

SAM PEACOCKE - Filmmaker

Acclaimed director Sam Peacocke came very close to being an industrial designer. Having been accepted into an industrial design course, he was all set to move to Wellington when he was offered a job in Sydney as an assistant director. After a year in Australia, Peacocke came back to New Zealand, where he crystallized his vision of the future. "I'd always really loved music videos. I used to tape them back in the VHS days, and I thought, 'If I do this, I can make music videos'." He started cold-calling and submitting treatments to musicians who piqued his interest. In King Kapisi, Peacocke experienced a meeting of minds. "He should be a director, or a writer," he insists. "His whole family's amazing." In late 2005, he made *Raise Up* for the Polynesian hip-hop artist, followed by *Lollipop* shortly after.

Sam eschews formulaic performer-based videos for more narrative journeys based on the artist's inspiration rather than literal interpretations of lyrics. His clip for the Checks song *Tired From Sleeping* was informed by his own experience racing go-karts in rallies. Featuring a Japanese race car driver, his lover and a tender paean to separation, the clip transcends a promotional device with its ambition and artful execution, and was picked up by Bug in the UK, a curated exposition of the world's most exceptional music videos. Next came a successful collaboration with the Mint Chicks for the tracks *Crazy? Yes! Dumb? No!* and *Walking Off a Cliff Again*, the latter taking the Best Music Video award at the New Zealand Music awards in 2007. These garnered the band significant international attention, while solidifying their success at home.

If it sounds as though Peacocke has fallen feet first into a profession after being extended a providential opportunity, think again. "I wrote this whole manifesto of what was going to happen and it's pretty much happened that way – only three months later than I had planned." Having recently completed a new video for *Shihad*, he is also in great demand for commercial work and is, always, formulating new plans for the future that include an inevitable foray into film. Time to re-write the manifesto? As a friend recently put, so eloquently, the future needs sunglasses.

Interview Rebekah Davies