





PRODUCTION NOTES

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Night Raiders, the Indigenous sci-fi thriller marks the feature film directorial debut from award-winning Saskatchewan-born Cree/Métis writer/director, Danis Goulet (*Wakening, Barefoot*), The film stars Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers (*The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open, Blood Quantum*), Brooklyn Letexier-Hart (*Burden of Truth*), New Zealand's Alex Tarrant (*Seachange, When We Go to War*), Shaun Sipos (*Krypton, Dark Matter*), and Emmy and Tony Award-winning Amanda Plummer (*Hunger Games, Pulp Fiction*).

Night Raiders was selected for the International Financing Forum at TIFF 2018, and the Sundance Institute's Talent Forum in 2019.

Night Raiders is a Canada /New Zealand co-production, an Indigenous first for the Canadian film industry. The producers are Paul Barkin (*The Colony, Amreeka, Firecrackers*) for Alcina Pictures (CA); Tara Woodbury (*Transplant, The Underground*) for Uno Bravo (CA); Ainsley Gardiner (*Boy, Eagle vs Shark, The Breaker Uppers*) and Georgina Condor (*Cousins, The Breaker Uppers, She Shears*) for Miss Conception Films/Whenua Films (NZ); co-produced with Chelsea Winstanley (*Jojo Rabbit, Merata: How Mum Decolonized the Screen, What We Do in the Shadows*) for Defender Films (NZ). Taika Waititi (*Jojo Rabbit, Thor: Ragnarock, What We Do in the Shadows*), Defender Films (NZ) serves as executive producer, as do Lisa Meeches and Kyle Irving of Eagle Vision (CA), Tim White of Southern Light Films (New Zealand) and Noah Segal and Adrian Love of Elevation Pictures (Canada).

Night Raiders is distributed in Canada by Elevation Pictures. XYZ Films is handling international sales.

Night Raiders was developed with support from the Sundance Institute and with assistance from Bell Media's Harold Greenberg Fund. Produced with the participation of Telefilm Canada, Canada Media Fund, Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit, Ontario Creates, and New Zealand Film Commission, in association with Bell Media's Crave and CBC Films

Synopsis

The year is 2043. A military occupation controls disenfranchised cities in post-war North America. Children are property of the State. A desperate Cree woman joins an underground band of vigilantes to infiltrate a State children's academy and get her daughter back. *Night Raiders* is a female-driven dystopian drama about resilience, courage and love.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Back in 2013, when any reference to a 'wall' conjured up Pink Floyd and Donald Trump amounted to little more than a WWE's contestant on Battle of the Billionaires, writer/director Danis Goulet was working on a screenplay for her first feature. She had already been experimenting with the narrative possibilities of social realism, a genre that North American film has never explored to the same extent as European film. "Lights had gone off about how to express in indigenous life on screen," she recalled. "Filmmaking is a natural and organic extension of the oral tradition. It gives us tools to bring these stories to life in new and imaginative ways."

She started with short, serious dramas, first about a father and son out on the land together for the last time, and another about youth in northern Saskatchewan and the futures that young women imagine for themselves.

It was at this juncture that Goulet's ideas leapt from social realism to science-fiction. And her entrée to this genre was her short film, *Wakening*. "I'd always been afraid to write something that had to do with our old stories because I felt those things were always described as 'quaint' and 'folkloric' to anyone outside of our cultures. To me, those were stories we grew up telling around the fire. They had a lot of power." Part of a commission to celebrate 100 years of Toronto's Winter Garden Theatre, *Wakening* followed Wesakechak, a lone Cree wanderer, as she searches an urban war zone to find the ancient and dangerous Weetigo to help fight against a brutal military occupation.

The key for Goulet was the mandate of this Winter Garden commission - to celebrate the passage of time. Except she decided to reach *further* back in time, bringing forward the stories of that land into that grand space. Simultaneously, she looked forward and placed Wesakechak, the trickster, and Weetigo, a fearful cannibalistic creature, two of the most classic Cree characters from the old stories, into the future, dystopian Toronto where a war had been going on.

Indigenous Sci-Fi: Being at the Forefront of a New Genre

Wakening was a cinematic epiphany for Goulet. She had found the storytelling portal that offered fresh perspectives and a way to connect people to the emotion of the events. "The sci-fi genre opened up something for me, liberating me to go into a fantastical space where you are no longer confined by reality. The experience was joyful. You can speak very loud in genre film because in reality, you have the naysayers that say, oh, but it really isn't that bad or it really isn't like that. In genre, you can hit it harder because you can always say you're in a totally fictional world. You can say whatever you want, actually, and that's what really got me excited about making my first feature as a genre film."

Wakening and **Night Raiders** are the forefront of a newly-minted genre: Indigenous Sci-Fi. Goulet is enervated by this development: "The wave of Indigenous sci-fi/horror wave is here.

People in our community have wanted access for so many years for the right to tell our stories. There were laws in Canada that outlawed our cultural expression so we're entering a renaissance and the wave of genre is a part of that. It's a *really* exciting time."

Producer Tara Woodbury is right on board with this, viewing Indigenous Sci-Fi as a beautiful Trojan Horse that enables an exploration of subjects that would otherwise make people uncomfortable: "We're able to dig into themes of oppression and xenophobia, otherness, intergenerational trauma and gender politics, all within a really entertaining vehicle. *Night Raiders* has all the major tropes of a genre film, but it spins them on its head. It's at the cutting edge of what a genre should be."

