

Nanuma

Karlina Mitchell

Nanuma means to think and remember – together. This body of work draws on that principle to reimagine the colonial photograph as a site of reflection, resistance, and renewal. Rather than accepting these images as fixed historical records, the works disrupt their authority and returns focus to the sitter – their presence and dignity.

Through processes of reworking, reframing, and recontextualising archival imagery, the project invites viewers to confront the layered histories embedded within the frame. *Nanuma* proposes a collective act of remembering that is active rather than passive, opening space for dialogue and reinterpretation. By centring the perspectives of iTaukei people, this body of work transforms the colonial gaze into a platform for self-representation and cultural continuity. In doing so, it honours those depicted not as subjects of documentation, but as individuals whose stories, strength, and identities endure beyond the photograph.

Bio

Karina Mitchell is a multidisciplinary artist whose work examines how layered cultural identities shape the formation of self and ideas of belonging. Using photographic practice as a base to then alter the photograph and create installations within spaces, she transforms images into immersive environments that reflect memory, displacement, and connection to place. Drawing on personal history and community narratives, her work holds space for complexity and contradiction. Mitchell invites audiences to reflect on their own relationships to heritage and home, proposing identity as fluid and continually evolving, shaped by experience, environment, and the ongoing negotiation between past and present.

List of works

from left to right

1.

Unnamed Fijian woman

2024

Page from *The Living Races of Mankind* (1900)

2.

Portrait of Bubu Lo

2023

Photo rag

84.1 x 118.9 cm

3.

Methodist Church, Vunivaivai village, Tailevu, Fiji

2025

Photo rag

23 x 32 cm

4.

Portrait of Uncle Bill

2023

Photo rag

75 x 50 cm

5.

Portrait of Bui

2023

Photo Rag

40 x 28 cm

6.

flowers, Vunivaivai

2023

Photo rag

23 x 32 cm

7.

plants, Vunivaivai

2023

Photo rag

23 x 32 cm

8.

Portrait of Aunty Tela

2023

Photo rag

40 x 28 cm

9.

Portrait of Aunty Una

2023

Photo rag

40 x 28 cm

10.

Portrait of Eseta (Mum)

2023

Photo rag

60 x 43 cm

11.

The Rewa river, Nausori, Fiji

2023

Vinyl

130 x 88 cm

12.

Portrait of unnamed Fijian man

2026

Photo rag

32 x 42 cm

13.

Portrait of unnamed Fijian girls

2026

Photo rag

32 x 42 cm

14.

Portrait of unnamed Fijian man

2026

Photo rag

32 x 42 cm

15.

Vunivaivai village, Tailevu, Fiji

2025

Vinyl

33 x 88 cm

16.

Portrait of Uncle Jo

2023

Photo rag

60 x 43 cm

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