

MARIO AND YVONNE Plate: 8

Throughout the western world the word tattoo has its origins derived from a small group of 12 volcanic islands situated in the Polynesian Pacific known as the Marquesas, it is here that the word 'tattoo' or 'tatau', meaning 'to mark something' originates. For centuries the Marquesas were feared due to the cannibalistic rituals of the inhabitants. Entire groups of tribes-men, women and children were tattooed from their fingertips to their toes, under the hairline, on their genitals and even in their mouths. Boys and girls as young as 8 were tattooed in preparation for puberty and the process for many was not complete until the age of 30. Unique to the Marquesas was the solid black and layered tattooing known as pahupahu. It was commonly applied to boys or warriors as a disguise and separated them from all other Polynesian tattoo forms. Nowhere in the world even today can this the most extreme form of tattooing be found. As with Marquesans, Mario and Yvonne share the same philosophy, seeing themselves as living and on going works of art, to be treasured in their own right. Approximately 95% of Mario's body has been tattooed in multiple layers and each layer incorporates a wide variety of designs and symbols that pertain to Yantra, the magical diagram. In 1990 Mario began experimenting with various designs relating to the Marquesas, a process that has since progressed to a mixture of Marquesas, Thai and Hindu designs. In 1991 he was tattooed by Luang Pee Paw, a life long monk whose mantras have been tattooed between designs in Sanskrit and an ancient Khmer language. Over the years Mario has been tattooed in oil in the unseen diagrams of yantra, this is said to protect him in life and to ward off sickness. He also wears the layered tattooing of pahupahu that can be seen in the matrix layers running down the left side of his body. Yvonne is his partner and she has her personal beliefs tattooed within designs on her body, many of these have been incorporated into the background of the artwork in both English and German. Yvonne's designs are a mixture of Chinese, Buddhism and Hindu. Though the majority of triangular and geometrical designs are from the Marquesas, Taumotu, Austral, Gambier and Society islands, all part of the Polynesian Pacific. She has pahupahu running down her arms and her designs emphasize a strong sense of balance, direction, rhythm, unity and emphasis, something that she has previously learnt as a designer. Yvonne lays on designs representing fertility and womanhood, an important feature to the Marquesas. The background to the work has over 200 Marquesan designs that hold many profound and symbolic meanings, one of which represents the bond and distinction between a man and a woman. Other motives relate to one's life history, land of origin, social level, work and activities, there are motives relating to seduction, mystic symbols and symbols representing honour and protection the meanings to which are published in a book about the artist. This portrait Plate Nr. 8 is one in a series of ten photographs taken by Garry Orriss over a six year period in which the couple have been tattooed in relation to a Garry Orriss hand-drawn and painted background. The artists' intention was to create a series that paid homage and reflected on the integrity and spirit of the couple, while creating a work in which both Mario and Yvonne found themselves sinking not only into their own body designs but also into a sea of Marquesan symbolism. For more information about this and other Garry Orriss artworks please go to the official website <http://www.garryorriss.com> or visit GoArt.com