



**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2018, 10.00PM AEDT / 7.00PM AWST / 11.00AM GMT**

**KELLY MACDONALD AND GARRETT HEDLUND JOINED BY DAVID WENHAM AS SHOOTING BEGINS IN AUSTRALIA ON TIM WINTON'S EPIC LOVE STORY *DIRT MUSIC* DIRECTED BY GREGOR JORDAN**

**CORNERSTONE FILMS TO HANDLE INTERNATIONAL SALES AND DISTRIBUTION, FINANCIERS INCLUDE FILM4, SCREEN AUSTRALIA, WARFF, SCREENWEST AND INGENIOUS MEDIA**

**London – October 8, 2018** – Principal photography commences this week on Gregor Jordan's (*Two Hands*, *Buffalo Soldiers*) *Dirt Music*, adapted from Tim Winton's award winning and Man Booker shortlisted novel by Jack Thorne (*The Aeronauts*, *Wonder*). Golden Globe and BAFTA Award nominee Kelly Macdonald (*Puzzle*, *No Country for Old Men*, *Boardwalk Empire*) and Garrett Hedlund (*Mudbound*, *Tron: Legacy*) have been joined by acclaimed actor David Wenham (*Lion*, *Top of the Lake*, *The Lord of the Rings*). Filming begins on Bardi Jawi country in the Kimberley, Western Australia and will continue on Noongar country in Perth and Esperance, Western Australia. Complimenting the musical backbone of the film, award-winning singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Julia Stone (of internationally acclaimed Australian sibling duo Angus & Julia Stone) will bring her collaborative talents in her role as Sal. Other cast includes Aaron Pederson (*Mystery Road*), Chris Haywood (*Muriel's Wedding*), George Mason (*Home and Away*) and Dan Wyllie (*Animal Kingdom*).

*Dirt Music* is produced by two-time Academy Award® nominees and BAFTA Award winners Finola Dwyer and Amanda Posey (*Brooklyn*, *An Education*) of Wildgaze Films and Academy Award® nominee Angie Fielder (*Lion*, *Wish You Were Here*) and Polly Staniford (*Berlin Syndrome*) of Australian based production entity Aquarius Films.

Film4 developed the project with Wildgaze Films and are financing along with Screen Australia, the West Australian Regional Film Fund, Screenwest and Ingenious Media. Cornerstone Films will handle the international rights and distribution and will commence sales at the upcoming American Film Market. Focus Features acquired the international rights in Australia and New Zealand where Universal Pictures will distribute. Executive producers are Daniel Battsek, Sue Bruce-Smith and Lauren Dark for Film4 and Peter Touche and Stephen Dailey for Ingenious.

*Dirt Music* is a gritty, sexy drama with a haunting love story at its heart set against the powerful backdrop of Western Australia's evocative landscape.

Georgie (MacDonald), sometime sailor, diver and nurse used to have guts. But somehow she has lost her way. Stranded in a remote fishing town on the West Australian coast she's living with a man she doesn't love, Jim (Wenham) and his young sons whose dead mother she can never replace. But a reckless moment leads to a life-changing encounter with Lu (Hedlund), an enigmatic loner, one time musician and sometimes poacher, outcast from the community. The two are powerfully drawn to each other and embark on an inescapable, intense and sexually charged affair. Georgie will risk everything for this chance of love, but Lu is haunted by a tragic accident from his past. For him the prospect is too painful and he retreats into the wilderness to the remotest islands leaving little clue as to his whereabouts. With the unlikely help of Jim who is determined to right the wrongs of his own past, Georgie embarks on a journey to bring Lu back from his past and his grief, ultimately finding herself.

Based on the acclaimed novel, *Dirt Music* is a film about people whose hopes and dreams are lost, and the redemptive power of love.

Heads of Department include Academy Award® nominated Production Designer Michael Carlin (*Colette*, *The Duchess*), Cinematographer Sam Chiplin (*The Cry*, *Safe Harbour*), Costume Designer Anna Borghesi (*Hotel Mumbai*, *Ned Kelly*), Editor

Pia Di Ciaula (*A Very British Scandal*, *Belle*), and Casting Directors Lucy Bevan (*An Education*, *Beauty and the Beast*) and Kirsty McGregor (*Animal Kingdom*, *Lion*).

Producers Finola Dwyer and Amanda Posey commented: "We're honoured to bring Tim Winton's iconic novel to screen, masterfully adapted by Jack Thorne, and with the vision of Gregor Jordan who has assembled the perfect cast; Aquarius are our ideal partners along with Film4 who developed with us from the start."

