

CLOSED FOR WINTER

press kit

Written & directed by James Bogle
Based on the novel "*Closed for Winter*" by Georgia Blain

TAGLINE

The emotional and poetic story of Elise, a beautiful young woman haunted by a tragic event in her youth.

SYNOPSIS

Closed for Winter is the emotional and poetic story of Elise, a beautiful young woman haunted by a tragic event in her youth.

As Elise attempts to piece together the mystery of her sister's disappearance at the beach, twenty years before when both were children, she must face dark family secrets that have remained unspoken. As the past is revealed, Elise at last finds the courage to begin to live.

Based on Georgia Blain's critically acclaimed novel of the same title, **Closed for Winter**, features a stunning performance by international star Natalie Imbruglia in her first leading role.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Executive Producer for Goalpost Pictures Australia, Rosemary Blight, read Georgia Blain's acclaimed novel **Closed For Winter** in 1998 and shared her passion for the book with writer/director James Bogle and Producer Ben Grant. Rosemary was Producer of James' earlier film *In The Winter Dark*, which starred Golden Globe Award winning actress Brenda Blethyn, and felt the darkly emotional and poetic story was idea material for Bogle to adapt for cinema.

Goalpost Pictures Australia (formerly RB Films) is a partnership between Rosemary Blight, Ben Grant, Kylie du Fresne and Cass O'Connor with company credits including *Eternity Man*, directed by Julien Temple and which screened at the Locarno Film Festival in 2008, Cherie Nowlan's *Clubland* (released as *Introducing The Dwrights by Warner Independent Pictures* in the US), Wayne Blair's *The Djarn Djarns* (winner Crystal Bear Berlin 2006), Neil Mansfield's *Fresh Air* and James Bogle's *In The Winter Dark*.

Closed for Winter was produced by Goalpost's Ben Grant in association with Kojo Pictures whose credits include Mulari Thalluri's *2:37*, which premiered at 2006 Cannes Film Festival official selection, *Un Certain Regard*.

The film was developed with the assistance of the European based script development workshop eQuinoxe.

Identifying with **Closed for Winter's** emotional tale of truth and lies, Ben says he has an interest in films that either tell the truth or are about truths.

For Ben, what makes the story so interesting is that the person with the secret is the one who has gone missing. "it's a very interesting proposition to put to the

audience that the person who knows what happens is the person who has disappeared.”

Grant says he had always wanted to work with director James Bogle and the process of working on *Closed for Winter* created a strong bond between the two filmmakers.

Ben was determined to secure finance and make the film. “This film has subjects and issues that are taboo. It was a very difficult film to get up and to and convince people that a film about a child that goes missing and a woman’s journey to try and deal with that 20 years later would be of interest.”

As a writer it can be hard to hand over your own work to someone else, but writer Georgia Blain knew her novel was in the right hands with Bogle, who she says has “stuck by the project for an incredibly long time”. “I think he has really wanted to make this film and it’s fabulous he got the chance to do it. It’s a very sparse book and I think James captured that. I think it’s a book where the place spoke very loudly and I think he gave that room to breathe in the script. Place is extraordinarily important to the story and I think he understood the emotional tenor of the book very well and that comes across in the film very strongly.”

James Bogle co-wrote and directed *In The Winter Dark*, which starred Ray Barrett, Richard Roxburgh and Miranda Otto along with Brenda Blethyn, opened the Sydney International Film Festival and was selected for other major international film festivals including the Discovery Section at the Toronto Film Festival.

James, a West Australian, says he was immediately attracted to Georgia Blain’s emotional story of a woman coming to terms with the disappearance of her sister 20 years ago. “One of the reasons I was drawn in was because there was a very singular idea and it was treated in a very complex way – and I liked that. I relate more to characters on the fringe, who may be in jeopardy of losing their way, in the sort of way where you just give up on the world or yourself. And I saw all of that in this story.”

For James, **Closed for Winter** is a delicate and intelligent journey into the emotional territory of 28-year-old Elise, played by Natalie Imbruglia. It is the story of how to make sense of the cruelly inexplicable. It is the story of how you are expected to pick up the remaining pieces of your life and go forward. It is the story of a power that we all have: The power to heal thy self.

