

TAUTAI

CONTEMPORARY PACIFIC ARTS TRUST

MARCH 2009

taimbipo, taimblong the art of Jeffry Feeger



A New Bougainville 2006



Transition 2008



Behind the Flowers 2008

As we welcome in March as the month of Celebrate Pasifika, we also welcome the inaugural recipient of the Tautai Trust and Pacific Cooperation Foundation Artists Residency, Papua New Guinea Artist Jeffry Feeger.

Jeffry was born in Kerema which is located on the Southern Coast of the mainland of Papua New Guinea. Based in Port Moresby Jeffry is a self-taught artist who after a year of formal training braved his skill in the contemporary Papua New Guinea art scene. Seven years on Jeffry has created a large body of work that reflect his love for surrealism, portraiture and Papua New Guinea life. This interesting mix of influence has lead Jeffry to the development of his own personal style he describes as 'magic realism'. 'Magic realism' as he explains is where photo-realism meets surrealism; it is in between

the real world and the world of spirits. For Jeffry this aesthetic reflects everyday life in Papua New Guinea where spirits and people live side by side.

While we may be familiar with the pioneering contemporary artists of Papua New Guinea such as Mathias Kauage, John Siune and Joe Nalo, Jeffry represents a new generation of artists. The narrative style of the pioneering artists spoke for a generation calling for a unified sense of 'nationalism' amidst the rapid modernisation of Papua New Guinea. Symbols of modernity such as planes and buses filled with masked faces and denim fitted people featured on many canvases, documenting the urban drift from the villages towards the city. Raised in the urban centre of Port Moresby Jeffry's work addresses new issues that stem from a generation born into the realities of modernity. The challenge of cultural survival

documented by the pioneer artists has been replaced by new political, social and global issues.

Although based in Port Moresby Jeffry has also spent much time in Bougainville. Experiencing city and village life provided a creative meeting point for Jeffry's practise. In an early series entitled 'Taimbipo' which is pidgin and literally means the 'time before' or the past. The series of ten portraits were based on early ethnographic photographs taken by Australian explorer Frank Hurley in the 1920s. Captured in the photographs were black and white images of the savage men in their 'natural settings' which were typical of ethnographic photography of the time. In Jeffry's portraits the images seem untouched yet they have been recreated in picture perfect colour. Viewing these works on my computer the issue of re-appropriation

came to mind however his intentions were more aligned with repatriation. In re-working these images in colour Jeffry claims his stake as an indigenous artist as he explains,

“Some people in these images come from where I come from. Only a lifetime ago they wore traditional attire and by reworking these photographs I claim ownership and it brings it back to me...”

Each colour is carefully chosen using intimate knowledge of his culture. Each shell, adornment and plant is revived and restored to their original colour. Breathing life and honour back into these often ‘frozen in time’ images is a task Jeffry believes can only be achieved by an indigenous artist.

Whilst his art and definitely his style have developed since this early series Jeffry continues to be an artist imbued with cultural responsibility.

Perhaps the work that put Jeffry in the spotlight as an emerging young artist was the work *A New Bougainville 2006*. Exhibited in the Luksave exhibition the work fetched the highest price. The title evokes both a sense of political awareness but also a new era of portraiture. Inspired by the election of the first autonomous government Jeffry searched for an image that reflected both place and the calming social-political climate. The girl clutches in her hands a piece of her grass skirt representing a sign of peace, hope and unity.

An avid observer he made over a hundred sketches of all types of people women, men and children. These detailed studies of people were new to many of the Bougainville villagers who believed he was a ‘magic man’ who could re-create their image in front of them. After a thorough search it was an image of a young girl dressed in traditional dance costume that inspired this work. The captivating eyes of the little girl and her upward glance depict a sense of hope for the future of Bougainville and its people after a ten year bloody civil war. Artistically the portrait represented a departure from the iconic painted faces of the highlands which have become synonymous with portraits of Papua New Guinea people.

The latest exhibition *‘Tokaut’ 2008* (talk out) reflected Jeffry’s dedication to addressing contemporary issues or as he states the ‘plight of the marginalised’. Corruption, injustice, social and economic concerns are key themes in his work. The title of the exhibition *‘Tokaut’ 2008* (talk out) addressed the global epidemic of AIDS and HIV in works such as *Behind the Flowers 2008* and *Transition 2008*. While Papua New



The Symbol 2008

Guinea (like many Pacific nations) is associated with images of lush and exotic landscapes these strong colourful images often gloss over and render invisible the harsher realities of contemporary life. The image of a woman in the work *Behind the Flowers 2008* camouflaged in the landscape refers to the stigmatization and global discrimination surrounding AIDS and HIV.

