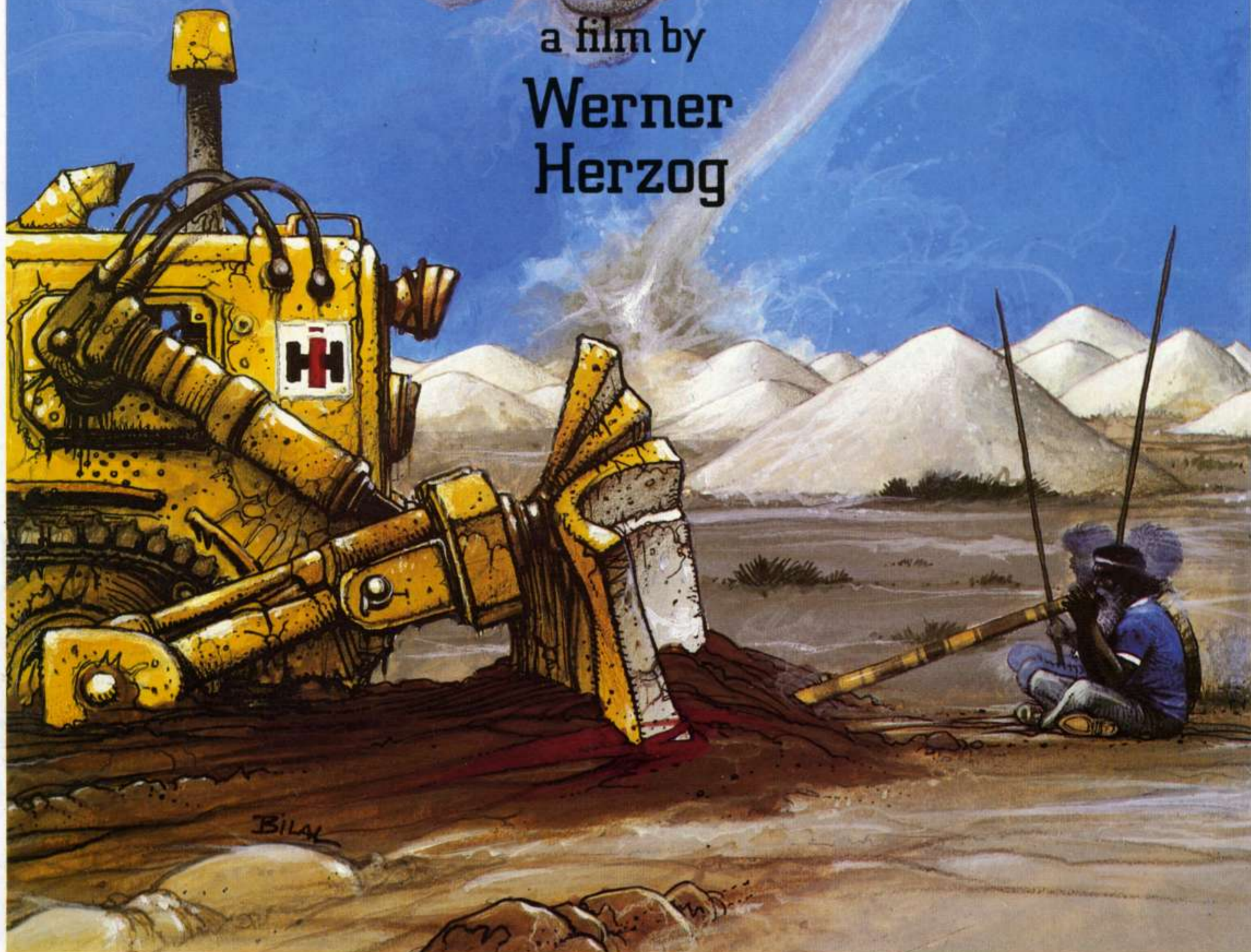


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Where the green ants dream

a film by
Werner
Herzog





A group of Australian tribal aborigines struggles to defend a sacred site against the bulldozers of a mining company. It is the place where the Green Ants dream.

