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Editorial	1
Ruth DeSouza	
Guest Editorial	5
Sean Cubitt	
A Brief Introduction	9
Robert Sullivan	
My New Zealand Identity	15
Nigel Murphy	
Hybridity and Creativity	19
Ian M Clothier	
Duty is Joy	23
Karlo Mila	
Confessions of a Secret Asian Man	27
Sándor Lau	
Creative New Zealand, Cultural Diversity and the Arts	31
Helen Bartle and Catherine Nesus	
Positioning and Soliciting Myself – A Business Strategy	37
Sapna Samant	
Creativity, Ethnic Communities and the Curious Case of Museums	41
Natasha Beckman	
Nurturing the Creative Spirit	45
Fe M. Sarmiento	
Going Bananas: Multiple Identities Forum 2006	49
Ellen Altshuler	
After life	53
Mallika Krishnamurthy	
Journeys	55
Athena Gavriel	
Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu: E Tala Mei Tonga Ki Tokelau	63
`Okusitino Māhina	
Swearing-In Ceremony Speech	67
His Excellency The Honourable Anand Satyanand PNZCM	
Happily Never After	69
Jameela Siddiqi	
Lash/Super Toy/Powder Room	75
Hye Rim Lee	
Ruminations on making urban space	81
Pip Cheshire	
Cultural learning for the benefit of all...	85
Julie Roberts	
Information for Contributors	88

Editorial

Ruth DeSouza

Arriving in New Zealand from Nairobi, Kenya with my family led to the loss of numerous reference points. Most dramatic for a child was the loss of wildlife; driving past giraffes or herds of zebra was part of my world. Then there were the everyday, more mundane losses that occur when one shifts from a multi-ethnic, multi-faith community to somewhere new: School friends, peer groups, doting family and friends, food, language.

Such deeply felt losses were for me at least exacerbated by the lack of reflection of anything resembling my culture in my new 'home'. My experience is not unique, even though it felt so at the time. 'Mississippi Masala' tells the story of Ugandan Asians, their exile and the creation of new lives in America. Their leaving Uganda reminded me of my leaving Nairobi. Our row of seats did not have a dry eye between us. 'Bhaji on the beach' introduced me to someone else who always had a ready supply of chilli powder in her handbag to embellish her food. 'Anita and me' showed me that stereotypes can be defied, redefined and resisted. The scene where a defenceless old Indian lady is waylaid by the dregs of British youth, switchblade in hand, takes a surprising yet strangely rewarding turn when she responds with an oversized cane knife.

For me, each of these movies brought into focus the depth of my craving for something that reflected my identities, my experiences. They reminded me how important this was to my well being. People who had similar experiences to me and were struggling to find their way in their new home offered me a range of survival strategies. Thankfully, such cinematic experiences have become highly accessible and I can gloriously and unashamedly indulge in them.

My personal and professional immersion in migration has brought me to realise that the flip side of loss and exclusion is freedom and creativity. Migration has allowed my family over several generations to gain new skills and experiences. Migration is transformative; providing an opportunity to sift out what isn't important to us and to try on new things – whether we like them or not! Migration provides new spaces, tools and ideas, opportunities for expression and creativity. And in return the receiving society is itself transformed and invigorated with new ideas and energy.

This brings me to our timely second issue of the AEN journal, focussed on creativity, identity and ethnicity. National identity is one of three strategic policy goals set by the Government and something that is being taken seriously. This issue is suffused with contributions from writers, poets, artists, creative organisations, museum folk, film, documentary makers and more who are committed to ensuring that the experiences of all who live here are reflected in our broader cultural spaces. Creativity not only builds bridges and creates understanding within and between people, it also provides, as Julie Roberts says, "a space within which the dissenting voice, the subversive position, and the critique of the dominant paradigm can be challenged".

This issue delights in film and in the visual and literary arts. It brings you an exciting range of contributors, many of whom consider not only the personal but the political, their own identities, New Zealand identity and diasporic identity. Because, to them, these are inseparable. The importance of creating space, the critical part arts and culture have to play in terms of our sense of self, our well-being and our sense of belonging are highlighted. Contributors grapple with issues such as freedom, being stuck, responsibility, language, absence, space, multiple identities and much more. The writing has temporal and spatial dimensions, it highlights multiple attachments to place: New Zealand, Hawaii, the United Kingdom, Norfolk and Pitcairn islands, Tahiti, Greece, Cyprus, Tonga, Korea and more.

The issue starts with questions from migrant, settler and indigenous, about their rights and responsibilities. Sean Cubitt's exploration of the freedoms migrancy brings highlights a separation from one's adopted culture that provides a unique perspective. I am reminded of an African proverb, "the stranger's knife is the sharpest". With freedom, comes the responsibility to tell both the old and the adopted what is wrong with them. In contrast with the freedom of the migrant, Nigel Murphy, a sixth generation Pākehā argues that the settler is stuck, he asks what responsibilities settlers have? Honolulu-based poet Robert Sullivan locates himself as multicultural, drawing from his whakapapa different cultural stories and different relationships with social and official power. Sullivan problematises the notion of bicultural and questions the reductive notion of a Māori nation and the availability of political process for Māori. He asks what kind of dialogue are we having and where does it take place? Perhaps this journal and its contributors are getting the ball rolling!

We move on to reflections on how creativity is evolving, with Ian Clothier suggesting that hybridity invites us to consider culture, identity and society and provides examples of how hybridity is a powerful catalyst for creativity. Karlo Mila tracks her evolution from poetry about her own experience to a more collective conversation incorporating the many communities she connects with. Mila argues that creativity provides a sacred space for bridging difference, finding common understandings and gaining empathy. Particularly so when the

differences can seem overwhelming. This theme of connecting and sharing understanding echoes in the poems of Athena Gavriel. A Greek and Cypriot mental health Nurse, she suggests that poetry opens "shafts of light into other worlds". Gavriel links her personal and professional experiences through her poetry, challenging stereotypes and prejudice. As does documentary maker Sandor Lau as he explores what it is to be a 'Secret Asian Man'.

Where Mila adopts a European style of poetry to talk about Tonga, her homeland, Okusitino Mahina's poetry about the death of the beloved Māori Queen, Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu, belongs to the Tongan genre of 'ta`anga tangilaulau', 'ta`anga tengihia' or 'ta`anga tutulu'. It is the poetry of weeping, translated into English by Manase Lua and into Māori by Te Aouru Biddle and Vicky Te Puhi-o-Te Arawa Rangī.

Migrants have many bridges. Bridges between the old and new and from the new back to the geographical, cultural and religious past. This requires a sense of dynamism that is reflected in a number of the contributions. Sapna Samant writes of becoming 'ethnic' on arrival in New Zealand and realising that in turn she had been re-classified a 'non-resident Indian' (NRI). She challenges the risk of reductiveness and hegemony in creative endeavours undertaken in diasporic communities. Samant emphasises the importance of moving away from representations that are safe and desirable. Hye Rim Lee extends this exploring how identities are influenced by culture, in particular challenging stereotypes of Asian cuteness as a Korean-born woman living in New Zealand. Perhaps no other creative endeavour this year challenges our cultural senses more than the movie 'Borat'. Reflecting on this, Australian Julie Roberts argues that film, visual and literary arts provide a medium where issues of identity and belonging can be played out, but that in Australia the space is paradoxically policed and hyped so that multiculturalism rarely goes beyond lifestyle manifestations to permeate ethnic equality and acceptance. Similarly, Natasha Beckman suggests that ethnic creativity whilst considered desirable and advantageous can remain a passive consumable and challenges museums to take greater responsibility to work for the good of all our diverse communities. Museums don't just preserve the past, they help shape our future. The dynamism

of ethnicity and creativity is reflected on by Ellen Altschuler talking about the 'Going Bananas' conference and how sharing culture provides bridges. Anand Satynand, New Zealand's first Asian Governor General suggests moving forward through our diverse communities' treating each other using good judgment, information, understanding and goodwill. We reprint his inaugural address not just because of its message but because none of the mainstream media – Māori TV aside – seems to have noticed his arrival.

Loss and grief form part of many stories of migration. We migrants leave things behind. It is, I suppose, inevitable. Fe Sarmiento shares her journey to enhancing arts opportunities for migrant and refugee communities. Eventually loss is replaced with new opportunities. Krishnamurthy reflects through her grief on the loss of her Father, considering her journey of being a minority in New Zealand. Jameela Siddiqi journalist, broadcaster and music critic contributes a short story. Born in Kenya and brought up in Uganda, much of her work focuses on the experiences of those families originally from the Indian sub-continent who were expelled from Uganda.

The importance of artistic expression as a vehicle to celebrate our own culture and a shared New Zealand culture is explored by Helen Bartle and Cath Nesus from Creative New Zealand who argue that arts and culture are critical to our well-being. They suggest that national identity and pride can be facilitated through ensuring all New Zealanders are visible in the arts. The built environment is also an important space for inclusion and exclusion, award winning architect Pip Cheshire suggests that it is timely to consider the degree to which public space might be culturally determined given the changing makeup of the city's demographic. Buildings reflect individuals, governments and corporations but city spaces are much more than the sum of the parts. Consider 100,000 people filling Britomart's urban valley to celebrate Diwali. Less than half were Indian.

I hope that this second issue of the AEN Journal provides an opportunity to see your own experiences reflected and to share in the experiences of others. It is an opportunity to be challenged, excited and invigorated. I've certainly had that experience myself as I read these contributions.

Ruth



The AEN Journal is a New Zealand Diversity Action Programme Project

The New Zealand Diversity Action Programme, a ten point plan to strengthen cultural diversity, was adopted by a community forum at Parliament in August 2005 following the desecration of two Jewish cemeteries in Wellington. The Programme includes a call for dialogue and exchange between different views, cultures and faiths, and the establishment of networks.

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Guest Editorial

Sean Cubitt

It seems strange to be writing this here, in Melbourne, and now, at the beginning of what promises to be a history-making drought. We talk to friends in Aotearoa about the weather – storms, wind and rain they complain, and we get envious. Australia is strange to me. The hard ground and yellow grass, even down here on the coast. The wind whips in, and there are days of persistent drizzle but as a farmer told me on the train the other day, it doesn't even reach the ground.

We went to see Al Gore's documentary about global warming: there were ripples of applause in the auditorium of our local cinema. This was a few days before the first member of the Howard cabinet to break ranks mentioned in a speech that global warming was, after all, a problem, and that maybe the government should think about doing something. The timing was interesting – state elections are coming up, and water rights especially are a big issue for the influential rural voters. Since the states are almost all Labour while the Canberra government is Liberal, there's a lot to play for.

We caught the story on satellite TV about the two-meter-wide jellyfish washing up on Great Barrier Island. In our six years in Aotearoa, we never made it there, but it sits high up on our list of places to go when we come back for holidays and to escape the February heat.

Two years back or so, we went to see Germaine Greer commemorating her infamous arrest with a speech at the Auckland Town Hall. She talked there about Australia's ecological disaster and offered a theory about how it happened. The white fellas were never at home here, she said. They had already traded continents, and they weren't locked into the land they tended. Once the water was gone, or the minerals, or the forests, they just moved on, until there wasn't anywhere left to move. Which is about

when we decided to arrive to take up my new job at Melbourne Uni.

My people were Irish. Dad was from Kerry on the West Coast. Mum was from Cork City. He was a young doctor when he volunteered for the British Army at the start of World War Two. He was with the paratroop regiment, and saw more than his share of action. Mum was in the war damage commission, and tending my new-born older sister. After the war they settled in rural Lincolnshire, where there were other émigrés, some wealthy like the Dutch tulip farming family, some less so like the Polish carpenter, who attended the Catholic Church. It was a small town. I was itching to escape.

University was a huge liberation. I took an opportunity to go to Montreal after that, and spent four years there. By the time I moved back to London, everything had moved on. Ten years in London, then ten years in Liverpool, then we moved to Aotearoa.

The Irish have wandering hearts. I suppose that's part of it. And then there's the sociology of work today. The university trade is international, and a PhD is a kind of passport, the poor man's gateway to the freedoms of the cosmopolitan elite. Like them I can, indeed almost must, travel to make my career. Like them, I am (almost) at home wherever there's a university or an academic conference. But

lecturers aren't the only ones. All the statistics we have agree: people move. It's a rare achievement now to live a life in one town, even one city; to stay in one job with one company. The small daily migrations of commuters are effects of a shift that began in the 1930s, when the majority of workers lived in walking distance of the factory that employed them.

I loved Montreal: most of all I loved the rich Québécois French culture, and the heady pleasure of changing languages, skipping from one way of living and thinking to another. Of course the winters are bitter, and they are getting worse: colder, drier, less snow. I loved London, though it wasn't my home: loved the punk ethos, the squats, the DIY culture that was, for me at least, the cutting edge of the 1980s. I loved the crashing clashing cultures, the intellectual challenge of it as well as the emotional charge. Through it all, and self consciously (because after all I'm an academic) I had a pleasurable alibi, an unearned nostalgia for an Irishness I'd never really experienced. That I suppose was my way of claiming an identity, but it was always a fiction, and I knew it, of course, and could be suitably, post-modernly, ironic about it too.

But then we came to Aotearoa. I didn't understand at first – lots of things I didn't understand. Some of those are things for poems and stories, stumbling thoughts and somehow private reflection. In public though, I think I can now make some kind of public sense of my experience, especially now I have to look back at my years when Aotearoa was home.

Here is the first idea, and it's a borrowed one, from an essay by Vilém Flusser, a Czech Jew who escaped to Brazil, devoted himself to his adopted country, but eventually fled during the period of military dictatorship, back to Europe, but this time to France, though he spent a large part of his later years writing and lecturing in German. His essay is called "The Freedom of the Migrant" and appears in the book of the same name.

Flusser says that the migrant has two freedoms, or ought to have. The first is one perhaps every migrant recognizes, however guiltily. We are free when we flee the stranglehold of tradition, of what's know and familiar, when we escape the bonds of family and community, when we set sail, young and anonymous, into the wide world. This first freedom

makes you a stranger in your adopted culture, sure enough, but it also has the heady, possibly even arrogant sensation of being better than those you left behind, clearer eyed, more able to see how narrow and restricted their world remains, as you soar free in the wild air. I think this is rather like Nietzsche's idea of the superman, someone who exiles themselves from the common lot, and looks down on them with aristocratic assurance of their own superiority to the herd. But there is a second, more dangerous freedom. It is the freedom that recognises that the other side of liberty is responsibility. The second freedom comes through taking responsibility for either the home culture or the adopted one, or both, using the first freedom as a lever. Because the migrant is doubly a stranger, back home and now here, she is uniquely placed to see either culture or both from a special vantage point, both integral and external. We migrants, Flusser seems to say, have the freedom and the responsibility to tell both cultures what's wrong with them. This isn't a very sensible thing to do. People tend to respond to this kind of criticism with baseball bats. But it is the freedom, the special charge, the duty of the migrant.

Now here's the second idea, which comes from years of reading, but most of all from my all too short experience of Aotearoa. The typical sociological analysis makes a distinction between two partners: migrants and locals.

For the locals, the migrant are always other. And there's a massive literature arguing whether, for example, locals become locals precisely by distinguishing themselves from the others, in fact by othering. This had seemed terribly important in London especially during the Thatcher years with their anti-racist and multicultural foment. I should have had an inkling from my time in Québec, where the struggle between French and English was so important, much more so than anything to do with migrants, and altogether more significant back then than indigenous rights.

But it was in Aotearoa that the weakness of the local-stranger opposition as a tool for thinking with really hit me. The New Zealand Wars were Victoria's Vietnam: the biggest army the world had ever seen fought to a standstill by Māori. Cheated, oppressed, Māori had never been beaten. They are nobody's victim. And they alter the status of localness. It is no

longer possible to think of migration in terms of its difference to one thing. Now, it seems to me, the central fact of our rootless lifestyle is its double difference, between the indigenous, the settler and the migrant.

It is as absurd and as profound to say 'we are all indigenous now' as to say 'we are all migrants'. 'We' and 'all' are very big words, even though they have very few letters. Writing here today in Melbourne, a handful of months into our Australian adventure, it isn't the drought, or the government, or the strange language of milk bars and eskies that makes us feel uprooted. It is a far more common thing, so common you wouldn't even notice unless you'd lived in Aotearoa, or perhaps gone to spend some decent amount of time in the desert here. It is an absence, which makes it even harder to pinpoint: the lack of the third term. Aborigines are almost completely absent from this city, or at least the suburbs I cycle through, the University where I work, and the CBD. There is a constant gap, a link missing, that makes it absurdly difficult to place ourselves. We know we aren't dinkum Aussies. But we don't know it in the way we know that we aren't Māori. Without that ground, will we too be like the farmers who stripped this land of its water and moved on?

Sean Cubitt was born in England of Irish parents. He has lived in Canada, the USA, Scotland, England and most recently Aotearoa New Zealand where he was head of Screen and Media Studies at the University of Waikato until moving to the University of Melbourne in 2006. He has written a number of books, most recently *The Cinema Effect* and *EcoMedia*, as well as articles, catalogue essays and web poems. He lives on the coast in suburban Melbourne and misses the fish.

A Brief Introduction

Robert Sullivan

Let me begin with an introduction. I identify with and belong to a tribe called Ngāti Manu, literally meaning the bird people, which affiliates itself with Ngā Puhi Nui Tonu from whom more than 100,000 people claim ancestry. My mother grew up in the Northland village of Karetu, not far from Kawakawa and Paihia. My father, who has Kāti Mamoe and Kāi Tahu ancestry through his mother, and Galway Irish through his immigrant father, was brought up in Kilbirnie, Wellington. So I also have strong Irish and Kāi Tahu roots. I also have one English ancestor, New Zealand's acting governor Robert Henry Wynyard, whom I can't but help remember, and some Scottish ancestors on both sides of the family. We also have strong Ngāi Tai and Ngāti Raukawa connections on our mother's side of the family. So by way of listing peoples, I'm introducing myself as multicultural.

Each of these families – the Sullivans or Harawenes, Pomares, Pirimonas, Wynyards, Conlons, Campbells, Morgans – belong to different cultural stories, and they each had different relationships with social and official power. Whetoi Pomare, for instance, was a leader of the North; his signature is the third on the Treaty – for a time he was an enemy of the colonial government. Five years after the Treaty was signed Pomare's fortress at the headland of Otuihu in the Bay of Islands was bombed by HMS North Star and then razed by its crew. Our people moved to the Karetu Valley about ten miles inland from there. Scenes of the destruction were painted by Cyprian Bridge and are now held by the Turnbull Library. I gave a copy of the burning pa to my mother. Pomare's portrait was painted by Lindauer. I gave a copy of that to my brother and another copy to my great aunt in Kawakawa. The original is in the Auckland City Art Gallery. Pomare's wife was Te Rangingangana, a poet and only daughter of Ngāti Raukawa's paramount chief Te Whatanui who is credited with

writing the song-poem "Rongo korero au"¹. I don't know much about my father's side, the Conlons, when they were in Ireland. My grandfather James Conlon's birth is registered in Boyle in the 1880s, but apparently he lived in Roscommon, Galway. I visited the Connacht Rangers' Barracks in Boyle and stayed across from the ruins of Boyle Abbey. My sister tells me one of our relatives was a nun there. I also visited the cemetery where Conlons were buried. My grandfather emigrated in the 1920s and was part of the 1951 waterfront dispute. My grandmother Sarah Morgan was raised in Otaki and spoke fluent Māori as a young girl. Her father was Scottish and her mother was Kāi Tahu and Kāti Mamoe. When I was in Boyle I sent my Aunt who pieced our Conlon family tree together a postcard of the place. My wife is of Irish descent going all the way back to Brian Boru; our children

¹ Te Whatanui. "Rongo Korero Au". Kati au i konei : a collection of songs from Ngāti Toarangatira and Ngāti Raukawa. Charles Te Ahukaramu Royal, comp. Wellington: Huia Publishers, 1994.

have a significant Irish and Māori heritage, but I am the only one in the immediate family who has an Irish passport!

If my family heritage is anything to go by where does the term *bicultural* come from in New Zealand? There was a lot of talk about biculturalism around the sesquicentennial Treaty celebrations. As Jonathan Lamb noted, it appeared in spectacular fashion during the 1990 Auckland Commonwealth Games². Biculturalism represented the culmination of a diplomacy between peoples, hearts and minds sort of stuff, appealing to New Zealander's national higher selves – and the appeal was quickly followed by the Treaty claims process towards achieving social justice, rapprochement. Looking back, it felt a bit like the public diplomacy the USA engaged in during the Cold War by broadcasting jazz on Voice of America³, the jazz of biculturalism being played across a neo-European landscape. Actually it was even more stark, more like a symphony orchestra that had allowed a koauau (bone flute) into the pit. A conductor (from the Court of Appeal) still kept the whole together.

Biculturalism is a compromise interpretation of the Treaty agreement between Māori and the rest of the community which gives the settler community special rights and privileges. Beside the narrow judicial expedient created by the 1986 State Owned Enterprises Act, which referred to the principles of the Treaty, the concept of biculturalism arose perhaps because it became too difficult to ignore Māori after the Second World War. Māori had migrated to the cities and our population was increasing faster than Pākehā. Previously, Māori had lived in separate rural communities and were out of sight. My mother moved to Auckland, as did many of her siblings, in the 1960s, while her father – a veteran, and widower - stayed in the village. Amiria Salmond has told me that the term was first coined by Erik Swimmer in the 1960s and was borrowed from French Canada⁴.

I'm sure there are many learned people who can discuss the nuances of the various Treaty articles, and as you know valuable work has been done by many scholars to contextualize and socialize the Treaty discourse – in particular Sir Hugh Kawharu and Dr Claudia Orange, Michael King, Ranginui Walker, to name just a few of many. I am equally sure that many can describe the heterogeneity of the New Zealand Pākehā population through history. I found the proceedings of the Population Conference and *New Zealand's Historical Atlas* as useful social research in that regard.

To parse the word biculturalism, it's unfortunate that the word 'cultural' is in there isn't it? It's confusing because the term has a special constitutional application in the New Zealand context. As I mentioned before, the term has come to relate to the Treaty Principles first developed by the Tribunal in the Manukau case and later supported by the Court of Appeal in the mid to late 1980s. These were the core principles of partnership between the Crown and Māori, the partners' principle to act cooperatively and reasonably in good faith, the Crown's principle to actively protect Māori interests and the principle of redress for past breaches of the Treaty. A superficial reason for resorting to principles, which I won't cover here, is that the texts of the Māori and the English versions of the Treaty promise different things. The bicultural term relates to the core partnership principle of the Treaty, but as I said earlier, it is a result of a new urgency in Māori-Pākehā relations.⁵

Since the Treaty, Māori have lived with multiple cultures, and married them; in our own extended family there are Spanish, Irish, English, and Scottish ancestors. In our immediate family there are Māori, Pākehā, and Samoan whanau. Of course it is difficult to extend our own family's experience to that of Māoridom, but then the very notion of a Māori nation remains reductive given the whanau-hapu-iwi structure of traditional society.

