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Peer reviewed

KATERINA TEAIWA & YUKI KIHARA

## ***Project Banaba: A Dialogue on Exhibition Collaboration and Methods***

### **Abstract**

*This is a discussion between artist and scholar Katerina Teaiwa and artist and curator Yuki Kihara about their collaborative exhibition Project Banaba—the origins of the project, the exhibition process, and its various iterations in Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and beyond between 2017 and 2022. First staged at Carriageworks in Sydney, the multimedia exhibition follows the historical path of colonial-era phosphate mining on Banaba; phosphate fertiliser production, distribution, and consumption; displaced Banaban life; and associated archives, images, stories, and media. Project Banaba engages the communities where it is shown—both in a historic and a contemporary sense—while reflecting on imperialism, the movement of Indigenous lands and peoples through mining, the complicated Indigenous kinships resulting from this history, and the cultural revitalization and resilience of Banabans and other Pacific Islanders.*

**Keywords:** *Banaba, Kiribati, Rabi, Fiji, history, contemporary art, phosphate mining, fertiliser, agriculture, community outreach, exhibitions*



Figure 1. Entrance of *Project Banaba*, Carriageworks, Sydney, 2017. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks

## Exhibition Background

*Project Banaba* is a multimedia travelling exhibition by scholar and artist Katerina Teaiwa and curated by Yuki Kihara (Fig. 1). The exhibition brings together research, seldom-seen historical archival materials, and new work that sheds light on a little-known era in the histories of Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, Kiribati, and Fiji, and its ongoing impact on contemporary Pacific environments and communities.

From 1900 to 1980, a multinational phosphate enterprise that eventually became the British Phosphate Commissioners (BPC)—owned collectively by Australia, New Zealand, and Britain—mined Banaba, also known as Ocean Island, in what is now the Republic of Kiribati. The phosphate was manufactured into superphosphate fertiliser and applied to farms across Australia, New Zealand, and beyond. As a result of the extensive mining operations and Japanese occupation during World War II, the island of Banaba was rendered uninhabitable and the Banabans relocated to the island of Rabi in Fiji in 1945.<sup>1</sup> The underground water stores had long been polluted by the removal of twenty-two million tons of rock and topsoil, and in 2021 Banaba ran out of fresh water for the approximately three hundred Banabans and Gilbert Islanders who live on Rabi as its caretakers.



Figure 2. Installation view of “Body of the Land, Body of the People.” Voile printed with photographic portraits of ancestral Banabans and hessian sacks with calico and cotton appliqué and printed archival texts. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks

*Project Banaba* is a conceptually layered installation that interweaves rare textual, film, and photographic records from the National Archives of Australia and other sources with personal narratives, including stories of the political injustice endured by generations of Banaban communities. It reflects on how the rock of Banaba, *te aba*, was viewed and transformed by powerful imperial interests. It is divided into three sections: the first is “Body of the Land, Body of the People” (Fig. 2), which combines archival text and representations of the mined landscape on textiles meant to replicate sacks of fertiliser; information from the mining archives; and large-scale photographs of Banaban ancestors. The second section is “Mine Lands: For Teresia” (Fig. 3), a three-screen projection featuring early-twentieth-century footage of phosphate mining and life on Banaba juxtaposed with the mining’s aftermath one hundred years later. It is dedicated to the memory of Katerina Teaiwa’s older sister, the late scholar and poet Teresia Kieuea Teaiwa. The final section is “Teaiwa’s Kainga” (Fig. 4), which combines colourful family (*kainga*) snapshots of everyday life on Rabi Island in Fiji with black and white images of mining, environmental degradation, and fertiliser production and distribution.



