

NEW ZEALAND the early years

The growth of a cultural arts identity! [1769 to 1990]

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INTRODUCTION

From the collision of cultures navigated by Cook's discovery in 1769 to 1990, the Arts and Culture of New Zealand have sailed upon an uncharted course. It is the intent of this paper to investigate this voyage, discuss the changes that were affected by the intervention of another culture, and examine how art and culture developed in New Zealand.

I have chosen two courses of discussion that examine cultural interaction between Maori/pakeha (white New Zealander), Maori/government, and government/artist. The first course sails hard to the wind steered by the social scientist presenting an historical overview. Second, multiple tacks steer the humanistic perspective of personal experiences to be included when discussing surviving as an artist in New Zealand. To avoid any confusion, the term "artist" is used as an umbrella for all the arts. The discussion will plot the influences of both public and political policies toward the establishment of a New Zealand cultural identity.

1. PRE-EUROPEAN NEW ZEALAND

For over five hundred years New Zealand existed as a homogeneous culture of the Maori people. Distance from other people meant the Maori developed their culture independent from the rest of Polynesia. While it may be seen as one variant of Polynesia it became distinctly more Maori as time passed.

Maori society in 1769 was rich and diverse. Many cultural features, traditions, and beliefs were shared by most or all New Zealanders but the way of life differed both economically and socio-politically from region to region. What further developments might have taken place can never be known, for the isolation of Maori society was about to be shattered completely. (Davidson 1981:27)

The sea-surrounded isolation that cultivated their culture was under threat. Forging into unknown waters were the explorers seeking new lands. In 1769, Young Nick the lookout aboard Captain James Cook's vessel the H.M.S. Endeavour sighted land. Cook stepped ashore, promptly displayed the English flag and took possession in the name of his Majesty. This right of ownership or political colonization was at no stage sanctioned by the Maori people. Cook, intentionally or not, had successfully set a course, toward a collision of cultures.

2. THE EARLY YEARS 1769 -1840

In the wake of Cook's discovery came the traders. By 1800 English, French, and Americans had bases from which to hunt seals for their lucrative skins. The sealing industry began to decline in 1810 and attention turned to the whales as another source of income. Trading companies were formed exporting New Zealand flax, agricultural products, and native timber. In 1814 the Reverend Samuel Marsden, who was previously a magistrate in Botany Bay Australia, introduced Christianity. On Christmas day, 1814, the gospel was preached on New Zealand soil for the first time. Marsden's text was from the gospel of St. Luke: "Behold I bring you tidings of great of great joy." (Sinclair 1980:37)

Marsden represented the Church Missionary Society (Anglican) and along with the Wesleyans and Roman Catholic soon established Mission Stations. The early missionaries taught the Maori how to trade in the ways of the European. When they felt that this was successful both teaching and preaching gained more emphasis. Teaching reading and writing enabled the Maori to record their language. In the process of passing on these new skills they also passed on the way

of the Christian. Not all Maori responded to the call of the missionaries. Sinclair (1980:45) describes various resistance cults that emerged during the 1830's. One such cult was the Nakahi. This derived from the serpent in the book of Genesis that related to the Maori ngarara, (lizard spirit form) and survived right until the end of the century. The Ratana movement began much later in 1918 when Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana heard the voice of God calling, "I have come back to Aotearoa to choose you, the Maori people." (Oliver 1981:292) This movement still exists today as a powerful political voice of the Maori within the Labour Party.

The first fifty years of trading, preaching, and settling did not convince the Maori to change. In 1820 the "Maori were still completely confident in the merit of rightness of their own culture." (Sinclair: 39) yet, the next decade signaled change. The traders, missionaries, and settlers all brought with them the diverse cultures of the world. Cultures mixed blood in battle, then in birth, but ultimately three cultural options faced the immigrants and the indigenous peoples:

1. They could choose to live side by side. This was evident in the early settlers who reaped the same resources, lived on the same land but pursue different cultural paths.
2. They could move together in a uniform manner. This occurred as the missionaries attempted to merge the people under the umbrella of Christianity. At the same time inter-marriage became increasingly common between European males and Maori females. However, there is little early record of Maori males taking European wives.
3. Finally they could intensify their differences as was evident in initial skirmishes that led to full-scale war.

Thus, New Zealand in a short span of history attempted all three of the above options while weaving together cultures during those turbulent colonial years.

