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‘A Harmony of Frenzy’: New Zealand Performed on the stage, screen and airwaves, 1862 to 1940

Marianne Schultz

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, University of Auckland, 2014
Abstract

This thesis is an examination of New Zealand performing arts from 1862 to 1940 via case studies of drama, music, and dance, performed both domestically and internationally. I argue that in the creation and reception of popular culture notions of modern New Zealand were shaped and understood. Highlighting New Zealand’s embodied culture of the past provides a new interpretation of the development of New Zealand’s cultural history and adds an unexplored dimension in understanding the relationships between Māori and Pākehā throughout the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries. The performance events discussed here reflect the cultural hybridity that developed in New Zealand. A strong thread running through this thesis is the belief that race and ethnicities are cultural constructions that have been manufactured through performance. A central question running through this thesis is: How have Māori and Pākehā been performed? By examining popular theatrical performances, the creators and performers, conventions and styles, the reception and contemporary interpretations, a history emerges that presents a new facet of understanding representations of New Zealand within a framework of transnational performance and cultural studies. Writing New Zealand history through performance, this thesis demonstrates how corporeal expression, manifested in the performing arts, constructed layers of vibrant and visceral representations of this land and its people, domestically and internationally.
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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: ‘An interest must be strong now-a days to raise much enthusiasm in an audience’: Māori, New Zealand and Empire on Stage, 1862-1864</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: Alfred Hill and Princess Iwa: Musical New Zealand 1896-1920s</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Performing Landscape, People and Stories: Rotorua and the Reverend Frederick Augustus Bennett</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: ‘Savage Suffragettes’ and a ‘Harmony of Frenzy’: Māori in Manhattan 1909-1910</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: New Zealanders in ‘Maori-land’: Māori and Pākehā on Film</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six: One Hundred Years of History Performed: 1840-1940</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## List of Illustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 1:</th>
<th>Advertisement <em>Whakeau, The Pakeha Chief</em></th>
<th>47</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2:</td>
<td>‘The War in New Zealand, the 57th Regiment taking a Māori redoubt on the Katikara River, Taranaki’</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3:</td>
<td>New Zealand Maori Warrior Chiefs! Nine in Number, Male and Female’, Royal Princess’s Theatre, Edinburgh, September 1863</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4:</td>
<td>‘Advertisement for performances at the Royal Princess’s Theatre Edinburgh, September 1863</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5:</td>
<td>New Zealand Maori Warrior Chiefs. Nine in Number, Male and Female’, Royal Princess’s Theatre, Edinburgh, September 1863</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6:</td>
<td><em>Hinemoa</em> by Arthur Adams and Alfred Hill</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7:</td>
<td>Photo of set for <em>Hinemoa</em>, Auckland Town Hall, March 1897</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8:</td>
<td>Score of <em>Waiata Poi</em> by Alfred Hill</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9:</td>
<td>‘Maori Songs collected and arranged by Alfred Hill’</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10:</td>
<td><em>Home, Little Maori, Home</em></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11:</td>
<td><em>Maoriland Love Song</em></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 12:</td>
<td>Crystal Palace Programme, 1911, London</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 13:</td>
<td>Princess Iwa, c.1911</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 14:</td>
<td>‘Dusky Dancers at the Palace Theatre’</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 15:</td>
<td>‘Princess Iwa entertaining an ancestor’ and ‘A seated “dance”’, London Palladium, December 1919</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 16:</td>
<td>‘A Maori Princess who will shortly produce Maori and Hawaiian songs and dances at the Palladium’</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 17:</td>
<td>‘Warriors Day’ entertainment 30 March 1921</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 18:</td>
<td>Iwa and husband Wilson Thornton</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 19:</td>
<td>Rotorua as ‘Geyserland’</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 20:</td>
<td>Model village at Whakarewarewa</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 21:</td>
<td>‘Fashionable Pendants’ on display in July 1908 at Stewart Dawson Jewellers on Queen Street, Auckland</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 22:</td>
<td>The Rev. Frederick Augustus Bennett and one of his performing groups, c.1908-09</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 23: Poster for Hinemoa, The Maori Opera Company 1915
148
Figure 24: Photo of cast and musicians of Hinemoa, The Maori Opera Company 1915
150
Figure 25: Little Maori Maid, Good-bye!
156
Figure 26: Opening of the Maori Congress, 14 July 1908
163
Figure 27: Cast members on set of the opera Hinemoa, 1915
167
Figure 28: Te Arawa set sail for New York, 1909
182
Figure 29: ‘Trifoliate Theatrical Triumph’, New York Times, 1909
188
Figure 30: Māori on stage at the Hippodrome 1909
189
Figure 31: The ‘lake’ of the Hippodrome, featured in Inside the Earth
192
Figure 32: Cartoon drawing of men’s haka on the Hippodrome stage.
194
Figure 33: ‘Duchess and Chief of the Maoris of Manhattan’
198
Figure 34: Publicity photographs taken on stage at the Hippodrome.
199
Figure 35: Kiwi Amohau, Rineha, American Museum of Natural History
1910
206
Figure 36: The ‘Savage Suffragettes’
207
Figure 37: Waapi, ‘Queen Kiri’, Caana, Tahira, Maata and Tungi’
212
Figure 38: Hera Tawhai (Sarah Tawhai Rodgers) as Hinemoa, 1914
218
Figure 39: Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914
221
Figure 40: Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914
229
Figure 41: Leaflet for the London premiere of Under the Southern Cross
233
Figure 42: Witarina Harris in Under the Southern Cross
234
Figure 43: Movietone prologue still to Under The Southern Cross
239
Figure 44: ‘Bathie Stuart and Her Maori Maids’
242
Figure 45: Poster The Adventures of Algy
249
Figure 46: ‘Kiwi McGill’ and ‘Mary’ in scene from The Adventures of Algy
250
Figure 47: Finale, The Adventures of Algy
251
Figure 48: Bathie Stuart
255
Figure 49: Historical Pageant at Waimate 1940
270
Figure 50: A waka at Waimate 1940
272
Figure 51: Hone Heke’ shaking hands with a ‘Red Coat’
275
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 52</td>
<td>Actors arrive at Waitangi, 6 February, 1940</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 53</td>
<td>The scene at Waitangi, 1940</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 54</td>
<td>Souvenir Programme, Centennial of the Treaty, 1940</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 55</td>
<td>Hone Heke (Hone Heke Rankin) at Waitangi</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 56</td>
<td>Actors pose for the camera at Waitangi, 6 February 1940</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 57</td>
<td>Apirana Ngata on the opening of the Whare Runanga Waitangi, February 1940</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

On 1 April 2013 Radio New Zealand Concert broadcast a brief musical profile of the nineteenth-century New Zealand composer, A.S. Mortimer. Roger Wilson, a highly regarded presenter, discussed a recently discovered score of Mortimer’s opera *Ropata and Juliet* and bemoaned the fact that this work had been lost to the public for so long. Mentioning some of Mortimer’s other works that illustrated the composer’s practice of mining New Zealand’s inhabitants, landscape and sounds for musical inspiration (*Echoes of Maoriland, Tui in the Flaxbush*), Wilson also speculated on how such a work as *Ropata and Juliet* – centred on an interracial relationship – would have been received in 1860s New Zealand. Given this mid-nineteenth century setting, Mortimer’s musical compositions pre-dated the works of Alfred Hill, commonly thought to be the first New Zealand composer (in the 1890s) to combine Māori motifs and settings with European musical styles. Listening to this discussion I was both intrigued and disappointed that I had not come across Mortimer or his works during my research for this thesis. Since I missed the beginning of the segment I felt I lacked some crucial information on Mortimer. Had his work been lying unnoticed and neglected in someone’s attic or had the nature of his work caused it to be hidden? Was it discovered at some point, but because of its content, deemed to be ‘politically incorrect’ and therefore dismissed by later music programmers and concert goers?

At the conclusion of the broadcast I contacted Radio New Zealand to enquire about obtaining a transcript. The response I received was not the one I expected. With the revelation that rather than being a long forgotten artist Mortimer was, instead, a fictional character created by Wilson concocted as an Aprils Fools’ joke, I reflected on the meaning behind his invention. Wilson implied that Māori who sang opera at
this time were an anachronism, that the notion of a Pākehā New Zealand composer fashioning a Māori New Zealand story in operatic form was unique, that New Zealanders living in the 1860s would have difficulty accepting such works, would view them as absurd or at the very least unusual, and that the utilization of local people, places, language and political themes in artistic works was exceptional.

It is the refutation of all these points, demonstrated by case studies, that forms the main argument of this thesis. Though Wilson’s motivation for concocting this trick in unknown, I argue here that his underlying rationale is incorrect. This thesis explores events, people and works from New Zealand’s performing arts from the 1860s to 1940 and argues that through corporeal expression notions of modern New Zealand were formed and understood by domestic and international audiences contributing to formations of identity for New Zealanders. As these case studies show, New Zealand stories, people and landscapes featured prominently in many performance events in this chosen time period. Taking centre stage here are the popular performing arts and the role they played in Māori and Pākehā relations and self–identification from the late nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries.

Wilson’s specious lament of the loss of important documents from New Zealand’s performing arts history is one sentiment that I agree upon. A prime motivation for undertaking this research is the absence of such works in the historiography of New Zealand. Moreover, the contemporary assumption voiced by Wilson that such incarnations of musical representations transgress accepted ideas of Māori and Pākehā (indigenous New Zealander and non-Māori) culture(s) of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries highlight the presentism of New Zealand cultural understanding. Traditional, authentic and cultural are some of the terms entangling historic meanings of performance. I challenge and interrogate those
concepts in this examination and present alternative understandings and interpretations of these terms via performance events.

This thesis argues that a deeper understanding of New Zealand’s cultural history can emerge by considering the transmission and transcultural exchange of British and American performance form, content and styles on and with Māori cultural expression. Performance theorist Diana Taylor has asked, ‘How does expressive behaviour (performance) transmit cultural memory and identity?’\(^1\) The challenge of analysing and measuring the power of representation that resides in the performing body is central to this work. This thesis aligns itself with Taylor’s plea that it is crucial to re-examine the ‘relationships between embodied performance and the production of knowledge.’\(^2\) Margaret Werry, in her examination of New Zealand’s role in cultural imperialism in the early twentieth century, has claimed that the ‘study of the state demands that we attend to the broader range of performance genres’ and ‘performance, in the context of the state, is both a resource of the dominate culture and of the powerless, who use it to navigate, to inhabit, and even to trick systems not of their making.’\(^3\) Highlighting New Zealand’s embodied culture of the past provides a new interpretation of the development of New Zealand’s cultural representations.

This thesis adds a new dimension to understanding the relationship between Māori and Pākehā in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by centralizing performance in historical inquiry. Though I support Werry’s stance that attention to performance can shed light on the space between classes and the structures of power within the state, this thesis presents an alternative exploration of the notion of agency in relation to performers, producers and spectators. In an attempt to answer these

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2 ibid., pp.xvii-xix.
questions, this thesis provides an analysis of specific tableaux, musicals, operas, variety shows, songs, music hall shows, radio broadcasts and films, between 1862 and 1940. A central aim of this study then is to examine how a change over time of theatricalized culture reflects the cultural and social politics of the era.

Several questions lured me into this research journey. What role have the performing arts played in the development, reception and formation of New Zealand’s cultural identity? What was the nature of Māori and Pākehā collaboration in producing, composing, writing and performing between the 1860s and 1940? What effect did staging and commodification of culture, the ‘reification of people and places as exchangeable aesthetic objects,’ have on the developing relationship between Māori and Pākehā in the twentieth century?  

How have the cultural and racial identities of Māori and Pākehā been performed? By what means has New Zealand been imagined in performance? Was the ‘desire to use Maori presence in New Zealand as definitive of the place’ central to representation of New Zealand in the performing arts? Amongst current notions surrounding culture, identity, race and representations, this thesis attempts to answer these questions by focusing on performances of haka (dance), waiata (song), and drama on stage, film and radio broadcasts from 1862 to 1940.

A strong thread running through this study is the belief that ‘race and ethnicity are cultural and historical rather than biological and a-historical phenomena.’ Highlighting New Zealand’s embodied culture of the past provides a new interpretation of the development of New Zealand’s cultural representations. By

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4 Christopher Balme, Pacific Performance: Theatricality and Cross-Cultural Encounter in the South Seas, Basingstoke, 2007, p.9.
5 Bruce Babington, A History of The New Zealand Fiction Feature Film, Manchester, 2007, p.44.
examining popular theatrical performances, the creators and performers, the reception and contemporary interpretations, a history emerges that presents new facets of understandings in the creation of categories and identities that came to represent Māori-ness and Pākehā-ness in New Zealand society and elsewhere. It is important to acknowledge the ambivalence and challenges when engaging with the terms Māori and Pākehā as overall descriptions of New Zealanders. Though these labels are in common usage today when referring to the indigenous people of New Zealand/Aotearoa and non-indigenous residents, historically these names came about in the process of colonization and settlement. Tony Ballantyne explains that by the early nineteenth century a significant number of tangata whenua (people of the land or native to New Zealand) were beginning to think of themselves as Māori, while the term Pākehā entered into currency around the same time. Peter Gibbons discusses how ‘the difficulties are compounded by the tendency of Pākehā to use ‘Maori’ in a generic sense’ without acknowledgement of tribal connections.7 The usage of these terms taken from my source material reflects these definitions. For the purposes of this thesis, I employ the terms Māori and Pākehā when discussing native New Zealanders and settlers primarily from the British Isles respectively. I use the terms ‘Māori-ness’ to encapsulate the essence of Māori culture and custom as it was applied to the new forms of creative expression that emerged at this time and ‘New Zealand-ness’ to identity both Māori and non-Māori cultural expression.

Presented as a chronology of performance events, this thesis constructs a narrative of New Zealand history whose focus is on the intersection of culture,

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performance and politics, introducing key characters that imagined, shaped and created notions of New Zealand for thousands of audience members over these eighty years. Focusing on performance(s) that transcend cultural, spatial and theatrical boundaries, case studies of popular entertainments, their producers and audiences, allows us to explore how and why performance, performers (both Māori and Pākehā) and the cultural representations they produced matter to New Zealand’s cultural history. Through an analysis of specific shows, tours, creators and performers, both at home and abroad, I show how performance in this time period ‘shape[d] and reflect[ed] their political and cultural eras’ to expand what we already know of Māori and Pākehā shared histories.  

The chosen period, labelled an era of ‘explosive colonization’, is a significant time in New Zealand’s past. Beginning with the wars of the 1860s between imperial forces, colonial troops and Māori, and ending with the centennial celebrations of the annexation of New Zealand, the selected 80 years also saw an increase in local expressions of cultural, pan-tribal organisations, the politics of assimilation, the development of the tourist industry and the emergence of the Dominion. Against this background, the performing arts both reflected and shaped the political, racial, and physical environment. Following the 1840 signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between the British Crown and many Māori tribes of Aotearoa/New Zealand, the social and cultural interaction(s) between natives, colonisers and settlers accelerated. By the 1860s the proliferation of Christianity amongst certain Māori communities and

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8 Lewis A Erenberg’s statement that historians ‘might want to explore how various aspects of cultural production shape and reflect their political and cultural eras and how these paradigms shift, giving weight both to agency and hegemony, consensus and conflict, as one age moves into another’, is appropriate to apply specifically to this history of performing arts. Lewis A Erenberg, Reviews in American History, 37, 4, December 2009, p.640.
settlers, the development of education for both Māori and Pākehā, the establishment of the English language as the predominant means of communication and the establishment of theatres, dramatic societies and sites for entertainment throughout the country all added to an emerging hybridity in culture and customs in New Zealand. It was in these institutions and practices (and others) and sites of interaction that native, colonizer and settler came into personal contact.

Another important consideration when examining this period of New Zealand history is the prevalence of the theory that promulgated the extinction of the Māori race via miscegenation, introduction to disease and Darwinian survival. The trope of the ‘Dying Māori’ permeated social policies and cultural expression in the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries. In relation to this belief, expressions of Māori culture and the Māori race acquired a romantic and nostalgic quality from Pākehā, leading to Māori design, place names, stories and images utilised by Pākehā. Pertinent to this thesis is the ways in which ‘Māoriness’ in song, movement and images was adapted by both Māori and Pākehā to convey New Zealand to audiences and spectators.

Unlike recent New Zealand scholarship from Conal McCarthy, Ewan Johnston and Giselle Byrnes that has focused on museum and exhibition display and ethnographic studies of this era, this thesis examines the live performance event and the corporeal expression and understanding of culture, nation and shared experience via drama, music and dance.11 Before I proceed, the word performance, as applied here throughout the thesis needs some attention. ‘Performance’ in various contexts

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can refer to a task, a measure of work capacity, an accomplishment or false sentiment. Likewise the terms acting and re-enactment can signal ambivalence. To ‘act’ can signify the portrayal of a theatrical character, but can also be understood as to feign meaning or conceal the truth behind an action, while reenacting signals an attempt to recreate an event or sequence of actions through expressive means. For the purposes of this thesis then, performance refers to dramatic, musical or movement-centered activities occurring in specified spaces such as theatres, concert halls, captured on film or broadcast via radio waves with a gathered and specific audience. The ‘enacting/re-enacting’ element of performance is what distinguishes it from other historical subjects; an event has been ‘staged’ to represent something else. Moreover, a live performance event can never be repeated or received the same way twice. Each performance constitutes new expressions, understandings and interactions from both performers and audience members. The temporal nature of live performance combined with its unpredictability, volatility and phenomenological experience are elements that set expression of culture via the theatre apart from museum exhibitions. Thus, this thesis presents Māori and Pākehā as actors, both in the sense of agents of change in the unfolding story of New Zealand and in the roles they created and played on platforms where New Zealand was imagined and formed.

Though it has been stated that the purpose of theatricalized performance ‘becomes one of generating an intensified experience for all who participate in it [both performer and spectator] rather than the representation of some pre-existing action or state of feeling’, this thesis argues that the performance events discussed here both manufactured and reflected representations of New Zealand – people and places, and events – as well as generating an ‘intensified experience’.¹² The ‘who,

what and where’ constituting the representative elements of performance are central to this study, as they provide a framework to examine the expressive, corporeal behaviour that transpired in theatres and on film.

In attempting to interpret the meaning and reception behind these performed representations of New Zealand and New Zealanders, I explore how repeated and popularized elements of performance become symbols of culture. Performance theorist Tracy Davis defines this mimetic form: ‘Theatre communicates through highly representational means, with deeply encoded systems not only of language but of speech, not only of configuration but of action, and not only of selected events but of events lit, dressed, arranged, and performed – sometimes over and over again.’\(^{13}\) As forms of performance, music and song, dance and drama, are repeated and made popular. During this process they can become fixed symbols for race, ethnicity, and cultural expression. For instance, performances of Native American song and dance, Hawaiian hula and Scottish bagpipes have acquired connotations of authenticity and nationality that suggest an ahistoriocity that denies their evolution of meaning, purpose and practice.\(^{14}\)

Likewise the injection of musical instruments, styles and techniques of playing into the fabric of ‘traditional’ performance blurs their origins and highlights questions of authenticity. An example of this evolution of meaning can be found in Michael Brown’s recent study on the inclusion of the guitar in performance of kapa haka, or


group dances, made popular in the twentieth century. In his interviews with practitioners Brown was struck at the lack of knowledge on how the guitar ‘strum’ had become integral to kapa haka. As Brown states: ‘Kapa haka practitioners knew of no estabilshed stories about this. Yet one widespread assumption did seem to exist: the strumming style had been created by Māori. In the absence of more detailed traditions, Allan Thomas notes, such ideas in themselves can be regarded as “miniature myths of origin” that make a positive statement.’ In this vein it can be understood that ‘people are agents of their own fate and will use, alter, and make innovations in their ethnic behaviour for a variety of reasons.’ As will be shown in this thesis, performing artists in this time period adapted, altered and augmented existing musical styles, dance forms and theatrical conventions to cater to both entertainment industry demands and assimilative policies that required the blending and shading of expressive culture. These new forms of creative expression led to inventions of Māori-ness and New Zealand-ness in the performing arts.

Māori and Pākehā, like most peoples throughout the world and throughout time, have set words to music and combined gestures and movements to express thoughts and feelings about local places and events. Accounts from the eighteenth century onwards describe New Zealand songs both as waiata and folk songs, while dances from the British Isles appeared at balls and social dances. Performing arts scholar Theresa Jill Buckland discusses the process of constructing identities through

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dance and how an examination of forms of performance contribute to understanding evolving identities and social cohesion. As Buckland argues: ‘Interrogations of “invented traditions” demonstrate that formerly unchallenged conceptualizations and performances of the past may have functional purposes for particular groups or agents in terms of power relations.’ As will be shown, the metamorphosis from traditional and ritual expression by Māori to entertainment by both Māori and Pākehā was a re-occurring phenomenon in this time period and constructions of cultural expression contributed to shifts in power.

While I acknowledge the long history of waiata and haka and their important place in Māori ritual, genealogy, enjoyment, amusement, protocol and ceremonial culture, this thesis does not include analysis of this type of corporeal expression. Likewise, communal singing and social dances have been strong cohesive elements in European cultures for centuries. Movement and song crucial to this type of human expression, both for Māori and European cultures, warrant a substantially different type of analysis and focus than what is offered here. Nonetheless, transcultural exchange, as witnessed in the singing of Christian hymns that impacted on the style of music sung by Māori from the nineteenth century, and Māori waiata that influenced approaches to western style musical compositions, forms an important component of my thesis. There is no question that music and dance hold historical significance in Māori culture and have proved ‘purposeful in everyday life’ as Te Rita Papesch states in her discussion on waiata and haka, however, it is in the exaggeration and imagination of everyday life as performed on stage and film that this thesis focuses.  

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Therefore, the type of song, dance and music highlighted here focus on that heightened sense of reality that performance offers, absent from exchanges in the everyday but also exploring how these expressions of culture both reflected and altered these exchanges. A question that is central to this thesis, then, is what effect did the evolution from ritual to commodity have on music and dance produced by New Zealanders, both Māori and Pākehā and by extension, the effect on day to day interaction of these two peoples. Ultimately, the attention in this thesis is given to drama, music and dance that were constructed to entertain paying audiences.

This thesis ponders questions of instigation, recognition and acceptance, and explores how forms of expressive behaviour came to stand for race, ethnicity, and cultural expression after repeated appearances on the popular stage. How can a performance event become historical source material? Though all history relies on primary and secondary sources, performance history demands that the historian imagines movement and sound in the empty spaces, between the lines, behind the frozen images of facial and bodily expression and in the silences of surviving sources. Fragmentary remains of performance can be found in reviews, costumes, scores, playbills, programmes, photographs, recordings or moving images and all have been utilized for this study. These are ephemeral but tangible remains that can tell us something about the event, though none of these constitute the event itself. The thing missing from these sources is the body, the voice, the kinetic recognition of movement and gesture, the stirring of emotions, the interaction between performer and spectator — elements that formed the means of expression through which a performance ‘came to life’. Importantly, modes of description, fundamental to the performing arts in order for events to be captured, understood and evaluated, are used
throughout this thesis. This approach to analysis reflects the source material used throughout my research. As this is a written history of physical corporeal expression, I acknowledge the absence of the sensual, visceral immediacy of performance. Therefore, performance, a fleeting, temporal experience for both performer and audience, is solidified in the ephemeral remains and it is these remains that are mined as historical evidence.

As the esteemed New Zealand historian Judith Binney noted in her work on Māori history, alternate sources must be appreciated for what they can add to written history. ‘Performance commands hearts,’ Binney said in a discussion on waiata.20 But how can a historian translate that phenomenal experience into a written account? Performing arts history acknowledges that past performances incited emotional meaning. A crucial element of this study is the belief that ‘in the theatre people not only sat under one roof, they interacted.’21 The physical proximity between performer and audience offers an intimacy not permitted in other social situations. Likewise, the voyeuristic quality of film allows glimpses into landscapes and people that incited emotional and visceral responses.

The difficulty in using the performing arts to form a history presents itself in multiple ways. The absence of accounts about these artists and their work from the historiography in combination with the proliferation of primary material relating to performers and performances have led me to include many more stories and accounts of performances than was initially anticipated. In short, I wanted to let these performances and performers take centre stage one more time, and, in true show business fashion, they all stepped into the spotlight. Taking advantage of my desire to

21 Lawrence Levine, Highbrow/Lowbrow: the emergence of cultural hierarchy in America, Cambridge, 1988, p.56.
tell their stories, the artists showcased here jostled for space backstage and in the wings.

Within the lacuna of performing arts history there have appeared sporadic volumes that explore specific genres, people or time periods. At the very least, New Zealand’s performing arts has been assigned an adjacent position to other artistic endeavours, namely literature and visual art. Conspicuous by their absence in almost all general histories, the performing arts have nonetheless managed to appear as a specialist subject in recent publications.22 Chris Bourke implies in the introduction to his 2010 publication Blue Smoke, a history of New Zealand’s popular music, that the historiography of much of New Zealand’s popular culture has been satisfactory. Bourke states that the colonial period ‘has been discussed by John Thomson and Angela Annabell’ and that ‘Musical Theatre has been explained by Peter Downes and Peter Harcourt.’23 Though Bourke is correct when he concedes that ‘Maori music has been the life’s work of Mervyn McLean,’ an alternative exploration of the cultural, social and political context in which popular performances of music and drama occurred involving both Māori and Pākehā is contained herein. Furthermore, what new formations of culture resulted from these performances? These are the gaps in the current knowledge of performing arts history that my thesis aims to fill.

The existing performing arts history of New Zealand has illuminated, sporadically, some of this country’s famous and infamous events and personalities.

22 In their general histories of New Zealand, Keith Sinclair, James Belich, and Michael King place emphasis on the nationalist voice arising from literature, poetry and visual art from the late nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth. Sinclair celebrates the novelists John Mulgan, Robin Hyde and Frank Sargeson, as does King, while Belich at least comments on the touring opera companies of the 1860s alongside the spread of folk songs and social dance music of the late nineteenth century. However, twentieth century culture is referred to as a ‘wasteland’. Keith Sinclair, A History of New Zealand, revised edition, Auckland, 2000, pp.286-91; Michael King, The Penguin History of New Zealand, Auckland, 2005, pp.415-19; James Belich, Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the year 2000, Auckland, 2001, pp.328-35.
Amongst specialist and popular publications, Peter Harcourt’s history of New Zealand musicals, Dianne Haworth and Diane Miller’s story of Auckland cabaret dancer Freda Stark, Paul Diamond’s book on Margaret Thom (aka Maggie Papakura), Patrick Day’s history of radio broadcasting in New Zealand, and Diane Pivac’s illustrated history of New Zealand film, all contribute broad but limited analysis of New Zealand performing arts. Adrienne Simpson’s 1996 publication Opera’s Farthest Frontier told the history of visiting and local opera from the 1860s but omitted forms that she deemed ‘lighter works’. Older publications, such as Peter Downes’s Shadows on the Stage and Top of the Bill, traced the colonial theatrical scene, focusing on visiting artists and touring shows. But since the publication of Downes’s books more than 30 years ago, there has been no comprehensive analysis of New Zealand’s theatre and drama history. Likewise, Peter Harcourt’s unique study of New Zealand musicals between 1880 and 1940, Fantasy and Folly, while offering an insight into musicals that may have been forgotten, neglects contextual details of the production and collaborations involved in the creation these shows. These specialists’ examinations provide a base from which to launch my own research into performance and the evolution of cultural representation in and of New Zealand. My goal is to add to these stories by highlighting and analysing performance events from the mid nineteenth century to the mid twentieth that shine a light on events and people from New Zealand’s past.

26 Peter Downes, Shadows on the Stage: Theatre in New Zealand-the first 70 years, Dunedin, 1975; Top of the Bill: Entertainers Through the Years, Wellington, 1979.
Some of the key players discussed here — the writers, composers, singers, directors, dancers and actors — have been included in various historiography of New Zealand, but their prominence as members of New Zealand’s performing arts history has been overlooked. For instance, Frederick Augustus Bennett, who appears several times in this thesis owing to his involvement in many early-twentieth century theatrical productions, has, until now, only featured in the histories of the Anglican Church, Te Aute College, and the Young Maori Party. The Rotorua Māori Entertainers (RME), featured in chapter three, was only one of the many groups that Bennett led — beginning with his first choir formed in the late nineteenth century to the full-scale opera company he assembled in 1915 — but it is arguably one of the most significant in the history of New Zealand popular culture. Examining Bennett’s integration of Māori, European and American performing arts and the presentation and reception thereof throws a spotlight on an era of conflict and compromise and provides a basis to discuss popular entertainment situated within assimilationist politics. It is also argued here that the assimilation of Māori, which Bennett publically supported and advocated, lead to creative endeavours of cultural expression in the twentieth century that have become symbols of New Zealand. An examination of these theatrical productions allows new insights surrounding Māori and Pākehā cultural identities, political encounters, cross-cultural and pan-tribal inventions.

Singers and actors who portrayed Māori-ness or New Zealand-ness via their artistic personas, such as Evaline Skerrett, aka Princess Iwa, have been overlooked in larger cultural histories of New Zealand. For example, in an attempt at incorporating

27 Adrienne Simpson’s 1996 history of opera in New Zealand, Opera’s Farthest Frontier, makes no mention of his 1915 opera Hinemoa, though she does preface her selection by stating that the works of ‘amateur operatic societies’ lie outside the scope of her history. Presumably she places F A Bennett’s Māori Opera Company in this category. Simpson does include Alfred Hill’s 1903 musical Tapu. Pollard’s Opera Company produced Tapu in New Zealand and Australia. Adrienne Simpson, Opera’s Farthest Frontier, Auckland, 1996.
artistic achievements into a new national history, *New Zealand’s Heritage*, the weekly serial that documented New Zealand history for the general public, published ‘Voices Heard Afar’ in 1973. Focusing on artists who had succeeded in establishing careers outside of New Zealand, Owen Jensen mused on the ‘remarkable number of top-rank musicians— instrumentalists, composers, and particularly singers’ that New Zealand had ‘produced’. Though the survey included profiles of vocalists such as Blenheim born Rosina Buckman, who developed her operatic career primarily in London parallel with Iwa’s, Oscar Natzka, the baritone labelled ‘New Zealand’s first international singing star’ and Ernest McKinley, the tenor who ‘had a special interest in Maori songs,’ no mention was made of Princess Iwa, a contemporary, whose talent, repertoire and career mirrored those of the singers mentioned by Jensen.29 More recently, the 2009 *New Oxford History of New Zealand* is striking in its lack of reference to the performing arts. Though the editor states that the *Oxford History* ‘tells the stories of New Zealand and New Zealanders from a number of different perspectives’, there are no stories or perspectives relating to the history of local performing arts, cultural representations, or corporal expressive behaviour apart from a brief analysis of twentieth-century opera diva Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, who, according to Katie Pickles’s in her chapter, ‘Colonisation, Empire and Gender’, has been objectified as a ‘modern Maori Maiden’.30

As the twentieth century progressed, discourses surrounding race, authenticity, exoticism, primitivism and tradition intertwined with the performing arts; New Zealand performers slotted into this international dialogue. The ‘malleability of ethnicity’ that occurred elsewhere in popular culture during the time period under

consideration can be seen in the careers of New Zealand performers.\(^{31}\) Pākehā artists featured in this study, particularly the composer Alfred Hill and actor/singer/dancer/comedian Bathie Stuart, have been credited with either treating Māori mythology ‘artistically’ or appropriating Māori through a ‘reductive borrowing from another culture’.\(^{32}\) Both views avoid consideration of the context of their works as well as the transcultural exchange of processes, media, racial theories, means of representation and agency.

With the advent of film production and radio broadcasts in the 1920s and 1930s the representation of New Zealand arrived in people’s homes and local movie houses. As the government became more involved in cultural production via these media the subject and content of artistic expression reflected this ‘official’ shaping. The Māori ‘as he was,’ both in affairs of the heart and on the battlefield were projected larger-than-life on cinema screens at home and abroad.

All of these performance events point towards a view of New Zealand’s past that reflects the complexity inherent in colonial nations where the cultural expressions of the indigenous peoples elide with those of the colonisers and settlers. If, as Homi Bhabha believes, ‘terms of cultural engagement are produced performatively’ then the consequences of the performance events discussed here are significant to New Zealand’s cultural history.\(^{33}\) While the term ‘cultural hybridity’ has gained popularity in recent historiography it has also been debated and challenged. I believe that hybridity and cultural hybridity as lenses through which to view identity can be useful to understand both the formation of cultural expression and the origins of some


\(^{33}\) Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London, 1993, p.2
contemporary manifestations and meanings of culture. Peter Burke has pointed out that historians are ‘increasingly sensitized’ to examples of hybridity in the past. In the nineteenth century, the term ‘hybridity’ was viewed as a label of racial inferiority and ‘physiological phenomenon’, but since the twentieth century the term has been applied to culture. John Hutnyk has voiced his concerns surrounding what he calls ‘hybridity talk’: ‘The ways in which hybridity displaces other languages and other ways of seeing and organizing deserve attention.’ This point notwithstanding, hybridity is used here to explain the meeting of cultures leading to new, and potentially more robust, forms of cultural expression.

An example of the lineage of this cultural hybridisation can be heard in one of the most well-known and popular New Zealand songs and its performance in the later half of the twentieth century, How Great Thou Art/Whakaaria mai. Sung in concert, theatre, in churches and marae (meeting and communal gathering space), and on television by popular Te Arawa performer, Sir Howard Morrison, this tune became one of the most well-known and loved ‘Māori’ songs of the twentieth century. However, its origins reflect the path of cultural hybridity begun in the nineteenth century.

century. With lyrics from a Swedish poem and the melody of an American country/gospel music song, Whakaaria mai is nonetheless embedded in New Zealand musical history. Therefore, New Zealand’s musical history reflects bi- and transcultural pathways, resulting in a destabilisation of race and culture that affirms Tavia Nyong’o’s statement that ‘hybridity unsettles collective and corporeal memory’. 39

This thesis looks back at the formation of artistic expression that reflects this process of hybridization.

Therefore, I have chosen to utilize cultural hybridity as an analytic tool for fusions in the development and evolution of cultural expression. However, cultural hybridity can also be viewed as transculturation, with input, influences and ideas flowing in many directions at once. Therefore, cultural hybridity and transculturation, as employed here, can be understood as cultural expressions that are a ‘result of multiple encounters rather than a single one’. 40 Moreover, the impact that travel and means of communication had on forms of entertainment from the nineteenth century and how these new developments fed back into societies cannot be overlooked. In her analysis of African American female performers in early twentieth century America, Jayna Brown’s dismisses racial authenticity in performance. Brown emphasises that ‘popular expressive forms resist purity’. 41 As Brown states the “cross-racial exchange” and ‘racial borrowings’ of female performers added to the emergence of new ideas of ‘the self’ in the modern world. 42

The evolutionary nature of the Māori and Pākehā relationship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries coalesced with input from other cultures present in New

40 Peter Burke, Cultural Hybridity, p.25
42 Jayna Brown, Babylon Girls, p.3.
Zealand via people, ideas, sounds and images and provided a continuous pool of inspiration for New Zealand performing artists. Pākehā composers, writers and performers added to their existing repertoire of material by adding reference to indigenous sounds, places, people and corporeal expression. Moreover, origins of cultural expression can be difficult to ascertain. For instance, Alfred Hill’s 1896 cantata *Hinemoa* for orchestra and (Pākehā) singers, discussed in chapter two of this thesis, featured a musical theme for flute that Hill attributed to Tutanekai and his famous song that drifted over Lake Rotorua. But as a 1948 article on Hill explained, the melody originally came to New Zealand from Rarotonga in the 1860s and was ‘quickly appropriated’ by Māori for use as a hymn.\(^{43}\) Thus, Hill’s melody, originating in the Cook Islands but performed by musicians trained in the European style of playing can be viewed within the ever-changing nature of cultural expression and hybridity. Hill’s musical compositions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflected contemporary cultural, social and artistic conventions and demonstrate the braiding of cultural expression.

It is not difficult to see how Māori cultural expression was moulded by other culture’s expressive behaviour as were songs and dances from European countries altered by variations in expressiveness and regional flavour. In nineteenth century, performances of haka demonstrated the influence the ‘rapid influx of European settlers [with whom] came the popular waltzes and polkas of the European dance floor along with instruments such as fiddles, accordions, concertinas and mouth organs (harmonicas).’\(^{44}\) New Zealand historian Miles Fairburn links Māori ‘exceptional capacity for adaptation’ with the ‘remarkable speed with which they

\(^{43}\) *New Zealand Listener*, 31 December, 1948, p.7.

became consumers and producers of European popular culture.⁴⁵ Fairburn cites American, Australian and British cultural imports as the most determining factors in shaping New Zealand’s exceptionalism, what he refers to as ‘the largely invisible and inexpressible nature of key areas.’⁴⁶ Certainly the profusion of entertainment produced by Māori in the early twentieth century and sites and occasions of performance align with Fairburn’s understanding of cultural adaptation and innovation.⁴⁷ This thesis, then, addresses Fairburn’s call for more work to be done on ‘Māori borrowing in the twentieth century’ by looking at performance (considered here a ‘key area’) and the conventions and mode of delivery.

The increase in recent years of the examination of the ‘hybrid’ in relation to performance has resulted in a multiplicity of works. Since the 1990s performance and dance scholars have approached the displays of culture via performance in a range of works. Joseph Roach’s Cities of the Dead, Jacqueline Shea Murphy’s The People Have Never Stopped Dancing, Tavia Nyong’o’s The Amalgamation Waltz and Diana Taylor’s The Archive and the Repertoire are important contributions that examine performance, culture, and entertainment in relation to national identity, race, and cultural hybridity.⁴⁸ Though discussing, respectively, Caribbean-American, Native American, minstrel and South American performance histories, similarities can be drawn in this examination of New Zealand performing arts history. Similarly, M. Alison Kibler, Jane C Desmond, and Jayna Brown’s fascinating accounts of the

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⁴⁶ ibid., p.155.
⁴⁷ ibid., p.161.
‘malleability of race’, ‘racial masquerade’, and ‘racial mimicry’ in their examinations of female vaudevillian and tourist entertainers provides another context for this present study.\(^49\) Race, sex and gender, especially femininity, grew increasingly important in the performing arts from the nineteenth century and the performing arts mattered to growing notions in, and the development of, racial and gender identities.

Moreover, this thesis, focusing as it does on both domestic and international performance events, investigates the shaping of colonial and imperial politics, racial identities and cultural expression. Aligned with Tony Ballantyne’s belief that ‘to appreciate the development of political culture within colonial New Zealand we must focus on important forms of political activity that operated at local and regional levels below the nation, as well as the forces that cut across the nation’s borders,’ I argue that the representation and creation of Māori and Pākehā via performance after 1860, both at home and abroad, constitute political acts that have been absent from New Zealand’s historiography.\(^50\) Most importantly, like Kurt Ganzl, I too believe that ‘what entertains us shows in many ways what we are, and knowing what entertained our ancestors helps us to understand them.’\(^51\)

Though this thesis does not attempt to present an anthropological approach to theories of race and culture, reference to Robert Young’s work on hybridity and Sadiah Qureshi’s examination of ethnographic displays is appropriate. As Young has clearly stated, the ‘cultural construction of race’ from the nineteenth century onwards has shaped ideas central to a ‘racial hierarchy’ invoking a ‘standard of

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measurement… through which European culture defined itself by placing itself at the top of a scale against which all other societies, or groups within society, were judged. And Qureshi’s understanding that throughout the nineteenth century ‘scholars redefined the social, political, and physical criteria used to classify humans’ is useful in placing the performance of ‘native’ customs in context of the entertainment that featured Māori performing on commercial stages. The cultural interactions and encounters that occurred in New Zealand, which resulted in new forms of entertainment, both echo these hierarchical constructions and contribute to their disruption. Pertinent to this study is the ways in which cultural expressive behaviour adapts, mutates and evolves. The impact of external influences on existing forms, conventions and expressions and the coincidental exchange from the tangata whenua to incoming peoples’ cultural expression led to an evolution of New Zealand cultural representation. This flow of practice and form warrants a thorough examination of the role that colonization, assimilation and globalization had on artistic expression.

The emphasis on the process of intercultural encounters in all of these works highlights the presence of hybridity in cultural expression. Jane R. Goodall’s examination of the popularity of ‘performing ethnology’ in the nineteenth century and Jane C. Desmond’s insights on the commodification of hula in the twentieth century add to my own understanding of the evolution in performance of race. Likewise, Qureshi’s impressive study on ethnographic displays of people in nineteenth-century Britain provided a framework in which to examine the confluence of race, culture and performance. Qureshi’s definition of both nineteenth and twentieth century

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entertainments that identified ‘performers as representatives of specific ethnic groups’
applies to many performers and performance events highlighted in this thesis.55 Roach
has identified ‘performance genealogies’, especially in relation to cross-cultural
encounters and this work provide a framework for the historization of New Zealand
performance. It is hoped that this thesis begin the process of tracing the performance
genealogies of New Zealand’s performing arts.

Recent Doctoral dissertations and publications from the United States, namely
by Lori Lynne Brooks, Marty Gould, and Matthew Wittmann also focus on race,
gender, national and cultural identities and performance and call upon the theories of
culture and cultural hybridity of Homi Bhabha, Edward Said and Paul Gilroy.56
Brooks’s analysis of the production of African American cultural representation in the
late nineteenth century and Gould’s study of Victorian drama and ‘images of empire’
provide a context in which to explore the New Zealand experience of theatrical
productions and representations. In New Zealand, recent Masters theses, including
Valance Smith’s ‘Colonising the Stage: The socio-cultural impact of colonisation on
kapa haka’, and Hector Moana Kaiwai’s ‘Pukana rawatia! Mickey Mouse does the
haka’ have also addressed the subject of European influence and Māori adoption of

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55 Qureshi, Peoples on Parade, p.280.
performing arts forms.\textsuperscript{57} Kaiwai’s examination of the use of haka for ceremonial welcomes for Royal visits, tourists and sporting events is relevant to my own exploration of the development of haka and other forms of dance and music as entertainment. Kaiwai’s study intersects with McCarthy’s as he highlights the state’s role in establishing cultural polices and institutions such as the Dominion Museum, and the promotion of Māori as cultural artefact. But whereas Kaiwai and Smith focus on performing arts and embodied representations, McCarthy establishes the importance of material objects to cultural representation. My research aims to demonstrate that the confluence of artefact, including costumes and the accoutrements of live performance were critical to the manufacture of cultural representation.

Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal’s PhD thesis and ongoing research on Whare Tapere, on ‘pre-contact theatre and performing arts’ is also relevant and provides a link to the ‘performance genealogies’ of Aotearoa/New Zealand.\textsuperscript{58} While Royal questions the link between present-day kapa haka and the waiata and haka of Whare Tapere, his findings nonetheless provide important information on the role and type of performing arts in nineteenth-century New Zealand amongst Māori. The accounts given by early European settlers, as presented by Royal, illuminate contemporary European understanding of waiata and haka. Other theorists concerned with Māori cultural expression emphasise the strong ancestral connections to haka and waiata, such as Valance Smith’s belief that a function of waiata was to record Māori history, while also recognising the developments in style and content as a result of

Paul Diamond’s account of Makereti/Maggie Papakura is useful for understanding the context of Māori performance in relation to the burgeoning tourist industry and shows how her business acumen contributed to the introduction of Māori culture-as-entertainment on an international platform. However, what is missing from some of these accounts and what is explored here more fully are the elements of agency and power, production and performance, meaning and reception, that transpired on stages and film sets where Māori performed as Māori.

The focus on culture, meaning and representation in New Zealand has most recently been seen in studies on material culture. Ethnographic research of performed culture has been primarily concerned with field studies of groups of people to ‘observe, document and analyse the cultural forms as manifestations of past and present ethnic identities’. However, culture as artistic expression and culture as ‘a common set of beliefs, customs, values and rituals’ overlap in this historical analysis of theatre, dance and music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Conal McCarthy has shown that museum exhibitions of Māori artefacts formed the basis of Pākehā understanding of Māori in the nineteenth century. The politics of colonization, assimilation and amalgamation of Māori performing culture, including haka and waiata, have been a focus of Mervyn McLean’s work. Though McLean acknowledges that ‘for most people Māori music is synonymous with modern forms which emerged under European influence,’ his work does not explore in detail the specific instances and performance events of Māori-Pākehā collaboration that led to,

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for instance, the integration of haka and poi in Victorian Melodrama or the inclusion of Māori culture in local operas.\textsuperscript{63}

This examination of the creation, development and expression of culture through song, dance and drama does not imply a path from naiveté to sophistication. As historian Felicity Barnes has recently argued in relation to the development of New Zealand’s literary legacy in the twentieth century, ‘Linear cultural progression is an unlikely concept.’\textsuperscript{64} However, as this thesis argues, a historical narrative constructed through expressive behaviour emerged in these 80 years of Māori and Pākehā creativity. Writing New Zealand history through performance, this thesis demonstrates how corporeal expression, manifested in the performing arts, added a layer of vibrant and visceral representation of this land and its people.

This thesis addresses questions surrounding the manufactured theatricalised representation of Māori and Pākehā culture. How have Māori and Pākehā collaborated to produce representations of New Zealand culture? What was the cultural, social and political context in which performance took place? These are the gaps in the current knowledge of performing arts history that the case studies presented here aims to fill. Chapter one opens with the story of the ‘Maori Warrior Chiefs’ who toured the Australian colonies in 1862 followed by an extensive tour to the United Kingdom from mid-1863. Set against the backdrop of the New Zealand Wars this chapter focuses on melodrama in the Victorian age and asks how it was possible that Māori entertained European audiences with ‘war dances’ on stage while at the same time in New Zealand, prior to conflicts with Imperial and local volunteer soldiers, Māori prepared for battles with haka? To what extent did these melodramas provide

propaganda for settlement in mid-nineteenth century New Zealand? Though a vision of the Antipodes emerged in these melodramas that reflected successful settlement and beautiful landscape, this chapter addresses questions of imperialism and colonialism overlayed with contemporary ideas of race and ‘civilised’ culture versus ‘savage’ authenticity. The performers in these works introduced a corporeal representation of New Zealand on stages in Imperial centres. The dramas that the New Zealanders appeared in—Whakeau, the Pākehā Chief, Rangatira Wahena or The Maori Queen and The Emigrant’s Trials or Life in New Zealand as well as the pantomime Robinson Crusoe—reveal other dimensions of constructed representations of New Zealand and New Zealanders. However, unlike Jane Goodall’s example of the 1844 London performances by Ojibbeway Indians in George Catlin’s tableaux vivants at the Egyptian Hall that stressed the ‘immediacy and authenticity’ rather than ‘dramatic narrative’, the dramas of 1862-1864 featuring Māori were melodramas first and foremost. As this chapter shows, the participation of Māori in Victorian melodramas abroad coincided with the New Zealand Wars, contributing visceral and tangible representations of New Zealand.

Chapter two introduces key creators, producers and performers central to this thesis: the composer Alfred Hill, and performer Evaline Skerrett aka Princess Iwa. This chapter explores how the concurrent development and fusion of European musical and theatrical styles with expression of Māori culture in the late nineteenth century. During the period under examination in this chapter (the end of the nineteenth century to the 1920s) European composers utilised Maori subjects, performers, settings and effects while Māori performers also adopted European

66 Goodall, pp.91-92. Goodall explains that the original cast of Catlin’s show featured ‘miscellaneous Londoners’ portraying Indians.
theatrical and musical conventions. These constructions help to explain the trajectory of developments in New Zealand’s popular culture later in the century. Revealing how opera and Western classical music became popular culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for both Māori and Pākehā, a spotlight is shone on the performer Evaline Skerrett, aka Princess Iwa. Though she has appeared briefly in histories as a member of the 1910-1911 performing group of the well-known guide and tourist entrepreneur Margaret Thom/ Maggie Papakura, here Skerrett commands centre stage.67 Her impressive career as singer in the United Kingdom over several decades is discussed within the wider framework of culture, gender and race in the early twentieth century.

Though Māori culture was represented in these creations, the primary mode of representation was via Western musical forms. Also at this time the Te Arawa story of the lovers Hinemoa and Tutanekai inspired many Pākehā artists to create theatrical and/or musical adaptations. In this thesis the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai appears in multiple guises, produced and performed by various artists over a considerable time period. Governor George Grey’s 1855 publication of the story in English led to an increased popularity of the legend but his intervention, instigating the ubiquity of representations of the story, has not been universally acclaimed. In 1987 Antony Alpers labelled the Hinemoa story ‘New Zealand’s earliest piece of tourist trash... Grey’s sentimentalised version of 1855 is regrettable for what it started – the cheapening of the Maori in a popular tourist location.’68 The historical understanding


of Grey’s interaction with Māori legends has changed over time as is reflected in comments from Sidney Moko Mead who believed George Grey, was a ‘man of his time’ and ‘an enigma to the Māori people’. Alfred Hill’s cantata *Hinemoa initiated* his lifelong venture of adapting and borrowing from indigenous cultures and inventing new manifestations of cultural expression framed within the vocabulary of Western classical music.

The rise in tourism, the promotion of Māori by Pākehā as an aesthetic experience and the intersection of these developments in the performing arts are considered in chapter three, as is the contribution to representations of Māori in theatres via groups of performers assembled by the Reverend Frederick Augustus Bennett. In 1901 New Zealand instigated the first government-run Department of Tourism in the world and a focus of their work centered on the Rotorua district. With its confluence of natural beauty and a concentrated Te Arawa Māori population, Rotorua provided an abundant supply of curiosities and attractions. In this chapter I argue that as the surroundings grew in significance as a site of tourism, the local people also assumed an integral role in tourism and performing arts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1908 the ‘Rotorua Maori Entertainers’, under the direction of Bennett, toured New Zealand with their tableaux production of the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai. Coinciding with this tour was the Māori Congress in Wellington. With the intention of promoting Māori achievements within assimilation, the Congress also raised awareness of the work of the Young Māori Party. Bennett also used the opportunity of the high profile tour of the Rotorua Maori Entertainers to publicise the work of the Young Māori Party. Thus, in 1908 Rotorua and Māori were focal points in the shaping of modern New Zealand, in theatres and at

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sites of tourism. In 1915 Bennett’s Maori Opera Company toured the Percy Flynn composition, *Hinemoa* to great acclaim and curiosity throughout the country, with proceeds going towards the Wounded Soldiers’ Fund. The story of the RME’s 1908 tour of the tableaux staging of the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, with its confluence of politics and performance, invites a reimagining of early twentieth-century New Zealand culture.\(^7\)

Following the visit of the American Naval Battleship ‘Great White Fleet’ to New Zealand in 1908 an invitation was extended to Māori performers from Rotorua to travel to New York. Negotiations between Bennett, Maggie Papakura, representatives of the New Zealand government and editors from newspapers in New York and Auckland resulted in a group of forty performers setting sail from Wellington to New York in July 1909. Chapter four tells the story of the ‘Maoris of Manhattan’ who, for thousands of Americans, created New Zealand on stage. From September 1909 to June 1910 they appeared in a theatrical spectacle, *Inside the Earth*, on the largest stage in the metropolis, The Hippodrome. For audiences without any prior, or at the very least, little knowledge of this far off country and its people, the performers conjured a mysterious land and its people. The Māori performers imagined a race and place virtually unknown to North Americans. The focus of this chapter shifts from the stage to other public sites where the Māori performers attracted public attention: on the sporting field; in the museum and at the ballot box. The confluence of politics, race and gender come to the fore in this examination of contemporary expressions of popular entertainment to show how performance and public discourse of Māori led to new representations of New Zealand.

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\(^7\) Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive /Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whittiahua, Wellington.
With the developments in technology in the early twentieth century came new means of delivery and experiences of performance. Dramatic films made in New Zealand between 1912-1929 promoted and featured Māori. In 1914 local theatre manager and producer, George Tarr created the first ‘photo-play produced in New Zealand by an entirely local enterprise’ and ‘acted entirely by Natives.’71 Tarr cast his film with the help of F A Bennett with some of the actors reprising the roles they played in Bennett’s tableaux of 1908. Chapter five focuses on this film and another featuring a Māori cast, the 1929 Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit. The early short films by French filmmaker Gaston Méliès – Loved by a Maori Chieftess, Hinemoa and How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride—attempted to capture the ‘exotic’ location of a South Pacific nation with native actors. Unfortunately no footage from these films has been found. These cinematic representations of New Zealand cast New Zealand as a land inhabited by strong, beautiful and lusty natives, untainted by colonization and modernity. Bathie Stuart, a Pākehā performer who performed ‘Māori’ was the lead actress in the 1925 Australian-New Zealand co-produced full-length The Adventures of Algy. Stuart’s interpretation and appropriation of Māori culture is examined in the context of the contemporary practice of the commodification of ‘otherness’ in entertainment in Western countries coupled with the sexual allure of the exotic and unfamiliar female. These filmic representations of New Zealand and New Zealanders highlight the international/transnational nature of New Zealand’s performing arts at this time.

In 1940 the National Broadcasting Service broadcast the centennial re-enactment of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi from the Treaty grounds at

71 Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whiriahuia, Wellington.
Waitangi. Drawing on examples from Canada, the UK, and the United States, the sixth and the final chapter of this thesis chapter explores the proliferation of re-enactments, pageants and theatrical commemorations that took place throughout New Zealand in 1940, reflecting the social and cultural landscape as New Zealand entered World War Two. New Zealanders enthusiastically chose to participate in and view historical pageants in 1940. Questions explored in this chapter surround the experience of live bodies re-presenting/representing events from the historical past. How did these re-enactments shape an historical understanding of New Zealand? The radio broadcast combined multiple temporal states and locations as the *New Zealand Listener* reported, radio enabled ‘nearly everyone in the Dominion’ to be ‘at the Bay of Islands this week without leaving home.’

This merging of acting, re-enacting, authenticity and manufactured representation reached a new iteration in New Zealand’s performing arts with this historical and historic re-enactment. Broadcasting into people’s homes a real-time transmission from the site of the original signing, the implication was that listeners could experience the signing of the Treaty just as the Māori and Pākehā who were present for the momentous event did in 1840. In 2004 William Renwick claimed that ‘the medium of radio turned the Waitangi celebrations into a truly national event’ and it is this occasion that is explored here. With the focus on the performance of history and the creation of New Zealand historiography via performance this chapter demonstrates how history ‘came to life’ for thousands of New Zealanders. The performance of history at this crucial time emphasised ideas of citizenship, race, national unity and love of country. However, the participation of Māori in re-enactments, broadcasts, and in photographs disrupts and complicates colonial and settler narrative.

72 *New Zealand Listener*, 9 February 1940, p.12.
The performances/performers featured in this thesis highlight the evolution of cultural representation within the context of social and political eras from the mid-nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries. The absence of the performing arts from New Zealand’s historiography in addition to the scant secondary literature available makes this study unique. I argue here that the symbolic images, sounds, movements and gestures seen in theatres and on screen contributed to the imagining of modern New Zealand. The hybrid cultural expression that emerged from these performance events led to the formation of new understandings of New Zealand and its people domestically and internationally. As will be shown in the following chapters, the performing arts have the ability to consolidate, condense and embody representations of people and places. Writing on the place of musical composition in the psyche of national consciousness, Celia Applegate believes that ‘If we can understand better how and why people define themselves as members of a common nation by giving meaning to aspects of their world- its social arrangements, its law and politics, its art, its music- then we will also learn something of the integrative power of national cultures.’ This thesis then attempts to present a history of the development of New Zealand’s cultural expression through a close examination of popular entertainment and the embodiment of New Zealand, Māori and Pākehā in a multitude of performing arts forms. This thesis is an exploration of the meanings attached to performance events discussed herein, thereby discovering a new dimension to New Zealand history. Like the mythical nineteenth-century composer A. S. Mortimer, I have found inspiration in the people and places of New Zealand and present a story of triumphs, trials and tribulations under and beyond the spotlight.

