



A FILM BY IVAN SEN AUSTRALIA / 104 mins / 5.1 / 4K DCP / ENGLISH

[AUSTRALIAN PUBLICIST]

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"Loss is a precious stone, a nectar, distilled in time, preaching the truth of winter to the fallen heart that does not cease to fall."

James K. Baxter

"Simon Baker is Superb as a Jaded Detective in Ivan Sen's Visually Striking Outback Procedural... A bracingly atmospheric setting... Sen is a humanistic filmmaker who believes in personal redemption."

The Hollywood Reporter, David Rooney

"A Starkly Atmospheric Outback Noir... This is outback noir – oblique, secretive and as hard-boiled as the ground is hard-baked – and Sen wears it well... Simon Baker [is] initially near-unrecognizable and never better... No empty space feels emotionally uncharged."

Variety, Guy Lodge

"Hardbitten outback noir with a compassionate heart... Terrific... A tough, muscular film with the grit of crime, but a heartbeat of compassion."

The Guardian, Peter Bradshaw

"Will surely have no trouble finding a wider audience... Dazzlingly shot... A pared-to-the-bleachedbones existential thriller... Works entirely in its own terms and at its own leisurely pace, hollowing out the detective genre to coolly thrilling effect."

The Guardian / The Observer, Jonathan Romney

"Terrific, atmospheric... A distinctive work, both visually and in terms of its intriguingly detached outback noir storytelling..."

Screen International, Wendy Ide

"We've never seen Simon Baker quite like this before... Hypnotically sinister... Sen's cinematiography is a star unto itself."

Ioncinema, Nicholas Bell

"Ruggedly Beautiful... a starkly and quietly furious story... a visually arresting and admirably highminded work that should make an impact... Sen projects an impressively strong auteur voice with Limbo."

The Film Verdict, Stephen Dalton

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SYNOPSIS

Travis, a jaded detective, arrives in the remote outback town of Limbo to investigate the cold case murder of local Indigenous girl Charlotte Hayes 20 years ago. As truths about the murder begin to unfold, the detective gains a new insight into the unsolved case from the victim's fractured family, the surviving witnesses and the reclusive brother of the chief suspect. A poignant, intimate journey into the complexities of loss and the impact of the justice system on Aboriginal families in Australia.

INSPIRATIONS

Limbo is a continuation of the themes I explored in my previous films *Mystery Road* and *Goldstone*. Those films dealt with primarily an Indigenous perspective of the justice system through the eyes of an Indigenous police officer. Limbo explores the deeper impact of a crime on an Indigenous family through the eyes of a white policeman. The source of these ideas has largely come from my own personal experience, from family members and friends who have been victims of crime. I have witnessed their struggle not only for justice, but also for fairness and recognition by the Australian justice system.

The characters in the film are all stuck in their own Limbo. They are unable to move out of their situations which have been created by their decisions and environments. The story is about their individual struggles to overcome that state.

They are all catalysts for each other's change, the change which will allow them to break out.

Limbo is a fictional place. I had planned to make a film set in Coober Pedy, which is a small, very remote town in South Australia, for many years. It's a very unique mining town where half the people live and work underground. The idea of Limbo also naturally grew from this underground world.

Another objective in shooting this film was to always maintain a continuum of time and space to achieve a filmic reality.

Who or what is in Limbo? The Aboriginal Family. The Detective. Indigenous Culture. The Cars. The Landscape.

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CASTING AND CHARACTER

I met Simon in 2004 about a possible project that didn't happen. I have always been a fan of his subtle style since seeing him in *The Guardian*. I think we were destined to work together at some point. It was refreshing to work with an actor who also directs. I had strong ideas about his character, Travis, and so did he. Most of the time, the ideas were mutually embraced.

I don't know if Travis is a hero or anti-hero. That's not really the point. He's a man looking for salvation and finds himself in a situation to do something about it.

While investigating other peoples' lives, he is also searching for answers about his own life and the personal things that haven't worked out, haunt him or that he has bottled up and shut out.