Some twelve thousand miles away in England the issues of "race" were debated. This resulted in the attitudes of intending immigrants being guided accordingly by public and political persuasion. Victorian politicians warned that traditional culture was to be seen as a hallmark of difference and this posed problems to the English government. The problem was simply that any difference from what the British

perceived as culture created stumbling blocks for the total dominance that was so eagerly sought after as a part of British colonization.

Great Britain guided policies from a distance. The British government while happy to reap financial rewards from New Zealand showed little other concerns. In 1817 in response to reports of European atrocities, Great Britain passed the first piece of legislation relating to New Zealand. The English government emphasized that New Zealand was not within "His Majesty's Dominions" but later under more pressure from missionaries reports of anarchy produced legislation in 1823 and 1828 that "made provisions for offenses to be tried in New South Wales." (Oliver 1981:42) Enforcing policies often fell upon military personnel promoted to political office. Such an appointment was Captain William Hobson. Upon arriving in New Zealand at the Bay of Islands on 29 January 1840 he immediately proclaimed himself the Lieutenant-Governor. This act "was anomalous, for he had proclaimed himself Lieutenant-Governor of a British Colony that did not, as yet, exist." (Sinclair: 72) Hobson had little legal knowledge and no legal advisor that forced him to rely upon instructions being sent from England. Unfortunately for Hobson instructions were delayed by the five month sea journey. Under these less than ideal conditions Hobson was called upon to implement a most significant and controversial piece of legislation, The Treaty of Waitangi. The treaty was an assurance from Queen Victoria to the over 150,000 Maori against other foreign intervention. In historical sense this resembled European colonization of North America. Like the American Indian, the Maori were deceived and began to fight for their land and rightful recognition of their culture. This scenario, that is war erupting as the failure of diplomacy, became a trademark of British colonization throughout the world.

After the wars of 1860-80, which the Maori lost, the government, guided by England, continued to amalgamate the Maori by absorbing them into an increasing European population. To do this the government used diplomacy and conciliation rather than military action. During this period of assimilation the English still insisted that the Maori culture be rightfully recognized. Yet there appeared to an anomaly in their endorsement of Maori culture. To the mathematician, 1 culture + 1 culture = 2 cultures. But

the English saw 1 culture + 1 culture = 1 culture. That one culture was English:

By the end of the nineteenth century both islands were settled, the Maori had been pacified, and a national government was organized. New Zealand had quickly and readily accepted its role as a British colony. (McLeod 1968:8)

3. MAORI CULTURE AND ARTS (1769 -1900)

The Maori culture had always laid emphasis upon arts and crafts, songs and dance, literature and ceremony. The colonialists could see these visible components of Maori culture. Unfortunately for the Maori, there were needs and values foreign to the colonial eye. The extended family or whanau, where mutual aid became a dominant feature, was largely ignored by the colonialists. They also failed to recognize the importance of the iwi or tribe. The iwi was central to the Maori's identity and link to the past. The social structure of the Maori began to disintegrate from first contact with the European. Between 1769 and 1900 the Maori underwent observable changes in language, housing, and dress. The most alarming change was because the Maori no longer belonged to the majority culture; "By 1890 the European population outnumbered the Maori fourteen to one." (Oliver 1981: 168) The coming of the twentieth century swept winds of change through New Zealand. Traditional Maori culture tossed and turned in this whirlwind finally settling the Maori in nowhere land.

To expect no change in a culture during assimilation or colonization is to be unrealistic. What is not always apparent is the degree of change and the rate with which it occurs. In cultural amalgams much can be lost forever if the rapidity of change accelerates beyond the ongoing preservation that naturally protects a culture.

The past is one of the cultural determinants which influence the present, but for the Maori there are two pasts: The cultural experience that stems from the thousand or so years in which the Maori lived undisturbed in New Zealand, and the past that begins with the European occupation. The latter has had such a profound effect on the Maori that the last century and a quarter have virtually eclipsed all that went before. (McLeod 1968:281)

4. EARLY EUROPEAN ARTS AND CULTURE (1840 - 1900)

The traders and missionaries prior to 1840 were the cultural minority. The traders were there to gain wealth while the missionaries saw their calling to be converting the Maori to Christianity. Both groups freely mixed with the Maori and did not instigate major cultural changes. The change came in the wave of settlers sailing toward the new land. This wave of settlers saw the European population increase tenfold in the years 1840 - 1850. State assisted immigration became a commercial enterprise. The New Zealand Company, led by Edward Gibbon Wakefield who strongly advocated the annexation of New Zealand, was responsible for over twelve thousand immigrants. Cultural pockets developed throughout New Zealand guided by the heritage and cultural preference of those involved. Within this influx of immigrants:

