FROM THE PRODUCERS OF HUNT FOR THE WILDERPEOPLE & JOJO RABBIT

MOUNTAIN

DIRECTED BY RACHEL HOUSE



HE ARATOHU MĀ TE KAIAKO TEACHER NOTES KIA TAU NGĀ MANAAKITANGA A TE MEA NGARO KI RUNGA KI TĒNĀ, KI TĒNĀ O TĀTOU. KIA MAHEA KA WHAKAMAUA KIA TĪNA! TĪNA! HUI E, TĀIKI E!

LET OUR ANCESTORS' STRENGTH AND LIFE FORCE BE WITH EACH OF US, FREEING OUR PATH FROM OBSTRUCTION! FORWARD TOGETHER!

Find more information and screening details at **THEMOUNTAINFILM.CO.NZ**

THE MOUNTAIN is presented by Piki Films and Sandy Lane Productions in association with Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga New Zealand Film Commission and Irirangi te Motu NZ On Air.



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66 I BELIEVE ORIGIN STORIES AND LEGENDS ARE OFTEN AT THEIR BEST IN THE HANDS OF TAMARIKI. TELLING STORIES WITH KIDS REPRESENTS A SPECIAL KIND OF MAGIC, THE KIND YOU FEEL WATCHING THE STARS, **WALKING THROUGH THE BUSH...** OR DREAMING ABOUT MOUNTAINS.

- RACHEL HOUSE, THE MOUNTAIN DIRECTOR

HEI WHAKAMOHIO HEADS-UP

STORY OVERVIEW

THE MOUNTAIN follows the journey of three newly connected tamariki.

Eleven-year-old Sam believes wholeheartedly that her maunga will cure her illness and grant her the identity she longs for. Joining her on a quest to climb Taranaki maunga are two accomplices: Mallory, the newest kid in town eager to make friends, and Bronco, a wise-cracking, bike-loving guardian of Papatūānuku.

Together, this perfectly imperfect trio experience the kind of friendship that changes your life forever.



RESOURCE OUTLINE

Providing conversation starters and activities for both classroom and out-ofclass exploration, this resource is designed to engage and inspire both Kaiako and tamariki, aiming to spark korero around the film's central themes.

1. TUAKIRI IDENTITY AND BELONGING

The quest for self-discovery and finding our place in the world.

2. WHAKAARO PAI UNDERSTANDING & ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE

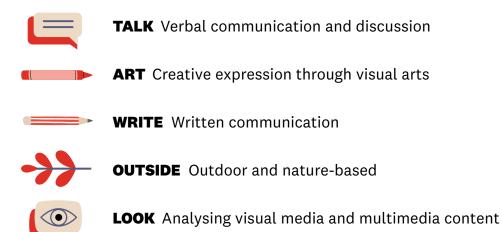
The importance of embracing diversity and respecting individual differences.

3. TE TAIAO CONNECTING WITH NATURE

The bond between humans and the natural world

Activity Key

Our activities provide many different ways for kids to engage and learn, using a variety of methods.



GUIDANCE

THE MOUNTAIN film, and this resource, are recommended for ages 9-14 and Years 6-9. The film has a PG rating, which means that anyone can view, but guidance for younger viewers is recommended. Combining comedy, coming-of-age drama, and adventure, **THE MOUNTAIN** offers relatable on-screen storytelling for children and early teens.

The filmmakers have worked closely with Dr. Leonie Pihama (Te Ātiawa, Ngā Māhanga ā-Tairi, Ngāti Māhanga) to explore gender perspectives related to Taranaki Maunga and its peaks. To align with the film's characters, please use gender-neutral pronouns 'they/them' when referring to Taranaki Maunga, Pouākai, and Kaitake.

VIEWING NOTES

We encourage Kaiako to be ready to offer support and guidance as needed while watching this film with tamariki. The film delicately explores some big themes including illness, death and grief.

There are moments in the film that might touch on sensitive topics for some kids. Teachers may find it beneficial to engage in discussions as needed to help unpack and understand specific issues or scenes after viewing.

Specifically, we follow a character in palliative care who passes at the end of the film — and another who has recently lost his mum to cancer. The film is best approached gently, especially if viewers have personal experiences with cancer.

In the film, messages of friendship and connection, understanding ancestral lines and whakapapa, guardianship of nature, and respect for Papatūānuku intertwine. The film also explores themes of loss and remembrance, as well as reflections on the cycle of life and our place in the world.



