

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT
DEMONS

Rated R16: Contains violence, offensive
language, drug use and sex scenes

Running Time: 90 Minutes

For further information contact:

Siân Clement

The Publicity Machine

Tel: 04 973 7426

Fax: 04 973 7427

e-mail: publicist@xtra.co.nz

Photographic available at www.firstsun.co.nz/demons

Cast List

Harry	KARL URBAN
Benny	KATIE WOLFE
Le Valliant	JONATHON HENDRY
Celia	SALLY STOCKWELL
Johnny	TONY MacIVER
Hood 1 Lawrence	PETER DAUBÉ
Hood 2 – Wank	KELSON HENDERSON
Girl Hood – Alice	MEL JOHNSTON
Richard	NEILL REA
Detective Chalmers	PERRY PIERCY
Officer Jones	ADAM BROOKFIELD
Melissa – Transvestite	ROBERT TRIPE
Girl Hood 2	ROMANI LAWSON
Hood 4	DENNIS FEAVER
Motel Receptionist	DANNY MULHERON
Bus Driver	PHIL GRIEVE

Synopsis

In the place between what you know, and what you fear, demons rule.

All hope is stripped away as demonic forces overcome you.

Dr. Harry Ballard has just unearthed the essence of evil. He's a marked man, a living sacrifice, thrown to the depths of the demon world.

At his side is a beautiful young woman – an ex-cult member who's experienced their immeasurable power.

How deep can you descend and still save your soul?

How much insanity can you stand?

When you discover the irrefutable truth about demons can you still survive?

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS

Glossary

- Demonolatry:** the worship of demons and/or practising sorcery with the aid of entities known as demons
- Sorcery:** (also Magick). Practicing divination, black magic, dark sorcery. Calling on infernal spirits to create a change according to the Sorcerer's will.
- Demon:** Defined as a lesser spirit of God or a 'devil' in Christian mythology. Literal meaning for Demon = "replete with wisdom". Derived from the Greek word: "Daimon" meaning divine power.

Demons are intelligent and can even be talked to and reasoned with. They will even warn you about their ward (their special defence against particular weapons e.g. swords). However they can never be dissuaded from fulfilling their mission.

Some demons have a nanorian for a heart. The nanorian is a stone that has magical properties.

In Scripture and in Catholic theology, the word has come to mean much the same as the devil and denotes one of the evil spirits, or "fallen angels who have sinned."

To early Christians, demons were incorporeal, made of moving vapour – not unlike the Holy Spirit, who similarly enters believers but with dramatically different results.

Production Information:

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS is a horror-thriller, by New Zealand writer/director **Glenn Standring**. His award-winning short film *Lenny Minute One* was selected for the Short Film Competition at Cannes in 1993.

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS centres on Dr Harry Ballard, a University lecturer who has become obsessed with exposing cults since the recent death of his brother. "The story unfolds," explains Standring, "when Harry is attacked by this horrible cult, at which point he has to try and work out whether there is just a weird cult chasing him, or whether, there are in fact demons. So he goes through a whole reality shift that he'd never considered before - embarking on a journey to discover the irrefutable truth."

The Core Cast

Harry Ballard is played by one of New Zealand's hottest actors, **Karl Urban** (nominated for Best Supporting Actor in *Via Satellite* and co-star of Harry Sinclair's new film *The Price of Milk*)

His 'underworld accomplice' – a schizophrenic called Benny is played by **Katie Wolfe** (*The Last Tattoo*)

Other core cast members include Harry's girlfriend, Celia (played by **Sally Stockwell** (*Thinking About Sleep, Hopeless*); his student protégé, Johnny (played by newcomer **Tony Maclver**); his brother Richard (played by **Neill Rea** of *Scarflies* fame); his nemesis, Le Valliant (**Jonathon Hendry**) and Lawrence - Le Valliant's right hand man, played by **Peter Daubé**.

"Casting is 70% of direction" says the director. "You get the right person, they can make that character real. And in our case with Karl, Katie and Jonathan in particular, we had people who were very close to the original concept. They all had elements of those characters in their personality and were [also] technically fantastic actors. "

On Location

Principal photography was completed in October 1999.

The filming involved six weeks of night shoots (till around 3 am each morning) in locations all over New Zealand's capital, Wellington, utilising virtually every dark alley in the inner city, as well as studio-built sets.

The 45-person crew worked hard to meet this demanding schedule, yet lead actor Karl Urban found that such odd hours added to the 'other worldliness' of the project: "In effect we created our own world" he explains. "Because there's virtually nobody else around at three in the morning, it enables you to focus and concentrate and create your own weird reality".

Standring says what helped him 'stay in the moment' during the night shoots was the solid rehearsal period they had prior to shooting: "When the going got tough we fell back on what we'd done in rehearsal and that's what gets you through" he explains. Urban agrees: "It was great because we had this really strong collaboration. Consequently the whole shoot was really quite trouble free

The Crew

Given that this was Standring's first feature, he remains eternally grateful to Line Producer **Chris Tyson** for being able to bring together such an experienced crew, particularly Director of Photography **Simon Baumfield** (whose work on *Share The Dream* won him a 'Best Camera' award at last year's NZ Television Awards) and Australian First A.D. **Chris Odgers** (*SeaChange*). "Having now seen what the 'First' does under those circumstances you kind of go 'Thank God we had someone of his experience.'" says Standring.

The Look

Standring's other collaborator was Designer **Clive Memmott** with whom he had worked many times before.

"We knew we were going to be shooting outside, in Wellington, in winter" explains Memmott, "so we decided that we should try to *embrace* the conditions, rather than fight them. "We 'wet down' wherever we could and utilised lots of gloss surfaces."

Whilst Memmott says much of the film's visual elements were dictated by Standring's script, his team decided to enhance the overall look by focusing on two specific elements:

"We went for glossy, deep, dark browns wherever possible", [in keeping with the cockroaches which appear throughout the film] "and we also tried to drop out all the reds ... We wanted to try and emphasise the blood in later scenes... so we tried to minimise red in our palette throughout the movie."