There were some well-educated pioneers, men who carried books, furniture, pictures, and musical instruments far into the High Country in extraordinary testimony to their attachment to culture and civilization. (Jackson 1969:42)

Those immigrants of both political and economic power became a dominant force in the shaping of cultural change. This could not be said of the less elite immigrant strata for with them only minimal possessions were brought to New Zealand. Reading was popular but confined to what arrived safely from the lengthy sea journeys. Books of verse, fiction and nonfiction, along with the ever popular Illustrated London News satisfied the literary diet. Music was very important, even extending to a flourishing Scottish Pipe Band influence during the military presence of 1840 - 1860. Choral singing was another favorite form of entertainment and toward the end of the century large audiences eagerly awaited touring Opera Companies.

The early painters, 1840 - 1860, captured the landscapes but exhibitions were sparsely attended. John Logan Campbell frustrated at the lack of fine arts during the 1850's in the colony believed that emigration was "only for clodhoppers and country bumpkins not for civilized beings" (Graham 1981:131) It was hoped that alongside the arduous colonial life that a respect for cultural and intellectual pursuits would increase. Sadly this did not occur. As the population grew so did political bodies. Many of those elected to both national and local political positions of the new

colony unfortunately lacked a cultural awareness. This attitude was reflected in minimal attention given to the development of matters of culture.

To help locally born people develop and mature few institutions existed where training in the fine arts and performing arts could be found. There were those who enriched the cultural milieu of colonial New Zealand but there were far too few of them. There was an art school established in Otago in 1870 and that was followed a decade later by art schools in the main centers. The turn of the century signaled the beginning of an arts' exodus. A situation had developed in which talented artists, among them painter Frances Hodgkins and writer Ngaio Marsh, frustrated with the lack of training and support were left with no alternative but to leave New Zealand and study overseas. At this time little support was to be found in the education system that was guided by the middle class who endorsed a curriculum that preferred literacy and vocational skills to matters of aesthetics.

Rural life dominated, emphasizing hard physical work and productivity. New Zealand was becoming a utilitarian society and out of this emerged a cultural identity, the cow-cocky (farmer). The cow-cocky became an icon, a symbol of the hard working pioneer struggling to tame the wilderness. Decades later in Maurice Shadbolt's novel, *Strangers and Journeys* that epitomizes the cow-cocky, a young boy shows his father a box of paints that he was given:

"What is the idea, boy?" his father asked.

"To paint pictures," he said, though it seemed obvious. "That's very well," his father observed, "for those who have time. Life is not pretty pictures."

(Gibbons 1981:314)

Utilitarianism, as symbolized by the cow-cocky, was soon to be joined by the sportsman as cultural icons of New Zealand. While the century ticked over New Zealand culture stood still, content to remain becalmed through an uncertainty of how to develop.

5. KEY POLITICAL FIGURES 1960 - 1990

The thirty years from 1960 to 1990 were dominated by four key figures. The 1960's belonged to Keith Holyoake and the National Party. Norman Kirk's Labour Party swept to power in 1972 and speculation of a sustained period in government ended with his untimely death in 1974. The political seesaw rested

with Rob Muldoon's National Party in winning the 1975 election. Muldoon remained until a snap election in 1984 launched David Lange and the "new look" Labour Party to power. Each of these four men was instrumental in shaping New Zealand's culture.

Holyoake survived by being what the majority of New Zealanders wanted in a politician. He was staid, solid, and safe. These are not considered character traits that lean toward the arts. He led his government like a business corporation and seldom took risks. Holyoake was not outspoken about the arts, he put pen to paper in authorizing legislation but seldom were his own opinions voiced. Holyoake was a symbol of support for any pursuits that contributed to the well-being of the country. If art and culture contributed to this goal then he tipped his hat accordingly.

The Kirk era was one of hope. The Labour Party had been rebuilt with a new image. Far-seeing policies, a youthful front bench of parliamentarians as well as extolling values of the 1930's Labour Movement, characterized the sweep of change. Culture was not neglected and Kirk embraced the Maori with recognition of their Maoritanga (all things Maori). This was demonstrated by his willingness to implement changes to rectify racial grievances in education, the workforce, and sporting contacts with South Africa. His working-class background made him easily identifiable to the ordinary person. It did not take long before his skills in matters of international foreign affairs built a reputation respected throughout the world. What looked to be a golden era was to come to an end with Kirk's untimely death.

