

Emma Jean Kelly

***A critical examination of film archiving and curatorial practices in
Aotearoa New Zealand through the life and work of Jonathan Dennis***

2014

Communications School, Faculty of Design and Creative Technology

Supervisors: Dr Lorna Piatti-Farnell (AUT), Dr Sue Abel (University of Auckland)

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy November 2014

Table of Contents

Abstract	5
Acknowledgements:	6
Glossary of terms:	8
Archival sources and key:	10
Interviews:	10
1 Introduction	11
2. Literature Review	21
Beyond Biography	21
The nature of identity – the subject and storytelling	24
Postcoloniality and the queer subject	28
Kaupapa Māori	35
The “said and the unsaid” in the archive	36
Philosophy of the archive	38
The practice of the archive	43
Biculturalism in the archive	44
The Silence in the telling of the story	47
Archive as biography of the nation	51
Biography and the Foucauldian Visual Studies Paradigm	52
3. Methodology	56
Reflexive auto/biography methodology	57
Interpretation of data	61
Kaupapa Māori research method	61
Oral histories	63
Thematic content analysis	66
Primary data – key document analysis	71
4. A historical narrative beginning: Jonathan Spencer Dennis and the early years	73
The drive to represent a “national identity”	85
The New Zealand Film Commission is established	93
The struggle to establish the Film Archive	96
The Film Archive is founded	101

5. Biculturalism and the NZFA.....	107
Films of the tāngata whenua	111
Nga Tamatoa: Young Warriors lay down a challenge	117
“Artefact” becomes “art” becomes taonga.....	122
The spiritual element: Ngā taonga – kaupapa Māori	124
6. The New Zealand Film Archive become Guardians of the Treasured Images of Light/Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiāhua	130
Springbok tour protests, the NZFA opens.....	131
Te Māori and its implications for biculturalism	135
7. Framing the Archive of Jonathan Dennis: Subject, author, curator	150
Film archivist as curator and “framer of the kept”	155
Dennis’ personal papers as archive	160
8. Narrative of Jonathan Dennis’ archive.....	166
Oral histories.....	168
Narrative co-construction through oral history.....	169
Fabula in the narrative	175
Versions of the story:.....	178
1. If I dreamed of anything I dreamed of being a film star	178
2. 24 Frames: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told	180
3. Friendship Is the Harbour of Joy (2004).....	182
The intimate public – silences in the narrative	184
Representing gay men’s lives: Folds in the heteronormative world	188
9. Beyond cinema, beyond the NZFA.....	191
Honouring the ancestors	196
Cinema for the ears.....	207
10. Concluding discussion: Archive as biography of the nation?.....	221
Directions for further research	231
References (Text, Film, Video, Sound):.....	233
List of Appendices:	244
1. List of Interviewees	244
2. Publications by Jonathan Dennis	244
3. Constitution Kaupapa of the NZFA 1988	244
4. James McDonald films	244

5. OnFilm article by Emma Kelly	244
6. FIAF article by Emma Kelly	244

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning. E J Kelly _____

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how the founding director of the New Zealand Film Archive, Jonathan Dennis (1953-2002), became a conduit for tension and debate during the 1981-2002 period in relation to both the indigenous and non-indigenous presentation of film archival materials. His work resulted in a film archive and curatorship practice which differed significantly from that of the North American and European archives he originally sought to emulate. As a Pākehā (non-Māori/indigenous New Zealander) with a strong sense of social justice, he argued for an awareness of geographical location and cultural context in his work. He supported a philosophical shift in archival practice by engaging indigenous peoples in developing creative and innovative exhibitions and programmes from the 1980s until his death. Dennis was part of a conversation about the contested ground of the archive, the biography and the nation during his lifetime of work, presenting constructions of national identity in artistic productions as well as archival presentations.

This thesis is a cultural history which uses qualitative methods and an underlying critical methodology to analyse the existing oral histories of Jonathan Dennis. New interviews were gathered by the author, as well as other primary and secondary texts, to consider the narrative of a life and work in relation to film archiving. Concepts relating to this topic include the “archive” itself via Michel Foucault and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, creativity in relation to the archive, and biculturalism as it was understood in a particular period in the work of Merata Mita, Barry Barclay, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Paul Tapsell. Also finally, the institutional dynamic inherent in cultural spaces as theorised by Pierre Bourdieu is explored.

Broadly, the thesis asks the question: “How might film archivists respond to social and political movements?” By maintaining a metacritical awareness of an array of methodologies in relation to the concepts specified above, the thesis seeks to draw strength from the intersection of these philosophers and practitioners to consider the tensions and debates predominant during the 1981-2002 period in Aotearoa New Zealand. This analysis is achieved via the life and work of Jonathan Dennis. Ultimately this thesis considers how an archive can respond to the materials within and the movements outside its walls with a commitment to the peoples who in turn respond to and engage with its contents.

It is important to note that this is not an examination of The New Zealand Film Archive itself over the 1981-2002 period as Dennis was only Director of that institution for the first decade. Once he left the Film Archive in 1990 he continued to work with archival material beyond the walls of that institution. The thesis follows his journey, leaving the post 1990 history of the NZFA to another study by a different scholar.

Acknowledgements:

The idea for this thesis emerged in late 2008. As a part time project it has had a long gestation period. The study has involved many people including University of Auckland staff Laurence Simmons and Annie Goldson who started me on my way in 2009, and Sue Abel who then stepped in to provide advice on the bicultural aspects of the research. While at University of Auckland I received a grant for archival research. I also received a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Archive Grant to access the Archives NZ film materials not available through the NZFA. When I moved to Auckland University of Technology in 2010 for my employment, Sue Abel was kind enough to continue her support for my thesis. Sue has been a superb secondary supervisor: Kia ora Sue. Lorna Piatti-Farnell has been my equally superb primary supervisor, patiently waiting for my thinking to catch up with hers on many occasions. Although our research areas are sometimes very different, she has “tuned into” my work and been the clear communicator I needed to see this through to completion. Others to thank are the interviewees who were so generous with their time; they are listed in an appendix to the thesis. Special thanks to Simon Dennis who introduced me to many of my interviewees and with her daughter Kirsten helped me negotiate access to NZFA materials. Roger Horrocks is often cited as an important mentor to film studies students for very good reason – he generously corresponded with me over the life of the project, providing information and ideas throughout. Helen Martin’s histories of NZ film and TV have been hugely useful and she has also discussed ideas with me for the duration of the project. Bill Gosden and Malcolm McKinnon were extremely helpful. Ferry Hendricks was such a kind host and interviewee, as were Fergus McGillvray and his husband during my visit to London. Sef Townsend and Elaine Burrows were delightful interviewees to meet so far from home. Annie Collins hosted me and is the wisest of women; Elizabeth Alley is perhaps her only equal. Peter Wells was an excellent source of information and thoughtful ideas, along with Bridget Ikin, John Maynard and Gareth Watkins. Genevieve Morris and Mary Righton were my cheerleaders along with Sam Jones, Liana de Jong and Alison Kirkness. Susan Potter’s intelligent work is an inspiration and her friendship a delight. The NZFA staff who helped me through years of visits were Owen Mann, Tania Strauss, Kiri Griffin, Siobhan Garrett, Sarah Davy, Diane Pivac and Jane Paul. Thank you for your generous help and intelligent support – your work is not easy. Geraldene Peters, Tui O’Sullivan and Ella Henry have provided support along the way. The Harris family have also been helpful to me, and reminded me to be always cautious and humble. The JWT (*Just Women Talk*) breakfast club has been wonderful. Lynne Giddings and Kate Prebble have been vital feminist intellectual companions and mentors. The posse of the Foucault discussion group led by Joanna Fadyl has been vitally important. Engaging with academics outside my own discipline to try and understand Foucault has been enlightening.

Thanks to the AUT Research Office who have kept us solvent through my employment there, and particularly to Richard Bedford and Filomena Davies for supporting me through a month long residency at the National Film and Sound Archive Australia (NFSA) at Canberra which was instrumental to my data collection. The Research Office also provided some financial support as part of my professional development which was used to transcribe interviews. NFSA Staff were great – Graham Shirley has continued to help me since I first met him there in 2011, as has Jenni Gall. Meg Labrum allowed me to interview her, and Christine Guster ensured that interview is archived at the NFSA. Ray and Sue Edmondson have also been generous with their time, knowledge and contacts. David Parker of AUT's Te Tari Awhina Student Learning Centre was there for me when I needed encouragement and guidance. Suzanne Hardy proofread the thesis in a timely and intelligent manner, even noticing a misspelling of an obscure reference to a 1960s cartoon character.

My Kelly and Hollows family have always encouraged me in my studies even when they have been bemused by them. I particularly thank my father John who is my hero, finding interest in the everyday and inspiring creativity and love in all who meet him. My other hero is my partner Jay Hollows who dug me out of intellectual and emotional ditches, made me coffee and inspired me with his tenacity, endless creativity and intelligence throughout his own studies as well as mine. Studying towards a BFA and Master of Fine Arts as an adult student with a partner doing a PhD simultaneously was no mean feat, my love. Without all these people and many others this study could not have been completed. Finally thank you to the family and friends of Jonathan Spencer Dennis who have been hugely generous in allowing a stranger to poke and prod into the life of your loved one. There were many tears, some of which were mine as well as yours.

Finally, this is dedicated to Jonathan Mane-Wheoki and Paul Bushnell, and to Sam Prebble and Emily Cater.

This research was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 13 September 2010 AUTEC Reference number 10/175, extended in September 2013.

Glossary of terms:

Unless otherwise stated all definitions by P.M. Ryan, The Reed Dictionary of Māori Language, 1995, Auckland, New Zealand, Reed Publishing.

Aotearoa New Zealand – since the 1980s the typical nomenclature for the country (Pollock, 2005 p.550) generally shortened to “NZ” throughout the thesis for the sake of brevity. “Aotearoa” is often translated to “Land of the Long White Cloud” by association with various legends.¹ “New Zealand” is the name given the land by Dutch explorer Abel Tasman in 1642.

Hapū – sub-tribe, clan

Iwi – tribe

Kaumātua – old man, elder

Kaupapa – strategy, theme, philosophy

Kaitiaki – guardian

Kuia – old lady, (e kui, form of address), matron

Mana – integrity, charisma, prestige

Māori – ordinary, native people, (the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand).

Marae – meeting area of whānau or iwi, focal point of settlement, central area of village and its buildings

Mihi – greet, admire, respect, congratulate

NZFA – *New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiāhua* (Guardians of the Treasured Images of Light). Since August 2014 the institution is called *Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision* to acknowledge the acquisition into the collection of the Television NZ Archive and Sound Archives from Radio NZ.

Paepae – orator’s bench

Pākehā – non-Māori, (usually applied to European, Caucasian)

¹ Retrieved 25/05/14 <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/aotearoa>.

Taonga – property, treasure

Whakapapa – genealogy, cultural identity, Book of Chronicles, family tree, recite genealogy

Whānau – extended family

Whare nui – whare = house nui = large (often used as the name of the main meeting house)

In Te Reo Māori, the vowels are pronounced differently than in English. A macron creates a longer sound.

A = pronounced as in the English “far”

E = pronounced like the ea in “leather”

I = pronounced like the English “e” as in “me” or “he”

O = pronounced as the English word “awe”

U = pronounced like the double o in “moon” (Ryan, 1995 p.7).

Note: I have used macrons on Māori words throughout the thesis, except where the original text quoted did not include them.

Archival sources and key:

New Zealand Film Archive Personal Papers Jonathan Dennis (uncatalogued). Referencing an uncatalogued collection is challenging. I have provided as much information as available. Sometimes papers were loose in a box, and sometimes they were in folders. This is always specified. The collection is referred to throughout as = **NZFA PP JD Box #**

Annie Collins Personal Papers (uncatalogued) = **AC PP**

Alexander Turnbull Library Manuscript collection of Personal Papers Jonathan Dennis (catalogued) = **ATL PP JD MS #**

National Film & Sound Archive Australia (catalogued) = **NFSA NZFA collection**

Interviews:

There are three main interviews with Jonathan Dennis which form the basis of the biographical thesis research. These are:

- 1) Diane Pivac and Jonathan Dennis recorded on 28 January 2000 and referred to throughout as: **(Pivac & Dennis 2000)**. New Zealand Film Archive ACCN AUD 0672.
- 2) Elizabeth Alley & Jonathan Dennis – this interview exists in multiple edits which are discussed in Chapter Eight – it was recorded by Gareth Watkins and the interviewer was Elizabeth Alley. Referred to in its broadcast version edited by Paul Bushnell and broadcast after Dennis' death as: **(Alley & Dennis 2002)** and in its unedited form as: **(Dennis in Alley et al. 2001)**. New Zealand Film Archive AUD 1129, AUD 1130.
- 3) Judith Fyfe interviewed Dennis not long before he died with Annie Collins as camera/audio person. This is referred to as: **(Fyfe & Dennis 2001)**. New Zealand Film Archive 2002.0974.

1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the philosophy and nature of film archiving in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) through an analysis of the role played by Jonathan Dennis, firstly at the New Zealand Film Archive, Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiāhua (NZFA), from 1981 until 1990 and thereafter as a freelance film curator until his death in 2002. The construction of a film archive in the early 1980s offers a valuable moment in which to analyse the wider purpose and the more specific process for the formation of a film archive. As a national institution presenting materials from the past, an archive quickly becomes a focus point for debates about the national past, present and future. How materials from the archive are cared for and presented offers opportunities both in their presence and absence from which to critique the notion that the archive may be a biography of the nation. This exploration of Dennis, film archiving and national identity is driven by a set of questions:

1. What is an archive and what should it do?
2. What relationship does an archive have to changing concepts of the nation as expressed by social and political movements?
3. How might a film archive and its archivists respond to the materials within and the movements outside its walls?

In order to address the questions above, this thesis utilises the founding director of the NZFA, Jonathan Dennis, as a conduit for an examination of the tensions and debates prevalent at a particular period of time in a specific country. This examination engages with indigenous and non indigenous values in relation to audiovisual materials from the past. It considers a colonised country, New Zealand, as a place in which competing perspectives are at play, and analyses how the New Zealand Film Archive and its materials became part of that competition. By using a specific subject such as Dennis, the thesis also explores the notion of the subject itself, and how that subject is constructed through narrative.

During the years 1981-2002 Dennis worked to present and preserve indigenous and non-indigenous film archival materials with an awareness of the social and political changes occurring in the country. This resulted in a film archive and curatorship practice which differed significantly from that of the North American and European archives he originally sought to emulate. As a Pākehā with a strong sense of social justice, he argued for an awareness of geographical location and cultural context in his work. As a gay man he had an understanding of being an outsider and this motivated him to see things differently. He supported a philosophical shift in archival practice by engaging indigenous peoples in developing creative and innovative exhibitions and programmes.²

One film archive has been chosen to examine these questions and one person who led that film archive for ten years has been selected as a human subject through which to interpret a decision-making process about that institution. NZ is a country whose national boundaries have not changed since 1840 when the Treaty of Waitangi was signed and has only ever had one independent film archive.³ Therefore it became the sole independent national repository for the film materials of a nation with stable borders.⁴ The founding director of that Archive, Jonathan Dennis, left rich personal materials from which to attempt to understand the development of the institution and his motivations. Dennis continued after his Directorship to engage with archives and evolve his philosophy. The most compelling reason to focus on Dennis when exploring questions of film archiving practice in NZ was that his name was repeated by many scholars, archivists and film makers as one which represented an emerging practice in the 1980s which was different from that of archives, museums and art galleries before that period. For example an Emeritus Professor of Film TV and Media Studies at University of Auckland remarked that

² This is in no way to suggest that homosexual and indigenous perspectives are the same.

³ “The Treaty of Waitangi of 1840 is New Zealand’s founding document, establishing the relationship between Māori and the Crown. In ensuing years the terms of the Treaty were consistently violated by the Crown, resulting in the alienation of Māori from the land and their impoverishment. In 1975 the Waitangi Tribunal was established, with the goal of redressing grievances resulting from the contravention of the Treaty. By 2010 the Tribunal had received over 2000 claims, and had paid out around \$950 million in settlements” (Morris, 2013). This process has been useful (though extremely painful for many) because hapū, whānau and iwi have collected oral and written accounts of their history and shared them as part of the panel hearing process, allowing for a greater understanding by all New Zealanders of the history which had not been shared in the dominant cultural institutions of school, museum, and state sanctioned historical discourse (Binney, 2009).

⁴ Having said NZ is a “stable nation”, some iwi did not sign the Treaty and one in particular Ngai Tūhoe was and is an independent nation, though various governments have chosen not to accept this view and Tūhoe are often represented as troublemakers in the mainstream media (Binney, 2009).

Jonathan Dennis was an “...unsung hero of the film culture” (Personal correspondence, Horrocks, R. 21/10/08).

“With a strong sense of place” is the way in which authors Sarah Davy and Diane Pivac described the development of the NZFA in its founding years, in a chapter they contributed to a book on NZ film culture (Davy & Pivac, 2008). The phrase “a sense of place” was made popular by a 1984 photography book by Robin Morrison, a Pākehā New Zealander who specialised in images of the everyday in New Zealand (Morrison, 1984). Dennis, like Morrison and others had become increasingly aware that the unique aspects of NZ were its geographical location and cultural diversity. They consequently sought strategies through which to work regionally, nationally and internationally with a “sense of place” (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Beyond this point of difference they also began to understand the history of their own country, largely because Māori insisted on remembering, rather than forgetting the colonial roots of the nation (S. Turner, 1999).

Jonathan Dennis began his work from the perspective of a European man, rich in knowledge and experience of the western world, but “ignorant” of Te Ao Māori [The Māori world] (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). By the end of his life he had shifted his view, incorporating ways of being and doing he had learned from Māori with whom he had worked for over two decades. He was perhaps attuned to diversity by his own situation as a gay man in a nation which celebrated the Pākehā heterosexual “kiwi bloke” as a cultural norm (Phillips, 1987, 1st ed.). As he learned to listen harder he became something other than European in the continental sense. This is not to claim an indigeneity for him, but to state a distinction based upon his awareness of his geographical location and personal sense of marginalisation. “Being Pākehā”, as historian Michael King discovered, is not to be embraced as indigenous, but it is to be something other than those of European descent born and living elsewhere (King, 1985). Nor does being Pākehā automatically make one sensitive to indigenous concerns. Film maker Barry Barclay (iwi affiliation Ngāti Apa) who worked with Dennis and critiqued the NZFA, argued that Pākehā and Māori quite literally talk past each other. He suggested that in the Pākehā world there is often a tendency to speak and debate in a linear fashion, whilst in the Māori world listening is highly valued and discussion can often be cyclic (Barclay, 1990 p.14). Barclay’s work in film and film archiving, his place as both Māori and Pākehā (of Scottish and French descent) (Martin, 1994 p.103) and his

writing on his ideas have a central place in this thesis because he was interested in the tension between two cultures and the creative possibilities which emerged from that space.⁵

In 2009 a review of the New Zealand Film Archive described an institution which seemed to have reached some sense of equilibrium between indigenous and non-indigenous perspectives – “the [New Zealand Film] Archive has devoted much time and energy to ensuring that indigenous rights are fully respected...[and]...has achieved international recognition for its innovative work in this area” (Horrocks, Labrum, & Hopkins, 2009 p.27). How the NZFA developed from a European institution in 1981 to one internationally recognised for its honouring of indigenous rights has not been described in detail in either the academic literature or by the archive and museum movement. Beyond Dennis’ own interviews with media in the 1980s and 1990s (for one of many examples, see Crosbie, 1990, March 11) and papers he wrote for industry related journals, such as that of the Art Galleries & Museums Association of Australia & New Zealand (Dennis, 1989), there has been no study made of more than a chapter in a wider book in which an author sets out to methodically investigate Dennis’ practice. Dennis’ work led to an Archive, which he felt by the time of his resignation in 1990, was a “living archive” engaging with “biculturalism” (Dennis, Report to FIAF Congress 1990). Nor has any single work examined the years from 1990 until 2002 when Dennis was free of his directorial responsibilities and able to create new works with archival materials in many different media. This deepened his engagement with a “sense of place” through an evolving philosophy which was influenced by wider sociopolitical movements.

Over a decade since his death, why should we care about the work of a film archivist from the South Pacific? More specifically, why did I embark on this study? The work of film maker and author Barry Barclay on the subject of film archiving and indigenous perspectives led me to the work of Jonathan Dennis (Barclay, 2005). In the 2000s period I worked as an image archivist and I had struggled as a Pākehā (of English, Irish Republican and Scottish Highlander descent) to incorporate the methodologies of a western based practice with the indigenous materials of the archive in which I worked. In seeking examples of good practice I read Barclay’s texts which investigate appropriate indigenous processes in both film making and film archiving. Included in

⁵ Barclay always acknowledged his Pākehā as well as Māori genealogies. For example see biographical note to *Mana Tuturu* (Barclay, 2005).

one publication was a section devoted to Jonathan Dennis and the work of the NZFA (Barclay, 2005 pp.93-136). That chapter and Peter Wells' film about Dennis and his friend and colleague Witarina Harris, *Friendship is the Harbour of Joy* (2004) piqued my curiosity. In undertaking this PhD thesis which seeks to explore questions of practice and philosophy in the film archive, I hope to enrich and inform my own practice and that of others working in the field of image and film archiving and also museum and art gallery practices in postcolonial territories, where handling and engaging with indigenous materials and the peoples related to them is common.⁶

Because Dennis was an archivist he left rich evidence of his life in the form of correspondence and photographs held at the NZFA. There are also sound recordings from his radio shows, television programmes and publications which he co-edited and co-wrote with his many collaborators. These materials were a useful platform from which to consider and analyse Dennis' work, but there were many gaps in the information available. Therefore I began to interview his friends, colleagues, family and industry peers. These conversations recorded as oral history interviews and themselves destined to become materials deposited in the NZFA, offered information unavailable through the previous written or recorded evidence of Dennis' life (a list of all interviewees is appended to the thesis). They introduced ideas and discussions about Dennis' practice and the wider context in which he lived and worked and suggested the importance of his personality to the project. The seeming contradiction between the charismatic individual leader and the committed collaborator they described became increasingly intriguing. The third element which informed the data collection was a literature review in which I sought to consider some of the wider concepts and philosophies of film archiving practice, cross cultural interactions, sociopolitical history and the role of biography and narrative in relation to the topic. The archival evidence, the spoken word of his peers, and the conceptual frameworks offered through the literature provided a rich set of building blocks from which to begin a critical examination of film archiving in NZ through a study of Jonathan Dennis.

The thesis is organised in a rough chronology. After the Literature Review and Methodology sections, a historical narrative introduction to Dennis' life is offered in Chapter Four. This provides

⁶ "Postcolonial" is a concept examined within the Literature Review.

the basic information and context, the facts of a life and the growing involvement in NZ cultural productions which began to intertwine with the developing film culture of the country in the 1970s. Without this foundation what follows would be more difficult for the reader to engage with as the more conceptual themes are developed and so it is a substantial chapter offering a framework for what follows. Chapters Five and Six discuss aspects of biculturalism —firstly the history of the use of the term in relation to key people of the previous generation to Dennis. Chapter Six then relates this term and the history of it to the NZFA itself in its first decade. Chapter Seven then moves to a consideration of “archive” as a philosophical concept in relation to a subject such as Dennis. Chapter Eight considers Dennis as a co-construction of a narrative developed by himself and others during the interviews he undertook during his lifetime. It also considers the interviews I gathered and how those people narrated Dennis’ life posthumously. Chapter Nine considers Dennis’ own work in some detail, and then the concluding discussion of Chapter Ten offers a weaving together of the discussion of biography, archive and nation.

Michel Foucault is instrumental to this work because his writings on the “history of ideas” are an appropriate approach for a thesis which seeks to examine how particular concepts have been understood in a specific time and place. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (iwi affiliations Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou) is a scholar who like Foucault underpins this work in that she provides tools for “decolonising” theories and practices for indigenous researchers which can be useful for those working in postcolonial territories. Her texts absorb and re-understand the works of various local and international thinkers such as Foucault and offer a resulting method and methodology through which to re/contextualize research by and with indigenous peoples in the geographical space of NZ. This is done in such a way that European intellectual thinking is not rejected but instead reappraised in the light of indigenous epistemology. Both Tuhiwai Smith and Foucault consider the philosophical concept of “archive” in their work in relation to the regulation of knowledge and this is useful to my work.

If subjected to a paradigm model this thesis would be located towards the subjective and critical/radical tradition rather than the post-positivist mode. Much of the work is influenced by critical discourse analysis which acknowledges the contribution of feminist inquiry seeking to address sites of oppression (Grant & Giddings, 2002). This brings it into tension with many

scholarly readings of Michel Foucault's work which argue he does not acknowledge hierarchies of power. This tension then becomes a space from which to explore varying perspectives and perhaps arrive at a new understanding of the power/knowledge nexus of the film archive and scholarship related to it.

Beyond the academic scholarship, film archivists and film makers themselves often provide philosophical perspectives which emerge from their own practice. Barry Barclay is one such writer and film maker, as is Merata Mita who spoke and wrote in various fora about the NZFA and Jonathan Dennis in particular; for example Mita & Dennis, 1991. Italian born film archivist Paolo Cherchi-Usai is also helpful in this regard. Being someone who worked alongside Dennis to support presentations of silent film, Cherchi-Usai, like Mita and Barclay, offers personal insights into the character of Dennis, but more importantly into the philosophy and practice of film preservation, presentation and the politics of the field. Curatorship, something Cherchi-Usai argues Dennis practiced, was (and perhaps still is) regarded as the antithesis of film archiving practice when the preservation of materials is prioritised. Cherchi-Usai offers many texts in which he explores this tension with fellow film archivists, particularly *Film Curatorship – Archives Museums and the Digital Marketplace* (Cherchi Usai, Francis, Horwath, & Loebenstein, 2008). Emeritus Professor Roger Horrocks also knew Dennis personally so offered his insights in an unrecorded interview for this thesis, and is the author of a number of written works on the history of film in NZ. His influence is particularly reflected in Chapter Four which provides a background to Dennis' life and work. Throughout that chapter and later in Chapter Eight, the work of oral historians such as Anna Green and Megan Hutching have been intrinsic to developing a sense of theory and practice in both the collecting and analysing of oral histories (Green & Hutching, 2004).

Archives, like museums and art galleries are often expected to present exhibitions which reflect the history or identity of the nation they are based in. There are many competing ontological and epistemological approaches to concepts of national identity in NZ. Biculturalism itself is often regarded as a tired term; kaupapa Māori (Māori centred philosophy and practice) has developed but does not replace the idea of partnership intrinsic to the bicultural process. Appropriately, where Pākehā sit in relation to kaupapa Māori or any Māori centred philosophy, is problematic

for Pākehā practitioners in any field. Dennis, like many curators, museum workers and archivists struggled to understand where he was positioned in relation to the work he did with indigenous peoples. That struggle is central to this thesis.

Professor of Museum Studies Peter Tapsell's (iwi affiliation to Te Arawa) work on Gilbert Mair's collection and the exhibition which was produced from that work (Tapsell, 2006), has been fundamental to my Pākehā understanding of *ngā taonga*. This term is now ubiquitous in NZ archival and museum circles as it is used to describe the material objects of the archive, acknowledging their spiritual aspects and the living relationship to descendants of the iwi they originated from. Tapsell articulates key concepts in the discussion of biculturalism within Chapter Five, which is the centre of the thesis. That chapter looks at biculturalism and practice before the NZFA began, with a particular focus on the previous two generations from whom many ideas and skills were developed which were incorporated into the eventual kaupapa/constitution of the Archive. Once this definition of taonga is established, the remainder of the thesis examines how Dennis embraced the term and engaged with it in his work.

Chapters Four to Six and Chapter Eight reflect the fact that the role of history is clearly central to this thesis. It is not a positivist historical analysis which uses archival documents to recreate a particular time, place and practice. Nor is it ethnographic or anthropological – it is something else, but not divorced from any of these disciplines. It is a cultural history, and the work of historian Judith Binney has been influential – she relied on both written documentation and also the active collection of new oral histories of (largely) Ngai Tūhoe tribal elders to create her historical works such as *Stories Without End* (Binney, 2010). She and fellow Pākehā scholar from University of Auckland, Professor Anne Salmond, acknowledged where their own Pākehā centred experience and knowledge failed in the writing of cross-cultural history. Salmond discussed her philosophy directly with Dennis. In her work she does not presume to understand the whakapapa (genealogy) and iwi knowledge of others, but works effectively with Māori people – not as the holder of power, but as the listener and the learner in the process (Shepard, 2009 p.161). Binney and Salmond's work lies in their respective fields of history and anthropology, but it also emerges from a feminist perspective where these women became aware of their own position *as women* experiencing forms of oppression whilst undertaking their scholarship (Shepard, 2009 p.128).

This impacted upon their individual practices, encouraging sensitivity to the oppression of others – this was the experience of many intellectuals in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1970s/1980s period including Dennis. Salmond and Binney consciously began to incorporate practices of reciprocity and an awareness of their own lack of knowledge of another's culture into their work (Shepard, 2009 p.137). Jonathan Dennis was a contemporary of these two scholars and met and discussed his practice with Anne Salmond. He was influenced by her and other feminist friends and colleagues of the time (Personal correspondence E. Alley 11/06/10).

The ongoing debate over the personal versus the political have been fierce in this study, following the lead of the feminist critical analysts, who, during the 1980s led the shift to make the personal part of the scholarly analysis (Heilbrun, 1988). Jonathan Dennis upbringing in grand hotels and his boarding school days were experiences which he and every interviewee for this study raised as influential in his life.⁷ Dennis saw these experiences as shaping his thinking, and that in itself is significant. The practice of this thesis has become one which attempts to understand how he himself created the narrative of his life (through the personal and public events within it), but also takes into account the wider impacts of sociopolitical and cultural events during his lifetime and the understanding of his actions by others, and beyond this, wider issues of film archiving practice.

Dennis had many opportunities to explore his own narrative and sense of self as he was interviewed for various purposes. His own experience of oppression through being a gay man was certainly part of his sensitivity to the diverse experience of being part of the nation. This narrative co-construction (McHugh, 2012) is explored explicitly through Chapter Eight, where his own stories and those told by others are analysed. Peter Wells, writer, film maker and friend of Dennis offers personal and more general insight into identity, gay perspective and the place of cinema in his own life as well as that of Dennis. Together Wells' and Dennis' narratives suggest the marginalisation of those who were not "kiwi blokes" and the need to negotiate a sense of

⁷ People would talk to me about this even when I had not asked them directly about Dennis' life. For example I was lucky enough to meet Professor Jonathan Mane-Wheoki while he was Head of Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland who told me Jonathan Dennis' story of unhappiness at boarding school in Christchurch (Personal discussion, J. Mane-Wheoki Auckland 2012). Vale Professor Mane-Wheoki.

place within a conservative sociopolitical environment where their experience – like that of many women and indigenous peoples – was often marginalised in the developing story of the nation.

Chapter Nine is an analysis of Dennis' practice in presenting archival materials. All that had happened before influenced his work in his last decade. This chapter argues that his own sense of creativity was strongly influenced by his work with indigenous peoples as well as some European mentors. Chapter Ten then offers a drawing together of the ideas developed through the thesis to ask whether the archive can be the biography of the nation and what that may mean in relation to film archiving and the biographical subject.

As Foucault's conception of a novel as a "a node in a network" (Foucault, 1972 p.73) provides a manner in which to consider the influences which impact upon the creation of that text, Jonathan Dennis is part of a web of influences. No one man, placed as he was at a specific time, period, and cultural make up, could create the NZFA alone – many influences impacted upon him and the work he did. This is reflected in this thesis which understands the subject as *a subject* in a particular time period and place, as well as a conduit to an understanding of the data; synthesising the information gleaned from the theory analysed to present a work "beyond all biography" (Agamben, 1989 p.143). Within this network and beyond biography, the nature of the film archive and its relation to the subject and the nation are investigated through the life and work of Jonathan Dennis.

2. Literature Review

Beyond Biography

...biography has to rely heavily on some evidence but a great deal on speculation, unless there are diaries and family papers to provide firmer ground. But biography at its best is a form of fiction. The personality and sympathies of the biographer cannot be sifted out of what is written (Davies, 1988 p.95).

In the case of Jonathan Dennis there are indeed diaries and family papers from which to glean “evidence” for a biography. But this does not necessarily lead to “firmer ground”. Davies’ description of biography as a form of fiction suggests the development of a biographical study in a poststructural mode where Roland Barthes’ “death of the author” argument is still influential (Barthes, 1967). The author of any biographical work is interwoven into the text. Davies’ interpretation of the subject is necessarily embedded in his own historically and socially specific context and is, to an extent as he would have it in the quotation above “a form of fiction”, a type of make believe. In order to acknowledge the role of the author in this study, the previous chapter included a brief personal narrative of my motivation for this biographical project.

As the “personality and sympathies”, the individuality and the bias of the biographer are present in the text, so is the desire to understand the *authentic* meaning of the subject of the biography. In *The Intentional Fallacy revisited and (perhaps) removed*, Ronald Shusterman (2008) describes structuralism and poststructuralism as modes which have “generally forbidden the pursuit” of questions regarding authorial intent. He quotes Maurice Couturier who suggested there is a “pseudo-scientific arrogance” to this “anti-author militarism” (Shusterman, 2008 p.1). Shusterman insists that – “The empirical author exists in the real world. One of the consequences is that knowledge of the author is also knowledge of what else he has written or accomplished” (Shusterman, 2008 p.6). Jonathan Dennis “exists in the real world”, or at least he did until his death from cancer in January 2002. However this thesis does not attempt to offer an authentic truth of Dennis as a personality, because truth is “not relative but perspectival, always

provisional, partial and incomplete” (Clare & Hamilton, 2003 p.152). Furthermore the epistemological, ontological and axiomatic perspectives of the biographer will inevitably impact upon the work which is presented.

In *Using Biography* (1984) William Empson, a student of the school of the “Intentional Fallacy”, challenged his own previous professional practice to illustrate how the life experiences of various authors such as Yeats, Marvell and Joyce influenced their work.⁸ He criticised the assertion of literary critic W. K. Wimsatt (1954) that the reader is forbidden “to grasp the intention of the author”, which, Wimsatt argues, creates an “ill-effect”. Empson suggests that in the very effort “to ignore the author’s intention”, the critic may “impute to him some wrong intentions” (Empson, 1984 p.104). In contrast to Empson, and bearing some similarities to Wimsatt’s Law and the notion of *The Intentional Fallacy*, Roland Barthes asserted unequivocally that the author is dead (Barthes, 1967). He argued if the author is the conduit through which a work of art is understood grave errors are inevitable. Instead he posits that “a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader” (Barthes, 1967/1977 p.148). Barthes proposed a radical shift in focus which has been analysed and developed in a myriad of ways since its initial publication.

In response to Barthes, Michel Foucault acknowledged the “death of the author” argument as a specific moment of discontinuity which sees a shift in the value placed upon the audience/reader in the interpretation of the work which in turn changes the understanding of the role of the author/subject (Foucault, 1969). He suggests that the moment at which the human subject is no longer privileged is “an introduction to the historical analysis of discourse” itself (Foucault, 1969 p.13). The “author function”, which not only considers the “modes of existence” of the discourse pertaining to the author but also may be used to “reexamine the privileges of the subject” is his suggested reconceptualisation (Foucault 1969 *ibid*). He asserted that the “author function” can

⁸ US literary critics of the New Critical school, asserted that the “Intentional Fallacy” proves that a poem does not belong to its author; rather, “it is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond his power to intend about it or control it. The poem belongs to the public.” Originally published as William Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, “The Intentional Fallacy.” *Sewanee Review*, vol. 54 (1946): 468-488 (W.K. Wimsatt, 1954).

be “the equivalent of a description”, but only if one has prior knowledge of an author’s works, echoing Shusterman’s argument that the author “exists in the world”. For Foucault the discourse of authorship is a “certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses” (Foucault, 1969 p.14). Foucault’s response to the death of the author discourse is thus a question – “What is an author?” He suggests that the very reason the “death of the author” argument has arisen is cause for examination and that furthermore an author may, under certain conditions, act as a conduit through which many influences are concentrated, and from this a new discourse will emerge (Foucault 1969 p.11).

Foucault, himself an “author function” through which we attach meaning based upon prior knowledge of his work, was anti-dogmatic (McHoul & Grace, 1993) and suggested a problematising, a questioning, a re-examining, and a conscious attempt to understand the methodological assumptions underpinning the focus on the author by a particular culture at a given time in history – he did not argue that the concept of the author was or was not “dead”. He did not position himself in opposition to Barthes, but instead engaged with his ideas and insisted upon an anti-polemical discussion (Foucault, 1984). In fact, in some ways the two authors echo each other. Barthes describes the text itself as “a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (Barthes, 1967/1977 p.146). Foucault similarly argues the novel is a “node in a network” (Foucault, 1972 p.23) to illustrate how at a particular point in history, a text is understood as part of a wider community or network of relationships. Where Barthes however rejects authorial privilege, Foucault prefers to consider *why* the author has privilege at a particular moment in time. He was particularly interested in the regulation of knowledge through this shift. In his view the shifting power/knowledge nexus in Europe shaped the author into an individual subject (Foucault, 1969 pp.6,7).

Foucault argued that this historically contingent discursive frame for the author also related to the subject itself – it would seem that one could also, beginning with analyses of this type, re-

examine the “privileges of the subject” (Foucault 1969 op cit. p.12).⁹ Foucault quite deliberately avoided focussing on the subject in much of his own early work in an attempt to demonstrate how other factors (governmental, social, and cultural) affected the ways in which Europeans understood the world. In doing so he did not negate the possibility of the subject, but sought to trouble modes through which the concept of the subject came into being, particularly in relation to knowledge and power (Foucault, 1966/2002 ed. p.xiv). As various scholars have argued since, this does not mean he felt the subject was not an appropriate topic for analysis, but that it could be enlightening to examine the historical and social construct through which the subject (or author) gained such prestige at a specific moment in Western culture (Allen, 2002).

The nature of identity – the subject and storytelling

If the concept of the “subject” is accepted as a valid one, another way in which to evaluate the subject is through a consideration of the construction of self, given that “A sense of self is difficult without myth” (J.C.Davis 1985 p.7). Davis suggests that the process of constructing the self and narrating one’s actions shifts the discussion away from the authentic nature of the subject to something other and perhaps more intriguing. Similarly, Virginia Woolf said in *The New Biography* that truth and personality do not always sit easily together and that for a writer of biography “in order that the light of personality may shine through, facts must be manipulated; some must be brightened; others shaded. Yet, in the process, they must never lose their integrity” (Woolf, 1967 p.229). Just what “integrity” might mean in this context is left unexplained. The reader must interpret Woolf’s statement, and thus the challenge of retelling or presenting a life. It is quite possible that, as she suggests, by the end of the biography “the figure which has been most completely on display is that of the author” (Woolf, 1967 *ibid.*) echoing David E. Gray’s warning of the potential narcissism of the reflexive approach (Gray, 2009 p.499). In narrating one’s own life history or that of others, facts are “manipulated”, some “brightened”, others “shaded” as Woolf has described. Foucault’s description of the archive itself resonates here – the enunciable

⁹ “I would like to say, first of all, what has been the goal of my work during the last twenty years. It has not been to analyse the phenomena of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects” (Foucault, The University of Chicago Press/1982 p.777).

will “...shine, as it were, like stars...” (Foucault quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.29). The author will choose to focus on some elements of a life and not on others for their own ends.

In order to serve the purpose of constructing the self or subject, biographical information is discarded or included –“narratives born of social and political crises are preserved in memory not so much as records of those times but as tools by which to act in the present” (Howard-Malverde, 1990 pp.3,4). Howard-Malverde argues that to have a purpose beyond the immediate “details of human experience”, individual stories are enunciated in order to fulfil a function required of them in the present (Howard-Malverde, 1990 *ibid*). Narrative theorists as well as oral historians realise this tendency to make stories through memory which construct a version of the past for a purpose in the present (Portelli, 1991). New Zealand historian Judith Binney suggests that orally transmitted ideas are not only individual, but also an “evocation of a collective awareness” and cautions against their meaning becoming fixed as they are recorded in written form. She reminds her readers that – “Contradictory meanings coexist in written records, for texts are ‘seldom univocal’” (Binney, 2010 pp.323,324).

Both Howard-Malverde and Binney describe testimony of indigenous cultures which were traditionally communicated through spoken rather than written means for a collective purpose. This offers a further dimension to the understanding or intention of memory sharing and story telling. The text often reflects through the fabula (the events, structural elements or beats of the story) within it a wider purpose or meaning than a simple retelling of a story from the past for the sake of entertainment. Events and explanations in the story are part of the fabula through which a text is recognised as a narrative (Bal, 2009 3rd ed. pp.5,6). Events of the past are related for various reasons which may shift and change over time. This is arguably true of all narrators, whether they write or tell their story to an audience or reader. Like Foucault’s understanding of the archive, aspects of the narrative will be said or unsaid at particular moments in time, or in Woolf’s words will “shine” or not, being less or more present depending on the interviewee/interviewer, speaker or author and the conditions in which stories are told, narratives developed, and biographical studies written.

Many scholars reject the biographical approach altogether, including some of those who use Foucault in their own work. For example, Lauren Berlant has developed the concept of the *intimate public*. Berlant's argument critiques the idea of the self where the subject is understood in relation to personhood. Within the paradigm of the intimate public Berlant challenges the assumptions made about the writing of a life. She claims to be "worried about the presumed self-evident value of bionarrative" (the story of an individual human life). Instead she asks life writers and biographers to interrogate their own assumptions about what it means to "have a life". She argues the very notion of "human biocontinuity" is suspect and suggests that "a biography of gesture, of interruption, of reciprocal coexistences" might be more fruitful (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.181). This argument rejects the assumption that the individual subject (or author) is the only, fixed category from which to analyse a concept, event or movement. She cites Foucault's *heterotopias* as an example of a fold within the normative world "where one can encounter the positivity of being otherwise..." without falling into the "...normative notion of human biocontinuity" (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 *ibid.*)

Berlant posits that in the present moment it is common to offer the "intimate public convention" through representations of suffering with which readers can identify through "norms of belonging, sociality, and justice" (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.185). By doing so she says a "sentimental contract" between author and reader emerges encouraging a kind of logic of belonging which often adheres to normative values (Berlant & Prosser, 2011, p.183). She argues as other queer theorists post-Foucault have done that this assumes certain meanings about the very concept of "a life" and *who* or in the case of Post Humanist scholarship, *what* is allowed to have one (Howe, 2004). She particularly challenges the "rules of belonging and intelligibility whose narrowness threatens people's capacity to invent ways to attach to the world". She sees "Queer, socialist/anti-capitalist, and feminist work" as being responsible for "multiplying the ways we know that people have lived and can live, so that it would be possible to take up any number of positions during and in life in order to have 'a life'" (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.182). This

argument shifts her work away from Foucault's perceived lack of engagement with gender and feminist theory (Jackson & Scott, 2010 p.35).¹⁰

In examining film archiving practice through the work of Jonathan Dennis, I seek to balance precariously between Berlant's "sentimental contract" of author and reader and the pursuit of the gesture or event which may prove as significant or more so than the bionarrative itself. I do this by examining the philosophy of the concept of archive, the NZFA itself as an organisation as well as social and political events and movements outside the narrative of Jonathan Dennis, but also including his bionarrative. As a gay man who was assertive in naming his sexuality from an early age in a conservative environment, the very act of engaging with his story and the stories that were told by him is in Berlant's words "multiplying the ways we know that people have lived and can live" beyond the immediate focus of the film archiving work (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.182). This thesis uses queer theory which seeks to address marginal spaces where those who have been deemed *other* may reside without falling into the essentialist mire of identity politics.

However, like Foucault before her, where Berlant's work is perhaps lacking, despite an assertion to the contrary in the preface to one of her publications (Berlant, 1997) is in the evidence that she has seriously considered non-white or non western peoples' engagement in the multiplicity of "ways we know that people have lived". Her work generally (though not always) focusses on white America, though at times also on African American lives, just as Foucault's work concentrated on the French specifically and Europeans in general. Indigenous peoples are virtually invisible in both authors' texts. There is a silence in the telling of their bionarratives, or in the analysis of the "gesture or event" of their existence. Since work in archives in NZ is always engaged with indigenous peoples, this means that there is a silence in Foucault and Berlant's work which needs to be addressed.

Edward Said's work on the manner in which people are made "other" links the discourse of the marginalised to that of indigenous and non-European cultures who are similarly made "other" (Said, 1978). Specifically in relation to indigenous peoples, Said's work, known as the founding

¹⁰ It is often argued, rather simplistically in my view, that "Foucault himself was not very interested in women or in gender relations" (Jackson & Scott, 2010 p.35).

texts of postcolonial discourse, has been utilised by Māori scholars to consider the “Western discourse about the other” as the process by which knowledge regarding indigenous peoples was “collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West...” (S. Walker, Eketone, & Gibbs, Routledge/2006 p.332). Said’s alternative work has opened up the possibility of the “subaltern” having agency and “speaking back” to empire (Spivak, 1988). This in turn has led to new works which access Said as an “author function” who offered discourses which could in turn be expanded upon into new territories (geographical and theoretical) such as towards the sexual “other”, who is marginalised by normative practice.

Postcoloniality and the queer subject

In challenging the ways in which knowledge of indigenous peoples has been “collected, classified and then represented”, discourses on sexuality, at various moments in time in specific cultural settings, have been of interest to scholars. The intention in their work has often been to describe and examine how sex (for example, in Catholic countries) was regarded as sinful and in need of control through confession, guidance and penance. This distorted the understanding of other sexual practices as Europeans came into contact with non-Europeans during the period of colonial expansion. Today, poststructural identifications most often associated with sexuality studies engage with queer theory as a discourse and argue that sex and gender is and was fluid, labile and constantly in flux (W. B. Turner, 2000 p.134). This echoes readings in the postcolonial mode which seek to find plural identity formations which are not fixed but dynamic. For example, indigenous scholars such as Paul Meredith have taken up Homi Bhabha’s contention that in between the narrative of the coloniser and the colonised, “a new hybrid identity or subject-position emerges from the interweaving of elements of the coloniser and colonised challenging the validity and authenticity of any essentialist cultural identity” (Meredith, 1998 p.2). Bhabha suggests that emerging from this interweaving is a third space beyond binaries which is a hybrid place of negotiation and translation which in turn becomes a productive place of possibility (Bhabha, 1994).

However Bhabha, Edward Said and others have been criticised in their turn for failing to specifically take into account same sex desire in their postcolonial critiques (Chari cited in Hawley, 2001 p.280). In response to this perceived lack, other writers have begun to consider

postcolonialism and the queer subject and linked these to the concept of hybridity. For example, John C. Hawley's *Postcolonial, Queer* (ed. Hawley, 2001) is a space for writers such as Hema Chari to consider the "elaboration of Postcolonial Masculinity and Homoerotic desire" (Chari, quoted in Hawley, 2001 p.277). Hawley describes postcolonialism as the study of European colonial conquest, "operations of empire", discourses of the subject and resistance as well as "the differing responses to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre- and post-independence nations and communities" (Hawley, 2001 p.2). This definition insists on an analysis of the "contemporary colonial legacy" rather than an assumption that colonialism is no longer a valid concept, which is useful to the present study of the specific geographical location and cultural context in which Jonathan Dennis lived and worked.

Scholars interested in the "differing responses to...incursions" and the "contemporary colonial legacy" in communities such as NZ, challenge the use of the term *postcolonial* itself, asking – "If we're postcolonial does that mean the colonists all went home?" (Meredith, 1998 p.3). David Pearson argues that although "Outdated 'master narratives' about nation and state building, modernisation and national identity have seemingly given way to a new relativism in which national and ethnic boundaries are viewed as discourses in flux and cultural identities are multiple imaginings". In what is often viewed as postcolonial times "heralding the end of the nation-state however is somewhat premature" (Pearson, 2001 pp.2, 3). Furthermore, Meredith contends that the "the 'post' in post-colonial requires some thought" (Meredith, 1998 p.3).

In considering the postcolonial queer subject in NZ, Jonathan Dennis' life did not fit the hegemonic discourse represented by the stereotypical "kiwi bloke" as Pākehā, fit, ruggedly handsome and able to drink and play rugby (Bannister, 2005; Campbell, 2000; Phillips, 1996 2nd ed.). At the time in which he was growing up "the consequences of being exposed as a homosexual in the mid-twentieth century were frightening: newspapers carried accounts of homosexuals on trial in New Zealand courts; homosexuals were targeted in America by McCarthy..." and local writer Frank Sargeson had been entrapped as a young man by laws

criminalising homosexuals (Millar, 2010 p.vii).¹¹ In Jock Phillips' seminal cultural history of the New Zealand Pākehā male, he describes how the understanding of a successful normative identity formation was closely linked to the stereotype of the pioneer, the soldier, and the rugby player whose heterosexuality was defined against indigenous identities (Phillips, 1987 first ed.). Dennis, as a homosexual man in a society which favoured heterosexual males as “defined against” the indigenous other, could easily relate to those categorised with him as unacceptable during the time when he was forced to become “transparent” during boarding school in order to survive the bullying that occurred there (Dennis in Alley, Watkins, & Dennis, 2001).

Anita Brady has recently argued specifically in the context of the NZ South Island area where Dennis grew up, that the nostalgia for “the way New Zealand ‘used to be’” in the High Country and the rural South, makes it “a complex and privileged place in the narratives of authenticity on which notions of pakeha masculinity depend...the South Island is often positioned in New Zealand media as a destination ‘back beyond the effete suburbanization of New Zealand manhood’” (Brady, 2012 p.359). Dennis was never “boysy” (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001) and at his South Island boarding school populated with the sons of wealthy farmers, his gender identity would have been considered “effete” and therefore not valued. There is a tension between a populist nostalgia for a “simpler” time in New Zealand which is at odds with the memory of many marginalised peoples who know that nostalgia is false, at least in their experience. In fact nostalgia is bound with power relations and used to “maintain, resist, construct and reconstruct identities in times of difficulty and change” (Matykiewicz, L. & McMurray, R. 2013 p.323).

This is not only the case for NZ. In a transnational gender identity study R. Connell discusses a similar pattern in colonised countries such as Australia, which led her work to the notion of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995) which, like the concept of heteronormativity is constantly in flux but underlines the hierarchy of masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005 p.831).

¹¹ In a separate study I interviewed an older gay man who had lived all his life in NZ and asked him about the fears he had in the 1950s-1980s period in relation to “coming out”. He remembered his father speaking with “disgust for queers” and in particular of Oscar Wilde’s trial at the end of the 19th century. The interviewee knew of Frank Sargeson’s arrest and he also cited the treatment of Alan Turing who was forced to take hormones after being accused of homosexual acts and eventually committed suicide in England as reasons to be frightened of declaring his sexuality (Personal Correspondence for *Queer Stories Our Fathers Never Told Us* project, Kelly, J. 2012).

Connell illustrates how, as Phillips also shows in this context, physical performance is used to ascribe gender to bodies (Connell, 1995 p.50).¹² Connell goes further than Phillips in that she illustrates the synergies between the notion of hegemonic masculinities, heteronormativity and queer theory. She argues that queer theory is a useful development in relation to hegemonic masculinities, as it “celebrates the symbolic disruptions of gender categories” (Connell, 1995 p.59) and in turn homosexuality itself is a disruption of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995 p.58). When young men and women in NZ were not able to express their non-heteronormative sexuality, they often silently sought representations of themselves in popular culture, to find their identity through others who may share their desires. A popular culture vehicle for doing so was the watching of films. This has been identified in queer theory as one of the ways in which young people sought to find an expression of difference. For example, in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s text, *Tendencies* (Sedgwick, 1993), she includes a consideration of gay youth alienation survived through identifying cultural objects which have some hint of homosexuality about them. “I think that for many of us in childhood the ability to attach intently to a few cultural objects...whose meaning seemed mysterious, excessive or oblique in relation to the codes most readily available to us, became a prime resource of survival” (Sedgwick, 1993 p.3). Sedgwick’s work in cultural studies has been fundamental in re-reading key texts as queer works, or at least, works which could be identified as having queer elements which were anchors for non-normative readers/viewers who did not identify with heterosexuality. Her *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990) is fundamental to an understanding of the elaborate codes through which people understood themselves and the cultural world around them at a particular moment in history .

Author and film maker Peter Wells supported Sedgwick’s notion of the cultural objects which create anchors for survival in relation to his and Jonathan Dennis’ experience of attending the movies as children and young men when he commented that “Cinema allows a kind of ambidextrous sexual reality” (Personal correspondence P.Wells, 30/06/2009). This “ambidextrous sexual reality” is something akin to hybridity and queerness, an in between space of otherness, an interstitial perspective or marginalised position from which the possibility of

¹² Connell acknowledges the influence of Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble* (1990).

desiring and engaging imaginatively is possible beyond heteronormative assumptions.¹³ Cinema was Dennis and Wells' delight and escape, and eventually their working lives would allow them to create and support narratives which explored non heteronormative identities in a more open manner as times changed, as censorship laws loosened and more diverse sexualities were able to be represented on screen.

In his work and personal life, Jonathan Dennis like other people who did not identify as heterosexual, appeared to construct his own cultural codes in his public and private lives and develop his own "schema of relations" (Foucault in discussion with Barbedette, 1982 pp.38, 39). Most of this was expressed silently – at least in his younger years. As he became an adult, aesthetically speaking, Dennis began to wear bright clothing and was described in terms of his dress and manner as "blatant rather than latent" (Personal correspondence, P.Wells op.cit.). He used elements of kitsch as well as bright colours and unusual clothing combinations incorporating materials from the South Pacific. For example, he referenced non- "kiwi bloke" cultures by often wearing items which in his time were unusual, such as colourful Italian scarves, while carrying kete (Māori woven bags). He also wore unusual spectacles in bright colours including turquoise, and some of these even glowed in the dark of the cinema (Personal correspondence S.Bartel 03/12/09; S.Dennis 06/02/09; M.Leonard 01/04/10).

Dennis' choice of clothing was a non-verbal signifier of "otherness" which may seem inconsequential, but at that time men in NZ were not encouraged to "stand out" from the crowd (Phillips, 1987 1st ed.). Every interviewee for this study commented on the effect of Dennis' sartorial style. Fellow cinéaste Professor Emeritus of Film Studies Roger Horrocks suggested Dennis had a camp aesthetic, if the meaning of "camp" is that of Susan Sontag's *Notes on Camp* (Personal correspondence, R.Horrocks 25/10/11). Foucauldian scholar David Halperin's definition of camp is similar to Sontag's and suggests something akin to Dennis' approach to his appearance as it was described by interviewees and observed in photographic evidence. Dennis was camp in the sense of "parody, exaggeration, amplification, theatricalization, and literalization of normally

¹³ Cinephilia is an entire body of work which could be used to analyse Dennis' life and work. However I would argue that Dennis' passion for film also crossed into an engagement with all forms of art: painting, writing and crafts, and therefore "cinephilia" would be limiting if it was the only lens used to consider Dennis' practice.

tacit codes of conduct” (Halperin, 1995 p.29). Dennis played with codes of masculinity using clothes as performance and declaration of self.

These tacit codes, these silent signals of difference, these unsaid devices for asserting ones’ agency in the world seem to have been important for Dennis. They were unspoken strategies by which he performed his sense of self in the wider world of life and work. They were the silences in the discourse, disrupting the “kiwi bloke” stereotype, creating a signal of difference. Dennis’ ability to live in Berlant’s “counterconventional” fold within the normative world is one of the in between spaces, the unspoken interstitial moments where a new or different perspective was possible for him. Interviewees certainly felt this to be true and some explicitly referred to Dennis’ approach as “queer” (Personal correspondence, C. O’Leary 10/12/09).

David Halperin’s conception of camp and his work in general is part of what he refers to as “queer studies”, which for him emerged from the activist movement in the United States. The word *queer* is an attempt to consider a non-heteronormative sexuality without being reduced to essentialism through identity politics or binaries. In the sense that the word *queer* avoids an essentialist view, queer theory is a poststructuralist term denoting the provisional and contingent nature of identity (Jagose, 1996 p.7). It seeks to assert the potential for new and different relational possibilities (Halperin cited in Howe, 2004 p.35). However, unlike other subjects who are often marginalised, Dennis as a Pākehā from a middle class family always had the option to not reveal his “otherness”. Marginalised peoples do not often have this luxury. In NZ, the option of blending into the hegemonic majority (or “passing”) is generally only available to Pākehā. This leads to tension, even if Pākehā are sympathetic to the sensitivities of multiple perspectives. Indeed, it is the space between the essentialist and non-essentialist nature of identity politics and queer theory which creates the most difficulty, but is the most productive position from which to analyse Dennis and the NZFA in the geographical location of the South Pacific. “Postcolonial” and certainly the “postcolonial queer” are contested concepts which this thesis does not seek to resolve. However, being aware of the discourse is helpful in examining the life of a gay man who engaged with indigenous peoples. He demonstrated a strong identification with those who were marginalised

in some way by a society which viewed the heterosexual Pākehā male as the mainstream norm in his lifetime.

Judith Binney suggests that any historian engaging with “a society that evolved from a divided past [which] attempts to become bicultural in its later reconstruction...must also become consciously ‘bihistorical’” in order to accept “alternative cultural codes” (Binney, 2009 p.xiii). Although Binney’s work refers to the state (governmental) perspective on the “bicultural” in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi, she, like the poststructuralist and postcolonial thinkers, advocates for a multiplicity of perspectives. The current moment in NZ is perhaps best described as a time of “cultural colonialism” which acknowledges ongoing psychological, educational and sociological assumptions regarding who “we” are as a “nation”.¹⁴ Stephen Turner suggests there is a “settler culture” of Pākehā in NZ who generally control state decisions and dominate normative values without explicitly acknowledging their role (S. Turner, 1999) just as Halperin argues the “tacit codes” of masculinity which camp resists are unspoken (Howe, 2004).

There are challenges in using European theory when speaking of indigenous experience, and indeed this thesis does not try to identify with or explain indigenous perspectives. Yet the balance is a fine one. An alternative to postcoloniality is the discourse of decolonisation which has become common in NZ in recent times. For example, Jo Smith and Sue Abel argue that Māori television is a tool of decolonisation for both Māori and Pākehā (J. Smith & Abel, 2008). Linda Tuhiwai Smith used Foucault in her seminal text, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999/2012) in order to critique Western discourse in relation to indigeneity. Māori activists and scholars since the 1970s have campaigned vigorously to ensure an indigenous voice is heard in NZ, quite literally in the case of the legal status of the Māori language (Ratima, 2008). This has led to a peculiar situation where the term “bicultural”, referred to by Binney and celebrated in the 1980s as a partnership model between the two peoples of the Treaty of Waitangi, has become a theoretically and politically tired proposition. Consequently

¹⁴ Many artistic and curatorial projects have challenged the assumed inclusivity of the term “we” in recent years. For example a 2012 exhibition of art at Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts at Pakuranga was entitled “What do you mean, *we*?” It was an example of a curated exhibition which sought to “examine prejudice in its various forms” (Publicity Poster, 3 March – 6 May 2012). The original question “What do you mean, we white man?” was spoken by Tonto, North American “Indian” (indigenous american) sidekick to the white cowboy *The Lone Ranger* in response to the cowboy’s statement “we’re surrounded by Indians” in the long running US book, radio, television and film series.

postcolonial works are sometimes useful but do not necessarily define the historical specificity and cultural context of NZ today (O'Sullivan, 2007).

Kaupapa Māori

A geographically specific indigenous response to biculturalism, postcolonial and decolonisation debates is kaupapa Māori theory/philosophy. This is a model generated by indigenous peoples with the explicit purpose of situating ones' own practice and identity in relation to the research/practice undertaken. It attempts to make transparent the issues that can arise where researchers and researched have different cultural backgrounds, acknowledging differences of perspective which may be otherwise unconsciously affecting the dynamic of the interview process (Powick, 2003). Kaupapa Māori practice, like critical social theory and various methodologies related to qualitative data collection, recognises power dynamics and attempts to ensure the interviewee feels they have agency in the research process. Kaupapa Māori principles emerge from the work of a number of Māori in both the academic and regional communities and are dynamic. Below are the set of principles recorded by Linda Tuhiwai Smith who cites Ngahuia Te Awekotuku as her source:

- Aroha ki te tāngata – respect for people
- Kanohi kitea – the seen face, that is, present yourself to people face to face
- Titiro, whakarongo...korero – look, listen, then speak
- Manāki ki te tāngata – share and host people, be generous
- Kia tupato – be cautious
- Kaua e takahia te mana o te tāngata – do not trample over the mana of the people
- Kaua e mahaki – don't flaunt your knowledge

(Te Awekotuku in Tuhiwai Smith, 1999/2012 p.124).

Kaupapa Māori research methodology is a “nascent” method and methodology (Ratima, 2008). It seeks to address some of the indigenous concerns about research in the past which tended to be *done to* rather than *with* indigenous peoples. By following Te Awekotuku's instructions, the

researcher is forced to become personally engaged with interviewees, to reveal and examine ones' agenda, and to be reciprocal and humble. It is an expectation of ongoing self reflexivity.

There are differing viewpoints on the nature of kaupapa Māori theory itself. For example, Kahurangi Waititi states that kaupapa Māori research can be “described as research by Māori, for Māori and with Māori” (Waititi, 2008) whereas Matiu Ratima asserts (particularly as it came out of the kohanga reo/language nest movement) that “Kaupapa Māori is open to anyone...Pākehā children and their families are welcome...as long as they are willing to respect the culture and language of Māori people” (Ratima, 2008). Walker, Eketone and Gibbs argue – “Lessons from kaupapa Maori research can be applied to research more generally” (S. Walker et al., Routledge/2006 p.343) but there is significant ongoing debate regarding whether the leader of a kaupapa Māori project must be Māori or not (Walker, 2006 op.cit. p.335). As this debate is ongoing, it seems appropriate to use not only a NZ specific philosophy, but also investigate a non-Pākehā and non-Māori position to counteract the potential bias inherent in the study. It is an attempt to take a transnational view which may or may not be successful. By attempting to do so the negotiation between coloniser and colonised is acknowledged. However there is a risk of simply falling back on a continental Eurocentric philosophy. Therefore Pierre Bourdieu's theories of various forms of capital competing within an institution is offered not as the encapsulating philosophy of this thesis, but simply a further lens through which to consider the NZFA, particularly in relation to power.

The said and the unsaid in the archive

Pierre Bourdieu's approach to forms of capital (cultural, social and economic) is an outsiders' perspective from which to consider issues between Māori and Pākehā in relation to the archive.¹⁵ Bourdieu argues from a sociological perspective that aesthetic taste, attitudes and understanding are dictated by upbringing and education. He describes these as “cultural capital” (P. Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Furthermore, within any institution, an individual member's upbringing, belief systems and background will dictate their position in relation to power.

¹⁵ Conal McCarthy has recently used Bourdieu to consider museum practice in NZ (McCarthy, 2013).

The notion of “cultural capital” is not immediately intelligible in the New Zealand setting however, since this concept is geopolitically situated in France and assumes particular aesthetic responses and an understanding of “high” and “low” culture based on the individual’s habitus (dispositions inculcated by family, class, and daily interactions) which are markedly different from those in NZ where “class” is not often utilised as a factor in sociological studies nor everyday discourse. Yet Bourdieu asserts, that though his work is an “ethnography of France” it can be translated to other geographical and cultural landscapes because there are “universal propositions” in his methods (Bourdieu 1984).

His concept “economic capital” is easier to transpose as it is simply the ability to command economic resources. The third major aspect “social capital” is perhaps the most familiar concept to some in NZ as it bears relation to *whakawhanaungatanga*, the building and making of connections and relationships (in particular Māori iwi relationships).¹⁶ Bourdieu defines social capital as calculated in relation to group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support and it is by definition difficult to measure (Pierre Bourdieu, 1986 p.6). Bourdieu’s methodology and philosophy has been used in South Africa, another “settler” country, to analyse shifting power relations within the institution of the university at the end of the apartheid era (Kloot, 2009).

Bourdieu arguably offers a “transnational” frame. This may be useful as historian Jacob Pollock suggests – “there is considerable value in seeking historiographical models that upset the traditional notion of the nation, particularly in a colonial place” (Pollock, 2005 p.129). New Zealand based scholar Simon Sigley notes Bourdieu's work in relation “to cultural hierarchies and hegemony in France has been particularly influential in recent academic discussions of culture” (Sigley, 2003 p.30). However, he considers the limitations of this analysis are the “tendency to concentrate on social (or sociological) categories, and thus runs the risk of becoming a one-dimensional analysis” (Sigley 2003 p.31). In order to address this, the work of Bourdieu is offered

¹⁶ For an analysis of *whakawhanaungatanga* and related concepts see Russell Bishop (1996).

in this study in conjunction with other theorists so that matters beyond the social are considered. Paul Tapsell's work in particular is used to illustrate Bourdieu's theory in relation to the materials of the archive or museum. The views and writings of scholars from NZ are consciously incorporated into all analysis to ensure the "multiplicity of perspectives" that are required to allow for the (as Binney calls it) "bihistorical" mode where alternative cultural codes, voices and views offer strength in their intersection.

Bourdieu's interpretation of the "aesthetic disposition" is particularly useful as an insight into European relationships to culture and cultural production during a particular period. Admittedly, Bourdieu did not embrace film itself as a fully realised art form, stating that cinema, jazz or song are the "most legitimate of the arts still in the process of legitimation" (Bourdieu 1984 p.16). However, his description of the "cultivated man" for whom cinema attendance, where the "knowledge of directors is much more closely linked to cultural capital than is mere cinema-going" (Bourdieu 1984 pp.26, 27) is apt in relation to Dennis' interest in films. Where Bourdieu's work may not be applicable is in his perceived emphasis on roles being fixed and agency being unavailable to the "actors in the field" (Kloot, 2009). The fixed categorising of agents may not allow for changing identity in the bionarrative and shifting power relations; not just between players in the game (or workers in the institution) but within the self which is shifting and changing, when categories of "the subject" are deemed suspicious and always in flux (Berlant & Prosser, 2011). This will be further analysed in the body of the thesis.

Philosophy of the archive

Hodder has suggested that the very fact of re-engaging with materials from the archive and working through issues of decontextualisation and repatriation to indigenous peoples may be valuable in working through identity formation for those groups. "The reburial of American Indian and Australian aboriginal remains is an issue that has expressed, but perhaps also helped to construct, a new sense of indigenous rights in North America and Australia" (Hodder, 1995 p.398). There have been a number of examples of repatriation of indigenous materials held in overseas archives to iwi within NZ over the last thirty years and even a feature film entitled *Te*

Rua about one iwi's journey to retrieve a taonga from a German museum (Prod. O'Shea, J. Dir. Barclay, B. 1991). As Hodder describes, archival objects and the institutions in which they are housed are a space of recontestation which continues to challenge the archivist and audience alike. It is a space from which to challenge memory but also forgetting. What has conveniently been forgotten through decontextualisation in a nation's history in order to ease the conscience of the hegemony? From this vital process of recontestation, a new biography of the nation may perhaps be created and negotiated.

The "archive" is often referred to in contemporary writing as both a literal repository and a philosophical proposition. Charles Merewether defines it thus – [The archive] "constitutes a repository or ordered system of documents and records, both verbal and visual, that is the foundation from which history is written" (Merewether, 2006 p.10). Paula Amad asserts that a *film* archive is different in its practice from other forms of archiving because the medium it seeks to preserve is such that the audience or reader were never intended to touch it. The "illusion of movement depended upon what the eye could not see, and whose lifelike resurrection of ghosts so frequently recalled death, films' presence has always been accompanied by absence" (Amad, 2010 p.2). In fact she says, "the archive has become a figure for the obfuscation of history writing" (Amad, 2010 p.18).

The absence, the silence, the illusion of movement, the "resurrection of ghosts" inhabiting the film archive suggests it is a dubious place from which to present any form of national identity or biography of the nation. Călin Dan and Josif Kiraly (2010) suggest that any archives and their records can be neglected or suppressed in order to avoid considering some truth about the self (Kiraly, 2010). This idea is important to consider in any society where one culture has colonised another. The archive, and according to Amad the film archive in particular, is perhaps as much about absence and silence as it is about the presence of the materials it houses.

The archive as literal repository for materials has thus far barely been mentioned and yet it is perhaps the single most important organising principle for the thesis. As previously noted it is both a physical space in which materials are housed and accessed and a conceptual construction for considering issues of power, the subject, identity and narrative. Many theorists offer useful

insights into the archive as both metaphor and literal repository of knowledge. Jacques Derrida offers the concepts of guardianship and (via Sigmund Freud) the death drive of the archive through his text *Archive Fever* (Derrida, 1996). Archivists, he argued, once considered neutral guardians are now widely acknowledged as powerful gatekeepers of archival materials, able to impose (consciously or not) their epistemological framework on the materials they keep. They control the telling of the story:

The archons are first of all the document's guardians. They do not only ensure the physical security of what is deposited...They are also accorded the hermeneutic right and competence. They have the power to interpret the archives (Derrida, 1996 p.2).

It is well known that since the publication of Foucault's *Madness and Civilisation* Foucault and Derrida have often disagreed (Boyne, 1990 p.1). Yet, like Barthes and Foucault in relation to the subject, both offer useful insights. One of the main points on which the two differ is in their understanding of power. For Foucault power was everywhere and productive, whereas for Derrida, the "guardians" of the archive held the power to interpret their contents. Yet Derrida does not simply see the archive as a place of power and control but also as a possible platform for future possibilities and a space which "...can receive the unexpected, the unprogrammable, the unpredictable, the un-presentable and the un-representable. An opening of the unknown is thus produced, which no archival knowledge prepares us to receive" (Kujundzic, 2004 p.168). Kujundzic notes traces of Derrida's work in Agamben's testimony of the holocaust archive which is "...death deprived of its human possibility" (Kujundzic, 2004, p.183).