The Costumes

Another strong visual element in the film is the cutting edge costumes created by innovative New Zealand designers WORLD who have wowed both audiences and media at three London Fashion Weeks.

“In the past, WORLD fashion shows have always been very theatrical and art-based,” explains WORLD designer Francis Hooper. “So being able to create costumes without boundaries was a challenge that appealed to us”.

“It was a new experience” adds his partner Denise L'Estrange-Corbet. “But we’ve thoroughly enjoyed working with both the production team and the actors. We’re also very impressed that New Zealand film-makers are utilising New Zealand talent to create their images.”

Post Production

‘DEMONS’ post-production (at First Sun) has taken six months to enable all the required computer generated images (CGI’s) to be added by a specialist multi-media team headed by Nigel Streeter, who established and designed First Sun’s computer effects and animation suite three years ago, remaining at the helm ever since. His team created the computerised demons using 4 networked SGI computers along with 2 NT machines for rendering. The special FX were created in a mixture of 2D and 3D. 3D rather than prosthetics was used so the team had more post-production control, enabling the creatures to do things in the film that would have been impossible in real life. “Maya” software was primarily utilised for fine tuning the demons’ design – first for animating the their movements and then rendering the demons themselves.

The Soundtrack

Described simply as “stunning” by a delighted Glenn Standring, the movie’s soundtrack was created by Auckland-based orchestral composer Victoria Kelly (who has also scored *The Ugly*, *Heaven*, and *Magik and Rose*) and her collaborative partner, electronic specialist Joost Langeveld

The Backers

DEMONS is financed primarily by the **NZ Film Commission**, who are also handling international sales. “There’s a strong and proven international demand for horror films from New Zealand,” explains Marketing Director **Lindsay Shelton**, “yet the success of THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS has far exceeded our expectations.”

About the Cast

KARL URBAN *Dr Harry Ballard*

"I've never played a character before who's had the living shit kicked out of him, on such a frequent basis!" reveals **Karl Urban** about his character in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS.

Urban plays Dr Harry Ballard, an anthropologist whose life changes dramatically after a cult makes his life a living hell: "What starts off as something of a 'joke' manifests itself into a deadly serious game," explains Urban. "As the web of deceit closes around Harry, he finds himself not only fighting for the truth, but for his very soul..."

"Harry starts off in a place of utter security - he's an anthropologist at a University, he's got his girlfriend, and his cynical view of the world... and during the course of the film *every facet* of his life gets stripped away from him."

At 28, Karl Urban has already attracted a lot of attention. He was nominated for Best Supporting Actor in 1999 for his role in the New Zealand movie *Via Satellite* and is also the co-star of Harry Sinclair's second feature *The Price of Milk*.

Internationally Urban is probably most recognisable as *Caesar* in Pacific Renaissance's popular TV series: *Hercules* and *Xena: Warrior Princess*.

Urban says he was attracted to THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS because of the strength of **Glenn Standring's** script: "I was impressed with the strength of the structure and I wanted to explore what Glenn wanted to do with this genre by giving everything a little bit of a *twist*. I also liked his collaborative directing style."

Whilst THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS is Urban's first horror film, he found it was no different to making any other sort of film, except there was "a lot more blood and violence, and you're reacting to elements that aren't in front of you. Things that have to be computer generated later on like monsters and demons."

The biggest challenge however, were the rigours of six weeks of night shoots and the fact that his character appears in virtually every scene. "The great thing about shooting at night was that we were all thrown into 'the zone' which actually helped bind the cast and crew together," says Urban. "But it was hard on your energy ... Working 13 to 14 hour days, five days a week ... quite often around three in the morning I'd find my energy would wane a bit, so I had to be really vigilant because we'd still have another few hours to shoot."

“And, because I was in virtually every scene, I had to constantly monitor my energy. I had to gauge *exactly* where it was it was. I think I really learnt to pace myself.”

Through the course of the film Urban gets beaten up, drowned, drugged, put into bondage gear... “I was very, very, uneasy about being drowned,” he admits. “That’s a situation where you have to have complete trust and faith in the people you are working with - and know that you’re going to be pulled out if anything goes wrong...”

Having cockroaches crawling in his mouth in another crucial scene wasn’t exactly Urban’s idea of a good time either: ‘I was quite nervous about having insects in my mouth but I discovered that the fear of that and the reality of it are quite different ... the fear is worse!’

Throughout these ordeals was lead actress **Katie Wolfe** who stars as **Benny**, Harry Ballard’s guide in the dark and mysterious underworld: “Her character is so wild and vivacious; mad and manic,” explains Urban. “Harry is on the other polarity - so confused and out of his element. Having the two interact is a great way of breaking up the dark elements of the story.”

“And we had great chemistry. We had some potentially very difficult scenes to do together but Katie is so professional, so on the money.”

Now that filming is over, Urban is confident that **THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS** has much broader audience appeal than a straight ‘horror’ movie: “It’s got action, it’s got adventure ... it’s a love story... Ultimately it takes you on an enlightening journey. You follow Harry on a journey to discover his own power and self worth ...”

“Having said that, it should still be viewed as pure entertainment.”

* * *

KATIE WOLFE

Benny

“Benny was one of the most exciting characters I’ve read in a long time,” comments lead actress **Katie Wolfe** who plays the enigmatic **Benny** in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS.

“It was a huge acting challenge” she says, “having to play someone who on one level - the world of reason - is a schizophrenic, and in *another* world, is just the most fantastic, free, imaginative, weird, strange person.”

The multi-talented actress has starred in several award winning New Zealand television dramas including *Marlin Bay*, *CoverStory* (which won her a best actress award in 1997) as well as *The Last Tattoo* (a feature with Kerry Fox).

Benny is so far from most classic ‘female’ roles, but she saw this role as a special challenge as “Benny’s a little witch, really” says Wolfe, “She’s dangerous, and she lives outside all the norms of how women are perceived in society. She breaks the ‘rules’ all over the place ...so it was a role that doesn’t come along everyday”.

