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|  | Speak Up – Kōrerotia  Celebrating Matariki  15 June 2022 |
| 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 whā  Tēnā koutou katoa  Nau 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.  Ko te hōtaka reo irirangi “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, ko Sally Carlton tēnei, te kaikōrero o te hōtaka nei.Today we’re going to be talking about celebrating Matariki. Te kupu, or the word, ‘Matariki’ refers to a number of things. Firstly, it’s the cluster of stars that in other scenarios are called Pleiades or the Seven Sisters. It also refers to the main or the brightest star within that cluster. And the third way, and the one we’re going to be talking about most today, is the celebration that comes with the rising of that cluster which marks the Māori new year.  So different iwi have different kōrero around Matariki and the rising of the stars. We’ve got the eyes of Tāwhirimātea, the atua of weather and so that’s Ngā Mata o te Ariki, shortened then over time to Matariki. We’ve also got the story about the mother Matariki and her six daughters and each of those daughters has a different gift that they bring. And I think it’s probably important to note, as well, that not all iwi see Matariki because at different parts of New Zealand, it’s not as visible as in other parts. So for some iwi it’s not Matariki, that cluster of stars, but other stars that they look to that rise about the same kind of time.  So I think we’re going to talk a wee bit more about these different traditions as we go on but I think probably we’re most likely to focus on what is Matariki, the celebration. What does it mean for Māori, what does it mean for our guests, what does it mean for tangata whenua and tangata te Tiriti and all of us who live here in Aotearoa? So we’re here in June 2022, it’s a fantastic time to be talking about Matariki. Later on in the month we’re going to have the first public holiday of Matariki and this is super exciting because it’s the first time that the country has marked mātauranga Māori in this kind of way. It’s not just another day off work or a day off school, it’s something that I think is probably, hopefully anyway, a kind of a milestone in how the country looks to these sorts of things.  So we unfortunately are one guest short because Heperi can’t join us today but we have got Reimana and we have got Rachael here in the studio. It would be really lovely to hear from both of you a wee bit about yourselves, what is it that you bring to today’s kōrero. Just I guess, situating yourself in this Matariki story. |
| Reimana | Kia ora, thank you firstly for having me. So a little bit about myself. My name is Reimana Tutengaehe, I come from the Ngāi Te Rangi people of Tauranga Moana, that’s my tribal area. Myself and stars, particularly my father used to sit us outside quite often and he would tell us narratives about the different stars that he was aware of. Not too much around what their purposes were or how they related to us, just more around the narratives of those stars and because of that I gained a passion I guess for looking more into Māori cosmology and Māori astronomy. |
| Sally | So here’s a question for you straight away: the difference between astrology and astronomy and cosmology. |
| Reimana | Astrology is the scientific study of stars. Astrology is not considered a science but is the study of stars and their effects on people and cosmology is the study of, well I guess, the origin of the universe. |
| Sally | Very cool, awesome summation by the way, that was a really nice way of putting it. |
| Reimana | Cheers. |
| Sally | Okay and Rachael Pelvin. |
| Rachael | Kia ora. He uri ahau nō Aerani, Ingarangi, Kotirana, me Weira. I tipu ake au ki Waiharakeke. He Pākehā ahau, heoi anō, e piki ake ana ahau ki tangata Tiriti. He ākonga ahau i te reo Māori me ōna tikanga. Nō reira tēnā koutou katoa.  *[I am a descendent of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. I grew up in Marlborough. I am a Pākehā but on an conscious journey towards allyship. I am currently studying the Māori language and culture.]*  So thank you Sally for having me also and Reimana for inviting me along. I come here as Pākehā and a sustainability and outdoor educator and my knowledge and experience with Matariki is fairly new. I have been reading about engaging with the knowledge of the stars for the past three or four years and it aligns really beautifully with my mahi and sustainability education and I’m really excited about the learnings that can be shared in that space and help us to increase our understanding of te taiao, the environment, and whenua (land) here in Aotearoa based on indigenous knowledge especially. |
| Sally | It’s such a shame that Heperi isn’t here but it’s also really cool that we have tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti and we’ve got someone who has a really long term association with these sorts of things - you’ve mentioned your father taking you as kids to look at the stars - and someone who is also quite new to it. So it’s quite a nice balance we’ve got with just the both of you here. |