James Henson



Where the green ants dream

a film by

Werner Herzog

with

BRUCE SPENCE - WANDJUK MARIKA
ROY MARIKA - RAY BARRETT
NORMAN KAYE and COLLEEN CLIFFORD

Director of photography
JÖRG SCHMIDT-REITWEIN

Editor
BEATE MAINKA - JELLINGHAUS

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CAST

Lance Hackett, geologist	BRUCE SPENCE
Miliritbi, Riratjingu, tribal eldor	WANDJUK MARIKA
Dayipu, aborigine of the Riratjingu tribe.	ROY MARIKA
Cole, foreman	RAY BARRETT
Baldwin Ferguson, vice-president of Ayers Mining	NORMAN KAYE
Miss Strehlow, widow with lost dog	COLLEEN CLIFFORD
Fletcher, biologist, researches Green Ants.	RALPH COTTERILL
Arnold, ex-anthropologist	NICOLAS LATHOURIS
Blackburn, judge of the Supreme Court	BASIL CLARKE
Coulthard, solicitor general.	RAY MARSHALL
Malila, «The Mute», last of Worora tribe.	DHUNGULA I MARIKA
Watson, half-breed pilot	GARY WILLIAMS
Fitzsimmons, missionary.	TONY LLEWELLYN-JONES
Daisy Barunga, Young woman, Riratjingu	MARRARU WUNUNG MURRA
Prof. Stanner, anthropologist	ROBERT BRISSENDEN
Secretary.	SUSAN GREAVES
Pilot	MICHAEL GLYNN
Young attorney.	MICHAEL EDOLS
Bailiff	NOEL LYON
Police Officer	MAX FAIRCHILD
Supermarket Manager	BOB ELLIS
Worker	TREVOR ORFORD
Ayers Mining Exec.	HUGH KEAYS-BYRNE
Protocole Officer.	ANDREW MACK
Peevish Woman	MARIA STRATFORD
Mandalis	MICHAEL MANDALIS
Cook.	ANASTASIOS CHATZIDIMPAS
Mongoloïd girl.	MARIA CHATZIDIMPAS
Ferguson's driver.	PAUL COX
Chauffeur	PHILIP RADKE
Ayers Mining photographer.	PAUL COX
Strange Aborigines	RICKY & RONNIE
Ayers Mining Lawyer	JAMES RICKETSON
Lawyer's assistant	CHRISTOPHER CAIN
RAAF Pilots	PAUL DONAZZAN
	TIM CARTWRIGHT
	MICHAEL GLYNN



*You have ravaged the earth with your mines, and don't you
see that you have ravaged my body ?*

**Sam Woolagoocha,
(Cockatoo Island, Northwest Australia, 1979)**

SYNOPSIS

A desolate stretch of earth somewhere in the heart of Australia. Two tribes of Aborigines, the Wororas and the Riratjingus, preserve their ancient legends, songs and laws of creation here. Theirs is a struggle for a culture, myths, and laws that are the result of 40.000 years of living in the desert. They come into conflict with the laws of modern Australia and the interests of a large company that wants to mine uranium in one of their holy places, the place where the Green Ants dream. A revolt by the world of dreams against an impatient civilisation that wants everything and understands nothing.



*You white men are lost.
You don't understand the land.
Too many silly questions.
Your presence on this earth will come to an end.
You have no sense, no purpose, no direction.*

**Miliritbi to Hackett
in «Where the green ants dream»**

INTERVIEW WITH WERNER HERZOG

by Simon MIZRAHI

– *This is a project that dates back quite a long time : does the film have the same shape today or has it evolved over time into its present form ?*

– I have some vague memories of the very first stage of this project. I spent some time in Australia for the first time in my life around 1973, at the Perth Film Festival, when I read about Len Wright's battle of some aborigines against a mining company that did bauxite mining in the North West of Australia. And I learned that many such struggles had taken place. It intrigued me and I wrote a story, which already was entitled *WHERE THE GREEN ANTS DREAM*. Then, a few years later, I saw some documentaries by a young Australian filmmaker, Michael Edols, and I became very intrigued by the leading character in the film *LALAI DREAMTIME*, who was called Sam Woolagoocha. Through Mike Edols I met this old man, who was a very charismatic figure, a saintlike, wonderful, wise old man. We tried to put a film together, partly with Australian money and organisation, partly with German, then with all the bureaucratic hassle this old man died. If Kinski had died in the preproduction for *AGUIRRE*, I wouldn't have shot the film, and at that time I said to myself : that man can't be replaced, I have to drop the project forever, I won't make it now. While I was doing *FITZCARRALDO* the project kept bothering me, again and again, becoming heavier and heavier. I said to myself I shall look in Australia, maybe I can find some people who would be as good as this old man, and I came across a family clan, and two or three of the leaders are now the leading characters in the film.

– *Instead of just one ?*

– Well, there were several characters in the previous project, but it has changed a little according to the real people who are in the film now.

– *The dying civilisation of the Aborigines, the coming of progress and technology that kills the indigenous culture. This ecological theme has been around before, hasn't it ?*

– I don't see it as an environmentalist film, it's on a much deeper level : how people are dealing with this earth. It would be awful to see this film only as a film on ecology. It has a common borderline with that, but it would be very misleading to see it as a film for the «Greenies». We must not forget that there is a real struggle going on, a confrontation between two groups of people. And it's also a film on a strange mythology, the green ants mythology. It's a movie, that's the first thing. It's kept open towards the end whether the plane has actually crashed or not... I hope that the two Aborigines have flown somewhere over the mountains into the east, into their dreamland... even if at the same time some tribal aborigines from the mountains report that they've found a wing somewhere in the ravine of a mountain. It's left open...

