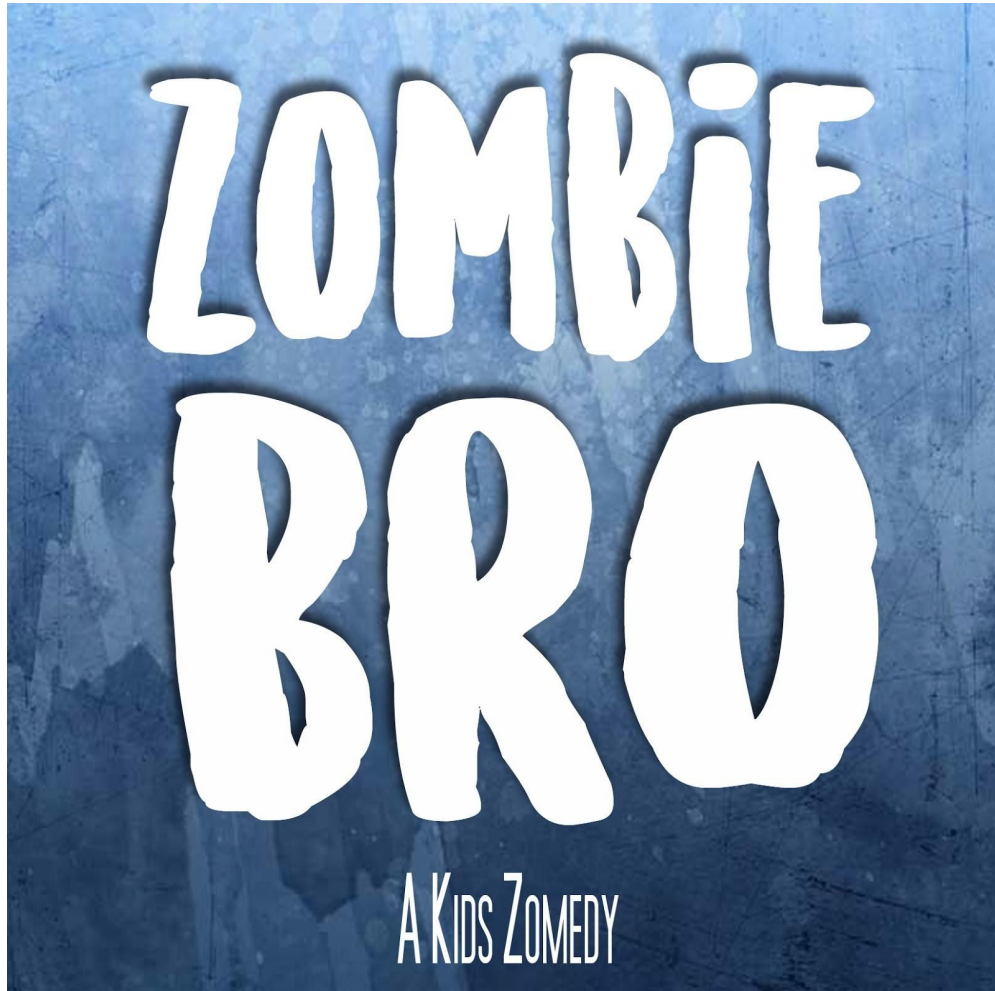


## **2018 PRESS KIT**



**Directed by May Grehan and Co-Produced by Claudia Pickering**

**Starring: Anthony Taufu, Claudia Pickering, Lauren Grego, Cooper Flynn, Karina Bracken, Natassija-Belle James, Ned Morgan and Keoni Davis.**

**For behind the scenes images and trailer, please visit:**

**[www.zombiebromovie.com](http://www.zombiebromovie.com)**

**For any enquiries: [zombiebromovie@gmail.com](mailto:zombiebromovie@gmail.com)**

## **LOGLINE**

A young girl must enlist her juvenile father to help save the town from her biting brother.

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

They say blood is thicker than water, but does zombie blood count? When Francine catches her brother, Teddie, in the act of attack, she must convince Ma & Pa they're in danger and, worst of all, find a way to stop her beloved but biting brother. Along the way, Francine learns to defend herself, makes a best friend for life, and becomes closer to her idol, her father.

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

Francine is a very normal ten-year-old girl living with a not-so-normal family. She lives a pretty simple life; she goes to school, she comes home, she goes to dances occasionally. But there is something very strange going on in the Luca household. Teddie, her older brother, is a zombie.

