

THE DROVER'S BOY



SYNOPSIS The Drover's Boy is an award-winning hybrid documentary set in the 1920s outback Australia, which recalls a time when it was illegal for white Australians and Aboriginals to marry. Thus, a drover and his Aboriginal wife are forced to pass off their relationship under the guise of her being a 'drover's boy'. This meant she had to bind her breast, cut her hair and change her name to disguise herself as an Aboriginal boy. This tender and important love story, based on a ballad by Australian bush legend Ted Egan, pays tribute to this forbidden union and the significant and under-represented contribution Aboriginal women have made to the pastoral history of frontier Australia.



FESTIVALS + AWARDS

FESTIVALS | 2017

SCREENINGS

- BERLIN INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL - Official Selection 2017 | Berlin
- QUEENS WORLD FILM FESTIVAL - Official Selection 2017 | New York
- ETHNOGRAFILM FESTIVAL - Official Selection 2017 | Paris

FESTIVALS | 2016

AWARDS

- DUNGOG SHORT FILM FESTIVAL - WINNER | Best Australian Director - Documentary + RUNNER UP - Best Australian Short Documentary 2016 | Australia
- MELBOURNE DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL - WINNER | Best Indigenous Short 2016 | Australia
- ARTE NON-STOP FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE CINE Y ARTE - JURY SPECIAL MENTION: SILVER PALMS AWARD 2016 | Buenos Aires
- WORLDFEST-HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL FILM - PLATINUM REMI AWARD | USA

SCREENINGS + TOURS

- ST KILDA FILM FESTIVAL – Official Selection 2016 + DIRECTOR'S CHOICE | Official Festival Tour | Australia
- HEART OF GOLD INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL - Official Selection 2016 + FESTIVAL DIRECTOR'S CHOICE | Official Selection Festival Tour 2016 | Australia
- TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL/ SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL - Official Shorts Program | A touring festival that brings the best of Sydney Film Festival to regional Australia 2015/16

FESTIVALS | 2015

AWARDS

- SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL - Official Selection 2015 | SHORTLISTED - Event Cinema Australian Short Screenplay Award 2015 | Australia
- INTERNATIONAL SAMOBOR FILM MUSIC FESTIVAL (ISFMF) – WINNER | Best Original Score 2015 | Croatia

SCREENINGS

- ADELAIDE FILM FESTIVAL - Official Selection 2015 | Australia
- ANTENNA DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL - Australian Shorts Competition 2015
- CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - Australian Shorts Competition 2015
- BOFA – Tasmanian Film Festival - Australian Shorts Competition 2015
- CANBERRA SHORT FILM FESTIVAL - Australian Shorts Competition 2015

Lyrics

THE DROVER'S BOY

by Ted Egan

They couldn't understand why the drover cried
As they buried the drover's boy.
The Drover had always seemed so hard,
to the men in his employ
A bolting horse, the stirrup lost,
And the drover's boy was dead
The shovelled dirt, a mumbled word,
And it's back to the road ahead;
And forget about the drover's boy;
Forget about the drover's boy.

And they couldn't understand why the drover cut
The lock of the dead boy's hair
And put it in the band of his battered old hat
As they watched him standing there
And he told them to take the cattle on
I'll sit with the boy a while
A silent thought, a pipe to smoke
And it's ride another mile
And forget about the drover's boy
Forget about the drover's boy.

And they couldn't make out why the drover and the boy
Always camped so far away
For the tall white man and the slim black boy
Never had much to say
And the boy would be gone at the break of dawn
Tail the horses, carry on
While the drover roused the sleeping men
Daylight – hit the road again
And follow the drover's boy, and follow the drover's boy.

In the Camooweal Pub they talked about
The death of the drover's boy
They drank their rum with the stranger who'd come
From the Kimberley run, Fitzroy
And he told of the massacre in the west
Barest details – guess the rest
Shoot the bucks, grab a gin
Cut her hair, break her in
And call her a boy – the drover's boy,
And call her a boy – the drover's boy.

So when they build that stockman's hall of fame
And they talk about the droving game
Remember the girl who was bedmate and guide
Rode with the drover side by side
Watched the bullocks, flayed the hide,
Faithful wife but never bride,
Bred his sons for the cattle run
But don't weep for the drover's boy,
Don't mourn for the drover's boy,
But don't forget the drover's boy.

DIRECTOR'S BIO In 2010, Margaret completed her undergraduate degree from the Australian National University School of Art with Honours in Documentary Photography and Video Art. It was during this degree that she developed her unique visual style and interest in experimental filmmaking. Upon graduation from the ANU, Margaret was awarded the prestigious professional mentorship with the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) in Canberra. Margaret has also studied visual art, photography and filmmaking at Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, Spain and Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland. Her work has been screened locally, interstate and internationally in Europe.

In 2012, Margaret was accepted into the inaugural Graduate Diploma in Documentary at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS). This course focused on the future of nonfiction storytelling and engaged with the latest innovations in documentary filmmaking.

