

TRISH  
CLARK  
GALLERY



VINCENT WARD | Palimpsest/Landscapes  
30 August – 23 September, 2016

Press Release

## TRISH CLARK GALLERY PRESS RELEASE:

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30 August – 23 September 2016TRISH  
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Trish Clark Gallery is pleased to announce Vincent Ward's first solo exhibition of new work for 4 years, presenting three films that together mark a significant development in the artist's approach to painting, drawing, the human body and landscape. Drawing directly onto living forms, Ward has the body mimic hillsides and valleys, lush caves and dry mountainous earthquake zones. Suspension of disbelief is aided by a remarkable ambient soundscape developed in concert with the stunning visual imagery, at once speaking of physical transformation and charged psychology.

Internationally recognised for his ability to convey charged emotional experiences through his experimental approach to film making, the New Zealand artist and award-winning filmmaker engages in a visceral visual language to explore ideas of psychic states and our relationship with the physical world. Ward's fascination with the possibilities of landscape is rooted in his childhood experiences of rural life in New Zealand, following family generations in farming on his father's side, his mother a Jewish refugee who fled Germany. Ward's deep understanding of the primal force of the land was burnished by the physicality of the work required to tame the hill country farm: his father, burned and scarred in the war, would "cut and burn and hew and dig and fence and sew grass. The seemingly endless flesh grafts to his body, from one part to another, creating smoothness in one place by leaving a hollow with a ragged scar line in another, was contrasted by perfectly straight fence lines that he dug and wired on seemingly impossible, hill and cliff edge terrain, they were like straight lines arcing across an almost human landscape creating for a time order, and form, and a boundary, a sort of sanctuary for my mother and us."

This new body of work began with large canvases and drawings in an attempt to find expressions of human experience through the physical expression of the body in oils and ink. But the attempts to lock down some figurative reality lost mystery and multiple meanings. Struggling with this impasse, Ward had an epiphany: why work with canvas or paper, why not the moving camera. "With ink, paint and pigments, bathe the human form directly, then breath on it with the elements, of wind, dust, rain and fog. It continued a range of experiments that I had been making where paint meets film, but rather than motion painting on film, it could be painting / filming on a new landscape, our bodies, male and female, ephemeral as the elemental world we live in, and as harsh and varied as the hill country I experienced as a child".

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, IMAGES AND QUERIES PLEASE  
CONTACT THE GALLERY

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*Palimpsest/Landscapes 1, 2016*



*Palimpsest/Landscapes 2, 2016*

Vincent Ward  
b. 1956

Vincent Ward is a New Zealand artist and award-winning filmmaker, internationally recognised for his ability to convey powerful emotional and psychological experiences through the use of moving image. His experimental mixed-media work explores the terrain where movement, paint and film collide. In both film and art Ward engages in a visceral visual language exploring moments of transformation, psychic states and our relationship with the physical world, explored in the 2011 U.S. publication on his work 'Making the Transformational Moment in Film' by Michael Wiese.

Ward's films have received international acclaim at both the Academy Awards and the Cannes Film Festival. In 1999 Ward developed with his team a motion painting aesthetic that led to an Academy Award for best visual effects for his film 'What Dreams May Come.' Ward has continued to build on these techniques; in 2007 receiving the New Zealand Order of Merit (NZOM) for his services to film, and ensuring his practice remains at the forefront of innovation in this area. Ward's extensive experience in the film industry greatly informs much of his artistic practice.

Ward has exhibited widely since 2012, commencing with a large solo exhibition 'Breath' curated by Rhana Devenport for the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand. It included a ten-screen immersive cinematic installation, photography, and large mixed-media works on canvas. Later that year Ward became the first New Zealander to participate at the Shanghai Biennale. As a guest of renowned Chinese video artist and curator, Qiu Zhijie, Ward held a solo pavilion show in an historic former cathedral on the Bund.

A guest professorship at the China Academy of Art, School of Fine Arts, Hanzhou, has been conferred on Ward, and he also runs workshops on new media at Shanghai University, School of Fine Arts. Ward is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Canterbury where he was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts; the same university where he first studied art and completed a Dip FA (Hons) in 1978.

Ward lives and works in Auckland, New Zealand.