Francine and her brother have a great relationship but things start to get a little sour when she catches him trying to bite Ma. And when she brings Teddie along to the school dance, he has an abundance of people to chew on - including Francine's new best friend, Calissa. Only then does Francine begin to realize that maybe keeping Teddie around isn't as safe as she first thought.

When people all around Francine start turning into zombies, it is up to her to enlist the help of her charming but childish father. They've never gotten along, but desperate times call for desperate measures. With the help of his impressive blowgun collection and not-so-impressive policeman's expertise, they must find to work together to save the town.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*Zombie Bro* is a family film with a big dose of comedy thrown in, along with a pin-drop of gore. Think Taika Waititi's *Boy* meets Chris O'Dowd's *Moone Boy*, infected by *Shaun of the Dead*. It's a quirky story about a normal kid with a not-so-normal family.

I grew up watching *The Sandlot Kids*, *The Little Rascals* and *Matilda* on repeat. I sometimes wonder, whatever happened to the live action family film? Is it really that hard to work with children and animals? I don't think so. Maybe you just need the right director.

*Paper Planes*, *Oddball* and *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* are great examples of more recent live-action family films that have found box office success and won audiences' hearts. *Zombie Bro* hopes to follow in their footsteps, as well as serve as a stepping stone for the next live-action children's film in the Liah Liah vault.

## ABOUT THE CAST



**Lauren Grego (Francine)** is a young actress from Sydney, Australia. This is her first leading role in a feature film and she has enjoyed the experience. As well as acting, she spends her free time doing gymnastics and dancing with Brent Street. She is represented by Jenni Anderson at Brent Street Agency.



**Anthony Taufa (Pa)** graduated from NIDA in 2009. His most recent stage productions are QTC's *The Octoroon*, and STC's *Black is the New White*, *The Golden Age*; *Love and Information* and *Orlando*. He has appeared in many stage productions in Melbourne and Sydney, including *The Brother's Size* for Griffin Independent and *10,000 Beers* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company. In 2012, Anthony was a member of the Bell Shakespeare Learning Ensemble. He also plays the role of Taufa in the feature film *Downunder* and can be seen in the television series, *Top of the Lake – China Girl*.



**Claudia Pickering (Ms Green)** is a Sydney-born filmmaker whose feature film projects have achieved widespread festival acclaim, including her directorial debut *Frisky*, which has gone on to be optioned as a television series. Pickering regularly creates sketches with her comedy trio *Frothpocalypse*, having studied comedy improvisation at the Upright Citizen's Brigade in Los Angeles. She is one of the founders of Freshflix Film Festival.



**Cooper Flynn (Teddie)** is a young actor from Sydney, Australia. This is his first role in a feature film. He has been in numerous commercials (Uncle Tobys, Disney) and looks forward to working on more projects like *Zombie Bro* in the future. He loves anything Star Wars and old school rock'n'roll. He is represented by Sonya Marturano at Random Management.



**Karina Bracken (Ma)** is an actress and writer based in Sydney, Australia. She has played roles in multiple theatre shows and film works. Most notably, she worked on award-winning *Superman Returns* in 2006 and has been on Channel Seven's, *Home & Away*. She is currently writing and shooting a sketch comedy show available across Facebook and Youtube titled *VODville* with Madeleine Butler.



**Natassija-Belle James (Calissa)** is an actress based in Sydney, Australia. This is the first feature film Natassija has worked on. Although she usually gets confused for being older, she liked playing a role younger than her age. She looks forward to working on more film sets and continuing with her dancing. She is represented by Sonya Marturano at Random Management.



**Ned Morgan (Butch)** is an actor based in New South Wales, Australia. He most recently played the role of Pheonix in the award winning short film, *Sleepwalking*, in which he shaves his head on camera. He comes from a family of actors, his younger sister Martha can be seen in the popular Australian Domestic Violence ads and has worked on shows at STC. He is represented by Vicki Jackson at Matrics Management.



**Keoni Davis (Brooklyn)** is a talented young actor who enjoys being on screen. Already, he has worked on numerous films including *Embedded* (2016), *Random and Wacky* (2017) and now, *Zombie Bro*. His modelling and acting has taken him to Los Angeles where he has won many awards. Keoni enjoys being on screen and is proving to be a real natural. He is represented by Vicki Jackson at Matrics Management.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS



### Writer

### Director

### Producer

[www.maygrehan.com](http://www.maygrehan.com)

**May Grehan** is an Aussie-bred, Singapore-raised, Toronto-living actor, comedian and children's entertainer. She made her professional stage debut playing Martha in *Spring Awakening* at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in 2011. Since then she has toured theatre shows around Australia and made appearances in TV shows *Deadly Women* (Discovery Channel) and *Old School* (Matchbox Pictures).

