

Billy Apple®

# PIRIPHO

He Whakautu nā Yllwbro

Mokopōpaki

## Tēnā koe Matua Āporo,

We have just seen *Trademark Registration*<sup>1</sup> (2018) in Pakuranga and note with amusement another sneaky but subversive appearance of the 'black apple'. Made us laugh and think about all those other 'black apples' and activists you must have hung out with back in the day. Viva la revolución!<sup>2</sup> eh, Matua? Viva la revolución! Anyhow, your current interest in an exploration of the artist's identity by appropriating some possibilities in te reo appeals to us and we offer the following thoughts.

In a parallel universe you might expect the-artist-known-as-Billy-Apple when experimenting with a re-brand in te reo Māori would opt for the in-your-face, more or less literal convention of linguistic reflection. According to this tactic, an idea that exists in one language or conceptual landscape, simply becomes the mirror substitute of another.

Billy becomes Piri

Apple becomes Āporo

The artist becomes Piri Āporo

Job done.

However, in a space like Mokopōpaki, where matters Māori do in fact matter, we thought the one-size-fits-all approach to culturally sensitive but commercially viable label-making was too predictable, too safe and too vanilla.

We understand that you have chosen Piri over Wī as a Māori form of Bill(y) and thought it might be useful for you to know that in te reo, piri has other meanings as well. When used as a verb, piri means to stick, adhere, cling, keep close, be loyal to, supporting. When used as

a noun piri also refers to the quality of adherence, loyalty, commitment, and allegiance.

In this new work, where two square canvasses are to be presented side-by-side, or shoulder-to-shoulder as they were in *Brown Room Subtraction*<sup>3</sup> (2017), could we encourage you, Matua, to push the trade-marking waka out even further? Perhaps the text for 'brown apple' could move away from straight forward transliteration. For this reason may we suggest a word that looks like āporo but isn't. What comes to our mind is 'poho'. A short, powerful two-



Poho

syllable word that sounds nice and crisp just like the English apple. When used as a noun, poho means chest, bosom, seat of affections, stomach. However, 'poho', when put next to 'piri' can be read as 'piripoho' which in this instance we take to mean treasured, precious, prized, valued. For us, *Piripoho* is a refreshing, much crunchier, more elegant but graciously indirect way of identifying a distinguished New Zealand artist such as Billy Apple<sup>4</sup>.

In the drawing we attach, you will see that our response to your proposal is presented on a brown background. Here, the light-co-



loured elements are in fact off-white – a colour we like to call ‘bone’. Bone in te reo is ‘iwi’ which is also the word for ‘tribe’ and all of us in one way or another are part of an identity much bigger than that of an isolated singularity.

In the spirit of Māori collaborative exchange we have also helped ourselves to your typeface – as you have helped yourself to ours. Or, more correctly, the typeface belonging to the Whānau at Mokopōpaki. What works for you, Matua Āporo, works for us – particularly if the core values are brown.

BILLY APPLE

Nā tō mokopuna pakupaku,

Yllwbro

Ko Yolo rāua ko Blu

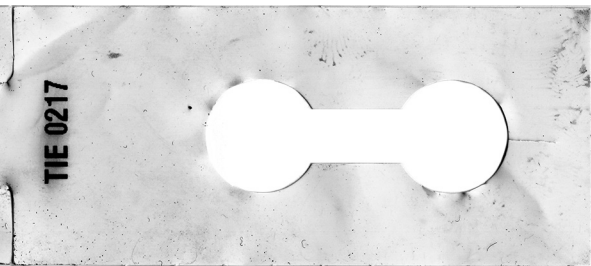
**\$49.99**



**Apple Mischief Tm.**

Dwarf apple on M116 rootstock. 1.5m tall. Ideal for the small garden or a container. Medium sized fruit with green skin and splashes of colour. Crunchy with slight tart flavour. Bred in NZ. Train to single or dual leader. Can be biannual fruitier if not thinned. X - Pollinate.

PIRIPHO



## References

- 1 Billy Apple, Trademark Registration (2018). Commissioned by Te Tuhi, Pakuranga, Auckland.
- 2 Long live the revolution! Dissident protest declaration referencing the Cuban Revolution (1953–1959).
- 3 Billy Apple, Brown Room Subtraction (2017). Commissioned by Mokopōpaki, Auckland.
- 4 Billy Apple is a recipient of the 2018 Arts Foundation Icon Award – Whakamana Hiranga, recognising distinguished artists for their contributions to New Zealand’s arts and culture. At any one time, there are only 20 Art Icons.

## Captions

Pp. 5–6

Billy Apple, Piripoho (2018).  
He Whakautu nā Yllwbro.  
Commissioned by Mokopōpaki,  
Auckland.

Pp. 9–10

Yllwbro, Ngā Inoi ā Te Iwi: Prayers of the People (detail) (2017).

## Mokopōpaki

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11am–5pm

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11am–3pm

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