| Reimana | Kia ora. |
| Sally | My first question just to kick it off, is how do you feel about the fact that Matariki is going to be celebrated this year as a public holiday? |
| Reimana | I think it’s an amazing opportunity as a society. As you said, it’s really going to be the first time in New Zealand history where we actually come to celebrate mātauranga Māori. So I think it’s quite an amazing time to be in New Zealand, to see something that is… well, previously just been the native peoples’, now being available to everybody to celebrate. And I think the neatest thing about Matariki, that people will come to see over the next few years, is that the date will be floating as opposed to a fixed date. And I guess that’s quite reflective of… if you look at other cultures like moon festivals and so on in Asia where that date is not fixed at all, it’s all a reflection of the people’s environment.  And so when we look at New Zealand and Matariki is a floating date, I would hope that people started to pay a little more attention to the environment. |
| Rachael | Absolutely, I taitoko (support) that. I feel really hopeful that it will strengthen our collective narrative and consciousness around te taiao (environment) and that the stories that we hear and tell are changing according to the place and the time here in Aotearoa. I think it’s amazing that it’s in the public sphere and that it has the possibility to reach all corners of our motu (nation) and along with that, it carries the principles of remembrance and reflection and connection and celebration and that inherently within the kaupapa (topic), those things can be spread to areas that it wouldn’t normally be and it’s amazing that it’s been pushed through. The first ever indigenous holiday in the world, is what I’ve heard - according to these colonial systems, I suppose - recognised as a public holiday. |
| Sally | I hadn’t realised that, that’s really cool. |
| Rachael | I think. |
| Reimana | Let’s go with that!  I think one of the neat things about New Zealand celebrating Matariki is that Matariki isn’t exclusively something of the New Zealand night sky and there’s lots of cultures that actually look towards this star cluster and I’m thinking more specifically to the other Pacific nations, where we do find narratives about Matariki and I would suspect that it probably had at one point, something very similar to what Māori practice and it could be a great opportunity for the other Pacific nations to have a look at some of their more historical practices. |
| Sally | Perhaps even wider if what Rachael is thinking is true, then maybe some of these other colonial countries can think about maybe... |
| Reimana | Heck yes. |
| Sally | … what could they be doing to embrace their indigenous cultures a bit better as well. How about in terms of the lead up to it becoming a public holiday? Were you aware of much discussion and debate and it has it been kind of pushed for a long time? |
| Rachael | I signed a petition a couple of years ago, Action Station. I just did a quick Google search before I came: they ended up with about 35,000 signatures so it was a big push. I mean in the grand scheme of things not a huge lead up but a couple of years of people collecting signatures and it gaining momentum. In terms of the future of the holiday, I guess some concerns have been raised around potential commercialisation and colonisation of a really significant time and it’s really important that we follow the lead of the Māori thinkers who are vocal in this space and follow their lead in terms of making sure it’s still a process of reclamation and revitalisation and I think in following the principles that they share, hopefully we will avoid… that… |
| Reimana | Hope so, yes. I have seen a few pamphlets float around talking about celebrating Matariki with a fireworks event which sounds kind of crazy when you think about trying to view stars and having exploding lights everywhere. It serves a portion of the Matariki celebration, which is for people to come together and building relationships and so on, but it also takes away from the aspect of observing our environment, there’s a little bit of an issue there. |
| Sally | I think that’s the city council actually.  We might have our first waiata. Rachael, you have selected a song by Rahera Davies and it would be cool to hear your reasoning behind this. |
| Rachael | This waiata is tino ataahua, really beautiful, and it was introduced to me during my studies at Te Puna Wānaka at Ara. I have been studying te reo there for a few years now and it’s something that has been shared and sung amongst the students and staff there for a number of years in celebration for Matariki. |
|  | **MUSIC BY RAHERA DAVIES – MATARIKI** |