For Foucault the concept of the archive stands not for a library of things but "the form of organisation of the parts of a discourse (it's statements)..." (McHoul & Grace, 1993 p.30). Because Foucault did not see power as intrinsically negative he argued –

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms; it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power

produces; it produces reality, it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth (Foucault, 1977 p.194).

This lies in contrast to Derrida who argues “There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory” (Derrida, 1996 p 4). As Derrida sees it, the archivist has the power to present in a specific manner, to contextualise, to retell (or mistell or not tell) a story connected with an archival object. He argues that the archive is as much about forgetting and destroying as it is about remembering and preserving (Amad, 2010 p.121). With reference to Freud, the “mal d’archive” for Derrida always returns “to the authentic and singular origin” in the Western archive model (Derrida, 1996 p.85).

Foucault however understands the archive as a system of “discursive practices, systems that establish statements as events” (Foucault quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.28). It is not “the sum of all the texts that a culture has kept upon its person as documents attesting to its own past, or as evidence of a continuing identity; nor do I mean the institutions, which, in a given society, make it possible to record and preserve those discourses that one wishes to remember and keep in circulation.” The “archive” for Foucault is not the archive as physical repository (Foucault quoted in Merewether, 2006 *ibid.*). Instead, “The archive is first the law of what can be said” (Foucault quoted in Merewether, 2006 *ibid.*) It determines what is enunciable, it groups statements together, it is the archive which regulates the “statement-event” even as far as it “defines at the outset the system of its enunciability” (Foucault quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.29).

Foucault and Derrida perhaps have more in common than one would at first believe when Derrida says that the death drive of the archive renders it *stumm* (mute), always operating in silence – “it never leaves any archives of its own. It destroys in advance its own archive...the archive takes place at the place of originary and structural breakdown of the said memory” (Derrida quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.78). Foucault does not describe the archive in such negative terms, but they agree that it is a place which does not in any simple sense preserve records. The archive in both

Foucault and Derrida's perception is much more complicated and certainly for both in various ways it regulates knowledge and power.

Significantly, Foucault does not think that silence leaves no trace. For him, silence is the archive beyond enunciation – “There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses” (Foucault, 1976 p.27). Silence still carries meaning – it is not *stumm* but something else. Foucault recognises that in the naming of things there is risk. The confessional is an example of the naming of behaviours which can then be judged and regulated as sin. Foucault suggests that in *not naming*, silence may in some regards become Berlant's “fold within the normative world” where one may be oneself without censure – “the agency of domination does not reside in the one who speaks (for it is he who is constrained), but in the one who listens and says nothing; not in the one who knows and answers, but in the one who questions and is not supposed to know” (Foucault, 1976 op.cit.). Silence may be a way to protect oneself from exploitation, from misinterpretation, from untruth. In this regard, silence is productive and powerful, not *stumm* or mute and the archive beyond enunciability therefore becomes a place of possibility.

Paula Amad has noted that neither Derrida nor Foucault, the great philosophers of the archive directly addressed *film* archives themselves: “As much as Foucault and Derrida deconstructed the concept of the archive, for the most part their work neglected the material example responsible for unwittingly reinventing that concept in the early twentieth century, the *film archive*” (Amad, 2010 p.21 Amad's emphasis). Film archiving is a subset of archiving practice, and often takes as a model the practices of other institutions which house different media (such as paper manuscripts). And yet, as Amad argues, the film medium is quintessentially different to the material found in other archives, thus she argues the archive she analyses is a “counterarchive” (Amad, 2010).¹⁷

¹⁷ In the late 1970s Dennis worked with ARANZ, the national archiving association as a partner to develop the policy which would influence the NZFA. Later the NZFA joined FIAF, the international film archiving association which was regarded as a better fit for film archive specific practice and discussion.

The practice of the archive

The cultural practice of archiving physical materials in dedicated institutions emerges from European museums and libraries and is adapted by film archives, which over time have developed their own styles most appropriate to the media which they house. In examining the literature on the physical archive it becomes quickly apparent that at times the pragmatic everyday aspects of archiving can seem very far removed from the more philosophical discussion above, and that archivists may be under-resourced and overworked to the point where they take for granted the perspectives which ingrain their practice. In Bourdieu's terminology this is the influence of habitus, doxa and so on. The divide between the everyday work and the philosophical and academic concerns of the archive can cause tensions and challenges understood in terms of the debate "Preservation Versus Presentation" or "Archiving Versus Curatorship" (Cherchi Usai, Francis, Horwath, & Loebenstein, 2008). This tension stems from dual questions which can be interpreted as philosophical or pragmatic – "What is an archive?" and, "What is its function?"

It is the work of the archivist to ensure the safety of the objects they preserve. In the traditional Western, North American (settler) or Continental European context, "safety" is defined as the maintenance of the integrity of the physical object. But the archivist generally emerges from the majority culture of their community and will be imbued with its values. Therefore even what is deemed "safe" (for the objects as well as the people who care/have guardianship over them) will depend on their personal, cultural and philosophical understandings (Maere, 2004). From an indigenous perspective, preservation of the integrity of an object would include the cultural and spiritual safety of both the physical object and the guardians of that object who may be the descendants of those in the archival image or descended from those who made an object or used it. These differing views of the concept of "safety" can create a cultural clash for those caring for archival materials (Cherchi Usai, 2000; Mita, 1992). Cultural and spiritual perspectives regarding archiving practice question the assumptions of the archivist and the source of their mandate to care for the material objects of a community (Barclay, 2005).

The day to day processes and practices of the archivist from the majority culture are driven by guidelines encapsulated in publications such as *Keeping Archives* (Ellis, 1993) or *Managing Records; a handbook of principles and practice* (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003) in which procedures regarding management of different formats, systems, and organisational structures are discussed. However, the philosophical, cultural and spiritual concerns of archive users and the communities who have gifted objects to the archive are rarely mentioned in these textbooks. Terry Cook describes the risk of this approach from the perspective of the archivist – “We are deciding what is remembered and what is forgotten, who in society is visible and who remains invisible, who has a voice and who does not” (Cook, 1999). It is argued by some that in colonial societies, archives are by-products of power relationships where the colonists tend to be keepers of the public memory through archives and museums (Jimerson, 2010). This argument is similar to Derrida’s regarding the power of the archons. Through their practice, archivists are able to interpret the archives, frame (curate) archival materials and present the story of the nation as they understand it through the objects within the collection. This story is a version of a biography of a nation, if the archive’s purpose is to reflect the culture and history of the nation, or national identity. This responsibility to present a cohesive view of the nation is enormous and under-theorised by archivists themselves (McCarthy, 2011). The NZFA was developed out of the legislation of the New Zealand Film Commission which was understood to be part of a strategy to “forge a national identity” in the late 1970s (Waller, 2008) and therefore was required to engage with these concerns, particularly in relation to the concept of biculturalism.

Biculturalism in the archive

Issues regarding power and control of the national story are played out in museums and archives but also universities and other institutions of learning. Pākehā scholar Danny Butt for example suggests that in NZ there is a vast gulf between Māori and Pākehā ways of undertaking research and that this is a “meta-truth” to be taken into account, particularly in relation to discourses of biculturalism. He says “there is a crisis in our own subjectivity that must be staged within our own practices” (Butt, 2005). Pākehā scholar Conal McCarthy uses both Butt’s concept of this crisis as well as Pierre Bourdieu in his research work on museums and Māori. McCarthy’s work is helpful

in considering the discourse of biculturalism in the time Jonathan Dennis worked with archival materials. Unfortunately, McCarthy's analysis (like Derrida and Foucault before him) does not include the work of any moving image archives specifically beyond a cursory nod to Dennis' contribution (McCarthy, 2011). Barry Barclay does however, and as a writer and a film maker offers a view from an indigenous perspective working in the same era as Dennis. Barclay worked with the NZFA during and after the time Dennis was Director and considered the need for indigenous peoples to take control of the image in regards to production, presentation and preservation in order to tell an alternate story (Barclay, 2003).¹⁸ Barclay's work offers a response to Butt's "crisis in our own subjectivity". Barclay's texts, written and audiovisual, question the assumptions of the film archive in the wider sense of the possibilities of the enunciable subject. For example Barclay turned the tables on the normative subject as early as the film *Autumn Fires* (1977) in which Pākehā were studied as a curious subject presented in ethnographic terms (Prod. Keating., Dir. Tuckett, 2009).

Barclay later made a documentary called *The Neglected Miracle* (1985) which addressed a topic considered then "obscure"; plant genetics and the rights of indigenous peoples in relation to them (Barclay in Dennis & Bieringa, 1992/1996 p.117). Although it was a transnational film he took a "marae approach" to the topic which was highly unusual at the time. Barclay challenged assumptions of subjectivity and objectivity by his film making process which he likened to a traditional Māori hui (meeting often held on a marae), where "there is opportunity for all to speak... Mana is recognized, of course, but over the days of a hui, the little person, the 'nobody', is given room too...It matters little whether you happen to be a city lawyer or a breaker of horses. All have a voice" (Barclay, 1996 p.119).

Barclay's work questions the discourse of the subject, the archive, the Pākehā and the Māori. He asks "who has the right to speak?" and responds that Māori can and must speak for themselves (following a kaupapa Māori mode). By changing the practice of film making itself, a new kind of discourse was created which in turn created the possibility for further and new works and ways

¹⁸ Barclay posited the "camera on the shore" to encapsulate the notion of a "fourth cinema" — film making from an indigenous perspective. What if, he asked, Māori had a camera, filming events as colonisers first arrived in NZ? (*Camera on the Shore*, Prod. Keating, A., Dir. Tuckett, 2009).

of being and doing. When his film on genetic engineering was screened, he described how some audience members hissed “communist” and left the theatre. These audience members were “eminent men, famous amongst peers...from the developed world...” (Barclay quoted in Dennis & Bieringa, 1992/1996 p.118). These “eminent men” tried to silence Barclay’s discourse, which offered an alternate view from the perspective of indigenous peoples who he felt needed to have “power over the plants you use for food, for dyes, for fibre, for medicines and so on [in order] to have the dignity of sovereignty” (Barclay, 1992/1996 *ibid*).

Barclay was creating a new and different discourse which was not considered valid for those “first world” audience members. He was speaking as an indigenous film maker trying to create a new conversation amongst “third world” peoples who were usually the “nobody” without a voice, the “breaker of horses”. Their voices were just as important to the discursive practice of the film as the views of the “city lawyer”. Barclay was responding to the question “who are *we*”? Who is represented or excluded by the documentaries, films, and materials of the archive? Barclay’s work, like that of Lauren Berlant, asked who was considered a valid subject for public discourse – who was allowed to “have a life?” He insisted (in different terminology to Berlant) that Māori people needed to be present on screen and in the production and preservation process in order for their stories to be represented appropriately.

Barclay and the other prominent Māori film maker of the period in which Dennis was alive, Merata Mita, offered through their films and writings an alternate perspective and also a way of being which had not previously been articulated by those in a position to decide what is and is not enunciable. Barclay and Mita acknowledged Butt’s “crisis in our own subjectivity” and suggested possible ways of enacting that crisis within their own practice. They worked both within NZ and also outside the nation’s boundaries. They took a transnational view and engaged with indigenous peoples across the world (Barclay, 1990; Mita, 1992). Barclay and Mita both worked with and challenged NZFA practice over the course of their careers. Their practice (and that of many others) which attempted to regain control of the process of making and doing has become known as “kaupapa Māori” over time, but in the 1980s period when Jonathan Dennis

was still at the NZFA it was much more common to use the term “biculturalism”. Kaupapa Māori developed in response to a feeling that biculturalism had failed as a philosophy and a practice (McCarthy, 2011). The feeling that biculturalism had failed was evident through the data collection phase of this thesis, as stories and evidence emerged of the sometimes ferocious disagreements between Māori and Pākehā, in relation to film archiving and calls for social justice. These disagreements at times led to new and productive pathways, and sometimes led to silence. However, just as Foucault argued that power is more than just a tool of the oppressor but can also be productive, he also argued that silence too is more than simply *stumm* – it is more than just a muteness or a shutting down. This was evident in the discourse related to Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA where silence sometimes led to new ways of approaching film archiving and curation.

The Silence in the telling of the story

Silence has become an unexpected theme of this thesis. There emerged a plethora of silences associated with the archive as a philosophical concept and in relation to the New Zealand Film Archive itself. For example, the silencing of the indigenous person (Barry Barclay at his screening where the audience walked out), the silence which is the absence of the subject, “the death of the author” in Barthes’ text, or the “dead man in the game” in Foucault (Foucault, 1969 p.2). As we have seen, Derrida also has his own insight into the silence of the archive which he believed was a destruction (the death drive) of the archive – “It will always have been archive-destroying, by silent vocation” (Derrida quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.78).

Susan Sontag has written of the many silences in Western culture including John Cage’s 4’33” or Duchamp, Beckett or Grotowski’s admonitions for silence where “notions of silence, emptiness, reduction, sketch out new prescriptions for looking, hearing...” (Sontag, 1969 Section VI).¹⁹

As Sontag conceptualizes it, like Foucault’s view of power and the archive, silences are not necessarily negative – for example Halperin’s demonstration of the word “camp”, as the use of tacit codes to resist heteronormativity. A silence can be necessary in order to allow someone else

¹⁹ During his time in the *Amamus* theatre company Dennis was an advocate of Jerzy Grotowski’s work at the Theatre Laboratory in Poland (Personal correspondence, D.Young 03/08/11).

to speak or to think differently – silence allows someone else to have a voice. For example, the pause within the oral history interview which is often suggestive of so much which is left unspoken (Holroyd, 2010). This is also manifested in the silence of Māori interviewees reluctant to speak to a Pākehā researcher they do not know and have no connection to (Personal correspondence, B. Harris 24/05/09), and the silence within the interview itself where the interviewee chooses not to share certain information.

In an example of the power of silence in a recent New Zealand documentary film *Gardening with Soul*, the interviewee Sister Loyola turned to her interviewer positioned off camera and addressed her directly to explain that although she appreciated the interviewer's need to analyse ideas and situations, some experiences were simply "beyond words" (Prod. Pope, V., Dir. J. Feast, 2013). This is an example of a rupturing of the rules of the documentary text which generally focuses the camera's attention upon the subject, leaving the interviewer as a disembodied and abstract non-subject. It is an example of a subject speaking back to assert that the text is unable to capture all possible experiences. The interviewee's point is to articulate the fact that not everything is able to be analysed, not everything is enunciable, as Foucault has also suggested. The fact that the filmmaker chose to include this sequence in the film suggests her understanding of its significance even as it registers a criticism of her desire for enunciability, explanation and explication. Through including in the edited film the refusal of the interviewee to articulate something, Feast has made something productive of the silence.

Berlant's caution that the subject as the central organising figure possibly encouraging a false sense of community and connection between audience and author, is echoed here. Despite all the interviews gathered, the material analysed, the audio listened to and the images watched, everything is not articulable and some things are (perhaps) beyond biography, some things are beyond words. Silence is a valid response by the interviewee – and that silence will be interpreted in multiple ways by the reader/audience, supporting Barthes' position that the reader has become more important than the author of the text/work. Foucault counters that silence is a form of resistance and therefore an example of the productive nature of power – without an

authority which attempts to silence the subject, the subject would have no reason to find a way to resist through their silence. As Foucault has it – “There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses” (Foucault, 1976 p.27).

Foucauldian scholar Giorgio Agamben moves beyond a literal examination of the biographical archive towards a consideration of the “said and the unsaid” or the discursive context. He argues that the archive does not contain simple testimony to be mined by future researchers but instead it reveals much more through its own discourse, its context and creation (Agamben, 1989 p.145). Agamben suggested, in the narratives of victims of the Holocaust, that there is a disgrace in the infamy which led some people’s lives to be archived which “bears witness to life beyond all biography” (Agamben, 1989 p.143). In chorus with Berlant who cautions against the sensational and the “sentimental contract”, Agamben suggests that a certain type of oral history – a method through which to gather the stories of a subject — is “pathos-laden”. However, he suggests, something more appropriate may emerge from an exploration of the discursive formation of the archive itself – “the luminous trail of a different history” (Agamben, 1989 *ibid*).

If, through using Foucault’s understanding of discourse (via Agamben), rather than an analysis of the subject *per se*, a “luminous trail of a different history” may result, then the approach to writing the biography requires a shift in thinking to a consideration of discourse within and without the archive. It also demands an examination of the discourse of biographical practice itself as a form of narrative construction and co-construction of histories of national identity.

Indigenous stories may also be illuminated by an examination of the “luminous...history” which left their voices relegated to the margins, misinterpreted or ignored by archivists from the settler culture. For Foucault, the said and the unsaid in the archive –

...shine, as it were, like stars, some that seem close to us shining brightly from afar off, while others that are in fact close to us are already growing pale. The archive is not that

which, despite its immediate escape, safeguards the event of the statement, and preserves, for future memories, its status as an escape; it is that which, at the very root of the statement-event and in that which embodies it, defines at the outset the system of its enunciability (Foucault quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.29).

Foucault's language and terminology in this passage embodies a central tenet of the thesis – silence (like Foucault's understanding of power) is not unproductive. Speaking or naming organises and regulates information and practices. Foucault argues that the archive is not a "safeguard" – it actually limits what can or cannot be spoken, the "system of its enunciability" at any given moment. What shines or is "already growing pale" is decided by the very event of the statement. Barclay provides an example when he makes the observation that as a practice (and as a generalisation), Māori lay great emphasis on the importance of listening as it is embodied in the discourse on the marae where everyone has an opportunity to speak, whereas Pākehā often speak more than they hear (Barclay, 1990 p.14). This suggests the "said and the unsaid" may differ, depending on cultural settings and (often) unspoken rules of behaviour. The "said and the unsaid" are, as Foucault insists, an intrinsic element of the archive and the enunciation of the subject.

John Cage created a piece of music consisting of silence, in order to highlight the "inescapable truth about perception" (Sontag 1969 section IV) that "there is no such thing as silence. Something is always happening that makes a sound", even if it is the sound of the heartbeat and the blood coursing through the head (Cage quoted in Sontag 1969 Section IV). Following the musical metaphor – "The silences are important...it's the spaces in between things that count. Listen to the gaps. They're music too" (Azzopardi, 2010 p.56).²⁰ Within the "gaps" and "spaces" is the tension between cultures, and also arguably the productive space of possibility between colonised and coloniser and the interviewer and interviewee.

²⁰ John Tebbutt cautions against a simplistic or romantic ideal of listening as comprehension and good citizenship citing Jane Belfrage's tracing of the trope of the "Great Australian Silence" (Tebbutt, 2009).

Archive as biography of the nation

Judith Butler also supports the productive nature of silence when she says – “The categories by which social life are ordered produce a certain incoherence or entire realms of unspeakability” (Butler, 2001 p.3). If this is the case, then how is an archive supposed to present a coherent narrative of the nation? The NZFA, like many other national repositories including the National Library, Te Papa o Tongarewa (National Museum) and the Alexander Turnbull Library have specific duties and responsibilities to collect the cultural heritage of “the nation”. The policy document for Te Papa states in part – “The unified collections of the Museum are managed as a total resource and drawn upon in new and varied ways to present insights into our national identity” (Te Papa Policy document 2013).²¹

By drawing materials from the collection for exhibition to “present insights into our national identity”, these institutions create a version of the biography of the nation. As truth itself “is never value-neutral and absolute but rather necessarily interpretive and perspectival” (Clare & Hamilton, 2003 p.105), the archive or indeed the biography is not a true representation of an objective history, but an imperfect, contingent representation of the nation’s past at a particular moment in time which is created by curators and interpreted by its audience. As the Te Papa Policy document states, it has a “narrative approach” to the collection (Te Papa Policy document 2013). This interpretation, the narrative, the “biography” may well be the most significant and telling aspect of the exhibition, revealing much more about the policy makers and museum workers than about the nation itself.

At the time the NZFA was being developed, the idea of promoting “national identity” was popular in many government departments (Sinclair, 1959/1991). A growing awareness of the need to redress in practical ways the Pākehā perception that their history was the only history of the nation was catalysed through various indigenous protest movements. In conjunction with protests by indigenous groups were calls by feminist and gay advocates to redress the balance of

²¹ The policy is drawn from the National Museums Act. Retrieved 18/11/13
<http://tepapa.govt.nz/ResearchAtTePapa/CollectionCareAndAccess/Pages/Te%20Papa%20Policy.aspx>

power. This was reflected in the context of filmmaking. Lawrence McDonald describes a period in New Zealand, later than the counter-culture movements of other Western countries, where “the Māori renaissance and the rise of feminism, fostered a period in which film makers tackled such topics as sexuality, childbirth, mental health, racial discrimination and biculturalism, existential meaning and national identity in innovative and provocative ways” (McDonald, 2011 p.156). During the 1980s, archives, museums and libraries were increasingly expected to reflect these sometimes violent and certainly passionate changes in social, political and cultural practices to support growing and developing perceptions of what it meant to be a “New Zealander”.²² If this is the case then the archive or museum expected to reflect insights into the nation is arguably a biography of the collective identity of New Zealanders.

Biography and the Foucauldian Visual Studies Paradigm

In reviewing Amad’s study of Albert Kahn’s *Archives de la Planète*, Jan Baetens refers to the “Foucauldian Visual Studies Paradigm” which permeates much of the study of images and archives (Baetens, 2011 p.366). Baetens claims that Michel Foucault is the most important theorist of the archive as his analysis exemplifies the power-knowledge paradigm, which has for many years provided the basis and background of all serious critical thinking in the field (Baetens, 2011 p.377). It is revealing that this review of a film archive is published in the journal *Biography* (Issue 342, Fall 2011). According to Amad, founder Albert Kahn envisioned an archive of the planet, a documentation of the early twentieth century through the use of (what was in his time) the new medium of film. Yet despite the review’s presence in a journal about biography, Amad’s reading of the archive is not intended to reveal the secrets of Kahn’s life. However, through the examination of the contents of the archive, illustrating his life’s work she demonstrates that the contents of the archive are a selective biography. In this case it is not just an archival biography of the nation but of “the world”, as seen by Kahn (Baetens, 2011 p.366). Baetens argues that

²² In a New Zealand government report on the use of the term “New Zealander” in the national census it was stated that “The development of national identity within a colonial context is intricately connected with the construction of social groups and with social relations between settlers,...(and)... the Native Other...” (Cormack & Robson, 2010 p.2). Cormack and Robson demonstrate how in the early days of colonisation “New Zealanders” were Māori as colonisers chose to define themselves as British. Later as Māori populations were reduced by disease, poverty and war “New Zealanders” became the new majority, the British. They argue the term “indicated those who had become the ‘normal’ or ‘usual’ inhabitants of the country.... This new national identity might have embraced some Māori symbols and markers, such as a few words or artistic motifs to distinguish it as unique, but it was primarily defined by descent from Britain, and to that extent was exclusionary of Māori” (Cormack & Robson, 2010 p.3).

Amad demonstrates how when a “Foucauldian...Paradigm” is used in examining the archive, the positivist perspective of the original picture taker is challenged, and a re-examination of the intentions of the photographers, archivists, curators and collectors themselves becomes possible. As Baeten notes, Foucault’s work has been used by many cultural theorists in relation to the image, particularly in the use of the panopticon and discussions of surveillance.²³ However, Amad believes that much has been lost in the discussion of Foucault’s ideas by various theorists. In particular, she is aggrieved that “Foucault’s warning to always question the self-evidence of the visible” seems to have been lost (Amad, 2010 p.264).²⁴

Foucault’s mode of problematisation can be illuminating in relation to how certain practices developed in film representation and preservation. For example, his assertion –“We have to know the historical conditions which motivate our conceptualization. We need a historical awareness of our present circumstance” (Foucault, 1982 p.778). This is helpful in considering the NZFA in all its aspects, because an archive emerges from a specific Western tradition of “encyclopaedic” control and analysis of knowledge in the mid nineteenth century (Amad, 2010 p.145). Foucault’s work in *The Order of Things* (1966 French ed.) and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972 English trans.) sought to “expose the arbitrariness of classificatory arrangements of knowledge” (Amad, 2010 p.18). He asks, “what is the ground on which we are able to establish the validity of this classification with complete certainty?” (Foucault, 1966/2002 ed. p.xxi). Through these works, Foucault established the links implicitly between the archive and power, challenging the belief that “the unfathomable endlessness of the world might be grasped through modes of ordering and classifying” (Foucault, 1972 p.123). In Foucault’s argument, it was more important to understand *why* things are classified in a particular way than *what* is being classified, in the same way he was more interested in *how* and *why* at a particular moment the “death of the author” argument arose, rather than asking if Barthes was correct or not.

²³“The archive without walls posed by Foucault’s *The Archaeology of Knowledge* thus underwent a renovation in the phenomenal wake of Said’s *Orientalism*, especially in the field of visual, and more specifically, photographic studies. What emerged (much to the surprise of Foucault and Said) was the more intractable and generalisable hybrid of what we might call the panoptic archive, an archive walled in by the oppressive architecture of the all-seeing, all-knowing, and invisible eye of the panopticon” (Amad, 2010 p.263).

²⁴ Amad also refers to the literal nature of the medium of film itself – even as it is projected it is destroyed, and therefore through its presentation it disappears. This idea is pursued by others including Paolo Cherchi Usai (Cherchi Usai, 2001).

The archive as both a physical institution and as a philosophical concept, contains its own silence. Although they appear to be the repositories of “authentic truth” and evidence of past activity, in the same way a biography can be assumed to provide evidence of a life, the archive (as concept) and the Archive (as physical repository of materials) are not simple manifestations. Materials for a biographical study reside in the physical archive, as well as in the memory of those who knew the subject. The concept of “memory” itself is attached in the popular imagination to “the archive” as an institution which is often assumed to be an unproblematic source of authentic truth in relation to the past and in turn allows for the idea that an archive or museum represents the “national identity”. Memory itself is a discursive formation through which to consider the archive (Byatt & Harvey Wood, 2009). “Memory” is indeed an important concept to the archive, but actually “memories” do not exist in the archive, and viewing objects deposited in it does not engender memory in an audience where no prior experience of a depicted event or object. The archive as described in a manual of archiving is paralleled in the philosophical discourse with the interpretation of the archive as one of the social institutions in which power is discursive and norms are internalised (Corber & Valocchi, 2003 p.10). There are “silences in the telling of the story” of the archive as well as the multiple silences within the materials of the archive where memory is absent.

Where memory is considered within the thesis lies in relation to the memories gathered through oral history interviews presented as “data”. These interviews are understood as stories or narratives attached to a person and may or may not be strictly speaking “the truth”.²⁵ Collected together, compared, contrasted, and layered “like complex harmonies” (Richard Holmes quoted in Byatt & Harvey Wood, 2009 p.102), something emerges which is not intended to be an authentic reproduction of the subject. Nevertheless, in our “need to believe in the coherence of the personality of others...” (J.C.Davis in 1985 p.15) it offers a conduit through which to interpret and understand a number of themes and events. This allows for the “author function” which offers a version of a discourse to flow from the name of the subject (Foucault, 1969). Ultimately,

²⁵ Some scholars of Foucault argue that academic work which includes interviews is not valid in Foucault’s conceptualization (Fadyl & Nicholls, 2012). Amy Allen and others have argued against this position (Allen, 2002).

it may only serve to bear witness to Agamben's interpretation of the archive as being "beyond all biography" (Agamben, 1989 p.143). It may only be an empty space, a place marker or a virtual room or archive in which to explore some ideas associated with the life and work of Dennis, and perhaps the in between moment it creates is itself a productive silence. Alternately, it may only render the subject *stumm*, as Derrida would have it.

The archive of Jonathan Dennis as a subject is also subject to regulation – to a system of its own enunciability by the author and the poststructuralist mode and postcolonial context in which the research is undertaken. The historical, political, cultural and social contexts – Berlant's "events and gestures" are an alternative way in which to consider themes and concepts related to the archive. In the writing of the biography of a gay Pākehā man in the post WWII period, there is an argument to be made that context is highly influential, or even that the subject is not as relevant as the sociopolitical context of his time. Dennis' life as a gay man living within a fold of the heteronormative world is only one way in which to consider matters. Dennis' aesthetic and attitude arguably emerged from constraints and practices within the society he grew up within. What was and was not enunciable by and about Dennis was and is embedded in his (and our) context. This specific subject and his experiences as both non- normative/marginal (as a gay man) but also Pākehā male (and therefore part of the normative majority) offers an intersection of worlds which may shed light on aspects of the discourse of national identity and particularly biculturalism as a narrative through Dennis as a subject understood to be "porous and disorganised", shifting position in relation to "objects, worlds, and situations" (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.187).

3. Methodology

Barry Barclay described Jonathan Dennis' work and his "stumbling prescience back in the first years..." which demonstrated how he "...showed, at least in film archive circles, certainly in this country and perhaps internationally too, how he was much ahead of his time" (Barclay, 2005 p.107). Conal McCarthy's text, *Museums and Māori: Heritage Professionals Indigenous Collections Current Practice* (2011) also briefly commented on Dennis' work during the early 1980s which he said "demonstrated through an active public programme and community outreach how a small cultural organisation such as the archive could begin to take on board Māori values and practices" (McCarthy, 2011 p.42). Both authors specifically name Jonathan Dennis as the person who developed an "active public programme" in relation to film archiving and indigenous communities, but their words raise more questions than they answer. Most immediately, how did Dennis come to his practice? What were his influences and who guided him? Why did this Pākehā have such passion for Māori process? How had the social, cultural and political issues of his day affected his work? How did *film* archiving itself relate to these issues? Could Dennis' practice be used as an example for others? As we have seen, overarching these very specific concerns are broader thematic questions:

1. What is an archive and what should it do?
2. What relationship does an archive have to changing concepts of the nation as expressed by social and political movements?
3. How might a film archive and its archivists respond to the materials within and the movements outside its walls?

In order to answer these questions, a qualitative methodology has been developed from a social sciences perspective, philosophically grounded in cultural history studies. Because of the geographical location in which the research was done and also because of the themes which

emerged in the data collection, various philosophies and philosophers of both the Western or European/North American (settler) *and* South Pacific indigenous and non-indigenous ontological and epistemological frameworks have been influential. As noted previously Michel Foucault, the historian Judith Binney, the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and Lauren Berlant as well as others have been instrumental. The methods through which the methodology has developed have been influenced by kaupapa Māori. Oral history methods have been used to generate new data which has been analysed using thematic research analysis whilst maintaining a reflexive approach. In summary a critical thematic analysis with an interdisciplinary methodological approach has been developed.

Reflexive auto/biography methodology

Much of the work in this thesis involves the interpretation of documents and interviews. Interpretation is subjective so it is important that the process is transparent and continues to be interrogated and modified as required (Bryman, 2004 p.381). Both reflexive biographical practice (via critical theory) and kaupapa Māori research methodologies underline the importance of the author asserting his or her own place in the research through reflexive practice.^{26, 27} Acknowledging the centrality of the researcher/self has been influenced by indigenous scholarship and poststructural philosophy as well as those involved in the hermeneutic and critical theory traditions over the last thirty or so years (Gray, 2009 p 498). The aim is to present the research findings as a revealing of perspectives open to “multiple voices” (Lumby, J. & Jackson, D. in Clare & Hamilton, 2003 p.163). These voices are not considered exhaustive; instead they are “socially and culturally constructed and representative of a certain position in time and space” (Lumby, J. & Jackson, D. in Clare & Hamilton, 2003 p.165).

This awareness of the socially constructed and historically contingent nature of the research, supports David E. Gray’s suggestion that reflexivity in the research process is important in ensuring the “realisation that the researcher is not a neutral observer, and is implicated in the

²⁶ For examples of auto/biographical practice see: Casey 1995, Dhunpath 2000, Green & Hutching 2004, Sedgwick 1990.

²⁷ For examples of kaupapa Māori methodology see: Bishop 1996, Mead 2003, Smith 2005, Te Awēkotuku 1991.

construction of knowledge” (Gray, 2009 p.498). However, Gray also suggests (via Weber 2003) that the potential dangers of reflexivity are narcissism, self-righteousness and arrogance (Gray, 2009 p.499). If the focus is too specifically on the individual’s perspective and experience, a wider lens is not possible and may lead to narrow supposition. In NZ where not only western academic discourse but also Māori research methodologies are influential, acknowledging one’s own position as a Pākehā researcher is to acknowledge an inherent position of power as part of the hegemonic majority. Consequently non-Māori researchers have a responsibility to avoid an assumption that their perspective is objective in the positivist sense (Pringle, Wolfgramm, & Henry, 2010). Māori researchers tend to deliver their greetings and whakapapa (genealogical history) to acknowledge their position, to develop connections and networks within the research space which demonstrate whanaungatanga (relationships, connections).²⁸ By doing so, Māori follow their own ontological and epistemological process. Cultural theorist Stephen Turner argues that white settlers would do well to remember their own connections rather than forget their past in order to engage more creatively with other cultural paradigms. He suggests that “in New Zealand, the white dream of a new country, which requires that indigenous inhabitants be forgotten or constructed in terms of the vision of a bright future, conflicts with the tenacious historical memory and insistent presence of Māori” (S. Turner, 1999 p.22). Turner’s argument calls for a re-understanding of the white/settler/Pākehā perspective and introspectiveness, not for its own sake but for the wider purpose of re-engaging with others in a more insightful manner.

Oral historian and scholar Judith Binney agrees, noting that “it is unhealthy to forget” (Binney, 2010 p.351). There is a Māori proverb which supports this view: *Ka haere whakamua, ka titiro whakamuri* (we walk into the future facing the past) (Jacobs & Falconer, 2004). I understand this to mean that if we do not understand our own history we cannot move with confidence into our future, and that whether we acknowledge it or not, our genealogy and past defines us. This in turn supports Bourdieu’s view that our habitus and doxa are part of us in a fundamental way

²⁸ In the National *Te Ara Tika* Health Research Council guidelines for appropriate Māori research engagement it states that “Whakapapa is used to explain both the genesis and purpose of any particular kaupapa (project/strategy/process), within the context of relationships it supports meaningful connections” (Puutaiaora Writing Group, 2010).

which affects how we behave in the world. Therefore in developing my thesis I follow the Māori tradition of contextualising myself in the research supported by both Turner and Binney's suggestions. I introduce my English, Irish and Scottish roots, and my birth in NZ through the short introduction "Kō Ingarihi, kō Airihi, kō Kotimana ōku iwi" (I am English, Irish and Scots) in my writing, presentations and interviews. I explain to potential interviewees my experience working as an image archivist concerned with the processes of engaging with indigenous materials in archives which has led me to this thesis subject. I also tell people who ask me about my own family history, and the manner in which my ancestors came to NZ. Like most Pākehā, I have both coloniser and colonised ancestors, including relations who left Ireland and Scotland to escape colonisation only to become colonisers themselves in their new home. This is the partial perspective, the situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988 p.581) from which I embarked upon this study.

A further methodological approach was to deliberately present in public on my work *as it developed* in an attempt to follow rules of reciprocity (Te Awēkotuku, 1991). Through sharing aspects of the research process with interviewees and potential informants, enrichment of the material was possible and a challenging of my methodology and developing arguments was able to occur. For example, in 2010 I was interviewed in a short broadcast on National Radio about my thesis topic (E. Kelly & McCarthy, 2010). Potential interviewees heard the broadcast and therefore already knew something of the project, for example Elizabeth Alley who was later interviewed by me (Personal correspondence, E. Alley 11/06/10). The recording, still available on the National Radio website, is an efficacious signpost to my (early) methodology with a short description of the project.

Furthermore, I presented a piece on Dennis' creative work with archival material and sound at an international radio conference in 2011. Following this I was invited by Liisa McMillan, Head of Spoken Word programming to present to Radio New Zealand (National Broadcaster, known as RNZ) staff. I invited key interview participants such as Jonathan Dennis' older sister Simon to attend, along with Elizabeth Alley, Dennis' producer for most of his time in radio. Also present was Gareth Watkins, Dennis' former sound engineer. Thirty five staff attended, some of whom shared memories of Dennis which I was able to incorporate into my research. Alley and Simon

Dennis joined the discussion and provided feedback to the presentation. Following the session Simon Dennis suggested that Radio New Zealand could use some of their archival recordings to create a new radio broadcast commemorating the tenth anniversary of Dennis' death. I approached Paul Bushnell, Head of Spoken Word programmes with this suggestion. He agreed to it and I was able to write an article for a national film trade magazine (*OnFilm* Dec/Jan issue E. J. Kelly, 2012) to promote the broadcast (Watkins, 2012). Again, a "podcast" is available for the broadcast, and the online version of the *Onfilm* article was shared with potential interview subjects overseas. The article is presented as an appendix to this thesis. In April 2014 a further article was published on Jonathan Dennis which I had written for the International Federation of Film Archivists. Again this is an appendix to the thesis.

To ensure best practice during the data collection phase I joined the National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) and have attended oral history training workshops and conferences and been an invited speaker at an oral history symposium.²⁹ This practice has allowed my oral history gathering skills to develop over the length of the project and ensured I have received feedback on best practice on an ongoing basis. To further develop my understanding of the interview process I also undertook to be interviewed by others during the course of my data collection. In one case the result was a presentation with the interviewer about the experience and a paper was published (E. Kelly & Lavranos, 2011). In addition I was interviewed with my father John Kelly for Gareth Watkins' website (www.PrideNZ.com). These experiences have been important to ensure my understanding of the experience of the interviewee who may feel vulnerable or concerned by the interview process and/or the outcome, and to aid my understanding of the circumstances under which certain information will be shared or not by the interviewee.

²⁹ In September 2012 I attended National Library Oral History training with Megan Hutching and Lynette Shum. On the 7th October 2012 I attended a further workshop with Auckland City Oral Historian Sue Berman and Renee Bester. I was a guest speaker at the NOHANZ Oral History Symposium on 11th May 2013. Other speakers included Anna Green of the Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies whose work has been illuminating for me.

Interpretation of data

Kaupapa Māori research method

As noted previously Jonathan Dennis placed great emphasis on his own “sense of place” in NZ. He was interested in being situated in the South Pacific which he liked to call Oceania (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). This led the research to the work of those interested in local contexts. Linda Tuhiwai Smith uses Michel Foucault in arguing for a kaupapa Māori practice (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999/2012). Following Tuhiwai Smith, as a philosophical underpinning but also a method for the data gathering process, my study uses kaupapa Māori theory (from the situated perspective of a Pākehā) with *all* interview subjects (Māori or non-Māori) to ensure a careful and ethical approach to data collection and publication of findings (Puutaiaora Writing Group, 2010).³⁰

Although as we have seen it is a contested term, kaupapa Māori method attempts to ensure an awareness of the perspectives and experiences of the interviewees in the research and interview process. In the case of the data collection through oral history the practice has been fruitful, with ongoing exchanges of information possible. Intrinsic to this has been *whakawhanaungatanga* – the establishment of connections. For example Simon Dennis, Jonathan’s eldest sister and I have made connections through discussing our genealogy. We are both of English and Irish descent and even have a family connection through marriage (Personal correspondence, S.Dennis 13/07/10). However, in a cross-cultural exchange, my use of kaupapa Māori method has not proven as effective, thus perhaps supporting the view that non-Māori cannot and should not use this approach (Waititi, 2008). The Harris family of the iwi Ngati Whakāue were consulted face to face in Rotorua at their home about this research in 2009 (Personal communication, B. Harris 24/05/09).³¹ Stuart Harris’ mother Witarina was first kaumātua (elder) of the NZFA. She was a major influence in much of the bicultural work undertaken by Dennis and the NZFA (Dennis, 1990). Witarina Harris died in 2007 at the age of 101 and her son and daughter-in-law hold many memories and mementoes of her life and work. Following this initial meeting, I sent the family a

³⁰ Distinctive aspects of Māori research include questions such as: “Who gets to say what is researched? What is the purpose of the research? Who benefits from research outcomes?” (Ministry of Research Science and Technology, 2005 p.23).

³¹ Ngati Whakāue are part of the wider iwi confederation of the Bay of Plenty region, Te Arawa.

draft of a paper I was presenting at a conference for the International Auto/Biographical Association in England in 2010. Harris' son was offended by my use of queer theory. He withdrew approval for me to write about his mother and has chosen to no longer correspond with me (Personal correspondence, S. Harris 2010 various dates).

Since I have undertaken to follow Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's methodologies, I respect Stuart Harris' decision and have shifted my emphasis in relation to Witarina Harris' role in the thesis. One of the tenets of my methodology is to understand and respect the fact that silence is not assent and therefore I have chosen only to use information available in the public domain about Witarina Harris, eschewing the material gleaned from the meeting with her son and daughter-in-law. However, another member of the whānau is supportive of the research and encouraged me to continue despite Witarina Harris' son's discouragement.³² This highlights for me the difficulties of kaupapa Māori research practice – where one can consult with many people in a whānau who may have competing views, how does one decide upon which opinion to follow? It also reinforces my own ignorance of Te Ao Māori. It is as well to be cautious and not trample on the mana of the people, but when a researcher does not know the person in question and is ignorant of customs or practices, one is liable to cause offence, no matter how well intentioned. As Linda Smith argues, there are many traps “good willed” researchers have tumbled into when researching outside (or perhaps even inside) their own culture (Smith, 2005).³³ Whether indigenous or non-indigenous, identity and research have their complexities in all research designs, methods and outcomes (Fisher, 2010; Moeke-Maxwell, 2005).

The risk to my thesis is that Witarina Harris' extraordinary accomplishments and influence, which have been so important to the NZFA and Jonathan Dennis, will not be adequately demonstrated. It is possible that she might become invisible, even though Jonathan Dennis himself always talked about her contribution in his own interviews – for example, Fyfe (2001), Alley (2001), Pivac

³² I have not named this member of the hapū as I do not wish to create further disagreement on this matter.

³³ I consulted on this matter with a number of people, but in particular two Māori academics at my institution, one of whom knew Jonathan Dennis. I have not named these women, as this situation is delicate, and I do not want to cause further discomfort for the Harris whānau or the women themselves. We discussed the fact that the history of the Harris whānau is difficult and complex and is one which has already been written about in a book co-edited by Jonathan Dennis, Irihapeti Ramsden and Patricia Grace. It includes Witarina Harris' sister Francie describing Witarina's abusive husband and the impact of his behaviour on Witarina's life (Grace, Ramsden, & Dennis, 2001).

(2000).³⁴ To ensure this does not occur, I follow Judith Binney's suggestion that when working on oral histories with those from a culture other than one's own, stories cannot be amalgamated but they can be juxtaposed as illumination occurs "in the juxtaposition" (Binney, 2010 p.329). Following this idea, my thesis seeks to present oral histories adjacent to each other, considering their content without assuming an understanding of every nuance of the utterance. Sometimes the stories of Witarina Harris in particular, which are available through various published texts, have been presented and analysed to a degree, but also by their juxtaposition and incorporation I hope that they reveal of themselves without my perspective overshadowing other possible meanings. This cross-cultural work has been challenging but very educational and through a self-reflexive process I hope it has illuminated the work in the manner Binney suggests.

Oral histories

In collecting oral history interviews, the work of most life historians and biographers advocates the semi-structured style which encourages the interview subject to provide information in the most natural manner possible within a formal interview situation (Bishop, 1996; Empson, 1984). Thirty one recorded interviews were collected following a semi-structured qualitative process using open-ended questions (Glesne & Peshkin, 1993). At the beginning of the data gathering process each interview was recorded on a digital audio device and transcribed by the author. As the number of interviews accumulated it became necessary to contact each interview subject and request permission for a third party transcription service to complete the process. Each interview subject agreed to this request. Occasionally, interviewees preferred no recording was made, and in these cases detailed written notes were taken. Ten interviews were undertaken in this manner. Copies of transcripts or notes from the interview were returned to all interviewees for their consideration. At this time interviewees were encouraged to make changes if they were uncomfortable with the content or if they identified inaccuracies. This is not usual practice in the collection of traditional oral history recordings as outlined by the National Oral History

³⁴ In 2013 I again approached the Harris family as I had been asked to write a piece for the International Federation of Film Archives and decided my topic could be Witarina Harris and Jonathan Dennis. The family read the piece I had prepared and agreed it could be published (Personal correspondence, B.Harris December 2013). This piece is an appendix to the thesis.

Association of New Zealand (Code of Ethical and Technical Practice NOHANZ, 2011), but it ensured an emphasis on the interviewee's rights and privileges in the research process previously described in the kaupapa Māori section above. The typed transcription was then modified accordingly and returned to the interviewee. Because of this careful process, all interviewees who made recordings have agreed that their transcript and/or edited audio may be deposited at the NZFA at the end of the research process.³⁵ If interviewees did not have the opportunity to edit their material, many would have been uncomfortable with it being added to an archive collection.

Adding material to the NZFA supports a practice which ensures evidence of new primary sources is available. It also encourages further and different studies related or unrelated to Dennis' work, the NZFA, filmmaking and archiving practices. The interviews contain material which may be used for entirely different projects, and this is a chief reason for generating oral history interviews (National Oral History Association of NZ Guidelines NOHANZ, 2011). To create material which allows for the possibility of unknown future projects is to recognise the ability of the archive to be a place of future creative potential. Because interview subjects have been able to control their own transcripts, many have been comfortable with my approach and as a result stayed in touch, allowing me to ask further questions as they arise. Some have sent me further materials to develop my research (For example personal correspondence N. Brand 13/07/10). This is partly due to the unanticipated advantage of the long duration of the project.³⁶ As a part time student I had six years to complete the thesis. This has allowed people to become familiar with me. One participant, an historian himself, has been interviewed three times. On the third occasion he was accompanied by another person who had been initially reluctant to be interviewed. By interviewing more than once, richer and deeper information may be gleaned.³⁷ This can only happen with time and trust, and reflects Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's ethical values which include

³⁵ The deposit of these interviews will not occur until the thesis has been submitted, examined and (hopefully) passed. Therefore the interviews are referred to as "Personal correspondence", as they are unavailable at this time. A full list of interviewees is included as an appendix to the thesis.

³⁶ Thank you to Victoria University academic Jo Smith for pointing out that the long duration was an advantage to me at a time when I did not feel this to be the case. Also Eketone, Walker and Gibbs argue that Kaupapa Māori research often does not fit easily into institutional timeframes (S. Walker et. al., Routledge/2006 p.337).

³⁷ For example Annie Collins answered further questions through conversation and email, Simon Dennis has been recorded once but interviewed with notes taken on multiple occasions (Personal correspondence, A. Collins, 26/01/09; S.Dennis 06/02/09).

being a “seen face”, someone who is engaged and committed, available to talk or listen when the interview subject is ready (Te Awekotuku, 1991).

International oral history practice also encourages multiple interviews with a subject where possible. Kevin Bradley, Curator of Oral History and Folklore at the National Library of Australia recommends that two to three interviews are required to ensure maximum information is derived from an interview subject (Personal correspondence, K. Bradley August 2011). As I found, by meeting multiple times the interview process often develops into a relationship with the interviewee and in some cases, an ongoing dialogue to further interrogate issues or themes raised during the course of the research (Hall cited in Green & Hutching, 2004, p. 159). The potential risk of this approach is the researcher may become emotionally engaged by their interview subjects, which could lead to skewed presentation of the data. In order to ensure this has not occurred, a reflective and reflexive practice with my supervisors has allowed me to remain focussed on the goal of creating a study of film archiving through the life and work of Jonathan Dennis without undue attention to personal opinions. In addition, Emeritus Professor of Film Television and Media Studies Roger Horrocks recommended early in this study a focus on the “values” of the thesis subject and the works undertaken rather than a personality focussed study (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 21/10/08).

A generic list of questions was developed which could be elaborated in response to the specific interview subject. Some questions have been standard: “How did you meet Jonathan Dennis? What were your first impressions of him? What projects (if any) did you work on together?” Other questions developed out of the particular circumstances of the interview subject. For each interview a minimum of twenty questions was prepared. If the oral history deviated substantially from the planned discussion, a return to the written questions was always undertaken prior to the recording device being switched off. I also took handwritten notes during the interview and recorded these as field notes afterwards, which informed the analysis. Considerable background research was carried out in relation to each interviewee to ensure a thorough understanding of their background. Many interviewees were seniors in their own field and/or retired from it and

wished to share aspects of their own history before engaging in the discussion of Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA. For example, Ray Grover was Chief Archivist of Archives New Zealand and is an author and military historian (Personal correspondence, R. Grover 31/01/11). Prior research had alerted me to the fact that Dennis and Grover did not have a positive relationship. This was important in guiding the interview with Grover who I thought might feel uncomfortable discussing someone he had an ambivalent relationship with.

Interviewees from the broadcasting industry (film, television and/or radio) who had been senior in their fields shared some of their autobiographies for the record, including Bill Sheat (former Chair of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council), Douglas (Doug) Eckhoff retired Chief Executive of the National Film Unit and NZFA Board member for thirty years (who died in 2012), Annie Collins, senior film editor, Elizabeth Alley, former Head of Spoken Word for Concert and then National Radio, Radio New Zealand. Without thorough background research there was the risk of giving the impression of an indifference to the interviewees' own history which may have led to a less than fulsome interview. These interviews are richer for the information provided, and will ensure they are useful to scholars interested in subjects other than Dennis himself when they are deposited and become available in the NZFA.

Interviewees arguably offered more and/or different information about themselves precisely because they knew it would be archived. They were aware of leaving a record – it is unclear how beneficial this is as it will subtly or dramatically alter the substance of the interview in ways which cannot be predicted. This is recognised as an inherent but unmeasurable risk of this method. It is not possible to set up a control interview with an individual to measure the difference between an interview which is recorded or unrecorded, without automatically altering the manner in which that person will respond to interview questions.

Thematic content analysis

As the materials for the thesis were gathered, Thematic Content Analysis (Gray, 2009 p.500) was undertaken on each of the texts related to Dennis and the NZFA during the period he worked there. These texts included oral and video recordings, radio programmes, television and film and

written documents. Peter Wells' documentary film of Jonathan Dennis and Witarina Harris, *Friendship Is the Harbour of Joy* (2004) and three oral history interviews that were undertaken during Dennis' lifetime, were key in developing a basis for the thesis as these works offered the first fabula or beats in the story from which to start exploring the subject. Not only did these recordings provide information on Dennis' life and work, but more importantly they offered insights into how Dennis constructed the narrative of his life.

All oral/life history interview subjects are telling a story with omissions and additions as they construct a narrative of themselves (Dhunpath, 2000). Judith Binney has said of the process of collecting oral histories – "there are always silences in the telling of a story" (Binney, 2010 p.329). Early in the data analysis it became clear that what is unsaid can be important to the telling of the tale. Pauses, silences and non-verbal language such as laughter, tears, sighs and looks are meaningful and must be taken into account, though they are clearly open to various interpretations (Mellor & Haebich, 2002). The relationship between archival documents and oral histories is complex (Binney, 2010 p.351) and has required much consideration and analysis, as has the idea of the co-construction involved in the interview (Petraki, Baker, & Emmison, 2007 p.108). The literature on oral history as a practice has been invaluable. Texts such as *Remembering: Writing Oral History* (Green & Hutching, 2004) (Green & Troup, 1999) have offered practical information, as well as philosophical and theoretical arguments on the nature of oral history.

It is commonly acknowledged that people will have differing memories of the same incident (Ketchel cited in Green & Hutching, 2004 p.96). Life history and biographical researchers "confirm the arrival of a post-paradigmatic age" which accepts that every interviewee has a subjective interpretation of events and experiences (Casey cited in Dhunpath, 2000 p.235). An example of the multiple perspectives of interview subjects pertains to the manner in which people understood Jonathan Dennis to have left the NZFA at the beginning of the 1990s. In his own oral history interviews he states that he made a decision to leave as it was becoming uncomfortable there (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). He said that the bicultural process was very difficult and they were being "hammered" on it (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Some contemporary interview subjects have suggested that Dennis was asked to resign by the NZFA

board (Personal correspondence, D. Eckhoff 09/06/10). The NZFA board meeting minutes from that time do not record why Dennis was leaving (NZFA Board minutes, 1989-1992). Given the differing versions of the resignation story, it is difficult to make a definitive statement about what happened. Green and Troup acknowledge that “historians now argue that oral history has a different ‘credibility’ from the empirical evidence of documentary sources. Subjective and collective meaning is embedded in the narrative structures people employ to describe the past” (Green & Troup, 1999 p.236). As signaled by Green & Troup, this study acknowledges these multiple perspectives and understandings of the narrative of Dennis’ life and work. This is an example of the challenge of using the oral history interview as testimony, but a poststructuralist view allows for multiple perspectives regarding a single event and presents those for the discerning reader to digest and interpret. This is important given that the events described are recent history in living memory and may affect interviewees emotionally, socially, culturally and professionally, influencing what they are willing to say to an interviewer.

The interview process supplemented a document analysis, but the document analysis has also enhanced the interview process, and so they have run in parallel, an approved process in Thematic Content Analysis methodology (Boyatzis, 1998). Snowball sampling technique (Gray, 2009 p.153) allowed interviewees to suggest further points of contact. Once the data from the interview, recording or archival document was analysed using thematic content analysis, the process of interpretation began (Boyatzis, 1998; Burnard, 1991; Gray, 2009). As Gray states – “One of the challenges of qualitative research is that there are no widely accepted rules about how qualitative data should be analysed, other than that the approach is generally inductive and involves the coding of data” (Gray, 2009 p.494). Therefore I undertook an analysis of the transcriptions of the data including field notes and reflective observation as recommended by Boyatzis (Boyatzis, 1998). Identification of themes within the data followed, with these themes incorporated into subsequent interviews and document analysis. A continued reading of the collected data prevented over interpretation during the interview process as this may have led to foregone conclusions. As connections between themes, categories and concepts were made, general principles and theories were developed. A consideration of how potential themes related to theoretical models was then possible (Gray, 2009 pp.496, 497). A spreadsheet was developed

listing in the vertical column the names of all interviewees with dates, comments and ideas regarding any further research needed. On the horizontal axis was a list of themes including quotes from interviewees. This allowed for a grouping of themes and efficient access to keywords and specific interviewee data within one document. A summary theme list was then created and is presented as figure one below. As each interview was completed and transcribed the table was reviewed and new information added. Previous transcripts would then be reconsidered to understand the overlap, intersections or inconsistencies between the interviewee's memories and ideas of Dennis, and wider themes. These themes were then linked to the literature as indicated in the following table:

Themes	Subthemes	Links to literature review and comments
Personality	Masks, performance	Analysis of the subject, death of the author, auteur, biography, life history.
Aesthetics	Importance of decoration in house, clothes, garden	Masculinities, queer theory, gay identity, biography, life history, camp
Relationships	Family, partners, friendships	Particularly strong theme – elderly friends and female friends who were feminist and their influence (Elizabeth Alley suggestion)
Biculturalism	Witarina Harris, James McDonald films, travel, Fiji, responses to indigenous films in Europe and North America, also Pacific Islands and Australia	Overlaps with “Relationships” category – cultural construction, indigeneity, kaupapa Māori, cross-cultural work, postcolonialism, multiculturalism, “South Pacific” and “Oceania”, “a place to stand”
Work	Acting, Film Society, Radio, Archive, after archive, editing, production, film making, oral history collection	Overlaps with most other areas – archiving, film, auteur philosophy, performance
Death Processes	Death of mother and father not long before his own, Māori process followed	Connected to “Relationships” and “Biculturalism”. Cross cultural practices, being Pākehā, importance of film – influence of Irihapeti Ramsden and Witarina Harris
Passion	For film, people, indigenous issues	Overlap with “Personality” but an important theme for many interviews – in relation to film, friends, family, art, archive, hatred of bureaucracy, cross cultural interactions, inspiration
Being gay in 1950s- 2002 time period	Homosexual law reform, soundscape on HIV AIDS artists, being ‘out’, masculinities	Sexuality, masculinity, “intimate publics”, “gay bashing” in Melbourne

Figure One: Themes for analysis

These broad theme areas which emerged in the interview process were examined as the raw data for the thesis and then expanded to consider film archiving itself as philosophy and practice in a wider sense beyond Dennis himself.

Primary data – key document analysis

Beyond data collected from interview subjects there are numerous documents related to Jonathan Dennis available from archives. Dennis' personal papers, correspondence and notes are housed in three publicly accessible collections. Firstly, Dennis himself deposited materials in the Alexander Turnbull Library collection in the 1990s, now housed within the National Library (Personal correspondence, S. Dell 10/09/10). This collection comprises formal documentation such as his University records and correspondence with notable people. His family papers are also housed there, lodged by his older sister, Simon Dennis (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 06/02/09). The second collection is uncatalogued and resides at the NZFA, consisting of 20 archive boxes of papers. I have analysed both collections during a series of visits to Wellington over a number of years. Thirdly, the National Film and Sound Archive Australia collection at Canberra holds a significant correspondence and various materials on the NZFA. I engaged with this material during a month long residency there. There are also two smaller private collections held by individuals. Simon Dennis holds many family documents which she has shared over the period 2008-2013. Finally, film editor Annie Collins had a substantial correspondence collection at her home which she permitted me to analyse onsite; this was uncatalogued. Dennis' personal papers held in all five of these collections have been a key source of information for the interview process. The materials included personal correspondence, lecture notes Dennis wrote, scripts for the film radio show he became well known for in the 1990s, diaries of work trips, calendars and printed emails and faxes. Even handwritten notes Dennis took while on the telephone are available from the NZFA collection.³⁸

³⁸ Diane Pivac, a staff member at the NZFA collected these papers after Dennis died with his permission. He had not had time to sort through them all but he explicitly stated that he trusted Pivac and the NZFA to deposit appropriate materials in perpetuity (Personal correspondence, D. Pivac 26/11/09).

The above papers and recordings have been analysed for thematic connections or contradictions which require clarification through interview questions and key document analysis. The material from these archives has been used to support the generation of interview questions as earlier described. In turn these multiple data sources clarified facts (such as dates) and triangulated information provided by interviewees. The accumulated information has then been used to decide which literature is appropriate to review in relation to the topics emerging from the document and interview process. The literature review developed concurrently with the interview process and document analysis to ensure a reflective, dynamic and constantly engaged approach as suggested by Dey (1993) who recommends qualitative analysis is understood as a circular process of describing, connecting and classifying information (Gray, 2009 p.499). Through this reciprocal process of data collection it has been possible to develop the themes of the thesis, ensuring an ethical approach to interviewees and the data collected from them. In turn the relationships developed over the course of the study have engendered further projects such as the broadcast on Jonathan Dennis in 2012, encouraging discourse on the subject of the NZFA, Dennis and the purpose and nature of the archive.

4. A historical narrative beginning: Jonathan Spencer Dennis and the early years

This chapter offers the only traditional biographical section of the thesis. It presents the specific context in which Dennis became the founding director of the NZFA. The first section of this chapter is a biographical narrative of Dennis' early years leading up to the founding of the NZFA. Key themes are raised which will be developed and investigated in later chapters. In the first section themes include an early interest in films, the desire for invisibility and a need for close family contact and distance from outsiders, an interest in performance and engagement with 1970s theatre and film productions in New Zealand, an unusual sartorial style and a growing engagement with the art scene. In the second section of this chapter, key state interventions in the fledgling film culture are described and analysed at a time when Dennis was beginning to be involved with those influencing government decisions in relation to film presentation and production.

Jonathan Spencer Dennis was born on the 27th September 1953 at Taumarunui, a town in the North Island of NZ.³⁹ At the time of his birth the Dennis family lived at The Chateau, a large hotel built in the 1920s at the base of Mt Ruapehu on the Central Plateau. Dennis later described the hotel as having a "sense of splendor" with "an extraordinarily spacious, beautiful lounge, with dripping chandeliers and the great picture window looking over the mountain" (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). The hotel was a base for tourists who explored the walks in the area and for ski parties who spent their days on nearby Mt Ruapehu. Prior to her arrival at The Chateau, Dennis' mother Patricia (Pat) had lived in Dunedin, in the South Island where she had been born in 1916 to the O'Reilly family. The O'Reillys later moved to New Plymouth where she grew up with two brothers and two sisters. Pat's first job after completing her schooling was as a receptionist in the office at The Chateau where she met Laurence (Lawrie) Dennis (born 1915), who was at that time most likely the Manager of Stores at the Hotel.⁴⁰ They married in 1940, and their first child and only daughter Simon was born in 1942, followed by Michael in 1944, Timothy in 1951 and

³⁹ "Spencer" was the family name of his godparents (Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

⁴⁰ Simon Dennis, keeper of the Dennis family archive is unsure what her father's specific role was at that time (Personal correspondence, S.Dennis 29/04/09).

finally Jonathan.⁴¹ Although the hotel itself was cosmopolitan and there were many international visitors, the family lived in a couple of rooms at the end of a corridor. Simon remembered that Pat worked very hard in the early years with limited resources to raise the children. Once Timothy was born, their two bedrooms were made into a self-contained flat by putting a door across a corridor, “but they were literally two bedrooms on one side of the corridor joined by a bathroom...The deluxe bedroom became the lounge and the bathroom, the toilet was boarded over and Mum had a little stove there” (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

In later life many people understood Dennis to have had a grand and privileged upbringing (for example Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10). In terms of personal material possessions this does not appear to have been the case, as they lived in a grand hotel while their own accommodation was basic. However in 1958 when Jonathan was 5 years old, Lawrie was offered the job of Manager of The Hermitage. Like The Chateau, it was one of the government-owned chain of hotels organised under the Tourism Hotel Corporation. At the Hermitage at the base of Mt Cook (also known as Mt Aoraki) in the South Island the family had a separate house behind the hotel which meant for the first time they had their own home. The Hermitage at the time was “the height of modern, the new flash hotel...I didn’t know any different – what I didn’t realize was that other people didn’t live in those kinds of places” (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). Dennis’ childhood from that time was privileged and insulated from the outside world until he went to boarding school.

Dennis’ brother Timothy said that growing up in such an environment with parents who were open-minded and interested in the world meant that he and his siblings felt that anything was possible, and this gave them confidence. They met people from a wide variety of backgrounds and interacted with everyone from maids and cleaning staff to royal guests. Timothy says his father treated them all with equal respect and interest, even if he could not always remember everyone’s names (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis 05/08/09).⁴² Tim’s experience may have been quite different from Jonathan’s. Their niece Kirsten remembers her mother Simon

⁴¹ Simon does not know why she was given this particular name. It is not one traditional to the family, and when she asked her mother Pat she was not given an explanation (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis *ibid.*).

⁴² Timothy and his sister Simon told many entertaining stories of their parents handling a variety of situations, including an outbreak of sexually transmitted diseases among the staff and of a cook who was dismissed and in response tried to poison the flour before leaving (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis; T. Dennis *op.cit.*).

describing picnics when Jonathan was a child where he would insist that no one but immediate family was present. He would panic if there were others in the vicinity and ask that the family go somewhere more isolated (Personal correspondence, E. Burrows & K. Dennis 08/07/10).⁴³ Dennis himself said he was never “boisy” or outgoing (J. Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002) and in later life was extremely selective regarding who he chose to spend time with. He was often rude to those he did not wish to be part of his social circle (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10). It may be that Dennis’ early life spent sharing his home with strangers led him to feel protective of his personal space.

Reinforcing the idea that they had very different experiences, Jonathan’s brother Timothy remembered The Hermitage as an “extended outdoors adventure” where he would shoot rabbits outside the picture windows while the guests were dining, help his “mentor” Bob Simpson with building work around the property, and go on hiking trips. In contrast, he said Jonathan was not interested in the outdoors – “Jonathan always had dolls in his room. The women at the hotel gravitated to him, idolized him, looked after him” (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis 05/08/09). For the rest of his life Dennis’ friendships tended to revolve around female figures (Personal correspondence, E. Alley 11/06/10).

Simon Dennis remembers Jonathan as being a “collector of small things”, with pockets full of little stones, toys and other items he picked up during the day (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 29/04/09). In later life one of the comments often made about his house that it was full of small collections of items – toys, pictures, playful objects (Personal correspondence, N. Brand 13/07/10; B. Gosden 08/12/09).⁴⁴ The boys had a series of governesses to help them with correspondence school work because at the time there was no formal school in the area, so a group of children would gather for lessons. They once picked up one of the governesses who threatened to tell their parents about their behavior and put her on top of the cupboard “until she came to her senses” (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis op.cit.). Clearly, although the boys were quite different, there were some things they were able to agree upon. Around this time

⁴³ Kirsten Dennis was insistent on the point that the Dennis family were mostly introverts. Jonathan and Kirsten got along very well and he was more open with her than many people in his life. Most of his friends felt he had a very extroverted personality, but Kirsten explained this was not the case.

⁴⁴ Jonathan Dennis told the story of opening every breakfast cereal packet in the hotel stores to get the free toy once as a child (Dennis in Alley & Dennis 2002).

their parents felt there were enough children in the area to start a more formal school system. Their father Lawrie sent hotel staff to pick up an unused schoolhouse from Tekapo. They put it on the back of a truck and brought it up to The Hermitage. Eventually, someone at Tekapo noticed the schoolhouse was missing and wrote to Lawrie, who invited them up for a weekend at the hotel and the matter was never mentioned again (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis op.cit.). Lawrie's decision to take the unused building without seeking appropriate permission was told by various family members as an amusing anecdote. It does suggest (like the story of the boys putting their governess on the cupboard) that some family members did take an unusual amount of initiative. This was interpreted by others at times as an overdeveloped sense of privilege or entitlement on the part of the Dennis family. Jonathan Dennis in later years was sometimes perceived as presumptuous, and did describe himself as selfish and blinkered at various times (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002; Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). His sister Simon commented that from her perspective it seemed that "he expected something to be done and it was" (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

The family certainly enjoyed a degree of privilege; the boys owned ponies and attended Pony Club, they had a lamb each year from Glen Tanner Station, cats and a border collie and even a red eared turtle. This childhood experience reflects Dennis' later comment that he took for granted the fact that everyone had the things he grew up with and that it was a surprise to find that they did not. Simon Dennis said while Jonathan was still quite young "skiing on the glacier became tour du jour" and the DC3 flights introduced from Christchurch to Mt Cook made it much easier to access The Hermitage. This also meant it was easier to travel away from the hotel, and when Tim and Jonathan were still at primary school the family went to Fiji for the first time, as Lawrie and Pat were offered the opportunity to temporarily manage a hotel at Sigatoka. They were to continue to travel after this time, with Pat in particular being very active in this regard (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).⁴⁵

⁴⁵ The Dennis family continued to have a relationship with Fiji for many years, as eldest son Michael bought a resort hotel island called Toberua. Lawrie and Pat would help run it while Michael was away and all the siblings would visit at various times. Pat particularly spent much time with the locals and helped raise funds for new schools and water supplies. When Pat and then Lawrie died, Fijians asked for the family to visit so local funerary customs could be followed, and this was an important part of the grieving process and something the Dennis family were very proud to be involved in (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 05/08/09) (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis 2001). Dennis was also involved with Sharon Dell and Susan Bartel of the National Library in curating an exhibition entitled *The Heart of Fiji* (1993). This was a presentation of photographer Arthur Hocart's work and was undertaken as a reciprocal project with the local Fijian community of Wellington. A particular highlight of the cross-

As suggested by the overseas trips, as Lawrie Dennis was promoted into management positions the prospects of the family had improved. Jonathan Dennis remembered The Hermitage as a place where people did things “properly” – one dressed for dinner, formal table arrangements were followed and etiquette observed (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Dennis appreciated these practices and would follow them throughout his life. Sharon Dell as an Alexander Turnbull librarian in the 1980s, remembered Dennis hosting film screenings with a vase of flowers, decoration and arrangements which she felt lent the screening a sense of occasion. She had not seen any other archivist or museum curator include such practices in their exhibitions (Personal correspondence, S. Dell 10/09/10). It was both a personal touch and a gesture which formalised the event and gave it a sense of prestige.

In interviews Dennis described his attraction as a young boy to the converted games room at The Hermitage which had been transformed into a 16mm film theatre for guests. He started his film education watching the local tourism newsreels of the National Film Unit or NFU (government funded filmmakers) there. The hotel also played a 16mm feature each week (either American or British), and these were enthralling for the young boy who felt his dreams were “going at 24 frames per second, and they were big, big on the screen. And I suppose I used to imagine myself being part of those dramas, part of those imaginings that were taking place in front of me there in the dark” (J. Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).

Perhaps it was easy to imagine himself in films, because many of those he viewed were local and he and his family even had a cameo in one – “they were mostly [National] Film Unit films so I watched most of the NFU scenic films that were 1950s and 1960s and I’m in one of them – *SkyHigh in New Zealand*” (1961).⁴⁶ Dennis also remembered *Journey for Three* (Prod. Andrews, S., Dir. Furlong, M. 1950) and *The Snows of Aorangi* (Prods. Scott, G. & Morton, C. Dir. Brake, B. 1955) from this time (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).⁴⁷ Watching locally made films as well as British and American features must have given Dennis the impression that films were made in

cultural exercise was that the cleaner at the Library turned out to be a Fijian man of high birth and therefore became involved in the exhibition (Personal correspondence, S. Bartel 06/02/09).

⁴⁶ NZFA catalogue description of *Skyhigh in NZ* does not provide details of Director or Producer: “Mount Cook and the Hermitage are reached via the Mckenzie country. It promotes the unique scenic wonderland and local recreational activities: skiing, climbing and hunting. Painter Duncan Darrick (sic), has lived in and painted the area for 35 years. Includes brief footage of the Dennis family who ran the Hermitage” (retrieved 01/07/13 NZFA Online Catalogue Ref F3067 National Film Unit Travelogue 1961).

⁴⁷ *Snows of Aorangi* was nominated for an Academy Award (Dennis & Bieringa, 1992/1996 p.223).

