

Marcus Lush

Marcus Lush made his first forays into television in the 1990s, but it was a 2003 episode of travel show *Intrepid Journeys* that set him on a new broadcasting path. The longtime talk radio host went on to win acclaim and awards for *Off the Rails*, which chronicled his journey along New Zealand's railway lines, and travelled in varying directions for shows *ICE*, *North*, and *South*.

Marcus was raised largely in Auckland, the fourth son of a printer and a speech therapist. He began his long career in talk back by presenting a show on student station Radio BFM (now 95bFM), where he worked alongside *Eating Media Lunch* co-creator Paul Casserly. At the age of 24, he went on to take over the graveyard talk back shift on 1ZB.

In the mid-90s, Marcus was seen on television, on late night TV2 news show *Newsnight*. He spent time as host of the show's less serious half, presenting stories on guinea-pig shows and lawnmower collectors.

It was travel that signalled a new path for Marcus' television career. It showcased his informal, musing, ad-hoc style to best advantage. In the first series of *Intrepid Journeys* in 2003, he spent time amongst the pyramids and camels of Egypt. The show was directed and co-produced by Melanie Rakena, from Auckland production company Jam TV. After working on it, Marcus refused to make television with anyone else.

Melanie and Marcus went on to make *Off the Rails*, which was a big ratings success. The programme followed the trainspotting Lush as he ventured from his transplanted home town of Bluff to Opua in the North, utilizing a range of railways - including coal, freight and steam. Lush argued that the show was about more than trains: "That's why we subtitled it 'A Love Story.' It was really a love story about New Zealand."

Marcus and the Jam TV crew followed *Off the Rails* with *Ice*,



outspoken

a five-part series about the history, environment and wildlife of Antarctica.

In December 2008 he began work on a new television series: South, in which he explored Southland and Otago. South began airing the following August, winning him a second Qantas award for best Presenter, and a best director gong for Melanie Rakena.

February 2011 saw the debut of a follow-up show from the same team: North. This time Marcus headed north from Auckland, visiting a number of nearby islands along the way.

These days Marcus lives in his beloved Bluff, with sons Tracker and Denver, and partner Vanessa, from where he hosts the night-time talkback show, Marcus Lush Nights, on NewstalkZB.

TESTIMONIALS

Marcus is an open and honest speaker, both thought-provoking and entertaining. He was a big draw card for our event and guests left thrilled to have seen a face, to the voice they know so well.
Janelle Willy, Arena Living