In other works such as *The Symbol 2008* he tests our social awareness in presenting what seems a simple portrait of a middle aged woman wearing a bold red scarf. Read in the context of this exhibition the flowing form of the scarf reflects the shape of the AIDS ‘red ribbon’. As a sign of the changing social issues of Papua New Guinea the show also signalled the changing role of art as a practise that reflects and informs our future. The exhibition enabled people to ‘talk out’ loud and pose questions and enabled marginalised people to ‘talk out’ to provoke action.

Creating art for artists like Jeffry and many of our own Pacific artists is more than an expression of independent creativity. Jeffry’s art is many things. It is a voice for the marginalised, a platform for indigenous concerns and a window into contemporary Papua New Guinea life. As a budding art historian and a member of our Pacific art community, my *talanoa* with Jeffry was a refreshing reminder that what is most important in our field, is people.

I hope that many of you will be able to meet Jeffry during his stay here in Aotearoa.

Faka’apa’apa atu, Nina Tonga

tautai news

Ni sa bula vinaka

The ‘new look’ format of the Tautai newsletter is part of our communications strategy implemented with financial support from Creative New Zealand. The new logo and colours will be applied to all Tautai material, the website, arts diary and advertising. Also as part of this strategy Naomi Singer has been engaged to assist with publicity and has obtained media coverage of some recent Tautai exhibitions and activities.

We were pleased to welcome Jeffry Feeger to Auckland at the end of February as the inaugural Tautai Trust and Pacific Cooperation Foundation Artist in Residence. Jeffry has attended and taken part in many events during this busy festival time in Auckland and has met many of the Tautai community.

Jeffry has managed to keep his fitness levels up through a generous sponsorship from Les Mills in Victoria Street and has also fitted in a few games of soccer. We thank Deborah White for her work over the past two years in bringing this new Tautai initiative to fruition.

We especially thank the Pacific Cooperation Foundation for its generous sponsorship which made the residency possible.

Tautai’s contribution to the Auckland Fringe Festival was an event at Galatos on 27 February 2009 entitled Tautai:OFF STAGE. This was the first event of its kind which Tautai has facilitated. It was primarily an opportunity for artists to show their experimental moving image work but also included some great live performances. Twenty seven artists participated in this event and we thank Nooroa Tapuni for the hours she spent bringing together all the works for this event.

Language People exhibition curated by Janet Lilo opened at Artstation on 2 March as part of Celebrate Pasifika. Tautai is pleased to support exhibitions which provide artists with the opportunity to have their work seen and have a record of the exhibition with the production of a catalogue. We congratulate Janet for curating this Tautai exhibition and for designing the catalogue.

Le Folauga exhibition currently on display at

the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Art in Taiwan ends on 5 April 2009 and the works will then return to New Zealand. The exhibition is being very well received in Taiwan. We thank Kaohsiung Museum for all their support and congratulate them on the wonderful 90 page catalogue they have produced. The web catalogue will soon be completed and available at www.lefolauga.co.nz.

This is the twenty-first year of the existence of Tautai. We acknowledge and congratulate Fatu Feu’u who together with some good friends had the vision to establish an organisation which became the Tautai Trust. Since the inception of Tautai many people have worked hard to find ways to support contemporary Pacific artists. Many of the artists involved with Tautai from the outset are still involved today. The current trustees and management team remain intent on maintaining the original objectives of Tautai through evolving new programs and events. These objectives still remain relevant today in supporting contemporary Pacific visual art and artists.

Vinaka vaka levu
Gina Cole (Chair)

language people

SILIGA DAVID SETOGA LINDA TANOAI VAIMAILA URALE ALBERT WENDT LEILANI BURGOYNE LILY LAITA
NOOROA TAPUNI JOHNNY ANGEL MUA STRICKSON PUA NOOROA TE HIRA

Language People

Curated by Janet Lilo Artstation Gallery March 4 - 18 | Opening night 5 - 7pm Tuesday March 3
Floor Talk & Readings with Mua Strickson-Pua, Artists & Guests Tuesday 5.30 - 7pm March 10

ARTSTATION
1 Ponsorby Rd, Newton, Auckland 1011 - Ph: 09 376 3221 - E: artstation@aucklandcity.govt.nz
Gallery Hours: Mon-Thurs 9am - 9pm | Fri 9am - 5pm | Sat 10am - 4pm | www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/artstation

TAUTAI
COMMUNITARIAN PACIFIC ARTS TRUST

creative communities
Auckland City

AUCKLAND
City Council

Curated by Janet Lilo for Tautai this exhibition which set out to explore the nature and language of visual and verbal practices with the intention to formulate new dialogue opened at Artstation on Tuesday 3 March.

