

The Action. The Drama. The Passion.

NED

Written, directed by and starring Abe Forsythe

PRESS KIT

Release date: May 22, 2003

ONE-LINE SYNOPSIS

A riotous comedy that splits the sides and destroys the myth of the Ned Kelly legend.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Ned Kelly, a near-mythical icon of Australian history and culture, has had it coming for quite some time. **“NED”** pokes irreverent fun at Australia’s popular hero, and pretty much everything else along the way. Hijacking history and turning the Kelly legend on its iron helmeted head, **“NED”** stars Abe Forsythe, Felix Williamson, Nick Flint, Jeremy Sims, Damon Herriman, and Michala Banas (with some rather special cameos.)

LONG SYNOPSIS

Drawn as loosely as possible from Australian history, **“NED”** gives us a slapstick romp through Australia in the 1880s. More particularly, the historic town of Glenrowan, where Ned Kelly and his false-bearded gang of thieves spend most of their time hanging about robbing the same bank, with varied levels of success.

One night over the dinner table a young and naive Ned, son of an obsessed rubber farmer, walks-out on his rubber dinner, and leaves the family farm to seek-out a career as a magician. Packing his things on his pony, he rips the letterbox from his front gate, drops it upside-down on his head, and sets off on his adventure.

Coming upon the town of Glenrowan, Ned responds to a job advertisement for the position as fourth member of the “Hughes gang”, and successfully interviews for the role. Despite Kelly’s lack of talent as an outlaw, his quirky habits make him popular with the townsfolk, who in their provincial boredom weave bizarre tales of his “pure gold helmet” and “blood-drenched miniature horse”. To the chagrin of Dan Hughes they become popularly known as “the Kelly gang”.

Ned’s fellow gang members Joe Byrne, Steve Hart and Dan Hughes are a psychologically motley crew. Joe, an endearing drag queen, saving-up for a sex change, seems to steal more women’s clothing than cash. The violently psychotic Steve, plagued by voices in his head, tries to influence the gang with pop psychology techniques such as “quiet time” in order to quell his own demons. Whilst the cranky syphilitic gang leader Dan is so irritated with his own lack of infamy he is forced to rename himself “Captain Amazing” in order to claim his short-lived place in public memory.

As Kelly’s arch nemesis, hamster-loving Governor Sinclair, tries to track them down, the gang’s serendipitous survival throughout the film is aided by a very strange array of escape tactics and the comic hopelessness of their would-be captors.

Whilst on their circular journey, Ned discovers love and handjobs, at the Glenrowan Slut Palace. Learning who he “really” is, discovering that Dan Hughes is his brother, and later that Dan Hughes is not his brother... but rather his half-brother, in a parody of maturation and self-discovery.

“NED” draws on the Kelly legend to playfully subvert it, creating an absurd and funny film full of wit, slapstick, and a healthy dose of silliness.

KEY CAST LIST

Ned Kelly.....	ABE FORSYTHE
Dan Hughes	NICK FLINT
Steve Hart	DAMON HERRIMAN
Joe Byrne.....	JOSEF BER
Governor Sinclair	FELIX WILLIAMSON
Police Sergeant.....	BILL CONN
Policeman (Roy).....	SCOTT MAJOR
Hawkins	TIM RICHARDS
Henchman Shanahan	RYAN JOHNSON
Henchman Williams	MICHAEL FALZON
Henchman Byrne	SEAN LYNCH
Henchman Morrisey	SEPTIMUS
Klan Policeman	NATHANIEL DEAN
Mr Kelly	JEREMY SIMS
Muffy	MICHALA BANAS
Narrator	DREW FORSYTHE
Mrs Kelly	CAITLAN MCDUGALL
Ernie.....	JIE PITTMAN
Shopkeeper.....	JOHN BATCHELOR
Cindy	EMMA LUNG
Stacey	ANGELA KEEP
Tori.....	BREE WALTERS
Green Midget	JAMES GARU FALLON
Yuen Wah	MICHAEL PARK
Tiffany	NIKKI OSBOURNE
Tina	CORNELIA FRANCES
Russell the Cowboy	JOHNNY CASS
Father Thompson.....	JASON DONOVAN
Doctor	ANDREW DADDO

