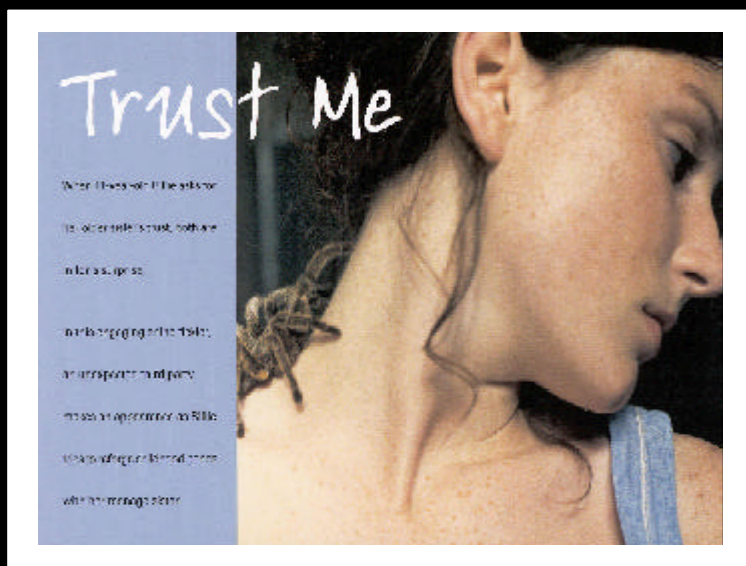


TRUST ME



Presskit

Official Selection 2001:

Berlin Film Festival



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Production Notes

Writer: Virginia Pitts/Jane Warren
Director: Virginia Pitts
Producers: James Wallace and Tony Kovacs
Production Company: James Wallace Productions

Colour 9.5 minutes 35 mm 1:1:85 Dolby SRD

Log Line

When 11 year old Billie asks for her older sister's trust, both are in for a surprise.

Synopsis

11 year old Billie explores her decrepit urban hideaway in the distorted reflection of an old mirror. When she sights 17 year old Dan caressing her older sister's breast, Billie's jealousy and exclusion become tinged with disgust.

Dan is playfully pushed away by a reluctant Sonia and, once he's gone, Billie hopes to have her sister's attention back. But it seems the old games have palled for Sonia. So Billie decides to reveal her special secret – something much more exciting than mere boys. She takes Sonia to a locked room, a darkened cupboard, a secret box...

Inside is a massive, hairy tarantula. Sonia shrieks in horror, and Billie skillfully manoeuvres the little beast onto her own arm. She challenges Sonia to do the same, who eventually agrees. But then Billie pushes things further – she wants to feed a slithering sliced worm to the tarantula

on Sonia's arm. Should Sonia trust her sister or not? Watch as events spiral out of control for the daring siblings in this engaging spine tingler.

Director's Notes

On the surface, the film provides a compelling tale of how power is negotiated when trust is asked for or given. Strikingly tactile imagery brings the drama to life in purely cinematic terms: a dark hairy creature on soft white skin; an eager finger extracting a wet writhing worm; a glinting knife blade against a vulnerable vein. This is a female world in which nothing is 'pretty as a picture'. Hard edges, rough surfaces, industrial detritus and the tangled weeds of rebellious nature characterise the setting for the drama *Billie* provokes.

Simmering beneath the surface story is an evocative subtext. *Trust Me* is a film of secrets and hidden places: a stolen glance, a darkened room, a secret bag, a Pandora's box. And inside, that potent symbol of mature sexuality – a great, dark, hairy spider. Repellent, alluring, and drenched in mythology, the tarantula at the centre of the rite performed by Billie and Sonia hints at a symbolic sexual initiation which comes complete with a need for trust and inherent dangerous consequences.

Having erred on the side of caution with her boyfriend, Sonia submits to the unknown with Billie and her spider, and is shown how dangerous that can be. Billie learns that exploiting someone's trust and playing on their fears, however unwittingly, can never win them back. She suffers a double loss as a result.

