

TAKU RAKAU E

P R E S S K I T



A legacy ...

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

Chelsea Winstanley - StanStrong Ltd - PO Box 90957 - Auckland - NZ
Tel +64 845 2954 - Mob +64 21 459745 - chelsea@stanstrong.co.nz

STANSTRONG

PRODUCTION NOTES

Writer/Director Kararaina Rangihau
Producer Merata Mita
Co-Producer Chelsea Winstanley

Production Company StanStrong Ltd
Country of production New Zealand
Date of completion 2010
Shooting Format 35mm
Screening Format HDCam/35mm
Ratio 1:1.85
Duration 12.5 mins
Genre Drama

World Sales Chelsea Winstanley
StanStrong
Tel. 649 845 2954
Chelsea@stanstrong.co.nz

35mm / Stereo / Colour / 12.5mins / 1:2.35

LOGLINE

A child is enlightened when her grandmother explains the meaning of a waiata (song) that some have taken for granted.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

TAKU RAKAU E is a waiata tawhito composed about 1873 by Mihikitekapua of Tūhoe. Now in 2009, some generations later Mihikitekapua's descendents continue to sing her waiata. In this short film Mihikitekapua laments the loss of land and her family succinctly phrased in a haunting lament.

Erana, a young girl is learning Taku Rakau E at school. The school is set in a small rural village on the fringes of the Urewera.

Take Rakau E is brought to life by nan who agrees to tell the story of Mihikitekapua to her great - grand - daughter, Erana. The pair drifts back and forth revisiting the times of the great chief Takahi and his warriors. Erana imagines, (sees), that Mihikitekapua searches in vain for Takahi and his people. She develops a strong sense of belonging as the story unfolds, and a new found pride in her tipuna - kuia.

She learns that she is one of many descendents of Mihikitekapua.

Erana empathises with Mihikitekapua and her long walk through the long dark night where her ancestors beckon her with the words of the waiata, Taku Rakau E.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

As a person of strong Tuhoe descent it is important to me to develop my skills as a film-writer and film-director, so that I may retell our stories from a Tuhoe perspective. They are interesting, relevant, and most of all, they have never been told before. My aim is to be one of this century's great Tuhoe story-tellers, one who like the characters in my stories will be remembered.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Kararaina Rangihau, of Tūhoe and Te Arawa descent is a repository of tribal stories and history, and is known in her community as storyteller and songwriter of considerable note. Under the mentorship of veteran film maker Merata Mita, Kararaina has written and directed her very first short film Taku Rākau E.

She has experience in documentary making, music videos, and produced many plays; creating works that have lead her to strong involvement in community development initiatives, government programs for Maori and international development projects with indigenous communities. All her work is about Māori, written for Māori, and delivered in the Māori language.

She is a founding trustee of a Māori radio station, a former trustee of an Iwi governance board and a current trustee of a Māori land and Treaty settlement trust.

Kararaina currently manages the creative production work at Moumou Design and designs relationship and communication strategies for government engagement with communities

Artist Other Works: All 100% Maori Language:

1994; Co-Writer/Director, Nga Tama Ariki o Te Ao Atea 50min Stage Production

1995; Writer/Director/Producer 47 x 1hr Childrens TV programs Aotearoa TV

1996; 20x 15min Drama Radio Programs

1997; Writer/Director/Actor 40min stage production, Te Taniwha

2002; Te Orokohanga o Te Ao, 100% Maori Language, 40 min Film

PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY

Merata Mita

The late Merata Mita was a key figure in the story of Māori filmmaking. Through documentaries, interviews, public speaking and her 1987 dramatic feature Mauri, she was a passionate voice for Māori and an advocate for social change.

Merata Mita grew up in the Bay of Plenty town of Maketu, the third eldest of nine children. She had a traditional rural Māori upbringing, and recalls watching newsreels when films were projected onto the walls of the local whareniui.

Later, during eight years teaching at Kawerau College, Mita began using film and video to reach supposedly unteachable high school students, many of them Māori. "What they were all good at was expressing themselves through art, image,

drawing." The experience taught Mita "how powerful image was in reaching people who don't have other communication skills".

Mita worked on her first documentary in 1977, helping a Pākehā filmmaker organize interviews with Māori people. But she soon began to grow disenchanted at Māori misrepresentation on film, and at how Māori seemed to be employed only to liaise with Māori communities for white filmmakers.

In May 1978 Mita got a telephone call telling her "to get a film crew up to Bastion Point". Mita arrived just in time to film police removing Ngāti Whatua protestors from the site. Lack of funds meant that *Bastion Point: Day 507* (co-directed with Gerd Pohlmann and Leon Narbey) would take another two years to complete.

