

j i n d a b y n e

A film by Ray Lawrence
Based on the story So Much Water So Close to Home
by Raymond Carver

Laura Linney Gabriel Byrne
Running time 123 minutes

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Synopsis

On an annual fishing trip, in isolated high country, Stewart, Carl, Rocco and Billy ('the Kid') find a girl's body in the river. It's too late in the day for them to hike back to the road and report their tragic find. The next morning, instead of making the long trek back, they spend the day fishing. Their decision to stay on at the river is a little mysterious—almost as if the place itself is exerting some kind of magic over them.

When the men finally return home to Jindabyne, and report finding the body, all hell breaks loose. Their wives can't understand how they could have gone fishing with the dead girl right there in the water—she needed their help. The men are confused—the girl was already dead, there was nothing they could do for her.

Stewart's wife Claire is the last to know. As details filter out, and Stewart resists talking about what has happened, she is unnerved. There is a callousness about all of this which disturbs her deeply. Stewart is not convinced that he has done anything wrong. Claire's faith in her relationship with her husband is shaken to the core.

The fishermen, their wives and their children are suddenly haunted by their own bad spirits. As public opinion builds against the actions of the men, their certainty about themselves and the decision they made at the river is challenged. They cannot undo what they have done.

Only Claire understands that some-thing fundamental is not being addressed. She wants to understand and tries to make things right. In her determination Claire sets herself not only against her own family and friends but also those of the dead girl. Her marriage is taken to the brink and her peaceful life with Stewart and their young son hangs in the balance.

Production Credits

Directed by Ray Lawrence
Written by Beatrix Christian
Produced by Catherine Jarman
Executive Producer Philippa Bateman
Executive Producer Garry Charny
Director of Photography David Williamson
Production & Costume Designer Margot Wilson
Art Director Deborah Riley
Editor Karl Sodersten ASE
Line Producer Tony Tvrdeich
Original Music Score Paul Kelly & Dan Luscombe featuring Soteria Bell
Sound Designer Andrew Plain
Casting Director Susie Maizels

Cast

Laura Linney Claire
Gabriel Byrne Stewart
Deborra-lee Furness Jude
John Howard Carl
Leah Purcell Carmel
Stelios Yiakmis Rocco
Alice Garner Elissa
Simon Stone Billy ('the Kid')
Betty Lucas Vanessa
Chris Haywood Gregory
Eva Lazzaro Caylin-Calandria
Sean Rees-Wemyss Tom
Tatea Reilly Susan

Ray Lawrence - Director

Ray Lawrence is one of Australia's most highly regarded directors. The award-winning "Lantana" was released in Australia in 2001–2 and went on to critical acclaim and commercial success in Australia, the US, UK and Europe. The film's ensemble cast includes Anthony LaPaglia, Geoffrey Rush, Vince Colosimo, Barbara Hershey and Kerry Armstrong. In 2001, Lantana won seven AFI (Australian Film Institute) Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor for LaPaglia, Best Actress for Armstrong, and Best Adapted Screenplay for Andrew Bovell who based the script on his play *Speaking In Tongues*. It was released by Lions Gate in the US in late 2001 and launched the international careers of Vince Colosimo and Andrew Bovell.

Lawrence made his feature debut with "Bliss" (based on the best selling novel by Peter Carey) which screened in main competition at Cannes in 1985 alongside the films of Peter Weir, Alan Parker and Paul Schrader. In Australia Bliss received AFI Awards for Best Screenplay (Lawrence co-wrote with Carey), Best Director and Best Film.

Jindabyne is Ray Lawrence's third feature.

Interview with Ray Lawrence

Talk to us about the very beginnings of this story.

After I finished *Bliss*, I was reading purely for pleasure and there was a story I thought would make a good film. I ran into Paul Kelly. We had common interests. We didn't become fast friends then, just interested in similar things. I started to tell him about the story, and he introduced me to the writings of Raymond Carver. One of these stories was "So Much Water, So Close to Home", which had at its heart the most fantastic moral dilemma. I thought maybe that would be better than the one I was planning. That was almost 20 years ago.

What was it about the story that made you stick with it?

I tried to do other things. It sort of came and went. It was the same with "Lantana". There's just one little thing in a story you like and sometimes you forget everything else. It's just that one little piece, like a hook, it catches you. With *So Much Water, So Close to Home*, it was the difference of opinion that promoted very strong discussion between men and women.

There was a time when it wasn't politically correct to talk about men and women being different. Whereas now, especially with this film...

They're really the only dynamics there are. Politics, the sexes, even if they're the same sex, it's still somebody playing a male or female role. I don't know who it was, but somebody said there are only three stories: man, woman and God—whichever God that may be. I'm fascinated by how people stay together, why they break up and when they choose to or not, why some people have kids. There doesn't seem to be much else.

Can you talk about the first visits to the Jindabyne area, to the Snowy Mountains...

I used to go there all the time to fish, fly-fish, so I knew the area. That was part of the fascination with the story, the outdoors. I really wanted to do a film outside. So when Beatrix [Christian] and I decided we were going ahead I said, 'Let's do what Raymond Carver did. Let's go where we want to set it and see what happens.' There's a story about the lake. It was starting with a germ, like a short story writer. We just walked around, saw a river and wrote about the river. Years later when we brought the key crew to the location they said, 'It's very similar to the script isn't it?' So, that was the script. We knew where we were going.

Tell us about the first week of filming down at Yarrangobilly, in the river...

The logistical problem of the film was that everything was at least 45 minutes away. So, 45 minutes there and 45 minutes back—it cuts down on your shooting time. When we started we were shooting in daylight-saving time so that was good, but we were still only working with a ten-hour day. Having daylight-saving just meant I didn't have to get up so early. Our head grip [Dave Nichols] has done all sorts of big films and he said Yarrangobilly is probably the hardest location he's ever worked in. You can drive to the area but then you've basically got to walk in and it's quite dangerous. It took forever to get the stuff and the people in. And we had to get them out before dark, so we had to light the path. It was about two or three kilometres in on a winding track.