VINCENT WARD

### **EDUCATION AND AWARDS**

- 2015 Guest Professorship, China Academy of Art, School of Fine Arts, Hanzhou, China
- 2014 Hon. Doc. in Fine Arts, University of Canterbury
- 2007 New Zealand Order of Merit (NZOM) for services to film
- 1979 Dip. Fine Arts (Hons) Painting, University of Canterbury

### **SELECTED FILM AWARDS**

#### ***Rain of the Children***

2008 Grand Prix – Era New Horizons Film Festival Poland (audience vote selected from 250 features)

2008 Nomination Best Director - Australian Directors Guild

2008 Best Original Music – New Zealand Film and TV Awards (6 Nominations including Best Director)

2008 Nomination Best Film – Asia Pacific Screen Awards

#### ***River Queen***

2006 Golden Goblet – Shanghai International Film Festival

2006 Nomination Golden Kinnaree Award – Best Film, Bangkok International Film Festival

2006 Best Picture, Best Cinematography and Best Costume Design, New Zealand Screen Awards, 2006 (6 Nominations)

#### ***What Dreams May Come***

1999 Best Visual Effects – The Academy Awards

1999 Best Production Design Nomination – The Academy Awards,

1999 Excellence in Production Design – Art Directors Guild Awards 1999

1999 Best Renting Drama Video – Majors, Australian Video Ezy Prestige Awards

1999 Best Visual Effects – Golden Satellite Awards

#### ***Map of the Human Heart***

1992 Official Selection – Cannes Film Festival

1993 Most Significant Artistic Achievement – Tokyo Film Festival

1993 6 Nominations including Best Film and Best Director – Australian Film Institute Awards

#### ***The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey***

Winner of over 25 international awards including:

1988 In Competition – Cannes Film Festival

1988 Grand Prix – Fanta Film Festival, Rome

1988 Grand Prix – Munich International Festival of Fantasy Films

1988 Grand Prix – Sitges Fantasy Festival

1989 Grand Prix – Oporto International Film Festival

1989 Best Film and Best Director – Australian Film Institute Awards

1989 Best Film and Best Director – NZ Listener Awards

#### ***Vigil***

1984 In Competition – Cannes Film Festival

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1984 Grand Prix – Prades Film Festival  
 1984 Grand Prix – Madrid Film Festival  
 1984 Best Cinematography, Best Production and Best Screenplay – NZ  
 Listener Awards

***In Spring One Plants Alone***

1980 Silver Hugo – Chicago Film Festival  
 1982 Grand Prix – Cinema Du Reel, France

***A State of Siege***

1978 Special Jury Prize – Miami Film Festival  
 1978 Golden Hugo – Chicago Film Festival

**SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 2013-14 *Breath: The Fleeting Intensity of Life*. Aratoi, Wairapa Museum of Art and History, Masterton, New Zealand.  
*Hā: Winter's Breath*. Te Manawa Museum, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
- 2012 *Wehi*. Mark Hutchins Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand.  
*Inhale / Exhale*. (Video Installation) Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand.  
*Exhale*. Wallace Arts Center, Auckland, New Zealand.  
*Inhale*. Gus Fisher Gallery, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand.  
 Cinematic Installation in New Zealand Pavilion, Guest of Honour Frankfurt Book Fair, Frankfurt, Germany.  
*Destinies Lost & Found*. The Shanghai Biennale. Solo Station, Former Union Church, Shanghai, China.
- 2011-12 *Breath: The Fleeting Intensity of Life*. Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand.

**FILMS**

- As Director
- Rain of the Children (2008)
  - River Queen (2005)
  - What Dreams May Come (1998)
  - Map of the Human Heart (1993)
  - The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey (1988)
  - Vigil (1984)
  - In Spring One Plants Alone (1981)
  - A State Of Siege (1978)
- As Producer
- Rain of the Children (2008)
  - The Last Samurai (2003) (Executive Producer)
  - Map of the Human Heart (1993)
  - In Spring One Plants Alone (1981)

As Screenwriter Rain of the Children (2008)  
River Queen (2005)  
Map of the Human Heart (1993) (story)  
Alien 3 (1992) (storywriter)  
The Navigator: A Medieval Odyssey (1988)  
Vigil (1984)  
A State of Siege (1978)

### **PUBLISHED WORKS**

*Inhale / Exhale*. Ron Sang Publications, Auckland, New Zealand. 2012.

*The Past Awaits: People, Images, Film*. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson, New Zealand. 2010.

*The Edge of the Earth: Stories and Images from the Antipodes*. Heinemann Reed, UK. 1990.

*A Medieval Odyssey: Screenplay*. Faber and Faber Limited, London, UK. 1989.

### **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

Hughes, David. *The Greatest Sci-Fi Moveis Never Made*. Titan Books, London, UK: 2008.

Varela, Stephanie. *La Peinture Animee, Essai sur Emile Reynaud (1844 – 1914), Entre peinture et cinema*. L'Harmattan, France: 2010.

Finke, Laurie A and Martin B. Shichtman. *Cinematic illuminations: The Middle Ages on Film*. John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore: 2010.

*Breath: The Fleeting intensity of life*, a recod of exhibition. Govett-Brewster Art Gallery Publications, new Plymouth, NZ: 2012.

Fleming, Daniel (PhD). *Making the Transformational Moment in Film: Unleashing the Power of the Image (with the films of Vincent Ward)*. Michael Wiese Productions, California: 2011. (Chinese Translation: 2014)