

THE CALL

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Director Debut Of 'Her Majesty' Gets Gordon An 'A'

By Tracy Allen

Kansas City CALL

Vicky Haughton (Hira Mata) and Sally Andrews (Elizabeth Wakefield) star in the independent film, "Her Majesty", which is in select U.S. theaters.

The fascination of New Zealand, not to mention, the nostalgic visit of Queen Elizabeth to a small village town in New Zealand in 1953 was enough to get Mark Gordon thinking about writing a film. A film that centered on the English Queen, a young girl who desired to see her, and an old lady who fought to defend her home against those who often criticized her and her people's lifestyle.

In the inspiring independent film, "Her Majesty", director Mark Gordon provides several messages for his audience. One, never give up on your dreams as was evident in a young girl (Elizabeth Wakefield). Two, learn to accept other people's differences, even if you don't want to. And finally, be willing to stand up for what you believe.

Gordon was right on target with all three ideas. Not bad, for a guy who made his directing debut with the screenplay, "Her Majesty", which made its U.S. theatrical debut April 30 in Kansas City. Prior to that, the film had been played at various movie festivals around the world. Eventually, it should go international.

"We think it will play well internationally since it has a lot of universal themes, even though it's filmed in New Zealand," Gordon said.

"I really loved some of the elements with this story," Gordon said. "Little girl, queen, ah, that was the spine of the story. I thought the story was

the catalyst for this young girl to go on a journey. To learn about her self, her identity. To have to deal with some conflict, some choices. It just seemed natural to integrate some of the things I was learning about Maori history and culture, even though it was entirely a fictional story, although the true part is that the Queen did come to New Zealand during her coronation."

The Los Angeles-based writer, who began his career as a student at UCLA, is proud of his directorial debut but admits, he has struggled to get his work noticed. Money is hard to come by. Getting people interested in your work is a whole problem in itself. It took Gordon 16 years before someone finally looked at his script and thought there was something good.

But script writing isn't new for Gordon. His film and TV assignments have included work for the Walt Disney Company, 20th Century Fox, ABC and NBC studios, and he has served as an executive story editor and staff writer for various television shows, including "Malibu CA" and the sitcom "Teen Angel".

"It definitely takes a thick skin," said Gordon. "You have to have the three Ps -- patience, passion and persistence. You got to be in it for the long haul."

As for his production of "Her Majesty", Gordon credits having "the right people around me. While it hasn't been overnight, I felt the only way this was going to get made was if I did it myself."

Fortunately, "Her Majesty" has garnered enough royal remarks from those who've seen it thus far, that it shouldn't be long before someone recognizes Gordon's work and gives him that chance he's always been looking for.

"If we had the budget of the "Lord of the Rings" movies, we could have easily made 50 "Her Majesty" movies," said Gordon.