Shooting there was really beautiful, and the beauty of the place made the logistical problems facing us all seem a lot easier. It was slow walking in the water, a lot like fishing except I didn't have a rod. We spent all day in the water. I think everyone really enjoyed it. It was the desire to embrace the landscape. The challenge for me was the beauty—there's so much of it, and there are so many meanings in this landscape that I was always tense about whether I could capture it.

Can you talk about why you use natural light?

It radiates out of my desire and hope to get as natural a performance as possible. I think it's easier to get good performances without lights. Lights introduce a style to the film, they impose. The cinematographer has a style. Things he likes, even if they're subconscious, get imposed onto a film. On this film, except for the night sequences, where it's pitch black, we haven't used one film light. They've all been domestic bulbs or daylight. I turn more lights off than I turn on. I think the actors subconsciously react to it in a good way. So it's not a style thing, it's a practical choice that I've made to try and get rid of the paraphernalia that goes with making a film. I'm not the only one who does it, it's just that I really do push it.

In the setting up, there was a lot of talk with the actors about how it was okay to stumble, okay to make a mistake, it was okay to just...

Be. It is. Ultimately, that's what they're trying to do, just be there. It's like giving them permission to work towards a particular goal a particular way. In the main I've chosen actors that embrace that particular style.

Can you talk a little bit about the cast, and working with them?

I always seem to end up with ensemble casts. It's difficult because, even though they're all working basically the same way, they all have their needs. I don't like seeing anybody's work. I don't like 'hearing' the words, I don't want to know someone has written them. I want the words to sound like they've just fallen out of their mouths. I don't want anybody to see my work either. I much prefer to be like wallpaper. And they wonder what I'm doing. That's good. It takes away a lot of the pressure that I think is fake on a film. After a while the film starts to make itself. The notion of that happening, in the three times that I've done it, has never let me down.

You've also worked with a lot of the people around you for many years...

I go to the same restaurant, sit in the same chair and order the same meal. I find it very comforting not having to explain things. I think I work in an unusual way, or I'm told I do. When I find that I work with people that aren't used to working my way, it's just slower, because then I've got to get them up to speed and they don't always like it. So, all the people that I work with, in the main, are ones that I've worked with for years.

What would you like the audience to take away after they've seen the film?

The root of all this is to confirm people's lives. I don't like the aspirational thing, I've said it before. It's odd, having spent so much time in advertising. In the stuff that I do, I always try to take the aspirational dimension out of it, and put in some sort of confirmation. Aspirational is just a way of controlling people. It's okay to be human. You look at some of the magazines, and some of the shows, and some of the products you see—not very average is it? It's hard to feel sympathetic for somebody who gets out of a Porsche.

Beatrix Christian - Screenwriter

Beatrix Christian graduated from Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art playwright's studio in 1991. Her successful career began with her first play "Spumante Romantica" which was produced by Sydney's Griffin Theatre in 1992 and has been performed many times since.

Her second play, "Blue Murder", was staged at Belvoir Street Theatre in 1994 and Eureka Theatre Company in 1996. It won the Sydney Theatre Critics' Circle Award for best new play. "The Governor's Family", directed by Neil Armfield, premiered at Belvoir Street in 1997 and was nominated for an Australian Writers' Guild Award and the NSW Premier's Literary Award. The following year Beatrix received the Australian National Playwright's Conference New Dramatists' Award to travel to New York. At the Sydney Theatre Company, Beatrix has been Affiliate Writer and later Writer-in-Residence. Her comedy, Fred, was produced by the Sydney Theatre Company and broke box office records. It subsequently went on to be produced by both Melbourne Theatre Company and Queensland Theatre Company.

Beatrix's most recent play, "Old Masters", was produced by the Sydney Theatre Company and won the 2002 Queensland Premier's Literary Award for drama. Since 2001 she has adapted three major plays for Sydney Theatre Company: Chekhov's "Three Sisters", Ibsen's "A Doll's House", and Calderon's "Life is a Dream".

Beatrix is currently under commission from the Sydney Theatre Company to write a play for their next season and is also writing the script for Ray Lawrence's next film.

Interview with Beatrix Christian

Can you remember when you first read Raymond Carver's short story "So Much Water, So Close to Home", and how you came to write the "Jindabyne" screenplay?

When I was doing the adaptation of "The Three Sisters" for Sydney Theatre Company we read a lot of Raymond Carver in preparation for that script. Raymond Carver was quite fascinated with Chekhov's short stories and he had written some poetry that was like prose fragments, based on the Chekhov stories. There was something about Raymond Carver's style. I felt the Carver writing was like clear water, something about it was so simple and yet it was really evocative. It was ordinary and yet it took you somewhere much bigger than the story might suggest. We used the Carver Chekhov fragments as a guide when we were doing Three Sisters. So I was really familiar with the writing. When Ray said he wanted to do So Much Water I was really excited but also a little anxious because Carver is an American icon. I went home and read the story and I was pretty ambivalent about it. There were things I loved about it, mainly the men and the trip to the river. I got very curious about what happened at the river. It is not very explicit in the story and I kind of got hooked on this idea—what would have happened if there had only been one man or two men? The fact there were four men, seemed to me to be really fascinating. The dynamics of four people agreeing to do something like stay at the river seemed very different to one person doing it, or two people doing it. I started thinking about what that trip to the river meant to the men. On the other hand I didn't like—it is not that I didn't like the female character, but the Carver stories are very rooted in their own time and era and place, and the Carver female character seemed to me to have become somewhat dated. There was almost a passive-aggressive quality to the way she would emerge, she would surface for a moment from her life, which was almost like a life of sleep, she would respond and then she'd sink to the bottom again. The big question I had for myself was do I really want to spend a year or two, knowing how long it takes to write anything, in the company of this woman? Ultimately, working with Ray was the deciding factor.

In adapting "So Much Water, So Close to Home" to a new setting in both time and place, what was the guiding idea that you wanted to address in "Jindabyne"?

We conceived of the story as a kind of a ghost story. Everybody in the story is haunted by something, whether it's somebody who's died, or whether it's a past they would like to change, or whether it's the person they thought they might have been but never became. There is this group of haunted people, and then you have the serial killer who emerges in his season to create havoc.