Robert Muldoon was certainly one of the more memorable New Zealand Prime Ministers, but hardly memorable in his support of the arts. In the first of his two autobiographies he tells the reader how bright he was at school but never attained first place because he was always "beaten by some girl who was good at art." On another occasion he said that too many women are wasting their time in arts degrees as it only leads "to a teaching career." Obviously his task was to balance books, his was a financial mind immersed in the economic running of the country. Muldoon was at his most insensitive when it came to racial relations. In 1976 dawn raids by police to deport Tongan and Samoan over-stayers made many think that they were living in South Africa. Turmoil surrounded this

controversial leader during his nine years in power.

David Lange at the age of forty two became the youngest New Zealand Prime Minister. His victory signaled the end to the Muldoon era and the beginning of an eventful period in New Zealand's history. Lange was a true Labour person who gave time and energy to all New Zealanders. He lived in a predominantly Polynesian suburb of Auckland and had first-hand knowledge of the needs of ethnic minorities. His political party developed the Ministry of Culture in an attempt to bridge gaps that had grown under the previous government. His ability as a public speaker, especially in debates won him international recognition, but perhaps more importantly he endeavored to address Maori people in their native tongue. Even with a dangerous economic climate, people saw hope and change in the wind. The Lange era ended as dramatically as it began with his sudden resignation for personal reasons.

With the decade drawing to an end Geoffrey Palmer took the helm for a short period of stormy sailing amidst rumors of mutiny. The fourth Labour Government replaced Palmer with Mike Moore as Prime Minister mere weeks before the 1990 election. The tide had turned and the National Party led by Jim Bolger took over power ready for the storms of the nineties. So, in thirty years, the balance of power swapping four times, stability became reality for only short bursts. A change of government almost inevitably signaled a change of direction in policies. It could be said that the Labour government preferred development of home-grown facets of arts and culture. This could not be said of the conservative National government who appeared content to nurture cultural and artistic ties to Great Britain in areas of Ballet, Opera and Theater. The changing faces of power in government created a wait and see attitude in the arts world, many expecting the worst especially if the economy was shaky.

6. SURVIVING AS AN ARTIST WITHIN NEW ZEALAND

How then did the artist survive in New Zealand within such a constantly changing political structure? This has long been the battle that so many artists have had to endure. In order to survive, artists have been forced to find appropriate methods of gaining financial support. This is a demanding, time consuming process that requires considerable skill. Unfortunately in New

Zealand there was little training in arts administration to prepare artists for survival. Success for many was largely a matter of good fortune. Some individuals gained funding from arts friendly corporations but that was very rare. If an artist has had experience in the world of business, fund raising, advertising and manipulating media then they may gain independent funding. But generally in New Zealand, those artists who manage to gain financial support found this, as in so many countries throughout the world, in one central patron:

Patronage has always been part of the history of the arts. Today, if the arts are to flourish in the face of strong competition from mass media entertainment, private patronage must be supported by State assistance. In New Zealand, as in other countries, the state was taking an increasing part in providing financial aid to culture. (New Zealand Official Yearbook 1965:1131)

The patron in New Zealand, for the majority of artists is the government. The patronage began during the 1940 centennial year when finance was awarded to writing, music, and painting. But this still did not signal a firm political commitment to the arts. It was not until 1946 that State funding for the arts began. "State aid for literature was established on a permanent footing through the Literary Fund, financed from the vote of the Department of Internal Affairs." (New Zealand Yearbook 1965:1131) This fund was created by the efforts of John Heenan, a public servant, and politician Peter Fraser:

Now it moved permanently, if frugally, into patronage. Power and culture, each for its own ends, reached out to clasp hands, though they did not yet embrace. (Oliver 1981:430)

Politics and culture embraced momentarily in 1947 when assistance was extended to include all the arts along with Literature. Funding for this scheme came from The Art Union (lottery) profits rather than from public taxes. A small portion of the Art Union (lottery) profits was allocated by the Government to form a Cultural fund. This fund was used to send talented young artists overseas to study, once both the Minister of Internal affairs, and the Prime Minister's approval was given. For the next twenty years politics and culture touched hands infrequently until 1960 when the Arts Advisory Council was established under the

following structure:

The council advised the Minister of Internal Affairs, who was the ex-officio chairman. There were three other ex-officio members, the Secretary for Internal Affairs (deputy chairman), the Director of Education, and the Director of Broadcasting, and five non-Government members held appointments for three years. (New Zealand Yearbook 1964:1168)

One could say that this was an embrace, restrained perhaps by political structures but never the less it was a significant turning point in New Zealand's cultural development. In essence, the government had taken over even though the Arts Advisory Council was responsible for feeding the arts; it was central government that held the key to the food cupboard. Testimony of this power was demonstrated in 1963 by introducing legislation that allowed by proclamation a significant name change from The Arts Advisory Council, to The Queen Elizabeth II Arts' Council. Did this change occur through artists lobbying or public pressure? No, it was solely to commemorate the Queen's visit to New Zealand.

