

SMASHER FILMS PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SHORT FILM FUND OF THE NEW ZEALAND FILM COMMISSION AND THE SOUTHERN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

THE KEEPER

A COLONIAL HAUNTING OF BIRDS AND ISOLATION

SAM SNEDDEN TAREN CUNNINGHAM TAI BERDINNER-BLADES RUFUS HOLMES IN 'THE KEEPER' PRODUCTION DESIGNER GUY TREADGOLD MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN MAXWELL SCOTT LEAD VISUAL EFFECTS ARTIST STUART BEDFORD EDITORS PETER SCIBERRIS & ANDREW CHAPLIN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY GERMAIN MCMICKING EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS TUI RUWHIU, BRAD HAAMI & POATA ERUERA
WRITTEN BY PAUL STANLEY WARD PRODUCED BY CLAIRE KELLY DIRECTED BY DYLAN PHARAZYN





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DIRECTOR	DURATION
Dylan Pharazyn	15 minutes
PRODUCER	SHOOTING FORMAT
Claire Kelly	Arri Alexa
CINEMATOGRAPHER	SCREENING FORMATS AVAILABLE
Germain McMicking	35mm print, HDCAM SR, DCP, DIGIBETA.
EDITORS	ASPECT RATIO
Peter Sciberras & Andrew Chaplin	2.40:1
PRODUCTION DESIGNER	DATE OF COMPLETION
Guy Treadgold	June 2013
COMPOSER / SOUND DESIGNER	PRODUCTION COMPANY
Maxwell Scott	Smasher Films
LEAD VISUAL EFFECTS ARTIST	COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION
Stuart Bedford	New Zealand
CASTING DIRECTOR	GENRE
Adrian Dentice	Drama / Science Fiction
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS	INTERNATIONAL SALES
Tauihu Shorts	NZ FILM
Tui Ruwhiu	Lisa Chatfield
Brad Haami	shorts@nzfilm.co.nz
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	New Zealand

Synopsis

A rugged, windswept bush-clad island in the Cook Strait, New Zealand, 1900. Joseph is a young lighthouse keeper struggling to wrench a life for his pregnant wife and young boy in the harsh environment. They have run out of conventional fuel for the light; they will lose their livelihood if the light fails. The family resorts to rendering fuel from bird fat, which requires slaughtering hundreds of the island’s birds, and boiling them up in an iron ‘digestor’. In the embers of the forest burn-off (to flush the birds out), his boy discovers a large mysterious egg.

Joseph’s wife has trouble with the baby and she and the boy are emergency evacuated to the mainland. Isolated and sleep-deprived by his lighthouse keeping duty, Joseph keeps the light burning for their safe transport. He struggles to keep awake. Meanwhile the egg grows bigger and bigger. In a storm, a creature hatches. He is wary, but intoxicated by the exotic creature, Ava.

Hunched by the lantern, with no fuel left and at his wit’s end, Joseph is approached by Ava. She lulls him into using blood dripping from her cut palm as lantern fuel. Beguiled by the ensuing glow he falls — finally — into a deep sleep, and neglects the light. Darkness comes.



Director Dylan Pharazyn

Director Dylan Pharazyn's first short film *Vostok Station* was funded by the Creative NZ & NZFC's Screen Innovation Production Fund. The film was nominated for a New Frontier award at Sundance 2010. Hailed 'authoritative film-making' by Vincent Ward, and named in the Top 10 Shorts by Cinematical's Sundance insider Eric Davis, *Vostok Station* was also selected for: 54th Valladolid International Film Festival (Spain) 2009, Uppsala International Short Film Festival (Netherlands) 2009, OneDotZero (London) 2009, 25th International Short Film Festival (Berlin) 2009, Breda International Film Festival (Netherlands) 2010 and International Film Festival (Dallas) 2010.

Dylan is represented as a commercials director with global film production company The Sweet Shop Films (www.thesweetshop.tv).

Dylan grew up in Central Hawkes Bay and now lives in Auckland, New Zealand with his girlfriend, Nicki, and their two daughters, Rosa and Frances.

Vostok Station can be viewed here:
<http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/vostok-station-2009>.

Writer Paul Ward

Paul received a Qantas best screenplay award for debut short *Graffiti of Mr Tupaia* (which also won best film and best actor, and screened at Locarno, and dozens of international festivals). After an OE that took in an Oxford masters and producing for a Discovery Channel reality show, he was the writer for primetime NZ TV series *Here to Stay* (on NZ settler groups) and covert policing doco *Undercover*. He received a 2010 Qantas nomination for scripting short film festival success *Choice Night*. *Choice Night* was selected for four 'A-list' festivals, including BFI London and Clermont Ferrand, and won Best International Short at Geneva Film Fest. NZFC 'Premiere'-funded *Jub Jub* is in post-production (directed by Dylan). He is editor for NZ On Screen, and developing feature projects with Dylan and Claire.

Choice Night can be viewed here:
<http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/choice-night-2010>

Producer Claire Kelly

Claire has been producing television commercials for over 20 years now. Within this time frame she spent 7 years as facilities manager and post production supervisor at flying Start Pictures. She left in 2000 to become involved as a freelancer in production, working for several years as a freelance production manager, line producer and now producer working on high end commercials. She also spent 5 years working out of the Sweet Shop in Auckland producing for various directors there. Claire has produced over 100 commercials all over NZ and more recently offshore with the Sweet Shop. Claire was also involved in the film industry as an investor in a gripping company for over 7 years.