KEY CREW LIST

Director/Writer **ABE FORSYTHE**
Producer **DARRYL ROBINSON**
Executive Producers.. **EMILE SHERMAN & JONATHAN SHTEINMAN**
Director of Photography **TOM GLEESON**
Production Designer..... **KAREN HARBOROW**
Costume Designer..... **GWENDOLYN STUKELY**
Sound Recordist..... **NICOLE LAZAROFF**
Film Editor **CHRISTIAN GAZAL**

BACKGROUND: the real Ned Kelly

Born in 1854 into an Irish family, Ned Kelly grew-up outside the town of Glenrowan. Forced to theft by the family's poverty, by the age of 16 Ned was sentenced to hard labour and remained in and out of prison until the age of 19. Upon his release from prison Ned formed the Kelly gang with Steve Hart, Joe Byrne, and his brother Dan Kelly.

Wanted for murder and armed robbery, the gang were at large for 18 months. Their final confrontation with the police was on June 27th 1880 when they bailed up the town of Glenrowan, cutting the telegraph wires and forcing the railway workers to destroy the train line. They took more than sixty hostages as they waited for the arrival of the police train sent to capture them.

After the arrival of the police in Glenrowan, and the famous shootout that followed, the police lay siege to the hotel where the gang took shelter. The siege lasted nine and a half hours, finally ending when the building was burnt to the ground. Dan Kelly, Steve Hart and Joe Byrne were killed. Ned was arrested, and on November 11th 1880, was hanged in the old Melbourne Gaol.

The Ned Kelly story is one that has become integral to Australian history. Taught in Australian primary schools, Kelly is renown as perhaps the most mysterious and intriguing of our historical figures. His fight against the English government, which he saw as repressive, and his struggle to protect his family against the authorities, has made him a heroic figure in popular memory. Kelly is such a focus of Australian history and folklore, that the town of Glenrowan has transformed itself into a tourist attraction.

Beyond the legendary tales of the gang, the figure of Kelly in his home fashioned iron helmet was cemented as a famous Australian image through the paintings of Sidney Nolan. Nolan depicted many scenes from Kelly's life, portraying him enigmatically in a flat square black helmet with only his eyes visible. Whilst more recently, the 1998 publication of Peter Carey's book *True History of the Kelly Gang*, and the focus on Kelly in the 2000 Olympics, created a resurgence of interest in the story. In addition to "**NED**" there are two action/drama features on Ned Kelly set for release in early 2003.

Inspired by Australia's fascination with the Kelly legend "**NED**" makes a spoof of the dramatic tale. Drawing very loosely from historical documentation, and more strongly from twenty year-old writer/director and star of the film Abe Forsythe's warped imagination. The story focuses on Ned's quest to become an amateur magician. Playing with the leap between this ambition, and how he became Australia's most famous bushranger.

Forsythe takes the basic outline of the Kelly story, and twists it. Cross-dressing, prostitution, toilet humour, banana costumes, and a syphilis epidemic are some of the many elements of the ridiculous that result. The antithesis of the romantic legend, "**NED**" sets out to explore an alternate history of documented events in the life of Ned Kelly. In the words of the Forsythe, "**NED**" is a "historical-comedy/action-spoof/drama".

The film is very much directed at an Australian audience, drawing from Australian history for it's story, and from popular Australian culture for many of the films gags. Reference is made to Australian TV from the 70's to now, with local TV icons such as Cornelia Frances, Jason Donovan and Andrew Daddo giving cameo appearances alongside Big Brother cast member Johnny Cass, amongst others.

Producer Darryl Robinson explains: “you don’t have to have read a Tim Winton novel to get it”. The humour of **“NED”** draws directly from Australian experience, for an Australian audience of 20 – 30 year olds, the films gags are drawn from the history we are taught in Australian schools to the television we watched when we got home.

Some of these ideas were quite spontaneous inclusions, Forsythe describes one instance: “The perfect example is Nudge (from the TV show Hey Dad), we were literally driving to location and we were all saying how funny it would be if Nudge comes in and says “*Hey how’s it going Mr Kelly?*” I called-up the next day and the next thing you know he’s there on the first day of the shoot”.