To immerse herself in the character Wolfe read the diary of a schizophrenic young woman given to her by writer/director **Glenn Standring**: “That was really important,” recalls Wolfe, “because that’s Benny’s ‘other layer’ She is a schizophrenic and that needs to be ‘placed’ in the film. She hears voices in her head and stuff like that.”

Wolfe also studied Pagan Witchcraft and Wicca. “I discovered that Wicca is more hippyish and environmental and ‘new age’ than Benny - she’s still back in the occult. Her squat is all about warding off demons - keeping them at bay because she is so plagued by them - so everything in there is about protection.... stopping the voices...”

Like her co-star **Karl Urban**, who stars as Dr Harry Ballard in the film, Wolfe struggled with the physical demands of shooting THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS through many long nights, particularly staying focussed in the early hours of the morning: “The real acting challenges were in getting up there – as high as you can – when it’s two o’clock in the morning...Benny’s ideas come from all directions, flicking in and out of her mind in a way that is not rational to you and me, or ‘of this world’. So I found that I had to be so *clear* in what I’m doing within myself, to portray that craziness.”

She also had to match her own performance against Karl’s: “Harry’s journey is from cynicism to enlightenment,” she explains, “but sometimes, in portraying Benny, I just have to do things that make him feel uncomfortable, to keep surprising him.”

It was at those times that she appreciated the rapport they built up both professionally and personally. “Karl’s so focussed and dedicated to his work you get drawn into his performance. He goes right into it and so you just have to go along with him, which is great.”

“But separate to that, he made me laugh a lot which is great because we were working under some pretty extreme conditions – the middle of the night and you’re cold, and surrounded by yucky barrels of offal... and he’s making you laugh!”

She also found working with writer/director **Glenn Standring** a real pleasure: “We’ve both got this weird sense of humour so it’s been a really easy relationship. Because with some people I might be raving on about something and they look at me and say ‘You’re Crazy!’ but with Glenn you don’t have to explain anything - he totally ‘gets’ weird shit!”

Having now completed the film Wolfe says it has strengthened her beliefs in the possibility that other forces are at work in our lives: “I’m *REALLY* superstitious,” she admits. “In all those kinds of ways like not ever walking under a ladder...and I’ve never, ever had my fortune told and I *never* will! I don’t know why. My mother is very superstitious...so maybe that’s it.”

“Some people go and get their tarot cards read, or visit a psychic or whatever but not me. There’s something about it that I just don’t want to go there.”

She also credits the film for raising her consciousness about Black Magic and giving her the chance to learn about its historical context. Something that she thinks will appeal to female viewers.

“It’s a chance to enter and discover the occult world. Trust me, it’s going to scare you, in a really different kind of way.”

* * *

JONATHON HENDRY

Le Valliant

“When you see Le Valliant he’s having a ball, and yet what he’s doing is *appalling!* He’s basically destroying a man’s life and he’s enjoying every second of it” grins **Jonathon Hendry** who stars as the evil **Le Valliant** in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS.

“Le Valliant has a huge grudge against the world,” explains Hendry. “But he’s also highly intelligent, with a large ego and I think that’s the key. It’s what makes him really fun to play - the fact that he has this really healthy regard for himself.”

In the 12 years since he graduated from the NZ Drama School, Jonathon Hendry has built up an impressive list of New Zealand theatre, film and television credits but THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS is his first leading film role.

Hendry was attracted to this complex role by the cleverness of **Glenn Standring’s** script: “Le Valliant is somehow ‘respectable’ because he’s part of privileged society. He’s got money, and money is power. Money is our new religion. So his battle with Harry [**Karl Urban**] isn’t personal, it’s survival of the fittest.”

The ‘cat and mouse’ power struggle between cult-leader Le Valliant and anthropologist Dr Harry Ballard is at the core of THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS and provides the film with many of its thriller twists: “Le Valliant targets Harry because he has to find someone who he believes is an equal,” explains Hendry. “Someone who has that ‘X’ factor...which Harry has with his energy, his physicality and his intellect ... He admires him even though he has to kill him...”

Le Valliant’s ‘evilness’ aside, Hendry believes his character still has huge audience appeal because he has no fear: “We tend to admire rebels, people that seem to be able to transgress social boundaries. So there’s that sense that you can laugh at him, or with him, depending on what you want to do. He doesn’t care what people think of him.

“He’s a natural leader, and people are drawn to him because of his charisma. “

* * *

SALLY STOCKWELL

Celia

“She’s sharp, she’s ambitious, and she’s manipulative,” says actress **Sally Stockwell** gleefully about her role as Celia, in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS.

Stockwell leapt at the chance to play Celia for several reasons: “First and foremost she’s a challenge, and I love challenges!” she says. “I love taking on something which I don’t quite understand and which requires a lot of work”.

Stockwell graduated from the NZ Drama School four years ago. Her character is an ambitious lawyer and the girlfriend of Harry Ballard (played by **Karl Urban**).

“Because she’s a lawyer, mental structure and analysis rule her world,” explains Stockwell. “And what’s happening with Harry is the perfect ballpark for her - manipulating him to gain more of what she wants.”

“Her relationship has deteriorated, and now she’s found something which fulfills her more, more than a personal relationship, more than love, ...she’s very ambitious and I think ambition overtook everything in regard to love. And she’s given impetus and inspiration by Le Valliant. She’s sacrificing herself to him in order to receive greater powers.”

Stockwell had never made a horror film before and has in fact tended to steer clear of even watching them. “My first horror film was, I suppose, *The Omen*, and I couldn’t get that out of my head! I was haunted by that as a youngster.”

To prepare for her role in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS, Stockwell did a lot of reading on religion and Satanism to see where her character was coming from. “Celia already had the darkness inside her,” she explains, “so I had to find something, a parallel that worked for me, which I did by just kind of sharpening my ‘want’.”

