

TURANGAWAEWAE

A PLACE TO STAND



Presskit

INTERNATIONAL SALES

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NEW ZEALAND FILM

Production Notes

Writer	Wiremu Grace
Director	Peter Meteherangi Tikao Burger
Producer	Catherine Fitzgerald
Production Company	Blueskin Films Ltd

Colour	10 minutes	16 mm	1:1:85	Dolby Digital
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Log Line

When one soldier dies, another takes his place.

Synopsis cont.....

Synopsis

Turangawaewae: a place to stand

Tiare (a Koro or old man), a veteran from the Vietnam War, lives homeless, wandering the city, collecting bits and pieces in his plastic bags. He marks out his world by creating tiny shrines made from stolen pieces of turf, and little symbols of his world and offering incantations over them. His daughter brings her own daughter to visit and tries yet again to persuade him to return to their ancestral home. He does not wish to go there.

This morning, he leaves on his wanderings, but all the signs show him a hostile world. Stealing some lawn from the Bowling Green, he gets accosted by the Club President who threatens him, clearly not for the first time. He just escapes from there to a city beach to build another protective shrine. His reverie is disturbed by boys whose play casts him back into the haunting images of his service in the Vietnam War. There he witnessed, if not unwittingly caused, the deaths of his whaanaunga (relatives).

Back on the streets he now has a heightened awareness of messages of war, death and destruction which meld into his ever powerful memories. Distracted by the confusion in his mind, he bumps into a heavily tattooed gang member.

Confounding his paranoid expectations, this man (Manu) helps to his feet and buys him a meal. He believes he recognises a fellow soldier, someone who will understand, and opens up to him. But with his guard down, he forgets to watch out for himself and is knocked down by a car.

As he drifts out of consciousness, he is transported to his homecoming from the war, where he realised the soil from which he came could no longer offer him strength against the horror of his war experience. In convalescence, his daughter can now insist on his coming home again.

Returning the shelter to collect his things, he stands her aside and pulls a tray bearing a mosaic of grass from behind his collection of bags under his bed. He stands to speak to his shelter comrades. For the first time, she realises her father carries much she knows nothing about. She sings in acknowledgement of this and in support of his mihimihi (greeting). He has tried to build a piece of the earth where he belongs away from the place of his ancestors and his descendants. But this has been not enough to protect him – spiritually, mentally or physically from his war experience.

They return home, but as he stands to speak as an acknowledgement to the ancestors he has returned, it becomes clear that the past still haunts him and that healing will be slow but only possible with the support of family.

Director's notes

In this film I wanted to capture the complexity of the idea of *turangawaewae*. For those Maori today, who no longer live in the place where their ancestors have lived for centuries, it becomes important to work out where can a sense of physical, mental, and spiritual security be sourced? The Vietnam War has left this old man (Koro) haunted by his sense of having failed his soldier family to whom he had felt as connected as his own family. This is so overwhelming he cannot return home without guilt. As a consequence, he is left wandering, without "a place to stand" and as we come to see, is not safe, mentally, spiritually or physically.

I was keen to create both the sense of displacement and pain than has haunted Tiare, (a seemingly cantankerous, unbalanced but puckish old man), ever since he was a soldier and an increasing empathy with him.

Much of my work to date has been in television commercials, especially those which make people smile. This poignant, moving script with moments of cheekiness and humour, offered the chance to work to evoke a huge range of feelings. As I work towards my first feature film, this felt an important step.

It has been a great pleasure to work with so many talented artists on this film – some I had worked with before on commercials or television drama and comedy projects, but they all – actors, Director of Photography, editor, designer, everyone who worked on the production and postproduction delivered on my vision for the film.

Just as I started planning for the shoot, I came across the Trinityroots song *Little Things* which felt a perfect conclusion. *Haere Mai, There's a Blue Sky Waiting for Me, Tomo Mai* and *Ma wai ra* all contribute crucially to the complexity of the mood and emotional journey of the film.

Director's notes cont...

I am very grateful for the generosity of all those who allowed me to use their music to make this film and to Warryn Maxwell for his original music.

It has also been exciting to work with the teams at Oktober and Weta Digital to pioneer in this country a digital blow up of the film from 16 mm to 35mm and make the most of all that digital technology has to offer a director in post production including effects and grading.

I hope people all over the world respond to this film – although many of the concepts in this film are very important in Maori culture, I am sure the feelings are universally comprehensible.

Director's biography

Peter Meteherangi Tikao Burger is of Ngai Tahu and Rangitane descent. He was raised in Wellington, New Zealand, where he still resides. After initial intentions of becoming an actor, "I soon saw the error of my ways", and while at Victoria University, began directing theatre, then film.

Peter joined Silverscreen Productions, a commercial production company, in 1994, and directed his first commercial for them in 1996. Perhaps not surprisingly, his tvcs have a strong storytelling/ performance bent. As his work has matured, the awards have come in, most notably being selected for the Saatchi & Saatchi Young Director's Showcase in 1999, and being named Young Director of the Year at the Australasian Television Awards in 2000. His commercial for Toyota 'Rav4' was named Best Commercial of the Year on Fair Go in 2001.

Director's bio cont....

Some other notable commercials Peter has directed include DB Draught "That Man Deserves a DB", Land Transport Safety Authority "Rural Speed", and Tui Beer "Rummage in the Jungle".

Peter directed his first one-hour television drama, entitled *Fish Skin Suit*, with Kahukura Productions for TV3 in 2000.

Most recently Peter has directed:

- an episode of *Mataku*, a Maori thriller series which screened on TV3 in November 2002, (South Pacific Pictures producer Carey Carter);
- a block of *Hard Out* a television drama series for screening in NZ 2003 (Screenworks, producer Chris Hampson);
- a block of *The Strip* a television drama series for screening in NZ 2003 (Gibson Group, producer Dave Gibson).

