

lips of our own people in everyday life. To me the whaikorero is a dramatic art-form. People who speak on the marae are performers who use dramatic gestures to emphasise their whaikorero.

### Not alien

"Maori drama on the stage or screen is an extension of this. For those who say it's an alien artform, anything is alien the first time. Harry Dansey showed the strength of words some years ago with his stories and it's up to us to carry on."

Te Ohaki a Nihe can be viewed on the surface as a touching little slice of Maoridom fairly palatable to a television audience, albeit in the Maori tongue. But the barbs lie beneath this surface both for Maori and pakeha alike.

Nihe's son, Hiko, in the course of picking best bets for the weekend's racing, traces the genealogy of the winner of the Auckland Cup to justify his choice. However he's a bit sketchy on his own whakapapa.

Nihe's scolds him thus. "Kua riro koe i te mana onga hoiho e Hiko. He maha koutou kua noho taurekareka. Mohio ke atu koutou ki nga tatai hoiho; ki o koutou ake nei whakapa. Te nuinga inaianei, heoi ano i mohio ki o ratau karani mama, Karani papa, mutu atu ano i reira. Inga wa o mua, e hara koe i te tangata kia whakaheke mai ra ano koe ia koe mai inga waka i hoea mai ra i Hawaiki. Titiro kia a koe e Hiko, ahakoa pehea taku ako atu ia koe; ka wareware tonu koe ku o tupuna, ka whai tonu koe i o hoiho ... purari paka."



Ray Waru (left) and Robert Pouwhare edit film for Koha.

### Funny way

Later on in the play the young couple throw off at the old man munching away at his dog biscuits without realising his false teeth are not in. Nihe's mokopuna defend the old man but Nihe tells them it's just the way of showing affection.

"Pai ana e moko, our people, they have that funny way of showing the love. When they cheek you, they love you. When they say you purari paka, that means kei te pai koe.

The ways of showing the love probably has a lot to do with the varied career and impetus behind the playwright.

Selwyn has served a long media apprenticeship in broadcasting which is now paying off with contract work on Television's Koha programme. But in between times he's also gained a reputation as a visual artist using canvas, wood and bronze. Along with other talented people in the Maori Artist and Writers Society, he's been at the forefront of promoting Maori culture through the artists eye.

"Whatever is creative in a person overflows into different activities. For me the story of Te Ohaki a Nihe takes place everyday, I have just added a writers dimension. It's a play for and about the Maori and they will recognise themselves within the play, but this time not as an outsider sees them."

## Te Reo

# Te Ataarangi needs nurturing

Selwyn Muru



Coloured sticks and conversation are the main ingredients of an effective new method of learning Maori which is spreading rapidly through New Zealand.

Hundreds of fluent Maori speakers — unpaid but willing — are setting up classes in homes, factories, marae, even freezing work stock pens.

But the numbers of prospective students are growing even faster and tutors are urgently needed.

The Te Ataarangi method is based on an overseas learning technique called "The Silent Way" — a reference to the tutors role as listener rather than talker.

It was adapted for New Zealand conditions by two writers and fluent Maori speakers Katerina Mataira and Ngoi Pewhairangi.

Katerina Mataira recognised the possibilities of "The Silent Way" when she came across Peace Corps tutors using it to teach language in Fiji.

Resources needed were few — the most vital being a pool of fluent Maori speakers.

Other teaching aids like the coloured rods could be acquired relatively cheaply.

### Sound base

She liked the method's "sound philosophical base" — that teaching should be subordinate to learning.

"It completely reverses the traditional teaching process," she said.

When she returned to New Zealand she began exploring the possibilities of using the method for teaching Maori.

After initial experimentation a scientifically controlled study was set up using intermediate school children.

When this produced encouraging results Katerina got together with another fluent Maori speaker and writer, Ngoi Pewhairangi, and they began setting up training programmes for tutors.

These were very different from traditional teacher training programmes with kaumatua, culture groups and other organisations playing a big part.