Prior to shooting Limbo, I spent quite a bit of time travelling to Coober Pedy, to find locations and cast. I wanted to use local Indigenous cast and found many of my cast on these trips. I was familiar with and admired the work of first nations actors Rob Collins and Natasha Wanganeen, and they make a great brother and sister.

Simon and Rob's characters are both men who are hurt, in pain, and they start to see that in each other. Travis, the detective, has also lost his connection to his own son. But he decides to take the opportunity to help reconnect Charlie (Rob Collins) and his estranged son Zac.

OUTBACK NOIR

Genre clearly provides good bones for stories and plots, and the Australian outback is a natural setting for western style films. The Trojan Horse is the experience of Aboriginal culture and perspective that is delivered from the underbelly.

Coober Pedy is an incredible location with its own underground world. It's a very harsh, dry, dusty desert environment and the locals have built their houses, churches and hotels underground to escape the oppressive heat.

The town is refuge for a diverse population of outcasts following their opal dream. Coober Pedy is also a tourist town and yet just beyond its borders traditional Aboriginal communities still live in their culture and language. These elements interplay with my approach to the film, itself influenced by classic 1960's and 70's Noir. Not to mention its Black and White.

There are a million or more holes dug surrounding Coober Pedy to mine Opals. This also provided a powerfully visual contradiction - with the vast destruction of the environment, but

at the same time creating an unnatural beauty, with the myriad mounds of exposed coloured rocks and soil.

The juxtaposition between the vast desert country and sky with the intimacy of personal trauma, loss and grief in our family felt both profound and yet familiar.

Besides a couple of conscious neo-Western elements, like a stranger riding into town, everything else is how I naturally responded to the landscape and the place. Coober Pedy is unique, and I spent a lot of time getting a feel of how I was going to create a world around it. I found every single location in the film, and I had a strong idea of how to shoot each of them. I bought the key props of the film and secured the hero's car.

All of these design elements were important in weaving the tapestry of the film.

HISTORY AND TRAUMA

The more Travis finds out about the family of 20 years missing girl Charlotte Hayes, the more he is drawn to them and he sees the way they have been treated. Rather than the victims, the police and justice system have made them feel like they are the criminals to be blamed and then ignored.

Through my personal family situation and having made films about missing Aboriginal women and girls before, I have gained an insight into the unrelenting trauma this casts on our Indigenous families. The Police and the Justice System often don't really investigate or deal properly with such crimes. The thing I wanted to expose in this film is that even though the crime took place 20 years ago, it's never a cold case for the family. It could have been yesterday for them, they can't move on. Time is almost at a standstill in this huge desert country and I think the cumulative power of the film is in the intimacy we feel for the family, experiencing their pain, as we learn to know them through the investigation carried out by the detective Travis.

In movies, Indigenous filmmakers have now found a centre stage place in the Australian canon of films. So the industry has come a long way from the early short film initiatives from back when I began. However, the fact is – there is still a long way to go in terms of equality, justice and telling our side of the story.

Australia is still a place of injustice for Indigenous Australians. As a country we accept Indigenous ideas much more than in the past, but as Indigenous people, we are still living in an occupied country where the occupiers largely feel the land belongs to them. And the problems belong to us, the Indigenous people.

A FILM BY IVAN SEN [PRODUCER'S NOTE – BUNYA PRODUCTIONS]

Ivan Sen's body of work marks him as a unique voice in Australian cinema. His multi-awardwinning films, *Beneath Clouds*, *Toomelah*, *Mystery Road*, *Goldstone* and *Loveland* each have a powerful personal vision.

Limbo is a return for Ivan to his previous body of work, set in the outback and dealing with First Nations stories, characters and themes. These stories reflect and explore his own Australian Aboriginal heritage.

Limbo is set in the South Australian outback opal mining town of Coober Pedy. The black and white photography captures the incredible landscape beautifully and delivers a rich and profound sense of place.

The characters who populate this film are hardened souls surviving in a harsh and unforgiving town. But finding each other changes them, reminds each of them of their human compassion and thereby alters their destiny.

The world of *Limbo* takes us into this harsh desert landscape, and also into a racist world. There we explore loss, grief and justice, how Aboriginal people are treated by the justice system, as well as the intergenerational impact of racism.

