

## *About the Artist: Shigeyuki Kihara*

Shigeyuki Kihara is a visual and performance artist based in Auckland, New Zealand. The recipient in 2003 of Creative New Zealand Art Council's Emerging Pacific Island Artist Award, her cutting-edge work challenges cultural stereotypes and dominant norms of sexuality and gender. Crossing borders is integral to Kihara's life. She grew up with a Japanese father and Samoan mother, and in adolescence began occupying the Samoan space (*vā*) of a Fa'afafine—a liminal gender category best translated as a male who identifies as a woman.



PHOTO BY KEN MAYER

Kihara's first acclaim came in 2000 when her exhibition *Teuanoa'i: Adorn to Excess* (twenty-six t-shirts satirizing corporate logos) created a sensation and was purchased by New Zealand's National Museum Te Papa Tongarewa. Her next work re-appropriated ethnographic images of Polynesians with modern consumer items through the medium of paper collage (*Black Sunday*, 2002) and later focused on photographic self-portraits where she posed as Samoan Goddesses (*Fale Aitu: House of Spirits*, 2003) and deities from Samoan folklore (*Vavau: Tales from Ancient Samoa*, 2004). Emulating the genre of velvet paintings, these photographs express a double entendre as they are intended to honor traditional Samoan culture while subverting a Western gaze that exoticizes images of Pacific Islanders. Parody is integral to her performance work, as well. For example, as pictured opposite, she wears a corseted eighteenth-century gown while richly bejeweled and displaying the fingernails of a high fashion model. Her 2005 exhibition *Fa'afafine: In the Manner of a Woman* intended a similar critique with personal implications. Drawing on archival nineteenth-century South Seas postcards, Kihara poses as both a Samoan man and woman, and in three panels of a dusky Polynesian maiden reveals her dual sexuality to challenge the binary model of Western sexuality that labels third sex/gender categories deviant. Kihara exhibits and performs internationally. Her Fa'afafine works are carried by Sherman Galleries in Sydney, Australia.

PAMELA ROSI

*Bridgewater State College*



*Taualuga: The last dance*

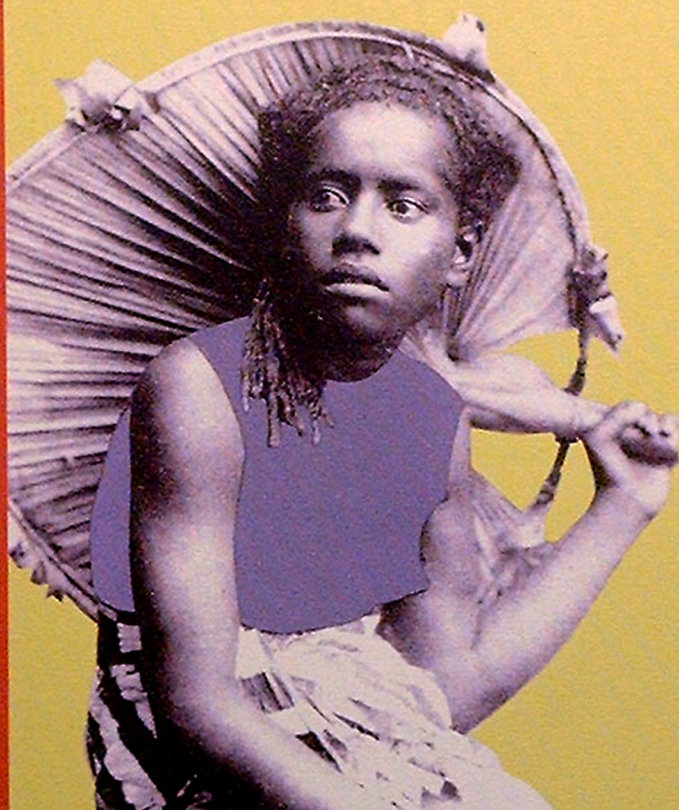
Shigeyuki Kihara in solo performance at the  
4th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art,  
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia,  
2003. Photo courtesy of Lukas Davidson.





*Tasi ae afe; One but a million*

Ink jet on canvas and mixed media, 2002,  
60 cm x 90 cm



*Show no evil*

Ink jet on canvas and mixed media,  
2002, 30 cm x 45 cm





*Gossip sessions*

Ink jet on canvas and mixed media, 2002,  
60 cm x 80 cm



*Distressed maiden*

Ink jet on canvas and mixed media, 2002,  
35 cm x 40 cm





*Afa Tasi; Half of one*  
Ink jet on canvas and mixed media, 2002,  
60 cm x 80 cm



*Lalava Taupou*

C-type photograph and mixed media, 2003,

100 cm x 80 cm

Collaboration with Filipe Tohi.



*Tribute to Lesina*

Ink jet on canvas and mixed media,  
2002, 35 cm X 40 cm





*Iesu Keriso: Jesus Christ*  
C-type photograph and mixed media,  
100 cm x 80 cm