WHEN I STARTED THIS PROJECT, I KNEW I WANTED AUDIENCES EVERYWHERE TO SEE SOME OF THE WISDOM AND MAGIC THAT EXISTS WITHIN TE TAIAO, THE NATURAL WORLD. AND TO FALL IN LOVE WITH OUR ADVENTUROUS KIDS WHO DISCOVER THAT FRIENDSHIP CAN SEE YOU THROUGH JUST ABOUT ANYTHING.

- RACHEL HOUSE, THE MOUNTAIN DIRECTOR

TE TĪMATANGA THE BEGINNING

JOURNEY TO THE MOUNTAIN

RACHEL JESSICA TE AO MAARAMA HOUSE ONZM is an award-winning writer, director and actor, whose celebrated career spans film, television and theatre. Rachel, beloved for her roles in MOANA, BOY, SOUL, THOR and OUR FLAG MEANS DEATH (to name just a few) is seated in the film director's chair with this, her debut feature, **THE MOUNTAIN**.

Piki Films, the producers behind HUNT FOR THE WILDERPEOPLE and JOJO RABBIT, invited Rachel to helm this project, based on an original script by Tāmaki Makaurau-based writer Tom Furniss.

Rachel's connection to her Māori heritage, stemming from her Ngāti Mutunga, Te Atiawa, and Kāi Tahu ancestry, has profoundly influenced her filmmaking journey. Revisiting her Taranaki roots during the scriptwriting phase of this project added a layer of depth to the film's developing narrative.





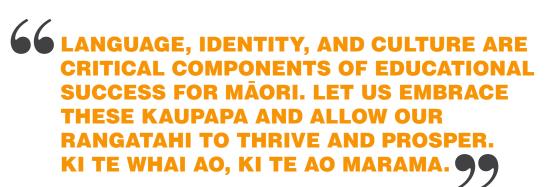
THE MOUNTAIN explores an indigenous perspective of bonds between land and culture, drawing inspiration from the origin story of Te Kāhui Tupua Taranaki Maunga (our collective mountains).

Filming in Taranaki was a hugely enriching experience, with crew and cast committed to honouring the environment and cultural significance under the blessing of mana whenua. Rachel has been supported in the creation of **THE MOUNTAIN** by a dedicated team, led by producer Desray Armstrong (Te Aitanga-ā-Hauiti, Ngāti Porou), and partners across the motu.

For Rachel, **THE MOUNTAIN** is more than just a feature film — it's a way to convey universal themes of culture, identity, and whānau relationships, all underpinned by her distinctive and unique creative voice, which is full of adventure, laughs, and deep heart.

KUPU TAKA VOCABULARY

TE REO MĀORI	ENGLISH
Hōhā	Annoyance
Kaitiaki	Guardian, Caregiver
Kanikani	Dance
Kurī	Dog
Kōtiro	Girl
Maunga	Mountain
Mīharo	Amazing
Pae Maunga	Mountain Range
Papatūānuku	Earth Mother
Para Kore	Waste-Free
Taiao	Natural World, Environment
Tiaki	To Look After, Nurse, Care, Protect, Conserve
Tuakiri	Person, Personality, Identity
Tupuna/Tipuna	Ancestor / Ancestors
Tūrangawaewae	A place where one has the right of residence and belonging, through kinship and whakapapa
Whakaaro	Thought, Thinking
Whakaaro Pai	Goodwill
Whakapapa	Genealogy, Lineage, Descent



— DAMON RITAI, NGĀTI MUTUNGA, TE ATIAWA, TARANAKI, NGĀTI RUANUI, NGA RUAHINERANGI. KAIHOE MĀTAURANGA FACILITATOR FOR MĀORI ACHIEVEMENT COLLABORATIVE (MAC).



HE ARONGA SENSE MAKING

Just like the characters in the film, your tamariki can explore identity, belonging, and connection through critical thinking and reflection.



QUESTION TIME

- » Would you recommend this film to your friends or whanau? Why?
- » Did the film show you anything new or make you think differently about something?
- Were there any scenes that made you feel sad, happy, scared, or excited? Why?
- Were there any conflicts or problems in the film? How were they resolved?
- » Were there any meanings or messages in the film that stood out to you? What were they?





