

The epic story of the battle that changed nations forever  
told from all sides of the conflict

THE FRONT LINE EXPERIENCE

# GALLIPOLI

Narrated by JEREMY IRONS and SAM NEILL

A film by TOLGA ÖRNEK

Distribution enquiries:  
RONIN FILMS  
PO Box 1005, Civic Square ACT 2608  
Phone: 02-6248 0851 Fax: 02-6249 1640  
Email: [andrew.pike@roninfilms.com.au](mailto:andrew.pike@roninfilms.com.au)

Publicity enquiries:  
TRACEY MAIR  
50 Bay Vista Lane, Ewingsdale NSW 2481  
Phone: 02-6684 7128  
Email: [traceym@tmpublicity.com](mailto:traceym@tmpublicity.com)



# GALLIPOLI

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## CREDITS

Written, Produced & Directed by **Tolga Örnek**

Produced by **Hamdi Döker** and **Burak Örnek**

Narrated by **Jeremy Irons** and **Sam Neill**

Turkish Narration by **Zafer Ergin**

Director of Photography **Volker Tittel bvk**

Production Designer **Oliver Munck**

Original Music Composed and Orchestrated by **Demir Demirkan**

Edited by **Maria Zimmerman**

Post Production Supervisor **Martin Kreitl**

Location Sound **Ismail Karadas**

Sound Designer **Monica Tutak**

Special Effects **Karl Heinz Bochning**

Production Supervisor and Main Researcher **Feza Toker**

Turkish Voice-over Director **Sungun Babacan**

Distributed in Austalia and New Zealand by **Ronin Films**

120 minutes Rated PG

[www.canakkale-film.com](http://www.canakkale-film.com)

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## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It was in 1997 when I was producing my first feature-length documentary on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the first President of Turkey, that I first travelled to Gallipoli. I was there to research Atatürk's involvement in the campaign and photograph the sites where he commanded his troops and fought against the Anzacs. I was immediately struck by the magnificent landscape and the unique topography rising from the beaches. How could such a bloody battle take place on such a breathtakingly beautiful place? As I researched the subject more and tried to discern Atatürk's role more clearly, I came across many personal accounts of ordinary soldiers from both sides: Turkish, Australian, New Zealander, British or French. I slowly began to notice that although fighting on opposite sides, the Turks and the allies shared a common horrific experience on Gallipoli. For both sides it was their first encounter with industrial warfare and it was the end of the romance of war. The conditions and the battles that the ordinary soldiers on both sides had to endure created in me sympathy for all of them. After a while, national boundaries began to disappear and I started seeing all of them as just people. They were ordinary men who were asked to make the most extraordinary sacrifice for their countries. Gallipoli had been examined by many filmmakers before and many aspects of the campaign such as the strategies and the blunders had been portrayed very skillfully. But I wasn't interested in strategies, tactics, politicians or generals. What intrigued me was the experience of the common soldiers on both sides. I wanted to tell the general story of the campaign in a balanced way from both perspectives by portraying the similarities and differences between the sides. I wanted to examine Gallipoli to understand armed conflict and make a more general statement on what war entails. I didn't know what this statement would be at the beginning, or where our research and production would lead us. I just wanted to follow individual characters throughout the campaign and tell the story of Gallipoli through their own words. But I was absolutely sure that I wanted the story to be even, balanced, and most of all humane. I wanted the film to appeal to everyone from all the sides of the conflict and not just a single country. I also wanted it to be accessible so that it would be able to reach an audience who had never heard of Gallipoli. In this sense the film had to be specific to this campaign while being universal and timeless.

We immediately knew that the real life characters (their diaries, letters, photographs, and memoirs) would be the stars of the film. As filmmakers we would just open the way for these soldiers' own words. They would tell their own experience with their own words. Our responsibility was to recreate the setting and mood of their time. What was it like to be in a deep narrow trench for days with the constant threat of shell fire? What was it like to eat your food with millions of flies swarming your fork? What was it like to crawl to the latrines with crippling dysentery? What was it like to experience one of the hottest summers in years followed by the coldest winter in decades? To portray these and to really pull the audience in to the story, we decided to shoot reenactments and visually support the soldiers' own texts. This immediately set the style of the film; it would be a docu-drama on Gallipoli intercutting photographs, archival films and interviews with dramatic recreations. To make the film as even as possible and to find the most suitable ten characters out of hundreds, we began our extensive research in seven countries and more than seventy archives guided by our sixteen historical consultants and fifteen researchers. We wanted to gather as much information on the campaign and concentrate on personal accounts. This lasted for almost six years. During the last two years, all teams worked around the clock. Finally, we picked 3 Australian, 2 British, 3 New Zealander and 2 Turkish soldiers as our main characters with many other peripheral characters' diaries and letters complementing them.