Figure 3. Installation view of the exhibition section “Mine Lands: For Teresia.” Projections and soundscape of footage from the archives and Katerina Teaiwa’s fieldwork, chronicling phosphate mining and the displacement of Banabans. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks



Figure 4. Installation view of the exhibition section “Teaiwa’s Kainga.” Photo “reef” featuring a combination of black & white photographs of twentieth-century mining activities on Banaba and phosphate packing and transport in Victoria, Australia, with Katerina Teaiwa’s personal photographs of twenty-first-century daily life on Rabi Island. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks

The valuable rock found naturally on Banaba was first identified through a rock sample from nearby Nauru, which ended up in a Sydney office of the Pacific Islands Company. The industry that grew from both islands manufactured the rock into superphosphate fertiliser, which was used extensively by farms across Australia and New Zealand. For most of the twentieth century, phosphate was a matter of global and national food security, as it dramatically increases agricultural productivity and the resulting exports. The value of the mineral on Banaba also made the island a target for Japanese occupation during World War II. Many Banabans, and Pacific Islander, or “kanaka,” mining workers from the Gilbert Islands and Ellice Islands (now Tuvalu) were killed during this period.<sup>2</sup>

During her research for the exhibition, Katerina Teaiwa identified approximately 518 metres (1,699 feet) of government files associated with the BPC—some of which have only recently been declassified—in the National Archives of Australia. In her 2015 book *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba*, Teaiwa describes the experience of encountering all this archival material as “one of diffraction and remix: every photograph generated a potential storyline that overlapped with the edges of another

storyline centered on a newspaper fragment, a letter, a face-to-face interview, a coral pinnacle, or a moment on a canoe.”<sup>3</sup> *Project Banaba* gives form to the sense of remix that researching this history creates.

The following is a discussion between Katerina Teaiwa and Yuki Kihara about the origins of the project, the exhibition process, and its various iterations between 2017 and 2021.

### **About the Collaboration**

**Yuki:** Katerina and I have been friends for over a decade now and we have mutual friends across the Pacific. In 2016, I was invited by Carriageworks in Sydney to present an exhibition and I knew I wanted to do something that had resonance with the Australian context. I remembered Katerina telling me a few years back about phosphate mining in Banaba. I had also seen the 2003 exhibition she had collaborated with Māori artist Brett Graham on, entitled *Kāinga tahi Kāinga rua* (presented at the Adam Art Gallery, Pōneke Wellington) in response to phosphate mining on Banaba.

I had also read her book *Consuming Ocean Island*. There were parts of the book that were poetic and also outraged me about the injustice endured by the Banaban people. I saw the phosphate mining history in Banaba as a forewarning of what could happen to those of us in Sāmoa, especially because at the time our country was in a heated debate around the privatization of customary land. I felt that the Banaban story told by Katerina was too important to be confined to academia; it needed to be highlighted within the contemporary art context—with its access to the general public—to help create awareness, especially because we’re living in a time when intersectional issues around Indigenous peoples, the environment, and sustainability are prominent in global media.

During our research and development for *Project Banaba*, Katerina had a number of great ideas regarding materials used during the mining production that could be recontextualized and represented as artworks. She also generously introduced me to her Banaban family, and we often talked about the lack of contemporary artists in the Banaban community. It was then I had an epiphany: if I wanted the outcome of the exhibition to empower the Banaban people, then Katerina had to be the artist and I would support her as the curator. I also felt that the Banaban story wasn’t mine to tell, that the exhibition would have more impact if it came from Katerina herself. Katerina didn’t take my suggestion that we swap

roles too well at first, but I reassured her that, given her experience as a former dancer and her thinking about materiality, she could think about the exhibition as choreographing an experience for the audience. That was when it clicked for her that she could take on the role of a “visual artist.”

**Katerina:** Working with Yuki has been an incredible journey. She is precise, organised, energetic, a brilliant planner, and has a strong sense of justice and resistance. I had loved her work for years before we decided to collaborate. It was really clear that she moved through the world, inhabited the world, in a critical and creative way—always seeing things from nuanced perspectives. Yuki’s practice crosses so many genres of art, and is driven by an ethics and politics that resonates with my own. She’s very much been a dear friend, generous mentor, and guide in this visual arts journey.