As the curtain rises and the lights dim, the show commences.
Chapter One: ‘An interest must be strong now-a days to raise much enthusiasm in an audience’: Māori, New Zealand and Empire on stage, 1862-1864

From the early nineteenth century, performance of the ‘Other’ took many guises, from exhibitions and dime museum displays to ethnological shows. The inclusion of indigenous peoples in forms of popular entertainment evolved over the course of the century. Ethnologically based entertainments of the mid-1800s moved from almost static exhibition to the ‘performance’ of daily rituals and ceremonies. The next logical step, then, for producers in the latter half of the century was to incorporate real ‘savages’ into melodrama rather than merely as objects for display. As this chapter shows, in the realm of theatre Māori performers in the 1860s adapted their songs, dances and games to adhere to European performance conventions, while English and Australian actors acted Pākehā within these conventions. This chapter therefore focuses on melodramas performed by Māori, Australian and English actors highlighting the manner in which these diverse groups of people came together through a communal cultural expression. Joseph Roach articulates the complexity of layers inherent in dramatic representation when ‘actors, serve necessarily as double signs, referring at once to themselves and to the characters they represent’. ¹ For instance, a description of the Māori actor Tomatia Hono, who played “Tanhou” in an 1864 melodrama stated that while Hono was ‘an excellent pantomimist’…the epithet “untutored savage” by no means applies.”² Thus the Māori and Pākehā/European actors appearing on stage in the melodramas discussed here inhabited personas as themselves and the identities assumed onstage.

² The Era, 19 June 1864, p.10.
The melodramas and pantomimes explored here not only reflected contemporary modes of popular theatricality but also illustrated the way that ‘Empire’ and ‘Colony’ came together on stage. Marty Gould, in his discussion of empire and drama in the Victorian age, believed that ‘for many nineteenth-century Britons… performances were their only contact with the people and lands under British dominion… theatre is precisely the site at which empire was exhibited, celebrated, and challenged in the nineteenth century.’

The melodramas discussed here, *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief, Rangatira Wahena or The Maori Queen* and *The Emigrant’s Trials or Life in New Zealand*, performed between July 1862 and June 1864, concocted visions of New Zealand and its inhabitants for audiences in distant lands. As battles between and amongst Māori (indigenous New Zealander), and Pākehā (non-Māori), volunteer militia, military settlers and Imperial soldiers over land ownership and natural resources took place in New Zealand, mock battles and daring rescues drew audiences to theatres in main cities and small towns across the colonies of Australia and the United Kingdom. Māori and non-Māori constructed a vision of New Zealand on stage that portrayed harmonious race relations, strong, healthy bodies, and beautiful and sometimes magical scenery in a Christian colony. By employing backdrops of ‘authentic scenery and panoramic views’ and using displays of flesh not usually seen on the British stage, these performances allowed audiences to experience New Zealand vividly and viscerally.

Ostensibly, the performers and performances discussed here introduced the corporeal representations of New Zealand on stage that reflected what Alan Ward has

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identified as one of the main purposes of the conflicts; namely, ‘to establish the rule of British law’. However, acknowledging the agency of the performers, who entertained with their mix of ‘amusement and instruction’, the reception and the recorded observations thereof, leads to other readings of Māori and Pākehā, Māori and Crown relations and representations of New Zealand in Australia and the United Kingdom. Though these works could be characterised as propaganda that supported colonisation and settlement, they were, first and foremost, popular entertainment.

Concurrent with the conflicts in New Zealand, these 1860 melodramas explored ideologies of race, culture and imperialism via their inclusion of Māori performing ‘Māori’ and non-Māori performing ‘Pākehā’. Importantly, though the performances featured in this chapter occurred at the same time as the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s the focus here is on the creative interpretations on-stage of Māori, settlers and New Zealand. While the real-life battles have deservedly been the focus of works of New Zealand historians, adding to our understanding of the history of Māori-Pākehā relations, the contemporaneous performances that imagined Māori and Pākehā have not.

Central to successful nineteenth-century theatrical events featuring ‘savages’, ‘Indians’ or ‘Africans’ was the convincing performance and display of authenticity. Reinforcing this acceptance of authenticity was the link between popular performance and scientific evolutionary theory, leading to a type of entertainment that English scholar Jane R. Goodall refers to as ‘autobiographical performance’. Goodall’s analysis of show business entrepreneurs P. T. Barnum and William ‘Wild Bill’ Cody, who popularised the concept of indigenous people as entertainment on a large-scale,

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5 The *Age*, 18 September 1862, p.5; *The Empire*, 11 July 1862, p.5.
explains how the lines between performance and reality were blurred. As Goodall states, ‘wildness was a very European concept and the successful performance of it required some careful fashioning.’ Therefore, unlike the ethnographic displays in the early part of the century that reflected the ‘scientific study of human variety’ the melodramas explored here combined the talents and skill of Māori performers and the theatrical nous of producers, writers and directors.

The melodramas featured here, written and produced by Australians and Englishmen, contained the pre-requisites for nineteenth-century popular performance in the age of Darwin as specified by Goodall: ‘spectacle, humour, variety, eroticism and surprise’. Though Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief, and the The Emigrant’s Trials reflected familiar melodramatic tropes, Rangatira Wahena or The Maori Queen introduced a provocative scenario with a mixed-race couple and a female ‘native’ heroine/villain. In a diversion from these melodramas, Māori also appeared in a Robinson Crusoe pantomime in England in 1863, where the actors assumed roles as cannibal savages. These performances reflected what Goodall refers to as the ‘mischievous’ relationship between the ‘popular stage and the world of ideas’ of the nineteenth century and foreground the collisions of cultures permissible in theatrical venues. As is shown in this case study, the combination of the unfamiliar ‘Other’ with a conventional melodramatic format provided for a thrilling and educative evening in the theatre.

How was it possible that Māori entertained European audiences with ‘war dances’ while haka peruperu (dance with weapons) were performed prior to battles in

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7 Goodall, pp. 35-46.  
8 ibid., p.85.  
10 Goodall, Performance and Evolution in the Age of Darwin, p.8.  
11 ibid., p.6.
New Zealand with Imperial soldiers? What motivated both producers and performers to take these representations of New Zealand to the centre of the British Empire at this time? How does the admiration that the Māori performers received as skilled actors reconcile with the contemporaneous concept of savagery seen in news reports of the conflicts in New Zealand? To address these questions we need to look to past perspectives on race, culture and civilised society.

**Savagery and civilisation as ‘dramatic entertainment’**

The emergence in the early nineteenth century of a hierarchical model of civilisation highlights the importance of race in the imagination of the public, and provides context for these melodramatic presentations of and by Māori. Cultural theorist Robert Young discusses the three-tiered categories — savagery, barbarism and civilisation — that framed discourse of culture at this time. Definitions of savagery and civilisation formed major themes in the discourse of human evolution in that era. As Young explains, civilisation became increasingly defined by difference, and this difference sprang from the hypothesis of progression from the first black-skinned people to the white-skinned Europeans. Young concludes, ‘the extent to which savagery had to be created in the nineteenth century as an antithesis to the values of European civilization became clearer and clearer’.  However, historian Sadiah Qureshi states that the poles between civilised and savage at this time were not ‘discrete, binary opposites’ but instead ‘part of a developmental spectrum used to taxonomize human social and cultural organization’. In her extensive study on ethnographic exhibitions of people in nineteenth-century Britain, Qureshi argues that ‘due consideration for the political, economic, [and] military circumstances’ that

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impinged on and ‘informed the transcultural encounters’ play an important role in understanding these displays of the nineteenth century.

As the century progressed the developments in culture, including drama and entertainment, and the demands of audiences intersected with these social and political encounters enabling the types of melodramas discussed here to emerge. The mode of theatricality central to the melodramas, as distinct from ethnographic displays, allows for an expanded view of these taxonomies that placed white-skinned, male Europeans at the pinnacle of civilisation. Though the overriding message disseminated through these dramas was one of successful colonisation and settlement of New Zealand, the presence of Māori in Imperial theatres, interacting with non-Māori added a layer of complexity to these understandings of race and culture.

**Pākehā and Māori acting ‘Pākehā’ and ‘Māori’**

The members of the ‘troupe of Maori Warrior Chiefs, Wives and Children’ arrived with three weeks to prepare for their debut performance at Sydney’s Royal Lyceum Theatre in June 1862. Undoubtedly, Dr McGauran, the producer, hoped that Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief, would be the highlight of the mid-winter theatrical season in Sydney and Melbourne. The nineteen ‘New Zealanders’ who disembarked at Sydney harbour from Auckland on board the passenger ship Gazelle on 27 June 1862, described as ‘a party of highly interesting and superior class of men and women, all more or less holding positions of honour and distinction in their native country’, attracted attention before setting foot in the theatre.¹⁵ From the start, the

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¹⁵ The *Argus*, 17 September 1862, p.8.
Māori performers who arrived in Australia were distinguished as different from indigenous Australians, the Aboriginal, considered ‘barbarous’ and ‘uncivilised’ at this time.\textsuperscript{16} New Zealand historian Keith Sorrenson described this relationship in the following way: ‘the Aboriginal was despised as a rural pest’ while the ‘Maori was respected as a warrior.’\textsuperscript{17} Advertising for the ‘somewhat novel exhibition, namely a dramatic entertainment’\textsuperscript{18} promised that there ‘is no savage race so interesting as the Maori. He proves himself capable of education and civilization.’\textsuperscript{19} This enticement to witness the ‘physically, powerfully framed men’ and ‘native-born gentlemen’ who possessed ‘the beauty of diction’ with ‘the elegance of the rhyme, in their war songs’ highlight the difference in perception of Māori with Australian Aboriginals and the rhetoric surrounding the theatrical representation of the ‘New Zealanders’.\textsuperscript{20}

The elements of nineteenth-century melodrama combined moral, political, cultural and social issues with entertainment, and this is seen in the melodramas that featured Māori performers. Set in the North Island of New Zealand, \textit{Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief}, offered examples of Māori life and pastimes, including haka, stick games and the singing of waiata (song), within a classic melodramatic structure and plot development, with characters including the standard ‘suffering heroine or hero, a persecuting villain, and a benevolent comic’.\textsuperscript{21} In \textit{Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief} these roles were portrayed by ‘Miss Alice Mortimer’, daughter of an English settler, ‘Mark Thornton’, aka ‘Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief’, a Pākehā man living as a Māori chief, and ‘Peter Jenkins’, ‘a nondescript cockney’. The English playwright, Robert Percy

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{The Argus}, 17 September 1862, p.8.
\textsuperscript{19} ibid.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{The Age}, 18 September 1862, p.5.
\textsuperscript{21} Frank Rahill, \textit{The World of Melodrama}, University Park, 1967, p.xiv.
Whitworth, created *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*, in collaboration with Irishman Dr McGauran from Auckland. Whitworth, born in Devonshire, arrived in Sydney in 1855, settling in Melbourne in 1864 to work as a journalist. McGauran, a surgeon, reputed to have been a ‘long time resident among different Maori tribes’, turned his attention to theatrical endeavours following his dismissal as resident doctor from the Auckland Mental Hospital in 1859. Along with the scenic designer, listed in publicity only as ‘Wilson’, Whitworth and McGauran manufactured a dramatic, corporeal and visual representation of New Zealand for their Australian audiences. In the course of the three-act *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*, the twists and turns of the melodrama revealed villains, heroes, the struggle between good and evil, civilised society and savage life. Most importantly, the action on stage conjured in the minds of the audience ‘New Zealand’, ‘Māori’, ‘Settler’ and ‘Empire’.

Expectations for a thrilling and eventful evening ran high for the people lucky enough to get a seat at the Lyceum Theatre on 19 July 1862 in Sydney. Notices in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) promised the appearance of ‘an extraordinary race, at once exceedingly striking and picturesque’ providing a ‘grand scholastic entertainment’ on stage. When the curtain parted, images of New Zealand flora and fauna emerged, illuminated by the limelight that outlined the spectral shape of Mount Egmont. Act 1 of *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*, introduced an English settler, his daughter and their friend the missionary who interacted peacefully with the Māori men, women and children as they moved within the surroundings. Punctuated by the occasional ‘kia ora’ (hello) and ‘god be with you’, a vision of successful colonial civilisation unfolded. Suddenly, the peaceful setting was shattered by the appearance

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22 *The Empire*, 11 July 1862, p.5.
of the ‘Pakeha Maori’ chief. Dressed as a native and leading the ‘hostile tribe’ of Māori, the renegade Englishman plotted his evil scheme to kidnap the settler’s daughter.

The cast of Māori who portrayed ‘New Zealanders, Chiefs etc.’ consisting of a ‘hostile’ and a ‘friendly’ tribe, listed individually in the Argus along with their tribal affiliations, all came from the North Island of New Zealand. In Australia the ‘names of the Maoris’ appeared in newspaper notices as: ‘Hoani Papita, Hunia Waikera, Tomati Hapimana Wharinaki, Pauro Whakaheke, Timoti Tangata Kino, Anania Mataura, Henari Nga Manu, Patarika Taumata Wiwi, Pene Tutu, Meina Kereti, Henari Piri Mete, Rangatirā Moetara, Manuera Tekaru, Hori Kepa, Hohepa Pire Ngatara, Aperahama Pungatura, Hemi Maka’ with tribal affiliations appearing and short explanations, such as ‘a chief of rank and influence; ancestors very great warriors’, after each name. Defined by their rank within Māori culture, the rhetoric applied in describing the cast of Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief is crucial in understanding how the Māori were viewed and understood in performance. This convention of listing ancestral connections and tribal rankings refers back to earlier ethnographic displays. Qureshi highlights similar cast listings in notices of ethnographic displays in London in 1844, such as George Catlin’s Ojibbeway Indians, and explains, ‘the names of the Indians’ in newspapers offered ‘other opportunities for consumption without attendance’ with their claims to rank verifying authenticity, this, from the consumers’ point of view being ‘one of the most pressing initial concerns’. 25 Thus, one could obtain knowledge concerning the authenticity as well as importance in tribal ranking of the performers adding to the intrigue and allure of the drama itself.

25 Qureshi, p.63; p.166.
In Whitworth’s drama nineteenth-century white settlers in New Zealand are depicted as either tainted by uncivilised customs (‘the Pakeha chief’), superior by dint of Christian beliefs and morality (the missionary ‘Mister Spencer’) or heroic and even-tempered (the handsome, young ‘Mark Vernon’), and these characterisations imagined a colony where variations in behaviour and morality crossed stereotypical racial typology. The Australian actors were also listed individually next to their character’s name but without any further detail; for example, ‘Mark Thornton…..Mr Fitzgerald’, or ‘Alice Mortimer…..Mrs Harry Jackson’. As with the Māori actors, who played both the ‘hostile’ and ‘friendly’ tribes, the Pākehā were both good and evil. At the same time, these melodramas also supported conservative values, ‘animated the empire’ and ‘packaged a conventional social order’.

By offering exaggerations of reality, melodrama has been described as the ‘almost perfect instrument for propaganda’, and the plot of Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief supports the colonial and settler vision for New Zealand as the ‘Britain of the South’ or even a ‘Better Britain’. James Belich has argued that the settlement and colonisation of New Zealand from the 1840s relied on publicity and publications with titles such as The England of the Pacific and The Britain of the South, that promoted New Zealand as a utopia, a land full of opportunities, and a ‘progressive British

26 The tribal affiliations of the cast members as listed in The Argus, 17 September 1862, p.8: ‘Ngati teata tribe, in the Waikato country; the Tawera tribe, in the Bay of Plenty; Wakatohea tribe, O potiki, Bay of Plenty; the Patukoko tribe, Waikato; the Ngati Kahungunu tribe, East Cape; the Ngapuhi tribe of Hokianga [note: Henari Piri Mete is listed as ‘half-caste, of the Ngapuhi tribe of Hokianga, descended by his mother’s side from the ancestors of renown. His uncle is magistrate of Hokianga’]; the Rarawa tribe of Kaitaia, Bay of Islands district; the Ngatiwhakaue tribe of Rotorua; the Ngatitoa tribes of Cook’s Straits; the Ngatihinetu tribe; and the Ngati raunga tribe, Bay of Plenty’.


28 Rahill, p.xvi.
paradise’. Edward Wakefield’s New Zealand Company acted as the main force behind British migration during the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, Belich has labelled the 1830s-1880s the ‘Britainising of New Zealand’. Therefore, the constructed representations of Māori and Pākehā on stage presented caricatures that catered to contemporary notions of empire and colony and in particular the settlement that was occurring in New Zealand at the time of these performances.

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*Figure 1*: Advertisement in the *Sydney Morning Herald* for Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief, *The Pakeha Chief*: ‘The plot of the drama enables the author to introduce in a most interesting, instructive, and pictorial manner, the manners and customs of this extraordinary race, at once exceedingly striking and picturesque.’ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 July 1862, p.1

The three-act Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief told the story of British settlers to New Zealand and their encounters with the native inhabitants. The main characters illustrated life in a colonial New Zealand setting: ‘Mortimer’ and his daughter, ‘Alice’; the English missionary, ‘Spencer’; the ‘hostile tribe’ of Māori led by

[29] Belich, especially pp. 297-312.
‘Whakeau,’ the outlaw Pākehā Māori, ‘Charles Vernon’, a young European male and fiancé of ‘Miss Mortimer’; ‘Peter Jenkins’, ‘Mister Vernon’s’ comic friend and nephew to ‘Mister Mortimer’; and the ‘friendly tribe of Maoris’.\textsuperscript{30} The SMH commented that the ‘drama is enlivened by considerable intermixture of comedy, but is not without a judicious proportion of action and language of a more elevated and serious description’\textsuperscript{31}

Unbeknownst to the settlers, ‘Mark Thornton’, aka ‘Whakeau,’ the chief of the ‘hostile tribe’, a felon and an escaped prisoner, plots to take the beautiful ‘Miss Alice Mortimer’ as his bride. Meanwhile a ship, the \textit{Firefly}, has arrived in the port, with ‘Peter Jenkins’ and ‘Charles Vernon’ on board. During a haka of welcome, given by the ‘friendly tribe’, with its attendant flurry of movement and loud chanting, ‘Whakeau,’ and ‘a ruffian companion of his called “Red Bill”’ kidnap ‘Miss Alice Mortimer’. Raising the alarm, the recently arrived Englishmen enlist the help of the ‘friendly’ Māori to assist them in their rescue effort. ‘Spencer’, the missionary knowledgeable in the ways of the Māori, joins in the search.

Act two, set in a Pā (fortified settlement) ‘in the Whero Whero on the Waikato’, features ‘Mortimer’ and ‘Spencer’ searching for ‘Alice’. Here they witness ‘a native festival being held and at which many of the interesting games, songs, dances etc. are going on’, culminating with another haka, performed to instil bravery in both native and settler in their quest to find the evil ‘Whakeau,’ and save ‘Miss Mortimer’.\textsuperscript{32} A spectacular waterfall provides the backdrop for the next scene, and this is where ‘Whakeau,’ has hidden his captive. A secret entrance, known only to

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\textsuperscript{30} \textit{The Argus}, 17 September 1862, p.8.
\textsuperscript{31} Sydney Morning Herald, 26 July 1862, p.4.
\textsuperscript{32} The Argus, 17 September 1862, p.8. The absence of correspondence from the performers themselves also contributes to this gap in knowledge. As all of the performers were from the central and north of the North Island it is presumed that a combination of haka and waiata originating from those areas were performed.
\end{flushright}
‘Whakeau,’ and ‘Red Bill’, protects access to the waterfall. However, ‘Peter Jenkins’, who has followed ‘Red Bill’, discovers the secret. Meanwhile, as ‘Miss Mortimer’ pleads for her release, ‘Whakeau,’ ‘assumes the garb of Kopare, or a sorcerer (a class much dreaded by the natives) and consecrates the entrance and waters near the cave’.33 Just then the friendly tribes discover the waterfall and, recognising ‘Whakeau,’ impersonating Kopare, render him powerless. A battle ensues between the tribes, ‘Whakeau,’ is slain, and in the dénouement, ‘Miss Mortimer’ is freed and returned to the care of her father and fiancé. Thus, while the presence of the ‘real’ Māori acting Māori on-stage provided the necessary drama of a theatrical production, the satisfactory and peaceful ending of this imagined story reinforced the successful settlement of the Antipodes.

**Hostile and Friendly Māori**

The premise of the ‘unreality/reality of performance’ is integral to the representations of Māori and Pākehā in *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*.34 The complexity of the portrayal of 1860s New Zealand on stage materialised in the characterisation of good and bad, residing in the living bodies of Māori and non-Māori. For instance, some performers were members of Te Arawa, a tribe referred to as ‘loyalists’, ‘friendlies’ or ‘kupapa’, terms used to define their allegiance to the British Crown during the conflicts. However, as New Zealand historian Vincent O’Malley has pointed out, ‘problems of definition surrounded the concept of “Loyalist” or “kupapa”’. Whether due to historical alliances in matters of faith, trade or family or tribal relations, the divisions between the actual ‘friendly’ or ‘hostile’ tribes in New Zealand was not as clear-cut as seen on stage. At this time, real colonists in New Zealand depended on

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33 ibid.
trade and co-operation with Māori; the collaboration and conflict represented via performance in *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief* both simplified and personalised this situation. Moreover, O’Malley explains that the use of terms to describe those Māori who chose not to fight or fought against other Māori is complicated since many ‘simply tried [during the wars] to keep from being caught up in the conflict. Others chose to cooperate with the Crown’s forces or Crown officials out of the complexity of inter-hapu (sub-tribe) rivalry.’

The use of the terms ‘hostile’ and ‘friendly’ can be traced back to earlier dramatic representations of indigenous people while also referring to labels applied specifically to Māori during the conflicts of the 1860s. Therefore the ‘New Zealanders’ portrayal of both ‘hostile’ and ‘friendly’ natives in *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief* related not only to the conflicts in New Zealand at the time but also to broader questions surrounding colonisation and settlement. During the real-life conflicts taking place in New Zealand, the appellation ‘hostile’ was applied to Māori who outwardly supported the Kingitanga, the pan-tribal Māori king movement. The Kingitanga was a recent development in Māoridom, having begun in the early 1850s with the first king, Potatau Te Wherowhero, proclaimed in 1858. His support came predominately from the North Island tribes from the Waikato region, from Bay of Plenty, and tribes from the Taranaki and Whanganui regions, tribes also represented in the cast of *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*. Writing in 1864, John Gorst stated that Māori chose a king to ‘maintain their separate nationality, and have a chief of their own selection… to uphold such customs as they were disinclined to relinquish’ but

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36 In an 1844 tableau vivant presentation by George Catlin in London, ‘two hostile tribes’ consisting of ‘English players’ dressed in ‘beautiful Indian costumes’ engaged in a ‘Scalp Dance’ followed by the sharing of a Peace Pipe. Goodall, p.91.
he, like many Pākehā, thought most Māori did not imagine the Māori king holding equal rank and power as the British monarch. Nevertheless, James Belich has stated that the ‘the main combatants’ in the initial 1860 conflicts were ‘the King movement and the British Empire’.38

Advertising McGauran’s group as ‘The Warrior Chiefs’ also carried with it a certain air of recognition. The origins of the moniker ‘Warrior Chiefs’, commonly applied to Māori men at this time, is attributed, as James Belich believes, to both Māori and Pākehā, as for both the status as a warrior or victor could be understood in regards to respect. As Belich states, ‘militarism could indicate fitness to survive’, and since ‘some traditions (within Māoridom) became a succession of battles’, the stories of conflict won out over stories of the more mundane events of life.39 Therefore Belich believes that promoting Māori as a war-like race served both races as it demonstrated the attractive characteristics of strength in body and mind. In this instance it would also help to sell tickets.

Therefore, these representations of ‘Māori’ and ‘Pākehā/British’ on stage presented multi-layered understandings and readings of race, culture and civilisation. The non-Māori characters also stood for relations between different classes and ethnicities in the Empire. The friendship and loyalty between the ‘officer’ and the ‘cockney’ demonstrated another common device of nineteenth-century British melodrama; namely, a ‘unified imperial discourse’.40 This discourse involved an understanding of imperialism that led to a ‘consolidation and conceptualization of the

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British state.\textsuperscript{41} Class, all-important to this discourse, is witnessed in the characters of ‘Peter Jenkins’ and ‘Charles Vernon’ in \textit{Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief}. Jeffrey Cox, an historian of this genre, believes the ‘cultural work’ present in melodramas containing the character of the ‘loyal British sailor’ emphasised a ‘vision of the status quo at home’.\textsuperscript{42} ‘Charles Vernon’ fulfilled this role in \textit{Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief}. Portraying the ‘cockney’, ‘Jenkins’ fulfilled the role of the buffoon. When ‘Jenkins’ is ‘carried off’ by ‘the amiable savages’, who appeared to ‘enter thoroughly into the fun of the situation’, the characteristic fool-cockney and simple-savage combined to signal the lower/uncivilized classes.\textsuperscript{43} As Cox describes these melodramas, the sailor has ‘gone out into the world, confronted the enemy… [he has] lived in proximity to the Other, and yet all he wants is a return to the same.’\textsuperscript{44}

The encasing of authenticity within drama increased the marketability of these melodramas. As newspapers advertised ‘bona fide New Zealand natives’ featured in a ‘drama specially constructed to illustrate their manner and customs’, they promised readers that the ‘novelty of the entertainment will doubtless prove attractive for some time’.\textsuperscript{45} In discussing the complexity involved in the duplicitous realm of ‘acting savage’ by indigenous peoples and the expectations of a theatre audience, Goodall identifies the platform for performance as one where ‘performance skills in themselves were crucially situated on the savage/civilised borderline, so that a too-skilled presentation of savagery might paradoxically fail in its objectives, while too

\textsuperscript{41} Gould, \textit{Nineteenth-Century Theatre}, p.5.
\textsuperscript{42} Cox, p.176
\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Bell’s Life in Victoria}, 20 September 1862, p.2.
\textsuperscript{44} ibid., p.178. A review of the Melbourne production offers a comparison with a contemporary melodrama, \textit{The Green Bushes}. A popular English melodrama, \textit{The Green Bushes or Ireland as it Was} (1845) presented a ‘half-caste’ Indian woman who exhibits ‘savage’ qualities while living as the wife of an Englishman. The story also contains a kidnapping of a young woman. Rahill, pp.168-69.
\textsuperscript{45} The \textit{Age}, 18 September 1862, p.5.
natural a display would frustrate the expectations of an audience who wanted to see a certain kind of mental image realised in performance. McGauran’s ‘Warrior Chiefs, Wives and Children’ garnered feelings of ‘respect if not admiration’ for their ‘intelligence and physical power’ in their ‘air of reality and seriousness’, while ‘in the war-dance they seemed inspired with real fury’.

The layers of representation of Māori and British deepened with the next drama that McGauran’s troupe performed in Australia. Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief proved so popular that four days after it opened the SMH announced that a ‘new drama is in rehearsal, written especially for the Warriors’. Rangatira Wahena or the Maori Queen again served as a vehicle for the display of Māori games, ceremonies and ‘war dances’, but the play also represented social commentary with its narrative of interracial marriage, the status of native women and race relations in a settler society. A white Australian woman, the actress Fanny Morgan (‘Alice Mortimer’ in Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief), assumed the role of the Māori Queen, ‘Hine Matioro’. This character shared the same name as the historical Ngāti Porou chieftainess, Hinematioro, who died in 1823. It was said of Hinematioro that her mana extended all along the East Cape of New Zealand, and she was known for her ‘kindness, hospitality and good management’. Whitworth penned this drama as well, presumably relying on the legacy of the historical Hinematioro to fashion his dramatic heroine.

46 Goodall, p.89.
47 The Argus, 18 September, 1862, p.5; The Age, September 18 1862, p.5.
As *Rangatira Wahena or the Maori Queen* begins the audience is introduced to a happily married couple in New Zealand, the shipwrecked Englishman ‘Edward Dawson’ and his Māori ‘wahena’ bride (wahine is te reo Māori for woman).

According to a notice in Sydney newspaper *The Empire*, their happiness is disrupted with the arrival of Dawson’s compatriot ‘James Jones’, who convinces him that he should not have taken ‘Hine’ as his wife, but instead should have ‘intercourse with people of his own race’.

On learning of Jones’s plan to lure her husband away from her and her Māori village, ‘Hine’ threatens to kill ‘Jones’. ‘Dawson’ and ‘Jones’ escape to a settlement of Europeans, where eventually ‘Dawson’ marries again, this time to a Pākehā woman. The next scene sees ‘Hine’ leading members of her tribe in search of ‘Dawson’ to seek revenge. Finding him asleep in his cottage with his new wife, ‘Hine’ is about to strike him with her weapon but is prevented by her affection for him. She returns to her village and shortly afterwards a haka is performed as ‘a war ensues between her tribe and another’. During the battle ‘Hine’ is mortally wounded and ‘at the approach of her death her love for Dawson returns and she sends for him, for his wife and her father’. At the conclusion, as she lies dying, ‘Dawson’ forgives her murderous intent, and she dies reconciled with her former husband, not as husband and wife but in racial harmony.

The character of Hine Matioro is a strong woman; the entitlement bestowed upon her by the label ‘Queen’ would not have been lost on audiences during the reign of Victoria. However, as Leon Metayer has explained, it was assumed that a female heroine in melodrama, ‘once married… finds herself caught in a network of obligations that result in her new position being as devalued as the old.’

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50 The *Empire*, 28 July 1862, p.5.
51 ibid.
52 ibid., p.237.
Maori Queen, ‘Edward Dawson’ must forsake his wife for a mate of his own race, but his ‘erring yet impulsive and generous’ character allows him to pardon her and assume the position of the noble (European) male.\textsuperscript{53} Metayer describes the convention of melodrama that dictates when a heroine has transgressed, usually against her husband (or father) or when she has been acting in self-defence, ‘a woman loses her sanity (sometimes only for a short while) when the accusation is false. When the truth comes out, she regains her senses and, after asking pardon from her husband, she is allowed to return to the security of her home and family.’ \textsuperscript{54} In The Maori Queen the heroine perishes, but not before amends are made with her former husband, enabling her to die in peace.

The themes of conflict and resolution, seen in both these melodramas, can also be applied to the larger conflicts between the Crown and Māori in the early 1860s. As Belich described it, in the public’s mind, there was never any question that the Imperial and volunteer troops would be victorious in these conflicts. But since ‘the Pākehā believed it was their destiny to rule New Zealand fully’, for many British the resistance shown by some Māori in the colony was futile, unnecessary and perhaps most important, an impediment to settlement.\textsuperscript{55} Therefore, though conflict, both between Māori tribes and between Māori and settlers, were depicted in these melodramas, a peaceful resolution on stage was the inevitable outcome.\textsuperscript{56} However, this was not to be the case in real life for the cast and producers of Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief and Rangatira Wahena or the Maori Queen.

\textsuperscript{53} The Empire, 30 July 1862, p.5.
\textsuperscript{54} Metayer, p.240.
\textsuperscript{56} In Melbourne, somewhat surprisingly it was the battle scene in Whakeau that received the most scorn, viewed as the ‘weakest portion of the entertainment’. The writer in Bell’s Life commented that since it ‘requires a very considerable amount of histrionic education to do a death-grapple naturally’ it was ‘no wonder the poor New Zealanders did not succeed in giving a vivid picture of Māori warfare’, Bell’s Life in Victoria, 20 September, 1862, p.2.
Māori agency on and off stage

A lack of source material prohibits a conclusive understanding as to how McGauran chose his cast and why these chiefs, their wives and children opted to participate in these productions. However, a June 1862 report in the *Otago Witness* hints at McGauran’s selection process. As reported in the *Witness*, McGauran sought an audience with King Potatau, facilitated by Hoani Papita from the Waikato tribe Ngāti te Ata. Soon after the meeting McGauran had his performers in place, including Papita, thereafter listed in newspaper notices for the Warrior Chiefs as a ‘chief of great rank; nearly related to the Maori king’.

Likewise, without first-hand accounts from the performers it is difficult to ascertain the degree of their participation in constructing their own representation on stage and why they chose to leave New Zealand. Perhaps the opportunities offered by travel and employment along with the mana of taking Māori culture overseas provided justification enough. Possibly they wanted to escape the conflicts. Though it is not evident that tribal diversity amongst cast members impacted on preparations for performances, the performers’ own agency emerged in the midst of clashes between McGauran and cast members.

Problems quickly escalated after *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*’s opening in Sydney as seen in a notice in *The Empire* of 11 August 1862 placed by McGauran. The newspaper item cautioned ‘all persons against harbouring or employing all or any of the Maoris [sic] or aboriginal natives of New Zealand’. McGauran further warned that the ‘Maoris [sic] are under written agreement to me for the term of three years’, threatening to take ‘proper legal steps’ to ensure that they ‘fulfil their engagement

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with me’. A response appeared in the same edition of the newspaper signed by ‘Tomati Hapimana, Pauro Wokoheke, Hoani Papito Woikeri (for ourselves and Company’). It read: ‘we are somewhat surprised that [McGauran] rushed into print… we are prepared to defend ourselves against any legal proceedings which he may institute under his so-called “written agreement”’. The notice concluded ‘we shall be ready… to receive the balance due us, viz. £117’.  

Factions quickly developed between the performers, echoing the fictional ‘hostile’ and ‘friendly’ tribes seen on stage. The public antagonism continued in the press with a notice in The Empire the following day signed by three other members of the group, Hemi Maka, Rangatira Moetara and Manuera Takaru. Referring to their ‘deluded fellow countrymen’, the three stressed that McGauran, ‘the only real friend we have in Sydney, is not indebted to any of us.’ The letter hinted that an unnamed, unscrupulous ‘designing knave’ had offered better pay and conditions to the group. The public warning urged their comrades not to ‘attach themselves to the interests of a man whose antecedents in New Zealand leave no doubt that his only object is to swindle when he can get the chance.’

Reports of the troubles between McGauran and his performers next appeared in New Zealand newspapers. The Colonist claimed that ‘Dr McGauran has got into trouble’, adding:

To complicate the matter still further, the Maoris [sic] have formed three parties among themselves, so that between them all nobody can tell who is right. They fulfilled their engagement at the Lyceum Theatre, but refused to go to Melbourne till they were paid. He asserts they are overpaid. They attracted

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58 The Empire, 11 August 1862, p.1.
59 ibid.
60 ibid., 12 August 1862, p.1.
thousands of people to see their performances. If they were now in London they would do well under proper management.\(^{61}\)

Nonetheless, despite the real-life backstage conflict, *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief* opened in Melbourne in September, with a different cast of European actors but the same cast of Māori. Unfortunately, the performances in Melbourne proved to be less popular than those in Sydney, with critics describing the melodrama as a ‘very poor affair’.\(^{62}\) In October, the financial impasse between McGauran and his chiefs was compounded by poor audience attendance, as reported in the *Sydney Daily Times*: The ‘Maori troupe, introduced to this country by Dr McGauran, and who were so successful in Sydney, have proved a comparative failure in Melbourne.’\(^{63}\) By December the dispute between the various factions ended up in the Melbourne courts. McGauran lost his case when a ‘verdict was given for the plaintiff for the amount claimed, with costs. The defendant’s case—that the Maoris [sic] had broken their engagement and left him—was disproved and it was shown that he had left them to shift for themselves.’\(^{64}\)

‘Vehicles of communication’

The Māori actors’ physical presence demanded that Australian and later British audiences view them, to borrow Goodall’s term, as ‘vehicles of communication’, capable of expressing emotions, imparting knowledge and eliciting empathy through

\(^{61}\) *The Colonist*, 23 September 1862, p.2. Sydney newspapers advertised a twelve-night season (the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 July 1862, p.3 announced that the engagement would be ‘limited to twelve nights’ as the play was scheduled for Melbourne on 9 August) but Brian Mackrell asserts that this was extended to 37 days. Brian Mackrell, *Daily Post*, 1 May 1978, np, clippings, Tourism file, Don Stafford Collection, Rotorua Public Library.

\(^{62}\) The *Argus* listed ‘Mr. T. Andrews as Mr. Mortimer, Mrs. Harry Jackson as his daughter Alice Mortimer, and Whakeau, the Pakeha chief (alias Mark Thornton), Mr. Fitzgerald’, *The Argus*, 17 September 1862, p.8.

\(^{63}\) *Sydney Daily Times* cited in the *Otago Witness*, 18 October 1862, p.2.

\(^{64}\) *The Argus*, 23 December 1862, p.5.
gestures, sound and speech. The presentation of Māori ‘songs, games, and dances’ in both of Whitworth’s dramas revealed Māori lifestyles and customs in a theatrical setting while illustrating a way of life unknown to most Australians. Moreover, the physical presence of Māori, in close proximity to the spectators, added to the exchange of knowledge taking place in the theatre. Australians were able to see Māori in the (exposed) flesh, as described in the Age: ‘the physically, powerfully framed men, of average height, broad-chested, and with knotted muscles standing out upon their chests and limbs. They are almost nude to the waist, and entirely so from the knees down.’ The melodramatic form obviously succeeded where previous forms of display or texts had not, as the writer from The Argus pointed out to its readers. The author claimed that the drama ‘affords a better opportunity of determining the capabilities and physique of one of the finest aboriginal races with which British civilisation has brought into contact than a whole library of blue-books’. Reports such as this support the contention that in the combination of physical displays, dramatic storylines, instructive programmes and descriptive reviews, Māori and New Zealand took shape in the minds of Australians.

The importance attached to the performers’ physical attributes can also be linked to themes of contemporary evolutionary science. As Goodall has shown, the body provided the common element between science and the performing arts in the nineteenth century. While scientists hypothesised on human evolution, using physical characteristics as evidence, performers ‘did not have to take issues seriously. What

66 Bell’s Life in Victoria, 20 September 1862, p.2.
they did have to do was appeal to their audiences.'

Goodall’s example of the ‘live performance’ of indigenous peoples staged by P.T. Barnum in the late nineteenth century draws attention to the ‘theatrical gaze which follows a sequence of action’ as opposed to the ‘ethnological gaze, which lingers on people as exhibited bodies’, and the melodramas provided an ideal setting for this theatrical gaze.

When McGauran’s productions travelled to Melbourne, The Argus reported that rather than ‘risk the tedium usually attendant on monotonous lectures, [McGauran] has selected the drama and the stage as the best mode of illustrating the many peculiarities of the home of the Māori race’. The curiosity generated by the Māori performances in Whitworth’s plays merged with interest in Māori as a people at war with an Imperial army. The Age’s substantial summary of the opening night performance at the Royal Princess’s Theatre barely mentioned the performance, focusing instead on the New Zealanders themselves and their skills in other areas. In an attempt to provide an interpretation of the ‘savage race’ that allowed for a fuller understanding of the men and woman apart from their performing capabilities, the Age noted the that Māori has skills in farming and commerce, as a ‘cultivator, and [one who] breeds livestock’ adding:

He can bargain with the white man and will certainly not be outdone in keenness. There are in various parts of New Zealand numerous flourmills, the property of Maoris, who employ, and pay for, the superior skill of the white man as a machinist.

68 Goodall, Performance and Evolution in the Age of Darwin, p.7.
69 Goodall, ‘Acting Savage’, p.18. P.T. Barnum collected and displayed the largest and most popular curiosities, oddities and freak shows in the latter half of the nineteenth century. His American Museum opened in New York in 1841 and contained exhibits of, among other things, ‘industrious fleas, tableaux, gypsies, giants, dwarfs, and American Indians who acted their warlike and religious ceremonies on the stage.’ See Goodall, Performance and Evolution in the Age of Darwin, pp. 35-46 for a discussion of the intersection of performing arts and science at this time and Barnum’s role in the development of this form of mass entertainment.
70 The Argus, 17 September 1862, p.8.
It is almost impossible to imagine a similar account afforded to Australian Aboriginals. Moreover, the simultaneous reports of battles in New Zealand prompted The Argus to conflate the performance on stage with Māori fighting capabilities, judging both as equally entertaining and worthy of spectatorship:

Their ability as strategists was unmistakeably exhibited in the late New Zealand war, some of their pahs being impregnable against everything but artillery. All these circumstances combine to inspire the public with interest in the appearance and habits of this fine race, and it would be difficult to render the exhibition of their customs in any way other than the dramatic form without being monotonous.\(^71\)

Visual representations of place provided another means by which to educate theatrical audiences. The notice in the Argus advertising the upcoming production of Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief promised readers the scenic ‘drawings taken on the spot’ were ‘authentic’ representations of New Zealand. The SMH also noted that the set ‘affords the opportunity of giving panoramic views of the country, thereby enhancing the interest of the exhibition’.\(^72\) The Argus highlighted the value of the scenic authenticity in Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief with a rather long-winded explanation on the educative process: ‘the most successful mode of instruction is found to be by pictorial illustration, the eye being made the tutor to the mind, and the child is best taught by pictures, and becomes familiar with scenic matters long before they could be known by the usual routine of education’.\(^73\) Gould has pointed out how the use of visual representation in drama ‘collapsed the representational practices … that traditionally separated the drama from the panorama [and] ethnological exhibition’.\(^74\) Similar to fictive depictions of New Zealand at this time, especially the novels of

\(^{71}\) The Age, 18 September 1862, p.5.
\(^{72}\) The Argus, 17 September 1862, p.8.
\(^{73}\) ibid. A Melbourne newspaper described the scenery for Whakeau as ‘pretty’, especially the interior of a native pa, and the first scene, with a ‘Mt. Egmont shaped mountain in the background’, The Age, 18 September 1862, p.5.
\(^{74}\) Gould, Nineteenth-Century Theatre, p.19.
1860s, the scenic representation in these melodramas emphasised an exotic paradise, providing a visual context for the performance.

Following the court proceedings and verdict against McGauran, the beleaguered producer had no choice but to abandon his enterprise. However, a new producer, M.G. Hegarty, and a ‘group of Melbourne speculators’ stepped in, reassembling the ‘Warriors’ culling its membership from nineteen to six performers. Perhaps Hegarty was aware of the comment made earlier in the *Colonist* concerning the group’s potential to succeed in London if they were ‘under proper management’, for in mid-1863 Hegarty and his ‘Maori Warrior Chiefs’ set sail for London and a tour of the United Kingdom.

**Warriors in the United Kingdom**

Travel undertaken by indigenous peoples in the nineteenth century connected Christianity, commerce, politics and ethnology. For instance, Qureshi’s example of a First Nations man, George Henry (Maungwudaus) who attended a Methodist Mission school in Canada before departing with his own group of Anishinabe people to display in London in 1844 presents parallels with Māori travellers.\(^75\) At least 200 Māori travelled to Australia early in the century, primarily to attend Christian schools, but many also left New Zealand to work in whaling, shipping and trade. There are few recorded instances of Māori leaving New Zealand for the express purposes of entertainment. The Christian goal of civilising Māori though education blended with

\(^75\) Qureshi, p.106.
the Māori desire to engage with the wider world. This collusion of ideals came together in another group of Māori about to leave New Zealand in 1863.

As the troubles mounted in Australia with McGauran and his ‘Maoris’, another group of ‘Native Chiefs’ prepared to depart Auckland for the purpose of ‘giving lectures’ in the United Kingdom. Englishman William Jenkins, resident in New Zealand since 1842, was busily organising a group of fourteen Māori to travel in February 1863 on board the Ida Zeigler bound for London. Jenkins’s proposal, that these Māori might ‘see England, the work of England which is not seen by multitudes of men’, slotted into other contemporary missionary ideals. This combining of ‘conversion with training future Christian ambassadors’ emerged in the ethnographic displays earlier in the century. Working in New Zealand at times for the Wesleyan Missionary Society and as an interpreter, Jenkins planned the trip using funds from Nelson businessmen. With this backing Jenkins also solicited the support of Major Matthew Richmond, Chief Police Magistrate of Nelson, and Governor Grey. Brian Mackrell, in Hariru Wikitoria!, provides a detailed account of the ill-fated tour, explaining that ‘Grey could not fully commit himself to such a venture even if he wanted to’, since the ‘success or failure rested with those who financed and organized it’. Thus Jenkins’s tour, though instigated with a will to educate Māori, was primarily a financial enterprise.

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78 Qureshi, p.106.
79 Mackrell, pp.18-21.
80 ibid., p.21.
Jenkins aspired to gain the support of both the New Zealand government and the British Crown once in London, but as a letter from the Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State of the Colonies, to Governor Grey made clear, this support was not forthcoming. The Duke spoke of his alarm at the ‘discovery that Mr. Jenkins is going to take them about the country and introduce them to “illustrate lectures”. Which I perceive to mean to make a show of them a la “Barnum”.’

This reference to P.T. Barnum related to the ‘live performance’ of indigenous peoples that proliferated at this time. Though Jenkins professed that his ‘Warrior Chiefs’ would present lectures on New Zealand throughout the United Kingdom, as opposed to him putting them on display for purposes of entertainment, it became clear that his plan was fraught. The fundamental problems lay with the chiefs’ lack of understanding of the purpose of the tour, and inadequate resources. It also became clear to the Māori themselves that Jenkins required them to ‘act’ Māori, most notably in their style of dress.

Reihana Te Taukawau, a member of Jenkins’s lecture group, wrote in 1864 of the theatricality that Jenkins demanded from his group: ‘In New Zealand I never had a mat, before I knew Jenkins I disliked all sorts of mats for mostly they are many years old, being not much made now, and the things are nasty, they are often filled with vermin. Jenkins said, “You must wear the mats, people like it.”’

Mackrell notes that even though Jenkins’s ‘Maori party possessed European clothing’, the ‘majority of invitations they received requested their attendance in native costume’. Although Jenkins claimed that his lecture tour provided every ‘kindness’ and that he treated his group ‘like Princes’, the dissatisfaction displayed by the members of Jenkins’s party benefited the other group of Māori travelling through the United Kingdom at this time.

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81 Mackrell, p.45.
82 Statement by Reihana Te Taukawau, 8 March 1864, Mackrell, Brian MS-Papers-10953-2, Research papers concerning visit to England of Maori Chiefs, Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL), Wellington.
83 Mackrell, Hariru Wikitoria!, p.50.
time, Hegarty’s ‘Six Maori Chiefs’. The lectures that Jenkins manufactured amounted to little more than displays of ‘his’ Māori, whereas there could be no mistaking that Hegarty’s ‘Six Maori Chiefs’ were anything but performers.

Not surprisingly, the paths of both Hegarty’s and Jenkins’s groups crossed as they toured the United Kingdom in 1863-1864. Jenkins’s tour commenced in London in August 1863. Hegarty’s troupe of ‘Six Maori Chiefs’ – Tomati Hapimana, Aperahama Pungatura and Pene Tutu joined by Piki Woon, Henare Mete and Rangatira Moetara – opened at London’s Alhambra Palace Theatre, Leicester Square, in July. Overlapping with both the ‘Chiefs’ engagement at the Alhambra and Jenkins’s ‘Native Chiefs’ illustrated lectures, the 29 August edition of the Illustrated London News featured an engraving showing a pa engulfed in flames against the backdrop of Mount Taranaki (Egmont) with Imperial soldiers surrounding and capturing armed Māori warriors. As conflicts continued on battlefields in New Zealand between Māori fighters and Imperial troops, two separate groups of Māori, led by Pākehā, traversed the heart of the British Empire.
The looming shape of Mount Taranaki/Egmont, dominant in scenic representation in *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief*, *The Pakeha Chief*, featured prominently in the *Illustrated London News* on 29 August, 1863. This type of pictorial depiction of battles with ‘natives’, previously used in reports on the wars in Africa in 1840s and 1850s, highlighted the surroundings as well as the contrast in clothing worn by the combatants. The bodily movement depicted in the drawing (the rushing stampede of Imperial soldiers, Māori surging forward with taiaha and muskets raised, plumes of smoke billowing from fire-engulfed pa) conveyed the excitement and drama of the battle in the shadow of the mountain. Depicting a landscape of ferns and palms, with barefoot combatants carrying muskets, the newspaper illustration emphasised both the differences and similarities between this and other imperial encounters. Qureshi discusses illustrations in the *Illustrated London News* showing
battles between British and the Xhosa in South Africa in 1853 and believes that they fed into perceptions of Africans who were displayed simultaneously in exhibitions in London. With reports of battles appearing regularly in newspapers, and drawings, paintings or woodcuts depicting those battles featuring in the Illustrated London News, the British public were kept informed of the ongoing wars in New Zealand. When patrons entered the Alhambra they expected to get the same sense of unfamiliarity and excitement in their encounter with the ‘Maori Chiefs’. While the illustrated depictions may have blurred perceptions surrounding the actuality of battles and the relationship between Māori, settler, Imperial and volunteer soldiers in the colony at this time, the theatrical displays allowed audiences to feel drawn even closer to the action via the physical presence of Māori.

As the differences in terms of intent, content, and purpose between the two groups of Māori travelling in the United Kingdom continued, the confusion in the minds of the public must have increased. The contrasting motivations of entertainment versus education and Māori participation in these endeavours lie at the heart of this confusion. Though William Jenkins’s troupe appeared before royalty, in town and church halls, and on public lawns with the aim of presenting ‘Illustrated lectures on New Zealand and its Aborigines’, Hegarty’s ‘Warrior Chiefs’ received ‘thunderous applause by countless thousands’ in theatres in cities, towns and villages throughout England and Scotland. Both groups’ presentations contained performance of haka and waiata (dance and song). Despite Jenkins’s efforts to

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84 Qureshi, pp.71-76.
86 Library extracts relating to visit of Maori chiefs to England, Microfilm, MS-888-University of Nottingham, 1863-1864, Eph-C-MAORI-1863-01/06, ATL, Wellington.
distance himself and his ‘lecturers’ from the entertainers, the two travelling groups collided in London.

When three of Jenkins’s group — Wiremu Pou, Hirini Pakia and his wife Tere Pakia (Hariata Te Iringa) — defected to Hegarty’s ‘Warrior Chiefs’ in August 1863, citing money as the incentive, Jenkins tried his best to prevent this desertion becoming public knowledge. Kamariera Wharepapa, a spokesman for the Māori of Jenkins’s group, urged Jenkins to ‘confess publicly that some of our party have joined the Alhambra people’. Jenkins’s response that ‘we need not publicise it, it will do us harm’, demonstrates the gulf between the aims of the two groups.\(^{87}\) Alongside the issue of payment (Hegarty’s performers received £2 per week plus ‘board and lodging’, compared to Jenkins’s payment of tobacco and £1 5s), Hegarty’s group proved a much more up front way to ‘see England, the work of England’.\(^{88}\) Regardless of the difference in pay, the honesty displayed in Hegarty’s enterprise excelled Jenkins’s stated intent. Whereas Hegarty’s ‘Warrior Chiefs’ comfortably assumed their roles as performers having had experience in theatres of Australia, Jenkins did not explain to his ‘Native Chiefs’ that they would be performing \textit{as Māori} in England.

Presenting representations of New Zealand in the United Kingdom at this time equated to displays of Māori culture. For Jenkins, whose stated aim of giving lectures was meant to elevate Māori and educate them in the ways of England, contributing to their ‘civilised’ manner, Hegarty’s ‘Six Maori Chiefs’ entertained with haka,

\(^{87}\) Letter from Kamariera Wharepapa translated by Mrs. Colenso and Mr. W. George Maunsell, Brian Mackrell, Research papers concerning visit to England of Maori Chiefs, MS-Papers-10953-2, ATL, Wellington.

\(^{88}\) Mackrell, \textit{Hariru Wikitoria!}, pp.64-65.
wrestling and waiata. As Jenkins persisted with his tour, complaints from both the Māori and their English supporters multiplied, with reference to the ‘destitute Maoris’ [sic], the ‘Maoris [sic] very much to be pitied’ and their ‘unfortunate position’, and to how ‘their stay in England must have had a demoralizing tendency’. 89 In April 1864 Jenkins’s disheartened and ill chiefs left the United Kingdom to return to New Zealand, while Hegarty’s troupe of ‘Six Maori Chiefs’ continued to perform throughout England and Scotland. For the next eleven months, as Imperial troops spread across parts of the central North Island of New Zealand the Māori ‘Warrior Chiefs’ performed throughout the United Kingdom, with engagements ranging from one night to several weeks. Audiences from London to Edinburgh experienced Māori and a vision of settler ‘New Zealand’ that augmented and exaggerated newspapers’ representations of the conflicts in the colony. 90 While the 24 performances of the ‘Six Maori Chiefs’ at the Alhambra in July 1863 consisted of ‘haka, games and wrestling’, by August their performances had expanded to include ‘two Dramas along with an English company’. 91

‘Two Dramas along with an English Company’

News of the conflicts in New Zealand, along with insight into daily life in the Antipodies, was welcomed in any guise at this time in the United Kingdom, but the advantage of experiencing these phenomena via performance only enhanced this knowledge. Posters and playbills advertising the presence of the ‘New Zealand Maori

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89 Correspondence of C. J. Doratea to Bishop Selwyn, 23 May 1864, Brian Mackrell, Research papers concerning visit to England of Maori Chiefs, MS- papers- 10953-1, ATL, Wellington.  
90 Theatres where the Māori performers appeared between July 1863 and July 1864: Alhambra Palace, Leicester Square, London; Theatre Royal, North Shields; New Theatre, High Jarrow; Theatre Royal, Seaham Harbour; Theatre Royal, Stockton; Theatre Royal, Bradford; Theatre Royal, Leeds; New Adelphi Theatre, Liverpool; Royal Princess’s Theatre, Edinburgh; Theatre Royal, Accrington, Preston.  
91 The Era, 23 August 1863, p.1. The notice, signed ‘D. Morton, 18a Wolcot Place, Kennington Road, S.’, regularly appeared throughout the next eleven months in The Era.
Warrior Chiefs!’ at Edinburgh’s Royal Princess’s Theatre in September 1863 promised unparalleled and sought-after authenticity in performance. ‘The great attraction in the appearance of these renowned Warrior Chiefs, is the interest attached through the present calamitous Rebellious War in New Zealand, as they give an accurate illustration of their incantations, preparations, and mode of warfare, with their habits of daily life, which, when represented in a Drama, become intensely thrilling.’ The dramatisation of New Zealand made New Zealand and its people real for audiences.