Writer's biography

Wiremu Gerald Grace is of Ngati Porou and Ngati Toa descent. And lives in Wellington. He comes from a strong cultural and arts background: he is an experienced and talented teacher, carver, theatre and screen actor, musician, visual artist, and fiction writer. He was the director/producer /writer of 'Whanau' radio series.

He won the short film award and was a finalist in the children's story section of the 2001 Maori Literature Awards for short film, following his selection as a finalist in the short story in English section in the 1999 Huia Literature Awards.

Turangawaewae is his first screen credit but he has a feature film in development and continues to focus on screen writing.

Producer's biography

Blueskin Films was launched in April 2002. *Turangawaewae* is its first production, along with an accompanying documentary for the NZ Maori Television Service. We now have four feature films in active development.

The company also recently produced a music video *Downtown* for a New Zealand hip hop band, *Footsouljahz* with acclaimed musician Che Fu.

Two further short films (supporting upcoming feature projects) are slated for production early in the 2003.

Catherine Fitzgerald, the producer, has experience as a script consultant and producer/director of documentaries and educational programmes for a wide range of clients. She has served in a senior executive role in creative and industry development at the NZ Film Commission. At the NZFC, and subsequently as a consultant, she has also worked extensively in film and television policy development. She also currently chairs the NZ Film Festivals Trust Board, having 20 years experience in the management of film festivals and events.

Oktozor

Oktozor joined the production of Turangawaewae by contributing their wide ranging creative and technical expertise in high quality computer-generated special effects and film finishing to pioneer for New Zealand, the digital colour enhanced intermediate and blow up of a film from 16mm to 35mm.

Oktozor is in demand by film production companies, advertising agencies, broadcasters and film and television studios worldwide for its work designing and creating digital experiences. "Our skills and knowledge enable us to produce a wide portfolio which ranges from high end postproduction and stunning visual effects to database driven websites and iTV applications," Oktozor Division Head Dean Lyon says.

This film, shot on 16mm, is delivered on 35mm via digital technology. With a high-resolution telecine transfer, a talented team of artists enhanced the film with visual effects and digital colour grading ready for transferring to 35mm film negative. This process opens up a whole new world of opportunity for the production of high quality films in New Zealand.

For more information, visit www.oktozor.com .

Credits

Cast

Tiare (Koro)	Wi Kuki Kaa
Rose	Nancy Brunning
Hineata	Sydney Larkins
Young Tiare	Greg Matetaka
Mr Finch	Grant Tilly
Manu	Geoff Karena
Newspaper boy	Reuben Harcourt
Boys on the beach	Sam Miskinnmin Peter Holiday, Tommy Weston
Vietnam Soldiers	Tama Kirkiri, Taika Cohen, Sam Williams, Mana Hira Davis

Crew

Director	Peter Burger
Writer	Wiremu Grace
Producer	Catherine Fitzgerald
Director of Photography	Rewa Harre
Composer	Warryn Maxwell
Production Manager	Georgina Allison
Production Runner	Chris Mabey
1 st Assistant Director	Seumas Cooney
2nd Assistant Director	Sarah Rose
Continuity	Veronique Lawrence
Focus Puller	Andrew Stroud
Clapper Loader	Duncan Paterson
Gaffer	Gerald Morse

Credits

Crew cont....

Grip	Paul Murphy
Assistant grips	Melissa Ririnui, Luke Saulbrey
Production designer	Gary MacKay
Props	Ian Ruxton
Art Department standby	Garrick Rigby
Costume Designer	Nicola Smillie
Standby Wardrobe	Rebecca Edwards
Wardrobe Assistants	Brendan Goudeswaard, Sam Morley
Make Up	Michelle Connolly
Make Up Assistants	Catherine Maguire, Kat Gilsean
Sound recordist	Nick McGowan
Boom operator	Stuart Britten
Unit Managers	Jonathan Hawke, Jacqui Reid
Stunt coordinator/safety officer	Sam Williams
Stunt driver	John Osborne
armoury/pyrotechs	Karl Chisholm, Phil McLaren, Ian Hutton
stills	Chris Coad
catering	Blue Carrot
editor	Paul Maxwell
Assistant Editor	Katherine Maxwell
Trainees	Maurice Padane, Manahira Davis, Jordan Nation-Plimmer, Bianca Rewena
Reo Māori Advisor	Ngahiwi Apanui
Audio facilities	Marmalade Audio
Track Lay/foley/ADR	Bruno Barrett-Garnier, Jeremy Cullen, Grant Taylor

Credits

Crew cont....

Sound Mix	Bruno Barrett-Garnier
Negative matching	Jay Berryman, Upper Deck Film Services
Negative cleaning	The Film Lab
vehicles	Capital City Car rentals
Camera equipment	Panavision NZ Ltd
16 mm stock	Hanimex
THE FILM UNIT LIMITED Special thanks to	Dean Evans, Sue Thompson
Laboratory liaison	Pamela White
Lab - rushes process	The Film Unit
OKTOBOR Special thanks to	Geoff Dixon, Dean Lyon, Robyn Isaacs,
Post co-ordinator	Gail Appleton
Telecine colourist & 2K scanning	Andy Clarkson
Inferno artist & titles	Paul Freeman
Assistant inferno artist	Greg Spencer
Technical support	Brent Harrison, Abe Treadwell
Data wranglers	Greg Spencer, Chris Colvin, Tim Hansen
Facilities support	Racheal Trillo, Katrina Walker
Runner	James Barr
WETA DIGITAL Recording manager	Pete Williams
Redording operators	Nick Booth & Roman Gardner