James says the film is much like a jigsaw puzzle with a few missing pieces. “It’s a situation where someone is really stuck and you can see they are struggling, you hope for them to make some ground, any sort of ground. It’s like Elise’s life is a giant puzzle she needs to make up to go forward, even without all the pieces.”

The central statement of the film is loss and working out how to move on, which James says is a universal theme. “During the time I was writing the script, 9/11

happened and terrorism became a permanent part of all our lives. There are so many people out there that are left stranded dealing with the loss of a loved one. They are just expected to get on with it and I think that is part of the human condition. Sometimes you can't actually solve things in your life and you just have to get on with it anyway."

Closed for Winter delves further than simply solving the mystery of a missing family member and James says it takes the next, more personal step. "It navigates into a more personal mind space and in some ways this film is a meditation on how to heal yourself given a situation. Families are the most important things in life and yet a lot of us try to run away from them. This story is very much about a family and the psychological damage because of one day and what happened on that one day."

With such a character-driven story, casting was crucial. Ben and James were able to gather a dream cast including Tony Martin, Deborah Kennedy, Danielle Catanzariti, Tiahn Green and, in the central role, Natalie Imbruglia in her dramatic film debut.

"Natalie Imbruglia was the perfect lead for this film. Natalie has the serenity, charm and depth of character to play a woman quietly fighting something more. She possesses a focused, no-nonsense approach to the craft of acting that she is only just revisiting after a number of years. She has the capacity to see the world in a certain way and there is a lot of compassion that she is feeding back into the world in all sorts of ways, so this film seemed to be right for her," said James.

The 'great find' is newcomer Tiahn Green, the young Elise. "Tiahn just came out of the blue, she's never done any acting before. Tiahn was someone we found very late in the piece and she just had this stillness about her... she was so composed around all the mayhem of film-making."

Natalie Imbruglia's first reaction after reading the script was one of excitement that someone would offer her such an incredible role. "I remember being overwhelmed with emotion really, and I cried. I like films that deal with real people and real things that we can relate to," she says.

Working with James Bogle, she says, was brilliant.

"He doesn't say too much, he doesn't over direct you, he doesn't fill your head with things that are going to be distracting, so he allows that space for you to just explore the character yourself. But when he does give you notes they are so helpful and so poignant. I just felt very safe with him and I really trusted his judgement."

Imbruglia found the experience of working with Tony Martin truly amazing:

“I don’t think many actors would be as generous as Tony - I don’t think I will ever forget what he did for me. I feel like it was well and above the call of duty. He’s an artist and he really cares about the script and the characters and the truth and I think that’s what makes a brilliant actor, anything that appeared to me to be an obstacle he somehow made me see it as an opportunity, something to use. So he is my first teacher, really, and I hope I get to work with him again.”

It’s the female cast members who carry the emotional weight of the film with Natalie Imbruglia and Deborah Kennedy working through a challenging mother/daughter relationship. Natalie says, “It was very difficult for us. When we were doing the rehearsals Deborah would often say ‘I can’t look at you or I will cry’. So I think it was a lot harder for her because from my character’s perspective she had to be so horrible in some ways. I think it is important to acknowledge that as a mother Dorothy doesn’t view it that way and doesn’t realise she is having this kind of impact on her daughter.”

Production designer Rita Zanchetta has been living in the 70s while working on **Closed for Winter**. “We were very determined to design it in with the look of the 70’s and early 80’s in the belief that the main character and her mother had not moved on from the time.”

“James (Bogle) is just delightful to work for and has always had such a great ability to describe his view and vision of this film. We had a lot of one-to-one time together where we talked a lot about how he saw the individual characters and consequently what the design and their environment did for that character. He was very specific and had an incredible grasp of who those people were, which just helps enormously,” she says.

Zanchetta also worked closely with director of photography, Kim Batterham. “He has been wonderful, he is such a visual person. It is so important to have good communication and to know the cinematographer is there looking after the frame and looking out for the objects in it.”

