

CAMPING WITH CAMUS



Presskit



TEL: 64 4 382 7680 FAX: 64 4 384 9719 PO BOX 11 546 WELLINGTON

LEVEL 2 THE FILM CENTRE 119 JERVOIS QUAY WELLINGTON NEW ZEALAND
www.nzfilm.co.nz marketing@nzfilm.co.nz

Production Notes

Writer: Alan Erson
Director: Alan Erson
Producer: Richard Thomas
Production Company: First Hand Productions

Colour 11 minutes 35 mm 1:1:85 Dolby Digital

Tone

Amateur philosopher Uncle Blick teaches Hugh and Rodney surprising lessons in cricket, women and truth.

Synopsis

One summer at a camping ground, amateur philosopher Uncle Blick (60) and his nephew Hugh (18) are left to look after Rodney (9) by Uncle Blick's wife Aunt Janice and Rodney's mother Mrs Rasmussen.

Uncle Blick entices Rayleen Lamarge, an unattached women of around his age, into his caravan on the pretext that a biography of philosopher Albert Camus is actually about cricket, Rayleen's passion.

Meanwhile Hugh, while trying to talk philosophy with Phyllis, Rayleen's daughter, incites Phyllis to kiss him. Rodney catches Blick in the arms of Rayleen. Rodney says he'll tell. Uncle Blick and Hugh engage in mad behaviour culminating in Blick standing on his caravan and urinating on its TV aerial while singing French opera.

When Aunt Janice and Mrs Rasmussen return Rodney tells them everything. They don't believe him.

Director's Notes

Far from the cafes of the Seine's Left Bank, Uncle Blick pursues a rich intellectual life. The caravan park, suburbia shrunk and transported, is Uncle Blick's domain. A lesser mind may have succumbed to the grotesque proximity of fellow campers, the obscene clutter of Rodney's nine year old imagination, but Blick is reading his favourite philosopher Albert Camus. In his head at least, he lights another Gauloise, orders a third Pernod and gets down to metaphysics with other fine minds.

Camping with Camus is a movie of ideas and the itch of lust. It is lightly comic and seriously absurd. It is the story of the beleaguered but noble state of the intellectual in contemporary life and a lascivious old man who uses smart tricks to seduce and get away with it.

But philosophy also fails in the film. Apprentice philosopher Hugh manages to talk his way out of the arms of Phyllis. Lovely, frank and by far the most pleasant character in the camp, Phyllis is wise to Blick's bullshit and open to Hugh's awkward tenderness. Fuck Socrates, she says. But

Hugh is too much in awe of the world to take such sensible advice.

Phyllis' mother Rayleen understands Blick best. His rich exposition of the glories of cricket bowls her over. She is happy to play along with his ruse to get her into his caravan. He's no oil painting but then neither is she and at their age desire moves the mind well before the flesh.

In the end Rodney's sharp literal mind is no match for Blick's experience and theatrical daring. But Blick's camping ground triumph is at odds with the world outside where the mean, clinical and ugly mostly win. For the ten minutes of *Camping with Camus*, enjoy Blick's absurd flourish and small victory.

Credits

Cast

Uncle Blick	Jonathan Hardy
Rayleen	Brenda Kendall
Phyllis	Jessica van der Schaaf
Hugh	Daniel Meade
Rodney	Hunter Macdonald
Aunt Janice	Christine Bartlett
Mrs Ransumeen	Celia Nicholson

Crew

screenplay written and directed by	Alan D'Arcy Erson
producer	Richard Thomas
from <i>The Philosopher</i> by	Owen Marshall
executive producers	Frame Up Films
director of photography	Leon Narbey
editor	Tim Woodhouse
art director	Emma Muir
sound design	Dick Reade
music	John Charles
production manager	Robert Rowe

Director's Biography

Alan D'Arcy Erson is a successful New Zealand documentary maker.

He has made critically acclaimed documentaries for television in genres ranging from the off-beat verite *Flatmates* through popular films in the award winning *Heartland* and *Inside New Zealand* series, to historical films like *The Game of Our Lives* and *Nuclear Reaction*.

He recently completed the spectacular Himalayan wildlife film *At the Edge* and has begun research on four science films for an international audience.

Camping with Camus is his first purely dramatic film. His second, the short film *Grace*, is in post production. His first feature is in development.

Alan holds a Masters degree in Chemistry and a post-graduate diploma in Journalism.

Director's Filmography

NB: only films listed - no TV work listed, or magazine work or documentaries

2000

Writer/Director
Camping with Camus
Short Film

Writer/Director
Grace
Short Film

Writer feature film scripts
Service Station Story
The Burning Boy

1997

Writer film scripts
Vim Brothers
All Barred Up.

Producer's Biography

Richard Thomas was for ten years a social documentary director for BBC TV. He worked on the award winning MAN ALIVE series for whom he produced some forty films.

He held at Australian Film and TV School, Australian Broadcasting Corporation and TVNZ.

He now has a part time role as Executive Producer of Natural History New Zealand's WILD ASIA series. With a budget of \$12million, it is arguably the most expensive documentary series ever produced in this country. It is certainly the first major international natural history series to be produced for High Definition television.

