

Elliot Blakely was born in August 1991 in Gisborne as the eldest child of three. His father was a guitar teacher, and his mother was a midwife. He discovered his passion for the performing arts in high school, following successes in the Sheilah Winn Shakespeare in Schools competition, and the National Shakespeare Schools Production. Since then, he has also performed in local stage productions, including *Blackadder II*, *Pirates of Penzance* and *Death of a Salesman*, as well as improvised dinner theatre. Before going to study screen acting, Elliot first spent some time studying 3-D animation. As Elliot likes to put it: “Opportunities can come from anywhere. I just wanted to broaden my perspective, and keep an open mind to what's possible”.

In order to create a role, Elliot favours an approach that balances total immersion with personal observations, to create a performance which expresses self, but remains open for audience interpretation. “One of the things I've really enjoyed about acting, is what it can teach you about people. For me, creating a character has very much been like getting to know someone. The better you know them, the more convincing you can be on screen.”