

Talking Pictures Frances Calvert

## TALKING BROKEN

A portrait of the Torres Strait Islanders

1990, Germany/UK, 76 mins, 16mm & video/DVD

English & Kala lagaw ya with English subtitles; German subtitles

'Broken' is the creole spoken by the Torres Strait Islanders in far north Australia. Although they appear to keep up with 'the system', the hidden language of the authorities will always remain a mystery. With humour and intelligence, various Islanders talk openly about subjects as wide-ranging as independence, culture, tourism, adoption, sex and sorcery. Yet it becomes clear that not all Islanders are aware of their vulnerability in the face of outside forces.

Produced in association with Channel Four Television

Made with financial assistance from Kuratorium junger deutscher Film, Berliner Filmförderung, Evangelisches Missionswerk Hamburg, Stiftung Umverteilen Berlin/Projektgruppe Pazifik e.V.

### TELEVISION SCREENINGS

Channel Four Television, 1991

ABC Television Australia, 1991 & 1992

ARTE/ORB/SWF Germany 1994

### CREDITS

Directed by  
Frances Calvert

Produced by  
Lindsey Merrison & Frances Calvert

featuring  
the Torres Strait Islanders

Camera  
Peter van den Reek

Sound  
Pat Fiske

Editor  
Stewart Young

Music  
Original music of the Torres Strait Islanders  
Karl-Heinz Stockhausen

## PRESS

'...a fine work...The people in the film are extraordinarily articulate and intelligent.'  
Malcolm Arth, Margaret Mead Film Festival

'...an outstanding film which rises above being only anthropological and becomes a comment not only on the lives of the Islanders but on what civilisation means.'  
Ken Wlaschin, AFI Los Angeles Film Festival

'...such films...enlarge the world for the viewer and overturn any misconceptions'  
Declan Hassett, The Cork Examiner, Ireland

'How to find a taste of paradise...'  
John Tidmarsh, 'Outlook', BBC World Service

'This is not, however, a typical 'protest' documentary. Calvert's film is clearly a labour of love, providing an open and startling portrait of the Torres Strait Islanders from various angles....Frances Calvert's portrait of their lifestyle and their beliefs is a rich one (condom ads, a feast of wry observations and the appearance of one Chairman Mau are some).'  
Norman Miller Channel Four

'An island people stirs in the face of paternalism'  
The Dominion, New Zealand

## FESTIVALS

Augsburg/ Tage des Unabhängigen Films, Germany (premiere 1990)  
Bilan du film ethnographique, Musée de l'homme, Paris  
Festival International de Créteil (Festival de Femmes)  
Los Angeles International Film Festival  
Internationales Dokumentarfilmfestival, Munich, Germany  
Filmforum: Ethnologie und Dritte Welt, Freiburg, Germany  
Melbourne International Film Festival, Australia  
Sydney International Film Festival, Australia  
Wellington and Auckland Film Festivals, New Zealand  
Margaret Mead Film Festival, New York (opening film)  
Cork Film Festival, Ireland  
Internationales Dokfest Leipzig, Germany  
Festival dei Popoli, Florence, Italy