

# News

## Ruatoki movie screens today

**Neryda McNabb**  
Arts reporter

“OW What!” is a classic Maori-English slang phrase and one that’s heard a lot in the Eastern Bay.

Freelance film producer-director Mike Jonathan has taken the phrase, commonly voiced by Maori children and adults alike, and used it as the title of his latest film, shot in Ruatoki.

The first private screening of the short film, starring students from Te Wharekura o Ruatoki and Tuhoe activist Tame Iti, is being held at the kura today, supported by the community.

The 13-minute film is about Te Mauri (Timoti Tiakiwai) who like many 12-year-old boys living in small rural communities around New Zealand has dreams of one day following in his father’s footsteps and representing his country in the national sport of rugby.

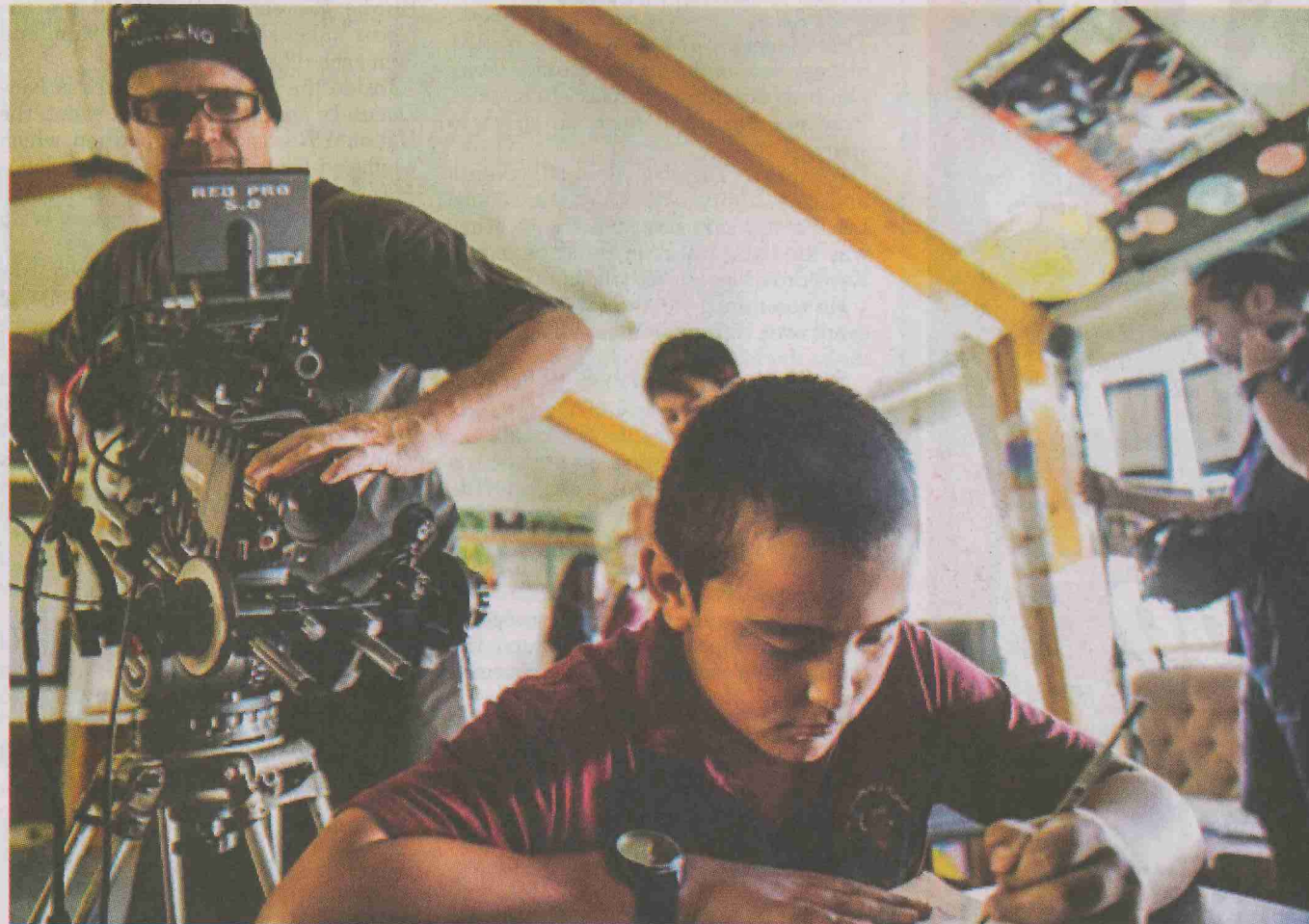
But, unlike most kids, Te Mauri is charged with looking after his two younger siblings while his papa is abroad playing footie.

