

JOURNEY TO IHIWA



Hope lasts a lifetime

PRESS KIT

A film by Nancy Brunning

I N T E R N A T I O N A L S A L E S

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N E W Z E A L A N D F I L M

Key Credits

Writer	Vicki-Anne Heikell
Director	Nancy Brunning
Producer	Makerita Urale
Production Company	Journey to Ihipa Ltd
Executive Producer	Catherine Fitzgerald
Director of Photography	Davorin Fahn

Technical Information

Format:	35mm
Film Ratio:	1:1.85
Sound:	Dolby Digital 5.1
Running Time	15mins
Country of Production	New Zealand
Language	English/Māori with English subtitles
Date of Completion	July 2008
Sales	Juliette Veber, New Zealand Film Commission Email: juliette@nzfilm.co.nz Te: +64 4 382 7686

Tag Line

Hope lasts a lifetime

One Liner

A woman spends her whole adult life hoping her son, who was taken by Maori relatives, will return to her - but when he finally does, the reconciliation is not what she had imagined.

Brief Synopsis

When a young soldier dies during WWII, extended Maori family protect the bloodline by taking his baby son from his European mother.

His mother spends her whole adult life hoping her son will return to his Maori home, but when he finally does, the reconciliation is not what she had imagined.

Festival Screenings

2008 New Zealand International Film Festivals, New Zealand
2009 Magma Short Film Festival, New Zealand
2009 Dreamspeakers Film Festival, Canada
2009 Wairoa Maori Film Festival, New Zealand
2009 Vladivostok International Film Festival, Russia
2009 imagineNATIVE Film & Media Arts Festival, Canada
2010 Sukagawa International Short Film Festival, Japan

Director's Notes - Nancy Brunning

In 2004 I read an early draft of *Journey to Ihipa*. I said to myself, *if I were a filmmaker, I'd want to direct this one*. I had directed for theatre before but never for film, and what was important to me at the time was to learn more about directing for theatre rather than film – so in my head, *journey* was going to be made by someone else, not me. *Journey* became my first film project in 2007 – its name has been synonymous to the experience I have had since it was confirmed as the script for us to make. We have been able to make a short film that does not expect us to explain the Māori culture or what it means to be Māori. It is a story that gives you the opportunity to be in an unfamiliar environment as an observer watching a personal situation unfold before you; or watch a scenario unfold before you that may resonate with your own personal experience, maybe through a character, through the situation or story. Although the event is a tangi (funeral), the story is for the living but about hope that survives loss, isolation and rejection and that hope allows you, to protect or defend, accept or deny, to continue or forgive. These are simple emotions played out in a complex situation where formality cannot be dropped – or where informality is too much. Whatever way you look at it, the bottom line is – hope never stops even when all hope for you is lost.

I would like to thank the people of Ruatahuna for allowing us to shoot *journey* with you all. You fed us and warmed us and allowed us to be the arty-farty's we have chosen to be without judgment or limitations. Thank you all so much for giving us an experience, our involvement in the community informed and inspired the direction of *journey* as a film and I am forever grateful that you opened the doors to us. I would also like to thank our small but perfectly formed cast and crew for taking on a new environment, a humble story and respecting everyone who had helped towards its completion throughout, you contributed to a process that required determination, openness and ownership and I am grateful to you all for accepting the challenge. A personal thanks to Sima Urale for offering me the time and knowledge to prepare for the short and to Peter Burger for giving me onset training. Both of you have specific styles and both of you let me in to your process – I came to you for help and you both gave me the confidence to start and keep going; thank you for your patience and generosity. Makerita Urale; Peti Nohotima and Catherine Fitzgerald have been the backbone of this production and bare the weight of all responsibility expected of this film, thank you all for standing with us on this film, you deal with ego's and policy, culture and creative differences every day but still manage to laugh, it has been humbling to know how far you will go with a project you believe in and hope that even after years you'll be able to look at this work and feel proud of it, it has been a journey that I am glad I have travelled; beside you guys.

Being allowed into the head of writer Vicki-Anne Heikell has been a nightmare for her I'm sure, but a gift for my self and Makerita as first time film makers. For us, the training we have had in Māori and Pacific theatre has always been about the

writer being the most important element in story-telling. Without writers we have no story to interpret, for Māori, the history of our writers has been that they are the ones who have kept Māori language, history and whakapapa (genealogy) alive through whaikorero (formal speeches), music composition, and oral history. Working with Vicki-Anne has allowed us the opportunity to continue to acknowledge that philosophy and to maintain our values towards the writer's contribution towards works offered for public consumption. Vicki-Anne's writing style challenged us and inspired us to find ways of working for the story she created; we also had to find a way to work with the Ruatahuna home people where we shot this film – we needed to bring two worlds together in a way that would honour the community, the crew and the writing, it was a challenge that required a lot of discussion and listening but had we not done that *journey* would not have been the film it has grown into. Although I am asked to put myself before the writer in this medium – I cannot agree that the director has made this film, the script of *journey* came from a place that I would never have understood without constant discussion with Vicki-Anne, the specificity in the writing was there before I got involved, and my job was to interpret that to the best of my ability - nga mihi aroha, nga mihi mahana ki a koe e Vicki-Anne for being brave, open and trusting in our interpretation of *Journey to Ihipa*.

