

PREDICAMENT



PRESS KIT

PREDICAMENT

CONTENTS

Fact Sheet	3
Synopsis, Tagline	4
ABOUT THE FILM	5-8
ABOUT THE PRODUCTION	9-16
ABOUT THE CAST	
Jemaine Clement plays Spook	17
Heath Franklin plays Mervyn Toebeck	18
Hayden Frost plays Cedric Williamson	19
Tim Finn plays Martin Williamson	19-20
Rose McIver plays Maybelle Zimmerman	21
ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS	
Jason Stutter – director, writer	22
Sue Rogers – producer	23
Vincent Burke – co-producer	24
Simon Raby – cinematographer	25
John Harding – production designer	25
Lesley Burkes-Harding – costume designer	26
Jonathan Woodford-Robinson – editor	27
Plan 9 – composer	27
FULL CREDITS LIST	28-35

FACT SHEET

PREDICAMENT

Production company: Midnight Films
in association with New Zealand Film Commission, NZ on Air,
Fulcrum Media Finance and South Taranaki District Council
International Sales: NZ Film Sales
NZ distributor: Rialto Distribution

Director: Jason Stutter
Producer: Sue Rogers
Screenplay: Jason Stutter (based on the novel by R.H. Morrieson)
Co- producer: Vincent Burke
Executive Producer: Jamie Selkirk
Cinematographer: Simon Raby
Editor: Jonathan Woodford-Robinson
Composer: Plan 9 (Dave Donaldson, Steve Roche, Janet Roddick)
Production designer: John Harding
Costume designer: Lesley Burkes-Harding
Casting Director: Rachel Bullock

Cast:

Jemaine Clement as Spook
Heath Franklin as Mervyn Toebeck
Hayden Frost as Cedric Williamson
Tim Finn as Martin Williamson
Tina Grenville-Cagwin as Granny Williamson
Rose McIver as Maybelle Zimmerman

Genre: crime comedy
Duration: 98 minutes
Format: 1:2.35
Rating: TBA

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PREDICAMENT

Synopsis:

Naïve teenager Cedric Williamson, conspires with two misfits to photograph and blackmail adulterous couples. When the scam goes wrong they end up with blood on their hands. Tortured by lust, roped into blackmail and possibly an accessory to murder, Cedric is in a predicament.

Tagline:

Three Misfits. One Murder.

PREDICAMENT

ABOUT THE FILM

Predicament is a crime comedy, adapted by director Jason Stutter, from the novel of the same name by Ronald Hugh Morrieson, author of New Zealand classics *Came A Hot Friday* and *The Scarecrow*.

The story sees naïve teenager Cedric Williamson (Hayden Frost), find a friend in the larger-than-life blowhard, Mervyn Toebeck (Heath Franklin). Bullied at school and isolated at home, Cedric is ripe for adventure and Mervyn leads him into a bizarre conspiracy with oddball stranger, the “Spook” (Jemaine Clement).

The three misfits devise a plot to photograph and blackmail adulterous couples ‘making-out’ in the local park. Fired by the promise of revenge against the Bramwells (the wealthy property developers who stole his family’s land) and embarrassed by his gone-mad father (Tim Finn) building an enormous tower in the front yard, Cedric is ready for action.

When they realise they can’t afford to buy a camera for the job, Cedric ingeniously suggests that all they need is a flash bulb, to give the *impression* a photo has been taken.

When they inadvertently “photograph” Maybelle (Rose McIver), the object of Cedric’s teenage fantasies, Cedric’s anxiety levels soar and the plot starts to unravel. He jumps at shadows as he begins to fear the dark side of his new friends.

When the trio con the wrong man, Cedric - tortured by lust, roped into blackmail and possibly an accessory to murder - is in a predicament.

The film stars Emmy Award nominee Jemaine Clement (of *Flight of the Conchords*) as Spook, the intriguing stranger. Cedric’s new friend Mervyn Toebeck is played by Heath Franklin - popular for his comedy character “Heath Franklin’s Chopper” (from Australia’s Channel 10, *Ronnie Johns Half Hour*) - who played to sell-out crowds at the recent New Zealand Comedy Festival with his live comedy show *Make Deadsh*ts History*. Newcomer Hayden Frost, from Wellington, plays Cedric Williamson, the awkward teenager at the centre of the action.

Renowned musician Tim Finn, in his first major film acting role, plays Martin Williamson, Cedric's father and Tina Grenville-Cagwin plays Cedric's grandmother. Rose McIver, who starred as Lindsey Salmon in Peter Jackson's *The Lovely Bones*, is the precocious Maybelle Zimmerman.

Edward Newborn and David Van Horn play the town's detectives and the wealthy Bramwell family is played by Chad Mills (Blair), Brooke Williams (Margot) and Peter Mochrie (Vernon). Carmel McGlone (Rita), Hadleigh Walker (Ernie), James Fletcher, C4's "Jimmy the Dwarf", (Winker) and Peter Dennett (Stanley Toebeck) make up the cast of colourful characters.

Director/writer Jason Stutter says **Predicament** is a crime comedy populated by a bunch of off-beat eccentrics who can be quite frightening at times, "The characters have an undercurrent, but it's definitely a comedy with a heart. Cedric meets two misfits, Mervyn and Spook, who appear to be the best thing that could happen to him - having new friends in his life - but it turns out to be the worst thing. On the other hand, while he goes on this fabulous misadventure, he learns a lot about himself and becomes a much more confident person. What I really love about this story is that Cedric has always been a great person anyway and through his entanglement with Mervyn and Spook he discovers that about himself."

Hayden Frost says his character Cedric is a nervy, unsure teenager desperately trying to figure out what he wants to be: "He's very much a normal teenager but he doesn't realise it. He's subject to all the neurosis and worries that teenagers normally have and he's profoundly affected by the people around him - mainly because they tend to ignore him.