| Sally | This is Speak Up – Kōrerotia and we’re talking about celebrating Matariki. It’s 2022 and we’re about to have the first public holiday. As we get into our kōrero, I think it would be really important to touch on why is Matariki so important in te ao Māori (the Māori world). Obviously it’s the Māori new year, it has significance in that respect, but as well as that and beyond that, what are some of the tikanga we see around Matariki, what are some of the celebrations and the pastimes that occur at this sort of time of year? |
| Reimana | So one of the aspects of Matariki is about mourning the people who have passed on through that year, it’s a moment to mourn them, celebrate them and release them. If we look at some of the old writings about the early ethnographers observing Māori during the Matariki period, they often said that it began with wailing, in other words crying. They often wrote that it was the women that were crying but I’m sure that most would have been crying in that moment.  There’s certain parts of the ceremony that… and this particular part, the tohunga, or officiator, of the ceremony would be conducting a karakia - for the lack of a better word, a prayer or a chant - and in that karakia, they would be referencing particular stars that were associated with this period of time, but also attaching different ideas from other narratives from other star groupings that served different purposes.  Long story short, they would get to a point in their karakia where they would say “Ko wai ngā mate o te tau?”, “Name those who have passed on this year”. And people would actually start to cry out people who have passed on, they would cry out their names. And as people were crying out their names, this tohunga would be saying, “Haere rā koe kua whetūrangitia”, “Go, become one with the stars”. And this is a very popular saying that we hear during the whaikōrero (formal speech) when talking about the dead. And so yes, this process was firstly releasing the people who we really care about into the heavens and becoming like a guiding star for themselves for this future period. It’s one of the traditions. |
| Sally | That’s beautiful, ataahua. |
| Rachael | On a different level to that, Matariki, part of its significance in terms of a bigger picture of revitalisation of mātauranga Māori is that you need to be able to understand the bigger picture of the Maramataka, the Māori lunar environmental calendar. And I think it would be a hard push to get people across Aotearoa shifting to an environmental calendar that’s so far removed from our current Gregorian calendar but the act of Matariki becoming present will allow us to engage in that space in a sort of a bite-sized manner. I think that’s some of the importance. |
| Sally | I guess leading on from that comment around observing the environment is the fact that I think traditionally Matariki was a time for thinking about kai and thinking about what’s going on with your food stores and replenishing some and storing some and those sorts of things as well. So not just what are you observing but what does that mean in terms of what’s happening on the ground, as well. |
| Reimana | If you think about our current, you know, western calendar, the Gregorian calendar that we use in our society, it starts January 1st and it follows the rotation of the earth around the sun which takes 365.25 days. It’s the most accurate calendar we’ve ever had across human society in terms of keeping track of time. But yeah, the major issue around it is that it removes us from our own environment. But anyway what I’m trying to get at here is that that particular calendar starts in the summer when everything is really great and then it dies down in the middle and it kind of comes back up at the end. Whereas I think if you look at the Marataka, the Māori lunar calendar, it starts a lot like the growth of a person: there’s not a lot at the beginning and then you have a great rise up into spring, summer and then towards the end of your lifespan… not that you’re fading away but you know… I’m not sure if I should finish the sentence!  We don’t look at the environment from its height as the beginning, we look at it from its lowest point at the beginning and then move forward from there. A lot like when we observe the moon, we observe it from it begins as in the new moon versus starting it at full moon, yeah. |
| Sally | I guess maybe the people who made the Gregorian calendar were from the Northern Hemisphere. |
| Reimana | Yes, I think so. |
| Sally | What else in terms of the taiao (environment)? The predictions that could come from what’s happening around the cluster? |
| Rachael | Not highly practiced in the actually observation of each star but I do know that each star has significant representation of a certain element of our environment and that this is - like you’ve said at the beginning - one narrative. So alongside Matariki, the mother, there are five wāhine and three tāne represented in the cluster and in terms of the environmental personifications, there is a star called Waitī that represents freshwater paired with Waitā and one of those is female and one of those male. So we find this beautiful place of balance in terms of gender representation and the connections to both of our major water spaces and sources of kai. |
