, Ludo, Monopoly and Uno

Curriculum links: Visual Arts, Mathematics and Social Studies

GALLERY WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Welcome and Karakia

Interactive Presentation: The World of Games (15min)

Tamariki will learn about different elements in boardgames through playing.

Guided gallery exploration Observation, (35min)

Discussion, and play with interactive board game.

Creative Workshop (30min)

Student will design their own board game:

invent characters, symbols, and challenges, then bring it to life through mixed media.

Our Big Questions This Term

What makes a great game?

How do games bring people together?

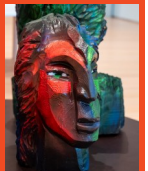
How can design and creativity turn ideas into playable experiences

What can traditional and modern games teach us about strategy, fairness, and fun?

Darcy Nicholas: Land of My Ancestors

DARCY NICHOLAS BY HIMSELF: 25 Jul – 18 Oct 2026

COMBINED SESSION WITH Oho Mai, Tū Tonu Ōrongomai : 17 Aug—18 Oct 2026



Exhibition overview

Darcy Nicholas is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most visionary storytellers. His creative career has spanned more than fifty years as an artist, sculptor, leader and strategic

administrator.

His art often combine symbols, text, and imagery to express ideas about land, whakapapa, and important events in New Zealand's past.

Nicholas has been recognised for his service and leadership fostering the growth in Māori art in local communities and

Gallery & Workshop Schedule

Mihi Whakatau & Karakia at the Pou

Guided Gallery Exploration

Students explore the exhibition through close looking, discussion, and observation. Together we will explore: Symbols and hidden meanings, colour and emotion, storytelling through art and connections to whakapapa, whenua, history, and community.

Creative Workshop – Pepeha Mixed Media Artwork

Students create their own mixed-media artwork inspired by pepeha, symbols and patterns and family, identity, and belonging.

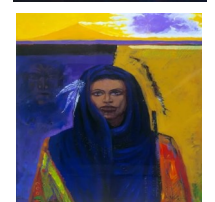
Our Big Questions.

What is whakapapa and why is it important?

How do artists share history, culture, and memory?

How can symbols and images communicate meaning?

What stories would you tell about your own identity and community?



Oho Mai—THE AWAKENING

8 Aug – 18 October (COMBINED SESSION: Darcy Nicholas Land of my Ancestors and Tū Tonu
Ōrongomai : 17 Aug—18 Oct 2026

Exhibition overview



Oho Mai brings together four contemporary Māori artists from our region, Garry Nicholas, Joanne Kahui, Louis Mikaere, and Stephen Thorpe whose practices reflect the richness and evolving nature of te ao Māori. Working across a range of mediums and approaches, each artist offers a distinct perspective grounded in kaupapa Māori, whakapapa, identity, and connection to place.

Through painting, sculpture, raranga, and tā moko, *Oho Mai* explores both contemporary expression and cultural continuity, celebrating the strength and vitality of Māori creativity today. The exhibition highlights how artists continue to draw from mātauranga Māori while responding to the world around them in innovative, thoughtful, and deeply personal ways.

Tū Tonu Ōrongomai

17 Aug –22 Nov 2026

Exhibition overview

In August 2026, Ōrongomai Marae marks 50 years in Upper Hutt with an exhibition that brings together the people, moments, and movements that made it possible.

From the bold decision to establish a marae in the heart of a growing city, this exhibition traces how Ōrongomai came into being. It celebrates the visionaries, builders, and cultural leaders who shaped its foundation, including the powerful legacy of Māwai-hakona, whose performances carried Ōrongomai onto national and international stages.

At its heart, this is a story of belonging: how a community created a place for itself, and how that place continues to serve, welcome, and grow people who continue to shape it.



Gallery visit.

Mihi Whakatau— Gathering by pou for welcoming

Gallery Students will engage with video, stories, photographs. Learning about the past the present and the future of Ōrongomai Marae

Creative workshop: Create mixed media My Pepeha artwork

Our Big Questions.

What makes a place a home?

What is whakapapa and why is it important?

Why are places like Ōrongomai Marae important to communities?

How do people keep stories and traditions alive?

How can art help tell the story of who we are?

COMBINED SESSION

17 Aug—18 Oct 2026

Darcy Nicholas, Oho Mai, Tū Tonu Ōrongomai



Whakapapa • Identity • Belonging

COMBINED SESSION: Darcy Nicholas, Oho Mai & Tū Tonu Ōrongomai

Students will explore whakapapa, identity, storytelling, and connection to community and whenua through art, history, and personal stories. They will discover how Māori artists and communities express culture, belonging, and identity, and create a mixed-media pepeha artwork inspired by their own connections and experiences.

Students will:

- Explore Māori perspectives and cultural identity.
 - Discover stories of community and belonging.
 - Investigate how artists communicate ideas and emotions.
- Create a mixed-media pepeha artwork.

Our Big Questions.

- What is whakapapa and why is it important?
- Why are places like Ōrongomai Marae important to communities?
- How do people keep stories and traditions alive?
- How can art help tell the story of who we are?

CURRICULUM LINKS:

VISUAL ARTS

- Understanding Visual Arts in Context (UC)
- Developing Ideas (DI)

SOCIAL SCIENCE

- Identity, culture, and organisation
- Place and environment

TE REO MĀORI

- Cultural understanding and tikanga

(Teacher note: It will be helpful with the booking to provide children's information about their Maunga and awa if they're not from the Hutt valley.)

AIR PLAYGROUND

TERM 4 Fully booked

TERM 1 Taking bookings from 28 Jan –28 Feb

31 Oct 2026 - 28 Feb 2027

Whoosh, swirl, gust, squish, flow, float and more in Air Playground. This touring exhibition gives curious kids the chance to play with air and focus on STEM. Experience hands-on the science of aerodynamics and the amazing invisible elemental force of air and embark on a journey of scientific exploration, discovery and fun – let science blow you away! An amazing way to end the year tighter.



Primary and Intermediate School Visits (Year 1 –8)

We welcome schools to visit Whirinaki Whare Taonga and take part in our booked education programmes with our Learning Programmes Specialist.

SESSIONS (105MIN) max 30 tamariki per session

Tuesday—Friday

Morning session: 9:30-11:15

Afternoon session 12:15-14:00

Cost: There is **no charge** for our education classes.

Visit includes a **curriculum-linked resource pack**.

PLANNING YOUR VISIT

Book Your Visit

Karen Nel

Learning Programmes Specialist

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