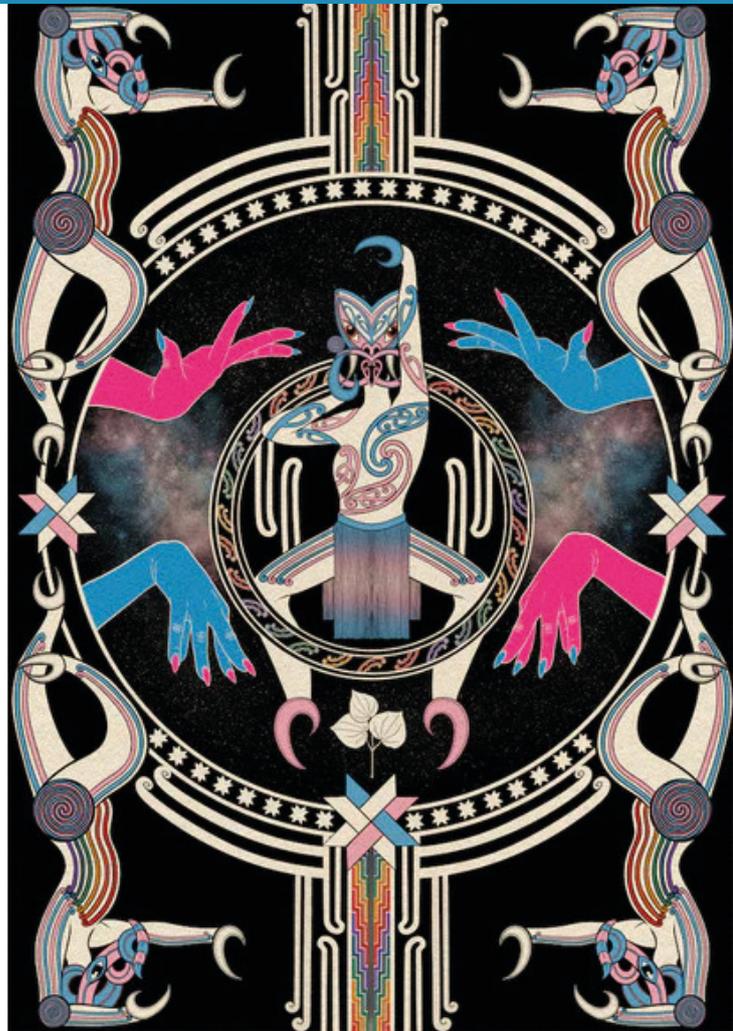




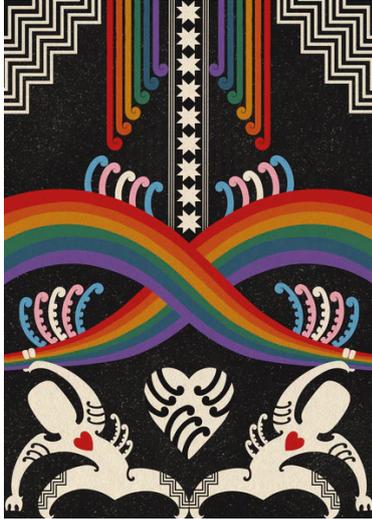
BEOPEN
art

Huriana Kopeke

Tricks and tips from Huriana Kopeke



The artist's studio: is a separate space necessary for productive work? What are the absolute essentials in your working space? What advice would you give to emerging artists in terms of setting up a studio/working space?



I think a separate space can be helpful. I didn't often have the privilege of working outside of my living space, particularly early in my career. Now, I am lucky enough to have an access to a community-run space called Wheke Fortress, which is run by artists for artists. A lack of separation between your home and your workspace can be really challenging, but I know that it isn't necessarily an option for everyone to have access to that. I am lucky that my work doesn't require a large amount of space or equipment, which makes it more accessible.

I need some sense of separation between working and non-working areas within my home, but that can be as simple as a desk in a corner. I like taking notes and writing things down, so

some organizational tools are helpful things like pens, sketchbooks, and pencils. I also like to be surrounded by art, especially by art made by my community, as it helps me stay inspired and motivated.

My advice to other artists would be that there isn't only one way to set up a studio/workspace. Try different options, don't be afraid to make adjustments, and eventually, you'll figure out which option works best for you and your work.

Earning a living from art: what steps are necessary to make a living selling artwork? Please share your experience of developing a website/social media pages, communication with wider audience and potential buyers, working with online and offline galleries, etc.



I've been very lucky throughout my career to be invested in and involved with my community, so when I started working, I had already had a base of support. These things can't be forced, they need to be developed organically, which can be frustrating and potentially take a lot of time. Consistent work helps you to get your name out there.

My social media has grown relatively slowly, but again, I was very lucky to have people around me who supported and encouraged me from the very beginning, who commissioned me early in my career and believed in the things I was creating.

There isn't only one way to make a career out of your art. However,

building support within your immediate environment, getting out, seeing and supporting other artists, and making connections with local galleries and retail spaces can be helpful. Knowing your work, understanding what you want to say, investing time in your craft, and making work for yourself have also been really important to me. Collectivism and a sense of community will get you very far in this industry.

I started by making work for myself, creating what I wanted to make, and everything followed naturally. I have to acknowledge that I've also had a lot of help, and I would not be where I am today without the support and investment of my various communities. We are nothing without each other.

Staying inspired: please tell us what you do to keep being an inspired creative. Is it necessary to take breaks from your work? How can an artist maintain their creative curiosity? Does your inspiration come from within or outside?



There's a long and rich history of narrative building and visual art in Māori culture, which I am very lucky to draw inspiration from, as well as traditional art forms within Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) such as raranga (weaving), tukutuku (lattice-work panels used to decorate whareniui, or traditional meeting houses), taniko (a traditional weaving technique used to make decorative borders for garments), kowhaiwhai (painted patterns often used to decorate whareniui rafters), and whakairo (carving). Recontextualizing these art forms and bringing them into a more modern era is another great source of inspiration for me. I am also heavily influenced by protest art and portraiture.

I think it's more important to find space and time to make things just for myself, rather than taking breaks or doing paid work. Research is essential: finding inspiration in the work of others, remaining curious, and investing in the world and current events that are reflective of the times we live in; all this helps maintain creative vitality.

I take inspiration from many sources, researching a lot, looking at others' work, reading, and studying artists I admire. All these practices help me maintain my love for creativity.