92 ‘Royal Princess’s Theatre (Edinburgh): photocopies of six posters advertising performances by Maori warrior chiefs’, Eph-C-MAORI-1863-01/06, ATL, Wellington.
Figure 3: Poster advertising the engagement of the ‘New Zealand Maori Warrior Chiefs! Nine in Number, Male and Female’, Royal Princess’s Theatre, Edinburgh, September 1863. The morning performances consisted of ‘The Maori Chiefs in various scenes of Native Life without the aid of dramatic representation’, while in the evening the group performed Wahena! or The Maori Queen. The programme also included the ‘comic farce’, A Phenomenon in a Smock Frock and the ‘farcical sketch, Which Shall I Marry? Royal Princess’s Theatre (Edinburgh): photocopies of six posters advertising performances by Maori warrior chiefs, Eph-C-MĀORI-1863-01/06, ATL, Wellington.
These theatrical inventions expanded upon what was possible in ethnographic displays by allowing ‘these historically antagonistic social entities to embrace the common cultural bonds’ through representations of Otherness and British-ness and the connection within these imperial bonds.\textsuperscript{93} The appearance of Māori in theatres provided tangible and visceral experiences of the natives of a far-flung colony and provided a context for current racial and political situations, forging a link between ideology and entertainment within the colonial encounters.\textsuperscript{94} The Edinburgh season at the Princess’s Theatre from 21 September to 3 October 1863 included not only Whitworth’s drama \textit{Wahena! or The Maori Queen}, supported by the ‘Resident Corps Dramatique’ with ‘Appropriate music’, but also the ‘Maori Chiefs’ in morning performances ‘without the aid of dramatic representation’ of ‘various scenes of native life.’ Audiences had a choice of seeing Māori acting alongside British actors in a melodrama or experiencing a ‘pure’ demonstration of ‘native life’. In this context the Māori actors entered fully into the realm of performance by tailoring their song, dance and gestures to suit either the fully-staged drama or the stripped back display of customs. Aware of their power over their audiences, the performers could manipulate responses as needed, as seen in this comment from British weekly newspaper the \textit{Era} when the audience expressed ‘a warm desire to have several of the “illustrations of savage life” repeated, but singular to state, the artistes, like certain great English vocalists, always appeared grateful for the applause they had created, but shrewdly declined the honour of an encore.’\textsuperscript{95}

This conjoining of drama and customs in theatres fed into the public’s need for ever more excitement and thrills in an evening’s entertainment. Goodall describes

\textsuperscript{93} Gould, ‘Role Britannia’, p.7.
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Daily Southern Cross (from The Field)}, 8 October 1863, p.4.
\textsuperscript{95} The \textit{Era}, 27 September 1863, p.11.
how from the mid-nineteenth century the ‘the fully fledged savage who offered a
frisson of threatened violence, spiced up with whoops and yells, leaps and spins,
warpaint and feathers, wild dances and murderous rituals’ catered to audiences ‘in
search of amusement.’ 96 An example of this is seen in a Scottish reviewer’s comment
on the ‘illustrations of savage life’ in Wahena!, where he noted the ‘lion-like growling
chorus’, and those ‘grandly original and thrilling war dances’. 97 While there could be
no doubt that the lead actors taking on roles of ‘natives’ in Wahena!, such as ‘Mrs.
Moorhouse as the Maori Queen’, were not Māori, questions arose concerning the
authenticity of the Māori playing the ‘two tribes’. The reviewer in the Era queried the
‘mock antipodean savages’. However, the author sought to reassure readers that they
were in the presence of real ‘Warriors’ at the Princess’s Theatre since ‘a very slight
ocular demonstration soon convinced the most credulous that the copper colour of the
skin of the “natives” was not a fugitive tint that disappeared under the nightly
influence of soap and water.’ 98

As seen with the Australian promotional material, playbills, posters and
newspapers notices included many details of the performance and Māori performers.
Though the lead English/Scottish actors are listed separately on the playbill (for
example, ‘Edward Dawson’ — Mr Charles Mortimer), only the Māori cast members
are listed with accompanying personal information. This related to the practice
employed during earlier ethnographic displays, enticing patrons into the theatre with
confirmation of both authenticity and difference. In Scotland the group’s membership
had grown from six to nine, comprising Wiremu Pou, a defector from Jenkins’s
group, joining Riki Woon, Rangatira Moetara, Sydna Pakin, his wife, Synda Terru,

96 Goodall, Performance and Evolution in the Age of Darwin, p.85.
97 The Era, 27 September 1863, p.11.
98 ibid.
Henairi Piri Metea, Tomati Hapimana and Aperahama Pungatura. The chiefly ranks and illustrious family connections of all the performers appeared beside their name. In this instance the female member of the group, Synda Terru, was described as ‘a young chieftainess of very great rank of the Ngapuhi tribe of the Hokianga.’ Other pertinent information informed that Terru was an ‘heiress to large estates’ and her husband, Sydna Pakin, was ‘owner of four hundred square miles of land’.  

Figure 4: Advertisement for performances at the Royal Princess’s Theatre, Edinburgh, September 1863. Alongside each cast member’s name a brief description of their mana (prestige) and family connections is given, such as ‘Henairi Piri Metea - his uncle is a Magistrate of Hokianga’. *The Scotsman*, 22 September 1863, p.1.
Figure 5: By the end of September 1863 playbills and posters announced that ‘previous engagements forbid their longer stay’. Poster advertising the engagement of the ‘New Zealand Maori Warrior Chiefs. Nine in Number, Male and Female’, Royal Princess’s Theatre, Edinburgh, September 1863. Eph-C-MĀORI-1863-01/06, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
The theatrical touring circuit of mid-nineteenth-century Britain allowed for performances in various venues, serving a variety of audiences. By the end of September 1863 Edinburgh playbills and posters from the Royal Princess’s Theatre announced that ‘previous engagements forbid their longer stay’. From then until mid-1864 regular notices appeared in the Era promoting the availability of the Māori performers. A ‘D. Morton’ from ‘Kennington Road, South’ sought engagements for Hegarty’s troupe, both theatrical and otherwise. Advertising the ‘Greatest Novelty’, Morton drew attention to other attractions that the ‘Warriors’ could offer. ‘Hangi! Hangi! Hangi!’, his notice exclaimed, ‘M.G. Hegarty’s New Zealand Chiefs will be open to appear at Galas, Fetes, etc. and exhibit this novel way of cooking by steam in the earth as cooked by them in their native country. They can cook from a leg of mutton to a bullock and potatoes accordingly.’

On occasion the two types of performance events coincided. An advertisement in the North British Daily Mail informed that in conjunction with the evening performance at the Gilmorehill Garden, Glasgow, in May 1864, ‘they will roast a sheep in the earth and cut it up after the custom of their country; when the sheep is roasted, a portion will be given to every visitor until finished, and it will be done each day.’ From March 1864 advertisements appeared announcing that the ‘New Zealand Chiefs’ were conducting their ‘farewell visits to Provincial Towns in the United Kingdom.’ The farewell visits involved numerous performances ‘in conjunction with an English company’, concluding with their final dramatic appearance in London in 1864.

100 The Era, 17 April 1864, p.1.
The climax of the Māori performers’ extended stay in the United Kingdom took place in the Empire’s Metropole with a drama ‘expressly written for the introduction of this party’. *The Emigrant’s Trials or Life in New Zealand* opened at London’s Marylebone Theatre in June 1864. With a plot and storyline almost exactly mirroring that of Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief, the cast of characters included New Zealand settlers, two young Englishmen, a former suitor to the settler’s daughter who becomes chief to a tribe of ‘hostile natives’, and a Māori ‘friendly to the whites’. The playwright, J.B. Johnstone (birth name John Southbeer, aka John Beer, born 1806 in Southwark, London) wrote over 20 plays between 1849 and the 1880s. Though little is known of his works, we can speculate as to how he came to write *The Emigrant’s Trials or Life in New Zealand*. He was a popular writer of topical and local issues and some of his titles, such as *Ned Kelly or The perils of the bush* (1880) and *Life’s luck, or The navigator’s bride* (1854), reflect his interest in colonial settings and nautical dramas.

A review of *The Emigrant’s Trials* promised ‘[T]hose who appreciate strong sensations can make sure of meeting with it in perfection at this Theatre.’

Johnstone’s production featured an English actress whose interaction on stage with the Māori actors earned special praise: ‘To those performers who were called upon to act in concert with the Maoris much credit is due (especially Miss Mary Sanders), who frequently served as interpreter between the beleaguered whites and their savage, but soft-hearted Maori protector, ‘Tanhou’ played by Tomati Hapimana. The play also contained a ‘Festival scene’, enabling the display of games and wrestling. In other acts, the Māori actors were ‘used to form groups and assist in making

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104 *The Era*, 19 June 1864, p. 10.
situations.’ Again, as seen in productions of *Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief* and *The Māori Queen*, the embodiment and actualisation of New Zealand rested entirely on the presence of the Māori performances. The character of ‘Tanhou’ in Johnstone’s play replaced the tribe of ‘friendly Māoris’ from Whitworth’s drama. Dressed in European-style clothing, ‘Tanhou’ demonstrated both his ‘evident leaning to civilisation’ and his consideration of the settlers’ predicament in this foreign land.  

Seen as a work of settler propaganda, *The Emigrant’s Trials* presented New Zealand as a trying and dangerous land but a rewarding destination nonetheless. In contrast to the character of ‘Tanhou’, *The Era* described how his fellow New Zealanders on stage displayed ‘considerably more of their muscular development’, which ‘startled a more than usually strong-nerved admirer of sensation.’ The display of ‘muscular development’ revealed in the haka led to *The Era* claiming that: ‘An interest must be strong now-a days to raise much enthusiasm in an audience, but it may be, at the same time, of an unpleasant nature. There were certain points in the exhibition at which something much more like horror appeared to be experienced for a short time by everybody but the Maoris themselves.’ The presence of Māori in the cast provided tough competition for other theatrical events in London at this time, including Monsieur Henrequez’s Windsor Castle Troupe of Performing Dogs and Monkeys and W.H. Wieland’s, the ‘Prince of Niggers-Ethiopean Delineators’. Johnstone’s integration of haka into the plot provided more than the commonplace melodrama, as its performance, along with the other elements of Māori customs and culture seen in the ‘Festival’ scene, stood for New Zealand. If not for the Māori cast

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105 *ibid.* The actor may be Tomma Honea, as listed in the Edinburgh programme or Tomati Hapimana, who travelled from Melbourne to London with Hegarty in 1863.

106 *ibid.*

107 *ibid.*

and their input to the plot, the *The Emigrant’s Trials* might not have been distinguishable from other contemporary melodrama in London.

A lack of personal accounts from the performers themselves limits the interpretation of these performance events from 1862-1864. Among the unanswered questions is why some of these Māori men appeared in a pantomime of *Robinson Crusoe* at the end of 1863.109 This diversion from the ‘Warriors Chiefs’ previous engagements is noteworthy. During the nineteenth century the story of Robinson Crusoe had ‘more than two hundred Victorian theatrical adaptations,’ making it a ubiquitous feature of Victorian drama.110 English literature scholar Ann Marie Fallon believes that the phenomenon of the ‘Robinsonade’, a genre of texts produced following the 1719 publication of Daniel Defoe’s novel, ‘established the Crusoe myth as a story of celebratory colonialism’.111 By the time the Māori performers appeared in the Crusoe pantomime the story had evolved from a tale of one man’s heroism involving shipwreck, domination and colonisation to what Gould refers to as a ‘transformative encounter with indigenous peoples’.112 Therefore, when the Māori actors assumed the roles of characters symbolising submission, colonisation and conversion to Christianity, they stepped outside their representation of their own race and became instead the overarching ‘signifying body’ of uncivilised society.113 If the Robinsonade genre ‘worked as a tool of European imperial cultural’ by making sense of ‘imperial aggression’, the appearance of these Māori actors in this pantomime forged a physical link between ideology and entertainment within the colonial

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112 ibid., p.52.
113 Joseph Roach explains that ‘the signifying body is central to theatrical representation in any form’. He believes that ‘theatre historians...chronicle the observances of the fleshy shrine where the body is represented nightly as the principal medium and the chief attraction’. Roach, p.101. In Defoe’s novel the island is an imagined one situated somewhere in the Carribean.
encounters taking place in New Zealand. Rather than merely ‘referring at once to themselves and to the characters they represent,’ as Roach has claimed, here the actors also symbolised the efforts and process of colonisation by acting savage on a conquered island.

When *The Emigrant’s Trials or Life in New Zealand* closed at the end of June 1864, notices for upcoming appearances of the Māori actors ceased in the British press. Instead, newspapers informed that ‘The New Zealand Chiefs’ would soon be departing for Australia. Accounts of the group after mid-1864 are scarce; however, a letter sent to the *New Zealand Herald* in June 1865 signalled that at least two of the performers, Wiremu Pou and Aperahama Pungatara, still resided in London. Titled ‘Address of the Aborigines Protection Society to the Native Inhabitants of New Zealand’, the letter stated that ‘their English friends wish William Pou and Abraham Pungatara (their Anglicised names), when they are safely returned to New Zealand, very plainly to tell their countrymen what they have seen in England, how many people there are here and what strength they have so that it must be quite impossible for the Maoris [sic] to conquer them.’ With battles between Māori and Imperial forces continuing at home, this letter, published in both English and te reo Māori (Māori language), urged Māori to live peaceably with the colonists, stating that though ‘some English countrymen have treated the Maoris very badly… this does not make it right for Maoris to do like them.’

Along with the aims of the Aborigines Protection Society, Imperial views are paramount here; in particular, that the establishment of a Christian society in New Zealand had enabled Māori and Pākehā to live harmoniously together in the colonised land, thus allowing for the possibility of peaceful settlement.

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115 *New Zealand Herald*, 10 June 1865, p.4.
and, above all, that fighting the Empire was futile. At the time this letter was published Pou and Pungatara had lived outside of New Zealand for at least three years, working with white Australian and British actors, presenting versions of New Zealand society and culture in theatres that reflected the merits and success of colonisation as outlined in their letter. For the two men who acted ‘Māori’ within a theatricalised colonial world, their personal stories meshed with the melodramatic plots they inhabited on stage. On their return home, they could be the bearers of happy endings reflected in the triumph of settlement, colonisation and empire.

Conclusion

By the late nineteenth century large spectacles featuring performance of ‘otherness’ were popular entertainment, with Buffalo Bill’s Wild West perhaps the most well-known example. However, melodramas of the 1860s that featured Māori performing Māori predate the Wild West by more than 20 years.

As has been shown, writers, directors and producers began fashioning wildness as entertainment from the early in the century. Though Whakeau, the Pakeha Chief and the The Emigrant’s Trials reflected familiar melodramatic tropes, The Māori Queen introduced a provocative scenario with its mixed-race couple and a female ‘native’ heroine/villain. In the Robinson Crusoe pantomime the Māori actors assumed the role of cannibal savages. While newspapers in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the Australian colonies of New South Wales and Victoria reported on the battles between Imperial forces and Māori, audiences flocked to see the ‘poetry of

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116 Wiremu Pou married Englishwoman Georgina Meen in London on 7 September 1864. According to a letter from M.R. Heke to William Jenkins’s grandson, Mr. A.S. Jenkins, 4 October 1964: ‘Wi Pou also returned with an English wife. They had a son. After living in Mangakahia for a short period she could not put up with the surroundings and living conditions of those times she left Wi Pou still living in the district’. Brian Mackrell research papers MS- papers-10953-1, ATL, Wellington.
motion that these native born gentlemen appear to possess.'117 And as Goodall explains, ‘theatre and performance not only provided entertainment for the widest spectrum of the public… they were also a major form of general communication about topical issues’.118 Examining the elements of performance, the casts, producers, the press, and reception of these melodramas reveals untold facets of constructed representations of New Zealand and New Zealanders in the nineteenth century.119 Were it possible to stand at the back of the auditorium in Melbourne in 1862 or London in 1864 and witness a performance, we might feel the excitement, awe, humour and fear instilled in the audience. We might also consider the relationship between colony and empire in a new light. The stage offered a proximity to Māori that augmented the news of the wars and filled in gaps of knowledge about the far-flung colony and its inhabitants, both native and settler. Māori became multidimensional beings while also blending into the visual representations of an unknown land.

Though encased in the world of Western theatre, these performers and the roles they played reveal agency as cultural representatives as well as an engagement with the ideology of empire. Managed and produced by non-Māori, the Māori performers became professional actors through their years of touring and treading the boards. Of course these dramas promoted British superiority, Christian morality and the civilising influence of both. But pulling back the curtain on these dramas sheds light on an unexplored aspect of New Zealand’s history and demonstrates theatre’s ability to shape perception and therefore define people, places and power. As the

117 The Age, 18 September 1862, p.5.
118 Goodall, p.5.
following chapters shows, cultural interaction between Pākehā and Māori increased in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, with new expressions of New Zealand developing musically, dramatically and visually leading to innovations in representations of race and gender. The flow of theatrical conventions, musical styles and forms of cultural expression increased and diversified, leading to new roles for both Māori and Pākehā.
Chapter Two: Alfred Hill and Princess Iwa: Musical New Zealand 1896-1920s

From the end of the nineteenth century New Zealand’s artistic expression reflected increased immigration, continuing colonisation, ease of travel and improved communication networks. The consolidation of Empire within New Zealand continued, revealing itself in a myriad of ways. Though revisionist history offers new understandings of the nineteenth century wars and the effect they had on the political and social relations between Māori and Pākehā, there can be no doubt that European cultural expression became more prominent within New Zealand society from the end of the century.¹ The introduction of musical representations via the ‘High’ European arts of cantata, opera and lyric song, of New Zealand instigated the formation of hybrid cultural expressions. Opportunities for cross-cultural performance events increased for both Māori and Pākehā. Most importantly, the blending of Māori themes, setting and performers with elite European musical forms and compositional styles constituted a new cultural expression of and for New Zealand. This ‘fusing the unfusable’, as Prnina Werbner has described the process of creating aesthetic hybrids, can be seen in many of Alfred Hill’s musical compositions and in the performances of Evaline Skerrett aka Princess Iwa, the two artists featured in this chapter.² The consequence of their creative endeavours in the late nineteenth and early twentieth


centuries manifested in forms of bicultural and transcultural performing arts, particularly in later forms of musical expression.\(^3\)

The musical developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries highlighted in this chapter, beginning with Hill’s 1896 cantata, *Hinemoa*, through to Princess Iwa’s performances of Hill’s popular song *Waiata Poi* in the 1920s, demonstrate the continuation of cultural hybridity and the introduction of Māori-ness into entertainment seen in dramas decades earlier. However, unlike the discussion of the previous chapter, whose focus on nineteenth-century melodrama covered a range of writers, directors, actors, stories and locations, this chapter’s attention is given to two artists and two locations and their contribution to New Zealand’s musical expression as it developed from the late-nineteenth century.

The popular reception garnered by both Hill’s compositions and Iwa’s performances stress their practice of melding European musical conventions with Māori subjects, performers and settings. This merging and mixing of style and content dominated the careers of both artists and contributed to their successes. As this chapter shows, the work of these two artists blurred boundaries between High and Low culture, Māori and Pākehā, nation and Dominion and in the process created inventive forms of musical expression. As a means of aural communication, music can instigate emotional states, attachment to place and images of people. Both Hill’s

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\(^3\) In 2000, historian Jeffrey Sissons linked the usage of the term ‘biculturalism’ with the post-assimilationist stance taken by Apirana Ngata in the 1920s-1930s. Sissons stated that biculturalism came about through ‘Maori writers’ who argued that the basis for biculturalism in New Zealand was the partnership established in 1840 between Māori and Pākehā with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and as a backlash against the increasing use of ‘multiculturalism’ as a definition of modern New Zealand society. Likewise, Wira Gardiner wrote in 1989: ‘before we can truly enjoy the fruits of our multicultural heritage we must first sort out the fundamental relationship between Maori and Pakeha’. Therefore, reference to New Zealand as a bicultural society refers to developments that emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century. Jeffrey Sissons, ‘The Post-assimilationist Thought of Sir Apirana Ngata: towards a genealogy of New Zealand biculturalism’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 34, 1, 2000, p.59; Wira Gardiner, ‘Race Relations and the Treaty: A framework for resolution’, *Partnership and Peace: Essays on Biculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand*, Auckland, 1990, p.31.
compositions and Iwa’s performances sit at the crossroads of New Zealand musical expression and representation of New Zealand.

**Alfred Hill: new forms of authentic music**

Alfred Hill’s cantata, *Hinemoa*, took pride of place as the cultural contribution at the Wellington Industrial Exhibition in November 1896. The opening night concert of *Hinemoa* was ‘not confined to musical circles’, with all seats sold days before the event. The premiere of a local artistic creation offering a musical setting of a Māori love story attracted the same level of curiosity as the display of new refrigerator chambers in the Exhibition Hall. The trend to combine events and items of culture, indicative of national identities, with products and services in exhibits had begun a decade earlier at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London in 1886, where farm products shared the space with flora, fauna and ‘Maori curiosities’, so that ‘commodities now mingled with curios’. In Wellington, the performance of *Hinemoa* melded musical culture with ethnicity, identity and commodity. Hill’s cantata, the ‘largest-scale orchestral work until then composed in New Zealand’, featured singers from Maughan Barnett’s Musical Society and interpreted the well-known, popular and much-admired love story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai. With a libretto by Arthur Adams, complete with ‘alterations and additions’ to the Te Arawa story (Adams’s libretto included songs such as *Wake, My Tender Thrilling Flute* and *Over the Wave*), Hill’s cantata sat comfortably with other cantata of the day, consisting of operatic vocals, both soloist and chorus, set to instrumental music, but without the dramatic staging as in opera.6

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4 *Evening Post*, 19 November 1896, p.5.
6 Sarah Shieff explains that Hill’s cantata resided comfortably with other contemporary works by English composers such as Arthur Sullivan and Edward Elgar, who also set secular texts to music for chorus and orchestra. Sarah Shieff, ‘Magpies: Negotiations of Centre and Periphery in New Zealand
Alfred Hill’s training as a classical musician and composer was integral to his contribution to New Zealand cultural expression in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Born in Melbourne in 1870, Hill arrived in Wellington with his family in 1872. As a teenager, he travelled to Germany to study violin and composition at the Leipzig Conservatorium. Arriving back in Wellington in 1891, Hill undertook teaching and composing in the capital. His compositions reflected his...
years of study in Europe as he ‘belonged to a generation of colonial musicians who followed the inclination of English composers towards German music’. The German style left an indelible impression on Hill, influencing his approach to structure, form and orchestration. From 1892 his compositions appeared regularly in concerts by the Wellington Orchestral Society; in 1895 he began work on *Hinemoa*.

Hill’s music reflected his life in New Zealand and was influenced by the process of cultural assimilation that gained momentum in the late-nineteenth century. As discussed by historians such as Peter Gibbons and Chris Hilliard who commented on Pākehā and the process of ‘cultural colonization’ in relation to language, literature, and the formation of New Zealand’s national identity, Hill produced his music at a time when appropriation and incorporation of Māori culture by Pākehā was widespread in New Zealand. Hill’s biographer, John Thomson, claimed that the composer became interested in Māori music when a Wellington journalist sang him a ‘long plaintive melody’ believed to be of Māori origin. Hill soon attempted to incorporate this melody into a new composition, eventually finding its way into the score for *Hinemoa* as the main theme. Along with his ‘magpie’ tendencies to collect, alter and notate the songs and chants he heard when visiting Māori communities, Hill spoke publically on the importance of the preservation of Māori culture. Thus, while Hill re-imagined Māori for Pākehā he also added to the formation of new traditions within Māoridom, echoing Ian M. Clothier’s statement that ‘hybridity produces new

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8 Shieff, p.18.
9 Thomson, especially pp.43-57.
11 John Mansfield Thomson explained Hill’s ‘interest’ in Māori music was shared with ‘early-twentieth century scholars, anthropologists and historians such as Johannes C. Anderson, Elsdon Best, James Cowan, James McDonald, Edward Tregear and others’. Thomson, p.189.
12 Shieff, p.28. In the 1950s Hill exhorted Māori children to ‘Keep singing your Maori songs’. He proclaimed that the ‘Māori culture should never be forgotten.’ *New Zealand Herald*, 19 July 1952, np. cited in Thomson, p.211.
forms of authenticity’. Moreover, some Māori performers, including Evaline Skerrett/Princess Iwa, also embraced Hill’s work, performing his songs throughout the world.

**Himemoa and Tutanekai – connecting Māori to Pākehā**

Though haka and poi, or variations of haka and poi, were included in many performance events on popular stages beginning in the nineteenth century, Hill’s cantata introduced a new approach to the portrayal of Māori corporeal expression. His *Hinemoa*, described as a work of ‘distinctly New Zealand character’, featured the playing of a solo flute, whose main melody was pronounced a ‘clever adaptation of a Māori song’. Alongside the English-language libretto, the primary mode of representation of the Te Arawa story was via the Western musical form. Performed by Pākehā singers, the cantata illustrated the story of Hinemoa, a young wahine from the shores of Lake Rotorua who, was ‘secretly loved by Tutanekai’. Residing across the lake on Mokoia Island, Tutanekai and his ‘friend Tiki’ played their flutes and horns in the evening. These melodies drifted to Hinemoa as she longed to be with her love. One evening, as Hinemoa heard Tutanekai’s melody, she went to the shore of the lake planning to paddle across but discovered the canoes drawn up on the beach preventing her from going: ‘her feeble force could not launch one of them.’ In Adams’s interpretation, a chorus of ‘fairy voices’ encouraged Hinemoa to plunge into the lake and swim across to Tutanekai. Exhausted by her swim, Hinemoa rested in a warm pool of water, and there discovered by Tutanekai, the lovers were united.

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14 *Evening Post*, 19 November 1896, p.5.
15 Alfred F. Hill, Score-Hinemoa, a Maori Legend, IMS papers 4304, ATL, Wellington.
In this period when the romanticised Māori merged with representations of Māori in literature, visual arts and in music, beginning with Hill, the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai had progressed beyond Te Arawa and had become a ‘Maori legend’. Indeed, A.W. Reed has called the Hinemoa and Tutanekai story the ‘best known, best loved in all Maoridom’. George Grey’s collection of Māori myths and legends, published in 1854 as *Nga Mahi a Nga Tupuna Māori*, and the following year as *Polynesian Mythology*, is based on language, stories, religion and customs of Māori as told to him by a member of Te Arawa, Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikāheke. The legend of Hinemoa is included in this collection. One of Grey’s stated aims was to ‘acquaint myself with the ancient language of the country, to collect its traditional poems and legends, to induce their priests to impart to me their mythology, and to study their proverbs’. In his introduction, Grey recalled his visit to Mokoia in December 1849: ‘a native chief came up to me and knowing of my fondness for legends, he told me the beautiful legend of his ancestress Hinemoa, who had landed on the spot where we sat.’ Grey, impressed with the story’s ‘strong sensation of pleasure’, included it in his 1855 publication. Historian Peter Gibbons acknowledges that Grey’s publications of Māori stories are the ‘locus classicus of local myths and legends’, and he singles out ‘Hine-moa in particular’ since it has become ‘popular among Pakeha,

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17 See Jennifer Curnow, ‘Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikāheke: His Life and Work’, MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1983. An introduction to a 1907 publication by H.J. Fletcher of *Hinemoa and Tutanekai* states that, ‘Sir George Grey in the month of December 1849’ visited Mokoia Island. ‘While sitting on the edge of Hinemoa’s bath, a Maori chief, descendant of Hinemoa, recited the story. It was written by Mr. G.S. Cooper (Assistant Private Secretary to his Excellency) with the assistance of Pirikawau Interpreter’, *Hinemoa, with notes and vocabulary*, 1907, ID: Sommerville 1064, Auckland War Memorial Museum Library.
20 ibid.
either in Grey’s own words or retold with modified language but repeating the structure of Grey’s story.  

It is important to delve into the origins of how this story assumed its touchstone nature, connecting Māori to Pākehā, at this time. New Zealand historian and biographer of Te Rangikāheke, Jennifer Curnow, believes that both Te Rangikāheke and Grey viewed the setting down and translation of legends as political acts, though their intentions stemmed from opposite positions of assimilation. Grey, as Governor of New Zealand, acknowledged that these stories and his understanding of them played a crucial role in his ability to govern effectively. He explained: ‘I could not, as Governor of the country, permit so close a veil to remain drawn between myself and the aged and influential chiefs, whom it was my duty to attach to British interests and to the British race.’ Te Rangikāheke hoped that Grey, and through him all Pākehā, would have better relations with Māori if the legends and histories were known and understood as central to Māori culture. Forty years after Grey’s publication of the Te Arawa legend, with its echoes of other famous literary love stories, Hill had found the ideal setting for his musical experiment, the story that symbolised an attempt to join Māori and Pākehā culturally.

Interpretations of indigenous cultures in performance can be viewed as appropriation and colonisation, or more precisely, within Gibbons’s understanding of cultural colonisation or ‘colonization through various cultural practices’. While Hill’s borrowings from Māori music bore little resemblance to the original, leaving ‘Western forms intact’ with, as Sarah Shieff describes, ‘a veneer’ of Māori laid over

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European forms of music, he firmly believed in his quest to re-discover Māori music, alter it and introduce it to a wider audience.\textsuperscript{23} For instance, following Hinemoa’s premiere Hill was praised in the \textit{Evening Post} for his ability to adapt and manipulate ‘Maori song’ with his ‘masterly’ handling of the Hinemoa legend.\textsuperscript{24} Gibbons has questioned why Pākehā, writers in particular, attempted to ‘poeticize Maori myths and legends’, referring to Keith Sinclair’s description of the ‘plunder…of Maori culture’ in the quest for a national identity.\textsuperscript{25} Hill’s creations attempted to forge a link between what he perceived as musical forms that would disappear as the process of assimilation progressed and new indigenous forms of New Zealand classical music.

While the music of Hill’s \textit{Hinemoa} epitomised the harmonic European style of the day, though tinged with Māori words and characters, the set and costuming suggested a local setting. Sections of \textit{Hinemoa} filtered Māori culture through European musical expression. An example of this was heard in one of the most startling and exciting moments of \textit{Hinemoa}, the ‘Ra-ha chorus’. The male singers, accompanied by orchestra, appeared appropriately ‘savage, fierce and vengeful’.\textsuperscript{26} Supported with music driven by a 4/4 meter and featuring menacing horns, rumbling tympanies and crashing cymbals, the chorus sang the repeated refrain ‘Ra-ha’ interspersed with the words, ‘And peace is no more! And peace is no more! And love has no place, hate is everywhere! And the word is for war! For war, for war!’ in perfect harmony.\textsuperscript{27} Describing this ‘wardance’ the \textit{Observer} believed that ‘[N]o one who has seen the real thing can doubt the masterful talent with which Mr Hill has

\textsuperscript{23} Shieff, pp.18, 28-29.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Evening Post}, 19 November 1896, p.5.
\textsuperscript{25} Gibbons, ‘Cultural Colonization’ p.7.
\textsuperscript{26} ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Arthur Hill’s Cantata ‘Hinemoa’, ID 33737, Recording of \textit{Hinemoa}, July 1952, Radio New Zealand Sound Archives/Nga Taonga Korero, Christchurch; Alfred F. Hill, Score-\textit{Hinemoa} a Maori Legend, fMS papers 4304, ATL, Wellington.
seized its spirit and adapted it to his purpose." Edward Tregear, Secretary of Labour in the Seddon government and the author of *The Aryan Māori*, wrote to Hill following the premiere believing that Hinemoa was ‘simpatica’ to the ‘Maori feeling’, especially so the *Ra-ha* chorus. Hill’s ‘ra-ha’, meant to represent a pre-battle haka, instead presented a melodic choral chant, therefore mitigating the power and purpose of this corporeal expression of passion. Nonetheless, *Ra-ha*’s incessant orchestral rhythms recall a climatic moment in Wagnerian opera, which, in relation to its heightened emotional response, could compare to the vitality of a battlefield haka.

Unlike a fully-staged opera, the performers did not attempt to ‘act’ Māori but the costumes ‘suggested’ Māori. In particular, the Pākehā female singers adorned their hair with a single white feather, representing the custom of many Māori women of placing feathers in their hair to signify both mana and beauty. When the cantata was performed in Auckland in March 1897, the stage at the Auckland Town Hall concert chamber was dressed to suggest a rural locale, with native fern fronds and toi-toi (a native grass) stalks adorning the stage. Because of its concert rather than staged presentation, painted scenery was forgone in lieu of a realistic set design. The name ‘Hinemoa’, constructed from shrubbery, appeared in giant letters behind the performers while the conductor’s podium was made from a Māori carving. The stage setting placed the work firmly in New Zealand by including a ‘miniature Māori

28 *Observer*, 6 March 1897, p.9.
29 Shieff, p.72. James Belich explained Tregear’s theory behind *The Aryan Maori* (1892): ‘Maori shared an ancient origin with Northern Europeans, including the British. Both were members of the Aryan master race, who had gone in different directions after leaving their ancient homeland north of India.’ Therefore, Maori shared ancestry with Europeans and could be accepted as ‘honorary whites’. James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Auckland, 2001, pp.207-209.
30 Maughan Barnett’s singers, chosen from church choirs he conducted in Wellington, included Madame Eveleen Carlton appearing as Hinemoa, Mr Harry Smith as Tutanekai and Mr John Hill as Tiki. ‘Madame Carlton’, otherwise known as ‘Mrs. H. Dibley’, had considerable musical experience in Europe and the United Kingdom by the time she took on Hill’s composition.
whare’ (house) and ‘Māori carvings and mats’, while two United Tribes flags draped either side of the stage. The inclusion of these flags as set design is noteworthy as contemporary usage of this flag was widespread and was not solely confined to Māori communities. The Kotahitangi movement (pan-tribal unity movement) displayed the flag from the 1860s, and it was flown at various occasions including at religious and political meetings. Thus, the prominent display of the flags indicated both a native setting and a concept of unified Māoridom.

In essence, Hill managed to capture and express an urgency that stirred audiences. The revelation for Pākehā audience members was their introduction to Māori – stories, music, dress – in the High art setting of Hill’s Hinemoa. The success of the production of Hinemoa in Auckland in March 1897 was sealed with a review calling it ‘the finest and most original musical composition that has ever been produced in these colonies’.

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31 Observer, 6 March 1897, p.9. These comments refer to the performances that took place in Auckland in March 1897.
32 The United Tribes flag, hoisted at Waitangi in 1834, was designed to symbolise co-operation between tribes and was utilised when British Resident James Busby arrived to assume his position in New Zealand. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, the Union Jack was adopted as the New Zealand flag. However, as Malcolm Mullholland explains, the United Tribes flag has remained in use ever since, with more recent uses of it as a Māori symbol of protest. Malcolm Mullholland, ‘Ngā haki – Māori and flags – Early national flags’, Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 13 July 2012 URL: http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/nga-haki-maori-and-flags, accessed 15 October, 2013.
33 Dr. Robyn Anderson is currently conducting research on the use of this flag and others in social, political and religious circumstances throughout New Zealand in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. ‘A “craze for flags”: the material, social and political phenomenon of gifting Māori flags’, paper given by Dr. Robyn Anderson at the New Zealand Historical Association bi-annual conference, University of Otago, 22 November 2013.
34 Observer, 6 March 1897, p.9. In 1948 the New Zealand Listener published a story on an upcoming performance of Hinemoa. It was claimed the main flute theme was in fact a Rarotongan ‘melody’ brought to New Zealand by a Rarotongan chief in 1868 and quickly ‘appropriated’ by Māori who ‘turned it into a hymn’. New Zealand Listener, 31 December 1948, p.7.
Figure 7: Photo of set for Hinemoa, Auckland Town Hall, March 1897. To the left of the stage sits a ‘miniature Maori whare’ with carvings at either side, while fern fronds and toi-toi stalks adorn the stage. The front corners of the stage are draped with the United Tribes flag, adopted in 1834 but replaced by the Union Jack in 1840. Stage set for Hinemoa, MSY-2498-002, ATL, Wellington.

Hill’s approach of borrowing melodies, themes and traces from other cultures was not unique; for instance, the nineteenth-century European composer Antonin Dvorak used African American music and Native American rhythms in his orchestral works. Indeed, in 1893 Dvorak urged American composers to ‘turn to’ the ‘negro melodies’ in their compositions since they are ‘the folk songs’ of the American people and ‘all of the great musicians have borrowed from the songs of the common people’. In light of this advice, it is perhaps not surprising that Tutanekai’s solo,

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Wake, My Tender Thrilling Flute recalled an African American spiritual or hymn with its lilting, lullaby-like quality sung with a deep resonance.\(^36\)

The ‘Dying Maori’

Notions of the ‘dying Maori’ were prevalent at this time amongst some Pākehā, but the appearance of Māori themes, settings and performers complicate this understanding; as long as representation of Māori increased in the performing arts, Māori were kept ‘alive’.\(^37\) The visceral experience for both performer and audience allowed for an exchange of energy and ideas, and however imagined and idealised these representations might be, Māori culture had a presence in society. These musical compositions and performances highlight the evolving and changing nature of culture and emphasise how composers and performers can create ‘fusions that provide new forms of expression’.\(^38\) Nevertheless, Hill’s most popular song, *Waiata Poi*, illustrates an aspect of the ‘dying Māori’ ideology via his relationship with the painter Charles Goldie. Goldie, known for his portraits of Māori, hoped to capture the essence of the disappearing race in his work, with titles such as ‘The Last of the Tohungas’ and ‘A Noble Relic of a Noble Race’ attached to his portraits. Hill explained *Waiata Poi* came to him as he sat in Goldie’s studio in the evenings listening to the ‘old people sing half-remembered chants of the olden days’.\(^39\) Goldie’s paintings, like Hill’s compositions, attempted both to respect and salvage Māori on behalf of Pākehā.

It is also important to acknowledge an alternate view to the pervasive ‘dying Maori’ narrative. In an examination of the origins of this trope, New Zealand historian

\(^36\) Arthur Hill’s Cantata ‘Hinemoa’, ID 33737, Recording of Hinemoa, July 1952, Radio New Zealand Sound Archives/Nga Taonga Korero, Christchurch; Alfred F. Hill, Score-Hinemoa, a Maori Legend, fMS papers 4304, ATL, Wellington.

\(^37\) Belich, p.21.


\(^39\) Thomson, pp.81-83. Hill’s obituary in the New Zealand Listener heralded Waiata Poi as ‘the most popular and best-loved of all New Zealand songs’. *New Zealand Listener*, 18 November 1960, p.34.
John Stenhouse has pointed out that the ideas of Alfred Newman, the man credited with promulgating the scientific evidence for the inevitable demise of the race, were discredited at the time. In arguing for a broader contextual analysis of this oft-quoted address, ‘The Causes Leading to the Extinction of the Maori’, Stenhouse states how members of the Wellington Philosophical Society, where Newman delivered his 1882 speech, attacked his views, especially the manager of the New Zealand Institute, Sir James Hector. Hector ‘demolished Newman’s arguments’, stating that although he accepted the Māori population had declined, due to Māori abandoning their customs as well as introduced diseases, he dismissed Newman’s scientific findings. As Stenhouse points outs, Newman also stated that the “flourishing” European would die out’ in New Zealand. In short, Stenhouse argues that historians have accepted Newman’s ‘extreme view for a mainstream one’.  

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In his 1917 collection of songs published as *Waiata Maori*, Hill provided advice for singers on pronunciation so that ‘the Maori words should be sung if possible’. For those not familiar with te reo Māori, Hill offered that ‘the pronunciation is practically the same as Italian’, thus emphasising the romantic, foreign and High cultural element of this music. Sold as Māori songs, these European interpretations and imaginings of Māori brought a spectre of Māori and romance into British homes throughout the 1910s and 1920s.

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41 ‘Maori Songs collected and arranged by Alfred Hill’, published by John McIndoe, Dunedin, 1917.
Figure 9: Cover for collection of sheet music of ‘Māori Songs collected and arranged by Alfred Hill’, published 1917. Lyrics for the songs included in Waiata Māori include ‘hoki, hoki tonu mai’ and ‘ka mate, ka mate ka ora, ka ora’ with notes to be sung with ‘wild, barbaric frenzy’. Hill gives advice for singers that ‘the Māori words should be sung if possible. The pronunciation is practically the same as Italian.’ Sheet music in possession of author.
Figure 10: Alfred Hill’s *Home, Little Maori, Home*, published in Auckland and signed by Princess Iwa - ‘Te aroha nui, Iwa’- was discovered in Walter Fuller’s archive held at the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom. Fuller was an avid collector of artefacts from the Pacific region and the two met when Iwa appeared with Maggie Papakura’s group in London in 1911. Walter Fuller Papers, Sainsbury Research Unit, University of East Anglia.

Figure 11: Sheet music published in London, *Maoriland Love Song*, from Iwa’s UK repertoire. The illustration for *Maoriland Love Song*, drawn by Englishman Walter Fuller, was meant to be a representation of Iwa. The cover promoted Iwa, ‘The Maori Nightingale’, as the performer of this song. Walter Fuller Papers, Sainsbury Research Unit, University of East Anglia.
The Māori Nightingale: Princess Iwa in the United Kingdom

The sketch of Princess Iwa on the cover of sheet music for Hill’s *Home, Little Maori, Home* (1911) signed by the singer ‘Te aroha nui, Iwa’ (see figure 10) and the cover of the sheet music for *Maoriland Love Song* proclaiming ‘sung by Iwa- The Maori Nightingale’ with a drawing representing Iwa (see figure 11) all branded this music as Māori. Besides *Waiata Poi*, Princess Iwa’s repertoire included songs by other European composers who evoked Māori in their music including J. Alexander and Dora Wilcox. Iwa sang their *Maoriland Love Song* in music halls and variety stages throughout the UK. Princess Iwa’s solo career in the United Kingdom developed in the second decade of the twentieth century and her repertoire included a range of compositions catering to the British public. Iwa especially promoted Hill’s talents, expressing ‘loud praise’ for his works in an English newspaper, with the reporter concluding that Hill was the composer ‘whom English and Maoris alike look upon as their representative musician’. ⁴²

The career of Iwa and her journey from the furthest point south in New Zealand to stages in the United Kingdom reveals the emergent expression of identity of New Zealand as a place where Māori and Pākehā collaborated and co-existed. Evaline Skerrett, born on Stewart Island, Southland, to a Māori (Ngāi Tahu) mother and an English father in 1890, began singing in Bluff and competed in the Dunedin musical and elocution competitions in 1909, aged 19, where she placed second in the Sacred Solo-Contralto category. The prophetic words of the Australian judge, proclaiming her a ‘contralto with a future’, came to fruition the following year. ⁴³

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⁴³ *Otago Daily Times*, 1 October 1909, p.6; *Evening Post*, 1 October 1909, p.7.
1910, billed as ‘Iwa’ in Maggie Papakura’s (Makereti Thom) group of Māori performers and carvers who performed in Sydney and Melbourne, Iwa was described by the Sydney Sunday Sun as ‘the star attraction of the Māori village’ and as possessing ‘a contralto voice of great richness and power’.\(^{44}\) Another Sydney newspaper noted the ‘fine vocalisation of Iwa, who is known in New Zealand as the “Glorious Māori contralto”. Her voice is a magnificent one, and there should be a big future before her.’\(^{45}\) In Australia Iwa performed On the Banks of Allen Water, a song popular with other Māori singers of the day, and Alfred Hill’s Waiata Poi, neither one ‘Māori’ compositions yet nonetheless linked with Māori performance at this time.\(^{46}\)

Described as having ‘all the melodious qualities associated with Maori music’ Waiata Poi (1904), became a popular song internationally; its sheet music was widely available and it was performed by renowned artists such as the opera singer Clara Butt. However, its popularity, as Thomson states, depended on ‘romantic ideas of the Maori race’.\(^{47}\) Under Papakura’s direction and by association with this song in particular, Evaline/Iwa transformed into a performer who crossed cultural lines; appealing to European audiences with her renditions of Pākehā interpretations of

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\(^{47}\) Thomson, A Distant Music, pp.82-83. Thomson states that Hill advised Papakura on the repertoire her group should perform overseas, urging her not to take ‘watered down versions of Maori songs’, Thomson, pp.117-20.
Māori music while personifying Māori through song, movement and dress.

Figure 12: Programme for Festival of Empire, 1911, London. ‘Iwa, The Famous Maori Contralto’ was a featured performer with Alfred Hill’s Waiata Poi. Crystal Palace Theatre, Maggie Papakura, the Arawa warriors and Māori maidens programme, 1911, Eph-D-Māori Concerts, 1911-01, ATL, Wellington.

The physical representation of Māori via music, movement and clothing proved popular on the music hall and vaudeville circuit of Britain in the early twentieth century. When Iwa arrived in London in 1911 for the Festival of Empire with Maggie Papakura and her performers, she immediately stood out as a talented and charismatic singer. Personifying cultural hybridity, at once an indigenous, ‘authentic’ performer and European operatic songstress, she carved out a niche for herself as the ‘Māori Nightingale’. Iwa resisted categorisation as she embodied difference, naturalness and refinement, while her mixed-race English and Māori
ancestry perplexed those trying to describe her manners and talent. However, the platform for her performances allowed her to be accepted as both an exotic Other and as a popular entertainer of familiar English ballads, hymns and ‘Māori’ song who was also a British subject. While Iwa’s body and apparel signalled ‘Māori’ — she performed barefoot, dressed in piupiu (skirt made from dried and dyed flax reed) and feathered cloaks — her voice was that of a European classical singer.

Figure 13: ‘Princess Iwa’ c.1911. Iwa’s mixed heritage of English and Māori added to her perplexing racial identity on stage. Maggie Papakura, Makereti Papers Archives, Scrapbook of Makereti, Box 11, 1998.277.126, B 43a 126, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

Female solo acts on popular stages were not uncommon at this time and could be financially lucrative as M. Alison Kibler, an historian of popular culture, explains, ‘the centrality of a single performer in an act…often gave women more authority in vaudeville than they had in the legitimate theatre.’ \(^{48}\) Maggie Papakura groomed Iwa

as a soloist, and following the engagement in Melbourne and Sydney from October to December 1910, where Iwa earned praise as ‘the star attraction of the Māori village’ ,

their twice-daily shows in London consisted of poi dances, haka, games and tableaux staging of ‘typical’ Māori life, along with the ‘Legend of Hinemoa - illustrated with tableaux’. Amongst the 22 men and 18 women, predominately from Rotorua, Iwa attracted the attention of the public and the press with her renditions of ‘Waiata Poi’ and English ballads.

Both the Festival of Empire and the Coronation Exhibition were designed to demonstrate ‘what England is, and what England has made herself to be beyond the seas’. The Festival of Empire hosted the Pageant of London at the Crystal Palace, and it was here that the master pageant-maker, Frank Lascelles, assembled ‘15,000 voluntary performers, 500 horses, 20 deer and thousands of suits of armour and sets of weapons’ to illustrate the history of England in ‘thirty two scenes’. This pageant and the exhibition celebrated ‘the varied races and peoples who live beneath our flag’. Thus, the physical morphology of Empire displayed in both exhibitions resided in colonised bodies. Notices from the Crystal Palace performances of Papakura’s group confirmed that Iwa garnered attention as ‘the beautiful and extraordinary powerful contralto’. The Pallmall Gazette advised its readers that: ‘To lovers of vocal music

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50 Maggie Papakura – Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
53 Croyden Times, 11 October 1911, np. Maggie Papakura – Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
the advent of Iwa will be an event of special and particular interest, for Iwa is the soloist of the party, and had earned the reputation of being the finest Maori singer that ever lived.’ To emphasise her unusual talent, the Gazette informed that Iwa ‘will employ her beautiful contralto voice in native as well as English songs, to the accompaniment of the excellent choir.’ At the conclusion of every performance the group, led by Iwa, gave a rendition of the patriotic anthem of Empire, *God Save the King*.

Although the two celebrations of Empire in London attracted plenty of media attention, the exceptionally hot summer of 1911 proved to be disadvantageous to those taking part. The manager of the New Zealand performers explained that because of the heat that ‘emptied London’, his group’s performances drew small audiences. Above all the manager believed that the English were ‘not interested in the Maoris [sic]’ except for ‘Iwa and the poi girls’. To that end, and because of financial difficulties from the poor ticket sales, ‘Iwa and the poi girls’ were contracted to appear at the Palace Theatre in London. The poi, or ball made from raupo leaves stuffed with feathers or wool and connected to a long or short string, were swung in time to accompany singing and movement. The unison swing and rhythmic beating against the hand thus created both an aural and visual effect. Te Arawa women were especially known for their skill and innovation of poi dances and the poi that Papakura’s group performed, notably the ‘Famous Canoe Poi Dance’, became a signature item of this group.

54 *Pallmall Gazette*, 26 April 1911, np. Maggie Papakura – Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
56 Clipping, November 1911, Maggie Papakura – Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
Iwa’s singing and the group poi dances introduced novelty to the London popular stage, though slotting into pre-existing notions of the ‘market value of authenticity’, as described by Anthea Kraut in her study of African American popular performers of this era. However, the origins of this seated ‘canoe poi’ masks its authenticity. Presented as a traditional female dance, the ‘canoe poi’ was choreographed for performances at tourist sites in New Zealand to illustrate in movement the migration of the Arawa tribe to Aotearoa (New Zealand). Thus, though the implication in the notices regarding the upcoming appearance at the Palace was one of ancient tradition, this dance was a new interpretation of an older form of poi, created to entertain tourists at the Māori village at Whakarewarewa and visitors to the 1906-1907 Christchurch Exhibition. Nonetheless, the Māori women provided enough unknown qualities to enable them to slot into previous notions of otherness, exotica and authenticity while they conformed to the requirements dictated by patrons of the popular stage.

**Modernity, Primitivism and Authenticity**

Images of women from the Pacific had long proved fascinating to Western eyes. From the time of Captain Cook’s first voyages to New Zealand and Tahiti in the eighteenth century, the allure of young, nubile woman captured the imagination of artists and writers. The trope of the ‘Dusky Maiden’ loomed large in the Western imagination. Marata Tamaira, a scholar of indigenous studies, refers to these historical images as the ‘sexually receptive and alluring Polynesian maiden’, while ethics theorist Adria L. Imada describes dances by Pacific Island women performed for Western audiences as

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58 Mervyn McLean, *Maori Music*, Auckland, 1996, p.316. The ‘canoe poi’ is credited to Maggie Papakura’s sister, Bella, who created it for the entertainment of visitors to Rotorua’s model village at Whakarewarewa. A detailed discussion of the Māori village at Whakarewarewa is included in chapter three of this thesis.
an ‘imagined intimacy’. The Palace engagement of Iwa and the ‘poi girls’ fell in line with this representation of women from the Pacific. Seemingly in contradiction to their manager, who believed that the appeal of the Māori performers centered not on ‘what they were, but [on] what they could do’, the caption accompanying the photo in *Bystander* on 1 November announced the ‘Dusky Dancers at the Palace Theatre’.

The female entertainer, who added a ‘frisson of alluring difference’ to the line-up variety entertainments, could be counted on to provide a refined mode to an evening’s proceedings. Their dress alone suggested that these Māori women offered ‘dances …weird yet fascinating and totally different from anything seen in London’. The promotion photograph of the Palace season (see figure 14) shows Iwa standing on her own wearing her kahu kiwi (cloak of kiwi feathers) with a tāniko (geometric patterned stitched border) draped across her chest. A large hei tiki (greenstone pendant) hangs around her neck. She stands on a korowai whakahekeheke (a woven cloak decorated with tassels and feathers). The accompanying ‘poi girls’, posed in the seated ‘canoe poi’ configuration, wear an assortment of korowai (tasselled cloaks) and piupiu.

The combination of concert, orchestral music and popular entertainment was common on the variety stages of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries throughout the United Kingdom. The Māori women drew large crowds at the Palace, so much so that the ‘songs and dances by the troupe of Maoris, headed by the sweet-voiced Iwa, have proved so popular at the Palace Theatre that their engagement has

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60 Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World*, Chicago, 1999, p.68.
61 ibid.
been indefinitely prolonged’. The variety of acts on offer at the Palace catered to every taste. Sharing the bill with Iwa and the poi girls at the Palace were Alan Shaw, a clever coin and card manipulator; ‘Scenes in an Opium Den’, an acrobatic act of the Boganny troupe; and Mr Mauri Farkoa, whose delightful repertory included a French version of the ‘Nice Girls Everywhere’ ditty.’

Figure 14: Caption under the heading ‘Dusky Dancers at the Palace Theatre’: ‘The song and dances by the troupe of Maoris [sic], headed by the sweet-voiced Iwa, have proved so popular at the Palace Theatre that their engagement has been indefinitely prolonged. The dances are weird yet fascinating and totally different from anything seen in London.’ The Bystander, 1 November 1911, Maggie Papakura-Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

62 Bystander, 1 November 1911, np. Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
63 Sunday Times, 22 October 1911, np. Maggie Papakura-Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
Iwa’s singing ability, combined with her exotic beauty, contributed to the success and appeal of the ‘Dusky Dancers’. A review in *Lloyds Weekly News*, on 15 October 1911, emphatically stated that ‘Iwa, the “Maori Nightingale” is the latest musical star at the Palace Theatre, where she is heard under novel and most effective conditions’. The *Times* also singled out Iwa as the ‘sweet singer of the Maoris’ [sic], adding that ‘it is refreshing to come across something rather out of the common run’, while the *Croyden Times* called Iwa ‘the beautiful and extraordinary powerful contralto’. Iwa declared her happiness and satisfaction with this particular engagement, speaking of the ‘pleasure of singing to Palace Theatre audiences, which, I believe, is the ambition of all singers who go upon the variety stage’.

This ‘mixing of high and low culture’ on vaudeville stages led, as Kibler believes, to a ‘system of entertainment’ where women participated in and added to the ‘cultural uplift’ of societies. Following the Palace season Iwa received ‘cheering words’ from respected operatic English singing teachers Madame Mignon Nevada, Madame Blanche Marchesi and Alberto Randegger, and based on their encouragement she decided to ‘stay and study’. This acknowledgment by these ‘High’ art singing teachers supported Iwa’s decision to pursue her career and her repertoire at this time reflected their influence, especially with the songs *My Treasure* and *I Know a Lovely Garden* which required an operatic-trained voice.

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64 Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives Clipping, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.  
67 Kibler, pp.5-7.  
68 Ibid.
Noteworthy was another song in her act: *The Maori Slumber Song* or *Hine e hine*, written by Fannie Rose Howie/ Te Rangi Pai, with lyrics in te reo Māori. A predecessor of Iwa’s in London, Howie performed in London a decade earlier, also under the moniker of ‘Princess’: Princess Te Rangi Pai.\(^69\) When Mr. Westmacott, the group’s manager, spoke to the *Auckland Star* in light of Iwa’s appearance at the Palace, he warned that audiences would not take to Iwa if she sang the ‘usual pakeha drawing room song’ and that would be a ‘fatal mistake to her success’. Instead, Westmacott urged her to sing ‘in Maori’ wherein a ‘great future’ lay ahead.\(^70\)

This blending of ‘High’ and ‘Low’ acts on the vaudeville stage accommodated audiences’ ability to ‘test new freedoms and cross social boundaries’.\(^71\) Lawrence Levine has identified the variety stage as a site where ‘High’ and ‘Low’ met, where the ‘perimeters of …cultural divisions have been permeable and shifting’.\(^72\) Thus, during the course of an evening’s entertainment Iwa could appear alongside ‘fancy dances’, ‘character studies’ and a ‘pianoforte concerto’ while she sang *Nearer My God To Thee* and a popular New Zealand song, *Hoki Hoki Tonu Mai*.\(^73\)

**A Māori/Pākehā British Subject of the Dominion**

This dual persona of Māori and Pākehā was central to Iwa’s stage act while Iwa pursued her role as the ‘Maori Nightingale’. The mixing of her Māori heritage with\[\footnotesize{\text{\References
\begin{itemize}
\item[69] The most well-known and modern New Zealand-born, internationally recognised soprano, Kiri Te Kanawa, recorded *Hine e Hine* for EMI records in 1999 for the album *Maori Songs*.
\item[70] *Auckland Star*, 10 January 1912, p.8.
\item[71] ibid., p.54.
\item[72] Levine, p.8.
\item[73] Programme for Royal Hippodrome Nottingham ‘Grand Matinee, Thursday 27th January, 1916’, Scrapbook of Iwa Skerrett: Maggie Papakura Concert Tour of England, 1911, Rotorua Museum of Art and History; *Yarmouth Independent*, 5 July 1913, np. Britannia Pier, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs, etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford; RAM, 14 December, 1919, np., Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.}
\end{itemize}}\]
her English repertoire cut across class, race and social boundaries. Distinctions made
in the British press between ‘her renderings both of our ballads and her own home
gems of song’ also highlight the split in definition of New Zealand as a
nation/Dominion/colony at this time.74 ‘Our’ ballads versus the ‘home gems’ signal
the layered identification that applied to early-twentieth-century subjects of the British
Empire. A playbill from a 1916 benefit concert in Nottingham, where she appeared
alongside a 50-member orchestra, listed her as ‘a British subject of Maori nationality
who will sing a typical Maori song in the picturesque costume of her country’.75
Adding to this complexity of identification was the conferring of Dominion status to
New Zealand in 1907, allowing self-government at home rather than strict adherence
to the rule of the British Crown from a distance.

