

CAUSEWAY FILMS



TALK TO ME

Directed by DANNY PHILIPPOU & MICHAEL PHILIPPOU

Written by DANNY PHILIPPOU & BILL HINZMAN

Based on a Concept by DALEY PEARSON

Produced by SAMANTHA JENNINGS & KRISTINA CEYTON



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Country of Production: Australia
Language: English
Runtime: 95 minutes
Format: DCP 24fps
Sound: 5.1 surround

SHORT SYNOPSIS

When a group of friends discover how to conjure spirits using an embalmed hand, they become hooked on the new thrill, until one of them goes too far and opens the door to the spirit world, forcing them to choose who to trust: the dead or the living.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Mia (17) sits alone at her mother's Remembrance Day. Sick of her dad moping around in undisguised grief, she escapes to her best friend Jade's house. She wishes she could live with Jade's family, her supportive mum Sue and funny little brother Riley.

When a Snapchat video of a spiritual possession goes viral at school, Mia sees a chance to reclaim Jade's attention. Jade only has eyes for Daniel these days, who was Mia's first boyfriend when they were kids. She convinces a sceptical Jade and Daniel to join her at the next spiritual conjuring. But when their friends produce a ceramic embalmed hand apparently made from the severed arm of a psychic, and use it to become temporarily possessed, they discover their new favourite high. The one condition is that you have to exorcise the spirit within 90 seconds or it will try to stay. Mia has a turn, using the catch phrase "talk to me", and is instantly seized by a foul-mouthed entity that takes control of her body. Mia is utterly thrilled - she hasn't felt so alive in a long time. She is instantly hooked.

Riley (13) tags along with Jade and Mia to the next possession party and, after a spat with Jade, convinces Mia to let him have a turn. He is inhabited by a spirit claiming to be Mia's mother and Mia, desperate to connect with her, lets it go beyond 90 seconds. The evil soul viscerously attacks Riley from within, inflicting terrible injuries and landing him in a coma.

Riley is rushed to hospital, the shell-shocked teenagers insisting they didn't give him drugs. Mia is blamed and rejected by Jade's family, while Riley lies catatonic in a hospital bed unable to speak. Mia, who also went over 90 seconds, is increasingly visited by supernatural spirits with an uncanny ability to imitate humans, including her mother. They have stayed. And they want Riley.

The teenagers track down the guy who gave them the hand, only to discover that he killed himself a few months ago. His brother believes that the spirits forced him to die so they could have him forever. Terrified they will kill Riley, Mia and Jade decide to sneak into the hospital and exorcise the boy. But the exorcism fails and as Riley remains in a coma, Mia glimpses his tormented agony inside the spirit world.

Mia struggles to maintain her sanity, increasingly plagued by disturbing visions and evil paranormal figures, but she cannot stop the using the hand. The spirit imitating her dead mother pleads with Mia to release Riley from his anguish. Another spirit appearing as her father attacks her and, as she defends herself, she tragically mistakes her real father for the spirit and plunges a knife into his neck.

Determined to put Riley out of his misery, Mia lures Jade away from the hospital with the promise of a new plan. But instead, Mia abducts the paralysed Riley, forcing him into a wheelchair and out of the hospital to the highway. Just as Mia is about to throw him into oncoming traffic, Jade appears and Mia is hit by a speeding car.

Mia finds herself back in the hospital, where Riley has made a miraculous recovery, supported by Sue and Jade. But no one can hear or see Mia. She is pulled towards a strange light, and hears voices beckoning her to "talk to me". As she clasps an outstretched hand, she realises the tables have turned. She has entered the spirit realm.

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

We are always interested in the age where you go from being a kid to being an adult, where you're still taking risks but now the consequences are more brutal. Where you're trying to just have fun, but now hidden emotions convince you of negativity that isn't real. You are your own worst enemy.

MIA, our main character, is trying to deal with all of the regular stuff that's going on for a teenager – which is why she's not dealing with the fact that she lost her mother two years ago.

Her repressed emotions create a constant anxiety. So, when she is offered the chance to escape it by experimenting with spiritual possession, even though it's scary, she leaps at it – and she loves it.

Getting out of her head, Mia can flee the uncomfortable reality of her daily existence. But as with a lot of fun experimentation, it can easily turn into toxic addiction.

Mia's craving for release leads to her suppressed emotions manifesting as predatory spirits, stalking her, possessing her and eventually, convincing her he must kill a child she cares for deeply.

The real-world horror in the film stems from the consequences of reckless behaviour as an outlet; and the supernatural horror stems from the fallout of repressed feelings breaking free.

TALK TO ME is a sincere movie about not knowing how to cope with your feelings as a teenager and finding outlets that mess with your mind. We want this to be our first film because it's the closest to our world as it is now and we want to capture that.

We want to make this film while we're still in touch with these feelings and situations, and we want our first movie to feel vivid and alive.

Our starting point is to create a completely believable world – teenagers can sniff out artifice and posturing. We have cast teenagers who speak and act like teenagers, and not adults acting young.

We're very inspired by smart psychological horror films in recent years that reflect current society but with a classic lens. These movies are not just entertaining, but evolve the form, by respecting the audience's intelligence.

That is the contribution to the conversation of cinema we want this film to make.

Given the huge popularity of the horror genre right now – and the appetite for more emotionally sophisticated horror that says something about the world we are in now – we are hopeful that the combination of a strong concept and rich real characters in TALK TO ME will not only connect with a large audience, but also evoke a response that will generate thought and conversation from international audiences of all ages.

"Everything that we've ever done, everything we've ever made was in pursuit of this, of making our first feature film. So it was literally a dream come true. It was the most incredible experience. Every single part of it. It was so overstimulating we couldn't sleep at night. Every time that we'd shoot, we'd come home and we'd edit because it was just so... it was just the best experience ever. We loved every second of it. We felt like we were dreaming and we cannot wait to make another movie."

HOW IT STARTED

TALK TO ME is the debut feature film from Australian twins Danny and Michael Philippou, best known as online global sensations RACKARACKA, with more than 1.5 billion views on YouTube. Named one of Variety's 2016 FameChangers and ranked 5th on the Australian Financial Review's Cultural Power List, the brothers are the creators of action comic horror online content, which has racked up more than 1.5 billion views and over 6.6 million subscribers on Youtube alone. Their numerous awards include Best Integrational Channel Streamy Award; Best Overall at the Online Video Awards; and AACTA Award for Best Web Show.

A high-concept horror, the inspiration for TALK TO ME came from observing neighbourhood kids growing up. Danny explains: "One of the kids was experimenting with drugs - their friends filmed the experience and they were having a really negative reaction to the drug, they were on the floor convulsing and having a really bad reaction. Everyone was filming him on the floor and laughing at him. I found the footage quite striking and horrifying at the same time."

So when the brothers' friend Daley Pearson shared a short film script he'd written about a group of teenagers who used possession to get high, the concept sparked Danny's imagination and he started discussing it with his co-writer Bill Hinzman.

"At the first drafting stage, the story just flowed out, the characters felt real and it evolved really naturally. I wrote the initial 80 pages of scenes and ideas and characters, and from there Hinzman started throwing in his ideas to find the theme and the structure."

The film is about a teenage girl who gets hooked on possessions as a new high. But on a deeper level it's about young people dealing with addiction and mental illness, the way that what begins as an escape from suppressed pain, can actually become a terrifying eruption of that pain.

As the characters and story gained their own momentum, Danny and Michael agreed that TALK TO ME felt right to be their first feature film.

THE RIGHT STORY & THE RIGHT PRODUCERS

Causeway Films' Samantha Jennings and Kristina Ceyton had crossed paths with Danny and Michael years before they worked together. Kristina recalls "I originally met Michael when he was our production runner and Danny was lighting assistant on THE BABADOOK," Samantha adds. "Later they worked with us on CARGO and they were part of a Google and Screen Australia workshop I led for YouTubers developing longer form scripts."

Causeway Films was launched with the Sundance-selected debut of Jennifer Kent, THE BABADOOK (2014). Their subsequent features have launched the careers of many new and distinctive filmmaking talents, and they have produced a globally-acclaimed slate which includes award-winners from Venice, Berlinale, New York Film Critics Circle and the Australian Academy Awards (AACTAs).

Kristina says "We kept in touch with them and their work, so when they reached out with a few feature film concepts we were intrigued. We had seen their shorts as well as their online content, and knew that they had a rare connection to audience and also had the talent to be taken seriously as international filmmakers."

Samantha recalls "The concept for TALK TO ME was the one that stood out for us, because it was infused with their infectious energy, we felt it would really deliver on its genre and at the same time express themes relevant to what young people are going through now. We all decided to collaborate on developing the script and it took off from there."