New Zealand at a time when many people assumed they were exclusively produced overseas.⁴⁸ Yet the manner in which Dennis watched the films was sometimes curious. Elizabeth Alley interviewed him shortly before he died. She remembered one of the things that struck her as significant in their discussion was Dennis' description of hiding under the table in the dark watching films at the hotel – "I thought that was really interesting...partly hiding from his parents so they didn't know he was watching movies, but he also liked hiding in the dark. He liked that feeling of invisibility at that stage" (Personal correspondence, E. Alley 11/06/10).

"Invisibility" and "escape" became important for Dennis when his family sent him to school at the age of 10. First Tim left for Cathedral Grammar in Christchurch for the last year of primary school, moving on to St Andrews College for secondary school. Jonathan was to follow two years later. Tim knew few boys of his own age and did not find it easy to fit in when he arrived, even though he was an outdoors and sporty type. In retrospect he saw that Jonathan had "an absolutely awful time" and realised as an adult that Jonathan was "always gay" (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis op.cit.). By this time Simon, their oldest sibling, had completed her nursing training and was living in Christchurch. Jonathan would sign out of school by saying he was visiting her but would often go to the movies both because he enjoyed them and to escape from school (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

Many people interviewed for this study commented on Jonathan's stories of being bullied at school and how he was made to feel that he had to be "transparent" or "invisible". Interviewees often suggested that his bright and unusual sartorial display as an adult was at least in part a response to the miserable time he experienced (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10; E. Alley 11/06/10). Dennis himself said he "Practised invisibility at boarding school – the horrors – later I could reverse being invisible – I could be visible in a slightly different dimension – that person in public was me but also I could be helping him along from the sidelines" (Alley & Dennis, 2002). This understanding of self from both within and without as a "public" and "private" persona continued throughout his life, and this theme will be explored in relation to his personal narrative in Chapter Eight.

⁴⁸ Only three feature films were made in NZ during the 1940s to early 1970s period (Pivac et al. 2011).

Michael Armstrong was a contemporary of Dennis' at St Andrews College but unlike the boarders was a "day boy" because his parents lived in Christchurch. Armstrong was friends with Dennis because they were both "arty". He remembered the school having a strong academic atmosphere. It was conservative and focused on sports such as cricket and rugby; even soccer was not allowed – "The place itself was at that time very old and run down, with worn out and cold wooden rooms, full of chalk and borer dust. The door to the boarders' dining area and the kitchens always stank of boiled cabbage and cheap meat; it must have put the poor bastards off their food...Cultural and artistic affairs were never mentioned in assembly...The rules were very strict..." (Personal correspondence, M. Armstrong, 13/02/13).

Dennis had lived in a grand hotel where he and his brother had been free to do what they liked, so the experience described by Armstrong must have been difficult as Armstrong suggests. The "boiled cabbage and cheap meat" after the food of a grand hotel, the strict rules after having a teacher whom they could tease, and the focus on sports for a young man who previously stayed indoors and played with dolls must have been alienating. The focus on a particular style of masculinity would not have suited Dennis. Armstrong remembered clearly his own dislike of the headmaster who was an ex-military man and a well-known cricket commentator, thus fitting into the stereotype of masculinities popular during this period (Phillips, 1987 1st ed.). The descriptions echo Anita Brady's previously noted remarks on the South Island High Country as an example of the "blokey egalitarianism" and the "kiwi bloke" ideology that was key in the cultural imaginary of the NZ national identity (Brady, 2012 p.359).⁴⁹ When Armstrong was asked what Dennis may have thought of the school, he replied that it was hierarchical and there was terrible bullying. He thought that "Jonathan maintained a distance around himself that kept them away; words and maybe sarcasm but something effective, because I can never remember him being on the receiving end, nor did I ever see him bullying younger boys" (Personal correspondence, M. Armstrong, 2013, op.cit.).

In contrast to Dennis' memory of his own "invisibility", Armstrong remembered a forthright boy who seemed quite confident in challenging the bullying – he thought he managed to "maintain a

⁴⁹ Matthew Bannister also writes on this issue (Bannister, 2005).

distance” and was “outspoken”. Perhaps Dennis’ efforts to hide his own vulnerabilities led to feelings of “transparency” which were not obvious to others, or this “distance” was another form of transparency. Perhaps Dennis’ feeling that he could be “visible in a slightly different dimension” started earlier than he imagined (Dennis in Alley & Dennis 2001). It is clear from both Armstrong and Dennis’ accounts that it was not easy being at St Andrews for some boys.

During this time Dennis was watching as many films as he could, sometimes going to multiple sessions on the weekend at the local cinema (Crosbie, 1990, March 11). He kept diary entries for each film he saw and included the length of the film in his records. He felt he “escaped” into the films he watched to remove himself from boarding school “horrors”. His family had a “strategic plan” to keep him at boarding school (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002) and certainly at this time his letters to his parents are full of questions about when he will see them next.⁵⁰ As he matured, Dennis was sometimes bad tempered with his parents, writing to them with venom when they annoyed him.⁵¹ He described this to Elizabeth Alley in an interview as a “delayed reaction” to his boarding school days in which he was angry with his parents for sending him away. He acknowledged however that in retrospect his behavior was unfair and they were very tolerant of him (J. Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). Dennis’ anger at his parents was something only his immediate family generally witnessed (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis op.cit.). Most people felt he had a positive relationship with his parents. However, intimates knew that he did not censor himself with them when angry, and that he resented for many years their decision to send him away to boarding school, even though they had done the same to his three older siblings (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

Many people interviewed for this research had contradictory views of Dennis which are perhaps explained by his passionate and difficult relationship with his parents and his sense of having both a “public” and “private” persona due to the difficulties of his school days. Those who were fond of him often referred to him as “my best friend” and described his loyalty, generosity and love (Personal correspondence, S. Bartel 03/12/09; S. Dell 10/09/10; D. Young, 03/08/11). Others

⁵⁰ Examples found in NZFA PP JD Box 11.

⁵¹ 16 April 1979 JD to his parents from Amsterdam – letter opens “Dear Dad and Mum Alright lets get this clear right off – you do not sent out my letters to all and sundry. You can tell them butcha don’t show them. OK? It better be” (ATL MS Papers JD 9114-08).

witnessed or experienced snubbing from him, public “cutting down and coldness” (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10; S. Rainbow 29/01/09). These strongly contrasting perspectives perhaps related to a childhood which on one hand had been loving, warm, and privileged, while boarding school was full of “horrors”. Dennis, like many other young people of that time, endured this with no counselling or other opportunity to reconcile his experiences. Particularly for young New Zealand men, who at this time were expected to conform to a post-war ideal masculinity where outdoor pursuits and sporting prowess were considered important, Jonathan Dennis’ penchant for dolls, his failure to be “boysy” and his interest in films would have made him feel alone and isolated at a boarding school inhabited by the sons of Canterbury farmers.⁵²

Those afternoons at the picture theatre were a consolation and would provide Dennis with an excellent film education. Armstrong remembers the cinemas at that time around Christchurch as “rundown and uncomfortable...obviously with low patronage, and some of the suburban theatres like the Papanui corner one which showed westerns and silent movies closed around then” (Personal correspondence, M. Armstrong 13/02/13). The westerns and silent movies were films of an earlier period, and silent movies were to become Dennis’ favourite films for the rest of his life (Alley & Dennis, 2002).

Author and film maker Peter Wells, Dennis’ contemporary, has written about his relationship with cinema as a young gay man, and he discussed this with Dennis after Well’s biography *Long Loop Home* was published (Wells, 2001). Wells remembered that Dennis particularly remarked on a similar experience of identification with non-traditional gender roles in the films they watched. Wells described in detail their mutual relationship to images on the screen which offered each a silent opportunity to fantasise about the male characters kissing them, even

⁵² I do not pretend a knowledge of psychology and this study is not psychoanalytical. This view is offered because so many interviewees raised the “boarding school horrors” and the need for “invisibility” themselves. Other reasons for Dennis’ sometime rude behavior could be, as suggested by some, the influence of his maternal grandmother Nanna Nell (Nellie Blanche May Plummer). Dennis “adored” Nell and loved her rude behavior. She was judgemental of perceived defects in personalities and appearances and would loudly state her views in public. Denise Young described being invited to Christmas with Jonathan and his partner Ferry Hendricks at Queenstown when Denise was heavily pregnant. Nanna Nell was horrified and muttered about a pregnant woman who clearly had no husband. Nell made it obvious she was unhappy to have a “fallen woman” at the dinner table, which Dennis found hilarious (Personal correspondence, D. Young 03/08/11). Supporting the view that she was an influence, before he died Dennis was determined to go to Australia and walk around Ayers Rock (Uluru) because Nanna Nell had been born in Australia and Dennis wanted to honour the connection. He was able to do so with the help of his friend and ex-partner Fergus McGillivray (Personal correspondence, F. McGillivray 05/07/10).

though one would never have discussed it with one's friends at the time (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 30/06/09). Eve Sedgwick's work on identification of markers of non-heterosexuality in popular culture and literature in the development of a sense of self also has echoes in Dennis and Wells' relationship to cinema (Sedgwick, 1993). Finding hints of homosexuality in cinematic representations has been investigated in popular culture in the 1995 documentary film *The Celluloid Closet* in which diffuse clues and hints were interpreted as moments of homosexuality by audiences (Dirs. Epstein, Rob & Friedman, Jeffrey).

When not at the cinema or at school, Dennis' other artistic stimulation came from an uncle, his mother Pat's older brother. Ron O'Reilly was the Chief Librarian of Canterbury Public Library in Christchurch and a member of the Film Society. He was interested in both overseas and local artistic expression. O'Reilly collected local art and organised exhibitions as well as writing influential art reviews. O'Reilly made an impression on Dennis during family visits to Christchurch, and later when Dennis was on his own while at boarding school (Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

Born in 1914, O'Reilly was a friend of modernist artists such as Colin McCahon and Toss Woollaston and an early champion of their work, having met McCahon through the theatre scene in Dunedin.⁵³ As Chief Librarian of the Canterbury Public Library (from 1951-1968) he introduced a free book loan system and a scheme by which the public could pay a small charge to borrow from a lending library of New Zealand art. He slowly persuaded the City Council that funds should be used to purchase New Zealand art for the lending library collection (Drent & Sutherland, 1989). O'Reilly arranged an early joint exhibition of Woollaston and McCahon paintings in Wellington at the Helen Hitchings gallery in 1949 (Hall, 2010).

O'Reilly's daughter Rachel Watson (Jonathan Dennis' cousin) remembered the Dennis family visiting the two-storey Victorian brick and stone librarian's house at 109 Cambridge Terrace, next to the old neo-Gothic Canterbury Public Library. She recalled Jonathan's mother Pat (Ron's sister) arguing with Ron over the "obscene" paintings he had hanging in the house (Personal

⁵³ Colin McCahon is one of the best known modernist painters in NZ. Jonathan Dennis purchased a McCahon painting *Paul to Hebrews*. After his death the painting was sold for a seven figure sum and the resultant money was divided between a number of benefactors (Personal correspondence, M. McKinnon 23/11/09).

correspondence, R. Watson 03/10/10).⁵⁴ Jonathan Dennis remembered his mother saying that O'Reilly's paintings "were not proper". They were strange art works which frightened him but left a "deep impression". They were "unsettling and scary", and indeed some were "floor to ceiling" works. They had a "sense of landscape formed differently" (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). O'Reilly himself was a "disconcerting man" who liked to take wild drives in the country. On one occasion he drove Dennis into the Canterbury Plains while describing Antonioni's *Blow Up* (1966) in such a way as to make a serious impression on Dennis who had never heard anyone critique a film before (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis op.cit.).⁵⁵ In contrast to O'Reilly's taste, the artworks on display at the hotels where the Dennis family lived were classic representational landscapes of the area by local artists such as Aston Greathead and Duncan Darroch hung for the guests to purchase (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

The world of Ron O'Reilly was a great contrast to both Dennis' boarding school and his life at The Hermitage. The Film Society of which Ron was a member (Personal correspondence, M. O'Reilly 12/06/10) was part of the modernist art movement of the time, considered to be home to radical intellectuals, largely due to the fact that they were able to watch films banned by the censor for public viewing in NZ. As a result they were treated with suspicion and were sometimes assumed to be "perverts and radicals" (Sigley, 2003 p.91) by "doggedly practical New Zealanders" disinterested in "the mind and the spirit" (King, 2000 p.131).⁵⁶ Bill Gosden, later to become the Secretary of the Federation of Film Societies, said prior to censorship legislation changes, the film societies "exploited to the hilt" their access to movies unavailable to general audiences in order to increase their membership (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden 08/12/09).⁵⁷ O'Reilly and his friends were part of the younger generation challenging not just their elders but also their peers, working out a new and local understanding of art and identity through a form of "cultural nationalism", gaining their ideas through both local and international artistic practices including

⁵⁴ Unlike the contemporary art gallery space with pristine white walls, the librarian's house had densely patterned old fashioned wallpaper upon which the modernist paintings were hung (Personal correspondence, R. Watson 03/10/10).

⁵⁵ In his thesis on film reception, Sigley says that by the 1960s some New Zealanders were interested in "art films", by Bergman and others and specifically mentions Antonioni's *Blow Up* (1966) and *Zabriski Point* (1970) (Sigley, 2003 p.305).

⁵⁶ Michael King's description of New Zealand in the 1950s when author Frank Sargeson was encouraging Janet Frame, who had just completed her first novel, to go overseas and experience Europe where the "life of the mind", creativity and intellectual freedom were assumed to be in abundance.

⁵⁷ The Cinematograph Films Amendment Act 1934 allowed Film Society to pay a nominal fee to the Film Censor who was able to grant them license to screen films. The Minister of the day had to be agreeable to the issuing of the special license (Sigley, 2003 p.120).

film (Jensen, 1996). As Roger Horrocks later described it, the “public disliked their links with modern art and their critical attitude towards New Zealand. The artists were creating a local culture that the country did not yet know it needed” (Horrocks in Pivac et al, 2011 p.8).

For a young man who loathed his schooling which reflected a dogmatic and conservative aspect of New Zealand, O'Reilly's world, like that of the cinema he championed, must have seemed beguiling. The arguments between Pat and Ron about the paintings in the librarian's house surely intrigued a young man angry with his parents for sending him away to boarding school. As an adult Dennis became a collector of some significant McCahon paintings including *Paul to Hebrews* and he remembered his uncle's McCahon collection touring the country in the late 1970s.⁵⁸ Although a teenager at the time, Dennis was to say that O'Reilly's art made a definite impression on him, as did the conversations about the films O'Reilly was seeing and describing (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).

In 1968 significant changes occurred in the Dennis/O'Reilly clan. O'Reilly left the Christchurch Library, the Dennis family left The Hermitage for Wellington and Michael, the oldest Dennis child, competed as a skier in the Olympic Games at Grenoble in France (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). Because Jonathan “loathed and detested” school he insisted on completing his education at Wellington College (which meant he could live with his parents) rather than finishing at St Andrews in Christchurch (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis op.cit.). He then went on to study for a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature at Victoria University which he completed in 1976 (NZFA PP JD Box 11). Dennis recalled his university days as being “just an excuse” to be involved in theatrical work and that the film studies course of the time was “unbelievably pathetic”.⁵⁹ He continued to watch as many films as he could, recalling in his interview with Di Pivac the wild programming of the smaller picture theatres in the 1970s such as the Roxy and the Princess. The small cinemas did not have access to the latest films so they held “crazy repertory screenings”

⁵⁸ In 1969 Peter McLeavey, Wellington art dealer held an exhibition of O'Reilly's personal collection of McCahon paintings (Hall, 2010). This was the first year Dennis lived in Wellington and he may have meant the late 1960s rather than “1970s” as he said in the interview.

⁵⁹ It seems that in New Zealand, film was not “taken seriously” as either an art form nor considered worthy of scholarly analysis for many years. According to Simon Sigley it was Adult Education Classes organised by the Workers Educational Association (WEA) which were influential in the promotion of the study of film during the 1930s-1960s. Film studies were much slower to be incorporated into university teaching (Sigley, 2003 p.79).

and at theatres such as the *Lido* there were double bills on Sundays which included “Bergman films or what have you. So it was possible to catch up with a huge range of 50s and 60s films and foreign films from the 40s, 50s, 60s, within a strange nutty repertory” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

Dennis was seeing a wide range of films which informed his largely autodidact film education. The “fledging film course” at the University was not completely “pathetic”, as the lecturer did invite New Zealand’s earliest feature filmmaker Rudall Hayward to speak. He came with his second wife Ramai, and Dennis remembered Hayward as a “consummate gentleman”, friendly, knowledgeable and full of stories. He recalled the experience of viewing Hayward’s films for the first time – “Seeing *Bush Cinderella*...being mesmerised by it, loving various sequences, the dance in the ploughed field... it was sort of thrilling, it was personal. It was like my discovery at the same time of feeling a connection to McCahon paintings, of things I was looking at as a different landscape, and in the early 70s it was a different landscape because there really wasn’t anything else of NZ stuff to see” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Hayward as a local director making feature films excited Dennis’ curiosity and it was “personal”. He felt it was “thrilling” and he was “mesmerized” by it. He felt excited that, like his favourite modernist painter, there was a local filmmaker trying to see differently. Related to this was his concern that in general there “wasn’t anything of NZ...to see”. This concern was shared by Dennis’ elders who were at this time campaigning for governmental support for locally made artistic productions.

The drive to represent a “national identity”

In 1970 while Dennis was finishing his schooling at Wellington College, the “Arts Conference 70” was held at Victoria University of Wellington. It included discussion on “The role of film and television in establishing a nation’s identity” (Conrich, 2008 p.2). The session was chaired by Bill Sheat.⁶⁰ Speakers included Dr Roger Manvell, a “seminal writer about film as a serious art form”; Lord Goodman, the Chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain and John O’Shea, New Zealand filmmaker and film reviewer (also a historian by training) (Programme Arts Conference 70,

⁶⁰ Bill Sheat “is a lawyer by training and has had a long involvement with the creative disciplines, restoration projects and arts governance. He was Chair of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, now known as Creative New Zealand, founding Chair of the New Zealand Film Commission and Chair of the Royal New Zealand Ballet” (Retrieved 21/08/13 from <http://gg.govt.nz/node/4406>).

O'Shea, 1970).⁶¹ Also involved were Peter Munz, Professor of History at Victoria University, Christopher Thompson, TV Director, Anthony Williams, Film Director, Douglas McIntosh, the Film Censor, and "Miss Catherine de la Roche", an "international writer on film" (O'Shea, 1970). At the conference it was recorded in Resolution 117 and 118 that a Television and Film Archive was needed in NZ (Personal correspondence, B. Sheat 31/01/11). Bill Sheat was then Chair of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand and remembered that time with enthusiasm – "we actually commissioned John Reid to write us a position paper" on the need for a Film Commission and Film and TV Archive following the 1970 conference (Personal correspondence, B. Sheat op.cit.).⁶²

It was at this time in the early 1970s that Jonathan Dennis' personal history and the growing interest in a New Zealand film and television industry coalesced, as reflected by the resolution of the Arts 1970 Conference. His experience at this time sheds light on his later work driving a publicity campaign to recognise the importance of local historic film culture in the late 1970s and then through the 1980s as Director of the Film Archive. His passion for the local was developed by his experiences. He was to say of the 1970s period that "we were not seeing local content, and so we created it" (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). Denise Young (then Maunder) was the co-founder of local theatre troupe *Amamus* at the time with her husband Paul who was also working at the National Film Unit (the source of the films Dennis watched in the hotels as a child). They were both important points of contact for Dennis as he developed his sense of NZ culture.

Amamus was formed in 1971 and Jonathan joined as a "17 or 18 year old...by far he was the youngest in the group". He was not a great actor, but a "wonderful physical presence...and because so much of what we did was physically oriented his boundless energy and his sheer size was great – he was tall and young and vigorous and he was willing to do absolutely anything" (Personal correspondence, D. Young 03/08/11). The cast fluctuated depending on projects and availability, but in 1973 it included Denise Maunder, Gael Anderson, John Anderson, Sam Neill, Jonathan Dennis, Michael Bajko, Jane McKechnie, Pat Birdling, Olwyn Taylor, Anne England and

⁶¹ For a brief history of John O'Shea's work and life see *Don't Let It Get You*, a memoir edited by Jonathan Dennis and Jan Bieringa and named for one of O'Shea's feature films from 1966 (O'Shea, 1999).

⁶² John Reid was himself a filmmaker and actor who was to be involved in some Paul Maunder film productions (Pivac et al., 2011 p.158).

Paul Maunder (Unknown author Wanganui Chronicle, 1973). Anna Campion, sister of Jane Campion was also involved at various times. Many in this group were active in the film scene; some through Paul Maunder's productions (Personal correspondence, D. Young 03/08/11). Dennis' experience with *Amamus* taught him performance skills and the importance of telling local stories, as well as something of the resistance audiences might have for local content when they were more familiar with foreign productions.

The group followed Polish theatre director Jerzy Grotowski's "poor theatre" model using few props and exploiting their own experiences through sharing their memories and feelings. Prompted by Paul Maunder they shared their diary entries to develop plays about the "New Zealand condition" (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10).⁶³ However, like Horrock's description of the public who did not yet know that they wanted to see local productions, *Amamus* was not always popular with audiences – "it became so abstract that in many cases audiences couldn't accept it, didn't want to see it....it was very intense and sometimes our audiences were less than the cast members, you know, eleven people" (Personal correspondence, D. Young op.cit.).

Englishman Sef Townsend was at that time involved in another group called *Theatre Action*. The two companies met in the Manawatu for joint workshops. Townsend recalled that the *Amamus* style was "so cerebral...precisely what theatre audiences don't need" but upon reflection in later years he considered that "there were some good performances...and it was quite good at dealing with the New Zealand condition, with the whole Gallipoli thing and what it meant to a small nation like New Zealand" (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10). By "the whole Gallipoli thing" Townsend is referring to the growing notion that New Zealand identity was forged during its involvement in WWI.

When they first met, Townsend was the partner of Ferry (Frederik) Hendricks. Hendricks explained – "I had seen him [Jonathan] before at films, at the Film Society. Being so tall, he stood out, and I remembered him...I was still living with Sef [Townsend], and it was a novelty in 1975

⁶³ Jerzy Grotowski was a Polish experimental theatre director who wrote texts about and taught his "poor theatre" style. He was influential in the West during the 1970s (Wolford & Schechner, 1997).

to have a, what do you call it, a threesome, a ménage à trois, but it all worked out really well, it seemed to suit everybody” (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks 28/11/09). Sef Townsend and Jonathan Dennis “got together” the first weekend they met at the Manawatu, and Townsend then “brought Jonathan home” to meet Hendricks, and the three became involved (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend op.cit.).

In the year Townsend, Henricks and Dennis met, a review of the *Amamus* theatre production *Gallipoli* featured a picture of Jonathan Dennis holding a (fake) gun. The article described the eschewing of “visual means” such as lighting and props, “But much more radical than the simplicity of these elements in ‘Gallipoli’ was the use made of language. Words were not the primary means of communication, but more a sort of accompaniment to the movements of the actors” (Unknown author *Critic Magazine*, 1975 p.19). A reviewer in the University of Auckland student publication *Craccum* was impressed and explained that the influence of the Polish “poor theatre” tradition was very effective. “Their material, their workshop and their system can only be described as mind boggling. No wonder they’ve received grant money from the Arts Council. New Zealand needs them” (McGill, 1975).

Maunder and the *Amamus* cast’s film and television broadcasts received equally mixed reviews ranging from bemusement to enthusiasm. *Gone Up North For a While* (1972) was *Amamus*’ first television production produced through the National Film Unit where Paul Maunder worked. This was the tale of a young woman who became pregnant and the subsequent choices she made – at that time there was no Domestic Purposes Benefit to support her and often women were sent away to an unmarried mother’s nursing home in Auckland (the euphemism being “gone up north”) until the baby had been born and the young woman could adopt it out. Dennis features in one shot in a scene from the film but is not credited.⁶⁴ He is sitting in a “milk bar” holding a cigarette near the main characters played by Denise Maunder and a very young Paul Holmes (later to become a television personality and radio host). Paul Maunder also made an experimental film called *One of Those People Who Live in the Real World* (1973) about patients in a mental hospital which featured actual patients in the film. A further film *Landfall – A Film*

⁶⁴ I have verified with Simon Dennis that it is her brother and Denise Young also confirmed he was in the film (Personal correspondence, D. Young; S. Dennis op.cit.).

About Ourselves (1975) won first prize at the Abu-Shiraz Young Filmmakers Festival in Iran but no television channel in New Zealand (there were only two at the time) was willing to screen it initially. In an article entitled “Now is the time for all good Kiwis to submit to punishment” a reviewer states – “An ambitious film, *Landfall* is typical of the style we have come to expect from its director, with bleak and often obscure imagery [with an] undercurrent [of] serious moral issues”. It was to play at the Wellington Film Festival and “Auckland film critic Roger Horrock” [sic] is quoted as saying that it was “utterly disgraceful” that the film should not have shown on NZ screens earlier (Unknown author, ATL JD MS folder 1 4418 Amamus).

Simon Sigley’s description of the place of the arts in the 1930s is similar to the 1970s situation for the *Amamus* theatre group whose productions were sometimes lauded, but often misunderstood or dismissed. The “heroic days for the arts in NZ, when an interest in ‘modern’ ideas had something of the feeling of a shared crusade or conspiracy” (Sigley, 2003 p.111) seems true for the reception of the theatre/film group. The varying reviews of the *Amamus* productions (stage, television and film) reflected the competing conservative and liberal opinions of the 1970s in New Zealand at a moment where the younger generation were challenging their elders. Roger Horrocks was later to describe this time when “the young took revenge upon the staid values of their parents’ generation, challenging conservative New Zealand in films such as *Gone Up North for a While* [Prod. Bowie, R., Dir. Maunder 1975], *The God Boy* [Prod. & Dir. Reece, M. 1976], *Landfall* [Prod. Fowler, D., Dir. Maunder, P. 1975], *Sons for the Return Home* [Prod. Blakeney, D., Dir. Maunder, 1979]...” (Horrocks in Pivac et.al. 2011 p.11). Three of the films Horrocks referred to were directed by Paul Maunder and involved *Amamus* cast members. Maunder and the cast’s work in television and film broadcasts as well as through the plays they were writing and performing, set them on a course to develop various projects with a distinctly (Pākehā) “New Zealand” flavour through the 1970s and 1980s. Some, like actor Sam Neill, later gained international recognition for their work. The friendships and networks Dennis made during his time with *Amamus* would continue to be active throughout his life, though as Young described it, his close friendships were all with the women in the group (Personal correspondence, D. Young op.cit.).

In 1975 *Amamus* travelled to Poland for a student theatre festival celebrating Grotowski. Ferry Hendricks recalled the props they took across Europe in the trains with amusement given they were supposedly under the influence of the “poor theatre” – a large wooden cross and a fake gun which looked real (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks 28/11/09). The cast of *Amamus* began to change after this tour as Denise and Paul separated (Personal correspondence, D. Young, 03/08/11). However, Ferry and Jonathan had enjoyed travelling together and attended the Cannes Film Festival for the first time (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks op.cit.). Dennis left the company in 1978 as his involvement in the Film Society and local annual film festival began to outweigh his interest in theatre. He had realised after seeing himself on film that he was never going to be a great actor and recalled with laughter that he never thought Sam Neill would be either because of his “nasal” voice (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). However, this grounding in theatre and the development of local productions which were not always popular with mainstream audiences taught Dennis many things. He had a determination to express his ideas and those of his peers even if their message was unpopular; he was aware of the importance of performance in various settings; he knew that local stories needed to be told, and he had made many connections with others in the cultural industry.

By the mid 1970s Dennis was starting to deliver the occasional live film review on Sunday mornings on National Radio channel 2ZB and also became involved in programming for the Film Society. The two experiences became quickly intertwined. His involvement started “more or less with my complaining on the radio about the choice of some of the films that Lindsay [Shelton] was getting for the Film Festival” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).⁶⁵ Lindsay Shelton, the programmer of the Wellington Film Society since 1969, founded the Wellington Film Festival in 1972 (Conrich, 2008 xiv). Dennis joined the Film Society in that year, having seen the 1971 season which included films Shelton had bought in London such as Kenneth Anger’s *Scorpio Rising* (1964), *Eaux d’artifice* (1953) and *Invocation of My Demon Brother* (1969) (Sigley, 2003 p.335). Dennis was impressed by these films and was to cultivate a correspondence with Kenneth Anger

⁶⁵ Shelton’s response to Dennis’ complaint is testimony to the mentoring that occurred between older and younger generations – Shelton chose to involve Dennis in the Film Festival programming rather than be offended by his very public complaint. Shelton continued to generously champion Dennis throughout his life and after his death (Shelton, 2002, 2005).

which lasted the rest of his life.⁶⁶ Anger's work had always been controversial due to its homoerotic content. There had been issues for many years with film censorship laws in New Zealand which restricted accessibility, but the film societies had special dispensation to screen some works as they were deemed a private society. In 1976, with a sympathetic Minister for the Arts (Allan Highet), legislation was finally enacted which allowed changes to censorship laws (Sigley, 2003 p.328).⁶⁷ When Dennis complained that there were few films which reflected personal experiences for New Zealanders, gay experiences were some of those which were missing, and in fact many of the organisers of the Film Society and Film Festival were or were to come out as gay men, interested in films which reflected more than the representations of the "kiwi bloke" they were beginning to see in the late 1970s and early 1980s as New Zealand developed a film culture of its own (Farnell & Green, 2011).

During the 1970s, interest in both foreign and local films was increasing, and with a Minister of Arts engaged by film culture it was becoming possible to imagine a film industry emerging with government support (Personal correspondence, L. Shelton 07/12/09). As we have seen, groups such as *Amamus* were developing New Zealand content for stage and screen. Others who would later play important roles in that developing culture were beginning to meet and form alliances and friendships. Through the film societies and festivals they were bringing films into the country which represented different ways of being and doing in the world. Bill Gosden, current Director of the New Zealand International Film Festival was working at New Zealand Film Services in Kent Terrace in the late 1970s. It was "an independent film company with a very strong back collection of European films, a very strong contemporary collection of mildly erotic European films" and the Film Society had space hired in the Film Service offices (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Dennis was a frequent visitor to the office and Gosden remembered meeting him – "I was immediately

⁶⁶ In 1993 Dennis invited Anger to New Zealand for a retrospective screening of the *Magick Lantern Cycle* works. Included in Dennis' personal papers is an advertisement for a screening on Thursday 15 April 1993 – "The Paramount Theatre and the Wellington City Art Gallery present Kenneth Anger Hollywood Babylon featuring The Magick Lantern Cycle and Kenneth Anger in person. Screening two cycles of Magick Lantern – Session 1 *Fireworks* 1947, *Puce, Moment* 1949, *Rabbit's Moon* 1950, *Eaux D'Artifice* 1953, *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* 1954. Screening 2 *Scorpio Rising* 1963, *Kustom Kar Kommandos* 1965, *Invocation of My Demon Brother* 1969, *Lucifer Rising* 1970-1980. With Kenneth Anger presenting and signing his book 'Hollywood Babylon'" (Jonathan Dennis Personal Papers NZFA Box 11 Folder 'Kenneth Anger'). The Dennis/Anger correspondence in the NZFA is worthy of further analysis as a separate project.

⁶⁷ (David) Allan Highet (b.1913 d.1992) was an MP from 1966-1984 with the National Party. In 1975 he became Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister of Local Government, New Zealand's first Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Sport (Retrieved 26/11/13 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allan_Highet).

curious about who he was because he was always larger than life. An enormously colorful character swanning in and out...he dressed like people were dressing in San Francisco [at the time]" (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden 08/12/09). Lindsay Shelton also remembered Dennis because at early Film Festival screenings "he would sweep into the Paramount and sit right at the front, and in winter of course, he'd be wearing a scarf, a long brightly coloured scarf so you noticed his arrival" (Personal correspondence, L. Shelton op.cit.). Dennis sat in the front and centre of the theatre to watch films all his life and this was remarked upon by many interviewees (For example, Personal correspondence, E. Burrows 08/07/10). This was the classic seat for the cinéaste, the connoisseur of film (Sontag, 1996).

Because of his connections to the Film Society and the work he undertook cataloguing their collection, Dennis began to bring films home for private screenings which were also conducted in the tradition of the European cinéaste. Gosden remembered attending screenings of films at Dennis and Ferry Hendrick's house including "*L'Atalante* which was a revelation to me, a wonderful film". He also saw the D.W Griffith Screenings at the Wellington Public Library – "I can't remember exactly how many films were involved, but he [Dennis] had cued up music, he and Ferry were playing DJs [laughs] before DJs were DJs and that was quite wonderful. I was bowled over by those films, of course one had always read about the Griffith movies but to see them presented so carefully was exciting" (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden op.cit.). Gosden was impressed by the careful presentation, and the novelty of Dennis and his partner providing the soundtrack. These screenings were a "revelation" but they were also fun – it was an exciting time to be sharing films with each other in a small country isolated from the major film centres of the world. Dennis mentioned these events in various interviews too, saying that they screened *Intolerance* (1916) because – "I'd met Lillian Gish briefly, she'd been my favourite, hence we got into the Griffiths". He also remembered how strict he was on the audience when he screened films at home – "People weren't allowed to talk, even in the reel changes they had to just sit and watch" (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). At this point in time Dennis' presentation of films was very much in the formal European tradition, but it was also a wonderful experience for the people who attended these screenings, as Gosden described. Dennis had at this time a very European aesthetic in Bourdieu's sense, considering himself an elite cinema-goer interested in modern film

from the Northern Hemisphere, and Gosden's reference to his look being that of people from San Francisco at this time suggests he held a certain exotic, gay and cosmopolitan cache.

Lindsay Shelton remembered this time as cooperative and exciting. "Everybody...shared the joy and the pleasure of making films available to audiences" (Personal correspondence, L. Shelton, op.cit.). Jonathan Dennis, Bill Gosden and Lindsay Shelton were to remain stalwarts of "the joy and the pleasure" of films for many years to come as paid employment became possible in the new film industry, with Gosden becoming Director of the NZ International Film Festival and Lindsay Shelton a key player at the New Zealand Film Commission.

The New Zealand Film Commission is established

In 1973 Jonathan Dennis was twenty years old and the United Kingdom joined the European Union Community. This ended the close relationship NZ had enjoyed as the "dairy" of the United Kingdom, with trade between the nations no longer protected or guaranteed. Partly spurred by this change, some New Zealanders became interested in asking questions about national identity – was NZ still an English colony? What did it mean to live in New Zealand? (Conrich, 2008 p.2). The 1970 Arts Conference had explored "establishing a national identity" through art, and the developing film industry was part of this exploration. In the late 1970s, Michael (Mike) Nicolaides was commissioned by the Arts Council to write a further report to that of J. Reid (1970) on the importance of government support for a film industry, "and by this stage the thing is starting to gather momentum and in 1977 we set up as the Interim Film Commission. We didn't have any legislation...One of our tasks was to write our own...Now you actually cannot ask for more than that...Allan Highet [Minister for the Arts] obviously had...faith in us" (Personal correspondence, B. Sheat op.cit.). Although the events of this time are often portrayed as being male dominated, Sheat pointed out that, "One of the people who was really pushing it and to whom I pay considerable tribute was Alan's wife, Shona McFarlane...Shona had been on the Arts Council during my time...But you see there were all sorts of other things going on; a whole range of influences...Roger Donaldson made [feature film] *Sleeping Dogs* [Prod. & Dir. R. Donaldson, 1977] and Tony Williams made [feature film] *Solo* [Prod. Hannay, D., Dir. T. Williams, 1977], on which I

was Executive Producer”. Hamish Keith was the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council Chair at the time and “was very supportive of the whole film thing” (Personal correspondence, B. Sheat op.cit). The legislation, which was written by Sheat et al., stated in part –

The Film Commission Act 1978 has in its Functions and Powers: 17 (c) To encourage and promote the proper maintenance of films in archives (d) To encourage and promote, for the benefit of the New Zealand film industry, the study and appreciation of films and film making 19 (2) (c) With the consent of the Minister of Finance (may) establish endowments or create trusts...and appoint trustees in respect of such trusts (NFSA collection NZFA FD9/4/71 Dennis, 1985).

Dennis was disappointed that the Act did not directly charge the Film Commission with responsibility to *establish* a film archive, but only to “encourage and promote” proper maintenance of films (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Since 1977 Dennis had been involved with Clive Sowry (at that time the National Film Unit archivist) and others in a senior working group examining the need for a Film Archive. This group included Judy Holbrook (then Chief Archivist of the National Archive), Frank Mahoney, Education Department (senior to George Peart, Head of the National Film Library) and representatives from the Interim Film Commission (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Furthermore, in anticipation of the NZFC establishment, the newly founded “Archives and Records Association Film Archives Committee [ARANZ] recommended that the New Zealand Film Commission when it was established, have the creation of the NZFA as one of its statutory responsibilities” (NFSA collection NZFA FD9/4/71 Dennis, 1985). Dennis and Sowry were also involved with the ARANZ committee. ARANZ’s more strongly worded proposal would have ensured ongoing and guaranteed funding was available to a stand alone film archive. Instead, it has been vulnerable to the whims of various chairs and government officials who at times have waxed and waned in their enthusiasm for “the proper maintenance of films in archives” (Horrocks et al., 2009).⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Having said this, even government funding is not guaranteed. For a review of the ongoing funding challenges for the NZFA see this report accessible online at: www.parliament.nz/resource/0000147599.

Ostensibly, there was already a repository for New Zealand film; the National Library's Film Library. This made it problematic to suggest a completely separate and new archive be created even though the NFL was apparently doing very little at this stage (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Dennis and Sowry sought to publicise the moribund state of the National Film Library. By 1979 they had an intimate knowledge of the collection of nitrate film which was stored in munitions bunkers at the Army Barracks outside Wellington at Shelly Bay (Davy & Pivac, 2008 p.87).⁶⁹ Dennis and Sowry were able to contribute to a public campaign which included filmmakers and scholars who recognised the need for a proactive film archive, such as those in other countries, to develop concurrently with the Film Commission.

In a repeat of his earlier screenings of films, as described previously by Bill Gosden, Dennis and Clive Sowry presented a slide show and talk for anyone interested in listening to the story of the plight of the country's historic films. For example, Roger Horrocks reviewed the 33rd Annual Conference of the New Zealand Federation of Films Societies held in Napier in April 1979, where Federation President David Gascoigne lamented the loss of so many films by NZ filmmaker Rudall Hayward from the time of his "community comedies" such as *Natalie of Napier* or *Patsy of Palmerston*. He also discussed the loss of the "Colossal Historical Film Classic *The Birth of New Zealand* shot in 1922 by Harrington Reynolds" (Horrocks, 1979). Horrocks quoted Dennis & Sowry – "We have lost, probably irrevocably, between 12 and 15 of our New Zealand feature films, which is more than have been produced here in the last 20 years" (Horrocks 1979a). The article described how the work of earlier film librarians, Walter Harris and Ray Hayes, had been resumed by Dennis, who had been "hired by the NFL under the Government's temporary employment programme". He was joined by Sowry, a "member of the [Film Society] federations' working committee".⁷⁰ They had "been sorting out a million metres of old nitrate film owned by the NFU and held in an ammunition store at Shelly Bay in Wellington. That done, they began working on

⁶⁹ Cellulose nitrate film was the earliest film stock and was highly flammable. It was often burned by studios or sold as waste and made into combs or belts by other companies (Smither & Catherine, 2002) but in New Zealand government film that was saved was kept in bunkers in case of fire. There were also local collectors of commercial films on nitrate stock who gradually began to deposit these in the NZFA during the 1980s (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).

⁷⁰ In 1942 Walter Harris, a teacher who had used photo stills and films to teach geography with great effectiveness became head of the National Film Library under the auspices of the Education Department (Sigley, 2003 p.206). He began actively collecting films (funding permitting). Concurrently the National Film Unit (founded in 1941) at Miramar had begun producing weekly 35 and 16mm films of New Zealand wartime activity, all of which required an archive space in which to store them (Sigley, 2003 p.207). Harris hired Ray Hayes who had worked in the New Zealand Army Film Unit (Sigley, 2003, pp.208, 209).

Hayward's epic 1925 production *Rewi's Last Stand* which they showed the conference, along with NZ's oldest film, 1901 Salvation Army footage of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York visiting Rotorua" (Horrocks 1979a).

Dennis said later that *The Birth of New Zealand* was their "showcase" for publicising the loss of NZ film culture as it was by then nearly completely destroyed. The title had useful overt nationalist connotations with which to argue the terrible loss of NZ film culture. Its rotting nitrate was photographed and these images were shared widely (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Gascoigne, Horrocks, Dennis and Sowry were quite deliberately emphasising the link to a loss of "national culture" which these films represented. By doing so they hoped to encourage both public and governmental support for a NZ film archive. Dennis' background in theatre had made him acutely aware of the performance element to what he was doing and his interest in the "personal" NZ films and stories that motivated him (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

The struggle to establish the Film Archive

Dennis and Sowry's publicity campaign to establish a national film archive was not appreciated by the head of the National Film Library, George Peart who, unlike previous librarians Walter Harris and Ray Hayes did not have a strong relationship with the Federation of Film Societies, nor did he seem to have an appreciation of the film culture developing in New Zealand. Dennis said George Peart "was a pig really...He was boastful, and pompous, and he was very pleased with himself about the archive that they had at the National Film Library, which was in those days in Kent Terrace in Kent House" (Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Bill Gosden, though more diplomatic in his description, agreed George Peart's style was less collegial. Gosden remembered – "The National Film Library serviced our [Federation of Film Society] bookings and attended to the physical distribution of the films. I can't remember what the financial arrangement was but you know, it was a tacit governmental condoning of the activities of the Film Society in a way. Before George Peart [became Director of the National Film Library] I think Walter Harris had a foot in both the Film Society and Education side of things. George Peart's approach was, um, not quite as holistic shall we say" (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden op.cit.). In later years, part of Dennis'

frustration with George Peart was due to his close relationship with early New Zealand filmmakers Rudall and Ramai Hayward. Peart assured the Haywards he was working assiduously to look after their films, but apparently this was not the case. Dennis regretted the fact that he never succeeded in his aim during his directorship to have the Hayward films rehoused at the NZFA (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

As described in the 1979 Horrocks article, Dennis and Sowry had quickly “developed really a spectacularly good public campaign of drawing people into what a Film Archive was and...the dramas and tragedies of what we were confronted with. It wasn’t especially carefully designed to begin with, it was just wide open to promote the fact that we had a cultural disaster on our hands, and that initially the only thing that would prevent that disaster...was getting some money” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). As previously noted Dennis and Sowry began to invite film and television crews to view the rotting and damaged nitrate film at Shelly Bay in an effort to spur public opinion into supporting the creation of a Film Archive. Although this did work, it caused resentment from some government officials (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Dennis’ initiative echoed his father’s earlier decision to take a schoolhouse and move it to The Hermitage so that his children and those of the surrounding areas could have a space in which to learn. The sentiment was a good one, but by not seeking permission he potentially created an issue. In Lawrie’s case it was dealt with by offering a free weekend at the hotel to the complainant. Issues for Dennis were not always so easily rectified. He said later that the Archive had become “too successful” causing jealousy (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).

Dennis felt it was important for NZ that an Archive should be formed, and to that end spent a year and a half in Europe and North America largely self-funded, learning the art of film archiving. This experience was hugely influential and through it he not only learned the skills of film archiving unknown to anyone else in the country apart from Clive Sowry, but made networks, friends and contacts which he would enjoy for the rest of his life (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).⁷¹ Like his mother Pat, who sent and received hundreds of Christmas cards a year, (Personal

⁷¹ The National Film Unit paid for Sowry to work at the British Film Institute for a short period in 1979 to become trained in film repair, and Dennis soon followed, using a small Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council grant (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Within the personal papers collected at the NZFA are notebooks with meticulous notes taken during his training. Jane Paul, a film repairer for the NZFA, confirmed that Dennis’ technical film archiving knowledge was sophisticated (Personal correspondence, J. Paul 03/02/11).

correspondence, D. Young op.cit.) Dennis was to send postcards whenever he travelled, to a huge number of friends and acquaintances which were remembered during interviews for this research (For example; Personal correspondence, M. McKinnon 23/11/09; S. Bartel 03/12/09).⁷² Lindsay Shelton notably recalled the postcards Dennis sent while on his 1979/1980 archive tour which simply said, "Where is the Archive?" Shelton was bemused at the time, but said it was an effective reminder that Dennis had high expectations that while he was gone there were developments occurring which would result in a film archive being established (Shelton, 2002).

Dennis' study trip is worth considering in some detail for the connections he made and his experiences which he discussed for the rest of his life. The fact that he undertook such an extensive study trip with no guarantee of a job at the end of it is characteristic of his passionate and determined style. Europe and the United States were both important destinations for him as they were associated with some of his favourite films, but also because the first film archives in the world were established there (FIAF, 2002). He ensured he attended the Cannes and Berlin Film Festivals as well as visiting film archives, film directors and film exhibition spaces (ATL PP JD 9114-08 Dennis). Dennis was guided in his choice of destinations by a report written by Ray Edmondson, a film archivist at the National Library in Australia at Canberra. Edmondson's report of a trip to North America and Europe and the learnings he had gleaned were taken to heart by Clive Sowry and shared with Dennis (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

Although Dennis did receive a Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council grant it was for a sum which did not cover all his expenses, and therefore much of the trip was funded by Dennis' parents who helped him during a financially difficult period where he had little income. He did receive small amounts from the New Zealand Film Commission while he was away to support his travel and training (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). There was no guarantee of a job when he returned to New Zealand, as his six months on a government work scheme had ended.⁷³ Ferry Hendricks

⁷² Simon Dennis and Susan Bartel both have large collections of Dennis' postcards at their homes (Personal correspondence, S.Dennis., Bartel, S. op.cit).

⁷³ In a letter to his parents Dennis says "I've been workin and workin, I'm very good at it all but must say I'm getting a bit pissed off not knowing (sorry Mum wash my mouth) just what to expect from NZ – 're getting an archive they could actually let me know, tell me what is in it for me and say if they need me home sooner or later" [all me's are circled] (ATL PP JD 9114-08 Combined Ferry and JD letter, Ferry writing on one side and JD on the other dated 15/1/80).

travelled with Dennis throughout this time, and remembered Dennis weighing up the decision to either attend a movie or eat lunch because he could not afford both. The decision to attend the film was characteristic of Dennis for the rest of his life – films were his priority. Hendricks laughed when he recalled he would have preferred a wiener schnitzel (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks 28/11/09).

Elaine Burrows, a staff member from the British Film Institute also remembered Dennis' poverty when she reflected on his choice of lunches, which were often rhubarb and custard "and you suddenly think, hang on, I should have offered to buy lunch...it never struck me that someone who's sent on an official mission wasn't properly paid" (Personal correspondence, E. Burrows 08/07/10). It was not an "official mission", although it would have been understandable if Dennis presented it as such. Having received Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council funding he could say he had government support to pursue training in film archives. At this time the British Film Institute staff arranged for Dennis to work at the National Film Theatre next door to earn money (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Dennis remembered the poverty of the time with humour, and described living on "banana, cream cheese and honey sandwiches...I remember before Lindsay [Shelton] left just emptying him of every bit of spare British currency he had, to keep me going a bit longer" (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

Although without much ready money, Dennis was excellent at seeking out well-known people associated with films and archives and he was most fortunate that Mary Meerson, partner of Henri Langlois, the flamboyant founder of the first Film Archive in the world, the Paris Cinémathèque (Cinémathèque Française) met with him while on his study tour.^{74, 75} She was an eccentric woman but had contacts all over the world and would introduce him via phone calls to people he wanted to visit.⁷⁶ Dennis was to say that Mary Meerson was an inspiration because

⁷⁴ Film aficionados were always very impressed that Dennis had met Mary Meerson, Kenneth Anger, and also silent movie star Lillian Gish. As Ferry Hendricks described it: "He had a knack for finding out famous people, where they were..." Lillian Gish was one of his favourite silent film stars, and in the mid 1970s she was travelling on a cruise ship in Wellington: "He knew she was on the cruise ship, and...[she] would not leave the ship, so he organized to meet her and I thought that showed a level of initiative that a lot of people do not have. He was determined, she was an old star from the past, and in a lot of movies he was very fond of" (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks 28/11/09).

⁷⁵ Langlois had recently died.

⁷⁶ Dennis wrote to his parents from Cannes Film Festival: "Yes I saw Mary Meerson several times and had totally extraordinary times with her as usual. We went out to some friends of hers for supper one night tho she remained in the van for hers...." (ATL MS Papers JD Letters to his parents 9114-08 letter dated 15 May 1980).

she taught him that films were “living objects” and needed to be in front of an audience to be “alive” (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). This alludes to the competing demands of preservation versus presentation of films. The debate has been long running and is well known to film archivists and others involved in the industry. The issue is particularly urgent with film stock which is highly flammable (cellulose nitrate) and subject to degradation when handled and fed through a projector (Cherchi Usai, 2001).

The competing positions were exemplified by the supposed feud between Meerson’s partner Henri Langlois and Ernest Lindgren who ran the British Film Institute (Kula, 2002). Lindgren would not screen a film unless he had a preservation copy, but budgets were often tight and it was not always possible to make one. Under Lindgren’s directorship a film could not be screened without a preservation copy. Langlois however insisted that films were like “turkish rugs” and improved with wear and therefore always played them, even if he only had a single nitrate copy (Kula, 2002). Part of this discourse were “heroic” stories of the students of the 1968 cultural revolution in Paris calling for Langlois to be reinstated after he had been made to resign from the Cinémathèque (Personal correspondence, E. Burrows op.cit.).⁷⁷ Dennis, like all Western trained film archivists knew these stories and the legendary lengths early film archivists had gone to in order to preserve and present early films. In the late 1970s he was confident that he could see how the NZFA could compromise between the two extremes of Langlois and Lindgren. Dennis thought very carefully about his film and archiving heroes and how they could influence the Film Archive he wanted to create.⁷⁸ He saw the endeavor as a very personal one because he cared so much for the films he loved, and he certainly modelled the Archive after those who he felt had been successful in their work (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

⁷⁷ “The firing sparked protests from Parisian film students, from others among Paris’ half-million strong student community who frequented the Cinémathèque to view the films, and from such French film luminaries as Francois Truffaut and Jean Paul Belmondo. The French nouvelle vague directors had learned about the movies at the Cinémathèque, and they vocally supported Langlois. French directors Chabrol, Demy, Godard, and Truffaut proudly proclaimed themselves as ‘children of the Cinémathèque.’ The turmoil helped trigger the student riots of May 1968. Malraux was forced to back down, and Langlois was reinstated” (Retrieved on 4th October 2013 from http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0486581/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm.)

⁷⁸ The Paris Cinémathèque and BFI were founding members of FIAF under Langlois and Lindgren. FIAF’s mission statement: “Film archives and film archivists are the guardians of the world’s moving image heritage. It is their responsibility to protect that heritage and to pass it on to posterity in the best possible condition and as the truest possible representation of the work of its creators... Film archives recognise that their primary commitment is to preserve the materials in their care, and - provided always that such activity will not compromise this commitment - to make them permanently available for research, study and public screening” (FIAF, 2002). This assertion of the primary responsibility of preservation over presentation was quite deliberately inserted in an effort to protect archivists from the pressure to present films even if there is no preservation print available due to lack of resources which was a common issue (Personal correspondence, E. Burrows 08/07/10).

On this late 70s/early 80s study tour Dennis also met with ex-patriate NZ kinetic artist, filmmaker and sculptor, Len Lye. By then Lye had been brought to the attention of New Zealanders interested in the arts as an early artistic “ancestor” and there was discussion about bringing his films and sculptures back to New Zealand to be housed at the Govett Brewster Art Gallery (whose first director was John Maynard with whom Dennis had a good relationship. The second director was Dennis’ Uncle Ron O’Reilly). In a 1979 letter to his parents Dennis described meeting Lye – “He is a wonderful old man and Anne his wife equally lovely. He told me he had leukemia but referred to it as the ‘sissy kind’ that old people get. The studio had some amazing paintings and new sculptures he showed me through and we all talked for hours” (ATL PP JD 9114-08). Dennis and Lye had corresponded briefly before his trip to New York, and in a letter Dennis was to quote for the rest of his life, Lye asked if the archive would “support creativity”. This idea was very important to Dennis and gradually infused his work with the recognition that although the day to day business of an archive could at times be monotonous, it was also a rich source of creativity.

In Dennis’ letter about Lye, he went on to say as if incidentally, “Oh – I’ve been accepted for an archive summer school in East Berlin in August – held every 2 years only 25 people. It’s getting a bit serious all this archiving now which is a drag...” (ATL PP JD 9114-08). The FIAF Summer School in 1979 was to be a very important event for Dennis, and although he said the seriousness of the archiving was “a drag” it’s clear that he was most enthusiastic about working with film. Dennis’ reference to archiving being tiresome is a reminder that at this time he was only 26 years old and was taking on a great responsibility at a very young age. His passion was film, as evidenced by the efforts he took to meet the early film stars and contemporary filmmakers and archivists he admired. In order to work with it he had found a niche – the films of New Zealand needed preserving, and he was going to run the archive which performed that function.

The Film Archive is founded

Dennis and Hendricks returned to Wellington in 1980 and Dennis went back on the “dole” (unemployment benefit) which “was a bit dispiriting” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000), but eventually the Trust Deed for the Film Archive was written under the Charitable Trusts Act as it had become clear from the various committee meetings that no single government department

was willing to wholly commit to fund, resource and house the Film Archive. This meant that it would stand alone outside the umbrella of any government department.

In late 1980, the Film Commission drew up a Trust Deed... which, subscribed to by representatives of the Commission, National Archives, the Education Department, the Broadcasting Corporation, the Federation of Film Societies and the National Film Unit, enabled in March 1981, The NZFA to be established as an autonomous Charitable Trust. Later the Minister for the Arts appointed a representative to the Board as well. In the Deed, the aims and objectives are detailed as:

1. To collect, preserve and catalogue film materials;
2. To provide premises and facilities for preserving, storing, consulting, viewing and displaying film materials;
3. To provide access to material held by the Archive consistent with overriding preservation and copyright requirements
4. To issue publications, screen archives films and by similar means encourage and promote public interest and awareness in film materials, film history and culture, preservation matters and film archives generally.

(NFSA collection NZFA FD9/4/71 Dennis, 1985).

The Trust Deed quite deliberately echoed North American and European Film Archive policy in relation to the importance of preservation. Like all FIAF (International Federation of Film Archives) accredited institutions, it also committed to the promotion of film materials and culture. Film archives, unlike libraries which only collect published materials, collect all paraphernalia published or unpublished which is associated with film including sound tracks, stills, designs, posters, costume, slides and promotional, critical and historical materials and film equipment (NFSA collection NZFA FD9/4/71 op.cit). This means they are extremely resource intensive as they hold multiple formats of materials, all of which have different preservation requirements. Film archives are therefore extremely expensive to run, and this is presumably a reason why no government department was willing to take full responsibility for its funding and resourcing.

The 1970s and early 1980s Film Archive working party members were to largely become the first board of the NZFA. They were John O'Shea (representing the Minister for the Arts), "Judith Hornabrook (Chief Archivist)"⁷⁹, Doug Eckhoff⁸⁰ (National Film Unit), Frank Mahoney (Education Department), Ken White (Broadcasting Corporation), Ron Ritchie⁸¹, David Fowler⁸² and also Lindsay Shelton (New Zealand Film Commission)" (Pivac, 2005 p.4). Fowler was to be the first Chair of the NZFA Board and Dennis said that he was crucial – "There was no question, I couldn't have done it without him and I wouldn't have wanted to...he was a kind of wonderful, generous person who adored film and loved all range of cinema" (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

David Fowler was indeed enthusiastic about the Archive and loved to look through the National Archive duplicate collection stills Dennis had brought back in a tea chest from London. When an early cache of posters was retrieved from the Majestic Theatre, Fowler was the first to suggest the Archive exhibit them immediately (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Dennis particularly notes that Fowler was "wonderful" and "generous". These are traits he appreciated and the fact that Fowler "adored film" meant that Dennis felt close to him as Fowler too took film "personally". The passion Dennis himself felt always meant that others who also "adored" film would be prioritised in his world over those who did not.

Dennis was initially disappointed that the Archive was not to be organized under the wing of a government department, largely because funding would have been guaranteed through that mechanism. However, in later years he came to believe it was to their advantage to stand alone from government because they were able to be more flexible and responsive than a state institution (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). In its first year the Archive shared offices with the Federation of Film Societies in "cramped conditions". In its first twenty months its funding was

⁷⁹ This quote is from Ron Ritchie. He has misremembered the name "Judith Hornabrook" who was Judith (Judy) Holbrook, Acting Chief Archivist of the National Archives. By the time the Trust Deed was signed Ray Grover had taken over the Chief Archivist position (Personal correspondence J. Kominik & P. Stuart 02/02/11).

⁸⁰ Eckhoff would sit on the Board for the next thirty years (Personal correspondence, D. Eckhoff 09/10/10).

⁸¹ "b. 15/10/1924 – d.24/10/2007 Ron Ritchie's commitment to film culture began in the 1940s when he was an early committee member of the newly-formed Wellington Film Society and the New Zealand Federation of Film Societies. This began an involvement which continued for more than four decades, in the roles of Treasurer, President and Secretary. Ritchie represented the film society movement at the 1980 planning meetings which established the Film Archive, and followed on as the Film Societies' representative and a founding member of the Archive Board. He continued as a most active and thorough Trustee until 1999 after which time he continued to serve as a Convocation member. Ritchie also served as the Film Archive's first Treasurer" (NZFA Newsreel No 58 Retrieved on 3rd September 2013 <http://www.filmarchive.org.nz/projects/newsreel/newsreel-58-summer-2007-08/>)

⁸² Due to heart trouble David Fowler had stepped down as head of the National Film Unit and was replaced by Doug (Douglas) Eckhoff (Personal correspondence, D. Eckhoff op.cit.).

limited and there was only one full time staff member, Jonathan Dennis. A part time film repairer and assistant were then employed.⁸³ Dennis explained in a 1985 report that funding had always been a challenge – “despite the involvement of Board level of several State enterprises, the Archive is not a Government body, and has no guaranteed sources of finance...” (NZFA collection NZFA FD9/4/71 Dennis, 1985).

Allan Highet, Minister of the Arts gave the Film Archive a series of “one off, never to be repeated” \$100,000 grants. Dennis regarded Hyatt, Peter Tapsell and Michael Bassett as three key ministers.^{84, 85} He was closest to Peter Tapsell because the NZFA staff would often meet with him at hui (gatherings). “Witarina [Harris, first kaumātua of the NZFA] was very clear that it was useful to sleep with your minister on a marae. Peter Tapsell would have his mattress, and I would have mine, and Witarina would be next to that. So it helps to discuss your funding problems with your minister while you’re having a shower...*(laughter)*” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). With Harris’ help, Dennis began to understand the importance of “kanohi ki te kanohi” or face to face interactions as Ngahuia Te Awekotuku described them in her argument for kaupapa Māori practice (Te Awekotuku, 1991).

By 1985 the NZFA collection consisted of 6,000 stills from the National Film Archive in London, stills from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, stills for approximately 100 NZ titles, 3,000 film advertising posters including about 40 NZ titles, many of these brought back from Dennis’ study tour, and “the beginnings of a major film-book reference library”.⁸⁶ The Archive had moved to premises in the centre of Wellington where they had been able to open a “Museum of Cinema”

⁸³ In the early years since the only other trained film archivist in the country was Clive Sowry, Dennis looked for nimble fingered people to work at the Archive. He had hired a cake decorator but she became sick. The next employee was Tony Concannon who was a violinist. When he was playing with the orchestra he would take photos of the cinemas for the Archive. Colin Feldwick, was a “darling of a man” who had worked as a film projectionist. He became the second employee. Dennis described him as “loving and generous”. Wendy Osbourne, who had worked at TVNZ and been on a working party in the 1970s regarding the NZFA was employed as “a great film repairer” as was Ann Manchester who had worked as an editor at the Film Unit (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Later employees during the 1980s were Paul Sakey, Bronwyn Taylor and Jane Paul who was hired part time in 1986. She described the early staff as “a network of friends” (Personal correspondence, J. Paul 03/02/11).

⁸⁴ “Sir Peter Tapsell, the first Maori Speaker of the House... was born and raised in Rotorua. He entered Parliament as a Labour MP in the 1981 election following a career as an orthopaedic surgeon. He remained an MP until 1996, serving as Internal Affairs Minister, Arts Minister, Police Minister and Defence Minister at various stages of his career” (Retrieved 01/06/13 <http://tvnz.co.nz/national-news/former-house-speaker-sir-peter-tapsell-passes-away-4820053>.)

⁸⁵ Michael Bassett has a PhD in history and is a historian. Between 1987 and 1990 he was Minister of Internal Affairs, Local Government, Civil Defence and Arts and Culture. He was Chairman of the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board and of the 1990 Commission that commemorated the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (Retrieved 05/06/12 <http://www.michaelbassett.co.nz/biography.htm>.)

⁸⁶ This library was started with Dennis’ personal book collection and continued to be added to by him over the time he was at the Archive (NZFA PP Box 11). When he left there was a correspondence with the NZFA Board in which they agreed to purchase the books from him. Eventually this Library was to be named The Jonathan Dennis Reference Library. One interview subject claimed with glee and much laughter that Dennis stole many of the early books he collected because he had no money to buy them but felt it was imperative he should own them (Personal correspondence, D. Young op.cit.).

space. This “Museum” included NZ and overseas film materials including “photographs, programmes and posters...restored projection and camera equipment.” There was also a permanent exhibition related to “pioneer NZ born experimental film maker Len Lye”. According to Dennis, the purpose of this museum was “to actively encourage the public to take an interest in the work of the Archive and the collections it holds...Access by the public to their film culture and heritage is the main thrust of the NZFA in the future” (Dennis, 1985).

This modest exhibition space and the collection of film stills, posters, films and paraphernalia was the culmination of the work of many men and women dedicated to the exhibition of film in NZ over a period of nearly a century, including Walter Harris, Ray Hayes, the Arts Conference 1970 delegates, Bill Sheat, John O’Shea, Roger Horrocks, Clive Sowry and many others. However, Diane Pivac, New Zealand film archivist, has stated that “the archive would never have happened at that time without Jonathan” (Personal correspondence, D. Pivac 26/11/09). This remark was echoed by many interviewees for this research who, if intimate with the political landscape at the time knew that the Government was not willing to commit to long term funding for a Film Archive (Personal correspondence, L. Shelton 07/12/09; B. Sheat 31/01/11). It was clear to all interviewees that Dennis’ self- proclaimed “missionary zeal” (Fyfe & Dennis, 2001) for film and his enthusiastic engagement with audiences was the driving force behind the Archive in its first ten years (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 21/10/08; E. Alley op.cit).

By the time Dennis wrote the 1985 report in which he stated – “Access by the public to their film culture and heritage is the main thrust of the NZFA in the future”, he was signaling an emphasis on taking films out to the public wherever they may be; an approach influenced by Witarina Harris that would dominate the second half of the 1980s at the NZFA. Dennis’ passion for films linked to an interest in “national culture” and what that might mean, was to drive the Archive towards a bicultural model through the 1980s and see the Archive exhibit at NZ Film Festivals where Dennis became a guest curator each year. He also screened films at hui [gatherings], on marae [traditional iwi meeting spaces] all over the country, at national and international film exhibitions and, in 1989, at the largest ever exhibition of New Zealand film *Te Ao Marama* in Torino, Italy. During the 1970s and early 1980s period there had been a dearth of representation of indigenous experience through the media of film and certainly a lack of representation by

Māori in film-making and film archiving. “Biculturalism” was beginning to become a dominant discourse in NZ public life in the 1980s period, and the NZFA which was engaging with Māori people all over the country was inevitably to become part of that lively debate.

5. Biculturalism and the NZFA

During the late 1970s and 1980s period in which Dennis was locating and collecting film materials, social and political shifts were occurring in NZ. Jonathan Dennis was one figure in a wider landscape, and the previous chapter has described his personal experience as well as the development of the Film Commission and Film Archive. The thesis now moves to the parallel macro-social movements and cultural shifts which meant indigenous peoples began to speak more openly about their experiences and concerns. This chapter focusses on the origins of material which is held by the NZFA, which includes significant early ethnographic films featuring various iwi and also early feature films. Given the nature of these materials, it was inevitable that the impact of the bicultural discussion would be felt in Dennis' fledgling institution. The Archive had been established with a strong influence from the European and North American archives Dennis had visited during his study trip. But in the mid 1980s, indigenous people suggested the Archive needed to acknowledge its geographical and cultural position in the South Pacific. The understanding of the definition of Māori materials of the archive as taonga became particularly significant during the 1970s and 1980s and is discussed in some detail.

This chapter situates film archiving in relation to wider museum and art gallery practice. It considers the social and political pressures which resulted in legislative changes which would impact on the heritage sector. Conal McCarthy's definition of "museums" is utilised here. He includes: "museums of history, science, war and transport, art galleries, contemporary art spaces and many organisations with elements of libraries, archives, heritage and tourism" (McCarthy, 2011 p.15). Ideas of Māori and other indigenous academics, philosophers and artists are employed concomitantly with continental philosopher Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of power structures in institutions. Bourdieu's work offers a European philosophical lens through which to consider the NZFA in relation to a contestation between "actors" in a "field" (Pierre Bourdieu, 1986). By this he refers to people working within and outside an institution and their interactions based on their own backgrounds and understandings. Bourdieu's analysis of the negotiation of social, economic, political and cultural capital in institutions is valuable as a

perspective to think through relationships at this time (Bennett et al., 2013 p.132) but it has its limitations in the New Zealand context, particularly because indigenous peoples were never part of Bourdieu's perspective. Bennett et al. argue that "Bourdieu's empirical concerns, after his Algerian studies, focused resolutely on French issues and materials" (Bennett et al., 2013 p.130).⁸⁷ His conception of the cultural field depicts social actors struggling for power within autonomous spheres of prescribed values and regulative principles (Kloot, 2009 p.471). Bourdieu's notion of the field in which cultural capital dominates is unsettled by the idea that his European sense of cultural capital is redefined by Māori whose doxa (beliefs in the game and its rules) and habitus (upbringing and history) may be radically different to Pākehā, which in turn may be dissimilar to European based peoples.

Avril Bell has argued in the NZ context that museum exhibitions, such as those at the state museum Te Papa o Tongarewa, function to present biculturalism as an "achieved state" where settlers and indigenous peoples are equals who share power (Bell, 2006 p.263). "Biculturalism" as it was understood in the 1980s was an attempt towards Māori and Pākehā partnership by way of the Treaty of Waitangi, which arguably set out the conditions under which power would be shared equally.⁸⁸ The term "biculturalism" is considered specifically as a concept in this chapter because during the 1980s when Dennis founded the NZFA it was, as McCarthy describes it, one of the three interweaving "prevailing discourses of the time – national identity, heritage and biculturalism" (McCarthy, 2011 p.53). What has been called State sponsored biculturalism (government legislative changes and movements within government departments) has functioned as a tool through which government has attempted to negotiate redress for historical wrongs enacted since colonisation. Redress was prompted by Māori calls for recognition and demands for a degree of autonomy (Bell, 2006).

In the 1970s various Māori rights activists were challenging institutional engagement with the materials of the museum, archive, library and art gallery. These materials were seen as examples

⁸⁷ There are some examples of Bourdieu's work being employed within the context of Australia but less in New Zealand in the *Journal of Sociology* special edition entitled *Antipodean fields: Working with Bourdieu* (Bennett et al., 2013).

⁸⁸ This is not to say this state was ever achieved. Much of the debate since that time has been related to interpretations of the Māori and Pākehā versions of the Treaty (Orange, 1987).

of how Pākehā re/constructed or erased indigenous presence and forgot colonial oppression (Barclay, 2005; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999/2012). Those materials were insistent reminders of Māori presence and absence, with the Te Māori exhibition of the 1984-1987 period encouraging awareness among young urban Māori in particular about their heritage, what it was and where it was housed. The *Te Maori* exhibition opened at the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 1984 (McCarthy, C, 2011 p.50). *Te Maori: Te Hokinga Mai* (the return home) opened on 16 August 1986 at the National Museum in Wellington (McCarthy, C. 2011 p.53). The exhibition was groundbreaking for presenting various iwi carvings as art rather than ethnographic object. It was popular in its tour of the United States, but drew blockbuster crowds in NZ upon its return. It changed the museum and art gallery approach to Māori materials (Simmons, D.R, 1994). This burgeoning awareness brought new challenges to the cultural heritage sector because Māori began to question Pākehā rights to manage their materials housed in institutions (McCarthy, 2011 p.78).

The cultural heritage sector of any country is entangled with issues of sovereignty, power and control. It is difficult to understand contemporary or past museum, archive, library or art gallery practice as “natural” and “ahistorical”, or “free from the effects of power” (McCarthy, 2011 p.19). Following Bourdieu, Conal McCarthy explains – “Culture comprises social fields made up of values, beliefs, schemes and techniques. ‘Cultural practices’ are the ways in which things are done – the ways that individual social agents construct their worlds” (McCarthy, 2011 *ibid*).⁸⁹ When those “individual social agents” are brought together within an institution there may be competing values at play.

At the same time there were creative responses to social and cultural issues outside the institutions, new painting and sculpture, film and television broadcasts and also theatre works. These are included in this chapter in a discussion of the cultural heritage sector to signal a wider conversation with not only McCarthy’s list of “museums, libraries, archives, art galleries” (McCarthy, 2011 p.15), but also works and people outside those fields. Many of these works, as

⁸⁹ McCarthy ends this paragraph with a footnote referring to Pierre Bourdieu’s *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

we shall see, have become associated with Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA. For example Witarina Harris' film work would be presented by Dennis, and he would work with writers Patricia Grace (iwi affiliations Ngāti Toa, Te Ati Awa, and Ngāti Raukawa) and Irihapeti Ramsden (iwi affiliations Te Awe Awe o Rangitane, Tikao o Ngaitahu) to collect Harris' oral history as part of the project to record the stories of the Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club which was eventually published as a book (Grace et al., 2001).