New Zealand, like it or not, had an infrastructure firmly in place. The infrastructure preferred was one central body, holding the purse strings. These strings varying in size dictated how the needs and aspirations of all the arts were met? In its thirty year history the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council sailed several tacks in order to get on a successful course. So, what has been its history and what can New Zealand expect of the future?

7. THE QUEEN ELIZABETH II ARTS COUNCIL

The decade 1960-70 was one of both elation and confusion to the arts community. The formation of a governing arts body was greeted with enthusiasm and confusion. How was it going to best help develop the arts in New Zealand? To answer many questions the new Arts Council made the following mission statement.

The Arts Council was set up by an act of Parliament and charged with the following:

- (a) To encourage, foster and promote the practice and appreciation of the arts in New Zealand.
- (b) To make accessible to the public of New Zealand all forms of artistic and cultural work.
- (c) To improve standards of execution of the arts;
- (d) To foster and maintain public interest in the arts

and culture in New Zealand. (Smyth 1973:70)

This milestone, the government becoming the major patron for the arts, was not going to change the face of culture overnight. In order to achieve the mission statement it was decided to model the council upon those in Britain and Canada. Basically the council divided itself into specialist committees for the major arts, and an elected council determined policy. Applause was held until the inevitable question of funding was answered. Accordingly a plan was devised by the government resulting in funding largely coming from the lottery profits. The survival of the arts depended upon the gambling nature of New Zealanders. It is ironical, as very few New Zealanders would even be aware that their flirt with chance provides financial support to the arts.

Music, ballet, and drama flourished as funding increased. Their growth was seen by many as at the expense of other art forms. To address this imbalance, The Arts Council in 1969, made a recommendation to the government that it was time to restructure policies. In ten years the council had gained sufficient experience of the infrastructure to evaluate developments. It was concluded that the council wanted to foster art on the traditional foundation of New Zealand Culture. Many asked, what is traditional New Zealand Culture? To this a strong lobby firstly argued that visual arts formed the valuable cornerstone of New Zealand Culture. Secondly they suggested that Ballet, Opera, and Theater, while artistically valuable, merely replicated foreign cultures instead of contributing to a New Zealand Cultural Identity. Thirdly, the council had been guilty of primarily supporting the performing arts to the neglect of the visual arts. The lobby was simply for a balance in arts funding. Matters were not improved by the fact that both the New Zealand Ballet and Opera companies who received considerable funding were facing financial disaster. Hence the Council was seen by the public largely as an elaborate distributor of money that funded ventures which were poorly supported by the public rather than art and culture more home grown in content.

The Arts Conference in April 1970 set out to review existing cultural policies and attempt to devise a plan for the next decade. From this conference two major themes emerged:

1. To address the needs of the individual artists.

2. To address the needs of the rural regions.

The dissension between the performing and visual artists was resolved when a Visual Arts Panel was introduced. Regional and community arts councils became more important in terms of accessibility of the arts to rural communities. Alongside these changes emerged the Sector Council for Cultural Affairs. This new council had a much wider role than would normally be associated with the arts. If culture was to be defined as the way of life of the people, recognizing diversity, then new areas of concern needed to be addressed. Matters such as film, Maori culture, transition from school to the workforce, needs of museums and art galleries all fell under the umbrella of the new council.

Not all were pleased with this new cultural infrastructure. A.D. Fairburn, some ten years earlier, issued a warning in his article "The Culture Industry" (Landfall, x3, 1956) that soon with increasing interest in leisure many activities, "that go under the name of culture may become a rival to sport as a palliative for suburban boredom." This was beginning to become a reality that little chose to do anything about. What in fact began to occur was that the infrastructure brought with it "the era of the cultural bureaucrat, the patronized producer, and the subsidized consumer." (Oliver 1981:452) Whether planned or not, the infrastructure set up by the government began to recognize the true diversity that was beneath the surface of New Zealand society. This diversity brought with it new patrons both corporate and private; it was now almost fashionable to be associated with the arts.

