

baby?

Press Kit



GENERA

PRODUCTION NOTES

DIRECTOR	Mark Prebble
WRITERS	Marion & Mark Prebble
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Karl Sheridan
PRODUCERS	Ruby Reihana-Wilson Marion & Mark Prebble
PRODUCTION COMPANIES	Team M&M Monster Valley
COMPLETION DATE	October 2017
COUNTRY	New Zealand
SHOOTING FORMAT	Arri Alexa 2k
ASPECT RATIO	16:9
SCREENING FORMAT	DCP 24fps ProRes 24fps and 25fps
FILM LENGTH	12 mins 27 secs

CONTACT DETAILS

Mark Prebble +6422 155 9028
8 Eastglen Road, Glen Eden, Auckland, New Zealand
Ruby Reihana-Wilson +6421 133 0904



CAST

ISABELLE

LEISHA

SAMIKSHA

ADDITIONAL PERFORMERS

Radio Interviewee

Connor

Voice of Young Emily

Voice of Aditi

Julie Collis

Marion Prebble

Nisha Madhan

Jacinda Ardern

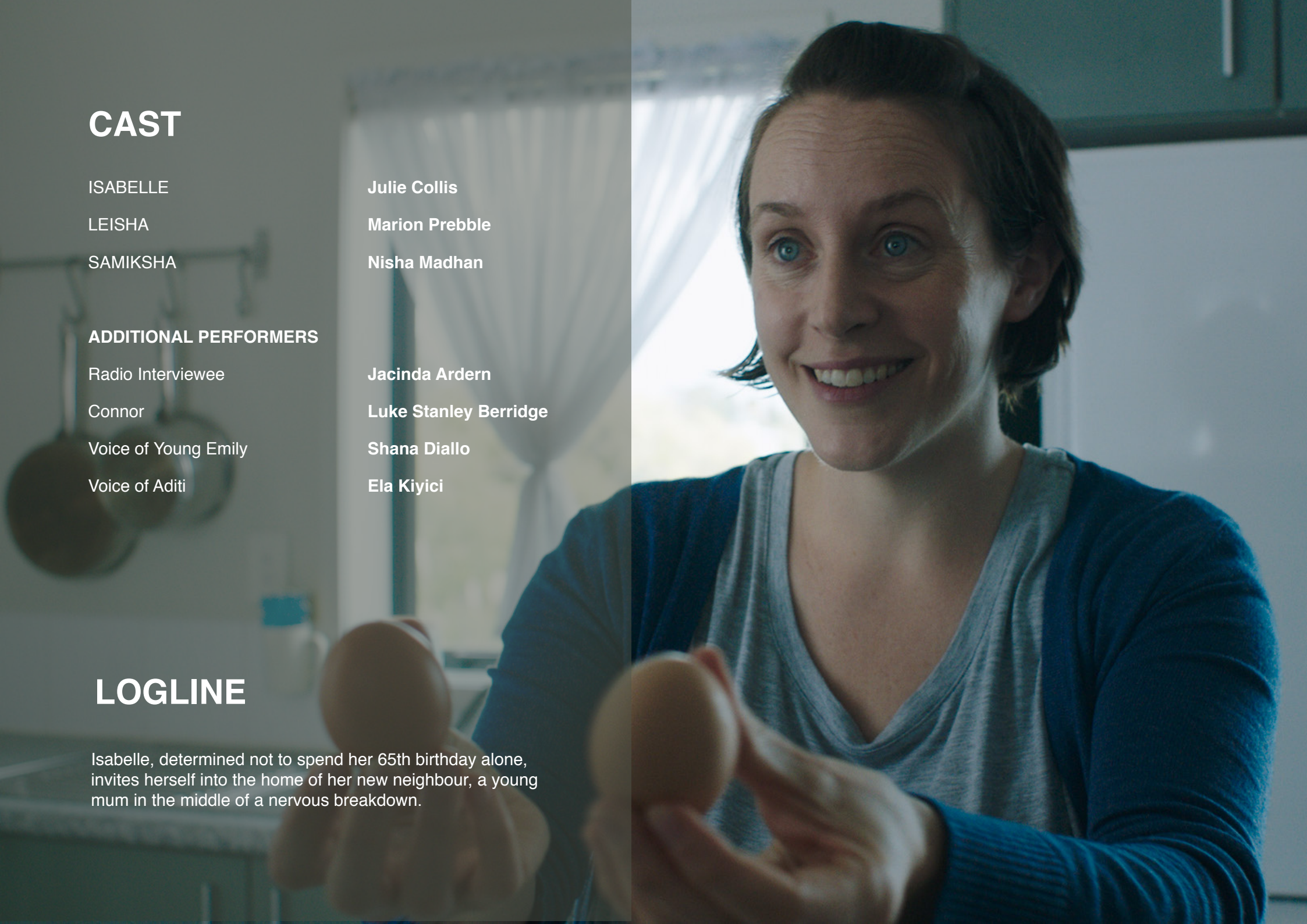
Luke Stanley Berridge


Shana Diallo

Ela Kiyici

LOGLINE

Isabelle, determined not to spend her 65th birthday alone, invites herself into the home of her new neighbour, a young mum in the middle of a nervous breakdown.