The World of the Night Raiders

Goulet's newfound freedom in storytelling took her to the year 2043. (See the detailed timeline she created in the Appendix) Political factions had come to a head after a war broke apart North America. In that process, Canada joined the United States, caving to the argument that the alliance was necessary for survival of the Government (previously, known as the US government), but it resulted in a civil war of rebellion which lead to a wall being built between the two countries. Everyone loyal to the far-right faction are moved to one side of the wall, and everyone else to the other side. Canada is now the land of the disenfranchised and impoverished. But then, as now, Canada is a land of natural resources, and the Government realizes it wants those assets.

It is into this world that we first meet Niska and her daughter, Waseese. They are on the run. At the age of 5, children become property of the state in this post-Civil War world, and Waseese is 11-years-old. In their efforts to hide from the authorities, they're forced into the city that is cut in half by the wall, Weyakwin City in the north, Emerson State to the south, where Niska is forced to give her up. Left on her own, Niska crosses paths with the Night Raiders, a group of an underground group of Cree vigilantes. Their goal is to break into the Academies where the children are being kept and steal the kids back one by one. Through the Night Raiders, Niska realizes she may have made a horrible mistake, and she must align herself with them if she has any hope of getting Waseese back.

"The journey our lead character goes through is actually an unusual arc," observed producer Tara Woodbury. "Niska is a loner who's been in fight-or-flight mode for her entire life, but has opted for the flight option. When her trajectory changes and she's called upon to fight, she is overwhelmed trying to figure out how to stand up to injustices, how to make her voice heard. But this is what she's called upon to do. By the end of the film, she finds a community, and she finds her voice, but she's a deeply reluctant hero."

"When I began writing this, I'd been thinking a lot about the changing demographics of North America because there's a time coming up fairly soon when the non-white children who are born are going to outnumber white children. Those changing demographics mean that both Canada and the U.S. are changing. And in my dark imagination, I imagined that there would be a white backlash."

"Funnily enough, it was actually under the Obama presidency that I started to imagine that happening. I had first written a timeline in which Hillary Clinton became president, and the hate for her was so intense that it gave rise to the far right in the U.S. But in fact, it happened a lot sooner than I expected when Donald Trump was elected. When you look at the racial makeup of that his base and the Republican Party, it is predominantly white. My world of *Night Raiders* is very much separated in that way. Everyone on the Emerson State side of the wall would be white with some exceptions because that demographic is never super cut and dry. And everyone else on the other side of the wall in Weyakwin is diverse, all kinds of races, including allies to those folks."

NOTE: The Meekaw Virus first occurs in the *Night Raiders* timeline in the year 2042. Principal photography for the film, October through early November, 2020, predated the first mention of COVID-19 by a month.

Assembling the Night Raiders Team

The first producer to come on board for *Night Raiders* was Tara Woodbury, who had worked with Goulet as the story editor on *Wakening*. Two years out from *Night Raiders'* principal photography, they met with producer Paul Barkin who joined the team. And then in May, 2018,

Goulet was an advisor at a Sundance Filmmaker lab, along with Chelsea Winstanley. The two women had been friends for some time, both being influenced by the films of Merata Mita, one of the grandmothers of indigenous cinema, the other being Alanis Obomsawin. All the advisors at the lab were sharing their latest works, and while Winstanley did read the *Night Raiders* script, Goulet did not at the time formally ask her to produce at that time.

In October, 2018, Goulet emailed Taika Watiti. "I've known Taika for about 15 years: at Sundance where we both had our films, through my work at Imaginative where Taika has been many times, and then meeting on the festival circuit as we do year after year. There's a tight-knit global community of Indigenous filmmakers who have all grown up together. I sent him the script and asked if he wanted to be involved. He said, he'd do whatever he could. And then Ainslee Gardner and Georgina Condor, who he'd also worked with, came on as the New Zealand producers and that was when Chelsea came on as the New Zealand on-set producer representing their company."

And with that, *Night Raiders* became the first Canadian/ New Zealand Indigenous co-production.

It was Goulet's vision for this film to have a strong Indigenous team which meant including contingents of New Zealand Maori roles to intersect with the Canadian production and to ensure that they were not only involved in the film, but also present on set. The casting was

not just Indigenous, but specifically Cree in certain areas, and that homage was paid to the Ojibway in Ontario. A great deal of thought went into constructing this from the ground up. A mentorship program was built within the production. A call went out to Indigenous people in Ontario to join the production. To that end, mentor Eva Thomas, who joined the production as a producer, was learning how to produce her first feature while running this Indigenous mentorship programme. Behind the scenes, *Night Raiders* was not about hiring people who have never done film before - it was about capacity building.

The Indigenous Imperative

The Indigenous influences in *Night Raiders* are rooted in the political movements that were taking place during the writing of the screenplay. Idle No More, a protest to protect the land and the water, was sweeping across Canada; it was a powerful time and it was also one of the largest uprising Goulet had ever seen in her life. "I started seeing youth really being seen and heard," she recalled, "I hadn't seen that before. The mall I hung out in as a child was taken over by youth. I started to feel the power of it. And I started to think about that in my work. What does that mean to stand up in spite of something that feels so oppressive?"