As a deliberate confrontation of Australia’s cultural cringe, Forsythe explains: “no one in Australia embraces our popular culture the way Americans do, like Mike Myers with Austin Powers. I wanted to do it because I hadn’t seen it done... It also comes from thinking about the audience, it’s made for Australians so why not try and find a way to incorporate those things”.

“NED” was shot on location at the Heritage Farm in Windsor with the support of the Hawkesbury Council and financed by the NSW Film and Television Office, Ocean Pictures, Content Capital and Showtime. The film will be released nationally on May 22 by Icon Film Distribution.

CASTING

Writer/director and star of the film Abe Forsythe selected the Kelly Gang cast early, encouraging their own interpretations and working with the actors intensively on their characters. Developing the dynamics of the gang was a main focus Forsythe explains: “We were wanting to get the right combination of characters, so in a scene together each one would be able to fire their own things.” The result is a humorous quartet of wildly contrasting characters.

The character of Ned Kelly is akin to an idiot savant, without the savvy. Described by Forsythe as “an innocent child” and “a complete retard”. Ned’s childlike relationship with his horse Muffy, his aspiration to be “the world’s premier outlaw illusionist”, and his virginity; are some of the signals to this innocence.

Forsythe originally wrote the script with the intention of casting someone else. However having written it with such a clear idea of the character and visualising the manner and timing of the role, he couldn’t give it up. Once in rehearsal and on set his character developed further when interacting with other cast, Forsythe tells: “once we got shooting he became slightly more simple than we had originally planned... and slightly more innocent and naïve in the way he reacts to things and situations”.

The character of **Dan Hughes** is derived from the real-life gang member Dan Kelly, brother to Ned. However in “**NED**”, playing on dramatic cliché, Dan becomes Ned’s long lost brother, which is revealed to Ned in a climactic moment.

Portrayed in the film as the gang’s real leader, Forsythe describes Dan as “very insecure... he wants to be the leader of the gang but never gets taken seriously enough...He’s one of the most complicated characters. Abandoned as a child by his parents...he is trying to get a gang together... a sort of family...and when that doesn’t work-out it sort of sends him over the edge.”

Dan spends most of the film either yelling or sulking, however Forsythe explains that actor Nick Flint, whom he had first met working on a TV commercial, “was able to make the transition, make you care for him and forgive him when you did actually get the real story”.

The character of **Joe Byrne** is described by Forsythe as: “very sensitive, caring... basically he wants to make sure everyone in the gang is looked after and well... if there was a problem he’d want to sort it out...he’s like the mother figure of the gang”.

Over the course of the film, Joe embraces his love of women’s clothing more and more. Beginning with a stolen bonnet from a bank customer, by the end of the film Joe is in full drag. This element was derived from the rumours that one of the gang members, or Ned Kelly’s father, was a cross-dresser. Taking this lesser known aspect of the Kelly legend, Forsythe has elaborated on this within the character of Joe, to the extent of scripting a posthumous sex-change as Joe’s dying wish.

Forsythe knew actor Josef Ber from a TV commercial they had worked on 7 years before, and Forsythe had him in mind for the role quite early on. Ber auditioned for the part, and as Forsythe explains: “with Joe we wanted a real warmth...he brings a really natural, caring, relaxed atmosphere... and Josef is like that in real life”.

These contrasting characters create a family dynamic, however the character of **Steve Hart** brings something different to the mix. Forsythe describes this development: “We had

a balance and we needed a dark side to that... Steve is a homicidal maniac... you don't really know what's going on inside his head but you get glimpses of how his mind works".

Of his choice of actor Damon Herriman, Forsythe says: "The character is so full-on...it was interesting, a lot of people would come-in and really push that, but the way Damon does it sort of behind his eyes and underplays everything... which makes him a hell of a lot more frightening".

In the campfire scene where the gang members talk about their desires, we see a flash of Steve's psychosis as he talks of his obsession with the experience of shooting and being shot in the face. This obsession rears its head throughout the film, as Herriman explains of his character: "he's always asking people if they ever shot anyone in the face, and in a gunfight he asks them to aim at his face".

Stalking the gang is the character of **Governor Sinclair**, who Forsythe explains, is driven by "a strange obsession with Ned Kelly... almost a sort of blood lust... and you see why over the course of the film".