Director of Photography (DOP) Kim Batterham found working on **Closed for Winter** a real challenge on a number of different levels. “We used a camera that no-one had used in Australia before, it was a Sony F23, one of the new breed of digital cameras that has far less compression of the original image, so you are essentially working with a raw image. It’s the closest thing that video has come to producing a digital negative. It produced an image that has bigger latitude and has a greater complexity in its colour palette. All those sorts of things, which this camera achieves, remind me of high-speed film negative.

“Originally we were going to shoot HD Cam, not film, and this camera is a step up on that system. It means the blow-up is much better and the images for the film can be more subtle. You still have to think about the blow-up, because one of the other things we are doing is taking it to another step, we are going wide screen, so the blow-up is increased by a factor again.

“It’s critical that you get the most amount of resolution and the most amount of image information to satisfy the blow-up requirements.”

Film editor Denise Haratzis says the filmmakers gave her wonderful images to work with: “DOP Kim Batterham has done a beautiful job – it’s incredibly cinematic. Every frame is just beautifully put together and beautifully lit.”

James Bogle hopes viewers will find some form of closure through this film: “It’s all about finding closure in the difficult things in life and believing that nothing is impossible considering the magnificence of the mind.”

PRINCIPAL CAST

NATALIE IMBRUGLIA as Elise

Natalie Imbruglia made her big screen debut in the popular 2003 spy-spoofing British comedy *Johnny English*, starring alongside comedian Rowan Atkinson.

The Australian actress is best known internationally for her musical career. In 1997, she released her debut album, *Left of the Middle*, which sold more than six million copies worldwide. Imbruglia wrote or co-wrote nine of the 12 songs on the album. Her first internationally released single, *Torn*, became one of the biggest hits of the '90's. She won 1998's MTV Video Music Award for Best New Artist and 1999's Billboard Music Award, also for Best New Artist.

In 2002 she was named as the new face for L'Oreal cosmetics. Her five-year contract expired in 2007.

Imbruglia grew up on the Central Coast, south of Sydney. She got her first job as a TV extra on a Japanese bubblegum commercial. At the age of 16 she was offered a two-week trial to play Beth Brennan on hit Australian soap opera, *Neighbours*. Her role lasted for two years.

DANIEL FREDERIKSEN as Martin

Daniel Frederiksen was nominated for an Australian Film Institute (AFI) award in 2007 for Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama for his role as Greg Combet in television mini-series *Bastard Boys*.

Frederiksen appeared in 58 episodes (2003-2004) of hit Australian drama, *Stingers*, as Leo Flynn. His other television credits include *Mermaids*, *Blue Heelers*, *Young Lions*.

Film credits include the Marvel Comics adaptation of *Ghost Rider*, which starred Nicholas Cage and the recent Australian film *Ten Empty*.

Frederiksen is a founding member of the *Red Stitch Theatre Company*.

DEBORAH KENNEDY as Dorothy

Deborah Kennedy is a stalwart of the Australian film and television industry. She was nominated for an Australian Film Institute (AFI) award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role for her role of Joyce Johnson in *The Sum of Us* (1996).

Throughout her career she has played supporting roles in numerous feature films including *Tim* (1979), *The Empty Beach* (1985), *Death In Brunswick* (1991), *Idiot Box* (1996), *Thank God He Met Lizzie* (1997), *My Mother Frank* (2000), *Swimming Upstream* (2003) and *Thunderstruck* (2004).

She started her acting career with the Marion Street Theatre, appearing in the *Trojan Woman* and *Macbeth*. Other theatre roles include *Travelling North*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* and *Desert Flambe*.

Her various television credits include *Silent Number*, *The Restless Years*, *Bellamy*, *Chances*, *Police Rescue*, *McLeod's Daughters*, *Bastard Boys* and *Neighbours*.

In 2006 she appeared in the iconic *Not Happy Jan* commercial for Yellow Pages.

TONY MARTIN as John

Tony Martin has been nominated for many awards throughout his outstanding career. He won back-to-back silver Logies in 1998 and 1999 for Most Outstanding Actor in television drama, *Wildside*.

Martin received an Australian Film Institute (AFI) award nomination for Best Performance of an Actor in a Television Drama in 1998 for *Wildside*.