Samantha explains, "One of the biggest priorities for us as producers is that we knew from the beginning we all wanted to make a really good film. Danny and Michael have always wanted to be filmmakers, and to be taken seriously as filmmakers. Their YouTube work as RACKARACKA is amazingly inventive, they worked out how to do incredible things, for real, and built up a huge following around the world. But that is one part of them."

"In making TALK TO ME, we set out to harness the huge talent, imagination and skill they've developed in their online work and at the same time elevate it. The whole team – directors, producers, Heads of Department, were constantly aware of their audience and alongside that a new potential audience too. We wanted to make a debut feature that was smart, cinematic and well crafted, that had layers and depth and was also exhilarating. Maintaining both sides of that equation throughout was key, and it meant that we all never stopped trying to push the material."

THE TRANSITION FROM YOUTUBE TO FEATURE FILM

For Danny and Michael, making the jump from their online content to a serious feature film was a challenge they enjoyed, bringing their energetic approach to the incredibly structured world of a feature film set.

Danny says “In the YouTube videos, we have no characters. We have no plot. We have no idea what we're doing, where we're going, or what the hell we're shooting or why we're shooting it. That's the YouTube thing. Nothing was really thought through very much. It was all just sort of made up on the spot and we just went with things.”

“With the film, there was more of a plan. But we still adopted the same energy that we have on our RACKARACKA videos - we are really, you know, energetic,” explains Danny.

Michael continues “It was so good working with other creatives, and other talented people and they could bring their specialty to the table as well. It was a massive collaborative experience. Even workshopping with the actors, playing through scenes, they added other dimensions to it, that we couldn't have with the script and never have with YouTube, except for Danny in Nerf Battle Three.”

Crucial to the team would be DOP.

Danny explains “I discovered Aaron McClisky via Vimeo. I saw his short film which was called NURSERY RHYMES, and I loved it so much. And we reached out to him and said, ‘Hey, do you wanna shoot our film?’ I was in love with the way that that one shot evolved and unfolded, and I was so excited to meet him and talk to him about it. And then, we just, blended so well.”

Michael continues: “He's very talented. You can describe any shot and he'll make it look like a masterpiece. I think a good thing with collaborating with people is finding people that are not only talented like Aaron, but who you also vibe with.”

Production Designer Bethany Ryan had worked with Causeway Films on four other productions, and Samantha knew she would connect with the directors. Bethany could see the potential for building an authentic contemporary world in a way that was cinematic yet kept the horror believable and immediate. Bethany and Aaron worked closely together and with the team in pre-production, building the aesthetic, which including a version of young Australian life that felt true and current with depth and mood, such as wet roads, colour, richness and texture throughout.

CREATING AUTHENTIC CHARACTERS

Hair and makeup designer Rebecca Buratto had worked on RACKARACKA productions over the last decade. Michael explains “She's been with us with all the RACKARACKA shoots. She is so talented. and can work under the gun and we've done crazy stuff with her. We knew that she would be perfect for it.” Danny continues “We'd literally been working with Bec for ages and she was always working on our stuff for free, so it felt good to finally pay her!”

Bec says “I've always known the boys would get a feature or TV series up. They're the most talented, creative, and energetic team I've ever met, they always manage to make whatever we're doing enjoyable. There's something about their energy and enthusiasm in everything they do that has always drawn me to them - even if I turn up at their dad's place at 6am and don't start any makeups until 10am because they haven't written the script yet...”

“I was definitely intrigued to watch them on set, with a professional crew, a schedule, and a time limit.... something completely different from a usual RACKARACKA shoot, and they both did such an amazing job - their energy and enthusiasm never faltered. It's definitely been quite an emotional journey from meeting them on my first ever feature film as a makeup artist where the boys were runners, and now working with them on their first feature film - I don't think I've ever experienced something as special as this one!”

Prosthetics was an essential part of the authenticity of the film for the audience, and integral to the directors' mission to achieve as much in-camera effects as possible. Bridging makeup with prosthetics was vital to seamless character transitions on screen. Paul Katte & Nick Nicolaou from Make-Up Effects Group joined the team.

Danny says “Nick and Paul were godsend. The makeup was so incredible that it held up in ultra closeup.” Michael continues “We didn't have to hide anything with camera work and lighting or VFX. It looked amazing. They are perfectionists. Nick is a crazy awesome artist. He's a da Vinci of special effects, and the collaborative process of finding all the makeup effects and creating the makeup bible was awesome as well.”

Building the characters was another collaborative experience involving costume, makeup, production design, and the cast themselves.

Danny continues “Our costume designer Anna Cahill was amazing because she connected with all of the cast so well. I just wanted everyone to feel natural with their character and what they thought their character would want to wear. We colour coded our main character – we had yellow be present in every single one of Mia’s scenes to represent death and Anna brought cool metaphorical ideas that we integrated throughout the film.”

Anna describes her interpretation of the directors’ brief “The world was to feel real, lived in and authentic. Pops of colour such as Mia’s yellow story and Riley’s red sneakers were to be beacons in this world. Each character had their own specific colour story and palette. Mia starts with strong yellow, which gradually fades to a washed-out suggestion of yellow as she herself fades away into the spirit world. Jade, at first seeming like a more passive character in her pastels then moves into stronger tones as we realise how strong she truly is. Meanwhile the characters surrounding them provide authenticity in their subtler palettes and streetwear graphics, grounding the film in reality.”

Makeup designer Bec Buratto adds “Danny and Michael found the perfect cast for every character, and they each brought their own style to the film. Joe who plays Riley, is a doe eyed young man who has the whole world ahead of him, we wanted to keep him younger looking, so keeping any pimples - or adding them in - was very important. Sophie really brought her character to life herself, and Danny wanted to use her nail polish to tell her story, you can see throughout the film Mia scratches at her nail polish, and we used that to signify her mental health, by the end of the film it’s almost not there.”

Anna sums up “It was very important that the characters all felt real, and that the actors themselves had input into how their characters looked. Streetwear, lived in, personal to each character.”

“Production designer Bethany Ryan and I constantly conversed about locations and colours, trying to ensure the costumes and characters were an integrated part of the world. For example, Jade’s bedroom was an extension of how she dressed. Where we could we selected a particular item of clothing specifically for how it presented against a certain set.”

THE HAND & POSSESSIONS

VFX Supervisor and Head of Post Production Marty Pepper explains “The directors were committed to everything looking as real as possible, and achieving stunts and FX in-camera. Given their background in brutally realistic YouTube films, I knew from the minute that we signed on that the “in-camera” method would be vital to the story telling. In pre-production, the use of traditional make-up effects and physical stunts were discussed in great detail to assist in achieving the right look and feel. Digital VFX could then be used to remove wire rigs, rebuild sections of the various set pieces, subtly change appearances. The camera was free to move and shoot whatever it took to tell the story, then we would deal with it in post as required. The last hospital shot as Mia walks through the corridor for example, we removed all the ‘dead’ human reflections from each mirror including Mia’s, made Mia’s fingers broken, all in one continuous shot.”

Ensuring the possession scenes remained as real as possible was a key priority for VFX. Mary explains “The possessions in the film were very important to the believability of the film and its players, if those moments fell flat, the film would not work. As planned, VFX played a supporting role in the first possession – just a slight hand grip or pupil dilation. In the second possession it was a different story, the script called for Daniel to passionately make out with Jade’s dog. On a different show, the dog would have been fully CGI, but ours had to be ridiculously real. A hand operated dog’s head was puppeteered to create the correct contact during the actor coverage beats, then extensive live action plates were shot on set and the dog was then rebuilt and positioned to create the photo realistic shots. The first part of the Riley possession relied on great prosthetics plus clever art department with minor enhancement and then more VFX when he shoots across the room (on wires) smashing the window, all were shot as a variety of plates and then rebuilt via match move techniques.”

This authentic approach to the possessions stemmed not only from the directors’ long-time commitment in-camera techniques, but also the importance of the experience for the characters.

As Sophie articulates “For Mia, the hand is an escape from reality and Mia is obviously dissatisfied with the way that her life is and trying to force all of these connections, so the hand is a way to release all of that.”

Otis, who plays Daniel, adds “The hand itself is this supernatural, almost satanic thing, the antithesis what Daniel’s been brought up to believe in. So it’s like doing the complete opposite of what he’s been told to do. He is really uncomfortable with who he is and he’s trying to prove to people that he’s not just a sheltered Christian boy. He’s trying to upset perceptions of him as this goody two shoes kind of guy and go against what his parents are pushing on him.”

Creating the reality of the hand and the possessions was a priority carried through to the sound process. Sound Designer Emma Bortignon explains “The hand itself is a thread throughout the film sonically. We tried to be as textural as possible, sonically textural. If someone touches the hand, or has an interaction with the hand, it has a very specific sound.”