There have been many debates in recent times about the role of the Treaty in contemporary New Zealand. J.G.A. Pocock has ascribed part of the urgency of this to the entry of the UK into the European common market when New Zealanders were treated by the British like "faithful servants no

² Lamb, Jonathan. "A Sublime Moment Off Poverty Bay, 9 October 1769." *Dirty Silence: Aspects of Language and Literature in New Zealand*. Graham McGregor and Mark Williams, eds. Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1991. 97-115.

³ Bayles, Martha. "Goodwill Hunting". *The Wilson Quarterly*. Summer 2005. 46-56.

⁴ Swimmer, Erik. "The Aspirations of the Contemporary Māori". Ed. Erik Swimmer. *The Māori people in the nineteen-sixties; a symposium*. Auckland: B & J. Paul, 1968.

longer needed”⁵. This caused not only an economic crisis but also one of cultural identity among Pākehā. The focus moved from an *idée fixe* of global Britishness to New Zealand’s relations within the Asia-Pacific region. This process is still continuing. This perhaps helps to explain the re-emergence of Māori nationalist movements given the general ferment of economic unrest in 1970s-1980s New Zealand. For a while, with the conciliatory sounding Waitangi Tribunal claims of the mid-1980s and 1990s it appeared to many that at last relations between Māori and the Crown had made a positive turn.

Yet things have recently become seriously negative between the Treaty/Tiriti partners. The clearest recent stain, with the most power polishing, is New Zealand’s foreshore and seabed legislation; the alienating process, among other things, split the Māori membership of the second-term Labour caucus. When the Government realised that the Court of Appeal in the Marlborough Sounds case was going to allow the Māori Land Court and the High Court to hear cases that might vest customary rights in the foreshore (land between the high tide mark and the low tide mark), and seabed (land below the low tide mark going out to sea) to particular iwi, it responded by making the judicial process pertaining to that unavailable to Māori. It was, in my view, a very serious ethical error and a very public demonstration to Māori (widely reported in the media) of domination by vested interests. The Waitangi Tribunal’s *Report on the Crown’s Foreshore and Seabed Policy* covers a range of relevant legal precedents and responses in New Zealand, Australia, Britain and Canada. It finds that at the very least the Crown’s policy is unfair as it removes property rights from at least some iwi without any compensation. I was tempted to use the term oppressive, instead of unfair, but as the African American scholar bell hooks says, oppression is when one has no choices. At least Māori have New Zealand’s democratic political process open to us.

But to what degree is the process open? It is tempting to scan the media reports about the Māori

Party to see the impartial coverage of the fourth estate. In early July 2005, I was lucky enough to see a one hour television show hosted by Simon Dallow which brought representatives of the community into a discussion forum. Alright, it wasn’t representative – there were only two Pākehā women, and one Māori man, in the group of twenty plus speakers. The Māori spokesperson, Professor Winiata, was allowed to speak near the end of the forum for less than a minute before being interrupted twice – once by Mr Dallow, and once by another spokesperson. At least Prof. Winiata was from the Māori Party and speaking independently. Well, we do have the political process open to us, but the usual means of canvassing support – the general media – is unavailable to us because it very generally presents the Māori world in a negative light or ignores it. The political process enabled Tariana Turia to turn her professional life upside down so that she could support her and many Māori view of the foreshore and seabed legislation. This was well justified by her party’s Māori electoral seats victories in the 2005 election which also, unfortunately, highlights the government’s and the multi-headed opposition’s alienation from mainstream Māori.

At least there is an alternative fourth estate of Mana News and the Māori TV channel, TV One’s news in Māori, and the network of iwi radio stations. To date, there is no daily print media that targets a Māori audience. A Māori political party today can reach a Māori constituency despite the mildly racist general media. It is far more difficult for it to reach a general constituency.

As with discussions about equality for women, dominant groups in New Zealand could not truly cope with the revolutionary thinking required to create equality for Māori, Pacific Islanders, and Asians, especially in relation to social justice. Thinking of bell hooks again, I think Māori ought to think about who we are seeking to be equal with. Do we really want to be copying behaviours of the dominant in this society? Do we want to be as powerful as Ruth Richardson and Roger Douglas once were? Do we want to be like Bob Jones or Theresa Gattung or other CEOs? Do we entirely accept assumptions about material wealth, and social distinctions that go with that?

⁵ He Tirohanga o Kawa ki te Tiriti o Waitangi: a guide to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi as expressed by the Courts and the Waitangi Tribunal. Wellington: Te Puni Kokiri, 2001; and Report on the Crown’s Foreshore and Seabed Policy. Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 2004.

Ah well, I needed to say that, and I do respect your right to disagree. It's very political. Personal really. As the Canadian author Thomas King would say, if he was here, "platitude platitude platitude."

When I read the conference binary and transcendentalist theme, "biculturalism vs multiculturalism", I was immediately reminded of my days in Auckland Grammar School's debating team. I remember our fourth form year debate which we won taking the affirmative of the moot, "That There is No Hope". I also recall an unfortunate comment by our headmaster, saying to the effect that all Māori are lazy, which was bandied about by the media. I know he didn't mean it. How? I got to see him interact with and lead us every day in school assembly. Face to face (although mine was in a sea of faces that did not look like my family's). It was a media beat-up, just as the lively if benignly racist New Zealand media reported the golfer Michael Campbell's similar recent comments that "Māori are quite lazy" soon after he won the 2005 US Golf Open.

I still wonder at some of the *Herald* staff's perception of their audience when they ran a negative comment by one of New Zealand's most successful golfers to Brendan Telfer's Radio Sports show, which echoed one he also made to *The Australian*:

*A lot of Māori people back home are trodden on. They're very much a race that sometimes get very lazy. I'll admit to that, too. You get to places where they get very complacent. But then you can turn your whole career around very quickly. Look at me, if I can do it, so can you*⁶

Perhaps it's newsworthy, titillating stuff.

A couple of weeks later, social commentator Tapu Misa, also of *The Herald*, had this to say about Campbell's comments:

Being a person who sometimes gets lazy, I know where Michael is coming from. Indeed, some of my best friends are of a similarly slothful disposition - which is probably why I

*like them so much. I'm sure I'd warm to the workaholics as well, if I could only get them to sit still long enough to have a conversation*⁷.

I'm with Tapu Misa and her friends on that one. I sometimes get lazy too. I'm also with Michael Campbell – his achievement is inspiring. Unfortunately the interesting part of his statement that Māori are trodden on, did not make up *The Herald* headline.

How is this dialogue taking place? Campbell is quoted in *The Australian*, although the *Herald* cites *The Boston Globe* as the original source where the comment is made, while Brendan Telfer's radio interview was later. A lot of weight is given to his words and actions now. Like a great text, he has become a great New Zealander, and so his comments are given special attention, as if they were written down rather than uttered, given almost the same attention paid by some people to poetry with its charged language or to the provenance of a souvenir. It's telling that the dominant culture media picked up on the message it wanted to hear.

As well as Campbell being a great New Zealander, he is also a great Māori. Nationalism has friends in more places than just golf courses. I was in New Zealand for the win, but my friends tell me he received pretty good coverage in Hawaii. An acquaintance of mine remarked that 'they might all want to play golf now', but I couldn't reliably judge his tone. When I got back I saw Campbell on the David Letterman Show where he was introduced to the American public as 'your' US Open champion.

Of course there's a difference, isn't there, between a Māori or a Samoan or a Chinese or a Pākehā New Zealander – well, Pākehā is a broad term isn't it, a bit like European or even British. J.G.A. Pocock's *The Discovery of Islands* sheds interesting light on English and British identity and reminds us of just how troubled the notion of Britishness has been. It isn't surprising then, that the term Pākehā has not yet met universal acceptance⁸.

⁷ Misa, Tapu. "Genetic Research Can Only Benefit Us All". New Zealand Herald 3 August 2005.

⁸ Pocock, J.G.A. *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 20.

⁶ "Māori Quite Lazy, Says Campbell". New Zealand Herald 30 July 2005.

The ideology of hard work has many echoes, as Michael Campbell knows, and which any reader of New Zealand history will also know. This ideology affects and affected our education system, the demography of 'employment', New Zealand's former colonial practices and hence our race relations, and continues to deeply affect whether we respond positively or negatively toward one another when we start talking about such things. I still hope we have the chance to get beyond introductions one day.

Robert Sullivan has published five books of poetry and two books for children. Among other things, is coediting "Best New Zealand Poems 2006" with the poet and novelist Anne Kennedy. He is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, where he specializes in Polynesian and Māori literature, and creative writing. His latest book of poetry is "Voice Carried My Family" (Auckland University Press, 2005). He has won several NZ awards for his writing.

My New Zealand Identity

Nigel Murphy

This poem sums up the author's thoughts to date on being a sixth generation Pākehā New Zealander. The process of thinking about identity and ones place in the great scheme of history, of course, is never ending. As they say, identity is a verb not a noun.

Why do some new migrants to New Zealand feel
more connected to New Zealand than me?

Why do they have such love
for this land?

For me
I have no particular feeling for New Zealand
except for tiredness.

It is, for me, my identity

Like being part of a family one does not particularly
get on with
or like.
One is part of that family whether one likes it or not.

I think I can take or leave being a New Zealander.

The Māori-Pākehā thing is almost tedious

'what's done cannot be undone'
said Lady Macbeth.

My heritage is central to the imperial and colonial
project
of fucking over Māori and creating
New Zealand.

Just as we had to destroy the native forest to create
the farmland of modern New Zealand, so we had to
destroy and dispossess the Māori who were here
before us.

No hard feelings, it's just business . . .

New Zealand

I have no love for New Zealand.
It is my mother and my country and I'm stuck with it.
I have no choice in the matter.
As Frank McCourt said
'I have no choice in being Irish,
everything else I have a choice about.'

Or words to that effect . . .

Reconciliation with Māori is a duty not a desire
Or
more accurately
it's a political necessity.

We do it because we have to.

Do we do it out of love or respect?
No, we do it just because we have to.

'is this a dagger I see before me?'
Said Lady Macbeth

The land

For me I feel no connection with the land that so many white people go on about.
When I see the New Zealand landscape I see violence and bloodshed and robbery.
I see infamy and disgrace in every fold and crease.
When I see the land I feel tired.

Who did we kill here?
Who did we dispossess there?

My heritage

My heritage is not connectedness but rupture and dislocation.

The longer our family is here
the less connected we become.

not more.

For me Māori is foreign, are foreign.
And remain so
and will remain so
and are so

I am too aware of my Anglo-Irish and Irish heritage
—being in a country but not of a country
We Anglo-Irish:
What difference is there between us here and us in Ireland?—

to know that sixth generation New Zealander

means nothing

‘Being born in a stable does not make you a horse’
Said the Duke of Wellington
A good Anglo-Irishman, God bless him.

Our joyful heritage

I look at the land and feel,
The weight of history
The weight of smug
privileged
exclusive
selfishness.

‘A fair go for all?’
yeah, right

whatever . . .

I feel the grinding oppression of racism and conformity.

All nations are created
by the spilling of blood.
White New Zealand takes this moment
on April 25
1915
Gallipoli

It should be 1863
when Cameron crossed the Waikato.

Or September 25
1905
when Lionel Terry murdered Joe Kum Yung
for not being English.

New Zealand identity is founded on lies and foul deeds
covered by more lies.

‘and all the perfumes of Araby will not sweeten this little hand’

Lies that we tell ourselves
as well as others

The lie that we are not racists
The lie that we have the best race relations in the world
The lie that we are all equal
The lie that we are multicultural

Our culture is based on emotionless Englishness
and dour Scottishness.

Where things and systems are more important
than human values and emotions
Māori culture is foreign
to me.
But so is Pākehā culture

When I think of New Zealand
I feel nothing
but tiredness and resignation

A feeling of claustrophobia

Trapped by history and identity

'out out damned spot!'

'Where is home for Cromwell's men?'
my cousin wrote
and yes:
where is home
for Cameron's men?

This land sucks the life
from me.
Rather than
gives me life.

So therefore let me praise my glorious ancestors
and yours.
Who gave us all
this legacy

and enjoy it.

Because

we cannot escape.

We are New Zealanders.

Nigel Murphy is a sixth generation New Zealander of Irish-German-English descent. He was born in Rotorua in 1958. He spent the years 1963 to 1971 in rural Queensland and New South Wales, including three years at Young, site of one of the largest Chinese gold fields in Australian history. It is from there that his interest in Chinese Australian and New Zealand history stems. He has studied Chinese New Zealand history for over 20 years and has been involved in the Chinese New Zealand community for nearly as long, being secretary of the Wellington Chinese Association and chair of the Wellington Chinese Language School. He has published and lectured widely on the history of the Chinese in New Zealand and on racism and White New Zealand, his most recent publication 'Aliens at My Table: Asians as New Zealanders' was co-authored with Manying Ip and published in 2005. In 2002 he was seconded to the Office of Ethnic Affairs as a researcher and historian to support the Chinese poll tax apology reconciliation process. One outcome of the process was the National Library exhibition 'A Barbarous Measure: the Poll Tax and Chinese New Zealanders' which he curated. The exhibition was held at the National Library in Wellington in 2003 and toured New Zealand between 2004 and 2005. He has recently completed a Masters of New Zealand Studies, his thesis being 'Racism and Empire: Discourses of Race and Empire in the Formation of New Zealand's National Identity 1890-1907'. This was an attempt to examine the origin and nature of New Zealand's racism against Chinese and others, a question that has increasingly obsessed him. He has also spent the last six years studying his own family history in New Zealand, Ireland and Germany, discovering in the process how intimately connected his family has been in the imperial adventure in such diverse places as Ireland, India, South America and of course New Zealand.

Hybridity and Creativity

Ian M Clothier

Everyone from Helen Clark down in this land, seems pleased to present Aotearoa New Zealand as a multicultural society. Often though, when multiculturalism is discussed an embedded assumption seems to lurk: the notion that in a multicultural society there is a kind of 'forest of cultures'. Over there is an Indian, to the right someone from Tonga, and standing next to the German is someone from Nigeria. It is unnecessary to point any accusatory fingers regarding this assumption, but important simply to state that this vision is incomplete: in-between the trees of the forest of cultures, are the hybrid bushes of cultural pluralism.

Hybridity

In a broad brush view, culture has two primary operative functions: one is to endorse what Homi Bhabha called the 'fixed tablet of tradition' and the second is to provide a location for the progression of culture through generations and time. These two forces intermingle in our daily lives. The fixed tablet of tradition is referred to when questions of correct dress, action, song or processes arise. However nearly any parent or grandparent will tell you things have changed from a cultural point of view. The latter refers to the process of cultural change and hybridisation – one way to distinguish between these two cultural forces is that fixed tradition is not geographically dependent (think of the many festivals that occur both in the originating homeland and where sufficient migrants have settled), whereas as hybridisation is often specifically related to place, locale and situation.

Cultural hybridity has not always been viewed positively. Indeed, the Latin root of hybrid is *hibrida* which means 'the bastard child of a Roman and a slave'. Hybrids have traditionally been despised, hidden from view and excluded from power. This is true of nearly all cultures up until the middle of the

twentieth century. Racial intermingling was frowned upon, which is strange in retrospect because where ever two cultures have been situated adjacent to each other, intermingling occurred.

Hybrid cultures are not the simple intermingling of two parent cultures, in the way red and blue make purple. Instead, a so-called 'third space' of hybridity arises, which gives rise to aspects that are unique to the hybrid. For example, in the Pitcairn-Norfolk culture from which I am maternally descendent, the language is a composite of old English and Tahitian, plus words that are independent – these words have arisen from a sense of place. *Nawi* means to swim on Pitcairn and Norfolk Island, and to dive on Tahiti. *Yorlye* meaning 'you all' is clearly a compression of the English. Some names for fish – pick-pick, dotter or whistlin, appear to be neologisms. In a hybrid culture, red and blue make red, blue, purple and yellow.

This third space of hybridity is uniquely authentic. Cultural hybridity has a critique for notions of cultural authenticity, which is often thought to be the sole preserve of cultures endorsing the fixed tablet of tradition. As the organisers of the architectural conference *European 6* wrote: "On the

basis of a study carried out into the development of Mexican culture it is stated that this culture, as a melting together of different 'authentic' cultures, is a typical example of a hybrid culture – but that at the same time it is highly authentic. Authenticity and hybridity are not opposites but are natural extensions of each other. Hybridity produces new forms of authenticity and is inherent in processes of social and cultural dynamics in which various cultures confront each other."⁹

That said, because hybrids are melds of cultures, drawing influences from 'parent' cultures and generating third space conditions, the visibility of hybrids is less obvious. For example, in regard to Pitcairn-Norfolk, this highly authentic culture does not have a national anthem, has two flags and no national dress. These are precisely some of the foundations the fixed tablet of tradition rests upon. So it is perhaps interesting to observe that while most cultures define themselves by these cultural referents, that these referents are not necessary to culture and tradition. Pitcairn-Norfolk has a strong sense of culture and tradition.

A second sharp contrast between cultures in the fixed tablet of tradition and hybrids is the notion of choice in cultural referent. For example, if a local school is having an 'ethnic day' those referring to the fixed tablet simply reference standing authority on the most appropriate dress. In contrast the hybrid must make a choice. This choice is significant because in cultural hybrids, traditions are loosened, and the capacity to make choices allowed. Cultural hybridity therefore, represents a zone of cultural dynamism. This ferment of culture is found on the borders, in the overlaps, and the in-between places between two or more cultures.

Indeed, while fixed cultures and hybrids have been separated for contrast for most of this article, in contemporary society the two go hand in hand, with the processes of hybridisation generating fresh states of cultures in the fixed tradition. To illustrate this point I need only refer to the Japanese child who dances in a troupe of Irish dancers in New Plymouth, or the combination of Scottish and Polynesian dancing presented one year at Style Pasifika – the two dance groups rehearsed in the

same hall and this provided fertile ground for interaction.

This point concerning an interrelationship between traditional and hybrid culture is of particular relevance to New Zealand Aotearoa. That is because in this multi-cultural forest it is more likely in the future that the hybrid bushes will overtake the forest, rather than the trees of the forest growing taller. There will be parents, grandparents and great grandparents that might lament this development, but it is inevitable.

Most youth today engage with international cultural forces particularly in regard to music, and pertinently New Zealand Aotearoa hip hop is unique. This is exactly a hybrid process – adoption of influence from elsewhere, that results in unique states subject to local forces and impact. When Malcolm McClaren visited New Zealand recently, he made the comment that contemporary young adult culture stands between two dynamics – authenticity and karaoke. As such young people here want to both participate in international culture and locate their cultural heritages. The cultural influence might be adapted or adopted, worn on the sleeve, and subject to change and mutation rather than expressed in ways determined by the fixed tablet. However the urge to locate heritage is strong and should be encouraged rather than imposed with fixed parameters. It is better to have people on the same side of the fence than running loose and disengaged from their heritage.

Creativity

Notions around cultural hybridity have been occupying the minds and computers of writers and academics in relatively recent years. Bhabha's significant *The Location of Culture* was published in 1994. By 1997 Eduardo Manuel Duarte would comment that the 'leitmotif of multi-cultural discourse was hybridity'. Close on ten years later, creative art works that reference hybridity are beginning to appear not just at the borders of the art world, but now at some of the most important events for contemporary practice.

The zone of cultural dynamism surrounding sites of hybridity engender a powerful resource for creativity. Rather than following a distinguishing set of aspects in regard to content and media, creative

⁹ See European 6: www.european.nl/european6/euro6_alg_e.html (8 October 2002).

work that references cultural hybridity is spread across the horizon of contemporary practice. Approaches are as diverse as that of the virtual reality of Tamiko Thiel and the documentary ethic of Samina Mishra.

Thiel is a Japanese American who now has a third cultural affiliation – she lives in Germany with her husband. Complementing this diversity in ethnicity is a multi-disciplinary CV – Bachelor and Masters degrees from Stanford in Product and Mechanical Engineering and Diploma from the Fine Arts Academy in Munich. At the 2006 International Symposium on Electronic Art (ISEA) the MIT Advanced Visual Studies Research Fellow exhibited a virtual reality art work where the cultural influences of Japan and America found complimentary expression. The horrible ghouls of Japanese imagination and the terrors of napalm in Vietnam mapped the ravages of hell, while parts of heaven were populated by multiple wiggled figures from 17th century Europe and Buddhist imagery. One interesting aspect of Thiel's work was the flawless assimilation of cultural diversity. There were no shocks or perceptible shifts, rather one complete space, perhaps referencing Thiel's complete identity as a hybrid.

Samina Mishra is a documentary film maker and media practitioner based in New Delhi. At ISEA 2004, Mishra exhibited a documentary as video, as printed digital images with text from interviews and authors notes, and as a website. Home and away explored the dynamics of hybrid identity among second and third generation children of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi parents. The comfortable division between the home left behind and a new home, “between a nostalgic past and pragmatic present”¹⁰ as Mishra put it, was easily identifiable for the first generation of the Indian diaspora. For the subsequent generations however, the one known home was “a unique combination of London's physical space and the subcontinent's culture”.

These art works underline many of the comments made by writers and academics on the subject of cultural hybridity. The works have both exposed and critiqued assumptions about culture and identity.

Questioning an embedded assumption within some discussion of multiculturalism started this article, and further interrogating the discourse will end it. For as the (hybrid) cultural development discussion continues, it is relevant to point to further embedded assumptions.

The first of these is the grand scale assumption nearly untested in all the discussion that democracy is the sole presumed basis for the societal development of humanity. Democracy is so often twinned with commercialism that when Estonia released itself from Russian control in the 1990s, part of the discussion among the people involved the question: is the aim of democracy simply to be able to afford a newer BMW? Is financial success the goal of human endeavour? Clearly there are some among us who do not believe this should be the goal.

One thing I like to remind some Western commentators is that a place that lacks electricity, where entire families sleep in one room, where the trappings of Western society such as TV and DVD players are not present – such a space is not necessarily one of poverty. Across the Pacific spaces such as this can be seen many times and these are spaces of family strength and bonding, zones of cultural wealth.