Sinclair is perhaps the most exaggerated of all the caricatures in the film. Drawing on Australian loathing for English authority that underlies the Kelly legend, Sinclair's "poncy" attire and lavish English accent create a character that can only be described as dastardly. Actor Felix Williamson describes his character as: "English aristocracy that hates the Irish...the antagonist to the protagonist".

Forsythe auditioned a number of actors for the part, but tells: "With Felix's reading of Sinclair he pitched it in a different way to how it was written, it was written as really opulent but Felix brought it all back and just had it simmering under the surface".

The character of **Hawkins** is another key role in the film. Actor Tim Richards describes the character as "the whipping boy of Sinclair. He has to keep Sinclair happy, but realises that he is nonsensical". Forsythe describes Hawkins as: "the only straight character in the film, he's the audience's perspective as well..."

Richards enjoyed the more restrained character of Hawkins, surrounded by larger-than-life characters he explained that it allowed him to "play off the over the top stuff".

The character of Ned's father, **Mr Kelly**, is one of the more extreme roles. Mr Kelly's obsession with his rubber plantation, and dreams of a future where people eat, wear, and live in rubber, are some of the funniest moments in the film.

Forsythe asked actor Jeremy Sims to read the script and was delighted when he accepted the role. Forsythe says of Sims' interpretation of the character: "he's so serious going toward his goal of the rubber farm... Jeremy saw the best way to play it, as straight as possible and with complete tunnel vision into his own world".

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Writer/Director, Abe Forsythe, drew inspiration for his first feature film from a number of eclectic sources. He cites Monty Python, Southpark, Farrelly Brothers, and the Naked Gun films as some of the styles he draws from for the comedy in **"NED"**.

Utilising shock as a comic strategy, Forsythe explains that his focus on authenticity in costume and production design helped to create a realistic backdrop for the films less realistic plot lines, to aid the comic effect. The realism of the set and costumes he explains, made the out-of-place jokes and occasional characters dressed as fruit, "stand out", peppering the film with unexpected comic moments.

The realism of the production also made the comic characters the focus, as Forsythe explains: "That was one of the most important things with the production design and the wardrobe... always striving to make sure it was realistic. Everything had to be completely real because otherwise if it was a bit wacky or zany you would be distracted from what you were meant to be laughing at, which is the performances."

The Heritage Farm used for the majority of the shoot was a Hawkesbury Council property. It was revamped by the production designers and provides the set for historical outdoor scenes. Most of the indoor scenes were sets built within a single shearing shed on the farm grounds. Forsythe was amazed with the result achieved on the films tight budget: "it ended-up looking exactly like it did in my head".

Realism was also a focus for sound in the film. Everything from the gunshots, horses, footsteps, and atmospheres, was painstakingly developed. Forsythe tells: "they went out into the middle of the bush and recorded all these atmospheres, so it's got this really still feeling to it when they're in the bush".

Revered by the cast for his talent and work ethic, and described by Actor Felix Williamson as a "natural clown", Forsythe worked well with cast and crew alike. His experience as an actor gave him the ability to understand and work closely with the cast, while his enthusiasm and focus as a director provided a strong environment for the production. Producer Darryl Robinson tells: "Abe's very clear and precise... he gave the crew a sense of clarity and vision... it made it a joy".

Forsythe used the production to develop a creative community with the cast. Forsythe explains: "It was a long process... really going over everything as a group...they helped to develop the characters. Damon is a really good example. The character of Steve really wasn't anything like he is now in the film. That was from working with Damon and trying to come-up with ideas". As a director Forsythe feels that "casting is ninety percent of direction... you have got to open yourself up for collaboration and improvisation... that's where you get your best stuff".