PERCEPTIVE DETECTIVE

Get your tamariki to start story sleuthing — gathering clues from what they see, and hear, and using their own knowledge to figure things out.

The following activities will have your students predicting, connecting, and unraveling themes and character details just like professional Private Eyes.



SPY AND SYNTHESISE

Have students view both the <u>FILM TRAILER</u> and the film poster featured on the previous page.

- » Provide art supplies such as felts, coloured pencils, paper, and magazines. Ask tamariki to create alternative posters for the film. They can incorporate core themes, favourite characters, scenes, and quotes. Let their creativity flow!
- » Challenge tamariki to write a sequel or prequel to the film. They can create new characters, introduce twists, or explore the backstory of existing characters. E.g What adventures do Bronco and Mallory get up to next, or how did Sam and Peachy's friendship start.
- » Turn the classroom into a 'Director Q&A' session where students take on the role of 'Rachel House, Film Director.' They can discuss and debate Rachel's creative decisions such as casting choices, visual style, soundtrack selections, and scene transitions, based on their examination of the film.



CHARACTER CLUES

- » Which character did you love the most in the film? Why?
- » How did that character change or grow throughout the story?
- » What qualities did this character demonstrate that you admire or find interesting?

Print out the **WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY** sheet on the next page. Get your tamariki to dive into the characters' minds to unravel their actions, thoughts, and motivations.

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY

It's time to be a details detective. What investigation leads can you follow to uncover character secrets?

FACTS QUOTES Gather what you know Capture some memorable about the character. quotes that reveal the character's personality. **CHARACTER NAME DELVE INTO THE ACTIONS** Take note of what the **CHARACTER'S MIND** Note down the character's character does and how thoughts and feelings to help it shapes their story. understand them better.

WHAT DETAILS CAN YOU DEDUCE
ABOUT THIS CHARACTER FROM THE CLUES
AND HINTS YOU'VE UNCOVERED ABOVE?



66 SO, I THINK WE CAN BOTH SEE THAT I'M PRETTY MUCH A WARRIOR WOMAN. WHICH CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING... I BELONG TO YOU. WE CAN HAVE A **GOOD TALK ABOUT IT WHEN I GET** THERE. AND MAYBE YOU WANT TO **KEEP ME AROUND?**

- SAM, SPEAKING TO A PICTURE OF TARANAKI MAUNGA

TUAKIRI IDENTITY & BELONGING

For Sam, the maunga is her focus, believing it holds the key to her identity, belonging, and connection. Despite not knowing her biological dad or her tūrangawaewae, she reminds us that we all belong somewhere and to someone, even if we're still discovering where and who that is.

When you uncover the power of belonging and inclusion, and celebrate your own strengths and talents, you can become a force for positive change in the world around you.

Understanding ourselves is deeply intertwined with the land we call home. Exploring our histories and cultural roots also helps us value the diverse people in our communities, our nation, and across the world.

When we have the courage and confidence to be ourselves, it's like starting a journey of discovery where we can feel at home wherever we go.





KNOW YOUR ROOTS

Exploring connections fosters empathy, helping us understand, and embrace, our similarities and differences.

Ask tamariki to draw their family tree or whānau circle, and then share these with the class.

Together identify and discuss any connections you may have, such as:

- » Tamariki who live on the same street
- » Walk the same route to school
- » Have the same number of siblings
- » Have whanau connections from the same regions
- » Have extended family members living with them
- » Have lived in a different town, city, or country.







CONNECT & REFLECT

Get your students to buddy up with a partner or small group and discuss with what, who, or where they feel their greatest sense of identity and belonging.

Ask them to think about geographical, historical, sentimental, and people connection points.

Encourage tamariki to create a word picture or collage visually exploring these details.

Please be mindful during this activity that Māori have a unique cultural and whakapapa connection to the environment, and their understanding of place is unique. Tangata Tiriti (non-Māori New Zealanders) have their own perspectives too, and all viewpoints are valued and accepted.



- MALLORY, TO HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR

WHAKAARO PAI UNDERSTANDING & ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE

Life's adventures can be made better with friends. Friends can support you during tricky times and make celebrating successes even more meaningful. With friends by your side, you can face almost anything, even the toughest challenges imaginable.

Our friendship's strengthen and deepen when we understand and embrace each other, celebrating our unique perspectives and quirks.

