

Monday 15 November 2010

Unnerved: The New Zealand Project

26 November 2010 – 27 February 2011

Opening 26 November, the National Gallery of Victoria will celebrate the extraordinary work of 26 contemporary New Zealand artists in *Unnerved: The New Zealand Project*.

This fascinating exhibition explores the rich and dark vein found in contemporary art in New Zealand, drawing on the disquieting aspects of New Zealand's history and culture reflected through more than 100 works of art.

Jane Devery, Coordinating Curator, NGV said: "The works presented in *Unnerved* reveal a darkness and distinctive edginess that characterises this particular trend in New Zealand contemporary art. The psychological or physical unease underlying many works in the exhibition is addressed with humour, parody and poetic subtlety."

The exhibition reflects the strength and vitality of contemporary art in New Zealand with works created by both established and emerging artists, across a range of mediums including painting, photography, sculpture, installation, drawing, film and video.

"*Unnerved* engages with New Zealand's changing social, political and cultural landscape, exploring a shifting sense of place, complex colonial past, the relationships between contemporary Māori, Pacific Islander and pakeha (non-indigenous) culture, and the interplay between performance, video and photography," said Ms Devery.

A highlight of the exhibition will be a group of sculptural works by Michael Parekowhai including his giant inflatable rabbit, *Cosmo McMurtry* and a spectacular life-size sculpture of a seal balancing a grand piano on its nose titled *The Horn of Africa*. Also on display will be a series of haunting photographs by Yvonne Todd whose portrait photography often refers to B-grade films and pulp fiction novels.

Gerard Vaughan, Director, NGV said this exhibition demonstrates the Gallery's strong commitment to interesting and challenging contemporary art secured from around the world and in particular from our region.



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“Unnerved will introduce visitors to the rich contemporary arts scene of one of our closest neighbours, fascinating audiences with works ranging from the life size installations by Parekowhai through to the spectacular 30 metre photographic essay by Gavin Hipkins. This is a must see show at the NGV over summer!” said Dr Vaughan.

Unnerved will also offer a strong and engaging collection of contemporary sculpture, installations, drawings, paintings, photography, film and video art by artists including Lisa Reihana, John Pule, Gavin Hipkins, Anne Noble, Ronnie van Hout, Shane Cotton, Julian Hooper and many others.

Unnerved: The New Zealand Project will be on display at NGV International from 26 November 2010 to 27 February 2011. NGV International is open 10am–5pm, closed Tuesdays. Admission is free.

A Queensland Art Gallery touring exhibition

Support sponsor: Sofitel Melbourne On Collins

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Image caption: Lisa REIHANA, Ngāpuhi: Ngāti Hine, Ngāi Tu, New Zealander 1964–, *Hinepukohurangi* 2001 from *Digital Marae* 2001–, cibachrome photograph mounted on aluminium, 200.0 x 100.0 cm, Purchased 2002 (2002.183a) © Lisa Reihana