Importantly, the appellation ‘Princess’ appealed to her fellow British subjects
obsessed with class and royalty. As she told reporters: ‘I am a lineal descendent of a
Maori king and I have white blood in my veins’, while another newspaper noted that
she ‘is directly descended from King Topi, one of the most famous Chiefs of the
Southern Maoris, who lived to the great age of 102’.76 However, ‘Princess’ is not a
term that would have applied to her high ranking or mana (prestige) in New Zealand,
where ‘rangatira’ or ‘ariki tapairu’ were more appropriate. Nonetheless, like her

74 Clipping, nd. Entertainments: Ayr Burgh Choir Concert, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers
Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S.
75 Clipping, nd. Entertainments: Ayr Burgh Choir Concert, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers
Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs, etc. property of Mr. J.S.
76 RAM, 14 December, 1919, np. ‘Maori Music and other Matters By Princess Iwa’; Winning Post, 13
December 1919 - ‘Hawaiians at the Palladium’, Maggie Papakura -Makereti Papers Archives,
Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc. the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984,
Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. Topi Patuki was a Ngai Tahu chief who lived from approximately
1810-1900. Born in South Otago, Topi was recognised as the rangatira (chief) of Foveaux Strait and
was described by Edward Shortland as ‘more European than any New Zealander I have ever seen.
He spoke very good English and was dressed in the style of the better class English sailor.’ Atholl
predecessor in London, the singer Princess Te Rangi Pai, the use of the title ‘Princess’, signifying rank, bestowed on her an air of mystery and dignity.

In her repertoire, physical appearance and public pronouncements Iwa represented New Zealand’s nascent hybrid cultures while also reinforcing the notion of harmonious race relations. In a 1919 newspaper interview she proclaimed that there is ‘none of the colour line difficulty in New Zealand where there has been much intermarriage and a general sense of equality, which I am told, is somewhat exceptional’.77 Iwa’s mixed-race ancestry of English and Māori also perplexed those trying to describe her talent. Though her physical appearance disrupted a clear understanding of her racial ancestry, it was her blending of musical forms and repertoire, rather than her mixed-race heritage, that produced her expression of cultural hybridity.78 The fascination with this young Māori singer, dressed in native clothing but singing ‘pure tones’ in English, relied on the juxtaposition of appearance and voice, and her repertoire reflected this as well. Iwa always appeared on stage in piupiu and often with her kahu kiwi draped around her shoulders. In 1916, at the Plymouth Guildhall dressed ‘in Maori costume, a curious admixture of primitive fur and sophisticated scarlet and gold’, she sang, along with Waiata Poi, Sanderson’s The Voyagers and del Reigo’s Sink, Red Sun. When Iwa sang her English and operatic ballads audiences were challenged and sometimes perturbed to place her within accepted schema of performance as this comment from the Daily Mercury shows. The newspaper reported that while performing Waiata Poi her ‘costume is harmonious enough in its realism, in the latter [the ‘fashionable lyrics of the twentieth century

drawing room’] it is a piquant distraction.\textsuperscript{79} Her incongruous (in British terms) joining of cultures manifested corporeally, sartorially, and musically.

**Primitive Modernism on stage**

The distinction between primitive and exotic rests with the opposition between pure and authentic on the one hand and foreign and unknown on the other. Iwa’s career as a solo performer required a strong identity, and to this end, her performance attire consistently emphasised her ‘exoticness’ and separateness from her predominately middle-class, white, urban audiences. Anthropologist Nicholas Thomas states that ‘exotic’ is historically connected to ‘difference and strangeness’, whereas the primitive signified simplicity, naturalness and originality. These distinctions are blurred when discussing Iwa and her performance persona, as her controlled, pleasing singing voice coupled with her display of her body in ‘native’ clothing complicated these classifications.\textsuperscript{80} Also, the modernity associated with the World War One era consolidated in urban environments while materialising in artistic movements.

The coupling of modernity and primitivism, prevalent in the visual arts, such as with Picasso’s African-inspired cubist works, and in dance with Nijinsky’s and Stravinsky’s collaborative, jolting ballet, *Le Sacre du Printemps/ Rite of Spring* (1913), point to an essentialism that appealed to a public reeling from the effects of war. Iwa’s Māori stage persona, solidified by costume and repertoire, places her within this need for both authenticity and historiocity in performance. Jane Desmond contends: ‘[W]ite appetites for entertainments based on racialized exotica were

\textsuperscript{79} *Daily Mercury*, 5 October 1916, np. Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

wide-ranging during this time’, and Iwa’s performance of Māori attests to this all-encompassing ‘exotic’ female as popular entertainment.\textsuperscript{81} Similar to dancers who performed hula on vaudeville stages in early-twentieth-century America, where the grass skirts of an imagined ‘hula’ allowed for movements and actions to take place that otherwise might have been censored on legitimate stages, Iwa brought a daring but beautiful sensualism to popular culture in the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{82} As a newspaper comment illustrates: ‘the effect of her singing was heightened by her appearance in native dress and with bare feet. She will not be soon forgotten.’\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{81} Desmond, p.68. See also Imada.
\textsuperscript{82} Desmond, p.74.
\textsuperscript{83} Clipping, nd. Entertainments: Ayr Burgh Choir Concert, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
Figure 15: ‘Princess Iwa entertaining an ancestor’ and ‘A seated “dance”’, publicity photographs promoting Princess Iwa at the London Palladium, December 1919, *The Sketch*, 17 December 1919. Iwa wears a piupiu with a tānīko (geometric patterned woven border) around her waist and in the bottom photo a korowai (cloak of feathers). In both photos she is bare shouldered. Her Hei Tiki (greenstone carving) is displayed prominently hung around her neck. Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc., the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

The commingling of ‘ancient customs’ and show business illustrates the performance environment that Iwa’s aesthetic inhabited. As with Hill’s ‘Ra-ha’ chorus that crossed borders between ‘High’ and ‘Low’ art and Māori and European
culture, Iwa’s introduction of real and imagined customs and cultural expression into her solo act led to new formations of performing New Zealand. In this milieu of ‘the staging of “exotic primitives”’ Iwa could be, as Desmond reminds us, ‘alluring or frightening’, ‘denigrated or celebrated’.\(^8^4\) Photographs published in *The Sketch* promoting her appearances at the London Palladium in 1919 show Iwa posed sitting in costume with various Māori cultural items meant to ‘illustrate the customs of her ancient race’ (see figure 15). The top photo, captioned ‘Princess Iwa entertaining an ancestor’, showed Iwa playing a carved wooden flute as she faced a preserved human head (mokomokai) set upon a plinth covered with a feathered cloak. In the bottom image a seated Iwa stares straight at the camera and holds a canoe paddle, with the caption describing her ready to perform the ‘seated song and dance’ of the Canoe Poi.

Dances inspired and borrowed from the Orient, India and Egypt, along with Caribbean Calypso, South American Tango, Hawaiian hula and Minstrel acts, brought audiences into theatres at this time. Accordingly, advance publicity for Iwa’s appearance at the London Palladium showed her in both Māori and Hawaiian costumes. The *Dancing Times* explained that Iwa would ‘produce Māori and Hawaiian songs and dances’. The Hawaiian elements of her performance served to strengthen Iwa’s connection to both the South Pacific and the ‘racialized exotica’ that was signified by her costuming, the exposure of bare leg and feet, her loose, dark hair and the bronze tint of her skin. A photo of Iwa in the *Dancing Times* draws attention to her Hawaiian costume, noting that ‘she should strictly wear nothing above the pā-u or skirt’, implying that an authentic representation of the dance would require her to reveal her breasts. Thus, the promises offered by the conglomerative ‘Dusky Maiden’ materialised in Iwa’s performance. The pressure to satisfy the demand for

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\(^8^4\) Desmond, p.67.
primitivism, exoticness and authenticity on stage may explain Iwa’s own borrowings from Hawaiian culture.

The female form, dressed in unfamiliar costumes suggesting exotica and primitiveness, combined with beauty and a talent for singing in a contralto voice was a winning combination for Iwa. The merger of New Zealand and Hawaii no doubt served as an attraction and aligned with other popular representations of hula of the day. As Adria Imada states: ‘Eroticized on commercial stages, hula and the young women who performed this art served as analogues for the Hawaiian Islands.’85 That Iwa was a New Zealand Māori was irrelevant for the sake of the box office. Iwa’s light-skinned, ‘primitively’ clad barefoot female dancer could be representative of any Pacific woman. At the Palladium Iwa slotted into contemporary tastes and appetites, with her versions of Māori and Hawaiian dance catering to the public’s fascination with female Otherness on stage.

85 Imada, p.67.
Figure 16: ‘A Maori Princess who will shortly produce Maori and Hawaiian songs and dances at the Palladium. On the left she is dressed as a Maori, and on the right as a Hawaiian ready for the hula. In the latter case she should strictly wear nothing above the pa-u or skirt, and on the ankles should be the ku-pe’e or anklets of whale teeth.’ In this photo Iwa has her piupiu draped across one shoulder, a customary style. Dancing Times, December 1919, Maggie Papakura-Makereti Papers Archives, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

**Europeanised’ Māori and ‘New Zealandised’ Songs**

The process begun by Alfred Hill of composing music with a ‘veneer’ of Māori suggested that although Māori as a race would disappear, the culture could be saved by Pākehā intervention. Iwa also publicly expressed the opinion that ‘[O]ur native customs are fast disappearing as we become more and more Europeanised, or should I say, New Zealandised?’ In newspaper interviews promoting upcoming shows, Iwa

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86 RAM, 14 December 1919, np. ‘Maori Music and other Matters By Princess Iwa’, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
made it clear that she wished to educate the public on aspects of Māori culture, which she believed would vanish, and in this regard she shared Alfred Hill’s mission to save Māori music from extinction. However, she seemed unable to perceive the contradiction in her performance of Westernised interpretations of Māori culture. Though she stated ‘the day cannot be far distant when all our native customs and rites will disappear, or be merely kept as relics’, her repertoire consisted of these ‘New Zealandised’ inventions. Her ‘Maori’ songs, sung in English (the exception, *Hine e hine/The Maori Slumber song*, had lyrics in te reo Māori and a Western melodic and note structure), thus contributed to the hybridisation and invention of Māori for English audiences. She explained to a reporter the basis of ‘pure’ Māori song: ‘Our native music is more or less of a wailing type, sad and mournful. Very few of the melodies have been set down in modern musical notation’. She also stated that some of her repertoire consisted of this type of song however, the evidence provided by programmes and reviews of her concerts do not support this claim. Hence, while she decried the ‘New Zealandised’ versions of song at home she continued to present her mix of Māori and European entertainments in theatres throughout the UK. Her ‘Europeanised Maori songs’ were the cornerstone of her career as music hall audiences could not be expected to sit through an evening of ‘sad and mournful’ music.

Iwa accommodated the public’s fascination with her seemingly untrained voice and her ability to combine skill and grace from her own culture with that of European music. Glowing notices, articles and reviews from Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Norwich, Plymouth, Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle appeared throughout the next few years. In 1913 the *Yarmouth Independent* described her as the

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87 Interview RAM, 14 December 1919, np. ‘Maori Music and Other Matters By Princess Iwa’, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
'world-renowned Maori contralto, who positively electrified her audiences with her wonderful voice’, while her appearance with the Ayr Burgh Choir in Scotland drew the comment that, ‘She has a voice of great range and power, pure tone, flexibility, and expressional quality, which stamps her as a front rank artist’. The appeal of songs such as Waiata Poi and Home, Little Maori, Home, performed alongside English popular songs and European art songs, reinforced the mixture of entertainment made popular on the music hall stage. Though singing ‘refined’ songs, Iwa still personified the antithesis of civilisation in a society defined by the ‘Western, European male at the top’. The British-Australasian newspaper explained that for her appearance at the Palladium in 1919, the English composer ‘Mr Delroy Summers scored her repertoire, consisting of “Kamiti, Kamiti” [Ka Mate, Ka Mate], the old Maori war cry, for orchestra’. Iwa consistently accentuated her Māori ancestry while performing works and arrangements by popular European composers. Moreover, the seemingly authentic, or untrained quality of her voice associated with the primitive; the Tatler reported on the ‘extraordinary voice’ from the untrained “natural” singer’, rubbed up against her precision when singing European music.

88 Clipping, nd. Entertainments: Ayr Burgh Choir Concert, Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
90 The British-Australasian, December 1919, p.19.
91 Tatler, 7 June 1911, np. Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives. Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. That same year she admitted that she had received voice training ‘for about a year, a little while ago’, adding ‘my teacher was Miss Violet Macintosh, who is a noted contralto vocalist in New Zealand’. Norwood News, 30 September 1911, np. Maggie Papakura - Makereti Papers Archives, Photocopies of an album of newspaper cuttings, photographs etc, the property of Mr. J.S. Barclay, 1984, Box X, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
As Iwa toured the United Kingdom throughout the 1910s and into the 1920s her fame spread. She performed in numerous benefit concerts in aid of the war effort, sharing the bill with many members of the popular Carl Rosa Opera Company. In 1921 the Glasgow Bulletin published a photograph of a very stylish Iwa dressed in the fashion a la mode beside her equally smart husband, the tenor Wilson Thornton.
Under the headline ‘Glasgow is their Choice’, the newspaper informed that ‘Mr. Wilsun [sic] Thornton and his wife (The Maori Princess Iwa) have severed their connection with the Carl Rosa Opera Company. They intend to settle in Glasgow to teach singing.’ Her singing career seems to have diminished after settling in Scotland, though she did continue to make appearances with her husband in Glasgow. The *Glasgow Evening News* ran an item on the couple’s move to Glasgow in 1921: ‘Mr. Thornton, it may be recalled, is married to Princess Iwa, a Maori lady in whose bloodline is a Royal strain. She was associated with her husband in opera, and will assist him in his latest enterprise.’ Judith Williamson’s summation of colonial appropriation of the feminine exotic applies to Iwa and her status as the ‘Maori Nightingale’ in the United Kingdom: ‘The mystery of foreign places and people, appear both as separate from our own culture and as its most exciting product’. Iwa’s exotic appeal did not diminish even though her singing career wound down; she remained Princess Iwa until her death in 1947.

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93 The *Glasgow Evening News* reported that ‘For the opening recital on 1st October of the Glasgow Corporation Saturday afternoon recitals Mr Edward Freer has secured the services of Princess Iwa, a Maori contralto, who has already established a reputation in Glasgow; Mr. Wilson Thornton, formerly of the Carl Rosa Opera Company….These artistes appear both at the City Hall and St. Andrew’s Hall.’ *Glasgow Evening News*, 30 August 1921, Playbills 1921, clipping, Mitchell Library, Special Collections, Glasgow.
94 *Glasgow Evening News*, 30 August 1921, Playbills 1921, clipping, Mitchell Library, Special Collections, Glasgow.
Figure 18: ‘Glasgow is their choice’ proclaimed the Glasgow Bulletin. Iwa and her husband, the tenor Wilson Thornton, publicise their move to Glasgow and their intention of offering singing lessons in the city. Glasgow Bulletin, 25 August 1921, p.6.

Conclusion

The transformations in cultural representation that occurred at the turn of the twentieth century are evident when one looks to the work of Alfred Hill and the career of Princess Iwa. Hill’s songs, a combination of European musical form and structure with Māori themes and settings, and Princess Iwa’s persona of a ‘Maori Nightingale’ altered notions of Māori, Pākehā, ‘High’ and ‘Low’ art, and offered innovative understandings of New Zealand, its society and culture. The work of these two artists
illustrate how Western classical and lyric music moved into popular culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for both Māori and Pākehā, as they fashioned musical representations of New Zealand. Maggie Papakura’s and Princess Iwa’s promotion of Hill and his music permeated Māori popular performance at this time. While Hill composed music that reflected the ethos of the era, Māori singers performed and celebrated his compositions overseas, contributing to his reputation as a New Zealand composer who wrote ‘Maori music’. Thus, Iwa personified Māori while performing Pākehā idealised versions of Māori, and her success on stage helped to promote Pākehā musical compositions.

Hill, lauded as a musical ‘genius’ following Hinemoa’s Wellington premiere in 1896, continued to explore the melding of Māori musical influences and themes with European musical styles. In the 1950s an Australian journalist credited Hill with ‘putting Māori music on the map’, while in the mid-1990s the noted New Zealand ethnomusicologist Mervyn McLean referred to Hill’s compositions as ‘Europeanised Māori songs’. By incorporating Māori stories and settings into his work Hill alleged that ‘Māori’ would be remembered through his music. Likewise, Iwa believed that by performing in piupiu and including orchestrated versions of haka in her act, she would contribute to an understanding of Māori culture and custom in the United Kingdom. Ultimately, both artists used the medium of music to portray New Zealand. Most Pākehā commentators acknowledge that Hill inaugurated a form

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97 McLean, p.313; Frank Snow, ‘He Made Maori Music Famous’, Australasian Post, 5 April 1951, p.16.
of music that represented a new expression of New Zealand and its people. However, writing in 1929, Irene Phillips believed the ‘songs sold by publishers as traditional Maori melodies may have had their origin in the misty past, but they have become so Europeanised in transit that they are of no value to the student’. 98 This chapter challenges Phillips’s claim. In examining Hill’s and Iwa’s contribution to musical representations of New Zealand we can appreciate the value they have had in shaping the cultural landscape of this nation and perceptions of New Zealand abroad.

The progression towards modernity in the early twentieth century is measured by developments in many areas of society including industry, urbanisation, networks of communication and political systems of government. In New Zealand, the granting of Dominion status in 1907 signalled a loosening of ties to the Imperial way of life, though recent historiography has debated the degree to which this happened. 99 Nonetheless, politicians and artists actively pursued the shaping of New Zealand and New Zealanders as separate and unique entities in the early twentieth century. The creative expression of New Zealand – its people and its landscape – continued to emerge within the systems of politics and religion prominent in this time period. The performing arts reflected these imaginings, as the following chapter highlights developments in representations of New Zealand in the Dominion.

99 For example, Felicity Barnes, states that although ‘Dominion status was supposed to signify the end of New Zealand’s colonial existence’ it had little effect on the continuation of ties to the ‘Old Country’ in terms of commerce, customs and in the construction of a ‘new’ New Zealand reflecting selected aspects of ‘home’. Felicity Barnes, New Zealand’s London, esp.pp.70-75.
Chapter Three: Performing landscape, people and stories: Rotorua and the Reverend Frederick Augustus Bennett

Māori performance and performance of ‘Māori’ was pivotal in the development of the tourist industry in New Zealand, and nowhere was this more evident than in the North Island town of Rotorua. The need for authenticity to be contained in acceptable and accessible environments led to new expressions of Māori and Māori culture. Early tourist endeavours in the Rotorua district, especially in the aftermath of the Mount Tarawera volcanic eruption in 1886, focused primarily on the hot pools and healing baths rather than on the local inhabitants. Visitors to the area marvelled at the performance of the natural environment prior to the construction of the model Māori village at Whakarewarewa in Rotorua and in the absence of Māori performing Māori. This combination of nature, leisure and culture was on show at the Sanatorium Bath House, opened in 1908 by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts (DTHR), and at the Māori village at Whakarewarewa. The exchange of corporeal and terrestrial energy manifested itself predominately in the village of Ohinemutu, at Whakarewarewa and at the mineral baths of the Sanatorium. Consequently, representations of these natural and physical phenomena appeared on stages throughout New Zealand at this time.

This chapter focuses on events between 1908 and 1915 that demonstrate how the landscape, people and stories of Rotorua manifested as performances. Coalescing with New Zealand’s engagement with the war in Europe, these performance events contributed to the shaping of identities at home. The roles that Pākehā and Māori played, both on and off stage, in the display and construction of New Zealand are crucial to this examination, as is the Reverend Frederick Augustus Bennett, who
assumed a role of tremendous power and influence in all these endeavours. Best known as a member of the Te Aute College association (the forerunner of the Young Māori Party) and as the first Anglican Māori Bishop of Aotearoa, his accomplishments in the performing arts have been sidelined by these other significant contributions to New Zealand society.¹ However, as this chapter illustrates, Bennett ceaselessly pursued new avenues for performance of and by Māori. His creations embraced the physical, emotional and aspirational aspects of Māori while slotting into Pākehā cultural expressions in the first decades of the twentieth century.

The conflict between appropriation of Māori culture and legends by Pākehā on the one hand and representations of assimilated Māori by Māori on the other, is at the heart of the challenge that sites such as Whakarewarewa and Bennett’s production posed. Māori were crucial to all these endeavours. And while there is no denying that Bennett’s performances adhered to a paradigm of the acceptable display of assimilated Māori — the balance of power lay with Pakeha — the standard and content of his entertainment blurred the boundary between the races. Examinations of these nascent culturally hybrid theatrical representations of New Zealand align with Peter Burke’s belief that ‘historians are increasingly sensitized’ to the transcultural understandings of the past.² Thus, in this intermingling of European artforms with Māori stories and customs set in hyper-realised settings, the idea of New Zealand, home to Māori and Pākehā, expanded.

¹ The Young Maori Party, although not a political party as such, assembled young Māori men, predominately educated at the Anglican Te Aute College, interested in mediating between the Crown and Māori. They pursued advancements for Māori in modern New Zealand society by adapting and adopting aspects of Pākehā culture and society. Founded in the late nineteenth century, its fiercest advocates, were Apirana Ngata, Maui Pomare, Te Rangi Hiroa, and Frederick Bennett, all from tribal groups who had historically demonstrated cooperation with the Crown. See Richard Hill, State Authority, Indigenous Autonomy: Crown-Maori Relations in New Zealand/Aotearoa 1900-1950, Wellington, 2004, esp.pp.43-64.

² Peter Burke, Cultural Hybridity, Cambridge, 2009 p.9.
The natural drama of spouting geysers and bubbling mud pools combined with the mystery and romance associated with Māori culture proved a winning formula for the tourist trade in this area. Jane Desmond has spoken of the ‘nexus of visual representation, popular performance, anthropology and bodily “sciences”’ that can be seen at the sites of tourism where ‘cultural difference’ became the focus and commodity. This nexus was crucial in Rotorua, where Māori were expected to assume a timelessness and naturalness combined with modern approaches to performing Māori-ness and New Zealand-ness. In 1901 New Zealand established the first government department of tourism in the world, the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts (DTHR). The department promoted and managed many sites of interest, both in the South Island (the Marlborough Sounds, Queenstown, Te Anau and Hanmer Springs) and in the North Island (the Waitomo Caves and the area surrounding Lake Waikaremoana in the Urewera forests). However, its primary focus was on the district surrounding Lake Rotorua in the Bay of Plenty region. This environment provided the means for Bennett to assemble groups of actors, singers and musicians who embodied the landscape and stories of Rotorua for domestic and international audiences. In particular, Bennett’s tableau and operatic interpretations of the Te Arawa story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai brought Māori and Pākehā into theatres across the country.

Objectives of assimilation, including the weakening of Māori language, beliefs and customs in the service of European culture, pervaded New Zealand society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The increase in interracial marriage throughout the nineteenth century, the accelerated settlement of Pākehā, and the blurring of boundaries between Māori and European customs, all contributed to the

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process of assimilation. In this era, tourist sites and theatres crystalized this process as Māori performed being Māori within European frameworks, with the theatricalization of Māori customs and stories slotting into pre-existing forms of performing arts. For instance, Sidney Moko Mead believes that George Grey, who published the story of Hinemoa in English in 1855, was a ‘man of his time’ and ‘an enigma to the Māori people’. Nonetheless, in his introduction to the revised 1988 edition Legends of Aotearoa, Mead states that Grey’s translations of Māori stories were crucial to the preservation of Māori culture and an essential element of modern New Zealand literature. As Mead explains, these myths and legends form ‘a part of our cultural heritage’. 4 With Bennett’s dramatised creations we can see yet another layer added to the interpretation, creation and fixing of tribal stories as Māori and, hence, New Zealand, stories.

The assimilationist ideology reflected both the contemporary government’s stance and the policies of Māori activists, in particular the Young Maori Party (YMP) and its followers, who supported specific degrees of assimilation as the way forward for Māori. An example of this can be seen in Bennett’s comments in October 1915. The Poverty Bay Herald reported that prior to the first bars of the overture to Percy Flynn’s opera Hinemoa being played, Bennett, as ‘proprietor’, appeared on stage and explained ‘how the production of the play has been entered upon, so as to create an interest in the Maori mind for the higher art’. 5 Therefore, one area where the ideologies of some Māori and Pākehā co-existed in this period was within the sphere of the performing arts, where the ‘essence’ of Māori materialised as Māori-ness in dramatic forms. 6

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5 Poverty Bay Herald, 14 October 1915, p.7.
6 Richard Hill explains that members of the YMP ‘urged both the adoption of many (or most) Pakeha ways and retention of the essence of Maoridom’. For purposes of this discussion I understand Hill’s
Figure 19: The performance of the geysers in Rotorua provided ‘scenes of interest’ for tourists. Tourist brochure, 1912, advertising Rotorua as ‘Geyserland’, Eph-A-Tourism-Rotorua, 1912-02 Front, ATL, Wellington.

Rotorua and the ‘curious life of this interesting people’

Though the local iwi and hapū (Te Arawa, Tūhourangi, Ngāti Whakaue, Ngāti Wahiao, Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Rangitīhi and Ngāti Rangiwhewhi) had resided in the

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area for centuries, an 1888 entry from the diary of tourist E. Barnes noted the lack of Māori in Ohinemutu, the thermal village just outside the Rotorua town centre: ‘We saw few Maoris and most of these old men and women, all the young men are away making the Railway from Oxford to here and as they take their wives and children with them, they leave the place pretty well deserted and we thought the place a horrid fraud and we little chance of selecting our 6 Maoris[sic].’ This absence of visible Māori led to the creation, by the DTHR, of ‘roles’ for Te Arawa and Ngāti Whakaue as ‘living’ Māori at the model Pā (village or fortress) built at Whakarewarewa.⁷

Indeed, the department re-imagined Māori for tourists. In 1896 the government purchased Whakarewarewa, a site of many large geysers and steaming hot pools, as ‘property of the nation’.⁹ With the repeal, in 1907, of the Rotorua Town Council Act, the town of Rotorua fell under the management of the DTHR, effectively making the whole town a tourist attraction while also alienating most of its native population.¹⁰

For the purposes of the DTHR this locale and its inhabitants created a vision and experience of New Zealand that was simultaneously natural, indigenous, manufactured and state-controlled. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has stated that in a habitat tourist site, such as Whakarewarewa, where people living in situ blend into an environment of historical or natural significance, ‘Visitors do not “passively” watch a performance on stage…they actively engage the site and those in it.’ ¹¹ The DTHR had hoped that families who lived at Whakarewarewa would ‘set up private

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⁷ Barnes, E, fl 1888: Diary of a tour to New Zealand, Australia, China and Japan across America and the Atlantic to England, qMs-0138, ATL, Wellington. Presumably the ‘6 Maoris’ were required as tour guides.
⁹ ibid.
enterprises of carving and weaving’ so the tourist could experience (and purchase) Maori crafts made on site by Maori, though this did not occur at this time.\(^\text{12}\)

The Pākehā men behind the development of the Whakarewarewa site imagined and shaped the village with a historic but de-tribalised Māori in mind. In the planning stages the head of the department, Thomas Donne, wrote to the Chief Engineer of Rotorua, Lawrence Birks, offering instructions for construction of the village based on a mid-nineteenth-century book of drawings by Englishman George French Angas.\(^\text{13}\) While the dwellings might have had a historical accuracy, based on Angas’s observations, the intended inhabitants were required to conform to a nineteenth-century idea of Māori. Moreover, the commercial aspect of the village demanded that, though authenticity and ‘purity’ were sought, the village also needed to be accessible and non-confrontational. Birks wrote to Donne outlining problems encountered with work undertaken and seeking design guidance:

> The two fundamental mistakes apparently are that the site has been levelled instead of advantage being taken of the natural unevenness of the ground, and the palisade has been built square and regular, instead in being irregular both in outline and contour. Our library of Maori Art is very deficient. Before re-commencing the work I should require to look up a few good models. I understand that Adams monograph on the subject is best and earliest, but will go into the matter on my next visit to Auckland.\(^\text{14}\)

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\(^\text{12}\) Waaka, p.90.

\(^\text{13}\) In 1847 George French Angas published *The New Zealanders Illustrated* in London. Angas’s illustrations of people and dwellings were accompanied by explanations. Letter from T.E. Donne to Lawrence Birks, 10 April 1908, BAEQ A259 5895 Box 44, rec. 244 Model Pa, Whakarewarewa, 1903-1912, Archives New Zealand, Auckland. As work continued at Whakarewarewa throughout 1907-1908, Birks responded to Donne’s suggestion of utilising Angas’s book that had indeed ‘proved very valuable in giving us some of the earlier ideas of Māori Pa work’. Letter from Lawrence Birks to Thomas Donne, 2 June 1908, BAEQ A259 5895 Box 44, rec. 244 Model Pa, Whakarewarewa, 1903-1912, Archives New Zealand, Auckland.

\(^\text{14}\) Letter from Lawrence Birks, Engineer in Charge, to Thomas Donne, 4 June 1907, BAEQ A259 5895 Box 44, rec. 244 Model Pa, Whakarewarewa, 1903-1912, Archives New Zealand, Auckland.
Birks’s reluctance to consult local Māori hinged on his belief that in order to be authentic and appeal to tourists, the village’s design and construction needed to be overseen by European ‘experts’: ‘We should also require an expert to supervise the work. The Maoris themselves have no conception of the importance in such matters of excluding modern tendencies unless supervised by an enthusiast.’\textsuperscript{15} The engineer was convinced that the commercial potential of Whakarewarewa would be diminished if Māori were allowed final say in the design of dwellings and pou, or carved poles. As Birks explained: ‘While the Pa will be kept as closely in conformity with pure Maori Art as possible… revenue earning capacity will of course be the main consideration in designing the details.’\textsuperscript{16} An illustration of the importance placed on European sensibilities being overlaid on the Māori design at this model village is seen in a letter the District Tourist Agent received in 1905 from the Minister for Tourist and Health Resorts stating that the Minister ‘has received petitions complaining of the unnecessarily indecent carved figures that have been erected round the Model Pā at Whakarewarewa, and in consequence thereof he has given directions that the indecent portions of the figures in question are to be removed at once’.\textsuperscript{17} The ‘indecent portions’ presumably referred to depiction of male genitalia that appear on many kuwaha, or carved entrance boards of whare runanga (meeting houses) and pou (pole).\textsuperscript{18}

The creation of the model village illustrates how the historical narrative of Te Arawa was reinforced by the DTHR. When the Whakarewarewa village opened to the public in 1908 the DTHR relocated three families from the district to whare (houses)

\textsuperscript{15} ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{16} ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{17} Letter from C.R.C. Robieson to the District Tourist Agent, 14 June 1905, BAEO A259 5895 Box 44, rec no. 244 ‘Model Pah’, Archives New Zealand, Auckland. \\
on site to be representatives of ‘authentic’ Māori life. These families, who were most likely from the tribes and hapū of Tuhourangi and Ngati Wahiao, had lived at Whakarewarewa prior to the government’s purchase and thus had a connection to this land. Other elements of authenticity could be manufactured, as demonstrated by Birks’s suggestion that ‘the natives occupying the Pa plant “kumura” on the site of the house, as an example of Māori agriculture’. Thus, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has identified habitat sites, where ‘the curator is a dramaturge of the metonyms of history,’ Birks and Hamilton shaped the story of New Zealand for the tourist.

Bennett also involved himself in discussions between the government and Ngāti Whakaue concerning Whakarewarewa and its representation. His correspondence with Birks reveals that while he valued the tourist trade in the area, he had concerns regarding visitors’ understanding and appreciation of local Māori at this specific site. In July 1909 Bennett suggested to Birks ‘the writing up of a descriptive pamphlet [sic] describing each part of the Pa, with a plan attached. This pamphlet could be kept at the Pa and sold for a small price as souvenirs of the visit. I think the tourists ought to be supplied with better information than they are now getting through the guides.’ Guides, such as Maggie Papakura and her sister Bella, had long taken tourists through Whakarewarewa, pointing out the major geysers and wonders of nature unique to the area.

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19 Waaka, p.90.
21 Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, p.193.
Bennett’s ancestral connection to the area was paramount to his involvement with both tourism and entertainment. The Bennett family home, situated on the shores of Lake Rotorua at Ohinemutu, provided an ideal location for Bennett to observe the tourist trade from a young age. From here Bennett witnessed and understood the attraction that both Māori and the natural scenic wonders held for tourists and audiences. He could watch as the noted carver Tene Waitere carved souvenirs for tourists at the Geyser Hotel at Whakarewarewa and visitors to the Lake House Hotel in Ohinemutu were encouraged to observe ‘the curious life of this interesting people’.

Bennett’s whakapapa, or genealogy, is crucial when discussing his theatrical adaptations, especially his versions of the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai. As discussed in his study of the Whare Tapere, or a ‘pre European’ house of

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entertainment, Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal explained how Māori stories moved ‘progressively from those of clear mythological nature to one[s] which [contain] historical figures who are nonetheless mythologized in Māori tradition’.24 The story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai epitomised this process; by the twentieth century it was understood as a Māori story that belonged to all New Zealanders, supported by works such as Alfred Hill’s musical cantata. What is most relevant to this examination of Tutanekai’s progression from historical figure to mythological hero is Bennett’s connection, genealogically and geographically. Bennett’s whakapapa is as follows:

Tama te kapua,  
Kahu matumamoe,  
Tamake moetahanga,  
Nenuku mai raratonga,  
Rangataki,  
Tuhourangi  
Nunuku kopake,  
Whakane,  
**Tutanekai**,  
Whakimairangi,  
AriAri te Rangi,  
Tunahopu,  
Tumaeke,  
Te Tiwha  

Pango Ihutarena  
Rangi moewaho Amohau  
Kai whakapaepae Paora Amohau  
Kateruna Kiwi Amohau  
Raiha Ratitel  
Frederick Augustus Bennett.25

Pererika Frederick Augustus Bennett, born at Rotorua on 18 November 1872, grew up in a racially mixed household. His mother, Raiha Ratite Rodgers, of Te Arawa and Ngāti Whākaue, was the daughter of Captain William Rodgers, an American born in Salem, Massachusetts, and Katerina Rangi Kawhiti, from

24 ibid., p.127.  
Ohinemutu. His father, Thomas Jackson Bennett, was the son of John Boyle Bennett, from County Cork, Ireland. A medical doctor and lay minister for the Methodist Church, John Boyle Bennett was a close friend to Governor George Grey and was appointed Registrar-General of New Zealand in the 1850s while also serving as the editor of the *New Zealander*. Thus, Bennett was surrounded by language and customs from Māori, Irish, English and American traditions, something reflected in his ability to speak ‘Maori and English with model fluency and resonance’. This close relationship to cultures that revelled in expressive storytelling and music revealed itself in Bennett’s religious and theatrical endeavours. Bennett’s accomplished singing, especially of choral music, and his powerful oration were commented on throughout his life. After attending St. Stephen’s College in Auckland, Bennett formed his first choir in 1893 in Wanganui. Hemi Bennett, F.A. Bennett’s brother, recorded that ‘he was famed for the resonance of his deep, rich voice, and as an orator he was probably without peer in the country’. The lines between secular and religious devotion and praise may have blurred for Bennett since ‘on one occasion during a church service, the congregation was so carried away by his eloquence that they burst into spontaneous applause’. The drama of Māori waiata, haka and legends combined with the church services of his youth and the Irish oratory style of his paternal family line found an outlet in his theatrical productions.

27 Hemi Bennett, Hemi Bennett papers, MS-Papers-1341, ATL, Wellington.
28 Westerman, p.2.
29 ibid., p.10.
30 Hemi Bennett, Hemi Bennett papers, MS-Papers 1341, ATL, Wellington.
31 ibid.
Hinemoa, Tutanekai and the Reverend Bennett

Part of Bennett’s strategy to morally, culturally and socially uplift Māori included performance; specifically, acting, re-enacting and presenting Māori stories and customs for Pākehā audiences. In his work as an Anglican minister and supporter of the YMP, Bennett used the performing arts to educate, promote and sustain certain aspects of Te Arawa and Māori culture. This is reflected in his selection of material for the Rotorua Maori Entertainers (RME), the group he formed in 1908, and the Maori Opera Company, his company of singers assembled in 1915. Notably both the RME and the Maori Opera Company performed versions of the Hinemoa story; the former in a tableaux vivants staging, and the latter with music and lyrics by Percy Flynn, direction by Charles Arthur, and accompanied by a small orchestra. In conjunction with the tableaux, the RME also presented ‘old tribal customs and ceremonies of the ancient people’ in the first half of their programme.\(^\text{32}\) The acceptance and appreciation given to the RME is shown in a notice from the Christchurch Star 18 July 1908 that proclaimed the ‘one universal verdict’ that the RME was ‘the best entertainment of its kind ever witnessed in New Zealand’.\(^\text{33}\) In this programme the ‘refined, unique and intensely diverting entertainment’ showcased poi and haka, alongside a male quartet who sang a combination of waiata, ‘Plantation Songs’ and popular tunes, such as the Scottish folk ballad *The Banks of Allen Water*, in addition to the staging of *Hinemoa*.\(^\text{34}\)

\(^{32}\) *New Zealand Herald*, 7 July 1908, p.3.

\(^{33}\) *Star*, 18 July 1908, p. 6. The troupe of entertainers had, by the time of their appearance in Christchurch, already filled theatres in Rotorua, Auckland, New Plymouth, Wanganui and Wellington. According to a report in the *Taranaki Herald*, prior to setting out on tour this group had been giving weekly performances in Rotorua: *Taranaki Herald*, 4 July 1908, p.2. The itinerary of the tour was as follows: Auckland, 6 July, Choral Hall; New Plymouth, 8 July, Theatre Royal; Wanganui, 9 and 10 July, Opera House; Wellington, 15 July, Town Hall; Feilding, 18 July, Drill Hall; Christchurch, 22 and 23 July, Choral Hall; Dunedin, 25 and 27 July, His Majesty’s Theatre; Wellington, 30 July, Town Hall. Reports indicate that most theatres were full or near capacity for every performance.

\(^{34}\) *Taranaki Herald*, 8 July 1908, p.7
Unlike earlier representations of the Hinemoa story, Bennett’s performance events consisted of representations of Māori by Māori, albeit filtered through European sensibilities and cultural expressions. The Hinemoa tableaux heralded a new direction for New Zealand entertainment, producing a hybrid form of embodied cultural identity. By 1915 Bennett had expanded the boundaries even further in his collaboration with composer Percy Flynn on the Hinemoa opera. Though many forms of Western entertainment were introduced into New Zealand in the nineteenth century, the origins of staged tableaux vivants can be traced to eighteenth-century France and nineteenth-century United States. By the 1830s tableaux were an ‘important form of popular entertainment’ in the United States, reaching their apex of popularity in the 1850s. Tableaux, in both amateur and professional form, made their first appearance on New Zealand stages that same decade. Therefore, by the time Bennett applied for a patent for his tableaux of Hinemoa and Tutanekai in 1914, this form of entertainment had been seen in New Zealand for over 50 years. At their simplest, tableaux vivants consisted of performers who represented in static form a scene from a painting, a sculpture or an event in history. Aided by costumes, scenery, lighting and musical accompaniment, tableaux recreated a still, silent image, which represented the original as close as humanly possible.

Tableaux were also incorporated into local historical pageants in the early twentieth century, particularly in the United States, where this ‘public historical imagery’ contributed to how Americans defined their ‘sense of identity and direction’. Bennett’s tableaux presented a local and historical Māori story as popular

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36 Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle, 11 June 1856, p.2; Southern Cross, 9 December 1856, p.3.
entertainment, and in the process gave audiences in 1908 a similar ‘sense of identity and direction’. Thus, the theatrical elements of Bennett’s tableaux combined European and American forms of presentation with traditional and popular cultural expression, disrupting representations of Māori in theatrical settings. Moreover, these developments in artistic expression resulted in the transformation of historic legends into forms of popular entertainment in twentieth-century New Zealand.

Besides Bennett and his performers, New Zealanders from other sections of society were also taking part in the invention of the ‘Māori as aesthetic experience’. This ‘utilization of Māori subjects for cultural expression’ conforms to Gibbons’s idea that cultural co-option was part of the ‘normative cultural practice by Pākehā’ at this time. This aesthetic expression could be found in high fashion and jewellery shops catering to domestic and foreign tourists. In the same month that Bennett toured the RME in 1908, an Auckland Queen Street jeweller advertised the latest in quality accessories for the fashionable woman. Amongst the gold and pearl pendants were two symbols of Māori culture: a greenstone tiki and a greenstone heart carved with the words ‘Kia Ora’. Though these pendants could adorn the necks of both Māori and Pākehā women, along with female tourists, these symbols of Māori culture became part of the popular culture and fashion of the day. However, this ‘general European discourse, which sought to record, classify, explain and control the non-European world’ is complicated when the participants and co-creators were Māori, as was the case with Bennett’s productions.

38 McClure, pp.43-49; Galbraith, p.7.
The well-heeled and fashionable also flocked to theatres, opera houses and town halls curious to ‘see what the trained Māori can do’ on stage.  

The first half of the RME programme depicted, against the painted scenery of the Ohinemutu Pā, the ‘Māori at home, at play’. The second half consisted of Bennett’s tableau of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, which presented the story of triumphant love against all odds in eight scenes. As the painted curtain of a kainga (village) parted, steam rose from the ground, revealing the maiden Hinemoa, beautiful in the mist, poised on a large rock. The moonlit night, achieved by limelight stage lighting, added to the heightened sense of realism in the theatre and conjured a romantic and idyllic land.  

This opening scene promised a magical re-telling of this much-loved story. If, as Mary Chapman

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40 Star, 18 July 1908, p.6.
41 Auckland Star, 7 July 1908, p.3; New Zealand Herald, 7 July 1908, p.3.
explains in her discussion of American tableaux vivants, the aim of tableau is to
depict ‘a single instant’ while implying ‘a complete narrative’ then Bennett’s
Hinemoa accomplished that.42 The scenes of the tableaux were as follows:

Tableaux– Scene: Lake Rotorua and Mokoia Island (from Owhata)

a. Hinemoa on Iri-iri Kapua Rock (listening to the strains of Tutanekai’s flute
(koauau).

b. Hinemoa swimming to Mokoia Island.

c. Hinemoa resting on ‘Hinewhata’, a carved pole erected in Lake Rotorua.

d. Hinemoa in Bath.

e. Tiki giving drink to Hinemoa.

f. Hinemoa breaks the Calabash.

g. Tutanekai and Tiki appear.

h. Recognition of Hinemoa by Tutanekai.43

It is clear from reports that the slow and elegant portrayal was ‘striking’ and
‘poetical’, and that Bennett devised his tableaux presentation with an awareness of
professional theatrical standards.44 The incandescent lighting proved especially
effective, as the Feilding Star reported that Bennett devised ‘scenery and effects’ that
made the tableaux the ‘favourite item on the programme’.45 Musical items between
scenes, allowing the performers time to change positions, juxtaposed present-day
Māori with characters from ‘the famous old story’.46 Casting aside ‘traditional’ Māori

43 Tableaux - Legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, PC 4, 1914/15, Archives New Zealand, Wellington. In 1914 Bennett applied to the patent office to claim copyright of his tableaux of Hinemoa in addition to three other tableaux. The application outlines the scene breakdown as cited.
44 New Zealand Herald, 7 July 1908 p.3; Star, 23 July 1908, p.1.
45 Feilding Star, 9 July 1908, p.2
46 New Zealand Herald, 7 July 1908, p.3.
dress, the performers took on the appearance of middle-to-upper-class English. Attired in European-style clothing (the male quartet in full evening dress and the women in blouses and long skirts), the singers embodied the assimilated Māori.47 For instance, between scenes a and b (Hinemoa on rock and Hinemoa’s swim) the female quartet sang, while between scenes c and d (Hinemoa resting and Hinemoa in bath) the male quartet entertained. The songs, versions of English folk and popular tunes of the day, concluded with a part-singing version in te reo Māori of Home Sweet Home/Te Kainga Tupu, presented by a full mixed choir.48 However, not all who saw this production appreciated Bennett’s choice of dress. The reviewer from the New Zealand Truth commented on Hinemoa’s costume, voicing the objection that a ‘fully dressed swimmer butchers the probabilities of the legend’.49 Given the sensibilities of the day, it is difficult to imagine Hinemoa appearing in anything less than a modest outfit.

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47 ibid.
49 New Zealand Truth, 1 August 1908, p.1.
The linking of civilisation with imperial culture at the turn of the twentieth century was crystallized in the arts in the British colonies. As cultural theorist Robert Young explains, ‘racial superiority, and its attendant virtue of civilization, took over even from economic gain or Christian missionary work as the presiding, justifying idea of empire’, and nowhere could this civilisation be seen more than in opera.  

*Hinemoa*, the ‘Maori’ opera, premiered in the Waikato region of the North Island at Paeroa in July 1915. Composed by Percy Flynn with direction from Charles Archer, the three-act opera was performed by a cast of 30 of the ‘Maori Opera Company’.

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51 Bennett and Flynn finalised their collaboration in 1914 when both parties signed a purchase agreement with the Office of Copyright which stated that Flynn (‘the Vendor’), author of the ‘Hinemoa opera’, would receive £20 ‘after said Musical Opera shall have been performed publicly at Rotorua.
As the *Free Lance* newspaper announced, ‘A Maori opera by real Maori performers is certainly something unique’. Following *Hinemoa*’s premiere a commentator for the *Ohinemuri Gazette* questioned the emergence of the Māori as opera singer but conceded that the time had come for such a phenomenon since ‘we have Maori members of Parliament and Statesmen, Maori doctors and Maori ministers of the church’. Thus, for the writer, it was inevitable that Māori should enter the world of European musical culture. The arrival of a ‘Maori opera’ on New Zealand stages appeared to provide evidence of the success of cultural imperialism.
Figure 23: Poster for Hinemoa. This ‘soul inspiring and beautiful spectacular Maori opera’ premiered July 1915. Directed by Mr Charles Arthur, the ‘well-known actor-elocutionist’ with a ‘beautiful transparent vision scene painted by Mr. Baird of Auckland, and Mr. W. Thomsen of Rotorua. 3 Acts and 9 Grand Scenic Tableaux.’ Photographs of cast members include Mere Amohau, Tiriti Butt and Tiawhi Rogers. Poster in possession of author.
Unlike the composer Alfred Hill’s 1896 cantata *Hinemoa* that featured Pākehā singers who performed in stationary positions in a declamatory fashion, Charles Arthur’s *Hinemoa* featured Māori performers acting their roles. Thus the ‘nine grand scenic tableaux’ scored for violin, oboe, cello, bass and trumpet, portrayed various scenes of the legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekai via chorus numbers, duets and solos, enhanced with ‘mechanical and limelight effects’.  

As discussed in chapter two, the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai inspired many Pākehā artists to create theatrical and/or musical adaptations, from the nineteenth century. Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikāheke chronicled Māori genealogy that reflected his own Te Arawa ancestry and shared these stories with Governor George Grey. Following Grey’s publications in 1854 (in te reo Māori) and 1855 (in English), these stories of Te Arawa eventually assumed origins as stories from Māoridom, erasing reference to specific tribes. Nonetheless, Grey’s publication of the Te Arawa stories led to many dramatisations before Bennett’s tableaux staging. Prior to both Flynn’s opera and Hill’s cantata of 1896, Miss Alice Rowley presented her *morceau por piano, Hinemoa* with a dedication written by Thomas Bracken, ‘to Sir George Grey’ in 1887, and in 1880 the *New Zealand Times* reported that ‘the manuscript of a new extravaganza entitled *Hinemoa* from the pen of “Grif” (Mr. Griffen of Wanganui)’ had crossed the reporter’s desk and was an ‘ambitious effort…well worth production on the stage’.  

Accordingly, for Bennett and Flynn’s operatic production, ‘Mr Baird of Auckland and

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54 Poster for Hinemoa, in possession of author.  
56 *New Zealand Times*, 9 November 1880, p.2.
Mr W Thomsen of Rotorua’ delivered ‘beautiful new scenery’, creating a ‘beautiful transparent vision’. The scenic effects provided by limelight added to the overall allure and visceral impact of their opera, with Hinemoa’s swim achieved through a ‘stage illusion’ of the moon rising over a ‘misty’ Lake Rotorua.

Figure 24: Photo of cast and musicians of Hinemoa, 1915, with signatures, taken outside Hatupatu meeting house at the model Pah, Whakarewarewa, Rotorua, 1915. Some performers have also signed their character name next to their real name, e.g., ‘Geoffrey Rogers (Tutanekai) and Toby Mahina (Tiki)’. Rev F.A. Bennett is in centre, composer Percy Flynn at far right holding baton and director Charles Arthur lounging in lower left corner. ‘Rev. F.A. Bennett’s Group at Hatupatu house model Pa’, photo: ID-7717, OP-2339, Rotorua Museum of Art and History/Te Whare Taonga O Te Arawa.

57 Poster for Hinemoa, in possesion of author.
58 Most newspaper reports mention the scenic effects without going into detail of how they were achieved. Limelight instruments were commonly used in theatres at this time.
Music and Māori: hybridisation of musical forms

Māori adopted and adapted Western forms of music from first contact with Europeans, with styles and techniques coming from various sources. Likewise, music by Māori in New Zealand reflected influences from across the Pacific region. John Thomson attributes the adaptation to Western musical forms by many Māori in the early nineteenth century to the work of the missionaries. Thomson states, ‘once missionaries …found they could win more hearts and souls through music, especially the singing of hymns’, Māori became familiar and comfortable with different tonic scales, metered phrases and rhyming text. Mervyn McLean cites missionary Richard Taylor’s observation in 1839 of local Māori singing ‘no more than three of four notes’, but this had already changed by the early 1840s with the widespread exposure to Christianity and its rituals. Earlier, in the late eighteenth century, Captain James Cook observed that the songs he heard sung by Māori were ‘solemn and slow, like those of our Psalms, containing many notes and semitones’. Nevertheless, as has been discussed by McLean and others, the scale, or number of notes, employed in waiata by Māori before European settlement differed from the scales utilised in Western notation. Elsdon Best also described the use of breath in hianga, ‘Maori singing’, as ‘drawn out vowel sounds’ that continued to the end of a line or stanza without a drop in the voice, while also explaining that ‘melody….seems to be produced by slight modulations of the voice’. Similarly an account from J.L. Nicholas in 1814 described a song of Māori as ‘a plaintive and melodious air, not unlike some of our sacred music in many of its turns; as it forcibly reminded me of

62 Best, p.187.
the chanting in our cathedrals; it being deep, slow and extended’. By 1908 the 36-year-old Bennett had long participated in Western-style music and his Christian upbringing, not dissimilar to other Māori at this time, impacted on his musical life and those under his charge.

From the mid-nineteenth century many Māori commonly sang other types of popular and folk music from elsewhere, alongside hymns. Considering these influences, the structure, sound and technique required to perform Flynn’s compositions for Hinemoa would have not proved jarring or musically difficult for most members of Bennett’s company, as they had also performed Negro spirituals, English parlour songs, Scottish folk ballads and church hymns in various incarnations of Bennett’s choirs. Though Flynn had resided for some time in Rotorua, his music for Hinemoa reflected the style of European music of the day and no attempt was made to make it resemble ‘traditional’ Māori music. Thus, while Flynn’s compositions veered from ‘traditional’ Māori singing in various ways, the skill that the cast of Hinemoa demonstrated in their performances attested to their accomplished musicianship, flexibility in vocal delivery and attuned ears.

The vocal style promoted by Bennett demonstrated the transnational nature of music at this time, highlighting influences from Europe and the United States. The ‘Plantation Songs’ in the RME shows were a borrowed theatrical style that harked back to the Minstrel performances of the mid-nineteenth century. These types of songs were first heard in New Zealand from visiting African American performing troupes from the 1870s, though black-face performers toured the country earlier as ‘Ethiopian Serenaders’ in the 1860s, presenting caricaturised songs of ‘the negro’.  

64 John D. Drummond, Choirs and Clogs, Mr. Ballads and Mr. Bones: Musical and other Entertainments in Dunedin 1860-1862, Dunedin, 1991, p.12.
Matthew Wittmann claims in his study of American entertainers in the Pacific that the 1877 tour by the Georgia Minstrels ‘introduced negro spirituals to New Zealand’. In the late 1880s the Fisk Jubilee Singers, a successful group of African American performers from Tennessee, toured both the North and South Islands, as did another group of black performers, the Hicks-Sawyer Minstrels. It has been said of the Fisk Jubilee Singers that they ‘standardized the performance of Negro spirituals by performing them in choral settings’, and their contribution to American culture had the long-term effect of introducing this type of music to a broad section of the population. As Lori Lynn Brooks, a scholar of African American history, explains, ‘if white Americans knew anything about Negro spirituals, it was due to the successful national and world tours’ of the Jubilee singers. Nonetheless, it is clear from a report in the Evening Post following the RME appearance at the Wellington Town Hall in 1908 that the songs were well known by the audiences. The reviewer appreciated the singers’ effort as the ‘familiar “plantation songs” were somewhat exotic, but took a new and original aspect as given by Maoris’.

The quality of Flynn’s music for Hinemoa raises other questions concerning this hybridisation of musical forms. Though the Free Lance described Flynn’s music as ‘a rare conception of Maori tradition’, a comment in the New Zealand Truth illustrated that not everyone who attended a performance emerged convinced of Flynn’s talents: ‘there is room for improvement in Percy Flynn’s composition; it lacks

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68 Evening Post, 16 July 1908, p.2.
spirit, and resembles largely the simple tunes of the Sunday school.’\textsuperscript{69} The Auckland Star tended to agree, believing the score ‘fails here and there’; however, there were elements of the production worthy of praise, particularly the ‘excellent chorus works’\textsuperscript{70}. Songs with titles such as The Life of a Maori Chief and Little Maori Maid, Good-bye! sat alongside others in the opera that did not specifically reference Māori, including Welcome to the Moon, By Yonder Star and My Angry Heart.\textsuperscript{71} It seems that Flynn’s attempt to inject local colour into his musical style, while innovative, may not have reached a pinnacle of compositional originality in New Zealand music.