– *What do you mean by the green ants mythology ?*

– That's not easy to explain... it is basically an invented mythology. We did not want to be like anthropological researchers, strictly following their rules. I wanted to have legends and mythology that come close to the thinking and the way of life of the aborigines, but I made it clear to them that the film is not their dreaming, it is *my* dreaming. I couldn't claim to make their cause my cause; that would be ridiculous. There are too many fraudulent people around, whom I would call the counterfeit people, who claim to know every-

thing about them, and to be their defenders. I am not like that. I think I have a certain understanding of them, but all our understanding is limited; even if you spent 25 years with them, spoke their language, your background is still a different one, you don't come straight from a tradition of Stone Age people, and their highly complicated family structure and mythology. You just will not understand them. I can't bear it that there are so many people, missionaries of all kinds, anthropologists, political activists and politicians, who claim they know exactly what has to be done with them, who claim to understand them completely. My understanding of them is limited, therefore I want to develop my own mythology.

– *But you respect them very much, don't you ?*

– Of course I respect their identity, and you can see it in the film. I respect them as people who are in a deep struggle for their religious belief.

– *Is it only religious belief, or, also, a struggle for survival ?*

– That is part of it.

– *They are on the verge of becoming extinct, aren't they ?*

– They are. Only two hundred years ago, in Australia, there were approximately 600 different tribes and languages. Now there are less than 150 left. And the tragedy is going on every single day. There are at least 8 or 9 known persons who are the last speakers of their language, there's nobody left of their tribe. And only one single person surviving who speaks and understands this culture and language. I've seen one in Port St Augusta, in an old people's home, who will die within the next few years. The tragedy is irrevocable. I can't protect them, I don't think anybody can really. We will lose, we will be poor, stripped naked at the end and we will only have McDonald culture on this earth.

– *Are you that pessimistic ?*

– Well, it goes very, very fast. I've seen it with the native Indians in the Amazon, and you can see it very clearly in Australia. It is a great tragedy...

– *A tragedy for the western world, or for the indigenous populations ?*

– For the entire world. It is tragedy enough that there are no more mammoths left on this earth. I don't speak of the Western or Eastern world, it is simply an enormous, monstrous loss, for all of us.

– *We see very few aborigines in the film, never more than 20, 25 at most. Why so few ? And what are they trying to fight for, in their non-violent way ?*

– One should know that tribal Aborigines do not normally appear in big groups. I remember, there was a big fuss about Kirk Douglas who once had a Hollywood project, where he would, as an outlaw, head ten thousand angry Aborigines who were to attack a town with spears...

He was immediately told that never in history had such huge numbers of Aborigines ever appeared together ! They always go in much smaller clan groups.

– *And they managed, socially, to survive like that ?*

– That was their only way to survive, because they had to be very mobile, very flexible,





very fast... And they don't run naked with loincloths, and with their faces painted. That doesn't happen any more. They come in blue jeans, they have their transistor radios or their walkie-talkies.

– *It's almost as bad as the Indians in Brazil...*

– Almost. But there are groups, who I would call the fundamentalists, the traditionalists, who have adopted certain ways and certain elements from Western civilisation for their survival. For example, they went to court and sued mining companies, and are getting revenues now. That survival is maintained through such technical means as wireless radio, which they use to call for help and support amongst other groups, and to activate political groups within the cities. In some areas, it functions very well; medical and legal aid is organised with and for them, there are some astonishing things going on. And yet at the same time there are certain groups - in my film you will see one of those - who are still thinking traditionally, and who have moved a camp now to a traditional sacred site, and they still do their burial rites and their ceremonies and their songs and their drowning pipe music...

– *They seem to be very clever strategically... Their non-violent way of fighting, and the way they sit, like a modern «sit-in», is this completely invented or does it correspond to a certain reality ?*

– Aborigines have traditionally hardly ever been aggressive... they don't sit in terms of a «sit-in».. they ARE the rocks that you have to move away! They understand themselves as a part of the earth. It is as if there is a universal body, and they are only part of that body. That's why a man like Sam Woolagoocha said to me one day: «Look here... you see these ditches and this mine here.. they have ravaged the earth; and don't they see that they have ravaged my body?» That explains everything.. they are the rocks, they are the trees and you'd have to shoot them first, or blast them, before they would move. It has nothing to do with modern «sit-in» techniques - we mustn't be confused by that. And while we were shooting, only 200km away, some aborigines had blocked an access road to a sacred site which was just about to be explored for mining. For two months they had been sitting there, with their tents, waiting until the bulldozers arrived, and they would not let them pass. And the struggle is still going on. There are only 10 or 12 of them there, but as soon as the bulldozers arrive, they will call for help, if necessary, and they will be 200 or so.

