

TROPFEST NEW ZEALAND

THE WORLD'S LARGEST SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
20 December 2013

TROPFEST NZ ANNOUNCES SPEAKERS FOR ROUGH CUT FILM SYMPOSIUM

Tropfest, with financial assistance from the New Zealand Film Commission, unveils today the speakers for the Roughcut Film Symposium to be held at the 4th Wall Theatre in New Plymouth on 15 February 2014, the day prior to the Tropfest New Zealand Short Film Festival at TSB Bowl of Brooklands.

Sharing their insights and film industry experience will be critically acclaimed New Zealand actor Craig Hall, award-winning Australian pocket filmmaker Jason van Genderen, independent documentary maker Heather O'Leary, entertainment lawyer, writer and producer Tim Riley, New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) Short Film Manager Whetu Fala, and screenwriter, playwright and NZFC Development Executive Briar Grace-Smith.

"We are extremely excited to offer up-and-coming filmmakers a broad range of filmmaking perspectives themed around 'Bridging the Gap' in this year's Roughcut," said Taranaki Arts Festival Trust chief executive Suzanne Porter.

"Tropfest has always been and will continue to be an opportunity for filmmakers to develop and grow into roles in the film and television industries," Porter added. "Roughcut plays an important part in helping filmmakers to cross the divide from passion to career."

One of New Zealand's most experienced screen actors, Craig Hall will speak on his motivation for becoming an actor and what training he recommends for actors. He will also explore tips for working with directors and share insights into the challenges actors face, including turning a role on and off while on set, and the reality of making a living from being an actor.

Australian director and producer Jason van Genderen has met international success with his films made with mobile phones and pocket cameras. Jason will share insights gained from his unorthodox approach to filmmaking.

Christchurch documentary maker Heather O'Leary is the epitome of filmmaking DIY and will speak about her approach, including the experience of crowdfunding her YouTube documentary 'Road to Ruin'.

Tim Riley is an entertainment lawyer and passionate filmmaker who is well aware of the legal pitfalls that creatives can fall into in the business of filmmaking. Tim will present on music rights, resource consent and that all important intellectual property issue, Chain of Title.

From the New Zealand Film Commission, Short Film Manager Whetu Fala will outline how best to succeed with applications for Fresh Shorts funding, while Development Executive Briar Grace-Smith will discuss the feature film development process, share some screenwriting tips and give insight into the different funding initiatives available through the New Zealand Film Commission.

Event Details:

Registration to Tropfest NZ Roughcut will be available from 9.30am on Saturday 15 February 2014.

WHEN Saturday 15 February 2014, 10AM – 4:30PM
WHERE 4th Wall Theatre, 11 Baring Terrace, Strandon, New Plymouth
TICKETS \$28 pp, tickets on sale now at www.4thwalltheatre.co.nz

For further information please contact:

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Presenter Profiles

Craig Hall
Actor (A Place to Call Home, Outrageous Fortune)

Craig has received critical acclaim for his performances in film, theatre and television nationally and internationally.

His recent TV work includes: A Place to Call Home, Outrageous Fortune, East Of Everything, Underbelly: Razor, Tricky Business, Rake and the telemovie Bloodlines, in which he won the 2011 AFTA for Best Supporting Actor. He has also been seen in the Australian mini-series Howzat! as Gavin Warner.

Craig made his feature film debut in 1998 in Savage Honeymoon and further movie roles continued in King Kong, The World's Fastest Indian, The Water Horse, Boy, Love Birds, The Devil's Rock, Show Of Hands, 30 Days of Night, Eagle vs Shark and the second installment of The Hobbit, his second film with Peter Jackson.

Craig also has a strong theatre background having performed in various stage productions with his most recent performances being Killer Joe in 2009 and The Lover in 2010.

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0355440/>

Jason van Genderen
Director/producer

An unorthodox filmmaker is probably the best way to describe Australian born Jason. His first works pioneered pocket filmmaking as he experimented with mobile phones and pocket cameras to create stories that stood comfortably alongside big-budget short films on the international stage. Attracting numerous awards for his films, Jason has become a frequent visitor to the stages of Tropfest (winning Tropfest NY in 2006 and Tropfest AUS in 2008) Aspen Shortsfest, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Palm Springs International Film Festival and San Francisco International Short Film Festival, to name but a few. Jason has presented numerous pocket filmmaking workshops across Australia and has been a speaker at Tropfest Roughcut Australia.

www.jasonvangenderen.com

Heather O'Leary
Director, DOP, VFX, Video Editor

Heather has a diploma in Advanced Digital Filmmaking from YOOBEE School of Design and as well as currently working full time in commercial videography and photography she is also the founder, Director, DOP, VFX and Video Editor at Optic Nova Studios in Christchurch.

