

Hughes House Films
presents
in association with
Wildheart Films
Wolf Creek Pictures
McMahon International Pictures
and
Screen Australia

**REVENGE
JUST
RODE
INTO
TOWN**

RED HILL

RYAN KWANTEN

Starring
RYAN KWANTEN
STEVE BISLEY
and TOM E. LEWIS

Written, Produced, Directed and Edited by
PATRICK HUGHES

Produced by
AL CLARK

Release Date: November 25, 2010

Running Time: 96 minutes

Rating: MA

Official Website: www.RedHillMovie.com.au

Official Facebook: www.facebook.com/RedHillAUS

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Young police officer Shane Cooper (Ryan Kwanten) relocates to a small country town with his pregnant wife. When news of a prison break sends the local law enforcement officers into a panic, Shane's first day on duty rapidly turns into a nightmare of revenge and redemption.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Young police officer Shane Cooper (Ryan Kwanten) relocates to the small country town of Red Hill with his pregnant wife Alice (Claire van der Boom) to start a family. But when news of a prison break sends the local law enforcement officers - led by the town's ruling presence Old Bill (Steve Bisley) - into a panic, Shane's first day on duty rapidly turns into a nightmare.

Enter Jimmy Conway (Tom E. Lewis), a convicted murderer serving life behind bars, who has returned to the isolated outpost seeking revenge. Now caught in the middle of what will become a terrifying and bloody confrontation, Shane will be forced to take the law into his own hands if he is to survive.

A taut thriller which unfolds over the course of a single day and night, told with explosive action, RED HILL is a story of retribution and redemption played out against the stunning landscapes of the Victorian high-country.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT – Patrick Hughes

For as long as I can remember, I have been inspired by filmmakers such as Robert Rodriguez, the Coen Brothers and Aussie legend George Miller; directors who made their first films outside the system and risked everything in the process.

When it came to making my own first film, I realised that that's what I'd have to do as well. So when I sat down to write the script, I set out to create a story that I knew I could make on a tight budget. Unfortunately, the finished script was loaded with stunts, shoot-outs, pyrotechnics, horse chases, car crashes and prosthetic limbs getting blown off – and two thirds of the film takes place at night, in a remote town in the dead of winter.

The consequence was that “Red Hill” had to be a passion project for everyone involved. We made the film independently, raising the money privately; the production went ahead with neither a distributor attached nor any government funding beyond a location grant. But I was lucky to have the support of some of the best filmmaking talent in the country, whose dedication and expertise enabled the whole film to be shot in 24 days in sub-zero temperatures with second-hand film stock from Hollywood, short ends from “Entourage – Season 5” and the last “Fast and the Furious”.

Filmmaking at this level is gut-wrenchingly stressful, yet wonderfully liberating at the same time. Working under such tight and gruelling conditions, the function of the director becomes one of managing compromise. Going into the production, I knew we had bitten off more than we could chew, but that's the game, that's how movies get made, and in the world of indie filmmaking the rule is simple – Quit your whingeing and just tell the damn story!

BACKGROUND TO THE FILM

Writer/producer/director Patrick Hughes has always loved westerns: “For the simple fact that there is no subtext to a bullet. They are stories built on the backbone of a moral code. Tales of men whose honour has been tarnished, whose lives have been wronged, men who seek nothing more than the simple taste of revenge. And that’s exactly what makes the genre such a visceral experience for audiences.”

Inspired by such films as “High Plains Drifter” and “No Country For Old Men”, Hughes set out to create a contemporary western whose themes of revenge, redemption and sacrifice would play out against the extraordinary landscapes of the Victorian high country. Over dinner in Melbourne in September 2008, he outlined his intention to two long-time friends and colleagues - Al Clark (producer of “Priscilla”, executive producer of “Chopper”) and Greg Mclean (writer/producer/director of “Wolf Creek” and “Rogue”) - informing them that he was about to start writing the script and inviting them to help him make the eventual film when the time came, which they agreed to do.

He drove to Omeo, an 8-hour journey from Melbourne, just below the snowline of Mount Hotham. He had been there before, and it had retained the vast spaces and feeling of isolation he remembered – a perfect setting for the film he was about to write. In this distraction-free environment he holed up in a local motel and wrote a first draft of the screenplay. Continuing to work on this on his return to Melbourne, he completed it at the end of January 2009, when Clark came on board as producer and Mclean became the first investor.

In the ensuing months, enough money was raised to finance the shoot, which began in and around Omeo in mid-winter with an impressive cast and crew. This included Ryan Kwanten, the star of the hit TV series “True Blood”, who left the show’s sub-tropical location in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, flew to Melbourne, was driven up the mountain and emerged camera-ready, saturated with blood and freezing rain, hours after arrival.

