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Performing Indigenous Culture on Stage and Screen

A Harmony of Frenzy

Marianne Schultz

Coming March 2016

'*Performing Indigenous Culture* is a highly original work where the author's unique background in performance is brought together with historical research. Another distinction of the book is Schultz's focus: New Zealand and New Zealand indigenous and settler performers. The thematic concerns that run through the settler/indigenous world across the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries delve into a realm in which contemporary notions of race, nation, and gender were rendered into popular form and found easy recognition, giving them both power and danger. This book offers important and accessible ways to bring sometimes complex questions to the fore – useful in extending knowledge in ways that enable global comparisons.'

– Charlotte Macdonald, Professor of History, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

'Schultz presents an original, rigorous, yet engaging study of how shifting understandings of New Zealand identities have been embedded, embodied and performed. Drawing on extensive archival research across three continents, her investigations underline the continuing need for historical performance research into representations of indigenous cultures and their dissemination. Nuanced and penetrating in its analyses, the book is an important contribution to contemporary understanding and will undoubtedly stimulate fresh evaluations of race, gender and performance in global perspective.'

– Theresa Jill Buckland, Professor of Dance History and Ethnography, University of Roehampton, London, UK

'What a treat to read this compelling performance history of popular entertainment. Schultz has teased out of the archives many details of a half-century of popular culture depicting Māori performance—including the troublesome stereotyping and commodification in the acts, as well as the agency and opportunities they afforded Māori performers. In focusing on the layered agendas and interwoven collaborations of Māori and Pākehā in producing these shows and films, the book offers a complex view of the historical development of a 'culturally hybrid' New Zealand.'

– Jacqueline Shea Murphy, Associate Professor of Cultural Studies and Dance Theory, University of California, Riverside, USA

About the book

Examining corporeal expressions of indigeness from an historical perspective, this book highlights the development of cultural hybridity in New Zealand via the popular performing arts, contributing new understandings of racial, ethnic, and gender identities through performance. The author offers an insightful and welcome examination of New Zealand performing arts via case studies of drama, music, and dance, performed both domestically and internationally. As these examples show, notions of modern New Zealand were shaped and understood in the creation and reception of popular culture. Highlighting embodied indigenous cultures of the past provides a new interpretation of the development of New Zealand's cultural history and adds an unexplored dimension in understanding the relationships between Māori (indigenous New Zealander) and Pākehā (non-Māori) throughout the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries.

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