The hybrid creative project, The District of Leistavia¹¹ raised these issues in an online voting questionnaire where the results of voting were used to generate the constitution of the micronation. The audience filling out the online form were basically an international audience that has a connection to the internet, who are also interested in electronic art projects. While the project was creative rather than scientific, as litmus of the international online audience the results of voting were very interesting.

For example, consider the responses to the question: ‘How is the Head of State decided?’ The collated answers of voting were Democracy 9%; Monarchy 2%; Meritocracy 59%; Nonarchy 30%. In other words, Meritocracy (defined as the political

¹⁰ See ISEA 2004 12th International Symposium on Electronic Art published by m-cult, Helsinki 2004.

¹¹ See www.art-themagazine.com/hybridia. The research that framed the writing of the constitution voting questions was influenced by cultural interconnections found between Estonia, Pitcairn and Norfolk, hence the hybrid basis of the project. I am principle creative director in this collaborative project.

structure where the person who serves the community best is Head of State) was overwhelmingly the choice of respondents. While such a political system is perhaps the dream of a creative, the important point is that there are options to democracy, and when there is an unrestrained selection procedure, that people do prefer a means of political system other than democracy.

The question which asked respondents to select the economic system was also revealing and generated surprising results. The collated responses were: Cash based on gold 5%; Barter 20%; Ecologically sustainable value 61%; Spiritual value 14%. Here sustainable value was the dominant selection, even when respondents were informed that this may mean increased prices. Once again, the assumption that capitalist democracy is the only way to go, has been tested and found wanting.

While all online, international, art interested persons are of course participating in the products of capitalist democracy (as they are using computers and the internet) this should not be taken to mean that reasonable, intelligent and interested persons throughout the globe agree that this political-economic system is the only option of any virtue.

And yet, try and find places where this subject is raised and these are few, outside of sites of radical opposition. Have we as intelligent thinkers come to the final solution to the structure of society? I think not, and likewise believe it is no coincidence that these questions might have arisen in a creative project that directly references cultural hybridity, for the hybrids are inviting us to consider the assumptions that guide discussions around culture, identity and society.

Ilan M Clothier is an artist/writer whose main creative themes are cultural hybridity and nonlinearity. He is a direct descendant maternally of the Tahitians and mutineers of the mutiny on HMS Bounty saga. He currently lives in New Plymouth, New Zealand, South Pacific Ocean, where he is Lecturer, Academic Discipline Leader Visual Arts and founding Director of the newly created Research Centre for Interdisciplinary Creativity at the Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki.

Duty is Joy

Karlo Mila

The theme of this edition – creativity in ethnic communities – has special resonance for me. Initially, when I began writing poetry, it was a truly personal endeavour. I wrote poems about my own experiences, hardships, heart-breaks – what I call ‘in a shoe-box under the bed’ type poetry.

After my first book of poetry was published - and particularly after it won the Jessie MacKay Best First Book of Poetry Award - the business of writing poetry has become less individualised and more ‘community owned’. What I mean by this is that the poems are much more responsive to community needs, issues and events. This is not such a huge shift, as my poetry has always been ‘reactive’ and about issues that ‘move me’. But now, there is also a sense that as a community member – and as a Tongan and a Pacific person in New Zealand, I must also use my poetry for ‘service’, where it is appropriate.

An example of this was when HRH Prince Tu’ipelehake and HRH Princess Kaimana and their driver, Vinisia Hefa were tragically killed in a car accident this year. At the Memorial Service I read poems composed to mark their passing.

Honouring Tu’ipelehake

Why are they still talking idly on the radio?
Why are the cars still moving on the city streets?

For we are in a distant land
that does not understand
that our prince of peace
has fallen.

We are in a distant place
that does not face
our loss.

Today many Tongans
living separate lives
divided like knives
will mourn as one.

Our hope has risen like a starlit wave
and crashed back into the sea.
Leaving only unforgiving ocean,
dark, blank, deep green.

- No one can tell their fortune on this salty surface
- No one can see their reflection in this bitter glass
- No one can fish in this deep, it is empty of all hope

We will don black
and like a flock of flying foxes
our grief will take flight across the diaspora.

Ours will be a sacred flight
through the deep of night
and the dark of sea,
back to the beginning
back beyond memory.

We will head to Lapaha
navigating the stars
we will leave the sun behind
and enter the moon
wings of skin stretched over fingers
trying to touch death.

Recognising that in life
you tried
to cross a divide

and touch the people
heart as your guide
conscience as your compass
side by side
We, the people,
mourn you now.

The Prince of the people has fallen
And we will descend silently like rain
into an ocean swelling
with tears.

I also wrote another poem shortly after this. And it was written for all those who were involved in organising the Memorial Service. It has a completely different tone - much less formal and beautiful. It is essentially a 'ranting' poem. One that was a reaction to the gate-keeping and negativity that goes on in communities - especially when there is politics between community leaders and an element of nastiness about who has the right to be taking leading roles. This poem was called 'A Commoner's Lament' but is not really about Tongan commoners, as such, but rather about negative politics that occur in all tightly-knit community groups.

A Commoners Lament (For S)

Yes it is us.
The ones from the bush
The haua ones from town
The ones who can't speak Dongan
The ones who can't speak English kood
The ones from that tiny little island somewhere,
nowhere
The ones who have lived too long in New Zealand
The ones who never had flush toilets where they
grew up
The ones who didn't even go to Tonga High School

Yes it is us,
The ones who come from the shithouse
The ones who nobody approves of
The ones who don't know that their people are
nobody from nowhere and should shut their mouths
- other people should be speaking -
The ones who are too well educated, they should
shut their teeth
The ones who took that money - haven't you heard
that rumour?

Yes it is us
The ones who raise everyone's eyebrows
The ones who are not from good families
The ones who are from a good family - I feel sorry
for them - they must be ashamed
The ones who had nervous breakdowns in their
twenties, fakasasele, vale, vale 'aupito
The ones who are too clever
The ones who are too dumb
The ones who are too pretty
The ones who are too ugly
The haua ones from town
The kaimu'a ones from the bush
The ones who don't know their genealogies
The ones who think that bloodline is all that matters
The ones whose houses never had any toilet paper
The ones who had too much toilet paper
The ones with the identity crises
The ones who know too much
The ones who don't know anything
The ones who are too young
The ones who are going senile
The ones who don't even live in Tonga anymore
(for crying out loud, how dare they)
The ones with the big mouths
The ones with the fat heads
The ones who eat-front, kai-mu-mu'a
Fie eiki, fie ma'olunga, fie poto, fie me'a
Who the hell do they think they are?

Yes it is us.
We are the voodoo dolls
who are pricked
and poked
in every place possible
from every direction.

Yes it is us.
We are the people.
And we are the ones
we have been waiting for.

I have just recently arrived back from Tonga. I was asked with a small group of others to assist the Office of the Lord Chamberlain to write website text for the Palace Office website, the official website of the Monarchy. On a political spectrum, I am usually left of left, so it was an unexpected role and opportunity. Any astute person will recognise that politics in Tonga are not clear-cut, nor black and white. Democracy as an ideal is fairly faultless;

however, the Bush Administration is indicative to me, of how different things can be in 'real life'. While in Tonga, I was stunned to see the way the media misrepresented, printed untruths and had a somewhat callous disregard for the fact that essentially, this was a family in mourning. I think that I have learned that choosing to walk on the side of 'righteousness' and truth is never straightforward and you can't always take the same road.

For someone born and raised in New Zealand, I also learned what a pleasure it was to serve the Lord Chamberlain, Honourable Fielakepa; a Noble of the Realm. He was a true leader and inspirational in his quiet and good mannered way - this was an interesting learning for me, who had little experience - and some suspicion - of nobility in Tonga. It was a crash course in Tongan history, Tongan culture and the Tongan way of life. Although I have lived there before, I had never sought to represent Tongan culture on paper, nor describe Tonga in an authoritative way to others. It was only working in a team environment in partnership with cultural experts and history buffs that this kind of work could progress safely.

It was a vivid learning experience for me and a good reminder that you never really do 'know it all' - there is always more to learn. The best you can do is ensure that the framework you hang your thoughts on, is open enough to accept new learning even when it challenges what you thought you knew.

While in Tonga, armed with new knowledge, I wrote a poem for the late King that can be found on the website¹² and is printed below.

Duty is Joy

(A poem for His Majesty King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV)

Tu'i Tonga,
a divine line
to Aho'eitu.

You too,
son of Tagaloa
surfing through the waves
conquering the sea.

You too,
like Maui
reaching for the sun
defying gravity, catapulting,
a comet into they sky.

Warrior Kings
of Ha'atakalaua
the throne of your bones,
an empire in their eyes.

Kings of Kanokupolu
ghosting your every move,
legendary strategy,
unifiers of people,
creators of a Kingdom.

Three ancient bloodlines
course through your veins,
Tu'i Tonga, Tu'i Ha'atakalaua, Tu'i Kanokupolu.

Poetry of Queen Salote, faithfully
inscribes the path where you have found your feet,
the strength of Tungi in your stride.
You have travelled the world, and
with strong and steady hands
plucked the best of what you've seen
to make a kakala for your people
as it has never seen before.

Musical notes,
float at your bidding
into the islands.

The alphabet itself,
bends at your will,
'b' arching into 'p' to please you.

Your crowning legacy
will be
the education of your people,
minds blossoming open like heilala in the sun.
Your people will never perish
Ki he lelei taha.

The road has been prepared.
But the prayers of your people
have kept you here.
Now that the sun has set in the Kingdom
the nation is adorned in darkness
only the ironwood tress stand still
for the people's hearts

¹² www.palaceoffice.gov.to

are at
half mast.

We remember your legacy
Ko e Tonga Mo'unga ki he Loto.
Tonga's strength lies in a mountainous heart,
and you were Tonga's mountain –
the pinnacle of the people's heart.

How blessed we are by your life of service,
How we strive to climb the heights you've reached,
Leading always, by example, "Res ipsa loquitur".

Two days after arriving back in New Zealand from Tonga, I was asked to teach a poetry workshop for a school holiday programme in Otago. This was an exciting group of stunning Pacific young people who took to poetry with talent and interest. The poems were focused on the suburbs that they lived in. We completed a 'five sense' exercise... i.e. what does your suburb sound like, smell like, look like, taste like etc. The words the young people thought of were put up on a whiteboard and then we all wrote poems using those words. My poem, which is a bit provocative (I actually have a lot of respect for Helen Clark) used the words selected by those young people.

Floor Show in the Southside

Behind the pub
Helen Clark is tagging
the same old same
rundown houses
where island kings eat Chinese takeaways
and island queens krump
so fast so furious

Behind the pub
Helen Clark is dancing
like a taupou
a slow ta'olunga
to an orchestra of dogs barking
and a symphony of sirens
she does a siva
to the soft sounds of stealing

Behind the pub
Helen Clark sings
with a choir of tight clothes
and one house alarm crying
like a solo trumpet

after too many drinks

Behind the pub
Helen Clark is firewalking
the fine line between donuts
and fresh cut grass towards
a drive thru umu
of chop suey, steak and cheese

Behind the pub
Helen Clark is sailing
like a true island princess
blood on her back
blue bandanna in her hair
a marijuana leaf
tucked behind her ear.
sailing staunch on ghetto sewage
sailing scared among a wasteland of churches.

At "Absolute Rush" program, Sept 2006

The poems I have selected for this edition all represent to me, the way in which creativity occurs in communities. I feel a part of many communities, the broader New Zealand population, the Tongan diaspora, the Pacific community, and many others. Each is a site of creativity and inspiration. I am confident that creativity is the sacred space where we are able to bridge exceptional diversity and difference and find common understandings and true empathy. This is where we create peace, insight and acceptance – in realms where there are often too many politics, people are divided and respect for others is challenging.

Karlo Mila is a poet of Tongan and Pākehā origins with ancestral connections to Samoa. She was born in Rotorua in raised in Palmerston North. Karlo has worked in Nuku'alofa and went to school at Tonga High School, as well as in New Zealand. She is a PhD student at Massey University where her thesis examines the health and wellbeing of the Pacific generation born and/or raised in Aotearoa. She has written a collection of poetry titled "Dream Fish Floating", which recently won the Jessie MacKay Award for Best First Book of Poetry in the Montana Book Awards. She is juggling writing a new book with raising two boys, completing her PhD, participating actively in the community and doing contract work in the area of Pacific research and evaluation. She is passionately committed to improving the position of Tongans and Pacific peoples living in New Zealand.

Confessions of a Secret Asian Man

Sándor Lau

If you really want to understand, it all comes down to the stacking of the firewood.

My father has always been my hero, but it took me some time to figure it out. One of my jobs as a kid was to help Dad with firewood, which he insisted on stacking in a neat pile. You might forgive me if at the time I could not see the logic of neatly stacking wood, ONLY TO BURN IT! But that's my dad.

He brushed his teeth with his left hand to increase dexterity. Read the whole encyclopedia before he was ten. Could do a perfect three-point turn with a trailer attached to the back of the truck. He always insisted on doing everything the hard way, but never lost his temper. Except once. My brother and I were watching Saturday morning cartoons and there was a hilarious show with a buck-toothed, four-eyed Chinese guy who had us in stitches. I could tell Dad was fuming when he walked in because he did something I had never seen before. He raised his voice. All he said was, "I'm a Chinese guy. And you're Chinese guys too."

If you understand about Elizabeth, Colorado and the 80s and Reagan's America, you might also forgive me for reaching the age of six and having to be told I was Chinese.

You see, I've always been a secret Asian man, because I don't look very Chinese. My brother and I both turned out fair skinned with brown hair. And apart from the woman in the hospital who in 1975 demanded to know where my mother got her adopted Vietnamese baby, most people looking me in the face never even guess I'm Chinese.

My great grandparents on my mother's side wisely thought 1913 was a fine year to leave Eastern Europe and migrated from Hungary to the United

States. On my father's side, my great grandparents took the popular 1880s option of leaving the life of farmer peasants in Guangdong to become farmer peasants in Hawaii.

But I grew up in Elizabeth, Colorado, among pickup trucks, rattlesnakes and lots of empty cans of Coors beer. By the late 70s, the variety of cowboys who actually shot each other had become extinct. But among the 1000 or so residents of Elizabeth, there were still a few who brought their six shooters to the Wagon Wheel Saloon and put some holes in the ceiling after downing a few too many cans of Coors. I'm sure you can relate.

It may come as no surprise to you that we had to drive an hour to Denver to buy a bag of rice or have a mouthful of dim sum. Our closest connection to the old country was our relatives in Hawaii, and even they mistook us for haoles. It took us years just to figure out they were speaking English and years after that to figure out what they were saying through their thick pidgin accents that sounded a lot more like South Auckland than Charlie Chan.

Dr. Sun Yat Sen was once asked what the most important effect of the Franco-Prussian war was, to which he responded, "It's too soon to tell." Back in the 80s, it was too soon for me to tell that my own buck teeth, four eyes, and straight-A report cards had anything to do with the Chinese guy in the cartoon. It was certainly too soon to tell that many of my schoolmates found me just as hilarious as the Chinese guy in the cartoon, for many of the same reasons. Not that I noticed, as every waking hour but Saturday morning, I was busy studying anyway. In later years, I would wonder if I was not a banana,

but an egg, white on the outside, yellow in the middle.

Oklahoma was previously known as the Indian Territory because that's where the US government sent the tangata whenua as soon as the wind stopped blowing, grass stopped growing and water stopped flowing. They figured it was the last place white people wanted to live — until everywhere else got crowded and they discovered oil where the wind comes sweeping down the plain. Fresh out of high school, it was certainly the last place I wanted to live. But with the land grab over, the University of Oklahoma instituted a new scholarship grab to bring in straight A-students, regardless of whether they had buck teeth or four eyes.

My ancestors had come across thousands of miles in a leaky boat on their own trail of tears so I could get an education, and I could hardly begrudge them travelling 600 miles more for it, even if it did mean landing in the buckle of the Bible Belt.

At the University of Oklahoma, I joined the Asian-American Student Association, but even they could not save me from the hordes of frat boys and Christian fundamentalists who dominated the rest of campus. Only the study abroad office could do that.

In exchange for doing hard time in Oklahoma, I got to retrace the journeys of my own ancestors and a lot of other people's, studying in Mexico, Spain, France, and in the summer of 1997, China.

The US administration has given us a few things to be ashamed of in recent years, Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, depleted uranium and extraordinary rendition. But if you were with me in Shanghai in the summer of 1997, you would understand yet another human rights violation. Never, ever, unleash a study tour of frat boys and Christian fundamentalists tanked on Qingdao beer onto the civilian population of China.

It would have been natural at this stage for me to want to identify more with Chinese people from the homeland as I certainly couldn't identify with my classmates. But if you want to make a Chinese person laugh. I mean really laugh. I mean laugh like an American kid watching a four-eyed buck toothed Chinaman on Saturday morning cartoons, go to

China as a fourth-generation Chinese-American and tell them you are Chinese.

While I didn't discover any ancient Chinese secrets on my trip, I did start to understand more about the stacking of the firewood. My ancestors came from an ethnic minority group called the Hakka. That's with two Ks.

My great-grandmother had come to Hawaii in the years following the Franco-Prussian war, and worked digging pineapple. One day out in the field, she put the pick through her foot. After which, she poured kerosene over the wound to cauterize it, wrapped it tightly in a cloth, and went back to work, "Because there was work to be done." I remember people in China saying, "Hakka? Oh yes, very hard working people."

My own hard work during the Oklahoman exile had paid off in the form of a US Fulbright scholarship to study filmmaking at the University of Auckland. As my thesis in film school, I did a documentary, *Behaviours of the Backpacker*, in which I did not put a pick through my foot, but I did walk from Auckland to Cape Reinga.

In the winter of 2002, it was too soon to tell how many people would give me their stories and put their souls on tape for me. But I did know I would get something by walking that could not be had any other way. I also knew that by stacking the firewood neatly... I mean walking 500 kilometres, I would discover something about myself I couldn't learn by taking a lift.

Now I've finished a new film called *Squeegee Bandit*. It's about a tough Māori guy from South Auckland who's into performance art and street theatre. Which is to say he washes car windows at traffic lights. It's about hip-hop, homelessness, the Treaty of Waitangi and finding God.

On the surface, it's about as far away from cowboys, rattlesnakes, Coors Beer, dim sum, Sun Yat-Sen, the Franco-Prussian War and digging pineapple as you can possibly get. But I am convinced that autobiography is the only genre out there. With *Behaviours of the Backpacker* and *Squeegee Bandit*, the most passionate reactions I get from people are when they see themselves in the characters and the story. I look at these films now,

and ultimately see stories about a kid from Colorado who had to learn to do things the hard way, who had to come all the way to New Zealand to figure out his father was his hero, and who wanted to see something more than four-eyed buck-toothed Chinese cartoon characters on television.

Sándor Lau was born in 1975 in South Bend, Indiana, USA, and grew up in Elizabeth, the pearl of Colorado's eastern plains... A full scholarship brought Sándor to the University of Oklahoma. He quickly decided to take full advantage of the university's study abroad programme. After spending half of his undergraduate education studying in Mexico, Spain, France, and China, he taught English in Taiwan where he amazingly survived the traffic and paraglided for the first time. In 2000, Sándor received a US Fulbright scholarship to study at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, and attended film school there. Sándor continues to live in Auckland, making films and writing for audiences in New Zealand and around the world. This article is based on his presentation at the 2006 Going Bananas Conference held in Auckland.

- Squeegee Bandit trailer:
www.squeegeebandit.com/trailer.html
- Behaviours of the Backpacker clip (and to get the DVD):
www.nzshortfilm.com/film,285.sm
- Sándor Lau website: www.sandorlau.net

Creative New Zealand, Cultural Diversity and the Arts

Helen Bartle and Catherine Nesus

Over the last 18 months Creative New Zealand has been working on the development of its Cultural Diversity Strategy. This article discusses that Strategy, its philosophy and broader work that Creative New Zealand is undertaking in this area.

In developing a Cultural Diversity Strategy, Creative New Zealand has taken account of the changing ethnic demographics of New Zealand. A conscious attempt has been made to enable Creative New Zealand to respond to this changing environment and to examine long term equity of access approaches to the work that it undertakes.

Arts and Identity

Arts and culture are integral to the lives and well-being of all New Zealanders. The arts reflect and define who we are. Artistic expression enables each of us to celebrate our own culture and heritage as well as our shared New Zealand culture and heritage. Visibility of all New Zealanders in the arts is also pivotal to building national identity and pride.¹³

Creative New Zealand's purpose is 'to encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders'. One of the cornerstones of making this a reality is by recognising New Zealand's cultural diversity and celebrating the arts of ethnic communities.

Why is Diversity Important?

Cultural Diversity is one of Creative New Zealand's six strategic priorities. In 2004, Creative New Zealand is committed to the development of a Cultural Diversity Strategy in partnership with tangata whenua. In the first instance this Strategy focuses on the ethnic diversity of New Zealand.

The Arts Council has adopted the following objectives for Creative New Zealand in respect of Cultural Diversity:

- That Creative New Zealand will be an organisation with the cultural knowledge and understanding to engage with, and respond to, the ethnic diversity of New Zealand
- To ensure that artists from diverse ethnic communities and backgrounds have a range of creative and artistic opportunities within New Zealand's arts sector
- The arts of New Zealand reflect our country's ethnic diversity.

Cultural Diversity in Partnership with Tangata Whenua

One of the defining parameters of Creative New Zealand's approach to examining its work with respect to diversity is that it is done 'in partnership with tangata whenua'. As a result it is seen as important that the Strategy is underpinned by a

¹³ National identity is a key theme for the Government. The arts have been discussed as being integral to the building of national identity and pride for New Zealanders.

Māori world view. Therefore the Strategy is constructed around a set of Māori values. Central to this is *whanaungatanga*¹⁴. This embraces the values of tika, pono and aroha which together symbolize an approach which is correct and just, with an intent which is based on integrity and sincerity, and seeking to achieve respect across diverse communities.

Strategy

This is the first Cultural Diversity Strategy for Creative New Zealand and provides the organisation with the opportunity to look back on progress to date and to signal its approach for the next three years. This Strategy is for all ethnically distinct communities including Māori, Pacific, European, Asian, Middle Eastern, and African, and acknowledges the unique place of Māori as tangata whenua of New Zealand.

