PAINTINGS BY THE RED WAVE COLLECTIVE

Lingikoni Vaka’uta (Tonga)  Josaia McNamara (Fiji)  William Bakalevu (Fiji)  Mason Lee (Fiji)  Fred Butafa (Solomon Islands)  Ledua Peni (Fiji)

10th May to 24th June 2006

October Gallery, 24 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3AL
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In the first exhibition of its kind in Europe, the October Gallery showcases exciting new work from the very forefront of the Oceania arts scene. In a year that sees focus turning increasingly towards the Pacific, with several major institutions planning historical surveys of the area’s traditions, the October Gallery looks to the future shape of Oceania art. Exploring the work of six artists from the Red Wave Collective, the exhibition provides an unprecedented preview of a thriving experimental arts movement.

The ‘Red Wave Collective’ is the most prominent group of artists to have emerged from the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji. Founded in 1997 by Epeli Hau’ofa, the Oceania Centre set out to provide an autonomous space in which artists and practitioners could evolve and explore new methods of creativity that both drew knowingly from local traditions and shaped fresh boundaries and visions. Since the beginning, the Centre has become a magnet for creativity in the area, bringing together artists from across the widely diverse Oceania region, and leading to a flourishing contemporary visual and performing arts movement firmly rooted in both historical visual traditions and the changing international environment.

Lingikoni Vaka’uta
*The First Human Beings of Tonga*

oil on canvas, 2006, 188 x 199 cm, £4500
Epeli Hau’ofa explains

“We are not interested in imitating (western art) and asking our artists to perform dances for tourists. It is time to create things for ourselves, to create established standards of excellence which match those of our ancestors… The development of new art forms that are truly Oceania, transcendent of our national and cultural diversity, is very important in that it allows our creative minds to draw on far larger pools of cultural traits than those of our individual national lagoons. It makes us less insular without being buried in the amorphousness of the global cultural melting pot.” (Epeli Hau’ofa, James Harvey Gallery, Sydney, September 2000)
Featured artists include:

**William Bakalevu**, Fiji; Bakalevu comes from Tailevu Central, on the main Island of Viti Levu. A self-taught artist, he began by painting murals inside people’s houses. Within a year of beginning to work with canvas, he had been invited to join the Centre for Oceania Arts and Culture. Many of his works deal with social disquiet, bearing titles such as “Kudrukudru” or ‘rumbling stomach’ in Fijian, signifying discontent. Echoing Hau’ofa’s concern to promote a pan-Oceania community, Bakalevu’s political attention spans beyond the crisis in Fiji to injustices across the region. “As an indigenous Fijian” he says, ”I believe this is more than necessary, it is a way of life, being in contact and living in harmony with people, whatever race or colour”.

In more recent years he has produced a series of paintings on the ancient gods of Fiji, and his most recent works focus on the myths and legends of his country.

**Frederick Butafa**, Solomon Islands, is from Malaita, although he was born in the capital, Honiara, on Guadalcanal island. He studied law at the university of the South Pacific’s Laucala Campus in Fiji, and at the University’s School of Law in Vanuatu. While in Fiji, he entered the Oceania Centre’s visual art programme as its first trainee artist. Upon graduation, Fred went to live in Perth, Western Australia, where he now practices law. He has maintained his membership of the Red Wave Collective, and he has spent short periods at the Oceania Centre.

**Lingikoni Vaka’uta**, Tonga; Lingikoni Vaka’uta was born in Tonga but has lived in Fiji for many years. He has been a resident artist at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture since it was established in 1997. His works are often visual narratives of his cross-cultural life experience and journey from Tonga to Fiji, and combine a contemporary vision with broadly Oceania references, from Solomon Island Kapkap design to Polynesian motifs and Oceania rock drawing. He says of his work, “the inspiration to create my art comes from my own cultural background, like legends, metaphors, proverbs and from everyday experiences.”
Josaia McNamara, Fiji; Josaia’s artistic practice has taken him from designing CD covers for Pacific singers to showcasing work at the Tjibao Culture Centre in New Caledonia in 2002 as part of the Noumea Biennale. In 2005 his works were exhibited at the Pacific Festival of the Arts in Belau. His distinctive style reflects his deep ascetic spirituality. McNamara is of Fijian/ New Zealand descent, and is 32 years old. He lives both in Suva and in a village in the interior of Viti Levu.