### **Moving from Academic Research to Practice-based Arts**

**Katerina:** Prior to *Project Banaba*, I looked to established visual artists to interpret and represent the archival, photographic, and film material I had been collecting since the late 1990s, when I did my master’s in Pacific Islands studies at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, and during my PhD studies at the Australian National University in the early 2000s. My whole life I had been sketching and dancing, and while dance was well established as a passion of mine through my participation in the Oceania Dance Theatre with the late Seiuli Allan Alo Va’ai, the visual arts remained a more peripheral activity until the PhD.

I had imagined my research as an exhibition really early on in the process, but as I was not based in a school of practice-based arts, I struggled to realise the things I was visualising. My supervisors in the anthropology department were not able to guide me in anything other than writing or text. However, one of my mentors, the late Professor Greg Denning, used to challenge PhD students to “perform” their research projects. Experiencing this early on in the PhD research process was liberating. I paid attention to the photographic and film content I found in the archives, and decided to include the video footage I previously filmed while conducting fieldwork. I had about fifty hours of content after doing research on Rabi in Fiji, where most of my father’s family lives, and on Tarawa, Tabiteuea, and Banaba in Kiribati, where I also have many relatives. Australian filmmaker Gary Kildea, who worked in the old ethnographic film unit in the former Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, generously mentored and co-produced the

ethnographic film portions of my PhD thesis. But after I completed my PhD, they remained on the shelf while the text portion was turned into journal articles and book chapters. I eventually wrote a new book on Banaban history and phosphate, with one chapter that I described as a visual and textual “remix.” This became the basis for conceptualising the multimedia *Project Banaba*.

### **Taking Shape: audience and empowerment**

**Yuki:** *Project Banaba* is co-curated by myself and the curator of the host institution that it is traveling to, in consultation with Katerina. I prefer to work this way because the host curator has more first-hand knowledge of how their institution operates, their budget constraints, and any logistical issues. The host institutions greatly benefit from presenting *Project Banaba* because it expands their audiences. The socially engaged nature of *Project Banaba* helps build solidarity and community, as it requires working closely with and alongside the local Banaban diaspora, Indigenous local authorities, Pacific communities, artists, and scholars. This becomes an allegory for repatriating the land that was taken away from Banabans in the twentieth century.

Katerina and I are careful in selecting venues that will be a good fit for *Project Banaba* because not all venues are suited to present installations. That said, we are currently looking at ways to mould *Project Banaba* based on the resources available to the host venue, especially where we feel that presenting this history can be impactful for the audience. *Project Banaba* also re-presents works made for or featured in its previous iterations, highlighting the exhibition’s multi-sited journey.

**Katerina:** The main issue for me with each gallery, location, or community where *Project Banaba* appears is that we link the exhibition to that site, make specific historical, material, archival, or contemporary connections. Yuki and I have already imagined how the exhibition travels along the same routes as the mined phosphate rock, which means it links Kiribati and Fiji to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Japan, the US, parts of Europe, and every other place where Banaban phosphate rock, or manufactured fertiliser from Banaban phosphate, is applied to farm soil. That’s a lot of places over at least eight decades across the twentieth century, and probably into the twenty-first century as phosphate was regularly stockpiled.



Carriageworks, Sydney | 17 November – 17 December 2017



Figure 5. Artist Katerina Teaiwa at the entrance to *Project Banaba* at Carriageworks, Sydney, 2017. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks

**Yuki:** The relevance of presenting *Project Banaba* at Carriageworks in Redfern, Sydney (Figs. 1–9), is that the space occupies what was the Eveleigh Railway Workshops, and Banaban phosphate was transported across Australia through the railway system. The Carriageworks presentation of *Project Banaba* helped to set the tone for subsequent exhibitions in other venues. We initially thought of installing *Project Banaba* inside an actual carriage, but it became logistically complex to find an empty carriage for rent and to transport it to Carriageworks, so we opted for an installation inside the gallery space instead.

It was great to receive attention from the mainstream news and social media channels, including in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. And as part of the outcome of *Project Banaba*, Katerina has received numerous invitations to present her artworks internationally, independent of *Project Banaba*.