When we lift each other up and appreciate everyone's different strengths and talents:

- » We discover that everyone contributes in their own unique way.
- » Together, we can achieve amazing things!
- » Every action we take has a ripple effect, whether it's positive or negative.





EMPATHY EXPLORER

Consider these scenarios to brainstorm how tamariki would handle these two situations.

SCENARIO 1

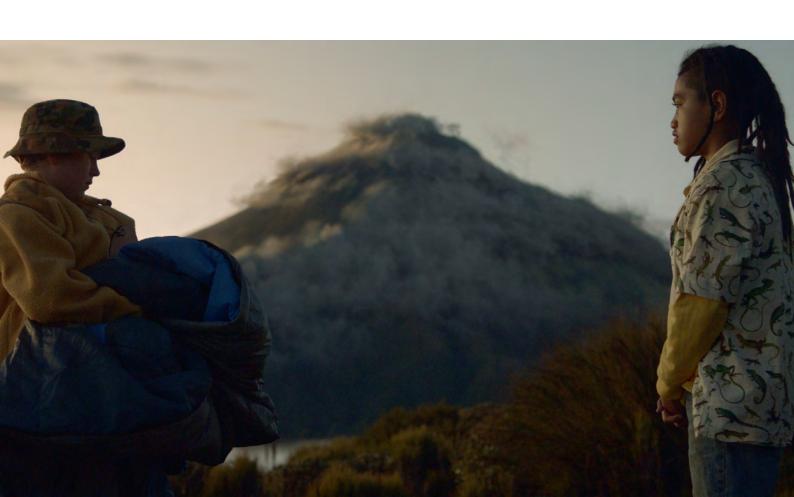
A NEW KID APPEARS LONELY OR SAD.

SCENARIO 2

A CLASSMATE WHO DOES NOT LOOK OR SOUND LIKE YOU.

- » What emotions do you think they are experiencing?
- » How do you recognise these emotions? Encourage students to ask rather than assume how others feel.
- » What actions can you and your friends take to include them?
- » How can you positively impact their emotions?

These questions are little friendship boosters, inspiring tamariki to think about others' feelings to help them create supportive spaces.





SPARKLE & SHAKE

Work together as a class to fill in an action-packed chart that shows how tamariki can spread kindness and offer support to those around them.

List ways students can promote inclusivity both in the classroom and across the wider school community.

INTENTION	WHAT CAN THIS LOOK LIKE AS AN ACTION
We check in to see how each other is feeling.	Play "Hey, how are you doing?" or a variation of this, in which students ask their classmates how they are doing. Make it a fun exercise. Consider singing, rhyming, or rapping the question. Consider utilising an existing whakatauki or school value in the key question.
	Or, consider using te reo Māori, e.g. Kei te pēhea rā koe?
We find ways to	Offer to sit together at the morning tea break or at lunchtime.
include, not exclude.	Say hello/goodbye to every class member at the start/finish of the school day.
We actively listen to what each other says.	Practice active listening by repeating back what others say to us.

Come up with a signature handshake. Handshakes show a bond and mutual respect, indicating connection.

Compile a student handshake table that Kaiako and students can reference when greeting each other. Such as:

NAME	HANDSHAKE BREAKDOWN	
Turama	Fist bump cross (left / right) / flare hands	
Angie	Side clap high / low, fist bump, spin, jump	
Devon	Foot tap / spin / hug / shake your tailfeather	
Hinerangi Curtsy / high 5 / low 5 / Elbow tap (left/right)		

TIP: Laminate a table with student names, leaving the 'Handshake Breakdown' section empty. This allows kids to update or change their handshake actions over time.



66 MY STORY IS: ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS THIS YOUNG FULLA WHO **WORKED FOR PAPATŪĀNUKU IMOTHER EARTHI** AS A GUARDIAN. THE END.

- BRONCO, TO SAM AND MALLORY

TE TAIAO CONNECTING TO NATURE

When we treat Papatūānuku (Mother Earth) and each other with kindness and respect, it makes life better for everyone and gives us a greater sense of purpose.

In THE MOUNTAIN, we see how working together while caring for nature can help both people and the Earth feel better, highlighting our interconnectedness with the natural world and its capacity to sustain and heal us.

The following activities have been shaped to increase awareness, foster practical understanding, and inspire curiosity about the cyclical nature of our environment and humanity's impact on it.