Ledua Peni, Fiji; Ledau is a full time artist at the Oceania Centre, and has taken courses at the School of Art and Design, Fiji Institute of Technology. He is also a member of the Oceania Dance Theatre. This exhibition is his fourteenth with the Red Wave Collective. He finds a lot of inspiration within his cultural background and the present Fijian society.

“My works are based on the stories or legends I grew up with in the village. However, since my works are contemporary, I also draw ideas from everyday life here in Fiji. My aim is to shape ideas and creative concepts in my search for identity. My art comes from my heart”.

Mason Lee, Fijian/ Chinese; Mason, an artist of Fijian and Chinese descent, has been based at the Oceania Centre for six years, working with oil and acrylic on canvas, and ink on paper. Mason draws on Fijian myths and legends in his work, as well as his own personal histories. He feels that while he owes his skill in painting to his Chinese heritage, his Fijian background has allowed him to put into art, legends and stories of the past, orally transmitted through generations.
William Bakalevu
*The Legend of Daucina*
2006, oil on canvas
201 x 177 cm, £6500
William Bakalevu
The Legend of Tokairahe
2004, 80 x 73 cm
oil on canvas, £950

William Bakalevu
Buitako i Valu
(The Thief of War)
99 x 79 cm
oil on canvas
£1350

William Bakalevu
Legend of Takei and the Moon
(Detail)
2005, oil on canvas
65 x 85 cm, £1350

William Bakalevu
The Legend of Dakuwaqa,
the Shark God, 2004
101 x 84 cm
oil on canvas, £1500
William Bakalevu
*The Legend of Mount Uluiqalau*
2005, oil on canvas
183 x 198 cm, NFS
William Bakalevu
*The Legend of The Potters of Mala*
2003, oil on canvas
80 x 80 cm, £1200
Lingikoni Vaka'uta
*Legend of Maui Slowing the Sun*
2006, oil on canvas
172 x 179 cm, £5000
Lingikoni Vaka’uta

*The Way*

2006, oil on canvas
167 x 182 cm, £4500
Josaia McNamara
*Trinity*, 2001-6, oil on canvas
177 x 186 cm, £6000

Josaia McNamara
*The World of Enlightenment*
2006, oil on canvas
177 x 172 cm, £4500

Josaia McNamara
*The Age of The Cardinal Cross*
2006, mix media, 93.5 x 117 cm
£1000
Josaia McNamara
*Man and Woman in Patriarchal Society*,
2006, 91 x 64 cm
oil on canvas, £750
Josaia McNamara

*The Sacred Foundation*

2006, 169 x 199 cm

oil on canvas, £4500
Mason Lee
*Lord of the Saltwater Fishes*
2006, oil on canvas
167 x 182 cm, £4500

Mason Lee
*The Clan*
2006, oil on canvas
172 x 183 cm, £4500

Mason Lee
*The Legend of the Phantom Canoe*
2006, oil on canvas
180 x 169 cm, £5000
Fred Butafa  
*Sau Hanga*  
94 x 168 cm, 2006  
Oil on Canvas, £1500

Frederick Butafa  
*Turtle Dream*  
1997, ink on paper,  
76 x 57 cm, NFS

Frederick Butafa  
*Tune of the Lizard*  
1997, ink on paper  
76 x 57 cm, NFS
William Henry Rafton Bakalevu
Date of birth: 23rd August, 1961
Nationality: Fiji

Exhibitions:
Red Wave Group Exhibitions at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture at the University of the South Pacific, 1999-2005.
Solo Exhibition, Theme – VU- gods of Fiji, Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific, 2001.
Solo Exhibition, Theme – Vuku – In the name of, Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture at the University of the South Pacific, 2002.
National Art Exhibition, Ratu Iloilovatu Gallery, School of Arts Culture and Design Campus, Fiji Institute of Technology, Suva, Fiji, 2004 and 2005.

Achievements:
Winner of the Indigenous Art Award at the National Exhibition in 2004, Ratu Iloilovatu Gallery School of Arts, Culture and Design Campus, Institute of Technology, Suva, Fiji.
Winner of the High Commendation Award at the National Art Exhibition in 2004, Ratu Iloilovatu Gallery- School of Arts, Culture and Design Campus, Institute of Technology, Suva, Fiji.
Winner of the High Commendation award at the National Art Exhibition in 2005, Ratu Iloilovatu Gallery, School of Arts, Culture and Design Campus, Fiji Institute of Technology, Suva, Fiji.
Winner of the High Commendation award at the National Art Exhibition in 2005, Ratu Iloilovatu Gallery, School of Arts, Culture and Design Campus, Fiji Institute of Technology, Suva, Fiji.
Illustrations of international journals and Magazine covers.
Poet- Published Poem VUKU (made into a SONG) (refer to Oceania Centre for Art and Culture, University Of the South Pacific).