Nonetheless, selected songs from Flynn’s score became available as sheet music to purchase, and these proved popular amongst the public. A duet, Little Maori Maid, Good-bye!, sung by the characters Tiki and Tupa, particularly captured the public’s fancy. The cover of Little Maori Maid, Good-bye!, published by music publishers A. Eady and Company, Auckland, featured a photograph of Mere Amohau and Toby Mahina in costume.\textsuperscript{72} The lyrics related the tale of a warrior who, slain in battle, is mourned by his ‘Maori Maid’, and these sentiments must have resonated with a public who received daily reports of loved ones killed on the battlefields in far-off Europe. The young lovers sing of ‘pining there with a heart so sore, for her brave lover she’d see no more’, while the chorus recalls their happy times together:

\begin{verbatim}

\end{verbatim}
‘When light is fading at the close of day, And you know I am far away,
Don’t sigh for me, little Maori, I’ll come back to you by and by;
Forever of you my fond thoughts will be, In our camp ‘neath the Ti-tree.
Aroha! Little Maori maid, Goodbye!  

Flynn’s lyrics reflected an idealised and romanticised Māori, and his music resonated in settings ranging from an intimate drawing room soireé, to a large opera house stage.


**Education and entertainment in ‘native colour and action’**

Alongside the plantation songs and Scottish folk ballads of the RME and the duets, solos and chorus numbers of Flynn’s opera, performances of poi, haka and games were incorporated into both of Bennett’s productions. In the opera these items provided ‘native colour and action’ between songs and connected scenes. Thus, as daylight breaks over Rotorua, a ‘haka of welcome’ ushers in the character of Whakaue, the chief. Prior to Tiki and Tupa’s duet, *Little Maori Maid, Good-bye!*, (the
‘great favourites’ with the audience), the ‘clever poi girls’ performed a poi dance.\footnote{Poverty Bay Herald, 15 October 1915, p.7.} In one reviewer’s opinion, the inclusion of both haka and poi saved the show ‘from slumber’.\footnote{New Zealand Truth, 18 September 1915, p.2.} Following the performance of the opera in Auckland at His Majesty’s Theatre, a writer for the Auckland Star noted that, ‘Hinemoa is astonishingly good’, adding, ‘In their hakas they exhibit an abandon and gusto which raises the audience to enthusiasm, while the pois have a rhythm and grace that is really nearer art than the fashionable tango, with its cubist attitudes and it vulgar exuberance. The applause was the heartiest the theatre walls have echoed for a long time.’\footnote{Auckland Star, 3 August 1915, p.3.} Another commentator went so far as to say that without the presence of the haka and poi in the work ‘not much else remains’.\footnote{Evening Post, 17 November 1915, p.2.}

The RME performances of 1908 consisted of two halves, with the Hinemoa tableaux finishing the programme. Bennett took to the stage at the beginning of the evening and explained that the performance presented ‘living depictions of the Maori as he was to be seen 50 years ago’.\footnote{Otago Witness, 29 July 1908, p.69.} The Evening Post advised readers that the RME performance contained much to ‘appeal to all students of Maori life and legendary lore’\footnote{Evening Post, 29 July 1908, p.2.} Reviews substantiated Bennett’s aim of presenting entertainment that was ‘pure, wholesome and elevating’. As the Evening Post explained, ‘the concerts have done much to educate the public to the possibilities in the Maori character’.\footnote{ibid.}

Bennett’s verbal interjection in the evening’s performance provided welcome explanations for the urban Pākehā. The Otago Witness commented, ‘were it not for the explanatory and interesting observations by the Rev. F.A. Bennett, which precede each item, the audience would be lost in conjecture as to what was going forward on
Another review supported Bennett’s aim of education through entertainment. ‘The concerts’, the writer claimed, ‘have done much to educate the public to the possibilities in the Māori character…the beautiful staging of the various tableaux, the singing of English glees, and the characteristic haka and poi dances, are an education in themselves to the pakeha.’ Bennett also used the performances of RME and the *Hinemoa* opera to raise awareness of the plight of the modern Māori and to elicit help in his fundraising efforts supporting this objective.

**Performance, Assimilation and the Maori Congress**

Instances of collaboration and agency by Māori within this assimilationist-orientated society augment our understanding of the history of New Zealand’s performing arts. Moreover, Bennett’s active participation in the creative display of Māori stories and customs, in addition to his Christian ministry and work for the YMP, expands the history of Māori and Pākehā relations in the early twentieth century. Bennett staged a version of the assimilated Māori while educating Pākehā on an idealised Māori of the past. In 1908, at the conclusion of the first half of the RME performance, Bennett spoke directly to the audience outlining the aims and objectives of the ‘Young Maori movement’ to which proceeds from the tour would be donated. Possessing great oratorical skills, Bennett asked ‘for the Pakeha help in order that the Maori may be uplifted from his present state, and saved from extinction’. The support given the YMP by both Māori and Pākehā was substantiated in the *New Zealand Herald*’s review of the performance and Bennett’s address in Auckland when the writer stated that the YMP was ‘an association in which the deepest interest is being taken by all

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81 *Evening Post*, 13 July 1908, p.2; *Evening Post*, 29 July 1908, p.2; *Otago Witness*, 29 July 1908, p.69.
82 *Evening Post*, 29 July 1908, p.2.
83 *Wanganui Herald*, 11 July 1908, p.2.
Audiences seemed happy to donate to the cause, and the income from ticket sales would have made a substantial contribution to the YMP (reports mention capacity or near full houses at most venues, including opera houses and town halls, during the six-week tour). With ticket prices set at 3s, 2s and 1 — equivalent to today’s prices of approximately $25, $18 and $9 respectively — the financial contribution to the YMP was significant.

The membership of the Maori Opera Company’s audiences reflected Bennett’s mana amongst both Māori and Pākehā communities at this time, and the support he gathered for his fundraising causes mirrored the demographic of his audiences. When the company appeared in Gisborne in October 1915, the Poverty Bay Herald noted that ‘the enthusiasm aroused, particularly amongst the many natives in the audience, was specially pronounced’. Notices in newspapers noted the generosity of the donation to the Wounded Soldiers’ Fund, emphasising that Hinemoa was the ‘only patriotic company at present touring New Zealand’. Proceeds also went towards the ‘liquidation of debt on Māori Church at Ohinemutu’. Ticket prices at ‘4s, 3s, 2, and 1s’ catered for a range of theatregoers, and newspapers encouraged the public to attend since Hinemoa offered not only a ‘delightful evening’s entertainment, but the results are for a good cause’.

Bennett adhered to the contemporary philosophies of the YMP that encouraged Māori to use ‘aspects of European culture for their own well-being’ and

84 New Zealand Herald, 7 July 1908, p.3.
85 Newspaper reports describe: the ‘crowded and enthusiastic audiences’ at the Feilding Drill Hall (Feilding Star, 9 July 1908, p.2); ‘the Pakeha audience, by the way filled the building to the doors’ at the Auckland Choral Hall (New Zealand Herald, 7 July 1908, p.3); ‘a fairly large audience’ at the Christchurch Choral Hall, (Star, 23 July 1908, p.1); ‘an audience that almost filled the Opera House’, in Wellington (Evening Post, 20 July 1908, p.2).
86 Poverty Bay Herald, 15 October 1915, p.7.
87 New Zealand Truth, 11 September 1915, p.2.
88 Poster for Hinemoa, in possession of author.
89 Dominion, 11 September 1915, p.3.
promoted assimilation alongside retention of some aspects of native culture.  
Furthermore, Bennett linked his practice of donating a production’s profits to a charitable cause to Māori custom. For instance, at opening night of the Maori Opera Company in Auckland in 1915, Bennett explained to the audience how the production’s contribution to the Wounded Soldiers’ Fund harked back to the Māori tradition of offering the first fish of the season to a deity, and for this ‘they did not wish for thanks’. Perhaps referring to the customary practice of koha, or monetary offerings made on marae (meeting and communal gathering space) to hosts of hui (gathering) and other formal gatherings, the Auckland Star commended this ‘characteristically Maori way of being generous’ and urged the public to support their effort.  

Using music and theatre to promote political agendas shows an understanding of the power of performing arts to influence human emotion while highlighting particular social issues. Bennett’s linking of politics and culture in his theatrical production echoed the Fisk Jubilee Singers’ earlier use of music to agitate for racial equality and civil rights. Indeed, the RME 1908 tour can be viewed as having similar aims as the Fisk Singers’ tours since the African Americans used their music to highlight the ‘discrimination they faced as racialized minorities in white dominated societies’, especially in their choice of repertoire of ‘negro spirituals’. Though the policies and histories concerning racial minorities differed between the United States and New Zealand at this time, a bond was forged between the Fisk Singers and local Māori in the late nineteenth century, when the Fisk Singers were ‘invited to a hui’ at

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90 Hill, State Authority, Indigenous Autonomy, p.47. James Belich has labelled this approach taken by Apirana Ngata and his cohort, including Bennett, as ‘subversive co-operation’: James Belich, Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000, Auckland, 2001, p.206.  
91 Auckland Star, 3 August 1915, p.3. Also, see Anne Salmond, Hui: A Study of Māori Ceremonial Gatherings, Auckland, reprint, 1985, pp.103-104 for further discussion on Māori gatherings and customary rituals.  
92 Wittmann, pp.269-72.
Pāpāwai. According to Matthew Wittmann, the Fisks Singers’ leader made ‘public comments about the general maltreatment of Maoris [sic] and the need for temperance and education’.93 Therefore, the platform of performance provided a safe and entertaining outlet for political views on race for both groups’ leaders.

It is no co-incidence that the RME tour intersected with a significant gathering of Māori and Pākehā leaders in Wellington in July 1908. The Maori Congress, taking place at the Town Hall, was dubbed the ‘great korero’ (discussion), designed to bring ‘the best Maori into closer communion with the best Pakeha in all phases of the stirring life of this young Dominion’.94 Spearheaded by Apirana Ngata, who, according to New Zealand historian Graham Butterworth, understood it to be mainly a ‘large scale public relations exercise’, the Congress was intended to highlight for Pākehā the progress that Māori had made in many areas of society since Pākehā settlement. It was also designed to act as a catalyst to unify Māori across tribal divisions in support of the YMP’s aims.95 As the editor of the Māori newspaper Te Pipiwharauroa explained, ‘the union of all the hapu of the country…is important in uplifting our people as a whole and this is only possible when our hearts and minds become one’.96 The opening ceremony included the singing of the National Anthem (God Save the King/E Ihowa Tohungia Te Kingi) in te reo Māori, led by the Rev. Bennett.97 Bennett’s entertainers also provided diversion during the Congress at an

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93 ibid., p.274.
94 Evening Post, 6 July 1908, p.7.
96 Te Pipiwharauroa, no.124, July 1908, p.4. As the newspaper was written in te reo, I have presented a translation. The original text from the newspaper reads: ‘ko te whakakotahitanga o nga hapu katoa o enai motu, ko te whakatotohu tanga i nga puhaehaetanga, ko te kitenga o nga rangatira, o na hapu kotahi ano te mea nui hei whainga ma ratou ko te hapai i te iwi nui, a e taea ai tenei mea ma te kotahi anake o te ngakau.’
97 Thames Star, 15 July 1908, p.1. Basil Keane has outlined how, in 1897, the first official translation of God Save the Queen into te reo Māori was ‘prepared for the Maori contingent that went with Prime Minister Richard Seddon to England on the occasion of Queen Victoria’s sixtieth Jubilee’. Keane states that Edward Marsh Williams, son of Henry Williams, translator of the Treaty of Waitangi, conducted
evening ‘entertainment’ at the Wellington Town Hall on 15 July 1908, sharing the stage with Ngata’s haka group performing his illustrative poem, *A Scene from the Past*. Other items on the programme included ‘Māori versions of familiar English songs’ such as *Home Sweet Home* and *Because I Love You*, composed jointly by Ngata and fellow MP, Hone Heke. Pākehā also contributed to the entertainment; Eileen Ward, daughter of Prime Minister Joseph Ward, sang.

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98 The programme states that ‘A Scene From the Past was written for the Dialectic Society of Canterbury College in 1892’. The opening lines begin, ‘We reek not that the day is past; That Death and Time the cruel Fates, Have torn us from the scenes we loved, And brought us to this unknown world.’ *Souvenir Of Maori Congress, July 1908, Scenes from the Past with Maori versions of Popular English Songs*, Wellington, 1908.

99 Hone Heke and A.T. Ngata, *Souvenir Of Maori Congress, July 1908, Scenes from the Past with Maori versions of Popular English Songs*, Wellington, 1908. Ranginui Walker believes that Heke and Ngata ‘amused themselves in their spare time interpreting popular songs of the day into Maori and singing them to their associates’. He explains: ‘First Maori words were selected to fit in with the English tunes. Maori idioms and expressions were then inserted to improve the Maori versions so that the Maori interpretation was often more poetic than the original.’ Ranginui Walker, *He Tipua: The Life and Times of Sir Apirana Ngata*, Auckland, 2001, pp.123-24.
The ideology of assimilation of Māori influenced Bennett’s push for the acceptance of Māori customs and culture within the framework of Pākehā boundaries. YMP leaders, including Ngata and Bennett, believed that the survival of the race was dependent on Māori utilising ‘aspects of European culture for their own well-being’.

Richard Hill explains: ‘Preservation and renewal of those facets of their own culture which they did see as highly desirable was possible only within the paradigm of British ideas, policies and culture.’ The duality of retention and relinquishment is reflected in Bennett and Ngata’s strategies to increase respectability and acceptance of

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100 Hill, *State Authority, Indigenous Autonomy*, p.47.
Māori waiata and haka (song and dance) within Pākehā culture and society. Susan Reed, a cultural anthropologist, discusses the process of how ‘making performances — and performers — respectable is a common practice of colonial nations as they adapt traditional cultural forms for presentation as ‘cultural heritage’.’ She continues: ‘implicit in this move [to respectability] is the assumption that traditional performances are too raw, crude, rustic, and unrefined for presentation on the modern stage. The gaze of cultural outsiders — middle and upper classes, foreigners, and tourists — dominates this process. Performances are changed to conform to the demands of the proscenium stage (such as forward orientation and the use of special lighting, sound, and sets).’¹⁰¹

For those at the Maori Congress, Bennett’s performers physically manifested the discussions taking place in the Town Hall; these were Māori who were uplifted, wholesome and pure. During the opening evening’s performance Bennett addressed the audience and spoke of the need for the ‘purification of the national dances of the Maori’.¹⁰² Controlling the representation of his performers, Bennett promoted the ‘aesthetic of respectability’ that develops when so-called traditional dances are transformed by the values of another culture. That Māori culture could be educational, entertaining and ‘pure’ challenged views held by many Pākehā, as seen in a comment in the Evening Post following this performance. While the ‘poi dances’ were ‘wonderfully graceful’ and the ‘games and dances’ were ‘remarkable for their perfection as gymnastic exercises’, the rendition of Home Sweet Home in te reo Maori was ‘sweetly sung’. As the Post concluded, the entertainment ‘was wholly unlike any

¹⁰² Evening Post, 16 July 1908, p.2.
public performance given in Wellington…[yet] the audience was enthusiastically appreciative."103

Both Bennett and Ngata orchestrated the interpretation and representation of Māori for the Congress’s entertainment and their theatrical productions emphasized the ‘refined’ Māori while distancing his performers from the sort of representation that could be seen as war-like or savage. Highlighting the character and progress of the modern Māori was very much at the forefront of Bennett’s objectives on RME 1908 tour and the Maori Congress.

Māori or Pākehā? — ‘not very Maori Maoris’

In 1908 the ‘enthusiastic receptions’ and ‘double and triple encores’ that greeted the RME throughout their tour of New Zealand were typical.104 Likewise the response from a Pākehā critic to the Hinemoa opera: ‘It is no exaggeration to say that no company of European amateurs could possibly compare with the way the Ohinemutu natives tell the story of their famous ancestress and her romantic swim across the lake to Mokoia Island, guided by the flute of her lover’.105 However, the novelty of Māori performing as Māori in Bennett’s European-styled productions garnered the most interest and comment in the press. Regardless of the respect the singers received on their vocal abilities, they could not escape comments pointing to the incongruous coupling of their vocal style with their racial history. Thus, apart from the stigmatisation of being labelled as ‘amateur’, Toby Mahina, the baritone in Hinemoa appearing as Tiki, was singled out as he ‘speaks clean and decisive English’.106

Moreover, some commentators bemoaned the lack of ‘Maoriness’ evident in the

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103 ibid.
104 New Zealand Herald, 7 July 1908, p.3.
105 Auckland Star, 3 August 1915, p.3.
106 Evening Post, 17 September 1915, p.2.
physical characteristics of the singers while also reminding readers of the expected demise of ‘pure’ Māori. The *Auckland Star* reported that the performers are ‘not very Maori Maoris — in fact the general lightness of skin is an almost pathetic evidence of the inevitable absorption that awaits this fine race’. Here, as with Princess Iwa performing in the United Kingdom at the same time, it was not only the colour of the performers’ skin that pointed towards the anticipated disappearance by miscegenation of the Māori race, but the convincing display of Māori performing Western classical music.

Nonetheless, the press praised certain performers for the quality of their singing: ‘Several of the leading wahines [sic] are gifted with fine voices.’ The female leads, ‘Miss Tirita Butt, as Hinemoa, and Miss Mere Amohau, as Tupa, pleased with their singing’, with Amohau singled out for her ‘sweet soprano voice’. The *New Zealand Truth* opined that these women had such potential that anyone of them ‘could be trained by a Marchesi into a possible marvellous Melba’. The allusion to the well-known singing teacher Blanche Marchesi and her famous pupil, the Australian soprano Nellie Melba, enabled Pākehā audiences to gauge the calibre of singing displayed by Bennett’s performers.

The RME all belonged, like Bennett himself, to Te Arawa and Ngāti Whakaue. The male quartet, Tame Petane, Tango Kokiri, Rua Tawhai and Dick Kakuere, and the female quartet, Wiki Butt, Rato Butt (Bennett’s half-sisters), Pipi

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107 *Auckland Star*, 3 August 1915, p.3.
109 *New Zealand Truth*, 18 September 1915, p.2. Though labelled as ‘strictly amateur’ in an early review, Bennett’s singers had experience in one of his many choirs or quartets. The use of the word ‘amateur’ in this context is significant. As Levine explains, citing a comment written about music in America 1894, to be called an amateur singer throughout the nineteenth century ‘carried with it respect, dignity and worth’, but by the end of the century ‘it was asserted that it was only the highly trained professional had who had the knowledge, the skill, and the will to understand and carry out the intentions of the creators of the divine art’. Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The emergence of cultural hierarchy in America*, Cambridge, 1988, p.140.
Scott and Marara Yates, sang with a ‘purity of tone and perfect balance of harmony’. Other members of the RME included Bennett, his wife Hana Park Bennett and Arihia Hemana. The lead roles of Hinemoa, Tutanekai, Tiki and Whakaue in Percy Flynn’s opera, sung respectively by Tirita Butt, Tiawhi Rogers, Toby Mahina and Etika Butt, all came from the Rotorua village of Ohinemutu. That so many talented and skilled singers came from the same small village of a few hundred people is testament to Bennett’s commitment to developing this artform amongst the Maori community in this area.

Figure 27: Cast members on set of the opera *Hinemoa*, 1915, photographed for the poster advertising the tour. Tirita Butt as Hinemoa and Tiawhi Rogers as Tutanekai, in centre. Mere Amohau as Tupa is at bottom left at Hinemoa’s feet and Toby Mahina as Tiki stands behind the lead pair. Some commentators complained of the ‘lightness of skin’ of the cast. Poster in possession of author.

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111 *Star*, 23 July 1908, p.1; *Evening Post*, 15 July 1908, p.8; 20 July 1908, p.2; 25 July 1908, p.6. The *Evening Post* advertisement of 25 July included first names only of the poi performers, who included Hepi, Miri, Rangi and Kahira.
Conclusion

As this examination of performance events between 1908 and 1915 has shown, from the beginning of the twentieth century Māori participation in sites of popular entertainment increased due to Frederick Bennett’s theatrical inventions. Moreover, since New Zealand’s early tourist industry was centered in Bennett’s hometown of Rotorua it is understandable that a local legend such as the Hinemoa story, to which Bennett could claim ancestral connection, would be exploited to represent the Pākehā fascination with Māori as ‘an unknown element’. Questions of ownership and cultural identity arose with interpretations of the Hinemoa legend. In 1902, Henry Stowell (Ngā Puhi/American), known as Hare Hongi, travelled through the upper North Island collecting and recording Māori legends for the government and suggested that the story’s locale be shifted. The Hawera and Normanby Star reported on Stowell’s suggestion that ‘among the traditions that he has unearthed is one that threatens to demolish the beautiful Māori idyll of Hinemoa and Tutanekai. The idyllic story will remain but its location will be shifted from Rotorua and the Island of Mokoia to some distant and unknown Hawaiki.’ The journalist’s outrage, that the setting of the story might be in dispute, demonstrates the degree of ownership that Pākehā New Zealanders felt for this legend: ‘the loyal New Zealander in general and the Tourist Department in particular, will be loath to have the Hot Lakes region robbed of one of its attractive features. For what are all the scenic charms of Lake Rotorua if dissociated from the Hinemoa myth?’ Thus, the legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, while having genealogical links to the area and Bennett himself, was also inextricably situated in Rotorua by public opinion and Tourist Department officials.

112 Galbraith, p.5.
114 Hawera and Normanby Star, 12 March 1902, p.4.
115 ibid.
The pattern of translation and interpretation of Te Arawa stories, begun by George Grey, can be seen in Bennett’s versions of the story, but his means of communication expanded the reception via the kinetic reaction to movement and gesture, the stirring of emotions between performer and audience. If performance ‘consolidates communal identities by providing an outlet for emotional expression and promoting feelings of solidarity’ then Bennett’s productions increased the sense of solidarity between Māori and Pākehā before and during the First World War.\textsuperscript{116} As the \textit{Feilding Star} reported, ‘the comedians of the company are strong in their plantation melodies, and the heartiness with which they enter into the fun becomes contagious and sends the audience away in genuine good humour.’\textsuperscript{117} The \textit{Evening Post}’s favourable review of the RME — ‘seldom is there seen so much sympathetic enthusiasm between audience and performers as was exhibited on this occasion — confirms the air of levity and good feelings palpable in theatres where Māori and Pākehā shared the same space.\textsuperscript{118} Likewise, the graceful, sublime gestures of his tableau actors altered the perception of these mythological figures, as did the limelight effects, as they imparted a visceral impression on audience members.

The assimilationist theories of the day advocated for Māori to abandon certain aspects of cultural identity and practice while adapting to contemporary ideas of racial hierarchy and ‘civilised’ versus ‘uncivilised’ cultures. While some Pākehā lamented the loss of Māoriness through assimilation, for example the ‘not very Maori Maoris’ of the Maori Opera Company, they also applauded Māori adaptation to Western musical forms. Moreover, while Bennett promoted the elevation of Māori through performance of opera and tableau he also contributed to the loss in expression in

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\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Feilding Star}, 9 July 1908, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Evening Post}, 31 July 1908, p.2.
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Māori culture by standardising performance of vocal techniques and adapting theatrical styles of the West. Ultimately, while assimilationist ideas privileged European expression over indigenous forms, the creations of Bennett and Flynn introduced hybrid forms of music and theatre where Māori-ness or the essence of Māori made its way into the popular culture of New Zealand.

The Māori who lived at the model Pā at Whakarewarewa acted the role of a historic Māori while forcing the visitor to actively engage with present-day Māori. Bennett’s performers initiated similar interaction with their Pākehā spectators and manufactured a new way of viewing and understanding Māori. These hybrid displays of Māori culture, stories and customs began a shift in cultural representation that continued in various guises throughout the century. On stage, Bennett’s performers controlled their representation and the gaze of the spectator. As Tavia Nyong’o states: ‘Performance — or “twice behaved” behavior — mediates between collective memory and the new, potential, and virtual. Its importance to politics cannot be ignored insofar as social action is organized around symbols, gestures, effigies and dramatic narrative.’

As most Māori cultural forms were unknown to Pākehā, Bennett’s transplantation of indigenous culture into theatres allowed for the transformation of these mysterious and ‘exotic’ customs into popular entertainment. The social and political expression of Māori and New Zealand took shape in the model village and explosive geysers as much as in the bodies of the RME. The Hinemoa opera and tableaux are but one example of a creative and adaptive approach to assimilation, both in the sense of innovation and also creative artistic endeavours.

With the creation of the model Māori village at Whakarewarewa, and the tableaux staging and operatic versions of the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai,

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different senses were called upon to respond to Māori. While the aim of these representations and performances was to educate *and* entertain, overall tourists and audiences saw, heard, and responded emotionally to Māori.

As has been shown in these examples of tourism and performance, Pākehā curiosity about Māori allowed for a willingness to pay to see and experience Māori both ‘in situ’ and on stage. Unlike the ‘ethnological gaze’ that is demanded from a museum display or exhibition setting, Bennett’s performers allowed for a ‘theatrical gaze’, as did the Māori who resided at the Model Pā at Whakarewarewa. Whereas the re-construction of Māori as tourist attraction relied on the enactment of everyday settings and tasks, the re-presentation of Māori on stage and in theatres consisted of an amalgamation of cultural forms and popular entertainment. As has been shown, both Māori and Pākehā contributed to these representations, either in their creation or through financial contributions. The DTHR recognised the allure of Māori for the visitor to New Zealand, as did Bennett with the domestic population. Though Pākehā imagined an historical Pā at Whakarewarewa, Māori created carvings for various structures and whare while living *as* Māori for visitors.

The coalescence of tourist attraction and performance that developed in Rotorua came to fruition in 1908 at Whakarewarewa and during the tours of the RME and the Maori Opera Company. Donne and Birks created a vision of a place and a people that encouraged appreciation for Māori and the local landscape, putting both, as it were, in the spotlight, as did Bennett. And while Bennett raised funds for a political movement whose objectives mirrored the Pākehā assimilationist agenda, the DTHR persuaded Māori to act an historical vision of Māori. From the awe-inspiring spouting geysers and bubbling hot pools to the timeless Māori planting kumara ‘at home’ and the lovers Hinemoa and Tutanekai re-enacting their love story in the glow
of limelight, the land and its people all contributed to the invention of Māori and New Zealand in 1908. Nikos Papastergiadis has stated that ‘the clash of cultures that colonialism invariably provoked, rather than producing a neat bifurcation between coloniser and colonized, encouraged the formation of new cultural hybrids’. Bennett and his entertainers along with Donne and Birks shaped new representations of not only Māori but also New Zealand via performance on stage and at tourist sites in the early twentieth century.

E. Barnes noted, in her 1888 travel diary, the theatricality present in the Rotorua landscape. Comparing the evocative and somewhat menacing terrain of Ohinemutu to ‘the “Brocken” in Faust’, the visitor realised the commercial potential should one be able to reproduce the natural landscape in a theatre, observing that, ‘these sights and scenes would look fine produced on the stage of the Lyceum and this, together with the hot water baths, would take London by storm’. As will be seen in the following chapter, an imaginary New Zealand — its landscape and people — was indeed transported the following year, not to London, but to the world’s largest stage, the Hippodrome in New York City.

121 The Brocken, a peak of mountains in Northern Germany, provided the setting for supernatural beings and witches in Goethe’s play, Faust. The low clouds and fog present at the Brocken is believed to create other-worldly apparitions.
122 Barnes, E fl 1888:Diary of a tour to New Zealand, Australia, China and Japan across America and the Atlantic to England, qMs-0138, ATL, Wellington.
Chapter Four: ‘Savage Suffragettes’ and a ‘Harmony of Frenzy’: Māori in Manhattan 1909-1910

The moulding of cultural representations of Māori and New Zealand into popular entertainment via music, drama and dance continued into the early twentieth century. With the expansion of tourism in New Zealand, sites and occasions for the performance of Māori-ness increased, especially in urban centres. As the theatre-going public became more comfortable with seeing interpretive expressions of Māori culture and customs on stage, opportunities for new forms of performing arts emerged. The movements of the haka and poi, intrinsic to Pākehā comprehension of Māori as a people at this time, align with Jane Desmond’s contention that ‘notions of race as a system of bodily based cultural classification dominated Euro-American thought at the turn of the century’.¹ The control and manufacture of this cultural identification by corporeal expression and the reception thereof is explored via this case study of the ‘Maoris of Manhattan’. This chapter shines a spotlight on 40 Te Arawa performers who lived and worked in New York City in 1909-1910, examining how contemporary racial theories melded into performance and spectacle at this time. The identification of groups of people by gestures, posture, movement and vocal expression, along with styles of dress, leisure activities and political engagement, are at the centre of understanding how New Zealand took shape in the eyes of thousands of Americans in the early twentieth century. Both on stage and off, the Māori performers in New York contributed to perceptions of New Zealand, particularly in regards to racial identities, gender equality and indigenous culture.

From Rotorua to Times Square

New Zealand and the United States of America drifted closer towards one another in 1908. Sixteen ships of the American Naval Battleship Fleet (dubbed the ‘Great White Fleet’) sailed into Auckland’s Waitemata Harbour in August of that year. ‘Fleet Week’ festivities swamped day-to-day life in the North Island, particularly in Auckland and Rotorua. In the weeks leading up to the festivities members of Parliament debated the expenditure of the associated events, referred to in the House by one member as ‘fleece week’. Some members of Parliament viewed the open arms extended to the United States as a turning away from the long-standing relationship with the ‘home’ country, Great Britain. Others, especially Apirana Ngata, representing Eastern Maori, saw the welcome of United States naval officers as Pākehā imperatives casting a shadow over Māori cultural expression. Ngata objected to the exploitation of Māori culture ‘for the entertainment of tourists’. Specifically, Ngata believed that ‘pressure had been brought to bear on the Rotorua people’ and this was, in his eyes, ‘reprehensible’. In his objection, Ngata stated that members of Te Arawa would ‘make a show of themselves’ if the government’s proposed Māori welcome went ahead.

As discussed in the previous chapter, many Te Arawa were happy to make a ‘show of themselves’ and Ngata participated in numerous events with F.A. Bennett’s Rotorua Māori Entertainers. In this instance, however, Ngata’s opposition to Māori involvement centered on his belief that ‘in America the treatment of the coloured

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1 New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (NZPD), vol 144, 5 August 1908, p.107.
2 NZPD, vol, 144, 6 August 1908, p.198. According to the New Zealand Herald, activities for the 3,000 visiting seamen in Auckland alone consisted of a matinee performance at His Majesty’s theatre, and thereafter an evening musical performance was presented by the ‘Liedertafel choir of 60 men’, an entertainment at the YMCA rooms at a concert, social, and light refreshments’. Moreover, in addition to human performances, the geothermal wonders of Rotorua entertained the visiting naval officers. New Zealand Herald, 11 August 1908, p.10.
3 NZPD, vol 144, 5 August 1908, p.200.
4 ibid., p.203; Evening Post, 7 August 1908, p.3.
races has not been such as has been the treatment of the Maoris by the British race’.\textsuperscript{6} Solidarity between minority populations drove Ngata to state that ‘we cannot as a people be expected to spontaneously extend a great welcome as from the Maoris of New Zealand to the American Fleet’.\textsuperscript{7} Although slavery in the United States had been officially abolished more than 40 years previous, African Americans still suffered immense prejudice and segregation in most areas of society; reports of lynchings and ‘laws enacted to keep the two races absolutely apart’, disenfranchisement and other solutions to the ‘negro problem’, featured in the New Zealand press.\textsuperscript{8} Nonetheless, other prominent Māori leaders disagreed with Ngata’s stance, arguing in favour of Māori participation. Peter Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa), the Medical Officer for Māori health, publicised his view in the \textit{New Zealand Herald}. Buck stressed the importance of Māori participation in the welcome since ‘it is these [ngeris (sic) and war dances] that recall to the Maori the glorious traditions of his ancestors and it is the perpetuation of these that will help to keep alive the feeling of race pride’. He concluded, ‘the Maori welcome is the highest honour the Maori can confer upon the visitors’.\textsuperscript{9}

From the government’s viewpoint, the visit of the fleet presented a potential boost to future trade and tourism, and, not least of all, future protection from a Japanese attack.\textsuperscript{10} Thus, it was important to extend a warm and unforgettable welcome. Prime Minister Joseph Ward vehemently denied pressure was being exerted

\textsuperscript{6} NZPD, vol 144, 5 August 1908, p. 200-201.
\textsuperscript{7} ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Nelson Evening Mail}, 18 March 1908, p.2. The issue of race in the United States at this time obviously warrants a much more thorough and detailed analysis than can be given here; however, for the purposes of this chapter the awareness amongst New Zealanders of race crimes perpetrated against African Americans and the displacement and settlement of Native Americans onto reservations were issues that Ngata highlighted in the debate of ‘Fleet Week’ activities.
\textsuperscript{9} \textit{New Zealand Herald}, 7 August 1908, p.6.
\textsuperscript{10} Newspapers at this time speculated on a ‘Japanese-American war’, so the advantage of a cordial relationship with New Zealand and a familiarity, from the United State’s perspective, with the government of a friendly Pacific nation cemented this alliance. \textit{New York Times}, 28 June, 1908, p.C1.
on Māori and reassured Ngata that ‘there has been no attempt to force any Maori or European to do anything against his own free will’.\(^{11}\) Ward’s response to Ngata distanced New Zealand’s domestic race issues from those of the USA. ‘In this country we regard the Maori as equal in every way with the European’, Ward said, emphasising that in New Zealand ‘we look upon the two races from the standpoint of colour as being one’.\(^{12}\) The debate concluded that a Māori welcome in Rotorua would take place, but participation of Māori was not decided by politicians, Māori statesmen or even the affiliated iwi and hāpū. T.E. Donne, the director of the Department of Tourism and Health Resorts (DTHR), shaped the representation of New Zealand for the American guests in conjunction with his confidant and friend, guide Maggie Papakura, and Frederick Bennett.

The nexus of politics, performance and cultural representation becomes clear when recognising the power that these three individuals held when it came to framing and presenting New Zealand to the world in the early twentieth century.\(^{13}\) Two months prior to Ngata’s public opposition, Donne met with Papakura in June 1908 asking her advice on Māori participation. Donne and Papakura’s intimate engagement with the tourist trade in Rotorua, as well as their close friendship, explains their involvement in planning the fleet’s welcome in Rotorua. As a result, members of Bennett’s entertainment group performed for the Americans at an evening gathering in Rotorua, augmenting the official welcome that coincided with the opening of the new Bathhouse. Papakura also led the American officers on a visit to

\(^{11}\) NZPD, vol 144, 5 August 1908, p.203.
\(^{12}\) ibid.
\(^{13}\) Maggie Papakura, as mentioned in chapter two, directed many performance events by Māori from the early twentieth century, in addition to her guiding duties at Whakawerawera. Her association with Donne stemmed from this role and led to the two becoming, as Paul Diamond states, ‘lifelong friends’. For details of Papakura’s career see Paul Diamond, *Makereti: Taking Māori to the World*, Auckland, 2007. The fleet’s itinerary included stops in San Francisco, Seattle, Honolulu, Sydney, Manila, Japan, and China. Reporters from United States newspapers accompanied the fleet and filed reports from every port. *New York Times*, 7 June 1908, p.3.
Whakarewarewa. All of these events led to an invitation for Māori to travel to New York the following year.

In spite of Ngata’s opposition to Māori participation, the performance of haka and poi received widespread and favourable news coverage in the United States, overshadowing discussion of politics and naval excursions. An entourage of press accompanied the international travels of the American fleet. Following the reception in New Zealand the *New York Times* reported on the ‘Maori dances’ in ‘weird costumes’ in Rotorua, claiming that the ‘stamping of frenzied feet in the war dances’ garnered praise from Admiral Sperry.14 The New York *Sun* devoted an entire page to the fleet’s visit to New Zealand, with reporter Franklin Matthews describing the ‘Dances of the Maoris’ as the ‘most thrilling and savage exhibition’ and the ‘heartiest greeting of good will’ that the fleet experienced on its journey. Matthews called poi that ‘wonderful’ and ‘entrancing’ dance’, adding that nothing ‘more graceful, more rhythmic’ was ‘ever witnessed by an American party’.15

The favourable reports of Māori feats of physicality found their way to theatrical entrepreneurs. On his arrival back in New York, Franklin Matthews telegraphed Donne with a proposition from New York’s largest theatre, the New York Hippodrome. The message curtly stated: ‘Hippodrome managers want to engage fifty to eighty Maoris to do dances like Reverend Bennett’s Company would be great advertisement for New Zealand’.16 The Hippodrome, known as the ‘playground of the nation’, catered to an ever-increasing demand for large-scale spectacle and illusion, including ‘bewildering ballets, thrilling drama, sensational scenic surprises and

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15 *Sun*, 8 October 1908, p.4.
16 Cable from Mr Franklin Matthews to T.E. Donne, 27 April 1909, Thomas Edward Donne papers, Scrapbook relating to Maggie Papakura, qMS-0621, ATL, Wellington.
constantly changing circus’. The theatre’s facility, its reputation for spectacle, its vast stage (not to mention its ‘lake’) and army of technicians, enabled the presentation of even more thrilling and extravagant theatrical experiences for its patrons. William Taylor, an historian of American culture, believes that the opening of the Hippodrome in 1905 signalled the development of the Times Square area as the entertainment centre of Manhattan and ‘an immense machine for entertainment of “the masses”’. As Taylor explains, the Hippodrome aimed to provide ‘everything in the way of entertainment the ordinary citizen could want and at prices most could afford’. Thus, the staging of New Zealand and Māori, envisioned as a ‘Maori village’ and ‘magic waterfall’, could fit comfortably within the ‘largest playhouse in the world’, known for its productions where their ‘magnitude and grandeur are unequalled on either continent’.

An intricate web of representation and control developed between Māori and Pākehā in the wake of the Hippodrome invitation. Understanding the shift in power in the representation of Māori is central to this analysis, as is the importance placed on

18 Programme notes on the ‘facts and figures’ of the Hippodrome in 1911 state that the ‘munificent managerial policy of Messrs. Lee and JJ Shubert has resulted in a scenic and sartorial equipment more complete and colossal than anything ever before attempted in the annals of theatrical history’. The front curtain of the Hippodrome stage, unlike in other theatres, dropped from the ceiling to reveal the stage, rather than the conventional methods of parting in the middle or lifting to the ceiling. According to the programme, the ‘tremendous curtain, which rises and sinks with the silence of passing cloud’ hid the apron, or thrust of the stage, from view, thus concealing or revealing the tank of water that featured in every Hippodrome spectacle. Hippodrome programme ‘Around the World’ 1911-1912, The American Variety Stage: Vaudeville and Popular Entertainment, 1870-1920, Library of Congress, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query, accessed 17 May 2011; Milton Epstein, The New York Hippodrome: A Complete Chronology of Performances, from 1905 to 1939, New York, 1993, pp.356-57.
19 The theatre district, consisting of the area bounded by 42nd Street and Broadway to 49th and 7th Avenue, has Times Square at its heart.
the corporeal expression of Māori as promoted by Pākehā. Correspondence between Papakura and Donne reveals competition and feelings of ill will between the various performance and tourist entities in Rotorua at this time. As Papakura wrote: ‘They are all very jealous in Rotorua.’ The stakes were high for all parties involved in representations of New Zealand, and Māori involvement was central to this enterprise. Papakura complained to Donne that a ‘Mr Whyte, editor of the Auckland Herald’ had put himself forward as the selector and management for the touring party. She wrote, ‘Whyte has been trying to get the Rotoruaites [sic] to go’, adding ‘Mr Bennett, nor the choir are not going [sic]. It is the other lot of Rotorua people who were in opposition to Bennett that are wanting to go.’ Papakura’s appraisal of that outcome was clear: ‘Well, you know what that means’ she told Donne, ‘disgrace to New Zealand.’ In the meantime Papakura replied directly to Matthews from the Sun: ‘Can raise 60 performers like Bennett’s if terms suitable’.

The interaction between Donne, Papakura and Bennett in this matter was further complicated by the interjection of Lawrence Birks, the Chief Engineer of Rotorua, and Augustus Hamilton, the Director of the Dominion (Colonial) Museum. As discussed in chapter three, Birks, Hamilton and Donne controlled the design and manufacture of the ‘habitat tourist site’ at Whakarewarewa in Rotorua where the performance of Māori-ness was central. Moreover, as revealed in correspondence between Birks and Hamilton, they were able to manipulate representations of New Zealand both domestically and abroad. For example, their encounters with local iwi

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22 Letter from Maggie Papakura to T.E. Donne, 5 May 1909, Thomas Edward Donne papers, Scrapbook relating to Maggie Papakura, qMS-0621, ATL, Wellington.
23 Letter from Maggie Papakura to T.E. Donne, 5 May 1909, Thomas Edward Donne papers, Scrapbook relating to Maggie Papakura, qMS-0621, ATL, Wellington. Rangitiaria Dennan, another well-known guide of the Rotorua geysers, confirms that from the early twentieth century ‘there was considerable rivalry among the various tribes and hapus [sic] in performing the Maori arts of song and dance’. Guide Range of Rotorua, Christchurch, 1968, p.50.
and individuals involved with the tourist trade led to them developing strong personal opinions on the moral character of some local Māori. In their reasoning, these moral reputations were crucial when it came to selecting Māori to represent New Zealand in New York. Significantly, both men expressed their pleasure of seeing the ‘discordant and most of the undesirable elements’ of Whakarewarewa leaving the village, perhaps permanently. As Birks wrote to Hamilton, ‘we are not worried if most of them never return’. Following their departure on the Manapouri from Wellington Harbour in early July 1909 Birks wrote:

We got the party of forty natives off to New York this morning. Fred Bennett has selected them most discreetly. None of his choir or church members are going but he has managed to make the party a splendid haka one, though the Yankee manager was disappointed at the small number of young girls — only two or three — but there again Bennett has been very discreet. The reason why Birks was so dismissive of this assemblage of Te Arawa performers. The elders of the group, Kiwi Henare Amohau and Kiri Matao, headed the 40 women and men and both had considerable mana (prestige) in Rotorua. Amohau assumed a place of high regard, renowned for his whaikorero (oratory skills), stylish dress and musical ability, while Kiri Matao had many years’ experience performing and leading poi and waiata for public occasions. Referred to as the ‘famous leader of dances in Rotorua’ during the 1901 visit to New Zealand of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, Matao had previously led the welcome for the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh in 1870. Moreover, Amohau, called one of the most

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25 Correspondence between Lawrence Birks, Chief Engineer, to Augustus Hamilton, Director of Dominion (Colonial) Museum, Wellington, re building of model Pa at Whakarewarewa — Tourist Department, Rotorua, 1909, MU000152/004/0041, Te Papa/Museum of New Zealand, Wellington. 26 R.A. Loughnan, Royalty in New Zealand: The Visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall & York, June 1901, Wellington, 1902, p.86. In 1918 Kiri had an oil portrait painted by the well-known artist C.F. Goldie, famous for his portraits of the ‘old-time’ Māori.
‘influential of the Arawas’, played a prominent role in the Anglican church/Mihinare.27

Speculation as to why the ‘Yankee manager’ was disappointed with the number of young girls in the party suggests that the Hippodrome hoped the presence of nubile young women would add to the authenticity of its ‘Bronze Belles’ in the planned spectacular.28 The trope of the ‘Dusky Maiden’ as it related to Māori carried over into the entertainment industry, as seen with the appearance of Maggie Papakura’s ‘poi girls’, advertised as ‘Dusky Dancers’, at London’s Palace Theatre in 1911.29

Further complications arose with the arrival of a representative from the Hippodrome in Rotorua, come to handpick performers. His criteria, as outlined in an interview with the *Evening Post*, made it clear what the Hippodrome expected: ‘They are tired of our Indians, these patrons of ours so I have come to New Zealand to take back with me a team of Maori dancers to titillate the dulled palates of New York theatre-goers.’30 The three locals involved in the selection, Donne, Papakura and Bennett, (Papkura by then distracted with preparations for her own up-coming tour to Australia) all understood the standards required for excellence in performance, whereas Birks and Hamilton and the envoy from the Hippodrome based their judgements on looks, gender, age and temperament. Ultimately, Bennett’s ‘discretion’ in the selection process points to his understanding of the potential for the exploitation of Māori, while also underlining the imperatives inherent in show business; the

27 Obituary of Kiwi Amohau, *Waiapu Church Gazette*, 2 May 1927, p.15. The Reverend Thomas Chapman established a missionary outpost/station in Rotorua in the early 1830s, followed by the arrival of Catholic missionaries in 1840. Amohau’s musical ability and skill as a player of the koauau (flute) also contributed to his renown. Kiwi’s uncle, the chief Temuera Amohau, argued against the establishment of the Maori King movement (Kingtanga) and acted as spokesperson for Te Arawa at a meeting held to encourage Te Arawa to join.


29 An examination of Princess Iwa and the poi girls at the London Palace is contained in chapter two.

gender and corporeal representation of Māori was central to the success of this commercial endeavour.

The group of people behind the selection of the Te Arawa performers could not have anticipated what lay ahead for them in the United States. Though Birks and Hamilton were pleased to see their ‘undesirable’ entertainers leave New Zealand, the Māori performers proved anything but undesirable in New York. According to William R. Taylor, New York City ‘became a national barometer of what was fashionable, what was exciting and what was new’. 31 The Māori performers slotted into all three categories. Moreover, alongside their notoriety on stage, the presence of Māori at the ‘crossroads of the world’ challenged ideas and understandings of race and gender in the United States.

Figure 28: The group of Te Arawa, set sail for New York. The caption from the Weekly Graphic described the purpose of their journey: ‘Māori Entertainers for America — A company of Maoris, whose part singing, native dances, etc. have created considerable interest in New Zealand, left Wellington by the Manapouri last week on their way to America, where they will appear at the New York Hippodrome.’ Weekly Graphic and New Zealand Mail, 14 July 1909, p.22.

‘Hakas in the streets’

The Manhattan that the Māori performers sailed towards reflected the increasing convergence of commerce, tourism and immigration that occurred in New York over the previous decades. From the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth ‘no other [American] city matched it for its range of entertainment, theatre, nightlife, and other forms of recreation’. As Taylor articulates, New York City was globally unique amongst other large cities because it had experienced ‘settlement, economic development and urbanization’ as ‘simultaneous stimuli to growth’. As such, the entertainment industry slotted into other burgeoning commercial sectors such as textile manufacture and retail. The notion of New York City as a cultural ‘pastiche’ mirrored the mix of races, classes and genders that made up early-twentieth century Manhattan. These new configurations of race and class collided with the development of New York City as a major tourist destination. Moreover, the tourist industry promoted the theatre district as an exciting ‘crossroads of the world’ in contrast to the overcrowding, disease and poverty present in other parts of the city. Overall, the theatre district promised unparalleled experiences in visual and aural sensations.

Medical examinations were routinely conducted on all foreign passengers on board incoming ships. This meant that the Māori passengers of the Manapouri were detained in San Francisco en route to New York, and were subjected to the ‘uncomfortable and startling eyelid eversion’ testing for trachoma.

32 Ibid., p.69.
33 Ibid., p.71.
34 Ibid., p.70.
travellers, the Māori underwent tests for contagious diseases, reflecting the ‘early 20th-century attitudes towards skin color and nationality’.\(^{37}\) Evidence that this detainment caused distress is seen in a waiata composed by Kiri Matao during the journey. ‘Standing at the wharf at San Francisco’, Matao wrote, ‘the current running, stop until the doctors come, you will not step ashore.’\(^{38}\) Though trachoma was not found amongst the group, the ‘Hippodrome promoters undertook to provide special treatment for the few who had eye trouble but not trachoma’.\(^{39}\) Given the all clear, they travelled cross-country to New York in three separate groups.

‘War cries’ and ‘bronze tint’: Māori in New York

Reports of the Māori arrival filled multiple-column inches of space in many daily newspapers. With a population of over three and a half million and approximately one out of six New Yorkers purchasing a daily newspaper, the presence of the Māori performers could not go unnoticed.\(^{40}\) The reunification of the rōpū (group) at Grand Central Terminal made headlines in many of the New York dailies. The New York Daily Tribune announced to its morning readers: ‘Maoris come to Town. Madison Avenue Gets its First Sight of the Haka and Likes It.’\(^{41}\) The 27 August edition of the World proclaimed that their reunion ‘split ears in their exuberant joy’, while the New York Press confirmed the commotion caused by their arrival; travelling down

June/July 1999, p.1315.
37 ibid., p.1314.
39 Bay of Plenty Times, 3 September 1909, p.2.
41 New York Daily Tribune, 28 August 1909, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts. New Zealand newspapers also reported on the arrival in Manhattan; for instance, the Otago Daily Times detailed the commotion: ‘Nothing like it has ever been seen or heard before in this city… the scenes that were witnessed were nothing short of remarkable… traffic was suspended… horses pricked their ears up’, while the New Zealand Herald explained how ‘work in the offices, in the shops, in the factories, ceased till the Maoris went by… people hung out of the windows in their thousands to see these men’. Otago Daily Times, 12 October 1909, p.2; New Zealand Herald, 11 October 1909, p.7.
Broadway in ‘two sightseeing autos and preceded by a brass band in another car’, they ‘shouted their war cries and shook their war clubs and spears at the surprised inhabitants of Manhattan’.  

The references to ‘war cries’ and weapons contextualised these native, ‘savage’ or uncivilised people for New Yorkers, as contemporary understandings categorised indigenous peoples with a rhetoric of the generic Other. Similar to Native Americans, whose ‘war and scalp dances’ featured in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West extravaganzas, the Māori displayed enthusiastic and unbridled emotions. However, the New Zealand press also perpetuated stereotyped representations of Māori. In its coverage of the arrival in Manhattan, the Marlborough Express reported, ‘the Maoris put on their best mats for the occasion, kiwi feathers and some carried their clubs and every now and then stood up in the cars and shouted their war cries. They simply couldn’t be stopped.’

Descriptions of the performers’ physical attributes, along with their mental and social capabilities, also slotted Māori into the racial hierarchy that was the cornerstone of evolutionary thought at this time. The ‘big men and handsome women’ gave ‘Broadway a thrill’, while their ‘amiable smiles took the edge off their warlike demonstrations’. An interview with Kiwi Amohau in the New York Daily Tribune on 28 August added an authorial dimension to these descriptions. Amohau, labelled ‘the oldest and littlest of the chiefs’ of the group, attempted to clarify Māori history for the Tribune’s readers. Amohau explained the ‘Maoris [sic] are the only people

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44 Marlborough Express, 19 October 1909, p.3.

England ever fought and did not conquer’, he said, adding diplomatically, ‘except the Irish and The Americans’.\textsuperscript{46} Another article concluded with the assessment, no doubt offered by Amohau, that the ‘Arawas [sic] are the most intelligent as well as the most warlike of the Polynesian tribes’.\textsuperscript{47}

Press coverage also emphasised the social manners and dress of the Māori in an attempt to construct an understanding of this race for North Americans. Soon after the opening of the Hippodrome show, the Māori performers gained notoriety and featured prominently in reports aimed at describing the men and women of the company. As the \textit{World} explained, ‘The men wear golf caps, have their trousers pressed, carry canes and smoke cigarettes and say “surest thing you know”’, while the women, ‘who speak English, have been taken out to luncheon at modish Broadway restaurants, and can hit the bill-of-fare to as costly a tune as any Manhattanese matinee girl’.\textsuperscript{48} This combination of language, dress and manners contrasted with the view of Māori the Hippodrome promoted on stage; that is, of a savage and uncivilised people.


Inside the Earth

The notion of the ‘ideological mirage’ of early-twentieth-century performance, where imperialism, capitalism and ideas of gender and race converged, materialised in the triple bill of *A Trip to Japan*, the *Ballet of Jewels* and *Inside the Earth*. A *Trip to Japan* stunned audiences with realistic cruise ships. The costumes made from precious stones in the *Ballet of Jewels* dazzled, while the obligatory circus featuring a ‘team’ of football playing dogs, a ‘carnival of clowns’, acrobats, gymnasts and equestrian horses drew laughs. The final spectacular of the programme, *Inside the Earth*, featured the Māori performers in a story weaving together working-class American miners, ‘mighty’ Māori and mysterious ‘sun worshippers’, inhabiting distant, exotic and wondrous locales. With this production the Hippodrome more than lived up to its reputation, described as ‘uniquely alone, for in all the universe there is nothing of man’s making that compares with it in size of greatness or its entertainment’. The format of Hippodrome spectacles with their melodramatic narratives and ballets billed alongside circuses and performing animals, conflated exotic locations, people and animals with unattainable abundance and wealth, and visions of leisure and progress. When the audiences of 1909-1910 were transported *Inside the Earth* they encountered the theatricalised physicality of Māori not seen before in New York.

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50 *Boston Budget*, 2 October 1909, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts. The *New York Commercial* reported prior to the opening of this ‘trifoliate’ production ‘close to $500,000 has been spent in the production’. *New York Commercial*, nd, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.
Figure 29: The advertisement for ‘Trifoliate Theatrical Triumph’ in the New York Times. This triple bill of *A Trip to Japan*, the *Ballet of Jewels* and *Inside the Earth*, featured the ‘60 Mighty Maoris’ in ‘Fiery, Frenzied Dancing Feats’ and included the ‘Savage Suffragettes’, New York Times, 31 October 1909, p.15.
Figure 30: Maori on stage at the Hippodrome 1909, on the set of the ‘Maori village’ in Inside the Earth. The painting of the ‘sacred mountain’ can be seen behind the painted huts. The white undershirts of the men and the high-neck tops of the women may have more to do with the cold conditions in the theatre than reflect issues of modesty or imagined ‘traditional’ dress. Photo courtesy Linda Morrison.

The ‘theatrical triumph’ on the evening of 4 September 1909 commanded total attention from the 5,000 members of the Hippodrome’s opening-night audience. As the final bars of the orchestral overture faded and the lights dimmed, the massive curtain of the gigantic stage cascaded to reveal an unfamiliar sight: a ‘Maori Village’ complete with thatched huts and 40 performers dressed in unfamiliar ‘native’ costume.

Written and directed by Hippodrome stalwart R.H. Burnside, with music composed and conducted by Manuel Klein, and scenic effects invented and executed by Arthur Voegtlin, Inside the Earth, ‘a drama with music’, featured: Oxtacelex, the

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Inca; Dan Willoughby, the owner of Willoughby mines; David Allen, a partner in the Willoughby mines; and Kiwi, the Māori chief and his tribe of Māori villagers.\textsuperscript{52} For 30 minutes the ‘bronze-tinted’ men and women provoked thunderous applause with their enactments of the ‘home life and customs of savage people in distant climes’.\textsuperscript{53} By all accounts most thrilling of all were the performances of haka and poi. The ‘remarkable bodies and almost horrible vitality’ experienced with these dances conformed to the contemporary rhetoric that identified people by their corporeal expression. Set against the backdrop of a ‘sacred mountain’ and a sparkling ‘magic waterfall’, the performers conjured a mysterious world peopled with savage but helpful natives who bravely travelled ‘Inside the Earth’ to rescue the heroine of the drama.\textsuperscript{54}

Presented in five scenes, with orchestral accompaniment, the drama commenced from the Māori village at the base of the ‘sacred mountain’. Moving inside the earth to a subterranean city, location of the ‘Palace of the Sun King’ with its attendant sun worshippers (played by ‘dwarfs’), the story reached its thrilling climax with the march ‘into the sea’ of an ‘army of men and maids’. As the narrative unfolded, the audience witnessed an ‘elaborate native celebration’ in honour of the birthday of Kiwi, the Māori chief.\textsuperscript{55} Unexpectedly, the celebrations were interrupted when a group of American miners appeared seeking the assistance of the Māori. The Māori, friends of the miners in this inter-racial environment, were called upon to

\textsuperscript{52} R.H. Burnside, born in Scotland, made his theatrical career in New York at the Hippodrome, between 1908 and 1923. Burnside was responsible for staging ‘over 200 shows’ in New York. Finding Aid for R. H. Burnside Collection, ca, 1905-1952, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.