Goulet also travelled to Standing Rock, North Dakota when researching the film and made a fortuitous discovery: "The people standing up at Standing Rock talked about the Black Snake prophesy: a snake that would cross the land and devour everything in its path, about it being the pipeline. It sent shivers up my spine to think about it that way. But also, it was such a beautiful metaphor, so poetic, so rich and so wise. I wanted to bring an element of that into *Night Raiders*, treating it with the respect and authenticity that it deserves and not letting it fall into the 'mystical Indian' trope."

The prophecy in *Night Raiders* relates to giant swarms of mosquitoes seen by an Elder. The swarm was coming to get them, but a Cree stranger who would come from the north and ensure the survival of their people.

Standing Rock offered Goulet a further inspiration- the unification of different nations. When she drove into the camp, she was struck by the long avenue of flagpoles that lined the main road down what had been grasslands before, with nearly 200 flags from native nations around the country. "There was a unification of factions that previously had not gotten along. It was historical. And even a Maori delegation had come in support of Standing Rock and Solidarity. I feel that indigenous nations all over the world have so much in common. We're very diverse nations, but there's so much solidarity amongst us that it just felt right to have a character from overseas that had joined this Night Raiders camp. That character became Leo"

Goulet's groundwork for the script was comprehensive because the truth of the film, the historical events and policies shown in allegorical form all had to stand on solid ground. She worked with Indigenous consultants and Elders building the concepts that underlie the

story. In the structure of the first second, third acts, and the character arcs, she developed them with multiple layers of consultation in Canada and New Zealand.

New Zealand Producer Chelsea Winstanley pointed out that colonization is a shared experience among many Indigenous peoples throughout the world. The events in the film depicting residential schools and families being ripped apart happened in Aotearoa (Māori for New Zealand), and again in Australia with the Aboriginal people, and in America with the Native Americans. That whole system of divide and conquer has been rife throughout history, she pointed out. "People don't know how to relate to that if they haven't had that shared experience. However, on the Indigenous level, we've all had that experience and the intergenerational trauma that comes with that is what our generation can relate to today, although we didn't literally experience it ourselves. What Danis has done through her script, which is so clever, has been to reference the past to be in the present to allow it to be shown in the future. And that's the warning: if we don't take notice of what we've done in the past, we can, if we're not careful, repeat those same mistakes."

The Principal Roles

Portraying the lead character of Niska is actor/director/writer, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers. In speaking about *Night Raiders*, she comes at it from each of her strengths, filmmaker and actor, and the perspective on the film changes accordingly.

As a filmmaker, she has unbound reverence for Goulet. They met several years ago when Goulet had helped produce Tailfeathers' third short, *Bihttos: Rebel*, through the Embargo Collective. "She's been a fierce advocate for changing the landscape of Indigenous cinema and fighting for more support for indigenous filmmakers," she said. "And it's really interesting to witness this union between Canada and New Zealand, seeing Indigenous people from both places work together and building something altogether new, especially because in New Zealand, Indigenous filmmakers have been making features for a lot longer because they've had a different system."

Tailfeathers had known that *Night Raiders* was in the works when she got the email from her agent about an audition. "I was beside myself with anxiety and excitement and such a strong desire to work with Danis. When I actually was cast, it just blew my mind because I've never felt so deeply connected to a character like this before."

The character of Niska is anything but the conventional warrior, and therein lies the appeal. "She's imperfect, vulnerable and strong. So often these archetypal roles of women have hard exteriors. She starts from this place of deep vulnerability and like any mother who's had to give their child up, she experiences a deep depression. When she comes across the Night Raiders, she's reluctant to answer the call to action. She doesn't believe she is capable of that. She's not the person that everyone's looking for, and she's not the prophecy. It's almost

like she's completely unaware that she's been committing heroic acts for the last six years of her life with her child in the bush."

On set, Tailfeather's admiration continued: "Danis has this beautiful ability to be both vulnerable and fiercely strong because this is coming from a place of truth for her. She has this intense focus from the moment we start rolling in the morning until we wrap in the evening. And she's so incredibly generous with her actors and also with the crew. It really feels like we've developed an organic relationship in the way that we work together. I'm learning a lot working with her, both as a filmmaker and as an actor."

Tailfeathers connected with many of the themes in the film. Her character is one of many generations of people who have been displaced from their culture and their land: "I think a lot of our people have lived that reality of really having to fight to exist. Niska's deep love for her daughter reminds me of my own mother, of so many strong, Indigenous women I know who are single mothers and just getting through the grind of the day and essentially performing acts of magic every day. Aside from the very intimate personal aspects of the story, there's larger themes that feel, unfortunately, so pertinent and real and timely."

" Elle-Máijá is an amazing, amazing actor, she really gives so much of herself," observed Goulet. "She just did such a heroic job in bringing this character to life. We went through a fairly extensive casting process where we looked all across North America for both of the female leads, and Elle-Máijá just knocked her audition out of the park. I was in tears when we flew her for her audition in Toronto for callbacks, and she portrayed a really important emotional moment in the film in the audition room. I was totally blown away by it."

