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| Speak Up KōrerotiaExhibitions, anti-racism and allyship19 August 2020 |
| Female | Coming up next conversations on human rights with “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, here on Plains FM. |
| Sally | E ngā mana, E ngā reo, E ngā hau e whāTēnā koutou katoaNau mai ki tēnei hōtaka: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. Tune in as our guests “Speak Up”, sharing their unique and powerful experiences and opinions and may you also be inspired to “Speak Up” when the moment is right.Kia ora e hoa, this is Sally Carlton with Speak Up – Kōrerotia and today we’re talking about “Exhibitions, allyship and anti-racism”, a very important topic for the moment. The catalyst for this show was the visit of Chris Harris who is the CEO of the New Zealand Holocaust Centre. He is in Christchurch for a few days to talk about the exhibition that’s currently on display at Tūranga: 1.5 Million Buttons Holocaust Memorial. So it got me thinking about, well what’s the role of a museum - or in this case, a library - in portraying racism, atrocity, but also more than that, how can exhibition be used to kickstart a reflection and a conversation on racism, on allyship, and potentially even generate action?One thing that also we need to point out here is we’re going to be talking about exhibitions, but exhibitions in a very broad sense of the term. Although in Chris’ case, we’re talking specifically about one particular memorial that happens to be inside a library, we will be talking about exhibitions in a much, much broader sense. So taking this idea of an exhibition as a sort of a public narrative, something that is publicly on display. I think this topic is particularly important. At the moment it’s August 2020, we’re a few months into the revival of Black Lives Matter; we’ve just had the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, one of the worst genocides in modern history - so it’s an apt time to be reflecting on these sorts of issues, I feel. Perhaps we will start off with some introductions. Chris, we’ll start with you and then we’ll hear from Meng, our other guest. If you could talk a little bit about why you’re here today, what is it that you’re going to be sharing with us.  |
| Chris | Yeah I mean I’m here today to pretty much share the story of the 1.5 Million Buttons but also to give an insight about what the Holocaust Centre does in regards to advocacy, acting on doing the right thing and making sure that our future students of this world become upstanders rather than bystanders and do the right thing in the communities.  |
| Sally | And I think that idea of being an upstander ties in so well with this idea of allyship.  |
| Chris | Definitely.  |
| Sally | And Meng?  |
| Meng | Kia ora listeners, my name is Meng Foon. I’ve been the Race Relations Commissioner for one year, previous was the Mayor of Gisborne and previous to that harvested potatoes. It’s very important that we continue to learn about the history so that we don’t actually repeat the ills of the past going forward. So thank you very much for enabling me to participate in today’s conversations.  |
| Sally | Well thank you for taking part. Meng, it would be great to hear from you a little bit about a couple of exhibitions - again thinking very broadly with this term, here - that the Human Rights Commission has been doing and I’m thinking specifically of the ‘Give Nothing to Racism’ and more recently the ‘Voice of Racism’ campaigns. And so campaigns is stretching this idea of exhibitions somewhat but nonetheless it’s still a tool of public engagement, I suppose. So if we could hear a little bit about those two projects, that would be great.  |
| Meng | Give Nothing to Racism was a concept that started a couple of years ago and Taika Waititi fronted it. I wasn’t… I was the mayor then and when I saw that it took me a little while to actually comprehend Give Nothing to Racism and I think the reaction of some people… some inert to the situation similar to me, some caught on pretty quickly and there was good conversations around the Give Nothing to Racism campaign exhibition. Some people didn’t realise that they were feeding racism, some people did not know that they were racist themselves, and then some people are ignorant to that and you know, you have the flat earth society whoever, they still believe that there is no racism in New Zealand so they live in their bubble. But it is important that the campaign actually made us aware that racism existed. It is a difficult word to actually say, often. I’ve been saying it quite often in the last year now and so it’s good that it’s on the lips of people. There have been numerous accounts where people have been caught out being racist in public places and they have been taken to task, some have ended in the court and we learnt about the New Zealand Wars, that’s all part of the racist policies that the government implemented back in 1840s and so we have a continuum of the legislations, mainly against Māori and Chinese. We come to this exhibition now, the Voice of Racism. There were around about 200/300 people that shared their experiences in terms of what they feel that people say to them actually hurts and we asked Taika to front this campaign as well and the reason for Taika is he is well known. Not only in a little place Te Kaha, not only in the East Coast, in the Te Tai Rāwhiti, not only in New Zealand, but