In terms of THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS impacting on her own personal beliefs, Sally admits the film has changed them somewhat: “They have changed a bit. I went from thinking it was a bit silly to focusing more on the dark side of life, although personally, I’m always careful not to get involved in that really.”

“Everyone has a spiritual being about them and I think if we invite something into our lives - I mean really, truly, *invite* it - then it will be there. I’m a bit superstitious in that way.”

* * *

TONY MacIVER

Johnny

“Johnny’s a student who works in Harry’s office,” explains actor **Tony MacIver**. “He’s a pot-smoking, wild, student guy, but he’s also learning a lot from Harry who’s kind of like his big brother”.

It’s a mentor/protégé relationship that newcomer Tony MacIver says also extends to his admiration of actor **Karl Urban**. “I was so happy when I heard that Karl was working on this movie” he recalls. “I saw him in *Via Satellite* and on *Xena* and *Hercules* and decided then that I wanted to work with him. He’s amazing, one of those rare talented guys that isn’t scared to ‘turn it on’”.

Whilst the self-taught young actor had worked in fast turnaround television before, *THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS* is his first feature. He clearly remembers his first reaction to reading Glenn Standing’s script: “It was just so good,” he says, “It was dark, and it was sort of real. But mostly it was just so damn good.”

“Working with Glenn has been a real education,” he says. “I really like hanging out and working with writer/directors because they’ve got their eye on the ball. Because it’s *their* ball, it’s *their* vision!”

“Glenn’s talent is only surpassed by his wicked sense of humour!” he laughs.

MacIver started his acting career doing comic roles and says he used some of this when it came to playing Johnny: “Harry’s having a bit of a traumatic time, what with the death of his brother and everything. So my character has a very light-hearted approach...but comedy’s definitely serious, you know.”

His hardest, most challenging, scene was the one in the ‘sleazy motel’ when Harry desperately needs Johnny to get him out of trouble. “That was a really ‘charged’ scene” he explains “because I’m always looking to Harry for information and knowledge and all that sort of thing, and then finally, there’s my mentor Harry asking *me* for help.”

Does he believe in evil? “Of course” he says, “After all, we’re only human. We may be ‘beings of light’ but you can’t have one without the other. I don’t think light would be able to exist without darkness. And I don’t think goodness would be able to survive without evil – they feed off each other.”

* * *

PETER DAUBE

Lawrence – Hood #1

“Lawrence really enjoys his trade!” laughs actor Peter Daube. “He’s down the track of being possessed straddles the line between life and death. He enjoys the dark side and loves to be bad so he has quite a lot of contempt for righteous do-gooders. He’s a very sexual animal, very kinky and ready for anyone or anything at any time.”

“Peter is fantastic because he took a character that on paper was intense and turned up the volume and made him super intense,” says director **Glenn Standring**. “In every scene he appears your eyes are drawn to him – his intensity and dangerous sexuality just oozes out of him.”

Although he was required to undergo about an hour in the make-up chair each day Daube actually enjoyed the experience. “The make-up chicks were really good and I enjoy putting on make-up. I also loved the tight gear although it looked like I’d had a big year! But I’m not necessarily trying to look flash all the time. Lawrence leans towards gluttony, so that fitted the character.”

“The night shoots were definitely quite strenuous, but I come on in the last week of shooting so I didn’t have it as bad as the crew did. They were looking quite crazed by that point,” he continues. “But Glenn was great. “He’s incredibly enthusiastic and that enthusiasm rubbed off on everyone. He really enjoys himself and never let the long hours and night shoots get to him.”

Daube did a fair bit of reading about the occult to research for his role, but found “there’s just as much reality in the darkness as there is the light. I think you can see just as much in the dark.”

He has recently appeared in a variety of very different roles in a number of film productions. He appeared in a cameo role as ‘the pink shirt guy’ in *Stickmen*; Hero Orc in Peter Jackson’s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy; Cook Guy in the short film *Tongan Ninja* and most recently a role in the Invanhoe television series “Dark Knight” and as real-life Human Rights Lawyer, Rodney Harrison in the Gibson Group telemovie “Clare”. Among his numerous theatrical credits are *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*; *The Sojourns of Boy*; *Cabaret*; *The Farm*; *Eulogy* (which he also co-wrote) and most recently *Vagabonds*.

“People seem to want to cast me in diverse roles,” he explains. “The majority of my work is on stage and that gives me the freedom to do what I want to do. You don’t censor yourself - you can play incredibly diverse roles - old and young, good and bad even male and female.”

GLENN STANDRING

Writer / Director

The fact that **Glenn Standring** holds a first class honours degree in Archaeology from the University of Otago has fueled his fascination with ancient cultures and magic.

He is also a voracious reader of everything from science fiction to Gabriel Garcia Marques to Steven King, HP Lovecraft and Edgar Allan Poe and has been into horror films since watching Hammer horrors as a child.

“There’s something imaginative and magical about that kind of cinema,” he says. “It’s like going into a dark room and seeing something mythic. You either find it scary, or it stimulates the imagination and creates possibilities...”

The script for THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS took Standring nearly two years to craft. Most of the original scenes were composed while walking the family dog in the bush next to his Wellington home.

One of the sources of inspiration for the story came from his own feelings and experiences after taking magic mushrooms at University in Dunedin:

“This friend and I made the mistake of taking too many, too many times, in the course of about a week” he recounts. “We literally kind of fried our brains for like, three months!”

Standring healed himself by going to work on an archaeological dig in Thailand but says the ‘experience’ left him with a new understanding that you can destroy yourself with drugs: “You could drive yourself crazy. It also gave me a real taste of what it must be like for a schizophrenic. To go crazy, with no control over the basic way in which you perceive the world”.

Keen to explore that concept more fully (vicariously this time!) Standring set about reading the diaries of schizophrenics to get more insight into their condition. “It must be terrifying because they’re totally isolated with a sense of powerlessness and they can’t pull it back, as much as they try”.