Complimenting the role of Niska is the character of Waseese, the co-lead of the film, played by 13-year-old Brooklyn Letexier-Hart. The mother-daughter relationship is the bedrock of the Night Raiders story. The mother's agony is made more so because the way Danis has constructed it- Waseese doesn't fully realize that Niska was *forced* to give her up. And the indoctrination at the Academy plays on that wound to tear her away from her mother so she will identify with a new kind of family structure.

"It's a lot of pressure on a young girl to have," said Goulet about Letexier-Hart, who saw over 300 audition tapes for the role. "Brooklyn's a brilliant young performer. When we first saw her audition, we knew right away that we were seeing someone special and we found her in Winnipeg. Her instinct was already in the right place about what was happening in the scene and how to really deliver that. But, you know, she's not afraid to go there. I feel very lucky to have found her."

Letexier-Hart found 11-year-old Waseese to be imaginative: "She's always up in her own head, in her own space, talking to the birds and the rocks. She's an exciting character. Very different. For as long as she can remember, she's been in the woods, alone with her mom, catching fish and eating off the land. When it is no longer safe for them to be there, the change is overwhelming."

Waseese's arc is steep, and Letexier-Hart was up to the ascent. To go where she's needed to for this role, she drew on the support of her director, who gave the young actor permission to slow down and come into the space of each moment, a strong connection with her costar, the other cast and crew whose names she made a point of learning as soon as she got to set, and her family, many of whom had grown up in the residential school system, and her culture. "I love my culture," she said. "I love ceremony, the singing and the drumming. And I think it's important to hear Cree in this film. It's beautiful."

As Much as Night Raiders is Led by Two Female Actors, It Is an Ensemble Cast

Amanda Plummer, as Roberta, the woman who sheltered Niska when she became a mother, Alex Tarrant as Leo, the Maori member of the Night Raiders, Gail Maurice as Ida, the no bullshit Night Raiders camp leader, Violet Nelson as Somonis, an aide to Ida, Shaun Sipos as Randy, a denizen of the Weyakwin marketplace, Ray G. Thunderchild, as Tiny, a Night Raiders Elder in the camp, a singer, a drummer, a bringer of joy, and Pauline Shirt as Elder Chachigee, the woman who explains the prophesy to Niska: this is the group of characters who populate Goulet's reality of 2043.

Roberta, who could well be the post-apocalyptic cat lady of Weyakwin, cared for Niska when Waseese was born. As the child grew closer to the time the State would come looking for her, mother and child left, but Robert stayed, primarily because her son, Pierre, was now a solider for the State.

This was a role that Amanda Plummer had to play. She had read the script and talked with Goulet for a very long time and then announced, "I just have to do it. I just said I've got to do it. That feeling, you know. It was the script and the character and the entirety of it all." Plummer does not develop her characters, *per se*. In the case of Roberta, she reads the script over repeatedly, then arrives on set and allows the situation take over and speak to her. She likes to let it get into her skin.

It's a fine moment of Plummer process to hear her describe her approach to a role: "It's as close to telepathy that I can think of: you get all these images coming into your head for no reason at all and you follow them. You don't really know what put them there, but you're getting it from the different waves of people that you're working with and from the crew and the coloration around you."

Kitsaki, where the Night Raiders have set up camp, is where we meet their leader, Ida. Goulet felt lucky to have Gail Maurice in that role and as a part of the project. "She is a Cree speaker from Beaval, Saskatchewan, which is close to my hometown of La Ronge, Saskatchewan. She's always retained the language. Gail's a brilliant actor who brings so much gravitas to her character. And she has such presence on screen. It's like you can't take her eyes off of her. She brings the language through everything she does and to find that particular skill set in one person is like a needle in a haystack."

We first meet Leo, one of the Night Raiders, played by New Zealand actor, Alex Tarrant, when he encounters Niska one night at the perimeter of the Academy. Leo, who is on a raid to retrieve children, does not understand why Niska is also there, but it's enough to take her back to the Kitsaki camp for questioning. Once there, the Elders explain to Niska that she might well be the stranger from the North they have been expecting. Leo is wary of her immediate acceptance into the group, especially given he has had to work much harder to be included.

"Leo's an interesting character, because he's Maori and comes to the Night Raiders from very far away," said Goulet. "He's an outsider, a proud activist, who has chosen to stand in solidarity with them. He's struggling with his sense of belonging because, as we later learn, he comes from privilege. And that that privilege informs the way he sees Niska. He's a character who has tried very, very hard to do something good on behalf of Indigenous peoples. His heart is so in the right place, but he's blocked by certain obstacles that are holding him back. I feel very lucky to have connected to Alex Tarrant, which the New Zealand producers helped us connect. He did such a beautiful job bringing Leo to life in unexpected ways, bringing a warmth to the character that, on the page, could have been somewhat abrasive."

The Elders

In Indigenous cultures across North America, a key tenant is the valuing of Elders and the wisdom and the knowledge they hold. Goulet's vision would have been incomplete without Elders being part of the project: "My dad has been an Elder through the development of the film and then was also a part of shooting, but I also brought in Pauline Shirt, a Cree speaker originally from Alberta and now an Elder in Toronto where she's been a highly respected leader for years. I always saw the Night Raiders camp as being quite matriarchal which is why having a woman who was originally from the prairies and is a respected knowledge keeper was meaningful for this film. Ray G. Thunderchild, who is Cree from Thunderchild Cree Nation, which is in Saskatchewan is the other Elder. He has lived in Vancouver for many years now and is just such a big and lovely presence. It has really felt amazing to have them on set and part of the film."