As a writer, May has written sketches, short films, and feature length scripts. She received highly commendable reviews from numerous screenwriting competitions (Stranger With My Face Festival). She is mentored by comedy writer/director Claudia Pickering (*Winning Formula*, *Frisky*) and Awgie award-winning writer/director Timothy Wilde (*Primeval Evolved*, *#30*). *Zombie Bro* is her first screenplay and she is very excited to see where it will take her.



### Producer

[www.pickclaud.com](http://www.pickclaud.com)  
[www.freshflixfest.com](http://www.freshflixfest.com)

**Claudia Pickering** is a Sydney-born director, screenwriter, producer, and actor whose feature film projects have achieved widespread festival acclaim, including her \$5000 directorial debut *Frisky* which, after a successful release in US and Canada, has gone on to be optioned as a television series by Jungle (No Activity). Her earlier screenwriting and producing debut *Winning Formula* will be released in 2018 through Indican Pictures (Lionsgate).

Pickering thrives in the comedy genre, her passion for finding honest, human moments between people being her calling card. She regularly creates sketches with her comedy trio *Frothpocalypse* after studying comedy

improvisation at the Upright Citizen's Brigade in Los Angeles and becoming a selected director for Screen Australia's Talent LA program in 2017.

She has a masters degree in Architecture and is one of the founding partners of Freshflix film festival and emerging filmmakers' conference, which brings indie film, art and music together in Sydney (partnering with Vivid Ideas) and Los Angeles (partnering with Australians In Film). Pickering has recently directed Resting Pitch Face starring Nakkiah Lui, Bridie Connell and Emily Havea, and is currently developing several projects under her company, Cliff House Productions.

## FULL CREW

<b>Director</b>	<b>May Grehan</b>
<b>Writer</b>	<b>May Grehan</b>
<b>Producers</b>	<b>May Grehan</b>
	<b>Claudia Pickering</b>
<b>Casting</b>	<b>May Grehan</b>
	<b>Claudia Pickering</b>
<b>Cinematographer</b>	<b>Drew Bontoft</b>
<b>Camera Assistant</b>	<b>Carl De Masi</b>
<b>2nd Unit Camera Assistant</b>	<b>Alexander Mitchell</b>
<b>Lighting Assistant</b>	<b>Tobias Ridewood</b>
<b>2nd Unit Lighting Assistant</b>	<b>Sky Dominic</b>
<b>Sound Recordist</b>	<b>Charles Swales</b>
<b>First Assistant Director</b>	<b>Mahveen Shahraki. M</b>
<b>Second Assistant Director</b>	<b>David Kelly</b>
<b>Production Designer</b>	<b>Ashlie Fisher</b>
<b>Costume Designer</b>	<b>Daphne Grehan</b>
<b>Catering</b>	<b>Daphne Grehan</b>
<b>Makeup Artist</b>	<b>Kristina Moschella</b>
<b>BTS/Photographer</b>	<b>Mansoor Noor</b>
<b>Production Assistant</b>	<b>Dario Nadile</b>
<b>Editor</b>	<b>David Kelly</b>
<b>Music Composer</b>	<b>Coleman Grehan</b>
<b>Sound Editor</b>	<b>Oscar Jemmott</b>
<b>Colour Gradist</b>	<b>Rio Zoulas</b>
<b>VFX Editing</b>	<b>Andy Sutton</b>

# Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR

**Tell us a little of your story May, how did you get into making films, and in particular this one?**

I started off in film as an actor and when I wasn't landing roles left, right and centre I had to think seriously about what I wanted to channel my time and efforts into. I'd written *Zombie Bro* while I was living in Sydney for a year and so I set myself the goal of shooting the film and finishing it before I left for Canada. It was one of those "don't wait for the calvary" kind of moments.

**Where did you get the idea for *Zombie Bro* from?**

I'm actually pretty lucky. This might sound funny but I actually have pretty vivid dreams and a lot of my creative ideas come from those. I also work with a lot of children when I'm not filmmaking, who are a constant inspiration - it's them who told me Zombies are all the rage.

