



M a t u a

Electronic Press Kit

LOGLINE

When a Māori teacher reluctantly accepts the task of teaching two strangers, he is forced to confront and reconcile with his past by unearthing family secrets.



Synopsis

Manaaki Roberts is a 32-year old Māori teacher who learns that his mother has passed away and returns to his family estate to deal with her passing.

Staying on he is approached by two separate strangers - an older Māori man, and a Māori teen - to provide Te Reo lessons to them. Manaaki reluctantly accepts but is unaware that in doing so, he is about to uncover hidden family secrets.



Director's Statement

Matua is a deeply personal story about a Māori man coming to terms with his past and finding a way to reconcile with his culture and whānau. Our main protagonist Manaaki is caught between two worlds; the Pākeha world and the Māori world, which came from his own upbringing and life journey.

Manaaki grew up in the streets of Māngere and was raised by his single mother Aroha, and it is here where he grew to loathe where he came from. But it was never the Māori culture he rejected, but rather, the South Auckland culture.

As a person who is half-Pākeha/ half Māori myself, I often struggled with coming to terms with my own identity. There was always this underlying feeling of rejection that loomed within both the Pākeha and Māori worlds. As a boy that never knew his real father, I have written this story as a creative outlet to express my own personal struggle with identity and connection through culture and family. I hope to use this film to connect to those who are on similar life journeys to myself and that they too may reconcile with their pasts in order to move ahead to the future.

Ngahiriwa Rauhina as Manaaki Roberts



Manaaki is a Māori academic currently working at the University of Auckland as a Professional Teaching Fellow and the head convenor of his own Māori studies course.

He loves his mother but always felt a repressed resentment towards her, as she kept many secrets throughout their life. This led to Manaaki moving away at 18, starting a new life in the city and pursuing a career in academia.

Despite growing up without a father, Manaaki always learned how to take care of himself and managed well in life. Until the recent news that his mother has passed away, and her death calling him back home.

Calvin Tuteao as Jerry Rowhiti

Jerry is a Māori security officer who has always been disconnected from his language and culture.

Jerry grew up without a family after his mother's passing and father's abandonment. He never had a place of belonging, which led him to finding his surrogate family within the Mongrel Mob. One night, things changed when he and another patched member were imprisoned for murder.

Now Jerry works hard to try and make amends for the mistakes in his past by reconciling with those he's hurt in order to move forward.



Rama Marrow as Kingi Edwards



Kingi is a young introverted Māori teen living in Mangere and is the next door neighbor to the late Aroha Roberts. He showcases a sense of maturity beyond his years which may be due to the influence of his neighbor and long-time babysitter, Aroha.

Kingi would refer to Aroha as his 'Aunty' and viewed her as a secondary maternal figure in his life.

Aroha often told Kingi how similar he was to her own son Manaaki in terms of his drive for academic excellence, but also saw that he had a true love and respect for where he comes from.

Aroha Rawson as Marama Roberts

Marama is a kind and caring Māori social worker with strong family values and a deep appreciation for her culture.

In her youth she grew up with her younger sister Aroha in their family homestead in Māngere. The two sisters would often clash repeatedly throughout their childhoods, but they would always confide and have ultimate trust in one another whenever things went awry.

Marama would eventually move over to The Gold Coast where she would get a job as a social worker within the local Māori and Pacific communities..



Shontelle Williams as Aroha Roberts



Aroha was a single Māori mother who passed away in her old age after suffering from a severe medical condition. She raised Manaaki as a single mother for most of her life, and he'd frequently ask who his father was.

Aroha would tell Manaaki that his father was dead and gone, and would carry this secret for the rest of her life until her dying breath. Too ashamed to reveal the truth about who his *father really was*.



Kaitiaki Rodger
Director

The *Matua* Team



Director/ Writer/ Producer
Kaitiaki Rodger

Kaitiaki is a Māori filmmaker, writer and director studying his Screen Production Masters, specialising in Directing.

He has worked mostly on short film projects and hopes to use his experience to build up a career in either the camera and/ or lighting departments.



Co-Producer
Cameron Broadhurst

Cameron Broadhurst is a filmmaker, writer and teacher based in Auckland, who has worked in journalism, film and television production and Media Education, and holds a Masters in Screen Production from the University of Auckland.

He has written and directed a number of his own short films in recent years as well as assisting and co-producing others. He regularly consults in developing screen projects of all kinds.



Associate Producer
Ray Larsen

Ray studied film at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and Auckland University.

He has always been fascinated with an individual's relationship with society, and preoccupied with the meeting point of internal and external realities.

Matua Full Crew List

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT

1st Assistant Director
Tim Signal

2nd Assistant Director
Cameron Broadhurst

Script Supervisor
Alex Dickie

Production Manager
Sakshi Chadha

CAMERA DEPARTMENT

Director of Photography
Daryl J. Wong

1st Assistant Camera
Pon Torthienchai

2nd Assistant Camera
Seunghoon Sam
Jonathan Fong

Digital Imaging Technician
Vaimailia Leatinu'u

SOUND DEPARTMENT

Sound Recordist
Joey Siasoco

Boom Operators
Jenny Chen
Brian Gill

LIGHTING DEPARTMENT

Gaffer
Leslie Gu

Best Boy
Jonathan Buckman

ART DEPARTMENT

Art Director
Damian Leith

WARDROBE DEPARTMENT

Wardrobe
Sara Chen

MAKE-UP DEPARTMENT

Make-up Artist
Isa Lilai

CRAFT SERVICES
Sakshi Chadha
Billy Hawksworth
Cameron Broadhurst

CATERING CHEF
Martin Hansen



















MATUA

KA MATE KĀINGA TAHI, KA ORA KĀINGA RUA

A FILM BY KAITIARI ROBERTS STARRING NGĀWHYRA RAUHINA, CALVIN TOTELOU, RIANA MABROU, ARIEHA RAWSON, SHONELLE WILLIAMS
CO PRODUCED BY CAMERON BROADBENT DIRECTED BY PHOTOGRAPHY BY LARRY LA WANG ART DIRECTOR DAMIAN LETH COSTUME DESIGNER JACEY CONNOR
EDITED BY LESLIE ELL EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS KAITIARI ROBERTS MUSIC COMPOSER YOUNG JAZZ EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RYAN WONG WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY KAITIARI ROBERTS