Of Drones and Children

Dystopian science fiction has long been used as a means of social protest. *Night Raiders* falls squarely in this arena.

Goulet felt inspired by the way youth are being seen and heard right now which is why the finale of the film comes back to the power of youth.

And yet, in 2020, younger generations bear the weight of the future of the world. Goulet would like adults to take responsibility for the footprint they're leaving on the planet and for

future generations. "Telling stories like this remains relevant because I don't even think as a country, we've really begun to contend with our history," she maintains. "The Truth and Reconciliation Commission only came out three years ago. Beyond the findings, have we as a country really let in the impact of it? I think it's a very difficult thing to contend with. Through the power of storytelling, we start to understand beyond the statistics what the fracturing of families actually does to human lives. And so, in the telling of *Night Raiders*, I was able to explore the impact of these kinds of policies on people and what it actually means to lose a daughter."

Goulet believes that if the future is going to be better than what has happened in the past, we have to start to grapple with these realities: "You have to think about the intergenerational dynamics that play out, but what might be true for one generation doesn't have to be true for the next generation. I hope that our baggage is getting lighter as each generation goes on. And to me, that's the hopeful way of looking at how we're moving forward."

ABOUT THE CAST:

ELLE-MAIJA TAILFEATHERS (Niska) is a filmmaker, writer, and actor based in Vancouver, British Columbia. She is Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) from the Kainai First Nation (Blood Reserve) as well as Sámi from northern Norway. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of British Columbia in First Nations Studies with a Minor in Women's and Gender Studies. Tailfeathers was the 2018 Sundance Institute Merata Mita Film Fellow and is an alumnus of the Berlinale Talent Lab, the Hot Docs Accelerator Lab, the CFC/NFB/Ford Foundation Open Immersion Virtual Reality Lab, the Whistler Film Festival Aboriginal Film Fellowship, and the International Sámi Film Institute Indigenous Film Fellowship. Her short documentary, Bihttoš, was included in the TIFF Top Ten Canadian Shorts and was also nominated for a Canadian Screen Award and a Leo Award for Best Short Documentary. Tailfeathers received a Canadian Screen Award, a UBCP/ACTRA VWIFF Award, and was nominated for a Leo Award and an American Indian Motion Picture Award for her performance in On the Farm. Her narrative feature-length directorial debut, The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open, co-written and co-directed with Kathleen Hepburn, premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival in the Generation Program and was given the honourable mention for Best Canadian Feature at the Toronto International Film Festival. The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open was also named the Best BC Film at the Vancouver International Film Festival where Tailfeathers was also presented with the BC Emerging Filmmaker Award. She is currently directing a feature-length documentary about the opiate crisis in her home community of Kainai with the support of the National Film Board of Canada as well as the Hot Docs Cross Currents Fund. She also appears on-screen in Jeff Barnaby's Blood Quantum which premiered at TIFF 2019.

BROOKLYN LETEXIER- HART (Waseese) 14-year old Brooklyn, a newcomer to film and television, has been heavily recurring on *Burden of Truth* and will soon be seen in the feature, *Diaspora*, written and directed by Deco Dawson. Born and raised in Winnipeg Manitoba Treaty 1 territory, her mother is Metis and her father is Cree, and her home community is Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. Her spirit name is Four Butterflies, and she is from the Wolf Clan. Brooklyn is very connected to her culture and is an advocate for social justice. She is the youngest of three daughters and is animal lover. When she isn't busy with school or acting, she loves to play around with her makeup, sing, dance and spend time with her family.

ALEX TARRANT (Leo)

Alex has been in solid work since graduating from Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School in 2012. Starting with leads in two TV miniseries: *Tatau* and *When We Go to War*, he then joined core casts for *Common Ground* and *800 Words*. Soon after, he played a lead in both seasons of the New Zealand drama *Filthy Rich*. In 2018, Alex was cast in *Shortland Street* as fan-favourite Doctor Lincoln Fielder. He will also appear in feature film *The Other Side of Heaven 2: Fire of Faith* – set for theatrical release in June 2019. Most recently it was announced he would join the core cast of Nine network's *Seachange*. Alex is also a passionate theatre practitioner and deviser. He performed in the acclaimed production *Masi* at the 2012 New Zealand International Arts Festival, and toured globally with Red Leap Theatre's *The Arrival*.