Another idea which infused THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS was a disturbing first-hand experience. He dreamt he’d just woken up from having a dream feeling he’d done something terrible, but not able to pinpoint it. “To cut a long story short, I discover I’ve cut off the head of someone close to me and put them in the cupboard. And the horrible feeling was that I’d dreamt I’d actually done it in my sleep.... So what happens if you *dreamt* that you killed someone, and then woke up and found you *had* killed them? What are the moral

implications? Are you guilty? That's the seed of part of the story of THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS".

The essence of the film, he says, is about how 'plastic' reality is. "We all wander around thinking that reality is what we see, that it's firm and solid, but in fact, what you *believe* about something alters the way you look at it."

"It's the story of a sceptic who doesn't believe in anything. He's become cynical, a kind of a classic 20th Century man. Then he gets attacked by this horrible cult, at which point he has to decide whether there's just a weird cult after him - who are brutalising him - or whether there are actual *demons* after him. He discovers there's a whole other way of looking at reality that he'd never considered before."

Standring says the demons in the film are a metaphor for our fears and guilt, but there are deeper philosophical issues as well.

After University, Standring went on to do a degree in Film at the Ilam School of Fine Arts (in Christchurch, New Zealand), graduating in 1994. He made several short films during this time including ***Lenny Minute One*** which won several prizes before being selected for the 1993 Short Film Competition at Cannes.

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS is his first feature.

Since completing the movie Standring has been developing his sci-fi/ future noir project ***This Virtual Life***.

THE FILM MAKERS:

FIRST SUN

Production Company

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS is the first feature film to be produced by **First Sun**, a New Zealand production company, associated with The Gibson Group - one of New Zealand's most successful television production houses based in Wellington.

Other upcoming **First Sun** film projects include *Mandarin Summer* (based on the novel by Fiona Kidman), *Castle of Lies* (based on Otago's infamous Larnach family) and *This Virtual Life* by Glenn Standring (the writer/director of THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS)

DAVE GIBSON

Producer

Gibson Group founder **Dave Gibson** is one of New Zealand's leading film and television producers with 25 years of experience.

He has served on the board of the New Zealand Drama School and was the inaugural chair of the NZ Independent Producers and Directors Guild. In 1992 he chaired the 1st New Zealand Film and Television Conference, and served as President of SPADA (the industry-wide organisation which represents over 160 New Zealand producers and directors) in 1997/98.

With this experience behind him, Dave has now created **First Sun** with the express intent of producing a range of feature films which he has been developing with directors Yvonne Mackay and Glenn Standring (writer/director of THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS).

Standring says being able to call on Gibson's wealth of experience when it came to writing and directing his first feature was invaluable: "We've got a great relationship and it's been built on the basis of him *not* going – 'I've got an idea. This is what you should write' ...instead he just asks me questions, like 'Why did this character do that? Which is great, because it makes you go away and think about things.

"So we've always had a good collaborative relationship where I'm pretty much creatively free. And one of the great things about Dave is that he just helped get the film together, but otherwise stepped back and let me run with it. With his experience he could have been on my shoulder in every scene, because he's seen it all. But he had the strength to step back and let me make the mistakes. He just supported me, gave me a little bit of feedback, but basically let me go for what I thought the story was."

CLIVE MEMMOTT
Production Designer

The two biggest challenges for Award winning Production Designer **Clive Memmott** and his crew were the fact that all but one scene in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS occurs at night, and 60% of those were exteriors!

“We knew we were going to be shooting outside, in Wellington, in late winter, so we should *embrace* the conditions, rather than try to fight them” he explains.

Working very closely with Director **Glenn Standring**, and Director of Photography **Simon Baumfield**, they decided to utilise lots of gloss surfaces and go for a ‘wet look’ wherever possible. “That’s usually the opposite of what you do cinematically,” explains Memmott, “since gloss surfaces are very difficult to work with because of all the reflections.”

The storyline’s horror elements also needed to be visual highlights. “We talked originally about having lots and lots of insects,” he recalls, “but realised that it would be better to focus in on just one type of insect so we went with the cockroach which we believe to be an embodiment of everything that is nasty. The cockroach’s colours are these glossy, deep dark browns so we stuck to that colour palette. We also tried to drop out all the reds ... to emphasise the blood...”

Since THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS has a very urban feel specific inner city locations were chosen by Memmott and Location Manager **Grant Fahey**, for their enclosed, claustrophobic feel: “There are a number of scenes where Harry is feeling that way” explains Memmott. “It was almost like he was constantly trying to escape from something and we wanted to show that throughout the movie.”

Memmott collaborated with Glenn Standring on all the design aspects of the movie which were often location dependent. The script had to be tweaked to accommodate physical changes like a 2nd floor apartment instead of a house. That meant there was less flexibility however, in constructing the interior sets. “We couldn’t actually start designing the interior sets until we decided on specific locations” explains Memmott. “We had to build four substantial studio sets and all of them were contingent on existing architecture styles.”

He is particularly proud of the squat in which Benny [played by **Katie Wolfe**] lives. “Glenn’s script was fantastic. He had a very clear idea of exactly the images he wanted to see, then by asking questions like where she gets her money from, we were able to define her very, very well. There’s a visible Oriental influence so we sourced some of the props from Japan.”

Prior to filming, Memmott's team researched numerous occult books and websites - "ones with URL's like 'Voodoo.com' and 'Badshit.com' he jokes. They all helped in producing detailed props like the infamous 'Black Bible'. We manufactured that from scratch, commissioning illustrations based on 17th century lithographs from existing black magic books."

With a background in pyrotechnics, puppetry and prosthetics, Memmott has worked on numerous New Zealand television series and feature films.

Given his extensive experience (his film credits include *Broken English*, *Via Satellite* and *Mission Impossible 2*), manufacturing the necessarily quantities of blood for THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS was all in a day's work:

"There are numerous formulas for different types of stage blood" he reveals. "And you can buy commercially prepared ones, but they were too expensive for the quantities we needed. So we designed our own, formulated mostly out of glycerine. Because it was water-based we were able to dilute it with water, put emulsifiers in it to thicken it back up again, and then colour it with red food dye. It gave us exactly the right red we needed for the film stock we were using."

