



MEDIA RELEASE

Filmmakers announced for Cook 2020: Our Right of Reply

Tuesday 14 May 2019: Screen Australia and the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) are pleased to announce the eight Indigenous teams from Australia and New Zealand who will work on a joint anthology feature, *Cook 2020: Our Right of Reply*, entitled *Ngā Pouwhenua* in New Zealand.

The teams will each create a short chapter for the feature film, which will provide an Indigenous perspective on the 250th anniversary of James Cook’s maiden voyage to the Pacific.

Mitchell Stanley (*Servant or Slave*) from Australia, and Bailey Mackey (*All or Nothing; New Zealand All Blacks*, associate producer on *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*) and Mia Henry-Teirney (*Baby Mama’s Club*) from New Zealand have been chosen as co-producers and will collaborate with the teams to develop their concepts and the overarching narrative.

The teams and producers are attending a residential lab at Shark Island Institute in Kangaroo Valley to develop the film.

Screen Australia’s Head of Indigenous **Penny Smallacombe** said: “This is a rare opportunity for creative collaboration between Indigenous cultures, from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. I’m inspired by the experience and talent of the filmmakers selected to helm this project. These teams have presented exceptional concepts, with stories exploring the past, present and future, with humour and horror, sadness and joy, in response to who we are and how we continue to survive the colonial experience.”

“I’m excited by their unique storytelling styles and individual voices, and how they will complement each other to create a powerful anthology. This unique feature film will shine a light on us, as it should, in this moment in time.”

“Congratulations to all the successful teams,” says **Annabelle Sheehan**, NZFC CEO. “I look forward to seeing how they transform their individual stories into a single, shared vision through the wananga (workshop) process. This is a unique opportunity for these filmmakers from Australia, New Zealand and across the Pacific to share their voices, stories and histories through examining the impact of Cook’s arrival in our region.”

The filmmakers from Australia are:

- **Beck Cole**, a writer/director renowned for her work in drama and documentary with projects including *Here I Am*, *First Australians*, *Black Comedy* and most recently *Wentworth*. Cole will team up with emerging writer/director **Samuel Paynter**, who has written for the children’s show *Little J & Big Cuz*.
- **Dena Curtis** who has written and directed compelling short films including *Jacob* and *Hush* and directed comedy drama *8MMM Aboriginal Radio*. Curtis has also recently produced award-winning children’s series *Grace Beside Me* and documentary series *Elements*.
- **Danielle MacLean** whose work includes writing and directing *Queen of Hearts*, and writing episodes for *Redfern Now* and season two of *Mystery Road*. MacLean will be joined by producer **Anna Grieve**, who previously collaborated with her on *Croker Island Exodus* and *Blown Away*. Also joining the team is animator **Huni Bolliger** (*Blown Away*) who specialises in local storytelling.
- Writer/director **Tracey Rigney**, whose credits include shorts *Abalone* and *Man Real*. Rigney has also worked across documentaries, webseries and feature films, and has written for TV series *The Warriors*.

The filmmakers from New Zealand are:

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- Television producer, director and writer **Tiraroa Debra Reweti** who will be working on her first film project with **Elise Francis**, a producer who gained on television series *Pūmanawa*, and has recently production managed *Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen*. They are joined by **Chantelle Burgoyne** who has written and directed short films *Tatau* and *Sista*, and worked in production on films such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.
- Writer/director **Renae Maihi** who co-wrote the short film *Redemption* which screened at Berlin and Sundance Film Festivals. Maihi recently wrote and directed a short film for *Waru*, an acclaimed anthology of eight short films created by Maori women which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.
- Filmmaker **Richard Curtis**, creator and director of television series *Hunting Aotearoa*, as well as short film *Ahi Kaa*. Curtis will work with visual artist and writer/director **Tim Worrall**, whose credits include award-winning short films *Tits on a Bull* and *The Road to Whakarae*.
- Actor, writer and director **Mario Gaoa**, known for his work on comedy series *Bro-Town*. Joining Gaoa is **Miki Magasiva**, a director who has worked on short films such as *Brother* and *Usu* which won the Dream Digital Award at Hawaii International Film Festival.

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