AMANDA PLUMMER (Roberta) has received critical acclaim for her work in film, television and stage. Her impressive film work includes Terry Gilliam's THE FISHER KING – for which she received a BAFTA nomination and Quentin Tarrantino's PULP FICTION for which she received and American Comedy Award nomination for her memorable performance as Honey Bunny. Her other film work includes the title role in Lee Issac Chung's ABIGAIL HARM; Sydney Lumet's DANIEL; Michael Winterbottom's BUTTERFLY KISS; Isabel Coixet's MY LIFE WITHOUT ME; Eduardo Guedes' PAX; Larry Clark's KEN PARK and Justin Lerner's GIRLFRIEND which was an Official Selection of the 2010 Toronto Film Festival and Shunji Iwai's VAMPIRE which debuted at the World Dramatic Cinema Competition at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. Recently she has been shooting abroad including two films for Linus de Paoli entitled DR. KETEL and A YOUNG MAN WITH HIGH POTENTIAL. Ms. Plummer's stage roles are as varied and notable as her film credits. She won a Tony and a Drama Desk award for her work in AGNES OF GOD opposite Geraldine Page; a Theatre World and Outer Critics Circle Award and was nominated for a Tony and a Drama Desk Award for her performance in A TASTE OF HONEY. She was also nominated for a Tony for her performance in PYGMALION opposite Peter O'Toole. Other Broadway credits include THE GLASS MENAGERIE with Jessica Tandy. Her Off Broadway credits include Sam Shepard's A LIE OF THE MIND and Tracy Letts' KILLER JOE. Most recently she was seen Off Broadway in the critically acclaimed THE TWO CHARACTER PLAY with Brad Dourif. Ms. Plummer's work on television has been recognized with three Emmy Awards; one Emmy Nomination and a Golden Globe Nomination. She is also the recipient of the Anti-Defamation League Award. In the summer of 2016 Amanda was awarded the Lifetime

Achievement Award at the Oldenburg Film. Amanda will next be seen in Ryan Murphy's "RATCHED" on Netflix.

VIOLET NELSON (Somonis) Violet Nelson is a Vancouver based performer, she is a member of the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation (Kingcome Inlet, Quatsino).

The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open (2019) was her first feature film project and lead role. The film tells the story of a chance encounter between two Indigenous women with drastically different lived experience, navigating the aftermath of domestic abuse. It had its world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival; Canadian premiere at TIFF where it won Best Canadian Feature Film - Honourable Mention. It won the Best BC Film award at VIFF, and is being shown at festivals around the world. A graduate of Frank Hurt Secondary, Violet provides leadership to youth in her community, where her message is to never give up. She looks forward to opportunities to further connect with young people through her work in film and television.

GAIL MAURICE (Ida)
JORDAN BULLCHILD (Jordan)
RAY G. THUNDERCHILD (Tiny)
SUZANNNE CYR (Academy Headmistress)
SHAUN SIPOS (Randy)
PAMELA MATTHEWS (Lorna)
PAULINE SHIRT (Elder Chachigee)

ABOUT THE CREW

DANIS GOULET (Writer/Director) is a writer and director. Her films have screened at festivals around the world including Sundance, Berlin, MoMA, and the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). Her dystopian film WAKENING (2013) was selected for Sundance and also screened before the opening night film at TIFF. Her film BAREFOOT (2012) was recognized with a special jury mention at the 2013 Berlin International Film Festival. She is a former programmer for TIFF and a former director of the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival. She is an alumna of the National Screen Institute and the TIFF Filmmakers lab and a current member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Danis is Cree/Metis, originally from northern Saskatchewan in Canada.

TARA WOODBURY (Producer) is Executive Producer on the new smash hit medical drama *Transplant* for CTV and NBC, starring Hamza Haq. Debuting as the number one show in Canada, *Transplant* was recently acquired by NBC for the 2020 Fall broadcast line-up. She is currently VP of Development for Sphere Media Plus, leading domestic and international development for the English office. Previously, she was Director of Development for Amaze Film + Television, overseeing their scripted slate. While there, she worked on Seasons 1 and 2 of the family multi-cam *The Stanley Dynamic* for YTV. She has produced 13 short films,

including *Baby Half Lie* for Kimberly Miller-Price which premiered at the UrbanWorld Film Festival '12 and *The Underground* by Michelle Latimer, which premiered at TIFF '14 and received the Best Short Film Award at the ImagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival. She is currently on the Programing Committee for POV.

PAUL BARKIN (**Producer**) Over the past two decades, Paul Barkin has been actively producing feature films through his company Alcina Pictures. An award-winning producer and champion of director driven and first-time filmmakers, Paul has produced an array of critically acclaimed and commercially successful films for the last 20 years. Selected credits include Cherien Dabis' Sundance and Cannes entry, *Amreeka*, nominated for three Independent Spirit Awards including Best Picture, Bruce McDonald's 2007 Berlinale Panorama opener, *The Tracey Fragments*, starring Ellen Page, the ice-age apocalypse, *The Colony*, starring Laurence Fishburne and Bill Paxton, the Norwegian-Canadian revenge thriller, *Hevn*, by Kjersti Steinsbø, and Jasmin Mozaffari's powerful, award-winning debut, *Firecrackers*. In addition to *Night Raiders*, Barkin's current projects include *The Northwoods*, a Canada-Norway co-production starring Sarah Gadon and Elli Harboe and the psychological-thriller *Sharp Corner* by award winning director Jason Buxton (*Blackbird*).

AINSLEY GARDINER (Producer) Director/Producer Ainsley Gardiner is of Ngāti Awa, Te Whānau-a-Apanui, Ngāti Pikiao and Whakatōhea tribal descent (Aotearoa/New Zealand). Her first short film as writer/director, *Mokopuna*, had a successful festival life, winning Gold at the Dreamspeakers Indigenous Film Festival. She was one of 9 wåhine Måori filmmakers to write and direct the acclaimed feature film *Waru*. She has just completed her second feature, *Cousins*, co-directing with the film's screenplay writer, Briar Grace-Smith. Ainsley has produced more than a dozen short and feature films, documentaries and television drama. Notably Ainsley produced the short films *Two Cars, One Night* and *Tama Tu* written and directed by Oscar-nominee, Taika Waititi. She went on to collaborate with Waititi on his feature films, *Eagle vs Shark* in 2005 and his first No. 1 Box Office hit, *BOY*, in 2009. She produced 2018's comedy hit, The Breaker Upperers.

