

PRESS KIT

WE WERE HERE

WE WERE HERE is the first of its kind in Australia, a film depicting a portrait of the 2011 Australian Summer using only user generated content uploaded to YouTube Map My Summer. The resulting film is a moving, poetic and raw collective expression of cultural identity.

The film represents a powerful new direction in cinema and illustrates how YouTube has revolutionised and democratised the moving image around the world. Along with the film that inspired it, Kevin MacDonald's *Life in a Day*, *WE WERE HERE* is a high-tech form of modern communal filmmaking.

Directed by Amy Gebhardt
produced by Allison Lockwood
Edited by Nick Meyers
Composed by Oren Ambarchi
An Exit Films Production
Financed by Screen Australia
Partnered with YouTube

Duration: 24 minutes

Screening Dates:

Sydney Film Festival, 8:30pm Saturday 11 June 2011 (screens with *Life in a Day*)

YouTube broadcast, from 8:30pm Saturday 11 June to Sunday 19 June 2011

Melbourne International Film Festival, 21 July – 7 August 2011.

<http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/mapmysummer>

<http://www.youtube.com/screenaustralia>

<http://www.youtube.com/mapmysummer>

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT - AMY GEBHARDT

The making of this film was a conceptual and technical experiment. I was unsure at first, how powerful a film could be made from a disparate collection of low-fi footage uploaded by the general public. After some work on the edit, I was quickly seduced by the challenge of building a narrative out of these personal glimpses into the general public's lives.

Initially I was conscious of feeling removed from the footage as I was not present at the filming nor had ever met these people in the clips, so it took some time to grow an honest affinity with the hours of fragmented stories or to even know what this film would be about. The edit became a process of listening to the footage and being loyal to its own voice, rather than imposing a structure onto it. As I watched the material over and over again, new and profound meaning began to emerge; themes, symbols, sub-cultural languages and subjectivity, which helped map the narrative and attempt to drill into our collective psyche. Where do we sit right now as a nation? How do we love one another? How do we treat the spaces we inhabit? How do we heal from shared tragedies? How do we get thrills?

Answers to these questions began to rise and fall as the film structure took shape.

A fresh cinematic truth arises within a project created in this way, that somehow sits between drama and documentary, where a filmmaker can enter the personal space of internet users, without being there to influence or film the material, but to be loyal to the honesty of the footage uploaded to create a distilled portrait, in this case of the Australian Summer of 2011. There is a moving fragility that emerges, where people have chosen to share the world around them and their relationship to it.

Stories from diverse ends of our community, which as a filmmaker you would otherwise never think to link, beg to be brought together and dialogued. User generated storytelling promises to be a new genre of cinema that cross-pollinates the hand of the filmmaker with expressions from the general public, which I think is a very exciting frontier.

PRODUCTION STORY - Allison Lockwood

To produce a film with 100% Youtube user generated content, was a completely new filmmaking process for our team. The process of making a film like this, presented us with many challenges and some pleasant surprises.

In the beginning the first challenge that we had was the fact that there was no script to work from. Instead we had hundreds of clips uploaded by the public of Australia exploring a multitude of experiences, shot on different formats by people of all ages. There was no real starting point to anchor the production, the starting point was Amy reviewing all the clips uploaded and then narrowing them down to ones that conveyed something she liked or interested her. This reviewing process took over two weeks and continued through the early stages of the offline edit.

Our first concern was that we were not going to be able to find enough material from the clips that had the integrity to form a cohesive narrative. We didn't want a film that was just a mash up of images.

Based on this concern we budgeted additional expenditure to allow for us to film our own connective tissue to bind and give compelling meaning to the structure of the film. However, we were pleasantly surprised when we reached week five of the offline edit and we had a rough cut of a complete film that did not require us to film anything additional. We had being able to create a film from a 100% user content. The 'connective tissue' had become the music of Oren Ambarchi; it plays a large role in the film's structure.