"I did a lot of experiments trying to come up with the right textural sound. When the hand falls a couple of times and hits the ground, it hits the ground with an almighty bang and at one point it even slides across the floor. I used the sound of a gravestone being dragged along the concrete. I experimented with lots of leather sounds and lots of wood sounds and lots of other sounds that might help to give additional texture to that. And any kind of human hand touching the hand, whenever somebody grabs it, it needed to sound quite solid and heavy, it had to have weight, and at the same time be a very layered sound of ceramic. This had to land, so it was about getting that right and making sure that it wasn't asking to be heard, but if you wanted to go back and listen to it, you would hear what it is. It needed to be a very visceral experience."

"The thing that we were able to do with this particular story was really shift between what is the everyday sounds of our characters and when there is a possession. Once a possession takes hold, we changed a lot of the aspects of the sound design. We took out the belly of the everyday sounds and we added a slight layer of dread, which is sort of like an underbelly or low rumble. And because the possessions happen in stages, there are new elements added slowly, to then get to the point when we're in full possession mode and it is more about feeling. I think it's interesting to do that because horror is a bold genre but we were also quite subtle, we weren't trying to make everything be heard. To see this in a cinema, you would pick up on these things. Sometimes delicate, sometimes very bold."

Altered voices also needed to be created for the possessed characters, and new voice actors were brought into post. Emma expands "The characters become possessed by a spirit and the physicality of the characters change and so does the sound of their voice. So when they talk, they are talking with the voice of the spirit."

"We auditioned voice actors to play the spirits because we see the spirits within the context of the film, but we never actually hear them talking other than talking through their host characters. Those spirit voices were cast for the sound, for their characterisation, for how deeply they could emote the feeling. We had the actors emulate the words of another character beat for beat, so if you sit one voice on top of another, it sounds like it's coming from one person. We laid the actor and spirit's voice on top of each other and sometimes we affected them slightly, just a slight pitch down or up in that very second. And then we slowly changed from the actor's voice into the spirit voice. It was very subtle, particularly in the genre of horror where so much is so big."

Emma was enlivened by the process, "Michael and Danny are very attuned, sonically, so they could hear every little breath, every little moment, every little inflection, and would be able to respond to that in a creative way. We meticulously sifted through the spirit voices and tried to make sure that was a very seamless transition from character to spirit and back again, mainly leading with emotion. They knew when they heard that it was right, as opposed to it being a prescribed thing. I also work intuitively a lot of the time, I don't go into a scene a hundred percent always knowing what's going to happen. I want to look for things that surprise me and I want to look for things that will also surprise the audience and the story."

"Michael and Danny are very much locked in with each other. They support and back each other. They also listen quite intently to each other's ideas because, as twins, they're very different and they're also very similar at the same time. And so there's this constant interplay between the two of them. Where they are each other's greatest supporter and also each other's greatest critic. So it was really dynamic in that sense."

"What I feel that this film does really well is that it is using the psychological horror genre to bring forth really important issues young people are facing today. It's using the language of young people to bring to light issues, which I think might be hard to talk about. It's not obvious, it's quite intricately hidden within the context of the film - you could easily watch this film and get to the end and go, oh, that was amazing and fun. And then upon reflection, understand that the film is actually talking about things that people, not just young people, face."

FINANCING & CASTING

Samantha explains "Early on, we had some interest from US studios but collectively decided to finance the film independently. Bankside have been our sales agent on several Causeway Films projects and we knew they would be an ideal partner for this, and Screen Australia were keen for RACKARACKA, who they saw as "the most successful content creators in the country" move into theatrical features, so that all came together quickly – at first."

"Our stumbling block was when Covid hit. The industry was on pause for a few months and after that it became harder to attach international cast. At the same time, we were discovering some amazing talent from inside Australia, so we decided to shift our strategy and cast actors who weren't as international recognisable names. This of course had an impact on the finance, but we really believed it was the right approach for the film, so we reduced the budget and with a leap of faith from our investors, we were off and running! The minute the cast arrived, even before the cameras were rolling, our instincts were confirmed about the casting decisions we'd made," she says.

Danny concurs, "It took two years to cast the film and it took two years to find Sophie Wilde. She originally auditioned for Hayley and her performance was so strong, but we didn't think it was right for that character. Sam had the idea of trying her out for Mia. It was the perfect suggestion and it was the perfect audition and she's the perfect actor for that role. She was such a powerful performer.

Sophie Wilde says "What struck me when I first read the script was how relevant it felt, especially to young people and young audiences. Danny's writing of the vernacular and slang of Australian teenagers was so authentic and I thought that was really interesting to see on screen. The story itself is so original and interesting and I was really attracted to the complexity of Mia."

Michael says "She's so diverse with her acting capabilities that you could give her a note and she could completely change the character or the idea of the scene, and nail it every take. Sophie and all the cast brought a genuine authenticity to the work that was just amazing to see on set. We really enjoyed the rehearsals and the play through of the scenes and we had a lot of fun with that as well. It was awesome seeing them bring the characters to life."

Samantha adds "Danny and Michael made the rehearsals fun and unpredictable, while still being rigorous, and that set up the dynamics on set. The entire group of young people felt very free, they gave so much and they really had each other's backs."

"Every one of the actors was an absolute delight to work as well as being outstanding talent. Sophie is incredible, she can access any emotion and play it with truth and complexity plus she is captivating on screen. Alex, Joe, Otis, Zoe and Chris are all amazing and extremely generous artists. Miranda, Marcus and Alexandria were also incredibly open and really embraced the high energy environment on set – Miranda so funny and so grounded and the whole cast and crew was inspired by her wealth of experience."

Joe Bird, who plays the pivotal of Riley was the last actor to be cast. Danny says "A lot of kids were really good at acting naturalistically and talking. But once it became to the possessions, they sort of fell apart in the audition process. And Joey just didn't. He was so insane with his performance and his portrayal of the possession and mimicking the mum - he got it spot on. We were so excited to cast him. And he was dedicated, with long days in makeup and prosthetics. And he really delivered."

Joe Bird says "Growing up in Adelaide, RACKARACKA are huge here - and all across the world. But because they lived in Adelaide, it's like they're the local celebrities, everyone knew who they were and they lived quite close to me at one point. It was so great whenever we'd drive past their house, for school or an excursion. It was exciting to find out that they were the directors of this film. The script was so different and unique and I knew that this is something that I wanted to be a part of. It's quite cool, to be honest."

Miranda Otto brought her significant experience and genre credibility to the role of Jade's mum Sue.

Danny says "Why Miranda Otto? Because it's Miranda Otto baby! Miranda was the most intimidating person to direct because she's such a veteran. But she was fun to collaborate with, open to direction and such an artist."

Miranda had not heard of RACKARACKA before reading the script. Miranda explains "I loved the script and I was really engaged by Danny's energy. I really admire people who are self-starters - like Peter Jackson is a self-starter. He just started shooting films and I admire people who just get the equipment and start creating their own content.

"I enjoy horror and, but I think horror is hard to do well. This was such a good script because the voices of the teenagers felt really authentic. You read scripts and they write teenagers and young people in a certain way, and you think 'that's not true, that's not how they speak, that's not what they're into'."

"With horror, one of the most important things is to make it feel like a very real world in the beginning, a very relatable world, before the horror kicks in. The whole setup of TALK TO ME with the parties and the kids felt very true."

Alexandra Jensen plays Jade - Mia's best friend, and Riley's sister. Samantha describes how taken the team was at seeing Alex's audition; "Alex is so natural, nothing is forced. And when she and Sophie did a chemistry test, they really matched each other and it was so easy to believe they were friends."

Alexandra says "I was really drawn to Jade's emotional journey. I love that she's such a grounding force in the film and when I first met the boys, the first thing they said about Jade was that she is embodiment of home. She's quite warm and comfortable in herself but at the same time she can flip the switch and become very protective and quite feisty and that's cool."

Otis Dhanji plays Daniel, who Michael and Danny refer to as the most vulnerable role.

Michael says "you know that person who, when they're drunk or on drugs they do things that they regret. Daniel was the embodiment of that." Danny agrees "You feel so bad for him in the film but Otis' performance was amazing, he plays it so straight-edged."

Otis remembers reading the script “I was a little apprehensive about all my character’s weird stuff, like kissing the dog and getting my feet sucked. But what stuck out to me was that there was a lot of insane messed up horror but at the same time it just managed to maintain a narrative with a real emotional trajectory so that it is really heartbreaking in the end.”

“I was super excited to be playing a character that's one amongst many young people who all have to band together to solve all the problems that happen. A lot of the jobs that I've worked on prior, I was in the role of the kid - way younger than everyone else. But to actually be in something where everyone else is a similar age, it was a really good vibe.”

The supporting roles of Hayley and Joss had to be perfectly cast to complete the authenticity of the peer group. The directors found this in Zoe Terakes and Chris Alosio.

Michael says “Zoe has this power, this commanding presence.”