| Sally | Waitā being salty water? |
| Rachael | Yes, yes. And in the same way, Tupu-ā-Rangi and Tupu-ā-nuku represent ngā hua o te ao, the produce. From Tupu-ā-Rangi, the sources above us - so birds, fruits of the forest - and Tupu-ā-nuku represents the produce below us from the ground. And again, they’re balanced out female and male. As is Rūrangi, who represents the wind, and Waipunarangi, who is a personification of rain. And so each of those stars, when observed in the right moon phase at the right time and during this period, can tell us something about the year to come and the prosperity of those different spaces. |
| Reimana | There used to be this false understanding in our society - and it was probably because of a lack of knowledge - that if the whole cluster was shining brightly then it was going to be a great year and if it was very dim or hazy, then it was going to be a bad year. Not totally accurate. Each star in that cluster might shine a bit brighter or more dim than other times and if you think about all of them shining brightly, then actually one will fight with the other. If the star personifying wind is really strong and the star personifying salt water food is strong, it’s kind of concerning trying to sail your boat out and do some fishing if the wind one is really strong this year.  So yes, we have to understand what our environment is probably going to do based on these readings. |
| Sally | Do we know if these readings have been done and then people have, I guess, observed the pattern of the year to see how accurate, for want of a better word, those predictions have been? |
| Reimana | I’m not sure. I would believe, though, that Dr. Rangi Mātāmua is probably a person that is tracking that. He is arguably the leading authority in this space when it comes to astronomy and cosmology of te ao Māori (the Māori world). |
| Sally | And just one final tikanga that we touched on at the beginning but we haven’t really touched on so much in this segment is this idea of bringing people together in celebration and it’s a time for whānau. |
| Reimana | Oh yes, heck yeah. We should talk about the particular star known as Matariki which is the mother of the rest of this cluster. She is known sometimes as the healer and in some of the narratives around Matariki, we see that she coupled with another star called Rehua and they had the children previously named and he’s often referred to as the medicine man. So when the healer comes together with the medicine man, we get a process of rejuvenation, revitalisation and so on. Matariki herself - the star, not the cluster- she is a star in the cluster that represents people coming together. It’s my hope that people in celebrating Matariki, or at least taking the time off in the year, that they actually go and be with others and at least embody that portion of the celebration of the rituals and so on and just connect with others. |
| Sally | We’ve spoken about all the different stars - you’ve mentioned Pōhutukawa and that’s connected to the people that have passed on in that previous year - Hiwa-i-te-rangi is the only we haven’t yet mentioned. |
| Reimana | She’s a neat star. I think translating is sometimes a little dangerous because we lose a little something or we understand a little bit differently but Hiwa-i-te-rangi is basically a wishing star. If I could talk a little bit about the ritual associated around that star: what they used to do is they would dig a hole - not a grand hole like six foot down or anything, a humble hole, let’s say a foot - and they would actually stand in the hole and karakia and so on would be done.  And what they would do is they would actually cover over their feet with dirt and this signified them planting themselves into the ground. Now during the karakia, they’d be speaking to that particular star and they would channel the good energy from that wishing star. I mentioned they were planting themselves. You have to think of yourself as a seed and this seed is what you’re wishing for. It’s understood in our society that if you wish for something that is outrageous, it’s probably not going to happen, like bringing someone back who is passed on or giving me the next 20 winning Lotto numbers or so on. They were quite realistic wishes and so they were planting that wish in the ground. And we understand that whatever you wish for, it’s much like a plant. If you don’t nurture it, if you don’t feed it, foster its growth then what you’re wishing for is not going to come to fruition.  And so that’s what they did, they planted themselves, they planted their wishes and then they fostered the growth of that wish and so Hiwa-i-te-rangi is a very I think important star. We don’t just wish willy nilly for something, we are creating a pattern, process, whatever the correct word is and mentalising that and carrying through with what we’re wishing for. |