A woman with short, curly blonde hair is seated at a dining table covered with a white tablecloth. She is wearing a dark green, textured sweater and a necklace with a small pendant. She is looking down at a plate of food in front of her, which includes boiled potatoes, green beans, and a small salad. She holds a fork in her right hand and a knife in her left. On the table, there are two tall, slender wine glasses, one of which contains a small amount of yellow liquid. To the right of the woman, there is a clear plastic cake dome covering a cake. A smartphone lies on the table near the woman. The background is filled with numerous stacked cardboard boxes, suggesting a moving or storage situation. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from a window on the right side of the frame.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Isabelle is determined not to spend her 65th birthday alone. When her daughter doesn't turn up for dinner, Isabelle invites herself into the home of her new neighbour, Leisha.

Once inside and eating cake, Isabelle soon discovers that this young woman has recently lost her baby to cot death. When Isabelle's prying triggers a nervous breakdown in Leisha, she helps her in a way nobody else can.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Isabelle is downsizing in retirement to a row of identical townhouses. It's her 65th birthday and her first day in her new home but all her neighbours are too consumed in their semi detached bubbles to engage with the eager new resident.

Even Isabelle's daughter is too busy to help Mum move in and doesn't show for dinner, so it looks like Isabelle's spending her birthday alone.

That is until she meets Leisha, the reclusive young mother from a few doors down. Isabelle invites herself into Leisha's home with birthday cake to share.

The promising visit takes an awkward turn when Isabelle realises that Leisha's nursing "baby" is actually a teddy bear.

Leisha clearly believes the "baby" is real and becomes increasingly agitated by Isabelle's presence and behaviour around it. Leisha lashes out, calling Isabelle "weird". Isabelle retaliates by pointing out that Leisha is breast feeding a teddy bear.

Leisha's shock gives way to panic and then terror. She now believes her baby has stopped breathing and begs Isabelle for help.

Isabelle sees only one way to save Leisha from a complete mental breakdown – she grabs the teddy bear and gives it CPR.

With committed mouth-to-teddy-mouth Isabelle convinces Leisha that she's revived the imaginary baby and sows the seeds for a strange new surrogate family.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT


Baby? is a heartfelt and funny drama about two mothers connecting. We were inspired to write this story after our first daughter was born. Some things we wanted to talk about were: postnatal depression, the need for community and a story that celebrates older women. We also wanted a project in which mothers of young children could take key creative roles. We hope Baby? will draw our audience in with warmth and humour. We want to encourage people to talk about mental health and basically make them want call their mums.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

MARK PREBBLE - Mark has written and directed film and theatre projects in UK, Australia and around New Zealand. His play *The Pantry Shelf*, co-written with wife Marion, was an award-winner in Edinburgh and Auckland and a finalist for Best Play Script at Moondance Film Festival. His 2005 feature film *Futile Attraction* was the first feature film completed using internet crowd-funding. This was funded via his website www.MakeMarksMovie.com (now offline) which predates Facebook and Kickstarter.



PRODUCER BIOGRAPHIES

A portrait of Ruby Reihana-Wilson, a woman with dark, wavy hair, smiling. She is wearing a black shirt with a vibrant floral and tropical pattern featuring white hibiscus flowers and green leaves. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green foliage and a wooden fence.

RUBY REIHANA-WILSON - Ruby is a film producer, musician, and lighting technician for live theatre production. She produced her first feature film *Talk: A Portmanteau* in 2013 which won Best Visual Arts at the Auckland Fringe Festival. Recent freelance projects include production management, casting and first assistant directing *In Pursuit of Venus* by Lisa Reihana, which exhibited at the 2017 Venice Biennale. She has just finished post-production for her Loading Docs documentary *Asian Men Talk About Sex*, while producing full time for Monster Valley, a creative film studio.

A portrait of Marion Prebble, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair and blue eyes, smiling. She is wearing a light grey button-down shirt with a collar and chest pockets. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees and foliage.