Danny agrees “We knew from the first line delivery that this was our Hayley. Zoe's interpretation of it was perfect. They nailed every single beat, every single subtle thing that was in there. And in the dialogue, they performed it all to perfection.”

Zoe Terakes says “No one's ever let me play high status before. I've always played low status people probably because of my age. I've just played a lot of meek, vulnerable trans people. But Hayley takes up so much space and is so big and fierce and I was really drawn to that. I found it really exciting.”

“Haley plays rough, they're playful. But I honestly think they have a good heart, which might be controversial that I think that, but I think they do. I think they're very playful and it's just that their play maybe looks a little bit meaner than most people's play. I'd love to go to a party with Hayley.”

Chris's character Joss is based on a real childhood friend of the twins. Danny explains “In Chris’s audition, we felt we’d known Chris all our lives. He literally felt like our friend Tamani. He actually auditioned for a different character, for Cole and we could see that he could do the serious side of it.”

Michael continues “But when we tried him for Joss, he brought the comedy too, and we realised, ‘oh, you can do both!’ He's multi-talented, and his improv stuff is just hilarious.”

Chris was drawn to the project by the creatives and the subject matter. “The idea of this hand being a drug passed around at a party, it is something that's happening and it is something that people aren't talking about. It is a real look at the peer pressure, drug use and teens who feel like misfits.”

“What I love the most about this main cohort of characters - Mia, Jade, Daniel and Hayley - is that we look like we're a group of misfits who would never be together in a room, and yet we buzz so well together.”

“In a way that was Danny and Michael’s upbringing, and that's something I love about who they are as artists and how they bring themselves to this project. When someone brings themselves that hard and that intensely, you want to meet them at that level.”

“I think it gave us all permission to bring a hundred percent of ourselves. As an artist, as an actor, that's what you look for that more than anything.”

THE END FOR NOW

Causeway Films Samantha Jennings and Kristina Ceyton say “What has been a delightful surprise in making this film has been experiencing how fun the process can be. Making independent films is hard, it demands a huge amount from everyone involved, there is never enough time or money and you are asking everyone for an extreme level of commitment.”

“But working with these directors was a constant reminder to everyone that it can also be enormous fun. There can be wild exhilaration in a way that still encourages deep interrogation of every element and intense seriousness about the work. In fact, that little bit of crazy can make people work even harder, and it was a privilege to see that happen.”

BIOS - CAST

SOPHIE WILDE plays Mia

SOPHIE WILDE graduated from NIDA in 2019, immediately making her stage debut at The Sydney Opera House that year playing the role of “Ophelia” in Bell Shakespeare’s HAMLET. She went on to book the lead in EDEN, a six-part series directed by John Curran and Mirrah Foulkes for Stan. Her domestic success and flawless UK accents afforded her the opportunity to work in the UK, booking the lead in the BBC drama YOU DON'T KNOW ME opposite Samuel Adewunmi and the female lead in TOM JONES for Mammoth Screen and ITV. In film she played the leading role of Sophie Pettigrew in THE PORTABLE DOOR for the Jim Henson company alongside Sam Neill and Christoph Waltz due to be released in 2023. She recently wrapped filming the lead role in THE F***IT BUCKET for Netflix, written by Ripley Parker and is currently shooting the major role of Caitlin Spies on Netflix adaptation of BOY SWALLOWS UNIVERSE.

ALEXANDRA JENSEN plays Jade

Alexandra made her screen debut in acclaimed UK/Australian comedy FRAYED, season two recently aired on ABC in Australia and on Sky in the UK. This was followed by lead guest roles in hit comedy THE LETDOWN, which screened on Netflix internationally, and MY LIFE IS MURDER alongside Lucy Lawless. In 2021 she starred alongside Kate Jenkinson and Alex Dimitriades in Nine drama AMAZING GRACE and appeared in Peacock series JOE VS CAROLE alongside Kate McKinnon and John Cameron Mitchell. In 2022 Alexandra shot leading roles in Green Frog Productions feature film BEAT, upcoming Australian feature film TALK TO ME for Causeway Films and in ABC drama THE MESSENGER, based on Marcus Zusak’s bestselling Novel. Alexandra trained with ATYP in Sydney.

JOE BIRD plays Riley

Joe Bird commenced his acting journey at the young age of 9 years old. Joe landed his first feature film role as Aiden in RABBIT followed by short film CHARLIE IN CHARLIE’S STORY in 2017. Joe recently added TV credits ABC’s FIRST DAY and Netflix’s GYMNASTIC’S ACADEMY along with his outstanding supporting lead performance in feature film TALK TO ME which premieres at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival in January.

OTIS DHANJI plays Daniel

Twenty-year-old Otis Dhanji has been performing from a very early age. He regularly secured lead male roles in many school productions. Otis made his professional theatre debut at Sydney’s, Belvoir Street Theatre in 2015 in *Mortido* performing opposite Colin Friels. Soon after, Otis made his screen debut in US feature film AQUAMAN (2018) playing Young Arthur Curry at age 13. Otis was a regular cast member in ON THE ROPES (2018), an SBS drama series. In 2019, Otis played Piers in Australian feature film JUNE AGAIN, directed by JJ Winlove and produced by See Pictures (*Ticket To Ride*). Otis has played co-leads in DON'T MAKE ME GO (2022) and TALK TO ME (2023). Other credits include ABC/Netflix series THE UNLISTED and UNDERBELLY: VANISHING ACT for ScreenTime and Nine Network. Otis is a prolific writer. He has written many short stories, a play and is finishing his first novel. He also makes short films. Otis surfs, holds a black belt in Tae Kwon Do and has studied dance full time. He plays guitar, bass and drums and is in a band. Otis was accepted into the prestigious Newtown Performing Arts High School in Sydney, Australia and duxed the school on graduation in 2020. He is a student at Sydney University with majors in Mathematics and English.

MIRANDA OTTO plays Sue

Miranda Otto is a renowned Australian performer, with her career spanning decades across the stage and screen. Miranda’s feature film credits include THE THIN RED LINE, WHAT LIES BENEATH, WAR OF THE WORLDS, FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX, THE HOMESMAN, LOVE SERENADE, REACHING FOR THE MOON and her beloved portrayal of ‘Éowyn’ in Peter Jackson’s international blockbuster THE LORD OF THE RINGS film trilogy. This performance earned Miranda a SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture for THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING. In 2016, Miranda was awarded the AACTA Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in THE DAUGHTER, opposite Sam Neill and Geoffrey Rush. Most recently Miranda was seen opposite Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Will Ferrell in Fox Searchlight’s DOWNHILL.

Highlights of Miranda’s television credits include the roles of ‘Allison Carr’ in Showtime and Fox 21’s Emmy Award-winning series HOMELAND and ‘Aunt Zelda’ in Netflix’s CHILLING ADVENTURES OF SABRINA from 2018 – 2020. For Miranda’s performance as Lindy Chamberlain in the drama series THROUGH MY EYES, she was awarded the TV Week Silver Logie Award for Most Outstanding Actress in a Drama Series. Most recently, Miranda starred in the Australian comedy drama series THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS for SBS and the critically acclaimed drama series FIRES for ABC. Miranda will next be seen in the Disney+ original series THE CLEARING opposite Guy Pearce and Teresa Palmer.

Otto has worked extensively in theatre, including a memorable role in the Sydney Theatre Company's *Boy Gets Girl*. Her performance as 'Nora' in that company's production of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* won her the 2003 Mo Award for "Female Actor in Play of the Year."

ZOE TERAKES plays Hayley

Zoe is one of Australia's most exciting new actors. Zoe was most recently seen in the highly anticipated series, *NINE PERFECT STRANGERS*, alongside Nicole Kidman and Melissa McCarthy. Their other television credits including Foxtel's *WENTWORTH*, Amazon's *THE MOTH EFFECT*, ABC's *JANET KING*, and Foxtel's *THE END*. Zoe's film credits include the coming of age hit, *ELLIE & ABBIE (AND ELLIE'S DEAD AUNT)*. They are soon to be seen in Marvel Studios, Disney Plus series, *IRON HEART*.

Zoe's theatre credits include *Boomkak Panto* for Belvoir, *A View from the Bridge* and *A Doll's House Part II* for Melbourne Theatre Company, *A View from the Bridge* for Ensemble Theatre, and *Metamorphoses*, *The Wolves*, and *A View from the Bridge* for The Old Fitz.

For their work in *A View from the Bridge* at the Old Fitz, they received Sydney Theatre Awards for Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role in an Independent Production, and as joint winner, the Best Newcomer Award. Zoe also received the Don Reid Memorial award at the GLUGS for this performance. Zoe was nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role in a Play for Melbourne Theatre Company's production of *A View from The Bridge*.

Zoe identifies as nonbinary and trans masculine. They are a vocal advocate and activist for trans rights within the industry and on a global scale.