| Rachael | Today we might call that ‘goal setting’ but what you just described is so much more beautiful. There are loads of whakataukī (Māori proverbs) that connect to Matariki and I found two that might summarise kind of what we’ve just talked about there. “Matariki ki tua o ngā whetū”which translates to “Matariki of endless possibilities” and to connect that to the kōrero of Hiwa-i-te-rangi, I think explains it beautifully. And then “Matariki hunga nui”, so “Matariki of many people” and that encapsulates the importance of people coming together at that time, I think. |
| Sally | And I suppose the fact that there are so many whakataukī around Matariki does really go to show just how important it is, doesn’t it. |
| Reimana | Oh heck yes. There is one other whakataukī that talks about Matariki which is “Matariki tikotiko iere”. Now that whakataukī doesn’t translate very nicely: “Matariki, the period where you hear a bit of flatulence”. It speaks to the celebrating aspects of Matariki: coming together, having lots of kai, lots of food and you know, I’m sure many of us are used to having too much at Christmas and the effects of Christmas Day food. |
| Sally | I guess it’s a good representation though isn’t it, it’s like everything from the beauty and cosmology right down to the reality! Alright, we might have our next waiata (song) then. |
|  | **MUSIC** Ruia Aperehama, ‘Pimpers Paradise (Kairau Te Tinana)’ |
| Sally | This is Speak Up – Kōrerotia, I’m your host Sally Carlton and today we’re talking with Reimana Tutengaehe and Rachael Pelvin about Matariki. I’d like to think now about what is it that you guys think we might be able to learn from Matariki and how that might impact, influence, change, the way that we currently do things. |
| Rachael | I am really interested in the values that shine through from kōrero about Matariki and in the mahi that the public holiday panel have done. They talk about these values being centred around three principles: remembrance, celebration and looking to the future. So we’ve got aspects of past, present and future and I think most of the values that are expressed sit in a human-to-human relational context, though we can apply any of those values to any relationship, it doesn’t have to be human-to-human. Values such as aroha, kōtahitanga (unity), manaakitanga (hospitality or generosity) and wānanga (learning). So that idea of sitting and sharing knowledge at this time and coming together and all of the key relationship values that go with a period of people gathering.  But there’s also some values that connect quite strongly to our taiao, I think, and one that I’m really interested in, I touched on it earlier when I described some of the stars in the cluster, are around balance and the learnings that we can take from viewing the balance within the kāhui whetū, the star cluster, and applying that into our own engagement in the environment and how balance within the environment is so key when we think about biodiversity. I believe we can learn from that from a society perspective as well and in terms of when we think about social inequities, we get stuck today in a world that prioritises productivity but if we seek balance, we can actually find ourselves in a space of prosperity I think and that’s some of my thinking around the values. |
| Sally | So just a question for you, Rachael, do you bring this up when you’re talking with your students who are studying environmental sustainability? |
| Rachael | I do. Over the last few years in the sustainability programme here at Ara, we’ve been working hard to integrate mātauranga and share these kind of learnings and wānanga what it means to bring western knowledge systems together with indigenous knowledge systems. For me, that idea of balance is so key in all sorts of areas. You know, when we talk about environmental sustainability but also when we talk about the ways in which we gain knowledge. Have we sought that knowledge from a variety of spaces and places and people? |
| Sally | I imagine in a very scientific way, balance comes into play in the environment to a huge degree. Like, is the soil balanced right and is the health of the forest balanced right and all these sorts of things as well. |
| Rachael | Absolutely. |
| Reimana | I was so invested in what you were saying, Rachael, that I actually forgot what the question was. |
| Sally | Great kōrero, Rachael. What can we share from Matariki? |