On the style of the film, Forsythe says: "I never want the camera to distract from the performances... actors were centre frame and the focus was always cast first... a film like this relies on performance. This also ties in with wanting to make the environment as real as possible"

Forsythe met Producer Darryl Robinson whilst working on Tropfest in 1998, where Robinson was General Manager. Robinson recognised Forsythe's comic talent and suggested he write a comedy feature. After Forsythe wrote **"NED"**, he sent the script to

Robinson, then at Ocean Pictures, who immediately took to it. Robinson says “when I read it I thought *“This is really funny!”*... It would play out well to an audience, the characters were really strong and the dialogue was great. The comedy was on the page“

Robinson tells: “This is the sort of film I’d always wanted to make. I felt it would have an audience... and that it would be fun... Ocean pictures were immediately enthusiastic about it... the rest of the financing was, like any other film, a long and protracted process... but we had a lot of breaks and strong support from our investors... it’s a low budget film and we could access this entire town thanks to a very generous arrangement with the Hawkesbury council...”

The quality of cast and crew were also a stroke of luck on the films low budget, and as many of the actors explain, they chose to work on the film for love of the script rather than money. As Robinson explains: “They really liked the script, and a lot of them felt that this was one of the most refreshing and funny films they had ever worked on, and we are talking about people with twenty years of experience”.

On the films audience Forsythe says: “I’m hoping people will take a liking to the more crass elements of it... and I hope people will appreciate the performances... I also hope that they can be shocked a little bit too, that’s my favourite reaction other than laughter”.

The soundtrack will be released by Universal Music in May 2003 and combines period instruments with contemporary styles and techniques and the single “I Can See Clearly Now” by Jazibel will also be released in May.



THE CAST

Abe Forsythe - “NED” Kelly

As writer/director and lead of **“NED”**, 21-year-old Abe Forsythe shows prodigious talent. Abe has grown-up amongst the industry, the son of prolific Australian actor Drew Forsythe (Narrator), and has over the years developed his own strong career.

Abe has worked in film, television, and theatre. Playing key roles in the Bell Shakespeare production of *Richard III*, and Sydney Theatre Company Production of *Shadowlands*.

Abe's Television appearances include *Three Men and a Baby Grand*, *Water Rats*, *GP*, *The Miraculous Mellops*, and *Big Sky*. He can be currently seen as Campbell 'Cam' Todd, on the Channel Seven series *Always Greener*.

Abe's directing credits include the 1998 Tropicana Award winner *Guided by the Light of the Lord*. Along with the cult Matrix spoof, *Computer Boy*, which became one of the most popular films on the internet.

“NED” is Abe's first feature as a director, and is his forth role in a feature film. In 2003 he will play the lead role in the ABC's new mini-series, *Marking Time*, written by John Doyle and directed by Cherie Nowlan. Abe will also be appearing in *The Night We Called It A Day* in the role of Head Bellboy.

Nick Flint - Dan Hughes

Nick Flint studied Theatre and Media at Charles Sturt University, following his childhood passion for acting. First performing with the Naked Theatre Company, ATYP, and Urban Tales, Nick went on to work on more mainstream productions.

Nick has been given major roles in the Australian Shakespeare Company's production of *Wind in the Willows*, Melbourne Theatre Company's *The Recruit*, and an ongoing guest role in *All Saints*.

An upcoming Australian talent, in January 2003 Nick appeared in the Sydney Theatre Company's production of *The Shape of Things*, Directed by Jeremy Sims.

“NED” is his debut feature film.

Josef Ber - Joe Byrne

Josef Ber is a graduate of NIDA, who has a strong history in theatre and television. Touring Australia and New Zealand in the theatre Production of *Grease*, roles in The Company B Belvoir Production of *The Laramie Project* and Bell Shakespeare Production of *The Tempest*, are just a few of his past theatrical performances.

Josef's television roles include: *Wildside*, *Water Rats*, *Home and Away*, *Breakers*, *Young Lions*, and *Murder Call*. Recently tapping-into the US market with his role in the Fox Productions USA show *The Junction Boys* for ESPN TV.

“NED” is Josef's third feature.

Damon Herriman - Steve Hart

Damon Herriman has appeared in many local film, television and theatre productions.

Memorable for his role as Ted Pickles in the internationally acclaimed Company B Belvoir Production of *Cloudstreet* directed by Neil Armfield, Damon has performed many major roles for the Sydney Theatre Company. These include: *Lost in Yonkers*, *Summer of the Aliens*, *Two Weeks with the Queen*, and *The Cripple of Inishmaan*. Damon also recently performed in the Company B. Belvoir production of *Buried Child*.