MARION PREBBLE - Marion has worked as an actress, writer and producer in New Zealand and the UK. Her credits include award winning *The Pantry Shelf*, performed in Edinburgh London and Auckland. Other recent screen roles include short film *Mine* which screened at NZIFF in 2015. She's been a regular performer with dance comedy troupe Dynamotion, and is represented by Auckland Actors. She has worked as a theatre producer for Massive Company and as Producer in Residence at Basement Theatre. She has co-written as part of Team M&M several plays and numerous short films for the internet.

CREW

DIRECTOR of PHOTOGRAPHY

Tammy Williams

FIRST ASSIST DIRECTOR

Cristobal Araus Lobos

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Ruby Reihana-Wilson

SCRIPT MENTOR

Jake Mahaffy

CONSULTING PRODUCER

Jeremy Macey

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Jane Bucknell

ART DIRECTOR

Ablow Rasheed

ART ASSIST

Alex Matthews

1ST AC

Kelly Chen

Tom West

DATA WRANGLER/ASSIST EDITOR

Jade Paynter

GAFFER & GRIP

Lucas Baur

LX & GRIP ASSIST

Dave Perret

GRIP - CAR TOWING

Mike Tripp

HIGH VOLTAGE LIGHTING

Spencer Bonne-Locke

CONTINUITY

Mia Maramara

Olivia Walker

Darshan Sittampalam

Amy Galvin



CREW

SOUND RECORDIST

Shamir Rodriguez

Marlon Morris

PRODUCTION STILLS

John Murray

PRODUCTION ASSIST

Alex Wares

Alexander Mark-Hoyles

ON-SET BABYSITTER

Fiona Shortt

Honto Ming

PRE-PRODUCTION ASSIST

Abbie Cossey

LOCATION

Fleur Pepperell Roberts

Dan Roberts

ONLINE

Images & Sound

COLOURIST

Alana Cotton

POST-PROD PRODUCER

Samantha Jukes

SOUND POST

Envy Studios

SOUND DESIGN & MIX

Vedat Kiyici

FOLEY RECORDING

Jason Fox

COMPOSER

Claire Cowan



FAQ'S

Where did the story come from?

Like many mothers, Marion experienced postnatal depression after our first daughter was born. We felt an urgent need for community around us and weren't really prepared for how isolating parenthood can feel. These feelings were the springboard for our initial idea.

In Oct 2014 we participated in the Aotearoa Short Film Lab script development workshop. The feedback we received there and, in particular, the follow-up mentoring from Jake Mahaffy (Independent Spirit nominee and Venice Film Festival award-winner for *Free in Deed*) helped shape the idea into the script it became.

This story is important to us because it is about family and reaching out to community when you need help. Our busy modern lives can stop us from connecting to and noticing others in need.

You can read more about Marion's experiences with postnatal depression and their connections to the film in a [blog article here](#).

What was the biggest challenge you faced making the film?

Juggling a film schedule around the chaotic disrupted routines of two young children adds extra challenges. Delivering your best creative work can be difficult when your last uninterrupted night of sleep was four years ago. We also knew that Marion's focus would be regularly interrupted by the on-set feeding schedule of an eight-month-old.

We decided early on that it would be better to adapt our filmmaking process to fit in with our parenting needs. We scheduled a longer shoot with shorter days meaning parents could go home to their kids while they were still awake.

We approached women for most of the crew roles, in particular young creative mothers looking for projects to help return to the workforce. This meant we were able to work with some amazing women who might not otherwise have been able to work on the shoot.

There were children at all our production meetings, at grading sessions and often onset. This helped create a wonderful family vibe throughout the crew. It also had a direct impact on the actors. In a film all about mothers connecting to each other and longing for the presence of children, nothing makes that feeling more immediate and translatable on screen than cuddling a baby 30 seconds before action.



How have people responded to the material?

We knew that the subject matter of *Baby?* was taboo and this was one of the reasons we felt it was so important to explore. However, it wasn't until after we received funding from the New Zealand Film Commission and attended a workshop with fellow recipients that we really saw its potential to connect emotionally to audiences.

There was a pitching session where we all discussed each other's ideas. After only a few minutes of describing the story, complete strangers were opening up about their own family's struggles with postnatal depression and how tragic it is that people don't feel able to talk about it.

In the months since then, the more we have talked about our experiences, the more others have come forward wanting to share theirs. Our extended family has lost cherished members to suicide and young babies to illness so we feel that creating something which encourages people to connect at times of fragility is one of the best things you could aspire to as artists.

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