Mita went on to co-direct films with Pohlmann about the trade union movement (*The Hammer and the Anvil*) and the Hokianga Catholic Māori community (*Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki*). Both films were made at Auckland co-op Alternative Cinema. *The Bridge* (1982) chronicles the longrunning Mangere Bridge industrial dispute. She also collaborated with Martyn Sanderson on cross-cultural documentary *Keskidee Aroha*.

In 1980 Mita began an "often bitter and demoralising" tenure as a researcher, reporter and then presenter at Māori TV news show *Koha*. Mita was disappointed to be told that the programme was aimed at a majority viewing - i.e. white - audience, and that Māori language content should not exceed two per cent.

Patu! was Merata Mita's passionate record of clashes between protestors and police during the 1981 Springbok tour. Police sought court orders to get hold of film and photos to use in court prosecutions of protestors; Mita hid footage so that it could not be used, and complained of police harassment during the edit.

The subject of intense media coverage, *Patu!* was described by filmmaker/Listener reviewer Peter Wells as "the hottest documentary ever made in New Zealand". It was also the first feature-length documentary in New Zealand directed by a woman. Local cinema chains refused to screen it. *Patu!* went on to screen at film festivals around the world.

Mita argued that *Patu!* saw her branded unfairly as a political filmmaker, when in reality the film was primarily visual, and was deliberately low on commentary or heavy analysis.

Mita followed *Patu!* in 1988 with *Mauri*, only the second feature film drama to have a Māori woman director (1972's *To Love a Māori* was co-directed by Ramai Hayward and husband Rudall). *Mauri*'s plotline centres around issues of birthright and racism in an isolated rural community, with land rights activist Eva Rickard playing the central role of the grandmother.

The film was a training ground for many young Māori crew members; Mita argued that "what you gain from Māori people is an incredible intensity and passion about the work being done".

Mauri won a best prize at Italy's Rimini Film Festival. After some negative reviews of the film at festival screenings back home, Mita argued against Pākehā reviewers who were "not qualified to assess it". She asked not that people liked the film, but that they view it with an open mind.

In making *Mauri*, Mita consciously rejected Pākehā traditions of storytelling. Instead she embraced a layered approach, in keeping with the strongly oral tradition of Māori people. She told writer Cushla Parekowhai: "These are differences that Pākehā critics don't even take into account when they're analyzing the film."

1989 saw Mita and longtime editor Annie Collins at a Steenbeck editing bench on Turangawaewae Marae. Mita had accepted the challenge from NZ Film Archive founder Jonathan Dennis, to make *Mana Waka* (1990), a documentary which used abandoned footage chronicling the creation of four special wakas commissioned by Princess Te Puea, for New Zealand's 140th centenary. Mita wrote about making the film in the book *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand*.

Mana Waka met with its own ownership complications: at one point descendants of the original Pākehā cameraman ran off with an early print of the film, despite having already agreed to let Mita direct.

Mita also made documentaries on artist Ralph Hotere (*Hotere*, 2001), rastafarians in Ruatoria (*The Dread*, 1996) and judicial injustice (*The Shooting of Dominick Kaiwhata*, 1993). She also directed the video for Che Fu's *Waka*, which won the Music Video of the Year Award at the 1999 Hawaii Music Awards.

Mita spent much of the 90s working in America, alongside then partner, director Geoff Murphy. As an actor, she appeared in Murphy's historical epic *Utu* (for which she was also a cultural and casting advisor), and a TV adaptation of Rowley Habib's *The Protesters*. She was later on the producing team behind Murphy's Kiwi-set feature *Spooked* (2004) and box office smash *Boy*, and was executive producer on 2004's *The Land Has Eyes*, the first feature directed by a native Fijian.

Mita's unfinished documentary *Saving Grace* was originally set to screen on Māori Television as part of a Matariki special, aimed at finding solutions to the issue of child abuse. The film will now air at a later date.

Mita hosted workshops and spoke on panels about indigenous filmmaking in many countries. As an assistant professor at the Academy of Creative Media at the University of Hawai'i Manoa, she taught indigenous screenwriting, aesthetics and production. In 2005 she organised the Hawaiian launch of indigenous peoples' festival the Hawai'inuiakea Native Film Showcase.

In 1996 Mita was awarded the Leo Dratfield Lifetime Achievement Award for documentary, by the Robert Flaherty Foundation. She was also the subject of Hinewehi Mohi's 1998 documentary *Merata Mita - Making Waves*.

