

NGA KAIKORERO



In the media and the hotels, even in Parliament and the courts, one can occasionally hear Maori spoken, and more frequently hear people arguing about whether it should be spoken at all.

No such issue arises on the marae, though increasingly English is tolerated. Here Maori is the language, honed and polished until it has become a unique art form. The marae is the place to go to hear whaikorero — and to watch it.

These photographs, taken by Ken George, capture something of that extra dimension to Maori oratory — the visual dimension where gestures, postures, a flourish of the tokotoko, a pause or a pukana can each mean as much as the words themselves.