People are now haunted by the future. I think when you talked to people about the future at the turn of the 20th century, even though nobody had any idea what was going to happen in the 21st century, people were genuinely smiling when they talked about it. They were quite optimistic. Then, after September 11, when you talked to people about the future they tended to look haunted because everybody became very anxious about what might happen.

In our film, when Gregory comes out and kills, people suddenly become haunted by the future. And that creates the imperative for them to deal with some of the things that have risen up from the past. The girl's body being found in the river is a beautiful but terrible image of something rising to the surface emotionally for the men.

Can you talk a little bit about the exploration of the different ways men and women handle problematic situations in the story? And how that compares to Raymond Carver's "So Much Water, So Close to Home" written all those years ago?

The men's business and women's business in the story was quite a challenge for me to write. I grew up in an era where, politically, you were supposed to think of men and women as being the same. As I've gotten older, of course, I've realized that it's possible to be equal and be very different. As the script developed, and I talked to men and women, it became more and more obvious that they had very different attitudes. You talk to men about the fishing and even though most men couldn't imagine themselves doing it (leaving the girl there and going fishing) they were also much more prone to saying 'Well she's dead, you know, so there wasn't really anything you could do.' When you talk to women about it, it was as if they instinctively understood that what the men did was actually shocking. And there it became quite a polarized situation.

What would you like the audience to take away after they've seen the film?

If you're living in a world where you can't control what happens, which we all are, where really quite bad things can intrude into everyone's life, and where you feel quite powerless, when you're sitting there watching television and there are people being blown up and people being killed in wars that you haven't been able to prevent and all the rest of it, how do you keep going, particularly if you no longer have faith in a particular religion? So, one of the themes in the film has been this sense of people's spiritual beliefs. My own feeling is that you've got your personal integrity and you've got community and, even though they seem old fashioned and simplistic, hopefully by the end of the film when we see everyone gathered around the smoking we'll get a sense those things can actually help you through difficult times.

Laura Linney - Claire

Laura Linney attended the acclaimed Juilliard School and began her acting career in theatre. Her first film role was in George Miller's "Lorenzo's Oil" (1992). She came to prominence playing Mary Ann Singleton in the groundbreaking Armistead Maupin's "Tales of the City" TV mini-series on PBS in 1993. In 1996, she co-starred with Richard Gere in the thriller "Primal Fear". On the strength of her performance, Clint Eastwood cast Ms Linney in "Absolute Power" (1997). Her career continued to gather momentum with critical and audience acclaim for her roles in Peter Weir's "The Truman Show" (1998) and the award-winning "You Can Count On Me" (2000). For that film she earned Best Actress nominations from the Screen Actors' Guild, the Golden Globes and the Academy Awards (Oscars) in addition to Best Actress awards from the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Society of Film. In 2003, she starred in Clint Eastwood's Mystic River and the Working Title box office smash "Love, Actually". She was again nominated for a Golden Globe and an Oscar in 2005, for Best Supporting Actress in Fox Searchlight's "Kinsey". Later in the year, Ms Linney garnered widespread praise for her performances in "P.S.", "The Exorcism of Emily Rose", and "The Squid and the Whale". Among the numerous accolades bestowed upon her, she has also received two Emmys, one for "Wild Iris", a television movie, and the other for her work on the final season of "Frasier". An accomplished theatre actress, she regularly returns to the stage, and has been twice nominated for Tony Awards, first in 2002 for her portrayal of Elizabeth Proctor in the Broadway revival of "The Crucible", and again in 2005 for her performance as Patricia in "Sight Unseen". Her recent feature films include "Driving Lessons", "Man of the Year", and the upcoming "Breach".

Film Credits

(2005) The Exorcism of Emily Rose
(2004) The Squid and the Whale
(2004) Kinsey
(2004) P.S.
(2003) Love, Actually
(2003) Mystic River
(2003) The Life of David Gale
(2002) The Mothman Prophecies
(2002) The Laramie Project
(2000) Maze (aka Touched)
(2000) The House of Mirth
(2000) You Can Count on Me
(1999) Lush
(1999) Love Letters
(1998) The Truman Show
(1997) Absolute Power
(1996) Primal Fear
(1995) Congo
(1994) A Simple Twist of Fate
(1993) Searching for Bobby Fischer (aka Innocent Moves)
(1993) Dave
(1992) Lorenzo's Oil

Interview with Laura Linney

Can you tell us when you first read the story of "Jindabyne"?

I read the script two or three years ago. Anthony LaPaglia called me on the phone and said there's a script coming your way that a really great director is doing and you should do it. And I listened to Anthony. So, I kept an eye out for it. It arrived. I read it, loved it, of course. It's based on the Raymond Carver short story so the primary resource was such a beautifully written piece of work, and the script is equally wonderful.

So when you have material that's that good, in the hands of someone who has such insight, and you're filming in a remarkable location, it's hard to say no.

Can you talk to us about Claire, your character?

My character is an American who married an Irishman and lives in Jindabyne with their young son. She is haunted by the consequences of her life and some of the choices that she has made. Their marriage is challenging, as most are. They've weathered a lot, they have a lot to weather, they have a great love for each other, but they're trying to figure each other out.

Can you tell us what it is like work-ing with Ray Lawrence?

He has extreme faith and trust in his actors and his crew. I've always found that when you do things for the right reasons, and that's not always possible to do all the time, because we're human beings, but if you really try and do things for the right reasons, everything sort of works out. He has been very thoughtful and respectful to the story, why the story is being told, what's being told, who is telling it and he just stays out of the way. He guides it beautifully. It's his movie, through and through. But he lets everyone do what it is they know how to do, and then he braids it together in this fabulous creation. The entire movie is one take, and I've worked on movies before that are one take, but not an entire film. He only works with natural light, so there's very little equipment around, and things move very fast. And, fortunately, I've worked this way in the past, with Clint Eastwood, so I have a little bit of experience with it. And I'm very glad that I've had that experience to prepare me for this one. You learn a lot about relaxation and how to trust the story and not think too much about yourself. The trick is to sort of move in through the scene and just move out of it. If you start thinking too much about, 'it's only one take and I've got to get it right', nothing will happen and it won't be very interesting. So there is just a sense of staying calm, knowing what you're doing, being invested in what you're doing and trying not to predict what's really going to happen when the camera rolls.

