

“Signing Off”

A Short Film By Nightmare Productions

PRESS
BOOK

“Signing Off” DIRECTORS NOTES

By Writer and Director: Robert Sarkies

Walter Perryman is a radio announcer of the old school. His on air persona is a model of BBC perfection, he cares about his listeners, plays soothing music, and always wears a bow tie on air. But this is the 1960's and times are changing in the radio world. Television has arrived and broadcasters like Walter are being replaced by younger informal 'dee-jays' in an effort to modernise the medium. Walter, despite his unfailing dedication is about to become a victim of fashion.

“Signing Off” is a film about changing values in a fast changing world. The manager represents the self-serving values of today while Walter Perryman represents the values of the past... values that include valour, selflessness and dedication. Walter is a gentleman - quite possibly the last true gentleman, and precisely because of this he is prepared to do anything to remain true to his word.

At its most basic level, this is a simple tale about one of those days when everything seems to go wrong. We've all had a day like that, and many people will have experienced first-hand some of the frustrating situations depicted in this film (I certainly have, although I wouldn't wish any of the more extreme situations on anybody!). As a film-maker, I enjoy taking simple situations to their extreme and subjecting innocent characters to that extreme to see how they respond under pressure.

Whatever its issues and whether people relate to the situations or not, I made this film primarily for people to enjoy. With this in mind, I'll freely admit now that I personally take all responsibility for everything that happens to Walter in this film (yes you can call me heartless) and I don't have a granddad (at least not any more).

Enjoy!

Robert Sarkies
Writer/Director

“Signing Off”
SYNOPSIS

ONE LINER:

This is the story of Walter Perryman
and the things he is prepared to do for Joyce, his first and only fan.

SYNOPSIS:

Plagued with self doubt when his weekly jazz show is cancelled due to low ratings, veteran broadcaster Walter Perryman invites his listeners to call in with requests. He receives just one call from an elderly lady called Joyce (a devoted fan) and promises to play the record she requests.

Then he accidentally drops the record out the window.

In his desperate efforts to keep his promise before the record that is playing runs out, he locks himself out of the station, throws himself under a truck, gets trapped in a sewer and almost burns the station down.

It's a race against time that almost kills him, but in the end it's worth it...

or so he thinks...

"Signing Off"

ROBERT SARKIES - FILMOGRAPHY

1990	Peter's Story	19 mins	16mm
1992	Dream-makers	10 mins	16mm
1994	Flames from the Heart	13 mins	16mm
1996	Signing Off	15 mins	35mm

“Signing Off” PRODUCTION INFORMATION

“Signing Off” was shot in Dunedin over the summer of 1996, using the same group of film-makers who came together to make “Peter’s Story”, “Dream-Makers” and “Flames from the Heart”. This band of filmic pirates call themselves “NIGHTMARE PRODUCTIONS”. Essentially they are a group of friends who love film and have been working together on films, television programmes and commercials in Dunedin since 1989. Over this time they have built up a special team spirit and achieved international sales and recognition, winning the best film award at the Semina De Cine Experimental in Madrid in 1993.

There are so few films made in Dunedin that when one comes along it becomes a special event that the whole city takes an interest in. “Signing Off” was just such an event, involving hundreds of people in everything from supplying props to acting. Local businesses got behind the production, sponsoring everything from Airfares to catering. The production was huge for a short film with over eighteen different locations to be found, built and dressed, numerous stunts and several logistically tricky special effects. Shot on 35mm this is by far the most ambitious short film production ever to be made in the South Island.

The cast is a short list of talented South Island ‘unknowns’ with David Corballis, an english teacher at Otago Boys High School playing veteran radio announcer Walter Perryman. David (or Mr Corballis to his students) completed the film during weekends and breaks from school, sometimes working until seven o’clock in the morning on the film before starting his first class at 9:30. During the course of production David was regularly dunked in water, splattered with mud and covered in soot.

The production was funded by a small Creative New Zealand grant, a grant from the Dunedin City Council, and the support and generosity of the Dunedin production and business community.

“SIGNING OFF”

CAST AND CREW

CAST:

Walter Perryman
Joyce Hatfield
Station Manager

David Corballis
Pam Pow
Paul Barrett

CREW:

Writer/Director/Editor
Producer
Director of Photography
Art Director
Composer

Robert Sarkies
Lisa Chatfield
Steven Downes
Gaylene Barnes
Bruce Lynch

Unit Manager
First Assistant Director
Camera assistants

Hillary Halba
William Donegan
Ben Doudney
Nic Fay

Gaffer
Electrics
Best Boy
Grip
Storyboards
Sound Recordist
Tracklay
Make-up
Continuity

Mark Shephard
Steven Killroy
David Holtz
Simon McKinnie
Steve Meachem
Paul Potiki
Chris Hiles
Rudy Huetting
Ali McDanials
Sharon Lippert

Art Department assistants

Laura Gautner
Peter Carter
Danny Still
Sam Auger
Dion Kelly
Mark Willis
Paul Potiki

Special Effects

Stunt Supervisor
Stunts
Animal Wrangler

Mark Angelo
Awatea Edwin
Dave Mathews