– *In the film there is this notion of dream, which is very beautiful... the green ants dream, the dreamland, the children that have been dreamed... What does this mean ?*

– I have to be very careful here, because I am not an anthropological expert, and as soon as I begin to speak of the aborigines and their concept of dreamtime and dreamland I will run into trouble and I could probably be proven wrong.

– *What matters here is your idea of dreams...*

– I think that the group of aborigines with whom I have worked have understood that it does not depict precisely their philosophical concept of dreamtime. Their dreamtime is something of extreme importance, of mythological beings in the dreamtime that is still going on.. there's a forever continuous present time that is beyond everything that is going on now, in the past or in the future. Therefore, in many of the aboriginal langua-

ges, you don't have a future or past tense. There is a vague form of present, the «now time» and much of their life is based on their dreaming. For example, apparently at certain spirit places, for example a pond, a father would sit and dream his child and then the child would be born, and he would be connected with the dreamtime, or a dreamland, or sacred sites. It is very beautiful how the whole continent of Australia somehow is spread over with a network of rivers of dreams or «songlines» : they would sing a song when they travelled and by the rhythm of the song they would identify a landscape. A friend of mine who travelled with aborigines on a truck saw them singing in fast-motion, as if you were running a tape forward at ten times the normal speed, because the car was passing so fast that the rhythm of the song had to be in the rhythm of the landscape, according to the movement within that landscape. There are things that we will never comprehend, and that are very beautiful.

They apparently know how to handle their life on this earth better than many of us do. And they think that we must be crazy; a bunch of crazies has arrived on this earth and is coming to Australia, who do not understand anything anymore, that are just doomed...

– *Which is what the old Miliritbi tells Hackett : «You white men are lost. Too many silly questions». Is this what they really think ?*

– Many of them are absolutely convinced that this civilisation will come to an end, without sense, without purpose, without direction.

– *What were your relations with the aborigines ? Did they accept your way of depicting them in the film? Or were there many discussions ?*

– Yes, there were discussions. I explained very clearly what my idea was, and asked them whether they found it acceptable or not. Strangely enough, the real objections came from a completely different angle. They immediately spoke almost exclusively about the names that I used in the film. For example, there is a name in the screenplay which is not in the film anymore; apparently a man with that name lived, and once a man dies, for at least 10 years afterwards, you must not ever speak that name out loud again. They would speak of «that man who died» but never say his name or the secret name of the young men when they were initiated. And they would also change their own names - that's why in lawsuits it is often very difficult to identify aborigines, because from one day to the next they might assume a different name and would in all seriousness present themselves as someone else under a different name. Second objection, strongest objection, which is visible now in the film - the sacred objects during the courtroom scene. It has actually happened that in a lawsuit, in the Supreme Court of the Northern Territories, the aborigines produced some sacred objects which they had dug up from the earth, that had been there for about 200 years, and asked that all the spectators in the courtroom be removed, so they would show them only to the judge. They were wooden objects, with carvings, that were completely beyond the comprehension of an Anglo-Saxon judge. Yet for them it was the proof of why and how they belonged to this special area. In the film, they asked me not to show anything, even though I had offered them to fabricate some sort of duplicate, but they refused even that. Therefore it is not visible in the film, you only see that they have something wrapped, which they hold. We respected their wish.

– *None of the aborigines are actors ?*

– As you know, I don't make that distinction anyway. But they are not professional in that sense, no.

— *The ones we see in the film, what do they do ?*

— The man who plays the drowning pipe, the bearded old man, is very colourful, his name is Wandjuk Marika, he used to be one of the leading aborigines in cultural renewal; he was the chairman of the Aboriginal Arts Council of Australia. He is considered as probably the best drowning pipe player in the country, and he's one of the finest bark painters (painting mythological scenes on the bark of trees). He has had several exhibitions. He's multi-lingual, like many aborigines (most of them are bi or tri-lingual), he speaks 9 aboriginal languages and almost perfect English. He's travelled to the US, Russia, Jamaica, England, everywhere.

— *And the others have jobs in the cities ?*

— No, most of them live in the most northern part of Australia, and they are one of those groups who are still «traditional» thinkers, and try to preserve their culture. For the sake of the film, they travelled some 1,500 miles on location and I made it very clear to them : «You are not at your place, you are participating in a movie, for three weeks you will not be at home, you will be acting (many of them of course had travelled before to do shows, music or dance).. you will not be in your real life...» and they found that acceptable, they liked it.

— *The film has a lot of humour in it, but this is funny and very strange : the two main aborigines alternately speak their own language and the English translation. And once in a while, one of them says «What did he say?» referring to English, and translates, and then the contrary !*

— Wandjuk, the bearded one, speaks English most of the time, and the other one refuses to speak English although we know that he can speak it and understands it. For example, in court, he insists on making his statement in his Riratjingu native language. They do that quite often, and I like it a lot !