**Katerina:** Sydney was also the site of the original guano and phosphate mining office from which prospecting expeditions were sent into the Pacific Islands. New Zealand “phosphateer” Sir Albert Ellis discovered central Pacific phosphate when

he realized that a rock doorstep that had been previously thought to be petrified wood was, in fact, made of phosphate. The rock was from Nauru, a German territory at the time, so they searched for the closest island to it, guessing its geologic makeup would be similar, and found Banaba. Ellis was based in Sydney at the time, so Sydney is an origin point for the colonial and imperial forces and agricultural priorities that eventually shaped the lives and futures of Banabans and Nauruans.

Banaba is now an industrial wasteland filled with remnants of a dilapidated infrastructure: glass, steel, concrete, asbestos, and decayed mining equipment. Banaba is also quite “dark” in the sense that the history of mining and the devastation of the landscape weighs very heavy on the island, even when covered by vegetation. You can feel and see the impact of mining debris immediately when you disembark in Home Bay. Carriageworks is an industrial space, which was actually perfect for the show. After our initial gallery visit, I could envision the installation very clearly in its large, high-ceilinged space, and saw the potential of turning a large black box into a mined landscape. I decided to have phosphate pinnacles and superphosphate sacks floating in the space (Figs. 6–8). These were safeguarded by Banaban ancestors, whose images were printed on transparent voile—signaling their positionality in the afterlife—and hung nearby. Short quotes from the archives and their dates were printed beneath the Pivot fertiliser logo on the sacks, forming a historical timeline.<sup>4</sup>

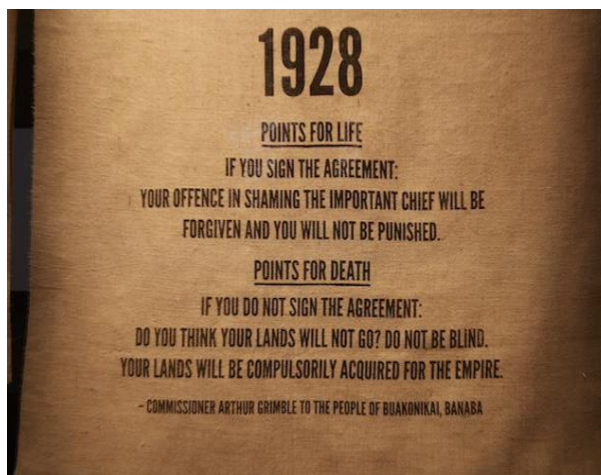


Figure 6 (left). Hessian sack with calico appliqué shaped as phosphate pinnacles. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks. Figure 7 (right). Detail of hessian sack printed with archival text. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks



Figure 8. Installation view of “Land from the Sea, Land from the Sky” with “Mine Lands: For Teresia” in the background. Photograph by Zan Wimberley. Courtesy of Carriageworks

My younger sister, Dr. Maria Teaiwa-Rutherford, surprised me by travelling all the way from New York, where she lives, for the opening of the show. This was very significant for me, as the whole exhibition references and is dedicated to our extended Teaiwa family, including our late sister, Dr. Teresia Teaiwa, who had passed away earlier in 2017 and whose early research and writing on Banaba very much inspired my own journey.

**MTG Hawke’s Bay Tai Ahuriri, Napier, New Zealand | 4 April – 1 September 2019**

**Yuki:** The relevance of presenting *Project Banaba* at MTG Hawke’s Bay Tai Ahuriri is that the Ravensdown phosphate factory is located near the museum.<sup>5</sup> Hawke’s Bay in Aotearoa is known as the “fruit bowl of New Zealand” because of all the pears, peaches, plums, apples, and grapes grown from the soil formerly nourished by the Banaban phosphate, which was dispersed through years of aerial top-dressing. These fruits are also hand-picked today by seasonal workers from the Pacific.