As an actress, how do you prepare for working this way?

Well, I think you have to do as much work as you possibly can on your own and then you surrender. You surrender to the story, because that's what Ray's doing. He has prepared and prepared and made every choice and every decision with great care and with fierce respect and responsibility towards the script and the story. And then he knows to step back and let the work unfold on its own. Everybody works very differently and I tend to work very differently on every single movie I do. With this one, I read the script over and over and over. I read it every day. In the United States there is the Arthur Murray School of Dance and they used to have these kits, I think in the fifties, that you could send away for. They would arrive at your house and it would be shoe prints that you would put on the floor and you would step from step one to step two to step three. A great script in the hands of a great director is a little bit like that. Between a really great director and a really great writer those steps are all there for you, and you just have to follow and the rest of it will. It is where skill and faith will intertwine.

Can you talk about the notion of difference between men and women in the story?

There is a split, without a doubt. You do wonder if three women had gone fishing and found a man floating in the water, what would they have done? The very nature of what and who a man is, and what and who a woman is, really comes into play. And the complexities of that. There are certain things that men will never understand about women and certain things that women will never understand about men. I think that is part of what keeps us together. It is part of the nature of the two sexes, how you can be so close intellectually and physically and so divided. It just opens up into unknown and frightening territory about the sexes. And all of that is bubbling under the surface as well.

What do the men and women have in common?

Everyone in this movie is struggling for something that is a little beyond them. They are struggling for some sense of life or identity or place, or something. Things are shifting for everybody.

What was it like working in Australia, and in the Jindabyne landscape in particular?

You know, as someone who's not accustomed to this environment, I've never seen a sky that felt so much like a dome. I've never seen a landscape that was so vast. Vast! We have Montana and Wyoming in the

United States, but nothing like Jindabyne. Being in a country that is so large, and with so few people, there's this wonderful power to the nature and the beauty of the landscape. On a daily basis it affects you, both positively and negatively. It can be a little disquieting at times and then other times it can be so beautiful. You feel so fortunate to look around and there's no other person in sight. You're looking hundreds of miles in every direction. So there's an odd emotional balance to that. There is a real confluence of energies pulling you in different directions here. The magnificent beauty, at times, is daunting because it is so wild.

Gabriel Byrne - Stewart

Irish-born Gabriel Byrne has worked with some of cinema's leading directors including the Coen Brothers, Wim Wenders, Jim Jarmush, Ken Loach, John Boorman, David Cronenberg, Michael Mann, and Bryan Singer. Moving between independent and big-budget Hollywood films, he has starred in 35 pictures, produced three and written two. He was nominated for a Tony Award for Eugene O'Neill's "Moon For The Misbegotten" in 2000. Mr Byrne made a welcome return to Broadway in 2005, winning glowing reviews for his performance as Cornelius Melody in another O'Neill play, "A Touch of The Poet". Upcoming features include "Wah-Wah", starring with Emily Watson, and "Played".

Film Credits

(2005) Assault On Precinct 13
(2004) The Bridge Of San Luis Rey
(2004) P.S.
(2004) Vanity Fair
(2003) Shade
(2002) Ghost Ship
(2002) Emmett's Mark
(2002) Spider
(2002) Virginia's Run
(2000) When Brendan Met Trudy
(2000) Canone Inverso - Making Love
(1999) End Of Days
(1999) Stigmata
(1998) Enemy Of The State
(1998) Quest For Camelot (aka Magic Sword: Quest For Camelot)
(1998) The Brylcreem Boys
(1998) The Man In The Iron Mask
(1998) Polish Wedding
(1997) This Is The Sea
(1997) The End Of Violence
(1997) Smilla's Sense Of Snow
(1996) Dr Hagar's Disease
(1996) Somebody Is Waiting
(1996) The Last Of The High Kings
(1996) Mad Dog Time
(1995) Frankie Starlight
(1995) The Usual Suspects
(1995) Dead Man
(1994) All Things Bright And Beautiful
(1994) Little Women
(1994) Trial By Jury
(1994) A Simple Twist Of Fate
(1994) Prince Of Jutland

(1993) A Dangerous Woman
(1993) Point Of No Return
(1992) Into The West
(1992) Cool World
(1991) Haakon Haakonsen (aka Shipwrecked)
(1990) Miller's Crossing
(1989) Diamond Skulls (Aka Dark Obsession)
(1988) The Courier
(1988) A Soldier's Tale
(1987) Lionheart
(1987) Siesta
(1987) Hello Again
(1987) Giulia E Giulia (aka Julia And Julia)
(1986) Gothic
(1985) Defence Of The Realm
(1983) The Keep
(1983) Hanna K.
(1983) The Rocking Horse Winner
(1981) Excalibur

Interview with Gabriel Byrne

What is "Jindabyne" about?

The story is about four men who come upon the body of a woman in the river and, not out of any sense of badness or lack of feeling, decide to leave the body in the river and not report it to the police until they get back from their fishing trip. Like many situations that we find ourselves in, in life, we're unaware of the consequences of our actions until those consequences come home to visit us in all kinds of unexpected ways. So the film is really about how this incident haunts these men and the lives of the people who are closest to them.

Tell us about Stewart, the character you play.

Stewart is a working-class, ordinary man who owns a garage. He used to be a rally driver and he has given up that life to become settled in this community. Not a simple man, but a man who lives a pretty simple predictable life up until this moment. As a result of this incident he's forced to examine who he really is morally, emotionally, and socially. Stewart and Claire have had their troubles like any couple in a long-term relationship. They love each other but as a result of this incident they're forced to examine not just who they are individually but who they are as a couple.

What was it that made you want to do this film?

I met Ray Lawrence in New York. When we met he talked about how he saw the film as a ghost story, the idea that this incident that's taken place haunted the lives not just of the men who it happened to, but all the people on the periphery by implication. It sounded intriguing. I'd seen "Lantana" and I knew that he would make something really interesting. This is a film that makes you think about your life. I remember Ray saying to me, 'I think you should do this film. It would be really nice if you came to Australia and did it. It would be a work experience but I think it would be an important spiritual experience for you.' That is what stuck with me. Nobody has ever said that to me before as a reason to do a film.