PAPATŪĀNUKU CLEAN-UP



Have tamariki identify how the environment was cared for by Bronco in the film.

Some examples include:

- » Cleaning up balloons in nature.
- » Concern about the awa (river).
- » Using harakeke gel to heal Sam's leg.
- » Apologising to "te whānau" (the natural environment) when Bronco walks off the boardwalk on to the wetlands.

Encourage students to connect with the environment by:

- » Committing to clearing rubbish from playgrounds or communal spaces in their city or township.
- » Picking up litter on footpaths, trails, walkways, or beaches.
- » Collecting rubbish during walks to and from school or while playing at the park or the beach.

These suggestions promote active engagement with the environment and instill a sense of responsibility towards keeping surroundings clean and sustainable.



PARA KORE

For a more structured approach, view the linked video — <u>THE ORIGINS OF</u> <u>PARA KORE</u>. Para Kore is an organisation that educates and advocates from a Māori worldview for a world without waste.

Consider joining the Para Kore initiative <u>ORANGA TAIAO</u> to access the learning packages and knowledge-sharing workshops. <u>REACH OUT TO YOUR LOCAL</u>

AREA PARA KORE REPRESENTATIVE for more information.



ADVENTURE TIME



Encourage tamariki to plan their next exciting outdoor adventure, considering the following elements.

1. COMMUNICATION

Let someone know where you are going, who you are with, and when you expect to return.

3. BE PREPARED

Know the weather forecast and be prepared for it to change – have your sunhat, a raincoat, warm clothes and comfy shoes. Stay hydrated with water, and pack healthy snacks. Don't forget a little first aid kit and sunblock.

1. MAP READING

Maps help you explore and find your way around new places. Reading a map is like solving a puzzle. Start by finding the map's key to understand symbols, then follow the directions and look for landmarks like roads and rivers.

4. RONGOĀ MĀORI

Rongoā is a traditional Māori healing system. Exploring Rongoā Māori is like discovering nature's secrets. Research healing plants and practices that have been used for generations to promote health and well-being, such as harakeke gel, which is great for wounds.

NOTE: Remind tamariki to never to ingest or apply anything they find in nature on their skin without first consulting a guardian.



NATURE QUEST

Embark on a quest where you discover, observe, and the explore the wonders of Te Taiao.

WHAT YOU NEED

- » List of items to find e.g. bird feather, pine cone, native plant leaf, interesting rock, etc.
- » Basket, bag, or kete for collecting items
- » Pen or pencil

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare a list of natural items for the nature quest. Include both common and unique items found in your local environment.

- » Give each kid a copy of the nature quest list and a basket, bag, or kete for collecting items.
- » Set a time limit for your nature quest, perhaps 20 minutes to an hour.
- » Set any necessary boundaries for safe exploring.
- Start the quest and encourage tamariki to explore their surroundings to find the listed items.
- » As they find each item, they can check it off their list and collect it in their basket, bag or kete.
- » After the time limit is up, gather everyone together to compare findings and discuss the different items they discovered.



66 IN A WORLD THAT CONTINUES TO SHIFT, WE HAVE EXPOSED SOCIETAL STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS THAT NO LONGER SERVE US. AND THE TEACHINGS OF OUR ANCESTORS HAVE BECOME **EVEN MORE POWERFUL.**

WHEN MĀORI FIRST INTRODUCE OURSELVES, **WE NAME OUR MAUNGA. MAUNGA (MOUNTAINS) ARE ANCIENT LIVING ANCESTORS — WHO HAVE** SHAPED AND FORMED OUR IDENTITY, BELONGING AND CONNECTION TO EACH OTHER

- RACHEL HOUSE, THE MOUNTAIN DIRECTOR

WHAIWHAKAARO REFLECTION

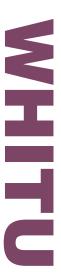
Encourage tamariki to share their feelings and the messages they've taken away from the film, and these discussions and activities.



CONTEMPLATION CELEBRATION

Print out the A5 Reflection Cards on the following pages (set your printer to double page print pages 25 and 26).

Ask tamariki to jot down or draw something cool they learned or loved about the film on the back of the card. There's some activity reminders there to help if needed.