"Cedric thinks Mervyn is not the sort of person that he should trust or hang out with, but he's just blinded by the fact that Mervyn is actually speaking to him in the first place. He thinks Mervyn is a bit shifty, but he doesn't know exactly how shifty."

Heath Franklin elaborates on his character's influence on young Cedric: "Cedric's life is lacking a little bit of zest. He's desperately trying to make a connection with his father and his mother isn't there, so there's a gap in his life. And Mervyn Toebeck strolls up and greases his way into Cedric's life and leads him astray. At the same time, he injects some adventure and gives Cedric a bit of perspective as to why he should have appreciated his life before Mervyn arrived."

Franklin is sympathetic to his character Mervyn's foibles: "Mervyn claims to have been born under an unlucky star, but I think he's the victim of some pretty dodgy parenting - an absent mother and a drunken father. So, without role models, he's constructed his own idea of what a person should be, and he's become a scallywag, a manipulator and a very bad con artist."

The third member of the hapless trio is Spook, played by Jemaine Clement, who says, "Spook hangs out on the fringes of town and he doesn't go out during the day, which explains his pasty complexion. He's almost supernatural in the way that he will just appear somewhere. He has his head filled with a lot of schemes which are only half-baked. He dreams of making it in the Big Smoke and he's always cooking up ideas. At the point we join him in the film he's just come out of jail and meets Mervyn again. And now he has a new scheme. Blackmail.

"He sees Cedric as just a kid and maybe as an opportunity to get some money somehow, since at least Cedric lives in a house and Spook doesn't always live in a house."

Tim Finn, who plays Cedric's father, Martin, sees Cedric's story as a cautionary tale: "Cedric's a callow youth; innocent, bored and lonely. It shows how, because of loneliness and boredom, you can shake hands with the devil. You can stray and get caught up and before you know it, it's worse than you expected. It shows how easy it is to take one little wrong step and end up in a whole heap of trouble."

Finn describes his character, Martin Williamson, as having been humiliated and shamed over losing his family land to the Bramwells: "He retreated into his own head and he's building this tower, which is his obsession. In fact, he ignores everyone, including Cedric, and is only aware of his tower. "It's almost a caricature of the quintessential Dad cliché – a bit unaware, in a daydream, not focussing on what's actually going on. That's actually quite a common failing of many fathers."

Featuring in Cedric's imagination is Maybelle Zimmerman, the precocious young schoolgirl. Rose McIver says Maybelle is aware of Cedric as someone in her class at school, but she doesn't know much about him: "Maybelle is a relatively good girl, but she gets caught up in something she shouldn't, and it obviously turns a little sour.

“I love the title: ‘Predicament’. It’s these lads trying to catch other people in trouble but ending up in a whole lot themselves. It’s a wonderful story.”

Written and directed by Jason Stutter (*Tongan Ninja, Diagnosis Death*), **Predicament** is produced by Sue Rogers (*Home by Christmas, Forgotten Silver, Heaven*) with co-producer Vincent Burke (*Flight of the Albatross*). It is a Midnight Films’ production in association with the New Zealand Film Commission, New Zealand On Air, Fulcrum Media Finance and South Taranaki District Council. Australasian distribution is by Rialto Distribution and international sales are handled by NZ Film.

The director of photography is Simon Raby (*Heaven, When Strangers Appear*), production designer John Harding (*Home by Christmas, Until Proven Innocent*), costume designer Lesley Burkes-Harding (*Home by Christmas, Out of the Blue*), editor Jonathan Woodford-Robinson (*The Warrior’s Way, Eagle vs Shark*) and composers are Dave Donaldson, Steve Roche and Janet Roddick of Plan 9 (*Secondhand Wedding, Tongan Ninja, Perfect Strangers*).

Ronald Hugh Morrieson lived in Hawera, South Taranaki all of his life (1922 –1972). The novel “Predicament” was published posthumously in 1975. His other three novels: “The Scarecrow” (1963), “Pallet on the Floor” (1964), and “Came a Hot Friday” (1976), have all been made into films.

For more information about Ronald Hugh Morrieson, see:

http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/DNZB/alt_essayBody.asp?essayID=5M57

For: Millen, Julia. 'Morrieson, James Ronald Hugh 1922 - 1972'. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007

And: **Ronald Hugh Morrieson – A Biography** by Julia Millen (David Ling Publishing 1996)

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

THE UNDERLYING WORK

When he first read the Ronald Hugh Morrieson novel upon which his film **Predicament** is based, director/writer Jason Stutter says he was laughing out loud and couldn't put it down because it was humorous, entertaining and gripping.

Introduced to the novel by his friend, Plan 9 musician Steve Roche, Stutter was immediately hooked: "I read it and went 'this is fantastic'. Then I rang producer Sue Rogers, with whom I had a number of projects in development, and we set about getting the rights and that started the journey of turning the novel into a screenplay."

In his translation of the book to film Stutter says he wanted to capture his initial excitement about the book for the film's audience. He says, "I didn't want to just make a story using those characters and elements. I wanted to make 'Ronald Hugh Morrieson's Predicament' - a version that he himself would say "Oh yeah, that's my story."

CASTING

A recurring feature of Stutter's films is his casting of comedians, for example Jemaine Clement in *Tongan Ninja*, and Raybon Kan in *Diagnosis Death*. In **Predicament**, he has Clement and Australian Heath Franklin, who takes on his first feature film role as Mervyn Toebeck.

Stutter says, "I love working with stand-up comics. I think they're fantastic actors because they're fearless in the way they just stand in front of an audience on one mark and just deliver gags. That's a fearless human being.

"When I read the novel I immediately thought 'wow, imagine Jemaine as Spook'. He's an incredible comedian. Anyone who can deliver the stuff he does and keep a straight face is unique. He's brought this great voice to Spook. He told me about it and I went 'oh yeah, sounds kind of cool'. Then, when he first delivered it on set we all laughed so much we had tears falling out of our eyes."

