

## ELLEN IS LEAVING PRESS KIT

### PRODUCTION NOTES

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Director	Michelle Savill
Writer	Martha Hardy-Ward
Producer	Desray Armstrong
Executive Producer	Gaylene Preston
Production Company	Paint by Numbers Ltd
Director of Photography	Andrew Stroud
Editor	Simon Price
Sound Designer	James Hayday
Country of production	New Zealand
Date of completion	2012
Shooting Format	Arri Alexa
Screening Format	DCP or HDCAM
Ratio	DCP: 1080psf 23.978 HDCAM: 1.2:35
Duration	15 minutes 46 seconds
Genre	Slacker-anti-romantic-drama/comedy

### LOGLINE

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On the eve of departing overseas Ellen makes the fateful decision to gift her boyfriend a new girlfriend.

### SYNOPSIS

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Ellen is leaving because she can. Travel is the cancer of modern relationships. Ellen needs to find her sad-sack of a boyfriend, Hamish, a nice leaving gift to try and help the mutual breakup feel a bit better. When Hamish jokingly suggests she get him a new girlfriend Ellen realises it's actually the perfect idea and sets out to find him the right girl. But when things start going a bit better than planned, Ellen starts to lose her nerve. Can she really give him up?

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

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I faced Ellen's predicament around the time Martha was writing this film. My boyfriend wanted to move to the UK and I wanted to stay in Wellington so we decided to mutually break up and have a party to celebrate the end of a good relationship. The party had a famous ex-couples theme, Charles and Diana were there, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. Even Woody Allen and Mia Farrow showed up and were very cordial! This idea was channelled into a short film that I knew would appeal to many others. The choices that are open to us, in this time, in

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this place, at this age, is the relationship cancer of the young adult generation and that is the bitter-sweet territory I wanted to explore with ELLEN IS LEAVING.

### **DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

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After completing her Bachelor of Media Arts with Honours, her student film BETTY BANNED SWEETS, was accepted into several high profile, international film festivals including Melbourne International Film Festival 2008 where she was invited to participate in the Melbourne International Film Festival 'Accelerator' Programme. The film went on to screen at Gijon International Film Festival 2008, Aspen Short Film Festival 2009, International Festival of Rotterdam 2009, Edinburgh International Film Festival 2009 and was in competition at the Clermont-Ferrand International Festival 2009.

Her second film ELAINE RIDES AGAIN premiered at the New Zealand International Film Festival 2011, Show Me Shorts Festival 2011 and was in competition at the 58th Cork Film Festival 2011.

In 2011, Michelle spent three months in New York working as an intern in the script development department of Killer Films, a company at the forefront of independent American cinema headed by producers Christine Vachon and Pam Koffler.

Her most recent short ELLEN IS LEAVING was a finalist in the 'New Zealand's Best' Short Film Programme at the 2012 New Zealand International Film Festival and went on to screen In-Competition at the Chicago International Film Festival.

When Michelle is not working on a film she is probably singing and playing the omnichord in Wellington band The Sing Songs

### **WRITER'S BIOGRAPHY**

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**Martha Hardy-Ward** has an MA in Scriptwriting from the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University.

She has experience writing for television, writing on both series of the Emmy award winning online drama Reservoir Hill and more recently Boy vs Girl. She has experience in writing for theatre and radio and is passionate about telling emotionally engaging, character-driven stories.

### **PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY**

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## ELLEN IS LEAVING PRESS KIT

**Desray Armstrong** began her career in screen production in 2004 and has worked as a freelance Production Co-ordinator, Production Manager, Line Producer and Producer in both television and film.

With a focus on conscious, compelling and informative storytelling, she set up production company StanStrong Ltd in 2007, which she owns and operates with Producer/Director Chelsea Winstanley. Her television producing credits include documentaries "Tame Iti: Man Behind the Moko" and "Ka Tipu te Whaihanga / And the Arts Flourished" (which she also directed) and documentary series "Haumanu" which explored the revival of traditional Maori instruments.

"Meathead" directed by Sam Holst, was Desray's first short film as a producer and was selected for a number of prestigious film festivals including: Cannes Film Festival 2011 (in competition), Chicago Film Festival 2011 (where it won the Silver Plaque), Montreal Film Festival 2011, Melbourne International Film Festival 2011, New Zealand Film Festival 2011 and most recently won the Crystal Bear at Berlinale 2012.

### **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY**

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**Gaylene Preston** has been making independent feature films and documentaries in New Zealand for 35 years. An innovative writer, director, and producer, Gaylene has insisted that it is possible to live in New Zealand and contribute New Zealand stories to global cinema, and her award-winning work has screened extensively at international festivals including Venice, Sundance, Toronto, London, Chicago, Sydney, Melbourne and New Zealand. She was the first filmmaker to receive an Arts Foundation Laureate Award and is an Officer of the NZ Order Of Merit for services to the film industry.