worldwide. And his voice, his name recognition absolutely helps the marketing of the exhibition itself. And so the Voice of Racism is very personal and you actually put on a pair of earphones and you listen to all the voices of racism and when you listen, you might actually hear things and say oh gosh, that sounds like me and if it does sound like you then it might be a good thing for you to think about it and actually not repeat those sort of things and maybe even apologise to the people that you used to say it to. It’s gone off very well, it’s been right across the country, we’ve asked a lot of businesses, sports organisations and more importantly, government institutions like the various ministries to give time for their staff, 10 minutes to actually listen to the Voice of Racism. Very soon we’ll be following up, seeing how effective it was and how many people actually listened. With the Black Lives Matter it’s unfortunate that the death of George Floyd stimulated protests; there should have been protests long ago in New Zealand in terms of structural racism and it has been admitted by the police, the education, the state sector service, that there is racism bullying happening from our young kids at kindergarten right to high school and universities and then going into workplace. Just to give an example: 30 percent of our children are bullied on a daily/weekly basis. Unfortunately, this year it spiked to 35 percent according to the ERO report and that number is transferred into our workplace. All in all, the Voice of Racism and Give Nothing to Racism are great resources for our communities.  |
| Sally | Yes, we highly recommend people have a listen. It doesn’t make for easy listening. |
| Meng | It’s sometimes quite hard.  |
| Sally | And Chris, just briefly if you could maybe talk us through what is the 1.5 Million Buttons Memorial? |
| Chris | In 2008, the children of Moriah Day School decided that they needed a way to remember the 1.5 million children that were murdered in the Holocaust. So the principal came up with the idea that the students collect buttons because every button is unique and every button actually has a representation of a child that was there. So they went away, they collected these 1.5 million buttons over two years, it sat in storage for quite some time. Unfortunately the Moriah Day School ended up closing so we were entrusted with the memory of what to do with these buttons and it came to three years ago where we decided that we needed to do something so we hired ourselves a project manager and also a designer and what we decided to do was go with a couple of his suggestions and then we narrowed it down to one and we came up with the concept of what we have no which is the Children’s Holocaust Memorial which is a collection of ascending boxes which are on wheels made of steel. So the smallest one contains one button to the largest one which is 2.16 metres high, full of buttons. There’s 895 kg’s worth of buttons so the big task was of course when we had these buttons sitting in storage, we also had to clean them all as well. So we had a very interfaith group filling up our hall where everybody sat around cleaning buttons, got to know each other a little bit more as well which was really, really good as a community of activity and then we unveiled it in November of 2018. Yeah, it’s a story that has to be told. We think of numbers and we think to ourselves, well we just sort of forget about those numbers and we say look, it’s too large and so what we wanted to do also as part of it is to show faces. So when you go through the Memorial, you also see faces of children that were murdered in the Holocaust. You’ll see an education part where it tells you about what happened to the children, not in explicit detail but just give you an overview so you walk away with some education. But then on the other side is where the Memorial actually changes into an exhibition and it’s about doing the right thing. So it’s about the values of being an upstander over a bystander, talking about your attributes, what values, looking at a case study. If you’re a young person, say to yourself, look is this really me? You can’t be fake with this and I think that that’s important sort of in the current environment that we’re in right now as well with Black Lives Matter, is that a lot of people are saying yes, yes, yes I’m actually for this cause. Are we going to hear those same voices in six months’ time as well? I would hope so but you sometimes can be a bit sceptical and think are they just rushing to it because it’s fashionable. And we don’t want people to be upstanders just for the short time and say oh well I’ve done my bit and moving on. We want them to be lifetime upstanders.  |
| Sally | Before we have our first break, it would be great to hear from both of you: We’re talking today about racism, anti-racism, non-racism, allyship, upstander, bystander. These terms can be sort of fluid and it would be great, I think, just to have a little bit of a discussion about what exactly do we mean by bystander and upstander, non-racist and anti-racist? What are the details of what we’re trying to get at here? What exactly are we trying to encourage people to do?  |