As the first kaumātua of the NZFA, Witarina Harris influenced and shaped Dennis and the progress of the NZFA in relation to Māori works housed and exhibited by the Archive. Witarina (Te Miriarangi Parewahaika) Harris nee Mitchell (b.1906 d.2007 iwi affiliation Ngati Whakāue) officially became the kaumātua of the NZFA in the mid 1980s (Dennis, 1987) but she and Dennis met in 1982 (NZFA PP JD Box 19). As a young Māori woman she had been part of the "silent migration" of Māori to the cities from rural areas in the 1930s and 1940s (Grace et al., 2001). In her twenties she was selected by politician Āpirana Ngata to become his secretary in the capital city. She described that experience – "Coming from Rotorua, we were used to mixing with the Pākehā people. So when I came to Wellington and felt so lonely it was a surprise to me. This thing sort of built up within me – I thought, 'I want to see a Māori face!'" (Grace et al., 2001 p.32). This led her to become involved in the Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club, a group of Māori cultural performers.⁹⁰ In her later years she often spoke of her dedication to her Māori and Pākehā worlds (Harris in Alley & Dennis, 2002; Harris in Wells, 2004). She understood these worlds as separate, but they were both hers to enjoy and belong to. She was negotiating her own experience and understanding of biculturalism in her everyday life.

Harris' employer Āpirana (Turupa) Ngata (iwi affiliation Ngāti Porou) and his colleague Dr Peter (Henry Te Rangihiroa) Buck (iwi affiliation Ngāti Mutunga), both members of the Young Māori

⁹⁰ Āpirana Ngata was patron to the Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club. Both the club and the man himself are today criticised in some circles as Ngata's general stance was seen as one which pushed Māori to be part of the Pākehā world (and therefore is understood by some as "assimilationist"). For example, he did not encourage the speaking of Te Reo Māori within the Young Māori Club except when performing songs, and although the language of the songs was Te Reo Māori, the tunes tended to be popular Pākehā numbers of the day (Paul Potiki quoted in Grace et al., 2001 p.95). Some also argue that his iwi background impacted on the manner in which he treated other iwi (Binney, 2009 p.7). But many people did feel the Club was important for bringing different iwi together and creating a sense of identity in the city. Scholar and author Irihapeti Ramsden was married at the Club in 1997 (NZFA PP JD Box 11 Ramsden, 1997). Ramsden said that she was the first of the urban born babies in the club, part of a new whānau, no longer based on kinship, as people came from all over the country to Wellington (I. Ramsden, quoted in authors notes section Grace et al., 2001).

Party, were working to ensure Māori voices were heard nationally in the early part of the century within the national parliament.⁹¹ Āpirana Ngata was using the term *biculturalism* by the 1940s to describe how Māori adapted to Pākehā systems, negotiating between two worlds (McCarthy, 2011 p.56). Harris was well aware of this negotiation as noted earlier, saying “my Māori world...my Pākehā world”, an aphorism which continued to shape her throughout her life.⁹² For Harris however her biculturalism was not related to power but to cultural experiences, experiences in the everyday.

Films of the tāngata whenua

Dennis and the NZFA curated a collection of early ethnographic and anthropological films and other archival materials in the mid to late 1980s for the Te Māori exhibition which travelled to the United States and subsequently returned home to an enthusiastic reception. He called it “He Pito Whakātu A Nga Iwi Māori: Films of the Tāngata Whenua” (Dennis, J. 1987). Harris, Ngata and Buck were all involved in the making of those films which would become so important to the NZFA. Their experience is described below in order to provide the context for an analysis of the 1980s period in which these films were revisited, repurposed and recontextualised.

In the early part of the twentieth century Harris, Ngata and Buck were involved in film representations of Māori people for Pākehā audiences beyond the performances of Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club. These representations would be rediscovered by the NZFA in the 1980s and become a feature of the collection. Although Harris’ film experience was very different to the two scholar politicians, the films they were to be involved in were all recordings of representations of Māori peoples’ cultural activities. The newest recording system on offer (cellulose nitrate film technology) was used nearly as soon as it was invented to record indigenous peoples, largely for non-indigenous audiences. These films would become part of a

⁹¹ “Although participation rates by Māori in universities have been extremely low, where Māori have participated they have been very successful as academics. Sir Apirana Ngata, for example, trained at Canterbury University in the 1890s and as a Member of Parliament was one of the better educated members Māori or non-Māori. Sir Peter Buck trained as a medical anthropologist, taught at Yale University and was a foremost scholar of Pacific Anthropology” (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999/2012 p.133).

⁹² At Harris’ funeral as is the Māori custom, photographs of her ancestors surrounded her casket – added to this was a full colour photo of Jonathan Dennis, “my Pākehā” as she called him (Harris in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Simon Dennis as the eldest living representative of the Dennis family was asked to sit with the Harris whānau at Witarina’s funeral as a sign of the Harris’ regard for Dennis and his whanau (Personal correspondence, S.Dennis 13/07/10).

lively bicultural debate as they were preserved and presented by Dennis and the NZFA staff in the 1980s as people began to ask who had the right to exhibit, edit and control the material (Dell, 1987 p.3).

In the late 1910s and early 1920s Ngata and Buck had been involved in some of the expeditions of the then Dominion Museum in Wellington led by ethnologist Elsdon Best. These were recordings of trips to the Whanganui River, the East Coast and other locations to film Māori at iwi gatherings performing customary practices.⁹³ At this time, museums were largely controlled by Cambridge educated scholars who tended to collect Māori materials (including images) in order to “save them” because it was believed indigenous peoples would die out. This has come to be known as the “salvage paradigm” in museum studies (Clifford, Seattle Bay Press/1987). The Polynesian Society published the papers which resulted from these filmed expeditions. Founded in 1892 and largely comprised of Pākehā scholars such as Elsdon Best (though Peter Buck was also a member), the Society represented an ethnographic attitude to indigenous peoples and materials. It was, however, perhaps an improvement on the common practice of settler societies of earlier times where local elites collected flora, fauna and indigenous materials (including mokamokai, shrunken heads) as curiosities which were displayed in glass cabinets with little attention to contemporary or past indigenous concerns or views (McCarthy, 2011 p.30). The fields of ethnology and anthropology treated indigenous materials as artefacts and evidence of cultural activity, and therefore organised and contextualised it as such. Best’s work did not incorporate Māori perspectives often or appropriately. Writing of this period, McCarthy argues – “Despite the contact people like Best had with kaumātua, tribal elders...there were no Māori staff working in museums, and few Māori visitors, and generally museums reflected the interests and perspectives of the dominant colonial culture” (McCarthy, 2011 p.33).

Best was involved in the films Ngata and Buck were to be associated with and therefore they have that ethnological feel to them which categorises Māori activity and presents practices such as kapa haka [a form of song and dance performance] as curiosities and representations of the “other”. Cameraman James McDonald (1865-1935) originally proposed the first expedition of the

⁹³ A catalogue of the film exhibition by the NZFA of these works is appended to the thesis.

Dominion Museum to film the Hui Aroha at Gisborne in 1919 as part of a proposed series of recordings.⁹⁴ Dennis wrote about this period in the catalogue for the 1980s exhibition – “The purpose of this and the three subsequent expeditions was to collect and record information on the crafts, activities, and tribal lore retained in the various areas. As well as the filming that took place, McDonald took many still photographs...and made sound recordings” (Dennis, 1987 p.74).⁹⁵ In 1921 Dr Peter Buck accompanied the party on a trip to the Whanganui River, and in 1923 Āpirana Ngata, then Member of Parliament for Eastern Māori, supported an expedition to the iwi of the East Coast (Dennis, 1987 *ibid.*). Ngata and Buck’s presence lent mana and prestige to these films and this implied that they were not exploitative of their subjects (Dell, 1987 p.3).⁹⁶ If this is the case, it is in contrast to the experiences of many indigenous peoples at this time. For example, Martin Nakata described a Cambridge anthropological expedition to the Torres Strait Islands in the late 1800s where there were no indigenous members of the party, nor does it appear that indigenous peoples were consulted about the expedition (Nakata, 2007). Nakata is critical of those who recorded images of his ancestors. He said their work helped develop the nascent discipline of Anthropology – “...in effect, the work of these scientists was...(to)...shape and inform disciplines”. These reports are now “considered to contain data that provide accurate snapshots of a vanished culture” (Nakata, 2007 p.28). Nakata doubts that this is true.

It is certainly true that the McDonald recordings informed research and the field of ethnological and anthropological work in NZ, although the evidence suggests that the films had few public screenings in the immediate years after they were recorded. Dell has noted that “information gathered has appeared in the articles of...Buck, Best, McDonald and Ngata” (Dell, 1987 p.4). Unlike the Torres Strait Islanders’ experience Nakata described, there was apparently

⁹⁴ Dame Professor Anne Salmond is the great great granddaughter of James McDonald. She and Jonathan Dennis corresponded about his work and life at the time when the James McDonald films were presented by the NZFA (NZFA PP JD Box 11).

⁹⁵ Sharon Dell and Jonathan Dennis curated an exhibition of these still photographs at the National Library in the 1990s (see appendices for further information).

⁹⁶ There is debate about these issues – Michael King relates that politicians Maui Pomare and Peter Buck were later criticised for an attitude which suggested there was “no option but to become Pakeha” whereas Āpirana Ngata was perceived by some Pākehā as having a “chip” on his shoulder because he emphasised injustices experienced by Māori (King, 1985 p.10). Judith Binney describes Āpirana Ngata and James Carroll (Timi Kaara) as “the pre-eminent Māori members of Parliament” implementing the Liberal Government policies to open up land for settlement. She points out that both had a conflict of interest in their work as they were from iwi “steeped in histories of recent military conflict with Tūhoe”, implying they were not appropriately distanced from politics in the area in which they worked (Binney, 2009 p.7). This failure by the government to recognize the conflict of interest reflects a still common argument in Pākehā circles that Māori all have common aims and perspectives when in reality different iwi have had hugely varying experiences and therefore hold very different viewpoints from one another in some specific situations.

“considerable support among Māori leaders for ethnographic activities in Wellington in the 1920s, [including] the active research and collecting expeditions of Best at the Museum, the publishing undertaken by the Journal of the Polynesian Society and the Māori Board of Ethnological Research, and field trips such as the expedition up the Whanganui River in 1921” (McCarthy, 2011 p.35). Despite this support, few Māori themselves were able to take control of the recording process for many years to come.⁹⁷ In light of the lack of active iwi involvement in the making of these films there has been some reassessment of these recordings and other works by Buck, Best, McDonald and Ngata. For example, Judith Binney has described Elsdon Best’s representations of the stories of one North Island iwi Ngai Tūhoe (East Coast North Island) as being portrayals of “the epitome of the ‘other’, the ‘untamed’, unknowable human being: the savage living in a savage land” (Binney, 2009 p.31). Binney’s description echoes Nakata’s criticisms of non-indigenous scholars recording information from their own perspective and failing to take into account the indigenous view.

Although Ngata and Buck were apparently enthusiastic about the recording of performances and customs, Keith Sorrenson has recently suggested they were not completely comfortable with the Pākehā led process – “Despite a lack of formal training in anthropology, Ngata had a keen and critical appreciation of the subject, although, like Buck, he believed that Pākehā anthropologists lacked the ability to understand the inner emotions, heart and mind of Māori” (Sorrenson, 2012). Sorrenson’s suggestion that in Ngata or Buck’s view Pākehā lacked the ability to engage with a different ontology or epistemology is not so very different from views in the 1980s on the matter when calls for Māori to regain control of their own representation became more common and strident. Ngata and Buck were working biculturally in their own sense of the term, by navigating between two very different worlds. They were, in Sorrenson’s view, aware of the limitations of the process, whereas the Pākehā anthropologists were not because they lacked the ability to understand the “inner emotions, hearts and minds” of Māori.

⁹⁷An exception was a leader from the Waikato. In the 1930s Princess Te Puea Hirangi of the Waikato iwi Tainui and a leader of the Kingitanga was to commission a film commemorating the art of canoe making (King, 1977) which Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA would become involved with in the 1980s. This film was to become *Mana Waka*, (Prod. Dennis, J., Dir. M.Mita, 1990) and will be analysed in a subsequent chapter.

In Bourdieu's terms the Pākehā anthropologists from the Museum had their own cultural capital in its embodied state (as part of habitus). This was their "scholastic yield from educational action" (Pierre Bourdieu, 1986 p.2). This cultural capital ensured they felt themselves to have a superior aesthetic disposition and knowledge to Māori. Although Buck and Ngata also had European educational qualifications, which in Bourdieu's view provided them with an "institutionalised state of cultural capital" (Pierre Bourdieu, 1986 p.3) they had their iwi upbringing, knowledge, customs and lore which were unknown to or unappreciated by many Pākehā. For NZ historians of the late 19th or the early 20th century Māori were "savages" dying out, "unable to continue the pre-contact, communal savagism, and yet unable to participate fully in the new capitalist economy" (Pollock, 2005 p.67). It did not appear to occur to many Pākehā that Māori may have *chosen* not to "participate fully" or indeed to participate *differently* because of their own views, beliefs and practices.

Harris' experience of filmmaking was less scholarly in origin or intent than that of Ngata and Buck, but it also reflects the negotiation of differing points of view of the Pākehā and Māori worlds in which she was involved. It is possible that gender played a role in her experience too. Prior to her move to Wellington she had been employed as a typist at the Māori Arts and Crafts School near her home marae in Rotorua at Ohinemutu when two Americans came and asked her to test for a film. She had to sit on a rock by the lake and pose, and was selected to play the starring role of a princess in a dramatisation of an old Māori story for a European audience. She remembered the "special premier" at the Deluxe Theatre, Wellington, 1929, but then she "didn't hear anything more about it for another fifty-four years" (Harris quoted in Grace et al., 2001 pp.24, 25).

The film had a number of names including its official release title *Under the Southern Cross*, as well as *Taranga*, but was known by the NZFA as *The Devil's Pit* (Edwards & Martin, 1997 p.42). The film was part of a craze in the 1920s and 1930s for exotic South Sea Island adventure films made for North American and European markets. These tended to focus on exploiting the novel elements of the landscape – the bubbling geysers and hot water pools of Rotorua and the idea of "Māoriland" and its inhabitants. A previous film of this type was *Hinemoa* (Prod. & Dir. George Tarr 1914), usually referred to as New Zealand's first feature film and billed as *The Legend of the*

Pretty Māori Maiden of Rotorua. Publicity for the film claimed “Specially Arranged Māoriland Music” accompanied it. In 1915, Australian Director/Producer Raymond Longford filmed *A Māori Maid’s Love* in Rotorua and returned the following year to record *The Mutiny of the Bounty* (Pivac et al., 2011 pp.60, 61).⁹⁸ Dennis was to describe *The Devil’s Pit* as an “appallingly banal Māori folk drama” (Dennis in Alley & Dennis 2002). Although Harris was the “star”, she only saw the film once at the time it was released and never had further engagement with the filmmakers or the film world. She was ultimately an anonymous representative of the exotic female native created for a North American and European audience. It was not a partnership model of film-making.

Āpirana Ngata’s interventions in Harris’ life were positive and never forgotten. Harris said she was chosen by Ngata as secretary because she could speak and write Te Reo Māori, and that it was her language “that’s put me into these important things, and from that time my Māori side really began to grow” (Grace et al., 2001 p.28). Harris became a founding member of the Māori Women’s Welfare League (awarded “Whaea o te Motu” [Mother of the Nation] in 1979) and she returned to Rotorua in the 1970s where she continued this work. She was part of a movement to ensure that Māori values, cultural practices and beliefs were upheld. While this was her legacy from Āpirana Ngata and his ilk, it was also the work Māori women have quietly carried out for hundreds of years (Binney & Chaplin, 1986).⁹⁹ Harris’ experience with film was to bring her into contact with Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA. Her knowledge and experience (her *habitus* and *doxa*) were to affect Dennis personally and professionally to an enormous degree.

By the time Harris returned to Rotorua, a counter-culture had arrived in New Zealand which encouraged new arts to develop with a growing interest in indigenous cultures (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 25/10/11). Artistic collectives such as *BLERTA* (Bruno Lawrence's Electric Revelation and Travelling Apparition) were starting to make works reflecting the activism and new thinking of a younger generation. Many influential filmmakers of the late 1970s and

⁹⁸ “Certainly New Zealand has been often seen only as a set for productions attracted to exoticism” (Dennis, J & Toffetti, S. 1989 p.69).

⁹⁹ Harris also worked with Mātua Whāngai helping women in prison. She was involved in the Te Reo Māori movement, and was *tipi-haere* kuia, working particularly in pre-schools as a member of Awhina Whānau. Other Māori and Pākehā organisations she was actively involved in before becoming Kaumātua of the NZFA such as Zonta are listed in Grace et al. (2001 p.239).

1980s would emerge from these collectives, including directors Roger Donaldson, Merata Mita, Paul Maunder (who ran the *Amamus* theatre collective), actor Bruno Lawrence and others (Horrocks in Pivac et al. 2011 p.11). Roger Horrocks described this time in the 1970s as a turning point for NZ culture. He argued that film had a particularly important part to play in those “years of activism in politics as well as art, a time of Vietnam War protests, Māori activism, feminism and gay rights. More generally, the young took revenge upon the staid values of their parents’ generation, challenging conservative New Zealand” (Horrocks in Pivac et al. 2011 *ibid.*). The films which began to be created at the time were often supported by the nascent NZ Film Commission.

Dennis was part of this challenge to the status quo of his Pākehā culture, trying to present stories of NZ through *Amamus*, the theatre troupe he was involved in, and by his work with the Film Society. But as this occurred, Māori began to challenge those Pākehā who believed themselves to be a younger generation of liberal thinkers who were “taking revenge upon the staid values of their parent’s generation” (Horrocks, in Pivac et al. 2011 *op.cit.*). A modernist and cultural nationalist sentiment which developed into “the nationalist narrative”, which supposedly would “unify New Zealanders within one discursive system” (Pollock, 2005 p.89), was challenged by young Māori, tired of either being relegated to the past, or pushed to belong to a version of NZ to which they could not relate. For them at least, the national identity narrative was not monocultural.

Nga Tamatoa: Young Warriors lay down a challenge

Harris’ activities supporting her culture were part of a wider movement working towards greater freedoms for Māori. She navigated two worlds in the same way Ngata and Buck had before her.¹⁰⁰ As Horrocks suggested, both the Māori and Pākehā of the younger generation were less eager to work within their elders’ respective paradigms. A generation or more younger than Witarina Harris, the group known as *Nga Tamatoa* (Young Warriors) became active in the 1970s. They

¹⁰⁰ Frank Stark, current director of the NZFA points out Harris may have done important work but she was not of high status within her iwi – she was picked as kaumātua because she had starred in a 1929 film the Archive had “discovered”, not because she had prestige within her iwi world (Personal correspondence, F. Stark 11/03/13). However, there is much anecdotal and published evidence that Harris was celebrated by her hapū Ngati Whakāue and the wider iwi of Te Arawa. For example, when Howard Morrison, a relation and well-known singer was asked to have his portrait painted, he instead suggested Witarina Harris be the subject, and this portrait is displayed at the Rotorua Council buildings (Personal correspondence, B. Harris 24/05/09). Harris also had connections to Peter Tapsell, another iwi relation and Government Minister who would call on Harris to do kaumātua duties for him and in turn Tapsell was also useful to the Archive (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

were largely urban Māori challenging their elders, whom they often regarded as having assimilationist tendencies (McCarthy, 2011 p.36).¹⁰¹ For example, Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Waikato, Tuhoe iwi affiliations), a Nga Tamatoa member and a student at the University of Auckland, was arrested for painting graffiti which demanded “Whakahokia mai ngā patu” (Give them back) on the Auckland War Memorial Museum (McCarthy, 2011 p.40). Te Awekotuku was to become a professional museum scholar herself and eventually sat on the board of the NZFA in the late 1980s and early 1990s (NZFA Board minutes, 1989-1992). Scholar and elder Merimeri Penfold (Ngātikuri iwi affiliations), remembered Te Awekotuku and others at the University of Auckland objecting to the fact that women were not traditionally permitted by Ngāti Whatua (local iwi of the area) protocol to make speeches at the paepae (speakers bench). Penfold was concerned at this challenge to tradition and the fact that the women were not speaking in Te Reo Māori. She said that much of what happened “wasn’t right culturally” (Penfold quoted in Shepard, 2009 pp.117, 118). Te Awekotuku commented on the “political minefield” of being a Māori woman working in the cultural heritage sector (McCarthy, 2011 p.67). Young Māori who took up public positions and challenged traditions were under great pressure from both their own elders and Pākehā.

The cultural heritage sector in New Zealand was influenced by these political and social tensions (McCarthy, 2011 p.56). As previously noted, Horrocks argued that “Film had a particularly important role to play because of its reach” in this movement. A few feature film makers attempted to address the ideas and concerns of a younger generation. For example one of Dennis’ favourite early filmmakers, Rudall Hayward, made *To Love a Māori* (1972) in order to explore themes of biculturalism. Hayward’s wife Ramai was co-director and they described it as a “romantic documentary...exploring love and racial discrimination in Auckland” (McDonald, 2011, p. 155).¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith was part of the group. She says the aims were many, but two which were central were to gain recognition for the Treaty of Waitangi and secondly to implement “the compulsory teaching of our language in schools...” (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999/2012 p.13). The issue of compulsory Te Reo Māori in schools is still being debated in 2014.

¹⁰² Hayward had chosen Māori themes for his “epics” such as *Rewi’s Last Stand* (1925), depicting the battle of Rewi Maniapoto and his supporters during the British invasion of the Waikato (Pivac et al., 2011 p.67), though at the time his reasons for making the film were not so much a desire to seek justice for Māori, but because he, like other film makers of the time saw possibilities in making New Zealand based frontier dramas similar to the popular Hollywood Western genre of the day (Pivac et al., 2011 p.63) or, as Horrocks has suggested previously in this chapter, wanted to play on exotic “Māoriland” themes.

Pākehā filmmakers John O'Shea and Roger Mirams (Pacific Films), had explored similar territory in their 1952 film *Broken Barrier* (McDonald, 2011, p. 133) which "promoted the idea of biculturalism and acknowledged that racism was widespread in the Pākehā world" (Horrocks, 2011 p.10). Neither film was a box office hit, but Hayward was influential as the first feature filmmaker in New Zealand. John O'Shea was to become Dennis' mentor and an NZFA board member for many years (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

As for television representation, Māori writer Patricia Grace wrote of the 1970s period – "there was no time any more for watching television, and not much liking for it because it did not define us. There was little indication through television that we existed at all in our own land" (Grace, 1986 p.105). However, in 1974 a new television series, *Tangata Whenua* (People of the Land) was produced which did indicate that Māori existed. Directed by Barry Barclay, produced by John O'Shea, and written by Michael King, Lawrence McDonald described *Tangata Whenua* as "one of the most important documentary series not only of the 1970s but also of New Zealand film history in general" (Pivac, 2011 op.cit. p.163).¹⁰³ The NZFA were to become the repository for these films in the 1980s which "paved the way for subsequent developments in Māori film making and gave Pākehā a view into hitherto hidden worlds" (McDonald, 2011 p.163).

Barclay later commented on the climate in which the series was made in much the same tone as Grace, saying that the camera was alien to many Māori, distrusted and sometimes loathed. He felt this was because personal and significant matters for individuals and their communities are difficult to capture appropriately, as the "camera for most people, of whatever culture, remains an impersonal and often threatening mechanical presence, especially when in the hands of complete outsiders" (Barclay, 2005 p.99). To counter this viewpoint, while making *Tāngata Whenua* Barclay sought ways in which to make the camera less threatening, by using a number of pioneering techniques when Michael King interviewed Waikato iwi elders such as Ngakahikatea Wirihana and Herepo Rongo.¹⁰⁴ Barclay had the camera placed as far away as possible so interviewees felt less self-conscious and disconcerted by the "impersonal and often

¹⁰³ *Tangata Whenua* 1, New Zealand 1974, 82m, Director: Barry Barclay *The Spirits and the Times Will Teach*. (Retrieved 26/05/14 <http://tvnz.co.nz/2-movies/film-festival-09-tangata-whenua-1-2827426>).

¹⁰⁴ Michael King was later to be criticised for writing about the Māori world even though he felt he had an appropriate mandate (King, 1999). Dennis often quoted Michael King in his lectures (NZFA PP JD Box 2).

threatening mechanical presence...” (Barclay, 2005 *ibid.*). Barclay started recording before the formal interview began so that the general chat could be included where appropriate. The interviewees spoke in Te Reo Māori with English voiceover translation added, and he ensured the settings for interviews were traditional spaces or in homes where people were most comfortable (Barclay, 1990, 2003). Barclay led these shifts in practice because he was an “insider”. Though not necessarily with iwi affiliations to the interviewees, he was at least Māori which meant he was not a “complete outsider” (Barclay, 2005 p.99).

Barclay shifted the “rules of the game” as the first Māori television/filmmaker having control of the camera. He explained – “Every culture has a right and a responsibility to present its own culture to its own people...” He wanted to try and find “...ways to adapt the technology to suit our own purposes...” (Barclay, 1990 p.7). He felt that as a Māori film-maker he needed to be a listener who did not interrupt, as “Māori debate tends to be cyclic” whilst Pākehā have a more linear style, “thrusting...forward...butting in...going one better...” (Barclay, 1990 p.14). As he talked to indigenous peoples across the world about his practice he developed a new language and method through which to represent Māori. He eventually came to call this indigenous approach “the fourth cinema” (Barclay, 2003).

Despite his pioneering techniques Barclay was not comfortable with *Tāngata Whenua*. Over time he became increasingly uneasy about the copyright of the images that had been recorded. The images were deposited at the NZFA as part of the Pacific Films collection, and so the issues for indigenous peoples, in relation to control of their images, came to rest with Dennis’ institution. Barclay was concerned by how those images could be used after he and Michael King were no longer able to exert influence over the archive in which they were held. This led him to argue for the concept of Mana Tuturu, roughly translated to indigenous intellectual property rights, in particular related to spirituality (Barclay, 2005).

In a radio documentary interview by Jonathan Dennis, the first Māori woman filmmaker Merata Mita, commented on Barclay’s process and his changing focus over time –

It’s very interesting if you look back on the docos – starting with Barry Barclay/Pacific [Films] we [Māori] are explaining ourselves to white culture at large – then as Māori

nationalism increased we took on the task of explaining issues to each other – Māori to Māori – and that trend hasn't changed. When you look back on Māori docos, [you are] tracing the rise of Māori nationalism and looking out to a more international perspective for our work, art, people (Mita, 1999).¹⁰⁵

Mita understood Barclay's work as the beginning of a conversation which explained Māori to Pākehā and then shifted to an indigenous discussion about "Māori nationalism" before turning to an international perspective. This description is useful in thinking through the changes in institutions over this period of time when iwi based discussions became more common, moving away from the amorphous term "Māori" to something informed by specific iwi, hapū [subtribal] and whānau [family] values (Healy, 2013). At the same time Mita identified that the conversation also widened to the "more international perspective" to include other indigenous peoples and the development of transnational indigenous processes such as the concept of the "fourth cinema" (Barclay, 2003).¹⁰⁶ As Māori recognised an indigenous purpose and coherent practices which were sometimes similar across iwi, they also began to explore international indigenous perspectives and find support outside national borders. As they began to represent themselves they began to think about how their representations would be preserved and presented in the long term.

During the 1970s as the first representations of Māori appeared on television, there was still limited contact between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in museums and archives. Conal McCarthy demonstrated that there was some, if rare engagement between Pākehā museum workers and Māori prior to the watershed of the Te Māori exhibition (1984-1987) (McCarthy, 2011 p.44). For example, McCarthy briefly mentions Pākehā curator Ron O'Reilly as someone working with Māori but does not elaborate (McCarthy, 2011 p.41). Although not particularly well known in New Zealand today, O'Reilly was an early champion of both indigenous and New Zealand modernist art as well as avant garde cinema (Personal correspondence, M. O'Reilly 30/11/09). His contribution is described briefly here as an example of a younger Pākehā

¹⁰⁵ Box 9 NZFA JD's papers Golden Kiwis Film Show about NZ filmmakers, transcripts of recordings from 1999.

¹⁰⁶ Little research has yet been done on the idea that Mita, Barclay and others were travelling during this period. They were looking back to NZ and seeing it differently through an international lens. When they returned home their thinking had shifted. Dennis also found the international perspective supported him to work differently in NZ. I think there is further work to be done on this notion.

interested in a new relationship with Māori materials, but also because he was Jonathan Dennis' uncle and as previously noted, had an early and strong influence on his nephew (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).

In 1964 O'Reilly travelled to Nigeria (his first overseas trip) and worked there for two years, becoming fascinated by the spiritual element of the Nigerian Yoruba carvings he collected (M. O'Reilly, 2009).¹⁰⁷ When O'Reilly returned to Christchurch in the mid to late 1960s Jonathan Dennis was a 15 year old at boarding school in Christchurch and would sometimes spend time on the weekends with his uncle as previously described. At this time, O'Reilly wrote two articles in *Ascent* magazine on the nature of Māori art (R. N. O'Reilly, 1968). Within these articles he argued for Māori materials to be shifted beyond the status of ethnographic object. His son Matthew O'Reilly argued that his father was "preparing the way for Māori art's normalisation as art and its entry into the art museum" (M. O'Reilly, 2009). Dennis was influenced by his uncle's taste in modernist painting and film. Ron's last two years were spent assembling a touring exhibition of Māori post-contact painted art under the aegis of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery that would have pre-dated the watershed of Te Māori exhibition (M.O'Reilly, 2009 *ibid.*).

The work of O'Reilly and other Pākehā "cultural nationalists" raised questions regarding what national identity might mean, whose culture should be represented, and how that representation should be managed when the materials of Māori or other indigenous peoples were involved. The question which arises from the work of Nga Tamatoa, O'Reilly or the early Māori film-makers like Barry Barclay or Merata Mita, is *whose* cultural capital is to be valued in the art gallery, museum or archive or on the television or cinema screen?

"Artefact" becomes "art" becomes "taonga"

Art Critic Hamish Keith argued that prior to the 1970s period Pākehā struggled to understand what their culture might be. They felt they were often lost in a "cultural wilderness" whereas Māori knew this to be a "despairing reality." Keith maintains that during this period Māori art

¹⁰⁷ This interest is open to interpretation, as Ron O'Reilly was asked by some Nigerians not to take these carvings out of the country. He did so nevertheless, and so perhaps was not very different from the white collectors, the "elites" of earlier times. These carvings are now largely housed at the Canterbury Art Gallery as part of the agreement made when he took them from Nigeria (Hall, 2010) (Personal correspondence, M. O'Reilly 12/06/10).

was “invisible” to most Pākehā, existing only as representations of “an apparently vanished people, consigned by well-meaning elders and ethnologists to a largely fictitious past and a counterfeit chronology” (Keith, 2007 pp.200, 201). In 1978, however, a small but not insignificant change occurred in the practice of the cultural heritage sector when Mina McKenzie became museum director at Manawatu Museum in Palmerston North – she was the first Māori Museum Director. She established connections with local iwi Rangitāne, and they blessed and advised the Museum in its role as “kaitiaki o nga taonga tuku iho – guardians of the treasures passed down” (McCarthy, 2011 p.41). McKenzie influenced a range of Pākehā and Māori curators who worked for or with her, and she contributed to national debates about the nature of Māori materials in the cultural heritage sector. Leading by example, McKenzie was an influential mentor for many younger Pākehā curators such as David Butts who also created a pre-Te Māori exhibition in a regional museum which incorporated local iwi views at Hawke’s Bay Museum and Art Gallery, Napier (McCarthy, 2011 p.46). McKenzie’s use of the phrase “kaitiaki o nga taonga tuku iho” may have been common in Māori circles, but it certainly was not part of the Pākehā cultural heritage sector discourse at that time. Professor of Museum Studies Paul Tapsell (Ngati Whakāue, Te Arawa iwi affiliations) describes the term “taonga” below. His definition is provided here in full as it has significance for Dennis and the NZFA:

...any item, object or thing that represents the ancestral identity of a Māori kin group (whanau, hapu or iwi) in relation to particular lands and resources (...) They are seen as the spiritual personifications of particular ancestors, either as direct images or through association. Descendants experience this wairua (ancestral spirit) as ihi (presence), wehi (awe) and wana (authority). Thus taonga are time travellers that bridge the generations, enabling descendants to ritually meet their ancestors face to face (Tapsell, 2006 p.17 translation Tapsell's).

This understanding of an “object” as carrying the ancestral spirit offers a very different conception of the material in a museum, archive or art gallery to that of most Pākehā archivists and curators. They generally saw their collections as containing individual objects to be catalogued and preserved in climate controlled environments which ensured the physical decay

of the object is slowed or stopped. A *taonga* has a spiritual engagement with the whānau, hapū or iwi from whence it came. It has a dynamic reciprocal relationship to other materials and its iwi of origin. This requires an understanding and set of skills quite removed from the formal training of most Pākehā archivists or curators. It involves understanding one's role as a "kaitiaki" (guardian or steward) as opposed to a collector or owner. It is "tuku iho" to be passed down – the curator or archivist is temporarily charged with caring for it for the peoples of the future. The material is never owned by the institution. The concept *taonga* makes manifest a reciprocal relationship between present and past.

Young urban Māori, "increasingly critical of images of themselves as 'primitive' rural folk living in the past" (McCarthy, 2011 p.36), knew that their relationship with nga taonga tuku iho (treasures passed down) was more dynamic and reciprocal than the museums were acknowledging. It was a more personal relationship. By the very definition of the term "taonga", Pākehā could not have the relationship that those descendants could, who would (as Tapsell puts it) "ritually meet their ancestors face to face" through the materials of the museum or archive.¹⁰⁸ This understanding requires a living relationship with the descendants from whence it came. These Māori assertions of a living relationship to taonga were to challenge and sometimes frighten Pākehā cultural heritage workers (McCarthy, 2011 p.64). It certainly changed the "rules of the game" for cultural heritage institutions including the NZFA.

The spiritual element: Ngā taonga – kaupapa Māori

To demonstrate the shift in understanding museum material which occurred in the 1980s, Professor Paul Tapsell tells the story of an ihupukupuku (cloak) from his iwi named Pareraututu (the ancestor for whom the cloak is a spiritual personification). It is worth noting here that Tapsell and Witarina Harris are relatives from the same iwi in Rotorua. Witarina and Paul knew each other well, and she was aware of this story (Personal correspondence, P. Tapsell 09/12/10). The story demonstrates the living descendants' relationship with the taonga. The narrative also

¹⁰⁸ In fact, Colin McCahon, Dennis' hero, was to paint images related to Māori but get vital details wrong in the representation. This was to cause disruption and upset to Tūhoe and make the national news in 1997 (Binney, 2009 p.8). As early as 1991 artist Michael Parekowhai had boldly critiqued McCahon's work with a reappropriation of McCahon's *I Am* painting (1954). Parekowhai created a sculpture spelling "I Am He" in *The Indefinite Article*. There are various interpretations of this work, but "He" translates to "wrong" in Te Reo Māori.

functions as an example of Bourdieu's theory of competing values enacted in the struggle over the field of the exhibition space in the 1980s, though Tapsell does not use Bourdieu's philosophy himself.

Tapsell's Te Arawa relation Hari Semens saw an ihupukupuku at Rotorua in a travelling exhibition in 1982. He picked up the cloak and put it on his body, because it was not just a cloak, an item in a display, it was to him an embodiment of his ancestor. He felt the spiritual aspect of it. "People got upset, but they didn't understand, this was my kuia!" he said. Hari Semens asked Paul Tapsell as a member of his iwi (connected by social capital), but also as a recognised museum curator (with economic and cultural capital) to negotiate the return of the cloak. Tapsell has written how through this process he "began to understand why many Māori people have felt so alienated from their taonga held in large city institutions". The repatriation of the cloak to the iwi took many years (Tapsell, 2006 p.51). Tapsell's description describes a different world view from that of most Pākehā. For an object to be a spiritual personification of an ancestor seems impossible to the "rational" Western mind. And yet Hari Semens and Paul Tapsell, himself a trained Western archivist, believed this to be the case and indeed Tapsell's work since that experience has sought to honour Māori understandings in the face of Pākehā economic, social and cultural capital imperatives.

Bourdieu's theoretical framework suggests agents have an integral "social trajectory and disposition" which he calls "habitus" which in turn affects their "doxa" or beliefs and therefore their behaviour (Kloot, 2009 p.469). In Bourdieu's terms, Paul Tapsell was able to negotiate between his competing doxa. He chose to attempt to influence the field of museumship in NZ by changing the "rules of the game" or the field within which he functioned (Tapsell, 2010). In the case of Hari Semens, his doxa and habitus is imbued with a traditional Te Arawa iwi upbringing and he sits outside the field – the museum in this case. Supporting Bourdieu's argument, Semens seemingly had no choice over what he believed – the cloak before him *is* the embodiment of his ancestor and despite the rules of the institution, he must wear that cloak to honour her. Semens transgressed the regulative principles of the traditional museum space by touching what the museum staff would view as an "artefact" which they control and have ownership or entitlement to handle in certain ways. Hari Semens' behaviour on viewing his ancestor's cloak is arguably an

example of his doxa and habitus, as is the response of the Pākehā museum curators who were upset and angry that he had put on the cloak. Their competing doxa, their different social, economic and cultural capital did not enable them to appreciate the perspective of the other party at that time.

Paul Tapsell, as both a trained museum curator and a member of Semen's iwi, was caught between the competing doxa of his upbringing and the field in which he was expected to behave as a professional curator who respected the boundaries between audience and "object" as they are understood in the Western museum, art gallery or archive context. Bourdieu's view that doxa and habitus are unable to change has been challenged (Kloot, 2009), but it is not without merit. Pākehā can acknowledge and accept Māori relationships to taonga (Semen's relationship to the cloak, his kuia) but they cannot feel that relationship themselves because it is not their cultural milieu. They cannot "time travel" to meet the ancestor face to face through the taonga. Semen is a representative of the social capital of the Māori person who has a connection through his networks and family to the cloak. Similarly Pākehā curators are imbued with their own social and cultural capital and may not be able to shift their view. Tapsell sits between the Māori and Pākehā position and must negotiate between these, much as Ngata and Buck did in Sorrenson's view many years before.

However, what is missing from Bourdieu's theory is an acknowledgement of the spiritual component (Semen's connection to his ancestor). It is this spiritual component which is by definition most difficult to measure or quantify in European (or Pākehā) philosophy. As Dennis was to complain to the International Federation of Film Archives in 1988, there is a fundamental inability in European archiving philosophy to engage with Māori perspectives (J. Dennis, report to FIAF Paris conference, 1988). Paul Tapsell said of Dennis that he listened and engaged with tāngata whenua and he worked to ensure their tāonga were appropriately preserved and presented (Personal correspondence, P.Tapsell op.cit.). Tapsell was able to see first-hand how Dennis operated in his community in relation to the films which Dennis exhibited to his iwi. Tapsell argued that Dennis worked biculturally, and when asked what that meant Tapsell responded by describing the "twin streams" of hot and cold water near his (and Witarina Harris') traditional home at Ohinemutu in Rotorua. He said when you sit in the stream, the hot and cold

water intermingle but are still separate, the cold reminding your skin that you are alive, while the hot is soothing, or sometimes even scalding. He sees Pākehā like Dennis as being like one part of these streams, existing side by side with Māori, but also remaining autonomous (Personal correspondence, P.Tapsell op.cit.). Tapsell's view of the semi-autonomous but co-mingling "hot and cold", has echoes of Harris' reference to "my Māori world" and "my Pākehā world". Both are aware of the negotiation between two autonomous spheres of influence and can co-exist between them.

In the 1970s there was a growing awareness of Māori rights and knowledges demonstrated by the work of Mina McKenzie, and later Tapsell, Semens and others which moved towards a practice which incorporated Māori epistemologies. Simultaneously, the activist campaigns of the likes of Nga Tamatoa, and the influence of film and television works encouraged significant legislative changes which would have an impact on cultural heritage practices. In 1975 changes to the Antiquities Act occurred to control the sale of carvings to overseas collectors and to encourage repatriation of Māori materials in overseas collections (McCarthy p.40).¹⁰⁹ Other important social and cultural movements of that time included the 1975 Hiko Land March led by Whina Cooper from Northland to Parliament and the 1978 occupation of Bastion Point which would be recorded in Merata Mita's film *Bastion Point: Day 507* (Prods. & Dirs. M. Mita, & Pohlmann, G. 1980). The introduction of the Waitangi Tribunal through The Treaty of Waitangi Act (1975) began to allow the stories of colonisation and their impact over time to emerge in the wider community. These changes began to have an impact upon staff and practices in the government sector in the late 1970s and 1980s period (McCarthy 2011).¹¹⁰

These significant political and cultural changes towards a biculturalism arguably had less popular impact however than a sports game, which for many has defined national identity and their sense of being a "New Zealander" for many years. In an exhibition at the NZFA looking back at this time,

¹⁰⁹ Barry Barclay was to make a feature film about an iwi trying to repatriate their taonga from a German Museum. This was entitled *Te Rua* (Prod. O'Shea, J., Dir.B. Barclay, 1991).

¹¹⁰ The Treaty of Waitangi itself and the discussions and debates around it at this time are described in detail in Claudia Orange's book *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Orange, 1987) as well as in the work of many others including Mason Durie (Durie, 2005), and Ranginui Walker (R. Walker, 1990).

curator Campbell Farquhar recognised the significance of rugby as a tool of propaganda for a “united” nation. Farquhar argued that:

The story of rugby and the story of NZ have been intertwined since the game was first played here in 1870. In NZ rugby is one of the cultural touchstones for ideas about masculinity, toughness and giving things a go. In cinema and on television this has been exploited to tell stories, sell products and generate community spirit (Farquhar, 2011).

Other authors also recognise the specific geographical and socio-political significance of sport in relation to biculturalism. For example the Ministry for Culture and Heritage includes the following on its website:

Sport was an aspect of the “cultural power” through which the British Empire imposed and maintained itself more cheaply than it could have done by military might alone. In colonial New Zealand, rugby football rather than cricket came to perform such a function. It both encouraged loyalty to the Crown amongst white emigrants and helped assimilate a Māori elite into the “British way of life” (Ministry for Culture and Heritage website, 2011).

The game of rugby has been used to regulate behaviours without ostensibly needing to enforce discipline or control. Rugby has become a kind of representation of NZ identity which many people are reluctant to disrupt (Brady, 2006, 2012). This “cultural touchstone” was to be a focus for a clash of multiple perspectives in relation to biculturalism and national identity when the 1981 Springbok (South African Rugby team) Tour of NZ was announced. This event became a galvanising force for many New Zealanders prior to the 1984 Te Māori exhibition. Both the Springbok Tour and Te Māori forced people to realise how little had changed since Ngata and Buck’s experience of Pākehā being unable to engage with the “emotions, hearts and minds” of Māori or Witarina Harris’ representation as an exotic “Maoriland” princess. Both the Tour and the exhibition had a great influence on representations of the nation. These cultural historical events were to impact upon the newly formed NZFA in its founding decade when debates about the nature of biculturalism were underway. McCarthy suggested that in the 1980s period influenced by these events, the argument that biculturalism was a negotiation or a power sharing

exercise shifted to an exploration of “how the system itself could change” to incorporate Māori values (McCarthy, 2011 p.56). By changing the system itself it was thought that the doxa and habitus of both Māori and Pākehā could be honoured.

6. The New Zealand Film Archive become Guardians of the Treasured Images of Light/Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiāhua

Within its first decade, the NZFA developed from its “very European” origins (Dennis, 1989 p.10) into an institution which had a working document called The Constitution/Kaupapa in which the Treaty of Waitangi principles were incorporated and acknowledged as the founding document of the nation. In particular the Archive developed an understanding of Article Two of the Treaty which referred to ‘taonga’, as we have seen, a concept which would alter the manner in which institutions in New Zealand would engage with Māori materials (McCarthy, 2011). As set out in the previous chapter, in the 1970s there was a re-evaluation of socio-political processes in the cultural heritage world, with small and incremental shifts eventually leading to changes in institutional practices. Because the NZFA was not a government department it was not obliged by legislative changes or ministerial decree to shift its practice. But the staff were aware of the changes occurring both inside and outside bureaucratic regimes. They were also becoming attuned to the needs of their multiple audiences, informed by Witarina Harris, Merata Mita, Barry Barclay and others.

During the 1980s, Dennis and the Archive staff became involved in a process they called “Returning”, which was a way for the Archive to make its material more accessible to those who would not necessarily feel comfortable coming into a Western institution (Barclay, 2005 p.105). It was also an effective tool through which to gain subject expert knowledge from descendants of the people in historic films; both Māori and Pākehā. The audience’s skills, knowledge and experience of the images previously unavailable to archivists within an institution, were important to a better understanding (and therefore cataloguing and presentation) of the films (Dennis, 1989 p.10). The doxa and habitus of descendants of Māori in films held by the Archive, for example, ensured they had cultural and social capital previously unavailable in a predominantly Pākehā institution. Dennis recognised this as a change in the “European” style of the Archive. However there were ethical issues here as Pākehā gained from Māori knowledge, and this became increasingly problematic during the 1980s period.

Screening films to audiences in regional cinemas and traditional meeting places proved to Dennis that a fundamental shift in the framework of the Archive was necessary in order to address the fact that the institution had remained firmly in Pākehā hands, even as engagement with Māori had increased. This led Dennis and the Archive towards structural changes as the understanding of Māori films as artefacts, in the ethnographic sense, changed to a re-understanding of these materials as artworks in their own right. This meant presenting Māori materials in context and with appropriate accompanying information. Subsequently, there was a final shift towards seeing these materials as ngā taonga. The corresponding shift in the structural framework which was required, led Dennis to more creative practices and responses to the materials housed in the Archive through an increasingly reciprocal relationship with the audience. This shifted the power of the Director of the Archive, who had previously been the expert, and now became the pupil. This chapter examines the 1980s period in which the Archive was established and quite quickly shifted its practice towards an understanding of ngā taonga. This led to the rewriting of the Archive's constitution in 1988 and a personal shift for Dennis in his understanding of the worth of the films he was working with and a new sense of himself and his place in NZ.

Springbok tour protests, the NZFA opens

The NZFA was founded in 1981 – the same year as the Springbok tour of New Zealand which caused protests across the country, described by Bruce Babington as “nation-splitting” (Pivac et al., 2011 p.202). According to his diary, Jonathan Dennis attended at least one Wellington protest on Friday 1st May, 1981 (NZFA PP JD Box 20).¹¹¹ The protests began as an all white Apartheid era South African national rugby team came to tour the country and play the All Blacks, the New Zealand national team. There had previously been a history of protest from (largely) Māori people who felt it was unacceptable for the New Zealand Rugby Football Union to send only white or “honorary white” players to matches in South Africa.¹¹² By 1981 the protest movement included Pākehā. There were competing perspectives, but the purpose – to halt the current tour – was sufficiently galvanizing for people to stand under the same banners; at least for a time. The

¹¹¹ Dennis' sister Simon also remembers him attending “anti tour protests” (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

¹¹² “Māori had long held concerns over sporting contacts with apartheid-era South Africa, but protests began in 1960. Prior to this, New Zealand Māori teams played against South Africa in 1921 and 1956” (Keane, 2012).

protests successfully halted the game at Hamilton and disrupted every other match played in the country. They encouraged a wide and passionate debate about the role of politics in sport, Pākehā responsibilities for the continuing aftermath of colonial occupation of the country, and brought to the surface ongoing anxieties and concerns in a country which liked to present itself as enjoying racial harmony.¹¹³

Scholar and activist Ranginui Walker remembered that in Māori political circles the Springbok tour protests were an important moment, pointing out that “In the wake of the tour, an argument adopted by some – that Māori should not be reliant on Pākehā and that Pākehā had no role in Māori political campaigns – gained ground” (Walker quoted in Spoonley, 2009 p.109).¹¹⁴ The “argument adopted by some” is articulated in Merata Mita’s film of the Springbok protests, *Patu!* (Prod. & Dir. M. Mita, 1983) (which translates to strike, beat, hit or subdue) in which we see protest meetings where Māori speakers ask Pākehā why they are willing to stand for the rights of Black South Africans when they had never protested about the inequities of the indigenous peoples of the country in which they lived. This film used footage Mita had collected and edited, together with that of other Pākehā filmmakers who donated their materials.¹¹⁵ The film would be deposited in the NZFA and Dennis personally appointed by Mita as its distributor even after he had finished at the NZFA (NZFA PP JD Box 11).¹¹⁶

The tour and the film *Patu!* were very important for the cultural history sector, with almost the whole of the film industry joining the protests and providing footage to Mita while helping her “keep the footage out of the hands of the police, who were attempting to requisition it for ‘evidence’” (Horrocks in Pivac et.al., 2011, p. 14). Annie Collins was the editor of *Patu!* She was a young Pākehā woman, who felt her “eyes were opened” regarding the history of colonialism by working on this film.¹¹⁷ She said Merata Mita was a key part of this education for her – “it was on

¹¹³ For a discussion of this topic from a Pākehā perspective see Pollock 2004.

¹¹⁴ For further discussion of the impact of the Springbok tour protests there are many texts, including Ranginui Walker’s *Struggle Without End Ka Whawhai Tonu* (R. Walker, 1990).

¹¹⁵ These included co-ordinators Gaylene Preston, Gerd Pohlmann and Martyn Sanderson. Photographers were Barry Harbet with W. Attewell, C. Barrett, A. Barry, J. Bartle, A. Bollinger, P. Carvell, R. Donaldson, M. Fingel, E. Frizzell, C. Ghent, A. Guilford, R. Long, Leon Narbey, R. Prosser, and M. Single all contributing (Edwards & Martin, 1997 p.91). Many of these people were or went on to have prominent careers in the film industry in NZ and/or overseas.

¹¹⁶ NZFA JD PP Box 11 correspondence on distribution of *Patu!* through the 1990s in folder labelled “Merata”. Annie Collins private papers at Wadestown accessed 2009 included requests addressed to Dennis asking to screen the film (AC PP).

¹¹⁷ Annie Collins worked as editor on *Patu!* because of her previous experience with other film productions: “I’d cut *Keskidee Aroha* for Martyn [Sanderson] and she [Mita] was co-director of that, although she wasn’t around when that was cut. And from there I was passed to Gerd Pohlmann, her husband, for *The Bridge*, and Gerd said ‘try Annie Collins [for *Patu!*]’ to Merata” (Personal correspondence, A. Collins 26/01/09).

Patu! that my comprehension shifted. It was on *Patu!* I realised that I did not understand the land that I was born in” (Personal correspondence, A. Collins 26/01/09).

Collins was also aware of the police presence around Mita’s house, and heard about the harassment of Mita’s sons and the attempts made to seize the film footage to use in the prosecution of protestors. They decamped at one point from Auckland to Waiheke Island in the Hauraki Gulf in order to avoid the disruption to the edit caused by police activity. They did not have a lot of money, and Collins vividly remembered home-made pizzas with gritty sand from the pipis (shellfish) they had gathered and put on them (Personal correspondence, A. Collins op.cit.). As Dennis noted in his own presentations later in the decade, Collins’ knowledge was to benefit the NZFA when she ran anti-racism workshops for the NZFA staff and quickly became a key ally for the NZFA (Dennis, 1989 p.11).

Merata Mita was one of only two Māori feature filmmakers to emerge in the 1980s period; the other was Barry Barclay, previously discussed as the director of the *Tangata Whenua* series in the 1970s. Both were involved in the development of the NZFA as it began to incorporate indigenous perspectives into its practices. For many years though, Barclay campaigned from outside, with Dennis commenting that he was “banging on the walls but we had already opened the door.” Mita on the other hand, was seen by Dennis as a “key supporter” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).¹¹⁸

As Barclay described it – “During the 1980s, a very significant contest developed within the [New Zealand Film] archive, a struggle of conscience, if you like, in which there were many players, to all of whom we are greatly indebted” (Barclay, 2005 p.103). This “contest” involved Māori and Pākehā debates on how archiving should be undertaken. The issues raised in Mita’s *Patu!* and exemplified by Ranginui Walker’s description, “Māori should not be reliant on Pākehā and that Pākehā had no role in Māori political campaigns”, were indicative of the debates, tensions and

¹¹⁸ There is some contention about Barclay’s influence at the NZFA. Barclay believes his interventions resulted in the Kaupapa of the Archive being established. Others including Dennis argue that the Kaupapa was already in place and what Barclay contributed was the phrase and understanding of “mana tuturu”, a spiritual guardianship aspect (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Barclay was certainly influential in ensuring that the NZFA post Dennis’ tenure as director continued to maintain a bicultural partnership agreement (Barclay, 2005).

difficulties at the Film Archive and in the wider cultural heritage sector as attempts were made to move towards the incorporation of Māori perspectives.

Because they hold the cultural materials of the nation, “museums are at the centre of arguments about culture identity, history, restitution and social inclusion” (McCarthy, 2011 p.2). A bicultural discussion was inevitable at the NZFA because of the nature of the film medium which “cries out to be shared” (Dennis, 1989 p.10), and the fact that “The wealth of the NZ Film Archive is actually the indigenous material” (Personal correspondence A. Collins, op.cit.). If the NZFA staff were taking indigenous materials out to the public then they were going to have to engage in discussions about rights and privileges in relation to control of those materials. The debate can be seen as an early discussion of kaupapa Māori methodology. Like Barclay’s experience of archiving the *Tangata Whenua* films, the attempts to have Māori people in control of the process within filmmaking and the subsequent archiving of those materials, is part of the discussion of Māori self-determination.

During the 1980s the term “bicultural” appears to have been variously understood by people and organisations in the sector. For example, Sharp argues that “bicultural reformism” was one approach which caused an adaptation by existing institutions which largely remained under Pākehā control, whereas “bicultural distributivism is the development of specifically Māori institutions to share the authority defined by the Treaty” (Sharp, 1997 p.230). The latter understanding equates to the concept of Nga Puna o Maumahara (marae based repositories of knowledge). This idea has been discussed and debated at various conferences including the Archivists and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ) *Ngā Taonga Tuku Iho* national conference in 2004. At this conference, Māori speakers expressed frustration at the lack of genuine progress in relation to the maintenance and cultural safety of indigenous materials in mainstream institutions (ARANZ, 2004).

Eagle has described the government department or state response to biculturalism as ideally a “journey”. The institution begins as monocultural. It then moves to a decision to be bicultural and introduces a Māori perspective. Next it encourages active iwi involvement and engenders trust, then finally creates a bicultural partnership which incorporates the values of the Treaty of

Waitangi (Eagle, 2000). Eagle critiqued this process, acknowledging that for most government departments the journey had not been either smooth nor successful and in fact in most cases had stagnated by the end of the 1990s (McCarthy, 2011 p.12).¹¹⁹

During the early 1980s there were few Māori staff within the cultural heritage sector. Those few were the only people able to advise on appropriate management of indigenous materials until Ken Gorbey established a national scheme for employing Māori after the Te Māori exhibition (McCarthy, 2011 pp.42,43).¹²⁰ There were no Māori staff at the NZFA in the early part of the decade.

Te Māori and its implications for biculturalism

Influenced by the many changes in practice and philosophy which were occurring during the 1980s, Roger Neich of the Wellington National Museum – previously called the Dominion where Elsdon Best had worked – curated two exhibitions: *Māori Art for America* and *Nga Taonga Hou o Aotearoa: New National Treasures* in 1983 and 1984 respectively. The 1984 exhibition was regarded as particularly innovative for displaying Māori carving as art rather than artefact. Displaying indigenous materials as art had become common practice overseas but not yet in NZ and echoed Ron O'Reilly's suggestions in his 1968 *Ascent* articles. Neich's exhibitions also used the word *taonga* as a bilingual term for the first time (McCarthy, 2011 p.42). This predated the Te Māori exhibition which is generally understood to be the first national exhibition in which Māori taonga had been treated in a way which incorporated Māori values and perspectives.¹²¹

The 1983 exhibition is significant in that Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA were involved for the first time with the museum in these early exhibitions. McCarthy makes a fleeting reference to Dennis when he writes:

¹¹⁹ This discussion of biculturalism in museums and archives owes great debt to Conal McCarthy's work (McCarthy 2011).

¹²⁰ This scheme no longer exists (Bloomfield, 2013).

¹²¹ This is not to say that Te Māori was considered an exemplary exhibition by all Māori peoples. Not all iwi agreed to allow their taonga to be involved in the exhibition (including the Whanganui iwi because of their negative experiences with museums) and some Māori women were offended by the fact that only men's art (carvings) were included (Merimeri Penfold quoted in Shepard, 2009 p.115).

Rare films shot by James McDonald of the Dominion Museum in the 1920s, preserved by the NZFA, were shown together for the first time in June 1983 in association with this [Māori Art for America] exhibition. Director Jonathan Dennis demonstrated through an active public programme and community outreach how a small cultural organisation such as the Archive could begin to take on board Māori values and practices (McCarthy, 2011 p.42).

These are the same films Ngata and Buck had been associated with, as described in the previous chapter. They were the ethnographic and anthropological studies which Dennis and the NZFA had inherited from the National Archives in 1981 now generally known as the James McDonald films (McDonald, J. 1919, 1920, 1921, 1923 NZFA collection). When Dennis and the staff began to process the film they had noted elements they “didn’t understand”, and so began to ask Māori people such as Bill Cooper to advise them, and then others became involved (Dennis, 1989 p.10).¹²² In response to this advice they began to take the films to their communities of origin for screening, realising that to be a truly national institution they had to respond to regional interests and could also encourage feedback and information on the films (Davy & Pivac, 2008). At first Dennis was the only NZFA employee and so he was accompanied by Clive Sowry, the only other trained Film Archivist in the country (Pivac & Dennis, 2000).¹²³ They would load up projection equipment and drive around the country, showing films to anyone interested in seeing them.¹²⁴ Merata Mita described the practice as “giving us insights into ourselves of which we would normally be bereft....These showings demonstrate a process of retrieving and restoring history, heritage, pride, consciousness and Māori identity” (Mita, 1996 p.50).

This practice, as Mita notes, was reminiscent of the days of the travelling picture showmen in the late 1800s and early 1900s before purpose built cinemas were common. As early filmmaker Edwin (Ted) Coubray would later describe it in a film by Dennis, these men would travel through towns setting up their equipment in a local hall or empty building and charge a small fee for the

¹²² The catalogue for the collection includes a list of those involved in the preservation and contextualisation of these films and is as previously noted appended to the thesis.

¹²³ Although their relationship eventually soured, Sowry worked closely with Dennis in the late 1970s and early 1980s to champion the idea of the NZFA, even writing the first and second monograph for the NZFA (Sowry, 1984). Dennis acknowledged Sowry’s important role when he said “the notion of a film archive certainly didn’t come to me, it wasn’t a blinding flash that I had, it was Clive Sowry that initiated I suppose my understanding that the films that I clearly liked, the Hayward films and the others were in some kind of danger” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis 2000).

¹²⁴ Dennis himself never learned to drive, so always needed someone with a car or van to accompany him (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

local people to see images of interest (*Mouth Wide Open*, Prod. Collins, A., Dir. Dennis, 1998). In the 1980s the revival of this practice became increasingly exciting to Dennis, as local Māori people responded with not only passion and interest, but also a “subject expert knowledge” to the films they were seeing (Dell, 1987 p.3).¹²⁵ The responses of these audiences helped guide how the films were catalogued, edited, and eventually managed in the Archive. For example, Dennis described how in 1985, “The Māori and Pacific Island weavers invited us to two of their national hui and we showed the weaving sequences from the [McDonald] film” (Dennis, 1989 p.10). This national weavers hui at Te Teko was an opportunity for the weavers to help the Archive understand the sequence of shots through the order of the weaving patterns in the film.¹²⁶

It was becoming clear to the Archive that their own expertise in preserving and presenting films was growing, but their knowledge of Te Ao Māori, or “taha Māori” (often translated as the Māori side) as Dennis sometimes called it, was lacking.¹²⁷ Dennis and his small but growing Pākehā team had a formal European training in archiving but lacked the cultural capital of Māori who may have grown up in traditional environments where the stories of their ancestors were shared. They could not have a spiritual engagement with ngā taonga o ngā iwi [the treasures of the tribe]. They were constantly reminded of this as they made mistakes. For example when the NZFA returned to the weavers’ next hui, having followed their advice for editing the film, the weavers’ feedback was that it was now an accurate edit, but “what a shame” that dialect appropriate intertitles for that region had not been created. “We hadn’t even thought of that!” said Dennis. The NZFA then had those intertitles translated appropriately (Dennis 1989 p.10). In this manner, screening to audiences all around the country encouraged the appropriate experts who were unavailable in a Pākehā dominated Wellington archive, to support and improve the contextualisation of the archival object or taonga.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ As Dr Susan Healy said at a presentation about Ngāpuhi philosophy, “the knowledge rests with the people it belongs to” and may or may not be shared with others depending on whether relationships develop which encourage trust and reciprocity (Healy, 2013).

¹²⁶ NZFA JD PP Box 19 (loose in box.)

¹²⁷ Turoa Royal notes that Graham Smith calls “taha Māori” a Pākehā invention (Royal, 2010). Dennis used the term in the catalogue of an exhibition in 1989 (Dennis Jonathan & Toffetti Sergio, 1989).

¹²⁸ This process could be understood as either reciprocal or exploitative. Presumably the weavers did not get paid for their expertise and advice to the NZFA. It is not clear if others who helped with intertitles were paid for their time as I do not have access to NZFA financial data. Cushla Parekowhai was the first Māori employee of the NZFA, but did not begin in the role until the end of the 1980s (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Witarina Harris as kaumātua was paid various stipends and travel expenses for her work but she was a “figurehead” and was not involved in the

Unlike screenings in museums and archives which tended to follow a Pākehā protocol, regional screenings at marae were very different. Dennis' developing practice was a crude and early form of kaupapa Māori in that it acknowledged that Māori people held the expert knowledge about their materials. However, the film archivists were still Pākehā and therefore from some perspectives, it could never truly be kaupapa Māori practice.

Pākehā Sharon Dell was the Māori Materials Subject Specialist in the 1980s at the Alexander Turnbull Library and began to accompany the Film Archive on these "returnings" in 1986.¹²⁹ She described her observations of marae screenings in some detail. One of the James McDonald films, *He Pito Whakaatu I Te Noho A Te Māori I Te Awa O Whanganui/Scenes of Māori Life on the Whanganui River (1921)* was first screened locally at Matahiwi in 1985, and since that time had several further screenings. In 1986 a MASPAC [Māori and South Pacific Arts Council] sponsored conservation hui at Koroniti, provided another opportunity to show the film and she wrote of the "profound and moving" experience as the films opened up "a direct communication...between the living and the dead" (Dell, 1987 pp.3, 4). She described audience members identifying family, and even ancestors of the animals in the village. "Most are known by name and some are greeted as if they stood before us...Personal characteristics are laughed at, family likenesses in the present generations are pointed out – even amongst the pigs and dogs which still wander around the village" (Dell, 1987 *ibid.*).

As Dell described it, the response and critique from iwi audiences suggested a living relationship with the ancestors in those images, a living memory of those in the images, and also an understanding of the playfulness of the film when "the people themselves face the camera with self-possession and confidence. They are aware of the artificiality of some of the reconstructions (when obviously dead fish are scooped all too easily into a net, the 'actors' perform with wry comic glee)" (Dell, 1987 pp. 3,4). Dell was able to learn that the performances were not necessarily authentic but they were important nonetheless. She described how some of the

day to day archiving processes. In 1987 on the 10th of February, a letter was written by the then Minister of Recreation and Sport Mike Moore awarding her a "retainer" of \$5,000 (net) to be Cultural Ambassador of NZ Films for the year in London, Paris and Bonn (NZFA JD PP loose in Box 19). Dennis appears to have funded many Māori associated activities with "one off grants" from Ministers of the Arts, Recreation, and (later) Internal Affairs (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

¹²⁹ Dell also helped Dennis a great deal in an advisory capacity and they worked on exhibitions of James McDonald's still photography as well as the aforementioned Hocart collection of Fijian images (Personal correspondence, S. Dell 10/09/10).

scenes in the film were set up for the camera “where they are using digging sticks and things that they hadn’t actually used that way for a long time...I think there is that sense that iwi were presenting what they wanted to present...” but said the screenings were still “magic” occasions (Personal correspondence, S. Dell 10/09/10).

Dell and Dennis observed the reactions of the audiences, spoke to them and listened in turn to their interpretations of the films.¹³⁰ As Dell notes, this was not a simple process of assuming an authenticity in the films, but an acknowledgement that these were constructed representations of indigenous peoples. However this did not detract from a passionate engagement by the audience. Working with these films and experiencing audience reactions, Dennis and the other staff began to learn from contemporary Māori people and their relationship to the films made so long ago. This was an extremely labour intensive and time consuming process. Dennis said – “...we tried to take films out of the archive and return them to people which meant we had to engage in dialogues with people and communities and at the time we could not find much of a precedent for this – but [it] gave us extraordinary insight” (Dennis in Mita & Dennis, 1991). Dennis’ friends and colleagues recognised that the passion he felt for films was finally matched by the audience, as Māori responded with enthusiasm to films of their ancestors (Personal correspondence, M. Wall 01/10/10). Dennis described another screening, this time in an urban setting in the capital city Wellington – “...an old lady who remembered the filming back in 1921 and who’d seen the film already at Matahiwi and at the Museum, stood and began to karanga, to call out to the ancestors, to welcome them back” (Dennis, 1990 p.3).

This elder was responding to taonga as described by Paul Tapsell – she was calling to the wairua of the films, to the ihi and wana with wehi.¹³¹ Because of these kinds of responses, rituals and ceremonies of the tāngata whenua came to be incorporated into the screenings of the films, and Mihipeka Edwards (iwi affiliations to Te Arawa and Ngāti Raukawa), Lily Amohau (iwi affiliation

¹³⁰ Sharon Dell completed an early draft translation of the McDonald film from Whanganui. Ruka Broughton, Taranaki Te Reo Tohunga then did a further translation (Personal Correspondence, S.Dell 13/04/15).

¹³¹ A reminder of Professor of Museum Studies Paul Tapsell’s (Te Arawa) description of the term taonga: “any item, object or thing that represents the ancestral identity of a Māori kin group (whanau, hapu or iwi) in relation to particular lands and resources...They are seen as the spiritual personifications of particular ancestors, either as direct images or through association. Descendants experience this wairua (ancestral spirit) as ihi (presence), wehi (awe) and wana (authority). Thus taonga are time travellers that bridge the generations, enabling descendants to ritually meet their ancestors face to face” (Tapsell, 2006 p.17 translation Tapsell’s).

Ngāti Whakāue) and Witarina Harris were all elders who “warmed” the films by accompanying them to various locations and contextualising them for audiences through introductions, prayer, song and talk (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Conal McCarthy describes warming as “an essential element in the care of taonga” referring to “the bond between people and treasures that is activated and maintained when they come together” (McCarthy, 2011 p.133).

This was exciting progress for Dennis and the NZFA, but it did pose many questions for the formal Western film archive model they were part of. In his 1988 report to the Federation Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF) Congress, Dennis expressed his concern with the lack of progress internationally in working with indigenous peoples to better catalogue materials. Dennis described the difficulties the NZFA encountered as they prepared a catalogue for the sixty films accompanying the return of the Te Māori exhibition of taonga from the United States of America. It was becoming increasingly difficult to follow the “European” model where the normative practice did not account for indigenous perspectives. The difficulty of ensuring appropriate process which could honour the Māori perspective as well as satisfy European archiving protocols was an issue for the international community in his opinion (Dennis Jonathan, 1987).¹³² He felt that although some “basic descriptive cataloguing” progress had been made, the “process cannot be sustained in isolation”. He was concerned by this and felt that “the inability of present cataloguing philosophy and practice to acknowledge the contribution and status of indigenous peoples ought to become the subject of much larger and more vigorous debate” (FIAF report of NZFA, Paris, 1988).

In this report Dennis is signalling a tension between geographically specific practices and processes developed with iwi which were alien from the international codes of film archiving. He is naming a failure in European “cataloguing philosophy” and calling for an international response to this dilemma. He was also asking for help from the international film archiving community. In the presentation of the films, Dennis had been able to follow the lead of elders such as Witarina Harris to ensure appropriate practice. But Harris was not an archivist and therefore was unable

¹³² The NZFA gained membership of FIAF (Federation Internationale des Archives du Film) in 1985. The archive was audited regularly, and if found to be failing the standards of FIAF’s code they would be expelled (FIAF, 2002).

to advise him on the practice of appropriate cataloguing or long term preservation of the films in the care of the NZFA. Nor were Barry Barclay or Merata Mita archivists themselves. The International Federation of Film Archives, dominated by European and North American interests were not engaged by ihi, wehi, wana or wairua. The “magic” Dell described in relation to these films was not part of the traditional view of the Western archivist. These concerns were not resolved by the time Dennis resigned from the Archive, and in fact these ongoing difficulties were part of the reason he departed from the Archive (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

Dennis was able to continue to engage with indigenous materials throughout the 1980s because Witarina Harris supported his work. The alliance with a Māori elder was his entrée into Māori communities where an unknown Pākehā and Director of a Wellington institution could not otherwise go: people’s private homes, Black Power hui [Māori gang gathering], where nui events and Māori film screenings (Alley & Dennis, 2002; Fyfe & Dennis, 2001; Pivac & Dennis, 2000). He had no social or cultural capital in these spaces and relied entirely on hers.