The organising and logistics of getting users to send release paperwork and high-res footage was a further task. The majority of the people who had submitted videos were people not familiar with the processes of filmmaking and a lot of them were filmed within family and friend social circles so it was a stretch to expect them to have supplied official paperwork for these scenarios. We tried to simplify things as much as possible for all the users. We mailed them 'how to' instructions with self-addressed parcel packs to send us their raw files and streamlined the paper trail where we could.

For Nick & Amy in the edit it was also a challenge working with so many different formats. A lot had been filmed on phones and people had filmed at different frame rates and then being uploaded to Youtube at another frame rate. The edit was in a constant change of flux, albeit

small, due to the fact that every time low-res footage was replaced with high-res footage it would alter the timings.

It also raised interesting creative questions for us. We initially thought that we would want the high-res version for all the clips but we found that for some, the high-res version lost the meaning of the clip and we opted to use the lower-res file.

This project continually raised questions for all involved at nearly every juncture, purely because it had never been done before. This new media of filmmaking from online content and within the online spectrum is very different from traditional filmmaking and requires a different framework.

We as a production team have learnt a great deal from this project and are extremely proud of our achievements.

AMY GEBHARDT – DIRECTOR

Amy Gebhardt has written and directed 6 short films, winning various international awards including Best Direction at the Flickerfest International Short Film Festival for *Look Sharp* which explored the iron will of a female photographer compelled to capture the truth beneath the rough exteriors of two sharpie gang members.

She was awarded Kodak Australia's new director of 2008 and won a Silver Lion (for advertising) at Cannes in 2009 for her *Anzac Memories* commercial. She was nominated for the Rising Talent award at the Inside Film Awards in 2008 after graduating from her Masters in Directing at AFTRS.

Amy has also directed several documentaries for ABC and SBS, including *Heart* which follows the storms of love within the marriage between an artist and muse winning Best Documentary at the Melbourne International Film Festival. She has recently finished a unique project partnering with Screen Australia and Youtube making a film from 100% Youtube user generated content depicting a journey into the Australian psyche, entitled *We Were Here*.

Further to her directorial skills, Amy is an accomplished Cinematographer shooting over 15 short films, and multiple documentaries. She loves to keep her hand in the technical aspects of the craft.

By combining her love of cinematography, performance and documentary, Amy is committed to telling stories that visually inspire and push notions of the human spirit. She is currently developing her first feature with support from Screen Australia and working as a resident director at Exit Films.

ALLISON LOCKWOOD - PRODUCER

Allison Lockwood has been producing television commercials since 2005, working as a resident producer at Exit Films. She has also produced two short films and two documentaries, including *Playground* directed by Glendyn Ivin, which follows the journey of Julius who is a young and amazingly talented musician and street poet living in South Philadelphia. It was awarded Bronze at Eurobest (advertising) for Direction & Cinematography, as part of an integrated portfolio for Coca-Cola's energy drink BURN.

At the beginning of 2011, she produced Amy Gebhardt's short 'Into the Sun' and has recently completed another film project with Gebhardt in partnership with Screen Australia and Youtube that explores the psyche of an Australian summer and has been made from 100% Youtube user generated content, entitled *We Were Here*.

Allison enjoys the multi-faceted nature of the role as producer and she finds the process of every new project and its unique challenges, a rewarding one.

She is currently researching her first publication, continues to produce photography and motion for commercial advertising and is looking forward to working on more long form projects in the future.

NICK MEYERS - EDITOR

Nick Meyers started out by shooting his own films on a cheap super-8 camera. There was no focus control, but a dial for cloudy or sunny meant that he could make movies rain or shine.

In the 80s, while working at the ABC in the editing department, he was also part of the film-making group "The Marine Biologists" which explored a crossover between narrative and experimental film.

The 90s saw him move into the night club world, creating the dramatic lighting effects for "The Tender Trap" night-club in King's Cross.

In 1998 he edited "The Boys". Since then he has worked with Robert Connolly on "The Bank", "Three Dollars" and "Balibo", and with Artist and Film-maker George Gittoes on the documentaries "Rampage" and "The Miscreants of Talliwood" in 2003 he edited Robert Herbert's "Homemade Histories": a series of miniature portraits of Australians crafted from their own home-movies.