Artists were Albert Wendt, better known for his writing but beginning his new career as a

painter, Lily Laita who needs no introduction, and new media artists Linda Tanoai, Vaimaila Urale and Nooroa Tapuni were joined by cartoonists and artists Johnny Angel and Nooroa Te Hira. Visual artist Siliga David Setoga put in a pristine photograph and the Rev Mua Strickson Pua presented his own words on opening night

along with works from his family poet to grace the gallery walls. And Leilani Burgoyne a young pacific writer and poet wrote her last words in New Zealand especially for Language People before leaving for a new journey in Australia.

Language People was supported by funding from Creative Communities Auckland City.

Photo courtesy of Aubrey Rodriguez



presentations and performance:

Emata Tavola reports back on her 19 Days in the USofA

In February, Leilani Kake and I travelled to San Francisco to meet up with freelance curator, Giles Peterson to start an event packed 19 day Pacific art tour of California and Honolulu. Fundraising efforts supplemented grants afforded to us from Manukau City Council, Creative New Zealand (Leilani was funded by the Pacific Arts Committee), the US Embassy and with support from Tautai Trust. Based around the invitation from the Pacific Arts Association to present papers at the prestigious College Art Association (CAA) annual conference, we also delivered talks at the University of California in Santa Cruz and Berkeley at the Center for Race and Gender. Leilani was also given the opportunity to present a new performance work at the de Young

Museum; it was a poignant and dramatic work about tino rangatiratanga fuelled with deep emotion, it was definitely the most profound and breathtaking experience I have ever had from a performance work.

In Los Angeles, American Samoan painter and poet, Dan Taulapapa McMullin introduced us to Chuck Feesago, a Samoan gallerist from Pasadena who hosted us for breakfast at the gallery he co-owns, Project_210. Dan and Chuck then took us on an intensive tour of dealer galleries in the Culver City art district; a rigorous and thoroughly inspiring day! The CAA presentations were well received and many new contacts were made as a result of this; the event itself felt like the art academy Olympics – huge and steeped in history and hierarchy. We

met some good people and were able to see more of LA through the eyes of locals who gave us excellent tours of Chinatown, Venice and Hollywood.

We ended our tour in Hawai'i where Leilani and I presented work in an exhibition called, Pan Pacific Nation at The ARTS at Marks Garage in downtown Honolulu. We also spent time at the University of Hawaii and the Bishop Museum whilst in Honolulu and felt extremely privileged to have met with some absolutely inspiring local artists including Maile Andrade, Ka'ili Chun, Lufi Luteru and Meleanna Meyer. Foundations have been laid for some exciting future Pacific arts projects connecting the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand and the US – watch this space!



University of California Berkeley Pacific Studies Research Group



Emata, Hillary and Leilani, Hollywood



Chuck, Emata and Dan, Pasadena

Pan Pacific Nation, Honolulu

Giles Peterson was also in Hawaii for the opening of Pan Pacific Nation at The ARTS at Marks Garage on 3 March, an exhibition which included a strong representation of work by New Zealand based artists. Giles says there was a wonderful opening function and one of the highlights was the opportunity to meet and connect with the Hawaiian artists.

Pan Pacific Nation, Opening Night First Friday, The ARTS at Marks Garage, Hawaii Arts Alliance Project 03-03-09: Carl Pao, Emata Tavola, Rich Richardson (Co-curator), Giles Peterson, Leilani Kake, Jaimey Hamilton (Co-curator), Noelle M.K.Y. Kahuna, (front), Healoha, Angela Tiatia



Photo courtesy Sabrina Sanchez

Patron: Fatu Feu'u

Board of Trustees: Gina Cole (Chair), Ron Brownson, Graham Fletcher, Colin Jeffery, Michelle Khan, Janet Lilo, Cerisse Palalagi, Fuli Pereira.

