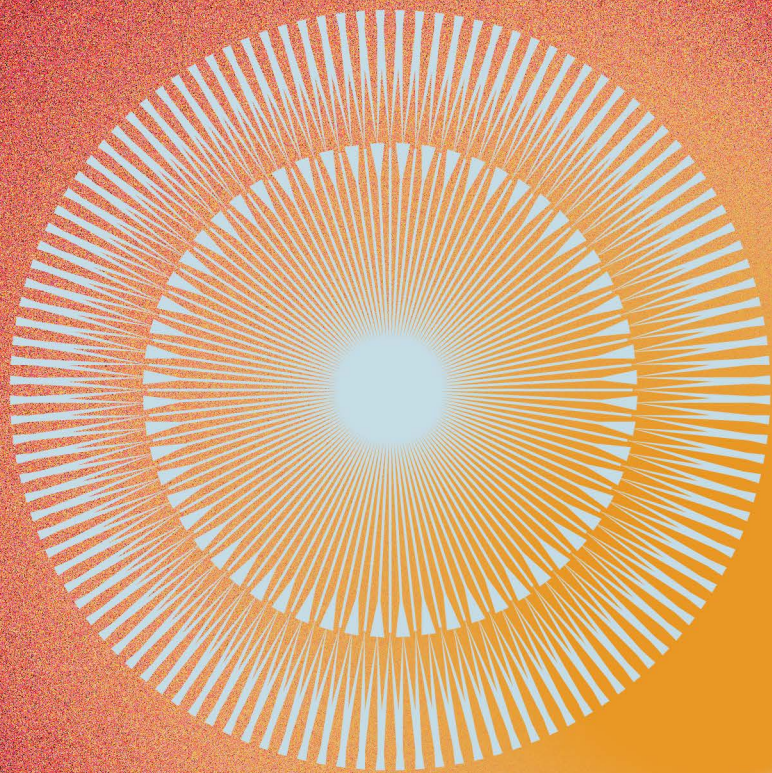


HOPURANGI



SONGCATCHER

POEMS FROM THE MARAMATAKA

Robert Sullivan

HOPURANGI—SONGCATCHER

POEMS FROM THE MARAMATAKA

Robert Sullivan



AUCKLAND
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

First published 2024
Auckland University Press
Waipapa Taumata Rau
University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142
New Zealand
www.aucklanduniversitypress.co.nz

© Robert Sullivan, 2024

ISBN 978 1 77671 122 2

Published with the assistance
of Creative New Zealand



A catalogue record for this book is available from
the National Library of New Zealand.

This book is copyright. Apart from fair dealing for the
purpose of private study, research, criticism or review,
as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may
be reproduced by any process without prior
permission of the publisher. The moral rights
of the author have been asserted.

Design and cover art by Breeze Durham
This book was printed on FSC® certified paper
Printed in Singapore by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd

I dedicate this book to my father, Bob Conlon,
and his brothers and sisters who have passed away.
They're with Nana Sarah and Grandad Paddy now.