The crew itself was a mix of friends from the worlds of commercials and short films in which Hughes has worked extensively - including his regular DOP, production designer, costume designer, assistant director and location manager - and experienced film practitioners such as the gaffer Reg Garside (“Matrix” trilogy, “King Kong”) and stunt coordinator Harry Dakanalis (“Matrix” trilogy, “Mao’s Last Dancer”), both of whom brought their formidable teams with them.

When the shoot was over, Hughes disappeared for weeks into the editing room. He emerged with a film substantial enough to persuade Screen Australia and Arlight Films to finance its completion. While post-production got under way, the film was submitted as a work in progress to the Berlin Film Festival. It was invited to screen in the official selection’s Panorama section, which led to a frenzy of activity to enable it to be ready in time. A DCP of the movie arrived in Berlin just before midnight, 12 hours before it was due to be seen by much of the world’s press.

On the back of its triumphant success at the festival, eleven territories were sold within days - notably the US to Sony’s Worldwide Acquisitions Group - and distributors in Canada, UK, Germany, France, Scandinavia, among others.

THE LOCATION AND LOOK OF THE FILM

With the film shooting in and around an old gold mining boomtown like Omeo in high-country Victoria, the production was able to capitalise on the stunning beauty of this mountainous region, giving the film an expansive sense of scale and scope.

“Our landscape is rich in history and conflict,” says director Patrick Hughes, “and it occurred to me that not a lot has changed since the 1800s. Sure, instead of horses we now use cars and instead of mail we now have the benefit of mobile phones; but if one were to take away these modern devices, the majority of small rural towns are still incredibly isolated. RED HILL taps into this sense of isolation, fusing elements of the thriller genre with that of the western, all rolled into a contemporary cop drama.”

The decision to set the film in and around Omeo was far from random, more a matter of personal history. Long before Hughes travelled there to start work on the script and look for potential locations in the surrounding countryside, as a boy he had been brumby tracking with local legend Ken Connley, the rider featured in the indelible highlight and signature shot of the horseman going downhill in “The Man From Snowy River”. Farmer, cattle breeder and horse wrangler, Connley was Hughes’s first crew member, not only because of what he could contribute as an individual but because his involvement automatically opened up the town.

ABOUT THE CAST

RYAN KWANTEN (Shane Cooper)

Ryan Kwanten has positioned himself as one of Hollywood's most promising talents and as an internationally recognised actor. He is currently starring as Jason Stackhouse in Academy Award-winner Alan Ball's (AMERICAN BEAUTY, SIX FEET UNDER) TRUE BLOOD for HBO - already their most popular ever series.

Kwanten's film credits include Luke Kasdan's DON'T FADE AWAY opposite Mischa Barton; FLICKA, with Maria Bello and Alison Lohman; the coming-of-age story AMERICAN BROWN; DEAD SILENCE from the creators of SAW, and GRIFF THE INVISIBLE, in which he plays an office worker by day, superhero by night.

Kwanten has also had success on the small screen with the television movie THE JUNCTION BOYS opposite Tom Berenger, and in the popular US television series SUMMERLAND and LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT. He has also played roles in well-known Australian television series such as HOME AND AWAY and SPELLBINDERS.

STEVE BISLEY (Old Bill)

Since graduating from National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), Steve Bisley has since appeared in hundreds of hours of Australian television and some of Australia's most important feature films including MAD MAX, NEWSFRONT and SILVER CITY. Other recent feature credits include SUBDIVISION, THE VIEW FROM GREENHAVEN, I LOVE YOU TOO, and KIN.

Among his television roles are SEA PATROL, EAST OF EVERYTHING, WATER RATS, STINGERS, GP, FRONTLINE, POLICE RESCUE, TWO TWISTED; and the telemovies THE KING and HELL HAS HARBOUR VIEWS.

In the theatre, he has played lead roles in productions of RICHARD III, HANNIE RAYSON'S INHERITANCE and THE GLASS SOLDIER, David Williamson's THE CLUB and DON'S PARTY and has worked with Neil Armfield, Phillip Noyce, Robyn Nevin and Richard Wherret, amongst others.

TOM E. LEWIS (Jimmy Conway)

Tom E. Lewis has a distinguished career spanning over 30 years, featuring in various iconic Australian films such as Fred Schepisi's THE CHANT OF JIMMIE BLACKSMITH, and Igor Auzins' WE OF THE NEVER NEVER. More recent films include SEPTEMBER, CROCODILE DREAMING, THE CURSE, BAD HABITS, and THE PROPOSITION. On television he has recently appeared in THE CIRCUIT, DOUBLE TROUBLE, and KANGAROO PALACE.

