

# BIRD



**Is Bird pushing his free-living, hippy lifestyle too far?**

## PRESS KIT

A SHORT FILM BY JANE SHEARER & STEVE AYSON

### INTERNATIONAL SALES

NZ FILM Lisa Chatfield  
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**NEW ZEALAND FILM**

## Essential Information

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Directors	Jane Shearer & Steve Ayson
Writers	Gregory King, Jane Shearer, Steve Ayson
Producers	Rachel Gardner, Anna Geddes
Production Company	Great Southern Films
Technical Information	1:1.85LB/35mm/ Dolby Digital
Running Time	15 minutes including titles and credits
Country of Production	New Zealand
Date of completion	2011
Genre	Drama
Sales	Lisa Chatfield, New Zealand Film Commission Email: <a href="mailto:lisa@nzfilm.co.nz">lisa@nzfilm.co.nz</a> Tel: +64 4 382 7686

## Log Line

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Bird can only be Bird with his daughters' Blessing.

## Short Synopsis

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Is old Bird just being Bird, or is he pushing his free-living, hippy lifestyle too far? His escapades are too much for his daughter Blessing, who packs him off to The Golden Falls retirement home. Bird hates it and rebels. The staff gets stricter with Blessing's support. With more rules, he gets more cunning. Blessing tries her hardest to steer her father along a conventional path, but ultimately she must face the fact that nothing will change him. She must choose between keeping Bird there, or setting him free.

## **Festivals**

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2011 Sydney Film Festival, Australia  
2011 Palm Springs Film Festival, USA  
2011 New Zealand International Film Festival, New Zealand  
2011 BFI London Film Festival, UK

## **Director Notes**

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Bird's character was what initially drew us to this story - a large, lovable personality dealing with the deepest of grief in his own flamboyant way.

His obstacle came in the form of his only daughter, Blessing, a character we developed as the polar opposite. Our intention with her was to see if we could show an un-likeable, angry character transform over the course of the film, and have the audience sympathise with her and then ultimately be moved.

Life is often this way, nobody is really who they seem. Bird is a rocking, aging hippy who looks like he is partying his grief away, while really inviting an early death to be with his wife. Blessing's angry, tight-lipped attitude, combined with her goal to tidy her father into an old folk's home, hides the fact that she is just frightened and desperate not to lose him too.

Both are fully aware of what the other is up to, both too afraid to actually confront the situation and talk about it.

All the unsaid stuff is such a typical family dynamic, we wanted the film to really reflect this, as it is universal in every culture.

## **Director Bios**

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Jane Shearer directed the award winning short film 'Nature's Way', which premiered in competition at Cannes Film Festival in 2006. It was her first creative collaboration with Steve Ayson, who co-wrote the script. They continued their writing collaboration and expanded it into co-directing on Bird.

Steve is a renowned international commercials director who also wrote and directed the award winning short film The French Doors. The French Doors premiered in Melbourne Film Festival in 2001 and won 'Leopards of Tomorrow' at Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival.

Jane and Steve have attended the Maurits Binger Film Institute in Amsterdam and currently have two feature films in development as co-writers.

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## **Writer Bios**

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Bird was based on an original story by Gregory King and written by Gregory King, Jane Shearer and Steve Ayson.

Gregory is a multi-award winning writer and director. His feature films as writer/ director include A Song of Good (2008) and Christmas (2002) – both of which have screened at numerous international film festivals and have won a screed of awards. His short films including Pop (1999), Teach you a Lesson (2000) and Junk (2001) first set him apart as a film maker with a voice and in 2001 he was awarded the New New Zealand Film Maker of the Year award. In 2008, Greg spent a year on the Binger Film Lab script development programme. He currently lives in Germany.

Jane Shearer and Steve Ayson continue their writing collaboration with Bird, which began with the short film Nature's Way (2006).

## **Producer Bios**

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Rachel Gardner and Anna Geddes have worked together in a producer / line producer relationship at Great Southern Film & Television for over six years. Rachel has produced a number of award winning short films, documentaries and feature films during that time, including Sima Urale's feature Apron Strings, which premiered at Toronto Film Festival (2008). Anna has over 12 years experience in line production, working in many different genres including drama, documentary, factual, entertainment and commercials. Rachel and Anna have a strong feature film slate at Great Southern.

## Key Crew

Directors	Jane Shearer & Steve Ayson
Writers	Gregory King, Jane Shearer, Steve Ayson
Producers	Rachel Gardner, Anna Geddes
Executive Producers	Mark Forster, Adam Strange, Kristian Eek of Robbers Dog Limited
Director of Photography	Ian McCarroll
Casting Director	Neil Rea
Editor	Jack Hutchings

## Cast

Bird	Peter Hawes
Blessing	Dra McKay
Jon	Tim Bray
Kevin	Antony Martin
Orderly	Jacob S'ua
Elizabeth	Elandra Meredith

## Crew

First AD	Robyn Grace
Script Supervisor	Hayley Abbott
Production Secretary	Richelle Jackson
Production Runners	Will Lewis Louise Ellis
Production Accountant	Amanda Beckett
2 <sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director	Campbell Roussell
3 <sup>rd</sup> Assistant Director	Katerina Inkster
Focus Pullers	Bryce Courtenay Julia Green Caleb Staines
Clapper Loaders	David Steel Jacob Thomas
Gaffer	Paul Eversden
Best Boy	Rocko Babbich
Lighting Assistant	Matthew Harte
Key Grip	Anton Leach
Sound Recordist	Adam Martin
Boom Operator	Callum Lister
Location Manager	Jordi Scot Smith
Location Assistant	Tim Carlson
Unit Manager	Helen Marsh
Unit Assistant	Rina Patel

Costume Designer  
Wardrobe Standby  
Make up Designer

Kirsty Cameron  
Kezia Hinchey  
Lisa Shearer

Production Designer  
Art Director  
Standby Props  
Props Buyer

Guy Treadgold  
Deidre McKessor  
Russell King  
Ant Freeman  
Peter Sweeney

Animal Wrangler  
Special FX  
Greensman  
Safety  
Catering

Mark Vette  
Reel FX  
Tobi Muir  
Scene Safe  
Luscious Catering

#### EXTRAS

Caretaker  
Old Lady 1  
Old Lady 2  
Young Bird

Chris Sellars  
Joyce Irving  
Barbara Charnley  
Jon Baxter

#### SECOND UNIT

1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director  
Director of Photography  
Focus Puller

Natasha Romaniuk  
Simon Riera  
Andrew McGeorge

Stills Publicity

Louise Hyatt

VFX  
Assistant Editor

Puck Murphy  
Andrew Chaplin

Sound Design  
Sound Engineer

Rachel Shearer  
Dick Reade

Composer

Dean Roberts  
Jenny Lange

Post Production

Digital Post

Film Out

Weta

Film Processing  
Post Production House  
Film Stock  
Cameras Supplied by

Filmlab  
Digital Post  
Kodak  
Panavision