He garnered a Film Critics Circle of Australia award nomination for Best Supporting Actor (male) in 1999 for *The Interview* and in 2005 he was nominated for a silver Logie for Most Outstanding Actor in a Drama series for *Jessica*.

Martin has appeared in a slew of Australian television shows and mini-series including *Chopper Squad*, *E Street*, *Heartbreak High*, *Captain James Cook*, *Blue Murder*, *Mary Bryant* and *The Games*.

His movie credits include, *Evil Angels*, *Inspector Gadget 2*, *Candy* and is currently working on *Hodads*.

TIAHN GREEN as young Elise

Tiahn Green is a newcomer to the Australian movie scene. The 10-year old caught the eye of director James Bogle and she now wants to take acting classes after her stint on this feature film.

DANIELLE CATANZARITI as Frances

Danielle won her first feature film role when she was chosen from more than 3000 girls for the role of Esther Blueburger in this year's *Hey Hey It's Esther Blueburger*.

In 2007, Danielle was a principal cast member of the Sydney Theatre Company's production of *Blackbird*, directed by Cate Blanchett.

Danielle is now being touted as one of Australia's hottest up and coming film actors.

SOPHIE ROSS as Jocelyn

Sophie graduated from WAAPA in 2005.

Her recent theatrical credits for the Sydney Theatre Company include playing Juliet in Wayne Blair's production of *Romeo & Juliet*, *Waikiki Palace / Hip Hip Hooray* and *A Woman In Mind*.

Sophie's film credits include *The Jammed* and *Ingrid Sits Holding a Knife*.

THE FILMMAKERS

WRITER / DIRECTOR – JAMES BOGLE

James Bogle's feature films include *Stones of Death*, *Mad Bomber in Love* (1992) and *In the Winter Dark* (1998) and currently he is working on *The Darkest Hours* and *Sex Sells*.

The Perth-based writer/director's most acclaimed film is his adaptation of Tim Winton's psychological drama, *In The Winter Dark*.

In addition to making films Bogle has worked in television drama, music videos, short films, commercials, documentaries, comedy and interactive media. Bogle is a respected member of the screen industry and has also taught and consulted.

He was named Western Australian Young Filmmaker of the year in 1981.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER – ROSEMARY BLIGHT

Rosemary Blight is one of Australia's leading producers.

Rosemary was executive producer of the 2007 Sundance hit *Clubland* (released as *Introducing The Dwrights* by Warner Independent Pictures in the USA), starring Oscar nominee Brenda Blethyn, directed by Cherie Nowlan and written by Keith Thompson.

Recently Rosemary has completed *The Eternity Man* with Julien Temple.

Other feature film producer credits include *Fresh Air* and the award winning *In the Winter Dark*.

PRODUCER – BEN GRANT

Ben Grant is one of Australia's most experienced film and television financial managers whose credits include feature films, television series and documentaries.

Grant was producer for the feature film *Clubland*, which starred Brenda Blethyn and was directed by Cherie Nowlan.

He was nominated for an Australian Film Institute (AFI) award in 2004 for Best Telefeature or Mini-Series for *Small Claims*.

His television experience includes more than 130 hours of Southern Star's *Water Rats* and more than 40 hours of television drama *White Collar Blue*. He co-produced the documentary *Boxers of the Desert* for French production company Gedeon and was co-producer of *Shambhala: A Central Asian Journey* and *Watching the Detectives*.

Grant has produced three instalments of the *Small Claims* telemovies.

PRODUCER – KENT SMITH

Founding partner of the KOJO Group, Kent now heads up the feature film division KOJO Pictures.

Kent produced Mulari Thalluri's *2:37*, which premiered at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival, official selection, Un Certain Regard.

Kent is also an accredited cinematographer and some of his feature film credits include *Wolf Creek*, *2:37* and *Rogue*.

AUTHOR OF *Closed for Winter* – GEORGIA BLAIN

Georgia Blain has written four novels: *Closed for Winter*, *Candelo*, *The Blind Eye* and *Names for Nothingness*.