Writer's Notes – Vicki-Anne Heikell (Nō Te Whānau-a-Apanui)

As a writer I am interested in examining the nature of relationships within Māori communities. *Journey to Ihipa* looks at the way people can be lost behind their eccentricities that distance them from others in the community and indeed from their own story. I like that compassion shown by one person to another can come in a throw-away line or a small gesture and in those inconsequential moments a person and an entire community can change.

Director's Bio - Nancy Brunning

An award winning actor in theatre, film and television in New Zealand, director Nancy Brunning was born and bred in Taupo New Zealand, trained as an actor at Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa/NZ Drama School but began directing for theatre in 1995. *Journey To Ihipa* is her debut as a director in the film medium. She has been in the NZ theatre, television and film industry for over 16 years.

Writer's Bio – Vicki-Anne Heikell

Vicki-Anne descends from Te Whānau-a-Apanui but grew up in Gisborne. In 2002-2003 Vicki-Anne completed the Whitireia Polytechnic Creative Writing programme. The very first draft of *Journey to Ihipa* was completed during the Short Film writing module based on Vicki-Anne's previously published short story, *Uncle Alex's Tangihanga* in *Huia 4*. Participation in and support from Taki Rua Writer's Block resulted in a first draft of *Taku Kiri* a full length play for stage.

Producer's Bio – Makerita Urale

Born in the Pacific Island country of Samoa, Makerita Urale spent her childhood

in her father's village on the island of Savaii before immigrating to New Zealand. A published playwright, documentary director and arts Producer - Makerita has worked in theatre and television in New Zealand for more than 15-years.

Composer's Bio - Warryn Maxwell

Formerly a member of bands "Trinity Roots" and "Fat Freddy's Drop," Warryn has now created his own ensemble "The Little Bushmen."

Editor's Bio – Chris Todd

In the early 1980s, Chris became involved with Auckland's Alternative Cinema collective and participated in a number of experimental films. In 1984 he began work as assistant editor to Mike Horton with whom he collaborated on many feature films, including the iconic Once Were Warriors. In his subsequent career as an editor (besides being dialogue editor of some 20 features), he's edited, employing Pic Syncs, Steenbecks, Kems, Avid and Final Cut Pro, two feature films, 8 theatrical short films, 80 to 100 hours of TV drama, a major history series of documentaries, and a dozen individual feature documentaries. Today, Chris Todd lives in Wellington, New Zealand.

Key Crew

Written by	Vicki-Anne Heikell
Directed by	Nancy Brunning
Produced by	Makerita Urale
Executive Producers	Catherine Fitzgerald, Blueskin Films
Director of Photography	Davorin Fahn
Editor	Chris Todd
Music Composer	Warryn Maxwell
Sound Designer	Tim Prebble

Key Cast

Gladys Matenga	Elizabeth McRae
Brownie	Nathaniel Lees
Ma Baker	Kahu Hotere
Herewini	Rawiri Hindle
Mina	Christina Ngahuia Asher
Kaumatua	John Taoho
Kuia	Ruahine Te Are
Kapi	Buster Apirana
Julz	Shameela Elia

Crew

Production Manager	Peti Nohotima
1 st Assistant Director	Hori Ahipene
Ruatahuna Liaison	Doris Rurehe
Art Director	Zoe Wilson
Continuity	Peter Wellington

Costume Designer
Focus Puller
Camera Assistant
Sound Recordist
Sound Assistant
Wardrobe
Wardrobe Assistant
Gaffer/Grip
Gaffer/Grip Assistant
Make-up/Hair

Production Runner
Art Department Assistant
Set Assistant
Ruatahuna Runner
Set Construction
Photoshop Imaging Props
Unit Manager
Unit Assistant
Catering
Ruatahuna Assistants
Stills

Translation
Post Supervisor
Sound Design
Dialogue Editor
Opening Titles

Pauline Bowkett
Andy Chappell
Merryl Peddie
Aaron Davis
Ethan Davis
Kimikimi Mane
Kate Fatu
Byron Sparrow
Saxon Ball
Sam Cairns-Morrison
Elizabeth Canales-Ron
Grace Hoet
Riria Hotere
Taungaroa Emile
Whitiaua Ropitini
Guy Moana
Sean Coyle
Anipeka Tekaawa
Halyma Solomon
Ruatahuna Kohanga Reo
Jack Apirana, Paratene Ripia
Catherine Fitzgerald
Byron Sparrow
Peter Wellington
Whaea Peti Nohotima
Peti Nohotima
Tim Prebble
Chris Todd
Nikora Ngaropo