Previously nominated for three Logie Awards, Damon's television roles include: *The Sullivans*, *For the Term of His Natural Life*, *Water Rats*, *The Miraculous Mellops*, *Brides of Christ*, *Murder Call*, and *All Saints*. Appearing in many ABC television productions including: *Patchwork Hero*, *GP*, *Police State*, *O'Loghlin on Saturday Night*, and the lead role in *Second Star on the Right*.

Damon's film history includes a co-lead in *The Big Steal* directed by Nadia Tass, a cameo in *Praise* directed by John Curran, and a number of his own short films including Tropfest finalist *They*.

"NED" is Damon's fourth feature film.

Felix Williamson - Governor Sinclair

Felix Williamson's theatrical performances include roles in the Sydney Theatre Company productions of: *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Pygmalion*, *Up for Grabs*, *Mr Kolpert*, and *Virgin Mim*; and the Bell Shakespeare production of *The Merchant of Venice*.

His television roles include: *A Country Practice*, *Water Rats*, *Farscape*, *My Brother Jack*, *Wildside*, and *Murder Call*.

Felix's comic prowess in **"NED"** is preceded by his film partnerships with celebrated comic Directors Nick Giannopolous, *The Wannabes*, and Yahoo Serious, *Mr Accident*.

Felix has appeared in numerous Australian and international feature films, including roles in: *The Thin Red Line*, *Thank God he Met Lizzie*, *Babe II*, *Welcome to Whoop Whoop*, *Strange Planet*, *Me Myself and I*, *Rage in Placid Lake*, and *Dirty Deeds*.

Jeremy Sims - Mr Kelly

Winner of the 1999 AFI award for 'Best Actor in a Lead Role', receiving an additional four AFI award nominations, and nominated 'Best Actor' for the 1998 Silver Logie, Jeremy Sims is a well-known face of Australian television.

After graduating from NIDA in 1990, Jeremy starred in many theatrical productions including The Sydney Theatre Company's *The Herbal Bed*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Virgin Mim*, and toured to NYC with their acclaimed production of *The White Devil*. After starring roles in Bell Shakespeare Company's *Pericles*, and *Twelfth Night*, he also recently performed the role of *Hamlet* for the Belvoir Street Theatre.

Jeremy has had major roles in many acclaimed local and international television shows, including: *Chances*, *Police Rescue*, *The Bill*, *Medivac*, *Wildside*, *Farscape*, *Kangaroo Palace*, *Day of the Roses*, *The Lost World*, *Street Legal*, *Corridors of Power*, and *Stingers*.

He has also starred in a number of telemovies, including the SBS production *Aftershocks*, and the ABC production of *Secret Men's Business*.

With numerous television and theatre productions under his belt, and receiving acclaim as a Director and Producer, Jeremy has extensive experience from all sides of the industry.

Jeremy's feature films include: *Police Rescue*, *Liquid Bridge*, and *Idiot Box*.

Tim Richards - Hawkins

Tim Richards graduated NIDA in 1999, where he performed in numerous student productions. After roles in many shows for the Hunter Valley Theatre Company and Freewheels Theatre Company, Tim recently appeared in the Sydney Theatre Company's *The Crucible*, *The Three Sisters*, and *Mr Kolpert*; the Bell Shakespeare Company's *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Company B. Belvoir's *Svetlana in Slingbacks*.

Television roles include: *The Farm*, *All Saints*, and *Backburner*. Tim has also appeared in various short films, and the feature films *Goddess of 1967* and *Better Than Sex*. "**NED**" is his third feature.

Drew Forsythe - Narrator

Appearing in more than one hundred productions over the years, Drew Forsythe has appeared in numerous prestigious theatrical roles, and popular film and television productions.

Drew Toured to London in 1977 with the internationally acclaimed Nimrod Theatre Production of *The Club*, and appeared in numerous major roles for Nimrod, Old Tote Theatre, and Sydney Theatre Company Productions over the years. Appearing on the stage more recently in London for the Edinburgh Festival performance of *Three Men and a Baby Grand*, and with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for *Three Men and an Orchestra*.

His many television roles since the 70s include: *Cop Shop*, *A Country Practice*, *Flying Doctors*, *GP*, *The Investigators*, *The Money or the Gun*, *The Miraculous Mellors*, *Three Men and a Baby Grand*, *Driven Crazy*, *Going Home*, and *All Saints*.