Reading the diaries and letters of these soldiers was a life changing experience for all of us. Since I had to double up also as the screenwriter of the film, I read hundreds of letters and diaries every day during the process. The suffering and self-sacrifice of these soldiers who had no idea of what they had embarked upon moved me deeply. History, especially Gallipoli, stopped being about numbers and dates and began to be about people. I began to notice how terrible war was; how it destroyed lives, families, and countries' futures. And it did this with indifference to race, religion, nationality and the motivation for being there. But, its most profound effect was the loss of innocence. No one who had experienced war, especially something like Gallipoli, would ever be the same. Slowly these sentiments began to transform the film. What started out as a war documentary based on personal accounts became a strong anti-war project warning us on the perils of war. But, what struck me about Gallipoli was that men from both sides clung on to their humanity and their hope. War usually brings out the worst in people, but I saw that Gallipoli, despite its terrible conditions, brought out the best in these men and was a triumph of the human spirit. The film became a tribute to them and to their courage and self-sacrifice. We were very careful not to offend their memories in any way and tried to be respectful to their stories. I hope we've succeeded, but that's for the audience to decide.

*Tolga Örnek - August 2005*

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# GALLIPOLI

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## SYNOPSIS

*1915, the First World War has a new front.....*

It all started as a simple demonstration in January, 1915. The British War Council wanted to help the Russians who were fighting against the Turkish Army in the Caucasus. They decided to use allied ships to attack the Ottoman Empire and relieve the pressure on the Russians. The plan grew rapidly. The British-French fleet's final objective was to attack the Dardanelles, sail through to the Ottoman Capital, Istanbul, and knock the Ottoman Empire, their enemy and Germany's ally, out of the war. When the naval attack failed, the British Government decided to land troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula to capture the shore defenses and enable the navy's passage. This decision led to one of the largest landing operations in history and one of the bloodiest and most controversial battles of World War I. It changed nations forever.

*Mistake, blunder, disease and death in the trenches; the end of the "romance" of war.*

On April 25th, an allied army made up of soldiers from Britain, Australia, New Zealand, India and France landed to capture Gallipoli. Turkish soldiers aided by their German allies dug in to defend their homeland. For 9 months, opposing armies attacked and counter-attacked each other in a fierce struggle that challenged not only the soldiers' endurance but also their humanity. They battled with each other; with disease; with the harsh climate and terrain; and with the horrors of modern warfare. Despite their hardships, the soldiers hung on with unprecedented dignity, courage, and tenacity. In the end more than 120,000 soldiers lost their lives. Many captured their experience in thousands of diaries, letters, and photographs.

The campaign affected Turkey, Australia and New Zealand profoundly. A new national consciousness began to rise on the shores of Gallipoli. For Australia and New Zealand it became their first major trial, "a baptism of fire". For the Turks, it announced the emergence of Mustafa Kemal and the path to a new country and national identity.

## GALLIPOLI - THE FILM

Due to its historical importance The Gallipoli Campaign has been the focus of many successful documentary films from many different countries in the past. Most of these films have focused on a particular side of the campaign and told the story through the perspective of one or two countries. But, in order to truly capture the spirit of the campaign and the experience of the soldiers, the filmmakers behind **GALLIPOLI** decided to tell the story simultaneously from the perspective of all sides and tried to capture the human dimension within the general structure of the campaign.

The war itself is the only enemy in this film. The Gallipoli Campaign is told through the diaries and letters of 2 British, 3 New Zealand, 3 Australian and 2 Turkish soldiers. The documentary aims to portray the historical importance of Gallipoli based on facts and from the perspectives of these soldiers who are representative of the thousands of soldiers from both sides. It is their common experience and it is their story.

Written and directed by Tolga Örnek, the film is produced by an experienced international team. The producer is Hamdi Döker who has previously made several successful international films in Europe and around the world; research coordinator is Dr. Feza Toker; director of photography is Volker Tittel; production designer is Oliver Munck. The film's voice-over talent includes international stars such as Jeremy Irons and Sam Neill, as well as many talented American, Australian, and British actors. Turkish narration was provided by the prominent Turkish stage and film actor Zafer Ergin. Special Effects have been designed by Karl-Heinz Boching, and the film's original music has been composed by Demir Demirkan. The consultants for the film include top experts in their field such as: Les Carlyon, Kenan Çelik, Ashley Ekins, Peter Stanley, Peter Hart, Norman Itzkowitz, Robin Prior, Christopher Pugsley, and Nigel Steel. Australian military historian Brad Manera, an expert on costumes and weapons, travelled to Turkey during the main shoot to check the historical accuracy of every item and scene that was being filmed as part of the production.