KO TOKU INGOA. MY NAME IS			
TUAKIRI IDENTITY & BELONGING	E.g. Drawing my family tree.		
WHAKAARO PAI UNDERSTANDING & ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE	E.g. Coming up with my own handshake.		
TIAKI I TE TAIAO CONNECTING TO NATURE	E.g. Discovering more about Rongoā Maori		

KO TOKU INGOA. MY NAME IS				
TUAKIRI IDENTITY & BELONGING	E.g. Drawing my family tree.			
WHAKAARO PAI	E.g. Coming up with my own handshake.			
UNDERSTANDING & ACCEPTING DIFFERENCE				
TIAKI I TE TAIAO CONNECTING TO NATURE	E.g. Discovering more about Rongoā Maori			



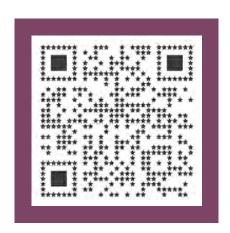
Alternatively, have students select one character from the film's trio of tamariki — Sam, Bronco or Mallory.

With the picture card front as their inspiration, ask students to identify the connection their chosen character has to the illustration.

For example:

- 1. Bronco and his trusty bike 'Black Beauty' and helium balloons
- 2. Sam and her stick 'Woodface'
- 3. Mallory and his compass
 - » What importance do these items hold for your chosen character?
 - » Why does your character keep these items alongside them?
- Encourage tamariki to design their own picture about connection.
 - >> What are the special items you would include within a portrait of yourself
 - » Explain your connection to the items

HAVE A KANIKANI TO THE SONGS
FROM THE FILM ON OUR SOUNDTRACK
EP FEATURING TROY KINGI AND
TONGA KARENA.



ROLL CREDITS

HE ARATOHU MĀ TE KAIAKO

TEACHER NOTES

THIS RESOURCE IS PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY













Created By MINA MATHIESON NIC MARSHALL

Ngā Mihi Nui

Huia Lambie, Jamie Tuuta, Wharehoka Wano, Kiterangi Cameron, Tungia Claire Mathieson, Damon Ritai, Jayne Irwin, Kyla Hansell, Te O Kahurangi Waaka, Desray Armstrong, Carthew Neal, Luke Murray & Andrew Cozens

PLEASE SHARE ANY FEEDBACK OR COMMENTS WITH mina@m3media.co.nz.

INTERESTED IN HOSTING A SCREENING FOR YOUR SCHOOL? PLEASE FILL IN THIS **ENQUIRY FORM.**

FILM

Directed By RACHEL HOUSE

Screenplay By **RACHEL HOUSE** and TOM FURNISS

Based On An **Original Story By** TOM FURNISS

Produced By DESRAY ARMSTRONG MORGAN WARU

Executive Produced By CARTHEW NEAL TAIKA WAITITI PAUL WIEGARD

Co-Producer **RACHEL HOUSE**

Music by TROY KINGI

Score by ARLI LIBERMAN Cast

Te Kāhui Tupua Taranaki Maunga AS THEMSELVES

Sam

ELIZABETH ATKINSON

Mallory

REUBEN FRANCIS

Bronco

TERENCE DANIEL

Wendy

FERN SUTHERLAND

Hugh BYRON COLL

Tux TROY KINGI

Peachy

SUKENA SHAH



PIKI FILMS AND SANDY LANE PRODUCTIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NEW ZEALAND FILM COMMISSION AND NZ ON AIR PRESENT A FILM BY RACHEL HOUSE THE MOUNTAIN STARRING TE KÄHUI TUPUA TARANAKI MAUNGA ELIZABETH ATKINSON REUBEN FRANCIS TERENCE DANIEL

FERN SUTHERLAND BYRON COLL TROY KINGI SUKENA SHAH DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MATT HENLEY EDITED BY CUSHLA DILLON CARLY TURNER PRODUCTION DESIGNER ANDY MCLAREN MUSIC BY TROY KINGI SCORE BY ARLI LIBERMAN VISUAL EFFECTS SUFFERISOR MARTIN HILL COSTUME DESIGNERS TE URA HOSKINS MATAARA STOKES HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN FRANKIE KARENA CASTING DIRECTOR ERYN WILSON EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CARTHEW NEAL TAIKA WAITITI PAUL WIEGARD PRODUCERS DESRAY ARMSTRONG MORGAN WARU BASED ON AN ORIGINAL STORY BY TOM FURNISS SCREEPPLAY BY RACHEL HOUSE TOM FURNISS DIRECTED BY RACHEL HOUSE