One of the challenges of any art department is creating realistic prosthetics and blending these with computer generated images (CGI's): "Because the demons are combined model prosthetic and computer generated images, each shot had to be carefully storyboarded," he says.

The prosthetic shots included creating numerous human organs out of foam.

A crucial scene in THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS takes place in a bathtub, presenting special challenges: "Bathrooms are notoriously difficult to both design and shoot in," says Memmott, "To look real they need to be quite small. If they're much bigger they tend to look surreal and unbelievable. So there's a very fine line between getting it right, and giving the crew enough room to work in.

"We also had to build a cut-away section of the bath for a drowning sequence so we can film underwater... and of course the more blood you get in there, the dirtier it all gets. We needed to make that rig very small so we could very quickly pump the water out and refill it for the next take. Otherwise we'd have been there all day waiting for the bath to empty and fill up again!"

* * *

WORLD *Fashion Designers*

When **Denise L'Estrange-Corbet** and **Francis Hooper** (the design team behind the ground-breaking New Zealand fashion label WORLD) were approached by producer **Dave Gibson** about the possibility of designing the costumes for THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS they leapt at the chance.

"We've been designing for eleven years, and are considered quite avant garde and theatrical. So we found it a great challenge to do this movie - where costumes are larger than life - because we could be as experimental as we wanted to be" says L'Estrange-Corbet.

Her partner Francis Hooper, says what clinched the deal for him was that "We found the flamboyant character of WORLD mixed very easily with First Sun. "We bounced ideas off each other and were on the right track from day one - so the process was a very easy and enjoyable one".

"It's also great to be involved in a totally New Zealand collaboration" says L'Estrange-Corbet enthusiastically. "Working on a movie, here in our own country, and showcasing it to the rest of the world!"

The pair had never designed movie costumes before, but their vast show experience (including presenting new collections at London Fashion Week) stood them in good stead. "We're used to performing in front of the public on catwalks around the world" explains L'Estrange Corbet, "so for us to have to show a collection to an audience isn't a difficulty. But not having worked in films before, we came down [to Wellington from their base in Auckland] and met with all the actors, and saw the makeup and worked very closely with everyone to get it just right."

"We spent a whole weekend ensconced in a warehouse with the lead actors which was the first time we physically matched the garments with the characters," recalls Hooper. "We had a great time - especially with Benny [**Katie Wolfe**], squeezing the poor darling into these outrageous costumes and then covering her up with a big coat with the fabric sometimes not meeting in the middle!"

Not surprisingly, that's when the obvious physical differences between models and actors became glaringly apparent: "The real challenge for us was working with actors, not models," says Hooper. "And those actors had to be very physical in some scenes and also very emotional ...some of them get killed...so we had to spend a lot of time thinking about people 'living' in clothes and living in them in very exceptional circumstances! So choosing the right fabrics was vital!"

They also concentrated on the right textures: "Most of the action happens at night" says L'Estrange Corbet. "Its a very dark movie, so we had to design around not having the actor blend into the background - they had to still stand out even though they were night shots."

Hooper agrees: "Rather than 'larger than life' costumes, what we actually needed to come up were in fact, 'darker than life' outfits. We found that really exciting because for us as designers, it was about texture and the way the clothes looked on the characters."

The actual mechanical differences - in making a movie rather than putting on a fashion show – turned out to be a huge unanticipated advantage for WORLD. "That was really a benefit for us," explains Hooper, "because in movies you can shoot it again and again, whereas in our normal work when we present something it's 'live'. So in fact, we had a lot of leeway to rework sketches and also with the fabrications - maybe the first texture we tried wasn't 100 percent so we had the time to go back and find fabrics that worked better on screen."

In May 2000 WORLD showed their Summer 2000 collection at Australian Fashion Week in Sydney. They then presented another summer collection at London Fashion week (for the 4th time) in September, and also visited clients in Italy and France.

* * *

VICTORIA KELLY & JOOST LANGEVELD

Composers

“Death and Bass!” That’s what composer **Joost Langeveld** claims was what writer/director, **Glenn Standring** wanted to underscore his first feature THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS.

Standring however, maintains he was a little more forthcoming: “Sure, I wanted that kind of Techno-funk sound with lots of heavy drum and bass,” he explains, “But I also wanted something that had a real ‘millennial edge’ to it but, at the same time, contained ancient roots.”

His response to the finished soundtrack can be summed up in just one word though: “Stunning!”

When Glenn Standring first contacted Auckland-based composer/singer **Victoria Kelly** (whose previous film work include three features: *Heaven*, *The Ugly*, and *Magik & Rose*) it soon became clear the score would require “a heavy electronic component”. So she in turn, talked to her old friend and collaborator **Joost Langeveld**.

“We both have areas of specialty” explains Langeveld. “Victoria’s orchestral and I’m electronic, but we inspire each other, indulge our ideas and then censure them to provide an objectivity that has developed out of working so well together in recent years.”

The biggest challenge he says, was in coming to terms with such a full-on horror story: “I’m convinced the ‘Demons’ invaded our computer equipment. It took several nightmares and revolutionary dreams to figure out we had the power to expel them and get on with composing the score” he laughs.

Langeveld, who personally describes the resultant soundtrack as “Death and Bass, with a touch of Pathos,” and says it was fantastic working with Standring and being able to “articulate” what he wanted, as well as writing music that indulged his own tastes and sensibilities. “As Glenn says, the music in the end, still has to be subtle and appropriate - there to *support* the story, not replace or *overwhelm* it.”

The pair used a variety of instruments and equipment to create the unique soundtrack. Aficionados will notice a string ensemble; (bass, cello, viola, violin) and live drums along with computer generated sound using Digidesign and Emagic software; 2 EMU samplers and a variety of analogue synthesizers.

