

# THE FILM ARCHIVE

Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua The New Zealand Film Archive

ON DISK

*A MOVING IMAGE RESOURCE FOR  
NEW ZEALAND CLASSROOMS*

CONTEMPORARY MĀORI ARTISTS: PART ONE

# CONTEMPORARY MĀORI ARTISTS: PART ONE

## ***Contents:***

CLIFF WHITING

Kaleidoscope: The Landscape Tradition, Part 2 (extract)

ROBYN KAHUKIWA

Kaleidoscope: The Landscape Tradition, Part 4 (extract)

ARNOLD WILSON & PARA MATCHITT

Two Artists

EMILY KARAKA

Backchat: Series 01, Episode 06 (extracts)

RALPH HOTERE

Backchat: Series 03 Programme 03 (extract)

CHRIS BOOTH

The Edge: Series 01, Programme 22

SHONA RAPIRA DAVIES 1

A Cat Among the Pigeons (extract)

SHONA RAPIRA DAVIES 2

The Edge: Series 2, Programme 27 (extract)

ROSS T. SMITH

Backchat: Series 03 Programme 06 (extract)

TOIHOUKURA: A NEW ART MOVEMENT

Mercury Lane: Toihoukura: A New Art Movement (extract)

## **CLIFF WHITING**

### ***Kaleidoscope: The Landscape Tradition, Part 2 (extract)***

TVNZ 1984. Duration 5:01

Prior to the 1960s traditional Māori art defined what Māori art meant. It characteristically expressed spiritual and artistic ideas in wood, stone, bone and flax. These materials largely determined the form of sculpture. Art was not as it is in the West an individual process, but rather a communal one. It was made to serve a practical or symbolic function and had a spirit or life-force. In this extract Cliff Whiting talks about the integration of landscape into early Māori carving.

## **ROBYN KAHUKIWA**

### ***Kaleidoscope: The Landscape Tradition, Part 4 (extract)***

TVNZ 1984. Duration 2:56

Robyn Kahukiwa's expressionistic painting is an affirmation of Māori and female identity. In this extract she talks about her series Hikurangi, and the relationship between the land and Māori people, and the loss of identity that came with a loss of land.

## **ARNOLD WILSON & PARA MATCHITT**

### ***Two Artists***

National Film Unit 1972. Duration 8:31

From 1950 onwards a renaissance of Māori culture was seen in New Zealand. Cliff Whiting, Arnold Wilson, Para Matchitt, Ralph Hotere and Fred Graham were among several young Māori artists who trained under the Department of Education National Supervisor of Art and Craft, Gordon Tovey. It was this group who went on to revolutionise Māori art by experimenting with new materials and motifs. Younger artists felt freer to produce works that both reflected their contemporary urban lives and cultural backgrounds.

Many traditionalists were threatened by these hybrid styles. European critics also argued that this new style rendered Māori artists secondary to European artists.

## **EMILY KARAKA**

### ***Backchat: Series 01, Episode 06 (extracts)***

Gibson Group 1998. Duration 3:28

Emily Karaka is a political artist communicating her ideas through a fusion of traditional Māori form and motif, and the bright colours and roughly textured surfaces of European Expressionism. Her work is an assertion of her identity as a Māori woman. It discusses issues surrounding the treaty and land rights. Her paintings often feature numbers which represent the number of land claims before the Waitangi Tribunal.

In this extract she talks about her work as a protest artist and about her future plans to enter into politics.

## **RALPH HOTERE**

### ***Backchat: Series 03 Programme 03 (extract)***

Gibson Group 2000. Duration 3:05

Perhaps New Zealand's most significant living painter, Ralph Hotere's abstract minimalist works draw on the traditions of Western art history. While his work doesn't use traditional Māori symbols or motifs, it is imbued with a spirituality connected to his heritage and culture. His subject matter is drawn from the natural environment and the processes of growth and decay. He is deeply concerned with environmental issues.

In this extract Hotere's Black Light series is discussed. Hotere began using the colour black in the late 1960's and it has become a defining characteristic of his work. The colour black holds many associations: race, death, silence and infinity.

## **CHRIS BOOTH**

### ***The Edge: Series 01, Programme 22***

Gibson Group 1993. Duration 3:05

Chris Booth's rural Māori background has given him a strong spiritual connection to the land. His work is concerned with the conservation of the natural environment that is increasingly under threat. By spending time in a community where a piece has been commissioned Booth becomes familiar with the land and its natural resources and uses found materials that require minimal modification to create arches, columns and mounds that harmonise with the environment they have come from. He also works in consultation with locals, especially indigenous communities, to ensure his pieces are culturally sensitive and meaningful.

## **SHONA RAPIRA DAVIES 1**

### ***A Cat Among the Pigeons (extract)***

Pamela Meekings-Stewart 1992. Duration 12:28

Shona Rapira Davies is interested in creating a discourse around Māori political issues from a feminist perspective. Her sculptures, usually life sized clay models, are the physical manifestation of her culture's pain. The use of clay references the land.

In 1988 Shona Rapira Davies was commissioned to redesign Pigeon Park (now renamed Te Aro park) in Wellington. She handmade 30,000 tiles to finish the project in 1992. Māori artist Kura Te Waru-Rewiri also did the artwork on the prow. There was considerable controversy surrounding the project as Davies not only went over budget, but completion was delayed by over a year.

## **SHONA RAPIRA DAVIES 2**

### ***The Edge: Series 2, Programme 27 (extract)***

Gibson Group 1994. Duration 6:33

Not Exactly a Māori Work of Art was in part a comment on how Māori have lost the humour in art. This lighthearted exhibition was an attempt to regain it.

## **ROSS T. SMITH**

### ***Backchat: Series 03 Programme 06 (extract)***

Gibson Group 2000. Duration 3:10

This extract discusses the series Hokianga by Ross T Smith who went to live in and photograph the economically depressed and predominantly Māori community of Hokianga in Northland. His highly sexualized images of the people of Hokianga show their beauty, strength and deviance in the face of poverty. Hemi the signature image of the exhibition shows a young man staring directly into the camera. In maintaining this direct eye contact through out the series Ross attempts to empower his subject.

## **TOIHOUKURA**

### ***Mercury Lane: Toihoukura: A New Art Movement [extract]***

Greenstone Pictures 2002. Duration 8:56

In this extract Sandy Adsett, the principal tutor at Toihoukura in Gisborne, discusses the success of the polytechnic in teaching students about traditional materials and techniques and combining these skills with a contemporary and personal vision. Adsett wants Māori art to leave the meeting house and enter New Zealander's homes. Toihoukura is breaking down many traditional barriers such as letting females carve.