As with all of his films, Ivan Sen took on a significant number of the key creative roles including Writer, Director, Producer, DOP, Editor, Colorist and Composer. This means a total immersion in and control over the construction of the film

Ivan Sen's films always say a lot about our society and identity, and *Limbo* is more than a crime mystery, genre film. Ultimately it is a poignant meditation reflecting back on our own sense of humanity and a deeper exploration of our desire to be human and to be valued.

A FILM BY IVAN SEN

[BIOGRAPHY – SIMON BAKER as Travis Hurley]

Actor and Director Simon Baker is known to audiences around the world for his performances in film and television.

His film credits include the 1997 Academy Award-winning film, *L.A. CONFIDENTIAL*, *THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA* and *MARGIN CALL*. He won international acclaim in the television series *THE MENTALIST* which screened in over 130 countries and garnered him Best Actor nominations for the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), Emmy and Golden Globe Awards.

Baker's award-winning directorial debut *BREATH* (2018), the film adaptation of Tim Winton's best-selling novel, screened at multiple international film festivals. It won Best Director at Australia's DGA awards and received 9 AACTA (Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts) award nominations. Baker himself received 4 nominations: Best Film, Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay and won for Best Supporting Actor. *BREATH* also received nominations across all categories at the 2019 Film Critics Circle of Australia awards, winning Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, Best Editing and Best Supporting Actor for Baker.

In 2020 Baker starred in and executive produced *HIGH GROUND*, directed by Stephen Johnson, appearing alongside fellow actors Witiyana Marika, Jack Thompson and Jacob Junior Nayinggul. The film premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2020.

Baker was more recently seen starring alongside newcomer Julia Savage in award-winning Australian artist Del Kathryn Barton's directorial debut feature *BLAZE*, released in 2022 after its World Premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival.

He will next be seen in the leading role of the Ivan Sen directed feature *LIMBO* for Bunya Productions, and the upcoming Netflix series *BOY SWALLOWS UNIVERSE*, based on the Australian novel of the same name by Trent Dalton.

Baker was invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2012, and in 2013 was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for his contribution to the entertainment industry.

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[BIOGRAPHY - ROB COLLINS as Charlie]

Born and raised in Darwin, Rob Collins graduated from the National Institute for Dramatic Arts in 2013.

Rob's Film credits include ARTHUR THE KING, TOP END WEDDING, UNDERTOW, EXTRACTION, ANGEL OF MINE, alongside Noomi Rapace and Yvonne Strahovski and directed by Kim Farrant, and Leah Purcell's THE DROVER'S WIFE.

Rob's Television credits include *FIREBITE*, *THE WRONG GIRL*, *GLITCH* Series 2 & 3, *CLEVERMAN* Series 1 & 2, *SECRET CITY: UNDER THE EAGLE*, *BLACK COMEDY*, *REEF BREAK*, *UPRIGHT* opposite Tim Minchin, *TOTAL CONTROL* Series 1 & 2, alongside Rachel Griffiths and Deborah Mailman and Series 2 of the critically acclaimed ABC series *MYSTERY ROAD*.

Rob's theatre credits include a national tour of *THE LION KING* in the role of 'Mufasa' and 'Lysander' in Sydney Theatre Company's *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*.

Rob will next be seen as 'Ron' in *TEN POUND POMS*, directed by Ana Kokkinos and *THE QUEEN OF OZ* opposite Catherine Tate.

[BIOGRAPHY – NATASHA WANGANEEN as Emma]

Natasha Wanganeen is an AFI award winning actress known for *RABBIT PROOF FENCE* (2002). Natasha also starred in the 2017 film *CARGO*. Her other feature credits include *STORM BOY* (2019) and *2067* (2020). Natasha also appeared in the TV series *A SUNBURNT CHRISTMAS* (2020), *AFTERTASTE* (2021), *THE TOURIST* (2022), *FIREBITE* (2022) and *THE AUSTRALIAN WARS* (2022).

More recently she co-wrote and produced the short film *BUNKER: THE LAST FLEET*, in which she also stars. The film screened at the St Kilda Film Festival, Perth Revelations Film Festival, Adelaide Film Festival and the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival where it won best Sci-Fi.