Harris’ influence on Dennis’ practice was profound. He sought her out when his international colleagues indicated that a copy of the 1929 film *The Devil’s Pit* might be available for repatriation from a private collection in the United States. Dennis had heard that the star of the film might still be alive, so just as he had sought out other stars and icons such as Lillian Gish, Len Lye and Mary Meerson, he arranged to meet Harris in 1982 (NZFA PP JD Box 19). She began to have an impact on his practice immediately, but Dennis said in later interviews that it was the 1984 response to the films with Witarina Harris at the Rotorua Festiv’Art which really had a great impact on the Archive’s direction. He described how she organised “a private screening [in someone’s home] and all the old people came. It was the first time we had shown the films in that context...when we showed the films at the festival, hundreds of people came. It was quite extraordinary...”(Dennis, 1989). It was this screening which encouraged him to realise how much more engaged Māori people were by their films, and how the NZFA could be part of that engagement.

Dennis notes it was the first time they had shown the films in a private home. It was Harris’ influence which allowed this to happen since she had arranged the screenings in her hometown.

It opened Dennis' eyes to new possibilities which would engage this passionate audience. Dennis said that when the films were shown privately to the elders they wanted to see each film fragment "*at least twice*" (Dennis, 1990 p. 2, Dennis' emphasis). In another interview he said "a thousand" came to the film screenings at the festival (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Dennis described the "terrific sense of excitement at being able to greet these images. It was like a whole tribe and city's home movies had been returned, were now known about and accessible (even though still only through the Archive). The occasion was deeply felt by both Māori and European alike...." He said although he did not realise it at the time the films and their reception were starting to change the archive, which needed to be "responsible for offering balanced and equitable services at local, regional and tribal levels – not just in the city where we were based" (Dennis, 1990, p.2). Dennis was clearly excited and the responses he saw were motivational in trying to engage people who really responded to the NZFA screenings. However he also notes that the films were only available through the Archive, signalling his awareness of the concerns regarding iwi control of their own materials.

Harris' knowledge and iwi based relationships afforded Dennis many advantages and opportunities he would not otherwise have had. Harris had a wide network, she had full command of her language, and knowledge of her culture. This allowed Dennis to invite other Māori to become involved through her influence. But ultimately, as Nga Tamatoa (the Young Warriors of the previous chapter) and other younger activists began to pressure cultural heritage institutions, it became clear that Harris' support was not enough. The younger generation of activists were not content to work in a supporting capacity for Pākehā, as (arguably) Ngata, Buck and Harris had done. They wanted control (arguably the kaupapa Māori mode). Dennis as a Pākehā did not understand the (as Sorreson described it of other Pākehā) "inner emotions, hearts and minds" of Māori (Sorrenson, 2012). He did not have the cultural capital required, nor did he feel as a non-Māori that he had the networks or support (which would have been provided by social capital) required. As Dennis said, without Harris' "generosity and love" he could not have undertaken many of the screenings they did. He acknowledged that although "she, and the others of her generation...were there for the Archive and for me, [ultimately they] were not

enough” (Dennis, 1990 p.4). This supports Bourdieu’s argument that people are fixed by their doxa and habitus and are unable to shift outside these.

Dennis was ostensibly European, being of a line of English/Irish settlers. And yet he was a Pākehā too – a New Zealand born European with strong ties and links to his country. He was in the same position as many Pākehā working in cultural heritage institutions in the 1980s. While he was willing to learn and take on the values of indigenous peoples, this was not enough to satisfy those who felt that in order to adequately redress the many wrongs of the past who felt it was necessary to take back control of their own images. In addition, he could never experience ngā taonga as face to face encounters with the ancestors, because they were not his ancestors. Māori had a different kind of cultural capital than Dennis did; they had a relationship to their taonga which he could not have. They did not, like Bourdieu and some Pākehā, see their taonga as “primitive” (Pierre Bourdieu, 1984 p.3). For Māori, who had social capital through iwi networks, they had a knowledge and experience very different from the Pākehā Director of the NZFA.

Dennis’ experience is certainly reflected in the wider development of the kaupapa Māori movement during the 1980s. The debates, such as “do you have to be Māori to do this?” were rife and Dennis was, as the Director of a national institution holding Māori materials, asked this himself. By the 1980s the “rules of the game” were changing and Pākehā were being challenged to give back the power they had held since colonisation began. The kind of concerns about Māori materials being screened by the Archive were encapsulated in an experience Dennis described which occurred while presenting the McDonald films at the old museum in Wellington on Buckle St (formerly the Dominion Museum where Elsdon Best and James McDonald had worked). With an audience of about 300 people, but without Witarina Harris present, a young Māori man demanded to know “what was a Pākehā doing with this material in the first place and what were we doing with it and how much do I earn, and you know, what gave us the right to preserve this material, and did this as a complete, really, aggressive challenge at me” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Dennis said this was “early days” for these kinds of challenges, and the Pākehā people in

the audience “curled up in horror” but the Māori people in the audience sat and watched “as one would do on a marae”(Dennis in Pivac and Dennis, *ibid.*).¹³³

In this instance, Dennis was describing culturally informed responses which depended upon the habitus and doxa of the individuals. The young man was openly speaking to Dennis in a public forum, challenging his right to hold this material of Māori origin. He was questioning Dennis’ power, his cultural capital in relation to these materials, which this man, like many others, responded to as ngā taonga, as a direct encounter with the ancestors. If Dennis had been on a marae and working within a framework for that space, it may have been a very different engagement.

As indicated by his observation that Māori sat up and watched as one would do on a marae where particular protocols and responses were normative, Barclay’s argument that Māori debate is nonlinear and cyclic arises here. Dennis was outside his own field, the Archive, and the young man was (possibly) outside his traditional field, the marae, where there would be rules of engagement quite different to those at the Museum where the films were screened. This young man was expressing sentiments similar to those which Mita’s film *Patu!* had shown and Ranginui Walker had alluded to. For this man, “biculturalism” meant self-determination, tino rangatiratanga. Dennis said he had “rarely felt so exposed...The generosity of my reception in places around the country never eased the vulnerability, or the hurts and rejection that seem to be part of the painful process of disempowering oneself. Without blueprints, the process of finding and providing some kind of adequate framework to empower others is immensely slow and difficult...But it can also be...a time of real awakening” (Dennis, 1990 p.6).

Another Pākehā working with taonga (and the descendant of James McDonald who was the cameraman for the films Dennis was screening above) felt there was an irony to a situation where

¹³³ Merimeri Penfold, a Māori scholar described similar criticism leveled at Judith Binney, a Pākehā historian and Ann Salmond, a Pākehā who had been chosen by Māori iwi elders to tell their stories: “Anne Salmond and Judith Binney were approached by Māori women protestors demanding them to ‘Stop. Stop writing about us.’ Judith was working on *Ngaa Moorehu: The Survivors*, her book of oral history interviews with Māori women elders associated with the prophet Rua Kenana and the Ringatuu faith. She replied ‘The writing has been done with the permission of the Māori women elders. Are you saying I should not accept the permission they gave me? Are you challenging their decision?’...These women protestors were much younger and for the first time they had to confront real issues. They needed to respect that Judy and Anne were working with the approval of the elderly Māori women” (Shepard, 2009 p.128) Dennis was aware of these criticisms – he had spoken and corresponded with Anne Salmond (NZFA PP JD Box 11).

in the 1980s period “Pākehā people...were bringing Māori things to public attention because Pākehā were in a position of advantage and privilege. They had better access to education over generations, so I could understand the force of Māori criticism” (Dame Anne Salmond quoted in Shepard, 2009, p. 182). Dennis was clearly not the only one criticised for engaging with Māori materials at this time. Pākehā privilege – their doxa and habitus – meant they were in a position to bring “Māori things” to public attention.

Dennis responded to the criticisms encapsulated in the young Māori man’s attack at the museum by attempting to change the institutional structure to reflect genuine power sharing. For example he invited Annie Collins, editor of *Patu!* and an anti-racism trainer with *Pākehās Against Racism*, to carry out workshops with the staff.¹³⁴ This group was undertaking “Pākehā to Pākehā” efforts to challenge racism. Collins did two workshops with the NZFA staff and they redrafted the constitution into the kaupapa (Personal correspondence, A. Collins op.cit.).

The rewriting of the Constitution/Kaupapa of the Archive occurred around the same time as the name of the Archive was changed from the NZFA to the *NZFA Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiāhua* (The Guardians of the Treasured Images of Light). Sharon Dell created the Te Reo Māori translation. These actions were intended to be steps toward a final goal of a restructured Archive with fifty percent Māori and fifty percent Pākehā Board (Dennis in Dennis & Pivac 2000). The change of name began to appear on official documents of the Archive in 1987 (for example, the FIAF report to congress) and on its newsletters around the same time.¹³⁵ The rewritten Constitution/Kaupapa states that the Archive aims to be a “storehouse/pataka tuturu of moving image materials/taonga whitiāhua in accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi/Tiriti o Waitangi principles of partnership” and the objectives are – “To acquire and receive all moving image materials/taonga whitiāhua of permanent national and cultural significance in fulfilment of the above aims, with due regard for and reference to mana tuturu and the rights of the materials

¹³⁴ By this time Annie Collins had worked again with Merata Mita as Senior Editor on *Mauri* (Prod.& Dir. M. Mita, 1988), and returned to Wellington where she had been working with others in the anti-racism movement. A report came out of the Department of Social Welfare in 1985 (Department of Social Welfare, 1985, *Institutional Racism in the Department of Social Welfare, Tamaki-Makau-Rau* [WARAG] revised edition, Auckland) which set out the institutional racism in that department. Groups like Annie’s were seen as useful in training staff to respond to the concerns raised in the report. Collins made a film *Double Take* about racism at this time which she used in her training (Personal Correspondence, A.Collins op.cit.).

¹³⁵ This title is first used in a FIAF report in 1987 (NFSA collection NZFA report to FIAF 1987 Dennis). Sharon Dell created the title as a symbol of the ongoing attempt to create a bicultural institution (Personal correspondence, S. Dell 13/04/15).

themselves, the rights of the copyright owners and the rights of the depositors” (the Constitution/Kaupapa is appended to the thesis).¹³⁶

This revised Constitution/Kaupapa made the NZFA different from any other Archive in the world at that time (Personal correspondence, M. Labrum 08/08/11; R. Horrocks 21/10/08). It incorporated indigenous rights into its infrastructure and acknowledged the rights of the materials *themselves* as ngā taonga, as living entities with relationships to people. This was significant, and despite various changes since Dennis’ time at the archive which are outlined in Barclay’s book *Mana Tuturu* (Barclay, 2005), the Constitution/Kaupapa still operates in 2014. But the written statements of the Archive were not enough. Māori people needed to be employed in the NZFA in order to provide their perspectives on the work to be done.

The first Māori staff member was employed as the Māori materials cataloguer in the late 1980s, but as Dennis had signalled in his reports to the International Federation of Film Archives, this work could only be “experimental” without wider inter-institutional support. Dennis acknowledged that this staff member was under immense pressure (Dennis, 1989 p.11) and she resigned after a short time. The next Māori staff member also resigned.¹³⁷ In 1991, NZFA Board member Te Aue Davis observed that Māori employed or asked to support appropriate Māori practice in mainstream institutions often become overworked (NZFA Board minutes, 1991).

In March 1990 Dennis had also resigned from the Archive, stating in lectures, presentations and articles for various journals, that he recognised that as a Pākehā, he was not the appropriate person to be in control of the Archive as it moved towards bicultural practice (Alley & Dennis, 2002; Dennis, 1989, 1990). Dennis was working at the Archive at a time of wide and ferocious debate about the role of Pākehā in bicultural endeavour. As the philosophy of kaupapa Māori, which (often) asserted Māori control was becoming more popular, Dennis felt his position was increasingly precarious.

¹³⁶ Dennis was to write in his FIAF report in 1990 that the Kaupapa was the first “major step toward becoming an institution that is fully bi-cultural in image and practice, has affected every level of the Archive and has given a place to stand on issues confronting our operation and activities. While sometimes progress toward real structured change – at staffing and Board levels particularly – has seemed slow, the commitment has not wavered....This Film Archive is, we hope, a living archive and we want to keep it that way” (FIAF Congress report of NZFA 1990).

¹³⁷ Both former staff members declined to be interviewed for the thesis (Personal correspondence with author). This is a silence in the discourse which is hard to interpret without their input and I do not want to try and explain their positions for them.

The minutes of the NZFA board state – “Ngahua Te Awekotuku confirmed that the first Director of the Film Archive had taken personal responsibility for bicultural matters. His departure left a critical muddle which had been difficult to deal with” (55th meeting of the NZFA Trustees 17/11/91 NZFA Board minutes, 1989-1992 p.3).

In terms of Eagle’s “journey”, Te Awekotuku’s statement suggests that Dennis and the NZFA had indeed moved from the monocultural to a decision to become bicultural, but this had only occurred thus far by individual “kanohi ki te kanohi” [face to face] relationships and not permeated the entire structure of the Archive. However, the rewriting of the Constitution which included the Treaty of Waitangi as its basis had already occurred, so there was a foundation for a general bicultural process as the infrastructure was being altered. This was not always acknowledged or perhaps even understood by all NZFA board members (Dennis, 1989 p.11). As the elders of Ngāpuhi argue in a 2012 report, it may be that “bicultural” relationships are only possible “kanohi ki te kanohi” and although institutional changes can be made, unless people are willing to come together face to face, trust will not be developed between them (Kuia and Kaumātua of Ngāpuhi Nui Tonu., 2012).

In the 1980s the power struggles which were occurring between groups such as Nga Tamatoa, younger Māori outside institutional walls and Pākehā within the institution demonstrated that Māori were not interested in Pākehā re-understanding their “primitive” materials as “art”, but instead wanted to obtain control of their own materials and have a different kind of relationship with them (McCarthy, 2011). Indeed, in the Māori understanding of cultural capital, an entirely different set of values have eminence. In European culture, written documents are often considered superior evidence of truth or value (for example, in the written descriptions of the provenance of an art or cultural object), whereas in Māori culture in the pre-colonial contact era, whaikorero (elaborate and allusion filled speeches in the whare nui and the accompanying complex protocols) or traditional tattooing, are two examples of erudite and rich cultural information sources completely undervalued in Pākehā culture (Kuia and Kaumātua of Ngāpuhi Nui Tonu., 2012). Two cultures with two different sets of understanding of “cultural capital” were talking past each other. Dennis described the views of some, such as Barclay, in an article in which he said that although he tried to “work these issues through” it was difficult because “even our

terminology was different... The Archive's structure allowed for tangata whenua window dressing, without a shared power base, and still without power at the decision making level" (Dennis, 1990 pp.4,5).

By 1990 there were many Māori critics of state-sponsored biculturalism, one of whom was Irihāpeti Ramsden, who was soon to start work with Dennis and author Patricia Grace on the oral histories (and the eventual book) of Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club (Grace et al., 2001). She remarked at a talk at the National Museum in 1990 that "to her, biculturalism meant 'bye-bye culture!'" (McCarthy, 2011 p.84).¹³⁸ Ramsden, Dennis and Patricia Grace were going to have many conversations about "biculturalism" over the next ten years or so as they worked together. Some of these fascinating discussions were recorded by Dennis and are available in the Alexander Turnbull Oral History Library (Ramsden, Grace, & Dennis, 1995).

It is possible to see the "journey" of the NZFA in the 1980s as being typical of government departments of the period. Pākehā historian Jacob Pollock described the bicultural era, which "emerged alongside the reformist fourth Labour Government in the 1980s, following more than a decade of social unrest" (Pollock, 2005 p.21). He suggests that in hindsight "Pākehā biculturalism...appears to be thoroughly engaged in the impossible task of achieving indigeneity" (Pollock, 2005 p.28). This is something akin to Bourdieu's argument, that one cannot completely remove oneself from the doxa and habitus within which an agent in the field has been raised. However Kloot argues that although Bourdieu is often understood to be pessimistic and "social reproductionist", a more "optimistic, transformative" reading is possible in which human agency is adequately accounted for (Kloot, 2009 p.473). Yet Pollock argues that the national identity narrative is "intimately bound up" with the project of "cultural colonization" (Pollock, 2005 p.3). Māori scholar Dominic O'Sullivan concurs, arguing that the enthusiastic embrace by state institutions of biculturalism was a liberal strategy of managing resistance while actually denying

¹³⁸ Ramsden wrote her PhD thesis in the 1990s on "cultural safety", then a new concept developed by Māori nurses. Jonathan Dennis was one of a group of friends who made regular payments to an account to support her studies (NZFA PP JD Box 11). Ramsden invited Dennis to her wedding in 1997, and there are a number of warm letters and cards from her in his archive (NZFA PP JD Box 11). Ramsden was to die of a brain tumour around the same time as Dennis died of cancer, but they both managed to be at the launch of their ten year effort with Patricia Grace to document the Ngāti Pōneke elders in late 2001 (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis, . op.cit).

self-determination (D. O'Sullivan quoted in McCarthy, 2011 p.77). Ultimately, Māori are still the subjugated partner in the relationship.

Dennis never found moving towards biculturalism easy, and often found it “scary” (Dennis, 1990), as did many others, Māori and Pākehā. What Dennis did do was listen to the criticisms that the Archive was receiving and try to respond appropriately to address Māori concerns. Mita, a strong critic of Pākehā who did not respect Māori views, allowed Dennis to be the distributor for her films and to work with her for the rest of his life, suggesting that she felt his work was appropriate. The elders Witarina Harris, Lily Amohau, Mihipeka Edwards and others supported Dennis to the end and were even an important part of his funeral, sitting with him on the stage at the Paramount Theatre ("The Last Film Show; Funeral of Jonathan Spencer Dennis", 2002 January 29). Barry Barclay, a passionate and astute critic of Pākehā institutions, said that the signing of a 2011 NZFA memorandum regarding the returning of films to iwi “somehow vindicated Jonathan’s stumbling prescience back in the first years of the archive, and showed, at least in film archive circles, how he was much ahead of his time” (Barclay, 2005 p.107).

Dennis’ ten years at the NZFA saw him experience the excitement of founding a new national institution, working with the everyday development of a Film Archive while adapting to social and political movements which were impacting upon concepts of the nation. He adapted as best he could, but felt it inevitable that he must step aside in order to allow for ngā taonga to have a relationship with Māori people. This was part of the narrative of his own life and work in relation to biculturalism but also a significant aspect of how others understood him. Jonathan Dennis as a subject for discussion, an amalgamation of experiences and events described by himself and others is analysed in the following chapter which considers the concepts of the archive and the subject in relation to his name.

7. Framing the Archive of Jonathan Dennis: Subject, author, curator

In previous chapters this thesis has set out to establish the histories of Dennis, film culture and biculturalism within the broader socio-political framework of NZ. It has considered the various kinds of capital which have affected the “rules of the game” via Bourdieu and established a definition of ngā taonga. In this chapter the philosophy of the subject and the archive are explored in relation to Jonathan Dennis and the work he undertook with a particular emphasis on Foucault’s concept of the “author function”.

The “critiques which challenge the traditional centrality of ‘the human subject’” have resonated for over fifty years and offered multiple new perspectives on the individual, the subject, the artist, the author and the auteur (Collini, 2012 p.75).¹³⁹ Yet through an analysis of Jonathan Dennis’ works, and through gathering and analysing interviews with those who knew him, a picture does emerge which is reasonably coherent. Yet at no point should it be supposed that an exact replica of the man can be created. No “truthful transmission of the personality” (J.C.Davis 1985 p.14) is possible or even intended.¹⁴⁰

Michel Foucault offered an alternative perspective to Barthes; he was interested in how the subject had become a central point from which to understand culture and science (Allen, 2002). As previously noted, Foucault offered the “author function” as a possibility for discourse which allowed that writing (or drawing, curating, painting or filmmaking) is a “game that invariably goes beyond its own rules and transgresses its limits. In writing, the point is not to manifest or exalt the act of writing, nor is it to pin a subject within language; it is, rather, a question of creating a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears” (Foucault, 1969 p.2). Therefore,

¹³⁹ Despite the challenge to the centrality of “the human subject” debates, in 2012 Stefan Collini, Professor of Intellectual History and English Literature at Cambridge University still argued that in the Humanities at least, “in general the overall cogency of a substantial piece of work seems more closely bound up with the individual voice of the author...the persuasiveness of any such piece of writing will depend in part upon some highly individual characteristics of the critic’s cast of mind and literary skill” (Collini, 2012 p.75).

¹⁴⁰ J.C.Davis is quoting biographer Sidney Lee.

Foucault argued, the text only marks the “singularity of his absence; he must assume the role of the dead man in the game of writing” (Foucault, 1969 *ibid.*).

Foucault presented the “author function” as his response to the writer as “dead man in the game”. He argued that in particular circumstances an author is not just the author of their own work, they are the producers of ideas (or discourses) which in turn engender the “possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts.” Therefore Marx or Freud are not just the authors of well-known texts, they “both have established an endless possibility of discourse” (Foucault, 1969 p.10).

It is perhaps presumptuous to compare Marx and Freud to a film archivist from NZ. Yet Dennis established an endless possibility of discourse in relation to the physical archive he helped create and the films, sounds, texts and related materials he cared for during a decade, and beyond that, in his own archive of creative work which had been influenced in turn by others. Dennis’ writing and stories, as related by others, also offer an intangible archive of “Jonathan Spencer Dennis”; the endless possibility of a narrative about his life and work and the risk of his disappearance into that archive, even as he is written or spoken about.

By creating numerous works of art himself, which generally presented elements from archival sources in many creative ways, Dennis opened the archive to the possibility of its use as an active live resource as opposed to a dead, closed vault of fixed images. This stimulated further discourse which was influenced by his work, but also became independent of him, supporting Foucault’s theory of the “author function”. The works which others created as they saw the materials of the archive in turn became their own discourses and discussions independent of the originator of the work of Dennis as archivist and curator.

Clearly Dennis did promulgate certain ideas which have perpetuated new knowledge and understandings beyond his death. We have seen in the previous chapter how Dennis tried to create a bicultural model for the NZFA. Interviewees for this thesis insisted that Dennis’ “kaitiaki” [guardianship] approach to the Archive was ground-breaking and became influential (Personal correspondence, D. Eckhoff, 9/06/2010). Film editor Annie Collins said in 2010, that “it’s the indigenous work that he did and his commitment to making sure that images are seen” which

people are still interested in (Personal correspondence, A. Collins 26/01/09). Furthermore, sound engineer and curator Gareth Watkins who worked for a number of years with Jonathan Dennis on *The Film Show* felt that Dennis' careful archiving of his own work was an important lesson for his own practice, as was the ethical process he undertook to ensure interviewees' information was used well (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins 21/11/09). Watkins, a sound engineer by training, now collects oral histories himself, and has developed an online repository of "rainbow" stories and photographs (www.PrideNZ.com) which recognises Dennis' careful archiving practices. Most recently he has been the Curator at Large (resident curator) at NZFA for 2014 (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins 26/08/14). Others similarly influenced include film archivist Sarah Davy who feels Dennis "sits on my shoulder" and guides her work (Personal correspondence, S. Davy 08/11/10). Like Marx or Freud (but on an infinitely smaller scale), Dennis' practice influenced and shaped in ways which cannot be understood without the "dead man in the game" being discussed as the "author function". Dennis is the "empty space" which is surrounded by the discourses he was part of during his lifetime and after.

Yet Dennis did not invent a number of the practices he was involved in. For example, the idea of "kaitiakitanga" [guardianship, stewardship] was learned from others who taught him about the concept of taonga. They had been living these concepts within their Māori communities for many years (Dennis in Alley & Dennis 2001). Dennis learned to listen and hear these practices which were quite different from those in most European institutions at this time. The "kaitiaki" approach is one he learned from others, and therefore he promulgated an idea, particularly among Pākehā, but was not the originator of the practice.

A metaphor for the organisation of material which may in turn engender discourse under the name of Jonathan Dennis, is the frame itself – the frame of the painting, or the camera lens, which determines what is included or excluded from the picture.¹⁴¹ Martha Sandweiss has suggested that a scholar will "pluck a single picture from a larger collection and use it to narrate his or her own stories. But such stories may or may not have anything to do with the original context of the photograph, the intent of its creator, or the ways in which it was used by its original audience"

¹⁴¹ This idea was originally suggested by Dennis' cousin, Ron O'Reilly's son Matthew O'Reilly, himself a picture framer and artist (Personal correspondence, M. O'Reilly 12/06/10).

(Sandweiss, M. quoted in Dyer, 2005 p.i). This propensity to narrate ones' own stories using material created by another is similar to the discussion of the biography as fiction. Many theorists have debated and discussed this perspective since "The Intentional Fallacy" theorem was first posited. The audience/reader/scholar has the privilege of plucking one photograph or aspect of a collection from its context and re-reading or re-framing it as they wish.

In viewing Dennis as a framed subject from which to discuss a certain finite list of works, but also in thinking of him as part of a network, a space is created which provides the platform for a wider discussion of the role of the film archive and the archivist. The space is not fixed but provisional, liminal and dynamic. The space allows for a consideration of the person and also a wider discussion of the perceived role of an archive as a function of any community or society at a given period in time, which will alter its practices depending upon the people who work within it and the responses from those outside its walls. In this way, by examining the life and work of Jonathan Dennis through an ever-moving partial perspective the questions "what is an archive and what should it do?" may be explored.

Framing Dennis as a subject is problematic in the manner in which Barthes has described. Every reader understands the author or the maker of a work of art from their own position, informed by their understanding of the world. Therefore, many versions of Jonathan Dennis emerged in the data collection. Examples of the many contradictory perspectives included the assertion that he was incredibly loyal (Personal correspondence, S. Bartel 2009); that he was vicious in his disregard for people (Personal correspondence, S. Rainbow 2009; R. Grover 31/01/11); he presented an inappropriately glorified view of the nation's film collection (Personal correspondence, F. Stark 11/03/13); he honoured the NZ film history (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 25/10/11; B. Gosden 08/12/09; E. Alley 2010; J. Paul 03/02/11). Two passages from interviews about his life and work exemplify these contradictions. An ex-partner Sef Townsend remembered – "I was always troubled by Jonathan's rudeness....oh, that caused some real difficulties. You know because there'd be somebody you liked and Jonathan would be walking away, and not talking" (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10). Simultaneously, Dennis was considered by Townsend and others as capable of showing great compassion, loyalty

and friendship.¹⁴² This perspective is exemplified by a story from Sarah Davy – “...he was so supportive of me, and he knew from his own experience going to the UK and the tour that he did in Europe in the early '80s how valuable that was. And he must have seen something in me...he talked to people in government, so I ended up getting an enormous amount of funding thanks to Jonathan...it was a real gift” (Personal correspondence, S. Davy op.cit.).

These examples illustrate the contradictory ways in which he was remembered, and yet there were some character traits all interviewees agreed upon. Dennis was a charismatic, strong-minded individual who judged others quickly and sometimes harshly. His idiosyncratic aesthetics, passions, leadership qualities and relentless drive to achieve goals were described by nearly every interview subject with admiration. His work with Māori was always referred to (examples include: Personal correspondence, N. Brand 13/07/10; B. Sheat 31/01/11; L. Shelton 07/12/09). He was a node in a wider network of people, all of whom have their own web of understanding and influence. He was a conduit, a funnel through which many influences combined. He was described as an enabler of others (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 21/10/08), like his uncle Ron O'Reilly, a “framer”, a presenter of others works (Personal correspondence, M. O'Reilly 30/11/09).

All interviewees agreed that Dennis' passion for film was an organising principle for his life and work. This is reflected in the title of Gareth Watkin's radio programme about Dennis *24 Frames: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told* (Watkins, 2012). Dennis' passion had led him to work with film, and this was the mode through which he expressed himself whilst simultaneously responding to wider socio-political movements and his own personal experience, which simultaneously included experiences of privilege and marginalisation.

¹⁴² Despite the many frustrations Townsend had with Dennis, they remained devoted friends long after their relationship ended. They visited each other (Townsend lives in London) and Townsend came to see Dennis before he died (Personal correspondence, S. Townsend 05/07/10).

Film archivist as curator and “framer of the kept”

The archive of Jonathan Dennis associated with the author function of his name is clearly multifaceted and complex. Archive scholar Paula Amad describes the concept “archive” as having four different manifestations: a storehouse, a metaphor, a producer of history, and a theoretical concept (Amad, 2010 p.8). Clearly the interpretation of the word itself is as complex as any reader/audience experience of a book or work of art. Photographer and cultural historian, Allan Sekula, has suggested that the archive is a complex space from which to consider the image. He argued – “In an archive, the possibility of meaning is ‘liberated’ from the actual contingencies of use. But this liberation is also a loss, an *abstraction* from the complexity and richness of use, a loss of context” (Sekula, 2003 p.444). This leads, he argues to “new meanings [which] come to supplant old ones, with the archive serving as a kind of ‘clearing house’ of meaning” (Sekula, 2003 p.445). Sekula is particularly concerned that the meaning of the photographs he describes are erased by the archive itself; a photograph taken for the gaze of a stockholder of a mine will be understood differently from that of a lover or friend looking at a portrait of a worker at the mine, and yet these various gazes are “eclipsed” by the archive (Sekula, 2003 *ibid*). Sekula is arguing for a consideration of the wider context from which a photograph or an archive is drawn, very much in the fashion of Barthes who argues for the reader/audience perspective to be accounted for, but acknowledging Derrida’s argument that the archive has a “death drive” in its ability to “eclipse” the gaze of the original image makers or owners (Derrida quoted in Merewether, 2006 p.78). Sekula’s description also bears resemblance to Foucault’s idea of the author function where the author is constantly disappearing into the act of writing.

For this reason Sekula cautions against elevating the reader/audience perspective too much when looking at archival materials, as he is concerned that an approach to historical images as aesthetic “found objects” privileges the subjectivity of the collector, connoisseur, and viewer over that of any specific author. This risks a superiority in the second viewer (not the audience the photo was intended for, but a new “sophisticated” art audience), and produces a secondary voyeurism over the primary act of looking which is “disturbing” (Sekula, 2003 p.449). Sekula is arguing that the original intention of the creator is still worth acknowledging and honouring, even as the reader/viewer makes new judgements on the work based upon their own perspective.

Timothy Wisniewski suggests it may be impossible to understand the original intention of an author. He uses Walter Benjamin's *Themes on the Philosophy of History* to argue for "against the grain" methods to understand the archive. He argues that –

Reading against the grain has become an established practice of critically reading historical documents through fragmentary traces that illuminate unintended or contradictory evidence, usually buried within records created to document entirely different actions (Wisniewski, 2007 p.5).

Following this idea he claims that an archivist is one of the "framers of the kept" who, whether they acknowledge their power or not, have great impact on the viewers' understanding of their collection (Wisniewski, 2007). Following this argument, today in a number of archives around the world, archivists are now called "curators" and select works for exhibition, publication, and online platforms (for an example of this see the National Film and Sound Archive Australia website).¹⁴³

Barthes' "death of the author" paradigm seems to come full circle as the archivists, previously understood as passive receptors of objects become active interpreters of them. And yet Foucault's "author function" also jostles for attention. What is left in the space in which the author/originator of the image has disappeared? What has rushed into the vacuum to replace the "dead man in the game"? Archivists still create catalogues for and exhibitions of particular photographers, filmmakers, sound creators or authors. The "author function" exists for them as a way to understand and organise bodies of material associated with a particular name. Furthermore, critiquing this approach, many artists from outside the institutions' walls use archival materials as a "gesture of alternative knowledge or counter-memory" to create their own works of art using existing materials. These "Retracings...present texts that contest not only the dominant construction of the archival as historical record but also its effects" (Hal Foster quoted in Merewether, 2006, p.14).

This is the poststructuralist understanding of the discourse of the word archive and the archive itself. The reader who creates alternative knowledge and counter-memory reads against the

¹⁴³ Retrieved 23rd October 2013 <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/about/corporate/corporate-plan/>

grain, as Wisniewski argues, in relation to the “framers of the kept” (Wisniewski, 2007). The reader becomes an author as they read against the grain to create a new understanding of the work of art. By re-reading archival documents from the lens of a different historical and cultural context, new understandings may emerge. However, as Wisniewski argues, in archiving circles there is “the unspoken but still dominant archival ideals of neutrality and objectivity – the...notion of archivists as ‘keepers’, rather than intellectual and critically engaged framers” (Wisniewski, 2007 p.9). Wisniewski calls for film archivists to acknowledge their role in *creating* materials through the naming and cataloguing of those items affected by their own epistemological, ontological and axiomatic traces. He challenges Hilary Jenkinson’s position in *A Manual of Archive Administration* (Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1922) that “records creators, not archivists, were responsible for selecting which records are kept in the archives” (Wisniewski, 2007 p.9). Wisniewski contends that archivists are being deceptive unless they claim their own agency in the archive – their role as “interpreters” or “framers” of the archive’s contents. This does not make them “authors” as such in Barthes’ or Foucauldian terms, but does insist that the archivist has agency and the ability to influence the understanding of the photo or other archival content and must be cogent of the responsibility that entails.

If the archivist has the power to interpret the archives, this has not always been explicit – it has not always been verbalised. Just like the Pākehā anthropologists and ethnologists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many archives and archivists have (and perhaps still do) practice a normative form of cataloguing and description within a very narrow understanding of the contents with which they work (for an example of this tendency see “The Handbook of Archives” Bowser, 1991). In many organisations in the western world the archive is a vault filled with contents the archivists may have little or no understanding of. This was the concern Dennis raised in his report to the International Federation of Film Archives in 1988 described in the previous chapter.

It is this everyday (usually unconscious) refusal to acknowledge ones’ own prejudice towards the objects in a collection which is ultimately problematic, because it means the archivist will assume their practice is standard and even culturally neutral, when it might be inaccurate or even offensive to some communities which the archive will serve. These are examples of the archive

beyond enunciation – the silences which actually contain so many ideas, prejudices, thoughts and unspoken assumptions. For example, as we have seen, many Pākehā understood the material of the archives as inanimate for many years. But to many Māori these are not inert objects, but embodiments of the ancestors known as taonga (Tapsell, 2006 p.17). This unspoken misunderstanding, this assumption of best practice based on a particular model led to mistakes being made in New Zealand archives which were at times irreparable. The archives themselves became demonstrations of how the relationship between indigenous New Zealanders and Pākehā was/is dysfunctional.

Sharon Dell, current Librarian at the Hocken library in Otago, South Island, NZ, worked in the Alexander Turnbull Library in the 1980s. As described previously she was a colleague of Dennis and was involved in film screenings on various marae. She is Pākehā but learned Te Reo Māori to help support the work with Māori materials she was undertaking. However she said the pitfalls were many for someone not of Māori descent. For example, she made the mistake of reusing files with the name of one iwi on them when archiving materials for another iwi. Being economical, she crossed out the previous name. When iwi members accessed this material they were sometimes offended or visibly distressed because the crossed out name was that of an enemy iwi. Other issues included an absence of water to cleanse the tapu (sacredness) off the hands after handling materials considered taonga. Dell learned to reframe her practice in order to avoid these kinds of mistakes as people gave her feedback and therefore has become increasingly trusted by those who access the materials in the collections she cared for (Personal correspondence S. Dell 10/09/10) (Dell, 2010).

Jonathan Dennis was influenced by Dell's lessons which she shared with him – he learned to acknowledge his own perspective and the limits of his knowledge, and he sought to find people who could provide other points of view (Dennis, 1987). He worked with Barry Barclay, Merata Mita, Witarina Harris and others from the Māori community in order to challenge his own partial perspective. To do this he engaged with The Treaty of Waitangi, as we have seen this was a bicultural response used by many government departments in the 1980s. The treaty document itself has its own history which exemplifies some of the cross-cultural issues in archives. Although not held at the NZFA, the Treaty of Waitangi document itself became central to the renegotiation

of practices in the institution during the 1980s and became the guiding document for the rewriting of the constitution of the NZFA. As Merata Mita wrote, during the 1980s it was recovered from a vault, having been “eaten by Archival rats” at Archives NZ before it was rescued as part of the recognition of its significance to the country (Fax communication in NZFA PP JD Box 11 Mita, 30/03/89). For many Māori including Merata Mita and Te Manu Aute, a group of Māori filmmakers and communicators engaged with the NZFA with whom Mita worked, the fact that the founding document of the country had physically been damaged in the National Archive was symbolic of the passive neglect by Pākehā leaders of the partnership agreement of the nation (Pollock, 2004).¹⁴⁴

This perhaps supports Derrida’s view that the archive is as much about forgetting (or even active destruction) as it is about remembering. In Foucauldian terms the incident would suggest the discourse surrounding these objects and the regulatory forces which sought to either care for and maintain, or neglect and forget the Treaty document itself, and all the associated ramifications of that act. These acts undertaken by generally well meaning archivists can have an impact on those who have other cultural priorities which may not be acknowledged. As Jonathan Dennis learned more about indigenous perspectives on archival materials, his methods moved further away from European standards and towards something much more ambiguous – incorporating more listening and less talking, learning about silence, and the power of the unspoken (Dennis, 1990).

Jonathan Dennis was interested in interpreting materials and re-understanding them, informed by their history and context. He was scathing of archivists he saw as “collectors” rather than “archivists” (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). For Dennis, an archivist had knowledge and context through which he “framed” the works he engaged with. An example of this engagement, which was led by his connections with Te Ao Māori, was a series of re-releases of archival sound recordings. For example, the reissue of *The Tahiwi* (Tahiwi, 1998) apparently occurred because he was visiting Witarina Harris in Rotorua and found some children playing frisbee with an old LP

¹⁴⁴“Despite their constitutional and historical significance, the Treaty of Waitangi documents were not well cared for in the 19th and early 20th centuries... They were progressively and more appropriately restored in the 1970s and 1980s” (Retrieved 20/10/14 <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/anti-racism-and-treaty-of-waitangi-activism>)

recording of *The Tahiwi* (Personal correspondence, E. Alley 11/06/10). He approached the National Library who agreed to work on a reissue of the recording (Personal correspondence, S. Bartel 3/12/09). This reframing of an archival material, a reintroduction of it into the world, would not have been possible if Dennis had not recognised the value of that LP which was being played with like a frisbee. Dennis was not the author of that record, but his knowledge enabled it to be listened to again by a new audience. This was the creation of a new reproduction of a sound recording, for which Dennis was the enabler, framer, or curator. Dennis viewed archival materials through a contemporary lens with an informed historical eye, and sought to frame or present these in a new way for a contemporary audience in collaboration with the descendants of those in the materials.

Dennis' personal papers as archive

The discourse which has become associated with the name Jonathan Dennis is perhaps itself an archive. What Dennis produced, what he said, and what is said about him, is a collection of ideas, writings and jottings linked with the “author function” associated with the name Jonathan Dennis. One definition of the term *archive* is an “institution and concept theorized by diverse poststructuralist thinkers as a central epistemological technology for the regulation and undoing, of modern discourse and memory” (Amad, 2010 p.8). This definition suggests that multiple understandings of legitimate knowledge have become part of the word itself. The ways in which we understand and/or remember Jonathan Dennis as a human subject is related to a literal archive which is itself variously understood by those who work in it, use it and run it. This suggests the complexities of trying to create a picture which is coherent. The complexity of the use of the word *archive* in relation to the subject is a useful point of reflection within the discussion, which considers the node in the network as well as the subject. If people who never knew Dennis (such as myself) reviewed his multiple works – the exhibitions, published books, film, broadcast or sound works, they could glean a particular impression of the man. Those who remember him can review the same materials and offer a further and different perspective based upon their memories.

Some materials Dennis created are not published, and therefore hold a different kind of place in his archive. His private musings, his scribbles on Post-it notes and in his diaries, were perhaps never intended for the gaze of others.¹⁴⁵ In the classic essay “La mort de l’auteur”, Barthes states “The author still reigns in histories of literature, biographies of writers, interviews, magazines, as in the very consciousness of men of letters anxious to unite their person and their work through diaries and memoirs” (Barthes, 1967 p143). This is frustrating to Barthes who considers the practice too simplistic because “The explanation of a work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it, as if it were always in the end, through the more or less transparent allegory of the fiction, the voice of a single person, the author ‘confiding’ in us” (Barthes, 1967 p143). Barthes (and Foucault) both resist the psychoanalytic point of view, which argues the author is the centre of the work of art, for the “men of letters anxious to unite their person and their work...” Barthes wished to free the audience from this narrow view of the artwork as only the intimate voice of the author “confiding in us”.¹⁴⁶

In reading the physical archival collection labelled *Jonathan Dennis* in the Alexander Turnbull collection of the National Library of New Zealand, or the 20 uncatalogued boxes of his papers at the NZFA, there are moments when it is tempting to see the scribbled notes in the margins or the prose on small pieces of paper Dennis left and think – “ah, I have discovered the truth of the man”. Here is the author “confiding in us”, offering evidence of an “authentic” self. At these times, Barthes’ oft quoted words are worth repeating, when one reads (for example) the emotional passages of a note Dennis wrote about feeling heartbroken by the visit of an ex-lover (NZFA PP JD Box 11 Folder labelled Stevan).

This piece, written on Post-it notes and gathered together with a paperclip, is a description of Dennis’ feelings on seeing a man he had been in a relationship with who was married to a woman at the time. Michael O’Driscoll and Edward Bishop’s work describes the experience of reading something similar when they were holding Virginia Woolf’s suicide note – “I felt a physical shock, like I was spinning into a vortex that collapsed the intervening decades... My first encounter with

¹⁴⁵ Dennis loved to talk on the phone (Personal correspondence, B. Ikin 05/11/10) and it appears many of the scribbled notes in the personal papers are telephone conversation summaries and doodles (NZFA PP JD).

¹⁴⁶ In relation to the psychoanalytic, Lacan reread Freud through a lens of structural linguistics and this was considered significant in the shift in the history of ideas in relation to the “unconscious” and the “subject” (Jackson & Scott, 2010 p.32).

the archival jolt" (O'Driscoll & Bishop, 2004 p.2). The tone of Dennis' writing here is very different from any other material in the personal papers at the NZFA. It is the only poem. It is not clear that he ever wanted anyone else to read it. Many of Dennis' friends referred to this relationship during their interviews (Personal correspondence, L. Shelton 07/12/09; A. Collins 26/09/09; S. Dell 10/09/10). The relationship and its ending had been the subject of gossip in the late 1980s/early 1990s, because Dennis had chosen to deposit his correspondence with this man (a well-known author) in the Alexander Turnbull Library. Sharon Dell felt it was an act of "self-preservation" on Dennis' part as he felt "obliterated" by the relationship not working out (Personal correspondence, S. Dell 10/09/10). Yet, on reading the long note written by Dennis, which describes the fear and loneliness he felt, it becomes tempting to move into the realm of psychoanalysis, which historian Keith Sinclair warns us against when he said of the biographical work "you cannot psychoanalyse the dead" (Sinclair, 1985 p.33). Barthes too would challenge an emotional response, arguing that it leads the reader/audience to think they had some "true" understanding of Jonathan Dennis, which can really only be an interpretation of the "diaries and memoirs" (Barthes, 1967 p143).

Foucauldian scholars might suggest something a little different in reading this material. Dennis was an out gay man for his entire adult life at a time when it was (until 1986) illegal to be involved in homosexual male acts (Brickell, 2008). Peter Wells suggests Dennis felt it was important to archive (and therefore record) the correspondence of this gay male relationship (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 22/04/10) because it is evidence of alternative ways of being in the world. David Halperin suggests that Foucault's work provided a platform from which to find ways to articulate and negotiate new ways of being (Howe, 2004) and Dennis' writing could be included in that articulation. As we have seen, Lauren Berlant suggests that providing spaces within folds of the heteronormative world in which other ways of having relationships may be possible is important, and particularly emphasises "queer" in this category (Berlant & Prosser, 2011).

For Foucauldian scholars, this poem does not offer an authentic truth of the personality of Jonathan Dennis, but speaks to a wider discourse about male homosexual desire, love and expression in a society which did not condone or allow it to be spoken of at a particular moment in history. Equally, other experiences in Dennis' archive relate to homosexuality and its

relationship to power and knowledge at a specific moment. For example, some of Dennis' personal correspondence refers to being "bashed" in Melbourne and how that had left him feeling fragile (NZFA PP JD Box 11). Dennis did not talk about this event explicitly in his oral histories, but there is substantial evidence within his own archive and the stories told by others (a verbal archive of sorts) that it was a significant event in his life. Interviewees described this incident with horror and referred to it as an act of "gay bashing" which left him deeply shaken (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.). It occurred at a time when HIV AIDS was still a new concept and people were reluctant to help him after the incident, fearing a gay man may transmit the virus to them (Personal correspondence, D. Young op.cit.). One can only surmise that this experience for a confident gay man must have been shocking and traumatic, but one can certainly say that it was a reasonably common experience for gay men at that time to be feared by those who assumed they had AIDS (Brickell, C. 2008).

Evidence of the event as traumatic is perhaps reflected in the resumption of the correspondence with his ex-lover, which was deposited in the Alexander Turnbull Library and continued in the NZFA personal papers of Dennis. There is a letter in which Dennis describes the aftermath of being beaten and asks his former lover to visit (NZFA PP JD Box 11). "One of my front teeth will not recover, as the dentist says, from 'the trauma' and I've got to have root canal surgery next week. I've always been very pleased with my teeth, once all neatly spaced, and carefully protected years ago by Mr-Monk-the-Orthodontist with shining-clean rooms looking out through venetian blinds over a leafy bit of the Avon [The Avon River in Christchurch where Dennis went to boarding school]. Some of Mr Monk's thoughtful work was swiftly and brutally redone." He then asks if "Stevie" is coming to Wellington – "I don't feel in the least like a fleeting casual visit. But it'd be nice if we can spend some time together, not hemmed in by too many safety-zones (I'm less good at compromise). I'd like to do something perhaps, go somewhere. If you're coming, that is" (Box 11 Personal Papers NZFA Dennis, 9 June 1991). Dennis manages in this letter to suggest a cool irony, describing the dentist with his unusual name and referring to his "shining-clean rooms". Yet he is also asking for comfort. He does not feel like a "fleeting casual visit". He needs support from someone who is married and cannot (or will not) give it to him.

This is evidence of the discourse “beyond enunciability” Foucault suggests is regulated by the archive of power/knowledge at any given time (Barbedette, 1982). It may be that the “evidence” in the archive of the love and desire for a man which was ultimately unreciprocated, or the gay bashing, tells us nothing new about the authentic truth of Dennis, but for those who knew him it was an important part of his story and for those interested in the stories of the gay community it is certainly significant. The correspondence with the ex-lover is part of the “unsaid” story of Dennis, as evidenced by the gossip at the time when he deposited the materials in the archive, and remains so because the correspondence in the Alexander Turnbull Library cannot be read without the living correspondee’s permission. This is a silence, but also a signal towards a correspondence that Dennis felt was significant. It becomes perhaps more significant because we cannot access all of the material. The story of the “gay bashing” told by interviewees, or the love which was unreciprocated, reinforces a notion that Dennis was in some ways marginalised by being a gay male. He knew what it was like to be framed as “other”, to be punished for being different and he sought to tell his own story, and find the stories of others like him.¹⁴⁷

In framing Dennis as a subject, as a discourse and as his own archive of materials and interviewee testimonial, there is clearly no fixed image of him, no authentic reflection of self. What does emerge is a framing of a permeable, porous subject open to interpretation, but anchored by the name which is the author function of Jonathan Dennis. He is also defined by the works for which he was the author/curator or framer. As author Margaret Mahy notes – “the reader needs to complete what the writer began” (Mahy, quoted in Shepard, 2009 p.310). Mahy’s assertion does not reject the notion of the writer/author as originator of the work of art, but suggests it is the complementarity of reader and writer which creates the understanding of the artwork. In this way Barthes’ and Foucault’s readings of the death of the author and author function provide two lenses through which to consider the author as curator, subject, individual, and as artist and the space left behind when the author becomes the “dead man in the game”. The thesis organised around the author function of a name is the beginning of the creation of a text or work which is

¹⁴⁷ It must be noted that Dennis said himself in an interview that being gay had never had an impact upon his professional life (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). He may not have known that when he began his radio broadcast career in the 1990s his producer Elizabeth Alley had to argue that his speaking voice was not “too camp” as her managers felt it was inappropriate for radio (Personal correspondence, E.Alley 11/06/10).

completed by an interpretation from the reader/audience – who in the first instance is the author of this thesis.

Whether an autonomous subject, or the centre of a web of connections, Dennis is a lens or frame through which to consider a body of work and a discourse which is associated with his name. Some of it is personal, and some professional material related to his work. Through the author function, Jonathan Dennis is the organising principle for the study. Through the author function a wider analysis of the experience of gay men at a specific time and place is possible. Simultaneously a consideration of film archiving practice as it was experienced by actors in the field is available which speaks to the socio-political and geographical context of the NZFA and in turn to the ever-changing perspectives and philosophies of the broader cultural heritage sector.

The following chapter focusses solely on Dennis' own narrative as it is told through the archive he left behind as well as the interviews undertaken by me which were recorded and will be added to the physical archive organised under the name Jonathan Dennis. It will be suggested that Dennis constructed his own narrative in a particular way which is revealing of his sense of self and his relationship to others, including those associated with the NZFA.

8. Narrative of Jonathan Dennis' archive

In organising information under the author function of Jonathan Dennis, much of the construction of the narrative has emerged from Dennis' own oral histories. In addition the stories by others told about him in conjunction with the information in his personal papers has aided this construction. The evidence Dennis left behind of a life lived in the real world is collected in a metaphorical and physical archive labelled with his name. Representing Dennis is also, as we have seen in the previous chapter, alluding to a gay man's life and the "said and unsaid" discourses of that life lived initially illegally before the NZ Homosexual Law Reform in 1986 and after this time in a nation which still has a significant heterosexual understanding of normative ways of being and doing. The narrative collected about Dennis and the life he lived is analysed in this chapter, which seeks to understand Dennis' self-talk as well as the talk of others (in the form of oral histories), in conjunction with the published materials created about him – for radio broadcast, print media and also documentary film. Berlant's "intimate public" comes to play here in the consideration of who is deemed worthy of "having a life" (Berlant, 1998).

When filmmaker Peter Wells made an audiovisual recording of Jonathan Dennis at his house as Dennis was dying of cancer in late 2001, he used a small hand-held digital camera which he felt was less intrusive than a film camera which would have required a crew. Wells admits this made for "an amateurishly shot home video", but felt "it wasn't that kind of massive invasion that you used to get with film. I was just there as a friend, really, and it was part of the privilege of being there" (Wells cited in Cardy, 2004). The edited footage from this recording was later interwoven with an oral history recording made by other friends (Elizabeth Alley and Gareth Watkins) and eventually the film *Friendship Is the Harbour of Joy* was screened at the New Zealand International Film Festival (Prod. & Dir. P. Wells, 2004). The film was then seen by a number of people and it in turn became one of the texts of the narrative of the life of Jonathan Dennis. This film is tangible evidence of Dennis' life: his house, his friendships and interests. It bears testament to Wells' and Dennis' friendship, which was partly based on a mutual fascination with film as a medium – not just for transmitting audio visual images, but as an artefact in and of itself. Using

a camera, Wells is able to capture recordings of verbal and non-verbal information. These sounds and images represent the “languages of the unsayable...negations, erasures, revisions, smokescreens and silences” through which a narrative is told (Sorsoli, 2007 p.306). The title refers tacitly to Well’s own friendship with Dennis, but more explicitly it depicts the friendship of Dennis and Witarina Harris.

By collecting images and sounds of Jonathan Dennis and his friend, as well as the house in which Dennis lived, “ephemeral physical manifestations” (Grishakova & Ryan, 2010 p.1) such as the sound of wind chimes, of kitchen business, and the spoken word were recorded. Sound engineer Gareth Watkins also deliberately recorded the sounds of Dennis’ house after the collection of an oral history with colleague Elizabeth Alley (Alley et al., 2001). These recordings enabled later works about Dennis’ life to use these rich ambient sounds as layers in the text, to add depth and substance without the need for verbal or written description of these ephemera. They are a library of sounds which, decontextualized, mean nothing. But attached to the author function Jonathan Dennis, they are filled with memory for those who knew him and had spent time with him in his house. For those who did not know him, they evoke various impressions which will be individual to the audience member.

Wells’ film is just one of a number of attempts to record the narrative of Jonathan Dennis shortly before his death, using various modes of oral history narrative co-construction which will be explored in this chapter. These recordings were also attempts by some of his friends to try and understand their relationship to Dennis’ living and dying time.¹⁴⁸ They are multiple co-constructions of a life and death. Within Wells’ text there is a representation of friendships which express the “intimate public” and a “queer” perspective. They are examples of Foucault’s “heterotopias”, folds within the normative world “where one can encounter the positivity of being otherwise...” (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.181). These are particularly present in Peter Well’s documentary of a gay man, by a gay man, at a time when they were both aware of the importance of documenting their own lives as the first generation of “out” and legal gay men in NZ. Dennis

¹⁴⁸ Other friends attempted to prevent recordings being made, despite Jonathan Dennis stating in the Elizabeth Alley recording session that he wanted the interviews to be an ongoing process (Personal Correspondence, G.Watkins 16/04/15).

was also quite consciously shaping a narrative of his life from his own memory. How he told his story, and how he interpreted the events of his life, are fundamental to his narrative of self.

Oral histories

A popular method for collecting life histories is through the oral history interview, which since the 1960s has been a relatively low budget method for recording life narratives (Mellor & Haebich, 2002). Oral history philosophy has been affected by poststructuralism, and it is therefore often understood that the purpose of the recordings is not to collect a verifiable truth. In fact, “oral history has made us uncomfortably aware of the elusive quality of historical truth itself” (Portelli, 1991 p.ix). Although facts can be established, verified and triangulated and the aspiration towards reality is essential, “certainty is bound to escape us” (Portelli, 1991, *ibid.*).

An oral history records the voice of the person, which is a form of truth: the intonations of that voice, the pauses and sighs, the sounds of the space in which they are recorded. Barthes has referred to the “grain of the voice”, which Siobhan McHugh pursues as a concept in her analysis of the oral history and its significance in the narrative co-construction (McHugh, 2012). What interpretation is possible from those spaces is different for each interviewer, each transcriber, listener, or reader. These are Sorsoli’s “languages of the unsayable” which add richness to the text, but are open to interpretation by the listener/reader/viewer (Sorsoli, 2007). Yet the various oral history interviews undertaken with Jonathan Dennis form an autobiographical arc that suggests a narrative “co-construction, an interactional achievement, a joint production and/or collaboration between the interviewer and interviewee” (Petraki et al., 2007 p.108). This arc supports Foucault’s concept of the author function as a valid organising principle for a collection of materials related to a name.

Many of the texts which are evidence of Dennis’ life are spoken word and therefore are “ephemeral physical manifestations” (Grishakova & Ryan, 2010 p.1). However, as soon as they are recorded and potentially transcribed they “become part of a more ‘stable’ historical record for future generations” (Binney, 2010 pp.323, 324). However, as Binney suggests in the title of her collection of essays, *Stories Without End...*, the meaning conveyed by words still have an “‘original’ fluidity of metaphor and meaning. Our understanding of them is not fixed by the act of writing. Contradictory meanings coexist...” (Binney, 2010 *ibid.*). Dennis’ oral histories and other

recordings have become the evidence through which he is understood, constructed and co-constructed by listeners and readers. But they are still open to various interpretations, they contain “contradictory meanings” and they are “fluid” in their “metaphor and meaning”.

Many interviewees for this thesis commented on Elizabeth Alley’s interview with Dennis, which was edited by Paul Bushnell and played on Radio New Zealand after he died (Alley & Dennis, 2002). They said they had not understood certain aspects of his personality until they heard that recording (for example, Personal correspondence, S. Dell, 10/09/10). The interviewees believed they had received some new truth or clarification about the personality of Jonathan Dennis through hearing the interview/oral history. Indeed, that narrative of his life became part of how they remembered Dennis posthumously. Because by the time they heard this new information Dennis was dead, it has become “fixed” in their minds as fact, but also gelled with something they already thought – or explained something they had not previously understood. They were not able to ask him questions themselves, follow up and clarify his meaning or explore his ideas after hearing this interview. Therefore, those who edited that oral history for broadcast are privileged because they cannot seek further clarification from the subject; their interpretation is final. Yet other edits of that same material could offer a different perspective entirely depending upon which elements were emphasised or edited out of the broadcast or text. These are Foucault’s “said and unsaid” moments, or Woolf’s facts polished to reveal certain aspects and not others. Before these edits and representations are possible however, the original raw recordings were undertaken. These too involved an editing process in the mind of the interviewee who chose what to reveal or conceal.¹⁴⁹

Narrative co-construction through oral history

Fischer and Goblirsch (2007) claim that people construct a narrative through a “creative process of self-constitution”; through interaction, accessing memories and co-constructing through talk

¹⁴⁹ As part of my own practice in being interviewed in order to try and better understand the process, I observed myself and my father during an interview with Gareth Watkins for an online archive both reveal and conceal facts about our lives – we did not do so to “lie” but one finds oneself quite necessarily developing a narrative which fits the purpose of the interview as one understands it at the time. In asking my father about this afterwards, I clarified that some of the events he had described had been “edited” in his head before he explained them to the interviewer. Interview available from http://www.pridenz.com/emma_and_john_kelly.html.

(Fischer & Goblirsch, 2007 p.38). People do this every day in informal conversation. This process of self-constitution becomes more pronounced when people are interviewed and specifically asked to reflect on their lives. Jonathan Dennis gave repeated interviews for radio and newspapers throughout the 1980s in order to publicise the NZFA (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). From 1990, the focus of these interviews changed from the NZFA to his own creative practice, his resignation from the Archive, and later still, his overall career. Finally the focus moved to his attitude towards his life, his experience of cancer (from which he suffered for six years), and his imminent death (For example Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Through this process certain milestone stories about Dennis' life and work begin to be repeated, which function to offer a narrative coherence, a discourse in "a privileged mode...tying together existent analogies between life, biography, and story" (Bamberg, De Fina, & Schiffrin, 2007 p.5).

Although this research does not follow a structuralist mode, Mieke Bal's *Theory of Narratology* is useful here in considering the versions of the narrative of Jonathan Dennis' life which have been produced by himself and others. In summary, Bal's approach considers many modes, including film, video, comic strips, oral stories and written texts as "narrative artifacts" or "narrative texts" which tell the reader a story (Bal, 2009 3rd ed., p.5). In Bal's theory, a story is the content of the text, but the text is not always identical; there are potentially many versions. For example, the story of Tom Thumb may appear in an adult and children's version. Some of the content will be altered as appropriate for the audience. All of these are versions of a narrative; the same story but a different text. According to Bal, a narrative contains fabula which are a "series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors" (Bal, 2009 3rd ed., pp.5,6).¹⁵⁰

The "fabula" of Jonathan Dennis' narrative are told in two major autobiographical oral histories (Alley & Dennis, 2002; Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).¹⁵¹ In addition there is a further interview which

¹⁵⁰ "Actors" being those who perform an action (Bal, 2009, pp. 5, 6).

¹⁵¹ Malcolm McKinnon has pointed out that the Alley and Fyfe interviews may be markedly similar because Dennis was very tired from his illness and had to be conservative with his energy, therefore perhaps provided simple and more practiced answers (Personal correspondence, M.McKinnon 14/07/10).

focused largely on his work and was recorded by a fellow film archivist Diane Pivac (Pivac & Dennis, 2000). These interviews were undertaken by three women who understood the value of recording stories, but each came from a different perspective.

Firstly, Diane Pivac, who has worked at the NZFA since 1990, interviewed Jonathan Dennis. She had liaised with him after he left the Film Archive as he organised various exhibitions and film screenings nationally and internationally (Personal correspondence, D. Pivac 26/11/09). Because she had access to the administrative records of the Archive and knew the archive well, her interview is rich with specific technical questions about the decade in which the Archive was founded. A particular kind of “co-construction” is apparent in her interview which seeks to clarify information about the founding years of the archive, some of which was later used in a publication (Davy & Pivac, 2008).¹⁵² Secondly, Elizabeth Alley, veteran radio broadcaster and interviewer recorded Dennis’ oral history not long before his death. She undertook this interview with sound engineer Gareth Watkins who had worked alongside Alley and Dennis, making *The Film Show* (film review show broadcast on Concert and then National Radio) for a number of years (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.) Both Alley and Watkins had begun working with Dennis as colleagues, but were firm friends by the time this recording was undertaken (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.). This interview explores Dennis’ feelings and the impressions he made on others in some detail.

Finally Judith Fyfe, a significant figure in the New Zealand oral history movement was asked by a group of friends to record a film and sound interview not long before Dennis died. Fyfe did not know Dennis previously (Personal correspondence, A. Collins 26/01/09). Annie Collins filmed the Fyfe interview. For much of the interview the image is one fixed shot of Dennis and Fyfe. In the background the bright colours of his walls can be seen as well as Dennis’ Colin McCahon painting, *Paul to Hebrews* and a window across which is an elaborate iron artwork. These are discussed during the course of the interview. The impression is of an artistic house of a well-established person. Later, Dennis is recorded with Witarina Harris by his side and she also speaks. All three

¹⁵² At the National Film and Sound Archive in Australia, key staff members oral histories are recorded and added to the Archive to develop and support its own corporate history (Personal correspondence, C. Guster, 05/07/11). This is not the usual practice at the NZFA.

recordings were deposited in the NZFA. Fyfe accessed Pivac's interview before meeting with Dennis, so to some extent her interview follows the fabula of Pivac's previous work, but then explores the idea of his imminent death (Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

There is perhaps something akin to the confessional in the Fyfe and Alley interviews with Dennis. In both he accepts that he is going to die, although he does not know how soon that will be. He reviews his life and tries to explain aspects of his behaviour and personality. This kind of oral history at the time of someone's diagnosis with a terminal illness is perhaps a specific mode of narrative and storytelling which is quite different from (for example) the interviews I have gathered about Dennis, which did not focus on the interviewee's life story, although aspects of that were often offered and always accepted (Examples include Personal correspondence, R. Grover op.cit.; B. Sheat op.cit.; D. Eckhoff op.cit.)

Within the narratives created by these three interviews are recurring motifs and moments in which Dennis indicated incidents which he understood to have shifted or developed his thinking. These paint the picture of his personality, of his life and interests and works. They are neither true nor false, being simply stories through which Dennis and others (including myself) understood and understand him as a coherent personality. This collection of materials offers an insight into the role of storytelling in the making of meaning for the understanding of "a life" of Jonathan Dennis. The narrative arc remains remarkably consistent across these three interviews, with commonly recurring milestones or "fabula" which identify it as the same story even if it were not attached to the voice of Jonathan Dennis or to his name.

Interviewees themselves also actively engaged in the meaning making of the story of Jonathan Dennis in discussion with me as interviewer and biographer. Ricoeur argues that "narrative coherence" is important for all of us, helping us make sense of life and how it has been lived in meaningful ways (Bamberg et al., 2007 p.5). Themes emerged from the interviews unprompted by the author's questions. For example, many interviewees discussed Dennis' appearance at some length, expressing amusement, fondness, and at times, bewilderment or embarrassment.

For example, Lindsay Shelton, who was then Marketing Director of the NZ Film Commission described walking down a mall in Milan in the early 1980s with Dennis who was dressed in his usual apparel. A group of very well dressed young Italian men were walking towards them and “parted like the red sea” on seeing Dennis (Personal correspondence, L. Shelton 07/12/09). Many felt that Dennis’ presentation of self through his choice of clothes reflected his performance of a public persona, a use of metaphorical masks which helped him negotiate his way through often difficult and confrontational public experiences. A close friend remarked – “I often used to think that the thread that linked all of Jonathan’s activities was that they were performances of one kind or another” (Personal correspondence, M. McKinnon 23/11/09). This understanding of Dennis as being performative, for some interviewees at least, may have been prompted by the interview most had heard between Alley and Dennis in which they discussed his “personas” (Alley & Dennis, 2002).

However, many people had experience of the performances for themselves. A close friend who had been part of the *Amamus* theatre troupe described how performance seemed to her an intrinsic part of Dennis’ own family dynamic. She related her experience of the Dennis family dinner table – “...for the outsider it was like watching *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*...a theatrical performance almost that they put on” (Personal correspondence, D. Young op.cit). Many others described these family dinners as exhausting, with guests and family alike being expected to take a position in the argument and see it through to the “bitter” end (Personal correspondence, K. Dennis 13/07/10). Gubrium and Holstein argue that “family is not so much a concrete set of social ties or bonds as a way of attaching meaning to interpersonal relations. Like other social objects, family is a project that is realized through discourse” (Petraki et al., 2007 p.108). The charged atmosphere at the Dennis family dinner table was reminiscent of some interviewees’ views on Dennis’ personal interactions, particularly when he was angry. Dennis did not hide his opinions or emotions well and perhaps had learned to behave this way through his family interactions, supporting Gubrium and Holstein’s view of the role families play in the attachment of meaning to interpersonal relations and discursive practices.

Some interviewees described Dennis by linking back to the stories they knew of film archiving history. For example, British Film Institute (BFI) archivist Elaine Burrows remarked that she thought Dennis had a similar passion and flamboyant enthusiasm to Henri Langlois, founder of the Cinémathèque Française (Personal correspondence, E. Burrows 07/07/10) while others said they were reminded of Len Lye (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins 21/11/09). Bill Gosden thought Dennis perhaps modelled himself on Edith Kramer, film archivist for the Pacific Film Archive at Berkeley (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden op.cit.). Edith Kramer was certainly a strong influence and became a good friend to Dennis and Paolo Cherchi-Usai (Personal correspondence, E. Kramer 02/04/12; P. Cherchi-Usai 14/05/09).

Other interviewees described the theatricality of Dennis' behaviour. Elizabeth Alley remembered a phone call in which she had told Dennis that their radio show was nominated for a New Zealand Radio Award for the first time and that he needed to wear "black tie" [formal wear] for the ceremony – 'He went out and he bought the most rare pair of blue, peacock blue trousers, brightest blue I'd ever seen really, with a gorgeous orange shirt. I can't remember if he bothered with a tie and a long jacket in another colour, it all sort of blended, and he looked like a peacock. It was wonderful. In this boring sea of black. I was thrilled. I knew exactly what he'd do. But I couldn't resist saying to him 'black tie' just to see what the reaction was [laughs]. He was not a corporate animal" (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit).

Alley's description signals her understanding of Dennis as someone defiant of convention but also her amusement and delight in the performance of his blue trousers (note she repeats the name of the colour three times). She also says in an understatement for anyone who knew him that Dennis "was not a corporate animal". As previously mentioned, Roger Horrocks interpreted Dennis' appearance as "camp" after the style of Susan Sontag's *Notes on 'Camp'* (Sontag, 1964); he felt there was an element of stylistic play, and a careful statement of identity in his apparel (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks op.cit.). Wells used the phrase "better blatant than latent" to describe Dennis' outfits (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 30/06/09).¹⁵³ This phrase

¹⁵³ Current director of the NZFA Frank Stark jokingly wondered who came first: Jonathan Dennis or Freddy Mercury? (Personal correspondence, F. Stark 11/03/13).

recalls the gay rights movement, as Alley's serves to remind us that Dennis was not a person who enjoyed the boundaries of mainstream society or institutions.

Fabula in the narrative

In relation to his professional rather than his personal life, there are two fabula of Dennis' narrative which speak to his internal understanding of his formation as a film archivist. These involved receiving advice from people he regarded as significant in their fields of practice. He stated that these experiences were influential for his own thinking. Dennis recounted for all interviewers in very similar words the following story: "I'd written to Len Lye and...he wrote back and said he'd be happy to meet me, it was a very gracious letter, but said something like 'oh you scholarly chaps with your archives...will it aid creativity?' And I had no idea what he meant. I couldn't fathom what he would mean by such a question" (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).¹⁵⁴

The letter has become part of the mythology of the Archive's development and Dennis' place within it where he argued that being "creative" was the key. It is part of the discourse of Dennis and Lye as author functions in that the story had impact on others and influenced their lives and behaviours. For example Sarah Davy, an employee of the Archive, was influenced by Dennis' passion for Len Lye in her choice of Master of Film Archiving project. When asked how she came up with her thesis topic she replied that it was because of the neon sign outside the Film Archive at Tory Street – "I loved that sign, and it was my first exposure to Len...that whole you know 'hope it aids creativity' famous letter that was written" (Personal correspondence, S. Davy op.cit.). As Davy notes, Dennis actively promoted an association with Len Lye by framing the letter and by using Lye's writing from the letter on the neon sign for the NZFA. Len Lye's words became one of the founding myths of the Archive – it functioned to remind those who saw it that creativity was an important part of the ethos of the Archive. Other interview subjects felt that Dennis' personal aesthetics and energy were also influenced by Lye, guessing that he "based a

¹⁵⁴ Aerogramme from the United States sent in February 28 1979, from Len Lye: 'Dear Jonathan: Thanks for your letter and news of the NZ National Film Archive....all you scholarly chaps! Good luck for your study and hope it helps creativity...that's the rub. We, my wife Ann and I will just be getting back to NYC from Puerto Rico in April and sorry we can't put you up, but if you get a chance to come to the Nitty NYC Gritty, take it. We'll be delighted to see you and help in any way poss...Old Paul Fiondella will be here and he can wise you up on my material. You seem to have a life's work with your millions of feet and news reel backlog. All best Len Lye ps. If ever acquiring film prints I suggest animation film students would get benefit out of UPA's Robert E Cannon's 10 min film work – Christopher Crumpet, Gerald McBoing-Boing, Billy the Kid. I don't know who has the rights but you could find out when you're here? L' (NZFA PP JD Box 2 Folder "Len Lye").

lot of himself on Lye....that zany, zappy, all that thing... it's just that amazing energy that Len had, and you look at his age and you think man I want to be doing that when I'm that age, you know, just amazing" (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.).

Watkins refers to himself in relation to his view of Dennis and then talks about the energy Len had – "I want to be doing that when I'm that age". Watkins in turn emulated what he felt were the best traits of Dennis' behaviour and life such as his aesthetic sense, creativity, ethical approach, archiving integrity, passion and determination (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.). Watkins describes his opinion of how Dennis was influenced by others and in turn influenced others, such as Davy and himself.