Ainsley is currently an Advisory Board member of New Zealand's *Script-To-Screen's Story Camp* (formerly Aotearoa Writers Lab). She mentors a number of emerging Māori and women writers, directors and producers. In 2018 she was awarded the Mana Wåhine award at the Wairoa Film Festival and also made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MBE) for her services to film.

GEORGINA ALLISON CONDER (Producer)

Georgina started her career at Kahukura Productions which was run by Larry Parr back in the early 2000's. In these formative years the company produced four low budget feature films as well as the TV series Lovebites and feature film Fracture. This time fostered a love for challenging the traditional filmmaking models and instilled a low budget methodology. After Kahukura Georgina worked as a line producer for many years including working with Ainsley Gardiner on Taika Waititi's feature films *Eagle vs. Shark, Boy and The Pa Boys. In 2014 Georgina was the New Zealand producer on indie film Free in Deed, directed by Jake Mahaffy with US producers Mike s.Ryan and Mike Bowes.* In 2015 Ainsley and Georgina

set up their own production company Miss Conception Films to focus on projects with Female Protagonists with female key creatives. MCF is passionate about working with first and second time female filmmakers. Miss Conception has released two features, the kiwi hit comedy *The Breaker Upperers* and *She Shears*, a film about female sheep shearers. *Reunion*, a thriller starring *Julia Ormond* is being released internationally in 2020 by MPI International. Two further feature films - Cousins and Candian Co- Production Night Raiders will be released internationally in 2021 and Georgina is going into production on indie comedy Going, Going in January.

CHELSEA WINSTANLEY (Producer) is an Oscar® nominated producer, an award-winning filmmaker and has been a producer, writer and director for more than 15years.

As a p.g.a. producer on Taika Waititi's Academy-nominated feature Jojo Rabbit, Chelsea became the first indigenous female Oscar® nominee for Best Picture. In 2019 Ava Duvernay and Array Now distributed critically-acclaimed documentary feature, Merata: How Mum Decolonized The Screen, which played at the 2019 Sundance and Berlin film festivals and is now on NETFLIX worldwide. In 2014, she produced the hit mockumentary What We Do in the Shadows, directed by Waititi and Jemaine Clement - now a TV show for FX. And early in her career, she produced several award winning short films two of which premiered in competition at the Cannes Film Festival. As a director she began making documentaries winning a Media Peace award with her graduating film Whakangahau. She went on to direct several short documentaries and television series for local broadcasters. She was one of nine women who made the anthology feature Waru which won the LAAPFF best film award in 2018. Her short film FORGIVE ME screened at ImagineNATIVE Film Festival in October 2019. Chelsea has several projects on her slate in various stages of development as a director and producer. Arezou with writer director Sophia Kiapos starring Shohreh Aghadashloo and Thief of Sleep directed by Darwin Serink starring Mojean Aria. As a director she is developing a documentary and the drama feature The Appeal. She holds a Bachelor of Communications, majoring in Television production and completed the EAVE Producers course in Europe in 2011. Currently living in Los Angeles with her family, she is from the indigenous tribes Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāi Te Rangi of Aotearoa New Zealand through her mother and Pākehā through her father.

TAIKA WAITITI (Executive Producer) Academy Award®-winning writer, director, and Emmy nominated actor Taika Waititi's latest film *Jojo Rabbit* (Fox Searchlight) received six Oscar® nominations and earned him an Oscar®for Best Adapted Screenplay. Previous credits include *Thor: Ragnarok* (Marvel), *Hunt for the Wilderpeople, What We Do in the Shadows, Boy* and Oscar®-nominated short film *Two Cars, One Night*. Waititi is in post-production on *Next Goal Wins* (Searchlight Pictures), will next direct and write *Thor: Love and Thunder*, and stars in *Free Guy* (Twentieth Century Fox). For television, Waititi directed the season one finale of *The Mandalorian* (Disney+), in which he also stars; and executive produces, co-writes, and has directed several episodes of the adaptation of *What We Do in the Shadows* (FX). He is Executive Producer on features *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (2016),

The Breaker Uppers (2018) Jojo Rabbit (2019) and Baby, Done (2020), which were produced by his production company with Carthew Neal, Piki Films.

DANIEL GRANT (Director of Cinematography) is an award-winning cinematographer with a wide variety of credits on both fiction and documentary projects, including several feature films with some of Canada's most celebrated directors, including Bruce McDonald's *The Husband*, and Patricia Rozema's *Into the Forest*, starring Ellen Page and Even Rachel Wood. His work also includes the Netflix Original film *ARQ*, and several award-winning documentary features. The Canadian Society of Cinematographers has recognized him with nine nominations and three awards for his work to date, and he has also been nominated for Canadian Screen Awards for Best Documentary Cinematography for *The Messenger*, and Best Narrative Feature Cinematography for *Octavio Is Dead*.