**This film is hilarious - who would you say had the biggest influence on the style of humour?**

I love Taika Waititi. And I actually hadn't come across his work until someone read my script and said it was a lot like his style in *Boy*. I did a little research and it turns out that yes, he is in fact the funniest person in the world. I also grew up watching a lot of *Southpark*, which is a big influence. My comedy is very playful, but can sometimes get a little dark.

**You managed to raise \$20,000 yourself to make this - how did you go about filming on such a low budget?**

Low budgets suck, but it does mean the work has to be great. I was able to snag a great DOP had Claudia Pickering mentoring me - and then to top it off I found an amazing AD.

After that, it was just a matter of finding people that loved the project enough to do it for little to no pay. We shot it all in 12 days and only 4 locations, which helped too.

### **What was it like working with child actors?**

It's the easiest thing in the world. I love it. I work in childcare back home, and used to run my own children's party business. So working with kids is always high on my to-do list. Added to that, my actors were so switched on it was almost like working with adults.

### **What was it like working with Anthony Taufa?**

Anthony Taufa is such an amazing actor. I only found out after we shot the film that he studied at NIDA. He is humble, hard working and so, so funny. A few of the lines that made it into the film were improvised by him too.

### **What was the worst thing that happened during filming?**

The house we were shooting in was an AirBnb rental, which we had rented for two weeks. A week out from shooting, there was an issue and the family who rented it could only let us have it for one week.

On hearing this, my fantastic AD leapt into action and whipped everything together so that all the house shoot days were up first and that there was no wasting time on set. We also ended up adding a fourth location later on because we didn't have enough time to put the 'chamber' in the original house.

I think if you pick the right team, the worst thing becomes just 'a thing' that needs to be fixed - you find a way to make it work together.

### **Discuss the casting process a little...**

Originally, the family was meant to be Maori, who I find have a very positive and naturally quirky sense of humour. When I couldn't find exactly what I was looking for, I just wanted to stay as true to the original idea as possible.

Funnily enough the lead, 'Francine', was originally a 'Frank'. We auditioned several boys but by the end of it, I still wasn't convinced, so we opened up to girls and Lauren Grego was found - and I couldn't be happier. I was particularly pleased to get Anthony Taufa on board too.

Then it was just a matter of putting together a believable family. Zombie Bro isn't intended to comment on diversity, if anything, I just wanted to show a typical Australian family experiencing life with a Zombie child.

**What is it like being a female director - did you experience many hurdles while making this film?**

In the pre-production stages when I would tell people I was making a feature film I definitely got a lot of people saying it wasn't possible, and I do think being a young female may have added to that. Luckily, I had some pretty strong females by my side to back me up and support me to throughout the project.

**Why is Zombie Bro important - why does this story need to be told now?**

I think there are not enough live-action kids films being made - ones with messages like standing up for yourself. I find that there is a big gap from the really 'kiddie' films to suddenly really grown up ideas of love and crushes; a gap for the children aged 8-13, who are still young and playful but learning to be independent. There is also a lovely father-daughter story in the film, which I hope shows the audience that love is given and received in different ways.

**Do you have any original music in your film?**

Yes. I'm lucky enough to have a brother, Coleman, that writes music. He wrote all the pieces, and you can even hear him having a sing during the school dance sequence of the film.

**What are you most excited for audiences to see your film? What do you think will resonate with them the most?**

I think Francine is pretty kick-ass. Audiences will be able to resonate with her right from the start and go on this journey with her. At the end of the film the audience can make their own mind up about what they would do if they were in her situation. Every other character in the film also have their own quirky storylines that I think the audience will enjoy too. Especially Pa, he is very very funny.

**What are your hopes for Zombie Bro?**

I made Zombie Bro as a stepping stone into my next feature film. It was small enough to do on a tight budget and it showcases my type of writing and humour. We are hoping it will win some acclaim at festivals, before going through sales/distribution and releasing it to the world.

### **What did you personally learn while making this film?**

I learnt that things are going to cost more than you think. I learnt that great pre-production is key to a great production. I learnt that post-production never ends. And I also learnt that you are never too young to start something, that no amount of time or waiting prepares you. You will never be ready, you just have to do it.

### **What's next for May Grehan?**

I've written a kids sketch show that I'll be shooting and putting up on Youtube later in the year. I also have a completed script for my next feature film, *Game On*, which I'll be pitching every chance I get (the budget is far higher than *Zombie Bro's*). There are also a couple more screenplays in the pipeline, so - hopefully a lot more!