

A sanctuary for the mind

Tears burst forth when Olivia Robinson heard she had a part in *Nga Tangata Toa* (The Warrior People).

THE Maori actress was about to go on stage for *Maui – One Man Against the Gods* when she received the call

"I was playing the goddess of death and the first thing I had to do was this huge karanga. I was overwhelmed with joy – and I was able to use that on stage," Robinson says.

Of Ngati Hine and Ngati Kahungunu descent, Robinson loves to perform in Maori plays. One of the highlights of this year was her solo performance in *Nga Pou Wahine* by Briar Grace-Smith.

"I am so excited. I think *Nga Tanagata Toa* is going to encourage a resurgence of Maori works, which is what we need."

Robinson plays Te Wai, the daughter of Paikea – the rangatira. At 16 Te Wai takes the role of mother in the

family when her mother dies.

"She wants to keep everybody happy and at peace," Robinson says.

Which is difficult considering the story is laced with conflict and revenge.

"People have underlying secrets and have held things inside so long. We all come together after not seeing each other for five years and all these things come to the surface."

The play is predominantly in English, with "bits of Maori here and there in the karanaga and waiata".

Crafted by Hone Kouka in 1994, the play means a lot to Robinson.

"The words take me to another place. It is like a sanctuary in my mind where I can go and sit comfortably."

Nga Tangata Toa, Downstage, October 18–November 4.



Olivia Robinson in *Nga Tanaga Toa*.



Michelle Hughes, Stray Cinema project coordinator.

Anyone can make a film

DO you want to become the next David Lynch or Steven Spielberg?

All you need is time and an internet connection.

Michelle Hughes, a 24-year-old Wellingtonian with a background in performing arts and no formal film training, launched an ambitious open source film project last week called Stray Cinema.

Open Source allows anyone to copy the source code of software and modify it freely. In other words raw footage from a film shot in London has been made available for the public to download from the Stray Cinema website (www.straycinema.com) with which people can create their own version.

"Traditionally films are created by a tight network working to-

wards a singular vision, and the footage is only released when its owners can control how it is interpreted," Hughes says. "We want to give everyone the opportunity to have a say over what story is told with this footage. We accept that other people may make a better cut of the film than us."

"So how do I enter?" you ask.

First, download the 1.5 hours of footage, 130 megabytes from the website. Then edit a one to two minute version of the film, using 80% of the supplied footage. There's no sound or dialogue, so you choose the soundtrack, and have the option of adding 20% of your own shots. Editing tips are available on the site.

One entry has already been submitted from Australia, and entries will close four months after 30 film edits have been supplied.

The top five films will be screened alongside the original film at the official Stray Cinema screening in London – voted for by Stray Cinema's online community (which you become part of once you login).

Stray Cinema will be an ongoing event. Each year the screening will be in the country the footage originates from. China is the next country on the cards.

"Hopefully we will get better and better filmmakers shooting footage for Stray Cinema until eventually David Lynch shoots our footage," Hughes laughs.