

Tissue

I cry most days viscose lines of streaming tissue

Kelly Malone, 2012

From the original poem

Every day I cry viscous tears of streaming lines

Kelly Malone, 2012

This scroll like weaving responds to both the black and white visual of the Morse code and the deciphered message of the poem.

To respond to the black and white printed code the body of the work is woven from muka extracted from the Taapoto variety of NZ Flax/Harkeke (Phormium Tenax), a variety that is favoured by Hawkes Bay Maori for its strong, shiny, white fibre. Black muka threads follow the sequence of dots and dashes, creating a tactile braille like interpretation of the Morse code, that continues the distortion of words to another sense – no longer transmitted through sound but by touch.

The hand-woven textile and small scale of the garment is reminiscent of the miniature cloaks found in Peruvian funeral offerings (The MET Museum). The black thread becomes not just a visual response to a black and white printed page but indicative of the colour of grief and loss to create a miniature cloak of mourning.

The black lines of ‘streaming tears’ runs along the pale white threads like water running down a pane of glass, ending in copper-beaded tear drops where the poem is now de-coded.

Michelle Mayn, July 2015