

EELING PRODUCTIONS & THE NEW ZEALAND FILM COMMISSION SHORT FILM FUND

eeling



DIRECTED BY PETER McCULLY
WRITTEN BY FRANCES EDMOND
PRODUCED BY MAILE DAUGHERTY

1:2 Colour 11 minutes 35mm

Sales: Juliette Veber, New Zealand Film. juliette@nzfilm.co.nz
www.nzfilm.co.nz
www.eelingfilm.co.nz





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CONTENTS

- 3. Poster (version A)
- 4. Poster (version B)
- 5. Synopsis
- 6. Director's Statement
- 7. Writer's Statement
- 8. Producer's Statement
- 9. Production Stills
- 10. Contact
- 11. Cast and Crew

**FREEDOM CAN BE
A FORCE OF NATURE**

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EELING PRODUCTIONS & THE NEW ZEALAND FILM COMMISSION SHORT FILM FUND "EELING" STARRING INGRID PARK JEFF SZUSTERMAN
CINEMATOGRAPHER LEON NARBAY EDITOR JOCHEN FITZHERBERT ART DIRECTOR BRENT HARGREAVES VISUAL EFFECTS ALBEDO VFX
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SHUCHI KOTHARI & SARINA PEARSON PRODUCER MAILE DAUGHERTY WRITER FRANCES EDMOND DIRECTOR PETER McCULLY



1:2 Colour 35mm
11 minutes

SALES JULIETTE VEEBER, NEW ZEALAND FILM
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TAGLINE

FREEDOM CAN BE
A FORCE OF NATURE.

SYNOPSSES (VARIOUS WORD LENGTHS)

A discontented and apathetic young rural woman spends her days renovating the country villa she shares with her often absent husband. A regular attempt to capture eels for their dinner-plates creates an encounter between the woman and an eel. One night the eel crawls into her bed and, sensing her loneliness, makes love to her. Incapable of understanding his wife's overwhelming connection with the eels, her husband kills her lover. Unable and unwilling to forget this mystic affair she is drawn to the eels' riverbed, where she chooses to join them. (91 words)

A discontented and lonely young rural woman is seduced by eels - the keepers of the land. Incapable of understanding his wife's overwhelming connection with the eels, her husband kills her lover. Unable to forget this mystic affair she is drawn to the eels' riverbed, where she chooses to join them. (50 words)

A discontented young rural woman is seduced by eels - the keepers of the land. The mystic affair breaks her free of her apathetic marriage and draws her into the eels' realm. (31 words)

A discontented wife is seduced by eels - the keepers of the land. The mystic encounter draws her into the eels' realm. (21 words)





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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT: PETER McCULLY

Eeling is a story with a clear narrative combined with metaphoric and symbolic themes and compelling visual moments. Upon reading Frances Edmond's script I recalled an exhibit of paintings by Auckland artist Derek March featuring eels that had greatly moved me. It has been Derek's dark and atmospheric landscapes which have inspired my approach to realizing the script in visual terms. This depiction of the river and the surrounding landscape has been brought to life using live action filmed plates, CGI, matte paintings and photographic textures.

The heart of the film is the emotional state of our heroine. As a script without dialogue, the depiction of this state relies on strong performances from the actress and supporting actors along with sound design and a unique visual treatment. Placing the heroine and her partner within a world that seems "painted" creates a subtle feeling of unreality. This idea that their modern world is out of step with the natural world forms the basis for the film. Like the straight lines of the house that oppose the curves of nature her home, her world, is not aligned to the natural order which exists right outside her window.

Residing in New Zealand most of the population live but a short drive from unadulterated nature. Yet it is still so easy to forget how much of our identity is derived from the land, and how lost we would feel without it.



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WRITER'S NOTES: FRANCES EDMOND

The *Eeling* story came to me after going eeling with my extended family, in the Tukituki River in Hawkes Bay - farming country. One of the stories told at the time was about eels being left in the washing tub at the farmhouse and escaping when the washing machine hose emptied into the tub. The idea appealed to me.

I am interested in the border between what actually happens and what we imagine might happen, or what we might want to happen - the notion of magic realism - and especially what film can do with this. There is no escaping the presence of mythology surrounding eels in Aotearoa, New Zealand. These are stories that surround and emanate from the natural world – a world that mythically eels are seen as guardians of. These kinds of stories which address our relationship to the natural world have the power to challenge us to see the world differently, to change our way of thinking and feeling and even to give us a way out - real or imagined – of impossible situations.