Drew's film experience includes the iconic Australian film *Caddie*, for which he received the 1975 AFI Award for Best Supporting Actor as "Sonny". Other roles include the features: *Stone*, *Deathcheaters*, *Newsfront*, *Doctors & Nurses*, *Dot and Santa Clause*, *Ginger Meggs*, *Anna*, *Annie's Coming Out*, *Burke and Wills*, *Travelling North*, *Outback*, and *Billy's Holiday*.

Michala Banas - Muffy

Currently the lead role in Channel Seven's *Always Greener*, Michala Banas has appeared in many Australian television productions since her debut in 1994. These include: *Home and Away*, *GP*, *E Street*, *Good Guys Bad Guys*, *State Coroner*, *Murder Call*, *Blue Heelers*, *Flipper*, *High Flyers*, *The Lost World*, *The Saddle Club*, *Beatmaster*, *Blue Heelers*, and a re-curring role in the ABC hit *Something in the Air*.

Bill Conn - Police Sergeant

Graduating from NIDA in 1975, Bill Conn has come a long way since his first role in *Hamlet on Ice* in 1976. A veteran of the iconic Nimrod Theatre Company, Bill performed in their productions of *Bullies House*, *Oresteia*, *Inside the Island*, and *Volpone*. Since the early 1980s he performed in numerous productions by Marian Street Theatre, Ensemble Theatre, and the Stables Theatre, whilst focusing on his television career.

Appearing in more than fifty television shows over the years, including the Australian classics *Cop Shop*, *Blinky Bill*, *Rafferty's Rules*, *Sons and Daughters*, *E Street*, *A Country Practice*, *Hey Dad*, and *Echo Point*, and more recently: *Heartbreak High*, *Home and Away*, *The Miraculous Mellops*, *Over the Hill*, *GP*, *Big Sky*, *Murder Call*, *All Saints*, *Escape of the Artful Dodger*, *Backberner*, and *CNNN*, to name but a few.

“**NED**” is his third feature film.

Andrew Daddo - Doctor

Andrew Daddo has a long career in Australian television, and has also worked on prestigious international productions.

Australian's know him from *Andrew Daddo Presents*, *Andrew Daddo's Cartoon Show*, *The Factory*, *Tonight Live*, *The Great Outdoors*, *The World's Greatest TV Commercials*, *Australia's Funniest People*, *11 AM*, *Kidspeak*, *Getaway*, and *The Morning Show* for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Andrew has also presented many documentaries including: *Bjorn Again*, *Made By Design*, and hosted special programs such as the *Logie Awards*. Dramatic productions for television include: *Round the Twist*, *Cluedo*, and *House Rules*.

Whilst living overseas Andrew presented the well-known British travel program *Lonely Planet*, and *MTV USA* and *Europe*.

“**NED**” is his fourth feature.

Cornelia Frances - Tina

An icon of Australian television, Cornelia Frances has starred in many varied productions. Her theatre performances within England and Australia include: *Diving for Pearls*, *Look Back in Anger*, *Lie of the Mind*, *Steaming*, *The Heiress*, *No Man's Land*, amongst others.

In an extensive television career, Cornelia has appeared in shows such as: *Cop Shop*, *Neutral Ground*, *Bellamy*, *The Outsiders*, *Serpent and the Rainbow*, *Young Doctors*, *Prisoner*, *Runaway Island*, *Secret Valley*, *Matlock*, *Kingswood Country*, *The Box*, and *Home and Away*. More recently her guest roles on *Always Greener* and *GP* have kept her busy between shooting the game show *The Weakest Link*, for which she is host.

Cornelia has appeared in a number of features, including: *Crack in the Curtains*, *Outback*, *The Man From Snowy River II*, *Outbreak of Hostilities*, *Lost Islands*, *All at Sea*, and *Last Rights*.

Jason Donovan - Father Thompson

First made famous by his role as Scott Robinson during the 1980's in *Neighbours*, Jason Donovan has recently returned to the limelight in his acclaimed role as Richard Savage in the ABC hit show *MDA*. Jason has also appeared in a number of other television roles, between his work over the years in theatre and film. These include: *Shadows of the Heart*, *Heroes*, *I Can Jump Puddles*, *Skyways*, and *Golden Pennies*. This work has earned him two Logie Awards for 'Most Popular Personality' and 'Most Popular Actor', and five Logie Award nominations.