— *But can you explain why?*

— They insist on their tribal dignity and pride.

— *Was it improvised or did you discuss it beforehand ?*

— We observed it, we discussed it, and in a few instances, there is a very simple explanation: the one who was supposed to speak in English had difficulties, so I'd say, OK, say it in Riratjingu and the other one is going to translate it. That happened once or twice, but it was an exception.

— *There is this strange character, the crazy scientist who is some sort of ant specialist...*

— We learned, through him, a lot about green ants ! I mean this is all invented biology; just as there is an invented mythology on green ants, there are also a lot of invented scientific things on green ants. For example, this ant researcher explains that the green ant is the only living creature on this earth that has a sensory organ for magnetic fields. Like little particles of metal in a magnetic field, they would all face in one direction, like little soldiers in armies. We actually tried to shoot that, but the ants wouldn't behave like that! We tried so long and so hard! We came closest in a cold store, where we kept them at 2 1/2 or 3 degrees celsius, so that they were almost immobilised by the cold; but as soon as we switched on a reflector and some light, they started to stir and move and bite.



– *Do green ants exist ? Ants that are actually green ?*

– Yes... well, the tail is green, but the rest is brown. And all the things that you learn about the green ants, that they grow wings, that they fly east over the mountains, is of course invented.

And, you see, these green ants, for some of the tribal aborigines, are the totem animal, whereas for others it is the green lizard, or the kangaroo... the totem animal that has created the world, and created human beings.

– *So there is some truth in it?*

– Yes.

– *What is the Didgeridoo ? Is it some kind of sacred instrument ?*

– It's a drowning pipe, which traditionally has been used for ceremonial purposes only, during initiation ceremonies, or when they have burials. It goes on sometimes for weeks and weeks, and they hardly sleep for days and nights. I remember when Wandjuk came to meet me for the first time, he was completely spaced out, very tired because he'd been in ceremonies for three weeks. And he is considered some kind of custodian priest of his tribe. Anyway, he had it in his contract that if someone in the family group within the clan died, he would have the liberty to leave instantly from the shooting location and go for ceremonies for up to three weeks. That was one of the big points of discussion, but we accepted it.

– *Do those didgeridoos always have the same length ?*

– No, various lengths; it is a wooden pipe, with no mouthpiece, about two metres long, about the thickness of an arm. Very deep and resonant, and very strange in its rhythms. Each rhythm has a certain significance; it's almost like long sequences in sentences. It's very complicated but very fascinating.

– *The early shots and the last shot... those small pyramids look like anthills...*

– They are all artificial of course. Very early in the film, you see how some sort of conveyor belt accumulates one or two such heaps. Yet the way these tens of thousands of artificial heaps are shown, you start to doubt whether they are man-made or not. It's almost like another world's landscape... or a landscape that could only have been created by ants.

– *And in the last scene of the film one thinks that Hackett goes into those anthills...*

– He disappears into them.

– *As though he goes into the ant civilisation, becomes one of them maybe.*

– At the end, he's like a renegade, he disappears into a dreamland, and so have the aborigines with their airplane...

– *The explosions we hear are those of the mining company ?*

– Yes, the disaster goes on. The mining that had been stopped will continue. The court case in the Supreme Court has been lost by the aborigines and they have been tricked into accepting an airplane. A green airplane that has the wings of a bird of death.

– *The smoke we see coming out of the plane, is it some ritual fire ?*
 – We never know exactly what it is, but one of the white pilots who is so scared and upset runs into the airplane and comes out saying it's just a camp fire on the floor. The moment they take possession of it, they do a coriboree inside and sing songs and make little camp fires, so the smoke is trailing out from all doors and windows.

– *The dream that Lance Hackett tells the old woman bears some sort of relation to the rest of the story ?*

– Not in a way that can be explained like in an equation, yet I know it belongs to the film. And he says it very clearly : «I've never been in such a situation before... it's just a dream» and he even, jokingly, puts that dream aside, and yet he knows somehow he is in a situation like that.

– *Why those stock-shots of tornadoes at the beginning and the end ?*

– I wouldn't call them stock-shots, because my cinematographer Schmidt-Reitwein spent four weeks in Oklahoma, just to chase after tornadoes for our film. And those shots were always written into the screenplay. Something like «the little end of the world»....

That's how I see it... a tornado that comes and wipes everything away, sucks everything into the clouds. I was very much intrigued by the hurricane «Tracy» that destroyed the city of Darwin in North Western Australia. A few years later, I saw some of the destruction still in this place. People showed me a huge water tank, on three legs, and the tank itself, made of steel, was about 30 metres in the air, and there was a huge rectangular imprint on it ! What had happened was that a refrigerator flew through the air for a few kilometers and hit the watertank! Everything else was sucked into the air, only this watertank remained standing !