Toward the end of the 1980s, the Labour Government proposed a Ministry of Arts and Culture. This was widely discussed within political, artistic, cultural, and sporting spheres. The resulting discussion paper, published in April 1989 exposed weaknesses in the present and strengths for the future. It became apparent during lengthy discussions that New Zealand had neglected developing a true cultural identity. This, the Labour party felt was due to the lack of rightful recognition in the promotion of arts and culture. The euphoria that flowed through the arts community following the publication of the discussion document has since become becalmed. Once again the arts were awaiting final political decisions from the newly elected 1990 National Party. A change of government, as mentioned previously, creates a wait and see situation.

What the new government plans to do within the arts and culture portfolios was yet to be firmly established.

8. CULTURAL ISSUES WITHIN THE ARTS: 1960 - 1990

Within this growth of corporate, private, and government patronage, were all cultural groups treated equally? To many, transplanting of a European culture beneath a Polynesian or Melanesian environment was of prime importance. There were those for whom it appeared impossible. However McLeod in *The Pattern of New Zealand Culture* cites Hawaii as an example of an "amalgam of cultures" that then "built a modern community within which Polynesian culture forms an integral part." New Zealand was not without opportunities, as McLeod suggested, that on two occasions several large European groups immigrated to New Zealand. What might have been an opportunity to amalgamate in the way Hawaii did was rejected by New Zealanders. Instead the immigrants on both occasions were absorbed into the already established way of life. So, Europeans who chose to live in New Zealand were expected to blend in with the locals. Those of white complexion blended easily; sadly it was not the same for those of brown skin. Pacific Islanders faced problems similar to those of the Maori in gaining cultural identification.

In the nineteen sixties as both Maori and Pacific Islanders grew in numbers building a life in New Zealand was made easier if one adopted the dominant culture and lifestyle. There was a cry for modification of the transplanted English culture but this fell upon deaf ears both politically and publicly. New Zealand was still predominantly British and this meant a loyalty to the "Mother Country."

The overriding preoccupation of New Zealand life was with security: social, economic and political. This tends to inhibit extremism, to discourage radical proposals, to glorify conformity, and to curb those flights of individualism in thought or action that eventually effect substantial cultural innovation or modification. (McLeod 1968:9)

It is in this "do not rock the boat" society that the Maori people, and more recently the Polynesians, have struggled to establish a cultural foothold. History records that the 1960s began with the much discussed Hunn Report. J.K. Hunn was appointed by the Labour Party to report on the work of the Maori Affairs

Department. The report contained many insensitive judgments; this was especially true of Mr. Hunn's concept of integration. Hunn drew the analogy of integration as being all together on the same road. If this road led to a disappearance of Maori Culture or some of the "relics," then that was the natural course of history.

My purpose at this point, is to discover what opportunities are available for cultural minorities. In the matters of social welfare such as housing, health, education and employment opportunities, the Maori and Polynesian fare decidedly worse than the pakeha. It would be both interesting and easy to discuss these issues but my intent is to focus upon arts and culture. I am well aware that these concerns all have direct bearing upon matters of culture and are difficult to divorce. However, it is to the arts community I look and this obviously directs me to the major patron, the government.

The Maori had been granted several agencies for gaining funds for cultural activities by the government. The Maori Welfare program, established in 1962, provided funds for an array of all things Maori. Artists could apply directly to them for financial aid. In 1963 The New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute became a vehicle to preserve ancient Maori skills. In essence this was fine but the venue in Rotorua, a major tourist attraction, drew some criticism. The young Maori artists were placed in open display for the tourist to view this preservation of heritage. The cage-like atmosphere offended many Maori and pakeha alike. Critics were reminded that the Maori were expected to use this geographical setting to gain revenue by producing authentic carvings rather than the cheap imitations that flooded the tourist shops.

In 1966 a merge of cultures came about in the usually European dominated domain of Opera. This occurred in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*:

Most of the roles were taken by Maori singers - the part of Porgy by the late Inia-te-Waiata, the famous Maori singer, and the production's national tour broke all records for attendance.

(Smyth 1973:33)

Maori artists were beginning to make a place for themselves in the arts community. Successes like *Porgy and Bess* certainly helped. By the end of the 1970s, the Maori could find support in the Department of

Maori Affairs, Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, Maori and Pacific Arts Council, and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. Not all these agencies prime concern were matters of culture, but they had funds available to help applicants with worthy projects.

The Education department certainly gave fuel to the development of Maori Culture. Maori studies became a part of the curriculum in schools, teacher's colleges, and universities. Significant Maori artists emerged during this renaissance. In literature Hone Tuwhare, Witi Ihimaera, and Patricia Grace become prominent. The visual arts produced Para Matchett, Selwyn Muru, Muru Walters, and Rei Hammon. In music, Kiri Te Kanawa became an international opera star. Maori arts had finally swept into the 1980s. Maori artists began to bridge the river of inequality that existed between cultures.