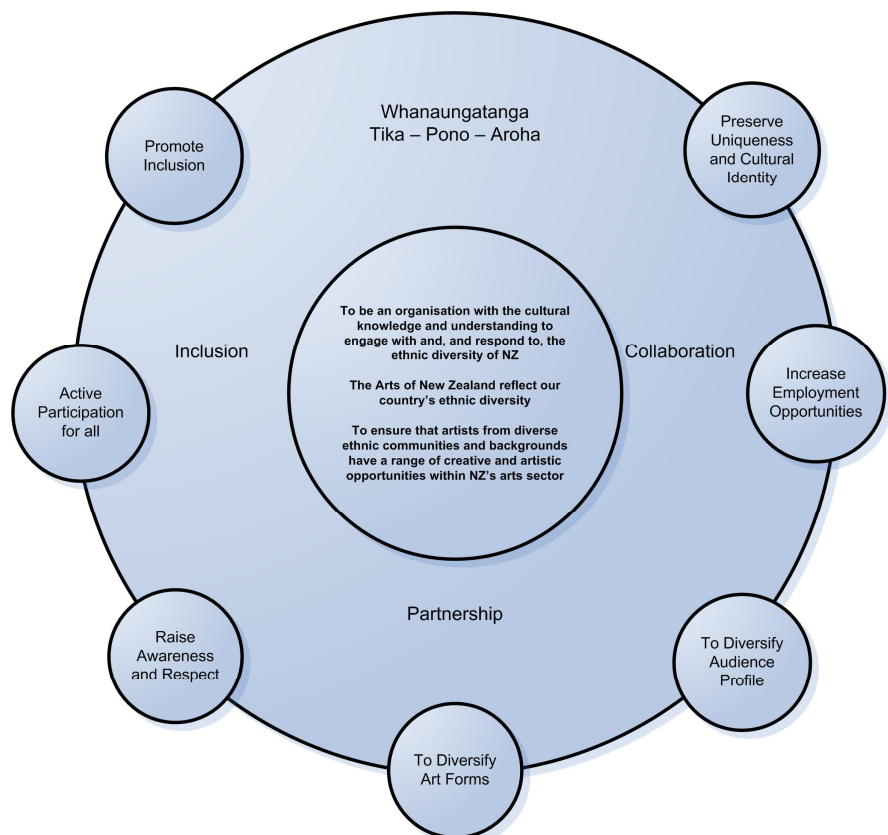
Creative New Zealand's Cultural Diversity Strategy looks to further develop culturally diverse approaches both within Creative New Zealand and across the arts sector. It is noted that achieving these priorities will require a long term approach. The priority areas that have been identified are:

- Promoting Inclusion – New Zealand's cultural and ethnic communities have a voice in the arts
- Preserving Distinctiveness and Cultural Identity – protecting and preserving New Zealand's distinctive culture/s
- Diversification of art forms – arts programmes will reflect the spread of art forms, values and beliefs of New Zealand's diverse artists. This can include the reflection and encouragement of traditional art forms of ethnic artists as well as the hybrid art forms

that are created through a fusion of New Zealand's unique range of cultural influences

- Raising awareness, understanding and respect for culturally diverse arts
- Encouraging and supporting active participation in the arts by all New Zealanders – ensuring that more culturally diverse art is visible and available to all New Zealanders
- Diversification of audience profile – audiences have access to arts that reflect the communities of New Zealand
- Increasing employment opportunities – there are increasing opportunities for people from a range of ethnic groups to work in the arts, including in management and governance positions.

Conceptually, these all establish the foundation upon which the Strategy is based, and more importantly how Creative New Zealand will undertake work in this area.



¹⁴ Whanaungatanga means 'kinship' or 'connections'. Whanaungatanga is about finding connections with people you meet and understanding where they come from. It is the foundation of building relationships.

What is Creative New Zealand Doing?

Creative New Zealand is undertaking a number of pieces of work to further understand demands and expectations in this area.

New Zealand Diversity Forum

Creative New Zealand recently hosted a special topic forum 'Diversity and the Arts' as part of the New Zealand Diversity Forum. This Forum provided an opportunity to further explore questions and issues around diversity, identity and the arts. A number of key themes came out of this forum that have been taken on board, e.g.

- We all possess multiple identities – therefore strategies and approaches must be inclusive rather than exclusive
- We are already living in a diverse society. It is important that organisations reflect that
- Organisations must take flexible approaches to defining diversity
- Organisations need to demonstrate leadership by beginning to examine the issues and opportunities associated with diversity

Asians and the Arts

Creative New Zealand, in partnership with Auckland City and the ASB Community Trust is about to embark on **Asians and the Arts**, a research initiative following on from the study into attendance at, participation in and attitudes towards the arts in New Zealand, which was commissioned in 2005.

The research is focusing on arts attendance and participation within Asian communities and the overall research objectives are to inform the implementation of Creative New Zealand's strategic initiatives in audience development through our Participation and Cultural Diversity strategies. We also aim to provide our organisation and the arts sector with in-depth knowledge about attitudes, attendance and participation in the arts for Asian communities and, by doing so, deepen the participation of Asians in the arts and increase Asian audiences for the arts.

What Do We Want to Know?

The research will include canvassing opinion on:

- 'What do Asian communities and individuals define as the arts?';
- 'Do recent immigrant communities from Asia differ in their attitudes and behaviours in arts attendance and participation from more established Asian communities?';
- 'What arts events/organisations in Auckland do they currently attend/participate in at present?';
- 'Do Asian parents have future aspirations for their children with regard to arts participation/attendance? What are these?';
- 'What are the attitudes of Asian young people (under 25) to the arts?';
- 'What are the attitudes to New Zealand arts? (e.g. new theatre and dance, Māori and Pacific arts)'; and
- 'What are the differences in arts attendance, participation and attitudes between the main ethnic groupings e.g. Chinese (Taiwanese and mainland China, Singaporean, Hong Kong), Korean, Japanese and Indian?'

Our Role in Providing Market Intelligence

Creative New Zealand recurrently funds a number of organisations in Auckland, among them Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Auckland Theatre Company, NBR New Zealand Opera, Black Grace Dance Company, Moving Image Centre, Artspace and Objectspace. In partnership with these organisations, we play a leadership role in providing market intelligence to help them understand different audiences' needs for future artistic and audience development. A growing diversity of communities is acknowledged by these mainly performing arts organisations but many questions remain as to how they adapt and reframe their art product offering to cater for a more multi-cultural society. Creative New Zealand aims to provide arts organisations that aspire to forge long-term relationships with Asian communities and organisations with the tools and the knowledge that "tell a story" and enable them to redefine awareness, accessibility and attraction of their programming to successfully grow a range of audiences. But this research will have wider applications than just the arts; it has the potential for community building, breaking down barriers between communities and fostering creativity.

We are incredibly lucky to have enlisted the support of a highly skilled group of Asian community leaders to better connect with Asian communities, and to tap into wider networks to inform and disseminate the progress and learnings from the research. The challenge for us, the research partners, is to accommodate heterogeneity in Asian culture within the confines of the resources available! The research is an Auckland sample of mixed qualitative focus groups made up of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Korean segment populations, with a spread of New Zealand born and non-New Zealand born as well as gender, age and socio-economic segments. Research company Colmar Brunton has been commissioned to undertake the research which begins in October 2006 and is scheduled to be completed by April 2007.

Future Generations of Asian Artists

The research is both timely and well targeted. One of the most dramatic recent changes in New Zealand has been the unprecedented growth of the Asian population. New Zealand's Asian population is projected to reach 670,000 by 2021, an increase of 390,000 or 145 percent over the 2001 figure of 270,000. Out of this rapidly changing demographic shift there is something very special for the arts. It is clear that there are many young artists under the age of 25, pioneering web based creative arts, and changing the creative landscape, especially in Auckland. Take young hip-hop artist, David Tsai who, for example: his debut performance was at Auckland City's Lantern Festival, sandwiched between a classical violin performance and Cambodian Chinese dancers. He is a great example of the 1.5 generation. Not first generation because he didn't choose to come to New Zealand, he came with his family from Taiwan. But he's not second generation either – as he was born in and spent the first six years of his life in Taiwan. Then there's comic writer and Chinese New Zealander, Ant Sang, designer of characters and backgrounds for hit television show *Bro' Town*, part of the new wave of New Zealand Chinese artists. Both are role models for future generations of Asian artists.

Asian youth are also having an impact on New Zealand youth culture. The Providence Report "Kiwi Asia" found that rather than looking to New York, Los Angeles or London for fashion and music trends, young Asian youth are more plugged into

what's happening in cities like Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai or Mumbai. Young Asian New Zealanders are adapting these trends – Japanese manga comics, quirky street fashion, the latest cellphone technology – to a New Zealand environment to create a hybrid type of pop culture that in turn influences young New Zealanders.¹⁵

National and International Audience and Market Development

This insight informs our work in audience and market development in providing national and international audiences with greater access to New Zealand arts and developing market opportunities for artists and arts organisations. This year, we have developed and launched a pilot programme to grow business capability within export ready arts companies, in conjunction with Incubators New Zealand and the IceHouse in Auckland. The pilot started in August 2006 with Indian Ink Theatre Company being the first participants.

Asians and the Arts will be benchmarked in the 2008 study on New Zealanders and the Arts, Attendance, Participation and Attitudes.

Conclusion

Creative New Zealand acknowledges that input and support it has received from tangata whenua, artists and the diverse communities it has engaged with. We know that in order to achieve its objectives, and those of communities, in this area Creative New Zealand must work collaboratively over a sustained period of time. This Strategy, and the work associated with it, will lay the foundation for Creative New Zealand's work in this area for many years to come.

- www.creativenz.govt.nz
- www.indianink.co.nz

Helen Bartle is the national Adviser for Audience and Market Development at Creative New Zealand. In 10 years of arts marketing and audience development experience in the UK and New Zealand, Helen has worked in various arts marketing roles including Watford Palace Theatre, Lyric Theatre Hammersmith and The Oxford Playhouse. The New Zealand Comedy Festival brought her to New Zealand in 2000 and this was followed by five years as

¹⁵ Sandy Burgham, "Kiwi Asia" Providence Report, 2003

Marketing and Sponsorship Manager for Auckland Theatre Company during which time she won a Marketing Magazine Award for "txt2U". Helen is responsible for development and delivery of audience development activity to grow existing and new audiences for the arts in New Zealand. She is currently project managing a research initiative on Asians and the Arts, Attitudes, Attendance and Participation in the arts.

Catherine Nesus is the Corporate Planner at Creative New Zealand. She is of Ngati Porou and Te Whanau-a-Apanui descent. Catherine has worked for over 10 years in the Arts, Culture and Heritage sectors. While at Te Papa she was instrumental in the review of that organisations Bicultural Policy, and in the development of organisational capability frameworks to deliver effective bicultural solutions across the organisation. In 2006, Catherine facilitated the development of Creative New Zealand's Cultural Diversity Strategy, and will now be focusing on making this Strategy a reality across Creative New Zealand.

Positioning and Soliciting Myself – A Business Strategy

Sapna Samant

I came to Aotearoa New Zealand in December 2001. I had a return ticket and only intended to have a holiday and get my Returning Resident's Visa. It is 2006 and I am still here. I had not reckoned with the lure of this land. The long white clouds and welcoming bush. Black sands, white sands, ninety mile beaches, gannet colonies, winds from the Hauraki and the spirit of Reinga. Neither had I reckoned with the covert disdain.

Suddenly I was an 'ethnic' brown face in a land of immigrants. It was the first time I experienced racism, the feeling of being subhuman and 'exotic' all at once. It was strange and challenging. What did I have to do to prove that I was a regular person with a regular needs and wants who was trying to make space for herself without stepping on anyone's toes? And really why did I have to 'fit in and blend' anyway? I just wanted to be recognised for who I am. Brown skin and all. After four and a half years, a degree from the University of Auckland, many odd jobs and projects later the recognition is beginning to happen. I feel the occasional pang of not being able to practice medicine any more. But media and creative practice are just as good. All because, here in Aotearoa, the challenge for me is to create a new life. To fill blank pages, to maximise every experience and savour new adventures. More and more I realise that I need TO STOP COMPLAINING. There was a time when I would have (I still sporadically do) whined about discrimination in New Zealand. If Dr Brash is popular in certain circles for taking Māori, Muslims and all other (coloured) immigrants to task; for making it essential to understand 'New Zealand values' then the other side of this populist argument, of only being a victim, is just as bad. It is so easy to indulge in the Great Bandwagoning Exercise. As a media

and creative practitioner all I have to do is make a long list of complaints about the mis and non-representation of ethnic communities by the mainstream media and hence the lack of creativity because of the lack of role models and all that. Alas and alack! Poor us ethnic immigrants! Dr. Brash is so wrong! It is just too easy. Besides, every self styled pillar of the community jumps on to this bandwagon. It is the fashionable thing to do. But is the end result constructive? Instead, as is my wont and my new business strategy, I want to do the hard thing. I want to argue that both mainstream media and ethnic communities in New Zealand actually endorse ethnic stereotyping and that creativity can be used to counter these notions as well as defy varying forms of hegemony. I will talk only from the Indian (and non resident Indian) 'ethnic' point of view because I come from India.

It all starts with a basic question. Who is ethnic? One of the meanings Dictionary.com gives is "pertaining to or characteristic of a people, esp. a group (ethnic group) sharing a common and distinctive culture, religion, language, or the like."¹⁶ Most lexicons of the world usually give the same meaning. Which means everyone in the world is

¹⁶ See: dictionary.reference.com/search?q=ethnic

ethnic. We all come from somewhere, we all belong somewhere (even in a metaphysical sense) and we all have our own cultures and languages. We are all ethnic in many different ways. We all have myriad affiliations and multiple identities. It is simple common sense. Yet most mainstream English media deny this ambiguity of ethnicity. Anyone who is not white, comes from a non-Western culture, does not speak English, wears non-Western clothes (or does not hang out the boobies) and is not Christian or Jewish is 'ethnic'. The last is not a figment of my imagination. One of the definitions of 'ethnic' by the American Heritage Dictionary is as: Relating to a people not Christian or Jewish; heathen¹⁷. Centuries of propaganda, of perpetuating that democracy, freedom of speech, media and expression are Western concepts and based on ideas that came out of the West have created the paradigm of the 'ethnic'. This ethnic then is always the Other. Everyone believes in it, even the 'ethnic'. It is a way, to oversimplify Edward Said's Orientalism, for the West to maintain its own supposed superiority and sense of identity and to contain all that is threatening. So the approach to the Other is magisterial or anthropological or singular wondrous despair at the inevitable clash of civilisations.

Situated as I am in the Other, I automatically become 'ethnic' in the scheme of the world. It might seem an uncomplicated place to be in. I stand on one side, throw stones at the other side and counter the West. But there are degrees of hegemony and patriarchy in this Other as well. Being a part of the Indian diaspora, or a non-resident Indian (NRI) has its own issues. To the Indian media (and hence consumers of this media), India is shining overseas. Just being an English speaking, highly qualified Indian is apparently sufficient currency to negotiate developed Western spaces. They love us! Whereas the Indian media in New Zealand defines ethnic affiliation by constantly questioning how 'Indian' you really are. How much do you love your motherland? How much of the 5000 year old Indian culture do you retain? Maintaining Indianness then comes through the sum total of watching satellite cable television, Bollywood films and celebrating Diwali and Independence Day. Or necessarily joining various Indian associations and being jingoistic at all times.

The post-globalised, partially webbed, urbanising scenario of an easily travelling, economically empowered Indian from India and of NRIs frequently going back 'home' has actually reduced the plurality and heterogeneity of being Indian. Religious, regional, linguistic and political differences asides, being Indian is a construct that is Punjabi-Gujarati, a conservative Hindu, modern and traditional with strong attachment to Mother India and who aspires to rule the world. This definition has no place for the semi-literate, poor Indian labourers in West Asia because they deny us our socio-economic and cultural aspirations. Neither is there place for the generation(s) born in the West unless it is to constantly remind them about Indian values, morals and the glorious, mythical past. Or as consumers of Bollywood. The global pan-Indian being has come out of the imagery put together by the Western media and Indian media out of cultural and existential insecurity on both sides. Each one feeds off the other to thrust a singular identity upon a heterogenic people such that the people actually begin to believe it. This where the problems begin, this where creativity can play a role.

That brings me to the definition of creativity. Dictionary.com gives one of the meanings as "the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations, etc.; originality, progressiveness, or imagination..."¹⁸ More than just being creative it is the attitude towards creativity that matters. Western, Indian and diasporic discourses have diluted this creativity into popular representations like Bollywood films and related song 'n' dance competitions, Bharat Natyam and classical music performances and passive participation in festivals that showcase Indian culture. Freezing culture and creativity into desirable, safe and traditional bytes for consumption. And it is through this quagmire that I have to make sense of my creativity.

After doing time freelancing I have established Holy Cow Media Ltd, a business that will write and produce content for various media. A business means legitimacy and transparency. Not an ethnic, shady, fly-by-night ghetto producer for print, radio or community television that gets away with 'free' work

¹⁷ See: dictionary.reference.com/search?q=ethnic

¹⁸ See: dictionary.reference.com/search?q=creativity

from talent or being populist, retrograde mouth-pieces for individuals. A business essentially means having a platform from which to reach wider audiences and deal with funding bodies, sponsors, the industry and government. It is the need of the hour for creatives to be businesspeople as well. Especially 'ethnic' creatives. It is not enough being just another in a long line waiting for politically correct funding that adheres to the Charter. And it is certainly not enough to only be called upon by broadcasters or 'non-ethnic' producers as cultural consultants when they seek 'ethnic' programmes or characters. A business means being pro-active in seeking work, going after opportunities and creating your own space. For me then mainstream media and community/ethnic television (because it is not run or owned by Indians but taxpayers money) are both fora to defy hegemony and stereotypes with my brand of creativity. They are the means to an end which is irreverence-the motto of Holy Cow Media. Having a business also means marketing, branding, networking, a game plan and strategy. Part of my strategy is to position and solicit myself. Which means constant analysis.

I was a passive recipient of media, culture and creativity once. Back in India when I practiced medicine. Until I decided to write. Even then the stories came out in an unconscious manner. It was only after self-conscious engagement with media and its production that I realised how to use creativity to break stereotypes. This engagement happened more in New Zealand than in India. It is an interesting place, this Aotearoa. Colonised and coloniser all at once. There is the discourse with England, the hesitant reconciliation with Māori, denial about changing demographics and a still evolving national identity. Then there is me with my own discourse with India as an NRI, the post-colonial India with its fixed sense of identity in which I grew up, negotiating Aotearoa New Zealand and all my multiple identities. It is a unique position to be in. Adds spice to my creativity. Another special aspect about New Zealand is the Treaty of Waitangi. I come from multicultural India. It is a way of life. Indians, in my experience, are happily tolerant and multicultural amongst themselves but find it tough dealing with unfamiliar peoples and cultures. I used to be like that. In all my years in India I never encountered more than ten foreigners at the most. India is chock full of Indians, of course. Multiculturalism takes on a different meaning in

New Zealand. It took living in Aotearoa, the Tiriti o Waitangi and the status of the tangata whenua to understand the agreement of mutual respect between cultures and how to implement it in creativity. Then there is the wonderful intercultural mix in the different subcultures of New Zealand. In today's economy this amalgamated cultural knowledge allows more creative power. But what use this creativity if it does not have an outlet? Television and film in New Zealand are small and saturated with the same players putting out the same tired programming. These producers and executives reckon to know what the audience wants. And in classic capitalist fashion claim to give it exactly that. None seem to have faith in the audience's ability to desire and consume various well done creative forms and content. In this scenario it is important to look beyond New Zealand because the whole world is a potential audience. So I think in terms of markets on and out of New Zealand. Being multicultural helps.

Joseph Nye Jr, who served as undersecretary in the first administration of Bill Clinton, coined the term 'soft power'. This is the ability to influence through cultural and ideological means.¹⁹ To me it is nothing but what Mahatma Gandhi and many wise men taught – to use charm, love, affection and a sense of humour to deal with and gradually influence people. I apply it to my creative work. On the nose, aggressive lecturing and shoving ideologies down audience throats in the name of creativity is threatening. THE MAN has been using soft power through media (whether Western or Indian) for a very long time. Most of us don't even realise it. Now it is time to reverse the situation. I believe that patriarchal ideologies should be fought within the paradigms that the patriarchy understands. USE THE SAME CORPORATE TOOLS TO FIGHT THE MAN. Just don't say it. Instead be softly political, defiant and creative.

Thus I position myself and thus I will solicit myself (and Holy Cow Media). It is a problematic positioning but then nothing in life is easy, not even creativity.

Further Readings

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Sapna Samant practiced medicine in India, has got a MA in film, television and media studies from the University of Auckland, has organised the Asia Film Festival Aotearoa, produces documentaries for National Radio and was runner-up in the Best New Broadcaster category of the New Zealand Radio Awards 2006. She also director of her company, HOLY COW MEDIA LTD.

Creativity, Ethnic Communities and the Curious Case of Museums

Natasha Beckman

What is the link between creativity and ethnic communities? Creativity often seems to be viewed as a cultural product, consumed passively at cultural celebrations such as the Lantern Festival and Diwali. Recent Auckland City reports have mentioned that ethnic creativity is vital to the growth of Auckland as a mature and vibrant city. But can creativity be channelled further? Can it be used as an active force for social change, and in particular to engender positive race relations? And are museums relevant sites for this?

*Entr'acte: Art as an ambassador for insights into Islam*²⁰ discusses the post September 11 trend in European and American museums to exhibit Islamic art as a way to promote greater understanding and help bridge the cultural gap between Judeo-Christian and Muslim worlds. Some important and relevant questions are posed including whether historical exhibitions can provide any fresh insight into what is happening in the Middle East today and the vital question of "... are we asking too much of art, giving it too much political weight?".

Museums, predominantly storehouses of the stolen treasures of the world's cultures, have a duty to work for the good of communities to a far greater extent than many other institutions. Many museums nominally state in their mission statements that they are culturally diverse institutions.²¹ In practice, however, there is little support for this in terms of real institutional support including adequate staffing and budgets. Cultural diversity is frequently deprioritized and viewed as peripheral to core museum business. This is confusing considering current world events which remind us of the

importance of these issues in our national and international development. Museums, which often possess rich collections, expert staff and purpose-built buildings for public events, are perfect sites for such discussions.