JORGE WEISZ (Editor) was born and raised in Mexico City, and is based in Toronto, Canada. He has collaborated with award-winning directors and producers such as Vincenzo Natali, Charles Officer, Joey Klein, Lindsay Mackay, Gaz Alazraki, and Christian Sparkes among others. Jorge has worked on diverse and award-winning films such as Naomi Jaye's WWII love story *The Pin*, which the New York Times called "A Revelation", Peter Stebbings' *Empire of Dirt*, which premiered at TIFF 2013 and *Las Hijas de Abril (April's Daughter)*, with acclaimed director Michel Franco which won the Un Certain Regard's Jury Prize at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival.

EVA THOMAS (Producer) Eva Thomas is a producer, writer and story editor. She participated in the inaugural imagineNATIVE / Harold Greenberg Fund Indigenous Story Editing Mentorship Program. As a story editor/mentor, Eva has worked with writers in the imagineNATIVE Screenwriting Intensive, the Magee TV Diverse Screenwriters Mentorship Program at the Toronto Screenwriting Conference and the Women in Film and Television (WIFT)-Vancouver's Tricksters & Writers Program. Eva was selected for the LA SKINS Native American Feature Film Lab in Los Angeles, the Netflix-Banff Diversity of Voices Initiative, Telefilm Talent-to-Watch Program and the National Screen Institute Totally Television Program.

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NIGHT RAIDERS

Written, Produced & Directed by DANIS GOULET

Produced By TARA WOODBURY

Produced by PAUL BARKIN

Produced by AINSLEY GARDINER GERGINA CONDER

Producer CHELSEA WINSTANLEY

Executive Producers
TAIKA WAITITI
TIM WHITE

Executive Producers NOAH SEGAL ADRIAN LOVE

Executive Producers
KYLE IRVING
LISA MEECHES

Director of Photography DANIEL GRANT, CSC

Production Designer ZAZU MYERS

Music by MONIKER

Editor JORGE WEISZ

Visual Effects Supervisor MARTIN TORI

Costume Designer
KENDRA TERPENNING

Casting by RENE HAYNES, CSA

ELLE-MAIJA TAILFEATHERS

BROOKLYN LETEXIER-HART

ALEX TARRANT

GAIL MAURICE

VIOLET NELSON

SHAUN SIPOS

SUZANNE CYR RAY THUNDERSCHILD JORDAN BULLCHILD

and AMANDA PLUMMER

Produced with the participation of







Production Manager CATHERINE LANG

1st Assistant Director ROB COTTERILL

2nd Assistant Director JAMES GILCHRIST

Line Producer LORI FISCHBURG

Associate Producer EVA THOMAS

CAST

Niska ELLE-MÁIJÁ TAILFEATHERS

Waseese BROOKLYN LETEXIER-HART

Leo ALEX TARRANT

Roberta AMANDA PLUMMER

Academy Headmaster SUZANNE CYR

Randy SHAUN SIPOS

Somonis VIOLET NELSON

Charlie JORDAN BULLCHILD

Ida GAIL MAURICE

Pierre ERIC OSBORNE

Tiny RAY THUNDERCHILD

Academy Solider SCOTT BARKER

Shy Academy Girl LORI PHUN

Victoria BIRVA PANDYA

CLUMA DINVAFANDIA

Lorna PAMELA MATTHEWS
Trey TAVAREE DANIEL-SIMMS

cy TATANEE BANIEL O

Joe ANDREW MOODIE

Elder Chachigee PAULINE SHIRT

Cree Elder KEITH GOULET

Kitsaki Warrior LINDSAY SARAZIN

Regime Doctor TIM GAMMON

Academy Guard ROBERT SKANES

Academy Cadet PHOENIX CONNOLLY

Emerson Propaganda Voice ALEX PAXTON-BEESLEY

Jingo Loudspeaker Voice ANDY MCQUEEN

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SAMUEL FLYNN SCOTT CONRAD WEDDE

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Vocals

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CRAIG TERRIS
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Drummers RAY THUNDERCHILD

MARK LAVALLEE
JARED BIG CANOE

Music Supervision MICHAEL PERLMUTTER, GMSC

MIKAILA SIMMONS, GMSC

MEMORIAL SONG

(Honouring First Nations Veterans who served in the Second World War) Performed by R. Thunderchild, M. Lavallee, J. Big Canoe Written by Ray G. Thunderchild Courtesy of Ray G. Thunderchild

SWING AWAY

Performed by R. Thunderchild, M. Lavallee, J. Big Canoe Written by Ray G. Thunderchild Courtesy of Ray G. Thunderchild

KHOUTNA

Performed by Nass El Hal Written by Redouane Raifak Published by Alter K / Mape (p)(c) 2019 Sans Commentaire

SMILIN'

Performed by Northern Cree Written by Leroy Whitstone Published by DMG Arizona Courtesy of Canyon Records

Production Legals (Canada) KEN DHALIWAL Production Legals (NZ) SARAH CULL

SARAH CAUGHEY

Bank Legals JONATHAN DYCK

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Director of Programming, Crave TORY JENNINGS



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TODD BROWN · SANTE CARDINAL · OMAR CHALABI · KATIE CHIPPERFIELD · VMG CINEMATIC · KATE CLARK ·
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CARLY TURNER · JESSE WENTE · DON & CATHY WOODBURY · LAC LA RONGE INDIAN BAND

Kinanâskomitinawow

MERATA MITA ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

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