What has it been like working with Ray Lawrence and his one-take process?

This is the least conventional film I think I have ever done and it is letting go of all the things that you can usually rely on. The whole thing is about letting go. It's a scary sort of process for most actors. All the things that actors like to depend on, like make-up and lighting and so forth, the security and comfort of eight or ten takes, that's all gone. Every actor is different. Some actors get it on the first take, others, you know, are just warming up after take five or six or ten maybe, but you don't have that security. It allows you an incredible freedom and, ultimately, it's your responsibility. You can always ask for another take.

Ray doesn't give much direction. He doesn't even say action. I've never worked with a director who never said action before, and he usually talks about the scene after it's over. So, yes, it's scary. Ray will say he's not directing the film, that he's trying to contain what's happened, but I think that everything, everything, in a way, comes from his vision. Ray thinks unlike any other director I've ever worked with, he shoots like no director I've ever worked with and his vision is unique to him.

Does this affect the way you approach your character?

In a more conventional approach to making a film, it is like climbing a rock, you have more places to grab hold of. Here you don't seem to have any places to grab hold of. I think that the closer I moved to thinking about the character as myself, the more sure the journey felt. When Stewart and his friends commit this transgression they don't even know they are doing it. They do this thing, they actually think they are doing something right, by tying up the body and leaving it in the water, but it is after they get back they realise what they have done. That has happened to me in my life. I have done something and didn't think about the consequences of it and sometime later I realise, how could I have done that? What did I do? It is something you never forget.

What do you think people will take from this story?

Everybody, I think, comes to a different conclusion. It brings up all kinds of questions about morality and, in Stewart's case, his marriage, and what is responsible behaviour. Guilt, regret, community, ritual, marriage, sex, love, friendship between men, friendship between women, all those issues to a greater or lesser extent are raised. The audience's reaction to it will be complex. On the one hand you have people who will disagree with the actions of the men. On the other, people will understand it. Hopefully people will identify with the reality of the dilemma that these people are forced to confront.

Deborra-lee Furness - Jude

A native of Melbourne, Deborra-lee Furness graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. She has since received a string of awards including honors from the Seattle International Film Festival, the Australian Film Critics' Circle Award and the prestigious Variety Award. Additionally, her guest role on the Australian ABC's hit television series "SeaChange" earned her a nomination for an Australian Film Institute Award. Deborra-lee has worked extensively in Australian film, television and theatre. Recognized for her roles in the Australian features "Jenny Kissed Me", "Waiting", "A Matter of Convenience", "Angel Baby" and "Shame", which won critical acclaim around the world for both the film and her performance, she has also distinguished herself in her television roles, including Corelli in the series of the same name and, before that, "Act of Betrayal", "Fire and Kings". Deborra-lee's US credits include "Blue Heat", "Voyager" and "Newsies". Having directed theatre in both London and the US, she more recently wrote and directed her first short film, "Standing Room Only". Deborra-lee currently resides in the US with her husband, son and daughter.

"Jude, my Jude—you always get very possessive of your characters. Jude is in a lot of pain. She comes across on the page as sort of grumpy, and she's mean to her granddaughter, but it's like anything, when you understand where someone is coming from, you get them. I love her strength to battle on, to fight through what she's got to get through to come out the other side. There's no handbook on how to deal with grief. When you're suffering, you just have to go through it. She has incredible loyalty to her husband, they're a great team, and as I see her, she's a matriarch. She's been in this town the longest and I think she feels a certain responsibility to make sure everyone else is okay, even though we find her at this time in her life when she needs to be looked after. For some people it's hard to go back and let others take care of them. So she's tough, she's strong.

Men and women are very different and we deal very differently with grief. I don't think the men really get to the nitty-gritty. I think women need, have the need, to talk more. We have to say, I feel this, I feel that. We need to talk about it. So I think women talk and men go fishing!"

John Howard - Carl

John Howard graduated from Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in 1978 and has established himself as one of Australia's most prolific, in-demand and beloved actors. He has appeared in numerous feature films including "A Man's Gotta Do", "Japanese Story", "The Man Who Sued God", "Blackrock", "Dating the Enemy", "Young Einstein", "A Cry in the Dark", "Strikebound" and "The Club". On television, he has cemented a huge fan base with his appearances in a number of critically successful, top-rating Australian series including "SeaChange", "Changi", "Always Greener" and "All Saints". As a theatre actor he commanded attention from his earliest performances, including the title role in "Nicholas Nickleby", as Iago in "Othello", and as Galileo in "The Life of Galileo". He has received a Critics' Circle Award and a Variety Club of Australia Heart Award for his performances in "The Crucible" and "The Mongrels", and has been nominated for two Australian Film Institute Best Actor Awards.

"All of the characters have some struggle in their personal lives. Carl is a fairly straightforward and honest person who runs a caravan park. He's a shambling, pot-bellied man, of generally good humor, who drinks too much. He hasn't properly dealt with his daughter's death some year and half or so before. He's caught between his granddaughter, Caylin-Calandria, whose behavior is becoming increasingly wild as she tries, in her little-girl fantasy way, to get rid of the pain that she's feeling, and his wife, Jude, who hasn't properly begun to grieve for her daughter either. Carl is not necessarily a particularly philosophical person, nor a deep thinker, although every now and then he unwittingly comes out with very wise things."

Leah Purcell -Carmel

Leah Purcell is one of Australia's leading actresses. Her performance alongside Anthony LaPaglia and Geoffrey Rush in Ray Lawrence's "Lantana" brought her recognition when, jointly with the other female leads, she received the Independent Filmmaker Award for Best Actress, as well as a nomination for a Film Critics' Circle of Australia Award. She followed this success with roles in the award-winning "Somersault", and the 2005 AFI winner "The Proposition". Prior to this she appeared in the short feature "Lennie Cahill" "Shoots Through" and "Somewhere in the Darkness". Ms Purcell's first regular television role was in the hit series "Police Rescue", followed by an Australian Film Institute Best Actress nomination for her role in "Fallen Angels". She has had enormous success on stage, including with her triumphant, self-devised, one-woman show, "Box the Pony" which toured to London and the Edinburgh Festival. Most recently she gained great acclaim for her portrayal of Condoleeza Rice in David Hare's play "Stuff Happens" in sellout seasons in both Sydney and Melbourne.

