

THEME STATEMENT

Ata Kura: Red Dawn of Integration

(or Whakataka te Hau – The Sharpened Spirit)

Whakataka te hau ki te tonga, kia mātaratara te wairua; e hī ake ana te ata kura, he oranga hou.

English vibe: Let the south wind cease its fury, let the spirit stand sharp and ready; the red-tipped dawn rises, bringing new life.

A world suspended in the cold breath before dawn.

Grey Otago valleys drowned in mist, stone towers rising like silent ancestors.

The air is mātaratara — sharp enough to cut, cold enough to sting.

Mirrors stand frost-rimmed, their reflections almost painful,
as though truth itself has frozen overnight.

Then the turning.

The south wind falls silent.

Stillness gathers — a held breath across the land.

And into that hush, the first streak of red cracks the horizon.

Ata kura.

A dawn that bleeds warm into the grey, stirring the stone, awakening the mana.

Pounamu begins to glow from within, catching the light.

Corvus remains raven-dark, shadow-born,
but now edged with pale frost-fire.

Luminara radiates soft red-gold,
as if the dawn itself has taken refuge inside her crystal form.

And at last, the seekers step out —

each carrying a shard of mirror, once shattered, now transformed.

Not blinding white, but warm, red-tipped, alive.

Every fragment cradling he oranga hou — new life, new beginning.

Integration not as flawless perfection,
but as dawn itself: arriving slowly, fiercely, inevitably.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE / PERFORMANCE BRIEF

The world of Ata Kura lives in the fragile space between night and day.

Everything feels cold, sharp, unflinchingly honest.

Performers should move as if every reflection slices, every shadow murmurs secrets,
and every breath carries the gravity of change.

The emotional weather follows the sky:

Pre-dawn — tension, fracture, visible breath in the frost

The turning — wind drops, absolute stillness, the heartbeat before decision

Ata kura — first red light, warmth creeping in, awakening

Emergence — characters step forward bearing their own shards into the new day

Corvus: depth of necessary shadow, not darkness for its own sake.

Luminara: warmth of dawn illumination, never sterile purity.

Kairos: the quiet hinge everything turns upon.

The final image — mirror shards catching that living red dawn —
is the soul of the piece:

Not blinding brilliance.

Not impossible wholeness.
Just real, warm, integrated life.
VISUAL DESIGN BRIEF
Colour Palette

Cold greys, mist whites, slate blues
Frosted silver, ice-edge glints
Deep raven black
Red-gold dawn bleed (ata kura)
Pounamu green slowly waking into light

Textures

Frost clinging to glass
Mist veiling ancient stone
Feather-soft shadow
Crystal catching red warmth
Broken mirror edges softened by dawn glow