Alongside Tainui Stephens and the late Barry Barclay, Mita helped brainstorm the idea of an initiative to encourage Māori film and filmmakers. Te Paepae Ataata trust was born in 2010.

Mita collapsed suddenly outside an Auckland television studio on May 31, 2010. The same year she had received the order of merit in the New Year's Honours. Her long cherished dream of adapting Patricia Grace novel *Cousins* into a feature remained unfulfilled.

Moe mai e te rangatira, moe mai.

Co-Producer
Chelsea Winstanley

Chelsea has been involved in the film and Television industry since graduating from Auckland University of Technology in 2003. She worked at Kiwa media for 5 years producing and directing TV Series and documentaries. She has won and has been nominated for the Media Peace Awards with her documentaries.

In 2007 she set up StanStrong Ltd, which she owns and operates with Producer Desray Armstrong. Chelsea has maintained an active role in television directing for other companies and freelance producing documentaries and factual series.

She coproduced her first Short film in 2007 Patu Ihu with Angela Littlejohn. She has had the opportunity of working with some of the most influential and experienced people within NZ's film and television industry since then. As a producer Chelsea has made two other short films 'Meathead' and 'Taku Rakau E'. In a production role Chelsea has worked on 'Boy' and 'Show of Hands'. She is currently producing the short film 'Hitched'.

Chelsea has been an executive board member of Nga Aho Whakaari and has sat on the governance board of WIFT – NZ. Chelsea won the Woman to Watch award at WIFT 2009 Film and Television Awards.

CREDITS

Dedicated to the memory of Mihikitekapua

Produced by
Written and Directed by

Merata Mita
Kararaina Rangihau

CAST

Mihikitekapua
Nan
Erana
Tia
Tamariki

Menu Ripia
Menu Ripia
Te Ratauhina Tumarae
Te Urewera Tekurapa
Kiripounamu Tekurapa,
Kirikatokia Rangihau,
Riria Rangihau,
Whakarito Rangihau

Whaea Tamati
Takahi
Warrior
Invaders

School Bus Driver

Parehuia Eparaima
Pato Ripia
Raymond Tipu
Tarewa Rota
Charlie Lambert
Ivan Turipa

CREW

Co Producer
Production Accountant
1st Assistant Director
2nd Assistant Director
Production Assistant
Director of Photography
Focus Puller
Clapper Loader
Camera Assistant
Assistant DOP
Editor
Kaarearea Footage
Sound Recordist
Additional Sound
Continuity
Gaffer
Best Boy
Grip
Grip assistant
Locations

Chelsea Winstanley
Desray Armstrong
Pita Turei
Kath Akuhata Brown

Shannon Biddle
Grant McKinnon
Kent Belcher
Meg Perrot
Amber Smith
Mike Johnathon
Dena Curtis
Hikoi NZ
Aaron Davis
Ethan Davis
Kath Thomas
Mike Toki
Logan Phillips
Jim Rowe
Andy Troughton
Steve Frires

Production Designer	Okiwi Logan Shipgood
Props Standby	Jimmy Kouratorus
Construction	Bonnie Taiatini
	Haruru Ripia
Make up Artist	Jasmine Amohau
Production Runner – Auckland	Dena Kennedy
Production Runner - Waikaremoana	Dave Anderson
Unit Manager / Safety	Tweedy Waititi
Stills Photographer	Cinzia Jonathon
Sound Production Designer / Foley Artist	Dick Reade
Music	Justin Kereama
Catering	Te Kohanga Reo o Waikaremoana
	Volcano Lighting
Lighting	METRO film
Camera Equipment	Fuji
Film Stock	Film Lab Limited
Film Processing	Digi Post
Telecine Transfer	
Rental Cars	Henderson Rentals, Metropolitan Rentals, 'North Harbour Rentals
RT's	Wireless Warehouse
Sound Design Studio	Reade Audio
Digital Scanning& Recording	Digi Post
Curious Film Producer	Matt Noonan
Flame Operator	Nigel Mortimer
Titles Design	Richard Shaw
Subtitles	Luke Haigh

THANKS TO:

Waimako marae, Te Kuha marae, Te Whanau o Te Kohanga Reo O
Waikaremoana, Tuhoe Waikaremoana Maori Trust Board, Te Rangianiwaniwa
Whanau Trust, Department of Conservation, Aniwaniwa base, Ora Digital, Iwa
Anderson, Erana Anderson, John Bicknell, Gary Little, Andy Roelants,
Whakamarino Lodge, Stanstrong Ltd, Te Paepae Ataata, Te Waka Toi