"What I loved about the script was there were six strong lead characters and they all had their own journey. An ensemble piece is hard to write and hard to cover and, although it was a smaller part, Carmel, my character, had a middle, beginning and end. That's something you look for as an actor, so you can really sink your teeth into it."

"For Carmel it's about being haunted from your past. Trying to work out who you are, where you fit in life and where you don't fit. She doesn't belong. Well, she does belong, but she doesn't know where she fits into the circumstances within her own personal journey as a character, and with the other characters, and the life in Jindabyne. Carmel is a city girl. I think she opted to go to the bush where there was a strong Aboriginal community. She's never denied her aboriginality, she's always aware of it, she's always proud of it, but she just didn't know how to connect to it. She's a strong woman, a professional, she's gone to university to be a teacher. At the same time, she's fighting with her own demons. She's got this yearning inside her that she doesn't quite understand. She's confused, she's at a crossroads, and she's the character that doesn't quite fit in. As the story of the film unfolds, the indigenous issue that does arise is really thrown at her, and she doesn't know how to deal with it."

Stelios Yiakmis - Rocco

Stelios Yiakmis was born in New Zealand in 1965. After graduating in drama from the University of Otago, he found fame in the long-running and hugely successful New Zealand serial “Shortland Street” where he played Dr Johnny Marinovich. His feature film appearances include “This Is Not a Love Story” and “The Last Tattoo”. In Australia, Stelios has appeared in top-rating network programs “McLeod’s Daughters” and “All Saints”. Stelios’ theatre credits include the lead role of Petruchio at the Christchurch Court Theatre production of “Kiss Me Kate”.

“Rocco is an unbelievable gift to me as an actor. He doesn’t have a great deal to say, he’s not stupid, but he’s not a great intellectual. He comes from a very visceral approach to life. That’s what people are looking for in story telling. The punters really don’t care what you think, they’re interested in how you feel in a situation. They’re interested in how human beings viscerally respond to being thrown into peculiar and challenging situations.”

Alice Garner - Elissa

Alice Garner has been acting since she was child, in theatre, film, television and radio. Her film credits include features Monkey Grip (Australian Film Institute nomination), “Nostradamus Kid”, “Lover Boy”, “Love and Other Catastrophes” (Film Critics’ Circle Award, AFI nomination) and “Strange Planet”, as well as numerous short films. She played Carmen in the acclaimed Australian television series “SeaChange” (ABC-TV) and followed this with her role as Caitlin in the top-rating “Secret Life of Us” (TEN). In theatre she has performed with leading Australian companies including Playbox, Anthill and Melbourne Theatre Company. An accomplished cellist, she has recorded several albums with Xylouris Ensemble and, with them, featured on the soundtrack of Rachel Perkins’ film One Night the Moon (2001 AFI best original score; 2003 APRA Best Soundtrack Album).

“Elissa is quite self-possessed and prepared to stand up for herself and for Billy. What’s important about the relationship between Elissa and Billy is that Billy is a very young man and he’s still open to influence, particularly from other, older men. I think Elissa’s concern is that he not be moulded by them into a kind of hard and uncommunicative man, which is what those older men seem to her to be.

My character was not a mother in the first script that I read but, being a breast-feeding mother, I brought Ted to the rehearsals in Jindabyne. Bea, the scriptwriter, was quite keen on him, and on the second day she came up and said, ‘I want Ted to be in the film.’ So Simon Stone and I had to sit down and figure that one out—whose child is he? It actually enriched our characters and our relationship a lot.

Ray doesn’t want people to think about their performance too much, he just wants it to happen as spontaneously as possible. When you’re performing with a baby it means that you’re not thinking about yourself. I had one scene when I had to perform without Ted and I felt quite bare.”

Simon Stone - Billy (‘the Kid’)

At the beginning of his acting career Simon has earned a reputation as ‘a new talent to watch.’ By age 18 he had already made four television appearances on popular favorites in Australia such as “Blue Heelers”, “MDA” and “John Safran’s Music Jamboree”. He recently completed his acting training at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) in Melbourne and has a great passion for theatre. In his final year at VCA he played in the classics “The Cherry Orchard”, “The Three Sisters”, “Midsummer Night’s Dream” and “The Caucasian Chalk Circle”. “Jindabyne” is his first feature film.

“Billy is what Ray calls a blow-in. He’s just been brought by the winds of chance into this town, and he’s one of those marvelous chameleons that can adapt himself to any situation. He finds a home amongst strangers. I think that’s his eternal attempt in the film, to fit in and belong. He’s someone who always has respect for everyone around him. That’s how he can be a chameleon, because he loves life and loves being

with people and interacting with them. Then things become more difficult and there is a wedge driven between everyone in the film. I think Billy starts to realise that he needs to look after himself and the things that are really dear to him, instead of just trying to belong. His relationship with Stewart is incredibly important to him. His relationship with Elissa is his greatest passion.”

Betty Lucas - Vanessa

Betty Lucas' career spans 50 years, encompassing radio, TV, film and stage both in Australia and the UK where she initially played juvenile lead roles for 18 months at the Playhouse, Nottingham. In Australia Miss Lucas has played leading and feature roles for commercial theatre companies and all the State theatre companies. Selected stage productions include “Patate”, opposite Leo McKern for the Melbourne Theatre Co, “The Crucible”, playing Elizabeth Proctor for The Old Tote, and later Rebecca Nurse for The Sydney Theatre Company; most recently, “Suddenly Last Summer” for Company B and “Aunty and Me” for The Ensemble Theatre. In feature films, Miss Lucas has appeared in “Wendy Cracked a Walnut”, “My First Wife”, “Stanley: Every Home Should Have One”, “Rat Race”, “The Alternative”, “Between Wars” and “A Girl in Australia”. She has made many appearances on series television and miniseries, most recently in the popular Australian television shows “Always Greener”, “All Saints” and “Blue Heelers”.