For several years I organized Auckland Museum's *Living Treasures* series which aimed to celebrate people – those individual and collective "living treasures" intrinsically connected to every object/taonga the Museum houses. Monthly, day-long events celebrated the culture of different communities – nearly thirty in all. In the beginning these events, such as such as Chinese New Year, featured purely traditional content. Over time, however, we learnt to incorporate more contemporary content including Chinese New Zealand rap and graffiti art, and increasingly more debate such as this year's *Asia: Aotearoa* which discussed how cultural institutions can engage more effectively with the Chinese community.

Certain events were particularly memorable, such as the *Art of Islam* exhibition and public program series where we focused not only on explaining traditional art of the Muslim world but also on the stereotypes the media was propagating with some

²⁰ Alan Riding *International Herald Tribune*, August 2, 2006.

²¹ Auckland Museum Vision "To be a source of inspiration for our communities" (www.aucklandmuseum.com).

intensity at the time. The *Living Treasures* series aimed to educate visitors about different cultures. It also taught Museum staff about ways we could continually strive to improve how we worked with communities. One major issue (which festivals also face) was the problem of maintaining long-term relationships with communities. Another was that most of these events were purely public program based rather than exhibition oriented. Te Papa provides a good model in this regard as their dedicated Community Gallery features a different community exhibition every three years, allowing community relationships some time to develop.

Last year I was fortunate enough to undertake an internship at the Smithsonian Centre for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in Washington D.C. and visit cultural institutions in six major U.S. cities, investigating their work in the area of cultural diversity and community engagement. Despite its obvious challenges, I found America to be an interesting model in this regard as it has been a multicultural society for far longer than New Zealand.²² In addition, in cities like New York, diverse immigrants have lived in much closer quarters to each other, as displayed historically at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.²³ Likewise, the Ellis Island Immigration Museum leaves the visitor with the impression that America is indeed a nation of immigrants. Many Americans seem to feel comfortable with being American while also being at home with their own unique cultural identity. This discussion of multiple identities is still obviously unfolding in the United States as it is in Britain and in New Zealand²⁴.

Even in smaller, very much less cosmopolitan environments like Salem, Massachusetts, progressive institutions such as the Peabody Essex Museum are a source of social change. The Museum runs an outreach program to Asian and Latino communities incorporating an innovative

internship program targeting Latino youth and including the development of a major film project. Such international museums offer positive models for us to learn from in terms of cultural diversity – although naturally we will have to carefully adapt examples to the specifics of our local environment.

Another important development in American museums is programs that encourage inter-cultural activity, where different cultures can meet, learn about each other and experience genuine exchange.²⁵ One model in the United States which has been particularly successful is the *First Saturdays* program at Brooklyn Museum. The Museum attempted to engage with its community by creating diverse programs that reflect and showcase them. They also waived admission fees to break down further audience barriers. The program started in 1997 and after continuous evaluation, by 1999 the basic outline for the evening included world music, film/performance, gallery talks and a dance party. *Time Out New York* applauded the “impressively diverse crowds” who attend these events.²⁶

Another strength in the American museum sector is that different institutions collaborate to discuss these common issues. The Field Museum in Chicago launched an inspiring program called *Urban Network: Museums Embracing Communities*. This has resulted in a consortium of ten major museums in five metropolitan areas across the United States that produce innovative programs and strategies to attract, serve and engage diverse audiences. *Urban Network* members share effective practices, strategies, and resources and advance a national dialogue on civic engagement.

New Zealand museums would also benefit from working more effectively across sectors. The Center for Cultural Understanding and Change at the Field Museum (with the *Cultural Connections* partners, a partnership of museums and cultural centres) created the Cultural Diversity Alliance. In its strategic plan the alliance sets out to be “a consortium of Chicago-area ethnic museums, cultural centres, and historical societies in partnership with external institutional stakeholders

²² As Mervyn Singham stated in his keynote address for the 2006 Going Bananas Conference, a change in our immigration policies in 1987 has meant that multiculturalism is relatively new.

²³ The Museum’s Mission is “To promote tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of the variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, a gateway to America”. Promotional brochure, 2005.

²⁴ Mervyn Singham, *ibid.* Britain is still trying to decide what it means to be British and a similar discussion is taking place increasingly in New Zealand.

²⁵ Auckland City’s *Intercultural City Study* is hopeful in this regard.

²⁶ *Urban Network: Museums Embracing Communities* The Field Museum, Chicago, 2003.

dedicated to promoting the value and public understanding of cultural diversity”²⁷. The *Cultural Connections* 2004 program explains *Cultural Connections* as a unique way to experience and learn about the rich cultural diversity in Chicago. Participants travel to ethnic museums and cultural centres in and around Chicago to explore the reasons for cultural differences and to uncover connections to “others”. Examples include “Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue... or Red? – Cultural Perspectives on Unity and Ceremony”²⁸. This event was held at the Korean American Resource and Cultural Center and the Swedish American Museum Center and served traditional Korean and Swedish foods to complement the conversation.

In New Zealand, Te Papa has been an excellent forerunner in the celebration of cultural diversity, especially in terms of its bicultural mandate. Pataka is also producing some wonderful programs that connect with both local and global communities. Recent local highlights also include *Rare View* which provided an insight into one of our growing immigrant groups, the Somali community.²⁹ I salute such exhibitions and hope they reflect a new generation of brave young curators who actively initiate projects and genuinely attempt to work in partnership with communities. Curators must retain this healthy self-reflexivity and avoid revisiting projects with vitriolic smugness, instead facing them as a learning process in which institutions continuously reevaluate themselves.

There are many activities beyond community exhibitions that museums can engage in to promote positive ethnic relations. Festivals such as Matariki (Māori New Year) can become platforms for a better understanding of Māori culture and values.³⁰ This comes with the proviso that festivals offer more than pure spectacle, where no real engagement or deep level of cultural understanding is achieved. Festivals and museums can work well in

partnership. Although festivals share the same problem of temporary exhibitions in ensuring long-term relationships with communities, they can help bring culture to life in a less restricted way beyond the museums walls. I experienced this while working on the 2005 Oman theme at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Staged on the National Mall in Washington D.C. the Festival featured over 100 musicians, dancers, craftspeople and cooks representing cultural traditions from the desert, oasis and sea³¹. Surely such models could be adapted to our own Auckland Domain with cultural festivals spilling outside the Museum walls. This would capitalize upon the Museum’s excellent collections and expert staff and create an opportunity for education and enjoyment for the wider public in one of Auckland’s finest civic locations.

Public programs also present an excellent opportunity for promoting positive race relations as they enable communities to reconnect with their taonga, breathing back life and meaning to the objects that museum’s house. Such programs can manifest in many varieties – performance, artists demonstrations, workshops, talks and debates. This is an area with few limits (besides the imagination) and a huge amount of potential in the field of cultural understanding. Somewhat fittingly, a worker in this area was traditionally an “interpreter” – not in terms of language but rather as a medium between the object and the visitor. Such roles present an important opportunity for bridging cultures through deeper understanding of cultural artefacts, traditional practices and current realities. Museums offer relatively neutral sites for at times heated debate and discussion. Te Papa started off this trend soon after it opened, with the controversial “Virgin in a Condom” exhibition and has continued by hosting important events such as the Human Rights Commission’s Cultural Diversity Forum. I look forward to this increasing into the future, with our national museum being utilized as a key site for cutting-edge debate.

Both my internship on the Folklife Festival and research on Woodford Festival in Brisbane last year reminded me that people love to hear other people’s stories. Storytelling is not just the domain

²⁷ *The Cultural Diversity Alliance Strategic Planning Executive Summary*, The Center for Cultural Understanding and Change at the Field Museum and Thinkinc. June 10, 2005.

²⁸ *Cultural Communities Promotional Brochure*, 2005.

²⁹ *Rare View* was curated by Crystal Arden of Waikato Museum last year and is to be exhibited as part of Auckland Festival, AK07 at Te Tuhi the Mark in Pakuranga.

³⁰ Festivals are recognized by the Human Rights Commission’s New Zealand Diversity Action Program. Step 8 “Celebrate Diversity”. The DAP also lists arts, culture and heritage organizations as Step 9 of 10 key actors.

³¹ *Smithsonian Folklife Festival 2005*, Smithsonian Institution, 2005.

of children. It provides an opportunity for us to truly learn and engage with each other. Dr. Manying Ip recently impressed this upon me in terms of how museums can engage better with the Chinese community.³² Andrew Young's rendition of going back to China to visit his relatives and the overwhelming impression this left on him brought many to tears at this year's Banana Conference. People also want to tell and hear their own unique stories. The success of the recent New Zealand Film Archive screenings of *Illustrious Energy* at Auckland Museum and Te Tuhi the Mark were testament to this.

As Mervyn Singham noted at his recent address to the Going Bananas Conference, New Zealand needs to see a purposeful process of change rather than a "multicultural drift". Museums present excellent sites for this as hosts of community exhibitions and a wide range of public programs including discussion and debate, festivals, intercultural meeting-places and the sharing of personal histories. By working in close partnership with cultures and communities in the future, museums can attempt to "re-present cultures" more authentically. Another important future pathway for museums is the employment of diverse staff members reflecting the demographic makeup of their local communities and collections, as well as those specialized in the field of cross-cultural relations. A further key challenge will be to keep the celebration of cultural diversity at the core of museum business. Museums must also reach out beyond their walls, literally spilling out into their grounds with cultural festivals and further collaborating both within and beyond their sector. They also need to position themselves firmly within not only the local but the global community context, keeping themselves up to date with examples of best practice internationally. To quote the aforementioned article on Islamic Art, "culture has always served as a political tool". Why, therefore, can't creativity be used as a positive force for social change? By following some of these key steps, museums could well become important advocates in the celebration of cultural diversity and promotion of positive race relations in New Zealand/Aotearoa. Indeed, they have a duty to fulfill this role.

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Natasha Beckman was born in England to parents of Polish Jewish descent. Natasha completed a LLB/BA at Otago University and then took some time to explore the world including teaching English in Tokyo. Natasha received an MA in Art History at the University of Auckland, where she focused on cross-cultural representation. She then spent most of the last decade working with cultural communities within her various roles at Auckland Museum, the most recent being Cultural Relations Manager. Last year Natasha undertook an internship at the Smithsonian Centre for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in Washington DC. Currently she is employed as the inaugural Visual Arts Coordinator for Auckland Festival, AK07.

³² Personal interview, November 2005.

Nurturing the Creative Spirit

Fe M. Sarmiento

Moving to New Zealand in 2001 was like a template of new beginnings as literally to me it meant new land, new zeal. Little did I know, it would be another journey where I would need all the zeal that I have to deal with frustrations, challenges and difficulties of being a new migrant – the feelings of isolation, periods of unemployment and a mid-life crisis.

When I started work with women's organizations back in the Philippines (thirteen years ago) I was a 'wounded soul'. I was also on my path to healing through creative workshops and feminist spirituality. As I opened my heart and shared my story with the rest of the women in the communities I worked with, circles of women formed. We journeyed together towards healing, transformation and empowerment. It was a journey of tears and laughter, pain and joy. A triumph of kindred spirits.

How does one come to terms with her own shadows and insecurities? Shattered confidence for every rejection letters received after seemingly great job applications and interviews? A lot of 'hows' and 'whys' and unanswered questions. Nevertheless, I let my life unfold, aware that new beginnings carried with it some growth pains.

In my moments of solitude, there was this inner 'prompting' from my soul to go back to that place in my heart where I kept the beautiful memories and experiences I had with the communities I worked with and who I was when I started. I am often reminded that I made it through those difficult times and I will make it again in this foreign land. I started with nurturing my soul, myself.

I sat for hours simply watching the long white clouds around Rangitoto Island and listening to the sounds of the waves at Takapuna Beach. I know that when I watch the sunset, it is sunrise on the

other side of the world. On full moon nights, I walk by the sea and remember the wonderful moon gatherings I had with the Moonsisters and remember our hopes and dreams and our connectedness. I started to write affirmations again and went back to my visual diary and journal.

Then one day I told myself, "Well, I will not wait until I get that 'break'. Either I spend my time feeling sorry for myself and drown in misery or rise up, go out and create." That started my volunteer work with refugee communities in Auckland, attending circle dances and looking out for free workshops dealing with women's mid-life crisis. And, yes, it helped a lot to understand and acknowledge what was going on in my life. I began to take responsibility for my health and my well-being, more consciously this time because there was no family or close friends around. It was not much a change in my life circumstances at that time, the shift came in my feelings and through starting to see things through different eyes.

Even with all these positive steps, I would sometimes find myself crying a bucket of tears. Overcome with a feeling of desperation as I waited, and waited for my 'dream job'. That favourite high school motto of "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again" became a broken forty-five, I mean a broken CD.

Call it faith in God or the Creative Spirit, or Allah, but this is what helped me through the difficult times in this far-away land. I think one's religion or spirituality is a wellspring of hope and inspiration. Most especially if you are alone, do not have family and friends around and lack a social support system.

So I re-visited my childhood faith. Each day, I dream and hope and remember the almost forgotten wisdom I learned from the religious Sisters and my women elders: "Bloom where you are planted". Before I started work in an otherwise stressful job, I make a choice to be happy and peaceful and send these loving thoughts to the people in my team and to the organization.

I still believe in 'miracles' and it happened to me at a time I was feeling happy and peaceful where I was. It was that day I heard the most wonderful words in my ears 'You got the job'. Oh dear, my 'dream job at last'! That is as an Arts Advocate for refugee and new migrant communities of Arts Access Aotearoa. Wow! Wowie!!! Gosh, I gave a silent scream of delight lest the elderly people downstairs where I live would think there was an emergency.

Can you imagine the feeling of a fish taken out of the water or the bird being put in a cage? Can you feel what it is like to be back in an environment where your heart and soul belongs? It was clear for me from the moment I had my transformation working with communities in the Philippines that my life path was with Creativity and Service. I know deep in my heart that if the opportunity was not available here in New Zealand I could create it through my voluntary work. And the good news is there are opportunities out there! Volunteering as work experience was something new for me. My concept of volunteer work back home was more akin to acts of compassion: visiting old people once in awhile or taking food and clothing to poor people in the mountains. This was borne of my religious upbringing of sharing one's time and presence and blessings to the less fortunate.

So, what has changed in me during these challenging times settling here in the Land of the First Light? The challenges helped me to grow deeper into Wisdom and appreciation of Life's journey from darkness to Light. I came to embrace

both my weaknesses and my strengths, widening my understanding and perspectives about relationships. I gained a more realistic view of cultural sensitivity, an appreciation of cultural diversity and have learnt to celebrate our differences.

At Arts Access, I am back to working with the people whose life circumstances I now fully understood. Working with refugee and new migrant communities this time around has far more depth and connection for me. I can look into their eyes and acknowledge the creative spirits within them. I am able to work alongside them, support them and know that we learn from each other. I now recognise that we all have the ability to express and manifest our unique gifts, talents and creativity.

I feel a joy in my heart when I come across people from Africa, Asia or the Pacific and we talk about arts and creativity and all acknowledge that art and creativity is not outside us, it is inside us.

Post Script – Life at Arts Access

Aotearoa

What a blessing to be part of an organisation that shares my dreams and visions of creativity and service. We are like a 'bridge' that brings arts and creativity back to people and communities where it has been lost. This includes people with disabilities, prisoners, youth at risk, the elderly, women and children, refugees and new migrants. I am presently assisting with cultural well-being programs and projects for refugees and new migrants. Arts, creativity and well-being: I think these sum up the direction I love to take in my work and in my life.

Our office is located at the Wellington Arts Centre close to the Cuba Centre, which to me is like a melting pot of interesting people, different eating places and fashion. People here dress up and down and somewhere in between. One thing is sure; it is never boring especially with positively windy days of Wellington.

One sunny day, I passed by the building next to the Wellington Arts Centre and noticed engraved on the wall these beautiful words from Pablo Picasso:

Art washes away the dusts of everyday life.

While ironically, the engraving is covered in dust and cobwebs, I have no doubt, the artists and the people who work in these buildings give Picasso a knowing smile.

The Creative Spirit is always renewing, re-generating and ever changing. I dream of the day, when we no longer need to do advocacy work and all of us have access to the arts. The time has come when everyone can re-discover that Creativity is a way of being.

Fe M. Sarmiento's childhood dream was to be a Nun. Her father's practical wisdom taught her to get a degree that could land a good job and overcame a dread of numbers to take up Accounting , graduating 'cum laude'. A significant twist of fate led Fe to the women's rights movement in the Philippines, where she took up community development. She was awarded a Ford Visitor's Program scholarship on Gender and Global Issues and participated in the Isis International Cross Cultural Exchange Program. In almost 10 years of community development work, Fe was involved in reclaiming women's wisdoms through rituals and creative workshops, formed the Moonsisters circle and co-founded the Yamang-Pagkaling Healing Foundation. She facilitated informal support groups for women survivors of violence, conducts workshops on creative visualizations, sacred space, dream work and sacred mandalas.

Going Bananas: Multiple Identities Forum 2006

Ellen Altshuler

Be warned, this is not an academic treatment, or even a real review of the 2006 Going Bananas conference: What follows are my musings as I digest what turned out to be an experience of total immersion in a discourse of identity.

I couldn't stop talking about the "Going Bananas: Multiple Identities Forum" for days afterwards. Driving through heavy rain on the way home to Whangarei I regaled my partner with moments of amusement, poignancy, and stories of intelligence and sheer humanity for two hours. Over the following days I wrote emails, gave little overviews to friends and even studied the notes that I'd taken on the little notepad supplied with the pack of goodies that came in my banana-yellow conference shoulder bag.

The Forum was beautifully structured. Incorporating the 3-H theory, it moved from the heart, to the head, and then humour. Individuals made presentations within one of three separate sections (Living with Multiple Identities, Reel Asians and Creative NZ Chinese) which were 'chaired' (so I've been told) by a presenter from the 2005 Bananas Conference. The section called Living with Multiple Identities was the up close and personal reflections of Jenny Lee, Andrew Young, Gia Nghi Phung and David Do. Mua Strickson-Pua chaired the session with hilarious self deprecating humour, sliding back and forth from Samoan to Chinese caricature; telling stories and jokes, illustrating different cultural values and thought processes. Helene Wong chaired the Reel Asians session, a serious reflection on the representation of Chinese in the media. Tze Ming Mok chaired an upbeat session on the Creative NZ Chinese. The likes of Ant Sang, Ted Chen, Kelvin Soh and Vikki Cheng each offered a snapshot of their "cultural-creative voices" with the help of the data projector. Mervin Singham's opening address set the scene. Citing migration trends and the increasingly multi-cultural face of

New Zealand, he pointed to the importance of a sense of personal identity and its connection to New Zealand's development of an emerging new multicultural national identity. He praised the NZ Chinese Association for mobilizing the Chinese community to debate topics of importance, paving the way for other ethnic communities in "self-empowerment". Dr Robyn Dixon's keynote address identified the context of the Forum as the formation personal identity. Later, Dr James Liu advanced this discussion on personal identity, bringing it into New Zealand's cultural landscape. In the background there seemed to be dozens of people working-preparing and presenting food, greeting and taking registrations, and dealing with the technology. And at the borders of the Forum were Kai Luey and Liu Shueng Wong, the elders, holding it all together. But it wasn't just the structure that turned me on.

Maybe it was Andrew Young's thoughtful and deeply personal reflection on his development of identity that led me to reflect on mine. His parents desire that he aspire to better values than the "lazy Say-Yun", their ethic of hard work and judgments of NZers. His adolescence brought with it the questioning of their values and inevitable rejection and distancing as he struggled to forge his own identity. It was a story that could have had an unhappy ending were it not for the opportunity through the NZ Chinese Association's Winter Camp and Young's trip to China to study and visit his father's village. Through this journey he experienced the past, his parent's past, and saw what motivated them to leave China and he came home with an appreciation for their sacrifices and motivations. Peering into past identity provided the link to a

future that could integrate his life. I was listening to Andrew's gentle narrative, and his experience of isolation coming from a family that sits outside the mainstream culture, and thinking of my own father, the child of Jewish refugees from Russia, born to parents who didn't really speak English or know much about their new country. I couldn't help feeling envious of Andrew's experience in China, peering into the past, bringing it into his present, with the gift of cultural pride to pass on to his children. By comparison, my family's past seems like a dim watermark that can't be erased, but nor can it be seen.

Maybe it was Gia Nghi Phung's poignant tale creatively expressed through the lens of her name. From its Chinese origins in Vietnam, to its refugee status in Australia, to the English spelling given to her as her first word in the Australian refugee camp school when she was five, her name holds her story. Having a name that no one in your world can say, spell or pronounce brings your identity into every interaction. I, too, have held on to my 'foreign' sounding name as a remnant of cultural identity, a piece of myself that harks back to the 'old country', and holds a story.

The more academic presentations of Drs James Liu and Robyn Dixon's theoretical framework on identity gave a context within which the rest of the presenters could play. Building on Dr Dixon's presentation of Erikson's theory of identity development- sense of belonging, identity feelings, ideals, thinking, and values- Dr Liu expanded on the questions of migrant identity into New Zealand's discourse on biculturalism. After the Forum, I went straight out and bought Dr Liu's book, *New Zealand Identities*. His eloquent presentation spoke of identity formation as an interactive process that is influenced by how others position you. No kidding! (I was reminded of my early years in New Zealand, constantly trying to reshape the lens through which others saw me.)

Maybe it was the sheer 'in your face' cleverness of Vikki Cheng and her school friend, Helen Luo, exploring stereotypes of Asian and Kiwi identity with their "rice girls" film. Through dance, drama, clever imagery and their song, B.A.D.A.S.S (Be A Dope Asian Super-sassy Stereotype), they capture Vikki's early experience of racism, a rude note left in her letterbox, and mix it with adolescent identity

questions to "puff!" – Take back the power, baby! And, oh by the way 'don't apologise for who you are' even if you are a pearl tea drinking stereotype Asian.

Gutsy David Do unhesitatingly identifies himself as a gay queer Chinese New Zealander. What more simple identity could there be? A committed gay queer activist, sexuality educator, Student Welfare Officer at Auckland Uni., president of the queer student's group, UniQ, and chair of a branch of Labour party, and, oh yeah, a student of politics and history. David Do must never sleep. Maybe because he seemed to be operating in 'real time', sharing his "journey", coming out to the mostly Chinese audience, baring his youthful, vulnerable, honest soul. Do David had the wow factor! Like a rush of air from a window suddenly thrown open, Do had no hesitation in stepping confidently into one of his many roles and doing some educating on queer awareness. While admiring his uncompromising honesty, I ached a bit with protectiveness for his youthful vulnerability. My anguish was relieved when a gay man from the audience offered Do a gift of courage and faith for his personal journey. Maybe it was the acceptance of the audience in making it safe for him; and thereby making me feel safe too that shrunk the room from a large impersonal lecture theatre to a family lounge – all of us on the edge of our cushioned chairs, praying for 'gutsy'.