During the 1960-1990 immigration patterns changed in that an increasing number of Pacific Islanders from Samoa, Cook Islands, and Rarotonga sought to live in New Zealand. The numbers were sufficient to identify Polynesians as the third largest culture in New Zealand. To address this rapid growing cultural group the arts council, under government guidance, formed the Maori and South Pacific Arts Council. Sheltering both Maori and Pacific Islanders beneath the same umbrella may have been seen as streamlined administration, but it was not greeted with open arms by either culture. In 1984 the Labour Government made steps toward solving this problem by forming the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs. This government act rightfully recognized the cultural aspirations of the Pacific Islanders.

The change in thirty years for the Maori and more recently the Pacific Islanders had been significant. Their place within the New Zealand cultural identity was being established. The Te Maori Exhibition (1986) gained international exposure that in turn created an interest both home and abroad for matters of Maori culture.

One such example is Ngapo (Bub) Wehi. Standing on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum in New York for the opening of the Te Maori Exhibition, Wehi was struck vividly by the interest that Maori culture captured in the American people. Wehi returned to New Zealand and established Pounamu (greenstone), a Maori cultural and entertainment group. What was significant about this group is that Wehi did not gain

any government funding for this project. To ensure that his group survived, he, upon his own initiative, approached the Auckland museum with an innovative scheme. Pounamu then provided two daily 45 minute guided introductions to the museum's Maori collection. Wehi has had his fair share of critics, largely for the use of Maori ceremony for monetary gain. To this Wehi has made his stance very clear:

We're attempting to provide something as close as possible to the genuine culture of the past. We have to pay our people's wages and there's no alternative way of promoting Maori culture other than charging people to see displays, such as we do at the museum. (Shaw 1990:48)

Wehi was in fact testing the waters of culture in New Zealand. Despite the critics, Pounamu was providing an outlet for Maori artists within the commercial structure of society. Pounamu gained an international reputation which the New Zealand government finally recognized. It was recognized by including Pounamu in many public relation activities from which both party's reaped benefits.

In the thirty years, 1960-90, Maori then more recently Polynesian cultures have begun establishing themselves within New Zealand. In a few isolated cases there has been success, but within New Zealand as a whole progress has been slow.

9. AN EMERGING CULTURE - INFLUENCES AND DEVELOPMENTS

The 1970s saw the full impact of television with the introduction of color broadcasting in New Zealand. The arts lagged a bit behind not anticipating the full effect upon their audiences. Soon theaters throughout the country were performing to fewer people. The common cry was to the Arts Council for greater funding to support them through. It was not made clear by the major theaters what they were being supported through and how long it would take?

The Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council becomes a financial crutch for tunnel-vision administrators. The call should have been for investigation of audience trends and the way in which television could become a weapon the arts could use to build support. The New Zealander exhibited that for far too long they had been closeted, content to exist within the welfare egalitarian state. For many New Zealanders, looking beyond and

showing enterprise escaped them. This was not a call to commercialism or a threat to artistic integrity. What was needed was research of the market and a solid plan to avoid closure of theaters and artists joining the unemployed.

Several important changes did come about from this challenge by television. New theater designs were smaller, seating 350 to 500 hundred people proved to be most favored. The architects, in consultation with the arts community, designed theaters that were able to cope with a greater deal of flexibility within several theatrical genres. The traditional eight o'clock evening curtain time became challenged by earlier six thirty and later eleven o'clock beginnings. The public could now make a choice between what time they wanted to go to theaters, very much like selecting a channel or program on television.

New Zealand playwrights made a welcome appearance; Roger Hall created a series of plays, *Glide Time* and *Middle Age Spread*, featuring typical Kiwis (New Zealanders) in everyday situations. This was a radical change from the dominating Shakespearian staged for mother-England refugees. It came as little surprise that theaters soon were filled to capacity within this race to establish a New Zealand arts culture. The 1980s saw even more growth and the New Zealand Film Industry began to emerge. New Zealanders lined up to see home-grown films on the big screen like Geoff Murphy's *Goodbye Pork Pie* that became a huge box office success. This was a remarkable turn of events in support for the film industry. It was only years earlier a UNESCO document on the Role of Culture and Leisure in New Zealand said:

Although the country has two film production studios, one publicly owned and the other a private commercial enterprise, neither of these makes feature films, and as a consequence the screenings in New Zealand cinemas are almost exclusively of feature films from Hollywood or British studios. (Smyth 1973:68)