\textsuperscript{54} R.H. Burnside Collection, T-MSS 1952-02, Box 14, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.

\textsuperscript{55} R.H. Burnside Collection, T-MSS 1952-02, Box 14, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.
assist in the rescue of Mrs Rose Allen, kidnapped by the ‘sun worshippers’. During the journey to the ‘sacred mountain’ the rescuers come across the ‘magic waterfall’ where the ‘souls of the maidens sacrificed to the Sun’ appear. If not rescued in time, Mrs Allen would be the next sacrificial victim. A spectacular fighting scene portrayed the Māori men fighting with the Sun King’s supporters in order to reach Mrs Allen, tied to a sinking boat in the middle of the lake.

The imagination and dramatic flair of Burnside and Klein fashioned the performance of haka and poi within the plot of Inside the Earth. Klein’s score, with its ‘Valse Maori’ in ¾ time, for an orchestra of violins, cellos, clarinets and drums, reflected the translation, codification and transcription of haka and poi rhythms in the twentieth century. The ‘canoe poi’ performed by the women was a melodic song accompanied by rhythmic poi actions and movements of the upper body while the women remained seated, evoking the motions of canoe paddlers. Klein’s orchestration of an already existing melody used for poi recalled the practice of setting poi to Western forms of music. Mervyn McLean, ethnomusicologist of Māori music, states that ‘European melodies were made use of in poi songs quite early’. He cites the recollection of a Māori woman who, as a child in the 1880s, ‘remembered hearing poi performed with an accordion accompaniment’. And eight years before her appearance at the Hippodrome, Kiri Matao led a massive display of poi for visiting British royalty accompanied by accordion, flute, banjo, fiddle and jews’s-harp.

The climatic end to Inside the Earth, the march of 48 metal-clad men and women vanishing into the ‘lake’, was perhaps the most astonishing element of the show, though the pool of the Hippodrome had been featured in many productions.

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57 McLean, p.125.
58 Loughnan, pp. 94-114.
prior to this one. Measuring 14 feet deep and running the length of the stage, constructed of concrete and steel, it added an extra magical dimension to every production. Nonetheless, the performances by the Māori, unfamiliar and hinting of danger, were hailed as highlights of the drama. From the ‘wild gyrations’ of the Maori women, to the men’s haka, described as ‘the most novel feature ever shown at the Hippodrome’ the excitement of these ‘new’ dances proved immensely popular with critics and audiences. The final image of the descending army, the reunification of Rose and David Allen on the lake surrounded by Māori and sun worshippers sent audiences away full of awe for a spectacle in which Māori had taken a starring role.

Figure 31: The ‘lake’ of the Hippodrome, featured in Inside the Earth. Maori performers stand left of the metal-clad army who, at the conclusion, descended the stairs into the lake, never to be seen again. New York Star, 25 December, 1909, R.H. Burnside

Within a week of opening, *Inside the Earth* proved so popular that the ‘sold out’ sign was erected outside the theatre.\(^{61}\) The drawcard was the performance of the New Zealanders. ‘The tribe of Maori seemed especially to hit the fancy of those who got in’, with another report claiming that ‘it will probably not be very long before the Maoris become the fad’.\(^{62}\) Certain performers were singled out for praise, and compared favourably with some of New York’s most popular stage personalities of the day. Tai, a young male cast member, delivered his one spoken line, ‘To the Sinking Islands!’, with the ‘dramatic gusto of a Sothern or a George M Cohan’.\(^{63}\) Amohau, in a letter home, explained how the performers featured in *Inside the Earth*: ‘for five minutes we are alone, just us.’\(^{64}\) May Mackenzie, writing for a Washington society/gossip monthly publication, *Club Fellow*, struggled to suppress her admiration for the physical attributes of the male performers, especially the exposure afforded by their costumes, describing the piupiu (skirt made from flax reeds) as ‘accordion pleated ruffles that are sensitive to breezes’. She went on: ‘They have fine long backs and dance with everything — their hands and features and heads and elbows, and oh, everything. Not an ounce of superfluous flesh, not a collar nor a tie, not a pair of cuff links on a Maori. Ah me!’ Mackenzie’s exuberance summoned visions of flesh rarely

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\(^{62}\) ibid.


\(^{64}\) *Pipiwharauora*, no.142, February 1910, p.10.
seen on the legitimate stage. Barely able to contain the pleasure of her experience, she urged her readers ‘Be canny and do not miss those Maoris.’

![Figure 32: Cartoon drawing of men’s haka as they appeared on the Hippodrome stage. Caption reads ‘The Māori “supes” transfer New Zealand vociferation to sixth avenue.’ The detail of muscular upper bodies echoed May Mackenzie’s comment in Club Fellow that not ‘an ounce of superfluous flesh’ was visible on the men. Clipping from R.H.Burnside collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts, p. 205.]

The skill and execution of their ‘song and dance’, in this instance the canoe poi and haka, especially impressed the critics. The presentational nature of these dances, where performers stood or sat in lines all facing the front of stage, demonstrated the adaptation of these expressions of culture for the proscenium arch while also reflecting historical accuracy. Accounts from the nineteenth century of these two bodily expressions described rows of men and women performing: in 1827 a French artistic described the ‘single row’ of men ‘stamping their feet… in perfect

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time’; while poi dancers appeared ‘in the sitting posture’ or ‘standing in ranks’ in 1859. Of course the haka and poi seen at Hippodrome and directed by Burnside aimed to entertain and reflected the ‘transition from ritual to stage’ that cultural anthropologist Susan Reed discusses in her account of dances from colonised cultures. Reed believes that dances once central in rituals and ceremonies are ‘recontextualized and redefined’, reflecting a nation’s drive to modernity. In this instance, the performance of poi in Inside the Earth was ‘read’ by audiences and critics as precise chorus work seen in the context of other Hippodrome shows and musical varieties of Times Square.

Popular, contemporary choreographed chorus lines of women, such as the Ziegfeld Follies or the Tiller Girls, combined melodic singing with precision steps, kicks and arm movements. In these choruses, as in haka and poi, rhythm, timing and harmony were most important. Comparisons made between the movements, formations and rhythm of the canoe poi and haka and these popular chorus lines were therefore not unfounded. Though the language, form and movement vocabulary of the poi and haka were unfamiliar, their presentation in performance easily manifested as versions of popular chorus work. The reviewer writing in the Sun compared the Māori performance to the best that Broadway offered: ‘their efforts teach the audience to believe that sometime in the dim past Kiralfy… Julian Mitchell… Hugh Ford and every other stage musical manager who has ever directed dancing choruses must have been in New Zealand and there picked up the chorus girl steps that we’ve been seeing

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ever since on Broadway.’  

The *Chicago Sunday Record Herald* also reported on the ‘unison of the movements’ and ‘earnestness’ of the performance, labelling it a ‘harmony of frenzy’.  

These comparisons to current dance forms seen on New York stages linked with displays of savagery encouraged audiences to interpret Māori as both modern and primitive, capable of entertaining with their combination of precision and abandonment.

The elements that establish ‘performers as representative of specific ethnic groups’, specifically movement, music, and costumes, were paramount not only to these performances by Māori but were essential to other popular displays of indigenous cultures.  

Desmond has described songs and dances ‘as cultural artifacts… believed to be representative of and specifically revealing of, a culture or a people’, and this type of representation was central to popular entertainment in the early twentieth century.  

Previous spectacles at the Hippodrome included: *Pioneer Days* (1906), featuring ‘a band of full-blooded Sioux from South Dakota’; the ‘Cossack Cavalry’ in *The Battle of Port Arthur* (1908); and various circus acts, such as ’24 Bedouin Arabs’(1907) and ‘Onapi, the Hindu Mystery'(1908).  

However, the Māori performers in *Inside the Earth* complicated the confluence of uncivilised, exotic and unknown culture with their precision and skill; they could be threatening and poetic, hard and soft, loud and lilting. In the context of expressions of other

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60 *New York Times*, 26 October 1909, p.1  


71 Desmond, p.17.  

indigenous cultures that audiences had come to expect, the songs, tight and precise movement formations, graceful poi, skilled acting and arresting physicality of the Māori entertained more than threatened.73

It was not just Americans who experienced new cultural phenomena as a result of Inside the Earth. Kiwi Amohau, the oldest performer of the group, wrote of his impressions and experiences in New York and at the Hippodrome via a letter to the Māori-language newspaper, Pipiwharauroa, in February 1910. Under the headline ‘He Reta No Nga Maori Ki Niu Ioka’ (a Letter from the Māori in New York), Amohau vividly described the unfamiliar environment the rōpū found themselves in. ‘It is not possible to know when it is night and when it is day because the lights are just as bright as daylight. And everything goes on day and night. The streets are just as full of people, cars, motors, horse buggies, bicycles, wagons and other such things at night as in the day. And it’s noisy at night.’ Amohau also recounted his impression of performers with whom he shared the vast stage. ‘There are many marvellous things going on in the Hippodrome’, he said, adding, ‘there is one very remarkable thing I will describe to you. A man flies up some 80 feet and then flying down headfirst he reaches a platform located in that space. He flies out to that platform which curves down below, and then he races up and reaches the platform base. And this is without any harm to his body.’74 The awe-inspiring, death-defying acts of a trapeze artist could be as incomprehensible as haka to the untrained eye.

73 Desmond, p.17.
74 ‘Kua mene katoa nga iwi o te ao ki te mahi ki tenei whare i nga tau kua taha ake nei, ko te iwi Maori o Niu Tireni te mutunga, a ko ta Niu Tireni anake nga mahi hou kua kitea nei kua mahia ki tenei whare ki te Hippodrome. Ko te tino whakamiharo rawa o matau ranga- tira ko te pai o a matau mahi e mahi atu nei, a he nui rawa to ratau manaki i a matau. Ko te tikanga o ta matau mahi i haere mai ai e rua tuunga i te ra he hawhe haora mo ia tuunga mo ia tuunga’. Pipiwharauroa, no.142, February 1910, p.10.
Figure 33: ‘Duchess and Chief of the Maoris of Manhattan’. Kiri Matao and Tai, featured performers of Inside the Earth, whose ‘surprising histrionic talents’ proved popular with New York audiences. The World, 28 November 1909, np, R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.
Three years after the Hippodrome featured Sioux in *Pioneer Days, Inside the Earth* introduced even more thrilling representations of the unknown and wild presented as entertainment. By showcasing the unfamiliar and exotic the Hippodrome epitomised the sophistication and modern environment of contemporary New York. The context and content of the Hippodrome productions can be understood then not only as ethnological performance but also by considering what film historian Miriam Hansen referred to as the ‘incessant sensorial stimulation’ of variety shows, reflecting
the increasing urbanisation and industrialisation of modern New York. The physical attributes and unfamiliar customs of the Māori coupled with technical developments in theatrical effects such as electric lighting produced even greater ‘ferocity’ on stage, reflecting American audiences’ demand for novelty. Recurring comments from critics about the group’s performing expertise and professionalism coalesced with issues of race and gender. Under the headline ‘Hippodrome outdoes itself. New show most magnificent ever seen in New York’, the Sun described how ‘The Maoris “got” their audience a second after the curtain rose. Most of their work is supposed to be “educational”. It is.’ The movements and sound of haka, waiata, poi, and the weaponry of patu and taiaha, showcased in Inside the Earth introduced new and novel expressions of culture to audiences already familiar with experiences of ‘otherness’ and ‘savages’ in the theatre.

**Māori off stage, on the field, in the museum, and at the ballot box**

Outside the boundaries of New Zealand’s colonial and assimilationist policies, representations of Māori did not resonate with the same intensity of ideas surrounding a lost culture, a dying race, or, as Prime Minister Ward argued in the debate over Fleet Week festivities, ‘Maori as equal in every way with the European.’ During their nine months in New York the rōpū made headlines for reasons unrelated to Inside the Earth, as they took part in events outside the theatre that disrupted notions of race and culture in America. The novelty of the Māori men who appeared ferocious on stage but dressed and spoke as elite Englishmen, and of Māori women who had the vote, complicated meanings of race and gender and the place of Māori within racial categories. Separated from their stage personas the Māori men and women fashioned...

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identities as modern New Zealanders and entered into New York society with their stylish dress, speech and manners.

Expressions of masculinity also signalled differences in race and class. As has been shown, the display of male flesh combined with the ‘horrible vitality’ of haka on stage at the Hippodrome conveyed a virility not normally displayed by American middle-class men, except in the arena of sports. Consequently, it was here that the masculinity of Māori and New Yorkers came into focus. During their time in New York the younger Te Arawa men assembled a rugby team, captained by Tai, that ‘arranged for scrimmage practice in Central Park’ every Wednesday and Saturday morning. Eventually feeling confident in their ability to adjust to the rules of American Gridiron, a game was played in October between the Māori men and a team made up of Hippodrome theatre technicians. The reputation of Māori as sportsmen, notably in rugby, preceded their notoriety as actors. In 1909 Professor of Psychology William McDougall published *An Introduction to Social Psychology* at the same as *Inside the Earth* was taking place at the Hippodrome. McDougall’s discussion of sport included reference to Māori, who, he believed, possessed a ‘fierceness’ that affected their game-playing tactics. Singling out Māori, McDougall hypothesised that members of this race were especially suited to football because they ‘take great delight in such contests’ owing to their ‘warlike’ tendencies. McDougall’s theory gained some merit as the headline from the 10 October edition of the *New York Press*

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77 *Sun*, 16 October 1909, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.

attests: ‘Maoris can kick Football. Also Knock Out Hippodrome employee in Dispute over Score.’

The difference in style of play by the two teams (English-style rugby versus American football) contributed to disagreements in tactics and play. However, reports confirm both teams suffered injuries. ‘An argument over the difference in points was a cause of yesterday’s casualties’, the *New York Press* reported. ‘McGonigle was tackling Tuora, the full back of the Maori team, when he received a kick in the neck, which knocked him unconscious. Tai, quarterback of the Maori tribe, also was wounded in this scrimmage receiving a bad cut over his eye.’ While both teams might have suffered physically, the public display of masculinity by the Hippodrome team took the worst beating. The *Marlborough Express* reported the final score as Maori 23, Hippodrome 1.

The appearance of the Māori in New York also attracted the attention of Native Americans, in particular young men from the Carlisle School in Pennsylvania. One hundred and fifty students from Carlisle, including the school’s football team made up entirely of Native Americans, attended a performance of *Inside the Earth* in October. The warm reception and recognition they received at the Hippodrome reflected the level of respect attributed to their sporting prowess, and they were ‘cheered by the audience as they entered and left the theatre’. The *Sun* explained that the ‘visit of the Carlisle Indians to the Hippodrome is the result of curiosity to see

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80 ibid.
82 Founded in Carlisle Pennsylvania in 1879 by Richard Henry Pratt, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, a Native American boarding school, aimed to educate and assimilate Native American children. Though it was reported that Tai, as captain of the Hippodrome team, issued a challenge to the Carlisle team for a game of football, there is no record of this match occurring.
the New Zealanders in their native dances’. The desire of the Native Americans to witness the Maori ‘native dances’, albeit staged in a theatrical spectacle, could have sprung from the restrictions placed on performances of their own dances from the late nineteenth century. As dance by Native Americans was a federal ‘Indian Offense’, the only venue available for performance, at this time, was either in ‘underground’, undetected sites, or in revues such as *Buffalo Bill’s Wild West*. Witnessing another indigenous culture’s corporeal expression, albeit in a context of spectacle, might have forged feelings of solidarity between the two cultures or stirred feelings of loss. In either case, witnessing haka and poi performed increased knowledge of Māori for the Native Americans.

Given the amount of publicity and favourable reviews the appearance of the Māori entertainers at the Hippodrome attracted, it is not surprising that interest in the Māori extended beyond their performance capabilities in the context of contemporary race-thinking. In the quest to acquire knowledge of other native cultures and customs in realm of both human and political sciences, two radically different groups approached the Māori performers, seeking their assistance to boost their respective cultural, social and political agendas. Anthropologists, advocates for women’s rights and the Te Arawa performers intersected at the ‘crossroads of the world’, resulting in new connections and representations of Māori and New Zealand in the United States.

As the field of anthropology developed in the early twentieth century it incorporated older ‘pseudo’ sciences such as phrenology and mesmerism. Phrenology, the ‘radical science of mind’, consisted of taking skull measurements to determine

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84 *Sun*, 16 October 1909, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.

‘relative strengths of intellectual qualities and emotions’. The practice of casting heads of indigenous people aligned with the scientific movement of comparative anatomical analysis, popular from the eighteenth century. This ‘science’ aimed to establish the intellectual capabilities amongst races by measuring the shape and size of various skulls. As Paul Turnbull, an historian of racial science, explains, the shape and size of the skull, of ‘savage races was a reliable indicator of the relative strength of intellectual powers and emotion in the individual mind’. In January 1910 the New York Times directors of the Anthropology Department of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) visited the Hippodrome to ‘see the haka dances given by the New Zealand Maoris’. Prior to their attendance at the theatre some performers were invited to the museum to examine some of the Māori ‘taonga and artefacts in [the museum’s] collection, in order to better identify them and to have photographs taken’. While there, head and body casts of some performers were created, with accounts of this process relayed in the New York newspapers:

…two straws [placed]in the chief’s nostrils, with sufficient cotton wool at the ends of the straws to keep them in position. The wet plaster was then applied to his face till nothing could be seen but the two straws through which he breathed. A towel was then placed over Kiwi’s head and a white sheet thrown over his body. For fifteen minutes he was compelled to sit motionless.

Another report, headlined, ‘Takes Casts of Maori Head. American Museum Professor Induces Chief to Sit’, described Kiwi’s discomfort during the castings, the

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87 Ibid.
89 Ohinemutu Informer, January 2007, p.27.
90 Bridgeport Post, 24 January 1910, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts. As far as is known at present, the cast of chief Amohau’s head still resides at the AMNH, though my own attempts to locate this cast have been unsuccessful. The granddaughter of Kiwi, Iwaiwa Bonnie Amohau, has recently said that she had no knowledge of this event having occurred while her grandfather was in New York. Moreover, Bonnie Amohau understands that the events of 1909-1910 were never discussed among whanau of the next generation in Rotorua. Discussion with Iwaiwa Bonnie Amohau with author in Rotorua, 8 July, 2011.
distress caused among those watching and the incentive to continue with the process. It is likely that these members of Te Arawa had never witnessed a cast being taken; therefore, with the outcome and effects unknown, the apprehension displayed by Kiwi and those watching was understandable.

Kiwi, the chief, submitted to having the cast made until the wet plaster began to harden, when he suddenly became impatient and would have destroyed the result had he not been persuaded by his manager to remain quiet until Professor Lowie removed the cast. Several members of the tribe watched the operation with astonishment and alarm. On being told however that he would be paid for submitting to the discomfort Kiwi agreed to return and have a cast made of his body. 91

Photographs taken at the museum consisted of formal poses with members dressed in a combination of traditional kahu kiwi feathered cloaks and European clothing. In one (see figure 35) Amohau, standing alongside two seated wāhine (one of whom has been identified as Reneha), is dressed in a three-piece suit complete with gold watch chain. Separated from their stage personas, the Māori performers assumed identities as subjects of the British Crown. The photographs taken of the rōpū at the AMNH contrasted with the representation of Māori being performed a few blocks south at the Hippodrome. 92 In opposition to the reports of the ‘wild gyrations’ of the women and the piupiu of the men ‘sensitive to breezes’, the serene, still and serious gaze of the men and women captured on film portray dignity and gravity. The images and the context of their construction enlarged the representation of Māori by presenting another dimension of these men and women not seen on stage.

Māori women also took central roles in political events. Advertisements for the Hippodrome boasted that the: ‘SAVAGE SUFFRAGETTES are actual voters in their New Zealand home’, and a visit to New York by the ‘mother of the militant movement of women’, the British suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst, offered a platform on which their status as voters could be displayed. When Pankhurst arrived for her inaugural visit to the United States she chose three Māori women from the Hippodrome cast to share the platform with her at a massive rally at Carnegie Hall on 25 October. The three — Kiri Matao, Waapi and Erana — were celebrated as symbols of the female suffrage movement, and in the process challenged American and British notions of race and gender politics. As reported in the New York Times: ‘New York has never seen such a gathering of women as that which was brought together last night at Carnegie Hall to listen to Mrs Pankhurst. The big house, which seats 3,000
people, was packed to the doors. It was a remarkable gathering of women of many professions.  

For Pankhurst, the presence and visibility of the Māori women on stage and in newspaper reports demonstrated that even non-white women from distant lands were capable of voting, challenging Americans own discriminatory policies against women, Native Americans and African Americans.

Figure 36: The Sun described the ‘Savage Suffragettes’ as ‘Kiri Matao, widow of Maori chief, who has voted twenty years in New Zealand, Erana, political leader and advocate of prohibition, Waapi, Half-caste Maori girl who has cast her vote for Parliamentary delegates’. New York Sun, 7 November 1909, section 2, p.10, H.R. Burnside collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.

Public opinion about the Māori women at the Hippodrome was complex; the ‘savage suffragettes’ suggested that women could participate in the democratic process regardless of race or class, yet as colonised people of the British Empire, they enjoyed a privilege of citizenship that British women did not. The enfranchisement of these women struck a chord with Americans and highlighted the differences between themselves and New Zealand, but also between New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The layers of meaning deepened with the conflation of their stage personas and that of enfranchised women.

Introducing the stage personas of the women into the debate on female suffrage both elucidated and confused comprehension of Māori. Referring to the women as they appeared in *Inside the Earth*, ‘clad in a skirt made of woven rushes with a spangled bodice and carrying murderous weapons made of greenstone’, the report combined their performance personas with their experience of obtaining the franchise, concluding that ‘they suggest that their methods have been more militant than is actually the case’. 94 The black and white feathers of the huia bird, worn in the hair of the women on stage, signified mana within the iwi as well as serving as an adornment of beauty; however, the historical significance of the huia feather was lost on the American press. 95 Conjectures that ‘Possibly the feather is the emblem of equal suffrage, and New York may yet see a similar trophy waving proudly aloft from pompadours of her social queens’, implied that symbols of Māori suffrage might soon be adopted by Americans. 96 Though the meaning of the feather adornment was

94 ibid.
95 *Encyclopedia of New Zealand* explains that huia feathers were worn in the hair of high-ranking people and were kept in a wooden chest called a waka huia. The huia has been extinct since the early-twentieth century, http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/nga-manu-birds, accessed 2 September 2011.
misunderstood, the association with Pankhurst carried with it significant exposure for Māori and New Zealand.

The wāhine chosen to accompany Pankhurst (‘Kiri Matao, widow of an old Maori chief; Waapi, a young leader of political opinion among her people and an ardent prohibition advocate; and Erana, a young woman who has cast but one vote’) represented the variations of age, interest and experience amongst the group. In reports related to female suffrage in New Zealand, New York newspapers emphasised that the ‘dusky suffragettes are little burdened by either political responsibilities or Paris fashions’. Since the journey to universal suffrage for women was relatively unknown in the United States at this time (white women in the state of Wyoming had been able to vote since 1869 followed by Colorado, Utah and Idaho by 1900), reports of the process of obtainment fascinated. Thus, the report in the *Evening World* concluded, ‘as a matter of fact, the Maori women’s right to vote has upon the election of two members of parliament been handed her without a struggle’.

The situation of female workers in New York City reached crisis point in 1909. Some 23,000 factory seamstresses, predominately young immigrant women, went on strike for better working conditions and pay. As a consequence of their actions, a rally in support of the striking ‘Shirtwaist’ Factory workers, organised by

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99 ibid.

Mrs. Oliver H.P. Belmont, was held at the Hippodrome in December 1909. On this occasion the theatre was filled to overflowing with workers, suffragettes, trade unionists, religious and cultural leaders, and the wāhine Māori who featured prominently two months earlier at the Carnegie Hall Pankhurst rally. As reported in the World: ‘In many respects this suffragette-striker mass meeting was remarkable. It is the first time there ever was such a gathering in New York.’ While the focus of the rally was the conditions of the striking women workers, messages proclaimed at the gathering echoed the earlier Pankhurst meeting with demands for women’s suffrage ringing through the auditorium. Banners hung from the walls — ‘Give women the protection of the vote’ and ‘Votes for Women’ — confirmed the allegiance between the union organisers and the suffragists.

Coverage of the gathering highlighted the Māori presence at the rally. The front page of the World featured a drawing of six Māori women wearing high-buttoned white blouses and large hats, announcing that ‘among those prominent on the platform were several Maori women who vote at home and who are members of the Hippodrome company’, including ‘Waapi’ and ‘Queen Kiri’. For women such as Kiri Matao, coming from a tradition where whakapapa (genealogy) prescribed rank and hierarchy sometimes regardless of gender, the notion of women’s rights and position within a society were understood differently from the way they were perceived in Western societies. Within tribal structures and on marae, Māori women assumed positions of power and participated in land ownership and management decisions. Most relevant to this discussion, however, was Kiri Matao’s mana as a performer. Given her history of leading poi and haka performances in New Zealand

101 ‘Shirtwaist’ described the style of women’s blouses of the day. See Epstein for a complete list of all events at the Hippodrome.  
for visiting dignitaries, most notably in 1901 and her role as leader of the Hippodrome rōpū, it follows that she would rise to the challenge and assume the role of spokeswoman for Māori women’s rights in New York.
Figure 37: ‘Among those prominent on the platform were several Maori women who vote at home and who are members of the Hippodrome company’ with the drawing featuring Waapi, ‘Queen Kiri’, Caana, Tahira, Maata and Tungi’. The World, 6 December 1909, np, R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.
Again, as reported in the *Sun*, the Māori women from *Inside the Earth* were called upon to represent the achievements of women’s suffrage. The *Sun* explained that amongst the ‘six thousand or more women’ in the auditorium, sitting at the front of the stage was ‘Mrs. Oliver H.P. Belmont...Mrs. Rangitikei, wife of Mr. Rangitikei of New Zealand... Professor Julius Hopp, founder of the Coddington School of Art and Drama’. Between speeches made by union officials and members of the clergy on behalf of the Shirtwaist workers, ‘women’s suffrage was brought in only incidentally. At such times the Maoris in box 2 at the left of the house applauded violently. They took a chance years ago and haven’t regretted it apparently.’\textsuperscript{104} The enthusiasm demonstrated by the Māori women with their ‘violent’ applause highlights their support for this agenda and suggests that modern New Zealand society and traditional Māori culture had introduced similar ways of thinking about women’s rights and improved working conditions. This massive gathering of progressive thinkers highlighted the differences between the relative comfort that enfranchised women experienced in New Zealand and the obstacles still to be surmounted by American women of all races and cultures.

**Conclusion**

The diplomacy and interaction of Māori and Pākehā in constructing the Māori welcome to New Zealand of the US Naval Fleet in 1908 extended to the transculturation of art and politics in New York the following year. Though the desire for ever more ferocious ‘real’ savagery on stage is what drove the Hippodrome to issue the invitation to the Rotorua performers and inspired R.H. Burnside, the writer of *Inside the Earth*, to incorporate Māori into his drama with music, it was the

\textsuperscript{104} *Sun*, 6 December 1909, np. R.H. Burnside Collection, series VII Scrapbook 1909-10, box 57, New York Public Library, Billy Rose Theatre Division, Lincoln Centre Library for the Performing Arts.
performers’ physicality and skill that was most commented on by the American theatre critics. Representations of events and people needed elaborate storylines and spectacular drama to provide evermore-thrilling titillation for the ‘dulled palates’ of New York theatre patrons. The precision of the canoe poi and the rhythm and unison of the haka, read by Americans as well rehearsed and choreographed chorus work, is what impressed most. Events off stage augmented knowledge of Māori and created visions of New Zealand as a progressive, enlightened and civilised member of the British Empire. The numerous press reports of the showmanship displayed at the Hippodrome, the football prowess and the voting status of Māori women coalesced as symbols of New Zealand for the general public of America.

Approximately two and a half million Americans attended the nine-month run of Inside the Earth at the Hippodrome. As the New Zealand Herald reported, the ‘Maoris of Manhattan’ created a perception of New Zealand and Māori in the United States that was unprecedented: ‘If New Zealand was but little known in America before it is well known now.’\(^{105}\) With their astonishing displays on stage, on the football field and in suffrage rallies, the rōpū from Rotorua increased awareness of Māori as a race while presenting versions of Māori culture and New Zealand that slotted into the burgeoning entertainment industry of New York City. In the context of Modernism and spectacle, performances such as those seen in Inside the Earth combined fantasy and the ideology of American Imperialism within a global community of different races working together for a common good. As stage spectacles gave way to the burgeoning film industry, performers, directors and producers manufactured landscapes and peoples in ways not possible on stage. The following chapter explores this new device in storytelling and performance and shows

\(^{105}\) New Zealand Herald, 11 October 1909, p.7.
how realism via film both transported and fixed New Zealand and New Zealanders for international and domestic audiences.
Chapter Five: New Zealanders in ‘Maori-land’: Māori and Pākehā on film

During the first two decades of the twentieth century New Zealand performers who initially trod the boards of music and concert halls, opera houses and community theatres moved into film representations of New Zealand, Māori and Pākehā. Transitioning from live performance to a fixed performance on screen affected both performer and spectator in significant ways. The gaze of a cinema audience differed markedly from that of theatre-goers, who took part in an exchange of energy and emotion with the performers. With point of view, perspective and time determined by the director, film left little room for personal interpretation or variation in experience. Most importantly, when New Zealand and New Zealand actors appeared on film, audiences experienced stories, landscapes and people voyeuristically, observing from a distance Māori and ‘Maori-land’.

Between 1914 and 1929 films made in New Zealand led to new formations of cultural representation, contributing to an imagined New Zealand from a fictionalised and historical perspective. As cultural products that transcended borders, these films enabled a transnational as well as an ‘across the nation’ exploration of race and gender to occur.\(^1\) The early twentieth century witnessed an increased presence of the moving picture, what cultural theorist Stuart Hall refers to as ‘the scene, par excellence, of commodification’, emerging as a ubiquitous site of popular culture. Accordingly this medium became ‘rooted in popular experience and available for expropriation’.\(^2\) Additionally, as cinema audiences consisted of large and diverse groups of people, these films intersected with multiple domestic and international

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\(^1\) Tony Ballantyne has urged historians to ‘think under and beyond as well as across the nation’ when approaching post-colonial history. Tony Ballantyne, ‘On Place, Space and Mobility in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand’, New Zealand Journal of History, 45, 1, 2011, pp.50-70.

social strata. New Zealand’s colonial and pre-colonial past overlapped with modernity via the technology of this new media, creating transgressions of culture that manifested as popular entertainment. The focus here is on three films: *Hinemoa* (1914), *The Adventures of Algy* (1925) and *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit*, (1929), including an examination of the career of singer/dancer/actress, Bathie Stuart. The emphasis is on the representation, construction, performance and reception of New Zealand and Māori in the medium of film.

Domestic screenings of *Hinemoa* and *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* provided a window on the ‘other’ New Zealand, a segment of society far removed from the urban, modern life of Pākehā. Similarly, *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* was hailed as shining a light on ‘Maori life as it existed before the advent of the white man’ and as interesting for ‘the customs of the tribes it shows’ when shown in the United Kingdom and the United States.

The *Adventures of Algy*, screened in New Zealand and Australia, starred Pākehā woman Bathie Stuart performing the role of ‘Kiwi McGill’, a Pākehā who performed ‘Māori’ song and dance. Therefore, this chapter focuses on embodied cultural expression captured on film that produced and located New Zealand-ness and Māori-ness for domestic and international audiences before 1930.

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3 A silent print of this film, discovered in 1980, has the title *The Dragon’s Pit*. This is the version held by the New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whātiahuia, Wellington.
4 Though film is central to this chapter, film analysis techniques such as composition of shots, angles and lighting are not employed here.
5 Leaflet for London premiere of *Under the Southern Cross*, 1929, ABQR W4507, Box 1, Archives New Zealand, Wellington; *New York Times*, 14 October 1929, p.28.
Hinemoa on film

In a 1962 radio interview 76-year-old Hera (Sarah) Tawhai Rodgers recalled her experience of ‘being’ Hinemoa as a young woman in her twenties. Though she had recently played the romantic lead in F.A. Bennett’s tableau production, another acting opportunity arose in 1914 for the young woman from Rotorua. As Tawahi explained: ‘Mr Tarr came to see our Māori Concert. Next thing after that the Reverend Bennett
came over to my home and told me that I was picked out to be the Hinemoa! I thought the Hinemoa in the concert — well, I still do the Hinemoa don’t I? He said no, the Hinemoa pictures. They gonna take the Hinemoa pictures.\textsuperscript{6} Following Bennett’s tableau production and prior to his operatic collaboration with composer Percy Flynn, the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai’s romance piqued the interest of Australian showman George Tarr, who had decided that it could serve as the ideal story for the ‘the first photo play produced in New Zealand by entirely local enterprise’.\textsuperscript{7}

Although Māori had appeared on film prior to George Tarr’s 1914 undertaking their presence in this, the ‘first picture on record that has been entirely acted by Natives’, marked a turning point in New Zealand film.\textsuperscript{8} From 1907 the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts (DTHR) had produced several short films designed to ‘advertise New Zealand attractions to the world’, with subjects ranging from the visit, in 1908, of the Great White Fleet to New Zealand, to Dominion Day celebrations (also in 1908) and Royal Visits, including the 1901 visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall.\textsuperscript{9} Māori featured in many of these films: in 1901 Te Arawa appeared in a display of powhiri, haka and poi, and in 1910 poi dancers were filmed at Whakarewarewa.\textsuperscript{10} An earlier 1898 limelight projected-film of a Māori welcome was produced by Joseph Perry of the Salvation Army to record the arrival of the army’s

\textsuperscript{6} Sarah (Hera) Tawhai interview, 1962, Film in NZ Audio tape: Film related sound materials from Radio NZ Sound Archives, side 3, 1962, audio A0050, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whittihua, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{7} Advertisement for Hinemoa, Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914 S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whittihua, Wellington; Bruce Babington, A History of the New Zealand Fiction Feature Film, Manchester, 2007, p.50.
\textsuperscript{8} Copy from promotional material for Hinemoa, Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whittihua, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{10} Jonathan Dennis, He Pito Whakaatu a Nga Iwi Maori/Films of the Tangata Whenua, New Zealand Film Archive-Auckland City Art Gallery, 1987, p.1.
founder, Herbert Booth, to New Zealand. In all of these instances, though performing, the Māori participants did not assume roles from a scripted drama but appeared in order to document native life in New Zealand.

*Hinemoa* presented a unique view of Māori within a much-loved story and local landscape. Advertising highlighted how ‘50 Maoris acted in this production’, emphasising the innovative aspect in the emerging artistic industry. Though promotional material guaranteed viewers the production was ‘Filmed in Rotorua! On the original spots, which have been handed down by generations of Maoris as authentic landmarks in the lives of their ancestors’, the Wellington *Post* reported that the ‘huge success’ provoked ‘astonishment on all faces last evening. Couldn’t have believed it. Made in New Zealand, too!’

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12 Promotional material for George Tarr’s *Hinemoa*, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington; *Evening Post*, 25 August 1914, p.2.
It is not surprising that as with most other contemporary public theatrical representations of Māori, F.A. Bennett’s involvement was central to Tarr’s endeavour. Bennett’s participation was no doubt bolstered by the fact that he held the patent to any performance of the story of Hinemoa. Likewise, the reputation of Te Arawa as accomplished performers preceded their participation in this new venture, leading Tarr to seek out Bennett and the performers associated with him. When Tarr approached the photographer Charles Newham with his idea of making a ‘Maori film’ the director also suggested that they enlist Bennett’s help, who could ‘travel to England with it and lecture on it’. Though Tarr’s proposition to ‘make a picture on the Maori customs and the Maori way of life’ fell through because of the outbreak of

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13 ‘Film in New Zealand - George Tarr’, tape 2, sides 2 & 3, George Tarr, audio A0050, Radio New Zealand, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiahua, Wellington.
war and lack of funding, he had already envisaged the story of Hinemoa as a film.\textsuperscript{14} Tarr approached the Auckland Chamber of Commerce for sponsorship, and was told by the president that he would ‘find the money for it if you get the thing in working order’.\textsuperscript{15} As Tarr remembered:

So, off I go to the Library about 11 O’clock in the morning and I read Hinemoa and I wrote a script. At 8 o’clock that night I went to the Chamber’s office with a script. I told him about the sunsets, and the swimming in the bath, and all the rest of it. At the finish he said, ‘all right, let us know when you are ready and I will fix finance.’ I said I wanted £50 to go away in the morning. He wrote me out a check for £50, which I managed to cash in time to catch the train. And I went to Rotorua.\textsuperscript{16}

Once in Rotorua, and with Bennett’s assistance assured, Tarr attended a performance of the Hinemoa tableaux. He cast Hera Tawhai, Hinemoa in the tableaux, to play Hinemoa, with her husband, Rua Tawhai, chosen to play Tutanekai. The reputation of Bennett and his performers proved crucial to promotion of the finished film, as posters advertised ‘every part being taken by the members of the Rev. F. Bennett’s famous Maori Choir Party’.\textsuperscript{17}

Both Tarr and Bennett possessed entrepreneurial skills combined with a passion for artistic endeavours. Born in Sydney in 1881, the young Tarr appeared on vaudevillian stages both in Australia and New Zealand in the first decade of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{18} His experiences in Australia of operating limelight magic lantern shows in the 1890s led him to work in the early cinema industry in New Zealand. In 1909 Harry Hayward employed him, and from 1910 he worked as a theatre manager for ‘Hayward Enterprise Limited’, the organisation that established a circuit for

\textsuperscript{14} ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} Promotional material for George Tarr’s Hinemoa, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whātiahua, Wellington.
showing films throughout New Zealand. Prior to collaborating on Hinemoa, he and local photographer and budding filmmaker Charles F. Newham made two ‘industrial films’, Trawling Industry and ‘a picture of the gannets on Cape Kidnappers’.

While Tarr and Newham made newsreel films, a French filmmaker travelled to New Zealand to capture an essential New Zealand for world-wide audiences. In October 1912, Gaston Méliès arrived in New Zealand to ‘shoot film in exotic locations’. When Méliès was introduced to F.A. Bennett, the two agreed to work together, with Bennett providing the ‘talent’ and advice. The Frenchman made three short films in as many weeks featuring Bennett’s group of entertainers, with Bennett co-directing some scenes in Méliès’s version of the Hinemoa story. Though pleased with the acting ability of his all-Māori cast, Méliès was disappointed that there ‘were no more tattooed Maori men’, thus requiring his actors to ‘tattoo themselves with makeup’.

Méliès’s Hinemoa screened in the United States in 1913 but was never shown in New Zealand. Following its American premiere, a United States film magazine observed that although ‘there is nothing theatrical about it at all… we can find nothing but good to say of it’. For overseas audiences even though the Māori cast did not appear to be ‘acting’ Māori (the film implied a ‘pre-European’ setting) the lack of theatrics did not diminish the appeal of the film; however, this 1912 Hinemoa

20 ibid; ‘Film in New Zealand - George Tarr’, tape 2, sides 2& 3, George Tarr, audio A0050, Radio New Zealand, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whитiahu, Wellington.
21 Mark Derby, ‘Méliès in Maoriland — the making of the first New Zealand feature film’, in James Bennett and Rebecca Beirne, eds, Making Film and Television Histories: Australia and New Zealand, London, 2011, p.1. Derby explains that in the course of his three weeks in the country Méliès shot ‘three narrative films’, including Loved by a Maori Chiefess, Hinemoa and How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride. No footage of these films has survived.
22 Méliès’s 14-minute Hinemoa, written by Australian scriptwriter Edward Mitchell with cultural advice provided by James Cowan and co-direction from Bennett. It is believed that no footage survives. Virginia Callanan, ‘Gaston Méliès’, New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History, Wellington, 2011, p.45; Pugsley, New Zealand Film, p.36; Babington, p.34; Derby, pp.41-45.
23 Babington, p.34; Derby, p.43.
presented the first instance of Māori standing for and representing Māori in a narrative film.\textsuperscript{25}

Bennett’s earlier involvement with dramatic and musical production led him to take precautionary steps in his dealings with filmmakers to safeguard what he regarded as his intellectual property. Following his experience with Méliès in 1912, and presumably anticipating both commercial gains and misappropriation by Pākehā, including composer Percy Flynn with whom he planned a collaboration, Bennett applied to the Register of Copyrights in Wellington for a patent of his tableaux staging of Hinemoa and Tutanekai in 1914. Included in his application was a request to copyright the name ‘The Famous Maori Choir’, in order to ‘protect it as against the use by others’. While the Registrar of Copyrights listed Bennett as the ‘proprietor’ of his Hinemoa tableau, the application in regards to the copyright of the choir’s name was more problematic since the Copyright Office did not recognise registration for ‘names of this description’. Nonetheless, copyright for staging Hinemoa was granted to Bennett on 21 January 1914.\textsuperscript{26} Thus, assured of his ownership of the Hinemoa story in dramatic presentation, Bennett passed on directorial duties of the film to Tarr. As Tarr remembered, Bennett assembled the cast prior to filming and instructed them that ‘whatever Mr Tarr tells you to do you do it just the same as you do it for me’.\textsuperscript{27}

As discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the Te Arawa story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai resonated with Pākehā at this time, with versions appearing in print, music and paintings. However, the voyeuristic nature of film created a proximity to Māori

\textsuperscript{25} Virginia Callanan states that Gaston came to New Zealand to gather ‘fresh material in novel settings’, and that by using Māori actors he could show ‘customs and characters of a people so wholly and strangely different from ourselves’. Virginia Callanan, ‘Gaston Méliès’, in Diane Pivac, ed., New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History, Wellington, 2011, p.45.

\textsuperscript{26} Copyright application from F.A. Bennett for Tableau of the Legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, 19 January 1914; letter to Bennett’s solicitor, W.A. Carter, 6 February 1914, PC 4, 1914/4, Archives New Zealand, Wellington.

\textsuperscript{27} ‘Film in New Zealand - George Tarr’, tape 2, sides 2& 3, George Tarr, audio A0050, Radio New Zealand, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
bodies and ‘authentic’ landscapes not normally available through these other media. Film scholar Roger Horrocks emphasises how the ‘relationship between Maori and Pakeha is not simply a source of filmic stories — it involves issues that are central to the social life of this country’.28 Tarr and Newham’s vision of Rotorua and its people created a new way of seeing Māori and the places that held great ancestral import to Te Arawa. The physical landscape featured in the film — the lake, the rock, the steam rising from the hot mud pools — became tangible and transported cinema viewers via close-ups and wide-shots, to the actual locations of the well-known story.

The inclusion of Māori and Māori culture in early New Zealand films enlarged the opportunities for exoticism that educated and entertained Pākehā New Zealanders as well as audiences abroad. These films also supported the trope of the dying Māori and the disappearance of a Māori way of life in modern society. As with Alfred Hill’s 1896 Hinemoa cantata and C.F. Goldie’s portraits, these cinematic imagings depicted a noble race whose customs and ‘pure’ corporeal expressions might soon be gone forever, supporting the claim that ‘the romantic Maori stereotype distinguished New Zealand’s overseas image’.29 Moreover, as stated by filmmaker Merata Mita, Māori, being ‘eminently photogenic’ offered a remarkable attribute for filming in the early twentieth century; Māori could fulfil the need for authentic ‘native’ in dramatic films.30 Historian Michael King has shown that the popularity of photographing young Māori women for use in postcards in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stemmed from their ‘erotic quality’, with the exposure of breast and titles

such as ‘A Maori Belle’. International tourists sent these cards home, thus perpetuating the idea of the exotic, uncivilised and alluring Māori. Likewise, the moving picture transported audiences to foreign locales, allowing them to witness unfamiliar people, customs, rituals and behaviours from the safety and comfort of a cinema seat.

The relationship between film, photography and Māori culture is underlined by spiritual beliefs contained within mātauranga Māori (knowledge and comprehension of the visible and invisible world). Mita explained that from nineteenth-century photographs to twentieth-century moving images, the ‘sacred aspect’ of film for Māori centred on the mana accorded to these images, held as a ‘window to the soul’ of ancestors who have passed on. Therefore films such as Hinemoa and Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit as well as Gaston Méliès’s Hinemoa, need to be understood in relation to this relationship between the screened image and spiritual aspects of the Māori, for both actors and audience. Furthermore, as Mita explains, as the film industry blossomed ‘the need arose to exaggerate or minimise aspects of Maori character or culture’ in the service of entertainment. Māori became ‘more accessible and attractive’ to audiences. But Mita also states that film allows entry to a ‘forbidden world of excitement and illusion’.

In 1962 Tawhai recounted her experience: ‘after listening for Tutanekai’s flute I got into the water. Swam, a little way of course, but in the picture [seemed like] miles! Then after swimming we landed [in a small boat] over in Mokoia Island just beside Hinemoa’s bath. Then we got off the boat. I swam a little way. When I got

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34 ibid, pp.41-42.
35 ibid, p.40.
ashore I was exhausted; tired from swimming all that way.’ Tawhai realised that for these ‘pictures’ she would be required to actually swim the waters of Lake Rotorua, unlike in the tableau that she had perfected in theatres, where water was represented by lighting and scenic effects.

Tarr quickly shot Hinemoa, with all the major work done in nine days, paying the cast 8 shillings a day for the men and 6 shillings a day for the women, and providing a ‘feast’ for all 50 actors at Whakarewarewa with ‘cooked pigs, potatoes, bread and butter’ on day seven. However, the demands of a tight deadline meant that the actors had to keep working during this feast. As Tarr explained, ‘while they were eating I took the principals out into the bush and I did the necessary work with them.’

The tight schedule also did not allow for close-ups to be shot, requiring the actors to return to Rotorua. But before that could happen, Tarr arranged to screen the unfinished film in Auckland to his employer, Henry Hayward, to solicit support for the final product. Having viewed the unfinished film, Hayward arranged for a preview screening a week later with an invited audience at the Lyric Theatre on Symonds Street. So enthusiastic was the response to this screening that at the conclusion Hayward offered Tarr a contract to complete the film and premiere Hinemoa at the Lyric.

The first dramatic film to be produced in New Zealand by an ‘entirely local enterprise’, Hinemoa, premiered at the Lyric on 17 August 1914, simultaneous with New Zealand’s entry into World War One. Hinemoa competed for audiences with other dramas from the United States, such as The Hearts of Women, a romantic love

36 Sarah (Hera) Tawhai interview, 1962, Film in NZ Audio tape: Film related sound materials from Radio NZ Sound Archives, side 3, 1962, audio A0050, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
37 Tarr made Hinemoa for £122 in total, or equivalent to approximately £GBP8000 or $NZ15,000 today.
38 ‘Film in New Zealand - George Tarr’, tape 2, sides 2 & 3, George Tarr, audio A0050, Radio New Zealand, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
triangle, in addition to short films featuring the local Expeditionary Force, the training of the British army and a film of New Zealand troops heading to the international conflict.\(^{39}\) The *Observer* commented on the lack of appreciation directed at this latter film and wondered why the ‘audience do not enthuse’.\(^{40}\) On the contrary, the *Observer* stated that *Hinemoa* ‘charmed the audience’, so much so that it ‘is one of the few pictures seen of late that the audience applauds’, concluding that ‘*Hinemoa* should not be missed’.\(^{41}\)

The ‘Really Unique Attraction!’, *Hinemoa*, thrilled audiences for 30 minutes with scenes such as ‘Tiki brings news of Hinemoa’, the ‘secret meeting’, ‘Hinemoa on the rock’, ‘Happiness for all’ and, finally, ‘sunset-Te Honga’.\(^{42}\) Specially arranged ‘Maoriland Music’, written by Alfred Hill and played by Hayward’s resident orchestra, accompanied the silent film.\(^{43}\) Following its run in Auckland, *Hinemoa* toured the country over the next five months. A preview in the *Evening Post* praised Hera Tawhai as an actress ‘whose physical advantages and ability and experience … have, it is claimed, enabled her to give what is regarded as a perfect portrayal of the mythical heroine’.\(^{44}\) As the *Observer* commented after the premiere of *Hinemoa*, ‘the Rotorua Maoris are born actors and actresses’.\(^{45}\)

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\(^{39}\) *Observer*, 22 August 1914, p.6.

\(^{40}\) ibid.

\(^{41}\) ibid.

\(^{42}\) Synopsis of scenes as presented on promotional flyer for *Hinemoa*, Promotional material for George Tarr’s *Hinemoa*, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.

\(^{43}\) Promotional flyer for *Hinemoa*, Promotional material for George Tarr’s *Hinemoa*, 1914, S1095, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington; *Press*, 31 August 1914, p.3; *Evening Post*, 24 August 1914, p.3. An examination of Hill’s work as a composer of ‘Māori music’ is discussed in detail in chapter two.

\(^{44}\) *Evening Post*, 24 August 1914, p.3.

\(^{45}\) ibid; *Observer*, 22 August 1914, p.6.
Māori participation in this filmic representation of the Hinemoa story signalled a willingness to locate themselves within this environment for the education and pleasure of Pākehā. Apart from witnessing and interacting with Māori at tourist sites such as Whakarewarewa, most Pākehā in urban centres would not have had access to the places and actions seen in Hinemoa. With Bennett’s encouragement but directed and framed by Pākehā, the actors ultimately created emotional responses to these legendary people and places. Their bodies’ interaction with the landscape created a comprehension of Māori and New Zealand that was real and unreal, simultaneously historical and contemporary. Visually, the films of the 1910s and 1920s that presented versions of Māori and the New Zealand landscape were at times both historical interpretation and realistic intimate portrait. Narratively, the mining of Māori stories
and myths for mass consumption in films created new avenues for the development of New Zealand as a nation with a distinct cultural heritage. Following the Wellington premiere of Hinemoa the Evening Post declared: ‘The exploitation of Maori lore for motion picture purposes is an entirely new departure, and opens up fresh fields for the kinematographic machine.’\footnote{Evening Post, 25 August 1914, p.3.} As an extension of the DTHR promoting New Zealand via tourist films, these dramas promised endless opportunities of promoting and depicting New Zealand.

New Zealand as ‘Maori-land’ past and present: Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit

The complexity of depicting both a pre-European setting of New Zealand acted by ‘authentic’ Māori and the ‘unreality/reality’ of dramatic representation manifested with the cast and crew of Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit. The project began in February 1928 when director Alexander Markey, hired by Universal Pictures, arrived in New Zealand with an American film crew. The expected six-week shoot was hampered both by rainy weather and Markey’s ‘cultural and spiritual ignorance’.\footnote{Mita, p.41.} Nonetheless, leading Māori political leaders including Apirana Ngata and Tai Mitchell, along with the head of the Maori Arts and Crafts Board, Harold Hamilton, contributed advice during the shoot in order ‘that the life and scenes of the past may be truthfully recreated in every detail’.\footnote{Bay of Plenty Times, 7 May 1928, p.3.} As post-colonial commentator Homi Bhabha has argued, ‘the borderline engagements of cultural difference may as often be consensual as conflictual’.\footnote{Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture, London, 1993, p.2.} In this instance the initial cooperation and interaction with Māori lessened as the production continued. Markey’s reported insensitivity led to ‘a growing resistance’ amongst the cast and contributed to his
dismissal from the project. Universal Pictures replaced Markey with his assistant, Lew Collins.\(^{50}\)

The requirement of film authenticity demanded by producers and audiences resulted in Hollywood creating in New Zealand a ‘dehistoricized pre-European past’ in an exotic location peopled exclusively by Māori.\(^{51}\) The plot of *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* presented a classic tale of forbidden love, hostile families and brave men who fight for the honour of their tribe/clan/family/kin.\(^{52}\) Set in an environment of elemental danger, the film’s locations included Ohiwa near Whakatane, the Waitomo Caves and White Island, (the active volcano named the ‘Devil’s Pit’). As the *Bay of Plenty Times* reported in May 1928, set construction required the assistance of local Māori residents to meet Hollywood standards of spectacle and wonder. The paper reported that ‘a pa is being reconstructed to film battle and other scenes. Canoes have already arrived and are being re-conditioned, and watch towers and palisades are looming up realistically, and trenches are being dug, so that when the actual filming takes place Ohiwa should present a spectacle of surpassing interest.’\(^{53}\)

Rather than solely depicting a past way of life, as Bruce Babington and others have suggested, the Māori cultural elements in this film could also be seen as a reflection of Māori and New Zealand in the 1920s. The act of recreating pā, erecting palisades and re-conditioning waka provided tangible elements of a Māori way of life that depended on Māori involvement, co-operation, knowledge and skills. And although during the shoot the *Bay of Plenty Times* reported that, ‘The natives actually

\(^{50}\) Mita, pp.41-42. Mita believes that Markey showed great insensitivity during the shoot, resulting in ‘resistance and subversive tactics’ from Māori involved with the production and thus causing the film to run over budget with lengthy delays in production.

\(^{51}\) Babington, p.36.

\(^{52}\) ibid.

\(^{53}\) *Bay of Plenty Times*, 7 May 1928, p.3.
re-lived, for a brief space, the life of the far-off days before the white man came to New Zealand’, the skills needed to build the sets and act ‘Māori’ for the camera called for a phenomenological experience of being Māori in the present. The involvement of the head of the Maori Arts and Crafts Board in addition to local craftsmen assured skill and artistry in production of ‘props’. Thus, this Hollywood creation fashioned New Zealand by utilising Māori skills and customs situated in both the past and present.

The action in Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit revolved around two Māori tribes, the ‘Ariki’ and the ‘Waitai’, who battled after the discovery of an illicit liaison between a chief’s daughter, ‘Princess Miro’, and a young warrior from a neighbouring tribe. The male rivals fought for the right to marry Miro. Following this personal conflict, the victorious warrior threw his defeated opponent into the active volcano. This action ignited the battle between the two tribes, resulting in many deaths on both sides. In the end, the true love of Miro and her young warrior led to a lasting peace between the tribes.

The silent film begins with a panned, wide shot of clear skies and a beach lined with palm trees, framed by a large hill. Titles set the scene: ‘Many years ago on the northern side of a menacing volcano known as The Devil’s Pit dwelt the Ariki tribe.’ Viewers are taken to a native village where a haka introduces the Māori inhabitants, and where the smoking volcano, which harbours ‘an angry spirit’, looms over ‘the Ariki, and their enemies on the opposite side.’ Images of lines of wāhine performing canoe poi and a carver at work introduce life in the Ariki village.