PRODUCER'S NOTES: MAILE DAUGHERTY

The successful realisation of the *Eeling* script relied on layering technical and creative methods to create a world embedded in both reality and mystic fantasy. Building upon the script, as the contributions of design, performance, sound and visual manipulation were each added, the story become embellished. Through the talents of our craftsmen, *Eeling* evolved, bringing forth greater visual storytelling so essential in dialogue-free filmmaking.

The practical challenge was distributing resources across the greenscreen shoot and the heavy visual effects and post-production needs of the film. Only with the cooperation and extreme generosity of both production and post-production teams was the film able to be made.

The visual style of the film was created using three primary components. After careful storyboarding the characters were filmed in 4K on the Red One Camera with key props and set pieces against a greenscreen. In post the lion's share of the

work was in the design and creation of the environments.

From the house to the river, all were constructed using digital matte painting techniques where real world photographic and moving footage reference were incorporated into digital 3D environments. Thirdly, 3D eels were modeled, textured and animated.

Once these three components of live action, environmental matte painting and 3D animation were composited together, the overall style based on Derek March's rich painting technique was applied. This treatment served to tie the separate components together into one seamless work – expressing a world where, like our lead character, the audience is invited to have a tactile relationship with the landscape and its creatures.

PRODUCTION STILLS





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CAST & CREW

Woman
Man
Eelman
Directed by
Written by
Produced by
Executive Producers

Production Manager
Production Assistant
Director of Photography
Editor
Art Director
Music and Sound Design
Concept Artist
1st Assistant Director
2nd Assistant Director
Script Supervisor
Editors

Underwater Cinamatographer
Focus Puller
2nd Camera Assistant
Gaffer
Best Boy
Grip
Grip/Gaffer Assistant
Sound Recordists

File Wrangler
Ms Park's Stand-in
Carpenter
Art Department Assistant
Wardrobe
Makeup Assistants

Stills Photographer
Unit Manager
Catering

Production Accountant

Ingrid Park
Jeff Szusterman
Matt Gibbons
Peter McCully
Frances Edmond
Maile Daugherty
Sarina Pearson
Shuchi Kothari
Angela da Silva
Sarah-jane Vercoe
Leon Narbey
Jochen Fitzherbert
Brent Hargreaves
Andrew McDowall
Derek March
Anton Steel
Estelle Chatenoud
Naomi Bowden
Jochen Fitzherbert
Zane Holmes
Sigmund Spath
Bruce Polwart
Alex Campbell
Adrian Greshoff
Tony Lumsden
Kimberly Porter
Frederick Muller
Al Seconi
Andy Shur
Andrew McCully
Estelle Chatenoud
Paul Hargreaves
Tony Tia
Hayley Marlowe
Maz Melhuishi
Samantha Carins Morrison
James McCully
Nicky Tremaine
Five Loaves
Rocket Kitchen
Sue McCully

Equipment Hire

Red Camera
Safety
Security

Casting
Visual Effects and
Creature Animation
VFX Supervisor
3D Animators

3D Matchmover
Senior Composer
Compositors

2D Assistants

Matte Painter
Title Design
Typography
Accountants
Dolby Mix Facility
Re-recording Mixer
File conversions/Compile
Post Production
Colourist
Colourist Assistant
Film Output

Thank you
Toybox, Westward Studios, Orakei Dive Centre, Ronnie Hape, Stu Turner, Jow Fisher, Juliette Verber, Alistair & Maureen Crombie, Bella Akroyd, Peter Roband, Andrew McCully, Kritteka Gregory, Cathy Kennedy, Tracy Powell, Trevor Walker Signs, Elena Doyle, Zane Holmes, Jochen Fitzherbert, Nancy Dobrochowski, Sue McCully, Scott Webster, NZ Eel Processing Ltd.

Filmed on Red

Rocket Rentals
Metro Films
Albedo VFX
Scene Safe
James McCully
Andrew McCully
Catch Casting

Albedo VFX
Peter McCully
Thandu Raj
Cameron Smith
Scott Carey
Petr Rohr
Andrew McCully
Sarah Jane Lloyd
Valerie Tai
Elena Doyle
Cathy Kennedy
Kritteka Gregory
Tracy Powell
Pierre Marquies
pHd3 Design
Peter Roband
Don Hounsell Accounting
DigiPost
Bruno-Barrett-Garnier
Toybox
Images and Sound
Paul Lear
Alana Cotton
Shaw Studios

A woman with dark hair, wearing a floral-patterned robe, stands in a doorway. She has her right hand raised to her head and her left hand is slightly raised. The word "feeling" is written in a glowing, light blue, cursive script across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the woman and the doorway. The background is a dimly lit interior with a door and a wall.

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FESTIVALS

2011 New Zealand International Film Festival, NZ

