

# Michael Parekōwhai

## Atarangi II, 2005

### A permanent work

Auckland Artist Michael Parekōwhai has made a towering sculpture outside Te Tuhi, inspired by Cuisenaire rods. Invented by George Cuisenaire, Cuisenaire rods were designed to help children understand colours and numbers. Cuisenaire came up with the idea to use various rods of different colours to represent the numbers one to ten. In Aotearoa New Zealand Te Ataarangi is a method of teaching te reo Māori using Cuisenaire rods. In this work, we can see Parekōwhai has stacked the Cuisenaire rods into tall columns.

#### ACTIVITY ONE

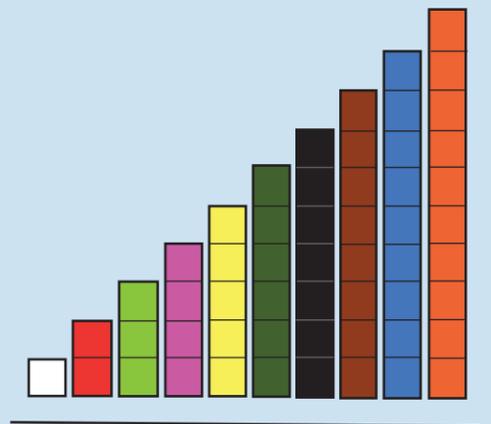