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54 ibid. 55 As with other references to high-ranking Māori woman in the realm of popular culture, such as Princess Iwa, the ‘Maori Nightingale’, the moniker ‘Princess’ signified the mana bestowed upon a young woman due to her family heritage within the tribal structure. However, princess is a misnomer in te reo Māori, rather the label rangatira or tapairu would be applied to a noble woman. The names of the tribes are taken from te reo Māori: ‘Ariki’ meaning high-ranking chief and ‘Waitai’ meaning salt water.
Equating authenticity with the primitive or historical leaves little room for the performance of these cultural expressions to exist in the present as contemporary cultural practice. Likewise, the possibility of acting ‘ancient’ in the present was indicated by actors whose persona and historical time period was marked by their race. While the haka, poi and waiata in Under The Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit were meant to evoke historical authenticity and pan-tribal uniformity, the effect that the filming, distribution and viewing of these songs and dances had on both Māori and Pākehā at the time has not been considered by historians. These captured performances, meant to define and portray traditional and pure culture, might have been an amalgamation of different movements and songs, representing diverse and
tribal-based origins. Once fixed on film, these performances then stood for a type of universal expression of Māori-ness. The juxtaposition of the modern and the historical was further highlighted in the film with the hairstyles worn by the actors, with many of the women sporting the flapper ‘do’ of the day and the men displaying the ‘short back and sides’ as worn in the 1920s. On the other hand, the actress playing the lead role of ‘Princess Miro’, Witarina Harris (née Mitchell), explained she had worn a wig as her natural hair was cut in a contemporary short ‘bob’, which would have disrupted the look of an ancient Māori ‘princess’. 56 While the natural set locations provided authenticity, the actors’ physical appearance and performances of customs and cultures needed to be shaped to convince audiences of their genuineness.

Figure 42: ‘I had to wear a wig because I had very short hair at the time’. Interview with Witarina Harris, 1996, AUD 1436, A0135, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua. Still of Witarina Mitchell Harris in Under the Southern Cross/The Devil’s Pit, 1929, S0381, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.

56 Interview with Witarina Harris, 1996, AUD 1436, A0135, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
The commodification of New Zealand, begun by the DTHR in the first decade of the century, gained strength with these early films. *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit*, filmed with the aid of and dedicated to the government, garnered support from Prime Minister Joseph Ward when he affirmed ‘that it is possible to build stories of great dramatic power and absorbing interest within our own beautiful country’.57 As with notices for George Tarr’s *Hinemoa*, where the ‘natural’ acting ability of Māori was commented on, Ward, in his opening night remarks in 1929, also stressed the abilities of Māori ‘acting’ Māori. Ward emphasised that ‘Once again the Maori race has proved “second to none” in its capability of reaching the highest standard set by the World in Motion picture production as in many other directions. It is a great tribute to their natural genius and should go far towards making the name of New Zealand a household word overseas.’58 When the film premiered in New Zealand in April 1929 the *Evening Post* praised the actors’ ability in preserving historical customs in a conflation with the scenery: ‘Filmed entirely in New Zealand and enacted exclusively by Maoris, it is an everlasting testimony not only to the histrionic capabilities of our remarkable Native race but a delightful vista of the Dominion’s world-famous scenery, and a worthy record of early Native traditions and characteristics.’59

The international appeal and success of *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* depended on the dramatic storyline, its cast of Māori actors and their interaction with the environment. The reception of films shot in ‘exotic’ and unfamiliar locations for American and British audiences depended primarily on the authenticity of the


59 *Evening Post*, 3 August 1929, p.7.
scenery and the interaction between it and with its native inhabitants. Thus, the flyer advertising the premiere of the film in London promised viewers a ‘Vivid Romance and Adventure in Exquisite Maori-land’, while the Los Angeles Times explained, ‘Only native Maoris are used in the cast and by this very virtue it is outstanding. One is carried, literally to far-away Maori-land, to watch through a camera eye the unfoldment of a favorite legend’. Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit was ‘an absorbingly interesting film far removed from the average picture’. At the end of 1929 the film screened in selected cities across Europe. Apart from the obvious and expected mentions of the cast and scenery, favourable reviews from overseas newspapers highlighted the plot: ‘unlike many productions made in strange lands it tells a story with hero, heroine and villain.’ Unlike other Hollywood films where ‘natives’ were often acted by known American actors, sets represented real locations, and action was limited to hunts and wild animals, the Māori actors, the absorbing story and the active volcano all combined to make Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit a unique cinema experience.

The participation of Māori advisors, actors and builders in the manufacture of Māori and New Zealand on the silver screen contributed to lasting images and interpretations of Māori. Though Māori film scholar Mita has argued that the representation of ‘culture, customs and spiritual beliefs’ of Māori in the service of entertainment was not fully understood by the actors in films of the era, the input from Ngata, Mitchell and the cast of Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit cannot be underestimated. Mita has described early films featuring Māori made by Pākehā as ‘culturally insensitive and in some cases downright offensive.’ It is not disputed, as

60 ibid.
61 The Devil’s Pit/ Under the Southern Cross/ Taranga, Mans. 0038, A+D basis 2028, Box 1, New Zealand Film Archive/ Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiahua, Wellington.
Mita says, that the ‘camera was an instrument held by alien hands’.\textsuperscript{63} But it was also the case that the action in front of the camera sprung from a genuine, embodied experience of the Māori actors. The filming of \textit{Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit} proved a positive experience for some. In 1996 Witarina Mitchell Harris recalled her excitement at being chosen as the lead in the film, especially as she had never left her home of Rotorua before. She remembered the joy of being able to say, ‘I’ve been on White Island, I’ve been to the Waitomo Caves’ to her friends at home. When told she had the lead role Harris thought ‘I must be the best looking girl in Rotorua- I got the part’.\textsuperscript{64} Once filming began she enjoyed the process, especially as she didn’t have to ‘remember any words because it wasn’t a talkie’. The director’s secretary ‘told me what to express. They told me where to stand or sit. I loved it.’\textsuperscript{65} For Harris, the process, as distinct from the agenda of Universal Pictures, allowed her to have fun and experience New Zealand in a way not possible before. The final product, however, did not represent her experience, as the imperative was to provide a glimpse into the ‘old relics and sacred customs of the past’ and ‘fierce native tribes’ of ‘Maori-land’\textsuperscript{66}.

More than 60 years after filming \textit{Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit} Harris had no hesitation in stating: ‘That one film has taken me all over the world. That one film has given me all this excitement in my life. The excitement is still with me.’\textsuperscript{67} Following the film’s return to New Zealand in the 1980s, Harris became kaumatua (elder) of the New Zealand Film Archive, accompanying film showings as a guardian throughout New Zealand and overseas for many years. Her presence at

\textsuperscript{63} Mita, p.42.
\textsuperscript{64} The Devil’s Pit/ Under the Southern Cross/Taranga, Mans. 0038, A+D basis 2028, Box 1, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{65} Interview with Witarina Harris, 1996. AUD 1436, A0135, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{66} Flyer for London premiere of Under The Southern Cross, 1929, ABQR W4507 Box 1, Archives New Zealand, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{67} ibid.
screenings of this and other films that featured Māori actors assured that the ‘sacred aspect’ of these films was acknowledged while preserving and protecting the mana of the actors.

**Bathie Stuart and *The Adventures of Algy***

America’s popular (as opposed to scientific) understanding of Māori culture in the early twentieth century revolved around fictionalised displays. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Māori who performed at New York’s Hippodrome in 1909-1910 not only acquainted audiences with haka and poi but also introduced notions of race and gender to a public otherwise ignorant of New Zealand and its inhabitants. When *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* screened in the United States in March 1930 it was preceded by a specially produced sound prologue. The Movietone, developed in 1926 as an early system of adding sound to film, was also employed for newsreels of current events. This particular Movietone prologue, the only audio component of this story, introduced the main feature. On a moonlit beach men and women performed movements and songs in front of a carved building. Four seated young women swung balls on string, while two men dressed in reed skirts played hand-held drums with two others playing wooden flutes. The presiding elder man, adorned with feathered cloak and impressive feathered head-dress, stood clutching a carved stick. The featured performer, a young woman with close-cropped dark hair, dressed in skirt and roman sandals, swung her balls with energy and a large smile.
Unbeknownst to the American audiences, the prologue was shot on a film set in a Hollywood studio. The central performer and director of this short clip, the New Zealand-born performer Bathie Stuart, thus created an illusion of New Zealand and New Zealanders for American filmgoers. As an introduction to Māori this prologue was pure fabrication, from the painted moonlit beach to the feathered headdress worn by the ‘Māori chief’, but for the movie-going public in the United States, Stuart conjured Māori and New Zealand. None of the performers in this prologue were Māori and their actions were an imagined conglomerate of South Pacific bodies, gestures, clothing and settings. Stuart described her idea behind the Movietone: ‘We had pseudo Māori girls — Hollywood extras dressed in Māori costume — and we had four Samoans who were supposed to be Māori warriors, who did the Samoan sword
dance you know, which is not the least bit like the haka. But I did the haka in the
prologue.\textsuperscript{68} When Paramount Pictures sought a director and performer for their
Movietone, Bathie Stuart seemed the obvious choice. Already in Los Angeles (she
accompanied Miss New Zealand, Dale Austen, to Hollywood in 1927), Stuart was
known in the theatrical world at home as the ‘Pakeha Maori’.\textsuperscript{69} Dressed as a wāhine
Māori, performing poi and songs in te reo Māori and English, her live stage act and
subsequent appearance in films encapsulated and embodied the hybridity of
performed popular culture of New Zealand in the 1920s.

Other forms of entertainment at this time displayed similar hybridity. Jazz
bands proliferated in the early 1920s in New Zealand, as Chris Bourke has shown in
his history of New Zealand popular music, \textit{Blue Smoke}. In this environment race and
gender seemed to matter less than, to borrow musicians’ terms, ‘chops’ and ‘swing’.
Walter Smith, a Māori musician (Ngāti Kahungunu) born in the Hawkes Bay in 1883,
formed his first jazz band in the United States in the 1910s. His musical life flourished
with many incarnations of popular bands. Smith and his band of saxophone, trumpet,
banjo and piano performed a range of popular songs and dance tunes in various clubs
and cabarets in Auckland throughout the 1920s. Bourke highlights Smith’s appeal to
both Māori and Pākehā clubgoers with a flyer advertising Smith’s band at this time:

\textsuperscript{68} Bathie Stuart Papers, MA 1591, MANS. 0010, Transcript of interview with Bathie Stuart by Julie
Benjamin, Laguna Beach, 1/2/1984, Folder 3, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga
Whitiahua, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{69} Unlike earlier usage of this term in the nineteenth century, applied primarily to men who had ‘turned’
Māori and adapted to a Māori way of life and possibly taking a Māori wife, the term as applied to
Stuart signified her performing repertoire and her stage costumes.
Magic, Mirth & Melody
Mattiki! Parekareka! Waiata!
Bright, Sparkling, Vivacious Music for the Young Folks!
Koma, Piaafaafa, Kutetera, nga Music ki te tangi! [sic]  

Similarly, Bathie Stuart’s stage acts and screen roles in the 1920s expanded the range of expression of New Zealand’s ‘Low’ culture, echoing Smith’s popular appeal and the commingling of Māori and European cultural forms in modern New Zealand society. Born 1893 in Hastings, in Hawkes Bay, to parents of Scottish descent, Bathie Stuart’s performing career began at age 14 when she became a member of Pollard’s Juvenile Opera Company, touring operettas on the vaudeville circuit throughout New Zealand and Australia. In her early twenties Stuart developed her own act of music and comedy. In later life she recalled Henry Hayward predicting ‘the gates of fame are swinging wide for you’ following the successful four-week run of ‘Bathie Stuart and her Musical Maids’ in 1926 at the vaudeville/cinema theatre the Majestic, in Auckland. Following this sold-out season, which a reviewer in the *Auckland Star* described the ‘instantaneous success of Miss Bathie Stuart and her accompanying native girls’, Stuart toured the next incarnation of this group, ‘Bathie Stuart and her Maori Maids’, throughout the Hayward circuit.  

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71 Bathie Stuart Papers, MA 1591, MANS. 0010, Folder 3, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whātiahu, Wellington.
72 Letter to Jonathan Dennis from Bathie Stuart, 1986, Bathie Stuart Papers, MA 1591, MANS. 0010, Folder 1, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whātiahu, Wellington.
73 *Auckland Star*, 8 May 1926, p.18.
By the mid-1920s, when Stuart surrounded herself with her ‘Maori Maids’ and performed as Māori, she characterised Māori on stage through song, dance and dress, while simultaneously highlighting her own non-Māori identity. However, by assuming the role of a Māori woman performing haka and poi, Stuart drew attention to Māori culture and customs through this phenomenological engagement with audiences. The ‘Maids’ act consisted of performances of the songs *Hoki Tonu Mai* and *Pokarekare*, poi dances and haka. So convincing was her performance that a reviewer, likely Pākehā, commented Stuart ‘is a Maori maid in all but colour’. The concept of the ‘malleability of ethnicity’, as described by Alison M. Kibler in her discussion of American female minstrel acts, raises unexplored parallel questions in
New Zealand’s history of race and performance and particularly in relation to Bathie Stuart. Was Stuart’s Māori stage persona impersonation, homage, derision, mimicry, appropriation or racial insensitivity? Kibler argues that flexibility in displays of race indicates a ‘link between old and new identities’, and Stuart’s ‘Pakeha Maori’, materialising in the interwar years and on the cusp of modernity, symbolised a New Zealand moving from assimilation towards amalgamation and a bicultural society. Her act as a ‘Maori Maid’ was an attempt to firmly place herself in New Zealand as a New Zealand entertainer, with Māori culture at its heart. As Hayward predicted, the ‘gates of fame’ did open for Stuart in 1925 when she was chosen by Australian film director Beaumont Smith to play the lead female in his ‘light romantic comedy’ feature film, *The Adventures of Algy*. The budding Australaisian film industry relied on cooperation and collaboration between Australian and New Zealand filmmakers. While financial backing primarily came from outside New Zealand, in return the country provided talent and locations. Such was the case for the Australian produced *The Adventures of Algy* (1925). Written, produced and directed by Beaumont Smith from Sydney, the ‘comedy drama in six reels’ stared British/Australian actor Claude Dampier and Bathie Stuart. After Smith arrived in New Zealand in early 1925 to conduct a series of ‘screen tests’ throughout the country to select his leading lady, a newspaper reported that Stuart, ‘known throughout the Dominion as “The Girl who Sings the Maori Songs”’ is the young New Zealand heroine in support of Claude Dampier’. Stuart’s

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75 ibid.
talents contributed a unique image of Pākehā New Zealanders to this project, and this novelty would add weight to the film’s success.

Filming commenced in March 1925, using locations in Auckland, Rotorua, New Plymouth, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Sydney.\textsuperscript{78} The plot of the romantic silent comedy revolved around cousins ‘Algy Allison’ (Dampier) and ‘Murray Watson’ (Eric Harrison), who have come to New Zealand from the United Kingdom to contest an inheritance from an uncle. The first to arrive in the country will gain ownership of a farm, on which the young ‘Kiwi McGill’ (Stuart) resided with her caretaker father. Upon first seeing ‘Kiwi’, both cousins are besotted, especially after ‘Kiwi’ dons her piupiu and performs a poi dance in her lounge for the visitors. ‘Murray Watson’, the ‘evil’ cousin, proposes marriage to ‘Kiwi’, but the young woman’s heart belongs to ‘Algy’. The ‘adventures’ that Algy encounters include being drugged by the unscrupulous Watson so that he misses the boat from Sydney to Wellington. When Kiwi’s father runs into financial hardship, ‘Kiwi’ is determined to help and, by coincidence, is seen dancing her poi by a visiting Australian theatrical producer at Whakarewarewa, surrounded by her Māori friends. As titles explain, she is seen by ‘‘Fullerton Williams”, an Australian theatrical manager, on a holiday trip to New Zealand. He was shortly producing a new revue in Sydney and here was a distinct novelty for it.’ Stuart and her character of ‘Kiwi McGill’ perfectly fit contemporary filmmakers’ need to strive for authenticity while also dispensing with it.

The familiar show-within-a film plotline of 1920s films, seen in films such as \textit{The Jazz Singer} and \textit{Golddiggers of Broadway}, presented a hard-working but unlucky female ‘star’ being discovered after being unexpectedly thrust into the spotlight. In

\textsuperscript{78} ibid.
Algy, after accidentally coming upon her dance at Whakarewarewa, ‘Fullerton Williams’ hands ‘Kiwi’ his card. As the title explains, Williams told ‘Kiwi’: ‘I am prepared to build a big act around you, £25 a week to start with.’ The following title illuminated Kiwi’s thoughts: ‘Here was her chance to help her father weather his financial storm and also save her from an unwanted marriage.’ Accepting Williams’s offer ‘Kiwi’ travels to Australia and is billed as the top act in his revue. Meanwhile, both British cousins, having travelled to Sydney, converge at the theatre and are witness to Kiwi’s triumphant finale. Backed by a chorus of exotically attired showgirls, ‘Kiwi’ takes centre stage with her poi and dances a frenzied routine combining hip swivels, turns, shuffles, and poi twirling. At the conclusion, ‘Kiwi’ and her dancers are showered with thunderous applause. By the conclusion of the film, oil is discovered on Algy’s second-rate Taranaki property and ‘Algy’ and ‘Kiwi’ are united in love (and money) in New Zealand.

The evolution and changing nature of haka, poi and waiata from the marae or whare tapere (pre-European contact house of entertainment) to cabaret, theatre and cinema takes a sharp turn with Stuart’s performing persona as a wāhine Māori. While her use of poi and waiata continued the trend of the performance of Māori-ness within the milieu of popular culture that began in the nineteenth century, Stuart was a Pākehā woman performing Māori culture or idealised or imagined versions of Māori culture. Performers such as music hall singer Princess Iwa, the performers at the New York Hippodrome in 1909 or the Rotorua Maori Entertainers could claim authenticity as racial Māori. The common element shared by these performers, their tools of the trade, was the music, movements and dress of Māori framed in a theatrical setting. In all these instances the locale of performance was crucial in establishing the nature of

79 Dorothy Buchanan — Music Scores The Adventures of Algy, Box 1: Related Papers, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
comprehension and reception. Thus, as Jane Desmond believes, ‘songs and dances are believed to be representative of and, since expressive, specifically revealing of, a culture or a people. They are portable and can be brought to an audience, unlike other cultural practices which are less easily detached from their broader social and physical contexts.’ In examining Stuart’s career we can see that as the modes and settings for cultural representation changed over time so too the role women played in these representations altered and expanded.

Stuart claimed that women from Rotorua taught her the ‘songs, poi and dances’ for her stage show ‘Bathie Stuart and her Maori Maids’ and that Apirana Ngata taught her ‘many of the Maori songs’. The acceptance and success of Stuart’s act of Māori-ness reflects a complex cultural engagement between Māori and Pākehā at this time. As Kibler emphasises, ‘racial masquerade’ was ‘one route to success and celebrity in vaudeville for women who were not conventionally attractive’.

However, Stuart herself believed that she was always ‘unusual’ because she had been so ‘interested in the Maori lore and could sing Maori songs’. She claimed that, ‘no other Pakeha did that in those days. I was the only one.’ However, Stuart was not unique in her portrayal of female ‘otherness’, especially in the United States. The present terms that could be applied to Stuart’s performances — appropriation, imitation, adaptation, colonization — correspond to female performers contemporaneous with Stuart.

For instance, Toots Paka, an American from the United States mainland, ‘packaged herself as a Hawaiian dancer’ in the first two decades of the twentieth

80 Jane Desmond Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World, Chicago, 1999, p.17.
81 Bourke, p.37; Bathie Stuart, Ref TO 1 118 5/3 part 1, Archives New Zealand, Wellington.
82 ibid.
83 Transcript of interview with Bathie Stuart by Julie Benjamin, Laguna Beach, 1 February 1984, Bathie Stuart Papers, MA 1591, MANS. 0010, Folder 3, New Zealand Film Archives/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
century. Her act, *Toot Paka’s Hawaiians*, played to large audiences in Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, New York and San Francisco. So successful was her act that Desmond describes her ‘non-Hawaiian, half-Caucasian look as the prototype of the hula dancer’. Likewise, Stuart carved a niche for herself in New Zealand’s entertainment scene as the ‘Pakeha Maori’, in her presentation of song, dance, comedy and ‘Maori-ness’.

That Stuart was able to create images and representation of Māori for her Pākehā audiences is understandable given the absence of Māori from Pākehā daily life. As James Belich has explained, Māori at this time were ‘isolated from and marginal to, the Pakeha socio-economy’ and lived predominately in the rural environment. The 1923 Census recorded the uneven population of New Zealand, with 1.2 million Europeans/Pākehā compared to roughly 53,000 Māori. Therefore it is not surprising that Māori culture was transplanted and translated onto stages and on the screen in the early twentieth century. Similar to the motivation behind George Tarr’s film *Hinemoa*, some Pākehā felt driven to preserve and celebrate Māori in popular culture. Likewise, as Pākehā dissolved tribal distinctions in the re-imaginings of Māori, a notion of a unified people devoid of tribal affiliations developed in the public eye. Māori and Māori culture nonetheless had a presence in the realm of entertainment. The metamorphosis from traditional and ritual expression by Māori to entertainment by both Māori and Pākehā cast a shadow over cultural production and representation, but it was out of this shadow that Stuart as a Pākehā Māori emerged.

Though Stuart’s character ‘Kiwi McGill’ in *The Adventures of Algy* is not meant to ‘be’ Māori, her ‘putting on’ of Māori, both in dress and movement, signified

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84 Desmond, p.67.
New Zealand for both the fictional characters in the film and audiences in New Zealand and Australia. Australian reviewers explained that ‘Miss Bathie Stuart has specialised for many years in Maori folk lore and her knowledge of Maori manners and customs has been skilfully woven into the film’. In New Zealand, Stuart’s adaptation of poi was called ‘most convincing — an exponent of Maori dances in real life, she uses this art to full advantage on the screen’. This commodification and re-packaging of culture and ritual on film directs us to consider Judith Williamson’s notion of colonial economies in relation to theatrical representation and the development of popular culture. Williamson states: ‘What is taken away in reality, then is re-presented in image and ideology so that it stands for itself after it has actually ceased to exist.’

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87 Everyones, 20 May 1925, p. 8.
88 Auckland Star, 12 September 1925, p.15.
Figure 45: ‘Kiwi McGill’ and ‘Algy’ feature in the poster for the New Zealand premiere of The Adventures of Algy, 1925. ‘Kiwi’ appears in her kahu kiwi (feather cloak) with her poi in mid-swing. Poster Collection, New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki O Nga Taonga Whitiahua, Wellington.

Two scenes in Algy featured ‘Kiwi’ dancing. In the first, when the ownership of the farm is threatened through lack of funds, ‘Kiwi’ visits her Māori friend ‘Mary’ for advice. ‘Kiwi’ arrives at the ‘village’, dressed in her feathered cloak, and explains her father’s financial crisis to Mary, who suggests a temporary solution: ‘dance for us, Kiwi, and forget your troubles.’ By seeing ‘Kiwi’ in this environment surrounded by Māori, viewers are meant to understand that Māori accept ‘Kiwi’ into their tribe. Moreover, she is encouraged to dance as a wāhine Māori by ‘Mary’. ‘Kiwi’ stands,
her cloak falling to the ground, revealing her piupiu and woven top draped over one shoulder. She dances, thrusting her hands and hips to the side, circling her wrists and placing one hand near to her ear with a shimmering movement; movements meant to resemble what wāhine might perform in a haka or poi dance. As ‘Kiwi’ dances, a group of European men and women, led by a Māori guide, watch with interest. This is when the Australian Fullerton Williams discovers his next ‘star’. Forthwith, ‘Kiwi’ heads to Australia, and though an attempt is made by Murray to sabotage Kiwi’s debut, the show opens in Sydney.90

Figure 46: ‘Kiwi McGill’ and friend ‘Mary’ in a scene from The Adventures of Algy. After ‘Kiwi’ pours her heart out to her friend, Mary suggests that Kiwi dance for them ‘and forget your troubles’. The Adventures of Algy; 592505-5, National Film and Sound Archive, Australia.

The next scene featuring ‘Kiwi’s’ dancing is the final ‘ballet’ of the Sydney stage production. Though very little of the staged show is seen in the film, the grand finale production number, featuring ‘Kiwi’, takes up four minutes of screen time. A detailed analysis of ‘Kiwi’s’ and the chorus girls’ choreography reveals the invention and conglomeration of movements made to represent Māori and Other. The sequence

90 The Adventures of Algy, 20007.0072, New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiahua, Wellington.
begins with ‘Kiwi’ waiting in the wings to go onstage, her costume checked by the producer and director. As they push her out she smiles with anticipation. The massive curtain lifts to reveal 20 chorus girls, some seated, some lounging on the floor, some standing with cloaks draped around their shoulders. Dressed in ‘grass skirts’ and cropped tops, they wear identical short, dark, curly-haired wigs. A soloist summons them to attention with a series of chaines turns, upstage, downstage, and side-to-side. Finally when all the girls turn to face the back of the stage, arms gesturing towards the centre, ‘Kiwi’ is escorted on stage by the soloist through a centre. She runs onstage to thunderous applause from the large audience.

Figure 47: The production finale scene, shot in Sydney, from The Adventures of Algy. Bathie Stuart, centre, hold a ‘patu’ (club) in her right hand while the chorus girls hold stylised clubs. All except Stuart, wore black wigs. The Adventures of Algy, 1925, Stills Collection, S008, New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki O Nga Taonga Whitiahua, Wellington.

Female chorus work in early-twentieth-century stage musicals and musical revues emphasised the female form moving in daring and exciting ways. Jayna Brown has described the ‘racial mimicry’ that emerged with the practice of white women

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91 Chaines turns are a ballet step meaning chains. These are rapid turns performed on half-toe, travelling in a line or circle. The stage directions upstage and downstage refer to the position of the performer on the performing space. Therefore, upstage, towards the rear of the stage furthest away from the audience and downstage, to the front of the stage, closest to audience.
enacting black female performers in the 1920s United States. These staged illusions align with Kibler’s concept of the ‘racial masquerade’ displayed by the Minstrel Misses, a headline act in the vaudeville circuit of 1903 consisting of white chorus girls who performed in black face. As Brown states: ‘Popular urban stages were key sites where changing notions of the self were given shape. “New women” embraced black expressive forms, adopting racialized gestural vocabularies to shape and redefine their own bodies as modern.’ The ‘ballet’ finale in Algy reflected this format of the contemporary stage musical, with Stuart and her chorus of exotically dressed young women adopting and inventing gestures with a pretence of Māori. Here, modern signalled Māori.

The chorus support ‘Kiwi’s’ actions with their unison movements, never pulling the focus from the ‘star’. Repeatedly turning, jumping and sitting, the girl’s bodies always frame ‘Kiwi’, who occupies centre stage. Once seated, they move their wrists and upper bodies as if swinging poi. ‘Kiwi’ travels side-to-side centre stage, leaning into a lunge with her right hand raised next to her head with a trembling movement, similar to the wiriwiri or shimmering hand movement employed in haka, then slight hip movements and hand movements evoking a Hawaiian hula movement. Circling herself on the spot, arms overhead, she continues to wave her wrists and hands.

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92 The Minstrel Misses, conceived by the innovative choreographer and director Ned Wayburn, consisted of 17 white chorus girls who first appear on stage garbed in colourful coats. After travelling to the rear of the stage, they apply blackface and short, black wigs, in full view of the audience. Their act consisted of minstrel songs and other expected conventions of minstrel. Kibler, pp.137-42.


94 The wiriwiri, or ‘trembling shimmer’, hand movement employed in haka has also been referred to as ‘kakapa’. Described in 1854 by Edward Shortland as a vibration of the hand ‘meant to produce on the eye an effect analogous to that of the shake in music’, the quick vibrating of the hand often opens and closes a performance. See Wira Gardiner, Haka: A Living Tradition, Auckland, 2001; Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal, ‘Te Whare Tapere: Towards a Model for Maori Performance Art’, PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1998.
As the dance continues ‘Kiwi’ moves downstage in the centre of an inverted V formation. Now all the dancers have clubs in their hands; ‘Kiwi’s’ resembles a patu or mere, while the chorus’s have small ball-like ends. As ‘Kiwi’ moves to centre stage she travels in low lunging steps, swinging her weapon across her body and overhead, singing. Her movements, projecting an air of improvisation and abandonment, have a slightly threatening quality to them as she directs her gaze to the audience in a penetrating manner. Aided by her club, ‘Kiwi’ and the chorus take on the persona of warriors, thus signalling ‘Māori’ to the audience.

The melange of movement, at times conjuring various ethnicities and time periods, results in frenzied dance. As the chorus girls move with fast side-to-side steps into three straight lines across the stage, they swing their clubs and hit them on the floor. The group divides into two, with the front (downstage) line performing a series of Cossack-like squat side kicks, while the upstage lines swing their clubs overhead while doing a series of Irish jig-like steps. ‘Kiwi’, closest to the audience, travels side to side striking her club on the ground, interspersed with a scooping movement of the arms. Finally, crouching, she repeatedly hits her club on the ground. As the lines of women exit the stage, some with Cossack-like steps, others with skipping kicks holding their clubs overhead, ‘Kiwi’, hands on hips, sways in a slightly crouching position with her club overhead, as if to strike. She stops just short of the wings, alone, raising her club proudly overhead.

The final segment of the ‘ballet’ sees the dancers enter the stage with a change of costume and wigs. ‘Kiwi’ enters (wearing a feathered skirt and velvet top) leading the chorus, now clothed in feathered skirts and floral leis, onstage in a conga-line movement. Their hair is coiffed in the short bob style of the flapper girl. With one hand on the shoulder of the girl in front and one hand on the hip, the chorus forms a
circle behind ‘Kiwi’, as she takes centre stage. In the spotlight she moves across the
front of the stage with a bouncy step and a thrust of her hips, her arms alternating
between hula-type floating movements, hands on hips, wiriwiri and poi-like wrist
movements. With the chorus in lines behind her, ‘Kiwi’ grabs two strands of feathers
from her skirt and, swinging in time to the music, joins the chorus in their movements.
Throwing her arms up triumphantly, she ends the dance and takes her bows, blowing
kisses to the audience.

Stuart and her chorus girls in Algy suggest Māori through dress, but their
movements bear little or no relation to expressions of authentic, racial Māori culture.
Like Ned Wayburn, the choreographer of the American Minstrel Maids, who also
created dances composed of what Barbara Stratynner has referred to as a ‘hodgepodge
of Egyptian, Turkish, Persian and Indian styles’, Stuart catered to a public eager to be
entertained by exaggerated expressions of the female Other.95 Portrayed as a Pākehā
Māori, the novelty of her act depended on her creation of Māori. Audiences admired
her ability to ‘become’ Māori. On stage and film, there could be no mistaking that
Stuart presented entertainment rather than ritual. She filled a niche in society’s
expectations for entertainment, providing an imagined expression of New Zealand
indigenous culture in mainstream society.

Reflecting on the career of Bathie Stuart reminds us of Desmond’s statement
that, ‘A “culture”, “a people”, “a song”, “a dance”, all become interchangeable,
 commodified signs’.96 As has been shown here, the conflation of songs, dances and
costumes with race, nation and ethnicity were important elements of early-twentieth-
century popular entertainment of and in New Zealand. The nature of popular
entertainment calls for constant innovation, creativity and imagination. Stuart

95 Barbara Stratynner, ‘Ned Wayburn and the Dance Routine: From Vaudeville to the Ziegfeld Follies’,
96 Desmond, p.17.
combined her knowledge and interpretation of Māori customs and culture with talent, femininity and that most important but elusive element of show business, pizzazz. In devising Māori-like songs and dances for stage and screen Stuart created space for new visions of Māori and New Zealand.

The illusionary nature of Stuart as a ‘native’ New Zealander concretised into the selling of New Zealand as a holiday destination. Having settled in the United States in the late 1920s, she ‘pioneered adventure/travel film lectures across

Figure 48: Bathie Stuart, ‘The only white woman interpreting the unusual folk lore of the Maori people’. Promotional material for Bathie Stuart in the United States, Bathie Stuart papers, TO 1 118 5/3-1, Archives New Zealand, Wellington.
America’, promoting New Zealand as a tourist destination and at times presenting up to 150 lectures a year. The story of how Stuart began her career on the lecture circuit in the United States parallels ‘Kiwi McGill’s’ discovery by the Australian theatrical producer ‘Fullerton Williams’ in Algy. In a 1984 interview Stuart explained that after lunching at a women’s club in Los Angeles the host introduced her as ‘Our guest from faraway New Zealand who will speak to us in her native tongue’. Explaining that English was her first language, Stuart then performed her ‘Maori’ dance. Consequently a booking agent appeared asking Stuart if she realised what a ‘remarkable novelty’ she possessed, adding ‘How much Maori can you do?’ From then on her presentations in the United States consisted of showing a tourism film on New Zealand, a short lecture on customs and landmarks and a performance of her interpretations of waiata, haka and poi. Her publicity promised that Stuart was ‘as proficient in the rendition of their [Māori] ceremonials and sweet haunting melodies as the natives themselves’. Though never passing as Māori, Stuart’s career depended on her convincing portrayal of romanticised imaginings of Māori. Her success in film and in cabaret perpetuated the notion of a vanishing culture saved from extinction through the intervention of Pākehā.

From a twenty-first-century perspective Stuart’s acting ‘Māori’ appears insensitive to cultural identity and dismissive of ownership of cultural expression. The difficulty in describing Stuart’s portrayal of ‘Kiwi McGill’ has caused consternation amongst New Zealand film scholars in more recent times. Minette Hillyer, in her

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97 Bathie Stuart papers, MA 1591, MANS. 0010, Folder 1, New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki O Nga Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
98 Transcript of interview with Bathie Stuart by Julie Benjamin, Laguna Beach, 1 February 1984, Bathie Stuart Papers, MA 1591, MANS. 0010, Folder 3, New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki O Nga Taonga Whitiāhua, Wellington.
99 Bathie Stuart papers, TO 1 118 5/3-1, Archives New Zealand, Wellington. Bathie Stuart died in California in 1987 aged 94.
study of New Zealand films of this era, interpreted Stuart’s ‘Kiwi’ as a ‘hyperbolically determined model “New Zealander”’ who is ‘half “native” and half immigrant’, while film historian Sam Edwards described ‘Kiwi’ as dressed in ‘tourist costumes’ performing a ‘pastiche’ of dances from ‘New Zealand’s indigenous people’. Others have labelled ‘Kiwi McGill’ as both ‘Maori and non Maori’ while ultimately embodying ‘essential New Zealandness’. Stuart erased all sense of tribal identities, difference and distinction in her interpretation of Māori. Peers viewed her performance of Māoriness as committed, skilled and ‘convincing’. Her talent fit within the parameters of performance that drew audiences to theatres and films of the day and aligned with contemporary aesthetics of the performance of the authentic, the primitive and the exotic. Perhaps as Bruce Babington believes, ‘Kiwi McGill’ represented ‘the desire to use Maori presence in New Zealand as definitive of the place’. Stuart’s ‘Kiwi’ could only be from New Zealand, but as her performance in *Algy* demonstrated, the concept of New Zealand in this film could take any form and need not conform to an authentic representation.

**Conclusion**

This analysis of popular films and its actors highlights the means by which ‘New Zealand’ was created performatively and understood both domestically and internationally between 1914 and 1929. When George Tarr sold his idea of filming ‘sunsets’ and ‘swimming in the bath’ to the president of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, he envisioned the appeal that seeing local landscapes and Māori actors on the big screen would have to the general public of New Zealand. Likewise, the

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100 ‘Native’ in this context refers to a native-born New Zealander.
Americans who produced and directed *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* believed that their film would convey a timeless and true essence of New Zealand and Māori to international audiences that would succeed at the box office. Bathie Stuart’s act as a ‘Pakeha Maori’ depended on her ability to convincingly portray a wāhine Māori while she fashioned a new hybrid form of movement and song. In all these performance events Stuart Hall’s assessment that the ‘engagement across cultural boundaries’ in popular culture are ‘bound to be contradictory’, resonates. Contradictions come to the fore when examining the works and careers of George Tarr, Bathie Stuart and the production of *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit*. The contradiction of the illusionary, timeless customs of Māori versus the real performance of Māori culture on film, the Pākehā who performed Māori and the conflation of violent landscape with an entire race of people, encapsulates the collision of cultures that can manifest in the performing arts, where erasure of boundaries between race and tradition, reality and invention, results in formations of cultural hybridity.

The cross-cultural encounters in New Zealand between Māori and Pākehā from the 1920s developed more firmly to conform to Eurocentric forms of expression in popular culture. Haka and waiata adapted to a variety of performance venues and means of communication, including film and radio. Moreover, forms of cultural representations solidified, with stories of people, places and events conforming to acceptable versions of modern New Zealand. As the following chapter shows, with the marking of one hundred years of British sovereignty in 1940 New Zealanders turned to the performing arts, not only to commemorate historical Māori, Pākehā and

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102 Hall, pp.470-71.
significant events, but also to celebrate the present state of the nation and the future direction of its people.
Chapter Six: One hundred years of history performed: 1840-1940

The depiction of people, place and history on film, both factual and fictionalised, differs substantially from the alchemical experience that transpires between performer and audience at a live performance event. Though film can offer an exposure to unfamiliar landscapes not available in a theatre, a live performance transports spectators through time and space via the imagination and physical proximity to the actors and actions. During a performance the illusion of time passing meshes with the actual passing of time, producing an experience of multiple temporal planes in one location. In 1940, as New Zealand approached the centenary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and prepared for war in Europe, its historiography (both nationally and provincially) took shape and was consolidated in historical pageants and re-enactments.\(^1\) As a performance event takes its spectators on a journey with a beginning, middle and end, so too a history of a nation unveils its story through a narrative of people, places and events. If the use of narrative enables historians to ‘portray movement through time’, as the historian John Gaddis argues, allowing for a ‘wider view’ of the past to emerge, then time portrayed through movement erases boundaries between performance and history in the creation of a dramatic story joining past and present. A performance that is an historical re-enactment cuts swathes across time and space, lending an immediacy of experience not available via text or film. This chapter highlights the ‘scroll of centuries’ that led to interpretations of New Zealand’s history as they were performed in 1940.\(^2\)

A bifocal view of performing arts and cultural expression culminated in a meta-narrative of New Zealand history in 1940. The pageant makers, government

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2 *New Zealand Centennial News*, 1 April 1940, p.39.
officials, writers, producers and actors of the historical re-enactments staged throughout New Zealand can be regarded as creating a history of both the centennial narrative and of modern New Zealand. The historical past was brought into the present in pageantry, parades and historical re-enactments by living, breathing bodies interacting with the local landscape, as pageants occurred out-of-doors at the actual site of an historical event. Moreover, since descendants were often cast to play the role of their ancestors, these ‘living links with the past’ reinforced the connections between past, present and locality.³

The pageants, parades and re-enactments highlighted here, all from the North Island (from Waimate and Waitangi in the upper half of the island, Taihape and Napier in the middle and Petone at the bottom) all share common elements in their presentation of events from New Zealand’s past. Historian Deborah Ryan believes that pageants were used as an ‘effective means of fostering citizenship through attachment to place at local, national and imperial levels’.⁴ Thus, the sites of these pageants, parades and historical re-enactments in 1940 reinforced the progressive colonised narrative of New Zealand history; marginalising Māori participation, habitation and culture while emphasising European settlement, civilisation and modernisation.

In opposition to the profusion of positive representations depicted through movement, gesture and music in the numerous re-enactments in 1940, Apirana Ngata emphatically stated on 6 February at Waitangi: ‘I do not know of any year that the Maori people approached with so much misgiving as the New Zealand Centennial

year’.

His words described a narrative at odds with the physical re-enactments performed throughout the country.

The historical pageant, referred to as a form of ‘popular art’, can be understood as more than ‘a dramatic public ritual’. Historian David Glassberg has interpreted historical pageantry in early-twentieth-century United States as depicting ‘not only what the community was but also what it might ideally become’; an analysis reflected in this examination of historical pageantry in New Zealand. This examination of the performed histories that acknowledged New Zealand’s one hundred years of incorporation into the British Empire, traces the place of performance and representation and its role in creating nation, identity and community.

Re-enactments revealed new relationships between Māori and Pākehā in this year where past and present carried significant meaning for both races as embodied interpretations of the past impacted on and created idealised notions of the present. In this examination of the process, performance and reception of centennial celebrations the overarching question remains: whose versions of past events were told and from what perspective? As this chapter shows, in addition to presenting an interpretation of ‘what took place 100 years ago’, these re-enactments reveal a snapshot of 1940 New Zealand. That year, when New Zealanders simultaneously recognised the signing of the Treaty between some Māori and the British Crown and entered World War Two, historical re-enactments provided a sense of place and history, creating stories of the past, present and future. This chapter examines the development and delivery of New Zealand Centennial News, no 13, 1 April 1940, Archives New Zealand, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, pp.26-27.


Glassberg, p.80. Emphasis mine.
Zealand’s centennial commemorations, the reasons for choosing pageantry and parades as the chosen form of presentation, and the creation and reception of those celebrations. As will be shown, these types of performances consolidated one hundred years of the move from a Māori-dominated society to a Pākehā-centered nation.

**Why historical pageants?**

The idea of creating pageants to celebrate one hundred years of British sovereignty in New Zealand was mooted as early as 1935. The popularity of historical pageantry, especially in England and Canada in the early twentieth century, provided inspiration for government officials involved with the organisation of centennial events in New Zealand, and in 1935 the Mayor of Auckland, Ernest Davis, outlined his plans on how the centennial should be commemorated in his city five years hence. Davis’s list of suggested ‘ceremonial events’ included: ‘Historical Pageantry, including both land and sea representation, Decorated Processions…. Nautical Displays — a Sea Pageant depicting the arrival of the first settlers and Governor Hobson.’ In 1936 the Historical Research Committee of Auckland City Council assembled to ‘investigate the history of the foundation of the Dominion in 1840, by reference to the events preceding it and the 100 years’ development since then’. The committee recommended that any celebrations should ‘take the form of pageantry, the illustrative success of which will

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8 I acknowledge the ambiguity and complexity present when using the term ‘British sovereignty’ in relation to any discussion of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. In the 1840 English translation of the Treaty to te reo Māori the phrases ‘sovereign authority’ and ‘civil government’ were translated as one word, ‘kawanatanga’, signifying governorship as opposed to absolute sovereignty. The discrepancies between the two versions of the Treaty and the meanings and understandings of the languages used have been highlighted and debated by many historians, notably Ruth Ross, Claudia Orange, Judith Binney and James Belich.

9 Report on Proposed Centenary Celebrations submitted by His Worship the Mayor Mr Ernest Davis, Mayor’s Office, Town Hall Auckland, 11 November 1935, Auckland City Archives, 405 Auckland Centennial (1940) Records, 405, 5, ID 72762, pp.11-12.

10 Historical Research Committee Report to His Worship the Mayor of Auckland Mr Ernest Davis, 11 August, 1936, Auckland City Archives, 398 Publications, Box 15, ID 400075, pp.1-2; p.8.
fundamentally rest on historical detail’. In June 1937 the National Historical Committee of the New Zealand Centennial met at Parliament buildings in Wellington. Members included the historians Willis T. Airey from Auckland University College and Dr John C. Beaglehole from Victoria University College in Wellington. Thus the involvement of historians in the fashioning of commemorations and pageants was deemed crucial for historical accuracy.

In Auckland, the Historical Research Committee called upon James Cowan, ‘the well-known writer on various aspects of New Zealand’s past’, to offer ‘practical suggestions’ as to what should be included in the proposed pageants. Reporting to the committee, Cowan’s suggestions included the ‘arrival of the Maoris from Polynesia; the Maori in peace and war; the advent of the Missionaries; early trading days; arrival of the pioneer ships; Treaty of Waitangi; naval and military features; social life of early Auckland; mining and settlement days; Rewi’s defence of Orakau and other events of the Maori War; Auckland’s first steamer; floral fete of the nineties’. It is clear from Cowan’s recommendations that he felt it important that Māori and Pākehā relations, not limited to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, should be represented in performance by depicting social, political, military and economic interactions. Ostensibly, the marking of 100 years of allegiance to the British Crown and the partnership between Māori and Pākehā symbolised by the Treaty of Waitangi formed the basis for most of the planned pageants, but difference

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11 ibid.
13 Historical Research Committee Report, p.8.
of opinion over the significance of events and dates deemed worthy for
commemorations in 1940 added to the complexity of planning.

As early as 1936 dates mooted as celebratory days during the centennial year
sparked debate amongst centennial committees. In Wellington a meeting of the
Provincial Centennial Organizations discussed the problem of choosing a National
Day of Celebration for 1940. For the members of this committee the date of 6
February, the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, held relatively
little importance as a ‘National Day’. Joseph Heenan, from the Department of Internal
Affairs, proposed ‘the 16th of November, which was the day when New Zealand was
separated from New South Wales and became a separate Colony, and therefore,
started its separate National existence’. However, Heenan admitted that the selection
of one day was problematic: ‘I do not feel that one date, even 16th November, can be
definitely settled as the one day on which NZ will jubilate’. Other dates suggested
included 21 May, ‘the day of Governor Hobson’s Proclamation declaring sovereignty
over the “Island of New Zealand”’ and 22 January, the date of the first landing at
Wellington of settlers of Edward Wakefield’s New Zealand Company. Writing in
1981, historian William H. Oliver believed that the centennial ‘celebrated a century of
colonization…. the remembered achievements were British’, and this is clearly seen
in the planning of pageants and commemorations of 1940 with the minimisation of
the role of the Treaty of Waitangi and Māori contributions to New Zealand society
since 1840.

14 Papers relating to the New Zealand Centennial Celebrations, Report of the Dominion Conference of
Provincial Centennial Organizations Held in the Social Hall, Parliament House, Wellington, on
Thursday, 20 August 1936 at 10:30 am, MS-Papers-7597-1, ATL, Wellington, pp.30-31.
15 Edward Wakefield’s New Zealand Company led the settlement of New Zealand with immigrants
from the United Kingdom, beginning in 1839.
16 W.H.Oliver,’The Awakening Imagination, 1940-1980’, The Oxford History of New Zealand, Oxford,
Solicitations for producing pageants began in earnest from the late 1930s with ideas and examples coming from many directions. As a letter from a New Zealand actor living in London to the High Commission shows, the centennial sparked large-scale planning and imagination. In 1937 Shayle Gardner envisioned a pageant with ‘2000 Maoris and 2000 others enlisted as actors’ highlighting New Zealand’s past with only the ‘best incidents dramatic and humorous’. Gardner was aware of the inherent drama that could be generated from a reconstruction of some of New Zealand’s less positive events, for instance, the 1886 Tarawera volcanic eruption, but advised against including it because, although it ‘could be a thrilling episode, I don’t think calling attention to it would be good publicity’. He concluded that he could produce a ‘show that everyone of us will be proud of and which visitors will never forget! A show of Dignity, Imagination and Beauty!’

The Historical Research Committee of Auckland City Council noted that they found as ‘useful material’ a book on Frank Lascelles. Known as the ‘man who staged the empire’, Lascelles produced historical pageants for commemorations not only in his native Britain but also in South Africa and Canada. Among his most elaborate pageants were the Coronation Pageant in Calcutta in 1912, featuring 300,000 ‘indigenous peoples and troops’, and the Pageant of Empire at the British Empire Exhibition in 1924, which featured a cast of 15,000 and an ‘assortment of exotic animals’. With Lascelles as a

17 In 1886 Mount Tarawera, in the central North Island, erupted, killing over 150 people.
19 Auckland Provincial Centennial, Historical Research Committee Report to His Worship the Mayor of Auckland Mr Ernest Davis, 11 August 1936’, 398 Publications, 400075, Auckland City Archives; Celebrations, Frank Lascelles, The Sibfords Society, http://thesibfords.org.uk/sibipedia/frank-lascelles, accessed 3 November 2011. Lascelles was responsible for the massive pageant at London’s Crystal Palace during the Festival of Empire, 1911, at which Maggie Papakura’s performing group (including Princess Iwa) were in attendance.
benchmark, the committee recommended that the council should contemplate the ‘engagement of some pageant-master upon whom the mantle of Frank Lascelles has fallen’. These examples signal the types of commemorations envisioned for New Zealand in 1940.

The discussion amongst politicians and committee members resulted in local centennial celebratory events that ranged from the ‘High’ art end of the artistic spectrum (the Centennial Drama Festival, the Centennial Music Festival, an essay competition and National Centennial Art Exhibition), to those considered ‘Low’, such as Agricultural and Pastoral (A&P) shows, fireworks and floral displays. Historical pageants and parades fell in between these two camps, as they enveloped history, music and drama while also being events ‘done by the people rather than for the people’, thus providing an inclusive rather than exclusive cultural experience involving both Māori and Pākehā.

However, planning for all centennial events was interrupted with the lead-up to New Zealand’s involvement in the escalating tensions in Europe. Questions arose over the prudent use of funding as well as the appropriateness of any celebrations at this time. The establishment of the Māori Battalion and their commitment to the war effort added a further complexity to events in 1940. Regardless, planning for pageants and commemorations went ahead with involvement of local residents, at times numbering in the thousands, providing the ideas, stories, costumes and performers.


Report on Proposed Centenary Celebrations submitted by His Worship the Mayor Mr Ernest Davis, Mayor’s Office, Town Hall Auckland, 11 November 1935, Auckland City Archives, 405 Auckland Centennial (1940) Records, 405, 5, ID 72762, pp.11-12. The government appointed Mr William S. Wauchop as the National Director of Centennial Pageantry.

Glassberg, p.78. Glassberg cites William Chauncey Langdon, the American director of pageants, referring to pageants as ‘folk drama written by local dramatists and performed by the people’ in order to highlight the ‘latent art-instincts of the people’. Glassberg, pp.78-79.
Historical pageants and re-enactments were the second most popular events throughout the country in 1940 after the Agricultural and Pastoral (A&P) show, though at times the two overlapped with historical parades taking place within an A&P.\(^{23}\) *The New Zealand Centennial Celebrations Programme of Events*, published and distributed by the Department of Internal Affairs, listed all events associated with centennial commemorations throughout the country taking place between 1 January and 16 November 1940. These events included the numerous A&P shows, special church services, balls, dances and gala sports nights. The Minister of Internal Affairs, William Parry, in his forward to the official programme, proclaimed that the centennial events ‘are the expression of the patriotism of New Zealanders and their desire to commemorate the country’s first glorious hundred years as a British Dominion’.\(^{24}\) No fewer than 35 pageants and re-enactments were scheduled from Russell in the Bay of Islands to Winton in Southland in the eleven months of official centennial celebrations. Included in these were historical processions and parades, tableaux staging of the signing of the Treaty and re-enactments of landings of first settlers.\(^{25}\) The first and one of the largest of the historical pageants took place in the far north at Waimate North on 2 January 1940.

**People, place and popular memory**

The significance of Waimate in the far north of the North Island as the site for the first historical pageant in 1940 was summed up in William Parry’s opening message. Addressing the assembled crowd of thousands, the Attorney-General conveyed Parry’s (and the government’s) sentiments that as ‘the Bay of Islands was the cradle

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\(^{23}\) There are 46 Centennial A&P shows listed in the official programme of events.

\(^{24}\) *New Zealand Centennial Celebrations Programme of Events*, Wellington, 1939.

\(^{25}\) Historical Procession — Opunake, Taranaki, 24 February; Tableau Signing Treaty of Waitangi — Winton, Southland, 13-14 February; Re-enactment landing of first settlers at Caroline Bay — Timaru, 6 April, *New Zealand Centennial Celebrations Programme of Events*, Wellington, 1939.
of British settlement in New Zealand’ it was ‘particularly fitting’ that this area hosted
the inaugural centennial year event. The arrival of English Christian missionaries to
the far north in the early 1800s continued the settlement process, with signing of the
Treaty of Waitangi in February 1840 taking place only 20 kilometres away. The
crowd of approximately 5,000 that assembled on that summer morning at the
Waimate Showgrounds anticipated the staging of local historical events combined
with moments fashioned from the national story. The promotional flyer described the
scene of the pageant: ‘Beneath the Puriri trees…the site of the first New Zealand
inland Mission Station…where signatures were added to the famous Treaty of
Waitangi.’ Through the efforts of the ‘more than 1000 people taking part’, a history of
Northland and New Zealand would materialise before the crowd’s eyes.26

26 Flyer advertising the Waimate North Historical Pageant, New Zealand Centennial Material, Joseph
Heenan Papers, MS-Papers- 1132-228, ATL, Wellington.
The locations chosen for these pageants supported the construction of a public historical narrative that celebrated European settlement. Though the sites chosen for pageants in Waimate and Petone held historical significance for both Māori and Pākehā, the actions depicted as worthy of remembrance and commemoration privileged Pākehā narratives. Deborah Ryan’s analysis of pageants as a form of ‘popular memories of place’ where ‘memories could be reconstructed in its
landscape’ describes the re-imagining that occurred in these settings. In the Attorney-General’s opening address Waimate was promoted as ‘the home of the early missionaries who toiled unceasingly in the interests of Maori and Pakeha alike’, and had been home to the ‘first Europeans to till the soil and farm the lands’. These sentiments celebrated settlement and colonialism while also invigorating the imaginations of spectators. Likewise, the site at Petone, chosen to commemorate the occasion of the sale of native land for British settlement, glossed over a contested version of nineteenth-century history.

In addition to the importance placed on sites for re-enactments, commemorations featured objects and symbols representative of historic events. Ships and their arrival to New Zealand featured prominently in many 1940 historical pageants and parades. To the thunderous sounds of chanting by ‘massed Maoris hidden in the bush’, the story of New Zealand, from 1350 to 1940, began at the Waimate Showgrounds with the entrance of a waka, ‘specially built and painted for the ceremony’, mounted on a truck and trailer. Inside the circular arena within the showgrounds, the first episode, Migration, featured this waka travelling through the crowd, representing the arrival of Māori to the shores of New Zealand and Northland. A photograph captured the moment as the waka, ‘paddled’ by a bare-chested ‘crew of sturdy Maoris’, passed before rows of well-dressed spectators seated under a canopy of trees. Likewise, large sailing ‘ships’ appeared in the ‘Cavalcade of the Century’ on 22 January at Petone, which depicted the sale of local land by Māori

28 Souvenir Programme of Historical Pageant, Tuesday 2 January, 1940, Waimate North Show Grounds, Waitangi National Trust, SUN 923, Waitangi.
29 New Zealand Centennial News, 1 April 1940, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, Archives New Zealand Wellington, p.39.
to the ‘Wakefields’ on board the *Tory*.\(^{30}\) Performed on the site of the first European settlement in the Wellington region, this re-enactment featured the New Zealand Company’s settlement ships, the *Tory* and *Aurora*, represented by wooden, stationary constructions. Two ‘Maori chiefs’, ‘the old wise Te Puni and his nephew, Wharepouri’, conducted the historical transaction.

![Image of historical pageant](image.png)

**Figure 50**: A waka, ‘specially built and painted’ for this inaugural historical pageant of 1940, ‘paddled’ by a crew of bare-chested young Māori men, circled the arena at the Waimate Showground, 2 January 1940. *New Zealand Herald* (1940), Bay of Islands Centennial, 1940, neg. C49999, Auckland War Memorial Museum.