CLAIRE VAN DER BOOM (Alice Cooper)

Since graduating from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), in 2005, Claire van der Boom has emerged as one of Australia's most exciting young actors. Beginning with early television roles in LOVE MY WAY and EAST WEST 101, she recently played the female lead in the Steven Spielberg/Tom Hanks mini-series THE PACIFIC.

In 2008, Claire made her feature film debut in a lead role in Nash Edgerton's THE SQUARE and starred in the television series RUSH, which saw her nominated in 2009 for the Silver Logie for "Most Outstanding Actress".

Following her role in RED HILL, she was cast in TOUGH TRADE, an exciting new US television pilot for Epix, starring Sam Shepard, directed by Gavin Hood (TSOTSI) and produced by Gavin Jenji Johan (WEEDS) and Chris Offut (WEEDS, TRUE BLOOD).

Her latest appearance has been the lead role in SISTERS OF WAR, a telemovie for ABC TV, directed by Brendan Maher.

ABOUT THE FILMAKERS

PATRICK HUGHES (Writer, Producer, Director, Editor)

RED HILL is Patrick Hughes's first feature. His first short films, THE DARKENING and TRUTH OR THE MORNING AFTER, won best film and best narrative at the 1996 ATOM Awards, sold to the ABC and screened at the National Gallery of Victoria.

His graduating short from the Victorian College of the Arts School of Film and Television (VCA), THE DIRECTOR (1999), screened at many international festivals and won numerous awards, including IF award for best short, an AFI best editing nomination, VCA best editing, best film National Student Film Awards, best short ATOM awards, and most popular film at International Flickerfest.

He also wrote, directed and edited THE LIGHTER, which won best film at Tropfest in 2001. The following year he wrote, directed and edited the 2002 Tropfest trailer.

An award-winning commercials director, he currently works out of @radical.media, a prominent international TVC production company. Having shot campaigns around the globe for brands such as Playstation, BMW, Honda, Mercedes, Vodafone and Xbox, his work has been profiled in the prestigious UK magazine 'Shots.'

In 2008, he was commissioned to write and direct the "branded content" romantic drama short SIGNS for Schweppes. The film has since become an online sensation, attracting over 4.5 million viewers. It is currently the highest rated short film in YouTube history and won a Gold Lion at the 2009 Cannes Advertising Awards.

AL CLARK (Producer)

Al Clark began his working life as a journalist on the London magazine "Time Out". For many years he worked at Virgin - as publicity director for the record company, as founder and editor of "The Film Yearbook", and as head of production for the film division, with production credits ranging from NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR (director Michael Radford) to ARIA (directed by Robert Altman, Jean-Luc Godard, Nicolas Roeg and others), from GOTHIC (director Ken Russell) to ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS (director Julien Temple).

Moving to Sydney, he was appointed to the board of the Australian Film Commission and went on to produce one of Australia's most successful films of all time THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT (director Stephan Elliott) and executive produce one of its most influential ones, CHOPPER (director Andrew Dominik). His other Australian productions include

SIAM SUNSET (director John Polson), THE HARD WORD (director Scott Roberts), THE BOOK OF REVELATION (director Ana Kokkinos) and RAZZLE DAZZLE (director Darren Ashton). Between them these movies played at the film festivals of Cannes, Berlin, Toronto, Telluride, London and San Sebastian, winning prizes in several cases.

Before RED HILL his most recent film was BLESSED, which reunited him with director Ana Kokkinos. Starring Frances O'Connor, Miranda Otto and Deborra-lee Furness, it won the jury prize for best screenplay at the 2009 San Sebastian Film Festival, and is a featured title at Seattle 2010, where director Ana Kokkinos is being honoured as an "Emerging Master" of cinema.

Clark has served on the official juries of the San Sebastian and Valladolid Film Festivals and is also the author of two books: RAYMOND CHANDLER IN HOLLYWOOD (Silman-James Press) and THE LAVENDER BUS (Currency Press).

GREG MCLEAN (Executive Producer)

Greg Mclean wrote, produced and directed WOLF CREEK (2005) and ROGUE (2007). WOLF CREEK screened in the World Cinema competition at Sundance, played in Director's Fortnight in Cannes 2005 and won the Movie Extra Filmink Best Film of the Year award in 2006. WOLF CREEK also achieved the highest ever box office return for an 'R' rated Australian film in Australia and debuted in the top ten films in the US on its release on Christmas Day in 2005. The film earned over AU\$6m at the Australian box office, and over US\$16m at the US box office, with DVD takings currently sitting at approximately AU\$50million. Both pictures were distributed by Dimension Films, who also financed the US\$25m budget ROGUE.