Maybe it was because it was so unpolished, kind of 'homegrown' and relaxed. Several times we had to wait while someone rushed out to get the technician to fire up the power point presentation. Irritating? No. It was comforting. Real people, even some super intelligent, over achieving New Zealand Chinese have difficulty with data projectors and Powerpoint. This added to the 'something real and intimate going on here' feeling.

It's a tribute to the conference organizers that four generations of Chinese were present. The stories of this Forum took everyone back in historical time and brought us all forward into the hands of the vibrant youth who are energetically confronting New Zealand's racism and forging a creative path to the future.

Identity can be a heavy topic or a light one. To me, it depends on whether you are making an identity or it is being made for you. Some people speak of

identity as emerging from a stew of ingredients. The Multiple Identities Forum made me think about the integration of flavours and textures that emerge with time and various degrees of heat. It provided participants with a pageant of tools and tips for deepening their own identities in ways that nourish the personal and collective spirits.

Ellen Altshuler works for the Whangarei District Council as the Settlement Support Coordinator. Her role involves facilitating a collaborative approach between migrant and refugee communities, local services and government to assist settlement by improving the provision of information and advice and improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of migrants and refugees. Ellen previously worked at the Human Rights Commission in Auckland and for the Office of Race Relations, where she was a mediator of discrimination complaints. Originally from the United States, Ellen has lived in New Zealand for 25 years, much of that time in Northland, where she has been active in community education initiatives for women, particularly around the prevention of violence and abuse.

After life

Mallika Krishnamurthy

My father died recently. So recently that when I find myself writing that phrase I feel disbelief, sadness, awe, fear and nausea among other sensations too ephemeral to name.

I have read about the stages of grief, even been on a course on grieving years ago when I worked as a crisis worker. I have never felt anything quite like this, some sensations are familiar, echoes of other experiences, but there seems to be a realignment that happens with the death of a parent that has shifted worlds. There are reflections on my father's life, how gently he lived and the grace with which he died. There is this hyper real starkness which lays bare my own life and forces me to examine the currents that flow through it. There is a rewiring of my sense of human life and our mortality.

As a creative person living in this country for 38 years the time has come to make some difficult choices. I grew up in Aotearoa in the 70s which were a time of assimilation and we didn't expect anyone to understand anything of what we came from and the prevailing winds of culture here certainly did not expect to do anything other than blow their way. We could keep up or disappear.

There were only one or two other families of our South Indian tradition here when we arrived. For a time I was convinced that our language was a secret spoken only between us. When the next family arrived, knocked at our door and greeted us in our own language I was convinced that they were magicians and mind readers.

Some of the implications of growing up as such a small minority are only recently dawning on me. I have intellectually known that people may look at me, see me as different from them and have expectations of me based on their assumptions which may not match who I think I am. This may

sound rudimentary, however the masks of assimilation have been so firmly attached to my psyche that I have been unaware of their subtle impacts on my own thinking and behaviour. All my life I have expected to meet each individual and automatically read how to put them at ease, to speak like them, to see which of their behaviours I must adopt in order to be accepted and to ensure that I guard my own integrity and respect for my own culture and family because I don't expect anyone else to. I thought that everybody did this all the time and perhaps they do and are as unaware of it as I have been. I, of course, don't always achieve this seamless interface with society and at various points in my life my mind and body have surrendered to chaos and retreated in an attempt to work out what is going on. I had not realized until recently, that throughout my life as a migrant in this country various doors have been closed to me so imperceptibly that I did not even realize there was a door there to be opened.

My question again is: Does this happen to everyone and are our only real differences our awareness of what is happening? There are people who walk out of their house and expect everything to be familiar and happen within a certain set of rules. There are margins of difference which we can ignore, override or assume that our point of view is right and shared by "the good", "the moral" and "the mainstream". In my experience, like quantum particles, these concepts move as soon as you get close to them. You realize that everyone around you is navigating their own private universe and participating in the collective illusion of "good", "moral" and "mainstream" according to a complex matrix of

awareness, choices, expectations and limitations that are their own and those of the society around them.

I have found fiction and dance powerful ways to explore layers of identity and societal interface. My father was one of my navigators, someone who held a cultural compass and helped me to formulate questions. I would have shown him this article for astute and honest criticism. I dedicated my first novel “Six Yards of Silk” to my father and my mother. I would not have allowed its publication if they had not seen some value in it. It is not our story, it is the story of a family who could have lived alongside us, facing some of the same issues of identity and society that we did. I am lucky that my father was the biggest fan and champion of “Six Yards of Silk” in the world.

He was of course much more than that. He was an academic, a political scientist who taught at Victoria University from 1968 till his retirement in 1992. To me he was an inspiration, my spiritual guide, my mentor, my teacher, my friend. He was my constant in a world of chaos. Trying to imagine my life without him is like trying to imagine the ocean with no ocean floor, or a river with no riverbanks and no river bed. It doesn't make sense. My father made sense. He was an optimist, gentle, stubborn and resilient. He helped me to make sense. His sense of social justice underpinned his spirituality, his loving non-attachment, his pragmatism and his politics. He was a learned man, a philosopher, a humble scholar. He cared deeply about people and how we treat each other. He was genuinely happy within himself and found fun and laughter in every day events. He was curious, always questioning, and he would gently refine any questions put to him because, as all good teachers know, the quality and accuracy of the question is more important than any temporary answers we find. Any good answer to a good question will lead to a better question.

All my life he taught me to honour what I love, do what I love and allow the rest to fall into place. I'm still learning how to do that. I'm doing my best. He lived quietly amidst the noise and haste. He was my still place, my oasis. I'm very grateful to have spent time with him while I could, to have listened to his stories and heard his laughter which still resonates through my sons. These are things that matter.

So what do I do now? The ocean still has an ocean floor. Rivers still run and have their riverbanks and river beds. I look inside myself and find that I am still here. I look at my mother and see that she is still here doing her best to remake a life after 45 years of marriage. I look at my husband and sons whom my father celebrated and loved. I look around and see my wider family and friends living around the world, we are all still here. So ...I want to honour those whom I love and do the things that matter, allowing the rest to fall into its own place and happen by itself.

My life is still full of questions. My father is teaching me still.

Mallika Krishnamurthy was born in Kerala, India and came to New Zealand with her family in 1968. She has a degree in French language and literature and speaks French, Italian and Tamil as well as English. She has worked as a teacher of children with special needs, ESOL and dance, been a crisis worker with people who had been raped or sexually assaulted, worked with people who were long term unemployed, been a careers adviser and community recreation programmer. She has a lifelong passion for dance and has been a performer, dance teacher and arts administrator. Her first novel “Six Yards of Silk” is published by Steele Roberts (steeleroberts.co.nz) and available from good bookshops everywhere!

Journeys

Athena Gavriel

Poems can send us into our own worlds, evoking memories, images or emotions. They can also connect people with similar experiences or create understanding by opening shafts of light into other worlds. This selection of poems and photographs is inspired by experiences, observations and stories of 'ethnic others' in Aotearoa. A sense of belonging and a positive self-esteem contributes to good mental health. Not being a part of the majority culture, adds another dimension to the often asked question, "Who am I?"

Belonging

To unearth the real,
To know your mountain,
To know you have a history, a home, a place where you are not alone,
To know the stories of your people.

Stories of migration contribute to personal and collective identities and worldviews.

Journey

Plomari clings to the hills above the harbour
Where multi-coloured fishing boats huddle,
Sunning themselves in the afternoon.

From the army of olive trees
High above the village,
I can see the deep blue shape of Turkey,
Only a short boat ride away.

Down the Aegean,
To the oily Mediterranean shores,
The hustle of Port Said,
The hassle of a factory floor in Alexandria,
Where you churn and turn the wood
To make chairs.

Visions of a better life
Draw you across the seas, the oceans...

To a far off shore,
Thousands of miles away in the Pacific.
Light years away from what is known and familiar.

To make a new life,
A better life,
For you and yours...

No longer the olives,
The ouzo,
The ringing of church bells,
The bustle of sheep or goats being herded along dusty village roads.

Somewhere on distant shores,
The olives and pines still stand.
Rooted into the soil of your ancestors' toil,
Calling you home.



Plomari, Lesbos, Greece*

Refugee's Lament

I did not want to come here!
I did not ask to leave
My home
My family
My friends

In my mind are memories from my youth,
Of happy times, playing on miles of beach, hiding in orange groves...
My friends,
My family,
My home,
My land.

In the darker spaces are memories of the guns,

The shouting and screaming
The terror, the blood, the missing and dead...
My friends,
My family....
Left... not discarded

Expelled from the place I love,
Memories shattered ...
In pieces ...
Left carelessly... here and there...
Seashore, orange grove, playground, home, land...
Fragments remain...
And I am called home... in my dreams, in my memories,
Called home ...
How do I get there?



Walking away, Cyprus*

As a child of immigrants growing up in 1960s and 70s New Zealand, there were expectations within the Greek community to continue cultural practices, whereas outside of it, there were strong societal pressures to conform to the majority culture. Now that New Zealanders are rediscovering their own cultures, their attempts to understand others cultures sometimes lead to stereotypes and prejudices.

What is a Greek?

To say because I am Greek I must have this or that quality, attitude or value,
Is to say that of all the colours of grains of sand on a beach,
Greeks are only the grains of one colour.
The sand has its consistency and colour because of its composition.
To separate the grains makes it something different,
No longer the sand of that beach.

Greeks are Greeks because of each and every one's uniqueness and similarities.
Sand on one beach is different in consistency and colour
To sand on other beaches,
But we are all apart of the ocean of life, and connected to it
Through the grains of our humanness.

Does it matter which beach we belong to or come from?
Yes and no.
To acknowledge my Greekness, is not to deny my humanness,
My Cypriotness, my Kiwiness, my Pacific home.

To acknowledge my humanness, is not to deny my Hellenic roots.

Nothing is straightforward or clear cut,
It is all different and the same.
Hold it together,
Ying and yang,
Soft sand from hard rock.
Stark dry rocky Mediterranean shores
Washed by sapphire blue seas
Tree clad lush Pacific shores
Washed by deep green seas
Hellenes are there too.



We are all different and the same*

Returning to my family's homelands elicited a range of emotions from excitement and joy, to distress about the experience of restricted movement within Cyprus due to the Turks occupying some of the country.

Arriving

We walk along the cobblestones to the kafenio...
In the dark, the golden glow through the doorway welcomes us.

I inhale the secrets of my childhood.
I can smell Yiayia's cooking
Drifting from the houses...

My world has expanded from her house
To a whole village,
A town,
An island.

I smile contented, letting memories flow over me.
Nurturing and washing me
In this new and old familiar world of knowing.

Newcomer's Mystery

Cyprus, I came to explore every inch of you,
But instead, I found a scar... a wall... I could not climb over.
I walked its edge and caressed the tender, rough spots.
The pain of weeping, and bloodshed staining the
Imperfect character of war's jagged edges.

Stories I was told of your beauties remain a mystery to me,
For some are hidden over your walls,
Over that great divide only centimetres thick.
So illusive in its stillness,
So tempting to cross.
If I should touch one inch, one speck,
The monsters of power would rise like an evil cloud,
To shoot me down and trample me to the ground.

So, with your beauty only partly explored,
I mourn the loss of childhood dreams,
Longing for when the wall is down,
The pain has receded,
And the healing complete.



The Green Line, Cyprus*

Some cultures, including Greeks, are reluctant to seek help due to concern about shame or loss of status from their situation, especially if it involves a mental illness or disability. Stigma often affects extended families also.

So, What Is Shame?

The water is muddy and deep,
Churned by the waves of time,
Waves of passion, confusion, despair,
Waves of embarrassment and fear

Sometimes in their white frothy tips
There is a sense of pure logic
Other times in the brown waters, churned and turbulent,
There is a feeling of dirt that just cannot be shaken off.
A want to run and hide.
To curl up, and not face the world,
Nor anyone in it.

Inability to trust strangers can stem from cultural beliefs, stigma or the effects of political unrest, war or abuse. Migrants do not necessarily trust health or helping professions or agencies that New Zealand society generally assumes are trustworthy. They do not always know about professional codes of conduct and confidentiality.

Trusting Others

When trust is betrayed,
And the ground, which you thought was solid,
Turns into quick-sand,
Do you reach out with your hands for your
Enemies to save you?
Or do you call to a friend?

Are you surprised to realize who is who?
Who extends their hand?
Who turns their back?
Do you know?
Can you judge anymore?

Who will walk away,
Watching as you slowly slither into sands, suffocating underground?
Which hands will hold you,
Pulling you out with all the strength they possess?

When you know this, you will know whom you can now trust.

Listening respectfully to people's stories or concerns and acknowledging their worlds can facilitate healing, contribute to emotional wellbeing and a healthy society.

Song

Each bird has its own song
To sing,
Each person their own life
To live,
Each life its own story
To tell.

If I listen,
I may hear
The song of life that is told.

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Athena Gavriel is a New Zealand born Greek and Cypriot, whose mother's parents immigrated in the 1920s from Egypt and Greece, whose Cypriot father immigrated as a young adult in the late 1940s. Athena trained and still works as a psychiatric nurse. Later she attained a BA in anthropology and psychology and recently completed her PhD in nursing in 2005, both from Victoria University of Wellington. Her main practice and interest areas are culture, identity, mental health and wellbeing with a focus on making services more user-friendly and culturally safe for people from different cultural groups. Athena also writes poetry and had several poems published in a nursing journal, an anthology of Cypriot writers, as well as several academic papers and her own thesis. She has three teen children, who are encouraged to know and be proud of the cultures they share with parents including their father's Anglo, Celtic and Swedish origins.

Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu: E Tala Mei Tonga Ki Tokelau

Okusitino Māhina

A poem composed in remembrance of the Māori Queen, Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu, with translations into Māori and English. The poem belongs in the Tongan genre ta`anga tangilaulau, ta`anga tengihia or ta`anga tutulu, “poetry of weeping”. The late Queen Salote of Tonga, considered the most famous contemporary poet that Tonga has ever produced, was responsible for refining this literary genre, formally naming it “ta`anga tutulu” (‘tutulu’ being the honorific word for crying or weeping). Specifically, all these poetic forms are concerned with the mourning of death or of the dead. In fact, she wrote several ‘tutulu’ poems, such as the “Tutulu `a `Ene `Afio he Pekia `a Fusipala” (“Weeping of Her Majesty on the Death of Fusipala”), Fusipala being her younger half-sister.

The poem, translated “Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu: Telling the North from the South”, was composed in deep mourning of the death of the much-beloved, well-respected Māori Queen (lines 8-11). Symbolically, the poem makes reference to the extremely sad public pronouncement of her death (lines 4 & 7), which emanated from Aotearoa and reaching Tonga (line 6; see sub-title).

With symbolism, the poem proceeds to celebrate her unique royal trappings and great social achievements as an exceptional Māori heroine (lines 12-24), representing her very own people's common struggle for freedom (lines 25 & 32). A permanent way of life, this ongoing spirit of freedom was originated amongst such great Māori heroes as Te Wherowhero, enumerated through the enduring landscape movement of the Māori as truly a great people (The grand Ranginui-Papatuanuku origin myth attests to this state of greatness, which my

most favourite of the Māori myths and I have written a long poem about it) (lines 25-32).

It also talks about the persistent cultural and historical inter-linkages between Aotearoa and Tonga, the so-called Friendly Isles, which can be traced back in time and space to antiquity (lines 6 & 35). It also alludes to the inevitability of death, vested in the hands of women (lines 36 & 37), transforming the ‘mortal’ body by leaving the immortal vanua, fonua or whenua as the indestructible, eternal soul (lines 38-40).

Fatu `e `Okusitino Māhina ko e tengihia mo e fakamanatu `o e hala `a e Kuini `ofeina mo faka`apa`apa`ia `o e kāinga Māori, Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu, Aotearoa Nu`usila, `Ākosi, 2006 `o e ta`u.

1. Ne u nofo `ou mūnoa pē au
`Ikai `apē ha`ate fakakaukau
Takamilo e tā mo hono ta`au
Ka e fakafokifā kuo pā e peau
5. Pea mahe`a he `ea `o e ngalu
Ke tala mei Tonga ki Tokelau
Kuo fasi tanunu pea loka tau
He tu`unga ia `ete tangi laulau
Ngaruawahia he `api kuo lala
10. Turangawaewae e kuo lauta
Ke tangi lau`aitu mo sī fatafata
He kuo `auhia `a e taha`imaka
`A e Pounamu ko e tama`imata
Fetapaki hono huelo tupu`a
15. `O maamaloa `i loto Aotearoa
Pea hulungia `i he `ulu fonua
Pohutukawa ne fisi pea moto
`O to`ulu mo matala he Waikato
Hono uini hauhau mokomoko
20. Ne afuhi hono hulufe laumomo
`E Tainui mo e `api ko Turongo
Ho`o fanautama ko e tāongapō
Ko e fai`anga ia `o e tautoko
Muka `a `ofa `i he `etau nonofo
25. `A e Kingitanga ia kuo he`aki
Ko e tala kuo fai hono lekesi
Kavei he feilaulau faimateaki
Te Wherowhero ne ne matua`i
Ko e Maui Kisikisi `o e `aho ni
30. `A e fakapōpula ia na`a ne tau`i
Mo e fakapo`uli ne fakafepaki`i
Ko e tau`atāina `ene tu`uholoaki
Ko e ngātanga ia si`ete tālave
Pe`i tōfā koe ka kuo malave
35. Ka u kalo ange au ki Felenite
Ko mate tofu ia mo `ene pule
Kātoi `i he `aofinima `o fafine
He nofo ni ko e nunu mo vete
Tu`uloa `a whenua ko e laumālie
40. Hu`i teunga pē tui teunga pē

Te Arikini Te Atairangikaahu: Telling the North from the South

Literal translation into English, by Okusitino Māhina, in deep mourning and sincere remembrance of the death of the dearly beloved Māori Queen, Te Arikini Te Atairangikaahu, Aotearoa New Zealand, August, 2006.

1. Carefree and unaware I stay
And never was there thought
Of the complex cycle of time
Suddenly a big wave has crashed
5. The airwaves sounded the alarm
Telling the North from the South
Swells crashing through rough seas
The cause of my crying in words
Dearest Ngaruawahia is deserted
10. Yet, Turangawaewae is crowded
To weep loudly beating one's breast
The one and only stone washed away
The Pounamu, the most precious
15. Its age-old rays that glitter
Shining in the midst of Aotearoa
Flashing through to distant lands
The Pohutukawa is blossoming
It branches out and is flowering
20. Nourished by the cool morning dews
Spraying the fine-leaf fern shrubs
Dearly beloved Tainui and Turongo
The child of your birth, a tāongapō
Interweaving, uniting us as tautoko
25. Thro' love the motto of our living
Of the Kingitanga that's mentioned
A tradition of such refinement
Knotted through great sacrifice
Led by Te Wherowhero the agitator
30. The Maui Kisikisi of our own time
Who stood up against oppression
Anti ignorance he fought it out
Making way for freedom to endure
Now that I have korero-ed my tangi
35. Let me retreat to the Friendly Isles
Death's freely acting and inevitable
Rightfully invested in women's hands
Life condenses here and rarefies there
Yet, whenua is the ever-lasting soul
40. With trappings worn on and off

Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu: Telling the North from the South

Metamorphic translation from Tongan to English by
Manase Lua

1. I ponder from the deep solace of space
lost in the beating of time, point and place
lo and behold comes the wind and the waves
crashing with force to astound and amaze
5. carried aloft by a foam gusted breath
from South to North swells a black tide of
death
Te Arikinui in casket of Toa
in grief they cry out to the atua
Ngaruawahia the house of the fallen
10. Turangawaewae answers the calling
the beating of breasts and tears from sore
eyes
last parting gifts and the children's soft cries
given with love and sincere aroha
to one who gave light both near and afar
15. her mana shines even now as before
pounamu eyes of a wahine toa
like the blood bloom of pohutukawa
Tainui waka her strength and mana
yet like a cool breeze she summoned them
all
20. "stand with me!" she called "stand straight
and stand tall!"
summon the hosts with gnarled tokotoko
the chosen of Hine-nui-te-po
call for all waka of Aotearoa
Waikato wants peace not settling old scores
25. to strengthen tomorrows Kingitanga
the word spreads forth from whanga to
whanga
whomever shall wear this garland of kings
the hope of Te Wherowhero it brings
a burden worthy of Maui to bear
30. won with valorous endeavour and care
the darkness dispelled with unity nigh
"freedom is staying together!" the cry
and on this bold note I gift you these birds
to ease the long road with fluttering words
35. caught on the mounds of the Friendly islands
captured for chiefs from far as the highlands
kingly royal lines cross the ocean in grief
but her earthly form will find sweet relief
on chiefly soil will her head rest in lieu
40. her spirit alight for me and for you.

Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu Whakaatu ana mai te Raki ki te Tonga.

Metamorphic translation to Māori by Te Aouru
Biddle, Ngati Pikiao and Vicki Rangī, Tuhoe

1. Kei roto au i te māhorahora me te ware
Kore rawa he whakaaro
Mo te uauatanga o te huringa ao.
Mea rawa ake kua tuki he ngaru nunui
5. I whakaaraarahia e te karehau
Mai i te Raki ki te Tonga, ka whaakihiia.
E tuki nei te āmai i te moana hīngarungaru
Te take o waku kupu hotuhotu.
Kua whakarērea a Ngaruawaahia
10. Engari te minenga, kei Turangawaewae
Ki te tangi tīwerawera e kaha mamae nei te
uma.
Te kōhatu i horoia atu, ko tana kotahi
Te kōhatu tino marihi, te Pounamu
15. E kōrītorito nei ana hihi tawhito
E piataata nei i te ngākau o Aotearoa
Kōpura ana ki ngā whenua tawhiti.
E puāwai nei te Pōhutukawa
Ka toro atu, ka whaipua
20. Ka whaangaia e ngā tomairangi hauangi
Rere ana te rehu runga rau aruhe.
Ngā tau o taku ate, Tainui, Turongo
Ka whanau tō tamaiti, he taongapō
Hei whakakapiti ka paihere hei tautoko ia
tatou.
25. Ko te aroha hei pepeha i te oranga
O ngā whakaaturanga ā-Kingitanga
He tīkanga-a-iwi tino tōrīretanga
Kua pūtikia i roto i te raupanga hirahira.
I arahina e Te Wherowhero te kaiwhakaueue
30. Te Maui Tikitiki o tenei wā
I tū maia ki ngā whakawhiunga
Ngā kūwaretanga i whawhaitia e ia
Kia tuwhera ai te rangatiratanga ka matatū.
Kua korerotia nei taku tangi
35. Tukuna au kia hoki ki ngā Moutere Hoahoa.
Ko te Mate he mahinga tuku, he heipu
Ka tika te tapae ki ngā ringa o ngā wāhine
Ka whakapotoa te oranga i konei i kora
He oi ko te whenua te wairua pumau tonu
40. Ko ngā kahu whakahira hei mau hei wete.