– *One of the most intriguing shots is, towards the end, the close-up of this little aborigine girl holding a stone and, by her side, the transistor with the voice of the Argentina World Cup coming out... like some menace for the future... from one extreme to the other : the futile sophistication of Western civilisation and the desperate and raw violence of a dying aborigine in the middle of a desolate desert...*

– It strikes me very deeply... and I must say that I don't know why it's so powerful, I can't tell you why this is so... it is very desperate, and it has a deep pathos, a deep sadness to it, and you can't name it: what is it ? A voice in ecstasy about a goal that was scored by Argentina... and a child holding a stone in her hand and not knowing what to do...

An image like that is probably as important as the whole story. And that's why I want to make films... I want to show things that are inexplicable somehow...

– *I like very much at the beginning of the film the long helicopter shots of the ant-hills, with the Requiem by Fauré, then the sound of the machines, then, as if it were born out of it, the sound of the didgeridoo; as if one sound were always born out of the other... It's strange and fascinating and tells a lot already.*

– You could stop the film right there, and you would know everything. There's one film I love, THE MUSIC ROOM by Satyajit Ray, it begins with this aristocrat sitting in his old chair listening to music on the roof of his crumbling palace, and the camera is moving away from him, and after those three minutes you could stop the film and you've grasped everything...

- *Speaking of dreamlands, what is your dreamland ?*
- I wish I knew. I wish I could find it, then I could make a film and close the book.

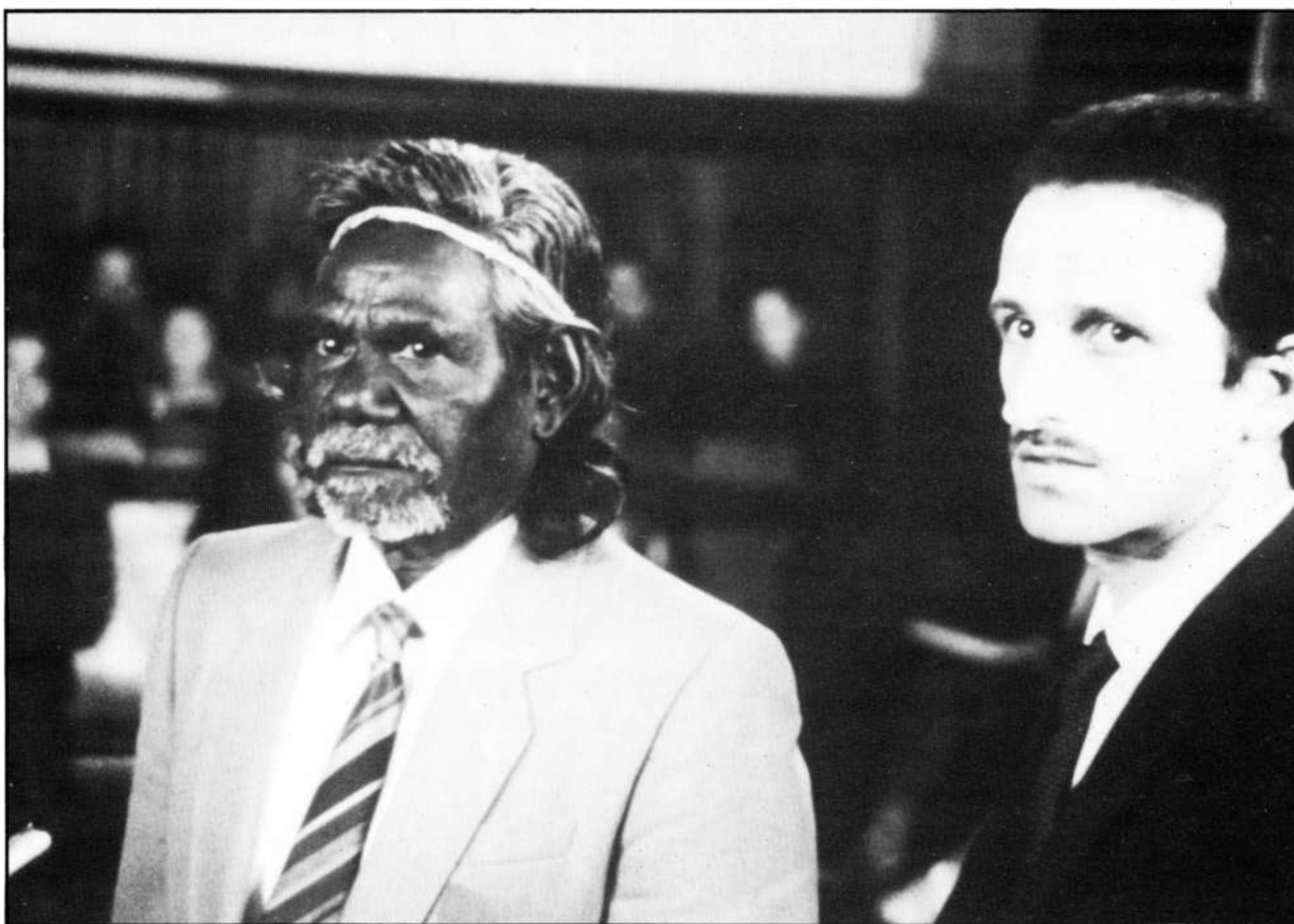
- *Only one film? You'd never close the book on your dreamland...that would take a whole life!*
- Well, I would just stop making films and stay there. If I have an answer to that, I'll let you know!