| Chris | The values of an upstander is of a person who is willing to be that difficult person at the dinner table, the person who calls somebody out and says this is unacceptable, the student who is in the playground who says to their own friend that this is unacceptable. We also preach to the students as well that they need to be safe when they do this, we don’t want to put a student into harm’s way when they’re actually calling somebody out but they have a responsibility to do it. We also say to them that it’s a numbers game as well, that you’ve got to be careful that people will be keyboard warriors and say what they want to say but if you can get enough people behind you and you can create a movement then go for it and do it because that’s the important thing is that it’s isolating those people and making sure that… I mean, that events in the past such as genocides that have existed because most people stood by and allowed it to happen. The same with racism and anti-racist, we’ve seen a world right now where it’s quite noticeable about who is racist because people are coming out and there’s videos that are being shown that are actually becoming more and more in the mainstream but again, we’ve got to be careful because we still also see those people that sit in the background and allow the casual racism that exists or the casual discrimination. We need to make sure that, I mean, that we’re reaching them as well and making them accountable.  |
| Meng | I think it’s a change in the habits but also arming ourselves with the right language, the right tools and having the back up of institutions and friends in terms of being anti-racist or an upstander. Because it’s a very brave thing to do on your own and if you feel that you know, you’re going to be intimidated yourself during those situations in the playground or in the workplace or in the public area, it could be quite demoralising so it’s very important that you choose your situations and you need to know that you’re in a safe place because the perpetrators are very powerful and it plays on people’s minds in terms of safety, fear. So people that are in the workplace and they are bullied or receive racism or discrimination, they may speak up but very seldom I see a whistle blower as continuing in the job that they love and the organisation that they love and I think it’s very important that in structural organisations, that you actually get a coalition of friends that are there to support you, other people that have received discrimination. It's sometimes pretty hard to know but it takes a bit of work and maybe to just sometimes in the staffroom or amongst friends say hey look, I’ve been discriminated today and it’s been happening for the last months and I want to share this and has anybody else and if there’s a coalition of you, it’s very important that you actually do it together rather than on an individual basis. But I do applaud people who are upstanders, who have the confidence to actually say hey, that it’s not on, or to be anti-racist. Anti-racist is sort of like we’re anti-plastic. If you’re anti-plastic you know, you won’t buy anything that’s plastic, nothing, and you live your lifestyle… just a total lifestyle change. And the same with anti-racist. A person who is actually out there every day ensuring that they are conscious of what they are saying, they’re conscious of the environment and other people and what they are saying, and they’re calling it out or giving them support and say hey, that’s not on, this is not the right thing to say and don’t say it this way. It’s a movement. I think it’s a movement that’s actually gaining reasonable momentum at the present time but it still comes with a lot of education as to what to say, what to do and how to do it.  |
| Sally | That’s actually the perfect segway into our next section where we’ll be talking about what is the role of the exhibition in providing this ‘how’ and this ‘what’. So we’re going to have Meng’s choice of song now which is ‘My Way’ by Frank Sinatra, and then we’ll get into some more discussion.  |
|  | **MUSIC BY FRANK SINATRA – MY WAY** |
| Sally  | Kei te whakarongo koe ki te hōtaka Speak Up – Kōrerotia. Today we’re talking about “Exhibitions, anti-racism and allyship”, and now we’re going to be thinking about what’s the role of exhibitions - again quite broadly defined here - in terms of encouraging people to think about and then potentially even act on anti-racism. Chris, perhaps we’ll start with you.  |
| Chris | I would say that the role of an exhibition that you attend not just to be able to look at something but that you have take something away with you. It should always leave you with questions as well, about what you can do or what you’ve seen. Being able to go away and say to yourself ok, what do I need to do to research and find out more about what’s in front of me. It’s important that a person goes away and says OK, what can I do and that they can go away saying to themselves can I actually belong to an organisation, can I support an organisation in some way that is making a difference within society. Because if we’re just going to go and look at something and then walk away and say OK, it’s done, yes I know I have to do the right thing but it’s too difficult for me to do or I’ve learnt something but I’m not going to do anything with it - well what’s the point in regards to going along? You want to take that piece away, find out more and it may be something very small, it maybe something very large, but you’ve got to be able to do something with it.  |