Last year he worked on both "Sleeping Beauty" and "Mrs Carey's Concert" Nick first worked with Amy Gebhardt on her 2005 film "Look Sharp" as an editing consultant.

OREN AMBARCHI - COMPOSER

Oren Ambarchi's works are hesitant and tense extended songforms located in the cracks between several schools: modern electronics and processing; laminal improvisation and

minimalism; hushed, pensive songwriting; the deceptive simplicity and temporal suspensions of composers such as Morton Feldman and Alvin Lucier; and the physicality of rock music, slowed down and stripped back to its bare bones, abstracted and replaced with pure signal.

From the late 90's his experiments in guitar abstraction and extended technique have led to a more personal and unique sound-world incorporating a broader palette of instruments and sensibilities. On releases such as *Grapes From The Estate* and *In The Pendulum's Embrace* Ambarchi has employed glass harmonica, strings, bells, piano, drums and percussion, creating fragile textures as light as air which tenuously coexist with the deep, wall-shaking bass tones derived from his guitar.

Ambarchi has performed and recorded with a diverse array of artists such as Fennesz, Otomo Yoshihide, Pimmon, Keiji Haino, John Zorn, Rizili, Voice Crack, Jim O'Rourke, Keith Rowe, Mika Vainio, Phill Niblock, Akio Suzuki, Robin Fox, Evan Parker, z'ev, Toshimaru Nakamura, Peter Rehberg, Merzbow, Thomas Brinkmann and many more.

Since 2004 Ambarchi has worked with American avant metal outfit Sunn 0))) contributing to many of their releases and side-projects including their *Black One* album from 2005 and the recent *Monoliths & Dimensions* release.

For 10 years together with Robbie Avenaim, Ambarchi was the co-organiser of the *What Is Music?* festival, Australia's premier annual showcase of local and international experimental music. The festival hosted over 200 local and international performers.

Ambarchi co-produced an Australian television series on experimental music called *Subsonics* and co-curated the sound program for the 2008 Yokohama Triennale and the *21:100:100* show, One Hundred Sound Works by One Hundred Artists from the 21st Century, for the Melbourne International Arts Festival.

Ambarchi has released numerous recordings for international labels such as Touch, Southern Lord, Editions Mego, Table Of The Elements and Tzadik. In 2003 his live release *Triste* received an 'honourary mention' in the Prix Ars Electronica digital music category.

WE WERE HERE - CREDITS

Opening Credits

SCREEN AUSTRALIA PRESENTS

AN EXIT FILMS PRODUCTION

AUSTRALIANS WERE INVITED TO UPLOAD EXPERIENCES
FROM THEIR SUMMER OF 2011

THIS FILM WAS CREATED FROM THE MATERIAL THEY SHARED

WE WERE HERE

Closing Credits

DIRECTED BY	AMY GEBHARDT
PRODUCED BY	ALLISON LOCKWOOD
EDITED BY	NICK MEYERS
MUSIC BY	OREN AMBARCHI
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	SARAH TINITALI
POST PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	RACHAEL IMAM
DIRECTOR'S ASSISTANT	GRANTLEY SMITH
COLOURIST/ONLINE	JON HOLMES
SOUND MIX	PAUL SHANAHAN
DIDGERIDOO PLAYER	RUSSELL SMITH

