

I began this work by exploring how to reframe and recontextualise legends and myths passed down within the culture I identify with, Maori. I wanted to bring an awareness to the current issues that woman and men face, helping to bring a change and shift to the perpetuating stories that root themselves in the retelling of many social stereotypes held within a culture's story. The classic paradigm of patriarchal hierarchy where the highest value is placed in god, then as follows, man, woman, children, animals with nature last, highlights how common prejudices of sexism and speciesism continue to perpetuate in the stories we all tell. As a woman, I closely link the destruction of nature with the domination of women and their bodies. This work looks in depth at one particular Maori myth, the story of the demigod Maui and his efforts to gain eternal life by reentering the vagina of the goddess Hine Nui Te Po (Goddess of death). I looked for a new story with an old beginning, an unlearning of my mythological ideologies and an exploration of relevant issues such as sexual discrimination and a connection to ecological dis-ease. I choose the title Mā to help illuminate in the colour white, holding all the colours within, and to be the one half of word Māmā.