Vanessa is a mother, a grandmother and a mother-in-law. I think she is bossy. She has looked after Tom from when was a baby until he was 18 months old. She has become part of the household and she has taken over. Of course this woman is very efficient, she is a good housekeeper, but she is bossy. People develop habits you know, and unless some-one tells them they just keep going. She is lonely, and every time she leaves the place the audience sees she is unhappy. So you get the contrast of this woman who presents herself in this way, but she is not going to let them see that she is lonely. Claire and Vanessa are not exactly close, there is that feeling that Claire is trying so hard, but you feel they are never going to get together. I have been a working actress since I was six-teen, but you are never sure of yourself. No matter how old you get, you think, ‘Can I do it? Will I be able to do what he wants?’ We talked a little bit about my character, but not much. I eventually got a phone call from Ray. He said, ‘Betty, you have a natural sweetness. I want your character to have steel inside.’ He just said those words.”

Chris Haywood - Gregory

Chris Haywood has amassed an impressive 72 film credits in his 30-year career, including the Australian classics “The Removalists”, “Breaker Morant”, “Heatwave”, “The Man from Snowy River”, “Razorback”, “Shine”, “Muriel’s Wedding”, “Blackrock”, “Oscar and Lucinda” and “Kiss or Kill”. Chris also appeared in the first features of acclaimed directors Peter Weir (“The Cars that Ate Paris”), Phillip Noyce (“Newsfront”) and Scott Hicks (“Freedom”). His performances have been honored with three Awards from the Australian Film Institute (from a total of eight nominations) for his roles in the feature films “A Street to Die For” and “Emerald City”, and for television in “Stingers”. Additionally, he has garnered three Logie Awards for his work on television—for “Essington”, “Good Thing Going” and “Janus”.

As a character Gregory is the embodiment of an evil spirit. Here’s a community which is carrying on day-to-day life when suddenly there’s a shocking murder that takes place and the perpetrator of this event is living there amongst them as if nothing is happening. I think it’s a very good sort of analogy as to what’s happening with the state of the world at the moment.”

Eva Lazzaro - Caylin-Calandria

At 10 years of age Eva Lazzaro is already earning a reputation as a rising young star since her appearances on the popular Australian television drama series “Blue Heelers, and in television commercials. “Jindabyne” marks her feature film debut.

“Caylin-Calandria lives in Jindabyne, in a caravan park. Her parents own a caravan park—well her grandparents do. Her mum’s died, and she has no dad. I must say, a lot of the time I feel sorry for her. I think she’s two sides of the coin. One side of her is just an innocent seven-year-old girl, and the other side has experienced a lot with her mum’s death from breast cancer. I think Caylin-Calandria finds the death of her mum really scary, and she finds Jude really scary, because Jude’s a scary lady, you know? Not in real life, Deb’s a lovely, kind woman, except Jude is scary. I think she’s very scared of Jude and, towards the end, she feels comfortable with Carl. Caylin-Calandria has kind of adopted Claire as her mum because she’s thinking, ‘Well, I’ve got to find a new mum, because my mum’s dead, so I’ll take Claire, she’s good enough.’”

Sean Rees-Wemyss - Tom

Despite his tender age, seven-year-old Sean Rees-Wemyss already has a string of credits to his name as a voice-over artist and through his appearances in television commercials. “Jindabyne” is his first feature film.

“Ray was just really kind and funny. He gave me a spider because I really love spiders because I know a lot about them. I’ve read nearly all the books on spiders in the Melbourne library. In some ways I feel sorry for Ray. He’s got a really big job, dealing with this and dealing with that. Sometimes the mic’s not right, and sometimes the actors make a mistake, and Ray has got to be there no matter what. It would be really tiring for him to just sit there all day, staring at the screen. Just imagine sitting down and just staring at one plant for, like, two minutes then getting up for one second and saying, ‘Next time can you do this?’ and getting back in this little box thing, and sitting down and staring at it for two minutes. So, yeah, I feel sorry for him. And I don’t feel sorry for him in a way, because he can explain well and that would make it easier. I think he’s just one of the best directors.”

Tatea Reilly - Susan

“Jindabyne” is Tatea’s first feature film. She started her career as a performer with the Aboriginal Dance Theatre. At the age of nine Tatea appeared in the short film “Nightwork” before beginning her training at the PACT Youth Theatre. Over her four years at PACT she has concentrated on music, dance, and set design as well as helping devise various performance pieces including for the Stand Your Ground project. Most recently she appeared with PACT as part of the Constellations season.

The Production Team

David Williamson - Director of Photography

David Williamson's relationship with the director Ray Lawrence goes back to "Bliss", Ray Lawrence's award-winning first feature. An integral part of the team, David Williamson has been lighting commercials for Ray Lawrence for many years. He is one of the most experienced camera operators in the world whose 27 film credits include all three of The Matrix films, "Peter Pan" and "Muriel's Wedding".

Margot Wilson - Production & Costume Designer

A costume designer on over 19 feature films and mini-series, some of her credits include "Japanese Story", "Ghost Ship" and Terrence Malick's "The Thin Red Line". Margot was nominated for an AFI Award for Best Costume Design for Ray Lawrence's "Lantana", and in 2005 she won the award for her work on John Hillcoat's "The Proposition". Margot has been in constant demand since her career in production and costume design began in 1996, when she designed the costumes for the Sydney Theatre Company's production of "A Fabulous Night at the Trocadero".

Deborah Riley - Art Director

With a design background in both architecture and theatre arts Deborah has forged a successful and varied career in film, advertising, theatre and corporate work. Her film credits include "The Matrix", "Anna and the King" (nominated for an Academy Award for Production Design in 2000) and "Real Women Have Curves". Deborah was assistant art director on "Moulin Rouge" which won a prestigious US Art Directors' Guild Award for Excellence in Production Design. More recently, Deborah was art director on the highly praised "21 Grams" and was Australian art director on 2004's "Godzilla—The Final Wars". She has just completed work on the new Working Title feature "The Middle of Nowhere".