DEEPEST THANKS TO THE
YOUTUBE USERS WHOSE WORK APPEARS IN THE FILM

ALLAN CRUZ	CLYDIECOWGIRL	FLETCHER THOMAS
AMANDA DWECK	CORY MCBRIDE	GOJO MEDIA
ANA WINES	DANIEL BRANNAN	IAN PAV
ANDREW SHANKS	DANIEL FOSTER	IAN WALDIE
ANDY WALLACE	DANIEL MULLAN	INEVOLVE
ANGUS YATES	DARRELL MORGAN	JESIOTROT
ANN MAHER	DAVID EMANUEL	JIM POE
ANNIE SLOGGETT	ELIZA STRIBLING	JTOWN1111
BILLY MUCHTAR	ELLIE KAY	JUSTIN HARTWELL
CATHERINE HARBUZ	ELLY HART	KATE RUSSELL
CHRISTOPHER HALASKA	ANABELLE HARPER & MARCUS CHRISTENSEN	KATIE & MEGAN MEREDITH
KEVIN LE	NEWSONABC	SCOTT WESTON
LAHIRU WIJESURIYA	OLIVIA CLARK	SHIZLERS
MARGI MCFAUDEN	PAUL GAVRANICH	STELLA MAYNARD
MARIA REYNOLDS	REBECCA DUKE	SURFINGVISIONS
MATT LA PORTA	ROBERT PIGNOLET	TJTRACEUR
MICHELLE BERNARDO	ROBYNMAHER123	THE MONKEY MOVES
MIKEY TROTTER	ROWAN WALKER	VANESSA BADMAN

MISCHA BAKA & MISHKA BECKMAN
MONSTERAIR7
NATHAN TENIKOFF
NICK MAY

RYAN ALCORN
SARAH MITCHELL
SCOTT NOWELL
SHIOBHAN FOUNTAIN & JACKIE LEE

VICTORIA HANNAFORD
VINCENT ROMMELAERE
VMUSICVIDEO
ZAYN ABBOTT

SCREEN AUSTRALIA PROJECT TEAM

KATHLEEN DRUMM
JACKSON PELLOW
CLAIRE JAGER
MIKE COWAP
ELIZABETH GRINSTON
EMMA DWYER

YOUTUBE PROJECT TEAM

LUCINDA BARLOW
ERNESTO SORIANO III
FELICITY McVAY
SCOTT SAVAGE
SYLVIA RAPTIS

'Simon'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "Insulation"
Touch (UK) 1999
Published by Touch Music

'Inamorta'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "In The Pendulum's Embrace"
Touch (UK) & Southern Lord (USA) 2007
Published by Touch Music

'Stars Aligned, Webs Spun'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "Grapes From The Estate"
Touch (UK) 2004
Published by Touch Music

'Fever, A Warm Poison'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "In The Pendulum's Embrace"
Touch (UK) & Southern Lord (USA) 2007
Published by Touch Music

'Corkscrew'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "Grapes From The Estate"
Touch (UK) 2004
Published by Touch Music

'Trailing Moss'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "In the Pendulum's Embrace"
Touch (UK) & Southern Lord (USA) 2007
Published by Touch Music

'Bleeding Shadow'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "Destinationless Desire"
Touch (UK) 2008
Published by Touch Music

'Sin Nanna'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From sunn 0))) – "Black One"
Southern Lord (USA) 2005
Published by Touch Music

'Highway Of Diamonds'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "Destinationless Desire"
Touch (UK) 2008
Published by Touch Music

'Bathory Erzsebet (intro)'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From sunn 0))) – "Black One"
Southern Lord (USA) 2005
Published by Touch Music/Sabbath Rehash/Ideological Organ

'Iron Waves'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi
From "Intermission 2000-2008"
Touch (UK) 2009

'Love Is'

Composed by Brett Thompson. Performed by Rand & Holland
From "Tomorrow Will Be Like Today"
Preservation (Australia) 2003

'Salt'

Composed and performed by Oren Ambarchi & Paul Duncan
Strings arranged by James Rushford
Published by Touch Music 2011

WITH THANKS TO
SYDNEY FESTIVAL FERRYTHON
GENERATION ONE FERRY
CRICKET AUSTRALIA
SURFERS PARADISE METER MAIDS
MAP MY SUMMER
TRISTAN CEDDIA
SHAUN MILLER

MUSIC & EFFECTS

SPECIAL THANKS

GEORGE MILLER CLARE STEWART
LOUISE SMITH ROBERT CONNOLLY
ASIA KASIA ALEX ASLANGUL
AMIEL COURTIN-WILSON
RHYS GRAHAM

FINANCED BY SCREEN AUSTRALIA



PARTNERED BY YOUTUBE



FINALSOUND

© 2011 EXIT FILMS & SCREEN AUSTRALIA