Jason's theatre experience includes starring as Joseph in Andrew Llyod Webber's production of *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, and working internationally on productions such as: *The New Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Camelot*, *The Fantasticks*, and *Night Must Fall*.

His work in musicals has been supported by his strong recording work. Working with Stock Aitken Waterman on two successful albums, and winning numerous awards including Smash Hits Awards for 'Best Male Artist of the Year', 'Best Male Singer', 'Britain's Best Album'.

THE FILMMAKERS

ABE FORSYTHE - WRITER/DIRECTOR

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Abe's Television appearances include *Three Men and a Baby Grand*, *Water Rats*, *GP*, *The Miraculous Mellops*, and *Big Sky*. He can be currently seen as Campbell 'Cam' Todd, on the Channel Seven series *Always Greener*.

Abe's directing credits include the 1998 Tropicana Award winner *Guided by the Light of the Lord*. Along with the cult Matrix spoof, *Computer Boy*, which became one of the internet's most popular films.

“**NED**” is Abe's first feature as a director, and is his fourth role in a feature film. In 2003 he will play the lead role in the ABC's new mini-series, *Marking Time*, written by John Doyle and directed by Cherie Nowlan. And play the coveted role of Head Bellboy in *The Night We Called It A Day*.

DARRYL ROBINSON - PRODUCER

Darryl Robinson started his career in film and television making music videos and television commercials. Since then he has worked at the Australian Film Finance Corporation, been appointed General Manager of Tropfest Short Film Festival, and has managed Tropfest's writing initiative.

Darryl is currently development and acquisitions executive at the Australian film production and distribution company Ocean Pictures. Ocean's first release was Phillip Noyce's *Rabbit Proof Fence*, for which Ocean Pictures was Australian distributor. Best Film at the Australian Film Institute Awards in 2002, *Rabbit Proof Fence* has grossed over seven million at the Australian box office, and will be released internationally through Miramax.

EMILE SHERMAN - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Producer Emile Sherman's first feature was *Sample People*, starring Kylie Minogue, Joel Edgerton, and Ben Mendelsohn, released through Becker Entertainment in 1999.

In this same year, Emile co-produced the documentary *Uncle Chatzkel*. Nominated for Best Documentary at the 1999 Australian Film Institute Awards, *Uncle Chatzkel* has since received international acclaim with prizes and nominations at numerous film festivals worldwide.

More recently Emile produced *The Night We Called It A Day*, directed by Paul Goldman and starring Academy Award Nominees Dennis Hopper and Melanie Griffith, supported by Joel Edgerton, Rose Byrne, David Hemmings, and Portia de Rossi. The film is a

comedy/drama based on the true story of Frank Sinatra's visit to Australia in 1974 and will be released nationally on August 7, 2003.

In 2002 Emile produced *The Honourable Wally Norman*, directed by Ted Emery and starring Greg Pickhaver (aka HG Nelson), Sean Micallef, and Kevin Harrington. The film is set for theatrical release in late 2003.

Emile Sherman and Jonathan Shteinman founded the Australian film production and distribution company Ocean Pictures in 2000.

JONATHAN SHTEINMAN - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Producer of the celebrated Australian films *Angel Baby* and *Thank God He Met Lizzie*, and the upcoming feature *The Honourable Wally Norman*, Jonathan Shteinman founded the Australian film production and distribution company Ocean Pictures in 2000 alongside Emile Sherman.

Jonathan has been involved with the production of many well-known Australian features. He was Associate Producer of *Metal Skin*, and Executive Producer of *On Our Selection*, *The Roly Poly Man*, *Rough Diamonds*, *Sample People*, and *The Night We Called It A Day*.

Formerly an Investment Manager at the Film Finance Corporation, Jonathan has also worked on financing for a number of other productions including *Romper Stomper*, *Gross Misconduct*, and *The Man From Snowy River*.

Jonathan currently holds the position of Feature Film Councillor of the Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA) and is a board member of the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC).