Clement says he initially didn't see himself in the role: "Spook is described in the script as being gaunt, rail-like and sickly. He's described as very thin. But I'm not that thin. I'm a respectable 90 kilograms. So I tried to seem thin and weedy by using my voice."

Stutter says he discovered Heath Franklin via the "Harden Up" clips on YouTube: "Someone sent me one of his clips and I thought it was the funniest thing I'd seen, so then I looked at all the *Ronnie Johns* DVDs and I became a fan. We offered Heath the Mervyn Toebeck role without auditioning. I didn't even meet him. I just sent him the script and he loved it, and then we met when he was touring here for the 2009 Comedy Festival, not long before we started filming."

Franklin says he was immediately attracted to the script, "I hadn't come across a film like this. Ever. This is a great story. It never over-reaches and it's nicely told. It's very human and there's a lot of empathy in the writing. The way the characters interact is often very funny and sometimes quite strange, especially Spook. It definitely has some very funny moments and some very dark moments, which are also funny. And some nice heartfelt moments as well."

Although Hayden Frost isn't a stand-up comedian, Stutter discovered some comedic elements in Frost's repertoire which brought an extra dimension to the relationships between the three heroes.

"Hayden's just such a talented actor. While it's true that this is his first on-screen role, his technical skills are incredible and he really 'gets' Cedric."

Stutter cast Frost after a very thorough audition process in which he and casting director Rachel Bullock looked at every boy throughout New Zealand, who fitted the brief for Cedric. They had started looking in Australia when they realized that Hayden Frost was perfect.

"He was the second guy we auditioned and it was uncanny. He walked into the room and we said 'oh my God, it's Cedric'. But the worst thing about finding him so quickly was that we had all these others to see and to compare him with; so Hayden went through three or four pretty intense auditions before we finally committed."

For Frost, part of the attraction of playing Cedric was their similarities. "I am probably more closely related to Cedric than I care to admit," he says. "Thinking back to my early days in high

school, there was a lot of Cedric in the way I was at the time – feeling really awkward and not knowing how to talk to people. I enjoyed having the chance to relive that and to play with it a bit.”

Perhaps the most unusual and striking piece of casting in **Predicament** is iconic musician Tim Finn playing Cedric’s father, Martin Williamson. Stutter says he had always been a fan of Finn’s music and became aware of his talent for comedic performance during a concert at the Wellington Opera House.

“They were having some problems with backstage things and I remember Tim asking for some water and someone brought him this motley little cup and he asked for a towel and they gave him one that looked as if they’d been scrubbing the floor with it. His reaction to those things was very funny and I started thinking of him as someone who understands performance, which of course he has from the very early days of Split Enz.”

Finn says he was thrilled to be offered the role because he was a long-time fan of the Ronald Hugh Morrieson novel, having read it twice over the years. “If I was going to do any film in my life it might as well be this one. It’s come as a gift of the gods, really, to be involved in something I really loved.

“The script seems to be true in all the most important ways to the book and I loved the fact that Jason said he laughed out loud when he read the book and he wanted the film to do that for people.”

Stutter says Rose McIver brings a fresh, believable quality to the character of Maybelle. “She’s just so talented. She gave this character an intelligence that wasn’t apparent in the book. We moved the relationship between Maybelle and Ernie Fox away from the sleaziness that’s in the book and treated them as being in love. We went for the sweetness of young love, which Rose played perfectly.”

McIver says that although she was not familiar with Ronald Hugh Morrieson’s work before reading the script, it reminded her of other New Zealand authors, like Maurice Gee, that she read as she was growing up. “The style was kind of familiar and it reminded me of a nice Kiwi

feel without being too overboard. I'm really looking forward to seeing how Cedric fares with these two older guys and the trouble that he gets himself into."

THE DESIGN AND SETTING

Although it was shot in and around Hawera and Eltham, Morrieson's South Taranaki home and literary inspiration, the film is set in a fictional town and does not attempt to depict reality.

Stutter says, "Even in the book, the story takes place in its own bubble - it's a world which represents an idyllic whole-of-New Zealand. Morrieson doesn't set it in a particular place because it's a story about large, universal themes. So, while we're setting the movie in the 1930s, you're not going to be able to watch it and study what the 30s in New Zealand must have been like.

"I didn't want to modernise Morrieson's story in any way. I wanted to set it in 1935, which is when the book was set, because I think that's the only place the story can be told. However, I didn't want to make a 'period' film, you can make a film that is set in the 30s but still make a contemporary film.

"For example, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is set in 1935 and *Batman* is somewhere in that era, so you can look at the 30s in a whole different way.

"We've got a very modern camera style, we're using original music from 2010 and we have a young and energetic cast, so the 1930s is a setting in the same way as if we'd taken the story and set it on Mars."

Production designer John Harding says that even though the design is a heightened reality a few steps removed from historical accuracy, "It's a very New Zealand story because children ride around in the countryside on bicycles and wish for things just like this to happen. They climb through windows in spooky houses and know that bad things happen in back alleys and are too scared to go there, but the thrill of it draws them in. That's Cedric, and that's how he gets caught up in this con-game."

Harding says he's not overly concerned about historical accuracy because it's not a historical film and he enjoyed the freedom of choosing the best or most suitable design elements from throughout the 1930s.

"Coming out of the 1920s there was a great feeling of life and vibrancy after the 1st World War and there was art deco with its poppy, high contrast colours - purple and yellow, purple and orange, lime green and orange – for example, the colours of great Clarice Cliff ceramics. Synthetic fabric dyes had just been invented and the world embraced colour. It was also close enough to the turn of the century for art nouveau to be still around. So, we could give the villains (the Bramwells) art deco in their house and we could give the Williamsons art nouveau, which is organic with overgrown vines and kind of lumbering and gothic."

A big bonus for the filmmakers was Bridge Street in Eltham, where the majority of the buildings remain largely untouched by the architectural upheavals of the 1980s. The South Taranaki District Council provided the necessary permits and services, while local shop owners embraced the filming process, allowing their shopfronts to be painted, with new names signwritten and windows dressed 1930s-style.