CHRIS ALOSIO plays Joss

Chris Alosio is currently in production on the upcoming Paramount+/Network 10 drama series *NORTH SHORE* alongside Joanne Froggatt and John Bradley. He recently completed production on the upcoming ABC series *THE MESSENGER* as one of the lead ensemble cast and will next be seen in Taika Waititi's highly anticipated feature film *NEXT GOAL WINS* alongside Elisabeth Moss and Michael Fassbender.

Chris was recently seen in the New Zealand feature film *MILLIE LIES LOW* which premiered at the 2022 Berlin Film Festival, ABC's crime drama series *TROPPO* and the Netflix series *SURVIVING SUMMER*.

Whilst in his second year of drama school, Chris was cast as a lead in the Foxtel series *FIGHTING SEASON*, then went on to graduate from New Zealand's leading drama school, Toi Whakaari. In 2019, Chris was awarded the AACTA Subscription Television Award for Best New Male Talent for his performance in the series.

MARCUS JOHNSON plays Max

Marcus Johnson grew up in the rough streets of the notorious south central neighbourhoods of Los Angeles and Inglewood, California. Being homeless and illiterate from a young age, Marcus decided to make a life for himself as a professional boxer. Years later, he used his boxing skills to become a personal trainer for people in the entertainment industry. It was during this time he developed a curiosity and fascination for the arts.

Marcus was encouraged by his colleagues to audition for National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in Sydney, Australia, where he was accepted and later graduated successfully receiving his Bachelor of Fine Arts. Upon graduating, Marcus has secured numerous film roles including *THE CONDEMNED*, *WINDSOR*, *THE OSIRIS CHILD*, *THE VERY EXCELLENT MR DUNDEE*, and more recently, *INTERCEPTOR* and *TALK TO ME*.

Marcus' television credits include *THE RAKE*, *SECRET DAUGHTER*, *POWER RANGERS*, *EAST WEST 101*, *SPARTACUS*, *MR AND MRS MURDER*, *SEA PATROL* and *IRREVERENT*.

Marcus' most recent theatre credits include Prize Fighter's national tour and *The Brothers Size* for Griffin Theatre Company. Marcus toured with *The Sapphires* and was excited to be working alongside such a formidable team both on stage and on the production side.

ALEXANDRIA STEFFENSEN plays Rhea

Alexandria is an acting graduate from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts where she was the recipient of the Leslie Anderson Award for Acting Excellence.

Her film and TV credits have included *TALK TO ME*, *HOW TO PLEASE A WOMAN*, *EDEN*, *PEANUT (short)*, *HAPPY FEET*, *NEIGHBOURS*, *FB HOLDEN (short)*, *CNNNN* and *LIFE SUPPORT*, as well as corporate videos and TVCs. In 2020, Alexandria was

nominated for a Performing Arts WA Award for Best Supporting Actress in Black Swan State Theatre Company's production of *Medea* whereby she played the titular character. Some of her theatre credits include *Good People* (Red Stitch), *Valley Song* which included a regional tour (Merrigong Theatre Company), *A View of Concrete* (Belvoir), *The Crucible* (Black Swan State Theatre Co.), *Camarilla* (Merrigong), *Crave* (Acquiesce Speck Productions), *Jet of Blood* (Ignite Productions and winner of Best Ensemble in 2006 Melbourne Fringe Festival and nominated for Best Ensemble Cast in the 2006 Green Room Awards), *X-Stacy* (Black Swan), and *Live Acts of Stage* (Black Swan). In 2008, Alexandria furthered her actor training and travelled to Los Angeles and studied with many leading industry professionals. In addition to working as an actor, Alexandria is also a theatre director and teaching artist.

BIOS - KEY CREATIVES

Directed By

DANNY PHILIPPOU & MICHAEL PHILIPPOU

Filmmaking twin brothers Danny and Michael Philippou are RACKARACKA, online purveyors of comic horror and action. Their Youtube videos have been watched over 1.5 billion times and amassed over 6.6 million subscribers. In 2015 their channel was awarded Best International YouTube Channel at the 6th Streamy Awards. Named one of Variety's 2016 Fame Changers and ranked 5th on Financial Review's *Cultural Power List*, the brothers have won numerous awards, including Best Overall at the Online Video Awards and the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Award for the Best Web Show.

Talk To Me is their debut feature film.

Written By

DANNY PHILIPPOU & BILL HINZMAN

Screenwriter Bill Hinzman is new to the film industry. His first credit is TALK TO ME, which he co-wrote with director Danny Philippou. He has worked with both Danny and Michael on a range of projects since 2011. He is currently working with them on their next feature.

Producers

SAMANTHA JENNINGS & KRISTINA CEYTON, CAUSEWAY FILMS

Founded by Kristina Ceyton and Samantha Jennings in 2014, CAUSEWAY FILMS with Jennifer Kent's THE BABADOOK, which premiered at Sundance and achieved global acclaim. Causeway then produced Jennifer Kent's follow up feature THE NIGHTINGALE (Special Jury Prize at Venice Film Festival 2019) as well as Australia's first Netflix Original CARGO, starring Martin Freeman, which premiered at Tribeca. In 2019, BUOYANCY premiered at the Berlinale and was Australia's submission for Best International Feature Film at the 2020 Academy Awards®. Causeway's features have won awards at Venice, Berlinale, New York Film Critics Circle and numerous Australian Academy Awards (AACTAs). In 2021 Causeway completed principal photography on four new features, including YOU WON'T BE ALONE by Goran Stolevski (Sundance 2022, distributed by Focus Features) and Goran's follow up feature OF AN AGE (MIFF 2022, Focus Features), South African psychological horror GOOD MADAM by Jenna Cato Bass (TIFF 2021, Shudder release 2022) and BLAZE by dual Archibald-winning visual artist Del Kathryn Barton, starring Simon Baker. Causeway recently completed TALK TO ME by RACKARACKA and is in production on First Nations horror THE MOOGAI by writer/director Jon Bell plus pre-production on Samuel Van Grinsven's ghost story WENT UP THE HILL starring Vicky Krieps (CORSAGE) and Dacre Montgomery (STRANGER THINGS).

Cinematographer

AARON MCLISKY ACS

Aaron McLisky is an award-winning cinematographer actively working across television drama, feature films, music videos and commercials.

Aaron shot the third and second seasons of acclaimed television drama MR. INBETWEEN (dir. Nash Edgerton, 2019) for Blue Tongue Films, Jungle Entertainment, Foxtel and FX. The series received multiple AACTA Award nominations as well as international critical acclaim.

Aaron's bold and distinctive visual style is exhibited in a number of short films, including the award-winning NURSEY RHYMES (dir. Tom Noakes, 2018) for which Aaron received the Flickerfest Award for Best Cinematography; as well as THE SAND THAT ATE THE SEA (dir. Matthew Thorne, 2018) which won Aaron the Silver ACS Award for Best Cinematography in a Short Film.

Production Designer

BETHANY RYAN

Bethany Ryan is an Australian Production Designer working across film, television and commercials.

A graduate of RMIT's prestigious Design School with Honours in Interior Design, Bethany began work in Architecture. In pursuit of a career in film she continued her studies at AFTRS in Sydney, specialising in Production Design.

In recent years Bethany has designed multiple features, including *YOU WON'T BE ALONE* (Causeway Films, 2022), debut of writer director Goran Stolevski. The film follows a young witch who is left to the woods by her isolated mountain village in 19th-century Macedonia. The film had its World Premiere at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival where it was met with unwavering acclaim.

Continuing her partnership with Stolevski, Bethany designed the queer coming of age feature, *OF AN AGE*, premiering at the Melbourne International Film Festival, 2022.

In 2018 she travelled to Cambodia to design *BUOYANCY*, directed by Rodd Rathjen. At its World Premiere at the 2019 Berlinale, *Buoyancy* was awarded the Panorama Ecumenical Prize and nominated for GWFF Best First Feature and the Berlinale Amnesty Award. The film went on to be selected as Australia's 2019 submission for best international feature film at the Oscars and won the AACTA Award for Best Independent Feature.

Following the success of director Jon Bell's short *THE MOOGAI* (Causeway Films, 2020, Grand Jury Prize Best Film SXSW Midnight Short, Best Australian Short Melbourne International Film Festival) she is currently designing the feature film of the same name.

Costume Designer

ANNA CAHILL

Anna Cahill is a highly respected Australian costume designer working across feature film, television, theatre and music videos. Recent credits include feature films *CHRISTMAS RANSOM* for Stan, *TALK TO ME* for Causeway Films, *BETTER WATCH OUT* (Storm Vision Entertainment/Best Medicine Productions) and *THE PRETEND ONE* for Causeway Films. Her television credits include *LAST KING OF THE X* (*Helium/Paramount*), *ROAR* (*THE WOMAN WHO ATE PHOTOGRAPHS*) for Made Up Stories, *PIECES OF HER* for Netflix/Made Up Stories, *BACK TO THE RAFTERS* (Seven/Amazon) and *RANDOM & WHACKY* for Ambience Entertainment. She has designed costumes for short films selected for Cannes, Berlin, London, Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne International Film Festivals, and notable music video clips include the ARIA Best Video Clip nominated *Geronimo* for Sheppard.

