

A Hypnotic Look at an Old Woman

By Judy Stone

A talented young New Zealand director with uncanny insight into the lives of older women will present his two unique films at the New York theatre tonight. Vincent Ward's drama, "A State of Siege", and his documentary, "In Spring One Plants Alone", were shown in the last San Francisco International Film Festival's New Directors' series.

In "In Spring One Plants alone" another kind of endurance is demonstrated by the old Maori woman. Her back bent from years of carrying firewood, and the burdens of caring for her 40 year old son.

Again we find a vignette of tremendous visual power as Ward explores the circumstances of the woman's life in isolation.

Hopelessness is overcome by the will to persevere. She works and work, while her son spends his time playing with a cat and watching her. His sudden outburst of violence is greeted with the mother



crying out: "I dead loss. I very sad inside me feeling no good, no good. But i have to stay."

Although the documentary is occasionally difficult to understand, there's no question about Ward's talent or the empathy that spurred him on in the difficult work of making this unusually poetic film.