He is an old soul and rather than joining his mates on the field after school, he sets about ensuring his little brother and sister are fed, clean and up-to-date with their homework.

Te Mauri’s world is transformed when he makes a discovery one fateful night that will change his life forever.

Jonathan said “ow what!” was a phrase used to help emphasise a word in a conversation like “What are you up to ow?”, or, as an expression of emotion.

In the film he used it as an expression of confusion, realisation and sur-



**FILMING:** A private screening of the short film *Ow What*, featuring Timoti Tiakiwai, will be held at Te Wharekura o Ruatoki today.

Photo supplied

prise.

*Ow What* was filmed over two weeks in May 2013. Jonathan said he was very happy with the finished film,

although the production involved a few delays.

Due to tangi in the valley he was not able to get his cast together until the

day before filming.

“I had two hours to work with them and then we had to hit the cameras,” he said.

The film has a main cast of three, with Iti taking a cameo role as a teacher.

Jonathan said he tried to get as many kids from the school into the film as possible as extras.

The children will be the first see the film before it goes out onto the world film festival circuit.

Rotorua-based Jonathan is heavily involved with making TV shows and documentaries as a day job. After hours he helps produce films for colleagues and friends in New Zealand and abroad.

On Friday he is travelling to Iceland to film a documentary about New Zealand meat workers who travel to the country every year for two months’ work.

He said it was an observational documentary about what Kiwi meat workers did, and how the work compared with that in New Zealand.

Last year, Jonathan released *Road to the Globe*, a documentary following the adaption of William Shakespeare’s play, *Troilus & Cressida* into Maori, which was delivered as the opening performance of an International festival in London, at the home of Shakespeare – The Globe Theatre.

His 2009 short film *Nga Taumaruru-Shadows*, in which a young Maori man, Tommy, a paranoid schizophrenic, retells his life story to a video camera, won praise from filmmakers in the United States and won the Silver Lei Award for excellence at the Honolulu Film Festival 2010.

An earlier award-winning short film, *Hawaikii*, continues to travel the world festival circuit.

### briefs

#### Leadership awards

STUDENTS from Paroa and Otakiri have received Sir Peter Blake Young Leader Awards this term.

Whakatane Westpac manager Darrin Hannah made the presentations to Neelan Wera-Cook, from Te Kura o Te Paroa, and Joel Blackwood, from Otakiri School, at assemblies recently.

A third award was presented last term at Allandale School to Matthew Hynds.

The young leader award celebrates young people who have displayed leadership traits such as teamwork, drive and commitment – qualities Sir Peter Blake was known for.

#### Children’s health stamps launched

STAND Children’s Services and NZ Post are launching the 85th edition of Children’s Health Stamps today.

The stamp issue, with the theme “healthy eating: fruit and vegetables” will be launched by East Coast MP Anne Tolley at Gisborne Children’s Village.

Ten cents from each health stamp sold goes to Stand Children’s Services to help them provide specialist home and school social services to vulnerable children.

One of seven in the country, the Gisborne Village provides for children and families living on the East Coast, and in Opotiki, Gisborne, Hawke’s Bay, and Waipukurau.

## Be very persistent

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## Deported truck driver faces another hurdle

## Orange day street parade

CHILDREN who helped to make their classmate’s journey between school and home safer this year will be celebrating with a parade down The Strand this Friday.

Whakatane police Senior Constable Trish Morris said 270 traffic wardens from 11 schools between Kawerau and

Opotiki would attend the first Eastern Bay Orange Day street parade.

The parade was an addition to the annual celebratory day out, which acknowledged the great work done by school patrols to improve road safety.

Groups from each school will walk with banners and fancy dress as part

of a day funded by Eastern Bay Road Safety.

The parade begins at Whakatane’s i-SITE centre at 10am on Friday.

The kids will walk down The Strand, turn left onto McAlister Street, then finish with a swim at the Whakatane Aquatic Centre.