Dennis' second story of an influential moment, a fabula which affected his life, was also recounted in each interview. He recalled his arrival at the Cinémathèque Française (the first film archive in the world established in the 1930s) on his late 1970s archive tour. Dennis described a conversation with Mary Meerson not long after her partner and founder of the archive, Henri Langlois had died. "Mary continually talked about films as living objects that for them to have a life they had to be in front of people. It was people that brought them to life and that if you didn't show them then you might just as well have some cupboard full of whatever, but it was of no value. You had to put them in front of people" (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

Later, when Dennis was to take films up the Whanganui River and see the reactions from descendants of those in the films who would call to the screen, laugh, weep and talk passionately, he was to remember Meerson's words, as did Di Pivac when she interviewed Dennis and commented on this "living" aspect of the films (Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Meerson's passionate engagement with films as "living objects" as Dennis recounted it, became related to his understanding of film as taonga in later life (Dennis, 1987). The idea of the living archive links "biculturalism" through the notion of "living objects" or ngā taonga.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Fax August 1993 from JD to Alain Marchand, La Cinémathèque Française – to Antonio Rodrigues, Lucy and Renee Lichtig from Jonathan Dennis: "I wanted you to know that my thoughts will be with you all at the funeral on Monday. My friendship with Mary was incredibly important to me and I loved her dearly. She was (and remains) an inspiration. She took me in when I was struggling to shape my ideas for setting up a film archive in New Zealand. What eventually grew into The NZFA would have been poorer, and certainly less creative, without Mary's generosity" (NZFA PP JD Box 11 Folder "Mary Meerson").

Both these stories as fabula in the narrative of Jonathan Dennis' life have a number of functions. Firstly, they were links of association to two icons of film history. Others often told stories of Dennis' association with people well-regarded in the film world – Kenneth Anger, his meeting with Lilian Gish, Len Lye and Mary Meerson. Secondly, these are important moments in which he and others made sense of the process of developing the NZFA, creating its founding myths and supporting its vision. It also reflected Dennis' own desire not to just archive things, keeping them in a "cupboard" tucked away, but to present them to people and justify the less traditional approach he took to archiving.

In addition these film figures lent a cinematic glamour to the dry and arduous work of archiving and linked that work to the films which inspire the behind the scenes efforts. They are presented by Dennis and others as catalytic moments in which the subject and others, through telling and retelling of the story, aid the development of a sense of the Archive's identity and its function as a creative enterprise supported by filmmakers and film personalities from both the national and international arena. It is not a "quiet" vault in which Dennis is "bottling away" preserving the films (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001) but a living and creative entity. These are two moments in which Dennis feeds a narrative about himself and the Archive and the way in which he wants to be understood and remembered.

This reinforces Foucault's notion of the author function being a collection of writings, impressions, thoughts and feelings which attach to a particular name such as Jonathan Dennis, which in their turn engender further discourse. The narrative created through these fabula are a construction of Dennis' life, making a cohesive story from the events which he experienced. They are also co-constructed with his interviewers and audience as they are heard, discussed and retold. These fabula become part of the myth of Dennis and his work. They also have a wider purpose – to feed a founding myth of the Film Archive itself which lends it purpose, creativity, and motivation.

Versions of the story:

1. If I dreamed of anything I dreamed of being a film star

In one of the two substantial oral history interviews undertaken before his death, Jonathan Dennis was asked by Elizabeth Alley about his sense of his own persona over the course of his life.¹⁵⁶ Bamberg et al. (2007) assert that – “...narrative functions as the glue that enables human life to transcend the natural incoherence and discontinuity of the unruly everyday....by imposing a point of origin and an orientation toward closure, and thereby structuring the otherwise meaningless into a meaningful life” (Bamberg et al., 2007 p.5). In this context when Dennis and the interviewer are aware that he is dying, the importance of meaning and closure seem to be more pressing matters than in the normal oral history situation.¹⁵⁷ Dennis discussed at some length his life story and the use he had made of public and private personas. He recounted how he quite consciously used his knowledge of performance to endure difficult situations which his private self did not feel capable of managing. Within this discussion a number of components of Dennis’ narrative are referred to, including his self-perceived skills and failings, his work experiences and his perceptions of others:

EA (Elizabeth Alley) –*as director, as critic, your perception and understanding of the human condition...you make finely tuned summations of films and people*

JD (Jonathan Dennis) – *sometimes too finely tuned. I was surprised when I’d find someone was scared of me*

EA – *are you not aware of your two quite clear personas?*

Alley challenges Dennis to think about the various ways in which he is understood by others which might not cohere with his sense of self. In the full interview she takes him through his life story, from childhood through to adulthood, and as someone who clearly knows him well, is able to do so in an intimate mode. When she asks about his “two quite clear personas”, she does so as someone who knows this about him – it is not a question an oral historian would generally ask.

¹⁵⁶ Oral History by Elizabeth Alley (interviewer) and Gareth Watkins (sound engineer) Interview with Jonathan Spencer Dennis. Recorded 6th December 2001 at Dennis’ home 14 Edge Hill, Wellington, NZ.

¹⁵⁷ Although it is becoming increasingly common to collect oral histories of patients if they wish it in NZ at Hospice [hospital for the dying] (Unrecorded discussion at Auckland National Oral History Association of NZ Symposium May 2013).

Dennis clearly trusts Alley to answer this question as honestly as possible. The interview continues:

JD – yes, public and private. I became aware of inhabiting a different persona probably at school. I know the boy practising invisibility at boarding school in Christchurch, that what I was presenting to people there was in some ways an outer shell to protect the more vulnerable inner...In the 80s I felt very strongly I created a public persona, and then there was me... It's a protection thing for me to really keep strong the things that are important to me in whatever I'm feeling or doing I need another layer of protection I suppose. And I've created quite a good one (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001).

Many interviewees heard the edited version of this interview broadcast after Dennis' death and remarked as Sharon Dell did, that these comments made sense of the fact that Dennis insisted on travelling with a "retinue", which could be quite tiring for those who felt they were expected to attend. Once she knew he felt the need for "protection" it became much more understandable to her and she was able to reconcile her previous perception of Dennis as being at times demanding as she realised how important his friendships were to him (Personal correspondence, S. Dell op.cit.).¹⁵⁸ Dennis then explains this a little further:

JD - In the training perhaps, all those years of being an actor...I feel like a lot of what I have done in the 80s and 90s was a performance, but the difference now was I was the director...Film Archive in 80s, 90s Film Show [Dennis' film review show on Concert FM and then National Radio]. That suited me to have someone else I could inhabit in the public sense. I feel absolutely tongue tied and scared and feel ungainly in any public sense where I feel I've got no friends or protection around me.

EA – and yet most of us see you as fearless

JD – (laughs) yes, it's weird (Alley et al., 2001).

¹⁵⁸ Dell has since commented that what she realised was that Dennis' friends were so important to him. "...he was always so kind and generous – had things prepared for you when you went to stay etc so it was deeply moving to hear that we were doing something important for him too" (Personal Correspondence, S.Dell 16/04/15).

With the help and support of his interviewer, Dennis is doing what we perhaps all would do in similar circumstances. He is creating the narrative of his life as he wants others to hear it. He knows he is dying and that this is one of the last chances he has to leave a record that he has some control over. Rubby Dhunpath says that in telling our life history we “make our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of a single unfolding story” (Silverman, 1997 p.545). This is particularly important if you are (relatively) young as Dennis was when he was dying. He had enjoyed a public and varied career, and was well-known by many in New Zealand and by the film archiving community through Europe and North America, as well as “Oceania” as he liked to call the South Pacific (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Therefore, having the opportunity to describe his own life seems to have been important to him – or perhaps to his loyal friends who wished to have him represent his own story before others, like myself, started to interpret it. Perhaps understandably, he fails to mention in any of his interviews his infamous ability to snub people who he felt were not worthy of his attention or had slighted him, instead referring to it obliquely when he says he was “surprised” when people were scared of him.

Dennis refers in the interview to the theatre work with *Amamus*, which he understood as having enabled him to perform a part, to have a separate public persona which he could utilise in order to protect the self who struggles to communicate with strangers. He felt this was reasonably successful, but also recognised that a “tight band of friends” was important in order for him to feel safe. Interviewees who heard this interview were often taken aback by these details which took them by surprise (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.). For others it came as no surprise, including for his niece Kirsten Dennis who knew he was an introvert (Personal correspondence, K. Dennis op.cit.). It is unlikely Dennis would have spoken quite so frankly unless he was near death, however this is purely speculation. In the Pivac interview from 2000 he also revealed some frank personal feelings although at the time he certainly did not think he was dying even though he was aware that he had cancer (Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

2. 24 Frames: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told

There are now a number of versions of the above oral history narrative in various edits of the original Alley recording. The Elizabeth Alley and Gareth Watkins’ interview with Dennis on 6th

December, 2001 exists as a raw recording (Alley et al., 2001). That interview was initially edited by Paul Bushnell for a broadcast played after Jonathan Dennis' death in 2002 on Radio NZ under the title *If I Dreamed of Anything I Dreamed of Being a Film Star*. The title refers to a quote from Dennis in the interview (Alley & Dennis, 2002). Excerpts from that same recording were then used by Peter Wells as the voiceover in his film *Friendship Is The Harbour of Joy* (Prod. & Dir. P. Wells, 2004). In 2012 the original recording was re-edited by Gareth Watkins, commissioned by Kate Mead and Roger Smith for RNZ Concert, and additional broadcasts played on RNZ National. This version was called *24 Frames: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told* (Watkins, 2012). An accompanying article I wrote appeared in *OnFilm* magazine under the same title as the Watkins' edit (E. J. Kelly, 2012). The various versions of the sound recording, the broadcast, the film and the article about Jonathan Dennis utilise fabula from within the original text that are considered by the various editors/authors to be important parts of the narrative. They choose to let certain words shine or be hidden.

One of the chief differences between the Paul Bushnell edit of the interview and the subsequent edits by Wells and Watkins is that Elizabeth Alley, a consummate professional interviewer with many years experience of radio, is heard to break down and cry in both Watkins' and Wells' edit. Paul Bushnell created a formal professional presentation of Dennis' life (rather like an oral obituary) whereas Watkins and Wells choose methods perhaps less "professional", but certainly more emotionally engaging. The ambient sounds from Dennis' house on the original recording were not used in the Bushnell edit. Similarly to Wells, Watkins wanted to remember the house as a "portrait of the man" (Wells, 2004). In Watkins' edit of the Alley interview he includes these sounds and narrates using his own voice to explain their inclusion as a way for himself to be able to remember Dennis. He narrates his choices within the text, giving the story a changed emphasis and making transparent the co-construction of narrative by the author/editor (Watkins, 2012). This shift in emphasis perhaps reflects a different time period in which the edits were made, the later edits perhaps adhere to a less traditional style of broadcasting with a self-reflexive influence. The effect is a more personal tone. The various edits become new co-constructions of the narrative of Dennis' life, utilising various modes of sound, including the ephemeral and non-verbal. They demonstrate not only the role of the editor in making important decisions about

emphasis in the narrative, but also how the original recording becomes part of a discursive practice related to the author function “Jonathan Dennis”.

3. Friendship Is the Harbour of Joy (2004)

Friendship is the Harbour of Joy further develops the non-verbal and interweaves this into the narrative artefact of Peter Wells’ story of Jonathan Dennis.¹⁵⁹ Although originally it was to be a record of Jonathan’s house itself, it developed into a piece about the friendship of Jonathan Dennis, a 49 year old Pākehā man and Witarina Harris, a kuia in her 90s (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 22/04/10). Wells, like Watkins, weaves himself into the narrative, but rather than doing so with his voice, he uses silent cinema style cards and sometimes he is seen in the frame.¹⁶⁰ The film opens with the sound of laughter, and a date on the screen, “18 November 2001”. There is a close up of an orange and teal house, and then the next shot is of a cushion on which is written – “Friendship is the Harbour of Joy”. Images of slippers and then a crutch are seen, and the writing appears again – “A portrait of the friendship of Jonathan Dennis and Witarina Harris”. The next card reads – “During the last months of his life I asked my friend Jonathan if he would like me to make a little film about the interior of his house....Once I began filming it changed into a portrait of what happened within the house.” Wells is seen at one point in the film in a shot with Dennis. He’s heard to laugh and comment on the small size of the camera he is using. He weaves himself into the film, asserting his right to be there by making a statement about his friend Jonathan. Like Watkins’ edit of the Alley interview, the form is self-reflexive. It also follows the oral history tradition of recording the stories of those who are traditionally marginalised – in this case a gay man and an older Māori woman.

In the production notes Peter Wells wrote while making the film, he asks himself, “Where do I stand?” (Wells, 2001-2004). He struggled to know if and how he should include himself within the text of the film he was creating, but clearly decided in the final edit that it was important he was present. Wells recalled – “Someone, having seen the film, said they felt it was the most personal film I’ve ever made and it was a real expression of my own character” (Wells in Cardy,

¹⁵⁹ What is not clear within the recordings is the considerable effort a number of people made in order to ensure Dennis could die at home. Ferry Hendriks, Dennis’ long time companion organised a number of people to cook, clean, sit with Dennis and organise everything as he died. Hendriks had by this time nursed a number of friends with HIV AIDS through their dying (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks 28/11/09).

¹⁶⁰ The use of title cards nods to Dennis and Wells’ love of silent cinema (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 22/04/10).

2004). He says he disagreed with the statement, but the fact that he repeated it to a journalist writing a piece about the film suggests he thought the idea had some merit, or at least was worthy of discussion.

The following outline of an excerpt of the film demonstrates how Wells blended the narrative texts of the oral history interview (by Alley and Watkins) and the film recording, skilfully interweaving verbal and non-verbal cues to tell the story of Dennis' life and work with Witarina Harris:

A shot of Witarina is shown as she reads on the sofa. Jonathan then walks into the shot while diegetic music is playing in the background. Witarina starts to sing along to the music as Jonathan looks at her and smiles.

Dennis' voice from the Alley interview – "I really had no contact with taha māori, I didn't even go onto a marae until about 1978 for the first time, and it was a revelation to me, I had no idea there was this separate world, I was completely ignorant..."

Cut to Jonathan and Witarina sitting on the sofa together

"...and I'm appalled by that ignorance when I think of it now, that I could be in my mid- twenties before any sense of anything Māori began to permeate, but what really happened, what really triggered..."

Camera swoops across room, close up on mantelpiece with photos and decorations

"...my involvement in any sense was the films again. We had found a print of a film called 'The Devil's Pit'..."

Shot from "The Devil's Pit" is intercut

"...an appallingly banal Māori folk drama..."

Shot of kids from film cheerfully performing a playful version of a haka [war dance]

"...made by Universal Studios here in the late 1920s. We regarded it as completely lost because Universal was one of the studios that burnt all of its original nitrate from that period..."

Shot of Witarina and Jonathan on sofa, Jonathan yawning

Jonathan goes on to describe calling Witarina Harris whom he had heard had starred in the film. This was the beginning of their relationship – “...we met and formed the most astonishingly deep friendship very very quickly, to the point where she became the kaumātua of the Archive, to the extent that she travelled with the films both Māori and Pākehā...”

Close up shot as Witarina sings, cut to medium shot of Jonathan and Witarina holding hands

“...to warm them, basically, to bring some of the life to these films, to be the conduit between the audience and the image...” (Prod. & Dir. P. Wells 2004).

This sequence which intercuts the sound from Alley’s interview and the images from Wells’ film demonstrates verbally and non-verbally the intimacy of Dennis and Harris’ relationship. The images and the soundtrack describe a friendship which is both cross-cultural and intergenerational. Wells’ film brings together the warmth of the Alley interview with the visuals which emphasise the love Dennis and Harris felt for each other. It is demonstrated how their intimacy had a huge impact upon both their lives and on Dennis’ passage towards his death, as Harris guided him in his dying time (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis op.cit.). According to this text, Dennis wanted this “bicultural” story told. In the film sequence shot after he died, we see unnamed Māori women dressed traditionally for a funeral welcoming mourners into his house. Dennis was proud of his engagement with “taha Māori” and the influence it had on his work ever after he stepped onto that first marae in 1978. He described how it was not until after his meeting with Witarina Harris that he was able to start usefully employing that engagement within his work at the NZFA. This is an intrinsic part of his “narrative arc”, the fabula of his story in every oral history recorded.

The intimate public – silences in the narrative

Much of the “text” of this film is silence; revisions and negations are present within the recorded footage. Dennis’ imminent death is not discussed in the video recordings made by Wells, but through the post-production edit the topic is introduced via the interweaving of Alley’s interview as the voiceover, and also through the images of medical paraphernalia around the house and

via the footage of his wake. Dennis and Harris are seen in the film enjoying their time together as the camera pans from their various activities to the walls of the house, the shelves covered in knick knacks and decorations. We can hear Dennis and Harris talking and singing. Their story within the narrative text is one of peace and happiness in their friendship. But Dennis and Harris are not a couple, and their relationship is in no way a traditional one. The very fact they are together in this intimate setting is unusual.

Dennis and Harris' relationship is certainly a "queer" one in the sense of the term derived from queer theory. Annamarie Jagose describes queer as a conceptual position – "Broadly speaking, queer describes those gestures or analytical models which dramatise incoherencies in the allegedly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender and sexual desire" (Jagose, 1996 p.3). Harris and Dennis' relationship sits outside the everyday assumptions of intimacy and coupledness. Their relationship is not "nameable" in the traditional sense. "Queer...has proved a useful category for scholars who seek to discuss sexuality outside the organising dichotomy of heterosexuality/homosexuality" (Jagose, 1996 p.136). It is in this sense that Peter Wells' film about Jonathan Dennis and Witarina Harris is a *queer* narrative text, a version of the story of Jonathan Dennis which highlights the "unusual" angles – his close friendship with an older Māori woman, and his non-heterosexual lifestyle. Dennis was literally gay, but that is an identity category which "queer" avoids. Queer does not assume an essentialist gay perspective. Queer is a moving beyond gender and sexuality categorisation, challenging heteronormative assumptions about the roles of male and female, about what a life might be and who may have a right to "have a life". The film speaks to Berlant's idea of the intimate public as offering moments within the folds of the heteronormative world in which being "otherwise" might be positive (Berlant & Prosser, 2011).

Dennis and Harris' relationship defies categorisation. Although Harris is female and seems elderly and vulnerable, it is the younger of the two, Dennis, who is dying. It is Harris who leads Dennis with her knowledge and experience through the journey towards his death. The hand holding, the intimate warmth between Dennis and Harris, signals the behaviours of the everyday couple. Bernard claims that "the correspondence between lovers, between a husband and wife – are the

very stuff of the archive” (Bernard, 2011 p.102). Is Harris and Dennis’ relationship not the “very stuff of the archive” even if they are not lovers? Or is this not possible because they are not a heterosexual couple?

Wells was initially determined to document a gay life (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 30/06/09). He was bearing witness and creating evidence of the lives which are often left unrecorded. The title of the film refers to a friendship which was unusual and often referred to by others (for example, Personal correspondence, D. Pivac 26/11/09; N. Brand 13/07/10; S. Davy 08/11/10). Italian film archivist, author and curator Paolo Cherchi-Usai described their friendship:

I think they were kindred souls...I don’t think I’ve ever witnessed such a fusion between two souls...in some respects the nature of this spiritual intimacy between Witarina and Jonathan is a mystery, and it should remain a mystery because it’s something between Witarina and Jonathan (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai 14/05/09).

Indeed, their relationship is a mystery, but one that has been recorded on film and is therefore a text available for analysis. Yet Sister Loyola’s words in *Gardening with Soul* (Prod. Pope, V., Dir. J. Feast 2013) return – some things are “beyond words”. The story of the narrative text is certainly one which piques the interest of those who see it.¹⁶¹ It is also painfully intimate and can feel voyeuristic when the camera follows mourners up the stairs into Dennis’ bedroom where he lies in state.

Lauren Berlant’s re-evaluation of representations of intimacy offers a lens through which to consider this friendship. As we have seen Berlant’s notion of the “intimate public” calls for a re-understanding of the heteronormative assumptions of relationships and intimacies:

Rethinking intimacy calls not only for redescription but for transformative analysis of the rhetorical and material conditions that enable hegemonic fantasies to thrive in the minds and on the bodies of subjects while, at the same time, attachments are developing that might redirect the different routes taken by history and biography. To rethink intimacy is

¹⁶¹ When I was an image archivist I attended the International Film Festival in Auckland in 2004 and watched *Friendship Is the Harbour of Joy*. This was the first time I had heard of Dennis or Harris.

to appraise how we have been and how we live and how we might imagine lives that make more sense than the ones so many are living (Berlant, 1998 p.286).

This redirection of routes of history and biography is an apt description of the relationship of the couple who are not a couple within the film narrative text. They love each other, they support one another, they sleep in the same bed and both refer jokingly at various times to being “girlfriend” and “boyfriend”. But they do not have a sexual relationship, which would make their intimacy comprehensible to a film audience accustomed to seeing heterosexual couples of comparable ages in intimate circumstances within the home environment.

Berlant states that “desires for intimacy that bypass the couple or the life narrative it generates have no alternative plots, let alone...laws and stable spaces of culture in which to clarify and to cultivate them” (1998 p.285). In Mieke Bal’s terminology, the fabula that make up the narrative artefact are not familiar. Peter Wells is representing something queer, yet it is not once stated in this film that Jonathan is gay. Nor is it hidden, and in fact from the opening sequence it can be guessed that if not gay, Dennis certainly does not hold to any set of masculine gender assumptions, at least as far as interior decoration of his home is concerned. For example, there is a shot of a stone with the name “Jonathan” carved into it. That shot then pans to an image on the wall of a beautiful young man (James Dean) with a cigarette in his mouth. Other images of Dennis’ house include shots of a ledge with four tikis (Māori symbols representing the first human) in a row, pacific style necklaces, three images in a row of black and white female movie stars of the past, and a shot of “Be Here For the Cure” literature.¹⁶² The images are perhaps best described as camp, and could be considered quite stereotypical of the gay man. They are non-verbal signals; code which can be read by the astute viewer. Wells was quite deliberate about showing these images so that although it is not stated that Dennis is gay, it is quite clear for those who can read the signs that he is (Personal correspondence, P. Wells op.cit.).¹⁶³ The film echoes Halperin’s “tacit codes of conduct” which resist everyday hegemonic forces. This is significant in

¹⁶² HIV AIDs awareness literature. People who did not know him well often made the assumption that Dennis died of AIDs, being at a moment when those deaths among gay men had been reasonably common for a decade. He died of cancer, the diagnosis and prognosis of which is discussed in the film by Dennis. There is also correspondence in his personal papers in which a correspondent asked whether he had HIV AIDs (NZFA PP JD Box 11).

¹⁶³ This “signaling” through objects is common in any culture which has been forced to be discrete and there is a large body of literature about it. The word “camp” itself suggests a positioning of oneself to suggest ones’ sexuality through attitude, clothing and style and is most often associated with male homosexuality. As Stephen Fry puts it – “Camp is queer. (Mostly)” (Fry, 1997 p.127).

Dennis' narrative in terms of heteronormative assumptions about what constitutes a normative portrait of a private setting.¹⁶⁴

This film is a curious hybrid; a home movie, a diary, an attempt to portray the intimacy of Jonathan Dennis' life and friendships. There were some family and friends who felt ambivalent about the film which they understood as "invasive" because it showed mourners in Dennis' house and left people feeling exposed or vulnerable (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden op.cit.).¹⁶⁵ Yet it was Dennis who asked Wells to record even the moment of his death (Wells, 2004). For Dennis, an avid and passionate film goer, the ultimate compliment was to be recorded on film. Ever the archivist, he wanted a record of his story, a narrative of his life and his passing.¹⁶⁶ Through recording the banal everyday domesticity as well as the friendship of Dennis and Harris and the death of Dennis himself, Wells is presenting a biography of gesture, of friendship and events leading to a death in a manner which he felt was respectful. It is an ephemeral moment captured on digital video, evidence of sorts of a gay and/or queer life. As Wells said in an interview at the time the film was broadcast on television – "Nothing is as transient as the interior of a house. That transience becomes particularly poignant when someone is dying or has died. You are aware of a world that is about to vanish completely. It's not only the person, but everything about them. The way they haphazardly arrange dishes in the kitchen or really think about what they put on a mantelpiece" (Wells in Cardy, 2004). Much of what Wells is trying to describe is unspoken – it is the visual and non-verbal which paint the picture of Dennis and Harris.

Representing gay men's lives: Folds in the heteronormative world

Peter Wells has described the ways in which he survived his childhood through creative attachments and fantasy in his own works (Wells, 2001). He also discussed them privately. Wells said, for example, that he and Dennis discussed at length the experience of cinema going in the

¹⁶⁴ Stuart Harris one of Witarina Harris' sons, read an early draft of a paper on the "Intimate Public" and *Friendship Is the Harbour of Joy* and found it offensive. He felt the use of the word 'queer' in association with Witarina Harris was inappropriate. Therefore I have only used material about Harris already available in the public sphere and not that gleaned from my one interview with her daughter-in-law. Since this early discussion I did write another paper and submit it to the Harris whanau. They gave it their blessing and it was published in April 2014 in the International Federation of Film Archives journal (presented as an appendix to this thesis).

¹⁶⁵ Wells took an edit of the film to Witarina Harris' house and got her blessing for it to be screened before it was shown at the International Film Festival. She loved the film (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 22/04/10).

¹⁶⁶ Many interviewees emphasised that Dennis was very angry that he was dying. He did not want people to think he had accepted his death as inevitable. It was also very physically painful and frightening (Personal correspondence; S. Dennis op.cit.; S. Dell op.cit.; S. Bartel op.cit.).

1950s and 1960s and what it meant to them. Wells described in detail the mutual understanding he and Dennis had of their childhood pleasures in going to the cinema. It is recounted in full here because it is difficult to do justice to such an articulate passage by summarising it:

...sitting in the dark and watching alternative lives was a way of avoiding what amounted to the compulsory heterosexuality of our...mutual childhoods...you could sit and dream and experience a notion of freedom which seemed to have great depth – you looked into a space and it offered both diversion and a contradictory reality – contradictory to the one you were imprisoned in, outside the cinema. You could also fall in love with the beautiful faces and bodies of men on the screen. You always imagined they were going to kiss your lips as the camera moved in a pre-clinch close-up (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 30/06/09).

Like Dennis, Wells is a gay Pākehā man from a working class background. They were virtually the same age, and therefore grew up in a similar era (the 1960s). For many years now, Wells has contributed to a public conversation about male gay narratives in NZ through visual and written media (For example Main & Wells, 1993; Wells, 1997, 2001). Dennis felt a kinship with Wells' work, their correspondence in the NZFA attesting to the warm regard and support Dennis felt for Wells' films and books (NZFA PP JD Box 11). As Wells describes it, they were both cinephiles who used cinema as an escape from their heteronormative upbringings, revelling in the films and their gorgeous images. As a child and as an adult, Dennis engaged with cinema as a way to escape the everyday difficulties of boarding school and a crippling shyness in social situations which he described in his interview with Alley (Alley & Dennis, 2002). As previously noted Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's work describes a similar theme of gay youth alienation, survived through identifying cultural objects which have some hint of homosexuality about them (Sedgwick, 1993 p.3). Dennis and Wells "survived" through cinema and fantasy at a time when heteronormative culture did not allow an explicit homosexual reality to exist in the everyday.

In Foucauldian terms, the "scribbled notes" which Dennis left behind, these films and sound recordings associated with his name, are significant to his life and the work he did, or at the least, they create the space left behind through which he may be interpreted. Each interpretation of

Dennis's story is bound up with the perspective of the editor, sound engineer, interviewer, film maker and the audience. Each interpretation is different, supporting the poststructuralist view that multiple perspectives are possible.

As the director of a national archive, as a lifelong archivist with an acute and conscious sense of the public and private spheres, Dennis more than many biographical subjects sought to be the narrator of his own story. He understood the power of the archive intimately, and he chose what was to be deposited in his collection of personal papers. Dennis also chose to allow Peter Wells, a man known for his representations of gay stories and his activism into his home at the time of his decline; he chose for the oral history interviews to be recorded. Dennis knew Peter Wells' work, and he knew that Wells sought to claim a public space for the gay story, for the marginalised, and for the man dying before his time. He wanted the queer narrative to emerge. Dennis had also previously chosen to create a soundscape about artists who had been diagnosed with or had died of HIV AIDS with Elizabeth Alley (this will be analysed in the following chapter). That work supports the view that he was interested in representations of folds within the heteronormative world which expressed the possibility of being otherwise.

Although an intensely private person, Dennis also had the abilities of the performer and the knowledge of the archivist. He knew or hoped that researchers would be interested in his story, and so he took the opportunity to present it. Or to put it another way, he chose to narrate the first distortion of the truth before others began to (re)interpret his life.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ Comment by John Reynolds, NZ artist, on the reason for creating a book about his work himself, rather than allowing someone else to interpret him in a monograph (Reynolds, J, 2010).

9. Beyond cinema, beyond the NZFA

The previous chapter examined Dennis' narratives of his life, while this chapter takes the threads of Dennis' experience and knowledge of social injustice and relates these to the presentation of archival materials which he undertook. It will demonstrate how Dennis' practice was a creative endeavour and a collaborative venture which sought, through remembering rather than forgetting the colonial history of NZ and the South Pacific, to trouble the contemporary moment. Stephen Turner's analysis of settler culture and its effects is employed to consider Dennis' practice.¹⁶⁸ In addition Homi Bhaba's concept of hybridity is investigated in relation to one of Dennis' final soundscape works, *Ocean of Time* (2000).

As discussed in Chapter Six, Dennis had worked with Māori and helped develop a "kaupapa" for the Archive which incorporated Māori values into its framework. He explained in a lecture and a subsequently published paper that his aim was "uncovering and releasing the images" from the Archive to find ways in which Pākehā and Māori could work together (Dennis, 1990). This could be interpreted as an attempt towards "kaupapa Māori", an indigenous centered perspective and practice which engaged face-to-face with Māori in order to enable the descendants of taonga to respond to them (McCarthy, 2011; Tapsell, 2006; Te Awakotuku, 1991). This perspective required not only a strong sense of place and self, but imagination to create new ways of presenting archival materials in a culturally appropriate manner. It involved cooperation and engagement with others. Dennis' work from 1983 onwards increasingly took materials outside the Archive walls into the wider world. In doing so he incorporated the values and practices he had learned from Witarina Harris, Barry Barclay, Merata Mita and the audiences for the films he had screened (Dennis, 1989). It also utilised his international contacts and knowledge, his cinematic sensibilities and theatrical flair.

Like Italian oral historian and political activist Alessandro Portelli, Dennis knew to "never turn your attention off, and always show respect for what people choose to tell you" (Portelli, 1991

¹⁶⁸ Turner has not analysed Dennis' work but he has considered Dennis' colleague Barry Barclay's film making and writing in depth in relation to colonialism (S. Turner, 2002).

p.x). This enthusiasm for being an active recorder and presenter of history rather than a passive keeper, was fundamental to Dennis and he continued pursuing this idea after his time as Director of the NZFA. It is certainly one of the reasons he was engaged with and by people from film, arts, and other communities outside the direct radius of the Archive itself (Personal correspondence, P. Wells 22/04/10). He was never regarded as a “gatekeeper” but as an enabler and “the unsung hero of the film culture” (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 21/10/08).

Dennis retained his passion for his first love, silent cinema. He was nostalgic for and engaged by early cinema, believing that the silent period had offered a more “pure” form of cinematic expression and a superior art form to that which came after it (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001).¹⁶⁹ As described in Chapter Four he was part of the 1960’s and 1970s “feverish age of movie-going, with the full-time cinephile always hoping to find a seat as close as possible to the big screen...” (Sontag, 1996). Dennis had a “particular sense of film aesthetics — he loved film-as-film” as well as specific filmmakers who he understood as auteurs, such as Robert Bresson (Personal correspondence R. Horrocks 21/10/08). He took these influences into his radio programmes, television and film works and soundscapes in unexpected ways, which will be analysed in this chapter.

He also added an element to his work which seemed alien to many white European and North American audiences; he was actively supporting indigenous peoples to have a voice in exhibitions, books, radio works, television and film projects. As he learned from his many collaborators, Dennis could no longer see images of indigenous peoples in the kitsch light of camp, but instead viewed them as a representation of their “ancestors”, which signified not so much a truth in their representation, but a truth about how they were perceived by filmmakers at the time of the recording. For example, he was realistic about *The Devil’s Pit* in which Witarina Harris had starred, calling it as we’ve seen “an appallingly banal Māori folk drama...” (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001) yet he valued the film because it was his opportunity to meet Harris herself. It also functioned as a telling example of how European filmmakers of the 1920s and 1930s had

¹⁶⁹ Others have spoken and written in detail about what was lost when sound was introduced to cinema. A different aesthetic was required once verbal explanation was possible and the sound equipment itself affected the visual nature of cinematography. See Kevin Brownlow *The Parade’s Gone By*, first published 1969 by Secker and Warburg, London.

exploited New Zealand as an exotic location to tell inaccurate tales of Māori people for box office purposes (Dennis, J. NZFA PP JD Box 2 Folder “Lectures”).

Dennis believed that he was led by his “heart not his head” in the work he did (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). This meant an emotional and personal engagement. He became committed to exploring a “sense of place” within NZ and the wider South Pacific through the NZFA (Davy & Pivac, 2008), attempting to engage with the people in the place in which he lived rather than reaching for a European ideal. The *Mana Waka* film production was an opportunity to test the new biculturalism of the archival structure and was a demonstration of a commitment to archival material being accessible to people who were not “archive literate”. Finally it was a chance to demonstrate how a cultural heritage institution could be “active rather than passive” (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Director Merata Mita was enthusiastic in her praise of the process when she and Dennis presented the film at a conference in Australia, saying – “...as an archive working in partnership with Māori people [the NZFA] has a lot to teach the world. That’s not to say it was easy – but the fact that Jonathan and I are still friends [laughter] reflects that it worked” (Mita in Mita & Dennis, 1991).

Mana Waka consisted entirely of archival footage donated to the NZFA by the Manly family in the 1980s. The footage depicted the building of war canoes commissioned by Princess Te Puea of the Waikato iwi Tainui in the 1930s. Te Puea was one of the leaders of the Kingitanga, a collective inter-iwi movement based in the Waikato in the North Island, and she commissioned the making of the film by Jim Manly, a Pākehā photographer.¹⁷⁰ When the Film Archive had repaired and restored the footage as much as possible, Dennis approached Merata Mita to suggest she direct an edit of the material. She agreed, and in turn she approached Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahi, the Queen of the Kingitanga who gave her permission for the edit to begin (Personal correspondence, A. Collins 26/01/09).

This was a kaupapa Māori process with the indigenous players in the film production leading. By appointing Merata Mita as director, Dennis demonstrated how the “bicultural” structure of the

¹⁷⁰ Manly went bankrupt during filming. Te Puea had tried to rescue the situation by selling some land to create more capital, but the film was never completed in their lifetimes (Mita & Dennis, 1991).

Archive could function, with Māori people in control of their own materials. He acted as producer and was “immensely proud” of the work (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Merata Mita in turn hired Annie Collins who had previously worked with her on *Patu!* They based themselves at Turangawaewae [home of the Kingitanga] in the Waikato for the edit. This was highly unusual – there was no editing suite there and they were away from the resources of the main cities. They were eight hours drive from the NZFA. This was necessary because of Merata Mita’s commitment to a process for making the film following Māori practice, where the film was regarded as taonga and needed to be edited in the place in which it had originated, surrounded by the people who were originally present or their descendants. There was a process for the handling of materials and traditional methods undertaken in relation to prayers and other blessings following a Māori based kaupapa (Personal correspondence, A. Collins 26/01/09). Supporting this iwi elders had an open invitation to attend the edit. Some described the birds that were singing as various sequences were shot back in the 1930s. The sounds the elders remembered were recreated for the soundtrack when the edit was completed (Mita & Dennis, 1991).¹⁷¹ This augmentation of the film with a soundtrack recalls Dennis and Ferry Hendricks’ careful presentation of silent films back in the 1970s as described by Bill Gosden, where they would “play DJs” to ensure the correct and appropriate sound accompaniment to the film they watched (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden 08/12/09).

As producer, Dennis was the negotiator with the NZFA and the Manly family over aspects of the production. There were confrontations between Māori and Pākehā perspectives as the Manly family became increasingly uncomfortable with the bicultural emphasis Mita placed on the footage. For example they did not want a discussion of the Treaty of Waitangi included in the film. Dennis recalled that Jim Manly had written a rough script, which was an “exotic Māoriland adventure” style movie, exploitative in its tone, that his descendants wanted to use that script (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). The NZFA Board were also uncomfortable with the process, as Dennis strongly encouraged them to financially support the production, particularly once a working print was stolen by the Manly family (Dennis in Dennis & Pivac 2000). Dennis was also

¹⁷¹ The sound of wood being chopped is frequently heard in the film. Annie Collins described the meticulous work required to create the sounds the elders described, and laughed as she said “I never want to hear the sound of chopping wood again!” (Personal correspondence, A. Collins op.cit.).

physically away from the Wellington Archive helping with the edit for about five months which caused tension with the staff (Personal correspondence, D. Pivac 26/11/09). Clearly, working in this manner was not without its challenges.

Despite the difficulties it entailed, Dennis felt this process was part of living up to the kaupapa and rewritten constitution of the NZFA which incorporated the Treaty of Waitangi and the idea of film as taonga of the iwi of NZ. Dennis felt *Mana Waka* was a chance to try and live up to the Archive's Māori name and he said that it was a "peak of creativity" for the institution (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). It is of note that Dennis viewed this as a creative endeavour for the Archive and an "active rather than passive" practice (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). It was certainly unusual for an archival production to follow an indigenous inflected editing process on a marae rather than in an editing studio. And yet by doing so the NZFA was able to actively expose and present its material to a much wider audience than would otherwise view it at its city base. In addition it was a chance to work with a foremost indigenous filmmaker such as Mita. It demonstrated the NZFA commitment to indigenous perspectives and highlighted the role of the film archivist as "framer of the kept" (Wisniewski, 2007). It explicitly addressed concerns that archivists as predominantly colonial descendants tend to control the presentation of indigenous materials (Jimerson, 2010). The process acknowledged the colonial origins and purpose of much early film and sought to empower Māori to reinterpret the footage as they chose. It offered Mita and the iwi the chance to be the "framers" of their own material.

Dennis found this process exhilarating and also "frightening" (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000). It responded to Mary Meerson's urging that in order to live, films from an archive needed to be shown to an audience and it also made reference to Len Lye's support of creative endeavour by the Film Archive (Dennis in Dennis & Pivac 2000). By employing a film director to edit the archival material anew into a feature length documentary, the NZFA was able to submit the film for exhibition at multiple venues as a new work. It played for the 1990 Commonwealth Sesquicentennial Celebrations, at the New Zealand International Film Festival, at festivals and conferences in Australia and screenings in the United States (Mita & Dennis, 1991). This ensured multiple audiences for the film who never would have known to make the journey to the NZFA in Wellington in order to access the images from there. It allowed creative people to engage with

the material to produce something new from its fragments and from the memories of the elders and also to “uncover and release the images” held at the Archive. This work used materials (film) and memories (of the elders during the edit) to create a new work and audiences for it into the future. It acknowledged both colonial and indigenous efforts to preserve moments in history and re-presented them in new formats for a contemporary audience.

Honouring the ancestors

Dennis’ practice in making *Mana Waka* sought to encompass and acknowledge the “tenacious historical memory and insistent presence of Māori” and others in the South Pacific (S. Turner, 1999 p.22). The film was an example of archival material creatively re-presented. In other projects he continued to work with archival principles to preserve materials but ensured an active mode by also collecting new recordings in the form of the stories of older people both Māori and Pākehā. He then found ways in which to not only archive those stories, but present them to audiences.

One example of this practice is the only film he would write and direct which recorded the memories of Edwin (Ted) Coubray, a Pākehā film-maker of the early period of New Zealand film production.¹⁷² The film was entitled *Mouth Wide Open* (Prod. Collins, A. & Dir. Dennis, J 1998). Dennis explained his purpose for making the film in a later interview in which he stated that Ted Coubray was “somebody who had not only done things I thought were wonderful, but he remembered them, and still cherished the memory of them...” Dennis felt that the film-making Coubray had been involved in during the 1920s and 1930s was “wonderful”. He said he had no desire to be a film director, but wanted Coubray’s story to be acknowledged and particularly to ensure that his story “existed into the future...[these] things are really immensely important to me” (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001).¹⁷³

¹⁷² Dennis also worked with Annie Collins on what they envisaged to be a series of archival shorts for television starting with *Girls’ Own Stories* (Dennis, 1993) for the Work of Art Series on TVNZ, Executive Producer Caterina de Nave. They were not successful with subsequent pitches (NZFA PP JD Box 2). This could have been related to a very long fax Dennis sent de Nave complaining of the late night slot the programme screened in. He had believed it would be played earlier when a larger audience was possible (AC PP).

¹⁷³ Ted Coubray had worked both in Australia and New Zealand in the silent film period and into the 1930s. Graham Shirley, Australian film historian also collected oral history recordings with Ted in the 1980s and Dennis and Shirley shared information and eventually films between their respective archives in Australia and New Zealand (Personal correspondence, G. Shirley 29/07/11).

Analysing Dennis' exuberant language, it seems he was following his "heart not his head", recognising fellow Pākehā like Ted Coubray and Len Lye as *his* artistic ancestors and engaging with their work and memories in such a way as to celebrate them as Pākehā taonga. The Coubray film was an example of this, as is Dennis' championing of Lye wherever possible. For example, Dennis contacted French film archive colleagues to suggest a screening of Lye's work in Europe and said – "To have an ancestor of this kind – someone who maintained a lifetime commitment to experiment – has been particularly important for us. His films are...dazzling and, wherever they're shown, are incredibly popular with audiences..." (NZFA PP JD Box 11 Letter J.D. to Marco Muller and Marina Mottin 24/01/96). He also wrote a chapter in a book on Len Lye for an exhibition held in Paris (Bouhours & Horrocks, 2000) and produced a video compilation of Lye's work (Lye, Re-release 1996). By championing the films of Coubray and Lye, but also by producing new texts analysing them and compilations of their work, Dennis demonstrated a commitment to supporting older generations of "ancestors" to be acknowledged and known long after they had finished their own careers.

For Dennis, Lye was the first of many older people associated with the NZFA with whom he would create a personal connection, and Lye demonstrated a manner in which New Zealand film makers might be experimental and creative in their approach. At the end of his life, Dennis reflected on the projects he had been involved in and the friendships he had. He said that people often commented "on this strange attraction to collecting elderly people, but I find such richness in the friendships." He felt that he had learned so much from the "sheer generosity" of Witarina, and had "such fun". With others – "...our connection was film. I loved these people for what they did..." (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). His personal experiences of friendship crossed over into his work, motivating him to exhibit and share older peoples' memories and works from the past.

Dennis maintained the archivist's drive to preserve the memories of these older people, but he took this a step further by actively recording stories rather than simply receiving them into the archive, and further, by finding ways to ensure people would engage with those memories. He said he had "no desire" to be a film director, but in order to tell the story of Ted Coubray he became one (Dennis in Dennis & Alley 2001). He refused to be just "bottling away somewhere" in a basement with films. He wanted archive materials exhibited and therefore had to create

platforms and opportunities to allow this to occur (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). This drove him to his own creative practice through collecting new archival materials and then writing, directing, producing and editing that material into various formats for audience consumption.¹⁷⁴

Dennis championed other “ancestors”, including NZ film-maker John O’Shea by supporting and editing his biography (O’Shea, 1999) as well as contracting him to produce a short film for the Centenary of Cinema (O’Shea, 1996). These types of works were sparked because he wanted to “acknowledge” the life and work of these “ancestors” “into the future”. In lectures and interviews, Dennis said “we take our films personally” (NZFA PP JD Box 2 Folder “Papers”). Dennis certainly felt a keenly passionate and personal relationship with films of the “ancestors” and attempted to respond by honouring their work with new presentations of it, or supporting his elders to create new works themselves. This supports the description of many interviewees of Dennis as an enabler (Personal correspondence, R.Horrocks op.cit.) or catalyst for the works of others.

A further pan-iwi Māori historical project which would eventually include a book, oral histories and the re-release of a musical recording from the archive was instigated by two Māori authors who knew Dennis’ work by reputation. When Irihapeti Ramsden and Patricia Grace asked Dennis to be involved in the project which would become *The Silent Migration, Stories of Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club...* (Grace et al., 2001), he said they imagined a small publication which members of Ngāti Pōneke and their families would buy. Instead it took ten years and became something quite different – “...part of this was that the stories of these old people were stories we hadn’t heard, and they were stories that deserved to be told, and documented richly...those things are really wonderful and fulfilling to me in a way that is exciting and palpable” (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).¹⁷⁵ The book is a form of curation of the recordings gathered by the authors and presented as a text. Similarly to the work with Coubray, Dennis wanted the stories of the old people to be heard. In order to do that in an “exciting and palpable” way, Dennis, Grace and

¹⁷⁴ Before he finished at the NZFA, employee Jane Paul remembered a conversation with Dennis in which he described a plan for the NZFA staff to begin actively collecting audiovisual recordings of street scenes for the archive collection (Personal correspondence, J.Paul 03/02/11).

¹⁷⁵ Ramsden was Ngai Tahu and Rangitane, born 24/02/1946 died 5/04/2003. She was known throughout the indigenous world as an important champion of ‘cultural safety’ which was translated into practice in Canada and other countries (Sweetwater, 2003). The Kaua Whakaruruhau (Cultural Safety) Committee at Auckland University of Technology was started after a visit by Ramsden (Personal correspondence D. Payne 17/08/13) and still functions today. Ramsden’s PhD thesis is available at: <http://culturalsafety.massey.ac.nz/thesis.htm>.

Ramsden produced a text which they felt “documented richly” the lives of these elders who were both Māori and Pākehā.

Dennis recorded some of the extensive discussions he, Ramsden and Grace had during their research and analysis of the materials they were collecting, and he deposited these audio recordings in the Alexander Turnbull Oral History Centre at the National Library of New Zealand (Ramsden et al., 1995). This provides a valuable group of materials that were not published in the book but offer a window on the thinking of the authors who produced it and their developing sense of purpose.¹⁷⁶ The recordings of the authors offer an analysis of the materials they were collecting which is not included explicitly in the publication itself. For example, we hear Irihapeti Ramsden discussing the past as well as the contemporary climate, in which she says Māori are still being defined as warriors. She says this is purposeful in that it allows Pākehā to justify brutal actions against Māori. She offers the example of the introduction of British soldiers during the early years of colonisation to control indigenous people – “...they’re [Pākehā] afraid of rough justice – the gangs, Mongrel Mob...I think it’s a very deep dark vein in NZ society; more than ‘vein’, I think it underpins it in lots of ways” (Ramsden & Grace, 1995).¹⁷⁷ Ramsden, Grace and Dennis are reflecting on the contemporary New Zealand situation “it’s a very deep dark vein in NZ society...” and how people understand (or fail to understand) each other across cultures in NZ.

The tone of the publication they were working on does not refer to this kind of perspective at all or only obliquely. It is only by listening to the recorded opinions of the authors that a darker analysis of the current climate in which the book was published is possible. It is unclear why the editors’ personal reflections were not included, but it certainly follows Dennis’ practice in later years where he eschewed the formal narrator’s voice and relied instead upon the raw materials gathered from interviewees. The recordings of the editors themselves offer the possibility of another project which analyses their views in relation to the text they created.

¹⁷⁶ Dennis similarly archived all full interviews from which he took extracts for his radio work. They are available through the NZFA.

¹⁷⁷ The Mongrel Mob are a pan-iwi Māori gang.

Accompanying the book, which was eventually published by Huia Publishers, is a sound recording of the music of Ngāti Pōneke. This was produced by Dennis (Producer J. Dennis Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club, 2001).¹⁷⁸ It offers another manner in which to engage with the content gleaned from the oral histories and presented in the text based work, providing the sounds of the music which Ngāti Pōneke members created so many years ago. It also reflected Dennis' interest in sound and his ability to think outside a narrow view of the presentation of archival materials. Between the recordings of the author/editors, the oral histories of the participants in the project, the text based publication and the re-released recording, Dennis, Ramsden and Grace managed to produce a multiplicity of materials to stimulate various senses and commemorate the past, but also present these stories in such a way that they would last "into the future". Multiple access points to the material are possible through aural, visual and archival means.

During the period he worked on *Mana Waka* and then with Ramsden and Grace on the *Ngāti Pōneke* project, Dennis was also developing two large scale international exhibitions of NZ film which reflected this desire to disseminate and share the resources of the archive widely and prove their value as art works in their own right, but also as taonga.¹⁷⁹ Dennis' large network of international contacts instigated by the late 1970s study tour, now came into play as these people continued to be a source of encouragement and a "lifeline" after his time at the NZFA to help him continue his film archiving presentations (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).¹⁸⁰ Both exhibitions were held in Italy – the 1989 Torino exhibition *Te Ao Marama...* and the 1993 Pordenone Silent Film Festival Australia and New Zealand retrospective *Aotearoa and the Sentimental Strine*. Both reflect Dennis' desire to curate NZ film and display his developing creative signature style which used juxtaposition, montage and humour to unsettle the notion that NZ had a unified national identity. Matthew Leonard, who would work with Dennis in the late 1990s, commented that he and Dennis were heavily influenced in their creative practice by Irihapeti Ramsden. He felt Dennis

¹⁷⁸ Dennis also produced other re-releases of historic sound recordings of Māori music for the National Library: *Ana Hato with Deane Waretini* (Hato & Waretini, 1995); *The Tahiwi* (Tahiwi, 1998).

¹⁷⁹ Dennis said in 1984: "The [Film] Archive is to moving images what art galleries and museums are to artefacts and paintings, and libraries to rare manuscripts and books: a guardian of national works of cultural value placed in its trust, a show place, dissemination centre, and study resource" (Introduction by Jonathan Dennis in Sowry, 1984). The view was not Dennis' alone, but that of FIAF, the Federation of International Film Archives (Bowser, 1991).

¹⁸⁰ After Dennis resigned in 1990 there was a three year period of relative upheaval at the NZFA with two directors appointed in quick succession, both of whom also resigned. In 1993 Frank Stark took up the role which he continues to hold today (Personal correspondence F. Stark 11/03/13). Stark argues that during Dennis' tenure the archive took the role of "treasure hunter" whereas under his directorship they are "asset managers" (Stark, 2006).

and he both “riled against boring Pākehā stuff”, wanting to challenge the “dominant cultural voice” (Personal correspondence, M. Leonard 01/04/10).

Te Ao Marama, Il Mondo Della Luce, Il Cinema Della Nuova Zelanda (Dennis Jonathan & Toffetti Sergio, 1989) was (and remains) New Zealand’s largest ever international film retrospective. It included 78 features and short films and a substantial book publication. The then manager of marketing for the NZ Film Commission Lindsay Shelton commented in his book on selling NZ films – “*Te Ao Marama* was accompanied by a book...edited by Jonathan and Italian film historian Sergio Toffetti in three languages: Italian, Māori and English. The book’s overview of New Zealand culture went beyond cinema, with quotes from literary legends...and reproductions of paintings by artists Ralph Hotere and Colin McCahon” (Shelton, 2005 p.101). Dennis’ desire to go “beyond cinema” reflected an attitude similar to that of one of his heroes, Derek Jarman (Hendriks, F. Personal communication January 2012) who believed that all life was art, and that no art form should be elevated over any other (Jarman, 1996 2nd ed. p.163).

Te Ao Marama is the name of one of the whare nui/meeting houses at Ohinemutu where Witarina Harris was born, but is also a phrase from Māori culture which translates very roughly to “into the world of light”, the world between Ranginui (sky father) and Papatuuānuku (earth mother) where mortals dwell ever since Rangi and Papa’s children forced them apart (Te Papa Tongarewa, 2011). It is the world of mortal life (Binney, 2010 p.33). The title of the exhibition is also a play on the idea that films can only be screened when light is shone through them.¹⁸¹ Film, like mortal life, only becomes animated with the addition of light. This also supports Langlois and Meerson’s assertion that in order for films to live, they must be screened.

The views of John Grierson, founder of the British documentary film movement (and one time employer of Len Lye) who visited NZ to report on government film making in February and March 1940 are quoted in the *Te Ao Marama* publication. Grierson said – “...if you want to show New Zealand’s importance to the world you should show the things which make New Zealand important. This sounds a simple proposition, but I am afraid you have not been doing it and we

¹⁸¹ There had also been a “large and successful” exhibition of Māori artists work curated by Te Rangihiroa Panoho at the Sargeant Gallery in Whanganui in 1986 with the name “Te Ao Marama: Seven Maori Artists” (McCarthy, 2011 p.88). It is unknown whether Dennis was aware of this exhibition.

have all been missing a great deal. So when you send us your films never send merely the scenic ones. Put in something about the real things you do” (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989 pp.81, 82). The editors comment that “his recommendations were not implemented” (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989 p.81). Dennis repeated this quote from Grierson in at least one other exhibition booklet (Dennis Jonathan & Cherchi Usai, 1993). He was certainly not the first to pick up on Grierson’s recommendation. Film critic and film- maker John O’Shea also quoted Grierson (O’Shea, 1999) as did others in earlier times when arguing the case for government support for local filmmaking (Sigley, 2003). Yet until the *Tangata Whenua* television series previously described in Chapter Five played on state television in the 1970s, there was little representation of “the real things you do” until the Film Commission formation in 1978.

Presumably in response to Grierson, the *Te Ao Marama* publication presents a multiplicity of examples of the “real things you do”. For example, in a section entitled *The Long White Cloud*, Pākehā painter Colin McCahon’s *A Landscape with too few lovers* is quoted, translated into Italian as well as being written in English – “I hoped to throw people into an involvement with the raw land, and also with raw painting...I hope you can understand what I was trying to do at the time – like spitting on the clay to open the blind man’s eyes” (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989 p.23). McCahon’s romantic relationship with the land is contrasted with Donna Awatere’s statement of Māori sovereignty also included in the exhibition book – “In essence, Māori sovereignty seeks nothing less than the acknowledgement that New Zealand is Māori land, and further seeks the return of that land” (Awatere, D., First published 1984 in Broadsheet, Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989 p.25). McCahon and Awatere’s views are juxtaposed through the fact that Awatere’s essay excerpt sits adjacent to Colin McCahon’s painting *One* (1965 – Collection of National Art Gallery, NZ). McCahon’s “involvement with the raw land” suggests no one has had a relationship with the land before him, while Awatere reminds the audience that Māori inhabited the land long before Pākehā, contradicting McCahon’s view of the land as “raw”.¹⁸²

¹⁸² Dennis did not write about his intentions with this publication to my knowledge so the interpretation is my own. The juxtaposition does echo his practice in a number of creative works where he seems intent on exposing hypocrisy or disjunction.

Dennis was a fan of Eisenstein, Vertov and the other early Russian filmmakers who used juxtaposition for political effect (Personal correspondence, R. Horrocks 25/10/11). He was to use this technique consistently in his exhibitions to highlight indigenous and other marginalised peoples' perspectives through ironic juxtaposition of materials such as that described above. The work recalls Judith Binney's suggestion that stories cannot be amalgamated but they can be juxtaposed as illumination occurs "in the juxtaposition" (Binney, 2010 p.329). The editors continue to juxtapose coloniser and colonised perspectives in the exhibition book, placing celebrated Pākehā expatriate writer Katherine Mansfield's letter to Sir Harold Beauchamp, 18 March 1922, in which she says – "New Zealand is in my very bones. What wouldn't I give to have a look at it!" (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989) alongside the writing of Tuini Ngawai of the iwi Ngati Porou who warns that 'Pākehā knowledge/sucks you in then confiscates land/Be strong friends,/Land is all we have/to rest a throbbing heart" (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989 p.22).

These contrasting narratives – Pākehā feeling a kinship with the land ("in my very bones") and Māori feeling enraged by Pākehā assumptions ("Pākehā knowledge...confiscates land") is a tense dynamic in the exhibition book. It responds to John Grierson's call for a representation of the real people of the land and their desires and practices by moving beyond the "merely...scenic". It is a montage of text and images, a juxtaposition of opposing viewpoints which presents a nation at odds with itself. These images from the archive expose "the underlying currents of power... [which]...are hard to detect, except through the shock of montage, when pictures from antagonistic categories are juxtaposed..." (Sekula, 2003 p.445). They confront the reader/audience in a way which requires interpretation and engagement in an active manner. The materials in their juxtaposition suggest race relations are imperfect and that NZ contains many tensions and disparate views. It presents a vastly different perspective to some other representations of NZ. For example the scenic and resplendent images in the triple screen presentation of snow covered mountains in a NZ film presented at an earlier international exhibition, Japan Expo in 1970 *This Is NZ* (Dir. H. MacDonald 1970).¹⁸³

¹⁸³ "Directed by Hugh Macdonald, *This is New Zealand* was made to promote the country at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan. An ambitious concept saw iconic NZ imagery – panoramas, nature, Māori culture, sport, industry – projected on three adjacent screens that together comprised one giant

At the time of the *Te Ao Marama* exhibition Dennis was working on *Mana Waka* – by his own description a “terrifying” time for the archive and himself, in which the bicultural process they had established was tested in the making of a film from archival footage (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis 2000). The process demonstrated how the ideology of biculturalism was extremely difficult to implement in the everyday. The striking divide between Māori and Pākehā sensibilities had been something he was well aware of since the first screenings of the James McDonald films – Dennis was not trying to hide this divide in this exhibition in Italy. There is nothing of the tourist version, the marketable, about this presentation of NZ, its art and artists. It appears Dennis was more interested in stimulating debate than he was in any presentation of NZ as an idyllic country.

By the time of this exhibition, NZ’s filmmaking was thriving compared to the dearth of films prior to the 1980s, and this meant there were a wider variety of materials to offer at such an exhibition. Filmmakers represented included Barclay and Mita, but also Peter Wells (*Little Queen* 1983), Vincent Ward (*The Navigator* 1988), and Geoff Murphy (*Utu* 1983). All were making films which challenged assumptions about what life in NZ might really be like beyond the “scenic” views Grierson described.

The second large scale Italian cinema exhibition by Dennis, *Aotearoa and the Sentimental Strine: Making Films in Australia and New Zealand in the Silent Period*, was co-curated with Paolo Cherchi-Usai, who is a founding director of the *Le Giornate Del Cinema Muto* (known in English as the Pordenone Silent Film Festival). This exhibition was also supported by a publication, but a self published one of modest means compared to the lavish text of the former (Dennis Jonathan & Cherchi Usai, 1993). Dennis had suggested the theme of Australian and New Zealand silent film for the festival to challenge the “very Eurocentric and North American” tradition of the film festival in previous years (Dennis in Labrum & Dennis, 1993). As co-curator, Cherchi-Usai visited New Zealand and Australia for the first time and met Dennis and began to look at films. Encouraged by Dennis he also met with Witarina Harris.¹⁸⁴

widescreen. A rousing orchestral score (Sibelius's *Karelia Suite*) backed the images. Two million people saw it in Osaka, and over 350,000 New Zealanders saw on its homecoming theatrical release” (Retrieved NZ On Screen 08/29/14 <http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/this-is-new-zealand-1970>.)

¹⁸⁴ Witarina Harris gave Paolo the name “Paora” and he stayed with her when he visited New Zealand. He also called her regularly on the telephone until she died (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai 14/05/09).

This was to be the first of a number of collaborations between the two archivists. Cherchi-Usai came to see Dennis as more than an archivist. He felt Dennis' work was a great influence on his own (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai 14/05/09).¹⁸⁵ Although Cherchi-Usai said Dennis had an "acute awareness of archival procedure", he was also someone who understood that the procedure had no value except in "how it functions for the collection". He said that Dennis was "archivist, curator, a cultural agent, but...also a cultural agit-prop, he was an activist. And so he was all these things together...I myself would not know how to define Jonathan in one word, but curatorship, the word curator, are the first things in my mind" (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai op.cit). Cherchi-Usai acknowledged the social justice perspective from which much of Dennis' work arose. Dennis was an "activist", someone who responded to the archive by recognising its inherent flaws as a biography of the nation – the exploitative tone of some of the films, the importance of acknowledging the films as taonga with relationships to living people who were the descendants of those in the films. Cherchi-Usai noted at the time the vast gulf between the indigenous engagement at the NZ Film Archive compared to the Australian equivalent where there was little or no understanding from the archivists beyond a "knee jerk" desire not to offend anyone (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai op.cit).

Dennis contextualised the films appropriately by having Witarina Harris or Lily Amohau accompany exhibitions to "warm" the films.¹⁸⁶ As Dennis described it, the role of kaumātua was "to warm them, basically, to bring some of the life to these films, to be the conduit between the audience and the image..." (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). Dennis' mother Pat, Di Pivac and Bronwyn Taylor from the NZFA also attended the Pordenone Silent Film Festival (Personal correspondence, D. Pivac 26/11/09).¹⁸⁷ Although Dennis' mother and the staff of the NZFA were Pākehā they also "warmed" the films by singing songs with Harris and Dennis and provided information to festival goers. They were supporting Dennis and Harris (Personal correspondence

¹⁸⁵ When Cherchi-Usai created his own film made of archival materials entitled *Passio* (2007) it originally debuted at the Adelaide Film Festival dedicated to Jonathan Dennis and is a montage of images from archives. It was accompanied by a live choir and orchestral performance (Personal correspondence, B. Ikin 05/11/10).

¹⁸⁶ The first time they did this was for the Te Māori exhibition in San Francisco in the 1980s. This was Harris' first overseas trip. She was in her eighties at the time (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis 2001).

¹⁸⁷ Pat Dennis became close to Witarina Harris, and learned Te Reo Māori herself in her seventies (Personal correspondence, S. Dennis 13/07/10).

D. Pivac op.cit.). Dennis was presented with the Jean Mitry Award for service to silent cinema at the festival that year (Pivac & Dennis, 2000).¹⁸⁸

Aotearoa and the Sentimental Strine sought to represent Māori and Pākehā filmmaking and filmmakers appropriately to contextualise these early silent films. These were creative responses to the films in the sense that Dennis undertook a non-European archiving practice when he chose to support and present indigenous responses to the films exhibited. It was not creative in the sense of creating something new, but instead was an approach which opened up the space for Māori ways of being and doing to become incorporated in archival presentations in a way that had not been done before. Dennis was reframing the works. The kaumātua were in fact the highlight of the festivals for some people.

Cherchi-Usai remembered the 1993 festival with a “great deal of emotion”. Witarina spoke, sang and danced and taught the audience songs, some of which he and his colleagues still remember. Witarina and Jonathan “became the ambassadors of NZ cinema, and they were extremely effective at this...they were providing the context...” Cherchi-Usai recognised that without indigenous representation accompanying these films, their “context” would have been lost. As “ambassadors”, Harris and Dennis were able to provide appropriate support to the films for an audience who would otherwise have found them potentially confusing to engage with (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai op.cit).

Neil Brand is a silent film pianist based in London who played at the *Aotearoa and the Sentimental Strine* exhibition. He remembered the New Zealand section with delight, describing Dennis’ presentation and the “theatricality of the Māori content...[and] Witarina, this tiny little lady in the spotlight singing and talking beside enormous Jonathan...It was phenomenally exotic in that extremely austere company...” For Brand, the presentation was “exotic” in the European setting and exciting for him. “All the fun and colour and theatricality of the film was to be had from that Māori culture...I’m parroting what Jonathan obviously felt, that the Pākehā culture had their own inbuilt neuroses...” (Personal correspondence, N. Brand 13/07/10). Brand, like Cherchi-Usai, recognised that the Māori cultural context complemented and drew out the films on the screen.

¹⁸⁸ Since his death, the Jonathan Dennis Memorial Lecture is held at each Festival (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai 14/05/09).

They both recognised that the difference between the NZFA and other archives around the world was the indigenous materials and how they responded to them. By working with Māori people, Dennis allowed the “colour and theatricality” of the films to flourish. This was a new meaning for the word “exotic” which was not exploitative in tone. Dennis’ own theatrical background helped him understand how the performance of the archive was important but Harris created the appropriate context for the performance (Dennis in Alley & Dennis 2001).

Dennis was committed to not just preserving but also curating and presenting materials to the widest possible audiences in New Zealand and overseas. The “inbuilt neuroses” of Pākehā culture could be countered by the warmth, colour and theatricality of Māori and Dennis knew how to exploit that in the “austere” company of the European silent film festival audience. The film archive could be “performed” for an audience in such a way that it could come to life. This was the creativity of the archive for Dennis – finding ways in which to present the films to multicultural audiences in a culturally appropriate manner.¹⁸⁹ Dennis found these experiences of presenting the films outside NZ with Harris (and occasionally Lily Amohau) as very rewarding and also screened film presentations in many other countries including North America, Hawai’i, Poland, France and Australia (Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

Cinema for the ears

After a few very busy years of projects and a great deal of personal upheaval with the cessation of his role of Director and the break up of a relationship, Dennis was in need of a regular income by 1993. Just as his film reviews on Radio 2ZB in the 1970s had led to Lindsay Shelton, programmer for the Film Society and founder of the Wellington Film Festival, offering Dennis a

¹⁸⁹ Italians seemed to have received the films particularly well – in a similar presentation in London Sef Townsend described a much more muted response from the audience. Townsend suggested (as others have done before him) that Māori and Italian cultures hold much in common in terms of practices around hospitality, music and performance and family connection (Personal Correspondence S. Townsend 05/07/10). The Māori Battalion soldiers also spent time in Italy and many brought back the language and interest in cultural practices such as opera which have been passed down generations. I personally know a man brought up by his Te Arawa grandparents who taught him Māori, Italian and finally English as his third language. His grandfather was a Maori Battalion soldier in WWII.

role in programming the Festival, in the 1990s after the Italian film festival of 1993, opportunities arose again through radio.^{190, 191}

Elizabeth Alley, Executive Producer of Spoken Word programmes at Concert FM, recognised the value of Dennis and Bieringa's new publication *Film In Aotearoa NZ* (Dennis & Bieringa, 1992/1996). The book was edited by Dennis and Bieringa and is a collection of essays written by various filmmakers, academics and critics. Alley interviewed Dennis about the book for her radio show *Anthology* (Personal correspondence, E. Alley 11/06/10). Subsequently she suggested Dennis turn the publication into a series for radio (Alley et al., 2001). Dennis said at the end of his life – "Radio in the last ten years has been the most creative part of what I've done. The sense of freedom that existed for me in radio was unexpected" (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). Much of his previous work with various film personalities at the NZFA was to continue in this new medium – he was to record new interviews with Merata Mita, Barry Barclay, Witarina Harris, Neil Brand, Paolo Cherchi-Usai and many others to use in his radio shows.¹⁹² He continued to incorporate juxtaposition, irony and playfulness in his work with a strong sense of place (Hurley, 1998). Indigenous voices continued to feature. He said he began to understand the creative possibilities of radio in the early 1990s, that "the creative side was wide open. You could do just about anything. The idea of trying to make a moving image form work as cinema for the ear was, I thought, incredibly exciting" (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001).

Dennis uses the term "creative" repeatedly when describing his sound work, more often than in describing the moving image works he had previously focussed on, with the exception of *Mana Waka* which he saw as a "peak of creativity". Once more he uses superlatives which describe his emotions as he undertook these projects. Others also used similar language to describe Dennis'

¹⁹⁰ Both Lindsay Shelton (Personal correspondence L. Shelton 07/12/09) and Jonathan Dennis (Pivac & Dennis, 2000) mention this in interviews and books (Shelton, 2005). In Dennis' archive there is a letter from Lindsay Shelton of the Wellington Film Society dated January 6 1976 inviting Jonathan (who was then living with his parents at 19 Central Terrace in Kelburn) to become involved in the organisation of that year's film festival (NZFA PP JD Box 7). Through the 1990s and until his death, Dennis also annually curated a silent film with live orchestra for the NZ International Film Festival (Personal correspondence, B. Gosden op.cit.).

¹⁹¹ One of Dennis' earlier film review broadcasts from the 1970s was a critique of *Star Wars* (Dir. Lucas, G 1977). It reflects a fearless style which did not waiver during his career as a film reviewer. In part it reads: "I don't wanta be the Grinch (or whatever it was) that stole Christmas, the blue meanie spoiling everybody's fun – but really, *Star Wars* is just not a very good movie, or a convincing one, or an involving one. Nor is it even serious Sci-Fi, being at most a bland, relatively minor adolescent cosmic cowboys'n'indians. The crock of humbuggery surrounding it tho, will have it end up the highest grossing movie of all time –its (sic) doing alarmingly good business and raking in herds of money and people..." (NZFA PP JD Box 10 2ZB Film Review 18/12/77).

¹⁹² Recordings are available at the NZFA.

creativity, including Elizabeth Alley who said he flew into radio “on his own personal rainbow” (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.). Gareth Watkins described with enthusiasm the cinematic manner in which Dennis managed to layer his sound work (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.). Dennis said he was “incredibly” excited by the possibilities of radio and the challenge of making a visual media work in a sound format (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). It was Dennis’ personal creative endeavour, more so than the previous filmmaking such as *Mana Waka*, in which he as producer supported the vision of others such as Merata Mita. Now he was the creator of the material to be presented.

The *Voices on Film* series was to be Alley and Dennis’ first collaboration, incorporating “half hour episodes, basically his own personal take on how cinema has progressed...it was the first time he started interweaving different sound sources. Movie clips, interviews, music, script...” (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins 21/11/09). In the first and second of the *Voices on Film* series, “New Zealand film from its earliest efforts” was presented using recordings of early filmmakers Rudall Hayward, John O’Shea, John Grierson and others from the archives as well as music of NZ and the wider Pacific. The third programme covered the “lean years” of the 1940s to early 1970s when only three feature films were made in New Zealand.