*



You're like somebody on a train that's heading for an abyss. Up ahead a bridge is down and the train is racing towards it and only you know the bridge is down, and the communication cord is not working and this train is going so fast towards its doom that all you have time to do is run through the train to the rear compartment.

**Arnold to Hackett
in «Where the green ants dream»**



WERNER HERZOG

Werner Herzog (his real name is Werner H. Stipetic) was born September 5, 1942, in Munich. He wrote his first screenplay at the age of 15 and graduated from high school in 1961. His first efforts at film-making were failures (at 17, he tried a film on prison-reform). He was his own producer for his first shorts and fictional features from 1963 on. He studied history and literature in Munich and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and worked nights as a welder in a steel-foundry.

At 18 he traveled to the Sudan during the Congo crisis and his other journeys became stepping-stones for movies - Greece (SIGNS OF LIFE), Mexico, the Canary Islands (DWARFS ALSO STARTED OUT SMALL), Peru (AGUIRRE and FITZCARRALDO), Africa (FATA MORGANA), Guadeloupe (LA SOUFRIERE), Ireland (HEART OF GLASS), Holland and Czechoslovakia (NOSFERATU and WOYZECK), Australia (WHERE THE GREEN ANTS DREAM).

Werner Herzog has also published several books, poems in the literary review *Akzente*, his screenplays in book-form, and in 1979 a book recounting his journey on foot from Munich to Paris, entitled VON GEHEN IM EIS (On Walking on Ice).

SHORT SUBJECTS :

- 1962 : HERAKLES (Hercules) - 12 minutes
- 1964 : SPIEL IM SAND (Game in the Sand) - 14 minutes
- 1966 : DIE BEISPIELLOSE VERTEIDIGUNG DER FESTUNG DEUTSCHKREUTZ
(The Unprecedented Defence of the Deutschkreuz Fortress) - 13 minutes
- 1967 : LETZTE WORTE (Last Words) - 12 minutes
- 1969 : MASSNAHMEN GEGEN FANATIKER (Measures Against Fanatics) - 11 minutes
- DIE FLIEGENDE ARZTE VON OSTAFRIKA (TV) (The Flying Doctors of East Africa) - 46 minutes
- 1974 : DIE GROSSE EKSTASE DES BILDSCHNITZERS STEINER (TV) (The Great Ecstasy of the Sculptor Steiner) - 45 minutes
- 1976 : HOW MUCH WOOD WOULD A WOODCHUCK CHUCK - 45 minutes
- LA SOUFRIERE - 45 minutes
- 1980 : HUIE'S PREDIGT (Huie's Sermon) - 40 minutes
- GLAUBE UND WAHRUNG (Faith and Currency) - 40 minutes

FULL-LENGTH FEATURES :

- 1967 : LEBENSZEICHEN (Signs of Life) - 89 minutes
- 1968/69 FATA MORGANA - 78 minutes
- 1969/70 AUCH ZWERGE HABEN KLEIN ANGEFANGEN (Dwarfs Also Started Out Small) - 96 minutes
- 1970 : BEHINDERTE ZUKUNFT (Handicapped Future) - 63 minutes
- 1971 : LAND DES SCHWEIGENS UND DER DUNKELHEIT (Land of Silence and Darkness) - 86 minutes
- 1971/72 AGUIRRE, DER ZORN GOTTES (Aguirre, Wrath of God) - 93 minutes
- 1974 : JEDER FÜR SICH UND GOTT GEGEN ALLE (The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser) - 110 minutes
- 1976 : HERZ AUS GLAS (Heart of Glass) - 93 minutes
- 1976/77 STROSZEK - 107 minutes
- 1978 : NOSFERATU PHANTOM DER NACHT (Nosferatu, Phantom of the Night) - 106 minutes
- WOYZECK - 106 minutes
- 1981 : FITZCARRALDO - 157 minutes
- 1983 : WHERE THE GREEN ANTS DREAM - 100 minutes



BRUCE SPENCE

Was born in New Zealand in 1945 in a family of wine makers. He studied horticulture, preparatory to joining the family business, but instead went to Australia, where he first worked as an agricultural chemicals advisor, then became a full time student at the National Gallery Art School in Melbourne. From there he developed an interest in theatre.