* * *

THE IRREFUTABLE TRUTH ABOUT DEMONS

Background information about Demons and related subjects

The Historical Context of Demons

- Ancient Babylonia and Assyrian religious beliefs included numerous demons and priests who performed incantations to protect people from evil spirits.
- Zoroastrians in Persia believed in a constant warfare between good and evil spirits.
- Chinese folk religion included a large number of devils to be placated or avoided.
- Many demons in folklore are connected with dangerous or unfavourable aspects of nature and are regarded by anthropologists to be related to animistic belief
- The Old Testament mentions demons comparatively briefly and rarely. Later Judaism included accounts of a great number of demons, including the fallen deities of other peoples, fallen angels and the spirits of the wicked dead. These invisible spirits, whose leader was Satan, are everywhere and responsible for human ills.
- In the New Testament, demons are presented as personal spirits that beset men and even possess them.
- According to the Scripture, (Revelations 12:9) demons are the angels that fell from heaven with Satan when he chose to rebel against God

Other views:

Justin Martyr, a Christian who lived about 150AD, believed, (based on Gen 6:2-4) that demons were the offspring of angels and men. Whilst the Greeks viewed demons as the spirits of wicked dead men (Heb 9:27)

Orders of Demons

Demonic Lore is the area of magic that allows demons to be raised and controlled. It also allows the control of lesser orders of demonic beings and of hellfire, a common substance on the demonic planes but an incredibly destructive force on the material plane. One of the major sources of power for a Demon Lord is the power of the demons he raises.

As monsters, demons are highly resistant to magic often having magic absorption and always having high magic slaves. Almost all demons are fire resistant and able to teleport. Many are resistant to poison and hellfire.

Demons come in four general types:

The weakest are small creatures whose major use is as spies or troublemakers. These creatures are usually called imps. They tend to be size -2 to 3, not too bright, and are often capable of flying or phasing. They are cowards and flee combat at the least excuse. The majority of demons are cannon fodder. These fabled "legions of hell" are made of large (size 0-6) creatures without much brains but with heavy armour, large damage potential, possibly fire auras, and very high to hit numbers. These sort of demons tend to be overconfident and have a love of fighting.

The last two classes of demons are more rare: mage and spirit demons. They tend to have shape-shifting ability, or lack bodies, and have spiritual or magical powers ranging from the annoying to the devastating. When they take on material bodies they often look like members of whatever race their summoner belongs to.

Demon Lords come from the warrior, mage, and spirit demon categories often combining the abilities of the various types. The Prince of Demons is reputed to have all the spiritual skills as well as knowing Fire, Air, Ether, Demon Lore, and Necromancy. There are orders of demons created from each of the six orders of elementals.

The Demonic Hierarchies

[according to Francis Barrett's 'The Magus' (1801)]

Mammon - Prince of Temptors
Asmodeus - Prince of Venegance
Satan - Prince of Deluders
Belzebuth - Chief of False God
Pytho - Prince of the Spirits of Deceit
Beliel - Prince of Iniquity
Merihim - Prince of the Spirits of Pestilence
Abbadon – Prince of War
Astaroth - Prince of Accusers and Inquisitors

Black Lodge

Modern term for a black magic coven - a society where black arts are performed. Usually under the leadership of a priest, or priestess.

Sigils

A sigil is a type of signature or symbol of intent. Sigils incorporated with other influences can add great direction and focus to spellwork. Sigils can be traced in air, carved on candles, drawn on paper and burned etc. Specific sigils are related to specific demons and their conjuring.

Belial or Beliar, (Hebrew).

The Earth elemental. Thought to have come from the Hebrew phrase beli ya 'al - meaning "without worth". Prince of Trickery. One of the 72 Princes of Solomon.

Asmodeus, Asmoday (Hebrew)

The God of Lust. A demon most commonly involved in possession cases, particularly noted in the possession of the Louviers nuns.

Kabbalah

The word "Kabbalah" (including alternative spellings such as Kabbalah and Qabalah), means "tradition". The core of this "tradition" was the attempt to penetrate the inner meaning of the Bible, which was taken to be the literal (but heavily veiled) word of God.

Because the Word was veiled, special techniques were developed to elucidate the true meaning. Kabbalistic theosophy has been deeply influenced by these attempts to find a deep meaning in the Bible.

It is not clear how Kabbalah was involved in the propagation of ritual magical techniques, or whether the ritual techniques were preserved in parallel within Judaism, but it is an undeniable fact that the most influential documents appear to have a Jewish origin. The most important medieval magical text is the "Key of Solomon" which contains the elements of classic ritual magic.

The combination of non-Jewish Kabbalah and ritual magic has been kept alive outside Judaism until the present day, although it has been heavily adulterated at times by hermeticism, gnosticism, neo-platonism, pythagoreanism, christianity, tantra and so on. The most important "modern" influences are the French magician Eliphas Levi, and the English "Order of the Golden Dawn". At least two members of the Golden Dawn. (S.L. Mathers and A.E. Waite) were knowledgeable Kabbalists, and three Golden Dawn members have popularised Kabbalah - **Aleister Crowley**, Israel Regardie, and Dion Fortune.

Aleister Crowley (and The Golden Dawn)

Edward Alexander (Aleister) Crowley [rhymes with "holy"] was born October 12, 1875 in Leamington Spa, England. He was the son of fundamentalist Christian Plymouth Brethren missionaries who tormented him with severe beatings, sadistic disciplines, and constant abuse.

He attended Trinity College at Cambridge University, but left before completing his degree. Shortly thereafter he was introduced to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The Golden Dawn was an occult society which taught magick, alchemy, tarot, astrology. Notable members included A. E. Waite, Dion Fortune, and W. B. Yeats.

Crowley was initiated into the Golden Dawn in 1898 but the order was shattered by schism two years later and Crowley left England to travel throughout the East.