Harding says, "It's a great community and so we were extraordinarily lucky. I thought they would want me to paint all the shops back once we finished, but all except one wanted to keep them exactly as they are. It could become a tourist attraction."

Perhaps the most distinctive design feature is the tower in the Williamson's front yard, constructed in the story by Cedric's father Martin, which is a great source of embarrassment to Cedric.

Stutter says "I've always thought the tower symbolises Martin's mental illness, but in our movie version we've added another element, which is that he really misses his wife and he made the tower as kind of an artistic expression of his feelings about her and about having his land stolen."

Harding, who designed the tower, describes it as a frozen tornado. "We made it a tower of doors and windows. Martin prises things out of junkyards and old ruined buildings. You might

often see him around town with his wheelbarrow filled with windows. Windows and doors are interesting because it means that the tower is quite transparent and it's kind of twisted, so that it looks like a glass tornado. With the translucency and the fragile, shard-of-glass effect, it was a really graphic way of showing his insanity.

“Although it’s kind of deranged and something that mathematically seems impossible; it magically stays up as if by the strength of Martin’s will, as much as by his great architectural talent.”

While he was in Hawera, Tim Finn climbed the town’s real water tower, which was built in 1914 and was probably the inspiration for Morrieson’s tower in the story. He says, “I could just hear Ronald Hugh Morrieson’s laughter chuckling around the corners up there. I’m sure he thought the whole thing was really absurd, hugely funny – an extreme reaction to a problem.” (For more about Hawera water tower, see: http://www.stdc.co.nz/attraction_detail.php?id=25)

As for his character’s obsession, Finn says it’s as if Martin feels he can’t relate to his family because he has this all-consuming thing that he must do. “It’s a really easy trap to fall into, I suppose. It represents the removal of self from what’s really going on.”

Hayden Frost says that for Cedric, the tower is “a symbol of everything that’s wrong with his family. It’s the reason he can’t relate to other people. Instead of realising that’s just what all teenagers go through, he thinks that the tower is the special reason he’s different from everyone else.”

Costume designer Lesley Burkes-Harding says she chose 1930 as a specific year for the costumes because Stutter wanted funky female fashions inspired by early Hollywood movies, while at the same time remaining accessible to today’s audiences.

She says, “I treated it as 1930 because I didn’t want the boxy look of the 20s. I wanted a sense of freedom, a sense of fun and a sense of youth and I felt I could get that on the cusp of the two decades, the changeover between the 20s and the 30s.”

Like production designer Harding, she also used the art nouveau/art deco colour palette: “The Williamsons are dressed in what I call renaissance colours - rich gold, green, rust or deep purple

– warm, lovely colours, albeit quite faded and worn out. They’re a family who were once grand but who are now impoverished. The Bramwells are newly-rich and are represented by art deco fashion, so their colours are pale, icy blues and pale yellows. Blair Bramwell wears a cream suit like the film star Errol Flynn.

Costuming the three leads, Spook, Mervyn and Cedric, was an interesting challenge for Burkes-Harding as she set out to illustrate elements of their respective personalities.

“Spook wears all black. He’s a spooky character who glides in and out of the shadows. He wears a raincoat which could be reminiscent of a Western. It’s made out of oilskin and is very broken down to represent the fact that he doesn’t really live anywhere and he’s got no money. But because he wants to be a successful businessman, we gave him a collar and tie.

“Mervyn’s a vagabond, a scoundrel, and so we wanted to dress him as if he’s found or stolen things. So he’s got a suit made of mismatched pieces and the colours are somewhat unpleasant shades of green to reflect his unsavoury personality.”

To dress Hayden Frost as Cedric, Burkes-Harding says she had to make him look “bookish, geeky and a loner. He wears a school blazer most of the time, the point being that he doesn’t have a lot of clothes.”

THE MUSIC

Inspired by being cast in **Predicament**, Tim Finn set himself a challenge: “When Jason first contacted me I just straight away thought, how could you ever sing that word, ‘predicament’? It’s too hard-sounding, too complex. But then I discovered that you can sing it and I had a song in a couple of hours.”

Finn made a demo CD and gave it to Jason Stutter, who was blown away by the fact that Finn, whose music he admires so much, had written a song for his film. “Then Tim said he’d like

Jemaine to do backing vocals and Jemaine said yes and then we decided to shoot a music video at the Williamson's house location during the shoot."

Finn: "It's one of those lucky ones that comes along. We were able to shoot the video in the rain at the end of a hard day's shoot. Jemaine's there as Spook playing a little lounge organ and doing the sinister undertone of the song. I couldn't be more delighted about it."

Stutter has a long-time collaboration and friendship with the musicians of Plan 9 – Dave Donaldson, Steve Roche and Janet Roddick - who also composed the music for his feature films *Diagnosis Death* and *Tongan Ninja* and several of his short films.

"In a strange way this film only came about through my work with Plan 9. It was while I was sharing an office with them when I was editing the *Making of the Lord of the Rings Trilogy* and they were doing the temp score for those films that Steve told me about the *Predicament* novel.

"Plan 9 is an incredible team of composers. Each of them brings a different sensibility and talent, which creates this amazing, original sound. I love working with them because everything they play is inspired by telling the story musically. Their score for *PREDICAMENT* is masterly – they've really discovered the heart of the movie."

ABOUT THE CAST

JEMAINE CLEMENT plays Spook

Jemaine Clement's creative partnership with Bret McKenzie in *Flight of the Conchords* is well-known and celebrated, as is his work with director Taika Waititi, which pre-dates the movie *Eagle vs Shark* to the comedy duo Humourbeasts. But perhaps not so well-known is that he also has a strong partnership with **Predicament** director/writer Jason Stutter. They co-wrote the acclaimed *Tongan Ninja*, directed by Stutter and starring Clement. It's a parody described by NZ Herald reviewer Graham Reid as "one of the dumbest, funniest local films in years". Clement also had roles in Stutter's short films *Bloodsuckers* and *Fizz*.

