

2006 Official Selection - Clermont Ferrand International  
Short Film Festival

# *break*



## PRESSKIT

I N T E R N A T I O N A L   S A L E S

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**NEW ZEALAND FILM**

## **Essential Information**

Writer/Director /Choreographer	Shona McCullagh
Producer	Ashley Stuart Coupland
Production Company:	Rogue /Human Garden Prods
Technical Information	35mm
Sound:	Stereo L & R
Video Format:	Beta SP
Video Format Ratio:	16 x 9
Running Time	13'40"
Country of Production	New Zealand
Date of completion	2005
Sales	Juliette Veber The New Zealand Film Commission email <a href="mailto:juliette@nzfilm.co.nz">juliette@nzfilm.co.nz</a> Tel: +64 4 382 7686

## **Log Line**

Through the eyes of a boy and the language of dance, a mother struggles with a decision that will shatter her family

## **Short Synopsis**

A long-term relationship is ending; set in rural new Zealand a depressed mother makes the difficult decision to leave her son and partner.

The film explores the relationship a nine-year-old boy has with his mother and the ultimate loss of his trust

## **Festival Awards**

2006 Runner-up, Best Dance Film – ReelDance International Dance on Screen Festival, Australia/New Zealand

2006 Winner, People's Choice Award – ReelDance International Dance on Screen Festival, Australia/New Zealand

## **Festival Screenings**

2006 In Competition, Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival, France

2006 IndieLisboa Lisbon Independent Film Festival, Portugal

2006 ReelDance International Dance on Screen Festival, Australia/New Zealand

2006 Cinedans Festival, Amsterdam

2006 Antipodes St Tropez Film Festival, France

2006 MIC Homegrown Film Festival, New Zealand

2006 Telecom New Zealand Film Festival, New Zealand

2006 Mill Valley Film Festival, USA

2006 Festival Corpi Urbani (Urban Bodies), Genova, Italy

2006 Wairoa Maori Film Festival, New Zealand

2006 Hofer Filmtage, 40<sup>th</sup> Hof International Film Festival, Germany

## **Director – Shona McCullagh**

### **Director's Notes**

The film originated with the choreographic idea of a suspension of the natural laws of gravity. It occurred to me that yearning was the emotional equivalent of a suspension of a body in time and space. Devising a story where a character yearned to leave but was compelled to stay provided the emotional and movement tension I needed to explore this idea.

All of my films have begun in a similar way, a simple movement idea teased out to reveal characters and a problem that must be resolved. Again I wanted the movement alone to tell the story and in this film I have enjoyed the innocence a child's body reveals, even in stillness and his placement in relation to adults.

The child in one scene "plaits" his playful movement amidst the ghastly argument of the parents – I was interested in the different physical levels we live in.

The film's ideas and rigging techniques were developed over a long period of time with the dancers and rigger Scottie Anderson.

### **Director's Bio**

*Dip.Dance ;MNOZM; NZ Arts Foundation Laureate*

Shona holds a unique position in New Zealand as an outstanding film director, dancer/ choreographer, filmmaker and educator.

Shona's first two films have achieved international recognition and unprecedented sales for NZ work featuring dance as a narrative medium. Her first film, *Hurtle*, won several international awards, including the Paula Citron Award for Choreography for Camera at the Moving Pictures Festival in Toronto and screened at Sundance in 2000. Her second film, *fly*, won the Australasian 2002 Reeldance Awards and was selected to screen on the BBC's Shortest Night Short Film Festival and was in the Official Selection at Clermont-Ferrand in 2003.

In 2002 Shona was named a New Zealand Arts Foundation Arts Laureate and in 2003 she was awarded Creative New Zealand's inaugural Senior Choreographic Fellowship.

Shona researched the software *Isadora* as her fellowship activity and developed a series of installations for dancers and non-dancers utilising the performance interactive software. In 2004 Shona created choreography for three feature films, *Perfect Creature*, *The Lion*, *the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *King Kong*. She also created a work on the Royal New Zealand Ballet company for their initial 2005 season. Shona has recently completed her 3rd dance film titled *break* which was the only New Zealand film to be accepted for competition at the prestigious Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival in France.

She recently co-directed Nutcracker for television and is currently preparing a work for the New Zealand School of Dance, developing interactive installations and a feature film script.

## **Cast**

### ***Ursula Robb***

Ursula's career began at nine with ballet and Jazz classes in New Zealand. She credits her three years at the NZ school of dance as providing her with an adaptable dance approach. After graduating, she danced professionally for six years in New Zealand working mainly with Douglas Wright and Shona McCullagh. Ursula is currently a member of one of Europe's most prestigious dance companies Rosas, working for Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker.

### ***Thomas Kiwi***

Thomas is a man of many talents. His skills cover everything from dancing, acting, performing arts, acrobatics, stunts and horse riding. He has film and TV credits in Lord of the Rings, Xena, Hercules and The Merchant of Venice.

### ***Arlo Gibson***

Arlo now twelve years old learns tap dance and piano and is a medieval enthusiast.

## **Crew**

### ***Producer – Ashley Stuart Coupland***

Ashley has worked in film and television for over 10 years. She started in the art department working on commercials and music videos in London before moving into drama. She currently works as an executive producer / producer in Auckland. Her last short film "Tiga e le iloa" screened at festivals around the world including Sundance, Montreal, Hoff, New York, Maui and Hawaii. She is currently working on a script for her first feature film.

### ***DOP – John Cavill***

John has over 20 years experience in film, television and commercials as camera op / DOP. He now concentrates on feature film drama and his wide range of credits include 2<sup>nd</sup> unit DOP on King Kong, main unit DOP on River Queen, 'A' camera op on Master and Commander: Far Side of the World, and a range of main unit and 2<sup>nd</sup> unit DOP roles on the Lord of the Rings trilogy.

## ***Original Music – David Long***

David has performed and composed music in a wide range of musical styles and genres for both the stage and screen. He has won awards for best television dramas score and his impressive career includes co-composing 'cultural music' and the 'sound of the ring' for peter jackson's lord of the ring Trilogy.

## ***Editor – Tim Woodhouse***

Tim has been editing for 20 years and has worked at abc (Australia) and BBc (London) and has edited projects that have screened on networks around the world. A documentary specialist, tim has worked on 'coffee tea or me', 'haunting Douglas' and 'sheilas 28 years on' that have screened at festivals in Sydney, Melbourne, san Francisco, London, Vancouver and Rotterdam.