| Sally | I think one thing that comes into play with an exhibition is that somebody has come up with the exhibition, and museums - if we’re thinking about the museum but also institutions more broadly - that tend to be the ones that put on exhibitions are in themselves part of a system that produces and continues to produce certain ways of being in the world, one of which is a particular view of the world. If we’re talking specifically here about racism, a lot of those institutions come from the dominant culture. So I’d be interested to hear what you both have to say about ownership and who sort of owns an exhibition. Who is putting on an exhibition and what can exhibitions do in terms of trying to challenge the very system that they are in fact a part of.  |
| Chris | Yeah I think that the community involvement has to be important with any exhibition regardless, I mean, if it’s coming from the dominant culture or not that you have to be able to take the voices of the community. I would use an example of something that we’re looking at doing in Auckland where we’re going to involve members of the Jewish community to make sure that it goes ahead and it reflects what their message is, not what our message is but what their message is and that I think is important with any exhibition that gets displayed because if you’re going to take it from one point of view, you’re going to offend someone and it’s important that you gather as many voices as possible. |
| Sally | Meng, I think that sounds like that’s what happened with the Voice of Racism. You were saying 200 or 300 people contributed their own experiences of racism to create that project, that campaign.  |
| Meng | Yeah look, exhibitions are… Successful ones and if you get the conversations going generally create topics of debate. How we do stuff is not always how other people would do stuff and that’s what is good about it. I think exhibitions should be challenging at times. Definitely getting a cohort of minds as to why the exhibition is going to be exhibited this way and what’s going to be in the exhibition. Definitely there’s always pros and cons of presenting confronting material, making people uncomfortable, creating that debate not only in the exhibition area but also taking it home, taking it to schools and having good debate there. There’s some stuff I don’t like but that’s not for me to say but it’s not to be corrected in any way because everybody has the right to express their views on the pieces or the concept or the story of the exhibition. And I think it’s good to initiate things, sometimes stuff people don’t want to talk about - suicide, racism, sexual harassment - and I think exhibitions are a way to actually sometimes safely bring those topics out for us to chat about. Sometimes we don’t know that we’re chatting about them but they are topics that should actually be discussed, it’s part of our real lives, how are these things supposed to be exposed but exhibition is a good way. Maybe telling the history of slavery and then coming to the modern slavery and people say, well, I didn’t realise that still happens.  |
| Sally | How the past can be used to shine a light on what’s happening today.  |
| Meng | Yeah absolutely, some human beings are still being cruel to each other, to their kids and perpetrating violence; it’s not on.  |
| Sally | In terms of when someone comes to visit, I suppose, a museum, or see a display however that may be, whether it’s online or in person or out on the street somewhere, somehow an exhibition can encourage people to think about something deeper, the next step then is taking action. Have you seen tangible evidence from some of the exhibitions you’ve been involved in of that further step from engagement in that museum space to kind of taking it beyond into the everyday life of the workplace or home or school or wherever that might be.  |
| Chris | I think from our sort of point of view of dealing with a lot of students who come through and look at the different exhibitions that we have, we do see a noticeable difference, we do see the students return back to school if they’ve been doing something like the peer guiding through Anne Frank: The Exhibition, or they’ve gone through the Children’s Memorial about being an upstander. It’s carried on conversation but it’s also seen that students have said to themselves, look I do have a voice in my community and are taking action. I get many, many sort of emails from students saying that it was fantastic and this is what I want to do, can you actually help me do the next step and that’s really good that they’re taking that step to contact us. Or the teacher will say OK, I’ve got a whole group of students that want to now join the Amnesty International group, I’m not sure how to set it up so they’ll contact me and I’ll go well, you’ll need to contact them, Amnesty Internationa,l and work it out that way, about how you can be active within your school community. I think all of those things are positive because it’s not just focused just on one singular point of action, there’s multiple that they’re wanting to be involved in and we are seeing that. It’s slow but it’s still good, any progress that we can see to changing society is a good thing.  |