Contents	Introduction 11	53 Korekore Tuatahi: Rom Coms
	Before the Maramataka 13	54 Korekore Rawea: Karakia
	Pāua Canticle 14	55 Korekore Whakapiri: Recycling
Continuous Positive Airway Pressure Machine 16	Pupurangi Shelley 17	56 Tangaroa-ā-mua: 'I slept under Puketohunoa Pā'
The Paper Chase 19		57 Tangaroa-ā-roto: Star River
Maramataka 21		58 Tangaroa Whakapau: 'I was getting a lift'
		60 Tangaroa Whāriki Kiokio: 'Another grey day'
All the Phases: Lunar Eclipse 22		61 Tangaroa Whāriki Kiokio: 'I have never emptied'
Mutuwhenua: Te Awa e Rere Nei 24		62 Tangaroa Whāriki Kiokio: You'll Get an Email from Me
Mutuwhenua: Mauri Ora Kāretu 25		64 Ōtāne: 'Virtue signalling in a time of Covid'
Whiro: 'I went alone to the Taj Mahal' 26		65 Ōtāne: Second Coffee
Whiro: 'The trees across State Highway 1' 27		66 Ōrongonui: 'Breezy vibes'
Tirea: 'I was wondering why' 28		67 Ōrongonui: The Corrections
Hoata: 'Today's rain is like television static' 29		68 Ōmutu: 'Some strange-looking insects'
Ōuenuku: Mauri Ora 30		69 Mutuwhenua: The Whole World
Ōuenuku: Pukamata 31		70 Whiro: 'I drove home last night'
Ōuenuku: Anei Anō he Rā 32		71 Whiro: Waiata Whakaharatau
Okoro: 'I had a cat once' 33		72 Tirea: 'Ko Āraiteuru te waka'
Tamatea Āio: 'And yes it is a peaceful morning' 34		73 Hoata: 'Today at Ngāi Tahu Hui-ā-Iwi'
Tamatea a Ngana: 'I saw a spider abseil' 35		75 Ōuenuku: 'I tried playing my kōauau'
Tamatea Kai-ariki: 'The pūrerehua walk under' 36		76 Ōuenuku: Hine Raukatauri
Tamatea Kai-ariki: After Talking to Jane 37		77 Okoro: 'The star river'
Tamatea Tūhāhā: 'Last evening' 39		78 Okoro: Honouring Words
Ariroa: 'In your tūpuna whare' 40		79 Tamatea Āio: The Best Hours
Huna: 'I opened a box' 41		80 Tamatea Āio: Āio ki te Rangi / Rave On
Mawharu: 'My basement got flooded' 42		81 Tamatea a Ngana: 'Four kinds of akeake'
Ōhua: 'Wet nosed' 43		83 Tamatea a Ngana: Kōauau—Te Wāhi Ngaro
Atua Whakahaehae: Alta Forte 44		84 Tamatea a Ngana: Two Questions
Atua Whakahaehae: Keening 45		85 Tamatea Kai-ariki: 'Three birds flew from me'
Turu: 'Just last week' 46		86 Tamatea Kai-ariki: He Iti Pounamu
Turu: My Funny Shoeshine Starling 47		87 Tamatea Tūhāhā: 'The last time we saw each other'
Rākaunui: Maranga Mai 48		88 Ariroa: When Great Trees Rise
Rākaumatohi: 'Ka rongo au i ngā manu' 49		89 Huna: My Own Personal Marama
Rākaumatohi: E Hoa 50		90 Mawharu: 'A respite from low-energy days'
Takirau: A Butter Lamp 51		91 Ōhua: A Short Short Fiction
Oike: 'Marama sits up in the west' 52		92 Atua Whakahaehae: Chains
		93 Turu: From My Sunroom
		94 Rākaunui: Shakti Card Opening
		96 Rākaunui: He Whenua Manu
		98 Rākaumatohi: 'The house shadow'

Takirau: Uku Rere	99
Oike: 177 Years	102
Korekore Tuatahi: 'I bought the chart'	103
Korekore Rawea: Q+A From a Shakti Card	104
Korekore Whakapiri: 'I threaded the eye'	106
Tangaroa-ā-mua: Ranginui	107
Tangaroa-ā-roto: 'I bought a book'	108
Tangaroa Whakapau: 'After checking my FB posts'	109
Tangaroa Whāriki Kiokio: Super	110
Tangaroa Whāriki Kiokio: Puddles	111
Tangaroa Whāriki Kiokio: Calling	112
Ōtāne: 'I need to plant the akeake'	114
Ōtāne: Songcatcher	115
Ōtāne: Feeding the Birds of the World	116
Ōrongonui: Petals	117
Ōmutu: Rākaihautū	118
Mutuwhenua: Light Therapy	119
Whiro: Poi Āwhiowhio Thought	120
Tirea: Mooring Day	121
Hoata: Seek Kai Knowledge	122
Ōuenuku: Mā te Mahitahi o ngā Kairaranga	123
Ōuenuku: Aoraki	124
Okoro: 'Come closer to me'	125
Tamatea Āio: Redux	126
Tamatea a Ngana: Kia Tūpato	127
Tamatea a Ngana: Huia	128
Tamatea Kai-ariki: Tautoko	129
Tamatea Kai-ariki: 'When Nana was in hospital'	130
Tamatea Tūhāhā: Keep Learning	131
Tamatea Tūhāhā: 'After writing this poem'	132
Ariroa: 'The Maramataka website today'	133
Huna: Three Poems from This Morning	134
Mawharu: Ngā Rā	136
Ōhua: Tāhae Jack, Te Tangata Nui and His Beanstalk	137
Atua Whakahaehae: The Humours	138
Atua Whakahaehae: Inanahi	139
Turu: Calm and Beauty Out There	140
Turu: Hoki Whenua Mai	141
Acknowledgements	143