She most recently produced and directed the ILLUMINATE installation for the exterior wall of the Auckland Museum for ANZAC week honouring the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

STRONGMAN THE TRAGEDY, a docu/drama for which she was executive producer, screened last week on TV3.

Preston is currently executive-producing a feature documentary, TATARIKIHI The Children of Parihaka, by director Paora Joseph.

### **ACTING CREDITS**

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Ellen	Tai Berdinner Blades
Hamish	Jack Sergent-Shadbolt
Joan	Rose Young

ELLEN IS LEAVING PRESS KIT

**FULL END CREDITS**

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**Directed by**  
Michelle Savill

**Written by**  
Martha Hardy-Ward

**Produced by**  
Michelle Savill and Desray Armstrong

**Executive Producer**  
Gaylene Preston

**Ellen** Tai Berdinner Blades

**Hamish** Jack Sergent-Shadbolt

**Joan** Rose Young

**Director of Photography** Andrew Stroud

**Film Editor** Simon Price

**Assistant Editor** Phyllisophia Jason Smith

**Sound Designer** James Hayday

**Pot Luckers** Jeremy Liss, Jonathan Power, Hadleigh Walker, Eli Kent, Clare Wilson, Anna Edgington, Clare O'Loughlin, Beth Brash, Simon Brash

**Redhead 1** Angela James

**Redhead 2** Erin Banks

**Production Co-ordinator** Olivia Scott  
**Production Assistant** Lizzie Dunn

**Focus Pullers** Jonny Yarrell  
Tom Markham-Short  
Charles Edwards

**Clapper Loaders** Andreas Mahn  
Moss Bowering-Scott

**Gaffer** Adrian Hebron  
**Lighting Assistants** Jared O'Neale

## ELLEN IS LEAVING PRESS KIT

David Brownjohn

**Sound Recordist** Ken Saville  
**Boom Operators** Nic Widfeldt  
Ferrand Peek

**Production Design** Heather Hayward & Tessa Peach

**Pot Luck Food Stylists** Lesley Parker  
Samuel Burt,  
Gradon Diprose  
Asher Norris

**Costume Designer** Kristy Palleson

**Make Up Artist** Leanne Hoare

**Stills Photographer** Jenn Hadley

**Unit Manager** Katie Frost  
**Catering supplied by** Deborah Logan  
Paula Sim

**Unit Equipment supplied by** Josanne Tane

**Camera Equipment supplied by** Queenstown Cameras Ltd  
CameraWorks Ltd  
Panavision Ltd  
Rocket Rentals Ltd

**Lighting equipment supplied by** Portsmouth Ltd

**Insurance** Crombie Lockwood Ltd

**Legal** David McLaughlin

**Second Assistant Editor** Alex Backhouse

**Colourist** Alana Cotton  
**Online Facility** Images and Sound  
**Credit Design** Luc McPake

**Dialogue Editor** Darren Maynard  
**Foley** Jonathan Bruce  
**Sound Re-recording Mixer** Phil Burton - Underground Sound  
**Composition** Mark Brenndorfer  
**Second Composer** Jeremy Liss

“Circles”

Written by Jade Farley and Gwen Norcliffe

## ELLEN IS LEAVING PRESS KIT

Pot luck version performed by Jeremy Liss  
Courtesy of Lil Chief Records

“Exploding”  
Written by Jade Farley and Gwen Norcliffe  
Performed by The Gladeyes  
Courtesy of Lil Chief Records

“Blanket”  
Written and Performed by Bachelorette  
Courtesy of Annabel Alpers

“Die Young”  
Written and Performed by HAPPY TRENDY  
Courtesy of Dylan Khotin-Foote

“Harriet and Angela”  
“Heartbreaker”  
Written and Performed by The Plot Club  
Courtesy of Michelle Savill, Jeremy Liss, Gradon Diprose

### **THANKS TO:**

Anita Burnside - Avalon Studios, Tash Barneveld, One Yarn Bandits  
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Beth Brash, Gradon Diprose, Paul Neason, Haley Vujcich, Erin Banks  
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The New Zealand Film and Television School, Wellington City Council, Pandora

### **VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

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Michelle Turner, Angela Littlejohn  
Nicci Lock, Delia Shanly - Film Wellington  
Robin Wilson, Nic Smillie, Kevin Magill, Emma Slade, Tony Keddy  
Josanne Tane, Jonathan Woodford-Robinson, Linda Wall, John Harding

### **NZ Film Commission Short Film Manager**

Lisa Chatfield

in association with Fresh Shorts  
New Zealand Film Commission

ELLEN IS LEAVING PRESS KIT

NZ Film Logo

Images and Sound Logo    GPP Logo    Portsmouth Logo    Panavision Logo  
Queenstown Cameras    CameraWorks    Underground  
Sound Logo    DigiPost Logo    Sirocco Logo

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