| Reimana | Learning is very subjective in terms of what a person might gain from it. I think people will learn different things. If I reflect on my own personal experiences, Matariki is an amazing period where we can actually start to become more in touch with our natural environment. We are so removed from it right now, myself included I think. There’s certain things that my family do, not necessarily just around Matariki but throughout the year and I found that my children were so removed from the natural environment that they didn’t like their feet in a bog or in a swamp or refused to do certain activities and so that was something I actually learnt, didn’t think I was going to learn it but I saw how removed or how ‘city’, if you will, my kids were in comparison to the times with my father or my family. Yeah there are plenty of learnings in Matariki.  I’m a massive fan of the narratives around the stars or the stories, if you will, and the reason I’m such a fan is because in a lot of western stories, I’ve found that there’s always a moral to the story or there’s one thing that you learn from it. Whereas what I’ve experienced with growing up with pūrākau or Māori narratives is that there’s no one single learning from it, there could be multiple learnings from it. And what we learn as individuals will be totally different to what others learn from it. It’s almost like looking at a single event from two different viewpoints and the two people will come away telling two different stories.  And so I’ve always looked at a lot of these narratives around our stars and around Matariki and so on and I like to think that I’ve learnt some really neat things that help to build my character or to reflect on how I interact with others, those small I guess kind of things. Please don’t ask me for examples. |
| Rachael | I totally agree, that anything that encourages us, especially on this national level, to get outside early in the morning and go somewhere, drive away from the light pollution, that gets us to move away from our urban safe zone and explore this place a little bit further has to be a good thing in terms of building connections, relationships between people and whenua (land). |
| Sally | I was really struck by something Heperi mentioned in our email correspondence before this show, which was Matariki is just one part of a cosmology that is so big. |
| Reimana | Yes. |
| Sally | And it makes you realise that you are just one part of something that is much, much bigger than you. |
| Reimana | Yes. The amount of information and I know… I would definitely not say that I am a tohunga in any way around Matariki, Māori astronomy and cosmology. Maybe just a little more informed than others. But yes, he’s totally right when he says that. There is a massive amount of narrative, of knowledge, there that we can totally draw from and I think Matariki is a great starting point for all of us. When we finally observe Matariki as a nation for the first time, I hope that for many people it would be a launching point, a point of interest to explore a lot more of it because it’s not the only star cluster, constellation of stars that mark things that are happening in the environment.  Many of the other stars will tell us, you know… I remember laughing one year because Rangi Mātāmua had just finished one of his lives and he was talking about the news saying that summer had officially ended and I remember laughing because he said - and I forget the particular number - but from his reading of a particular star it was going to last for like another five weeks and he wasn’t wrong, summer went a bit longer that year. But yes, plenty of learning. |
| Sally | How about this idea - and this is something Heperi brought up as well - a journey of reclamation. Reclaiming mātauranga Māori, reclaiming te ao Māori. |
| Reimana | I think important step for many people - being really honest about New Zealand population - I think many of us have become quite disconnected from our cultural origins to the point where we are forgetting family histories and so on. I’ve come across so many people who wouldn’t be able to tell me who their parent’s grandparents were and I immediately think, how do you not know that?! And Matariki is a very similar thing. For many of us Māori, it’s not something that was celebrated for a very long time, at least not en masse, and it’s only, I would dare say in the last ten years, really started to make a comeback, a cultural comeback, in our society.  And so this is a great opportunity for those that feel lost in who they are, to start to reclaim parts of, I guess, that traditional identity and then be able to move forward from that. But I wouldn’t narrow it to just the Māori ethnic group, I’d say it’s an amazing point for everybody in New Zealand because there’s so many more people than just those Māori who have lost their identity. There’s people who are fifth generation Kiwis that are so detached from their origins that they probably couldn’t speak to that information anymore. And it’s probably moving away from reclamation and so on, of Māori culture but I think it’s a much more wide-spreading thing than just that. It’s an opportunity for everybody in our nation to really start to reconnect. |
