

Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Haumanu ipukarea, ki uta ki tai: (re)connecting to landscape and reviving the sense of belonging for health and wellbeing

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Abstract:

In Aotearoa/New Zealand landscapes were personified by the Indigenous Māori through the contention that the relationship with the land forms the basis of their existence, where everything visible and invisible, tangible and intangible is inseparable. However, in the current context, cultural and ancestral landscapes have been desecrated by growing demands from colonization, capitalism, urbanization, and globalization. This article explores the potential for reinstating the ideologies associated with traditional Indigenous knowledge and the intricacies of interconnectedness between environments and people for improved health and wellbeing. It examines new ways of integrating Māori knowledge in design to expand the concepts of belonging, identity, quality of life and place. Taking a case study approach, it focuses on an infested waterway that meanders through a regenerating valley system at the heart of Wellington, the capital of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The study encapsulates the notions of ki uta ki tai (to the mountains to the sea) and hīkoi (traditional form of walking and talking with the land and exhuming meaning) and looks at healing remaining endemic ecologies in an attempt to recreate identity and sense of belonging. It hereby assists in reconnecting Māori and connecting non-Māori to their natural surroundings, following bicultural and Indigenous constructs.

Keywords: Landscape architecture; cultural identity; ecosystem restoration; Indigenous knowledge; Mātauranga Māori