

Talking Pictures Frances Calvert

## CRACKS IN THE MASK

1997, Germany/Australia/Switzerland, 57 mins, 35mm & video, DVD  
English & Kala lagaw ya with English subtitles; German subtitles; French subtitles

'Back then, the white man came, saw ... and collected. 100 years on, two Torres Strait Islanders pay a visit to some museums... and illuminate the cracks in their own history'.

CRACKS IN THE MASK – a moving documentary about the fate of Torres Strait art and artefacts in European museums.

Ideal for use in secondary and tertiary institutions for cultural studies, museum studies, anthropology, art, indigenous peoples, globalisation, colonial history but also of interest to a wide general audience.

Produced by Talking Pictures Frances Calvert  
in association with

SBS Independent, Australia  
SF DRS, Switzerland  
WDR Cologne, Germany

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Ausschuß für Entwicklungsbezogene Bildung und Publizistik; The European Commission 16:9  
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Development and Cooperation; MAP-TV; MEDIA Project for the Creative Documentar ;  
Queensland Government through Film Queensland; Queensland Department of Families, Youth  
and Community Care

## CREDITS

Directed by  
Frances Calvert

Produced by  
Lindsey Merrison & Frances Calvert

Diary written and narrated by  
Ephraim Bani

Camera  
Lars Barthel

Sound  
Tom d'Angremond (Australia)  
Karen Boswall (Europe)

Editor  
Stewart Young

Music  
Traditional Music of the Torres Strait Islanders  
John Cage, Brett Dean & Simon Hunt,  
Edgar Varèse, Thom Willems,  
Sarah Hopkins, Ros Bandt,  
The Mills Sisters

Archive material  
Photographs courtesy of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

'Visit by Qld Minister Hon J. Foxton' 1899  
'Pearl of the South Seas', Frank Hurley 1926  
National Film & Sound Archive, Canberra

Alfred C. Haddon's film 1898  
courtesy of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

Original wax cylinder recordings 1898 made by Charles S. Myers  
deposited at the British Library National Sound Archive

Publication (in English)  
'Moving Images, Making Meanings' by Frances Calvert and Emily Purser, in *Derrière les images*, GHK, éd. 1998 Neuchâtel (Suisse) Musée d'ethnographie

## PRESS

'An amazing hidden world of great Australian art'  
Lynden Barber, THE AUSTRALIAN

'A fascinating, challenging documentary.'  
Barbara Creed, THE AGE, Melbourne

'A film of major importance. It shows us a little-known corner of ethnic art through the eyes of its creators. And it demonstrates the varying attitudes of museum curators to the superb examples of Torres Strait art in their keeping'.  
David Moore, Former Curator of Anthropology, The Australian Museum

'Reveals a story about museums and about objects – about what museums do and about their rationale for continuing to hold such objects, and about the meaning of these objects for Torres Strait Islanders today... A moving, often poignant representation of issues surrounding the return of such collections to the descendants of their original owners. The discussions about the relationship between objects, culture, memory, history, identity, and cultural reclamation all converge to provoke reflection and thought about these issues.'  
Professor Martin Nakata, University of South Australia, for *The Contemporary Pacific*.

'The lighting reminds us of paintings'  
Peter Malone, President, International Catholic Organisation for Cinema and Audiovisual

'Fills in some of the gaps in Torres Strait Island history, and, at the same time, exposes the cracks in the current collection policies of some of Europe's museums. Perhaps the world needs more individuals like Ephraim Bani who are prepared to act before it's too late.'

Sue Rickard, SBS Aerial Magazine 1997

'A wonderful film'

Bernard Smith, Emeritus Professor of Contemporary Art, Australia

'A treasure trove of superbly photographed Torres Strait pieces. But these, impressive as they may be, are incidental. The lasting impression is one of separation and loss of a people and its past...A film which questions the very idea of a museum and shows how troubled many museum curators are about their role today.'

David Said, Oceanic Art Society Newsletter, Sydney, 1997

## AWARDS

Audience Prize for Best Film: III. Ethnofilm Fest Berlin 1997

Best Film (ex aequo) III. Ethnofilmfest, Berlin 1997

Estonian National Museum Prize for Best Film, Pärnu, Estonia 1998

Best Documentary: Mediawave Győr, Hungary 1999

First prize: XV. Fernsehworkshop Entwicklungspolitik, Cologne, Germany 1999

## FESTIVALS

Sydney Olympics Festival of the Dreaming, Sydney 1997

Freiburger Film Forum, Freiburg, Germany 1997

Amsterdam Beeld voor Beeld 1998

Berlin Down Under Festival 1998

Bilan du film ethnographique, Musée de l'Homme, Paris 1998

Brisbane International Film Festival Australia 1998

Cairns Travelling Film Festival Australia 1998

Chicago Windy City Festival (Director's Choice) 1998

Brussels Human Rights Festival 1998

Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival, New York 1998

Sights of the Turn of the Century, Mexico City 1998

Montreal Films sur l'art, Canada 1998

Munich Documentary Festival 1998

Sydney International Film Festival, Australia 1998

Melbourne International Film Festival 1998

Taiwan International Documentary Festival 1998

Pärnu Ethnographic Film festival, Estonia 1998 (National Museum's Prize)

XV. Fernsehworkshop Entwicklungspolitik, Cologne. Germany 1999 (First Prize)

Mediawave, Győr, Hungary 1999 (Best Documentary)

Ethnologisches Filmfest Munich 2003

Mediawave 'Best of 15 Years', 2005

## SPECIAL SCREENINGS

Goethe Institut-sponsored tour of Australian film festivals (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane) followed by tour to Travelling Film Festival (Cairns) and University of Rockhampton screening 1997

Community screenings in Torres Strait on Thursday Island and Mabuiag Island, 1997

Podium Discussion with museum curators, Haus der Kulturen der Welt Berlin 1998

Long Night of the Museums Arsenal Kino Berlin 1999

'Unlocking Museums' Darwin Australia 1997

AGENDA 21 Filmtage Dresden and Leipzig 1999

Commissioned screening and discussion: Centre for Cross Cultural Studies & Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra 1998

'Aborigines and Science' Screenings, Musée de l'Homme, Paris October 24, 2001

Australische Filmtage in Görlitz, Germany 2001

Joint screening with Australia Centre, Potsdam and University of Potsdam, Golm. Series: 'Australia Forum' 1999

Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne, 2001: screening and discussion with invited audience of museum curators and professionals.

Ethnologisches Museum Berlin: screening & discussion for the Friends of the Museum, December 3, 2001

Munich Ethnographic Film festival, Ethnographic Museum Munich, 2003

Musée d'ethnographie Neuchâtel Switzerland: screening with discussion to Friends of the Museum and Curators 2003

Free University Berlin, Department of Cultural Studies : Series: 'Whose Australia?' screening with discussion 2003

Deutsches Filmmuseum, Frankfurt, 2005

Thursday Island, Torres Strait, Gab Titui Cultural Centre 2005

Griffith University, Centre for Centre for Public Culture and Ideas 2005