In 2016 Natasha was an Ambassador for the Adelaide Film Festival and in 2020 was on their jury for the feature and documentary awards. Wanganeen is an activist and advocate for greater cultural diversity in Australian screen culture.

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[BIOGRAPHY – NICHOLAS HOPE as Joseph]

Nicholas has worked in film, television and theatre in Australia, Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Spain. His first feature film role as the lead in Rolf De Heer's acclaimed *Bad Boy Bubby* won him the Australian Film Industry Award for Best Actor. More recently he has appeared in Stan's *Black Snow*, as an ethereal doctor in Storm Ashwood's debut feature *The School*, as an aristocrat in Foxtel's *The Twelve*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, and a modern-day vampire in Erin Goode's *Jade of Death*, for which he won Best Actor at the Denver Series-Fest 2018. For Paramount, *The Secret's She Keeps*, the potential villain in Zanny Begg's *The Beehive*, an eccentric spaceman in Kurt Martin's *Moon Rock for Monday*, and a frustrated nuclear scientist in Peter Duncan's *Operation Buffalo* for the ABC. He has also been seen as Judge Eisenmanger in Leah Purcell's debut feature *The Drover's Wife*, and he provides the invisible voice for Ambience Entertainment's *Random And Whacky* Children's Television series.

Nicholas' memoir *Brushing the Tip of Fame* was published in 2005, and he made his writer/director debut with the play *Little Gods* as part of the May Day Festival in 2013. He directed the sell-out production of Joel Drake Johnson's *Four Places* for Outhouse Theatre in July 2014, and directed his own play *Five Properties of Chainmale* for the Griffin Independent season in April 2015. He directed the short film *Like Gold* for The Hub Studios *The Bench Series* (2017), and produced Peter Hanlon's *The Reckoning of Christian Spencer*, currently on the festival circuit.

Nicholas was awarded a PhD in Performance Studies in 2011. He has been a proud member of MEAA Equity since 1988.

[BIOGRAPHY – MARK COE as Zac]

Mark Coe is a local schoolboy from Coober Pedy, who auditioned and won the role of Zac, Charlie's estranged son. Mark received incredible support from his parents, grandparents and the wider Indigenous community in undertaking this role.



[KEY PRODUCTION TEAM]

IVAN SEN

Writer, Director, Producer, DOP, Editor, VFX, Composer

Throughout the late 1990s Ivan Sen worked on numerous short films, before making his feature film debut with *Beneath Clouds* in 2002. The film won Ivan global acclaim, screening in Competition at the 2002 Berlinale and winning a Silver Bear. *Beneath Clouds* also screened at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival and earned Ivan the 2002 Best Director Award at the Australian Film Institute Awards.

Ivan has written and produced a number of award-winning documentaries. His documentary *Yellow Fella* screened in Un Certain Regard at the Cannes Film Festival in 2005.

In 2011 Ivan completed his feature *Toomelah*, which was selected for Un Certain Regard at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival. The world premiere of the film at Cannes received a standing ovation. The film won the Grand Prix at the Pacific Meridian Film Festival 2011 and the UNESCO Prize at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards 2011.

In 2012 Ivan was awarded the prestigious Byron Kennedy Award, for "his unique artistic vision and for showing, by his resourceful, multidisciplinary filmmaking, that telling stories on screen is in reach of all who have something consequential to say".

In 2013 Ivan wrote and directed the feature film *Mystery Road* starring Aaron Pedersen, Hugo Weaving, Ryan Kwanten, Tasma Walton and Jack Thompson. *Mystery Road* had its international premiere with a "Special Presentation" at the 2013 Toronto Film Festival and opened the 2013 Sydney Film Festival. Ivan is an Executive Producer on the successful TV drama series adaptation of Mystery Road.

In 2015 Ivan directed *Goldstone* starring Aaron Pedersen, Jacki Weaver, David Gulpilil, Cheng Pei Pei, Alex Russell and David Wenham. Goldstone premiered at the Toronto Film Festival and was the opening night film at the 2015 Sydney Film Festival.

