

FALLING SPARROWS



Presskit

Production Notes

Writer: Murray Keane
Director: Murray Keane
Producer: William Grieve
Production Company: Morrison Grieve

Colour 12 minutes 35 mm 1:1.85 Dolby Digital

Short Synopsis

A bunch of boys in a backyard blitzkrieg – war's a game and nobody dies. They're playing it like they've seen it in the movies. But they have no idea how real it's going to get...

About the Film

"There is special providence in the fall of a sparrow" Ham. V.2

Falling Sparrows is a thirteen minute drama on 35mm, written and directed by Murray Keane. Murray's background is as an actor but since his looks began to fade he crossed over to the other side and has been a full time director for the last six years.

Falling Sparrows is the story of two warring factions, except this war is just a game held between six young boys.

His film could best be described as **Saving Private Ryan** for eight year olds. Most young boys have played war games at some time or another. Even when forbidden by politically correct parents to play with toy guns, boys will still pick up a wooden spoon and shoot someone with it. The difference in this kind of war is that usually no-one really dies.

Set in a rural Kiwi landscape **Falling Sparrows** examines war in its many incarnations. As a glamorous and exciting game, as a piece of cinema, as a part of history and as a reality.

Falling Sparrows stars the hot young talent of tomorrow. Though aged only seven to eleven all the cast bring an enormous degree of acting experience. Daniel Logan who plays Mark is presently shooting the latest Star Wars film. Other veteran performers are Tyler Read as James; Jack Fox as Geoff; Nikola Jaksic as Buzz; Elliot Lawless as Chris and Joseph Main as Cedric.

The director recalls, "in the small country town I came from the local park had a large war memorial statue right in the middle. With some mates help I scaled up the statue and left a large rubbish bin on its head, which we thought was hilarious.

This film is my way of making amends."

Credits

Cast

Mark	Daniel Logan
Geoff	Jack Fox
Buzz	Nikola Jaksic
James	Tyler Read
Chris	Elliot Lawless
Cedric	Joeph Main

Crew

Producer	William Grieve
Director	Murray Keane
Writer	Murray Keane
Script Advisor	Fiona Samuel
DOP	Rewa Harre
Camera Operator	Rhys Duncan
Focus Puller	Julian Boshier
Sound Recordists	Dave Madigan and Tony Johnson
Boom Operator	Adam Martin
Production Manager & 1st Assistant Director	Mark Harlen
2nd Assistant Director	Nikki Downey
Script Supervisors	Melissa Lawrence and Sarah Howard
Production Secretary	Felicity Letcher
Runner	Edward Geddes

Crew cont...

Unit Manager & Nurse	Carol Martin
Production Designer	Carin Nicola
Make up Supervisor	Trish Cohen
Make up	Emily Stewart
Wardrobe Standby	Jasmine Dickenson
Art Dept Assistant	Jeremy Harre
Stunt Double	Robert Lee
Special Effects	Gunner Ashford
Gaffer	Ian Philp
Best Boy	Chris Peacock
Editor	Eric De Beus
Editing Assitants	Phil Woolams/Scott Morgan
Sound Designer	Chris Burt
Music/Score	Neill Duncan and Jason Smith
Video Post Production	Images Post
Neg Matching	Finecut
Laboratory	Atlab NZ

Director's Notes

This short film contains exciting action sequences, explosions, runaway vehicles, guns and hand-to-hand combat.

This visual intensity will be enhanced by the heightened soundtrack with its **real** bullets and bombs. I don't see this as a gimmick, but a means to direct the audience right into the imaginations of the little boys. I hope that the audience will enter their world through the initial sound and fury of the battle sequence - then, when this is revealed to be 'just a game', the film takes a gentler pace and a more composed visual quality as the focus shifts more to character.

The visual style will emphasise the contrast between the light and space of the panoramic rural landscape and the intensity of the in-combat close ups of the boys. Fast cutting and hand-held camera during the battle sections contrast with the low angle wide horizon set-ups of the drama in between.

Although it's ambitious, I think the **Saving Private Ryan** analogy is a good one, because although that film opens with an amazing visual and soundtrack onslaught in the form of a battle, it's a long time before that happens again. The central part of the film is much quieter and more character-oriented - getting to know the group of men on the mission before the climactic battle at the end. **Falling Sparrows** has a similar structure in miniature - I would like the scale to be

as epic, but the length is condensed and, of course, the soldiers are children.

I hope the visual style, and the style of the performances, to be a balance of dynamic action and excitement with a lovely gravity and stillness. I believe this best serves the themes, and although it is a short story about children at play, I think the themes are large - innocence and mortality and the nature of war. These themes are important to me - they are where the story has come from.

The Director

Murray Keane's first short film **Prickle** premiered in the Wellington film festival in 1994. Before that Murray has worked primarily as an actor since graduating from the National Drama School in 1985. Since **Prickle** Murray has directed television drama such as **Shortland Street** and **Jackson's Wharf**, and lately a new sitcom for TV3. Murray also continues to act in a variety of roles including Gibbo in the award winning **Home Movie**, and as the now deceased Earl from **Shortland Street**. Murray, like everyone else in the country, is now attempting to get a big film up and running that will hopefully be both culturally rewarding and make shitloads of dough.