Na Okusitino Māhina i tito.

Okusitino Mahina holds a PhD degree in Pacific history from the Australian National University in Canberra Australia. Dr Mahina has taught at 'Atenisi University in Tonga and Massey University - Albany campus in Auckland for many years. He now lectures in Pacific political economy and Pacific arts in Anthropology at the University of Auckland. Dr Mahina has published a couple of books and co-edited several others amongst a number of journal articles and book chapters on a range of interdisciplinary topics, including poetry in the Tongan language. His research interests, inter alia, include time and space, development and globalisation, transcultural psychology and transcultural aesthetics.

Translations

Te Aouru Biddle has tribal affiliations to Te Arawa and Ngāti Pikiao. A speaker of Te Reo, she has had acted as a translator for the Māori Television Service and had a successful career as an educator and Principal for over 40 years.

Vicky Te Puhi-o-Te Arawa Rangi is affiliated to Tuhoe and Te Aitanga-a Hauiti. Vicky is a native speaker of Te Reo and has been an advisor and translator for the Māori Television Service since its launch in 2003.

Manase Lua was born on Tongatapu and migrated to New Zealand in 1974. He has lived in South Auckland for for most of his life. He has worked for almost ten years in the public service with the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and in his current capacity as a Project Manager in the Disability Services Directorate of the Ministry of Health.

Swearing-In Ceremony Speech

His Excellency The Honourable Anand Satyanand PNZCM

A reproduction of the Governor-General's swearing-in ceremony speech, 23 August 2006.

Prime Minister Helen Clark, Chief Justice Sian Elias, Speaker of the House of Representatives Margaret Wilson, Members of the Executive Council and Members of Parliament, Dean and Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Chief of the Defence Force and Defence Representatives, Honoured Guests from the Realm of New Zealand, Distinguished Guests - including those from overseas, Ladies and Gentlemen and Student Representatives.

Tena koutou katoa, kia orana, fakalofa lahi atu, ni sambula vinaka, malo elelei, talofa lava, ni hao, namaste, namashkar, sat sri akaal, greetings to everyone.

Here on the steps of Parliament, it is a great honour to be part of this State occasion at which the Prime Minister and her government, the judiciary, the Parliament of New Zealand and the armed forces are all represented. It is also a wonderful gathering of young and old, representing so many aspects of the contemporary New Zealand community, Māori, European, Pacific Island and Asian.

I pay my respects and tribute to my many predecessors for their contributions through the years, and particularly to my judicial colleague and friend, Silvia Cartwright. She and Michael Hardie Boys before her and Catherine Tizard and Paul Reeves beyond that, have provided sterling examples of service upon which I shall be happy to draw. I resonate respects on the recent passing of the Māori Queen, Dame Te Atairangikaahu who showed us true leadership with quiet humility and who will be sorely missed for her contribution to New Zealand.

I have taken the Governor General's Oath of Office and have sworn, faithfully and impartially, to serve Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of New Zealand. This Oath reflects our country's history, traditions and constitutional arrangements. The Governor General's Oath is also about the people of the realm of New Zealand – in other words the people of New Zealand, the self-governing states of the Cook Islands and Niue, and Tokelau. I have sworn to serve the people faithfully and impartially, and I will be steadfast, loyal and fair as I undertake the functions of office.

My wife Susan and I are New Zealanders raised in Auckland. Whilst living in North Island centres my work has meant contact with communities and people in both North and South Islands.

Our immediate family, as well as members of our extended families, are here in good strength. We are grateful for their support and appreciate the sturdy challenge they have provided for the Government invitation process. I wish to mention, in particular, my elderly mother who through frailty is in hospital and not able to be present.

I want also to pay deference to my linkage with Fiji, where my parents were born and raised. They came to this country in the 1920s and 1930s to undertake their lives in the New Zealand community. I acknowledge also my Indian origin, with four grandparents who migrated from that country to Fiji.

Through my family, community involvement, my legal, judicial and ombudsman careers and my association with sport, I have had the opportunity

over the years to make and maintain connections with many people in different communities and locations in New Zealand. These experiences have enriched my understanding of our country. I have observed that New Zealanders have in good measure a number of characteristics – a dislike of abuse of power, an inquisitiveness associated with small societies, no significant hierarchies and a liking for individual expression.

Even more importantly, I hope to bring to my formal roles, the great love and enthusiasm that I have for New Zealand and the beauty and experiences that it offers. Images which come to mind readily are the grey, green and surging seas of the West Coast at Waimamaku near Omapere, or at Kawhia or the Whanganui Inlet near Farewell Spit; the kotuku at Okarito and the hoiho at Kaka Point; the sights, sounds and smells of the morning markets at Porirua, Avondale and Otara; the wonderful quiet of islands such as the Barrier (Aotea) and the Mayor (Tuhua); the Chinese New Year lanterns in Albert Park and Victoria Square, and the watching of movies in the heaving Arahura coming over the Cook Strait.

It will be an extraordinary privilege to serve this country as Governor-General over the next five years.

There are many families in New Zealand like mine, who share stories of journeys to reach this country. New Zealand's culture and identity is now a blend of Māori, European, Pacific Island and Asian influences. Our heritage is honoured, but new influences continue to come from those who have chosen to belong to New Zealand as the place to which they, as active citizens, will contribute.

In an address in 2005 entitled “New Zealand Dreams Pacific Destinies” Witi Ihimaera said:

Our New Zealand dreams today are the dreams of the Rope of Man. They are no longer just Māori dreams or Pākehā dreams. They are also the dreams of our other migrants, Polynesian, Asian, American and African in Aotearoa New Zealand. They have become blended, laminated. And the answer to “what may yet be seen” surely lies in the quality of the ideas that have been woven into the Rope. They are in the hope, the

optimism, the leadership and integrity of a younger generation who should not be constrained by race, nation and location but, instead be energised by them.

These evocative words express a hope which I share for the future in New Zealand. I want to see our rope (te taura tangata) strengthened and the positive aspects of our country and its identity discussed, affirmed and celebrated.

Let us with optimism affirm our future. And let us strengthen, foster and encourage trust among the various communities that make up New Zealand. That will make us strong. Our ambition should be, may I suggest, to go forward on the basis of our communities trusting each other – not blindly, but with good judgement and liberal amounts of information, insight, understanding and goodwill.

Over the next five years my wife and I will be two people making a public journey. I imagine during that time there will be some who will say “There is one of us being one of them”. whilst for others it will be a case of saying “There is one of them being one of us.”

With goodwill and good humour, we hope to meet, talk to and share experiences with many New Zealanders and many communities. Deeply conscious of the confidence and trust that has been placed in us, we are committed to doing our very best for New Zealand.

To end, may I paraphrase the words of Mahatma Gandhi by expressing the hope that New Zealand will be “a place where all winds can blow without us being blown over by any of them.”

His Excellency The Honourable Anand Satyanand PNZCM is a former lawyer, judge and ombudsman. Born in Auckland, he is of Fijian-Indian descent and New Zealand's first Asian Governor-General. His inauguration speech has been reproduced with the permission of Government House.

Happily Never After

Jameela Siddiqi

A short story.

When his wife got something into her head, it was impossible to talk her out of it. Razia Khanum was a determined sort of young woman, descended from a long line of South Asian matriarchs who specialised in terrorising their men into meek submission, ensuring they remained miserable at all times. Such misery was supposed to keep other predatory females at bay hence minimising the chances of their men fooling around with younger specimens. Whilst their female ancestors had used traditional methods of control, subsequent generations of these women who were born and brought up in the West, had developed their bullying tactics into a fine art with the added veneer of western ideas of feminism and equality. Their men figured that surrender to the lady of the house was the only way to get a quiet life. And Razaq Shaykh was no exception. When his wife nagged and nagged him to get a full medical check, all his usual resistance to such a pointless activity capitulated before her dogged determination.

“But I’m fine! I feel absolutely fine,” he protested.

“That proves nothing! It’s best to make sure there’s nothing lurking in there. These things need to be caught early,” she said in firm tones, much as one would talk to a three-year-old.

“What things? There aren’t any things. Why go looking for trouble? When there are no symptoms and no problems, why go looking for them?” he tried again.

“That’s the trouble with you eastern men! You think you are invincible! It threatens your virility to submit to a medical exam. You think you’ll just go on living forever and ever!”

Using this very argument she had, over the years, curtailed many of his habits that didn’t conform to her idea of a healthy life. The first thing she’d put her foot down about was smoking. He hadn’t resented that too much because he thought a bossy wife was the perfect incentive to give up a harmful and expensive habit. But then his occasional enjoyment of a small glass of wine soon became a thing of the past as she refused to have the stuff at home.

“It sets a very bad example for my children” she would say in high moral tones as her precious children, aged five and seven, sat glued to the TV savouring some or the other cartoon character having their head bludgeoned by another one. After banning wine and other alcoholic drinks, she extended the ban to regular tea and coffee and filled the kitchen with sachets of herbal tea and other root substances that had to be infused to make something that resembled a cross between ditch-water and cow’s urine, which she called ‘tea’. He was able to ignore all of this because he could drink any amount of tea at work and there was nobody to give him a ticking off if he added four cubes of white sugar to the amber liquid.

Next, she invested in an expensive exercise bike and set it up in the spare room, announcing, “You have to get rid of that pot-belly. I’m still young and beautiful. I don’t want people think I’m married to a slob.” There was really no answer to that, so Razaq didn’t try to find one.

She had stopped cooking meat at home and Razaq could only sneak a proper korma or chicken pulao at the house of friends on the rare occasion when she hadn’t come along. She kept him on a diet of yoghurt and salad and soya-beans for six days of the week. On the seventh day, she grudgingly

served some kind of anaemic-looking steamed fish. Sweets and desserts would have been quite out of the question.

Occasionally, very occasionally, if she was away for the weekend visiting her mother in another town, then Razaq savoured his two full days of freedom by consuming all the forbidden substances to excess. Her mother, he was convinced, was the chief culprit in making his life a misery. But he encouraged her to visit her mother because the alternative would've been to have the cantankerous old bat in his house, which would have been a fate worse than death. This latest bee in the bonnet about unnecessary medical checks too, he was sure, had been instigated by his mother-in-law, providing constant advice and tips for her princess-daughter on how to tame a husband and keep him in good shape. Hence Razia had made all the appointments, booked him for all the tests and simply presented him with the ultimatum that he should keep himself ready for this most necessary outing. She had taken time off work to escort him to the tests. She wasn't taking any chances.

That had been over two weeks ago. And now, this phone call from a sickeningly neutral English secretarial voice summoning them to come and see a doctor with regard to his test results. How can one phone call from a complete stranger create such consternation in what was otherwise a fairly humdrum existence? The voice had been cold and detached and refused to furnish any details which only caused his wife, Razia, to needlessly point out: "See? I told you, one never knows. One should always have regular medical checks!"

After that phone call, he had been scared for the first time since this whole saga began. Up until then, he had seen the entire process as a necessary evil to pacify his wife. But now that he'd been summoned to go in and discuss his results, he was petrified. His own ideas on good health were completely different to his wife. You lived a simple life, you told the truth, you didn't hurt anybody and if you felt any twinges or pains or any other symptoms, you just ignored them. You carried on eating, drinking and being happy because, at the end of the day, the width and breadth of one's life was more important than its length. No point in living to be 200 years old if you were only ever

allowed to eat watercress and drink herbal tea and beetroot juice!

The appointment with the doctor was to be early on the following morning. Razaq was a bundle of nerves the night before. While Razia slept soundly, he spent the night tossing and turning and getting up to drink water followed by going to the bathroom. At one point he even managed to sneak out of the back door into the cool night air and smoke a couple of cigarettes in the back garden. He kept his secret stash in a box of Kleenex, at the back of one of the bookshelves, the white death-sticks cleverly buried between layers of white tissues. He came back in and switched on the TV. After staring at CNN for a full 20 minutes, he felt sleepy again. He went back to bed and felt wide-awake, so he got out of it again. Eventually, he crawled back to bed and just when he felt he was drifting into a comfortable drowsy state, Razia was shaking him:

"Get up! Get up! We're going to be late. Nine-thirty sharp, they said!"

"It's not fair," he protested. "I've hardly had any sleep. This lack of sleep is far worse for my health than anything they might find wrong..."

Razia shuffled and pushed and threw various garments at him to get ready. When he came out of the shower, she had laid out his breakfast: sugarless porridge made with water and a cup of raspberry tea. Today, of all days, he could have done with two fried eggs, crusty white bread, cream, honey, jam, toast, proper PG Tips tea with lots of sugar.

Still smarting at not having had enough sleep, he sat quietly as she drove to the special private hospital complex where he'd had the expensive tests. The doctor greeted them with a cheery Good Morning but managed to convey the impression that he had other, more exciting and fulfilling things to see to and they were merely holding him up.

"Now then, Mr... err... 'Sheekh'? Is that how you say your name...?"

"Shaykh", said Razak sullenly. Razia interrupted, "Oh just call him Razaq, and I'm his wife, Razia."

"I'm really, really sorry but you see, there is nothing," said the doctor in a crisp voice.

A puzzled Razia said, "But that's great! It's great there's nothing, so why are you sorry?"

"He's sorry he can't make any more money out of me because I've got nothing wrong with me," Razaq said under his breath, with a great deal of relief – only to have his toe stamped on by his wife's high-heeled shoes.

"No, you don't understand. Mr ...err... Mr Sikh, you see there is nothing. Nothing at all! Nothing registered on our machines! No pulse, no heart-beat, no brain function, no liver function, no kidney function, no blood count...err... nothing. I don't know how to say this but, you see, you are dead! I'm really, really sorry."

Razia let out a high-pitched wail: "Whaaat? No, no you've got it wrong. There's been some mistake. Tell me you're lying. My husband can't be dead. I'm too young to be a widow. But we eat such healthy food and take exercise, how can he be dead?"

"Not only is he dead, there's a distinct possibility he was never alive," said the doctor in a dramatic whisper.

Razia screamed. "What? You mean I've been married to a corpse all these years? Oh no! I wish I'd listened to my mother. You see, I thought he was just lazy. I didn't know he was actually dead!"

Razaq, who had remained quiet all through these ridiculous exchanges between the doctor and his neurotic wife, finally spoke up.

"Doctor, listen. You can't be serious. I am alive. I am 35 years old..."

"And I'm 58," retorted the doctor. "What's that got to do with it? You're still dead. Now, if you'll excuse me, I think I need to...."

"No, no, please," wailed Razia. "Please don't ask us to go. There must be something you can do. There must be some cure. Isn't there an operation he can have?"

"Sorry, Mrs...err...Mrs Sake. We are only allowed to operate on the living. No operations for the dead! Those are the rules," the doctor said with a dismissive wave while at the same time getting up to see them out.

"This is silly, let's go," Razaq said to his wife.

"You're not taking this seriously are you?" she squealed. "The doctor says you are dead and you don't think we should be doing anything about it? You're happy to see me as a widow, aren't you? Think of your children! Think of my poor mother! How will she take the grief of having her daughter turned into a widow at the tender age of 30? Don't you have any feelings?" Razia was whimpering openly now.

"How can I have feelings?" her husband replied wryly. "I'm dead, remember?"

"This is no joking matter," she chided him and then, turning to the doctor she said, "I demand a second opinion! You are not the only doctor in the whole world! Come on," she said, dragging her husband by the arm. "We are going to go and get a second opinion."

"I know this is upsetting," said the doctor, "but believe me there is no second opinion. Death is death and now, I'm obliged to issue a death certificate. Cause of death... err... Let me see. It's hard to say, really since nothing is working in his body. Let's just call it bronchial pneumonia. That sounds good and nobody really knows what it means. That's usually the cause when nothing else can be found. Here, take this certificate. You'll need it for the registry and the funeral parlour otherwise they'll refuse to bury him."

Razia took the certificate tearfully and stared at it in disbelief. She folded it lovingly and stuffed it into her overcrowded handbag.

Once they were outside, he said to her: "Hey, you don't really believe I'm dead, do you? Look, I'm here, right here, walking alongside you. I'm talking, I'm breathing, I'm seeing, I'm listening. How can I be dead?"

"He's a doctor. He should know what he's talking about. He said there was nothing, absolutely no-

thing, working inside you. According to the medical tests, there is no evidence that you are alive. I want to get that verified by another doctor, just to make sure..."

Just then her mobile phone rang. It was her mother. On hearing her mother's voice, she started crying again. Her mother had rung to see how the appointment had gone.

"Oh, Mama!" she whimpered. "Razaq is dead. Yes, dead ... I know, I know, I can't believe it either. What? Cause of death? I don't know, they said pneumonia-something. There is no heartbeat, no liver or something and, clinically, he is dead. "

A few minutes of disjointed conversation was followed by a lot of crying on both sides. Eventually, she said to her mother, "Yes, I need you. Please, as soon as you can. Yes, I'll get a neighbour to pick you up at the station. Oh, I just don't know how to tell the children."

That's all I need thought Razaq. First, a doctor tells me I'm dead. Next thing I know, the mother-in-law from hell is coming to stay. Oh God! Death would be the better option. But, wait, I am dead. Great! Perfect excuse! I'll start behaving like a corpse. That way, I won't have to eat her insipid food, or make polite conversation or get on that wretched exercise bike. I'll just lie down and be dead. Oh, God is kind. He certainly works in mysterious ways!

Razia's mother took charge from the moment she arrived. She started fussing in the kitchen and preparing inedible fruit and flower salads for her grandchildren. She got out all the kitchen towels and started ironing them. She emptied out every kitchen cupboard and then rearranged things all neatly again. In between these vital tasks she comforted her daughter: "I knew there was something wrong with him all along. I always I disliked him. Now I know why. You married a dead man! You see he was never alive. No wonder I felt so uneasy around him. I don't like looking at corpses. Now, my dear, I know this is a distressing subject, but we have to talk about the funeral."

At that point Razaq had had enough of the joke. He got up from the sofa where he'd been lying down and arrived in the kitchen. His mother-in-law let out a yelp: "Tell him to go away! I'm scared of corpses."

"Mother, dear, I'm not a corpse. How can you be so silly? See, it's me. I'm walking, talking, my eyes are open. How can I be a corpse?"

The mother-in-law looked at him strangely and still keeping her distance said: "One must accept death. I know it is very hard but it's bad form to expect to live forever. When you are dead, you must bow your head gracefully and prepare to go. Now, where would you like to be buried? And what sort of coffin would you like?"

"I'm not dead!" he screamed, getting a bit fed up of the game.

"Yes, yes. Of course you're not. The soul lives on. Don't worry, I'm sure you'll be able to visit us whenever you like. And you'll be able to visit your relatives in India without having to buy a plane ticket. Think of the savings!"

That evening, as Razak had been dozing in the spare room, he was woken up by lots of voices in the living room downstairs. No doubt, the news of his death had spread and neighbours, friends and relatives had arrived for condolences. There was a great deal of moaning and wailing. He crept downstairs to take a look and, standing on the staircase which afforded him a good bird's eye view of the living room, he saw a closed coffin placed in the centre of the mourners. All the women were dressed in black and they were all lamenting the fate that now awaited the beautiful 30-year-old widow. One of the women caught sight of him on the staircase and threw her hands up in prayer followed by an utterance of "Astaghfirullah! [May God forgive me!] It's amazing how the body clings to life. The soul stays very close to the body, refusing to give up."

Soon after witnessing this surreal image, he felt the cold February breeze of the local cemetery. Again, there were noises and murmurs around him. He heard the sounds of the Muslim midday prayer, done as a special funeral prayer. And then he heard his own voice in the distance, perhaps coming from deep under the ground: "No, no, let me out! Please let me out! I'm not dead! I'm alive. Get me out of here!"

It was pitch-dark. He could hear himself clearly, but he wasn't so sure that those above the ground

could hear him. He thumped his hands on the roof of the coffin and went on thumping until he heard a scream.

“Why are you beating my face?” shouted his wife. “Get up! We have to go and see the doctor.”

Suddenly a strange resolve took hold of him. After a lifetime of meekness and subservience, he felt born again. In a tone that he'd never used for her in their entire married life, and one that left her utterly stupefied, he said:

“I'm not going anywhere! You go where you want to go! Now, just clear off and let me catch up on some sleep! I don't need any doctor to tell me whether I'm dead or alive.”

Jameela Siddiqi is a novelist, broadcaster and music critic who began her career as a television journalist on coming to Britain after being expelled from Idi Amin's Uganda. Specialising in South Asian culture and languages, she focuses on North Indian classical and devotional music, poetry and dance. She won a Sony Gold Award for her BBC Radio 3 series “Songs of the Sufi Mystics” and presented the highly acclaimed “Nights of the Goddess” for BBC Radio 3 and World Service. She is a regular contributor to BBC Radio 4 and a guest presenter/contributor on the world music programme, World Routes. She has written extensively on Indian classical and film music including the Penguin Rough Guide. She has published numerous short stories and essays, translated Urdu, Braj, Sanskrit and Farsi poetry and written and lectured on Bollywood music and film classics. Her first novel, “The Feast of the Nine Virgins” was published by Bogle L'Ouverture, London, 2001 and her second novel, “Bombay Gardens”, is published by Lulu Books (www.lulu.com).

This story was originally published under the title “Life & Death” for the quarterly journal SUFI.