In 2019 Ivan wrote and directed his sci fi *Loveland* starring Ryan Kwanten, Hugo Weaving and Jillian Nguyen. Loveland was released in the US by Lionsgate.

His latest feature, *Limbo*, starring Simon Baker and Rob Collins, will have its world premiere in Competition at the 2023 Berlin Film Festival.

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[KEY PRODUCTION TEAM]

DAVID JOWSEY PRODUCER

In 2009, David Jowsey formed BUNYA Productions with award winning filmmaker Ivan Sen. BUNYA Productions is an independent production company based in Sydney and the Gold Coast, Australia. David produced *Toomelah* by Ivan Sen, which was selected for the Cannes Film Festival 2011 in Un Certain Regard. David produced the 2011 Sundance selected feature film *Mad Bastards* by Brendan Fletcher and also *Satellite Boy* by Catriona McKenzie which premiered at the 2012 Toronto Film Festival and had its European premiere in the Generation section at Berlin 2013.

David then produced Ivan Sen's next feature *Mystery Road* which received a Special Presentation at the 2013 Toronto Festival. In 2015 David produced *Jasper Jones* based on the best selling novel and directed by Rachel Perkins, as well as Ivan Sen's *Goldstone* which premiered at the 2016 Toronto Festival "Platfom" Section . David Jowsey produced *Sweet Country* directed by Warwick Thornton, which won the Special Jury Prize at the 2017 Venice Film Festival and the Platform Prize at the 2017 Toronto Film Festival.

In 2018 and 2020 David Jowsey produced two seasons of the the multi award winning TV drama series *Mystery Road*. David produced High Ground in 2019 which premiered with a special gala at Berlin 2020. Across 2019 and 2020 he produced the features *Loveland* by Ivan Sen and *The Drover's Wife The Legend of Molly Johnson* by Leah Purcell. Also in 2020 David Produced a third season of *Mystery Road*.

Most recently David produced Ivan Sen's latest film Limbo which premieres in Competion at Berlin 2023.

In 2022 David was awarded the Don Dunstan award at the Adelaide Film Festival.



RACHEL HIGGINS PRODUCER

Over the past 25 years Rachel has worked on over 50 feature film, television and documentary productions, with some of Australia's most esteemed producers - Al Clark, Andrew Mason, John Edwards – across all facets of production: the equivalent of over two decades of producing masterclass.

After starting at Kennedy Miller in 1997 - before moving to the UK working for Tiger Aspect, Granada, and Sky Pictures - Rachel returned to Australia to work for a decade with Al Clark ("Chopper", "The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert") on the films "The Hard Word", "Thunderstruck", "The Book of Revelation", "Razzle Dazzle" and "Blessed".

In 2010 she associate produced the feature film "Red Hill", directed by Patrick Hughes, which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival and sold to Sony in the US. Rachel's role included the financing structure, with "Red Hill" being considered Screen Australia's most financially successful film since its inception.

In 2012 Rachel produced the short "Lois" filmed in Australia and Greece. Starring Oscarnominee Jacki Weaver, "Lois" screened at many film festivals including Palm Springs, Warsaw, Cleveland, Melbourne, Hof, Brisbane, released theatrically in Germany, and sold to SBS and Virgin Airlines.

Rachel associate produced the feature film "Apprentice", with Birdcage Films being the Australian Production Company. Premiering in Un Certain Regard, Cannes (2016), the film released theatrically around the world, after screening at Toronto, Busan, and London Film Festivals amongst many others, and was Singapore's Oscar submission.

Rachel is currently in postproduction on the iconic Ivan Sen's next feature "Limbo", which she produced with long-time collaborators David Jowsey and Greer Simpkin. "Limbo" will premiere in Competition at Berlin 2023.

Rachel also worked within Screen Australia Investment Department for several years. In 2014 she was selected for the Producers' Lab, Rotterdam. In 2017 Rachel completed an International Producer Placement at Maven Pictures (NYC). In 2019 she was selected as "One to Watch" by Screen Producers Association Australia, winning the International Prize.



