

SYDNEY  
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## RAIN OF THE CHILDREN

Hailed as “deeply personal and incredibly moving” with “magnificently recreated historical sequences featuring Rena Owen among a superb cast of Maori actors”

Vincent Ward's (*River Queen*, *Map of the Human Heart*) deeply personal and incredibly moving film unravels and re-imagines the story of Puhi, the Tuhoe woman he documented in 1978 for his early film *In Spring One Plants Alone*.

Then she was 80 and caring for her schizophrenic adult son, and Ward was 21, a young art student capturing her traditional way of life. While not the subject of his earlier film, Puhi believed herself to be cursed, and this unknowable curse is what preoccupies Ward now. Puhi, he discovers, was an extraordinary woman. Chosen by Tuhoe prophet Rua Kenana to marry his son, she survived the 1916 police raid on Rua's Maungapohatu community and went on to have 14 children.

Cutting between early footage, his own to-camera narration, contemporary interviews with Tuhoe descendents, and magnificently recreated historical sequences (featuring Rena Owen as the older Puhi among a superb cast of Maori actors); Ward reveals both the heartrending background of Puhi's belief in the curse, and her lasting power over him.

– Clare Stewart director, Sydney Film Festival 2008