Credits

Cast

Older sister	Florence Hartigan
Boyfriend	Daniel Hansen
Younger sister	Augusta Kennedy

Crew

Directed by	Virginia Pitts
Screenplay by	Virginia Pitts & Jane Sherning Warren
Based on an original idea by	Jane Sherning Warren
Producer	James Wallace
Co-Producer	Tony Kovacs
Executive Producers	Frame Up Films
Development Funding	T.H.E Films Ltd
Director of Photography	Phil Burchell
Production Designer	Phil Gregory
Casting Director	Martin Henry
Editor	Wayne Cook
Original Music	Sean Donnelly
Sound Design	Chris Burt
FX Designer	George Port
Production Manager	Andrea Morgan
Production Assistant	Rhiannon Cole
1st Assistant Director	Joel Robinson

Crew cont...

2nd Assistant Directors	Katie Flannagan and Rhiannon Cole
Continuity	Sara Howard
Focus Pullers	Nic Fay and Rod Blackie
Clapper Loader	Todd Bilton
Video Split Operator	Matthew Perry
'Monty' Operator	David Greene
Stills Photographer	David Popvitz
Gaffer	Paul Eversden
Best Boy	Merlin
Lighting Assistant	Reuban Van Dorsten
Grip	Steve Springett
Grip Assistant	Shannon Hobson
Sound Recordist	Andrew Ennever
Boom Operator	Mark Storey
Set Construction	Nat Curnow
Art Department Assistant	Nick Vale
Location Scout	Esther Tobin
Spider Wrangler	Brian Lawton (Creatures Unlimited)
Spider Props Construction	Rosemary Gilbert
Make Up / Hair	Maya Lewis
Wardrobe Supervisor	Kerry Trendall
Catering	D.K Catering
Unit Manager	Candida Keithley

Crew cont...

Unit Assistant	Fiona Gilmore
Runners	Julie Tan and Shelayne Miners
Additional Editing	Steve Edwards
Edit Suite	Sparks PPS
Negative Matching	Fine Cut
Film Processing	ATLAB NZ Ltd
Telecine	Digipost
Neg Scanning	The Film Unit
Camera Equipment	Metro Film Ltd
Grip Gear	The Dolly Shop
Lighting Equipment	T.E.L.E LIGHT Ltd.
Filmstock	Kodak

Special Thanks to

Auckland War Memorial Museum / Kristi Barnett / Gregory Bennett
Harold Brodie / Roland Carati / Murray Edmond / Joanne Emmens
Tony Eversden / Anna Greaves and Grant Vecce at Pacific Renaissance Ltd.
Eva Gregory / Margaret Henley / Dean Hitchcock / Linda Hughes
Gary Hunt / Kiwi Earthworm Distributors / Shuchi Kothari / Ella Maia
Marcello at Santos Café / Grace Mok / Onehunga Spring Brewery Ltd – Brewers
of all natural, award winning NZ beers / Simon Raby / Gabriel Reid
Andy Roelants / Fiona Samuel / Debbie Sinton / Ken Sparks
Stewart at Slater Films / Dennis Thompson / Tim Warren / Chris Webb
Peter Worrall and Amanda Lane

Director's Biography

During the 80's in England, Virginia Pitts studied art, worked in theatre, and completed a film-making degree at the London College of Printing. In that time she also had political documentary work aired on BBC2 and Channel 4, and made a theatrical short, *Hassan*, about a family under curfew on the West Bank. The film was selected to screen at the Edinburgh, Melbourne and Tel Aviv film festivals and sold to Lichtpunt Television.

Since moving to New Zealand in 1992, Virginia has freelanced as a writer/director and assistant director in the film and television industries, had a baby, written proposals for drama, documentary and arts programmes, and completed a post-graduate diploma in film studies.

She is currently researching for a PhD on New Zealand film at Auckland University, where she sometimes teaches, and is writing her next film with the co-writer of *Trust Me*, Jane Warren.

Director's Filmography

NB: only films listed - no TV work listed, magazine work or documentaries

Hassan

Writer/Director

16mm 15min theatrical short.