She was named one of the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Best Young Novelists in 1998, and has been short listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards. Two of her other novels have also been optioned for feature films.

After years of writing fiction, Blain has written her own honest account of her brother, Jonathan's, battle with schizophrenia and his death titled, *Births Deaths Marriages*.

Blain was born in Sydney's northern beaches and at the age of 14 moved to Adelaide where she spent her formative years in the beachside suburb of Grange.

She has worked in a variety of occupations, as a copyright lawyer and a journalist and she also has experienced working with artists.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY – KIM BATTERHAM

Kim Batterham's numerous television credits include the documentary series *First Australians*, *Foreign Exchange*, *Stepfather of the Bride*, *Floodhouse*, and the mini series *The Potato Factory*, for which he won the ACS award for Cinematographer of the Year, in 2000

His other feature film credits include *A Man's Gotta Do* and second unit on *Master and Commander*.

PRODUCTION DESIGNER – RITA ZANCHETTA

Rita Zanchetta's feature film credits as production designer include *Look Both Ways*, (for which she received an AFI nomination in 2005), *The Honourable Wally Norman*, *Kabbarli* and *Selkie*.

Rita's television credits include *Pick Your Face*, *Magic Shop*, *Behind The News (BTN)* and *Here's Humphrey*.

COSTUME DESIGNER – ANITA SEILER

Anita Seiler's feature film credits as costume designer and or supervisor include, *The Resident Magician*, *Like Minds*, *The Honourable Wally Norman*, *Kabbarli*, *Paradise Found* and *Selkie*.

In addition Anita has worked as standby wardrobe / buyer on *Opal Dream*, *Look Both Ways*, *Cut*, *Dingo*, *Strangers* and *The Dreaming*.

EDITOR – DENISE HARATZIS

Denise Haratzis won both the AFI and IF awards for Best Editing in 2005 for her work on *Look Both Ways*. In addition she also won the 2007 AFI Best Editing award for *Home Song Stories*.

Denise's other feature film credits include *The Illustrated Family Doctor*, *Walk the Talk*, *Dead Letter Office* and *Love Serenade*. While her television credits include *Rain Shadow*, *Valentines Day* and *Love My Way*.

COMPOSER – DANIEL DENHOLM

As a composer and producer, Daniel Denholm has worked with numerous Australian artists, both in recorded music and live performance.

Daniel's television credits as composer include, *Lockie Leonard*, *Small Claims* and *Love is a Four- Letter Word*.

MAKEUP & HAIR DESIGNER – FIONA REES JONES

Fiona Rees Jones's feature film credits as makeup and or hair designer include *Lucky Miles*, *December Boys*, *Opal Dream*, *Wolf Creek*, *Peaches*, *Travelling Light* and *Black and White*.

Fiona's television credits include *Rain Shadow*, *McLeod's Daughters* and *Disappearance*.

KEY MAKEUP & HAIR – TRACEY PHILLPOT

Tracey Phillpot's feature film credits include *The Caterpillar Wish*, *Look Both Ways*, *Deck Dogz*, *The Honourable Wally Norman*, *Black and White* and *Sally Marshall is not an Alien*.

Tracey's television credits include, *Rain Shadow*, *Australian Idol*, *McLeods Daughters* and *Chuck Finn*.

CAST

Elise	NATALIE IMBRUGLIA
Martin	DANIEL FREDERIKSEN
Dorothy	DEBORAH KENNEDY
John	TONY MARTIN
Little Elise	TIAHN GREEN
Frances	DANIELLE CATANZARITI
Jocelyn	SOPHIE ROSS
Sergeant Dodds	GEORDIE TAYLOR
Jim Hunt	GUY O'DONNELL
Fat Tony	HENRI PHILLIPS
Police Woman	ANTJE GUENTHER
Steve	RAFFAELE SPANO
Mrs Brownsord	CARMEL JOHNSON
Police Constable	MICHELLE NIGHTINGALE
Police Constable	LINCOLN ZOMER
William	DUNCAN GRAHAM
Adult Fat Tony	PATRICK GRAHAM
Sophia	ALEXANDRA SICARI
Girl from Car	MICHELLE RANALDO
Hooded Youth	JOE RAFALOWICZ
Franco	ANTHONY BRDAR
Mariel (Mrs Mills)	KALIOPI BRDAR
Foreman	ADAM MORGAN
Workman	ROHAN HARRY
Jetty Boy #1	DEAN POLISENA
Jetty Boy #2	JORDI COLLEY
Dune Kissing male	MARK FANTASIA
Dune Kissing female	ALICE DARLING
Pylon Lover #1	ADAM PHILIPPOU
Pylon Lover #2	TERESA LOPRETE
Simon Hughes	ROB MACPHERSON