Introduction

I wrote these poems while learning about the Maramataka or Māori lunar calendar, and also while rejoining Facebook after six years. I decided to post a poem a day, and began to notice the different energies as described in the Maramataka resources available online and in print including Wiremu Tāwhai's *Living by the Moon*, Professor Rangi Mātāmua's *Living by the Stars* and Rereata Mākiha's videos online pertaining to the knowledge of our karani from the Ngāti Hau / Ngāti Kaharau hapū of Ngāpuhi. As always, I write about my mother's beloved Ngāti Manu village of Kāretu which continues to give our family strength.

This book covers a period of personal change and growth, reconnecting with my late father's iwi. As well as our Ngāti Manu marae in Te Tai Tokerau, I belong to the Puketeraki Marae of my father's people of Kāti Huirapa, Te Ruahikihiki, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha, Hāwea, Rapuwai and Kāi Tahu Whānui in Te Tai o Āraiteuru in East Otago.

It is set during three months, Te Ono o Whitiānaunau, Te Whitu o Hakihea, overlapping into Te Waru o Rehua. These poems were written on each day indicated of the Maramataka.

There are many spelling variations for the Maramataka phases. I've chosen to follow the spelling set out in Wiremu Tāwhai's *Living by the Moon*.

Ngā mihi whakawhetai nui ki a koutou katoa e whai i te arohanui o ō tātou mātua tūpuna.

Before the Maramataka

Pāua Canticle

I muscled through tides
between rocks and air, sand turning
like a child's water wheel before me.
Star and moon glitter in the turns
waves make storming
the Ōamaru beach.
I haven't gathered mahika kai
here yet. I don't like
swarms of kina, but
the ocean plants
feed me and my rainbow
and dried kelp carries the tītī too.
I'm fond of colours and kai.
They have things celestial
and oceanic in them. Who would

know my black foot
could create a star turn?
I sit within my colours,
my scraper inching along
biting rocks and seaweed.
If I had hands and a ukulele
I'd play 'Rainbow Connection'
for lovers and dreamers. La di da.
I look up past the salt ceiling
and ask how am I here?
A starfish plugs my breathing holes.
I push off a rock wishing for
fresh water. I have to feel
with my foot the sun.

Three birds flew from me:

a sparrow from my chest
a tūi out my throat
a pīwaiwaka from my thigh

they flew to see my father
to let him know I am well

—from 'Three birds flew from me'

After rejoining social media, Robert Sullivan wrote and posted a poem a day over two and a half months—the poems collected in *Hopurangi—Songcatcher*. Inspired by the cyclical energies of the Maramataka, these poems see the poet re-finding himself and his world—in the mātauranga of his kuia from the Ngāti Hau and Ngāti Kaharau hapū of Ngāpuhi; in his mother's stories from his Ngāti Manu hapū at Kāretu; in the singing and storytelling at Puketeraki Marae, home of his father's people of Kāti Huirapa, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha and Kāi Tahu Whānui in Te Tai o Āraiteuru; and in the fellowship of friends on Facebook.

Tihei mauri ora!



AUCKLAND
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