He starred in the Fox Searchlight comedy *Gentlemen Broncos*, directed by Jared Hess (*Napoleon Dynamite*, *Nacho Libre*), for which he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award as Best Supporting Male Actor. Clement voices a character in the 2010 release *Despicable Me*, an animated comedy from Universal, starring Steve Carrell. He appears alongside Steve Carrell again in the Dreamworks/Paramount comedy *Dinner for Smucks*, also releasing 2010.

In 2009, Clement was nominated for an Emmy Award for Best Lead Actor in a comedy for his role in the *Flight of the Conchords* HBO television series, while the show was nominated for five other Emmy Awards - outstanding comedy series, directing, writing, sound mixing, as well as original music and lyrics. The show also received four Emmy nominations in 2008 and their album "*The Distant Future*" won a Grammy Award for best comedy album.

Flight of the Conchords initially found international success with their unique comedy stage act earning a Perrier Award nomination at the prestigious Edinburgh Fringe Festival, leading to an award-winning BBC radio series and eventually to the US cult hit HBO TV series.

Clement, of Maori and European heritage, grew up in the Wairarapa region of New Zealand and attended Victoria University in Wellington.

HEATH FRANKLIN plays Mervyn Toebeck

Predicament is Australian Heath Franklin's first movie role. He is well-known for his work in the sketch comedy TV show *The Ronnie Johns Half Hour*, featuring his comedy character 'Chopper' which has made regular appearances at both the Adelaide Fringe Festival and the Melbourne Comedy Festival with live national and international tours of his shows "Harden The F*ck Up Australia" and "Make Deadsh*ts History". In 2007, he took "Harden the F*ck Up World" to the Edinburgh Fringe and London, where he also went on to perform "Make Deadsh*ts History".

He performed his one man show, "Make Deadsh*ts History", to sell-out crowds in the 2010 New Zealand Comedy Festival. In 2009, his show "Harden the F*ck Up New Zealand" was also a box office sell-out and critical hit at the NZ Comedy Festival and was nominated in the NZ Comedy Awards for best international show.

While in Edinburgh in 2007, he performed a dramatic role in Phil Nichol's production of *Breaker Morant*, a serious dramatic play performed by a cast of comedians, including New Zealand's Rhys Darby.

In 2006, he was nominated for the Inaugural Graham Kennedy Logie Award for most outstanding new talent for his work on *The Ronnie Johns Half Hour*, a show for which he was also both a writer and creator.

With a group of friends from university, he formed The Third Degree, which performed in the Melbourne Comedy Festival in 2003 and 2004. At the 2005 festival they were spotted by a talent scout from Channel 10, which resulted in the pilot of *The Ronnie Johns Half Hour*, going on to become two 13-episode series. 'Chopper' was one of many characters Franklin created for the show and broke out as a stand-alone act for the Melbourne Comedy Festival, which Franklin has performed in every year since 2003.

Franklin, who grew up in Sydney, had drama lessons as a child, attended Redfield College in Dural, and was active in the Drama Society at Macquarie University.

HAYDEN FROST plays Cedric Williamson

Predicament is actor Hayden Frost's first film. His casting in the role arose out of his work in the Young & Hungry Festival of plays at Bats Theatre in Wellington, which led to some auditions with Rachel Bullock Casting Agency. When the auditions for **Predicament** were underway, Bullock remembered him and put him forward for the role of Cedric.

Frost has been acting since he was about 12 years old and became serious about it while attending Wellington High School, where he was involved in all aspects of school productions and local amateur drama. He was NCEA Top Scholar in Drama in 2005, which earned him a drama scholarship to university, which he postponed to get more acting experience. During this time he helped devise and appeared in a New Zealand Comedy Festival show called "The Hunting of the Snark" by The Playground Collective. He then went to Victoria University, where his drama programme activities led to the Young & Hungry Festival and to his film audition opportunities.

He played the lead role in the Musical "Boomerang Lean and the She-Devil From Outer Space" in the 2009 Wellington Fringe Festival. He is currently a member of Long Cloud Youth Theatre, run by Willem Wassenner, and performed in the return season of their successful 2008 production "Colony"/"Grimm" in the 2009 Fringe, and more recently completed a successful season of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible".

TIM FINN plays Martin Williamson

Tim Finn is well-known and respected as an innovative and groundbreaking musician. Now, in addition to composing, recording and performing music for albums, concerts, television shows and music videos, he has added acting in film to his creative accomplishments.

Predicament is Finn's first major movie role, although in the 1980s he performed in several films - including *The Coca Cola Kid* and *Les Patterson Saves The World* - and has had his songs used in

many others since, most recently “Winter Light” in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and “Won’t Give In” in *Because of Winn-Dixie*. The New Zealand horror *The Ferryman* used “Fraction Too Much Friction”, Finn’s iconic single from 1983, and John Hughes’ eighties classic *Sixteen Candles* used “Growing Pains”.

He was composer for Australian movies *Puberty Blues* (1981), *Les Patterson Saves the World* (1987), *Kangaroo Palace* (1997) and *Chrissy* (1999).

During the filming of **Predicament**, he composed a song, “Predicament”. Director Jason Stutter, cinematographer Simon Raby and the **Predicament** crew made a music video of the song to accompany the release of the film.

Tim Finn formed the wildly original band Split Enz in the early 1970s, and hasn't stopped writing, recording and performing since. Though they broke up in the 1980s, Split Enz still does the occasional reunion concert, most recently sell-out tours of Australia in 2007 and New Zealand in 2008.

He has been recording and performing as a solo artist since his first album “Escapade” in 1983. In the early 1990s he and his brother Neil wrote songs together for the Crowded House album “Woodface”. They included international hits “Weather With You” and “It’s Only Natural”. In 1995 the brothers released the album “Finn” and in 2004 they toured extensively with “Everyone is Here”, which hit No 2 in Australia.