Heather's name and work received nationwide media attention in 2012 when she successfully crowd funded enough money to cover the costs of her documentary Road to Ruin. Her company, Optic Nova Studios has become known for their self-designed film equipment which they design and build themselves at a tenth of the cost of professional gear.

www.happyzine.co.nz/2012/10/01/road-to-ruin-paved-in-pledges

Tim Riley
Lawyer/writer/producer

Tim Riley is a partner at Dominion Law – New Zealand's only multi-partner specialist entertainment law firm.

He acts for a range of clients across the film, television, music, theatre, and online entertainment industries. He is the lawyer for a number of the film and television industry guilds, including the Director's Guild of NZ, the NZ Film and Video Technician's Guild, Media and Entertainment Arts Alliance, and Script to Screen.

Tim has acted as lead production counsel on a number of short and feature films; including the Magnolia financed Ant Timpson films ABCS OF DEATH 1 and 2 (each film involving legal relationships with 26 different filmmakers in dozens of different countries). On ABCS OF DEATH 2, he is also an associate producer.

Recently Tim made the jump to full producer status on KID LAZER, a NZ/Canada co-production that he is co-producing with Ant Timpson in NZ and Anne-Marie Galinas in Quebec.

www.dominionlaw.co.nz

Whetu Fala
Short Film Manager, NZ Film Commission
Nga Rauru ki tahi, Ngati Maru, Ngati Maniapoto
Samoa/Rotuma

Whetu has a background as an actor, editor, writer, director and producer for short drama, television, web content creation and feature films and is a co-creator of Fale Matariki and a founding member of Nga Aho Whakaari.

Her current role as Short Film Manager and the NZ Film Commission means she works closely with filmmakers and is an expert on creative talent development and funding opportunities.

Whetu will explain possible creative talent development pathways through the Short Film Fund and the Post Production Fund which are offered by the NZ Film Commission. She will also outline how to make an application for Fresh 10 and Fresh 30 film grants during 2014. The opening date for these applications is Monday 12 May 2014.

www.falamedia.com/whetu-fala

Briar Grace-Smith
Development Executive
NZ Film Commission

Briar is involved in feature film script development, production and post-production financing. She is a writer of plays, films, television and short fiction. She has worked as a script consultant for many years. Her first screenplay, *The Strength of Water* premiered in 2009. Her second feature, horror comedy *Fresh Meat*, premiered in New Zealand in 2012 and screened in the Midnight section of the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival.

www.bookcouncil.org.nz/Writers/Profiles/Grace-Smith,%20Briar

About Roughcut

Tropfest Roughcut was launched in Australia in 2012 by Tropfest founder John Polson as a way of nurturing budding and experienced filmmakers through the experiences of others in the industry.

In New Zealand, Roughcut launched together with the inaugural Tropfest NZ Short Film Festival competition in 2013.

Roughcut presenters the first year were:

- Tropfest founder John Polson.
- Industry heavyweight John Barnett, CEO at the time of South Pacific Pictures, the production company behind hits such as TV series *Shortland Street* and *Outrageous Fortune*, and feature films *Sione's Wedding* and *Whale Rider*.
- Well-known Taranaki actor and director Katie Wolfe, whose films *This Is Her*, *Redemption* and *Nights in the Garden of Spain* have garnered festival success internationally.
- Writer and director Michael Bennett. Michael has long experience as a television writer on many New Zealand drama series. His shorts have won acclaim at Cannes,

Berlin and other top festivals, and his first feature film Matariki premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2010.

About Tropfest

Tropfest began twenty-one years ago when director John Polson showed a six-minute film he made for under \$100 at his local café ('The Tropicana') in Sydney for 200 friends and family. Today the free Australian event is attended annually by a live audience of over 150,000 film-lovers and hundreds of thousands more watching via its live national TV broadcast and other platforms.

In the past two decades, Tropfest has become recognised as one of the world's most exciting launchpads for emerging filmmakers. Tropfest is also known for securing the support of some of the biggest names in the international film community including Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, Geoffrey Rush, Liev Schreiber and Tobey Maguire. Tropfest launched last year in New Zealand, Arabia and in the USA with Tropfest Las Vegas and Tropfest New York.

The Tropfest YouTube Channel has 45,920 subscribers and had 25,413,159 views, with around 40% of those coming from the United States. The channel provides film enthusiasts the chance to watch the top films from past festivals at: <http://www.youtube.com/tropfest>.

The first Tropfest NZ event was held in 2013 and was attended by 8,000 people. The winner was a short film called 'Cappuccino Tango.'

TROPFEST NZ – The world's largest short film festival, now in New Zealand – 16 February 2014, Taranaki.

www.tropfest.co.nz

www.facebook.com/tropfestnz

