

THE FREEZER



Presskit



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Production Notes

Writer: Paolo Rotondo & Neil Campbel
Director: Paolo Rotondo
Producer: Linda Keown
Production Company: MF FILMS

Colour 11 minutes 35 mm 1:1:85 Dolby Digital

Log Line

A day in the life of two unlikely debt collectors

Synopsis

The Freezer is a little story with a big heart.

Set in 1978, in high summer, *The Freezer* follows the journey of 12-year old Will and his uncle Ron, who are on a mission to repossess a freezer that Will's Dad hasn't received any payments for. Will's Dad runs the second hand shop in the predominantly Pakeha-run town of Kaikohe in Northland.

Will and Ron's journey takes them across the glittering Hokianga harbour to the unique landscape and people of rural Panguru, who are 100% Maori. When they get to the farm, Will and Ron find repossessing the freezer from their friends a little harder than they expected.

The Freezer is based on a true story.

Director's notes

I fell in love with this story over the dinner table with my co-writer Neil Campbel.

The first thing which attracted me to "The Freezer" story, was the fact that it was a bloody good yarn. Neil Campbel talked of his family and history in Kaikohe, in particular the legend of a Kuia that had been kept in the freezer to preserve her while the Tangi was being organized. I went away and wove different elements of Neil's family and history with this story into a screenplay. When interest was expressed in the story, Neil and I put our heads down and worked through loads of drafts with the assistance of a script advisor, Poata Eruera.

I was particularly interested in the complexity of the relationship between Maori and Pakeha in these small rural communities particularly in the North. On a more personal level the story of a child discovering death for the first time, the end of innocence was an expression of my own experience as an adult.

The making of "The Freezer" was an incredibly collaborative experience, there are loads of artists expressing their craft towards one goal, the final product is marked by the personalities of all those people.

Director's notes cont...

Between the producer, cinematographer and director a style emerged for the making of the 'The Freezer, partly 'art', partly the expediency of making a low budget film. For me as a first time director I wanted to make something simple and story driven. We made a film set in the 1970's in the same way it could have been made in the 70's. As an actor I was surprised how much I learnt about acting by being on the other side.

After all the times I've watched "The Freezer" I'm still in love with the story.

Director's biography

Born and bred in Auckland to a Kiwi mother and an Italian father, Paolo has been working in film, television and theatre for 10 years since he left school. After completing his Bachelor of Arts at Auckland University, Paolo embarked on an Architecture degree, but somewhere along the way decided the stage was where he wanted to be. Paolo studied in London with Philippe Gauliere and was greatly influenced by studying with John Bolton in Melbourne.

As a struggling novice actor Paolo worked in film and television production in order to be close to the action. He worked as a production manager on TV commercials and produced music videos for local talent.

Paolo's first role in theatre was in *Metamorphosis*, playing a man who turns into a gigantic insect. Since then Paolo has played characters as varied as a Dog in Berkoff's *Dog*, a madman in *Accidental death of an Anarchist*.

Director's biography cont...

a Mexican in *A Street car named Desire*, a fundamentalist Jehovah's witness in Jackie Van Beek's *Never Never* and many others.

Paolo has also directed two very successful season's of a devised show *Survivor* for the Auckland University Drama Dept and at Silo Theatre.

In 1997 Paolo was awarded the Best Actor award at the Rome Film Festival for his lead role as a serial killer in *The Ugly* (dir Scott Reynolds). Since then, he has starred in various short films and music videos, and in 2001, played one of the leads in the very popular feature film *Stickmen* (Hamish Rothwell). Paolo has appeared in numerous television series from *Street Legal*, to *Xena* and *Young Hercules* and most recently *Riverworld*.

The Freezer is Paolo's debut as a short film director.

Producer's biography

Linda Keown has been in the film and television industry since 1999. She finished her Bachelor of Arts at Victoria University and she fell into production accidentally on her return from post-study travel in India. Linda has worked with Michele Fantl, who runs MF Films, for four years.

Linda has production-managed several documentaries for television and the International Film Festival circuit including *The Big OE* (2000), *God Sreenu and Me* (dir Stewart Main, 2001), *Naughty Little Peeptoe* (dir Garth Maxwell & Peter Wells, 2001), *Pansy* (dir Peter Wells 2002), *The Magic Within* (dir Stewart Main, 2002) & *Jail Birds* (dir Jessica Justice, 2002).