Makeup & Hair Designer

REBECCA BURATTO

Rebecca Buratto has been working as a hair, makeup and SFX artist for over a decade now, on an extensive amount of film & TV productions. Within her time in the industry, she has worked on productions such as *MORTAL KOMBAT*, *SWEET COUNTRY*, *THE STRANGER*, *TOTAL CONTROL*, and *AFTERTASTE*.

Working under makeup artists such as Nikki Gooley (*The Matrix*, *Mortal Kombat*), and Jane O'Kane (*Lord of the Rings*, *Guns Akimbo*), has helped her gain crucial knowledge of the industry and the trade, and has also given her the opportunity to work with many different talented artists in the field. Rebecca has a strong interest in Horror and Sci-Fi films, so will always navigate towards productions that will keep her interests sparked, and the passion for her work alight.

As well as working on long form productions, Rebecca has been collaborating with the youtubers RackaRacka for almost 10 years, working on their YouTube ads, Versus series, and everything in between. Being able to contribute and Design the makeup for their latest feature film, was a very special experience after such a long relationship.

Special Makeup Effects Designed & Created By

PAUL KATTE & NICK NICOLAOU MAKE-UP EFFECTS GROUP

Make-up Effects Group (M.E.G.) is an internationally renowned and award-winning Special Make-up Effects Studio, offering high quality Prosthetic Make-up, Animatronic Characters, Special Make-up Effects, Creature Effects, Costumes, Puppets and Model Making services for Film, TV, Theatre and Advertising.

Make-up Effects Group have provided Special Make-up Effects and Services for numerous Feature Films, TV, Theatre and Advertising productions, including: *STING*, *THE MOOGAI*, *LAST KING OF THE X*, *TALK TO ME*, *FURIOSA*, *SHUDDER SCARE PACKAGE 2 - WE'RE SO DEAD*, *TRANSFUSION*, *INTERCEPTOR*, *WYRMWOOD 2*, *THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF LONGING*, *MR. INBETWEEN S3*, *BUMP*, *OCCUPATION RAINFALL*, *MORTAL KOMBAT*, *TITUS ANDRONICUS*, *MR INBETWEEN S2*, *PETER RABBIT*, *QUANTUM TERROR*, *NEKROTRONIC*, *PIMPED*, *UNDERBELLY FILES: CHOPPER*, *WAKE IN FRIGHT*, *CLEVERMAN S1 & S2*, *DOCTOR DOCTOR S1 & S2*, *GHOST IN THE SHELL*, *THE OSIRIS CHILD: SFV1*, *PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES*, *MAD MAX FURY ROAD*, *CHILDHOOD'S END*, *ENIGMA MAN*, *HOUSE OF HANCOCK*, *BACKTRACK*, *THE WOLVERINE*, *I*, *FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE HOBBIT*, *REDD INC.*, *NEEDLE*, *CLOUDSTREET*, *VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER*, *THE TEMPEST*, *LARRY THE LAWNMOWER*, *CRUSH*, *THE WARRIOR'S WAY*, *PRINCE CASPIAN*, *PRISCILLA LIVE*, *HEY BABY*, *BLACK WATER*, *2:37*, *NIGHTMARES & DREAMSCAPES*, *GONE*, *SILK*, *CANDY*, *CHARLOTTE'S WEB*, *THE LION*, *THE WITCH & THE WARDROBE*, *FEED*, *MAN-THING*, *DARKNESS FALLS*, *NED*, *THE GREAT*

RAID, MATRIX REVOLUTIONS, MATRIX RELOADED, DOUBLE VISION, CYBER WARS, CUT, THE MATRIX, TWO HANDS, PAWS, THE ISLAND OF DR MOREAU, BABE, MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS, and CRITTERS 2.

Make-up Effects Group have won numerous Awards including: The Inaugural Australian Society of Make-up Artists award for the feature films, NED (2004), CUT (2000), THE MATRIX (1999). They have also won the Australian Production Design Guild award (APDG) for Best Prosthetic Makeup Design for the SYFY Channel's mini-series CHILDHOOD'S END (2015), the ITHACA International Fantastic Film Festival Jury Award for Best Special Effects for the feature film REDD INC. (2012), the Screamfest L.A award and British Horror Film Festival award for Best Horror Make-up for the feature film NEEDLE (2010), and Best Visual Effects at the St. Kilda Film Festival for the short film FUEL (2004).

Editor

GEOFF LAMB ASE

Geoff Lamb is an award-winning editor, with a career spanning more than two decades in Australian and international feature film and television. Feature film credits include THE PORTABLE DOOR for The Jim Henson Company/StoryBridge Films, ALI'S WEDDING for Matchbox Pictures, DANCE ACADEMY – THE MOVIE for Werner Film productions and RETURN TO NIM'S ISLAND for Walden Media/Arc Entertainment. He was nominated for both an Australian Academy Award (AACTA) and Australian Screen Editors Award for telemovie RIOT (2018) and was awarded the ASE Award in 2020 for Best Editing in a Television Drama for THE COMMONS.

Sound Designer

EMMA BORTIGNON

Emma Bortignon is an award-winning Freelance Sound Designer and Supervising Sound Editor from Melbourne, Australia. Throughout Emma's 23-year career, she has worked on over 100 feature films, documentaries and television series with some of Australia's most notable Directors and Producers.

Some of Emma's most recent Supervising/Sound Design work includes the feature film TALK TO ME, the celebrated debut feature YOU WON'T BE ALONE, the Netflix smash hit CLICKBAIT and NBCU's LA BREA S1.

Over her career, Emma has been nominated for many awards, including 12 AACTA/AFI awards. She has won on four occasions for her work on FIRES (2021), SUZI Q (2020), MURUNDAK: SONGS OF FREEDOM (2011) and NOISE (2007).

As a respected senior member of The Australian Film Industry, Emma often mentors emerging filmmakers and lectures in Sound Design at Melbourne's preeminent tertiary film courses. Emma enjoys being involved in the discussion of Sound Design in film and is regularly invited to sit on industry panels and assist in the adjudication of awards.

Emma is a multi-instrumentalist for the much-loved, seminal Melbourne band Underground Lovers, playing the guitar and an array of electronic instruments for the band's live performances across Australia.

Original Music By

CORNEL WILCZEK

Cornel Wilczek is an Australian award-winning screen composer and music producer. He is driven by experimentation and the desire to find something new in music. Working with colour and contrast, he combines lush, acoustic sources with home-made electronics to take listeners to new places and help create unique worlds for his projects.

His TV scores include the global hit CLICKBAIT for Netflix, STATELESS (AACTA Award for Best Music Score in Television), GLITCH (AACTA Award for Best Music Score in Television), OFFSPRING, FIRES for NBCUniversal, the award-winning children's show NOWHERE BOYS and the Australian cult hit THE NEWSREADER. Recent TV projects include SURVIVING SUMMER for Netflix, LOVE ME for Hulu, CRAZY FUN PARK, and BAY OF FIRES.

His feature film work includes CUT SNAKE, THESE FINAL HOURS (Best Score at Festival International Du Film Fantastique de Gérardmer), THE MULE and Academy Award winner, Eva Orner's BIKRAM, for Netflix.

Under the moniker Qua, he has released 4 albums and toured the world. He has a Master's degree through RMIT's Media Arts department.

Cornel runs and owns Electric Dreams Studio, in South Melbourne, Australia. It is a high-end, acoustically designed space that facilitates creative development, broadcast composition and mixing, surround for TV and film, as well as album production.

Casting

NIKKI BARRETT

Nikki Barrett has been casting Australian and international film and television for over 20 years. Her work includes acclaimed features such as ELVIS, THIRTEEN LIVES, THE POWER OF THE DOG, TICKET TO PARADISE, MAD MAX: FURY ROAD, THE BABADOOK, NITRAM, HACKSAW RIDGE, THE GREAT GATSBY, I AM MOTHER, PETER RABBIT, THE NIGHTINGALE, THE PROPOSITION, MAOS LAST DANCER, THE SAPPHIRES, SOMERSAULT, THE RAILWAY MAN and CANDY. Television work includes the upcoming series, BOY SWALLOWS UNIVERSE, BAY OF FIRES and BLACK SNOW as well as past work, FIRES, PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK, JACK IRISH and the final season of HBO's THE LEFTOVERS.