The past 18 months have seen Claire start up her own company Smasher Films, servicing offshore commercial productions in New Zealand. Claire produced her first Premiere short film with Dylan as director and Paul as writer which is currently in post production. Claire lives in Auckland with her three daughters.



Director's Statement

The Keeper builds upon many things I was interested in with my first short Vostok Station (Sundance 2010). Vostok Station and was fortunate to receive a deal of festival success, and for this I feel extremely lucky. The theme of landscape as a central character, the dense emotional atmosphere, a rich visual language – Vostok Station was no ordinary short film and it is this unique approach that I have kept close while creating The Keeper.

The family loss that is at the heart of Joseph's story is a theme that resonated deeply with me. I have had a number of young men in my family die young and I was drawn to portray this tragic story.

Dealing with the emotional human themes parallel to the broader idea of man vs nature. Both Ava and Joseph suffer loss in the film - there's a kind of symmetry to their characters.

I was compelled by the fact that this is a very New Zealand story of colonial life told with a contemporary viewpoint. I was compelled by the idea of a genre or tone shift within a short film... Setting up the film with a colonial realism style and then, rather than pulling the rug, a gradual transition into a more fantasy piece. Ultimately the goal was to shoot a fable with a controlled use of abstract themes.

A colonial fable told with a modern language of realism. Cinematographer Germain McMicking and I veered away a classical style of period films and instead shot all handheld with available light. This made for an almost hyper real tone once the surrealism is introduced.

I feel truly privileged to have assembled such an incredible team of collaborators and performers to inspire, provoke and ultimately realise my vision for THE KEEPER.



Cinematographer Germain McMicking

Germain McMicking is a Melbourne born cinematographer and photographer. His credits include numerous award winning music videos, high-end television commercials and feature documentary and television projects. Germain also works in stills, shooting fashion editorials and portraiture. Over the past several years Germain has gained experience shooting commercials overseas, in Europe, South America, the U.S, and Asia working alongside a variety of established commercial directors.

In early 2000 Germain teamed up with photographer Ben Saunders and established the creative partnership Nice Trees, which has produced a broad selection of acclaimed work. Nice Trees' music videos have won several awards, including an Aria award for Eskimo Joe's "Wake Up" (2001), a Best Music Video award from the St Kilda Film festival for Augie March's "Little Wonder" (2004) and a Golden Guitar award for Paul Kelly's "Song of The Old Rake" (2006).

HAIL is Germain's fifth collaboration with filmmaker Amiel Courtin-Wilson. Previous collaborations include ADOLESCENT (2003), ON THE OTHER OCEAN (2006), BASTARDY (2008) and CICADA (2008). CICADA has been screened at the Cannes Film Festival, the 2010 Clermont Ferrand, the London Film Festival and the Melbourne and Sydney International Film Festivals.

In 2008 Germain filmed the AFI nominated feature documentary LIONEL, which was released theatrically. The film focused on the life and times of Aboriginal world champion boxer Lionel Rose and was directed by Eddie Martin.

Lionel screened at Melbourne Film Festival and won the Silver Palm Award at the Mexico Film Festival 2009.

In 2009 Germain filmed the second installment in the award winning Wilfred series with director Tony Rogers for Renegade Films and SBS, and also filmed the documentary components for the ABC's John Safran's Race Relations.

He filmed the two AFI award-winning SBS television programs John Safran's Music Jambo-ree and John Safran Versus God, and has also recorded a three-hour interview with Quentin Tarantino for Mark Hartley's feature documentary Not Quite Hollywood.

Editor Pete Sciberras

Born in Melbourne, Australia - Peter Sciberras has been working extensively within the film and commercial world for the past five years. 2011 marks a monumental year for Peter with films in competition at both Cannes and Venice film festival; two of the most prestigious film festivals in the world.

Peter's short film credits include Meathead for director Sam Holst (Official selection 2011 Cannes Film Festival, Official Selection MIFF 2011), Foreign Parts for director Michael Cody (Official selection 2010 Clermont-Ferrand short film festival) and The Father for director David Eastal (Official Selection MIFF 2011) to name a few.

Peter recently completed cutting the feature film HAIL for acclaimed director Amiel Courtin-Wilson (Official selection 2011 Venice Film festival). HAIL is the story of a world-weary criminal released from prison and reunited with the love of his life, but finds he cannot escape his inner demons, the trappings of crime, and the all-consuming spectre of tragedy.

Peter's commercial work includes jobs for directors Steve Ayson, Nick Ball, Glendyn Ivin, Ben Wheatley, Julius Avery, Sean Meehan, and Hamish Rothwell. Many of these commercials have won gongs at local and overseas award shows including a One Show Merit, MADC - Best In Show, silver and bronze editing awards at AWARD and MADC's as well as a nomination at the Clio's for best editing.



Filmography

DYLAN PHARAZYN

The Keeper (2013)

Vostok Station (2009)

PAUL STANLEY WARD

The Keeper (2013)

Cold Snap (2012)

Choice Night (2010)

The Graffiti of Mt Tupaia (2008)

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