In 2001, she produced the New Zealand shoot of an MTV Japan rock video for the group *Mad Capsule Markets*.

The Freezer is Linda's debut as a short film producer.

Writers Paolo Rotondo & Neil Campbel

Paolo Rotondo and Neil Campbel are old friends from Sacred Heart's College in Auckland. They have shared stories and laughed together for many years. In 2000, Neil told Paolo of a story about a freezer being reclaimed from Panguru by one of his ancestors who used to run the second hand shop in Kaikohe. Paolo loved the story, and went away and wrote a first draft of the screenplay. Neil and Paolo continued to develop the script and submitted the final draft in 2001. Out of approximately 145 submissions their script was one of three short films to receive funding from the New Zealand Film Commission through the Short Film Tender Group - GodZone Pictures (Liz DiFiore and Peter Salmon).

Paolo

Paolo has written two stage shows, the controversial "Black Hands" based on the David Bain trials and recently the critically acclaimed "Little Che" based on the young Che Guevara (in which Paolo also acted). "Little Che" toured New Zealand in 2002. This is Paolo's first short film.

Neil

Neil Campbel was raised in the Far North, and after leaving school spent a few years riding motorcycles around Australia, commercial fishing, reading economics and law, and writing. Neil has published work from *Australian Vogue* to Legal journals, including writing with NZ DOP Gerald Jenkins in Australia.

Along the way Neil got his Law Degree in Auckland & Economics degree in Australia, and returned to NZ in 1994. With his Law degree, Neil ran the Screen Directors Guild of New Zealand for 18 months. Neil has always had an intense interest in intellectual property rights, and has enjoyed applying his qualifications to businesses and organisations that protect and support creative work, including APRA, SDG, Baldwin Shelton Waters. Neil now works in law at TVNZ. This is Neil's first short film script to be produced.

Credits

Cast

| | |
|----------|-----------------|
| Will | Mat Sheppard |
| Ron | Eryn Wilson |
| Dad | David Geary |
| Rob | Rob Mocaraka |
| Tangaroa | Dustin Phillips |
| Kuia | Wharetatao King |

Crew

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Director | Paolo Rotondo |
| Writers | Paolo Rotondo & Neil Campbel |
| Producer | Linda Keown |
| Executive Producer | Peter Salmon & Liz DiFiore |
| Directory of Photography | Simon Raby |
| Editor | Margot Francis |
| 1st Assistant Director | Andrew Sorenson |
| Art Director | Tristan McLeod |
| Additional Production Design | Roger Murray |
| Costume Design | Kiri Rainey |
| Composer | Ed McWilliams |
| Sound Design | Chris Burt |
| Wardrobe | Mitch Andrews |
| Makeup / Hair | Tracey Henton |
| 2nd Assistant Director | Amand Weaver |
| Director of Sponsorship | Lisa Morrison |
| Production Assistant | Orlando Clairmont |
| Script Advisor | Poata Eruera |

Credits

Crew cont...

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|------------------------|--|
| Unit Manager | Anna Payton |
| Catering | Frangipani Fine Foods Ltd |
| Focus Puller | Tim Pope |
| Clapper Loader | Anna Stylianou |
| Continuity | Adrienne Rikihana |
| Gaffers | Tony Blackwood |
| | Gilly Lawrence |
| Best Boy | Merlin Wilford |
| Gaffer Assistants | Ollie Jones |
| | Poutama Hetareka |
| Grip | Dean Maxted |
| Grip Assistants | Rob Mita |
| | Spencer Locke - Bonny |
| Sound Recordist | Mike Westgate |
| Boom Operator | David Scott |
| Sound Post Production | Inside Track |
| Assistant Sound Editor | Reuben Rountree |
| Title Design | Geyser Design |
| Storyboard Artist | Jason Dufty |
| Offline edit | Digital Post |
| Assistant editor | Hamish Hooper |
| Negcutting | Jay Berriman, Upper Deck Film Services |
| Film Processing | Atlab |
| Post Production | The Film Unit |