His other collaborations include "ALT" with Irish friends Liam O'Maonlai and Andy White and in 1999 a sell-out NZ tour with Dave Dobbyn and Bic Runga, which was later released as the Finn-Runga-Dobbyn album “Together in Concert.”

He has released eight solo albums and 27 singles, including three New Zealand No 1 hits (“Fraction Too Much Friction”, “How’m I Gonna Sleep”, “Persuasion”). Amongst his many awards, the most recent is the Male Solo Artist Tui Award (2007) for “Imaginary Kingdom.”

In 1993, Tim Finn was made OBE for services to New Zealand music.

ROSE McIVER plays Maybelle Zimmerman

Rose McIver has been acting since she appeared as a three-year-old in Jane Campion's *The Piano*. She has now achieved Hollywood acclaim for her performance as Lindsey Salmon, Susie Salmon's younger sister, in Peter Jackson's *The Lovely Bones*.

Her recent roles include Summer, the Yellow Ranger in *Power Rangers: R.P.M.*, and a guest role as Alice, Kahlan's servant in *Legend of The Seeker*. She was in the core cast as Constance Short in the suburban comedy *Rude Awakenings* and played Garland in the adventure/fantasy series *Maddigan's Quest*.

While filming **Predicament** she was in her second year at Auckland University studying anthropology, linguistics and psychology. This continued the pattern of her childhood, in which she combined acting with study. From five years old to about eight, she had an occasional guest role as Ilea, the daughter of Hercules (Kevin Sorbo) in the *Hercules* telemovies and series *Hercules, The Legendary Journeys*. She has also had guest roles in *Xena: Warrior Princess* and several other series, including *Mercy Peak* and in American TV movies including *Murder in Greenwich*, *Maiden Voyage* and *Eddie's Million Dollar Cook-off*.

Rose McIver grew up in Auckland, where she now lives.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

JASON STUTTER – director/writer

Jason Stutter is a director and writer, whose debut feature, the cult comedy *Tongan Ninja* (2002), was one of his earlier collaborations with Jemaine Clement, along with **Predicament** producer Sue Rogers, who was executive producer for the film. His second feature, *Diagnosis Death* - a supernatural romantic comedy starring Raybon Kan, Jessica Grace and Suze Tye and featuring *Flight of the Conchords'* Jemaine Clement, Bret McKenzie and Rhys Darby – attracted international attention, being picked up for international sales, prior to completion, with its first sales going to the US and UK at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival.

Stutter's short film *Careful with that Axe* won the Golden Spike Award, the top prize for a short film in the Official Selection, at the Valladolid Film Festival in Spain. It also won a jury award at the Interfilm Short Film Festival in Berlin and was selected for competition at the AFI Fest in Los Angeles. It screened at many major festivals, including Edinburgh, Melbourne and Expression En Corto in Mexico.

This film sparked a companion, *Careful with that Power Tool*, which has also had widespread international festival exposure and both were picked up for theatrical distribution in Germany. The success of these 2-minute gems led the New Zealand Film Commission to request a third in the series, so Stutter made *Careful with that Crossbow* during post-production of **Predicament**. The NZFC screened it at the Clermont Ferrand Film Festival in February 2010 and it has been selected for the 2010 Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival.

Stutter has made about 20 short films, including *Fizz*, which also starred Jemaine Clement and screened in competition at the Valladolid Film Festival in 2000 as well as a number of other A-list film festivals around the world. In the early 1990s he made a 32-minute vampire movie, *Bloodsuckers*, which was his first collaboration with Clement, who played the head vampire.

Jason Stutter was born and bred in Wainuiomata, the Wellington suburb perhaps best known as the home of legendary All Black captain Tana Umaga, who made a brief appearance in *Tongan Ninja*.

Stutter started making films at the age of 11 and his first job on leaving Wainuiomata's Parkway College was at the Avalon Television Studios as a tape editor for TVNZ. Staff there, learning of his passion for making short films, helped him acquire the diverse range of skills he now puts into his directing.

He currently lives in Wellington with his partner Tracey and their daughter.

SUE ROGERS – producer

Sue Rogers is one of New Zealand's most experienced feature film producers, having begun her involvement in filmmaking by designing the international sales campaign for director Peter Jackson's first feature, *Bad Taste*. She followed that with the campaign for *Meet the Feebles* (director Peter Jackson); *Ruby and Rata* and *War Stories Our Mothers Never Told Us* (director Gaylene Preston); and the highly successful Cannes campaign for Peter Jackson's *Braindead*.

Having worked closely with her life partner, Jim Booth (*Meet the Feebles*, *Braindead*, *Heavenly Creatures*), she maintained the progress of his Midnight Films' slate, following his death in 1994. She was associate producer for *Jack Brown Genius* and producer of *Forgotten Silver* directed by Peter Jackson and Costa Botes.

She brought new projects into the slate, initially optioning Chad Taylor's debut novel *Heaven* and attaching Scott Reynolds to write the adaptation and direct. The project went into production in 1997, following 100% financing by Miramax. *Heaven* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and was awarded the Audience First Prize for Best International Feature. Rogers then went into production for Columbia TriStar, with *When Strangers Appear* (aka *Shearer's Breakfast*) also written and directed by Scott Reynolds.

Since then she produced Jason Stutter debut feature *Tongan Ninja* (2002) and executive produced *Frodo is Great . . . Who is That?!!* (aka *FIGWIT*) for first time filmmakers, Stan Alley, Nick Booth and Hannah Clarke.

Rogers co-produced Gaylene Preston's critically acclaimed feature, *Home by Christmas*, which is currently in theatrical release in New Zealand.