Using juxtaposition, quick cuts and layering, the third programme played with the notion of national identity and what it might mean as a filmmaking culture developed. The listener hears John O’Shea quoting the Minister of Arts Alan Highet – “NZ should have our own heroes...” Immediately following this is a soundbite from *Goodbye Pork Pie* (Prod. & Dir. G. Murphy 1980), in which the dubious and possibly mentally unstable anti-hero John shouts – “We’re taking that car to Invercargill, boy!” Dennis then cuts to a Māori kuia chanting, and Anzac Wallace’s lines from *Utu* (Dir. G. Murphy 1983) are heard – “It is a tale/Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury/Signifying nothing”.¹⁹³ Dennis is humorously toying with the idea of what NZ’s “own heroes” will sound like in this section.

The programme then cuts to the theme music for the 1983 colonial western, *Utu* (which was to become the theme music for Dennis’ *The Film Show* in 1994). In this film, Director

¹⁹³ Lines originally from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (Act 5, Scene 5, lines 17-28).

Geoff Murphy critiques the heroic tales of early colonists and challenges the idea that Māori were the “uncivilized” natives, as demonstrated by Anzac Wallace, a Māori character quoting Shakespeare. A quick edit cuts to the voice of Bruno Lawrence in *Smash Palace* (Prod. & Dir. R. Donaldson 1981) speaking a line of dialogue. Lawrence’s character is another anti-hero who at one stage in that film dons his ex-wife’s negligee to drive his truck to her new home, where he attaches a chain to the door and drives away, ripping the door from its hinges.

Immediately following Lawrence we hear filmmaker Peter Wells describing his recollection of New Zealand films of the 1970s/early 80s cinema (from an interview recorded by Dennis) as he realised those films had more merit than he gave them credit for at the time – “I thought they were so rurally smalltown based – couched in realism, straightforward narratives, landscape, heterosexual, no analysis of racial situation...seemed to ignore what was going on at the time...” This is immediately followed by film producer Bridget Ikin saying – “I think we’re stuck in a Frank Sargeson social realism mode...no sense of a broader tradition here that values non-realist filmmaking”. Jonathan Dennis’ voice then quotes the film industry statistics in relation to the low number of women and Māori involved as active participants. Merata Mita’s description of the Pākehā “neurotic film industry” follows. The passage ends with the promotional voiceover for *Sleeping Dogs* from Aardvark Films, “ordinary man is pushed to the limit...”, followed by the sounds of an explosion (Voices on Film Programme 3 NZFA AUD 0624).

Within the space of a few minutes through editing and montage, Dennis has incorporated many of the contradictory perspectives on what New Zealand film was and could be. In a very tight edit he has critiqued the privilege of the white heterosexual male. The sounds of explosions, music, and mysterious phrases such as, “we’re taking this car to Invercargill, boy”, would still create an interesting aural montage even if the listener had not seen these films him/herself. Dennis used playful juxtaposition of elements which included snippets from the films themselves, as well as passages from interviews with filmmakers he himself had recorded. The montage and juxtaposition is similar to that used in the *Te Ao Marama* exhibition catalogue (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989) where competing viewpoints are placed in close proximity and the audience are able to interpret the effect of this in their own way. Highet’s imprecation that we need to find our own heroes is playfully followed by the voices of some of the anti-heroes in

prominent New Zealand films. Each programme in the *Voices on Film* series is equally rich with film references, musical interludes and quotations from New Zealand filmmaking and filmmakers.

Programme number four in the *Voices on Film* series is entirely focussed on Māori film-makers and is co-produced and presented with Meredith Stevens. This is the only co-presentation in the series and reflects Dennis' commitment to working with, rather than talking about Māori people (Dennis, 1990). Programme five covered the 1980s period and then program six looked at the possibilities of experimental cinema. These were the six programmes broadcast in 1993 (NZFA Audio 1993 A0067, A0994, A0995, A0068, A0330, A0997). The series is playful and rich with material and offers a different view on the potential for the telling of New Zealand stories which might not centre on "social realism" (Ikin's view of the writer Frank Sargeson social realist paradigm) or the rugged "ordinary man" (played by Sam Neill, a Pākehā man) of *Sleeping Dogs*.

When she listened to these programmes it was clear to Alley that Dennis was talented and capable of doing more on radio in a similar format. Alley realised that Dennis was "enormously original...a little irreverent...pulled no punches...was extraordinarily articulate, great vocabulary, rich use of language, and he just stood out from the crowd in every possible way" (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.). It is perhaps not surprising that Dennis was so articulate – he had always been quick-witted and clever with words since he was a teenager (Personal correspondence, T. Dennis 05/08/09).

At Concert FM in the 1990s there was a new creative potential in state broadcasting and Alley felt they were "no longer hidebound by regulations and parameters that made us sound stuffy and conservative, there was a new freedom but it was extremely hard to find people who were prepared to take a few risks" (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.). Alley was prepared to take a few risks herself; when Dennis first returned to radio in the 1990s she was forced to defend his speaking voice as managers at Radio NZ raised concerns, feeling that he was "too camp" for radio at the time and that he should have voice training. Alley protested, arguing that his voice was perfectly acceptable and that Dennis would not have tolerated such a request for a change in his tone of voice (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.).

Alley's earlier reference to Dennis' "personal rainbow" was not explicitly a comment on his sexuality, but the suggestion echoes. Dennis' personal sense of marginalisation and difference as a young man growing up in a boarding school with strict rules and regulations and an underlying and secret bullying culture was reflected in a man who wanted to do things differently. He sought to expose hypocrisy and celebrate those who previously had little or no voice. Alley said that – "...he came in with the first programme and it just about blew our heads off. Because not only was he taking sound in a different direction, he had found ways of accessing the most amazing material, off videos in those days...using it in such a way that it sounded as though he was there" (Personal correspondence, E. Alley *ibid.*). Perhaps Dennis' non-heterosexual manner was also appealing to feminist women who were looking for less traditional radio personalities.

As Alley describes it, Dennis found ways to access material and present it in a refreshing and exciting manner which the audience responded to well. Alley encouraged Dennis to begin his own radio show, and *The Film Show* began in 1994 as a fortnightly programme on Concert FM (national state radio station). As one critic said after Dennis' death – "In developing *Film Show*...Dennis raised the standards of radio production to an art which few even attempt to equal. The programme's strength was in his ability to convey the feeling and style, the sense of what a film actually looked like, in a medium which excluded the use of film's only necessity, the pictures themselves" (O'Brien, 2002).^{194, 195} This is high praise and was representative of the critiques of Dennis' radio work both before and after he died.

Gareth Watkins was one of Dennis' sound engineers. He remembered Dennis' total focus and ability to record a passage in one take. He never got angry or showed frustration and he was always patient with the technical process. This was thrilling for a young sound engineer. Watkins said Dennis was "prepared to accommodate new ideas and thoughts, so in terms of creativity and collaboration, you were able to say 'we could try this' and he was always ready to try things out even if it didn't work" (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins 21/11/09). Watkins described a generosity in Dennis who was prepared to accommodate the ideas of others. In all Dennis'

¹⁹⁴ Jeremy Ansell was frequently the sound engineer for these shows, as was Gareth Watkins (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins *op.cit.*).

¹⁹⁵ *The Film Show* won Best Broadcaster or Feature Programme New Zealand Radio Awards 1996 and Best Daily or Weekly Series NZ Radio awards 1998 (NZFA PP JD Box 7 awards).

creative works collaboration was key. Dennis was prepared to take good ideas from where he found them, and acknowledge the origin of that idea. This reflected a collaborative engagement which he had learned through the 1980s at the NZFA, where the partnership with Māori had borne such fruit with films as described previously. It also followed archival practice where sources of ideas are always referenced as part of the everyday role of the archivist.

Another exciting development in 1993 was the release of Derek Jarman, British filmmaker and AIDS activists' final film, *Blue*. All Jarman's films were experimental in some way, eschewing traditional narrative form or addressing taboo subject matter such as gay sex, but this film was even more radical. The film was a blue screen for the entire feature length, with an audio track including the voices of some of his favourite actors such as John Quentin, Nigel Terry and Tilda Swinton speaking to create a soundscape. They and Jarman himself recited excerpts from his diary, quotes from various poets, writers and other films, evoking a depiction of the illness which was killing many people at that time and was often called the "gay plague" (Dennis & Alley, 1995). Jarman himself was losing his sight to the illness (Wollen, 1996). The experimental approach of the film with the visual being a single colour and the content being sound based would have appealed to Dennis who greatly admired Jarman and experimental cinema (Personal correspondence, E. Alley 11/06/10). The film also had personal and political implications. Ferry Hendricks, Dennis' partner of many years was at that time nursing various friends through their final illnesses with AIDS and at least one of their friends went blind before he died (Personal correspondence, F. Hendricks 28/11/09).

In response to the AIDS crisis and Jarman's film (and perhaps his own experience of "gay bashing" in Melbourne), in 1995 Elizabeth Alley and Jonathan Dennis produced a soundscape for World AIDS Day for Radio NZ entitled *A Day Without Art*. Within this production they interwove portions of *Blue* with local artists' descriptions of their own experience of being diagnosed, to narrate a local story of the current moment when "already in NZ over 500 people have been diagnosed with the HIV AIDS virus" (Dennis & Alley, 1995). They called this soundscape *A Day Without Art* to underscore the loss to the arts community of many of its members through the virus and in

honour of the US movement of that name.¹⁹⁶ The resulting work was an hour long collage/soundscape “blending text, dramatic excerpt, poetry and drama in tribute to those who have died of AIDS to mark World AIDS Day”. The production won the radio section of the 1995 AIDS Media Awards, the NZ Radio Award for Best Documentary or Feature in 1996 and was a finalist in the New York Radio Festival.¹⁹⁷ Elizabeth Alley said the result was a “stunning programme...it was Jonathan’s imaginative creative effort that shaped...[it]...far more than I did” (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.). Alley’s work with Dennis was indicative of his collaborations with others such as Sharon Dell, Annie Collins and Witarina Harris who worked with him. The relationships were creative, reciprocal and supportive.

Dennis seemed to find a niche in the sound work he did, and it became his main source of income for the rest of his life (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). Crucially, Alley negotiated the bureaucracy of Radio NZ for Dennis, who was hired only for the programmes he made with her. This gave him a new kind of freedom to focus on the productions without worrying about the politics of the organisation for after all he was not “a corporate animal” (Personal correspondence, E. Alley op.cit.). This was very different from his previous experience of directing the NZFA and constantly negotiating with a Board and government officials (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001; Pivac & Dennis, 2000). Alley’s support meant Dennis could focus on creating new sound programmes, soundscapes, books and exhibitions which seemed to offer him a satisfaction unavailable in the more bureaucratic work he had found himself increasingly engaged in at the NZFA as it grew (Dennis in Pivac & Dennis, 2000).

In Jane Hurley’s *Radio Best* column in The NZ Listener on January 10th 1998, she described another of Dennis’ sound works, the *Centenary of Cinema* Soundscape which was to play on National Radio, as – “...fragments of movie soundtracks, like a cinema billboard layered with forgotten posters, soundscape juxtaposes speech and music, Hollywood and New Zealand, the

¹⁹⁶ The title refers to a US movement of that name started in 1989 to offer a national day of action and mourning in response to the AIDS crisis which has since been renamed *A Day Without Art* to ensure creative practices are supported while acknowledging the loss of those who have died (Retrieved 26/05/14 http://www.carnegiemuseums.org/cmag/bk_issue/2005/winter/feature3.html <http://www.visualaids.org/>)

¹⁹⁷ Dennis’ awards are collected with his personal papers at the NZFA and include the AIDS Media Award, New Zealand Aids Foundation Award for Excellence, 3rd December 1995 for *A Day Without Art*, The New York Festivals Finalist Award 1996 for *A Day Without Art* (NZFA PP JD Box 7). It also won Best Factual Spoken Programme for Concert FM in 1996. (The New Zealand Radio Awards 1978 -1997 published by the NZ Radio Industry Awards Committee p.83.)

archival and the contemporary”.¹⁹⁸ She likened the work to collage. He responded by saying he wanted to explore “thematically through sound...we tend to think of cinema as something we go to see...in order to celebrate moving images just as sound, it seemed the most interesting way to go, for me...It’s nice for people to respond more emotionally, to follow an emotional line rather than a formal dramatic line...” (NZFA PP JD Box 10). This interest in the “emotional line” reinforces Dennis’ remarks in his interview with Judith Fyfe that he felt his intellect was not his strongest suit – he worked with his heart not his head – he trusted his other instincts (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). Dennis also said in the Hurley article that “Soundscape seemed to me to be always from a local point of view” (NZFA PP JD Box 10). Although aware of global trends, Dennis was pursuing a “sense of place” in the creative works he produced, providing layers of sound to present cinema even without visuals, just as the *A Day Without Art* soundscape was the local take on AIDS.

Dennis’ last major soundscape work was to follow the emotional rather than the formal dramatic line, represented the local, and was, like Jarman’s *Blue*, painting a picture without visual support. It was broadcast at the turn of the millennium and reflected much of the playful juxtaposition, montage and also serious political and social commentary of the earlier works described. It evokes many of the themes of Dennis’ work such as his collaborative style (he worked with a fellow radio producer Matthew Leonard, the programme being instigated by another collaborator, Elizabeth Alley) and use of archival materials in new and creative ways. In *Ocean of Time* (2000) he and Leonard presented a counter-narrative to the Pākehā vision of the exotic and idyllic “South Seas” by foregrounding voices of indigenous peoples describing their lives since the arrival of settlers to their homelands. The classic Oxbridge accented narrator’s voice is absent, though voices of earlier white narrators are included, and so placed to sound anachronistic. Sound engineer Gareth Watkins commented that Dennis used layers to strong effect in *Ocean of Time* as he had done in works with Watkins for *The Film Show* – “Layering...to either accentuate something or subvert...it would be very rare that we would have a straight sound. But he was

¹⁹⁸ Cleverly, Dennis managed to instigate two Centenary of Cinema celebrations – one in 1996 as the world anniversary of the first films played in cinemas (in France) and then in 1998 as the local anniversary (NZFA PP JD).

also very aware of the power of just a single voice...he certainly liked to have...layers of meaning going on" (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.).

Watkins' description echoes Hurley's comments regarding layering and collage. Watkins' felt these techniques were "filmic...in terms of how things faded; fade to black, same with audio, fading out and then bringing in another sound. I think he was expressing kind of a filmic language in an audio way which is quite neat" (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins ibid.). Watkins is describing an innovative manner in which to present sound on radio differently from the traditional forms he had observed previously as a Radio NZ sound engineer. The description supports Dennis' stated desire to create "cinema for the ears". Matthew Leonard agreed that Dennis' practice had a film-like quality which used "film semantics" to create various effects including "dissolves" (Personal correspondence, M. Leonard 01/04/10). This could perhaps be described as a "hybrid" style of soundscape using visual cinematic means for aural ends.

In the radio programme *Ocean of Time*, Dennis and Leonard created a colourful multi-layered collection of archival materials representing a variety of perspectives.¹⁹⁹ This was the culmination of (by then) many years of creative engagement with archival materials, and as Dennis became increasingly aware of his own position as a Pākehā, he had tried to appropriately represent indigenous peoples through collaboration. Although he never named it as such, Dennis' work has something of the quality of Homi Bhabha's conception of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994). Bhabha contends that a new "hybrid identity or subject-position emerges from the interweaving of elements of the coloniser and colonised challenging the validity and authenticity of any essentialist cultural identity" (Meredith, 1998 p.3). Bhabha suggests that emerging from this is a third space, a hybrid place between cultures where there is a negotiation and translation which becomes a productive space of possibility (Bhabha, 1994).

Dennis and Leonard are both "colonists" in the sense of being from European origins and living in the Pacific. They had both previously worked with the sound recordings of the colonised. It is an interweaving of colonist and colonisers, challenging the notion of a fixed identity. In the *Ocean*

¹⁹⁹ The montage style of various Australian radio programme makers such as Tony Barrell also seems to have been important in Matthew Leonard's work and in the Radio Eye (now 360) tradition on ABC where he worked at the time.

of Time soundscape Dennis and Leonard attempt to appropriately present a multiplicity of Pacific voices. They engage with Turner's "remembering rather than forgetting" the colonist and settler's acts and the reactions of Pacific indigenous peoples to those acts and events (S. Turner, 1999). They also arguably attempt to listen to, rather than speak about the materials they have amassed, creating a "productive space of possibility".²⁰⁰

The programme is loosely structured around Samoan New Zealander Albert Wendt's poem *Inside us the Dead*, read by Wendt himself. There are eight sections: *Prologue*, *South Seas*, *Colonisation/The New Way is the Cross*, *White Dreams*, *Traders*, *War in the Pacific*, *Sovereignty and Independence* and finally *Migration*. Dennis' desire in his radio programmes, like all his work, was to evoke emotion in himself and in his listeners (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001). One of those emotions may well be frustration or anger. Dennis felt archiving was about resisting the act of forgetting, to ensure ideas and themes could last, like Ted Coubray's memories, "into the future". As Turner cautions – "The danger of forgetting is that history too will be zoned, plotted and fenced off..." just like the picket fences that surround the settler's house "...a picketed history – leaving settlers with no feeling for the processes of settlement that are the foundation for the distinctiveness of their cultural setting" (S. Turner, 1999 p.32). The section titles indicate the conscious attempt by Dennis and Leonard to engage with colonisation and its effects, while also supporting an audio work which is in itself a creative endeavour – by explicitly naming "Colonisation" and the role of Christianity, "The New Way is the Cross", as well as later movements of "Sovereignty and Independence", they are insisting on the reality of indigenous peoples' experience.

One of the section titles, "White Dreams", also recalls another quote from Turner – "...in New Zealand, the white dream of a new country, which requires that indigenous inhabitants be forgotten or constructed in terms of the vision of a bright future, conflicts with the tenacious historical memory and insistent presence of Māori" (S. Turner, 1999 p.22). Leonard and Dennis appear to be deliberately "unforgetting" the tenacious memory of Māori as well as other

200 The work was inspired for both Dennis and Leonard by the documentary film *Mother Dao The Turtle Like* (Dir. Monnikendam, V. 1995) in which archival footage of Indonesia was used to create a story of colonisation in that region with songs and poems replacing any traditional narration (Personal correspondence, M. Leonard *ibid.*).

indigenous peoples of the South Pacific. The juxtaposition of recordings challenges “white dreams” and counterpoints with non-white memories, which may be able to then become fruitful new ideas and creative works. Leonard said Dennis wanted this soundscape to be “dreamlike” so people could drift in and out of it – and therefore quite literally it is the dream of a white man; that man being Dennis himself (Personal correspondence, M. Leonard *ibid.*).

In this production Dennis and Leonard explored the liminal space of the broadcast incorporating multiple voices into a creative work which in Homi Bhabha’s terms, is a hybrid. The very fact that it is “ephemeral” and has no visual accompaniment ensures that it is “liminal” even in the most basic sense of being. It is a “hybrid” because it is the voices of indigenous peoples. The broadcast attempts to sit in between cultures, in between time and place, but is created from the situated perspective of two Pākehā. Like Bhabha’s work, it can be criticised for being created by the privileged (Perloff, 1999). In Dennis’ case he was a middle class white man with access to archival resources and knowledge of how to use them.²⁰¹ Alternately, *Ocean of Time* demonstrates the opportunities that Charles Merewether celebrates in his work, *The Archive* (Merewether, 2006) in which he and his fellow contributors consider the creative potential of the archive, but also question the meaning of the materials which it produces.

Dennis and Leonard enacted and invoked the importance of remembering and storytelling in order to confront the past, which is also the present of NZ and the wider Pacific. For as Turner says – “Admitting the forgetfulness of the settler opens up a diversity of culture and experience that is denied by a reactive cultural realism” (S. Turner, 1999 p.38). In the original pitch for *Ocean of Time*, Dennis and Leonard wrote that they wanted to allow the sounds to “speak for themselves” (AC PP Pitch *Ocean of Time*). They certainly do not literally narrate the programme, thereby on one level “letting” the sounds speak. However, in Frantz Fanon’s words – “No one can mediate between the disempowered living, and the voiceless dead”. Greg Denning appropriates this quote from Fanon to assert that – “All of us writing in a history so terrible as that of the

²⁰¹ Leonard noted they were particularly privileged in making this work. They had a month of dedicated time in a recording studio in Melbourne with a sound engineer, Melissa May who was an important part of their process (Personal correspondence M. Leonard, 01/04/2010).

Pacific...have had to resolve that dilemma for ourselves” (Neumann, Thomas, & Ericksen, 1999 p.xiii).

Through this work, Dennis and Leonard provoke discussion of that terrible history, which cannot be erased by any romantic notion of “hybridity”. Following the argument of Turner, what they appear to attempt is remembering; not of a colonial past, but a colonial present. Their message within the broadcast runs counter to the prevailing wisdom that producer Elizabeth Alley and Matthew Leonard originally discussed when thinking about the millennial celebrations and the kind of radio programmes that would be broadcast. They imagined most programmes for the millennium would present race relations as peaceful, that any past conflict was ameliorated by the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims, and that New Zealanders would be presented as unified and satisfied with the status quo (Personal correspondence, M. Leonard op.cit.).

Ocean of Time was also an example of archivists using the internet to create a new presentation of archival material with an accompanying website which provided detailed reference to all the sound used in the presentation. It is a relatively early example of an interactive website with a live radio broadcast so that the ephemeral soundscape would have a longer life and a deeper engagement with its audience prior to the now ubiquitous use of podcasts (<http://www.abc.net.au/arts/ocean/info.htm>). It suggests where Dennis may have gone next in his work — towards digital storytelling platforms. Dennis was eager to use new technologies to creatively present archival materials and sought to push boundaries in order to do so (Personal correspondence E. Alley op.cit.; M. Leonard op.cit.; G. Watkins op.cit.; A. Collins op.cit.).

In *Ocean of Time*, in *The Silent Migration*, in *Mana Waka*, through the Ted Coubray documentary and the many film exhibitions and publications, Dennis’ constant practice was to retrieve and represent archival materials and collect the memories of “ancestors”. They were his ancestors and those of others, living and dead, creating new presentations for both Pākehā and non-Pākehā audiences alike. He treated all these materials as taonga, and through juxtaposition, layering, montage and collage made rich sound and visual works which deliberately provoked emotional responses from the audience and were creative works in their own right. As Cherchi-Usai explained, Dennis was a film archivist, a curator, but also an “agit-prop”. Specifically through his

work with indigenous peoples and materials he sought to find new and better ways for archivists to appropriately and ethically work with archival materials. Through working by “heart” rather than “head” Dennis felt he had satisfied his own ambitions to tell stories which he thought were “wonderful” and important (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis 2001).

As Dennis made all these works, he sought to identify his own place to stand within NZ and the wider South Pacific by focussing on local themes and local responses. He also consciously left an archive of rich materials for others, which are, thanks to his own methodical archiving practices, available through the NZFA. This constant vigilance about keeping records, not just of the final work but the many interviews and other recordings of which they consisted, results in Dennis’ creative works being accessible. This also ensures that the raw material is available for others to interpret in various ways, which may be very different from Dennis’ own. As he said of the Coubray film, he never intended to become a director but it was the most expedient way to record and present the material he gathered. In this way Dennis sought not to be an author but the conduit through which materials could be presented for interpretation by an audience. This is curation at its most creative.

10. Concluding discussion: Archive as biography of the nation?

The concluding chapter of the thesis weaves together the triple areas of contested ground that have been analysed throughout. The biography itself, the archive and the concept of nationhood all contain shifting meanings which are in negotiation and contestation at any given time in a specific geographical location. In the introduction to the thesis I asserted that its purpose was to explore film archiving philosophy and practice and this analysis would be driven by a series of related questions:

1. What is an archive and what should it do?
2. What relationship does an archive have to changing concepts of the nation as expressed by social and political movements?
3. How might a film archive and its archivists respond to the materials within and the movements outside its walls?

In order to address the above, this thesis has used the founding director of the New Zealand Film Archive, Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiāhua (NZFA), Jonathan Dennis, as a conduit for an examination of the tensions and debates present at a particular period in a specific country. Within this chapter I shall weave together the analysis from across the thesis.

I have demonstrated how Dennis' works (listed as an appendix to the thesis) contributed to the growing archive of New Zealand and South Pacific culture, and how he was never the sole author of these works; he was seeking to frame, curate and be the catalyst for the presentation of the artistic productions of others. Dennis understood that the work he did was collaborative – because he did not have all the information or skills required nor the *doxa* or *habitus*, he sought to encourage the work of others and engage with them to create presentations in various fora. Dennis shaped materials for various ends, and sought to incorporate a critique of the society within which he lived and worked.

Although Dennis never described it in these terms, an archive is simultaneously a tangible institution in which materials are stored and an intangible concept, an ideology and a platform.

As previously noted, Foucault exposed the archive's connection to power (Amad, 2010 p.19) and yet he did not support the view that power itself was only repressive (Foucault, 1976/2008). Dennis understood the connection between the archive and power. Those who were able to control the representation of history controlled contemporary understandings of the nation. He worked with others to address the power imbalances he recognised had occurred through the marginalisation of particular voices and perspectives. When he felt his position was no longer tenable, he stepped down as Director of the NZFA and continued his work without the economic capital of the Director's position to support him.

Throughout the thesis, I have shown that there are many similarities between the discourse of the "archive" and the "biography". The archive cannot hold every record or object of a nation or it would be too cumbersome to manage. Decisions are constantly being made, both consciously and unconsciously about what will or will not remain in the archive. There are costs to each course of action in terms of resources which will also come into play. Similarly, by necessity of length of the text alone, much will be omitted from any biography. Other considerations that lead to omission in the biography will be due to mistakes on the author's part, wilful manipulation of information, a desire to depict some people in a positive light for political or personal reasons, or ignorance of a particular fact or incident. Similarly, the archive is rife with omissions in the collection it presents to the public due to the same reasons listed above, but also because of a deterioration of objects, failure to obtain certain things for a collection or a desire to preserve an object by not presenting it if it may cause deterioration in its presentation. Alternately, there may be feelings of shame towards a historical artefact which now reveals an aspect of the society which in the present moment seems unacceptable. These omissions are a silence which shapes the archive; they are the discourse around the object. They are also similar to the decisions made by the biographer when analysing the materials associated with an author in which that author must inevitably disappear as a version of their narrative is reproduced, which can never be an authentic truth.

Dennis as an archivist and presenter of archive materials was both actively constructing the archive, and also a subject of it – he was impacted upon by the society in which he lived, and its changing socio-political forces. His place within his own archive of writings, artistic and archival

productions and the narratives told by him and about him, have their own omissions and contradictions, their own deteriorating truths and authentic moments. Interviewees will have chosen what to share or refrain from telling just as the curator or archivist will select what to present from the collection of the archive.

The biography and the archive are both representations of the past which are likely to be understood as “authentic” because they are published or exhibited in the public sphere. Additionally, the biography and the archive are linked by the fact that they are both important conduits of memory and nostalgia for a reader/audience who are as significant as the biographer/archivist in the interpretation of a body of work. Dennis’ archive and biography are both more and less significant than the sum of their parts – they create a space into which Dennis’ life and work constantly disappear, but in the space they create there is the possibility of a discourse which frames a subject which can be labelled with his name. Dennis allows for the debate which must always be associated with the archive and its subject – who has the right to name or describe the subject of the biography, or the object in the archive? Who holds the incontrovertible truth to label either? Who is allowed, who is privileged at a given moment in history to say – this is the truth of Jonathan Dennis, his life and his work. Equally who holds the key to the true archive, the true meaning of the New Zealand Film Archive? Instead, the multiple perspectives present a view of the archive as constantly in flux, in a state of change and contestation, tension and debate just as Dennis’ biography is a catalyst for a discussion about the work of the film archivist and its importance (or insignificance) in the contemporary moment.

As I have demonstrated, materials in the archive can be used to invoke notions of belonging. The archive can be charged with the responsibility to tell a story of anything, but quite frequently in the case of state funded national archives, the story required is one of evolving nationhood. But who is connected and who is excluded by the manner in which these materials are collected and presented? Whose is the real and authentic story of the nation? The archive offers a partial perspective which tells a story, a single frame which might be that of an individual, but more often will depict a wider group, possibly even a version of the nation itself, and that representation is in a constant dialogue and engagement with the reader/audience.

Dennis recognised the value of both retrieving and re-presenting archival materials, but also the importance of collecting new materials for the archive. He knew that archives are often the repositories for “forgotten” knowledges which wait to be unearthed in the future (Green & Hutching, 2004 p.2). Dennis understood that depending on the historical circumstances, the treatment a group receives will differ and therefore an individual or group considered unimportant at one particular time may be elevated in a different time period or context. Archivists attempt to take the long view, ignoring fashions and politics in order to preserve what they see as the voices of the past in order for them to be available, in Dennis’ own words, “into the future” (Dennis in Alley et al., 2001).

However, he also learned that archivists are fallible and will not necessarily understand their own partial perspective which led them to elevate some materials over others. This will inevitably lead to a failure to archive everything that might be of interest to all parties within the nation, and as Paula Amad describes it, the researcher in the archive needs to be aware of “the fantasies of the future nestled amidst the documents in which she pursues the facts of the past” (Amad, 2010 p.1). Archivists are imperfect gatherers of material with conscious and unconscious motivations, just as biographers are imperfect in their telling of a person’s life.

As the biographer telling the story of this particular person and the history of the Archive, I have demonstrated how Dennis’ contradictory experiences of both acceptance within his own family and then the shock of his boarding school experience meant he had to learn to negotiate his self presentation. In his own words he was lacking the “boysy” behaviours of the Canterbury farmers’ sons at his private school (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001). This caused him in later life to create his own performance of self, and also to consider the experiences of others who are less likely to be heard or registered in the story of the nation. He was aware of the false authenticity of the masculine ideal of the Kiwi bloke defined against women and indigenous peoples.

As we have seen, in many academic and popular fora since the 1980s it has been noted that masculinity is a strong national identifier in New Zealand; specifically a Pākehā masculinity. Hegemonic masculinities theory states that women define (or are forced to define) themselves against the notion of masculinity – “To sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing

of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005 p.844). Jonathan Dennis did not accept the stereotype of the Pākehā kiwi bloke in his own life or in his work; nor did he accept that women should be excluded or discredited, just as he did not accept his own exclusion. As an out and proud gay man, Dennis resisted the mask of heterosexuality. He was well aware of the masculine stereotype and the related practices of physical activity (such as prowess with the rugby ball) which made men acceptable in this society. He had experienced homophobia in Melbourne when he was beaten and then not helped by passersby too scared to come to the aid of a flamboyant and possibly gay man at the time of the rise of the disease HIV AIDS which they knew to be transmitted by blood. He had been spurned by a married lover who was unwilling to leave the closet. Dennis knew the importance of his story and that of other gay men being told. His strong friendships with feminist women also taught him of their history of repression and oppression. He knew their stories were also often unacknowledged, unarchived and unrepresented in the story of the nation.

By the late 1970s, early 1980s period Dennis was becoming much more aware of Taha Māori (the Māori dimension) (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002). The parallel universe of Aotearoa New Zealand as both an example of empire and an indigenous country with many iwi and practices alien to the British people who settled here, became increasingly compelling to Dennis. Through the Springbok Tour protest marches in which he partook which challenged Pākehā assumptions about race relations, Dennis became well aware of the increasingly vocalised resentments Māori felt towards himself and others like him. Through the 1980s Dennis learned how unjust his country had been to indigenous peoples, and he sought to address this through his work in a variety of ways which held a common thread – listening harder and giving a voice to marginalised communities.

How did Dennis “join the dots” between his own observations and experience of marginalisation and the experience of indigenous peoples, separately marginalised in his country? His feminist colleagues and friends such as Sharon Dell, Annie Collins, and Merata Mita sought to inform him through their own experiences of the multiple repressions experienced by women and indigenous peoples (Personal correspondence, E. Alley, op.cit.). Dennis’ colleagues demonstrated how the “colonist lens” (Personal correspondence, A. Collins op.cit.) had an impact upon the

constructions of the culture in which they worked. For example, Merata Mita observed that the 1970s and 1980s film industry was a “white” and “neurotic” one (Mita, 1996 p.47). Through her filmmaking she attempted to challenge this and tell other stories through an indigenous perspective.²⁰² Dennis recognised Mita’s work as significant and sought to preserve and present it through becoming Mita’s distributor for various films and then by asking her to direct *Mana Waka*. Mita, fellow filmmaker Barry Barclay, film editor Annie Collins and others told a different version of the story, a different biography of the nation than the mainstream version represented in other films of the time. Dennis supported this retelling, this different version of the narrative, this attempt to place emphasis differently.

Dennis became increasingly aware of the multiple pressures on the Archive to conform to the prevailing views of its time as he battled various bureaucrats who sought to change the archive into an image they were comfortable with. They resisted difficult tasks such as funding the editing of archival footage of war canoes into a new film for a contemporary audience using an untested bicultural production model. Dennis experienced an often unspoken pressure to conform to the needs and views of those in powerful positions, such as the Board of the NZFA, and he fought hard against them. His understanding of his own ignorance of the Māori world was a great strength for the Director of a mainstream institution which was by the end of the 1980s, successful and well regarded nationally and internationally. It would have been easy to continue with the status quo of archiving practice, but philosophically and emotionally, working with his heart and not his head, Dennis wanted to follow the traces and clues the archive provided. Particularly, he was learning to listen to the silences, the Māori voices which had previously been unheard in the archive. He also had a rare opportunity to shape the institution he led, given that the NZFA opened 50 years later than the first national film archives in other Western nations. He was able to learn both what he wanted the archive to be and also what he did not want it to be (Dennis in Fyfe & Dennis, 2001).

²⁰² This is also not an unproblematic or uncomplicated assertion, as *Patu!* (Prod.& Dir. M.Mita 1983) was edited from footage produced by many of the first wave of Pākehā film makers Mita accuses of making “white neurotic” films such as Roger Donaldson, Leon Narbey and Alun Bollinger.

The passionate responses of various iwi to films about their community had demonstrated to him that Māori were valuing the films of the NZFA in a way that most Pākehā communities did not (Dennis, 1990). This passion from Māori communities was a driving force which continued to push him outside the accepted boundaries of Te Ao Pākehā/the Pākehā world, as he responded equally passionately to iwi engagement (Personal correspondence, M.Wall 01/10/10).

Dennis described a great fondness for the films he cared for; he could name all the classic features and major documentaries in the collection and was proud of them (NZFA PP JD Box 2). Through the various local and international exhibitions he curated, through his work at the Archive and after, Dennis attempted not to present the truth of the nation, but the many perspectives and the often irreconcilable elements in NZ society. These were reflected in the Archive through the films he knew and cared for personally. He pushed the boundaries of the film archive exhibition too, showing contemporary fine art works and responses to them in the exhibition catalogue along with more traditional moving image fare.²⁰³ He expected his audience to be provoked, to respond, and to be “film literate” (Dennis in Alley & Dennis, 2002).

By doing this, Dennis was working well beyond the self-imposed mandate of many archivists who believe their only role is to catalogue and preserve the materials they collect. Through the exhibition process Dennis literally became Timothy Wisniewski’s “framer of the kept” (Wisniewski, 2007). Dennis did this by presenting both the “said” and the “unsaid”, the forgotten and the remembered, the popular and the unpopular from the archive. He entered the debate regarding the ontological and the archive, he commented on the past and the present through the exhibition of archival materials and questioned the roles of the archivist and the audience. Dennis was presenting a biography of the nation as problematic, exciting, creative and sometimes violently at odds with itself. He told the story of a nation which is still in exploration of its own borders by framing it in various ways through soundscapes, exhibitions, written texts and re-releases of sound recordings. By challenging the stereotype of New Zealanders as only Pākehā, male and physically, but not intellectually, socially or emotionally engaged, Dennis presented a version of New Zealand as Aotearoa New Zealand, a colonised land struggling to find its identity

²⁰³ For example there is a short essay in the *Te Ao Marama...* exhibition book by artist Gilberto Zorio regarding the art work *Black Phoenix* by New Zealand artist Ralph Hotere (Dennis, Jonathan & Toffetti, Sergio, 1989 pp.56, 57).

under multiple pressures and (in some quarters) resisting acknowledgment of its violent past and present, hoping to forget its history by creating a new version of the past.

In 2014 Gareth Watkins, photographer, sound engineer, archivist, and website manager was “Curator-at- Large” at the New Zealand Film Archive. His first exhibition of the year was *Pets* – archival images and sounds of pets and animals from the collection. His second was *30* – a commemoration of 30 years since the first HIV AIDS diagnosis in New Zealand. Watkins used the materials of the Archive – predominantly television broadcasts and film excerpts, both home movie and public releases – to show the official news stories of the “gay plague”, which was the language of the discourse of the time. At a given time all the screens would turn blue simultaneously. This acknowledgement of Derek Jarman’s *Blue* is complemented by the voice of Welby Ings, a Professor of Art & Design, reciting a short poem to his lover who had died of an AIDS related illness. The AIDS quilt panels (including Ings’) made in New Zealand (symbolising a unity with the global AIDS quilt), also hang through the exhibition, with Ings’ being the cover art for the publicity materials. Watkins’ work demonstrates the creativity possible using archival materials to both acknowledge and challenge the concept of a cohesive national identity at the time of a public health crisis which saw many people behave with prejudice and even hatred towards those with the new disease – many of whom were gay men. There is no easy nostalgia in this exhibition – the cumulative effect is in fact an overwhelming feeling of grief and sadness.

Dennis’ influence on Watkins’ exhibition is apparent. Just as Dennis had included an homage to Jarman’s *Blue* in his *A Day Without Art*, so did Watkins (who acknowledged his admiration of Dennis’ work) (Personal correspondence, G. Watkins op.cit.). The careful use of archival material to tell a difficult and sensitive story of the past is also a call to arms for the contemporary audience – it is as Cherchi-Usai described Dennis’ work, “agit prop” or activist archivist work (Personal correspondence, P. Cherchi-Usai op.cit.). This does not suggest that the work is not Watkins’ own, but it does acknowledge Barthes’ death of the author argument, and also the “author function” of Foucault. Watkins’ work is influenced by the network around him, by his own creative instincts, and by those who went before such as Jarman and Dennis who he acknowledges as artistic and creative ancestors. Just as Dennis’ life and work were influenced by

others, Watkins too is part of a discourse influenced by Dennis and in turn he will influence others through his work.

Watkins' work for the 30 exhibition evokes Lauren Berlant's gestures towards a narrative which moves away from the traditional biographical or "bionarrative" via the work of "anti-capitalist, feminist and queer" stories (Berlant & Prosser, 2011 p.182). 30 is a history of gesture, of effect, of queer lives, which cumulatively represents the statistics of an epidemic. Watkin's archival presentations of the lives of many, perhaps offers a more effective account than a focus on the life of an individual who died of HIV AIDS because it avoids Berlant's sentimental contract with the individual bionarrative. Watkins' exhibition proves that the archive can be a platform from which to creatively present the stories of many through his curatorship, his authorship, his role as conduit for archival materials which present a queer view of the nation. It does not fit an easy nostalgic representation of the "Kiwi bloke". Watkins' work is his own, and yet it stands on the shoulders of Dennis and those others who went before him – Derek Jarman, Merata Mita, Witarina Harris, Barry Barclay, Annie Collins, Elizabeth Alley, Irihapeti Ramsden, Patricia Grace, Matthew Leonard, Sharon Dell, Paolo Cherchi-Usai, Sergio Toffetti – all those film-makers, artists and archivists who wished to take images or sounds from the archive and challenge audiences to think harder.

Jonathan Spencer Dennis has been offered in this thesis as a conduit through which to consider some of the competing perspectives in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond its borders in relation to film archiving practice. Reflecting a view that museums and archives are always at the centre of contestations of the nation (McCarthy 2011) the NZFA became a space in which Māori and Pākehā battled and renegotiated their sense of selves in the 1980s. At the end of that time and before he resigned from the Archive, Dennis led a change in the constitution and title of the New Zealand Film Archive to Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua. By doing so he sought to name the changing purpose and intention of the Archive – he wanted it to be explicitly bicultural, and by that he meant actively partnering with the iwi of the motu [nation] to share responsibility, representation and power.

In 2014 the name of the Archive has changed again. It is now *Ngā Taonga – Sound and Vision*.²⁰⁴ This is partly an indication of its evolving contents. It now incorporates the state television archive as well as the state radio materials. The new name chooses to centre the Archive on the heart of its contents and intentions, which is to engage the living relationship audiences may have with the materials of the Archive which are taonga. In Paul Tapsell's words "time travellers" who meet their descendants "face to face" with iwi, wehi and wana (Tapsell, 2006 p.17). This significant triple renaming of the Archive in its first 30 years serves to indicate its various phases and functions and the multiple perspectives and understandings of these over time. Who knows what Dennis may have made of this renaming? Even after a six year study of his life and work, I maintain Keith Sinclair's caution against psychoanalysing the dead (Sinclair, 1985 p.33). Jonathan Dennis Spencer has served his purpose; to illustrate the tensions at a particular moment in Aotearoa New Zealand through his work with the New Zealand Film Archive, an institution which is guardian and steward of the images and sounds of the nation. He demonstrated how archivists can respond creatively to the materials within their archive by collaborating with those outside it. He showed that by learning to listen harder and release some control, new and creative possibilities can emerge.

The archive itself is not the biography of the nation. Its contents contain no memories. Only by an interaction with the living can the material of the archive come to life. The archive holds no intrinsic value; it tells no stories, sings no songs. When archivists and archive users choose a single photo, or a scrap of letter from the archive the process of storytelling begins.

²⁰⁴ Announced 1st August 2014 <http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/>

Directions for further research

This thesis has already stimulated further projects; the first being the ongoing oral history collection *Queer Stories Our Fathers Never Told Us* in which my father John Kelly and I collect the oral histories of older gay men. This was inspired by stories told by Jonathan Dennis' friends of their experiences of HIV AIDs and the impact on their relationships and friendships, particularly the stories of Ferry Hendriks. Furthermore, the theme of silence in the study is one I wish to pursue – the archive as limits of enunciability seems to have further potential for exploration. A third project has arisen as a personal response to this study, which has focused on a middle class, gay Pākehā man for over five years. I am involved with AUT's Gender and Diversity Research Group and through that will be collecting oral histories of older women with Associate Professor Lynne Giddings. The "queer" work which has been only a minor aspect of this study is an area I also wish to develop in the future. Beyond all these new research projects I hope to publish further articles from the thesis, as I do believe Dennis and the Film Archive are of interest to those both within the cultural heritage sector and those outside it. This is evidenced by the radio interview, film article, soundscape and film archiving article already published and the various conferences I have presented at. Perhaps most importantly, I hope to encourage new curatorship of Dennis' work. I mentioned within the thesis two possible further projects – one analysing the Kenneth Anger correspondence in Dennis' personal papers, and another investigating the impact of overseas travel on Merata Mita and Barry Barclay's work. Furthermore there is scope for a project with the NZFA to get Dennis' sound and visual material online and the possibility of new radio, film and television productions. Making the materials available would be an opportunity for a new generation of audience members to enjoy the creativity he expressed through a myriad of texts and in many different formats. I hope that people will engage with Dennis' ideas in the contemporary moment in order to create new works "into the future".

Beyond Dennis' specific contribution, there is the opportunity to research the NZFA and its developments after Dennis' departure. A comparative study of founding directors of other

national archives with Jonathan Dennis, and a comparative study of other archives and their engagement with indigenous materials are also possible avenues for further work.

References (Text, Film, Video, Sound):

- Agamben, G. (1989). *Remnants of Auschwitz: The witness and the archive*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Allen, A. (2002). The anti-subjective hypothesis and Foucault. *The Philosophical Forum*, 31(2).
- Alley, E., & Dennis, J. (2002). *If I dreamed of anything I dreamed of being a film star – interview with Jonathan Dennis*. [Oral History Recording] Wellington: Radio NZ (Original recording date 6 December 2001). Collection of the NZFA.
- Alley, E., Watkins, G., & Dennis, J. (2001). Full recording of Jonathan Dennis interview. [Oral History recording]. 14 Edgehill Mt. Victoria Wellington.
- Amad, P. (2010). *Counter-archive: Film, the everyday, and Albert Kahn's Archives de la Planète*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Andrews, S. (Producer). Furlong, M. (Director). (1950). *Journey for three*. [Documentary]. New Zealand: National Film Unit.
- ARANZ. (2004). *Nga taonga tuku iho: Treasures passed down*. Maori Archives and Records In ARANZ (Chair), ARANZ. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the ARANZ Twenty Eighth Annual Conference Rotorua. Retrieved from http://www.aranz.org.nz/Site/events/Conferences/2004_conference_programme.aspx
- Azzopardi, T. (2010). *The song house*. London, England: Picador.
- Bal, M. (2009) *Narratology: Introduction to the theory of narrative* (3rd ed.). Toronto, Canada,: University of Toronto Press.
- Bamberg, M., De Fina, A., & Schiffrin, D. (Eds.). (2007). *Selves and identities in narrative and discourse* (Vol. 9). Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Bannister, M. (2005). Kiwi blokes – recontextualising white New Zealand masculinities in a global setting. *Genders*, 42(2005).
- Barbedette, G. (1982). The social triumph of the sexual will: A conversation with Michel Foucault (trans. B. Lemon). *Christopher Street*, 6(4), 36-41.
- Barclay, B. (1990). *Our own image*. Auckland, New Zealand: Longman Paul.
- Barclay, B. (2003). Celebrating fourth cinema. *Illusions*, 35.
- Barclay, B. (2005). *Mana tuturu, Māori treasures and intellectual property rights*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Barthes, R. (1967). The death of the author. *Aspen*, 5,6.
- Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.
- Barthes, R. (1977). The death of the author. In *Image, music, text*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang. (Original work published 1967)
- Bell, A. (2006). Bifurcation or entanglement? Settler identity and biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Continuum Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 20(2), 253-268.
- Bennett, T., Frow, J., Hage, G., & Noble, G. (2013). Antipodean fields: Working with Bourdieu. *Journal of Sociology*, 49, 129-150.
- Berlant, L. (1997). *The Queen of America goes to Washington City*. London, England: Duke University Press.
- Berlant, L. (1998). Intimacy: A special issue. *Critical Inquiry*, Winter 28.
- Berlant, L., & Prosser, J. (2011). Life writing and intimate publics; a conversation with Lauren Berlant. *Biography*, 34(1, Winter 2011).
- Bernard, L. (2011). Unpacking the archive. *The Yale Review*, 99(4), 93-107.
- Bhabha, H. (1994). *The location of culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Billsteen, B. (Executive Producer). Epstein, R. & Friedman, J. (Directors). (1995). *The Celluloid Closet*. [Documentary feature]. United States: HBO & Channel 4

- Binney, J. (2009). *Encircled lands: Te Urewera 1820-1921*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.
- Binney, J. (2010). *Stories without end: Essays 1975-2010*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.
- Binney, J., & Chaplin, G. (1986). *Ngā Mōrehu/the survivors: The life histories of Māori women*. Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.
- Bishop, R. (1996). *Collaborative research stories: Whakawhanaungatanga*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.
- Blakeney, D. (Executive Producer). Maunder, P. (Director). (1979). *Sons for the Return Home*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Pacific Films.
- Bloomfield, T. (2013). Engaging indigenous participation: Towards a more diverse profession. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 28(2), 138-152.
- Bouhours, J.-M., & Horrocks, R. (Eds.). (2000). *Len Lye*. Paris, France: Editions du Centre Pompidou.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital [Proofed online version] marxists.org/.../philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bowie, R. & Fowler, D. (Producers). MacDonald, H. (Director). (1970). *This is New Zealand*. [Documentary Feature]. New Zealand: National Film Unit.
- Bowie, R. (Producer), Maunder, P. (Director). (1975). *Gone Up North For A While*. [Television feature]. New Zealand: National Film Unit. Archives NZ Reference W3471/6061 (16BW431E)
- Bowser, E., Kuiper, John (Ed.). (1991). *A handbook for film archives – International Federation of Film Archivists (FIAF)*. New York, NY: Garland Publishing Inc.
- Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information; thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Brady, A. (2006). All Blacks, eyeliner, and Queer Eye: Metrosexuality and the "crisis of homo/heterosexual definition". *New Zealand Journal of Media Studies*, 9(2).
- Brady, A. (2012). The transgendered Kiwi: Homosocial desire and "New Zealand identity". *Sexualities*, 15(355), 355-372. sexualities.sagepub.com/content/15/3-4/355.short
- Brickell, C. (2008). *Mates and lovers: A history of gay New Zealand*. Auckland: Godwit Publishing.
- Bryman, A. (2004). *Social research methods* (2nd ed.). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Burnard, P. (1991). A method of analysing interview transcripts in qualitative research. *Nurse Education Today*, 11, 461-466.
- Butler, J. (2001). What is critique? An essay on Foucault's virtue. *European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies*. Retrieved from <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0806/butler/en>
- Byatt, A. S., & Harvey Wood, H. (Eds.). (2009). *Memory: An anthology*. London, England: Vintage Books.
- Cardy, T. (2004, 23 July). The last days of a film fanatic [Feature article]. *Dominion Post*, p. 11.
- Cherchi Usai, P. (2001). *The death of cinema – history, cultural memory and the digital dark age*. London, England: British Film Institute.
- Cherchi Usai, P., Francis, D., Horwath, A., & Loebenstein, M. (Eds.). (2008). *Film curatorship –archives, museums, and the digital marketplace* (Vol. 9). Pordenone, Italy: Synema, Le Gionate del Cinema Muto.
- Clare, J., & Hamilton, H. (2003). *Writing research – transforming data into text*. New York, NY: Churchill Livingstone.
- Clifford, J. (1987). Of other peoples: Beyond the "salvage" paradigm. *Dia Art Foundation: Discussions in Contemporary Culture*, 1, 120-130, 142-150. (Original work published Seattle Bay Press).

- Club,. Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club . (2001). Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club historic recording re-release. Producer Dennis, J. [Compact Disc]. On *He Puiaki Puoro Treasures in Sound*. Wellington: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Alexander Turnbull Library.
- Collini, S. (2012). *What are universities for?* London, England: Penguin.
- Collins, A. (Director). (1987). *Double Take*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand: Pakehas Against Racism.
- Collins, A. (Producer). Dennis, J. (Director). (1998). *Mouth Wide Open*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand: Moa Films.
- Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Re-thinking the concept. *Gender and Society*, 19 (829).
- Conrich, I., Murray, Stuart (Eds.). (2008). *Contemporary New Zealand cinema: From new wave to blockbuster*. London, England: I.B.Tauris.
- Cormack, D., & Robson, C. (2010). *Ethnicity, national identity and "New Zealanders": Considerations for monitoring Māori health and ethnic inequalities*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Health.
- Crosbie, S. (1990, March 11). Films have been his mission in life. *Dominion Sunday Star Times*.
- Davies, R. (1988). *The Lyre of Orpheus*. London, England: Penguin.
- Davis, J. C. (1985). *Biography in New Zealand*. In J. Phillips (Ed.). Wellington, New Zealand: Allen and Unwin.
- Davy, S., & Pivac, D. (2008). With a strong sense of place: The New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki O Nga Taonga Whitiāhua. In I. Conrich, Murray, Stuart (Eds.), *Contemporary New Zealand cinema: From new wave to blockbuster*. New York, NY: I.B.Tauris. pp.85-99.
- Dell, S. (1987). Te hokinga mai ki Whanganui. Volume 16 February, *New Zealand Film Archive Newsletter:NZFA* Wellington, New Zealand.
- Dell, S. (2010). *Working together, learning together: How experiences of working with iwi shape more than collection management practices*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Australasian Registrars Committee, Christchurch.
- Dennis, J. *Personal Papers Box 11*. Wellington: New Zealand Film Archive.
- Dennis, J. *Letters to his parents, Alexander Turnbull Manuscript Collection*. Wellington, New Zealand: Alexander Turnbull Library.
- Dennis, J. (1982-1991). *NZFA reports to FIAF (International Federation of Films Archives) Congress*. Brussels:National Film and Sound Archive Australia.
- Dennis, J. *The New Zealand Film Archive NZFA FD9/4/71*. (1985). National Film Sound Archive Australia file, New Zealand Film Archive.
- Dennis, J. (1987). Taha Maori: The Maori dimension. *Hawaii International Film Festival Catalogue*.
- Dennis, J. (1989). The process of change at the New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki o Nga Taonga Whitiāhua. *AGMANZ Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand*, 20(1), 10 - 11.
- Dennis, J. (Producer). Mita, M. (Director). (1990). *Mana Waka*. [Documentary feature]. New Zealand: New Zealand Film Archive.
- Dennis, J. (1990). *Uncovering and releasing the images – the case of ethnological film*. Presented at the meeting of the Documents That Move and Speak, Audiovisual Archives in the New Information Age. Proceedings of a symposium for the International Council of Archives., Ottawa, Canada.
- Dennis, J. (Producer) (1993). *Girl's own stories*. [Television Episode] New Zealand: TVNZ.
- Dennis, J., & Alley, E. (1995). A day without art; World Aids Day Soundscape. [Radio soundrecording] Wellington, New Zealand: Radio NZ.
- Dennis, J., & Bieringa, J. (Eds.). (1996). *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press. (Original work published 1992) .
- Dennis Jonathan. (1987). *He pito whakaatu a nga iwi Māori, films of the tangata whenua catalogue*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland City Art Gallery.

- Dennis Jonathan, & Cherchi Usai, P. (Eds.). (1993). *Aotearoa and the sentimental strine – making films in Australia and New Zealand in the silent period*. Wellington, New Zealand: Moa Films.
- Dennis, Jonathan, & Toffetti, Sergio (Eds.). (1989). *Te ao marama, il mondo della luce, il cinema della Nuova Zelanda*. Torino, Italy: New Zealand Film Archive and Le Nuove Muse.
- Derrida, J. (1996). *Archive fever, a Freudian impression*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Dhunpath, R. (2000). Life history methodology: "Narradigm" regained. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13(5), 543-551.
- Donaldson, R. (Producer & Director). (1977). *Sleeping Dogs*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Aardvark Films Ltd.
- Donaldson, R. (Producer & Director). (1981). *Smash Palace*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Aardvark Films Ltd.
- Drent, A., & Sutherland, P. (1989, Sourced 14 March 2009). *Library treasures –New Zealand art works from the collection of the Canterbury Public Library*. Exhibited at the C.S.A Gallery Gloucester St, Christchurch. Retrieved from <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/Publications/CanterburyPublicLibrary/LibraryTreasures/>
- Durie, M. (2005). *Ngaa tai matatu: Tides of Maaori endurance*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Dyer, G. (2005). *The ongoing moment*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Eagle, A. (2000). *Biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand: The public service response (Master's thesis)*. Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand.
- Edwards, S., & Martin, H. (1997). *New Zealand film 1912-1996*. Otago, New Zealand: Otago University Press.
- Empson, W. (1984). *Using biography*. London, England: The Hogarth Press.
- Fadyl, J. K., & Nicholls, D. A. (2012). Foucault, the subject and the research interview: A critique of methods. *Nursing Inquiry, E-pub ahead of print*, 1-7. doi:10.1111/nin.12011
- Farquhar, C. (2011). *Rugby culture*. New Zealand Film Archive (Ed.). Auckland: NZFA.
- FIAF, International Federation of Film Archives (2002). Retrieved 21/02/09 <http://fiatifta.org/fiatifta-organisation/statutes/>
- Fischer, W., & Goblirsch, M. (2007). *Biographical structuring: Narrating and reconstructing the self in research and professional practice*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Fisher, K. (2010, 22 September). *Identities and subjectivities in cross-cultural research*. Presented at the meeting of the Manu Ao Network lecture AUT.
- Foucault, M. (1969, 22/02/1969). *What is an author?* Presented at the meeting of the Societe Francaise de philosophie. Retrieved from <https://wiki.brown.edu/confluence/download/attachments/74858352/FoucaultWhatIsAnAuthor.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1296272754000> PDF
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. (1976). *History of sexuality Vol. 1*. London, England: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry*, 8(4), 777-795. (Original work published The University of Chicago Press).
- Foucault, M. (1984). Polemics, politics and problematizations (L. Davis, Trans.). In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *Essential Works of Foucault (Vol. 1)*: New York, NY. The New Press. <http://foucault.info/foucault/interview.html>
- Foucault, M. *The order of things* (2002 ed.). Great Britain: Routledge. (Original work published 1966)
- Foucault, M. (2008). *The history of sexuality* (R. Hurley, Trans., Vol. One). London, England: Penguin. (Original work published 1976).

- Fowler, D. (Producer). Maunders, P. (Director). (1975). *Landfall: A film about ourselves*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: National Film Unit.
- Fry, S. (1997). *Moab is my washpot*. London, England: Hutchinson.
- Fyfe, J., & Dennis, J. (2001). *Interview with Jonathan Dennis*. [Video recording]. Wellington. NZFA.
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1993). *Becoming qualitative researchers*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Grace, P. (1986). *Potiki*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin.
- Grace, P., Ramsden, I., & Dennis, J. (Eds.). (2001). *The silent migration - Ngāti Poneke Young Māori Club 1937-1948*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.
- Grant, B. M., & Giddings, L. S. (2002). Making sense of methodologies: A paradigm framework for the novice researcher. *Contemporary Nurse*, 13, 10-28.
- Gray, D. E. (2009). *Doing research in the real world*. London, England: Sage.
- Green, A., & Hutching, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Remembering – writing oral history*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Green, A., & Troup, K. (Eds.). (1999). *The houses of history; a critical reader in twentieth-century history and theory*. Manchester, England: Manchester University Press.
- Grishakova, M., & Ryan, M.-L. (2010). Intermediality and storytelling. *Narratologia: Contributions to Narrative Theory*. 24 New York-Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Hall, K. (2010). A progressive champion: R. N. O'Reilly, McCahon and the Canterbury Public Library Art Loan Collection. *The Journal of New Zealand Art History*, 31.
- Halperin, D. M. (1995). *Saint Foucault; Towards a gay hagiography*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Hannay, D. (Producer). Williams, T. (Director). 1977. *Solo*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Tony Williams Productions.
- Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges; the science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3 Fall), 575-599.
- Hato, A., & Waretini, D. (1995). *Ana Hato with Deane Waretini; historic recording re-release*. Wellington: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Alexander Turnbull Library.
- Hayward, R. (Producer & Director). (1928). *The Bush Cinderella*. Ginger/Hayward. New Zealand.
- Hayward, R. (Producer & Director). (1940). *Rewi's Last Stand*. New Zealand: Frontier Films Ltd.
- Hayward, R. & Hayward, R. (Producers & Directors). (1972). *To Love A Maori*. New Zealand: Rudall & Ramai Hayward Film Productions.
- Healy, S. (2013, 09/09/13). *Ngaapuhi speaks presentation*. Presented at the meeting of the Presentation at Auckland University of Technology Akoranga, North Shore, Auckland.
- Heilbrun, C. G. (1988). *Writing a woman's life*. New York, NY: W.W.Norton.
- Hodder, I. (1995). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. 339-402. London, England: Sage.
- Holroyd, M. (2010, 28 June -1st July 2010). *Plenary session on oral history interviews*. Presented at the meeting of the International Autobiographical Association, University of Sussex.
- Horrocks, R. (1979). Colossal, exquisite – and lost. *The New Zealand Listener*, April 7, 1979.
- Horrocks, R., Labrum, M., & Hopkins, S. (2009). *NZ Film Archive: Review of government agency funding arrangements and service delivery*. Wellington: New Zealand Government.
- Howard-Malverde, R. L., 1990. (1990). *The speaking of history: "Willapaakushayki" or Quechua ways of telling the past*. London: University of London Latin American Studies.
- Howe, C. (2004). Foucault, gay marriage, and gay and lesbian studies in the United States; an Interview with David Halperin. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, Journal of National Sexuality Resource Center* Vol. 1 No.3.
- Hurley, J. (1998). Radio Best. *The New Zealand Listener*, January 10.
- Jackson, S., & Scott, S. (2010). *Theorizing sexuality*. Maidenhead, NY: McGraw Hill Open University Press.

- Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer theory; an introduction*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Jarman, D. (1996). *Kicking the Pricks* (2nd ed.). London, England: Vintage.
- Jensen, K. (1996). *Whole men: The masculine tradition in New Zealand literature*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Jimerson, R. (2010). Archivists and the call of justice. On *Nights with Bryan Crump*. [Broadcast]. Wellington: Radio New Zealand. (30 August 2010).
- Keane, B. (2012). *Ngā rōpū tautohetohe – Māori protest movements – Rugby and South Africa*. <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/nga-ropu-tautohetohe-maori-protest-movements/page-4>
- Keating, A. (Producer), & Tuckett, G. (Director). (2009). *Barry Barclay: The camera on the shore* [DigiBeta]. New Zealand: Acute Film.
- Keith, H. (2007). *The Big Picture: A history of New Zealand art from 1642*. Auckland, New Zealand: Godwit.
- Kelly, E., & Lavranos, E. (2011). "Sometimes I hate them": In what ways do identity and subjectivity currently influence forms of documentary expression? *Auckland University of Technology*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Expanding Documentary, Nga Wai o Horotiu Marae, Auckland University of Technology. Retrieved from <http://www.aut.ac.nz/study-at-aut/study-areas/communications/profile/research/expanding-documentary/conference-proceedings>
- Kelly, E., & McCarthy, N. (2010). *Kiwis who should be famous – Jonathan Dennis*. [Podcast] New Zealand: Radio New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/summernoelle/20100104>
- Kelly, E. J. (2012). The greatest love story ever told. *OnFilm*, January 2012.
- Kelly, J., & E. (2011). *Interview from collection Queer stories our fathers never told us* [Oral history recording digital format] Auckland: Oral history section of National Library of New Zealand.
- King, M. (1977). *Te Puea – A biography*. Auckland, New Zealand: Hodder and Stoughton.
- King, M. (1985). *Being Pakeha*. Auckland, New Zealand: Hodder & Stoughton.
- King, M. (1999). *Being Pākehā Now*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin.
- King, M. (2000). *Wrestling with the angel; a life of Janet Frame*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin.
- Kiraly, S. C. D. a. J. (2010). *subREAL website*. Retrieved 25/08/10 <http://www.plueschow.de/fellows/subreal/subreal.html>
- Kloot, B. (2009). Exploring the value of Bourdieu's framework in the context of institutional change. *Studies in Higher Education*, 34(4), 469-481. doi:10.1080/03075070902772034
- Kula, S. (2002). Mea culpa: How I abused the nitrate in my life. In R. Smither & C. A. Surowiece (Eds.), *This film is dangerous – a celebration of nitrate film*. Brussels, Belgium: Federation Internationale des Archives du Film.
- Labrum, M., & Dennis, J. (1993). Talk to NFSA staff about Pordenone Silent Film Festival. [Cassette Recording] AEK000454 *Tape One of Two*: NFSA.
- Laemmle, C. (Producer) Collins, L. (Director). (1929). *Under the Southern Cross/The Devil's Pit/Taranga*. [Feature film]. White Island New Zealand: Universal.
- The Last Film Show; funeral of Jonathan Spencer Dennis (2002 January 29). Paramount Theatre, Wellington: Recorded by Radio NZ Engineer, Jeremy Ansell. [Video] Copyright 2003. Radio New Zealand Ltd.
- Longford, R. (Director). Longford, R. & Lyell, L. (Producers). 1916. *A Maori Maid's Love*. [Feature film]. Australia: Vita Film Corporation and The Zealandia Photo Play.
- Longford, R. (Director & Producer). 1916. *The Mutiny of the Bounty*. [Feature film]. Lye. [Video]. New Plymouth, New Zealand: Len Lye Foundation.
- Main, S., & Wells, P. (1993). *Desperate remedies*. [Feature film] New Zealand: Miramax.
- Martin, H., Cairns, Barbara. (1994). *Shadows on the wall – a study of seven New Zealand feature films*. Auckland, New Zealand: Longman Paul.

- Matykiewicz, L., & McMurray, R., Modern Matron: a "site" for leadership. *Gender in Management: an international journal*. 28, 6. 321-337.
- McCarthy, C. (2011). *Museums and Māori: Heritage professionals, indigenous collections, current practice*. Wellington, New Zealand: Te Papa Press.
- McCarthy, C. (2013). The rules of (Māori) art: Bourdieu's cultural sociology and Māori visitors in New Zealand museums. *Journal of Sociology*, 49, 179-193.
- McGill, R. (1975, September 19). Unknown title. *Craccum Magazine*. New Zealand: University of Auckland.
- McHoul, A., & Grace, W. (1993). *A Foucault Primer; discourse, power and the subject*. Melbourne, Australia: Melbourne University Press.
- McHugh, S. (2012). *Oral history and the radio documentary*. University of Wollongong, Scholarly Commons online. Retrieved from <http://www.google.co.nz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CDsQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fro.uow.edu.au%2Fcgi%2Fviewcontent.cgi%3Farticle%3D1259%26content%3Dcreartspapers&ei=1VqdUoriBMuRiQekn4GoDQ&usg=AFQjCNFOjtwQM9UUTtrAppGf9TncKH6uvQ>
- Melies, Gaston. (Producer & Director). 1913 *Hinemoa*. [Feature film]. Rotorua New Zealand: Melies Films.
- Mellor, D., & Haebich, A. (Eds.). (2002). *Many voices; reflections on experiences of indigenous child separation*. Canberra, Australia: National Library of Australia.
- Meredith, P. (1998, 7-9 July 1998). *Hybridity in the third space: Rethinking bi-cultural politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Presented at the meeting of the Te Ora Rangahau Maori Research and Development Conference, Palmerston North.
- Merewether, C. (Ed.). (2006). *The archive*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Millar, P. (2010). *No fretful sleeper: A life of Bill Pearson*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Ministry for Culture and Heritage website. (2011). *Rugby in 1888 – New Zealand Natives' rugby tour*. Retrieved 16 February, 2012, from <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/culture/nz-natives-rugby-tour/rugby-in-1888>
- Ministry of Research Science and Technology. (2005). *Vision mātauranga*. Royal Society of New Zealand website: New Zealand Government Retrieved from <http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/programmes/funds/marsden/application/vision-matauranga/>
- Mita, M. (30/03/89). *Statement of Te Manu Aute Ki Tamaki Makaurau to the New Zealand Film Archive*. Auckland, New Zealand: Te Manu Aute. NZFA Personal Papers Jonathan Dennis Box 19.
- Mita, M. & Pohlmann, G. (Producers & Directors). (1980). *Bastion Point – day 507*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand / Aotearoa.
- Mita, M. (Producer & Director). (1983). *Patu!* [Documentary film]. New Zealand: Awatea Films.
- Mita, M. (Producer & Director). (1988). *Mauri*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand / Aotearoa: Awatea Films/New Zealand Film Commission.
- Mita, M. (1992). *The preserved image speaks out: Objectification and reification of living images In archiving and preservation, documents that move and speak "Ces documents qui bougent et qu parlent."* Presented at the meeting of the Audiovisual Archives in the New Information Age. Proceedings of a symposium for the International Council of Archives, Canada.
- Mita, M. (1996). The soul and the image. In J. Dennis, Beiringa, Jan (Ed.), *Film in Aotearoa, New Zealand*. Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press.
- Mita, M., & Dennis, J. (1991). Plenary session – Mana Waka presentation. On *6th Film and History Conference*. La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia: New Zealand Film Archive AUD 0075 Audio Cassette.
- Moeke-Maxwell, T. (2005). Bi/multiracial Maori women's hybridity in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 26(4), 497-510.