| Meng | From more particularly in the aspect of the Voice of Racism, we’ve had so many organisations actually call us and really want to actively participate and actively promote the Voice of Racism. Like New Zealand Cricket, David White the CEO, called us and said, look Meng, we really want to participate, we want to put the logos of the Voice of Racism on the scoreboards and so that people will be curious as to what it is. Football New Zealand want to start a programme of ensuring all of their fraternity - from players, coaching, volunteers, executive staff, regional staff - to actually listen to the Voice of Racism, be aware of it, call people out on the sidelines should they actually be perpetrating racist comments. New Zealand Police, they’re very keen on convicting hate crime and with that hopefully we might get some evidence together so that we can ask the government to legislate for hate crime legislation. So yeah, it’s been really positive. Children are right onto it nowadays, they’re actually more aware of discrimination, equality, equity, racism than I was at school. You know, in Covid and Italy every day they reported a thousand deaths. Well I used to sit in front of Boy’s High School in Gisborne here for prizegiving and there’d be about 700/800 boys at the school, the hall would be full of about 1000 including school teachers and their parents and I would say 1000, that’s all of those people that I used to see in front of me disappear every day and when you put that into a visual perspective, you say wow, that’s a lot. Well done, Chris, for your exhibition, the more visibility, the more out there we can promote exhibitions in a visual way, I think it’s very powerful indeed. You can read about it, you listen about it but when you see it in context, it’s huge. You say wow, you sort of get the enormity of this.  |
| Chris | Meng, I was going to ask you a question. In regards to the Voice of Racism, is this going to be like a travelling roadshow that’s going to go out to schools?  |
| Meng | We haven’t thought about that far. Likely we’re think… It requires a lot of resource, people power. You know the Gisborne District Council, they’re going to have a policy for the community in that they stand for no ration discrimination at all and so that’s fantastic leadership and I think the buy-in from the community is huge because they’ve been through Covid together and so you know, we were looking at even cities and what does that look like, what does a harmonious community look like. We’ve got Victoria University working with about 60 schools and the Ministry of Education, they’re doing controlled trials on KIVA which is a programme that is anti-bullying in schools and we really want to roll this out throughout the country. The Minister Salesa, she’s supported schools that have a high number of Pacific children in the schools and she’s really concentrating on teaching them maths and the positive unintended consequence of teaching maths to the Pacific kids is that there is less bullying because they have the confidence to actually participate in the school themselves, able to do work that is equal or if not better to other students in the schools and those sort of things are really positive. So there’s a number of things we can do and obviously adults but there’s only one of me, Chris.  |
| Chris | The only reason why I ask is because I was in Alabama last year and there was an exhibition which was focused on the Greensboro Sit-ins in the 1950s in the United States and the Woolworth’s counters and they ended up taking it on the road but we actually saw the stationary one where you asked to go and sit at a lunch counter, put your hands on the table and not move them and then close your eyes and you were given headphones and you heard the racist comments that were made - these are live recordings of what was made to African American young people during that time - and they said to us, how long can you actually last before you want to throw the headphones off? Because it was pretty horrendous. And they said they take this on the road for their young people and it’s sort of eye-opening to them, to sort of have that inclusive or that sort of visual experience about what life was actually like and where are we actually come from since then.  |
| Meng | And that’s probably the more targeted thing and that’s what I like about this particular resource, the Voice of Racism. It’s going to be there for the next 100 years but at least we can actually target and say let’s write to all the principals or chairs of the trustees and encourage the school fraternity - from parents to trustees to teachers to the children - and listen to it together or in their time, then hopefully there will be change. Because really at the end of the day, you only need a few people to actually say this is not on and we actually need to call this out and make practical changes and be an anti-racist to make a difference. You don’t actually need the whole school because you have other people that will be actually carrying the message right through.  |
| Sally | Chris, we might have your choice of song now. If you’d like to introduce it for us and then we’ll finish off with what are some challenges and some limits to these exhibitions but also, what are their positive impacts.  |
| Chris | So the song was originally done as a poem. It’s said as Yom HaShoah which is the Jewish remembrance to the victims of the Holocaust and so it was also turned into a song and it’s spoken in Hebrew and spoken in English as well.  |
|  | **MUSIC - ‘Eli Eli’ by Hanna Szenes** |