Karl Sodersten - Editor

In 2001 Karl cut Ray Lawrence's "Lantana" and his work was nominated for editing awards from both the Australian Film Institute and the Film Critics' Circle of Australia, while the film itself picked up seven AFI Awards. Karl has been editing since the late 70s and his work has been wide and varied. He started his career with commercials and later moved into television. For the ABC he has cut TV features, documentaries, children's and science series. For Channel 7 he worked on comedy series including Norman Gunston. For SBS, Karl made documentaries, food series, cultural and sports magazines. In 1986, he started his own company, Karl Marks Pty Ltd. Though specializing in commercials where he has won national and international awards, he has also cut many short films and music clips.

Paul Kelly - Composer

Paul Kelly is one of Australia's best-known singer/songwriters. David Fricke, music editor of Rolling Stone in the US, called Kelly 'one of the finest songwriters I have ever heard, Australian or otherwise'. With around 20 albums to his name, including several film scores, Paul Kelly has never gone out of favour. In 1989 Paul Kelly wrote a song and released an album ("So Much Water So Close To Home") inspired by the same Raymond Carver story on which "Jindabyne" is based.

Dan Luscombe - Composer

Dan Luscombe is a Melbourne-based musician, and a member of The Blackeyed Susans, Dan Kelly and the Alpha Males, and Paul Kelly and the Boon Companions. Having previously worked together on the film Tom White, this is the second time Dan Luscombe and Paul Kelly have collaborated on a film score.

Soteria Bell

A group of singers based in Melbourne, Australia, Soteria Bell performs traditional and original music from around the world including Mongolia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Venezuela, India and Japan. With unique and unusual arrangements for voice and minimal instrumentation including violin, thumb piano, tuned glasses and harmonium, members of the group have diverse backgrounds in the fields of improvisation, harmonic singing and classical styles.

Andrew Plain Sound Designer

Andrew has been providing quality soundtracks to Australian and overseas films and television series for the past 20 years. Andrew, with his own company Huzzah Sound, has worked on a wide range of projects including Jane Campion's "In The Cu't", Gillian Armstrong's "Charlotte Gray" and "Oscar and Lucinda", Ray Lawrence's "Lantana", Rolf De Heer's "Alexandra's Project" and Dwight Little's "Anacondas—The Hunt for the Blood Orchid". Over the years, Andrew's work has been recognized with numerous awards including two Golden Reel nominations, 10 AFI Best Sound nominations resulting in three AFI Awards for Best Sound, and an Independent Film award for Best Sound Design.

Catherine Jarman - Producer

Catherine's career in the film industry began in 1980 working with Ray Lawrence at his production company Window Productions. In 1984 she worked on Ray Lawrence's first feature "Bliss" as production assistant. In 1985 Catherine worked on Australian and off-shore projects until a job offer took her to London where she worked with RSA, one of the world's most successful production companies for commercials.

In 1988, Catherine worked for RSA in Australia and facilitated all production for them there before rejoining Window Productions as Ray Lawrence's producer. Since that time she has produced commercial campaigns in Australia, the US and France that have received awards and recognition worldwide. Window recently won the most prestigious award at Cannes, the Gold Lion award.

In 2000 Catherine line produced the critically acclaimed feature film "Lantana".

Philippa Bateman - Executive Producer

Philippa Bateman is CEO and one of the founders of April Films. April started life with a first-look deal with Universal Studios and later United Artists/MGM. She was also the acquisitions representative for United Artists/MGM for Australia from 2002–2004.

In 2004, with April partner Garry Charny, Philippa set up the April Babcock & Brown Movie Venture with investment bank Babcock & Brown. "Jindabyne", directed by Ray Lawrence, is the first film to be financed through the venture.

Prior to working in film exclusively, Philippa worked in the visual arts, journalism and academia. Her career in feature film began in Los Angeles working with Oscar-winning screenwriter William Kelley ("Witness", directed by Peter Weir). She continued to work in feature script development and feature

production in the UK before returning to Australia in the mid-1990s where she worked as a senior development and production executive for the AFC (Australian Film Commission). Philippa backed the first films of directors such as Rowan Woods (“The Boys”, “Little Fish”), Gregor Jordan (“Two Hands”, “Buffalo Soldiers”, “Ned Kelly”), Christina Andreef (“Soft Fruit”) and Tony Ayres (“Walking on Water”, “Home Song Stories”). Philippa has overseen the production of several feature films including “The Boys” (directed by Rowan Woods and starring Toni Collette and David Wenham) and “Thank God He Met Lizzie” (starring Cate Blanchett and Frances O’Connor).

She has been and remains responsible for the creative development of the April slate and works closely with writers and directors on all April projects. She is also in charge of the creation and implementation of April Distribution’s marketing strategy.

Garry Charny - Executive Producer

With a background in corporate advisory, finance, theatre and the law, Garry was responsible for the merger of April Films and Macquarie Film and Television to create April Entertainment—of which he is a major shareholder. He was instrumental in establishing and implementing The April Babcock & Brown Movie Joint Venture with leading investment bank Babcock & Brown—currently the pre-eminent private equity financier of feature films in Australia.

He is Executive Chairman of April Films and a principal of Wolseley Corporate and Media, a leading Sydney-based corporate advisory house. In that role he has been responsible for advising on and investing in numerous media transactions including the building and running of the (now publicly listed) Macquarie Radio Network, the start-up of Macquarie Film and Television, the takeover bid for the Brisbane Broncos Football Franchise and Ecomm—a General Electric joint venture in Australia. Prior to that, he practised for over a decade as a Sydney barrister specialising in commercial and equity work. Garry is a former director of Belvoir Street Theatre Limited and owner of Charny Green Productions whose productions include the award-winning “Gertrude Stein and a Companion” (starring Miriam Margolyes and Pamela Rabe) and “The Venetian Twins” (starring Drew Forsythe and Dennis Olsen). He has produced and directed extensively for the stage and executive produced many hours of television. Garry’s other passion is horse racing and breeding and for some years he was involved with the internationally renowned Strawberry Hill Stud. He currently owns Belannah Stud and has been a director of Australia’s leading racehorse auction house, Magic Millions Sales.