

The logo features the word 'MĀORILAND' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a red, curved banner with white scrollwork at its ends. Below the banner, the words 'FILM' and 'FESTIVAL' are stacked in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

MĀORILAND FILM FESTIVAL

NATIVE PEOPLES - GLOBAL FILMS

A selection of new short films by indigenous filmmakers.
Becroft Gallery – Sunday July 27 at 7pm



Mahika Kai
Directed by
Kieran Ampetyane
Satour

0:09:45

Against the astonishing terrain of Wanaka — embracing wild vast lakes, glaciers and mountains and dotted with widely trodden resorts — the film follows a family of Kai Tahu cultural conservators and knowledge-holders on their mission to rehabilitate a degenerating landscape by regenerating their traditional cultural practices of mahika kai (food gathering places).

In a story of active tautiakitaka (guardianship), Paulette Tamati Elliffe, Komene Cassidy, and their tamariki. Tumai Cassidy draws on the wisdom of their ancestors to restore both traditional Maori food sources like tuna (eel) or the Weka (bird) and the language intrinsic to these practices. In this journey, they overcome the destructive rupture of nature from culture, past from present, and language from the landscape that has accelerated the parallel disconnection from and decline of their whenua (land). These regenerative practices are extensions of a deep connection to and understanding of place. In caring for Country, we strengthen both the landscapes and ourselves: healthy water systems, nutrient-rich soil, thriving animals and plants all contribute to the health and well-being of our communities — creating a resilient, thriving future for all.



Papa's Chair
Directed by
Briar Pomana

0:07:35

A grieving family finds solace and strength in the enduring presence of Papa and his cherished chair, a symbol of love, legacy, and resilience.



Re-imagining Our
Futures: birthing
Directed by
Kimberley Benjamin

0:12:00

For many First Nations young people, re-imagining the future means returning to the past. For Nyikina and Jabirr Jabirr woman Kalinda (Gal) Palmer, this is her dream. As a young mother, Gal draws strength from her ancestors. Her late Poppy was born under a tree on Jabirr Jabirr Country, and inspired by the cultural significance of birthing on Country, Gal hopes to one day do the same. To birth on Country as an Aboriginal person is to feel the physical and spiritual connection to Country from the first breath—a profound act of reclaiming birth sovereignty. For over 80,000 years, First Nations women have birthed on Country, but while it is not illegal today, western medical systems often undermine the agency of mothers to practice this ancestral tradition. Having experienced the shortcomings of these systems herself, Gal feels a strong responsibility to learn more from her Elders. On the banks of the Martuwarra River, the heart of Nyikina Country, Gal sits with her Aunty Annie, a traditional healer and Elder, she shares her story of being born on Country and explains the many ways in which Country nurtures and provides for mothers and babies. Feeling strength from her Elders and Country, Gal confronts the western medical system and meets her midwife Georgia, who helped deliver her son Jalmarra at Derby Hospital. It is here between the clinical white walls of the birthing suite, Gal shares with Georgia some of her mistrusts with the system and her hopes to one day birth on Country. Through a stylised visual representation, we enter Gal's re-imagined future – we hear her speak and see her dream. We learn that through the action of re-imagining, new futures are created. Surrounded by her family with her son Jalmarra, her sisters and her mum, Gal takes a step toward her future by burying Jalmarra's placenta under a big, beautiful larrkardiy (boab) tree. Grounding their collective futures in Country.



Tuia Ngā Here
Directed by
Heriata Erana Rurehe
and
Kura Kakerangi
Turuwhenua

0:11:25

16-year-old Hiwa returns to her rural home from boarding school to discover her grandfather is terminally ill and unable to continue his life work of land conservation.

Coming to terms with the shifting dynamic in her family Hiwa notes that younger brother Potiki has inherited their grandfather's affinity for the environment.

When Potiki goes missing while in search of a cure for their grandfather, they both realize their role as the next generation of guardians for the land and their family.



Kūi

Directed by
Kahu Kaiha

0:11:16

Kūi is the protector. At 12 years old she's learned to walk a fine line to protect her three younger brothers from the harsh reality of their absent mother and struggling father, and her father from himself. As all their schoolmates are whisked home from the school gate to warm food and nurturing, Kūi is forced to pretend their father is in a car nearby to ensure the school is unaware of the lack of parenting. Hungry, and unable to even catch a bus, she guides them on the long journey home on foot. As they near home, Kūi recognises their father's car in an unfamiliar driveway. With a mixture of dread and hope she investigates. To Kūi's horror, Mera reveals his undying love for their mother as he jumps off from the roof of the garage... and comedically, lands on the trampoline below. The soft landing does little to jar Mera into sobriety, and he drives them home, weaving and nodding behind the wheel, while Kūi literally steers them to safety. The ache in Mera's heart is his children, whose picture he carries in his pocket, and after feeding her brothers their leftover pasta, she comforts her emotional father. Kūi is left, holding her mother's shoes symbolising acceptance of her circumstances and determination to rise above them.



30 Mars Street
Directed by
Bai Buliruarua

0:08:00

After a decade of her uncle serving as the guardian of their family home, a young girl faces a life-changing decision: to step into his role as protector of 30 Mars Street or to break free and leave her family's past behind.



Ahkuin
Directed by
Radio-Jusunná

0:20:03

A transcendent, playful documentary following three generations of a Sámi family united across time via joik - a distinct Sámi oral tradition of song, storytelling and reciprocity.

With the singular Sámi oral storytelling tradition of joik at its center, ÁHKUIN is a visual and musical call-and-response between a grandmother and her descendants. Archival interviews and the joik of Maarit-áhku (dir. Sunná Máret Nousuniemi's grandmother) unspool as a connective thread across time, inviting the viewer through a portal into this corner of Sápmi. Here, the rhythms of time are set by the daily tasks that assured the survival of those who came before; seemingly mundane chores — carrying water from the river, setting up the sauna, boiling reindeer bone marrow — offer up gifts of memory, music, and Indigenous knowledge.

As in Indigenous communities the world over, colonization has profoundly shaped recent Sámi history through stories of loss. Drawing aesthetic inspiration from sources as diverse as duodji (Sámi handicrafts and land-based knowledge systems), the work of David Lynch, Pauliina Peodoroff's Matriarkaatti (Matriarchy), and the environmentally focused, community-based art of Niillas Holmberg, Jenni Laiti and Outi Pieski, ÁHKUIN presents a melancholy yet playful Sámi story with lessons for a new era defined by giving and receiving.



First Horse
Directed by
Awanui Simich Pene

0:11:05

Aotearoa, 1826. A dying man makes his way home through sand dunes on horseback. Meanwhile, a young Mōri girl weaves a toy waka (boat) while reciting a chant in the ancient traditions of her tribe. She ventures off through the forest to launch her waka in a quick-running stream. Led astray in her pursuit of the waka, the girl finds herself at the foot of a giant sand dune, the boundary of a great burial ground. A flock of birds scatter from the treetops, alerting her to approaching danger, and she takes cover. From her hiding place in the reeds, the girl spies upon the sickly, dying man and a Taniwha! A mythical creature. This is the first horse she has ever seen. The girl steps out from her hiding place to offer her waka as a gift to console the man and get closer to the horse. In an unexpected moment of contact, the dying man realises he may have inadvertently passed on his disease to the girl. Seeing her fascination with the horse, the man offers her a final indulgence – a trade of her waka for his horse. The two set off on a joyous gallop through the dunes, and as they complete their trade, the man is faced with the dark dilemma - let her go and spread the disease further, or take her life and end the disease there