| Sally  | This is Speak Up – Kōrerotia. Today we’re talking about “Exhibitions, anti-racism and allyship” with Chris Harris from the Holocaust Centre and Meng Foon, who is Race Relations Commissioner. Just to finish up, I’d like to think about what are some challenges and some limits to exhibitions. We’ve been talking about what we’d like them to be doing but what are the limits to actually putting these in place and some of them will be practical but some of them will be more systemic, I suspect, as well.  |
| Meng | I think exhibitions… There’s no one thing that actually is the promoter and curer of all, right. I think it’s a spectrum of many threads that affect people in different ways and helps people change. I think that’s what I say an exhibition, an exhibition is only part of a solution for a certain group of people. It’s like when we had ills in our body, right, so it comes down to going to the doctor, getting a blood test, but also what are you going to do in terms of lifestyle that we live, from drinking, smoking to eating lots of stuff that’s not good like fats and sugars, and also the mind, te taha wairua. Is there an opportunity to find support for that? What is the work situation, what is the house like, is the home still damp and wet and mouldy, does it have rodents running around it? So it’s what Māoridom call mauri, Chinese call it feng shui. And so it’s not just one thing, it’s a spectrum of many aspects of exhibitions, writings, radio, television, plays and I suppose you can call all of those things are exhibitions of some sort and I think through all of those, there’s always a sweet spot for somebody who will click. But I must say psychologists have also said that some cases of discrimination, racism is very difficult to cure because it is actually a psychological genetic defect in people and so when their braincells are not working right or something stimulates their cells to think a way, it’s very difficult to actually stop them. Well we seen that with Hitler unfortunately, he was mad and so whether he had a disorder in himself, that’s yet to be found but psychologists have also said there are issues with some people and it’s very difficult to manage. So all in all, I just say exhibitions - there’s a plethora of opportunities to engage people in the message and hopefully in this case we’ll create harmonious communities through the elimination of racial discrimination. And really, it needs more than one Meng. So my role is to actually encourage as many people as possible that actually do little things at a time, it doesn’t have to be the big things, it can be just a simple thing like Chris said at the dinner table when somebody says something inappropriate, you just say look that’s quite inappropriate, that’s quite hurtful and they do change their mind, they start thinking about the positives of how they can actually change themselves because when you call people out, it sticks in their minds.  |
| Chris | For me, when I look at the challenges for exhibitions is that you also have to keep them up to date. There is many times that you can go to a museum or go to an institution and you find that it’s very, very old fashioned and you think to yourself it’s not really going to appeal to anyone and especially if you’re trying to target young people and you’ve got things that are falling apart or the pictures haven’t been done correctly or anything like that. So I think that that’s one major challenges that museums need to make sure that everything that they are doing is that they’re refreshing… .not on a yearly basis but at least, I mean, that on a regular basis that an audit is done. You’ve also got to make sure that the messaging is correct because what can happen is that with the museum, if it’s to do with racism for example, is it going to sound like a broken record that one group is just talking and moaning all the time? That can be conceived by some groups. And I think it’s important that it’s balanced and it doesn’t show any sort of bias to one group over the other but it really sort of gives an effective history of what’s happened or it’s leaving you with something that you can say OK, I can see both points of view. And I think that that’s a challenge that we have in this country as well, where there’s many people that will look at one point of history and there’s another group that will look at a point of history and I know that’s the challenge that the Ministry of Education will have in 2022 when the unveiling of New Zealand histories is a compulsory part of the curriculum, is making sure that, I mean, all groups are fairly represented and that those groups actually have a voice in what they’re trying to say and that their history is communicated in an effective and concise but also that it’s a history that is a true reflection. I know myself of growing up, you thought of the New Zealand Wars or even before them you thought of Europeans arriving in New Zealand and Māori dropped dead of disease, that was pretty much what was told to me by my History teacher. And as I got older and you started to learn more and more you were like, where was that History teacher reading that stuff from?! Because my goodness, there’s nothing that represents any of that. So I think that that’s important and that’s the challenge that I see for exhibitions going forward.  |
| Sally | I also wonder about particularly exhibitions that are quite confronting in their subject matter, for example racism, whether there’s pushback from the institution in which it’s being hosted or the public potentially or even certain individuals who have a voice, however that might be, sort of getting them over the line in the first place? I imagine that could be problematic.  |