Fisherman #1	MICHAEL MOODY
Fisherman #2	DARREN DAWE
Taxi Driver	FLAVIO ANFITEATRO
Stranger at Gallery	JOHN WALTER
Neighbour #1	TAMARA LEE
Neighbour #2	SUSIE FRASER

CREW

Executive Producer ROSEMARY BLIGHT
Producer BEN GRANT
Producer KENT SMITH
Writer / Director JAMES BOGLE
Based on the book "*Closed for Winter*" by GEORGIA BLAIN

Line Producer PAUL RANFORD
Production Accountant DEBORAH WILDE
Production Co-ordinator MATTHEW BYRNE
Production Runner NICK BOLLARD
Production Assistant ANDREW RUSSO
Production Assistant JESSE GONINON
Production Assistant FELICE BURNS
Location Manager SARAH ABBEY
Location Assistant SHARYN PANCIONE

1st Assistant Director VICKY SUGARS
2nd Assistant Director TRAVIS KALENDRA
1st AD Attachment SHANNON CROTTY
Directors Assistant /child drama coach CLAIRE MARSHALL

Script Supervisor DARYL WATSON

Director of Photography KIM BATTERHAM
1st Camera Assistant JULES WURN
2nd Camera Assistant RUSSELL MARRATT
Camera Attachment HENRY SMITH
Underwater DOP MALCOLM LUDGATE
Aerial Camera Operator NATHAN TOMLINSON

Production Designer RITA ZANCHETTA

Art Department Co-ordinator CHRISTINE WILLIAMS
Set decorator / buyer KAREN HANNAFORD
Art Department Assistant LAUREN RICHARDS
Standby Props JAMES PARKER
Construction PAUL SPENCER
Scenic Artist KYLIE LAWSON
Art Department Assistant DANIEL VIECCOLI
Graphics CHRISTA FOREMAN

Costume Designer ANITA SEILER
Standby Costume HEATHER WALLACE
Costume buyer / dresser SIENNA DEAN

Makeup & Hair Designer FIONA REES JONES
Key Makeup & Hair TRACEY PHILLPOT
Wig Maker KYLIE CLARKE

Key Grip MIKE SMITH
Best Boy Grip BEN WALSH

Gaffer STEPHEN PRICE
Best Boy ANDREW ROBERTSON
3rd Electrics STORM ASHWOOD
Swing Electrics & Grip LEIGH NEMETH

Sound Recordist JAMES CURRIE
Boom Operator MICHAEL BAKALOFF

Safety Supervisor JEN BICHARD
Safety Assistant KEITH BICHARD
Unit Nurse KAREN COCKS
Unit Nurse ANNA CHENEY
Unit Manager MARK SHARKY JOHNSON

Assistant Unit Manager MICK KILDARE

Goalpost Pictures – Publicity TRACEY MAIR

Unit Publicist STEVEN WATT

Stills Photographer SAM OSTER

EPK MEGAN SPENCER

Directors Cut Catering SONYA MARSHALL

FIONA HART

Casting Director NIKKI BARRETT

Casting Director ANGELA HEESOM

Casting Assistant / Extras BIELA McMILLAN

Editor DENISE HARATZIS

Assistant Editor JENNY WARDROP

Digital Tech Reports MARK MACHIN

Composer DANIEL DENHOLM

Oasis Post –Post Production Producer KATE BUTLER

Tracks – Sound Supervisor STEVEN R SMITH

Tracks – Studio Producer NICOLA TATE

Tracks – Studio Producer ALICE WILSON