He began acting in 1969 and spent several years as a member of the Australian Performing Group, which pioneered the development of a uniquely Australian theatre. There he directed or appeared in numerous productions, mostly of new Australian plays. He has also appeared with most major theatre companies in Australia, in plays ranging from Shakespeare, Jonson, Moliere, through to Brecht and Dario Fo. In 1979 he was guest artist at the National Art Centre in Canada, where he played the lead role in John Romeril's award winning Australian play THE FLOATING WORLD. He returned to Australia and, with John Romeril, developed and toured extensively in CARBONI, a one man play in which he played Raffaello Carboni, an Italian gold miner who wrote the only eyewitness account of Australia's first significant civil uprising, the Eureka Stockade.

Most recently he has appeared as Sganarelle in Moliere's DOM JUAN at the 1984 Adelaide Arts Festival, and was voted the most popular actor in the festival.

He has also acted in most Australian television series, both in continuous roles and as a guest performer. He has recently begun directing video clips.

Bruce Spence has appeared in at least 20 films since his debut in 1971 in the title role of STORK, a comedy which has been credited with reviving the moribund Australian film industry at the time. He has also been seen in THE CARS THAT ATE PARIS (Peter Weir), ELIZA FRAZER (Tim Burstall), NEWSFRONT (Phil Noyce), DIMBOOLA (John Duigan) MAD MAX II (ROAD WARRIOR) (George Miller). He has just completed his first film in New Zealand, PALLET ON THE FLOOR.

WANDJUK MARIKA

Wandjuk Marika was born in 1930 on Bremer Island off the Gove Peninsular of Australia's NE Arnhem Land. He was the eldest child of Mawalan, Riratjingu leader and ceremonial grand master for the clan groups of North Eastern Arnhem Land.

His education proceeded according to traditional methods despite the establishment of Methodist missionaries at Yirrakala in 1934. Unbending towards missionary pressure, Mawalan refused to relinquish his rich cultural and ceremonial heritage and ensured that Wandjuk and many others were recipients of his vast wealth of knowledge.

During his late teenage years, Wandjuk's father began teaching him to paint the important designs of his clan. This teaching continued for many years, the repertoire being extensive.

Upon his father's death in 1967, Wandjuk assumed many ritual responsibilities. Today his role is as teacher and director of ceremonies, as master painter and musician, and also as the custodian of complicated song cycles and YIDAKI (didgeridoo) music which give expression to his law.

- 1946/48 : Translated the Bible into Riratjingu and Gumatj language.
- 1948 : Acted as interpreter and assistant to his father Mawalan during the first major anthropological expedition to NE Arnhem Land. This collaboration resulted in the publication of definitive books on the people of Eastern Arnhem Land.
- 1948 : During these years, he painted and learnt the designs from his father Mawalan. He completed a major collection of drawings which were published nearly 30 years later in volumes «Love Songs of Arnhem Land» and «The Three Faces of Love».
- 1953 : An expedition from the Art Gallery of New South Wales resulted in that Gallery acquiring major paintings by Wandjuk and Mawalan.
- 1950/60 : He was appointed as a teaching assistant in Yirrkala School. During this time he also painted many works subsequently acquired by Australian galleries, art dealers and even evil American collectors.
- 1967 : After the death of his father, he took over important duties as ceremonial head of the Riratjingu. He maintains this position today.
- 1970/71 : The Riratjinga brought a legal action against the Swiss mining company Nabalco to try to prevent bauxite mining on their land. This was the first major legal battle in Australia that attempted to establish freehold title to Aboriginal land. The judge found in favour of the mining company and the white Commonwealth of Australia.
- 1970 : Appointed a member of the Aboriginal Advisory Board of the Australian Council for the Arts (now known as the Australia Council).

- 1971 : As a result of funding and support from the Uniting Church of Australia, he toured Australia informing people about the Yolngu (the Aboriginal people of Australia).
- 1973 : The Aboriginal Arts Board was established by the then Whitlam Labor Government. Mr. Marika was made a member of that Board.
- 1976/80 : He was appointed Chairman of the Board, and served for four years.
- 1979 : Awarded an OBE by the then Fraser Liberal Government.
Mr. Marika has made contributions to newspapers and magazines on matters of Aboriginal health, education and social and political life, and has made numerous television and radio appearances, including :
- 1982 : WOMEN OF THE SUN, the second episode of the Australian television series.
- 1982 : Philip Kaufman's film of THE RIGHT STUFF by Tom Wolfe.
- 1983 : Werner Herzog's WHERE THE GREEN ANTS DREAM. He also provided and played the film's traditional music sequences on the YIDAKI, or didgeridoo.