Tautai Office: Christina Jeffery (Manager), Jean Clarkson (Fresh Horizons Program Manager), Metuanooroa Tapuni, Daphiney Owen and Marlaina Key (Administrators).

kota pasifika 2009

Carvers Ian George (Cook Islands, center), Tukana Qusianadraniuraga (Fiji, right) and Mikoyan Vekula (Niue, left) carved a 3.5 tonne Oamaru stone for the Pasifika Festival at Western Springs Reserve. This year's theme was the Frigate Bird and Hibiscus flower. Kota Pasifika is an ongoing project funded by Auckland City and Creative NZ to have each village represented by a sculptor over a period of four years exploring the theme of the festival.



Photo courtesy of H. Scothorn

tautai: off stage @ galatos

Friday 27 February, opening night of the Auckland Fringe Festival. Tautai ventured into a new realm to put together a night of experimental moving image and mediated performances. The idea was to provide artists with a platform to show some of their experimental work and/or new ideas or to provide the opportunity to show work to a different audience. The final program of twenty seven pieces included both moving image works as well as six live performances. It was a great night, with the range of work keeping everyone interested and engaged. Due to the enthusiastic response it is hoped it can become a regular feature on the Tautai calendar.

koloa et al. your art is my treasure

Curated by Charmaine 'Ilaiu and Nina Tonga (pictured at the opening) this exhibition celebrated the work of Tongan women in the community. Fresh Gallery Otara was transformed as it was set up in the customary manner of Tongan teuteu, or preparatory adornment. The exhibition opened on 19 February with celebratory dance, music and food.



Photo courtesy of N. Singer

events & exhibitions

april/may/june 2009

Until 5 April *Le Folauga: Contemporary Pacific Art From Aotearoa New Zealand* at the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan

27 Feb – 1 June *Taranaki Culture: Fresh out of the Box* includes Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi at Puke Ariki, New Plymouth

28 Feb – 7 June *Assume Nothing* includes Shigeyuki Kihara at Te Manawa Museum, Palmerston North. www.temanawa.co.nz

7 Mar – 21 April *Mash Up* includes Shigeyuki Kihara at Artspace, Auckland

7 March – 22 April *'F' is for Fake* includes Shigeyuki Kihara at Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts, Pakuranga

14 March – 21 June *I see Red* includes Niki Hastings-McFall at Pataka, Porirua

20 March – 11 April *Colour and Contrast* Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi at Fresh Gallery Otara

28 March – 30 April *Anga Ta Mataora – Creative Treasures from the Pacific* Tivaevae by the late Tereapi'i Punga nee Ta'au. Kahukura Gallery, 34 Ormond Road, Gisborne

28 March – 17 April *Medallion Group Show* includes Fatu Feu'u. Remuera Gallery, Auckland

31 March – 18 April *Le Oneva – Misunderstood Aitu* Andy Leleisi'uao. Whitespace, Ponsonby, Auckland

12 – 17 April *Kau Auloa* at Niue Arts & Culture Festival, Alofi, Niue Island. includes Aotearoa based artists Lina Marsh, Cerisse Palalagi, Alexa Shaw, Zoro Feilo, Hili Mokaiei, Mata Smith, Chris Van Doren, Glenda Vilisoni

17 April – 9 May *Take 40* The Giles Peterson Collection. At Fresh Gallery Otara

17 April – 13 May *More Eccentricity* Lorene Taurerewa. Chaffers Gallery, Wellington

17 April – 17 May *My Mother* Lonnie Hutchinson at Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

19 April – 15 May *Kurunavanua: Black Bodies and War* Torika Bolatagici at Red Wall Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania

21 April – 13 May Niki Hastings-McFall at Bartley & Co, Wellington

1 – 3 May *Auckland Art Fair* Marine Events Centre, Halsey Street, Viaduct Centre, Auckland. includes Chris Charteris

15 May – 6 June *South Style* Ofa Mafi, Allen Vili, Vinesh Kumaran at Fresh Gallery Otara

12 June – 4 July *MYFACE* Janet Lilo at Fresh Gallery Otara

25 June – 10 July *Tautai: Tertiary Student Exhibition* at St Paul Street Gallery 1. Curator Charmaine 'Ilaiu. includes selected students from five Auckland tertiary institutions

watch the Tautai website and the Pacific Arts Diary
for news of upcoming events and exhibitions



The 2009 Artist Residency was sponsored by the Pacific Cooperation Foundation



ASB Community Trust
Te Kaitiaki Patea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau



ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND TOI
AOTEAROA

Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust receives major public funding from Creative New Zealand and also receives significant funding from ASB Community Trust.