Using the image below, can you label the Cuisenaire rods numbered one to ten? (Remember that one is the smallest sized rod and ten is the longest.)

From what you can see of the sculpture in Activity Three, can you find the total number the Cuisenaire rods represent?

#### ACTIVITY TWO

Let's start with colour!

- Mā (white)
- Whero (red)
- Māota (light green)
- Māwhero (pink)
- Kōwhai (yellow)
- Kākāriki (dark green)
- Pango (black)
- Parāone (brown)
- Kikorangi (blue)
- Karaka (orange)



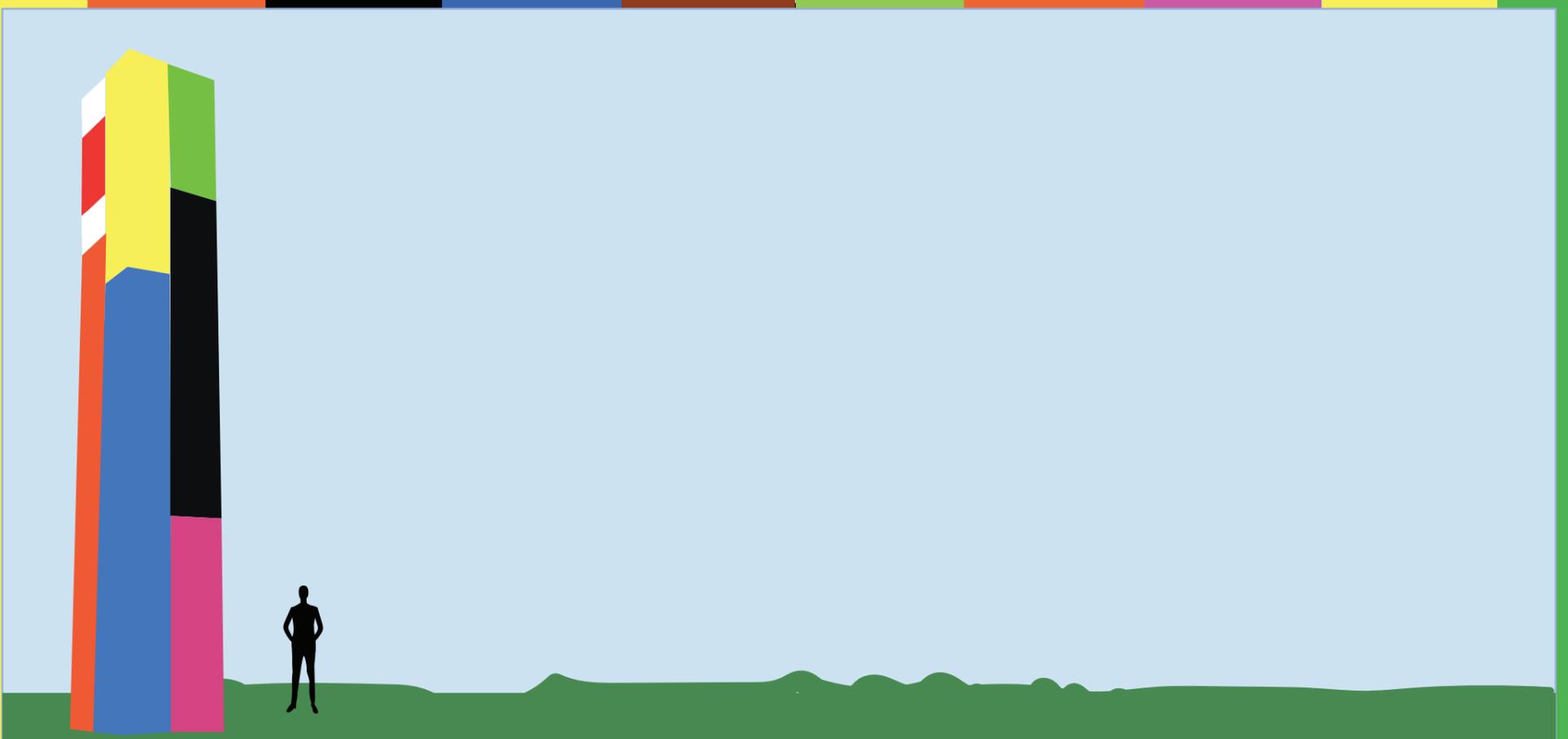
The *kikorangi* Cuisenaire rod is the number nine. On the left hand-side, can you draw nine objects that are *kikorangi*?