Figure 9. Opening reception of *Project Banaba* at MTG Hawke's Bay Tai Ahuriri, 2019. Photograph courtesy of Yuki Kihara

**Katerina:** Aerial top dressing, the application of fertiliser via low-flying aircraft, was a critical motif for the MTG show, which was co-curated by Jess Mio. We created two new textiles and incorporated the design of a 1960 postage stamp that showed the phosphate fertiliser being applied to a field (Fig. 10). We also added quotes by Teresia on the walls of the gallery.



Figure 10. Aerial Top-Dressing Stamp, circa 1960. New Zealand Post Museum Collection, artwork by J.C. Boyd, produced by Harrison & Sons Ltd. Image courtesy of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa



Figures 11 and 12. Artist Katerina Teaiwa overseeing the installation of *Project Banaba's* photo reef (left) and suspended textile works (right) at MTG Hawke's Bay Tai Ahuriri. Photographs courtesy of Yuki Kihara

Another new element added to Project Banaba at MTG was a Cook Islands dance skirt made by Caren Rangī ONZM. In her youth, Rangī performed in a Cook Islands dance group in Ahuriri Hawke's Bay. She made the skirt out of polyester phosphate sacks used to pack and ship phosphate from the Ravensdown Napier Works across Aotearoa New Zealand (Fig. 13). Cook Islanders have lived in Hawke's Bay, and worked at the phosphate plant there, for many years. We were able to learn from them and share so much about how Ravensdown had been processing and distributing Banaban and Nauruan phosphate for decades. This deepened our understanding of Rangī's piece and increased its resonance within this iteration of the exhibition.



Figure 13. Left to right: Artist Katerina Teaiwa, curator Yuki Kihara, Caren Rangī, and Caren's daughter, Kaiata Kaitao, standing with a Cook Islands dance skirt. Rangī made the skirt from polyester sacks from the Ravensdown Napier Works, a phosphate factory in Hawke's Bay. Photograph taken during the installation of *Project Banaba* at MTG Hawke's Bay Tai Ahuriri.

For the MTG exhibition catalogue, I had a really important conversation with a brilliant writer and environmentalist, Ngāti Porou Tina Ngata, a Māori rights activist and community organiser. We talked about imperial histories, contemporary cases of environmental extraction and dispossession, solidarity, and the complicated kinships that result from something like the transfer of Banaban land into Māori land.

The MTG showing attracted many viewers with direct connections to farming, mining, and Banaban histories. One Hawke’s Bay resident, Colin Wakefield, kindly reached out to me before the show and shared his own family history. His father, Major Ronald Wakefield, was the lead New Zealand officer who received the Japanese surrender after the occupation of Banaba/Ocean Island during World War II. This was a terrible period for Gilbertese and Ellice Islands (Tuvaluan) mining workers, who were left behind by the company, and for Banabans, who were eventually taken to war camps in Kosrae and Nauru after they ran out of food on the island. Many workers and Banabans were executed during the occupation. Colin’s family had kept personal papers, relevant media, and other information from the time, which helped fill in historical gaps of our knowledge of what happened in that period.

Such themes were further discussed at the floor talk for the show. Professor Alice Te Punga Somerville from the University of Waikato brought her undergraduate and postgraduate students along to this event. It was wonderful to have a Pacific Studies talanoa (dialogue) session under the textiles, surrounded by the other elements of the show, and to be able to reflect on the impacts of this multi-sited Pacific history (Figs. 14–15).



Figure 14 and 15. Jess Mio (left), co-curator of *Project Banaba* at MTG Hawke’s Bay Tai Ahuriri, introduces Katerina Teaiwa’s artist talk to students from Waikato University (right), 2019. Photographs courtesy of Yuki Kihara

After the show, one of Alice’s postgraduate students, Wanda Ieremia Allan, sent through a translation she had done of the journal of a Reverend Rusia, pastor for the Ellice Island community, who was interned with Banabans and workers during World War II. It was a harrowing and important account from a Pacific perspective that hadn’t made it into any history books.