Lash/Super Toy/Powder Room

Hye Rim Lee

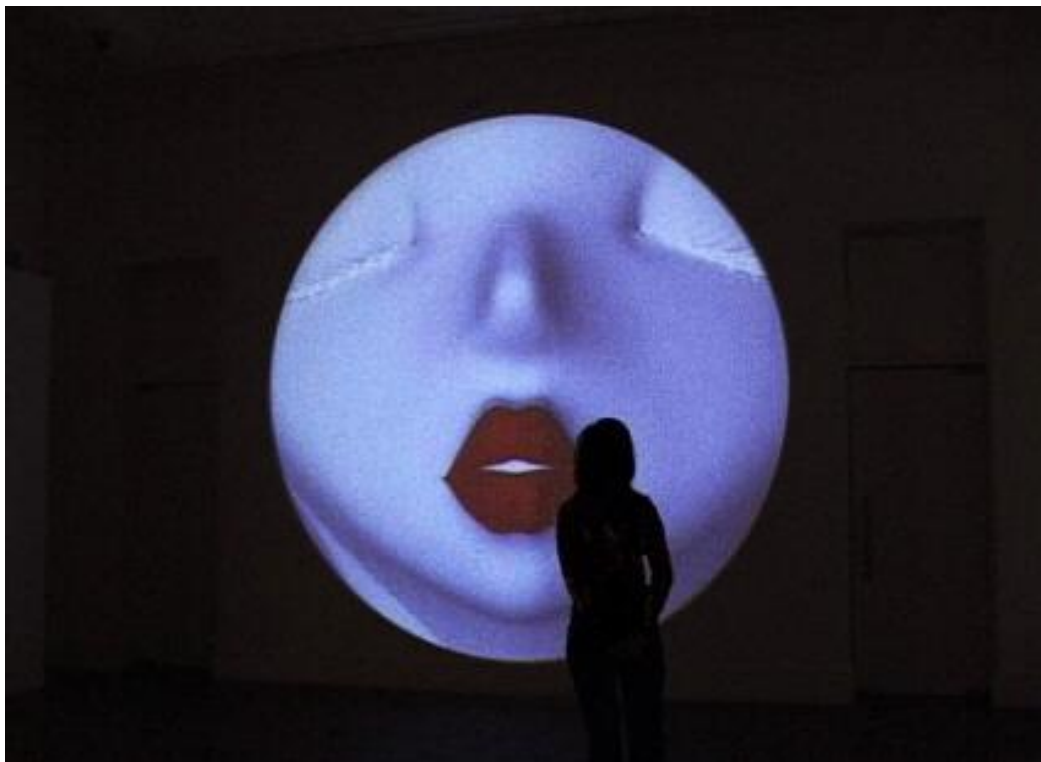
Through her digital personification, Toki, Lee presents a discussion of the desire and desirability of cuteness evident in Asian visual culture and fashion. Toki is a computer generated hybrid bunny-girl; she is cute and sexy like her anime (animated film) and manga (cartoon) counterparts, with doe-eyed western facial features, and a curvaceous and slender idealised body. Through this digital personification Lee explores what it means to be a Korean born woman living in New Zealand. The bunny reference though, has a multiplicity of significations, from the cute, playful childhood pet, to the sexual innuendos of playboy bunny. Toki's name is Korean for bunny, which holds a personal reference for Lee as she was born in the year of the rabbit. Lee suggests that Toki is a supernatural life form who embodies the experience of migration as an 'alien Asian'. Toki's youth and adolescence, is symbolic too of the experience of migration, of the ensuing uncertainty and discovery of self. Lee evokes this process of individuation in her Birth of Toki series, a process similar to the way an adolescent explores and develops their own identity.

Hye Rim Lee is an Auckland based Korean artist whose work across mediums considers the way fictional identities create and are created by, cultural desires.



Lash, video still, 2005

Courtesy the artist, Starkwhite, Auckland and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Lash, installation view, The Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland, 2005

Courtesy the artist, Starkwhite, Auckland and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Lash, installation view, The Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland, 2005
Courtesy the artist, Starkwhite, Auckland and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Super Toy, installation view, The Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland, 2005
Courtesy the artist, Starkwhite, Auckland and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Powder Room, installation view, The Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland, 2005
Courtesy the artist, Starkwhite, Auckland and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Powder Room, video still, 2005

Courtesy the artist, Starkwhite, Auckland and Kukje Gallery, Seoul

Ruminations on making urban space

Pip Cheshire

The bricks, mortar, concrete and glass that make up a city are the spore of the sum of its inhabitants past and present; a built aggregation of human endeavour. Where the individual buildings tell stories of an owner or company's hopes and dreams the pattern of city streets and public spaces tell more complex stories. Some cities are formed by the inexorable accretion of occupation, the streets and laneways paved, formalising the pathways and carriage trails that have been worn into the landscape over years of human passage. New Zealand cities are a more recent construct; a planned and designed pattern of ownership overlaid on the land, and the trails and shapes of earlier occupants.

Auckland is just such a city, laid out by surveyor Felton Matthews in 1840 as a series of concentric arcs radiating out from Albert Park. The arcs create a series of gentle crescents each containing a particular use and linked by a number of avenues radiating from the heart. The erratic economic fortunes of the fledgling colony's economy constrained the ability to realise the Felton Matthews plan. Though the plan was more honoured in the breach than its observance the aspirations of the colonial development agencies which commissioned it were clear; the ordered arrangement of human affairs based on the familiar models of Britain and Europe.

Though founded and planned to achieve the ordered look of empire Auckland, like the rest of the country, has grown in sprawling low density suburbs surrounding the inner city. Where the suburbs reflect, for better or worse, the utopian notions of the mid twentieth century welfare state, the inner city is a composite of public and private sector investment generally unconstrained and undirected by either ideology or coherent urban design strategy.

The absence of a deliberate design strategy in the inner city reflects the relative indifference of the

population to urban issues. The making of public space and its impact on the body politic are at best arcane issues, shrouded in jargon and beset by arguments about environmental determinism and the ability of design to effect behaviour. The laissez faire economic policies of the 1980s have also led to the dismantling of much of the local authority design apparatus; the council architects offices dismantled, services outsourced and the office of city architect, once the guardian of the quality of city life, abolished. In place of the city as an entity designed and constructed with a social and political program came the city as the consequence of unfettered market activities; if councils could attract and oil the wheels of private enterprise then a working city would surely result.

At the height of this monetarist surge the councils themselves embraced the machinations of developers and colluded with business to ease the path of development, sometimes to the extent of being major developers in their own right. One might only look to the abandoned Britomart scheme of the early 1990s to see the singular focus council officers bought to bear on assisting the city to grow its corporate base.

In the rush to assist the development of the property councillors and officers set aside decisions as to the quality of city life that the development would deliver to either the development itself or the wider city. Quality is a difficult criteria to argue, especially so in the face of the 'hard data' of projected revenue streams. It was, though, just such criteria that slowed the project enough in the Environment Court for the mid decade reverses of the Asian tiger economies and a change of city mayoralty to undermine the financial viability and political will of the project. Covering nine city blocks at the bottom of town it proposed the demolition of heritage buildings to make way for a thicket of office towers above a transport centre and it was over issues of the preservation of heritage buildings, described as cultural markers, that the arguments waged and the project ground to a halt.

While the end of Britomart was a miasma of politicking and legal action in many ways it represents the beginning of new engagement by both citizens and council in the deliberate making of a city. It was also the formal acknowledgement that history, in the form of the remnants of colonial warehouses if not of earlier Māori occupation of the site, is an important element in the creation of city life. . It was also an acknowledgement that the provision of a safe, attractive, vibrant city and inclusive city is too complex a task to be left to the happenstance of corporate decision making and that public agencies needed to engage in the shaping of the city. Urban designer Stuart Niven has characterised the role of council urban design as "representing those not at the table when decisions are made". This refers to the way in which the city is given physical form in negotiations between council's statutory regulators, the town planners, and property owners, yet is occupied and used by a far greater number of building occupants, passers by and citizens in general.

The disjunction between those who shape the city and those who occupy it is evident in the debate over the location of Auckland's football stadium. This was a rare opportunity to engage in the debate over a new construction in the city, a building which will have a significant impact on public space and which will determine much of how the eastern part of the Queen Street valley relates to the harbour edge. While the debate focuses on issues of site location, building bulk and appearance and

transport access many of the more critical issues affecting the quality of the city failed to enter the public debate.

It has been said by architects that 'god is in the details', by others that 'the devil is in the details', either way the point is made that the way in which things are assembled, be it buildings or public space, determines the quality of experience. Aotea square is well located between old and new town halls, at the head of the city's main street and within a precinct that mixes entertainment, education and commerce. For all these positive aspects the square has consistently failed to excite the imagination of the city and is a diffuse unfocussed space that welcomes neither large crowds nor solitary users.

Those in the business of making public space will point to a number of failures such as the lack of containment to the south that prevents the concentration of users or the lack of occupied edges that fill the surrounding buildings with people rather than blank walls. It is, though, the failure for the space to have been conceived with any sort of vision that underlies the square's failure; it is neither considered in the memory and knowledge of Felton Matthews nor of any other identifiable model.

If Aotea Square is both a failure of imagination and a failure to consult precedent it is not alone, the city being scarred by public spaces, and buildings, that share similar shortcomings. To address this the City Council has, in the last five years, established urban design panels, groups of worthy architects, urban designers and developers whose critiques of projects are intended to ensure a better quality of city prevails. Projects are required to be submitted to it as part of the resource consent process are reviewed with reference to the quality of experience that users and passers by will experience. The criteria employed by the panels is founded in urban design theory and values which invariably refer to European models as precedent, indeed until very recently the discipline's education was entirely dominated by a few colleges in Britain and the north east of America.

It is timely to consider the degree to which public space might be culturally determined given the changing makeup of the city's demographic.

Designers and urbanists have great difficulty agreeing common criteria for discussing the extent and qualities of even simple space and the identification of the parameters of culturally specific space is an extremely tall order. The art, or science, of spatial analysis is an imperfect craft yet one might make some empirical observations of public space in order to guide the makers and reviewers of such space in this country.

Consideration of the qualities of public space must build on assumptions of physiological comfort and security as a priori human wants. There is a considerable body of literature analysing the successes and failures of public space in dimensional terms. Such analysis typically concentrates on the ratio of height of building in relation to the width of public space enclosed, the width of pavements, orientation of streets relative to the sun and prevailing winds and the nature of occupation of buildings containing the space, the examples are invariably European.

In this context the Chinese lantern festival and the Pacifika festival stand in contrast to the ordered processional celebrations that inspired colonial public space. The vast number of people attending the events temporarily overwhelms the city and imposes a new order of public space; spaces that are dense, active and noisy. Crowds have always gathered in this country, to celebrate the end of war or the winning of a sporting prize, or the annual arrival of Santa. The two festivals are different events though; they are gatherings in which the primary focus is not the glimpse of a sports prize, or of Santa, but derives in large part from the crowd itself- the pleasure gained from being part of a large number of people with a roughly common aim.

These events take existing built space, Albert Park and Western Springs in these cases, and transform them such that traditional patterns of use and movement are reconfigured; gentle axial walkways and curving promenades lost underfoot and suggest the necessity of less proscribed and delineated design of open space.

Setting aside the formal preoccupations of nineteenth century British colonialism does not however imply an abandonment of public space as a place in which to achieve cultural objectives. The formal arrival and welcome protocols of Māori and

other Pacific people for example requires a highly structured organisation of space. This can include orientation to landform, the locations of host and visitor and the sequence of procession, challenge and speech making associated with the welcome.

The ability of such Māori protocol to be adapted to available space indicates both the flexibility of the culture and the minimal importance of specific spatial organisation to the ability to stage the event. The example though also reveals the importance of spatial organisation to ritual; even if a welcome is performed within 'found' space, an office building for example, the relative placement of host and visitor is maintained.

The city gets very few opportunities to make big new areas of public open space, those that are constructed invariably being in the outer city and required to accommodate the full range of suburban family life, recreation and sport. It is, therefore important that those charged with making urban public space respond to the needs of a less homogenous populace within the city. The evidence of events such as Pacifika suggests that appropriate spaces are large, open and non-specifically designed and able to be reconfigured to suit anything from a large celebratory event to a formal ceremony. Successful European examples point to an occupied built containment over much of the perimeter as important criteria though open space from other cultures shows containment by landform or vegetation is equally as effective. The desire for both open uncluttered space and containment are not contradictory imperatives though the degree of planting and landscaping within the space remains a moot point. Where the European model is invariably hard paved, probably reflecting the most robust climatic conditions, the more informal lifestyles that have evolved in Auckland seem to suggest a grass surface to allow informal games, picnics and so on.

The uses that the open space in the middle of the Britomart precinct has been put to have been an interesting laboratory. At various times it has been a tarmac topped carpark, an open paved promenade, a grassed art gallery with outdoor bar and plants, a soccer field, film set, motorbike rally location, market, skateboard zone and the location of a number of cultural festivals. In each the organisation of space has been manipulated to suit

the event but the base geometry remains; that of a simple shape contained by buildings forming a clearly marked perimeter. This somewhat minimal prescription for new city space should be refined, with smaller more intimate spaces for smaller groups, more solitary activities at the edges and the acceptance of the vagaries of site and geometry to loosen the hard edged geometry that is so evident in Britomart.

Despite the generalisations the prescription for loose fit and informally laid out public space is a useful start. Such spaces will be much the richer if they are able to generate an awareness of the particularity of the site location, some combination of orientation and outlook that is unique to the site. Marae are perfect examples of outdoor space organised in close relationship with their site, entry and main buildings being organised in relation to land features of special significance. Where marae are organised around relationships with land particular to that area identification with this country's land, light and natural elements is increasingly important as a means of identity in the wider population.

One need only look at the critical role landscape plays in the promotion of New Zealand in international media, not only is it shown to be beautiful to look at but we are portrayed as a nation of people actively engaged in the physical world, be it jumping off high bits, sliding down steep bits and running or walking through lonely isolated bits. The simple informal open space that is uniquely related to a location's underlying landforms and their symbolic relationships thus offers a welcoming ground which the many strands of culture in this city can claim.

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Cultural learning for the benefit of all...

Julie Roberts

In the recently released controversial film 'Borat! Cultural learning of America for make benefit of glorious nation of Kazakhstan', Jewish comedian Sacha Baron Cohen (aka Ali G) plays a naïve journalist from the former-Soviet Union stumbling through the morass of his own and America's prejudices. In what The Guardian³³ called 'a breathtakingly offensive' manner, Borat exposes the extent to which cultural stereotypes, bigotry and inter-cultural misunderstandings underpin world events.

Viewing Borat in the Melbourne suburb of Elsternwick, renowned for its high-density Jewish population, felt extremely uncomfortable: Cohen's film, set in his fictionalised vision of Kazakhstan, begins with a recounting of the annual 'chase the Jew' event. But just as an African-American is now the only person who can utter the word 'nigger' with impunity, it seems that anti-Semitic jokes can be made, as long as it's by a Jewish person. The theatre was nearly full and the audience laughed, and gasped, its way through the film appreciatively.

As the film's credits rolled the man sitting next to me turned and began a conversation, he was an Iraqi, born in Baghdad, currently in Australia on a medical fellowship. He was disappointed in the film; he had expected something that was more overtly anti-American, something that spoke out more strongly against the 'American Invasion'. We spoke for a while of the war in Iraq, he told of the missing members of his family, of the hospitals that are unable to effectively deal with the illnesses and injuries of the Iraqi people, of the growing rates of cancer due to poor nutrition and high stress. He spoke also of the regular kidnapping of friends and colleagues. It was a sobering conclusion to the comedic exploits of Cohen.

At home later that night I returned to my reading of Vikram Seth's *Two Lives* (2005). Indian-born Seth's book is the story of his uncle, a Hindu and his uncle's wife, Henny, a German Jewess who escaped Germany in the late 1930s. Aunt Henny, had a sister and a widowed mother both of whom were unable to escape Germany and were eventually killed in concentration camps. The part of the book to which I turned after the movie was comprised of letters written between Aunt Henny and her pre-war friends in Germany, mostly she tried to piece together the war years and last days of her mother and sister. The letters from her German friends told of the horrors of the war and the indignities and deprivations of post-war Germany. The letters attest to the ways in which the war impacted upon a group of friends, some of whom were Christian, some Jewish or part-Jewish, and in the case of Seth's uncle, Hindu. They reveal the difficulties facing the notion of reconciliation between Jew and non-Jew Germans post-war. People who were once carefree young friends now had to renegotiate such friendships in light of the realities of the war. Which of the non-Jews had supported their Jewish friends? Who had betrayed them? Was it possible, for instance, to maintain a relationship with a dear

³³ Peter Bradshaw, 27 October 2006.

friend, a Christian, who had shown much support during the war but had also, knowingly married a Nazi, a man who was possibly also a Storm-trooper? Seth's book lays before his reader the deep personal rents and tears in relationships caused by Hitler's attempt at ethnic cleansing.

I relate all this to introduce the question of art and ethnicity. The film, the book, the artwork: these cultural products are powerful vehicles for examining complex and perplexing issues. Seth's *Two Lives* reveals the almost insurmountable grief of a holocaust survivor and lays bare the complexity of human relationships at a time when one's racial and religious identity becomes the concern of the state. Cohen's alter-ego 'Borat' can say in his films that which cannot be said in real life – or more correctly perhaps – says loud and volubly that which is often spoken covertly, thus forcing his viewers to cringe and reject the ignorant assumptions underpinning such comments. His chosen medium of comedy reveals the foolishness and ignorance at the heart of racism, bigotry, sexism and all forms of discrimination. He might not effectively critique the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq, but Cohen alerts us, even as we laugh, to the ways in which deeply imbedded ignorance and fear of the 'other' provides a fertile ground for the manipulation of the masses and the justification of war.

The arts have a long tradition of providing a space within which the dissenting voice, the subversive position, and the critique of dominant paradigms can be challenged. This tradition was recently jeopardised in Australia when new laws of sedition were instituted. The cultural community – those involved in visual and performing arts, literature, film and even television – were outraged at the processes of censorship and control implied by such laws. The arts, in countries such as Australia and New Zealand, have long been a 'free space' for the expression of positions both popular and unpopular.

In both countries, film and the visual and literary arts have provided a medium through which issues of identity and belonging could be played out. That space, I would argue, is less policed in New Zealand, reflecting, arguably the more advanced level of Aotearoa's inter-racial relations. Australia, for all its marketing hype of multi-culturalism often

struggles to permeate ethnic equality and acceptance beyond its 'life-style' manifestations. That is, often what is presented in multiculturalism (and, implicitly, a sophisticated acceptance for the range of ethnicities that co-exist here) is little more than a recitation of the cafes and restaurants that line popular shopping strips. Melbourne, for instance, where I live, celebrates its Little Italy, Little Greece, Chinatown, Little Saigon, the Turkish dominance of Sydney Road, and the Jewish-ness of East St Kilda and Elsternwick, as I've already mentioned. It celebrates its Chinese-born Lord Mayor, John So, whose fractured, heavily accented English is mocked endearingly rather than cruelly. Melbourne has not seen, nor is likely to witness, the tensions that erupted on Cronulla Beach in Sydney last year. Nevertheless Asian students at the university where I teach still report discriminatory behaviour and even I, an Anglo-Australian can see the institutionalised racism that privileges those for whom English is a first language and whose cultural origins are Anglo-Australian.

In Australia we have yet to produce an equivalent of *Once Were Warriors* (1994). In the visual arts, as important as Aboriginal artists such as Gordon Bennett, Fiona Foley and Tracy Moffat have been in using the mediums of painting, photography and video to explore tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous, they have not pushed these issues as consistently as artists in Aotearoa, such as Peter Robinson, Jacqueline Fahey, Shane Cotton and Robyn Kahikiwa, to name but a few. Increasingly, in Australia, non-Indigenous artists of non-Anglo-Australian backgrounds are presenting their positions in their art, Guan Wei, is one who immediately springs to mind, and it is perhaps in this area – of art made by artists of immigrant and refugee background – that Australia has a more obvious presence. Not that I am proposing a competition between the countries. I leave that to the sports field. But it is of interest to contemplate the different ways in which these two countries, who share much in common beyond a shared geographical neighbourhood, have manifest quite distinct relationships between the different peoples who now occupy their spaces.

In each place, however, the long European tradition of using art as a vehicle for the exploration of complex, uncomfortable and troubling issues has been utilised by the dispossessed, the

disenfranchised, the marginalised and the reviled to speak out and assert their own position. This space, singled out from every day reality and protected by the parenthetical relationship provided by its assertion as 'art' contributes to shifts in attitudes and beliefs. Borat's 'cultural learning' beyond the scatological jokes lies in the capacity of the comedic film to imbed a note of horror in our laughter, to ensure repugnance for ignorance and discrimination underpins our reaction.

It is impossible to measure art's capacity to contribute to social change and shift in attitudes and beliefs, in a sense we can only measure art's power by looking at those cultures where rigid censorship exists – almost invariably such societies are intolerant dictatorships. In so-called democratic countries however, such as Australia and Aotearoa, while we may not always support positions expressed and we may not always be amused by attempts at comedic intervention and we may even criticise art that is too heavily overlaid with political intent, but the space that art provides for such activities to take place must be inviolate.

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Information for Contributors

The Aotearoa Ethnic Network promotes and connects ethnic communities in New Zealand. We are proud to be a partner in the Human Rights Commission's New Zealand Diversity Action Programme and to play our part in making a positive contribution to race relations in New Zealand.

The AEN Journal builds on this by providing an online open-access journal to discuss issues around ethnicity and to advance positive approaches to ethnic and religious diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand. It has been developed to foster the intellectual, artistic, social, business, political and cultural endeavours of our community members online and contribute to social cohesion.

AENJ welcomes submissions from anyone who wishes to write critically about issues facing ethnic communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. As you'll see from this issue, that doesn't have to be limited to New Zealand but it does need to be relevant to a New Zealand audience.

We encourage critical, thought provoking pieces that promote ethnic diversity and which constructively challenge established ideas, systems and practices. Whilst we welcome work that reports on research, such a piece needs to be accessible and not overly academic. We will choose intelligent and engaging over academic density every time – so we apologise in advance for rejecting any dry academic papers submitted simply to push up your research publication ranking!

The devil is always in the detail but in this case we'll keep it very simple. If you want to write a paper for AENJ, contact the editors (journal@aen.org.nz) with a short proposal (maximum 500 words, please). We'll horse-trade a little and then hopefully you can write the paper. We try not to have absolute limits but think in terms of between 2,000 and 3,000 words. All papers will be editorially reviewed and may be subject to minor editing for publication purposes. We will consider previously published articles if they are updated or would be useful and otherwise inaccessible to our audience (subject to satisfying the previous publishers conditions).

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AEN Aotearoa Ethnic Network

connecting a who's who of
influencers and decision
makers in the Aotearoa/
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