Organizing on Aotearoa: between inner space and external artefact

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We live and organize on Aotearoa. What we do is grounded on this landscape. This landscape comes towards us all day, every day. It eventually lives inside us. We also have an inner world that we impress upon this landscape. We leave our mark. Our inner selves and outer landscape, insofar as we can distinguish them, are in a constant state of mutual recognition and denial.

There is a growing literature around the aesthetics and artefacts of organization. We are learning to recognise what is there. How it got there and how it got to be what it is, continues to be a source of mystery. Of course it does. The creative process, conscious and unconscious, individual and collective, has fascinated cultures for millennia. It is often a physical and non-verbal, non-cognitive process. Hence it is also intimately bound up with metaphor.

A friend who is an experienced organizational consultant came to New Zealand from Africa years ago. He described how he struggled to “get into” organizations here. “Everything here is soft and cloudy and rounded and shape-shifting, there are no hard edges and starkness. People don’t make decisions in the same way here.” He was talking about people and land.

This is a reflective workshop. Participants will physically create and discuss, individually and collectively, an Aotearoa landscape. It is an invitation to reflect on what it mean to be on this “fragment / of new skin at the edge of the world’s ulcer”.

I don’t want to give away the plot. Trust me, it’s a good section… And in any case, even if you know more, will it help? Remember, the map is not the territory.


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