Finally, this iteration of the show was particularly significant for me when three young Banabans, led by Itinterunga Rae Bainteiti, travelled from Auckland to join us for the opening night. Rae gave a speech and the young men sang (Fig. 16). Three generations of my family from Wellington and Auckland also came to the opening (Fig. 17). This was so important for me, as my parents have never been able to travel to see *Project Banaba*.



Figure 16. Rae Bainteiti, Rangaba Taoroba and Raieta Kaipati performing at the opening reception of *Project Banaba*, MTG Hawke’s Bay Tai Ahuriri, 2019. Photograph courtesy of Yuki Kihara



Figure 17. Three generations of artist Katerina Teaiwa’s family at the opening reception of *Project Banaba*, MTG Hawke’s Bay Tai Ahuriri, 2019. Photograph courtesy of Yuki Kihara

**Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery, Auckland | 5 March – 29 May 2022**

**Yuki:** So that I could focus on presenting my work at the Aotearoa New Zealand Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2022, in 2019 Katerina and I discussed how I might hand over the curatorial duties for *Project Banaba* to another curator. I began considering a number of curators who could work with Katerina, and had conversations with curator Chloe Geoghegan about presenting *Project Banaba* at Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery in Waitakere region.

With the help and guidance of Katerina and Banaban leader Itinterunga Rae Bainteiti, on 8 August 2020 I made a short PowerPoint presentation introducing *Project Banaba* to the local Auckland community, during a church service hosted by the Banaban Christian Fellowship Support Hub at Ranui community hall in Waitakere (Figs. 18–19). Afterwards, I was surprised to see that people wanted to know more about the exhibition. There I also met Banaban elder Maggie Corrie-Kaipati—who already knew members of Katerina’s family—for the first time.



Figure 18 (left). Performance by the Banaban Christian Fellowship Hub at Ranui community hall in Waitakere. Photograph courtesy of Yuki Kihara

Figure 19 (right). Christina Buchanan (2nd from left), who was born on Banaba Island, discusses her family heirlooms from Banaba with members of the Banaban Christian Fellowship Hub. Photograph courtesy of Yuki Kihara

During our consultation with Maggie about *Project Banaba* at Te Uru, she identified a need for more resources for the Auckland Banaban community, in order to help strengthen their language and heritage arts. This inspired us to create the Te Kaneati Banaban Cultural Revitalization Workshops, which will be presented alongside *Project Banaba* at Te Uru. This was a perfect fit, given that the Banaban Christian Fellowship Support Hub and Te Uru were both based in



Waitakere. I knew that this opportunity would allow me to learn directly from the Banaban diaspora and to see whether I had it in me as a curator to make a difference in people's lives. This led to my decision to stay on as curator of *Project Banaba*. Being part of Te Kaneati also meant going above and beyond the call of duty as a curator because working with grass-roots Pacific communities means volunteering for many hours, which goes unnoticed by the institution of contemporary art curation. However, after having been part of many migrant community projects over the years and witnessing the true transformative power of art in peoples' lives, I knew Te Kaneati was going to be a special project for the Banaban community in Auckland. After numerous Zoom and face-to-face meetings, I am happy to have been part of the group effort alongside Rae, Lillan, and Chloe from Te Uru—as well as Katerina—in assisting Maggie to secure Creative New Zealand funding to stage the Te Kaneati workshop series. Maggie's engagement with *Project Banaba* also led to the inclusion, for the first time, of the performance of the Banaban Christian Fellowship Support Hub at the Fijian stage of the 2021 Pasifika Festival, with the support of Pacific Dance New Zealand.

Sefa Enari MNZM, director of Pacific Dance New Zealand, also gave us advice on how to structure the Te Kaneati workshops, which are divided into several parts, including costume making (weaving, knitting, sewing) (Fig. 20); music (Banaban language and meaning, singing and musical instruments); dance (choreography with song); and storytelling (ancestral, social, and political histories). The outcome of the workshops will be presented as an exhibition at Te Uru's Learning Center, in a separate gallery space alongside *Project Banaba*. The workshop activities will be recorded on video, as both a visual record of the events and to archive educational resource material for the Banaban community via accessible platforms such as YouTube.