| Chris | Very much so and I know that, I mean, it is a challenge with anything, to try and make sure that you’re not just appeasing the masses but you’re also making sure that you want traction with this exhibition, that you don’t want to make it and it sits there because nobody wants to take it on because it’s going to go completely against their own ethical decisions.  |
| Sally | I think that’s an interesting one, this idea of the personal and the public.  |
| Chris | Yeah.  |
| Sally | I think if we’re thinking about allyship and being an upstander here, it’s one thing to attend or see an exhibition and take that message home and enact it in your daily life but then enacting change on a greater scale, that kind of systemic change that is needed, that one step further that’s harder to kind of grasp.  |
| Chris | It is, yeah and you’ve got to make sure you’ve got a lot of people around you that share that same value and that same message as well or else it’s not going to be very effective for you. You’re going to believe in it but it’s not going to work.  |
| Sally | Just to finish up then, I’d be really keen to hear from you, any final thoughts you’ve got and how you feel your particular exhibitions have been impactful in this sense of anti-racism, allyship, upstandership.  |
| Chris | Summing up in regards to my final thoughts, I mean the success of the Anne Frank exhibition that’s gone through the country, the success of the Children’s Holocaust Memorial, also, that… we’re dovetailing a lot of that now with our Just One Week campaign as well where we’re asking schools throughout the whole country to give at least one week of Holocaust education and we provide all the resources so the teacher doesn’t have to do anything, they just have to present it and what we’re trying to do is get feedback from there. So it’s sort of linking everything together because our long term view is that Holocaust education does have a part to play in New Zealand’s history. We have had survivors; we have had people that also were related to survivors make their way to New Zealand. I’m sitting in Christchurch right now which was the headquarters of the Canterbury Refugee Emergency Committee that took place in the 1930s with Oliver Sutherland and also with Karl Popper who were huge supporters of bringing refugees to New Zealand. So I think that when I look at that, I sort of say to people look this is people within New Zealand, they were also advocating for people to be given a home link, to be given somewhere which was safe and that’s the important thing for me going forward is that I want our young people who go through this exhibition, who say to themselves OK yes I can be an upstander but like you said before, is that I do it myself but who else is going to join me as well and they need to start a movement and say look, white supremacy has no place in New Zealand, white nationalism has no place in New Zealand and any form of racism should have no place in New Zealand whatsoever. And it’s going to take a monumental task but I think that the more and more that we can create things like the human rights, the Voices of Racism, combine that with the Children’s Holocaust Memorial and the other things that we’re doing can only provide a good platform for young people going forward.  |
| Sally | And Meng, any final thoughts?  |
| Meng | I was thinking about how we really want to put a lot of emphasis in the mature audience and more the structural organisations, mainly government and sporting organisations, because if we can start to change the hearts and minds of politicians and the ministries, that will be a great start because we do need resources and positive leadership in our country. So if you have positive leadership - and the current prime minister has been absolutely fantastic in terms of the message of kindness, being kind to each other and during the pandemic and ensuring that the messaging is consistent through the leadership - and I think that goes a long way. And you know, when I was walking around our streets during the lockdown, there was so many messages of kindness, being kind, heart-shaped logos on the footpath, to be a good neighbour, be kind, love each other. All those were posted everywhere so you know, the leadership of a country is hugely important. So I think a lot of my effort will be trying to change the hearts and minds of the people that are office holders in very important roles and from there, hopefully there will be a monumental shift. The other shift could be actually from the grassroots; grassroots are very important. There’s been a lot of movements from anti-slavery to anti-apartheid to many other events like the land marches of Whina Cooper to seabed and foreshore where they have actually come from the grassroots of our communities and people in decision-making places have taken note of the movement, the movement of Nga Tama Toa because of this suppression of Māori language was momentous in the 1970s. And we’ve all got a role to play, whether it come from grassroots or up the top. there’s a lot of work to do. So just want to say thank you Sally and thank you Chris for your exhibition and our conversations this afternoon.  |
| Sally | Kia ora Meng, and thank you very much, Chris, as well, for a really deep and meaningful kōrero.  |
| Chris | Thanks Meng, thanks Sally.  |
| Meng | Yeah, kia ora kōrua, thank you very much.  |
| Chris | Kia ora.  |