



Dr Katerina Mataira

Aue taku reo, mā te aha rawa koe e tino ora ai?

He urupare ki ngā kōrero kei te rere haere i tēnei wā mō te reo. He arotake hoki i tāku i moemoeātia mō te pae tata me ngā āhua kei te pae tawhiti tonu e whātareta mai ana.

Author, artist and academic Katerina Mataira (Ngāti Porou) was born in Tokomaru Bay. Katerina was educated at St Joseph's Māori Girls College in Napier and trained as a teacher and art educator. She established the first Māori language class in a state school at Northland College in Kaikohe in 1956. In 1958 she was part of a movement of Northland art educators that presented the first exhibition of contemporary Māori Art. Katerina has been at the forefront of Māori language revival and teaching for many years. In 1985 she helped set up the first Māori language immersion school, Kura Kaupapa Māori at Hoani Waititi Marae in Auckland, and co-authored Te Aho Matua – the philosophy and charter for kaupapa Māori schools. In 1987 she was appointed a foundation member of the Māori Language Commission. In 1996 she was made an Honorary Doctor at the University of Waikato.

She has published a number of award winning picture books in Māori for children. However, her ground-breaking work has been the writing of novels in Māori - Te Atea (1975), Makorea (2002) and Rehua (2006). In 1998 Katerina was awarded the Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in recognition of her contribution to New Zealand.