- Morris, C. (2013). Kai or kiwi? Maori and 'kiwi' cookbooks, and the struggle for the field of New Zealand cuisine. *Journal of Sociology*, 49(2-3), 210-223.
- Morrison, R. (1984). *Sense of place: Photographs of New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Seto.
- Murphy, G. (Producer & Director). Hutchinson, N. (Producer). (1980). *Goodbye Pork Pie*. New Zealand: A.M.A.
- Murphy, G. (Producer & Director). (1983). *Utu*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Utu Productions Ltd.
- Nakata, M. (2007). *Disciplining the savages, savaging the disciplines*. Canberra, Australia: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Neumann, K., Thomas, N., & Ericksen, H. (Eds.). (1999). *Quicksands; foundational histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales.
- Ngaapuhi elders. (2012). *Ngaapuhi speaks he wakatupunga o te rangatiratanga o nu tireni and Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Independent Report on Ngaapuhi Nui Tonu Claim*. Whangarei, New Zealand: Te Kawariki & Network Waitangi Whangarei.
- NOHANZ. (2011). Code of Ethical and Technical Practice. In National Oral History Association of New Zealand (Ed.). Wellington: NOHANZ.
- NZFA Board minutes. (1989-1992). *Minutes of the NZFA board meetings 1989-1992*. Wellington: New Zealand Film Archive.
- O'Brien, T. (2002, January 31). Farewell to a critic who pulled no punches. *Dominion Post*, p.20
- O'Driscoll, M., & Bishop, E. (2004). Archiving. *Archiving*, 30 (1 March).
- O'Reilly, M. (2009). *Ron O'Reilly: The collector's eye*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Christchurch Art Gallery Exhibition Talk, Christchurch Art Gallery: Collection of the author.
- O'Reilly, R. N. (1968). Maori art. *Ascent: A Journal of the Arts in New Zealand*, 1(2).
- O'Shea, J. & Mirams, R. (Producers & Directors). (1952). *Broken Barrier*. New Zealand: Pacific Films.
- O'Shea, J. (Director & Producer). (1966). *Don't Let It Get You*. New Zealand: Pacific Films.
- O'Shea, J. & Walters, C. (Producers). Barclay, B. (Director). (1985). *The Neglected Miracle*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand: Pacific Films.
- O'Shea, J. (Producer). Barclay, B. (Director). (1987). *Ngati*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand: Pacific Films.
- O'Shea, J. (Producer). Barclay, B. (Director). (1991). *Te Rua*. [Documentary film]. New Zealand: Pacific Films.
- O'Shea, J. (1970, 10-13 April 1970). Programme of the Arts Conference 1970 Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Arts Conference 1970, Victoria University of Wellington.
- O'Shea, J. (1996). *Centenary of cinema trailers*. [Short film] New Zealand: New Zealand Film Archive.
- O'Shea, J. (1999). *Don't let it get you*. Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press.
- O'Sullivan, D. (2007). *Beyond biculturalism – the politics of an indigenous minority*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.
- Orange, C. (1987). *The Treaty of Waitangi*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.
- Perloff, M. (1999). Cultural liminality/aesthetic closure? The "interstitial perspective" of Homi Bhabha. *Literary Imagination*, 1(1999), 109-125.
- Petraki, E., Baker, C., & Emmison, M. (2007). "Moral versions" of motherhood and daughterhood in Greek – Australian family narratives. In M. Bamberg, A. De Fina, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *Selves and identities in narrative and discourse* (Vol. 9). Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Phillips, J. (1987 first ed.). *A man's country? The image of the pakeha male, a history*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin.
- Pivac, D. (2005). The early years interview with Ron Ritchie. *Newsreel*, July 2005(53).
- Pivac, D., & Dennis, J. (2000). Interview with Jonathan Dennis [oral history recording]. Wellington (28th January) NZFA

- Pivac, D., Stark, F., & McDonald, L. (Eds.). (2011). *New Zealand film; An illustrated history In association with the Film Archive*. Wellington, New Zealand: Te Papa Press.
- Pohlmann, G., & Mita, M. (Producers & Directors). (1982). *The Bridge: A story of men in dispute*. [Documentary feature]. New Zealand.
- Pollock, J. (2004). "We don't want your racist tour!": The 1981 Springbok tour and the anxiety of settlement in Aotearoa, New Zealand. *Graduate Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies GJAPS*, 2(1), 32-43.
- Pollock, J. (2005). *From colony to culture: Historiographical discourse and historical identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1883-2003*. University of Auckland.
- Pope, V. (Producer). Feast, J. (Director) (2013). *Gardening with soul*. [Documentary Film] New Zealand: Pop Film.
- Portelli, A. (1991). *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and other stories: Form and meaning in oral history*. New York, NY: New York State University Press.
- Powick, K. (2003). *Māori research ethics: A literature review of the ethical issues and implications of kaupapa Māori research and research involving Māori for researchers, supervisors and ethics committees*. Hamilton, New Zealand: Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, School of Education, University of Waikato.
- Pringle, J., Wolfgramm, R., & Henry, E. (2010). Extending cross-ethnic research partnerships: Researching with respect. In S. Katila, S. Merilainen, & J. Tienari (Eds.), *Making inclusion work: Experiences from academia around the world*. London, England: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Puutaiaora Writing Group. (2010). *Te ara tika; guidelines for Māori research ethics: A framework for researchers and ethics committee members*. Auckland, New Zealand: Health Research Council.
- Marriage invitation and order of ceremonies – Ramsden, Irihapeti and Paul*. (1997). Wellington NZFA Personal Papers Jonathan Dennis Box 11
- Ramsden, I., & Grace, P. (1995). 26/8/95 LC-6725 Oral History Collection – 10539 OHA- 3647. *Ngati Poneke author discussions*. Wellington, New Zealand: Unpublished.
- Ramsden, I., Grace, P., & Dennis, J. (1995). Ngati Poneke OHA-3646 Tape 2 Side A. *On Ngati Poneke author discussions*. Wellington, New Zealand: Tape 2 Side A.
- Ratima, M. (2008). Making space for kaupapa Māori within the academy peer commentary. *MAI Review*, 1 2008. Retrieved from <http://www.review.mai.ac.nz>
- Reece, M. (1976). *The God Boy*. [Television film]. New Zealand: TV One.
- Reynolds, H. (Director). (1922). *The Birth of New Zealand*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Tiki Films.
- Reynolds, J., Frizell, D. (2010). *In conversation*. Discussion Auckland Readers & Writers Festival. New Zealand.
- Royal, T. (24/08/10). *Lecture to Manu Ao Network*. Presented at the meeting of the Manu Ao Network, Victoria University.
- Ryan, P.M., (1995). *The Reed Dictionary of Modern Māori*. Birkenhead, New Zealand. Reed Publishing NZ Ltd.
- Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
- Sanderson, M. & Mita, M. (Producer & Director). (1979). *Keskidee Aroha*. [Documentary feature]. New Zealand.
- Scott, G. & Morton, C. (Producers). Brake, B. (Director). (1955). *Snows of Aorangi*. New Zealand: National Film Unit.
- Sedgwick, E.K. (1990). *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley, California. University of California Press.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1993). *Tendencies*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sekula, A. (2003). Raiding an archive; Photography between labour and capital. In L. Wells (Ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London, England: Routledge.
- Sharp, A. (1997). Why be bicultural? In M. Wilson & A. Yeatman (Eds.), *Justice and Identity: Antipodean Practices*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.

- Shelton, L. (2002). Obituary for Jonathan Dennis republished. *SPADA*, 67, 5. Retrieved from <http://www.spada.co.nz/documents/News02-02.pdf>
- Shelton, L. (2005). *The selling of New Zealand movies: The inside story of the deal-making, shrewd moves and sheer luck that took New Zealand film from obscurity to the top of the world*. Wellington, New Zealand: Awa Press.
- Shepard, D. (2009). *Her life's work; conversations with five New Zealand women*. Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press.
- Shusterman, R. (2008). Knowledge and the author: The intentional fallacy revisited and (perhaps) removed. *Cycnos*, Volume 14(2) Retrieved from <http://revel.unice.fr/cycnos/document.html?id=1420>
- Sigley, S. (2003). *Film culture: Its development in New Zealand, 1929-1972*. University of Auckland, Auckland. PhD thesis.
- Silverman, D. (1997). *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice*. London, England: Thousand Oaks.
- Simmons, D.R., & Penfold, M. (Trans). (1994). *Te Māori; Treasures of the Māori*. Auckland: Reed.
- Sinclair, K. (1985). Essay In J. Phillips (Ed.), *Biography in New Zealand* (pp. 33). Wellington, New Zealand: Allen and Unwin.
- Sinclair, K. (1991). *The history of New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1959).
- Smith, J., & Abel, S. (2008). Ka whawhai tonu maatou: Indigenous television in Aotearoa New Zealand. *NZ Journal of Media Studies*, 11(1), 1-14.
- Smith, T. L. (2005). On tricky ground: Researching the native in the age of uncertainty. In N. Denzin, Lincoln, Yvonna (Ed.), *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Thousand Oaks.
- Smither, R., & Catherine, S. A. (Eds.). (2002). *This film is dangerous – a celebration of nitrate film*. Brussels, Belgium: Federation Internationale des Archives du Film.
- Sontag, S. (1964). Notes on "Camp". *Partisan Review*, December (Fall), 515-530.
- Sontag, S. (1969). *The aesthetics of solitude*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Grouse.
- Sontag, S. (1996). The decay of cinema. *New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com/books/00/03/12/specials/sontag-cinema.html
- Sorrenson, M. P. K. (2012). Ngata, Apirana Turupa. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. Retrieved from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/3n5/ngata-apirana-turupa>
- Sorsoli, L. (2007). Like pieces in a puzzle: Working with layered methods of reading personal narratives. In M. Bamberg, A. De Fina, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *Selves and identities in narrative and discourse* (Vol. 9). Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Sowry, C. (1984). *Film making in New Zealand – a brief historical survey*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Film Archive, Friends of the Film Archive.
- Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. London, England: MacMillan.
- Spoonley, P. (2009). *Mata toa; The life and times of Ranginui Walker*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin.
- Stark, F. (2006). From treasure hunters to asset managers: Delivering the digital archive. In New Zealand Film Archive (Ed.). Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Film Archive Internal Document.
- Sweetwater, I. (2003). In memorial Dr Irihapeti Merenia Ramsden. *The Aboriginal Nurse*, 18(2), 14.
- Tahiwi, T. W. (1998). The Tahiwi's historic 1930 recordings by Te Whaanau Tahiwi [Recorded by J. Dennis]. *On He Puiaki Puuoro Treasures in Sound*. Wellington, New Zealand: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Alexander Turnbull Library. (1998)
- Tapsell, P. (2006). *Ko tawa; Maaori treasures of New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: David Bateman.
- Tarr, G (Producer & Director). 1914. *Hinemoa*. New Zealand: Auckland Chamber of Commerce.

- Te Ara Encyclopedia online (2004). The Treaty of Waitangi Conservation. *Te Ara Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/35912/treaty-of-waitangi-before-conservation>
- Te Awakotuku, N., Manatu Maaori. (1991). *He tikanga whakaaro, research ethics in the Maaori community*. Wellington, New Zealand: Manatu Maaori.
- Te Papa Tongarewa. (2011). *The marae*. Retrieved from <http://www.tepapa.govt.nz/WhatsOn/exhibitions/Pages/TheMarae.aspx>
- Tebbutt, J. (2009). The object of listening. *Continuum Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 23(4 August), 549-559. doi:10.1080/10304310903012644
- Tuhiwai Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. (2nd ed.). London, England: Zed Books. (Original work published 1999).
- Turner, S. (1999). Settlement as forgetting. In K. Neumann, N. Thomas, & H. Ericksen (Eds.), *Quicksands; foundation histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand*. Sydney: University of New South Wales.
- Turner, S. (2002). Being colonial/colonial being. *Journal of New Zealand Literature: JNZL*, 39-66.
- Turner, W. B. (2000). *A genealogy of queer theory*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Unknown (1975, March 25) *Critic: Otago University Student Magazine*.
- Waititi, K. (2008). Māori documentary film : Interiority and exteriority – Intern Research Report 6. *MAI Review*, 1, 2008.
- Walker, R. (1990). *Ka whawhai tonu matou: Struggle without end*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin.
- Walker, S., Eketone, A., & Gibbs, A. (2006). An exploration of kaupapa Maori research, its principles, processes and applications. *International Journal Social Research Methodology*, 9(4), 14. (Original work published Routledge).
- Waller, G. A. (2008). The New Zealand Film Commission: Promoting an industry, forging a national identity. In I. Conrich & S. Murray (Eds.), *Contemporary New Zealand cinema from new wave to blockbuster*. London, England: I.B.Taurus.
- Wanganui Chronicle, (1973) *Actors Who Perform Only New Zealand Plays*. Wednesday March 21st. New Zealand.
- Ward, V. (Director). Maynard, J. (Producer). (1988). *The Navigator: A medieval odyssey*. [Feature film]. New Zealand: Arenafilm.
- Watkins, G. (2012). *24 frames: The greatest love story ever told* [Broadcast]. National Radio: Radio New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://www.radionz.co.nz/concert/programmes/24frames>
- Wells, P. (Director). (1983). *Little Queen*. [Short film]. New Zealand.
- Wells, P. (1997). *Frock attack! Wig wars! Strategic camp in desperate remedies*. Auckland, New Zealand: University of Auckland.
- Wells, P. (2001). *The long loop home, a memoir*. Auckland, New Zealand: Vintage.
- Wells, P. *Production notes for Jonathan Dennis film Book 1* (Notes). (2001 - 2004).
- Wells, P. (Producer & Director). (2004). *Friendship Is the harbour of joy* [Documentary film]. New Zealand: New Zealand Film Festival.
- Wisniewski, T. (2007). Framers of the kept: Against the grain appraisal of ephemeral moving images. *The Moving Image*, 7(2 Fall).
- Wolford, L., & Schechner, R. (Eds.). (1997). *The Grotowski sourcebook*. London, England: Routledge.
- Wollen, R. c. (Ed.). (1996). *Derek Jarman; a portrait artist, film-maker, designer*. London, England: Thames and Hudson.
- Woolf, V. (1967). The new biography. In *Collected Essays Volume 4*. London, England: The Hogarth Press.

List of Appendices:

1. List of Interviewees
2. Publications by Jonathan Dennis
3. Constitution Kaupapa of the NZFA 1988
4. James McDonald films
5. OnFilm article by Emma Kelly
6. FIAF article by Emma Kelly

Appendix One

Interviewees:

1. Alley, Elizabeth 11/07/10 Recorded, to be deposited (edited by EA) at NZFA
2. Armstrong, Michael 17/01/13 Email correspondence, to be deposited with MA's permission at NZFA
3. Bartel, Susan 03/12/09 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
4. Beiringa, Jan 14/12/09 Unrecorded, not to be deposited, Second interview with Malcolm McKinnon 01/02/11 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
5. Brand, Neil see Kirsten Dennis 13/07/10
6. Burrows, Elaine with Kirsten Dennis 07/07/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
7. Cherchi-Usai, Paolo 14/05/09 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
8. Collins, Annie 26/11/09 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA with 25 year embargo
9. Davey, Sarah 08/11/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
10. Dell, Sharon 10/09/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
11. Dennis, Kirsten 13/07/10 with Neil Brand Recorded (quality poor) to be deposited at NZFA
12. Dennis, Simon 06/02/09 & 2904/09 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA, 13/07/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
13. Dennis, Timothy 05/08/09 Recorded (faulty), notes taken, to be deposited at NZFA
14. Eckhoff, Douglas (Doug) 09/06/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
15. Gosden, Bill 08/11/09 Recorded, to be deposited (edited by BG) at NZFA
16. Grover, Ray 31/01/11 Recorded, to be deposited (edited by RG) at NZFA
17. Harris, Beryl & Stuart 24/05/09 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited in NZFA.
18. Hendricks, Frederick (Ferry) 28/11/09 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
19. Horrocks, Roger 25/10/11 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
20. Ikin, Bridget 05/11/10 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
21. Kominik, Jane & Pat Stuart 02/02/11 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
22. Kramer, Edith 02/04/12 Recorded, not to be deposited at NZFA
23. Kupferberg, Audrey 26/09/10 via telephone, unrecorded, notes taken
24. Labrum, Megan 08/08/11 Recorded at NZFA Canberra, recording deposited in NZFA collection
25. Leonard, Matthew 25/05/10 Recorded by ML, notes taken by EK, not to be deposited at NZFA
26. McGillvray, Fergus 05/07/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
27. McKinnon, Malcolm 23/11/09 & 14/07/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
28. O'Leary, Clare 10/02/09 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
29. O'Reilly, Matthew 30/11/09 Unrecorded, notes taken, 12/06/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
30. Paul, Jane 03/02/11 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
31. Pivac, Diane (Di) 26/11/09 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
32. Rainbow, Stephen 29/01/09 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
33. Sheat, Bill 31/01/11 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
34. Shelton, Lindsay 07/12/09 Recorded, to be deposited (edited by LS) at NZFA
35. Stark, Frank (Francis) 11/03/13 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
36. Stuart, Pat see Kominik, Jane
37. Tapsell, Paul 09/10/2010, unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA.
38. Townsend, Sef 05/07/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
39. Wall, Mattie 01/10/10 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
40. Watkins, Gareth 24/11/09 Recorded, to be deposited at NZFA
41. Watson, Rachel nee O'Reilly 03/10/10 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
42. Wells, Peter 22/04/10 Unrecorded, notes taken, not to be deposited at NZFA
43. Young nee Maunder, Denise 03/08/11 Recorded, not to be deposited at NZFA

Appendix Two

Non exhaustive list of publications, exhibitions, sound and film works by Jonathan Dennis arranged chronologically:

1. 1981 BOOK *Tin Shed: The Origins of the National Film Unit* Clive Sowry author, NZFA (JD Editor)
2. 1984 BOOK *Film making in New Zealand* Clive Sowry author, NZFA (JD Editor)
3. 1987 CATALOGUE & EXHIBITION Dennis Jonathan. (1987). *He Pito Whakaatu A Nga Iwi Māori, Films of the Tangata Whenua Catalogue*. Auckland: Auckland City Art Gallery. (JD Curator, Writer, Editor).
4. 1987 Dennis, J. Taha Maori: The Maori Dimension. *Hawaii International Film Festival Catalogue*. (JD Curator, Writer, Editor).
5. 1989 CATALOGUE & EXHIBITION Dennis Jonathan, & Toffetti Sergio (Eds.). (1989). *Te Ao Marama, Il Mondo Ella Luce, Il Cinema Della Nuova Zelanda*. Torino: New Zealand Film Archive and Le Nuove Muse. (JD Curator, Writer, Editor).
6. 1989 ARTICLE Dennis, J. The Process of Change at the New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki o Nga Taonga Whitiāhua. *AGMANZ Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand*, 20(1), 10 - 11.
7. 1990 PRESENTATION & ARTICLE Dennis, J. *Uncovering and Releasing the Images - the case of Ethnological Film*. . presented at the meeting of the Documents That Move and Speak, Audiovisual Archives in the New Information Age. Proceedings of a symposium for the International Council of Archives., Ottawa, Canada.
8. 1990 FILM Dennis, J. Producer *Mana Waka* (directed by Merata Mita, editor Annie Collins)
9. 1992 CATALOGUE & EXHIBITION Dennis Jonathan. (1992). *Headlands: Moving Images from Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art.
10. 1992 & 1996 (2nd edition). BOOK Bieringa, J., & Dennis, J. Eds *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
11. 1993 CATALOGUE and EXHIBITION Dennis Jonathan, & Cherchi Usai, P. (Eds.). (1993). *Aotearoa and the Sentimental Strine - Making Films in Australia and New Zealand in the Silent Period*. Wellington: Moa Films. (JD and PC-U Editors, Curators, Writers).
12. 1993 TELEVISION PROGRAMME *Girls' Own Stories* for TVNZ's *Work of Art* Series (JD co-produced with Annie Collins)
13. 1993 SOUND Radio Programme *Voices on Film* (JD Writer, Presenter Producer with Elizabeth Alley)
14. 1993 *Heart of Fiji: Photographs by Arthur Hocart 1909-1914* National Library Gallery 20th March – 19 June co-curated with Sharon Dell
15. 1994 SOUND Radio programme *The Film Show* on National Radio (originally on Concert Radio) (Writer, Presenter, Producer until his death)
16. 1995 SOUND Soundscape Dennis, J., & Alley, E. (1995). A Day Without Art; World Aids Day Soundscape [Recorded by R. NZ]. Radio NZ: Radio NZ.
17. 1995 Hato, A., & Waretini, D. *Ana Hato with Deane Waretini; historic recording rerelease*. [Produced by J. Dennis]. Wellington: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Atoll Ltd Alexander Turnbull Library. (
18. 1996 SOUND Soundscape *Centenary of Cinema, RNZ* (JD Presenter, Writer, Producer).

19. 1995/1996 ARTICLE Dennis, J. *Ana Hato; The Melody is Ended but the Memory Lingers on... Music in New Zealand, Summer*, 46-48.
20. 1995 Hato, A., & Waretini, D. *Ana Hato with Deane Waretini; historic recording rerelease*. [Produced by J. Dennis]. Wellington: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Atoll Ltd Alexander Turnbull Library.
21. 1996 Lye, L. *Free Radicals, Video Editions of Films of Len Lye*. New Plymouth: Len Lye Foundation. (JD involved in production).
22. 1996 O'Shea, J., & Page, G. *Centenary of Cinema Trailers*. New Zealand: New Zealand Film Archive. (JD Producer).
23. 1996 BOOK *Don't Let It Get You* Memoirs of John O'Shea (JD co-editor with Jan Beiringa)
24. 1998 FILM Dennis, J. Director (1998). *Mouth Wide Open - Documentary of Ted Coubray*. New Zealand: Moa Films. (Producer Annie Collins)
25. 1998 Tahiwī, T. W. The Tahiwīs Historic 1930 Recordings by Te Whaanau Tahiwī [Produced by J. Dennis]. On *He Puiaki Puuoro Treasures in Sound*. Wellington: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Atoll Ltd Alexander Turnbull Library. (1998)
26. 2000 BOOK Contribution to Len Lye book for Pompidou, Paris exhibition (Roger Horrocks editor)
27. 2000 SOUND Radio soundscape *Ocean of Time* with Matthew Leonard, Radio NZ & ABC Joint Production
28. 2001 ARTICLE ONLINE Dennis, J. *Tribute to John O'Shea*. Retrieved 16/08/2010, 2010, from http://www.filmarchive.org.nz/archive_presents/pacificfilms/oshea_intro.html
29. 2001 BOOK *The Silent Migration: Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club 1937-1948 Stories of urban migration* (JD co-editor with Patricia Grace and Irihapeti Ramsden) Huia Press
30. 2001 SOUND RECORDING Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club Historic Recording rerelease [Produced by J. Dennis]. On *He Puiaki Puuoro Treasures in Sound*. Wellington: National Library of NZ Te Puna Maatauranga o Aotearoa Atoll Ltd Alexander Turnbull Library.

Appendix Three:

The NZFA/NGONTW Constitution/Kaupapa 16 November 1988

First page The Treaty of Waitangi itself written in Te Reo Maaori

Translation into English. Article the second 'Her Majesty the Queen of England confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand and to the respective families and individuals thereof the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession...' *states that this translation is by Professor Hugh Kawharu*

NZFA Principles

- 1.1 The New Zealand Film Archive/NGONTW, its staff and Trustees will incorporate the principles embodied in the Treaty into its policies and practices
- 1.2 Treasured cultural possessions/taonga are specifically referred to in Article 2 of the Treaty. As a storehouse/pataka tuturu of taonga, NZFA/NGONTW sees the Treaty as having specific implications for partnership, participation and protection.
- 1.3 It sees the Treaty as a charter of two peoples in New Zealand and recognises Maori as Tangata Whenua. It will work to uphold the Treaty as a joint partnership between Maori and Pakeha of resources, institutions and decision making which guarantees Maori people rangatiratanga over their lands, homes and taonga while giving a legitimate place to Pakeha people. The Archive regards the Treaty as a living document with a wairua of its own.

Aims

- 2.1 To be a storehouse/pataka tuturu of moving image materials/taonga whitiahua in accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi/Tiriti o Waitangi principles of partnership
- 2.2 To be national in outlook, responsible for offering balanced and equitable services at all local, regional and tribal levels
- 2.3 To be specific in its focus on the moving image media and their derivatives, and archival in its commitment to the dual aims of preservation and accessibility.

Objectives

- 3.1 To acquire and receive all moving image materials/taonga whitiahua of permanent national and cultural significance in fulfilment of the above aims, with due regard for and reference to mana tuturu and the rights of the materials themselves, the rights of the copyright owners and the rights of the depositors
- 3.2 To ensure the preservation of all moving image materials/taonga whitiahua of permanent national and cultural significance without loss or degradation.

3.3 To encourage and provide public access to the moving image heritage. Access and preservation are seen as complementary concepts of equal importance. The aim of preservation is permanent accessibility but the imperatives of preservation will not be compromised in order to provide access. The Archive will cater for general as well as specialist needs, encouraging and undertaking research, and creative and entrepreneurial activity.

3.4 To represent New Zealand in its field and to contribute fully to international activity through FIAF (Federation Internationale des Archives du Film) and especially in its relationships with neighbouring countries in the South Pacific region.

3.5 To maintain a special relationship with the moving image industries, whose output and history it preserves and embodies. It shall work to merit their support and trust, and to complement, aid and stimulate their creative activity

3.6 To maintain and defend its own professional integrity, independence and judgement in its role as a publicly accountable body

Definitions

The moving image material/taonga whitiāhua of New Zealand/Aotearoa embraces moving images in all their manifestations, whether as art, communication, historical record, entertainment, industry, technology, science, cultural and social phenomenon or otherwise. This heritage shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1.1 Film, television or other productions comprising moving images created or released within New Zealand, or by New Zealand, or with reference to New Zealand, whether or not primarily intended for public release.
- 1.2 Objects, materials, works and intangibles relating to moving images whether seen from a technical, industrial, cultural, historical or other viewpoint; this shall include material relating to the New Zealand film, television and broadcasting industries and fields such as literature, scripts, stills, posters, advertising material, manuscript material and artefacts such as technical equipment and costumes. It also includes such concepts as the perpetuation of obsolescent skills and environments associated with the presentation of these media.

Appendix Four

Films by James McDonald of the Tangata Whenua He Pito Whakaatu A Te Maori Na James McDonald 1919 -1923 The New Zealand Film Archive catalogue with The National Museum

James McDonald (1865 – 1935) began working for the Dominion (now the National) Museum in 1904 and in 1907 also began filming various scenic attractions for the Tourist Department. He made several ethnographic film records for the Museum (although his film making was additional to his general activities there). In 1926 he retired from his position as Assistant Director, to Tokaanu where he organized a school of Maori arts and crafts

Te Hui Aroha Ki Turanga - Gisborne Hui Aroha

1919 35mm, b&w silent, 10 mins

In 1918 James McDonald proposed an expedition to the Hui Aroha to be held in Gisborne the following year. The purpose of this, and the three subsequent Dominion Museum expeditions, was to collect and record information on the crafts, activities and tribal lore retained in the various areas.

The week long Hui Aroha, in April 1919, was organized to welcome home from France the Maori Pioneer Battalion, to honour those who did not return, and to celebrate peace. The Museum party consisted of their ethnologist, Elsdon Best, the Librarian at the Alexander Turnbull Library, Johannes C Andersen, and McDonald. The surviving film shows poi dances and string games.

He Pito Whakaatu I Te Hui I Rotorua – Scenes at the Rotorua Hui

1920 35mm b& w silent 24 mins

In April 1920 the tribes gathered at the Rotorua Racecourse, to greet the Prince of Wales. The Dominion Museum party of Best, Andersen and McDonald too the opportunity to be present and McDonald recorded on film the ARawa welcome at the reception camp to the visiting tribes, together with various demonstrations of action songs, hand and string games, flute playing and skills such as fire making and stone drilling.

He Pito Whakaatu I Te Noho A Te Maori I Te Awa O Whanganui - Scenes of Maori Life on the Whanganui River 1921, 35mm b&w silent, 48 mins

In March and April 1921 several weeks were spent by Best, Andersen and McDonald at Koriniti, Hiruharama (Jerusalem) and Pipiriki in the Whanganui River Valley. Te Rangi Hiroa (Dr Peter Buck, Director of Maori Hygiene) joined them for a few days at Koroniti. On this expedition over 300 still photographs were taken, over 50 cylinder recordings made of speeches and songs, and between 5000-6000 feet of film exposed (not all of which has survived). The scenes in the film record games such as skipping and string games, crafts such as dyeing and weaving of flax for many purposes, cultivation and fishing. The making of traps for eels and the setting of traps in the weirs are shown in detail. Also included are scenes of divinatory rites such as niu and raurau. The niu consists of making predictions from the manner in which fern stalks, or sticks, fall when balanced or thrown. The raurau is performed publicly to determine the outcome of a battle. The tohunga causes sticks to advance towards branches of karamu (coprosma) standing in the ground. The number of leaves which fall when the branch is struck by the stick indicates the number of men who will fall in the approaching battle.

Hi Pito Whakaatu I Te Noho A Te Maori I Te Tairarwhiti – Scenes of Maori Life on the East Coast 1923, 35mm b&w silent 26 mins

Apirana Ngata, Member of Parliament for Eastern Maori, was very keen for the Museum group to visit the East Coast to obtain records of his people, the Ngati Porou. So in March 1923, having been delayed by an outbreak of typhoid and influenza in the area, the final expedition set out for Ngata's home at Waioamatatini, which was to be their base. Best, Andersen and McDonald were again joined by Te Rangi Hiroa and they also had the help and sympathy of many leading Maori in the area who regarded the recording of their arts and crafts and tribal lore as a matter of considerable importance. From Waioamatatini visits were made to Whareponga, Kahukura, Rangitukia, Te Araroa, Ruatoria and other parts of the district. McDonald recorded in this film examples of the old-time skills retained in the area for making fishnets and traps, methods of netting and catching fish, weaving, hand games and music making. The digging and storing of the kumara and the cooking of food in a hangi are shown. Tribal lore and songs were also recorded on a phonograph during this expedition and numerous still photographs were secured.

Further expeditions planned to Taupo, the Bay of Plenty, Rotorua and the Urewera never took place.

Preservation of the McDonald Films

There is very little evidence of the films being shown at the time they were made, although some of the Whanganui film was shown – in towns with electricity – during the East Coast expedition, and a lecture given by Te Rangi Hiroa in Auckland in June

1923 was accompanied by scenes from the films. However, no prints have ever been located. When it was established in 1981, The New Zealand Film Archive received the surviving unedited nitrate negatives of the films, and their preservation has been taking place ever since. The negatives were in very poor condition and some had begun to decompose badly. First, the films had to be painstakingly repaired by hand, then carefully reprinted on to stable acetate film stock. The fragmentary scenes were then assembled into sequences, based on notes McDonald scratched on the leader to each roll of film. When deciphered, these notes gave the date, location and sometimes information on who or what was in a scene. Gradually a series of titles were prepared, based on these notes which were then translated into Maori. As the preservation work progressed screenings took place whenever and wherever possible, of successive early prints of the films. These were shown (often for the first time) in the areas where they had been shot and for people who were skilled in the activities documented. The work was completed in March 1986.

Director Jonathan Dennis

Film Repair and Editorial Restoration – Anne Manchester

Translations – Gisborne Hui – Amster Reedy

Rotorua Hui – Ruka Broughton, Sharon Dell

Whanganui River – Ruka Broughton

East Coast – Amster Reedy

Film Cataloguer – Elizabeth Street

Documentation Peter Sakey

Film Repair Wendy Osborne

Technical Officer – Colin Feldwick

Secretary Heather McLean

Accountant Bonita Roberts

Accessions Alison Whyte

Librarian Jo Seton

Composer-in-Residence Dorothy Buchanan

Research and Technical Supervision Clive Sowry

Lab NFU

During the five years spent on the restoration and preservation of these films the Archive has received the help and support of numerous people. In particular we would like to thank: Sharon Dell, Geoff Rogers, Ruka Broughton, Bill Cooper, Emily Schuster and the Maori and Pacific Weaver's Hui, Bronwyn Simes, Witarina Harris, Erenora Puketapu Hetet, Keri Kaa, Norm Hubbard, Jan Bieringa, Bill Gosden, Whanganui Historical Society, Matahiwi Marae Komiti, Juliet Hobbs, Warwick Wilson

Photographs – held in the photographic section of National Museum – album in Alexander Turnbull

Sound Recordings – the surviving cylinder recordings are held by the Archive of Maori and Pacific Music at the University of Auckland

ONFILM

06/02¹⁵ \$7.10
Onfilm Dec/Jan

GG
1ST
15/12
FIL

DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

NZ'S SCREEN PRODUCTION INDUSTRY MAGAZINE

\$7.10 INCL GST

ONFILM.CO.NZ



The boys are back in town

Taking care of *Sione's 2: Unfinished Business*

Gerard Smyth's *When a City Falls*

Vincent Ward comes up for *Breath*

SPADA and APN conference roundups

AFTA Awards' winners

Animation & VFX



9 421902 251027

CONTENTS

DECEMBER 2011

Views

- 4 **A private view**
Onfilm columnist **Doug Coutts** and cartoonist **Barry Linton** take the path of least wind resistance.
- 5 **Editorial**
A quick word from editor **Steven Shaw**; Cartoonist **Andy Conlan** looks at animation.
- 6 **Short cuts**
Philip Wakefield rounds up NZ box office and television news from the NZ screen industry.
- 12 **Conference calls**
Peter Parnham reports on the **SPADA Conference 2011**, where the plight of public broadcasting was highlighted.
- 13 **Asia Pacific forum NZ style**
The **Asia-Pacific Producers Network Symposium** was held in Auckland in November. **Peter Parnham** reports.
- 16 **Apples and Pears**
Gifted screenwriter and industry stalwart **Rachel Lang** shares her thoughts on the division of categories at the **Aotearoa Film & Television Awards**.

Features

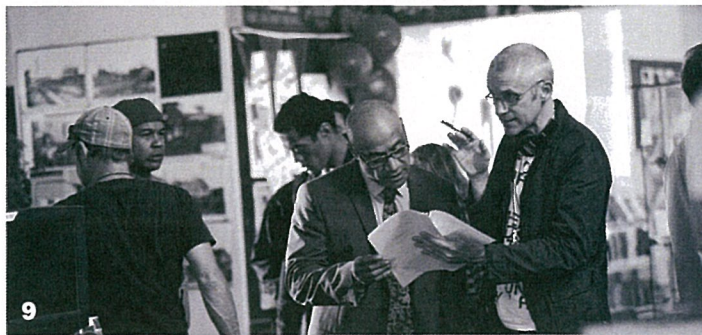
- 9 **Taking care of business**
Onfilm talks to director **Simon Bennett** and writers **Oscar Kightley** and **James Griffin** about **Sione's 2: Unfinished Business**.
- 14 **AFTA Awards' 2011 winners**
Check out the list of winners in this year's **Aotearoa Film & Television Awards**.
- 18 **24 frames: the greatest love story ever told**
Emma Kelly backgrounds a new radio programme on the late **Jonathan Dennis**, founding director of the **NZ Film Archive**/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua.

Animation & VFX

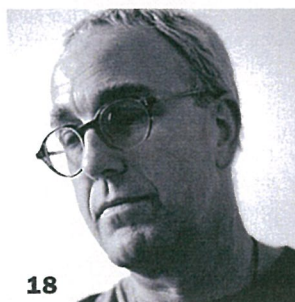
- 20 **Enrico Casarosa**
Peter Parnham talks to Pixar Animation's **Enrico Casarosa** about **La Luna**, a new animated short that's creating a lot of buzz.
- 21 **Imagination stations**
Onfilm hears from several **animation** and **VFX** artists about recent projects and success stories.
- 22 **Coming up for Breath**
Vincent Ward talks about his new exhibition entitled **Breath**, which opens at Taranaki's Govett-Brewster art gallery in December.

Regulars

- 26 **Film Reviews**
Helen Martin discusses two films about the Christchurch quakes: Gerard Smyth's **When A City Falls** and Park Kiyong's **Moving**.
- 27 **Across the ditch**
James Bondi, our ex-pat spy based in Australia, rounds up industry news from the Lucky Country.
- 28 **A legal view**
Legal expert **David McLaughlin** examines the importance of merchandising rights.
- 29 **Production listings**



COVER: The boys from **Sione's Wedding** are back in **Sione's 2: Unfinished Business**. Photo: Jae Frew. © 2011 South Pacific Pictures Ltd.



ONFILM

Volume 28, Number 11 Est 1983

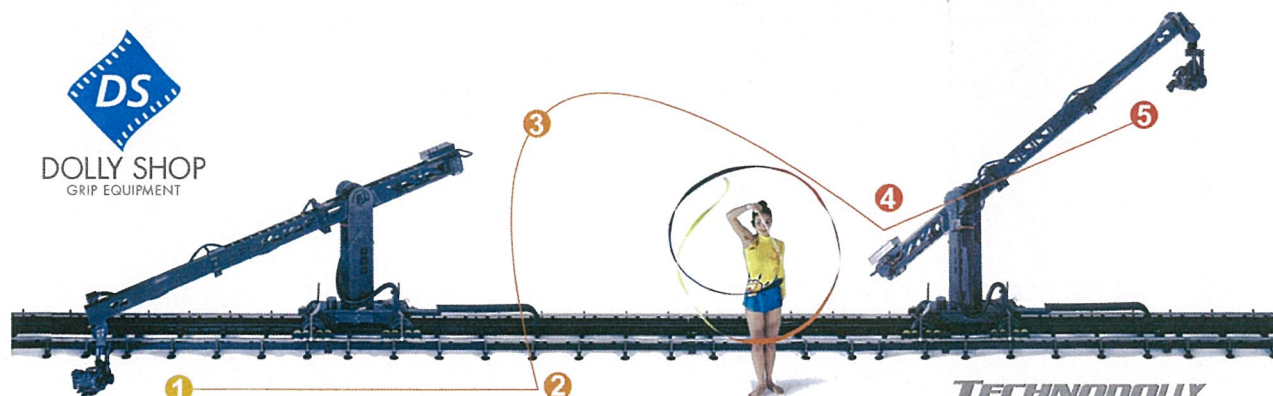
Editor: Steven Shaw
(editor@onfilm.co.nz), 021-905-804
Contributors: Doug Coutts, Peter Parnham, Philip Wakefield
Ad Manager: Kelly Lucas
(admanager@onfilm.co.nz) 09-366 0443
Production Manager: Fran Marshall
Designer: Cherie Tagalao
New Subscriptions: www.onfilm.co.nz/subscribe
Subscriptions Enquiries:
subs@mediaweb.co.nz, 09-529 3000
Pre-press and Printers: PMP Print

Onfilm is published 11 times a year by Mediaweb Limited, which also publishes The Data Book. Mediaweb Limited, PO Box 5544, Wellesley Street, Auckland 1141. Phone 09-529 3000, Fax 09-529 3001 Website: www.onfilm.co.nz

The contents of Onfilm are copyright and may not be reproduced without written permission. © 2011: Mediaweb Limited. While Onfilm welcomes unsolicited contributions addressed to the editor, no responsibility can be accepted for their return unless accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope. All letters addressed to Onfilm will be assumed to be intended for publication unless clearly marked "not for publication".



Subscriptions (one year, in NZ): NZ \$78.15 incl GST, Australia \$115.50, Rest of World \$160. ISSN 0112-2789 (Print), 1176-8436 (Online)



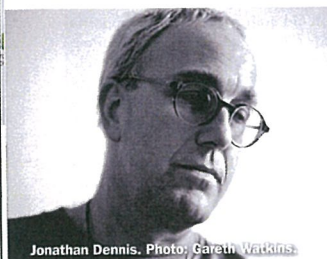
TECHNODOLLY

www.dolly.co.nz | 021 443 958 | 09 818 1981

PRECISE REPEATABLE CAMERA MOVEMENT

24 frames: the greatest love story ever told

Emma Kelly listens in to a new radio programme about the late Jonathan Dennis, founding director of the New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua.



Jonathan Dennis. Photo: Gareth Watkins

In the early 1960s a small boy living at The Hermitage Hotel at Mt Cook was sent to boarding school in Christchurch. Being a boy who liked to be with his family where he could play with dolls or sit in the dark watching 16mm films with the hotel guests, he did not get along with the others at school. He felt threatened and bullied and so he escaped as often as he could to the elegant surroundings of the Regent Theatre to watch films, often attending "the 11 o'clock, 2 o'clock, 5 o'clock... to... envelop myself in other worlds". Later his uncle Ron

O'Reilly, head of Christchurch Library and himself an avid film society member and modern art collector, would drive him around the Canterbury plains describing films he'd seen such as Antonioni's *Blow Up*. Through these experiences the boy developed an "addiction" to film which was to shape his life and his career. His name was Jonathan Dennis.

Gareth Watkins has created a new radio programme about Jonathan to mark the 10th anniversary of his death from cancer on January 24 2002. Starting with a recording Watkins made with interviewer Elizabeth Alley in Jonathan's home a month before he died, he has re-edited this piece into a multi-layered soundscape reminiscent of *The Film Show* Radio NZ film reviews Jonathan became well known for in the 1990s. It is rich with sounds from films such as the chopping of wood from *Mana Waha* (1990, directed by Merata Mita, edited by Annie Collins and produced by Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA), sound effects of a rotary dial telephone as Jonathan describes being banned from access to the telephone at boarding school, and the music Jonathan loved.

Jonathan Dennis was the founding director of The New Zealand Film Archive/Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua. The programme reflects both Jonathan's diverse contribution to NZ film heritage and also the close friendship shared by Elizabeth, Gareth himself and Jonathan. The self reflexivity of the piece is touching as it reveals Gareth's desire to capture the sounds of Jonathan at the typewriter, or in the kitchen, "so I can remember". We hear Elizabeth Alley, the consummate professional interviewer crying as she tries to ask Jonathan, her friend and interview subject, about his cancer, which he knows will soon kill him.

In the 1970s Jonathan was involved with experimental theatre company *Amamus* with Sam Neill, Anna Campion, Paul and Denise Maunier and others and also worked for the Film Society (mostly, he said, "so I could programme films I wanted to see"). Concurrently an older generation of filmmakers and producers, as well as archivists and arts administrators, was

undertaking a campaign to pressure the government into supporting the creation of a Film Commission to help the development of the nascent film industry. It was decided in 1978 that the then interim Film Commission would be responsible along with National Library, Archives and others, to protect the nation's film heritage.

As the momentum developed, Jonathan and Clive Sowry (the only professional film archivist in the country, employed by the National Film Unit) began to investigate the state of the nation's film heritage, parts of which were stored in bunkers at Shelley Bay in the form of nitrate film, which is flammable. They were concerned by the deteriorating images they found and responded by creating a publicity campaign to support the development of a Film Archive. Jonathan's experience in theatre was a great skill, and aided him in the ongoing media campaign on radio, television and newspapers, which was necessary to ensure the Archive as a charitable trust received enough funding.

Film producer Bridget Ikin notes, "Jonathan was a marvellous showman. His gifts were his passionate enthusiasm for – coupled with his phenomenal knowledge of – films. And then there was his determination to share his passion, by creating special film events around the country. I'll never forget some of the screenings of restored early Māori films that I was lucky enough to attend, in remote marae and halls. The excitement in the audience was palpable. He always made these events specific and imbued with memorable meaning."

After receiving a QEII Arts Council grant to study film archiving, Jonathan and his partner Fredrik Hendricks spent a couple of years visiting the greatest film archives in North America and Europe as well as Egypt. Upon their return in 1981 to NZ, Dennis became the first employee (and founding director) of the New Zealand Film Archive, supported by a board of film champions and volunteers.

As Professor Emeritus Roger Horrocks says, Jonathan was an "unsung hero of the film culture". He goes on to explain, "People know Jonathan

but his contribution was much greater than people acknowledged. He made a great contribution through his love of film as art. That's what the term 'film culture' implies. It's not a term that's widespread because the film world is now very commercial. Jonathan really understood the art of film, and loved the tradition of film culture, which the Europeans, especially the French, had developed. Jonathan was a real cineaste. For example he was passionate about Bresson, who was truly a 'film-maker's film-maker'. We urgently need more Jonathans!"

In addition to his love of film, Jonathan developed a sense of the importance of the bicultural institution during the 1980s. With the help of early film star and kaumatua of the NZFA Witarina Harris (Ngati Whakāue), Jonathan and the Archive began tentatively to reach out to Māori communities to receive guidance in the appropriate process for archiving of Māori images and associated materials. Witarina's voice can be heard talking during the programme. She and Jonathan took New Zealand films to the US, Hawaii, Poland, Germany, France, England and Italy to promote the little known film history of our country, "warming" them before each screening with Witarina's knowledge of Māori culture. Other important guiding figures for Jonathan were filmmakers Merata Mita (Te Arawa te iwi, Ngati Pikiao te hapū) and Barry Barclay (Ngati Apa te iwi) who as part of the *Te Manu Aute* collective of Māori communicators challenged the Archive to become a truly bicultural entity. Part of the process included the addition of the Māori name for the Archive, and the introduction of "Kaitiaki" (Guardian) agreements to ensure both physical and spiritual safety of Māori images. By the end of Jonathan's nine years at the Archive a bicultural framework was in place which stands strong today. Filmmaker and academic Ella Henry remembers Jonathan from this time as someone who she enjoyed working alongside, and as a Pakeha who supported Māori regaining control of Māori images.

24 Frames: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told captures the enthusiasm and

COMMUNICATIONS FOR ANY EVENT OR PROJECT

Our solutions include:

- Portable & mobile radios
- Quality audio accessories
- Base stations & repeaters
- Satellite phones
- GPS



Film & TV production units
Events - sporting, concerts and festivals
Security companies

Contact us today:


0800 SKYCOM
rentals@skycom.co.nz
www.skycom.co.nz



passion Jonathan felt for film and his strong sense of place in Aotearoa. Through this new radio programme made 10 years after Jonathan's death, an opportunity arises to enjoy and reflect upon both Jonathan Dennis' contribution to the creativity of the archive through his many works using archival records, and to ask a wider question of the place of the New Zealand Film Archive in the national consciousness. For if an archive is a biography of the nation, what does our national film collection say about us today?

• *24 Frames: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told* will be broadcast on Radio NZ Concert, 7pm Thurs 19th Jan and 2pm Sun 22 Jan; and on Radio New Zealand National, 4.06pm Sun 22 Jan and 9.06pm Tues 24 Jan.

- Ko Ingaruhi, Ko Airihi, Ko Kotimana ōku iwi. Ko Emma taku ingoa. Emma Kelly was born in Aotearoa of English, Irish and Scottish descent. She is a PhD student in the School of Communication Studies at AUT writing a thesis entitled *The Adventures of Jonathan Dennis*; a critical biography of the founding director of the New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhau.



SLOW

MOTION

Shoot **I 20 fps** on ALEXA,
at queenstown camera
www.qcam.co.nz

queenstown nz

MEET THE
2ND A.D's
NEWEST BEST FRIEND!

**Order the Extras you
need from your iPhone!**

www.actras.co.nz

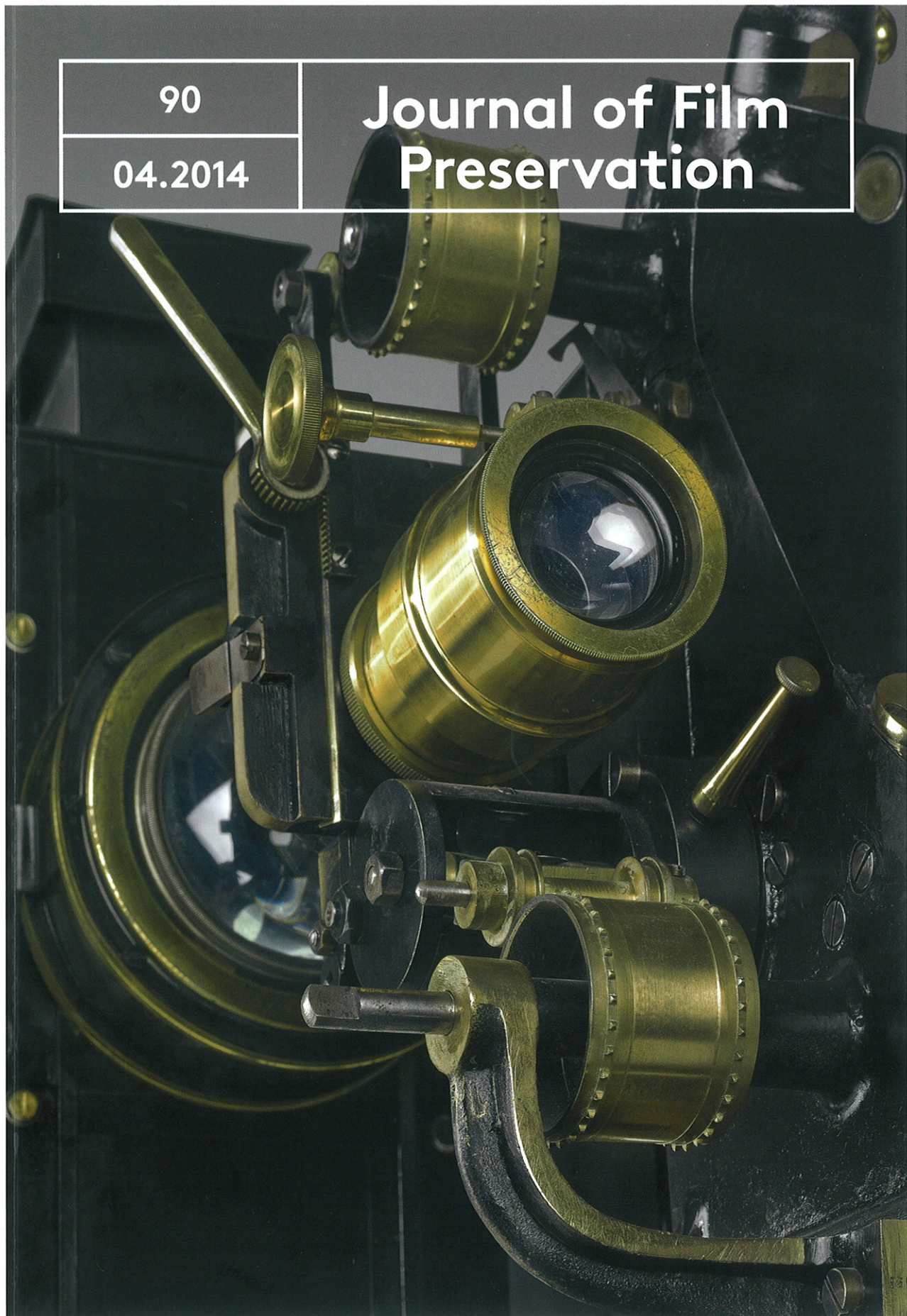
Ph: 09 377 8774 *(press option 5)*
or A/H Ph: 021 0260 1423

Actras
Professional Actors for Role Plays in Business Training & Extras for TV and Film

90

04.2014

Journal of Film Preservation



The Adventures of Jonathan Dennis, Founding Director of the New Zealand Film Archive

Emma Jean Kelly

Emma Jean Kelly worked as an Image Archivist before starting her current study of the philosophy and practice of film archives, and is presently based at the Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. Her thesis is entitled: *The Adventures of Jonathan Dennis: A Study of the Life and Work of the Founding Director of The New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua* (The Guardians of the Treasured Images of Light).

In 1979, Jonathan Dennis wrote to his parents after visiting kinetic artist Len Lye in New York. In an apparent afterthought to his description of Lye's studio and the conversation they had, he adds: "Oh – I've been accepted for an archive summer school in East Berlin in August – held every 2 years, [with] only 25 people [accepted]. It's getting a bit serious all this archiving now which is a drag..."¹ The 1979 FIAF Summer School was to be a very important event for Dennis. Although he says the archiving was "a drag", it is clear that he was enthusiastic about working with film and recovering archival materials to preserve and present to audiences. Dennis's off-hand comment is a reminder that at this time he was only 26 years old. In the late 1970s, he and his partner Ferry Hendriks travelled across North America and Europe in order for Dennis to train as a film archivist.² Dennis would subsequently tell the story of visiting the Paris Cinémathèque where he met Mary Meerson:

Mary continually talked about films as living objects [and] that for them to have a life they had to be in front of people. It was people that brought them to life and if you didn't show them... it was of no value. You had to put them in front of people.³

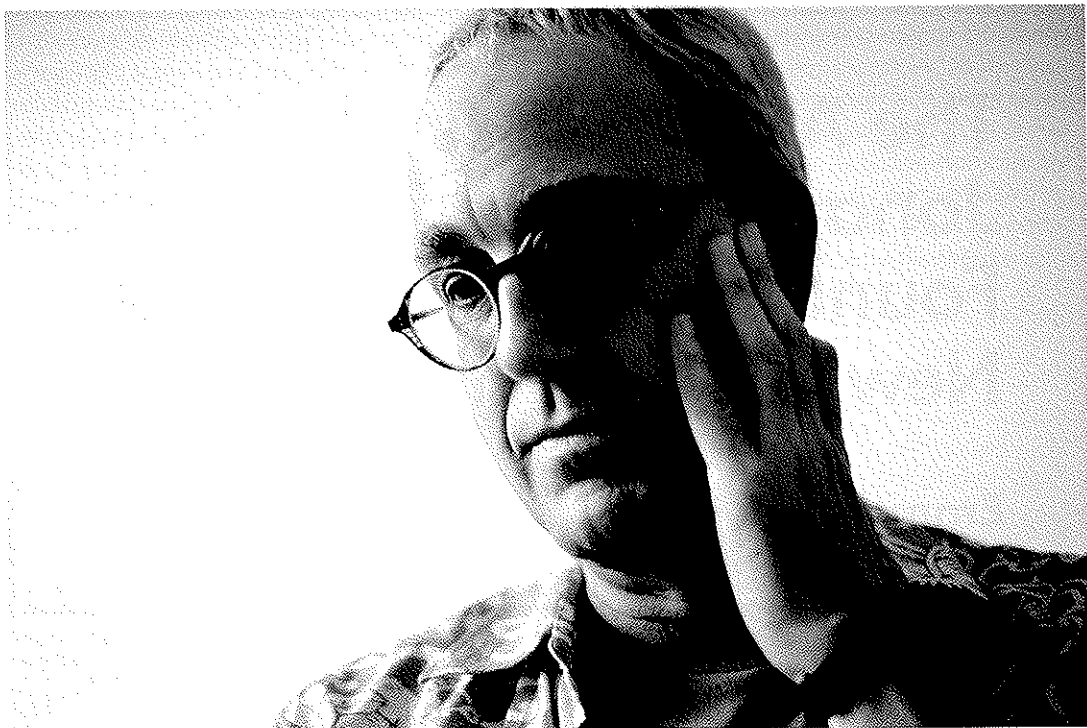
The "living" aspect of the films, as well as the question Lye had asked him in a letter, "will the archive support creativity?" were guiding principles for Dennis for the rest of his life. Yet other influences closer to home were to become equally important. Dennis was a Pākehā (European born in New Zealand) who was guided from the early 1980s by a Māori woman (tribal affiliation to Ngāti Whakāue of the Te Arawa waka) who had starred in a 1929 film. Witarina Harris was in her mid-seventies when she and Dennis met, following the re-discovery, via FIAF contacts in the United States, of the film which came to be known as *The Devil's Pit*.⁴ Her story was fascinating

1. Jonathan Dennis, letters to his parents, MS 9114-08. Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand.

2. Dennis was guided in his choice of destinations by a report written by Roy Edmondson, film archivist at the National Library in Australia at Canberra. Edmondson's report of a trip to North America and Europe and the lessons he had learned were taken to heart by New Zealand film archivist Clive Sowry and shared with Dennis (Jonathan Dennis interview with Diane Pivac, 28 January 2000, New Zealand Film Archive: NZFA ACCN AUD 0672).

3. Jonathan Dennis interviewed by Diane Pivac, 28 January 2000, *ibid*.

4. Also known as *Under the Southern Cross and Taranga*, directed by Lew Collins for Universal. (Sam Edwards and Helen Martin, *New Zealand Film 1912-1996*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997, p.42).



Jonathan Dennis, founding Director of the New Zealand Film Archive / Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua

to Dennis who was only then just beginning to learn about Te Ao Māori (the Māori world).⁵ As a young woman, Harris had been working as a typist at the Māori Arts and Crafts School in her hometown of Rotorua when she was asked to star in a film.⁶ The movie was part of a craze in the 1920s and 1930s for exotic South Sea Island adventures made for North American and European markets. They tended to focus on exploiting the novel elements of the landscape – the bubbling geysers and hot water pools of Rotorua and the idea of “Māoriland” and its exotic inhabitants.⁷ Following the release of the film, Harris worked, married and raised a family for many years in the capital city, Wellington, involving herself voluntarily in linguistic and cultural activities. By the time she returned to live in Rotorua, a counter-culture had arrived in New Zealand. Emeritus Professor of Film TV and Media Studies, Roger

Horrocks, described the 1970s as a significant time: “Film had a particularly important role to play because of its reach... These were years of activism in politics as well as art, a time of Vietnam War protests, Māori activism, feminism and gay rights. More generally, the young took revenge upon the staid values of their parents’ generation, challenging conservative New Zealand.”⁸

As part of this activism, Pākehā filmmaker John O’Shea and Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay (tribal affiliations to Ngāti Apa), as well as Pākehā historian Michael King, instigated the 1974 television series *Tangata Whenua* (People of the Land). *Tangata Whenua* is regarded as “one of the most important documentary series not only of the 1970s but also of New Zealand film history in general”.⁹ The series “... paved the way for subsequent developments in Māori filmmaking and gave Pākehā a view into hitherto hidden worlds”.¹⁰ The New Zealand Film Archive (NZFA) was to become the repository for the series in the 1980s. *Tangata Whenua* was con-

5. Peter Wells’s documentary film *Friendship is the Harbour of Joy* (2004) depicts the friendship of Harris and Dennis in great detail at the time Dennis is dying of cancer. In this film Dennis describes his growing awareness of the Māori world over the course of his life.

6. Patricia Grace, Irihapeti Ramsden and Jonathan Dennis, *The Silent Migration Ngāti Pāneke Young Māori Club 1937-1948*, Wellington: Huia Press, 2001, pp.24, 25.

7. Diane Pivac, Frank Stork and Lawrence McDonald, *New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History. In Association with the Film Archive*, Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2011, pp.60–61.

8. R Horrocks in Pivac, Stork & McDonald, 2011, op. cit., p.11.

9. L McDonald in Pivac, Stork & McDonald, 2011, op. cit., p.163.

10. L McDonald, 2011, ibid.

sidered a bicultural endeavour using Māori principles as far as it was deemed possible at the time, but Barclay became increasingly uneasy about the copyright of the images in *Tangata Whenua*.¹¹ He was concerned by how those images could be used after he was no longer able to exert influence over the Archive in which they were held – he wanted recognition of the films as *ngā taonga*. Professor of Museum Studies Paul Tapsell (tribal affiliations to Te Arawa) describes the term *taonga* as:

...any item, object or thing that represents the ancestral identity of a Māori kin group (whanau, hapu or iwi) in relation to particular lands and resources... They are seen as the spiritual personifications of particular ancestors, either as direct images or through association. Descendants experience this wairua (ancestral spirit) as ihi (presence), wehi (awe) and wana (authority). Thus taonga are time travellers that bridge the generations, enabling descendants to ritually meet their ancestors face to face.¹²

This understanding of an “object” as carrying the ancestral spirit offers a very different conception of the materials in a museum, archive or art gallery to that understood by most Pākehā curators, who see their collections as containing discrete items to be catalogued and preserved in climate-controlled environments which ensure that the physical decay of the object is slowed or stopped. A *taonga* has a spiritual engagement with the *whānau*, *hapū* or *iwi* from whence it came. It involves understanding one’s role as a *kaitiaki* (guardian). The concept *taonga* makes manifest a reciprocal and ongoing relationship between present, past and future. In the 1970s and 1980s, young urban Māori, “increasingly critical of images of themselves as ‘primitive’ rural

folk living in the past”,¹³ knew that their relationship with *ngā taonga tuku iho* (treasures from the past) was more dynamic and reciprocal than the predominantly Pākehā museums, art galleries and archives seemed to recognise.

The New Zealand Film Archive was founded in 1981 – the same year as the Springbok tour of New Zealand which caused protests – described as “nation-splitting”¹⁴ – across the country. According to his diary, Jonathan Dennis attended at least one Wellington protest on 1 May 1981.¹⁵ The protests began as an all-white Apartheid-era South African national rugby team came to tour the country and play the All Blacks, the national New Zealand team. The protests encouraged a wide and passionate debate about the role of politics in sport and Pākehā responsibilities for the colonial occupation of the country. Māori scholar and activist Ranginui Walker (tribal affiliation to Whakatohea) remembered:

In Māori politics, it was an important moment as Māori and Pākehā joined together in public protest. In the wake of the tour, an argument adopted by some – that Māori should not be reliant on Pākehā and that Pākehā had no role in Māori political campaigns – gained ground.¹⁶

The “argument adopted by some” is articulated in Merata Mita’s film of the Springbok Protests *Patu!* (1983), in which we see some Māori ask Pākehā why they are willing to stand up for the rights of Black South Africans when they had never protested the inequities of the indigenous peoples of the country in which they lived. This film used footage that Mita and others had shot, which Mita collected and edited.¹⁷ Jonathan Dennis and the New

11. Barry Barclay later encouraged the NZFA to use the concept of *mana tūturu* (“what is right” in relation to spiritual guardianship) in its agreements with Māori to ensure the spiritual aspect often removed in Pākehā and European practice remained attached to the materials in the archive (Barry Barclay, *Mana Tūturu: Māori Treasures and Intellectual Property Rights*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2005, p.96).

12. Peter Tapsell, *Ko Tawa: Māori Treasures of New Zealand*, Auckland: David Bateman, 2006, p.17; translation is Tapsell’s.

13. Conal McCarthy, *Museums and Māori: Heritage Professionals Indigenous Collections Current Practice*, Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2011, p.36.

14. Bruce Bobington in Pivac, Stark and McDonald, 2011, op. cit., p.202.

15. NZFA Personal Papers Jonathan Dennis Box 20 (uncatalogued).

16. Walker quoted in Paul Spoonley, *Mata Toa: The Life and Times of Ranginui Walker*, Auckland: Penguin, 2009, p.109.

17. Those involved included film coordinators Gaylene Preston, Gerd Pohlmann and Martyn Sanderson. Photographers were Barry Harbet, W Attewell, C Barrett, A Barry, J Bortle, A Bollinger, P Carvell, R Donaldson, M Fingel, E Frizzell, C Ghent, A Guilford, R Long, Leon Norbey, R Prosser and M Single (S Edwards and H Martin, 1997, op. cit., p.91). Many of these people were or went on to become prominent in the film industry in New Zealand and/or overseas.

Zealand Film Archive were to become *kaitiaki* (guardians) of *Patu!*. Dennis was responsible for managing distribution, income and screenings of the film and continued in that role after he left the Archive.¹⁸

Barclay remembered, "During the 1980s, a very significant contest developed within the archive, a struggle of conscience, if you like, in which there were many players, to all of whom we are greatly indebted."¹⁹ The issues raised in Mita's *Patu!*, and exemplified by Ranginui Walker's "argument developed by some", were indicative of the debates, tensions and difficulties at the NZFA as attempts were made to move towards an incorporation of Māori perspectives during the 1980s.

As Jonathan Dennis and the NZFA prepared a catalogue of 60 films with indigenous content to accompany the seminal Te Māori exhibition²⁰ to the United States, Dennis articulated the difficulty of ensuring appropriate practice which could honour the Māori perspective as well as satisfy European archiving protocols in his report to the FIAF Congress in 1988:

*With regard to the New Zealand Film Archive Māori material, most progress was achieved in the area of basic descriptive cataloguing... However the success of these initial innovations tends to suggest that this process cannot be sustained in isolation and that the inability of present cataloguing philosophy and practice to acknowledge the contribution and status of indigenous peoples ought to become the subject of much larger and more vigorous debate.*²¹

In presentations of the films, Dennis was able to follow the lead of elders such as Witarina Harris, but Harris was not an archivist and was not in a position to advise him on the appropriate cataloguing or long-term preserva-

tion of the films in the care of the NZFA. These concerns were not resolved by the time Dennis left the Archive, and, in fact, these ongoing difficulties were part of the reason he resigned.²²

Dennis was able to continue to engage with indigenous materials throughout the 1980s because Witarina Harris supported his work. The support of a Māori elder was his entrée into Māori communities. Seeing local responses to films with Witarina Harris at the *Festiv'Art Rotorua Arts Festival* in 1984 had a great impact on the Archive's direction:

*When I arrived in Rotorua Witarina had arranged for us to do a screening for some Te Arawa [the local tribe]. We did a private screening and all the old people came. It was the first time we had shown the films in that context. I took some to a private home that night, and when we showed the films at the festival, hundreds of people came. It was quite extraordinary.*²³

Dennis described the "terrific sense of excitement at being able to greet these images. It was like a whole tribe and city's home movies had been returned, were now known about and accessible (even though still only through the Archive). The occasion was deeply felt by both Māori and European alike".²⁴ Harris's knowledge and tribal-based relationships afforded Dennis many advantages and opportunities he would not otherwise have had. But, ultimately, as younger activists began to pressure cultural heritage institutions, it became clear that Harris's support was not enough. The younger generations were not content to work in a supporting capacity to Pākehā.²⁵

The Film Archive responded to challenges from Māori by inviting Annie Collins, editor of *Patu!* and anti-racism trainer with the organisation Pākehā Against Racism, to carry out workshops with the staff. After the training, the rewritten Constitution/Kaupapa of

18. NZFA Jonathan Dennis Personal Papers Box 11: distribution and correspondence regarding *Patu!* in folder labelled "Merata" (papers uncatalogued). *Patu!* has been registered as a UNESCO NZ Memory of the World <<http://www.unesco.org.nz/new-zealand-register/browse>>. With thanks to Ray Edmondson for alerting me to this fact.

19. Barry Barclay, 2005, op. cit., p.103.

20. This exhibition of Māori carvings was influential on Pākehā and Māori practice in New Zealand and has been described in various publications including Conal McCarthy's excellent book *Museums and Māori*, ibid.

21. Jonathan Dennis, NZFA Report to FIAF Congress, Paris, 1988.

22. Jonathan Dennis interview with Diane Pivac, 2000, ibid.

23. Jonathan Dennis, *The Process of Change at the New Zealand Film Archive/Nga Kaitiaki o Nga Taonga Whitiwhia*, AGMANZ Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand Journal 1989, Volume 20 Issue 1, pp.10-11.

24. Dennis, *The Process of Change at the New Zealand Film Archive...* 1989, ibid.

25. Jonathan Dennis, *Uncovering and Releasing the Images – the case of Ethnological Film*, Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1990, p.4.

the Archive was published in 1988 and was intended as the first step towards a restructured Archive with an evenly split Māori and Pākehā Board. In addition, the name of the Archive was changed from The New Zealand Film Archive to The New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua (The Guardians of the Treasured Images of Light).²⁶ The new Kaupapa incorporated indigenous rights into its infrastructure and acknowledged the rights of the materials themselves – recognising them as ngātaonga, living entities with relationships. The Kaupapa still operates at the NZFA today.²⁷

fr

Jonathan Spencer Dennis (1953-2002) fut le directeur des Archives du Film de Nouvelle-Zélande (NZFA) durant sa première décennie d'existence (1981-1990). Cinéaste passionné, Dennis était fier d'avoir connu Lillian Gish, de compter Kenneth Anger parmi ses amis et de bénéficier des conseils avisés de Len Lye et Mary Meerson. Il avait étudié à l'Université d'été de la FIAF organisée en 1979 à Berlin-Est et au BFI. Il avait aussi travaillé au NFT au cours d'un long voyage d'études en Europe et en Amérique du Nord. Pourtant dans les premières années du développement des Archives, quelque chose se produisit qui allait éloigner l'organisation de ses influences initiales. Witarina Te Miriarangi Parewahaika Harris (1906-2007), vedette du film de 1929 *The Devil's Pit*, également connu sous le titre *Under the Southern Cross* (réalisé par L. Collins pour les studios Universal) devint l'amie de Dennis et la première kaumātua (doyenne) des Archives. Elle amena Dennis à collaborer avec l'iwi du motu (les gens des campagnes) afin qu'un nouveau type d'archive, fermement ancrée dans les traditions du Pacifique Sud, voie le jour.

Durant ce processus, de fortes tensions se manifestèrent lorsque les déséquilibres de rapports de force au sein de la société trouvèrent un écho à l'intérieur des murs de l'Institution. Cette tension suscita à son tour une créativité nouvelle ainsi qu'une reconnaissance du potentiel des Archives à incorporer sa valeur spirituelle autant qu'intellectuelle et historique. Sous l'influence de Dennis et de Harris, les Archives du Film de Nouvelle-Zélande évoluèrent jusqu'à devenir Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua : les Gardiens des Précieuses Images de Lumière.

In his final FIAF report, in 1990, Dennis echoed Meerson's advice on the living nature of the Archive when he said that the Kaupapa was the first "major step toward becoming an institution that is fully bi-cultural in image and practice [and this] has affected every level of the Archive and has given a place to stand on issues confronting our operation and activities. While sometimes progress toward real structured change – at staffing and Board levels particularly – has seemed slow, the commitment has not wavered [...] This Film Archive is, we hope, a living archive and we want to keep it that way."²⁸

es

Jonathan Spencer Dennis (1953-2002) fue el director del NZFA durante su primera década (1981-1990). Cineasta apasionado, Dennis se enorgullece de haber conocido a Lillian Gish, ser amigo de Kenneth Anger y seguir los consejos de Len Lye y Mary Meerson. Estudió en la FIAF Summer School de Berlín Este del año 1979 y en el BFI. Trabajó también en el NFT durante un estudio extensivo entre Europa y Norteamérica. Sin embargo, en los primeros años de desarrollo del archivo, un acontecimiento lo alejó de sus influencias iniciales. En efecto, Dennis se hizo amigo de Witarina Te Miriarangi Parewahaika Harris (1906-2007), estrella de la película *The Devil's Pit* alias *Under the Southern Cross* (Dir. L. Collins, Universal Studios, 1929), que se convirtió luego en la primera "kaumātua" (notable) del archivo. Guió a Dennis para que se comprometiera con los "iwi del motu" (la gente de la tierra) y que ese nuevo tipo de archivo se inscribiera en las tradiciones del Pacífico Sur.

A lo largo del camino, hubieron muchas tensiones dentro de la institución que reflejaron los desequilibrios de poder de la sociedad neozelandesa. Esas tensiones dieron lugar a una nueva creatividad, un reconocimiento del potencial del archivo que incorporaba el valor tanto espiritual como intelectual de la sociedad. Bajo la influencia de Dennis y Harris, el New Zealand Film Archive empezó a evolucionar hacia el Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua: Los guardianes de los tesoros de las imágenes iluminadas.

26. Jonathan Dennis, NZFA report to FIAF Congress, 1987.

27. The Kaupapa is accessible on the NZFA website, <www.filmarchive.org.nz>

28. Jonathan Dennis, NZFA report to FIAF Congress, 1990.



IN THIS ISSUE

OPEN FORUM Attack of the Little Green Mould
| Digital Preservation for Film Archives and the
OAIS • **HISTORY** *Regard neuf sur Olympia 52* | The
Adventures of Jonathan Dennis • **ARCHIVES AT
WORK** World War I Goes Online: EFG1914 | Restoring
The Battle of the Somme and *The Battle of the
Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks* | America's
World War I Collections | The Great War Down Under
| The Apparatus Collections of the Cinémathèque
française and the CNC | Pruning Movies for
Education in the 1940s and 1950s: the Teaching Film
Custodians | Georgian Film Can Wait [?] | The Film
Treasures of the Koldo Collection • **BOOKS & DVDs**