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# GALLIPOLI

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## CONSULTANTS

[In alphabetical order]

### LES CARLYON

Les Carlyon has been editor of *The Age*, Melbourne, and editor-in-chief of the Herald and Weekly Times group. He received both the Walkley Award (1971) and the Graham Perkin Journalist of the Year Award (1993). He has three times won the Carlton and United Best Australian Sports Writing Award. He has also written the best-selling book "Gallipoli" (2001).

### KENAN ÇELİK

Kenan Çelik recently retired from 18 March University in Turkey as the head of the English Language and Literature Department. He has great interest in Military History and studied the Gallipoli Wars for many years. Kenan was given the "Order of Australia" in 2000 and was invited to Australia and worked in the Australian War Memorial for some time.

### ASHLEY EKINS

Ashley Ekins is a Senior Historian with the Military History Section of the Australian War Memorial where he has worked since 1989.

He is currently completing the final two volumes of Australia's official history of the Vietnam War, dealing with the role of the Australian Army in Vietnam. In addition to researching and writing on the Vietnam War, Ashley specialises in the military history of the First World War and he has published a number of articles on the role of Australians in the First World War.

### PETER HART

Peter Hart went to Liverpool University before joining the Sound Archive at the Imperial War Museum in January 1981. As the museum's Oral Historian his work primarily involves interviewing and cataloguing the taped memories of First and Second World War veterans. He is the author of several books on regimental history. He wrote three books with Nigel Steel: "Defeat at Gallipoli" (1999), "Tumult in The Clouds" (1997) and "Passchendaele" (2000).

### BRAD MANERA

Brad Manera is a historian in the Military History Section at the Australian War Memorial. Originally from Western Australia, he worked at the Western Australian Museum and later at the National Museum of Australia as a curator before joining the Memorial. He is currently curating an exhibition for the Australian War Memorial on Australians in the Korean War 1950-53 and completing a book on the campaign on Crete in May 1941.

### CHRISTOPHER PUGSLEY

Christopher Pugsley is a freelance historian and lives in Wellington, New Zealand. He served as a professional soldier in the New Zealand Army, retiring as a Lieutenant-Colonel in 1988 to pursue a career as an historian. His books include: "Gallipoli: The New Zealand Story" (1990).

### PETER STANLEY

Dr Peter Stanley is the Australian War Memorial's Principal Historian. He has worked at the Memorial since 1980 and has been involved in the development of many of its permanent and temporary exhibitions, including Gallipoli, Soldiers of the Queen, Australia and the South African War and the Second World War galleries. His current projects are 'A Hundred ANZAC Heroes', (on the Australians awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal on Gallipoli in 1915), and a projected book on the AIF on the western front.

### NIGEL STEEL

In January 1988 Nigel Steel joined the Imperial War Museum, London, as an archivist in the Department of Documentary, responsible for collecting and cataloguing First World War manuscripts. In June 1999 he was appointed head of the Museum's Research and Information Department. He wrote three books with Peter Hart: "Defeat at Gallipoli" (1999), "Tumult in The Clouds" (1997), "Passchendaele" (2000).

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# GALLIPOLI

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## PREMIERES AND SPECIAL SHOWS

**GALLIPOLI** premiered in Istanbul, Turkey, on March 15th, 2005 and in Gallipoli on March 18th. It was theatrically released in Turkey on March 18th for the 90th anniversary of the Campaign. **GALLIPOLI** was the number one film in Turkey for five weeks and became the highest grossing documentary in Turkish film history. The Turkish release was followed by several special screenings around the world: on April 13th at the Imperial War Museum in London; on April 18th at Te Papa-The National Museum of New Zealand, in Wellington; on April 21st, 22nd and 24th at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra; and on June 6th in Washington, DC.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### *International Production*

The documentary is the outcome of a 6-year effort. Research has been conducted in more than 70 archives in the UK, Germany, France, Russia, Australia, Austria, New Zealand and Turkey, and more than 16 international historians have been consulted to make the film as historically rich and accurate as possible. The film which has also been produced in association with the Australian War Memorial, Imperial War Museum, New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, and the Çanakkale Naval Museum, is a true international collaboration. Experts have advised the script in various stages of the project and Australian military historian Brad Manera has travelled on location to Turkey to supervise all the dramatic reenactments.