SCREEN AUSTRALIA
PRESENTS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FILM CORPORATION ADELAIDE FILM FESTIVAL
HEAD GEAR FILMS AND METROL TECHNOLOGY
AND
BANKSIDE FILMS

A CAUSEWAY FILMS PRODUCTION

TALK TO ME

Directed By
DANNY PHILIPPOU & MICHAEL PHILIPPOU

Written By
DANNY PHILIPPOU BILL HINZMAN

Based on a Concept by
DALEY PEARSON

SOPHIE WILDE
ALEXANDRA JENSEN
JOE BIRD
OTIS DHANJI
And
MIRANDA OTTO

ZOE TERAKES
CHRIS ALOSIO
MARCUS JOHNSON
ALEXANDRIA STEFFENSEN

Produced By
SAMANTHA JENNINGS KRISTINA CEYTON

Executive Producers
STEPHEN KELLIHER SOPHIE GREEN

Executive Producers
PHIL HUNT COMPTON ROSS DANIEL NEGRET

Executive Producers
NOAH DUMMETT JOHN DUMMETT JEFF HARRISON ARI HARRISON

Executive Producers
MIRANDA OTTO DALE ROBERTS DANNY PHILIPPOU MICHAEL PHILIPPOU

Cinematographer
AARON MCLISKY ACS

Production Designer
BETHANY RYAN

Costume Designer
ANNA CAHILL

Makeup & Hair Designer
REBECCA BURATTO

Special Makeup Effects Designed & Created By

PAUL KATTE & NICK NICOLAOU MAKE-UP EFFECTS GROUP

Editor
GEOFF LAMB

Sound Designer
EMMA BORTIGNON

Original Music By
CORNEL WILCZEK

Music Supervisor
ANDREW KOŤÁTKO

VFX Supervisor
MARTY PEPPER

Casting
NIKKI BARRETT CSA CGA

By watching this film legally, you have supported thousands of jobs of creatives, distributors and crew as listed below.

Co-Producer CHRISTOPHER SEETO

Line Producer CARLY MAPLE

First Assistant Director GREG COBAIN

CAST
(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Cole	ARI McCARTHY
Tyson	HAMISH PHILLIPS
Peck	KIT ERHART-BRUCE
Fiona	SARAH BROKENSHA
Jayden	JAYDEN DAVIDSON
Duckett	SUNNY JOHNSON
Mia	SOPHIE WILDE
Max	MARCUS JOHNSON
Aunty Lee	KIDAAN ZELLEKE
James	JAMES OLIVER
Riley	JOE BIRD
Alex Varolli	JETT GAZLEY
Jade	ALEXANDRA JENSEN
Dog	COOKIE
Possessed Girl on Phone	HELENE PHILIPPOU
Sue	MIRANDA OTTO
Possessed Boy on Phone	JUDE TURNER
Hayley	ZOE TERAKES
Joss	CHRIS ALOSIO
Daniel	OTIS DHANJI

Teens at First Possession	ZAC SCOTT JESS KUSS DAVID ROBERTS DEMI VAN KASTEREN PIA GILLINGS OSCAR WANGEL COURTLAN GORDAN LOUISA GIAMEOS JEM O'CALLAGHAN JOE ROMEO ALEX NOEL CHARLIE MORKUNAS
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Eerie Man	ROBIN NORTHOVER
Olmen	FRANCES CASSAR
Olmen Spirit Voice	KELLY BUTLER
Elizabeth Spirit Voice	LEEANNA WALSMAN
Rhea	ALEXANDRIA STEFFENSEN

Quain Spirit Voice	CASS CUMERFORD
Old Lady in Hospital	PATRICIA HAYCOCK
Old Man in Hospital	MURRAY HAYCOCK
Hungry Woman	KERRY REID
Little Girl Audrey	AVA STENTA
Burke Spirit Voice	JACEK KOMAN
Nurse	CATHERINE PURLING
Quain	CASS CUMERFORD
Predator Spirits	NICOLA THIELE DAVID SIMMONS
	JOSEPH (HOUSE) BAKER ALICE SCHEID
	ANITA KIMBER BEN BULLOCK BRIAN GODFREY COOPER DUNCAN
	DANIEL PITT
	DANIELLE RUGGIERO-PRIOR DYLAN WARREN
	EMILY FOGG EMILY GUNN JASON MOORE
	JESSICA HOMEWOOD KATE PORTUS
	LELUM RATHNAYAKE MATT GOLDWYN
	MICHAEL GILMORE PHILIP MAYNARD
	SARAH BABER SARAVJIT SINGH S
	HADRACK KAMAU THOMAS GARDNER
Husband in Car Crash	MARK DUNCAN
Wife in Car Crash	ELLA FENWICK
Stranger in Greece	MICHAEL HARPAS
Young Man in Greece	NIKOLAS GELIOS
Men in Greece	ALEX PHILIPPOU CON LIPAPIS CON PATELIAS
	LOUIS VAVAROUTSOS UNCLE MARS NICK LIPAPIS
Mia Stunt Double	TESS MALPAS
Mia Picture Double	YASMIN DERIEL
Sue Picture Double	ALICE COLGRAVE
Riley Stand In & Double	CHARLIE MORKUNAS
Riley Stunt Double	ALEKS SKAR
Riley Adult Bed Double	CALIN DIAMOND
Jade Picture Double	LAUREN MARSHALL
Max Stunt Double	CORY BEESTON
Rhea Picture Double	ANGELA MACKENZIE

PRODUCTION CREW

Production Coordinator	EMMA MARSHALL
Location Manager	RHAVIN BANDA
Second Assistant Director	JAMES DUBAY
Third Assistant Director	KATE LARMER
Additional Third Assistant Director	JAKE LUKAC
Production Accountant	RINA AUCIELLO
Supervising Accountant	MARK KRAUS
Accounts Assistant	MARIE CLARKIN
Production Runners	MURRAY REHLING MICHAEL HARPAS
SAFC Production Manager	Attachment GRACE STEWART
Script Supervisor	LUKE WISELL
Camera Operator & Steadicam	JONATHON BAKER
First Assistant Camera	CHARLIE WHITAKER
Second Assistant Camera	SID TINNEY
Drone Operator	JOEY MCQUADE
DIT Operator	CHRIS DANIELS
DIT Assistant & Video Split	OLIVER DAVIS GRACE TINNEY
Additional First Assistant Camera (B Camera)	SIAN BATES
Additional Second Assistant Camera (B Camera)	BEC TAYLOR
Gaffer	RICHARD REES-JONES

Best Boy Electrics TOM CLARK
Electrics Assistants TOM SCHELL JOSH KOSTER
Additional Electrics Assistant LUCINDA CORIN

Key Grip JOHN SMITH
Best Boy Grip BEN WALSH
Grip Assistant & Ronin Tech JUSTIN ECKERT
Grip Assistant EVAN MEGAW
Additional Grip MIKE SMITH
Towing Vehicle Supplier & Operator PETER ITSINES

Sound Recordist NICK STEELE

Boom Operator OLIVER MCLOUGHLIN
Utility Sound Technician NIKOLA VAN DE WETERING

Art Director GARETH WILKES
Art Department Coordinator LAURA OCKENDEN
Set Decorator JEN DRAKE
Senior Buyer & Dresser JONATHON HYDE NEARY
Junior Buyer & Dresser BEN CONROY
Props Masters EMMA HOUGH HOBBS TROY DIGNON
Prop Maker GREG SWEENEY
Standby Props BEN CRABTREE
Assistant Standby Props FRASER WHITEHEAD
Graphic Designer & Draughtsperson STEWART MARSH
Casual Graphics Assistant HANNAH MORCOM
Art Department Runner BEN ALLEN
Casual Art Department Assistant ELLA NEUMANN
SAFC Set Decorator Attachment SONJA VAN BAVEL

Action Vehicles Coordinator GARY BAXTER

Construction Manager JARED SPENCER
Construction Foreman PAUL SPENCER
Set Builders LEETH KEOUGH ALEX HEATH
Trade Assistant JUSTIN GRISBROOK
Head Scenic MICHAEL WOLFF
Set Finisher ASH D'ANTONIO
Set Painters SHANE TOWNS STEPHEN ROEDEL
SFX Technician PETER OWENS
Rain Effects Technician LEETH KEOUGH

Animal Wranglers KAREN MACEY-MORT JASON LAPINS

Storyboard Artist BEC TROISI

Casting Associate KELLY GRAHAM
Acting Coach MIRANDA HARCOURT
Intimacy Coach RUTH FALLON

Extras & Actuals Coordinator MELISA DALY

Additional Extras Coordinators SAMUEL BURTON JADA ZILM
RUBY CUNNINGHAM ISHKA MATT

Costume Supervisor OLIVIA IACOBELLI
Costume Standby OLIVIA ZANCHETTA
Costume Assistant CHELSEA ANDREW
Additional Costume Assist IMOGEN HUTCHINSON
Art Finisher JOLYON AURI