VINCENT BURKE – co-producer

Vincent Burke is the Principal of Top Shelf Productions, which he established in 1988. It is now one of New Zealand's leading film and television production companies with offices in Wellington and Auckland. Since establishing Top Shelf Productions, he developed and produced the feature film "Flight of the Albatross", a NZ/German co-production. The film gained 1st prize for Best Children's Feature at the 47th Berlin International Film Festival and went on to receive the Jury Award at the Giffon Film Festival (1997). The Maori language version of the film screened on Maori TV and the DVD version was release late 2006 by TVNZ licensing and Roadshow NZ. Burke's other drama credits include the one-hour television drama "Swimming Lessons", director Steve LaHood, and short films "Gordon Bennet", starring Andy Anderson and "Dirty Creature", co-produced with Peter Jackson.

Burke is a twice past-elected President of SPADA (the Screen Production and Development Association of New Zealand) and is currently on the Executive. He is also a past Chief Executive of the NZ Film and Video Training Board. Prior to establishing his own film and television production company Vincent was employed as a Policy Advisor for the New Zealand Film Commission and the New Zealand Arts Council (Creative New Zealand) and was a successful arts administrator. He had previously held several senior elected positions on a number of Non-Government Organisations, including the NZSAC and the NYC, and a government funding advisory panel.

Vincent has a post graduate degree from Victoria University where he studied music.

SIMON RABY – director of photography

Multi-talented Simon Raby has two parallel careers: as cinematographer and as director. His most recent work was as second unit director for the Peter Jackson-produced, critically acclaimed *District 9*.

His cinematography includes the Scott Reynolds' films *The Ugly*, *Heaven* and *When Strangers Appear* (aka *Shearer's Breakfast*). The latter two were produced by **Predicament** producer Sue Rogers. He also was cinematographer for Stewart Main's *50 Ways of Saying Fabulous* and Niki Caro's early dramas *The Summer the Queen Came*, *Sure to Rise* and *Plain Tastes*. He was second unit director of photography for all three of Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* films and camera operator for *Without a Paddle* and *Mee Shee: The Water Giant*.

He has directed episodes of television drama series *Rude Awakenings*, *Amazing Extraordinary Friends* and *Interrogation* and regularly works as director/camera on television arts programme *The Gravy*.

JOHN HARDING – production designer

John Harding has a versatile and varied career as film production designer, art director, character and costume designer, theatre and event designer, as well as design tutor. He was NZ costume designer on James Cameron's epic *Avatar*. He worked for Weta Workshop for five years on the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, in many design, construction and art director roles. He also designed and developed miniature sets, native costumes and weapons for Weta Workshop for Peter Jackson's *King Kong*.

He was production designer for Gaylene Preston's most recent feature, *Home by Christmas*. Harding's other production design credits include *The Lost Children*, the 13-episode television series set in 1860s New Zealand; the telefeature *Until Proven Innocent*; and the award-winning short film *Fog*. He won the New Zealand Film Awards best design award for his work on the

short film *The King Boys*. His work as art director includes US telemovie *Fatal Contact: Bird Flu in America*, New Zealand television series *Kidnapped (Robert Louis Stevenson)*, and Larry Parr's feature *Fracture*.

He has extensive experience as a theatre designer and has also taught many aspects of stage and film design at Auckland University, Unitec, New Zealand Film School and Toi Whakaari New Zealand Drama School; having originally trained as a specialist art teacher at Canterbury University and Teachers College.

LESLEY BURKES-HARDING – costume designer

Lesley Burkes-Harding is an award-winning costume designer and period costume specialist who, alongside designing and constructing costumes for films and television drama of many different eras including contemporary, is also a costume history tutor at Toi Whakaari New Zealand Drama School.

She won New Zealand Film Awards best costume design for her work on *Her Majesty*, a coming of age drama set in 1953, and was a finalist for Qantas Film & TV Awards best costume design for *Out of the Blue*, directed by Robert Sarkies. She designed costumes for NZ feature films, *The Locals* and *Jubilee*. Prior to working on **Predicament**, she designed the costumes for Gaylene Preston's most recent feature, the highly successful and critically acclaimed, *Home by Christmas*.

She has designed costumes for many US television features and series filmed in New Zealand, including *Ike – Countdown to D-Day*; *Lucille Ball: Life Story*; *Murder in Greenwich*; and *Kidnapped* – a three-part series of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic for the BBC. She was a finalist in the 2009 Qantas Film & TV awards for her work on *Until Proven Innocent*, a New Zealand television drama.

She was assistant costume designer for James Cameron's epic *Avatar* and worked as a construction specialist for Weta SPFX on *The Lord of the Rings*. She also has an extensive career in costume design for theatre.

JONATHAN WOODFORD-ROBINSON – editor

Jonathan Woodford-Robinson is a feature film editor known for his understanding and love of the digital environment and the interface between live-action and computer-generated material. The Sngmoo Lee epic action-adventure *The Warrior's Way* (aka *Laundry Warrior*) called on those skills extensively, as did his role of editing the first episode of the Starz television series *Spartacus*, in which he had to pioneer workflow systems for the entire series, which used high-end CGI in television for the first time.

His other features include *Eagle vs Shark*, *Fracture* and Jason Stutter's *Tongan Ninja*. He also edited the cult documentary *Frodo is Great . . . Who is That?!!* (aka *FIGWIT*) about Flight of the Conchords Bret McKenzie's appearance in the *Lord of the Rings*. He was credited with additional editing on *King Kong* for his work with motion capture elements. He edited the story aspects of the Sony/Ninja Theory video game "Heavenly Sword".

PLAN 9 – composers

Plan 9, consisting of David Donaldson, Steve Roche and Janet Roddick are regular collaborators with Jason Stutter. In addition to **Predicament** they have also composed for Stutter's feature films *Diagnosis Death* and *Tongan Ninja* and his short films *A Greater Plan*, *Gun Lovers* and *Fizz*.

They composed for NZ box office hit *Second Hand Wedding* and have twice won New Zealand Film & Television Awards best feature film score - for *Saving Grace* and *Jack Brown Genius*; and were finalists for *Jubilee*, *Perfect Strangers* and *Forgotten Silver* (produced by **Predicament** producer Sue Rogers).