The change in ten years was significant. Hollywood and British films still constituted a large slice of the film industry but there were increasing numbers of local film companies making international quality films. The success in the 1990 Cairns Film Festival of *Ruby and Rata*, and *An Angel at My Table* created a spirit for the industry. Along with the home-grown films there were films being made about New Zealanders by foreign

film companies such as Spinsters that is based on Sylvia Ashton-Walker's 1958 novel of the same name. New Zealand, like it or not, was establishing cultural heroes that dared to compete with the sportsman who had taken over the mantle of fame from the colonial icon, the cow-cocky. Sam Neil who began his rise to fame in the New Zealand film *Sleeping Dogs* is now an established international film star. Geoff Murphy, the director, is now domiciled in Hollywood with international recognition.

New Zealander artists, no longer had to flee the country to further their training and establish careers. The exodus that began at the turn of the century still continues but alternatives exist. In growth industries like film and television employment and training became available, stemming the exodus in at least one field of the arts.

In dance, New Zealand had grown accustomed to waiting for annual New Zealand Ballet performances. Change was upon the horizon, contemporary dance appeared toward the end of the 1970s. Modern dance companies began to take advantage of the starved dance audiences by plotting courses of national tours. The Limbs Dance Company, perhaps the most significant modern dance company so far in New Zealand, made an exciting impact both nationally and internationally. Within this flotilla of interest in dance new paths were charted. I was fortunate to be swept along by the energy and enthusiasm to such an extent that I that I became an integral part of contemporary dance in New Zealand.

From 1981 through to 1986 my dance company, Linkz, was performing to capacity audiences, gaining prime television coverage and touring to Australia and America. While riding upon this wave of success I too became guilty of giving little thought to why it is all happening. In my experience, funding was difficult but not impossible. Linkz received several grants from community arts, regional arts, and Queen Elizabeth Arts Councils. I was the recipient of two Prestigious Study Awards, and appointed as a Cultural Ambassador in 1986 while living in America. Sadly in 1986-87 the tide had again turned against the arts; economic storms crashed upon New Zealand wreaking havoc.

The stock exchange collapse pulled the curtain on many corporate sponsors. Private patrons quickly followed tending to their financial wounds. Like a

becalmed yacht, the arts drifted in a sea of confusion awaiting a breeze of hope that would again put them back on course.

It was the Government that controlled the winds of change in matters of arts and culture in New Zealand; to this they must plot the course. Whoever engineers, manipulates the navigation, co-ordinates the course is the crucial factor. The arts community has a responsibility to themselves in that they must provide spokes-people with adequate skills to advise what the best course for cultural development is. New Zealand in its short history has produced talented artists in a variety of disciplines, however this has been sporadic and often the government part in this success has been minimal. If the proposed Ministry of Arts and Culture gains sufficient support then New Zealand may indeed begin to achieve the 1987 Labour parties pledge of developing a New Zealand Identity. To their credit the Labour party saw the only way in achieving this goal was by "the promotion of arts and culture, and an appreciation of heritage." One can only wait and see whether this happens under the recently elected National party.

To conclude, the impact upon the development of art for more than a handful of select individuals is the government's responsibility. The government's assumption of this responsibility has been cyclic at best. Infrequent spurts of enthusiasm have led to a fragmented identity. The next decade in New Zealand poses many new problems for pakeha, Maori, and Polynesian. No longer can New Zealand languish under the illusion of a mono-culture modeled upon nineteenth century Great Britain. The proposed Ministry of Arts and Culture addresses these problems of bi-culturalism versus multi-culturalism. To recognize this is the first step toward an understanding of one's identity that will in turn add to the development of a national identity.

For me, an artist in exodus, the future looked very bleak. I would like to think that my training and experiences will not be lost to New Zealand. Deep down I know that historically my career in New Zealand flourished coincidentally under a Labour government and it may take a return to power of policies practiced similar to those of the Labour party to enhance my chances of returning and sharing my new knowledge. It is my belief that the arts and culture are totally dependent upon government support.

In New Zealand's case, support has been as variable as the weather that surrounds the islands of New Zealand. Like the sailor who is at the mercy of the winds, so are the arts and culture to governments. Where the sailor hopes for strong consistent winds that full the sails ensuring progress, the arts in New Zealand need that consistency or at the least a long range weather forecast. Infrequent gusts of support have proven to be insufficient for the development of the arts in general. Perhaps, this may explain why New Zealand struggled with an identity, an identity that the government had the power within their bulkheads of policy making mechanisms to nurture if they so choose.

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