Makeup & Hair Artist MARIE PRINCI

Makeup & Hair Assistant ADELE SHEARWIN
Additional Makeup & Hair Artists BEC TROISI
KRISTINA PERSICHINI GRAZIANO
ERIN SCOTT MEGAN O'MAHONEY
MATTHEW PING GEORGIA EDGAR
ALEXANDRA SWISTRO
Additional Prosthetics Artist CASSIE O'BRIEN DANIEL FORD
Optometrists KURT LARSEN KATHY DINI
BEN HAMLYN HAYLEY MCDONALD

SPECIAL MAKEUP EFFECTS BY MAKE-UP EFFECTS GROUP

SPFX Makeup Artists PAUL KATTE NICK NICOLAOU
HELEN TUCK WINBI TRANG NGUYEN
Studio Artists CALUM WILSON AUSTIN REZA EIMANIJO ALASTAIR MURRAY
KIANA JONES
KATHERINE BROWN WINBI
TRANG NGUYEN SAM JINKS
JAC CHARLTON ALICE BAUERIS
AREEYA VORAPATRAKUL STEFANIE Y GIBBONS
Puppeteers PAUL KATTE NICK NICOLAOU HELEN TUCK
Screen Australia Prosthetics Attachment WINBI TRANG NGUYEN
Additional Prosthetics (Dog Head) JOSH HEAD, FACEHEAD.CO

Stunt Coordinator MARK DUNCAN
Assist Stunt Coordinator JESSE ROWLES
Stunt Rigger CRAIG MORGAN
Additional Stunt Coordinator MIKE DUNCAN
Stunt Drivers DAISY FRYER PAUL LIGHTFOOT
CRAIG MORGAN TESS MALPAS

Safety Supervisor CLAY DUNN
Safety & Covid Consultant JEN BICHARD
Covid Officer & Nurse JARED JEFFREY
Additional Covid Officer & Medic JO KOWALICK
Covid Coordinator MELISA DALY
Additional Safety Supervisor JACKIE MURRAY

Location Manager (Pre Production) TESS O'FLAHERTY
Location Assistant TASHA TREBECK
Location Consultant JESSE GONINON

Caterer SONYA MARSHALL
Catering Assistants JODIE BROWNE OSCAR GRAETZ

Unit Manager KIM BOSTOCK
Assistant Unit Manager ED PETTY
Unit Assistants BROOKE PRITCHETT PATRICK THIELE
Overnight Unit Manager & Security SEAN O'CILLIN
Overnight Security TODD BUNGEY

Unit Publicist CATHY GALLAGHER, ABCG FILM

Behind The Scenes Director COURTLAN GORDON

Stills Photographer MATTHEW THORNE
Titles Design LIZ ELLIS
Camera Equipment VA HIRE
Vehicles COMPLETE UTE & VAN HIRE
Hire Cars SHOWGROUP TRAVEL

POST PRODUCTION SERVICES BY KOJO STUDIOS
Post Production Supervisor ELENE PEPPER

Post Production Producer KATE JAMES
Post Production Coordinator GEORGIA LIPPE

First Assistant Editor JOSH ATTERTON-EVANS

Colourist MARTY PEPPER
DI Assistant & Dailies Operator SURIYNA SIVASHANKER

VFX Supervisor MARTY PEPPER
VFX Producer SHARNA HACKETT
VFX Editor & Coordinator ADEN BEAVER
VFX Compositors JAKE BARTON ALISTAIR SCOTT
AMY O'HARA REBECCA WELLS
JAMES BUTT SKIP VISTA

Supervising Sound Editor EMMA BORTIGNON

Dialogue Editor JUSTINE ANGUS
Sound Effects Editor CAMERON GRANT LACHLAN HARRIS
Sound Editor JENNIFER LEONFORTE

Foley Artist SAM ROGERS
Foley Recordist RYAN SQUIRES
Foley Editor THEO HASSAN

ADR Recordists BRENDAN CROXON ADAM SHAW LIAM MOSES
ADR Editors JUSTINE ANGUS JENNIFER LEONFORTE
PIP ATHERSTONE-REID

ADR Facilities BOOMTRACKS, TRACKDOWN STUDIOS,
KRADR, XB STUDIOS, SMART POST ATLANTA, ALOHA STUDIOS,
SEEING SOUNDS

Loop Group ANDREW COSHAN, JAMES PADLEY,
JENNIFER LEONFORTE SILAS JAMES,
STEVIE JEAN, TEGAN STIMSON

Music Editor CHRISTIAN SCALLAN
Additional Composition Elements JACK JAMES TROISI
Additional Vocals ROSANNA LONGFIELD

Re-Recording Mixers BRENDAN CROXON EMMA BORTIGNON
PETE SMITH

Mix Facility BOOM TRACKS
Post Producer CHRISTINA REMNANT

ADDITIONAL VFX BY MODEL FARM

Head of Studio SHANE AHERNE
CG Supervisor IULIAN BULIGA
FX Artists PATRICK JEFFS DYLAN BROWNE

THIS IS NOT A CULT

Lead Composer PHILIP FRASCHETTI
Senior Composer & VFX Producer JACK JAMES TROISI
VFX Co-Producers DANNY PHILIPPOU MICHAEL PHILIPPOU

FOR CAUSEWAY FILMS

Development Producer ALEX WHITE
Contracting Supervisor LISA DUFF
Production Executive & Post Production Supervisor SASKIA VANEVELD
Manager, Development & Production GEORGIA NOE
Producers' Assistant ANNABELLE POWELL

Post Production Accountant ANTONETTA RUSSO

Post Production Scripts REEZY MILLER SCRIPT SERVICES
Closed Captioning & Audio Description ACCESS MEDIA PTY LTD

Legals MARSHALLS + DENT + WILMOTH LAWYERS BRYCE MENZIES
MARCO ANGELE MIET ENGELHARDT

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MARC WOOLDRIDGE, ALEX TAYLOR, ARI HARRISON, NEIL LAMBERT

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MUSIC CREDITS

“DUCKS IN A ROW”

Written by Lucian Blomkamp & Jerry Agbinya

Performed by Lucianblomkamp & IJALE

Published by Sony Music Publishing Australia Pty Ltd

“CHANDELIER”

Written by Sia Furler & Jesse Shatkin

Performed by Sia

Published by EMI Music Publishing Ltd /

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EMI Music Publishing Australia Pty Licensed courtesy of Monkey Puzzle Records,
Sony Music Publishing (Australia) Pty Ltd under license to Inertia Music / Gaga Music Pty Ltd

“WHO ARE YOU?”

Written & Performed by Takara
Published by Control (ASCAP)
Licensed courtesy of Takara Allen

“SPOT THE DIFFERENCE”

Written by Jerome Misa, Pio Misa, Salec Su'a
& Spencer Magalogo
ONEFOUR
(Australia) Pty Ltd

“MY CITY”

Written by Charlton Howard, Jerome Misa,
Solo Tohi, Spencer Magalogo, Keanu Dean Torres, Isaac De Boni,
Khaled Rohaim, Michael
Mule, Subhaan Rahman Willie Tafa
Performed by ONEFOUR & The Kid LAROI
Published by Sony Music Publishing (Australia) Performed by
Pty Ltd / Sony Songs LLC / Keanu Beats Published by Sony Music Publishing
Publishing / Song Songs LLC / Songs of Universal Licensed courtesy of ONEFOUR
Inc / Champagne Therapy Publishing,
administered by Universal Music Publishing Pty Ltd / Subhaan
Rahman Publishing Designee (BMI) & Warner-Tamerlane
Publishing Corp (BMI), administered by Warner Chappell Music
Australia Pty Ltd / TY Media Holdings Pty Ltd / Concord Music
Publishing ANZ Pty Ltd, on behalf of Pulse Publishing

“Who Run It”

Written by Daniel Latu, Amon McGoram
& Jamal Muavae Performed by SWIDT
Published by SWIDT
Licensed courtesy of SWIDT Ltd

“Leonardo”

Written & Performed by Takara
Published by Control (ASCAP)
Licensed courtesy of Takara Allen

“La Foule”

(Richard Carter Remix)
Published by Clockwork Grey Music (ASCAP)
Written by Ángel Amato & Enrique Dizeo
Performed by Édith Piaf
Published by Warner Chappell Music Argentina (SADAIC),
administered by Warner Chappell Music Australia Pty Ltd
Édith Piaf recording licensed courtesy of Warner
Music Australia Pty Ltd Remix licensed courtesy of Richard Carter

“The Moon Smiled Back At Me”

Written by Cody Foster
Performed by Sadistik
Licensed courtesy of Sadistik LLC

"Possession"

"Kangaroo Hospital"
Written & Performed by Mark Buys
Licensed courtesy of Play Pause Record

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The Filmmakers would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which TALK TO ME was filmed and produced.

All filming with live animals was monitored by professional handlers and animal action was created with special and visual effects. No real kangaroos were harmed and no real dogs were kissed.

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