#### ACTIVITY THREE

Below, we can see Parekōwhai has stacked the Cuisenaire rods into tall columns. Parekōwhai is an artist who likes to be playful with what size an artwork can be. Cuisenaire rods are small enough to fit in the palm of your hand. Here, you can see how gigantic Parekōwhai has made the rods, creating a sculpture 8.5 metres high.

Can you see the colour *karaka* in his sculpture? Now, think of an object that is *karaka*. This object must be able to fit in the palm of your hand. In the space below, draw that object bigger than a house or even bigger than Parekōwhai's sculpture. You can see a shadow of a person to show you how big you can draw this item.

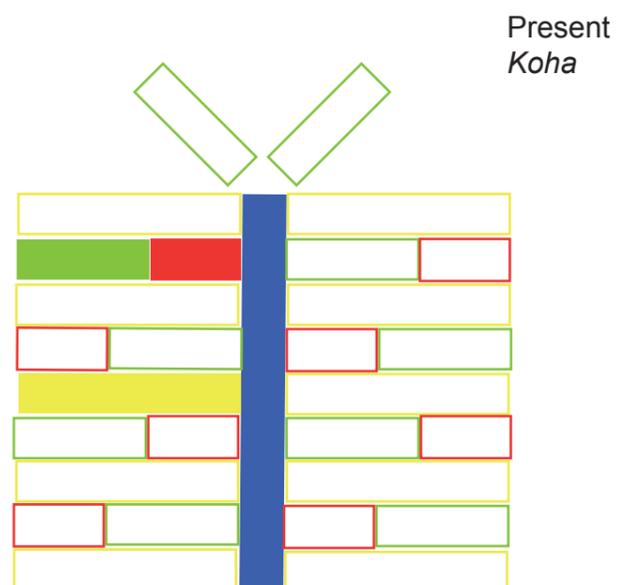
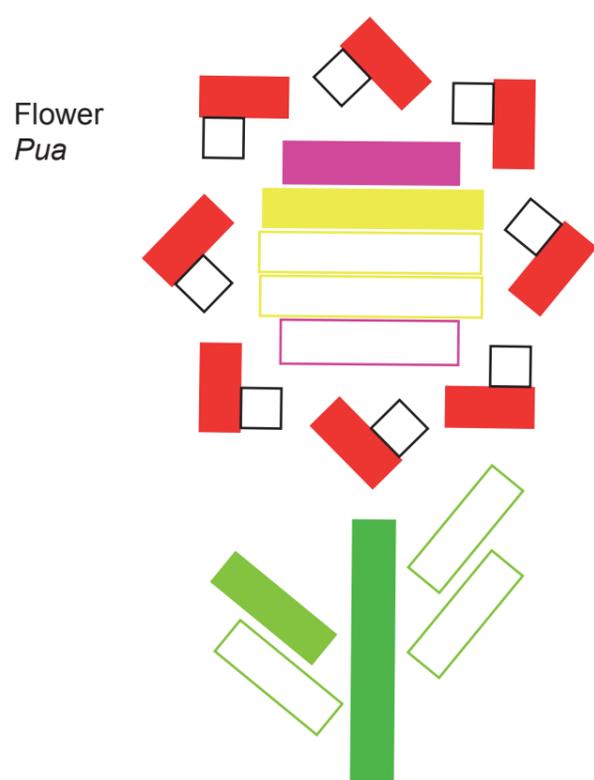
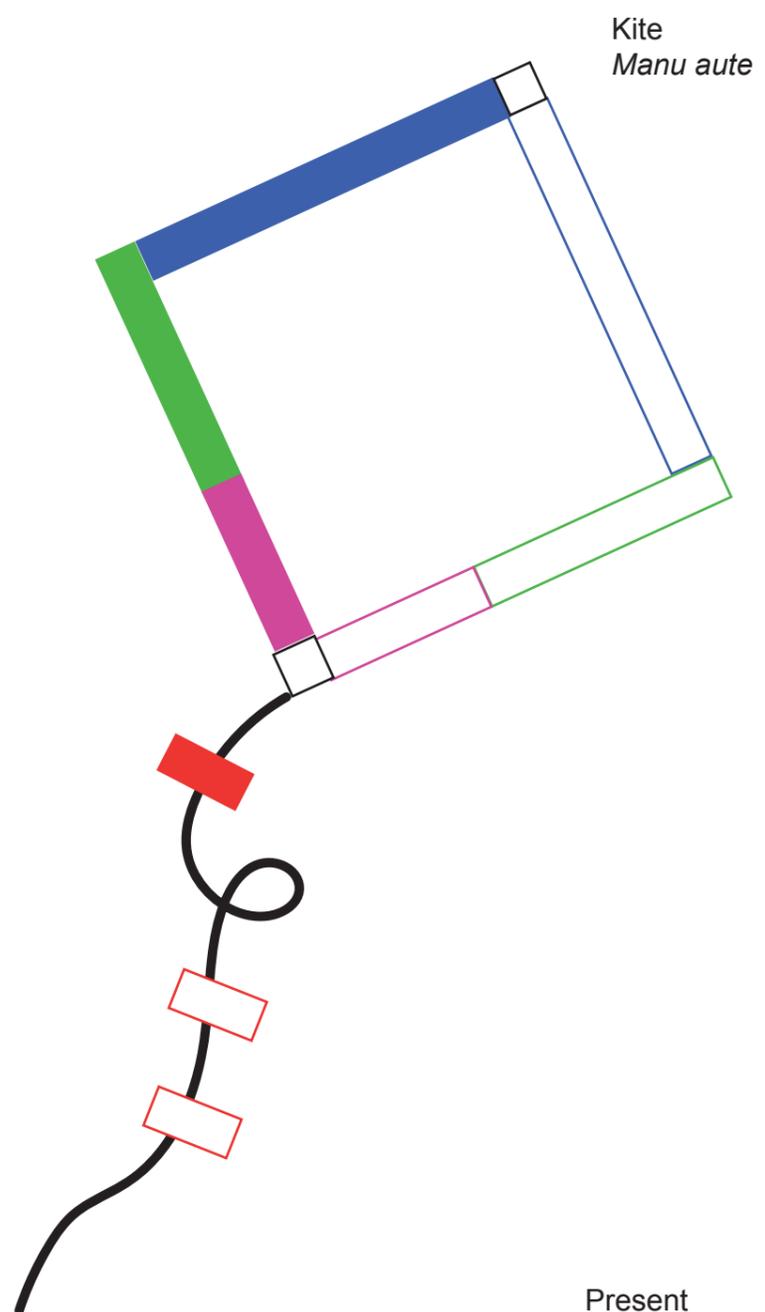
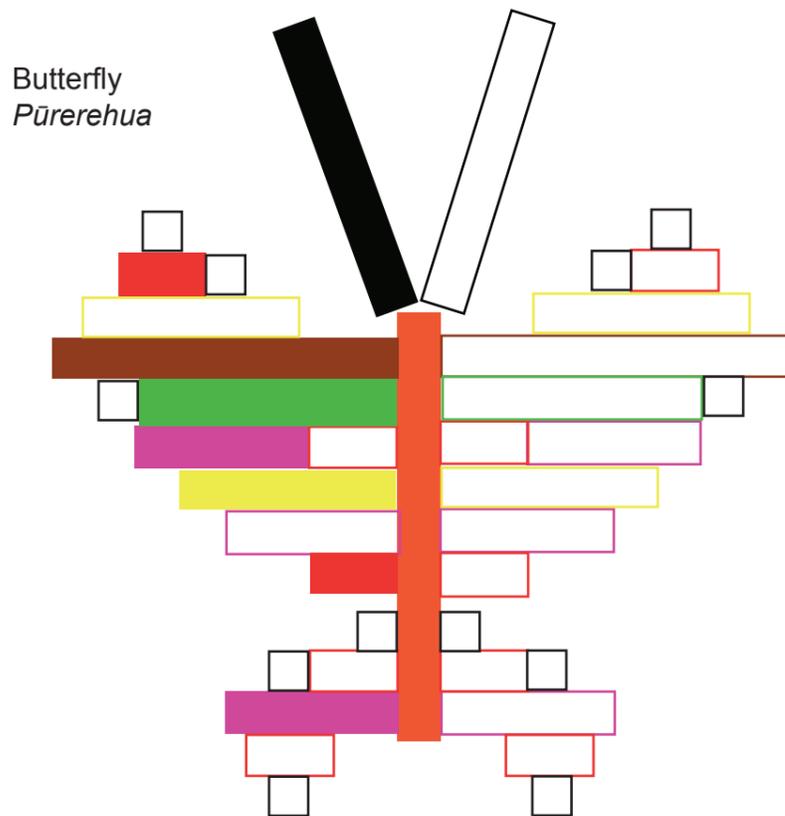
Your object is now a larger than life sculpture!



## ACTIVITY FOUR

Cuisenaire rods are all different heights, and are made from one of two simple shapes, a square or a rectangle. The number one is represented as a square. The number two is a rectangle, equal to two squares put together. Each time the number increases, the Cuisenaire rod grows one extra square taller. The greater the number, the taller the Cuisenaire rod.

Below are images created with Cuisenaire rods. Colour in the blank rods below. Some of the rods are already coloured in, to help show you what size each colour is. The square shape with the *pango* outline should remain *mā*.



### FURTHER ACTIVITIES FOR HOME

Make your own Cuisenaire rods, using materials such as playdough, Lego or coloured paper.

Can you make a sculpture of your own, using the Cuisenaire rods?