Figure 20. Aroiti Tane, Te Kamari (a traditional, ceremonial Banaban neck piece worn by women), 2021. Photograph courtesy of Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery

**Katerina:** Unfortunately, the global pandemic and its associated travel restrictions have prevented me from being as involved as I'd like to be in the pre-exhibition workshops and activities that we have organised through Te Uru Waitakere Gallery and the Banaban Christian Fellowship Support Hub in Auckland. I was able to conduct one site visit and meet with Yuki, Maggie, Lillian, and the Te Uru team before New Zealand's borders closed in July 2021. The potential and impact of *Project Banaba* has now expanded even further to directly incorporate the Banaban Aotearoa diaspora.

### **The Future of *Project Banaba***

**Yuki:** *Project Banaba* is a site-specific exhibition that responds to the cities and countries in the Pacific Islands, Japan, the UK, New Zealand, and Australia that share a history related to phosphate mining in Banaba. It has a strong community outreach component that engages the Banaban diaspora, local Indigenous tribal authorities, the Pacific community, activists, artists, and scholars, among others. We have had people reach out to us and share their family heirlooms, rare memorabilia, films, and photo albums that cannot be found in research libraries and museums. Not everything about Banaba is held in institutions of learning—much is held in the memories of everyday people.

We hope to compile everything we have accomplished in *Project Banaba* into a book and/or a website that will be accessible to a wide and diverse general public. We can all learn from the strength and the resilience of Banaba and its people.

**Katerina:** I hope to bring *Project Banaba* to the Pacific Islands one day, especially to Kiribati and Fiji, where many Banabans live. Finding an appropriate space and arts support has been one of our challenges in that respect. Yuki and I share information and content from the show with many Pacific communities who are very active on social media so that knowledge of our work is accessible.

There are serious ongoing issues surrounding the ethics and colonial nature of phosphate mining today. Morocco runs the world's largest mine in the non-self-governing territory of Western Sahara, and has displaced many of the Indigenous Sahrawi people there. The history of phosphate mining is a history of the Anthropocene and a clear example of the kinds of mass agricultural, extractive, and industrial activities that have directly contributed to climate

change. We will continue to make these links with the exhibition going into the future.

### **Acknowledgements**

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*Katerina Teaiwa was born and raised in Fiji and is of Banaban, I-Kiribati, and African American heritage. She is a professor of Pacific studies and the deputy director of higher degree research training in the School of Culture, History & Language at the Australian National University. She has a background in contemporary Pacific dance and was a founding member of the Oceania Dance Theatre at the University of the South Pacific, Laucala campus. She was president of the Australian Association for Pacific Studies from 2012 to 2017, and is currently its vice president. She is also chair of the Oceania Working Party of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, art editor for The Contemporary Pacific: A Journal of Island Affairs, and editorial board member of the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute and The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology.*

*Yuki Kihara is an interdisciplinary artist of Japanese and Sāmoan descent whose work seeks to challenge dominant and singular historical narratives by exploring the intersectionality between identity politics, decolonization, and the environment through visual arts, dance, and curatorial practice. In 2019, the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa—the national arts development agency of the Government of New Zealand—appointed her to represent the Aotearoa New Zealand Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022. Kihara has been a curator of Project Banaba by Katerina Teaiwa since its inception in 2017 when it was commissioned by and presented at Carriageworks, Sydney. See <https://yukikihara.ws>*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Katerina Teaiwa, *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> See Teaiwa, *Consuming Ocean Island* for more detail on this history.

<sup>3</sup> Teaiwa, *Consuming Ocean Island*, 50.

<sup>4</sup> The Pivot company manufactured and distributed phosphate made from Banaba and Nauru across Australia.

<sup>5</sup> There is also a Ravensdown phosphate factory in Dunedin on Te Waipounamu.