Plan 9, in collaboration with David Long, composed the cultural music and the music/sound of "The One Ring" for Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, and created ambient music design for Jackson's *King Kong*.

FULL CREDITS LIST

Spook	JEMAINE CLEMENT
Mervyn Toebeck	HEATH FRANKLIN
Cedric Williamson	HAYDEN FROST
Martin Williamson	TIM FINN
Granny Williamson	TINA GRENVILLE-CAGWIN
Maybelle Zimmerman	ROSE McIVER
Detective Huggins	EDWARD NEWBORN
Officer Dawson	DAVID VAN HORN
Blair Bramwell	CHAD MILLS
Margot Bramwell	BROOKE WILLIAMS
Vernon Bramwell	PETER MOCHRIE
Rita Zombroni	CARMEL McGLONE
Ernie Fox	HADLEIGH WALKER
Winker Sanderson	JAMES FLETCHER
Stanley Toebeck	PETER DENNETT
Cheeky Kid #1	STEVEN CHRISTODOULOU
Cheeky Kid #2	MITCHELL CARESWELL
Preacher Fanthorp	JOHN HARDING
Constable #1	DENNIS LALLY
Stunt Co-ordinator	AUGIE DAVIS
Stunt players	RODNEY COOK
	PATRICK MORRISON

UNIT PRODUCTION MANAGER Michelle Turner

1st ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Marc Ashton

2nd ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Jacqui Pryor

SCRIPT EDITOR Sue Rogers
CASTING ASSOCIATE & DRAMA COACH Vaughan Slinn

FIRST ASSISTANT CAMERA Sean Kelly
SECOND ASSISTANT CAMERA Garth Michael
CAMERA TRAINEE/VIDEO SPLIT OP Ashleigh Ruck

ART DIRECTOR Josh Barraud
ART DEPARTMENT COORDINATORS Carey Johnson
Mary Connolly
LEAD SET DRESSER Amber Richards
SET DRESSERS Gill West-Walker
Ben Whale
ASSISTANT SET DRESSER Jody Conaglen
STANDBY PROPS Dodge Edwards
GREENSMAN Dan Horton

ART DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT	Rupert Grobben
DRAUGHTSPERSON	Janine Morris
GRAPHIC DESIGNER	Tanea Chapman
GRAPHIC ARTIST	Sean Golding
PICTURE VEHICLE CO-ORDINATOR	Jaffray Sinclair
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER	Jim Marsden
CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN	George Ferguson
CARPENTERS	Finn Marden
	Andy Hastings
	Seth Key
	Michael Caldwell
	Hannah Jenkins
	Chris Fuller
	Eugene Whiston
SCENIC ARTIST	Alastair Maher
LEADING HAND	John Cruickshanks
BRUSHHANDS	Aaron Maffey
	Tony Ferrier
STEEL WORKER	Megan Wilson
SPFX SUPERVISOR	Iain Hutton
SPFX TECHNICIAN	Philip McLaren
COSTUME SUPERVISOR	Katherine Milne
COSTUME BUYER	Rebekah Edwards
COSTUME STANDBY	Andrea Plested
COSTUME STANDBY ASSISTANT	Paul Booth
EXTRAS COSTUME COORDINATOR/STANDBY	Maja Neumann
PATTERN MAKERS	Pauline Laws
	Miriam Christie
CUTTER/MACHINIST	Sheree Roud
MACHINISTS	Sheila Horton
	Lachlan Mayclair
	Hannah Goldblatt
BREAKDOWN ARTIST	Tom Caddy
WORKROOM ASSISTANT	Amy Jansen-Leen
RUNNER/INTERN	Hazelle Tailby
GAFFER	Adrian Hebron
BEST BOY	Hansel Verkerk
GENERATOR OPERATOR	Ryan O'Donnell
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	Matthew Andrews
	David Brownjohn
	Hendrikus De Vaan
	Jay Rei
ADDITIONAL LIGHTING ASSIST	Ants Farrell

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DOLLY GRIP	Melissa Ririnui
BEST BOY GRIP	Maurice Kapua
ASSISTANT GRIP	Nathan Awatere
HAIR & MAKE UP SUPERVISOR	Angela Mooar
MAKE UP ARTISTS	Frankie Karena
	Jayne Donaldson
SOUND RECORDIST	Ken Saville
BOOM OPERATOR	Jo Fraser
SCRIPT SUPERVISOR	Pat Robins
DATA TECHNICIAN	Adam Dransfield
3 RD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Kendall Finlayson
PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR	Desray Armstrong
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS	Kevin Armstrong
	Jules Lovelock
CAST ASSISTANT	Joel Anscombe-Smith
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LOOP GROUP CAST Juanita Hepi Raybon Kan Martin Kwok Kate McGill Jonathan Power Kay Smith Steph Walker Phil Ward Mark Westerby Ben Wootten	

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Gilbert Lake
MIX ASSISTANTS Tim Chaproniere
Buster Flaws

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music performed by Plan 9 with
New Zealand Symphony Orchestra

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MUSIC MIXER
Michael Hedges

“NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU”
(N Finn/T Finn)
Mushroom Music Publishing
Performed by The Finn Brothers
Courtesy EMI Music

“THE FIRST NOEL”
(traditional)
Performed by
Steve Roche Janet Roddick and David Donaldson

“SILENT NIGHT”
(traditional)
Performed by
Violin: Donald Armstrong
Harp: Carolyn Mills

“PREDICAMENT”
(T.Finn)
Mushroom Music Publishing (Australia/NZ) Ten Ten Music (ROW)
Performed by Tim Finn
Recorded at Roundhead Studios, Auckland NZ
Engineered by Jordan Stone & Andy Morton
Produced by Tim Finn & Andy Morton
Mixed by Andy Morton
Mastered at Elysian Masters

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(NZSO LOGO) (RADIO NZ LOGO) (DOLBY LOGO)

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