In 1903, Crowley went to Egypt on his honeymoon. The following year he wrote three chapters of verse known as Liber AL vel Legis, or The Book of the Law. This book heralded the dawning of the new aeon of Horus, governed by the *Law of Thelema* (from the Greek word meaning "will")

In 1906 Crowley rejoined George Cecil Jones in England, and created a new magical order called the A.'. A.'. (Astrum Argentium, or Silver Star). In 1910 Crowley was contacted by a German organisation called the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.) a group of high-ranking Freemasons claiming to have discovered the supreme secret of practical magick. Crowley became a member and eventually took over as head of the O.T.O which became independent of Freemasonry (although still based on the same patterns).

Crowley died in Hastings, England on December 1, 1947. His legacy lives on in the *Law of Thelema* along with dozens of books and writings on magick, and other mystical subjects.

The Wiccan Religion

The word "Witchcraft" dates back many hundreds of years and means literally "The craft of the wise". This is because the Witches of old were the wise ones of their village, knowledgeable in the art of healing, legal matters, and spiritual fulfilment. A Witch had to not only be a religious leader, but also the doctor, lawyer and psychologist of the village.

Today, people have reclaimed this word in their pursuit of Wiccan religion. A Witch is an initiate of Wicca, one who has earned the right to call themselves Priest, or Priestess, through study, self-evaluation, and spiritual living. Wicca, itself, is an attempt to re-create European (mostly) Shamanistic Nature Religion, adapting it to fit our modern lives.

Witches are worshippers of the Earth and its many cycles. They believe that deity is found not only outside our realm or plane of existence, but that it is found within every living thing and all that supports it (which is why Wiccans tend to involve themselves with ecological pursuits). Wicca teaches self discipline, personal responsibility, kinship with our planet and its creatures, open-mindedness and the virtues of diversity.

Wiccans observe the holidays of Pagan Europe: Eight festivals spaced evenly about the wheel of the year, at the quarters (equinox and solstice) and the cross-quarters (midpoints between the equinox and solstice). Many Wiccans also celebrate the Full Moon, of which there are 13 a year.

Crew List

KEY CREW

Writer/Director
Producer
Line Producer
Director of Photography
Editor
Production Designer
Sound Recordist
Visual Effects Design
Costume Design

Glenn Standing
Dave Gibson
Chris Tyson
Simon Baumfield
Paul Sutorius
Clive Memmott
Ray Beentjes
Nigel Streeter

WORLD

Frances Hooper
And
Denise L'Estrange-Corbet
Victoria Kelly
Joost Langveld

Composers

TECHNICAL CREW

1st Assistant Director
Production Manager
Production Assistant
Production Runner
Production Trainee
Production Accountant
Asst. Production Accountant
2nd Assistant Director
3rd Assistant Director
Continuity
Location Manager
Location Assistant
Location Scouts

Unit Manager
Unit Assistant
Focus Puller
Clapper/Loaders

Video Split Operator
Steadicam Operator
Gaffer

Chris Odgers
Tina McLaren
Rachael Cooper
Karl Zohrab
Ben Milsom
Jeannie Buxton
Kathy Regnault
John Magee
Skot Thomas
Clare Cunningham
Grant Fahey
Sophie McColl
Max Kelly
Matt Kaveney
Mark Ashworth
Dean Bushby
Mike Knudsen
Sandy-Lee Bell
Charles Edwards
Kylie J. Plunkett
Neil Cervin
Michael Wood

Best Boy	Johnny Earthmover
Gennie Operator	Dave Anderson
Lighting Assistant	Jamie Nevill
Key Grip	Alex Collins
Grip Assistant	Simon Giles
Sound Recordist	Ray Beentjes
Boom Operator	Craig O'Reilly
Art Dept Manager/ Graphics	Campbell Read
Props Buyer/Set Dresser	Tim Robinson
Standby Props	Daniel Scotford
Props Assistant	Melissa Fanning
Weta Wrangler	Ron Goudswaard
Art Dept Runner	Sanjay Patel
Construction Crew	Russell Stoupe
	Vince Austin
	Josh O'Neill
Set Finisher	Troy Stephens
Wardrobe Co-ordinator	Nic Smillie
Standby Costume	Edmond Shea
Make-up Supervisor	Kareen Donaldson
Make-up Assistant	Geraldine Jacobsen
Prosthetics	Alex Kennedy
Model Making	Judy Alexander
	Nick Nugent
	Andrew Mausen
Safety Officer	Acting Safe Ltd.
Stunt Co-ordinator	N.Z. Stunts
Celia Double	Andrea Hickman
Harry Double	Abseil Access Ltd.
	Martin Wilson
Catering	Rebecca McLeod
Publicist	Beverly Martens
	Communication Central
EPK	Zealot Productions Pty Ltd
Assistant Editor	Johanna Sanders
Neg Cutting	Upper Deck Film Services
Demon Design	Troy Stephens with Alex Kennedy and Judy Alexander
	Euan Frizzell
Demon Animation Director	David Crossan
Visual Effects	Jeff Adie
	Robert Stevens
	Adam Sondej
Demon Modeller	James Bell

“FastSCAN” 3D Laser
Scanner
The Film Unit Ltd.

The Film Unit Lab Liaison
The Film Unit
Post Production Liaison
The Film Unit
Computer Effects Liaison
Colour Grading
Supervising Sound Editor
Re-Recording Mixer

Effects Editor
Foley/Atmos Editor
Foley Artist
Sound Assistant
Dolby Sound Consultant
Orchestrations
Music Programming
Drums Performed by
Strings recorded by
Music Pre-mix by
Studio

Thanks to

For FIRST SUN LTD.

General Manager
Development Executive
Facilities Manager
Producers Assistant

Polhemus Corporation,
USA
Sue Thompson
General Manager
Grant Campbell
Lara Esam

Colin Tyler

Lynne Seaman
Mike Jones
Michael Hedges
John Boswell
Peter Mills
Melanie Graham
Carolyn Lamborn
Glen Bullen
Steve Murphy
Victoria Kelly
Joost Langeveld
Nick Gaffarey
Stewart Newman
Andre Upston
the Helen Young Studio

Chris Van der Geer
Tim Groenendaal
The Feelers

Stephanie Hopkins
Alan Brash
Rex Potier
Jasmin McSweeney