**Commissions and Collections:**
Westpac Banking Corporation, Head Office, Queensland, Australia.
Westpac Banking Corporation Board Room Suva, Fiji.
Carpenters Finance Head Office, Suva, Fiji.
Tebbut Marketing Research (regional), Suva, Fiji.
Managing Director Caz Tebutt.
2004 South Pacific Festival of Arts.
Lingikoni Emelio Vaka’uta
Date of Birth: 02/07/1973
Nationality: Tonga

Exhibitions:
Group Exhibition, Oceania Centre, University of the South Pacific, 2005.
Red Wave Group Exhibition at Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture,
Invited Artist for the Biennial De Noumea Art Exhibition, Tjibaou
Red Wave Group Exhibition at James Harvey Gallery, Sydney, Australia,
2000.
Solo Exhibition at Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the
South Pacific, Fiji, 1999.
Workshop Exhibition at Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University

Education and Experience:
Primary and High School in Tonga.
BA in Economics and Computer Information System, University of the
South Pacific, Fiji.
Visiting artist-in-residence at Manukau School of Visual Arts, Auckland,
Artist-in-residence at Oceania Centre; 2003, 2005 and 2006.

Commissions and Collections:
University of the South Pacific.
Ratu Joni Madriwiwi, Vice President of Fiji.
Yasawa Island Resort.
Australian High Commission Staff, Fiji.
Commonwealth Foundation for South Africa.
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Fiji.
Dere Bay Resort, Koro Is, Fiji.
Epeli Hau’ofa, Director of Oceania Centre.

Frederick Butafa
Date of Birth: 7, January, 1975
Nationality: Solomon Islands

Exhibitions
First Red Wave exhibition Oceania Centre for Art and Culture, 1997.
Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture Emalus Campus, Port Vila, Vanuatu.
Solomon Islands National Art Gallery (Raindrops Exhibition), 1998.
Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, Emalus Campus, Vanuatu, 1999.
Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, 2003.

Artist in Resident at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific, Fiji:

2002 Oct – November.
2003 Feb – March.
Mason Lee
Date of Birth: 17 October, 1978
Nationality: Fiji

Exhibitions
Group Exhibition, Oceania Centre, University of the South Pacific, 2005.
Participated in the Alliance Francaise exhibition, 2005.
Red Wave Group Exhibition, Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands, 2001 - 2004. (10 exhibitions)
Participated with the Red Wave Group Exhibition in James Harvey Gallery, Sydney, Australia, 2000.
Group Exhibition, Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands, 2000.
Launch of Monumental Pieces, Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands, 2003.

Education
Tertiary Level, Oceania Centre for Arts & Culture, USP, Suva, 2000 – Present.
Josaia Waqabaca Mc Namara
Date of Birth: 16/02/1974
Nationality: Fiji

Exhibitions:
Banyan Tree round the world traveling art exhibition, 2003-2006.
Fiji Arts Club, Group Exhibition, 2003.
Solo Exhibition, Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, 2001, 2002.
Group Exhibition, Bradman Hall, Australian High Commission, 1998.

Education and Experience:
St Thomas Primary and Secondary School, Lautoka, Fiji.
Based at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, 2000-2004, 2006.

Published Works:
The Vision, SPAN No.52, April 2002.
University of the South Pacific Media Production, 2001.
University of the South Pacific Internet Website, 2001-2006.

Conducted Workshops:
Talks to young artist at the Oceania Centre, 2004.
Commissions and Collections:
University of the South Pacific.
National Fiji Museum.
Red Cross Society.
Catholic Missionary Society.
Professor Epeli Hau’ofa.

Ledua Peni
Nationality: Fiji

Exhibitions
Participated in fourteen exhibitions of Red Wave Collective art group at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, University of the South Pacific, 2000-2006.

Education and Experience:

Awards:
1st Prize For Public Award, 2004.
2nd Prize For Indigenous Award, 2004.

Published works:
Articles in Fiji Times, 2002.
USP Beat, Published by The University of the South Pacific, 2003.

Education:
Oceania Centre, USP, 2001 – Present.