Principal photography began in April 2004 with three teams shooting simultaneously in New Zealand, Australia and Gallipoli. In July, a crew of six travelled to Australia and New Zealand to shoot interviews and the collections in the Australian War Memorial and other institutions. The main shoot began in September in Turkey, which consisted of reenactments, interviews, landscape shots and aerial and underwater photography. The filmmakers tried to accurately recreate the trenches based on maps and layouts from the campaign. More than 90 extras took part in the dramatic reenactments. The special effects team rigged the set for many scenes involving explosions and machine gun fire, and they recreated the harsh four seasons of the peninsula. Finally in early October, the Gallipoli landscape was filmed from the air with a special WESCAM system.

Post-Production involved the coordination and collaboration of many firms from Turkey such as Sinefekt, ABT Production, Sinemaj, Dizi Film Production and from Germany such as MK Media Production, TaurusMedia Teknik and Das Werk.

The original music was composed by Demir Demirkan who infused western and ethnic Turkish instruments to portray the different sides of the campaign and sometimes the shared experience of the soldiers. The film music was recorded in Prague and performed by the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra.

The film is also a first in Turkey with its financing. Many well respected Turkish firms have agreed to become part of a collective group to finance the film and enable the project's completion. The film is mainly sponsored by Doğu Group with also generous contributions from Akçansa, Banvit, Çalık Holding A.Ş., Deva Holding, Garanti, Doğan Yayın Holding, Feyziye Mektepleri Vakfı Işık Okulları, IBM Turk Ltd. Şti. İstikbal, Kent Gıda, Koç Allianz, ODIN Gemışletmeleri and Tirsan Trey.

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# GALLIPOLI

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## EKIP FILM

Ekip Film is Turkey's premiere production company specialising in feature-length documentaries and docu-dramas for the international market.

The company's productions include:

- **ATATÜRK** (1998) English-language, 81-minute feature-length documentary. Finalist in the San Diego International Film and Video Festival; and third place at the Chicago International Film and Video Festival. The film has been broadcast in the following networks: Australia SBS, SCN Canada, AB Sat Europe, UAE Middle East, HISTORIA CA, Planeta-BECA Spain, TRT and Kanal D in Turkey.
- **FENERBAHÇE** (1999) a documentary on the history of the most celebrated Turkish Soccer team, Fenerbahçe. The project was completely sponsored and financed by the club itself. The resulting 60-minute film, composed of interviews, archival footage, and reenactments, is a testament to the evolution of the soccer club and sports in Turkey. It has been broadcast by Show TV in Turkey and is available for home video distribution in Turkey.
- **MOUNT NEMRUD: THE THRONE OF THE GODS** (2000) English-language, 52-minute documentary about the history of Mount Nemrud and the Kingdom of Kommagene. The film has won the first place in the history/biography category of the US International Film and Video Festival (2001); RAI Television Award in the Terronto Film Festival (2002). The film has been sold to History Channel in Portugal and Spain, Italian RAI and German ZDF. It is also available on DVD, both in Turkish and English.
- **HEART OF STEEL: EREĞLI** (2001) 45-minute documentary film on the historical and cultural treasures of Karadeniz Ereğli, a coastal town in Northern Turkey.
- **THE HITTITES** (2003) chronicles the incredibly advanced culture that once decimated the armies of Egypt's King Ramses II. The film features 23,000 historically accurate handmade props and sets, including a miniature scale model of the ancient Hittite city; full-scale working battle chariots; and replicas of period statuary, pottery, armour, costumes and weaponry. More than 140 days of principal photography took place in 31 locations in Asia, Europe and Africa including Syria, Turkey and Egypt. The Hittites is the first Turkish documentary film to be released theatrically in Turkey and has been seen by more than 80,000 people. Special screenings have been organised in Los Angeles, the Smithsonian Institute, the British Museum, Canberra and Brisbane, Tokyo, and Cairo. It's aired or been sold to Channel 5 UK, Discovery Europe, ABC 2-Australia, History Channel-FOXTEL, and to RAI 2 in Italy.
- **GALLIPOLI** (2005)

[www.ekipfilm.com](http://www.ekipfilm.com)  
[www.ekipfilm.net](http://www.ekipfilm.net)

Address:  
Sakir Kesebir Caddesi  
Gazi Umur Pasa Sokak  
Bimar Plaza 38 / 1 Balmumcu  
Besiktas- ISTANBUL TURKEY

Tel: +90 212 288 97 07  
Fax: +90 212 272 10 65  
e-mail: [ekip@ekipfilm.com](mailto:ekip@ekipfilm.com)

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