



YOU BEAUTIES: NEW AUSTRALIAN CINEMA

Shadow

Director's Statement

Shadow uses a combination of dramatic and documentary-style elements to tell the story of a group of activists who hold a public meeting only to discover their own prejudices are their biggest obstacles to saving the world.

Thematically, we wanted to understand individual and collective responsibility and question how we come together to make decisions that are in the best interests of society.

As artists we are seeking alternative models of story creation and screen production. Created over two and a half years through conversation and improvisation, the performers are also the co-authors, 95% of the people on screen are people with disabilities, and the majority of the crew roles are fulfilled by interns who identify as people with disabilities supported by professional mentors.

The narrative thematic and the film's philosophical approach to the process of creation are intrinsically linked. This is community filmmaking.

The production

In 2020, Back to Back Theatre's intense international touring schedule was put on hold thanks to the global lockdown. When the Victorian lockdown was lifted in October, the company were able to prioritise the film production of *Shadow*, one of the few positives to come out of the pandemic.

Filmed on location in and around Geelong across three weeks in December 2020, *Shadow* ambitiously builds upon the success of Back to Back's debut short film, *Oddlands*, creating a feature film that is provocative and challenging, and opportunities for people with disabilities both in front of the camera and behind the scenes.

Alice Fleming, Producer of the *Shadow* film: '*Shadow* is an avenue to provide paid and meaningful opportunities for people with disabilities in the film industry. Even though we are making a compelling film, the priority is to provide an environment that is about learning, and to showcase an inclusive filmmaking practice and model.'

The process of transforming the theatre work into a feature film was a highly collaborative process, with a creative team carefully structured around mentorships, and several departments featuring a mentor and a mentoree.

In mid-2020, Back to Back put out a call for people with disabilities who were interested in or had some kind of experience working on film. They received applications from 40 individuals from all over the country.

Fleming explained the first part of the process: 'We had a conversation with each individual interested in a technical department about what they might be interested in and, if they'd had experience in film or TV, what were the barriers they might be able to identify, and what could we do to remove them. We didn't want to assume to know what is best for any one individual seeking this experience. It was a learning experience for us as well, and sometimes quite depressing to hear the barriers to entry and barriers to further pathways for those who'd had some significant experience on sets before.'

‘Sometimes it was about working out what someone might be interested in doing in a more general way; that person may have never deliberately considered something equivalent had existed on a film set, or would propose something adjacent to their existing interests and skills.

‘The second part was forming the team around them to support that experience so the environment was one that nurtured those learning experiences. It’s not just about those mentees though; we hope that everyone on set, including the mentors, will now consider new ways of working to create more inclusive film sets.’

Meret Hassanen, Associate Producer of Back to Back Theatre/Pictures: ‘Since starting in the industry, I’ve become increasingly aware of how disability is approached and portrayed. The notion that we must present disability through a particular lens has severely impacted the way in which employment opportunities for people with disability are created. In order to achieve true inclusivity, stories should include characters with disability, rather than stories being about disability. Having key creatives in front of and behind the camera are crucial to breaking down current industry barriers.’

A crucial member of the *Shadow* team was Production Supervisor and Internship Mentor, John Cumming, who supported the two camera teams – each with a camera operator and a camera assistant, working alongside Director of Photography Rhian Hinkley to give what Gladwin described as ‘a crash course in cinematography’.

Cumming explained his role as ‘helping the interns to get familiar with the particular camera we’re using and the rest of the production team, and the process of making a film... Very quickly it became apparent that we would just start using the cameras, that thing of learning through practice.’

Liam White and Nikita Veitch, Camera Interns: ‘We are learning from John. We have learned about focusing the camera on a particular person and the different views that we can get from different points of the studio. We’ve learned about the lenses, how to put them on and what ones we need for some of the shots. We’ve also been learning about the wide shots, angles, close-ups.’

Designer Shio Otani was the mentor for Wardrobe Intern Aaron Lucas. ‘A costume intern does all sorts of tasks related to costuming and wardrobe,’ said Lucas, ‘dressing people, making sure that costumes are pressed appropriately, looking out for marks that shouldn’t be on the costumes, taking stuff from place to place and assisting with fittings... Having supportive people that you can talk to at virtually any time that you have an issue has been really helpful.’

Eden Menta, Make Up and Art Department Intern: ‘This is the first film set I have worked on. My mentor is Mandi [Dempster]. She’s extremely nice and patient, I call her “The Make-up Mother”. It’s important for people with disabilities to work behind the camera as well because we want a shot too, we have hopes and dreams as well, and if we can do something that we love then that’s our dream come true.’

Production notes

Call History

A captivating performance from Zoe Terakes anchors this tale of a new love among the ashes of an old relationship.

CALL HISTORY

Director: Lillian Paterson

With:

Zoe Terakes

Australia 2020

10 mins

SHADOW

Director: Bruce Gladwin

a Back to Back Pictures *production*

Executive Producers: Bruce Gladwin, Tim Stitz

Producer: Alice Fleming

Associate Producer: Meret Hassanen

Assistant Producer: Pippa Wright

Screenplay: Michael Chan, Mark Deans, Bruce Gladwin, Simon Laherty, Sarah Mainwaring, Scott Price, Sonia Teuben

Based on the Back to Back *Theatre stage production*

The Shadow Whose Prey the Hunter Becomes

Director of Photography and Editor: Rhian Hinkley

Art Director: Tao Weis

Costume Designer: Shio Otani

Musical Composition: Luke Howard Trio

(Luke Howard, Daniel Farrugia, Jonathan Zion)

Cast

Mark Deans

Simon Laherty

Sarah Mainwaring

Scott Price

Belinda McClory

Brian Lipson

Breanna Deleo

Iris Walshe-Howling

Phillip Besancon

Australia 2022

56 mins

YOU BEAUTIES: NEW AUSTRALIAN CINEMA

So-Called Australia: Blak Art on Film + Terror Nullius

Fri 3 Feb 18:10; Tue 21 Feb 20:30

Sissy + Pink Reef

Sat 11 Feb 20:30; Mon 20 Feb 17:50

Friends and Strangers + Lime Parfait

Thu 16 Feb 18:10; Fri 24 Feb 18:15

You Won't Be Alone + Gem

Fri 17 Feb 20:25; Sat 25 Feb 17:30

Shadow + Call History

Wed 22 Feb 18:20

Sweet As + Finding Jedda

Sun 26 Feb 18:30; Mon 27 Feb 20:50

With thanks to



NEW RELEASES

Enys Men

Continues from Fri 13 Jan

EO

From Fri 3 Feb

Blue Jean

From Fri 10 Feb; Fri 10 Feb 18:10 (+ Q&A with director-screenwriter Georgia Oakley and producer H el ene Sifre)

Creature

From Fri 24 Feb; Fri 24 Feb 18:10 (+ intro and Q&A with director Asif Kapadia and other members of the filmmaking team)

Broker

From Fri 24 Feb

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