The episodes enacted by local residents of Waimate and Petone, both Māori and Pākehā, portrayed a New Zealand with no racial, political, religious or gender-related issues in the past or the present. This was at odds with what historical records show. For instance, the scene at Petone on the *Tory* depicted the interaction between Wakefield’s New Zealand Company and the historical figure ‘Te Wharepouri’ as

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being one of mutual cooperation, as ‘Wharepouri’ proclaimed: ‘We want to live in peace, and to have white people come amongst us. We are growing old, we want our children to have protectors in people from Europe. We will sell our harbour and our land, and live with the white people when they come to us.’ 31 The reality of the event differed substantially. A Waitangi Tribunal report on the Wellington District purchase and settlement by the New Zealand Company states that the ‘company and its settlers had no legal rights to the land which they claimed to have purchased’ owing to the transaction between Wakefield and local Māori having been completed prior to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. 32 Moreover, the elements of re-entactment created new connections between historical figures and present-day residents. In Petone, following the performance of ‘hakas, poi dances and waiatas… the final scene depicted the arrival of early settlers from the Aurora, cementing of the friendship between Maori and the white man’. 33

At Waimate the pageant progressed with the Whangarei Municipal Silver Band heralding Episode 2, The Arrival of Captain Cook. As Hearts of Oak, the official march of the Royal Navy, played, a model replica of the Endeavour, mounted on a car chassis, entered the arena. Cook’s arrival was symbolised by an assortment of significant moments, not least of which was the ‘introduction of the first pig to the country’. The programme described the action: ‘Maoris come forward with haka of welcome, Maori wahines dance poi, Cook presents the Captain Cook pig.’ Nautical Melodies, played by the Whangarei and County Pipe Band, accompanied Cook’s farewell as the Endeavour ‘sailed’ out of sight. 34 The pageant unfolded

31 Evening Post, 23 January 1940, p.4.
33 Evening Post, 23 January 1940, p.4.
34 New Zealand Centennial News, 1 April 1940, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, Archives New Zealand Wellington,p.39;
chronologically, with the introduction of Christianity to New Zealand depicted in Episode 3, featuring the characters of Samuel Marsden, Henry Williams and Bishop Selwyn portrayed by local dignitaries, including Canon Williams taking the role of his ancestor, Henry Williams. In this scene a ‘church service, which included portions of Marsden’s first service in New Zealand’ was re-enacted in the centre of the arena. At the halfway mark in this pageant, to the strains of the iconic British melody Rule Britannia, the ‘arrival of Governor Hobson’ took place, followed by the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Hobson, played by Mr L. Middleweek (later to reprise this role at the Waitangi pageant in February), addressed the assembled Māori actors and invited them to sign the Treaty. The English-language version of the Treaty was then read aloud.

While the qualities of exaggeration, suspense, humour and poetic licence are common elements of performance, perhaps the most striking element of these historical re-enactments was the blurring of boundaries between historical event and real-time activity and between authentic, in-the-moment action and imitation. For example, at Waimate the character of Hone Heke, portrayed by an unnamed Māori actor, appeared in Episode 5, Hone Heke’s War, along with Sir George Grey (Mr R.H. Lewis) and a contingent of ‘Red Coats’. In one of the most lively and physical scenes of the entire pageant, the action portrayed the events of 1844 and 1845, as described in the programme: ‘Maoris incited by Hone Heke; the flagstaff cut down amidst demonstrations of the Maoris; when tumult subsides the redcoat buglers sound the advance.’ For added effect the medley of music comprised of Slavonic Rhapsody no. 2 and Cock o’ the North played by pipers accompanied the action. The first half of the

Souvenir Programme of Historical Pageant, Tuesday 2 January, 1940, Waimate North Show Grounds, Waitangi National Trust, SUN 923,Waitangi. It is believed that Captain James Cook introduced an English-bred pig, later referred to as a ‘Captain Cooker’, to New Zealand during his first visit in 1769. 35 New Zealand Centennial News, 1 April 1940, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, Archives New Zealand Wellington, p.39.
Waimate pageant concluded when the ‘Pakeha troops are withdrawn from ground and the Maoris march off to the bush. Grey rides forward and shakes hands with Heke.’

Likewise, in Petone, a ‘feast in the old Maori manner’, including ‘two bullocks, two pigs, and a half ton of potatoes cooked in Native ovens’, was served to the spectators. In this action, past and present materialised in the consumption of food. As the Evening Post reported, ‘some of the Hutt Valley’s most staid citizens could be seen eating pork, beef and potatoes from flaxen baskets without the aid of knife or fork.’

However, for some Māori eating from paroa (woven flax basket) was not a historic activity.

Figure 51: ‘Hone Heke’ shaking hands with a ‘Red Coat’ at the conclusion of the first half of the Waimate Historical Pageant, 2 January 1940. The Māori men all wear painted facial tattoos. New Zealand Herald (1940), Bay of Islands Centennial, 1940, neg. C50001, Auckland War Memorial Museum.

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36 Souvenir Programme of Historical Pageant, Tuesday 2 January, 1940, Waimate North Show Grounds, Waitangi National Trust, SUN 923, Waitangi.
37 Evening Post, 23 January 1940, p.4.
Displays of progress and the passage of time featured in all historical pageantry. Wedded to these concepts were the portrayals of courage during settlement and war, and endeavours such as industry and farming. But as Glassberg has pointed out, though there is an ‘intersection of progressivism and antimodernism’ in these types of performance there is also a strong focus on the ‘inevitable evolution’ of society. In Waimate, Episode 6, Pioneer Settlers, opened the second half and consisted of a procession of ‘old-time transport’, including horses, bicycles and a bullock wagon, and women and men dressed in various garments from the years 1845-1914. Musical accompaniment included English tunes such as Sally in Our Alley, Last Rose of Summer and The Village Green. For the ‘Cavalcade of the Century’ in Petone, the focus of the entire pageant relied on the depiction of ‘the formation of friendship between the Maori and the white man’. Episode 7 at Waimate, The Great War, featured a parade of local World War One returned servicemen marching to the band’s rendition of It’s a Long Way to Tipperary and Pack up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag. The concluding episode depicted Modern Progress with floats symbolising the ‘growth of towns’ and musical accompaniment, the Beer Barrel Polka. The pageant was brought to a close with the singing of God Save the King and Auld Lang Syne and the playing of the especially commissioned New Zealand Centennial March. Both pageants depicted exciting pasts, while reinforcing optimism for the future and assuring spectators of their nation’s place in the modern world. There could be no doubt that the modern world of New Zealand was one of a European-centered society.

38 Glassberg, p.5.  
39 New Zealand Centennial News, 1 April 1940, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, Archives New Zealand Wellington, p.17.  
40 ibid.
Progress and racial harmony in the past and present

As we have seen, New Zealand officials looked to other nation’s commemorations when planning New Zealand’s centennial celebrations. For example, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s address on Dominion Day 1927 had emphasised the importance of the publication of historical surveys, radio talks and historical re-enactments in the marking of 60 years of Canadian Confederation. Mackenzie’s speech, broadcast on radio, stressed the use of the past to create the future: ‘Let us hope that the interest created by the present anniversary will give us a greater pride in our country’s past, and mark a place of new beginnings in the importance to be attached to Canadian history in our universities and schools.’ Ignoring the possibility of dramatic interpretation and poetic licence, Mackenzie hoped that the Jubilee commemorations would be ‘but a simple record of the truth’. As discussed here, ‘true’ representations of past events were a central concern of pageant-makers. For instance, the Historic Pageant held at Waitangi on 6 February, labelled the ‘most important feature of the New Zealand Centennial celebrations’, aimed to re-present ‘a true picture of what actually took place 100 years ago today’.

Themes and sentiments expressing a communal patriotism, such as the acceptance of the Treaty and the racial harmony seen at Waimate and Petone, were common in historical pageantry in the United States and Canada. The concept of ‘liberal imperialism’ that espoused the ‘compatibility of a prosperous and essentially sovereign [Dominion] existing within and at the service of a vigorous, though decentralized, British Empire’, seen in Canadian historical pageants in 1927, was also

42 ‘Centennial Celebrations recorded at Waitangi by the National Broadcasting Service’, ID 37928, Radio New Zealand Sound Archive/Nga Taonga Korero, Christchurch.
present in all of New Zealand’s centennial historical re-enactments and pageants.\textsuperscript{43} In June 1927 500 performers portrayed Canada’s colonial past and progressive future in Amy Sternberg’s staging of the \textit{Historical Pageant}. The ‘dual allegiance to nation and Empire’ became physically manifest in Sternberg’s \textit{Historical Pageant}.\textsuperscript{44} Similar to the final episode in the Waimate pageant with its floats of tableaux depicting industrial growth, the \textit{Historical Pageant}’s finale presented progress in the form of ‘technical, cultural and legislative advances’, with a parade of ‘Telephones, Electricity, Art, Literature, Legislation, the Air Force, the Mounted Police, the Navy and the Army’.\textsuperscript{45} The march towards a better and prosperous future could not be denied.

Māori participation in Waimate and Petone reflected the settler narrative of events and aligns with participation of other indigenous or marginalised communities in historical re-enactments, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom. ‘American Indians or Blacks’ were rarely included in the ‘concept of democracy’ promoted in early-twentieth-century American pageants. As Naima Prevots understands American events, most pageants ‘did not recognize conflicting ideas of history’, while Glassberg points out that early twentieth-century pageants ‘depicted relations between Native Americans and whites as one of smooth transition rather than violent conflict’.\textsuperscript{46} The action of the Māori cast members in the Waimate pageant — their repeated appearances from and retreating into ‘the bush’, and their ‘tumult’ with the ‘Red Coats’ — emphasised the theme of European colonisation and civilisation. The bare chests and physicality of the Māori men as opposed to the religious garb and prayers of the missionaries and the military formations and

\textsuperscript{44} ibid., p.8.
\textsuperscript{45} ibid., p.10.
\textsuperscript{46} Prevots, p.2; Glassberg, p.86.
uniforms of the ‘Red Coats’, highlighted the differences between the races. Though Māori acted Māori, there could be no confusion that the intention behind the ‘chant’ and ‘war song’, the preparation of food and performance of haka during the proceedings symbolised Māori of the past. Apirana Ngata has been referred to as one of the three men (along with Parry and Heenan) who had the greatest influence in the planning of the official centennial celebrations.47 As a member of the National Centennial Committee his input was directed towards Māori participation at the celebrations planned for the Treaty grounds at Waitangi on 6 February and the opening there of the new Whare Rūnanga (Meeting House). Therefore, celebrations in other locations relied on its residents to shape and direct the portrayal of historic and present-day Māori participation in these events.

The Centennial News, a periodical published by the Department of Internal Affairs to publicise and report on all events associated with the centennial year, reported favourably on the ‘excellent pageant’ at Waimate and included comments by the National Director of Centennial Pageantry, Mr William S. Wauchop, who believed this pageant ‘set a standard for the Centennial year’. His satisfaction that ‘the actors fitted into their parts so that one would think they were real characters of the period’ aligns with one of the aims of historical pageantry; that is, to link people (both well-known and common) from the past with present-day living ancestors through gestures, action and clothing.48 His comment also reinforced the historical ‘truth’ of settlement and the cooperation of Māori in the making of ‘New Zealand’. In this regard, the first historical re-enactment of the centennial year with its depictions of

48 New Zealand Centennial News, 1 April 1940, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, Archives New Zealand Wellington, p.40.
Māori and Pākehā as living and working harmoniously together set the tone for the pageants and other commemorations to follow.

**Moving histories**

Another main form of historical display used to commemorate the centennial was the parade. Constructing a history via a parade provides advantages over a historical re-enactment. By presenting a literal ‘movement through time’ without dialogue or elaborate staging, the parade provides eclectic visual signposts of chosen scenes or people from the past without complications of spoken or chronological narrative. The imagined environment and the physical, local setting are condensed onto a float with a tableau display of people and place. In creating these static yet mobile histories, events from the past commingle with local characters that have pre-existing physical and/or corporeal meanings in communities. An example of this can be seen with the Taihape historical parade that took place on 22 February during the Centennial A&P show. The *Centennial News* reported that the parade ‘covered aspects of the history of the district’, including ‘an old market cart driven by a Maori’ and a float designed by the local bowling club featuring Sir Frances Drake ‘engaged in a game of bowls… as the great Spanish Armada sailed up the English Channel’. Nonetheless, Taihape’s Amateur Athletic Club won the award for best float for their colourful ‘Erin go Bragh’, perhaps reflecting a bias towards Irish ancestry among the local adjudicators.\(^{49}\) The Napier historical parade, a ‘pageant of history’, on 18 February, featured more than 100 floats whose ‘brilliant spectacle’ contained ‘humorous and serious subjects’. The *Centennial News* emphasised that this parade highlighted the ‘remarkable contrasts’ of the district, such as ‘lightly clad sportsmen and

\(^{49}\) *ibid., p.48*
sportswomen succeeded [by] “early settlers” in the ‘voluminous dress of the time’.  

The citizens of Napier constructed a history that straddled past, present, local and foreign while providing the main centennial celebration event for the town.

Rather than viewing historical re-enactments, pageants or parades as merely folk or public art, however, it is argued here that this form of performance can be understood as the politics of history; the historiography of nations and regions formed by government officials as well as the creators and spectators of pageants. Cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha’s understanding of cultural engagement is relevant here. As Bhabha states: ‘The borderline engagements of cultural difference…realign the customary boundaries between the private and the public, high and low art.’  

A re-enactment commonly involves a local community as storytellers who, whether actors, musicians, costumiers, prop makers or spectators, serve to bring ‘people together to eliminate ideological differences and barriers of race and class’. Bhabha points out that since ‘terms of cultural engagement are produced performatively’ when ‘restaging the past…other, incommensurable cultural temporalities’ are introduced into ‘the invention of tradition’. Moreover, the casting of descendants to ‘re-create’ their ancestors in situ adds to the palimpsestic nature of this type of performance. Past utterances, gestures and sounds are layered onto existing bodies and locations. Thus, it is through both the inclusion and omission of events and people, in a conflation of time and place, that the history of that particular community or nation was created in these commemorations. Ultimately, the input from and funding given by government departments shaped the histories that emerged in these performed events.

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50 ibid., p.47.
51 Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture, London 1993, p.2.
52 Prevots, p.2.
53 Bhabha, p.2.
Art by and for the people: ‘High’ and ‘Low’ cultural expression

By the late 1930s the Department of Internal Affairs and in particular Heenan supported the work of local writers and artists, predominately all Pākehā men.

Generally, it can be argued that the Labour government under Michael J. Savage (1935-1940) instigated and encouraged a divide between ‘High’ and ‘Low’ art, between Culture, associated with European arts, and culture, the song, dance and customs of Māori. William Parry’s active advancement of ‘High’ culture in the lead-up to the centennial materialised in the setting up of a National Centennial Symphony Orchestra, a Centennial Music Competition, the Centennial Drama Festival, the Centennial Music Festival, an essay competition and National Centennial Art Exhibition. In contrast Savage, in charge of the Native Affairs portfolio, ‘encouraged [Māori] to retain and cultivate their own culture and art’ during his administration.54

In short, Parry took up the challenge of elevating New Zealand’s artistic achievements to the level of High (European) culture.

An example of this is in his advocating for music to play a prominent role in centennial events. In 1938 Parry explained to the Dominion Conference of Provincial Centennial Organizations that the country had a need for increased cultural activity in this regard. Referring to the deputation of the Choral Union that requested monetary support for centennial projects, Parry voiced his concerns regarding the de-humanisation of modern society when he stated, ‘We are living in the “press the button” age when everything comes to us in the form of a machine. Today we are not even bothering about having our children taught to play music. We press the button and we get it and we do not bother about it. We have an opportunity of reviving that branch of our culture and I am sure we will have the support of the Centennial

54 Barry Gustafson, From the Cradle to the Grave: A biography of Michael Joseph Savage, Auckland, 1986, p.188.
Committee. Working in conjunction with Parry’s aims, the Radio Broadcasting Company of New Zealand contributed to centennial awareness and celebration.

**Broadcasting Waitangi**

The government’s control of New Zealand’s cultural expression expanded with the development of nation-wide radio broadcasting. By the mid 1920s radio transmitters were established in Wellington and Auckland, and the government of Gordon Coates created the Radio Broadcasting Company of New Zealand (RBC), effectively taking control of radio transmission in New Zealand. Four main stations, in Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin, came under the control of the RBC, regulated by the government and financed by licensing fees.

Radio’s involvement in centennial commemorations and those held at Waitangi in particular illustrates the power that this state-sponsored agency held in 1940.

Earlier broadcasts marking Waitangi Day had occurred, but none matched the scale, content or form of 1940. By the mid 1920s wireless broadcasting’s contribution to the shaping of New Zealand society was substantial. Specific to this study is an exploration of how Māori culture, linked with commemorations of Waitangi Day, had been disseminated throughout the nation on radio waves. In 1928, the National Broadcasting Service (NBS), a government-run broadcasting unit, programmed a special ‘Radio Pageant of the Maori Race’ on Waitangi Day. The previous year the weekly guide to radio broadcasts, the *Radio Record*, reported on the future of radio as

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predicted by the general manager of the National Broadcasting Company of the United States, as ‘more than entertainment’. By publishing this address the Radio Record was suggesting a similar role be undertaken by radio in New Zealand; that is, that radio’s mission was to carry into homes ‘every form of cultural influence and service’.

Radio’s role, envisioned by the director of the NBS, as a provider of education and culture found a perfect outlet with the broadcasts commemorating Waitangi Day and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The souvenir programme of the 1928 Waitangi Day, published by the Radio Record, advertised the historic broadcast of the pageant by announcing that the event will ‘constitute one of the most effective measures ever taken for informing the pakeha public of the romantic past and present adaptability of the Maori race’. Patrick Day, in his history of broadcasting in New Zealand, has described this as a ‘major’ broadcast of Māori content, though he does concede that it would ‘be a mistake to see the Radio Broadcasting Company (RBC) as introducing any distinctive Maori broadcasting’. Day qualifies his stance by stating that the RBC Māori-based content in the late 1920s was not ‘produced by and for Maori’, believing instead that it was ‘designed to provide a New Zealand slant’ to regular programming. According to Day, ‘New Zealand’ equated to Māori and stood in stark contrast to the daily diet of European classical music and lecturettes on subjects such as the works of Shakespeare, Esperanto and the Taj Mahal. By 1940 this commitment to service by the RBC materialised in a three-hour live broadcast from the Treaty grounds at Waitangi.

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57 Radio Record, 5 August 1927, p.5.
58 ibid.
59 ‘Souvenir of Maori Pageant’, Radio Record, 3 February 1928, np.
1840 and 1940 at Waitangi

The headline in the *New Zealand Listener*, ‘Making History Out Of History’, heralded the nation-wide radio broadcast of the re-enactment of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi at Waitangi on 6 February 1940. The National Commercial Broadcasting Service (NCBS) set up a mobile outdoor unit at Waitangi. Colin Scrimgeour, the director of this branch of government radio broadcasting, assembled a team of broadcasters, including the Māori announcers Uruamo Paora (known on air as Lou Paul), Kingi Tahiwi and Ari Pitama. The broadcast of the ‘most important feature of the New Zealand Centennial celebrations’ in 1940 echoed earlier Waitangi Day broadcasts but with the inclusion of the re-enactment of the signing of the Treaty, expanded to a scale previously not achieved. The events were produced and directed by the National Director of Centennial Pageantry, Mr William S. Wauchop, and the programme explained that ‘the script and staging, based on William Colenso’s account of events of February 5th and 6th, 1840, (published in 1890), attempted to present an authentic experience of events as they would have unfolded in 1840’. The three-hour live broadcast included not only the 90-minute re-enactment of the signing of the Treaty, but also speeches by government officials and a report of the opening ceremony of the Whare Rūnanga, presided over by Ngata and Deputy Prime Minister Peter Fraser.

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63 *Programme, Centennial of the Treaty of Waitangi, 6 February 1840, Cast of Characters*, Waitangi National Trust (WNT)1989/187/1. At the time of his appointment William Simon Wauchop was an accomplished actor, dancer, writer and performer. Wauchop produced more than 50 plays for the amateur Wellington Repertory Society from 1929-1947. William Colenso, the Church Missionary Society’s chief printer, is claimed to have corrected some use of te reo Māori in the invitations sent to chiefs to attend the discussions at Waitangi prior to the Treaty signing. Orange also speculates that Colenso may have influenced the wording of the Treaty itself. Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, Wellington, 1987, pp.35-39.
The variety of events taking place at Waitangi on this day led to an amalgamation of ideals, representations and understandings of New Zealand’s past and present. As discussed by historian Helen Robinson, the commemorations at Waitangi in 1940 were ‘an important part of the centenary’ from the government’s perspective, and as such ‘considerable sums were donated towards building of canoes and the meeting house at Waitangi’.  

Māori and Pākehā cooperation in the planning and execution of events was evidenced in the array and backgrounds of those in charge, but Māori participation varied. The ceremonies at Waitangi in February 1940 also included the opening of the Whare Rūnanga (Meeting House) opposite the Treaty House on the grounds at Waitangi. While Apirana Ngata played a significant role in the opening of the Whare Rūnanga, the boycotting of the event by followers of the Kingitanga and Taranaki and Waikato tribal groups highlighted the divisions and grievances still standing. Though the occasion highlighted events of the past, with movements and gestures recalling 1840, the speeches and sentiments expressed by Māori were firmly situated in the present, reinforced by the presence of the newly formed Maori Battalion.

Cultural and social interaction between Māori and Pākehā men in positions of authority reflected the complex relationships in wider society between Māori and Pākehā at this time. This is revealed with the choice of W.S. Wauchop as Director of Centennial Pageantry. Wauchop, a member of the Wellington Savage Club, rubbed shoulders with government ministers and local civic leaders, both Māori and Pākehā, who met in their ‘Bohemian comradeship’ to pay ‘homage to Maori traditions’ through ceremonies, performances and shared meals.  

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65 Allan Thomas, ‘The Savage Clubs: A Spirit of “Bohemian Comradeship”’, The Turnbull Record, 31, 1998, p.43. For a comprehensive history of New Zealand Savage Clubs see Natasha Beckman,
this men’s social club was primarily in writing, directing and appearing in many of the club’s entertainments. Though originating in London, New Zealand Savage Clubs included elements of Maori culture — language, design, haka and waiata — in their ceremonies and entertainments. Members and their guests at the Savage Club in the 1920s and 1930s included the Governor-General, the composer Alfred Hill and prominent Māori politicians including Peter Buck/Te Rangi Hiroa and James Carroll. Therefore, Wauchop’s experience in this environment impacted on, and lent support to, his aesthetic choices in direction for the Waitangi re-enactment.

On 6 February the radio broadcast began with the announcer setting the scene at Waitangi for listeners at home, with a description of the grounds and the activity:

Crowds and crowds of people, both Pakeha and Maori represented, as they were 100 years ago today. The whole setting should be a true picture of what actually took place 100 years ago today. Some of the visitors are arriving on horseback.

Figure 52: Actors arrive in promenade for the ‘signing’ of the Treaty of Waitangi, at Waitangi, 6 February 1940. Centennial Photograph Album, 1989/166/1, Waitangi National Trust.

The technology of a live broadcast created an experience of events unfolding similar to reports coming from the war in Europe with their attendant sense of community and nation. The broadcasting of this historical re-enactment made this occasion unique; however, its reliance on accurate recreation of dialogue from 1840 is what makes this event significant. The actors (local residents) performed in real time while replicating actions and words performed 100 years previous. Unlike other outdoor pageants where the visual spectacle of selected events, costumes and props conveyed the action and told a story, the placement of 12 microphones in and near the tent where the Treaty was ‘signed’ placed the emphasis on the actor’s speech. The announcer explained that ‘microphone arrangements have been made so that not only the Maori chiefs coming up to the Governor, but all those sitting at the table will enable, we hope, to have a complete picture of what is taking place.’

William Renwick’s belief that ‘the medium of radio turned the Waitangi celebrations into a truly national event’ is supported by the Listener’s editorial of 9 February that explained how the short-wave transmission was ‘brought to listeners in every part of the Dominion’, highlighting the erasure of geographical isolation made possible by radio broadcasts. The continuous commentary transported the events as they unfolded from the site to listeners’ living rooms. From the arrival of ‘Captain Hobson’ in the bay at Waitangi to the signing of the Treaty, spectators and actors intermingled and occupied the same space while existing in two temporal states: 1840 and 1940. Listeners at home heard how:

Those taking part in the ceremony will have the opportunity to move freely. It will be a continuous ceremony, a history enactment right from the time Captain Hobson takes up his place on the dais until the first Maori chiefs make their representation to the Governor.

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This broadcast blurred the boundaries between past and present, between re-presentation and authentic, in-the-moment action. Officials present for the re-enactment, such as the Governor-General and Members of Parliament, moved through and amongst the actors and staged scenes, on land and water, as described by the radio announcer:

… numerous canoes coming in every direction towards the place of assembly, which is a little beach below the flagstaff here. They keep time with the cadence of the canoe song. The Excellencies Lord and Lady Galway, Senator and Mrs McBride happily viewed the landing from their launch. The Vice Regal party viewed the landing of Captain Hobson on the beach just below the flagstaff here from the launches. They will be escorted to the gates of the Treaty House by cars and will be welcomed by the Honourable Mr. Fraser.  

![Figure 53: The NCBS announcer described the scene at Waitangi: ‘Governor Hobson is being received on the beach by a gathering of Maoris and also by Pakeha. Maori dressed in their traditional dress and Pakeha dressed in the dress of the period 1840’. National Broadcast Service, Waitangi Ceremony Re-enactment, 1940, ID 37870, Radio New Zealand Sound Archives, Christchurch. Photograph, 1989/166/1, Waitangi National Trust.](image)

For the thousands of spectators who were present for this re-enactment the day’s events confirmed the historical relevance of the Treaty of Waitangi to New Zealand’s identity.

68 ibid.
Zealand society. Listening to the promise of Governor Hobson that accompanied each signing by individual chiefs — ‘He iwi tahi tatou’, ‘We are now one people’— the assembled crowd received the ‘true’ words as they witnessed the physical actions of handshakes and close and cordial physicality between Māori and Pākehā. ‘Tamati Waka Nene’s’ address, as performed by Koro Waenga Raunatere, solidified the harmony between the two races brought about by the signing. ‘Nene’ stated: ‘Let us all be friends together. I am walking besides the pakeha.’ At this moment, the Evening Post reported, ‘there were lumps in the throats and tears in the eyes’ of those who witnessed events unfold. When local living, breathing Māori and Pākehā reproduced the gestures such as handshake or the signing of a parchment and the words as recorded by Colenso, the veracity of history was reinforced for spectators and commentators.

The casting of family members to play their ancestors and the attention given to the replication of gesture and movement also contributed to the phenomenon of joining the past to the present at Waitangi. The programme stated that ‘Canon Williams and all Maori members of the cast are descendants of the persons they represent’. Glassberg explains that ‘the practice of casting descendants in the roles of their ancestors followed the custom in historical re-enactments of the late nineteenth century that displayed descendants as living links with the past’. At Waitangi, as in other 1940 re-enactments, this ‘living link’ was crucial to the authenticity and truthfulness of the narrative. Robinson’s analysis of events at

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69 There is a variance between the cast of characters in the printed programme and the list that is held by the Waitangi National Trust Board. Though the programme given out at the re-enactment cites Tamati Waka Nene portrayed by Te Tuaa, the Trust Board records Koro Waenga Raunatere as Nene. I refer here to the Trust Board account. WNT 1989/187/1, Waitangi. Centennial re-enactment programme, Waitangi, 6 February 1940, Souvenir Programme, Centennial of the Treaty of Waitangi, 6 February 1940, WNT, MS12, Waitangi.

70 Evening Post, 9 February 1940, p.10.

71 ‘Re-enactment of Preliminary Events and of the Signing which took place on 5 and 6 February 1840’, WNT 1989/187/1, Waitangi.

72 Glassberg, p.114.
Waitangi in 1940, which holds that ‘Maori incomprehension of the Treaty was so unimportant that it could be displayed to a crowd of thousands without any official concern’, neglects the agency of the Māori actors and their direct link to the signatories. Their willing and active participation points to a different interpretation of this day. Robinson’s claim overlooks the input from the Māori actors, especially those depicting their ancestors and those taking on the roles of others who were present at the debate on 5 February and the signing on 6 February 1840.

Figure 54: The programme stated that ‘Canon Williams and all Maori members of the cast are descendants of the persons whom they represent’. Centennial re-enactment programme, Waitangi, 6 February 1940, Souvenir Programme, Centennial of the Treaty of Waitangi, 6 February, 1940, MS12, Waitangi National Trust.
Dramatic tension and interpretation came to the fore in many scenes, especially one that depicted the debate and the ‘Maori incomprehension’ that took place before the Treaty signing in 1840. Wauchop devised the dialogue spoken by ‘A White Man’ who voiced his displeasure on behalf of some Māori. Whether this man was meant to be Colenso is not clear, but his dissenting voice echoes Colenso’s and others’ interjections that the Māori present that day had not been made ‘fully aware of… the situation in which they would by their so signing be placed’. Essentially, Colenso believed that Māori did not fully understand the articles of the Treaty. Wauchop’s ‘White Man’ addressed ‘Hobson’, declaring that: ‘the Native speeches are not half interpreted by Mr. Williams. Neither are His Excellency’s remarks fully interpreted to the Natives. The Natives are complaining of being robbed by … (making a gesture towards Williams).’ Following further discussion the pageant concluded, portraying a peaceful resolution with signatures and handshakes. It is hard to imagine the Māori actors’ commitment and participation to this project if they were depicting ‘Maori incomprehension’.

Both Wauchop’s direction and the radio announcer’s descriptions, taken from Colenso’s account, attempted to bring sounds and movements from 100 years previous to the eyes and ears of those present and at home. Colenso, the Church Missionary Society’s chief printer, described as a ‘critical observer’ in February 1840, may have influenced the wording of the Treaty itself. Nonetheless, what mattered to those present and listening at home was the actions of the participants. The radio announcer filled in details:

73 Orange, p.54.
74 Centennial re-enactment programme, Waitangi, 6 February 1940, Souvenir Programme, Centennial of the Treaty of Waitangi, 6 February, 1940, WNT, MS12, Waitangi.
75 Robinson, p.67.
As 100 years ago, settlers, both British and American, are here. They promenaded on the open space between the house and the tent exactly as they are doing at the moment now. Groups of native chiefs squatting on the ground. Each hapu discussing with ample gesticulation as is typical of the Maoris. All these important Maori chiefs sitting out in the open square, chatting and discussing things as they did 100 years ago.’

In this context, movements, gestures and postures assumed, simultaneously, moralistic and racial overtones. The British and American promenaded while the ‘Maoris’ squatted and gesticulated, conjuring for listeners at home the difference in body types, deportment and physical expression.

Figure 55: Hone Heke (Hone Heke Rankin) ‘signing’ the Treaty of Waitangi, observed by Captain Hobson (Mr L. Middleweek) and James Busby (H.K. Hatrick), Waitangi, 6 February 1940. Spectators can be seen in upper right corner. Centennial Photograph Album, 1989/166/1, Waitangi National Trust.

77 Waitangi Ceremony Re-enactment 1940, ID-37870, series D, Radio New Zealand Sound Archives/Nga Taonga Korero, Christchurch.
Perhaps the most powerful and potent representation of present-day Māori at Waitangi occurred at the opening of the Whare Rūnanga. Alongside the actors participating in the re-enactment, the 500-strong contingent of the Maori Battalion affirmed not only the Māori partnership to the Treaty from tribes represented in the battalion, but also their willingness to fight for King and Country alongside Pākehā in Europe.  

The 28 (Maori) Battalion formed almost a month to the day after New Zealand entered the conflict, on 4 October 1939, and quickly grew to encompass hundreds of men organised according to tribal affiliations and districts areas. When New Zealand formally declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939 with Prime Minister Joseph Savage’s pronouncement, ‘We range ourselves without fear beside Britain. Where she goes, we go; where she stands, we stand’, the nation’s position within the Empire was unambiguous. Concurrent with overall recruitment, Māori

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Members of Parliament including Ngata, along with Eruera Tirikatene and Paraire Paikea, urged the government to assemble a battalion of Māori ‘as combatant troops in or beyond New Zealand’.\(^{80}\) Ngata professed that twentieth-century Māori inherited a grace and skill from their forbearers displayed primarily in haka and battle. This belief underlines his understanding of the link between ‘the olden days’ and the need for and ability of the Maori Battalion. As he explained: ‘it may be that something of the physical endurance, of the fighting instinct and the adaptability to the life and trials of the soldier has come down to them.’\(^{81}\)

The linking of Māori battles with the movements and words of haka has been fundamental to Māori and Pākehā history alike. Historians have also recognised the power of ‘keeping together in time’ that occurs during a military march. Benedict Anderson has claimed that singing national anthems, or in this case, a marching song, enables people to share a unisonance (unified sound), an ‘experience of simultaneity’ via sound that draws them together and ties them to a common cause. The words to the popular *Maori Battalion Marching Song* reflect the allegiance to ‘King and Country’ being asked of Māori and accepted by the soldiers:

Maori Battalion march to glory  
Take the honour of the people with you  
We’ll march, march, march to the enemy  
We’ll fight right to the end  
For God, for King, for Country  
Aue! Ake ake kia kaha e.\(^{82}\)

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\(^{81}\) ibid., pp.14-15.

\(^{82}\) *Maori Battalion Marching Song* cited in Patricia Grace, *Tu*, Auckland, 2004, np. Though the words to the song are attributed to Anania Amohau from Rotorua, grandson of Kiwi Amohau, the leader of the Hippodrome performers, Wira Gardner explains that the origins of the Maori Battalion Marching Song is disputed, with ‘confusion and a great deal of uncertainty about how and when the tune, words and music came together’. Wira Gardner, *Te Mura O Te Ahi, The Story of the Maori Battalion*, Auckland, 1992, p.29. The tune originated in the United States and was a popular college football song. New Zealand Folk Songs, http://folksong.org.nz/maori_battalion, accessed 26 December 2013.
Likewise, William McNeill has called marching songs examples of ‘muscular bonding’ that produce ‘social cohesion among any and every group that keeps together in time’.\(^{83}\) Thus, this marching anthem provided a cohesive element for the disparate members of the battalion while also binding them to the common cause of New Zealand’s armed forces in World War Two.

Ngata’s formal address at the opening of the Whare Rūnanga raised controversial issues surrounding the Treaty and broken promises to Māori. Taking his place at the entrance to the Meeting House and with the Governor-General in his sights, Ngata spoke of the trepidation Māori felt in 1940. Outlining the cause of Māori misgivings for 1940, Ngata posed a question to the English King’s representative in New Zealand: ‘what did the Maori see? Lands gone, the power of the chief crumbled in the dust, Maori culture scattered-broken. What remains after one hundred years of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, Your Excellency? What remains of all the fine things said then? We want to retain our individuality as a race.’\(^{84}\) The *New Zealand Herald* reported that although Ngata had voiced his ‘grievances’ about the Treaty his overall message was ‘testimony as to the value’ of the Treaty.\(^{85}\) As Robinson points out, though Ngata ‘tempered his strong words’, the summary that the *Herald* conveyed was one of his overall support for the Treaty.\(^{86}\) The radio broadcast also relayed the events at the Rūnanga, but how Ngata’s words were received into people’s living rooms is unknown.

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\(^{84}\) *New Zealand Centennial News*, no 13, 1 April 1940, Social Security Department, Head Office-New Zealand Centennial, 1940- General- Shows, etc., record 7/1/18, pp.26-27, Archives New Zealand Wellington

\(^{85}\) *New Zealand Herald*, 7 February 1940, p.10.

\(^{86}\) Robinson, p.66.
Historians have commented that the events at Waitangi in February 1940 marked a ‘great bicultural occasion’ in the nation’s history.\(^{87}\) The multiple events taking place that day (the reenactment of the debate and signing of the Treaty, the opening of the Whare Rūnanga, the massed gathering of the Māori Battalion) illustrate the diversity of narratives of past and present vying for attention at this one site on this one day. At the conclusion of his speech Ngata led a haka in front of the Whare Rūnanga. The photograph taken of that moment, with Ngata, attired in trousers, vest and tie, frozen in mid-stamp with his arms outstretched, has been used as a symbol of unity, progress and national pride ever since. This image can also be viewed as a strong symbol of cultural hybridity, with Ngata in his European dress, leading the bare-chested men in pipipu and painted facial tattoos, performing for an audience of Māori and Pākehā on this day commemorating the signing of a Treaty. Though the haka in this instance was central to the ceremony, for Pākehā spectators this haka could be read as other haka ‘performed’ in re-enactments. The movements conveyed an ahistoriocity that stood for all Māoridom. Therefore, as with the Māori who performed in the historical re-enactment at Waitangi, Ngata and these Māori men claimed both their current and historical place in New Zealand society at Waitangi through their movements.

\(^{87}\) Renwick, ‘Reclaiming’, p.105.
Figure 57: Apirana Ngata leading the men’s haka on the opening of the Whare Rūnanga (Meeting House), Waitangi, February 1940. This image has come to symbolise the national unity expressed at Waitangi in 1940. MNZ-2746-1/2-F, ATL, Wellington.

Conclusion

If, as has been said of other nations’ public celebratory displays, ‘history could best be understood in performance’, this examination of New Zealand’s centennial commemorations has shown how interpretations of New Zealand’s past were performed in 1940.\textsuperscript{88} The historical re-enactments featured in this chapter highlight the role that performance can play in the creation of history. Nevertheless, as performing arts theorist Steven Connor reminds us, the word ‘perform’ itself conjures ambiguity, since ‘if perform means to act, it also means to pretend to act, to feign action’.\textsuperscript{89} Moreover, historian and historical theorist Hayden White describes how historical narrative is ‘always a figurative account, an allegory’.\textsuperscript{90} Therefore,

\textsuperscript{88} H.V. Nelles, The Art of Nation-Building: Pageanty and Spectacle at Quebec’s Tercentenary, Toronto, 1999, p.11.
\textsuperscript{90} Hayden White, ‘The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory’, History and Theory, 23, 1, February 1984, p.24
performed history can be both a story of what happened, represented in clothing and speech and locale, and an imagined past that is resurrected via the gestures and movements of the living bodies. And Gaddis’s understanding that historians ‘advance bravely into the future with our eyes fixed firmly on the past’ resonates when one looks to the purpose and meanings of these historical pageants and ceremonies in 1940. These re-enactments, pageants and parades say more about mid-twentieth-century beliefs than they do about the one hundred years in New Zealand between 1840 and 1940. The idea that ‘community pageants provide evidence of popular beliefs and attitudes’ refers not only to the historical acts portrayed but also to the contemporary interpretations promulgated by governments and pageant-makers.91

New Zealand’s history became the focal point for commemorations in the centennial year, and versions of this history were shaped and imagined through historical pageantry and re-enactments. The pageant-makers, directors and actors of the historical re-enactments of 1940 should be regarded as historians in their own right. Not only did they aim to present ‘a true picture’ of ‘what took place 100 years ago’, but also, by examining the scenes and actions, people and events that they chose to enact, we can sense the political, social and cultural environment of 1940 New Zealand. In summing up the centennial commemorations, Minister of Internal Affairs Parry concluded that ‘history had a splendid run all through Centennial year’.92

Looking back on the centennial from the 1970s, Monty Holcroft reflected on the role that historians played in shaping ‘interest in the past’. Holcroft believed through the centennial commemorations, ‘people began to feel proud of what had been done by founding fathers and wanted to know more about them’, regardless of the fact that the

92 Evening Post, 16 November 1940, p.9.
‘founding fathers’ referred to ‘pioneers’ from the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{93} Representations of Māori and Pākehā in the centennial events reflected contemporary states rather than historical facts.

When planning for the centennial began in the mid-1930s New Zealand’s participation in an international conflict was but a distant thought. In 1932 Lord Bledisloe, the Governor-General, gifted the Waitangi estate and Treaty house to the nation, thus igniting plans for Treaty commemorations eight years hence. By the time the centennial celebrations began in earnest in 1940 New Zealand’s participation in World War Two was certain, and these two events, entry into the war and remembering the signing of the Treaty, ignited unity and patriotism throughout the country. Modern nations, as Benedict Anderson reminds us, ‘inspire love’ and ‘the cultural products of nationalism — poetry, prose, fiction, music — show this love very clearly’.\textsuperscript{94} These cultural elements came to the fore in the lead-up to and events of 1940. Along with the National Centennial Symphony Orchestra, the Centennial Drama Festival and the National Centennial Art Exhibition, the historical pageants and parades highlighted the love and pride ordinary citizens felt for New Zealand. The historical re-enactments constructed and solidified a particular view of history that became, in performance, a shared public memory, reinforced by the corporeal and visceral.

The past gives way to the present in historical pageantry, visible and embodied in the actors and actions performed. The historical pageant thus allowed for a ‘wider view’ of the past that enabled citizens to experience significant moments, places or people in a collective history in order to acknowledge and celebrate the present. As with melodramas of the 1860s that promoted New Zealand as Europeanised colony

\textsuperscript{94} Anderson, p.141.
inhabited with ‘friendly’ Māori who worked alongside settlers in harmony, the historical re-enactments and parades depicted Māori and Pākehā as having gone through 100 years of hard work together, resulting in a better and united modern future. The looming conflict, which saw the formation of the Maori Battalion going off to Europe fighting alongside Pākehā for the British Empire, reinforced this shared vision of New Zealand. The narrative of 1840-1940 that ended well for Pākehā citizens overshadowed the alternative ending for Māori, who, as Ngata emphasised, approached 1940 with both trepidation and pride.
Conclusion

Recently I escorted a first-time visitor to New Zealand to the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Walking through the hall of Māori artefacts we entered the small auditorium where the four-times-daily Māori Cultural performance takes place. As the five performers entered the space audience member’s cameras began snapping. For thirty-minutes the two bare-chested, maro (loincloth) wearing ‘warrior’ men and the three women in piupiu and pari (woven bodice) spoke, sang and danced for their guests. For the small group gathered together in this room, this in-the-moment, visceral experience could be nothing more than 100% pure Māori and therefore, New Zealand. Situated within the museum walls, alongside the preservation of Māori taonga (treasures) the message behind this performance was clear; in order to experience the real New Zealand tourists had to view performances of haka and poi. Just being in the presence of these movements and sounds emanating from these indigenous bodies assured that one had truly ‘seen’ and ‘experienced’ New Zealand. Aside from the static displays in the next room, the corporeal expression of New Zealand was vital to understanding New Zealand.

This thesis has focused on the creative physical expression of New Zealand from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. The embodied expression and representation of New Zealand lies at the heart of all of the case studies presented. As this thesis has shown, performance and the corporeal expression of culture help to make sense of people, communities and nations. Song, music, dance and drama contribute to representations of race, consolidation of identities and formation of history. In short, performance offers an epistemology of being; another way of knowing about the world we inhabit. As these case studies have shown, when performer and audience came together in theatrical settings the exchange of energy
resulted in new perceptions and different emotions. The Australians who discovered, in 1862, the ‘songs, games and dances…illustrating the peculiarities’ of the Māori performers in *Whakaeu, the Pakeha Chief*, came away from the melodrama informed and entertained. The New Yorkers who witnessed haka and poi in the vast auditorium of the Hippodrome in 1909 claimed to have seen and felt such unusual sensations that their response to the ‘horrible vitality’ and ‘harmony of frenzy’ was the ‘sold out’ sign outside the theatre. The Pākehā who stood en masse under a blazing sun to ‘witness’ the re-enactment signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1940 experienced ‘lumps in their throats and tears in their eyes’ as they watched the actions of their forbearers unfold before them. What all these examples show is that performance has the ability to alter, reflect and illuminate understanding of past and present, of people and place.

Importantly, the case studies presented here have demonstrated how Māori and Pākehā – cultures and people – came together in forms of corporeal expression from the 1860s, producing new expressions of Māori and Pākehā and by Māori and Pākehā. This analysis has shown that with the cultural hybridity that emerged in the performing arts during this period interpretations and inventions of Māori, Pākehā, and New Zealand emerged in the public sphere. In 2002 Peter Gibbons challenged historians to ask questions about ‘Maori collaboration and the uses Maori may have made of Pakeha cultural productions’ in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹ This thesis is one response to that challenge. For instance, while acknowledging the pressure of assimilationist ideology, F. A. Bennett invented ways to celebrate and disseminate Māori cultural expression in an environment of ‘High’ culture. Likewise, Princess Iwa chose a repertoire of English ballads and ‘Europeanized’ Māori songs to

appeal to audiences in the United Kingdom who could appreciate her vocal talent while also respecting her status as a Māori ‘princess’.

In order to understand the impact of the performing arts on New Zealand’s past, it is necessary to situate this human expression within other historical narratives. New Zealand’s performing arts have been isolated from more prominent events that detail this country’s past. With accounts and interpretations of wars, social upheavals, gender issues and race relations, recent histories have omitted the role that the performing arts, (especially the types of popular performing arts featured here), have played in the shaping and interpretation of New Zealand. Specifically, the historiography has neglected to notice how the performing arts intersect with all of these topics. Alongside other histories, the embodied expression of dance, song, and drama highlighted in this thesis form a historical narrative of place that augment our understanding of New Zealand’s past. Whereas an account of Māori and Pākehā historical interaction in trade, education or religion may provide a deeper understanding of the processes of colonisation and settlement, a focus on how Māori and Pākehā shared and innovated forms of cultural expression on stage and film opens up other dimensions to this relationship.

The representation of Māori and settler in the melodramas of the 1860s provided an immediate, visceral connection to the antipodean land where battles between Imperial forces and Māori were depicted in woodcut illustrations and newspaper reports. Seeing the live interaction on stage between ‘settler’ and ‘friendly tribes’ contributed a different interpretation to this relationship. Alfred Hill’s compositions and Princess Iwa’s renditions of his songs show how music came to represent the relationships that were developing between Māori and Pākehā in the
early twentieth century. While Pākehā attempted to ‘preserve’ Māori culture, Māori, such as Iwa, utilised this fascination with the ‘dying’ culture to promote her own performances. FA Bennett’s innovative performances, with their blending of Māori, European and American performing arts, expanded the representation and comprehension of Māori for Pākehā in New Zealand. The ‘Savage Suffragettes’ challenged Americans understandings of both Māori and indigenous woman while they performed their ‘wild gyrations’ on stage and agitated for women’s rights in New York. And while the actors in film *Under the Southern Cross, the Devil’s Pit* portrayed ahistorical tribes in a volatile landscape, the success of the film relied upon Māori cooperation with the American producers and their input into the design and building of sets and props.

It is clear from the examples given here that expression of Māori-ness became increasingly important to the performing arts in the twentieth century. The cultural expressions that developed following early-twentieth century performances of Alfred Hill’s musical compositions and F.A. Bennett’s theatrical productions contributed to the evolution of cultural identities in New Zealand, and those identities mirrored what occurred on stage. Hill’s borrowings from Māori music and stories and Bennett’s joining of European theatrical convention and Māori performers, lent themselves to a new awareness of what it meant to live in New Zealand. Their performance events placed New Zealand people and places in the foreground by presenting recognisable people and familiar stories in inventive ways. Above all they gave their audiences an entertaining and enjoyable night in the theatre. Pākehā attempting to describe, conjure and portray Māori points to both a fascination with Māori and the entrepreneurial nature of entertainment; as the agent for the Hippodrome said when he came to New Zealand, something new was needed to ‘titillate’ the palates of theatregoers. Māori
became ‘the fad’. When Bathie Stuart performed her ‘Maori’ dances, or Alfred Hill composed his ‘Waiata Maori’ they responded to the demands of a public romanticising about Māori, while also imaging something of place on stage.

The frequency with which the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai appeared in theatricalised versions, many of them discussed here, point to both the increasing popularity of this story amongst Pākehā and the need to claim a romanticised myth as local story. By the early twentieth century the Hinemoa story was firmly connected with Māori in general and the Rotorua region in particular, and served as an important symbol of Māori romanticism for the tourist trade, both foreign and domestic. George Tarr’s choice in making New Zealand’s first ‘photo play produced with entirely local enterprise’ the story of Hinemoa continued and broadened the fascination with this love story.

Elsewhere, Princess Iwa and the Te Arawa performers of Inside the Earth took Māori corporeal expression and aligned it with music hall and spectacular performance conventions, resulting in a curiosity and interest in Māori and New Zealand from their diverse audiences. Within the heightened reality of performance new perceptions of people, places and events are created. North Americans’ knowledge of and interest in New Zealand and its citizens at this time was limited. The Hippodrome engagement bolstered awareness both of Māori and of New Zealand as a South Pacific nation with a distinct heritage separate from Great Britain, most notably in regard to female suffrage. Princess Iwa’s dual status as the ‘Maori Nightingale’ and a subject of the British Crown also attracted attention and bolstered her reputation throughout the United Kingdom in the early twentieth century. The meaning of what constituted ‘New Zealand’, ‘New Zealanders’, ‘Māori’ and ‘Pākehā’
expanded with the musical events and performers and performances examined in these chapters.

In the process of cultural hybridization, the joining of two or more forms, conventions, styles or aesthetics develops into new forms of expression. The nature of popular entertainment calls for constant innovation, creativity and imagination. As the case studies have demonstrated, New Zealand’s performing arts developed and grew in this way and in the process produced a baffling array of performance events and artists. Given the suspension of belief that is required in theatre and film, the joining together of incongruous elements could be, and was, accepted. So when Bathie Stuart portrayed ‘Kiwi McGill’ and performed her mix of pseudo Māori mixed with an assortment of other vaguely ‘foreign’ dance steps in a show-stopping finale, cinema audiences of the 1920s ‘got’ that Stuart was acting as a New Zealand Pākehā acting Māori. No one would have thought Stuart herself Māori but her performance of Māori-ness ushered in new representations of Māori songs in popular culture, as seen with her renditions of Hoki Tonu Mai, Pokarekare and poi dances. Instead of viewing Stuart’s act as abject Pākehā appropriation, her work, as argued here, was a celebration of Māori culture via entertainment. In an attempt to make sense of her world for herself and her audiences, Stuart situated herself in New Zealand through her interpretive dances and songs of Māori.

By focusing on these examples where performances and performers elevated Māori a different understanding of the nature of cultural identity emerges. The evolutionary nature of culture, injected with hybrid creations, produced new reflections of New Zealand society from the nineteenth century onwards. The haka, poi, costumes and scenic designs on stage and screen not only placed a work within New Zealand, they also created and fixed these creative expressions as New Zealand.
The performance of place, either imagined or real, has been critical in all of the examples offered here. When the Māori actors in Edinburgh in 1863 performed their haka audiences could envision the conflicts taking place simultaneously in New Zealand between the ‘hostile’ and ‘friendly’ tribes. Similarly, the ‘magic waterfall’ of Inside the Earth conjured an exotic environment where Māori worked side by side with non-Māori. The model Pā at Whakarewarewa offered a different kind of experiential connection to Māori and Māori culture. Though the dramatic landscape itself was real, the design and manufactured elements, not to mention the residents on site, allowed tourists a proximity to Māori and the land that went beyond painted backdrops and limelight effects. By the time that the American film crew came to New Zealand to make Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit in 1928, film techniques enabled locations such as an active volcano and underground caves with dramatic rock formations to establish New Zealand as a performing landscape.

The increasing presence of female performers in the entertainment industry added to the blending of styles and means of performance of New Zealand. Importantly, the role that women played in the formation of twentieth-century representations of New Zealand on stage has been overlooked in our historiography. For Māori women such as Iwa, Witarina Harris, the film ‘star’ of Under the Southern Cross, and the wāhine from the Hippodrome company in New York, their performance opportunities introduced them to vast and unknown worlds. Māori culture was at the heart of their performance but through the medium of the popular stage and film they transfigured culture into entertainment. While Bathie Stuart’s ‘act’ hinged on her affective portrayal of Māori she nonetheless promoted Māori haka and poi in popular culture.
The nexus of politics and performing arts has been highlighted throughout this thesis. As has been shown, the work of the artists showcased here intersected with national and international political issues, ranging from the 1860s conflicts between Imperial forces and Māori, American Naval manoeuvres in the Pacific and the Young Maori Party in 1908, the rights of woman in the United States, and United Kingdom, New Zealand government sponsorship of American-produced films and finally, the making of history with the involvement of government departments in the production of centennial re-enactments. In all of these instances performance and the performing artists assumed a significant role in supporting, questioning, elucidating or creating political stances. This thesis has shown how these artists and their works both reflected and shaped the social and political climate of the era.

This thesis presents an important chapter in the continuing story of New Zealand’s performing arts from the nineteenth century. Of course there were instances of borrowings and transculturation occurring in performing arts prior to 1862, and certainly popular entertainment expanded expediently after 1940. With a plethora of works, artists and events to focus on, the attention from other historians is warranted and anticipated. By centralizing performance and corporeal expression in historical inquiry new facets of New Zealand history can be uncovered. Entire theses could be devoted to the impact that World War Two had on New Zealand’s performing arts, or the results of the dissolution of trade agreements with Great Britain in the 1970s had on drama, or the change in musical composition following the growth in the airline industry and travel between New Zealand and the rest of the world. As has been shown the popular performing arts did not emerge from or operate within a vacuum. They formed integral components in race relations, international politics, and gender equality. This history of New Zealand’s performing arts has also charted beginnings
of partnerships that continue at present. With current blockbuster film projects based in New Zealand that link Hollywood and Wellington, the origins of *Under the Southern Cross, The Devil’s Pit* reveal the initiation of this relationship.

The works and people featured here are all connected to New Zealand but these performance events reflected influences and ideas from many different places and cultures. Moreover, while New Zealand performing artists and performances are the focus of this thesis, these case studies are not intended to present a version of a national history. There can be no disputing that the 1940 centennial re-enactments presented a version of New Zealand history that celebrated British sovereignty and cooperation between Māori and Pākehā, but they also illuminate how history can be constructed by other means that are ‘by and for the people’. The townspeople and neighbours, theatre directors, government officials, and radio broadcasters all came together to create not only an interpretation of events from 1840 but what their actions and choices in the creations of the re-enactments unveil is the gulf that existed between Māori and Pākehā in 1940. Past and present collided at Waitangi when Apirana Ngata spoke against the legacy of the Treaty and performed his powerful haka in front of the Whare Runanga following the historical re-enactment.

The examples in this thesis, then, provide a model of a collective sense of self that emanates from the performance experience. Above all they show us that through performance people can be entertained, thrilled, challenged, comforted and educated. Performers hold immense power when they are under the spotlight. When all eyes are upon them they are capable of manipulating the perspective and emotions of their spectators and therefore construct versions of events and notions of people and place, that other means of communication cannot.
The accounts of past performance events presented in this thesis has affirmed that the performing body is an important element in the fashioning of history and that in order to understand New Zealand’s cultural expression, racial identities and national sentiments we need to pay attention to performance, in particular, to the Māori and Pākehā bodies featured here who created New Zealand on the stage, screen and airwaves.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aotearoa</td>
<td>Land of the long white cloud/New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Māori</td>
<td>indigenous New Zealander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>New Zealander of European decent or non-Māori</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haka</td>
<td>dance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hapu</td>
<td>sub-tribe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iwi</td>
<td>tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korowai</td>
<td>flax cloaks with tassels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohu Kiwi</td>
<td>feathered cloaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pā</td>
<td>fortified settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poi</td>
<td>ball connected to a long or short string</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pōwhiri</td>
<td>a welcome ceremony</td>
</tr>
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<td>Piupiu</td>
<td>skirt made from flax reeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mana</td>
<td>prestige or high regard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marae</td>
<td>meeting area and its buildings</td>
</tr>
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<td>Rangatira</td>
<td>chief or chieftainness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tāniko</td>
<td>woven border</td>
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<td>Piupiu</td>
<td>skirt made from flax</td>
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<td>Waiata</td>
<td>song</td>
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<td>Whakapapa</td>
<td>genealogy</td>
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<td>Whare</td>
<td>house</td>
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*Hawkes Bay Herald*
*New York Times*
New Zealand Freelance
New Zealand Herald
New Zealand Listener
New Zealand Magazine
New Zealand Mail
New Zealand Truth
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