| Rachael | Yes absolutely, I can’t speak to the journey of reclamation but as tauiwi, we have a responsibility under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the promises that were made abundantly clear that Māori would retain tino rangatiratanga and I think it’s our responsibility as just people here in Aotearoa to connect to the culture of this land and develop an understanding of our shared history and support the reclamation and revitalisation journeys of Māori.  But I also agree that we, as Pākehā, have lost any sense of a cultural identity, I think. I’ve been on a personal journey to explore my whakapapa (genealogy) back to Britain and I think for us to live here in Aotearoa together effectively, we need to forge that relationship and understand that we are here in relation to each other and yeah, connecting with kaupapa like this is an easy first step. |
| Sally | I agree with that ‘easy’, I think that’s a good word actually. I think most people would get behind a day off, a day to connect with whānau, a day to look at the stars, whatever it may be. It’s something that people can get behind, I think. And you both sound like you’re quite hopeful that this could be the start of a journey of change? |
| Reimana | Heck yeah, heck yeah. I think it’s a… as we were kind of speaking to earlier, it’s an amazing opportunity in our society to really look at… I don’t want to say things Māori but because Matariki is actually more so a reflection of our environment and also a reflection of our beliefs. I don’t mean spiritual beliefs here, I’m talking about just connecting with people, celebrating those that have passed, celebrating those that are here, getting your mind set for the new year and what are the milestones or stepping stones in order to achieve whatever it is that you’re looking to achieve. So I think that it's an amazing event. I want to move away from the word ‘holiday’ because it sounds like rest but an amazing event for all of us here in New Zealand. |
| Sally | How do you see the future of Matariki? Once we’ve had this public holiday this year, how do you see things moving forward? |
| Rachael | I grasp onto that idea of an event that you mentioned, Reimana, and hope that woven into the holiday is spaces for us to engage in those deeper learnings. I know that there have already been proposals for community events, I think there’s funding for a couple of events, a festival maybe even, down in the dark sky district, down at Tekapo and yeah, holding onto the tikanga and those really significant traditions and not letting it be just a holiday, just a day off but a time for us to learn and share. |
| Reimana | I think Rach sort of mentioned it earlier, about being fearful about the commercialisation of Matariki. That’s one of my hopes is that it doesn’t become commercialised but instead is something that’s celebrated as a natural phenomenon, a natural event in our country that we can all appreciate and get behind. I’d love to see more and more people engaging meaningfully with Matariki and I don’t mean I expect everybody to go out and observe the stars - it’s not necessarily realistic for everybody - but my hope is that people do connect with others and at least do the practices that make Matariki significant. |
| Sally | Just as we finish up then, what will you both be doing on Matariki, 24 June? |
| Reimana | At Ara we normally look to take a group of people out to observe Matariki. I’d normally be a part of that but I’m not this year. But what will I be doing at Matariki? I probably will be kicking my kids out of bed in the early hours of the morning and starting to speak to the narratives around the stars because yeah, that was something that my father did with us and unfortunately it hasn’t been something that I’ve done with my own children. So I’ll probably do that. |
| Rachael | Hard to know exactly what I will be doing on the 24th but through my mahi (work) at Ara, as Reimana mentioned, we will be taking a group out to Waimari beach to observe the star cluster. We’re doing that a few days earlier because according to tikanga, we can observe Matariki during about four or five days which is the Tangaroa period of the Maramataka, so according to the right moon phase. So we will be doing that and later on in the month, another kaupapa that we’ve been running through Ara is to do some restoration work, so some planting at Kaiapoi Pā that’s really significant I think because it once again is another opportunity for us to connect with te taiao and take hold of our responsibility in that space and improve biodiversity and it’s another time for us to come together, gather together and share kōrero and it’s been really special. |
| Sally | Well from me, tēnā kōrua, thank you very much for coming and sharing your kōrero (words), your whakaaro (thoughts) around Matariki. It’s been really interesting hearing from both of you coming from different perspectives but very complementary, I think. It’s been really lovely. |
| Both | Kia ora. |
| Sally | Thank you guys. |
| Reimana | Thank you. |
|  | **MUSIC** |