[KEY PRODUCTION TEAM]

GREER SIMPKIN PRODUCER

Greer Simpkin joined Bunya Productions as Co-Managing Director and Producer in March 2015 after many years working in editorial and production roles in broadcasting – ABC (Australia) and Channel 4 (UK).

Since joining Bunya, Greer has produced the award-winning feature films *Sweet Country, Goldstone, High Ground, Loveland, The Drover's Wife The Legend of Molly Johnson* and was an Executive Producer on *Jasper Jones*. Greer is a Producer on Ivan Sen's latest feature *Limbo*.

Greer produced all three series of award-winning television drama *series Mystery Road*, adapated from Ivan Sen's original feature film *Mystery Road*. The *Mystery Road* franchise has won a total of 15 AACTA Awards and a TV Week Logie Award for Most Popular Drama. The series has been a ratings hit; the second series was the highest rating Australian drama on free to air in 2020, the third series Mystery Road: Origin is the highest rating drama on ABC iview in its 15 year history.

In 2021 Greer produced *True Colours*, a ground-breaking drama series set in the art world of Alice Springs and a remote Indigenous community, and with much of the series spoken in the local Arrente language.

Prior to joining Bunya, Greer was Deputy Head of Fiction at ABC Television. Greer was instrumental in commissioning a large slate of new dramas and narrative comedies. As well as overseeing the entire TV Fiction slate alongside Head of Fiction, Carole Sklan, Greer was an Executive Producer of *The Code, Hiding, Parer's War, Serangoon Road* and *The Secret River*.

Before joining the ABC, Greer lived and worked in the UK. She was a Programme Finance Executive for Channel 4 for 6 years and, prior to that, Head of Production for Mentorn Films (now Mentorn Media) and a Producer for acclaimed photographer and filmmaker Brian Duffy.



[KEY PRODUCTION TEAM]

THEODORE BENTON COSTUME DESIGNER

After graduating in Design from the National Institue of Dramatic Arts, Theo moved into televisionat the ABC in both sets and costumes for 10 years, before going on to freelance design on many award-winning feautres and television productions such as series "Police Rescue", "Heartland", "Wildside", "Water Rats", "Supernova" 1 & 2, "Wolf Creek" 1 & 2, "Wanted 3" and features "Coffin Rock", "Inner Deamon", "Bad Blood", "A Sunburnt Christmas". Theo also Art Directed the feature "Sweet Country", and more recently Costume Designed the 2022 SBS series "True Colours", the 2023 Paramount+ series "Last King of the Cross", and the upcoming feature film "Limbo".

TONI FFRENCH MAKE UP & HAIR DESIGNER

Over the past thirty years Toni has worked in the film and televison industry on both local and international projects. Her credits include "Shantaram", "The Twelve", "Kong:Skull Island", "The Pacific", amongst many others.

THOM KELLAR SOUND DESIGNER

Sound Designer Thom Kellar regularly works with Australia's leading directors as both a sound supervisor and sound effects editor including Warwick Thronton, Ivan Sen, David Michod, Jocelyn Moorhouse, Russel Mulchay, Jonathan Teplitzski, Matt Saville and Nash Edgerton amongst others. Thom has won an Emmy for sound mixing on Netflix's "Beat Bugs" featuring the music of The Beatles, as well as multiple ASSG award wins and AACTA nominations.

A FILM BY IVAN SEN [CREDITS]

Key Cast

Simon Baker	Travis Hurley
Rob Collins	Charlie
Natasha Wanganeen	Emma
Nicholas Hope	
Mark Coe	. Zac
Joshua Warrior	Oscar

Filmmakers

Ivan Sen Ivan Sen	
David Jowsey, Rachel Higgins, Greer Simpkin and Ivan Sen	Producers
Ivan Sen	DOP, Editor, Composer
Shannon Wilson-McClinton	Line Producer
Adam Head	Production Designer
Theodore Benton	Costume Designer
Toni Ffrench	Hair and Make Up Artist
Richard McGrath	. First Assistant Director
Nick Rowan	
Ivan Sen	Colourist
Ivan Sen	VFX Supervisor
Thom Kellar	Sound Designer
Phil Heywood	Re-Recording Mixer

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Sydney, Australia