TIM HUDSON, A.C.S. (Director of Photography)

Tim Hudson was the cinematographer on Patrick Hughes's short films THE DIRECTOR and THE LIGHTER. Other short film credits include THE DROP, ROADSIDE, MY SISTER, IN THE CAN and BOAT PEOPLE. Hudson was the 2nd unit DOP on the features THE VISITORS and BRILLIANT LIES and the US television series PONDEROSA.

His recent credits include the US feature FARMHOUSE, and the Romanian television movie UN FILM SIMPLU.

ENZO IACONO (Production Designer)

A long-time collaborator of Patrick Hughes, Iacono has amassed a large body of work as an art director on prestigious TVCs, and music videos which include Ben Lee and The Sleepy Jackson.

Film credits include production design on Nash Edgerton's short FUEL, and key positions in the art departments of feature films THE ILLUSTRATED FAMILY DOCTOR, THE NIGHT WE CALLED IT A DAY, GARAGE DAYS, MISSION IMPOSSIBLE II, BIRTHDAY GIRL and STRANGE PLANET. He also worked on the American telemovies THE THREE STOOGES and FIRST DAUGHTER.

NICOLA DUNN (Costume Designer)

After graduating from the Whitehouse School of Fashion, Dunn began as an assistant fashion stylist, leading to the position of assistant fashion editor for both "Studio Magazine" and "Studio Brides". She then moved overseas working in Austria, London and New York before returning to Australia to work as a freelance stylist for Adidas, Marie Claire magazine and Mercedes Fashion Week. Celebrity clients during this time included Heath Ledger, Guy Pearce, Bryan Brown and Abbie Cornish.

Over the past eight years, Nicola has moved into the film industry. Her credits include costume design on the feature films WOLF CREEK, ROGUE, the television mini-series TRIPPING OVER, six short films and over one hundred television commercials. She also worked in the costume departments of HATING ALISON ASHLEY and the Australian box office hit MAO'S LAST DANCER.

DMITRI GOLOVKO (Music)

Over his varied music career, Dmitri has done everything from composing music for films to creating sound design for video-games, and has had his work performed at major live events in Australia. His composer credits include the US feature film THE ANNIVERSARY; short films SACRIFICE, GIG and Patrick Hughes's SIGNS; and the web series hit OZ GIRL.

CHARLIE PARR (Additional Music)

Born and raised in Austin, Minnesota, Charlie Parr's style bears the influence of hours spent listening to country blues records and Smithsonian/Folkways field recordings. Parr plays original and traditional folk tunes, blues covers by Mississippi John Hurt, Charley Patton and the like.

His father's first-hand accounts of growing up during the Depression made the music all the more visceral to the young Charlie. As both his parents were union workers on the picket line during labour strikes in the mid-1980s, Charlie got a first-hand view of what those old protest songs were about. For every old song about a factory town, union battle, or soup line, Parr's father had experienced similar, first hand.

Charlie has recorded seven albums, the latest being "Roustabout".

PRINCIPAL CAST

Shane Cooper	RYAN KWANTEN
Old Bill	STEVE BISLEY
Jimmy Conway	TOM E. LEWIS
Alice Cooper	CLAIRE VAN DER BOOM
Slim	CHRISTOPHER DAVIS
Barlow	KEVIN HARRINGTON
Manning	RICHARD SUTHERLAND
Gleason	CLIFF ELLEN
Rex	JOHN BRUMPTON
Earl	KEN RADLEY
Ted	JIM DALY
Ken	DOM PHELAN
Willy	EDDIE BAROO
Micky Carlin	TIM HUGHES
Joseph Carlin	KEN CONNLEY
Dale	RICHARD YOUNG
Ellin Conway	JADA ALBERTS
Martha	JENNIFER JARMAN
Old Woman	ELSPETH BALLANTYNE
Old Man	RONALD FALK
News Reader	RICHARD MORECROFT
News Reporter	YESSE SPENCE

PRINCIPAL CREW

Written, produced, directed and edited by	PATRICK HUGHES
Produced by	AL CLARK
Executive Producers	GREG MCLEAN
	ROB GALLUZZO
	CRAIG MCMAHON
Director of Photography	TIM HUDSON, A.C.S.
Music by	DMITRI GOLOVKO
Additional music by	CHARLIE PARR
Production Designer	ENZO IACONO
Costume Designer	NICOLA DUNN
Sound Designer	FRANK LIPSON, M.P.S.E.
Line Producer	RAY HENNESSY
Production Manager	VICTORIA CONNERS BELL
Associate Producers	RACHEL HIGGINS
	KATE MENZIES
Casting	NICK HAMON
First Assistant Director	CAMERON WATT

Technical Details

Format: 35mm

Aspect Ratio: 2.40:1

Sound Format: Dolby Digital SR/SRD

Australia/New Zealand distribution: Sony Pictures Releasing

International sales: Arclight Films