In 2014, she was invited back by AFTRS to direct another film, *The Drover's Boy*, which had its world premiere at the Sydney Film Festival 2015 and was shortlisted for the Event Cinema Australian Short Screenplay Award. *The Drover's Boy* has gone on to screen and win awards at many more festivals in Australia and internationally.

She is currently doing her Master of Research at Macquarie University on Hybrid Documentary, which is a research training pathway to a PhD, and is in production on her next short film. Margaret looks forward to continuing to explore the boundary between video art and documentary filmmaking in her creative practice.



FILMOGRAPHY DIRECTOR

SHORT FILMS

- 2017 **Sun & Moon** - Hybrid Doco | In production
- 2014 **The Drover's Boy** - Hybrid Doco | AFTRS
- 2012 **Devine is Dead** - Reenactment Doco | AFTRS
- 2012 **Soul Searchers** - Observational Doco | AFTRS
- 2012 **The Stirrers** - Hybrid Documentary | AFTRS

VIDEO ART

- 2011 **Limbo** - 2.10min | NFSA
- 2011 **Please Don't Stop Me** - 3.07min | Exhibition commission
- 2010 **The Golden Rule** - 10.27min | ANU School of Art
- 2009 **Fantastic Documentary** - 11.31min | ANU School of Art
- 2009 **Greed** - 4.42min | Uni Politecnica de Valencia, Spain
- 2008 **Mr Brown** - 5.00min | ANU School of Art
- 2008 **Louise & the Meaning of Life** - 3.27min | ANU School of Art

margaretmchugh.com.au

LYN NORFOR – PRODUCER

An experienced producer, Lyn's credits encompass drama, documentary film and television productions. Her films, including ON THE LOOSE and HEADS 'n TAILS have won numerous awards, opened the Sydney Film Festival and screened at Sundance Film Festival. THE LOVE SONG of ISKRA PRUFROCK (writer/director Lucy Gaffy) won 12 international and domestic awards, screened at over 60 international film festivals and was nominated for an Australian Film Institute award for Best Short Film. Lyn and Lucy were recipients of Screen NSW's Emerging Filmmakers Fund for their next short film THE GIFT and their third short film THE FENCE, screened at the Busan International Film Festival 2012. Lyn was selected for Screen Australia's Springboard program (2011-12) for debut features with writer/director Miranda Nation for their psychological thriller UNDERTOW, with their short film PERCEPTION funded for production through Springboard. PERCEPTION won Best Short Film at the Dendy Awards, SFF 2013 and had its international premiere at Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival. UNDERTOW has received development funding from Screen Australia.





JACKSON BUHCK - EDITOR

At age 12 making short films on the family Hi-8 camera, Jackson was naturally gifted in the art of story telling through video. By the time he was in his teenage years he had already made a name for himself with a cult following on his YouTube channel, which as of 2014 has reached 1,505,566 total video views with thousands of subscribers. In 2011 he completed a Certificate IV in Film and Television, which inspired him to turn his passion as a Video Editor into a career. In 2012 and 2013 he developed his technical video skills in a Certificate IV and Diploma of Digital Media. In 2014 Jackson was accepted in to the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) where he completed the Graduate Diploma in Editing.

YUNYU ONG - COMPOSER

Yunyu is a composer specialising in reality contorting music. A recent screen composing graduate of AFTRS, Yunyu was asked to work as a series concept developer and composer for a musical kids series by producer David Elfick (Rabbit Proof Fence) from Palm Beach Pictures. Yunyu has won many awards for her works including Triple J Unearthed. Her recent clients include Harper Collins and Random House Publishing. Recently, Yunyu was the recipient of Australian Council Artstart Grant 2015 and Shortlisted for European Union Film award.





KATIE BECKETT - ACTOR/DROVER'S BOY

Recently, Katie Beckett was awarded the prestigious 2015 Balnaves Foundation Indigenous Playwright's Award. Its inaugural winner was Nakkiah Lui, whose play *Kill the Messenger* was staged at Belvoir earlier this year and featured Beckett. She also appeared in Belvoir's 2013 play *Coranderrk* and the television series *Redfern Now*.

Beckett was a participant of 2009 Kickstart - Next Wave program, winner of the Ian Bowie Memorial Award and was shortlisted for the Yvonne Cohen Award for her solo work in progress *Coloured Digger's*, directed by Leah Purcell which has been performed at the Dreaming Festival - Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

She has been described by critics as captivating and powerful to watch. Her works as outrageous, fresh, and gorgeous with a unique style of storytelling.



CREDITS

Writer & Director **MARGARET MCHUGH**

Producer **LYN NORFOR**

Cinematographer **BEN COTGROVE**

Production Designer **GRACE BROWN**

Editors **JACKSON BUHCK**
SAMUEL ZUBRYCKI

Original Music **YUNYU ONG**

Costume Designer **OLIVIA SAUL**

Sound Supervisor **AUDREY HOUSSARD**

Sound Recordist **MARTIN DEMIAN**

Visual Effects Artist **EVAN WHITESIDE**

The Drover's Boy **KATIE BECKETT**

The Drover **DALE MARCH**

Based on an original ballad
by and featuring **TED EGAN**



The Drover's Boy 11min 2014
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