Angie Fielder and Polly Staniford from Aquarius Films said: "We are thrilled to be collaborating with Wildgaze Films in bringing Jack Thorne's stunning adaptation of this much-loved Australian love story to the big screen. Winton is an Australian literary legend with a dedicated fan base, and *Dirt Music* is a globally acclaimed book. With accomplished director Gregor Jordan at the helm, along with our brilliantly talented cast and creative team, we feel the alchemy is there for a fantastic movie."

Director of Film4 Daniel Battsek said: "We're so happy to see *Dirt Music* reach the start line. It's been a wonderful process developing this unique film with Wildgaze, who together with Gregor and Aquarius have assembled a formidable cast and crew to tackle Jack Thorne's pitch perfect adaptation of this classic novel. We can't wait to see the results."

Cornerstone Films' Alison Thompson and Mark Gooder also noted: "We're proud and delighted to be part of this wonderful adventure. Never has there been a better time to bring this beautiful, bold love story to the big screen for worldwide audiences to enjoy."

Head of Content at Screen Australia, Sally Caplan said: "*Dirt Music* is a classic Australian story set in a fictional small West Australian fishing village, and it's exciting to have a second Tim Winton film adaptation showcasing this beautiful part of Australia to the rest of the world. I'm sure this talented creative team and cast will do a brilliant job at bringing this popular and iconic Australian story to life."

Screenwest's Interim CEO Peter Rowe added: "This is such an exciting time for production in WA and Screenwest is committed to supporting creative storytelling that showcases our beautiful State and the stunning WA locations hand-picked for this film compliment Winton's novel as a love song to the land and place of his home state. From Esperance's stunning white beaches in the south to Cape Leveque's red rocks in our north, WA's diverse landscapes will be showcased on screen like never before."

**Production credit:** *Dirt Music* is a Wildgaze Films and Aquarius Films production with major production investment from Screen Australia in association with Film4. It was financed with support from the West Australian Regional Film Fund (WARFF) and Screenwest with Ingenious Media.

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**ABOUT WILDGAZE FILMS**

Wildgaze Films is one of the UK's leading independent film production companies, with a track record of producing high quality films with internationally renowned talents, both in front of and behind the camera. It is headed up by double Oscar® nominated and BAFTA award winning producers Finola Dwyer and Amanda Posey (for *Brooklyn* and *An Education*).

Wildgaze's recent productions include *Our Souls At Night*, a film for Netflix co-produced by Wildgaze and Robert Redford's Wildwood Enterprises. Directed by Ritesh Batra, the film stars Redford and Jane Fonda and received its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival in September 2017. We are executive producers on *VS.*, a feature debut co-written and directed by Ed Lilly, produced by Bennett McGhee, which will receive its World Premiere at the London Film Festival in October 2018, before Altitude release it across the UK later that month.

*Their Finest* reunited Finola and Amanda with director Lone Scherfig, and premiered at TIFF in September 2016, followed by the Mayor of London's Gala Screening at the London Film Festival and Sundance 2017. *Their Finest* was adapted for the screen by Gaby Chiappe from Lissa Evan's novel 'Their Finest Hour & A Half', starring Gemma Arterton, Bill Nighy and Sam Claflin, and was released in April 2017 by Lionsgate in the UK and STX in the US.

*Brooklyn* was released in 2015 by Fox Searchlight in the US, and was a critical and box office success, taking \$63m worldwide. It was nominated for three Oscars® (Best Picture, Best Actress and Best Adapted Screenplay) and six BAFTAs, winning the Outstanding British Film BAFTA. Based on Colm Toibin's award-winning novel, adapted for the screen by Nick Hornby and directed by John Crowley, the film starred Saoirse Ronan with Domhnall Gleeson, Emory Cohen, Julie Walters and Jim Broadbent. Wildgaze's feature documentary *My Nazi Legacy* (known as *What Our Fathers Did: A Nazi Legacy* in the US) premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York in April 2015 to outstanding reviews. Written by and featuring international human rights lawyer Philippe Sands and directed by David Evans, it was released by Altitude in the UK and Oscilloscope in the US in November 2015.

Among their other producing credits are *An Education*, directed by Lone Scherfig, adapted by Nick Hornby, and starring Carey Mulligan in her breakout role, which was nominated for 3 Academy Awards (including Best Film), 9 BAFTAs (including Best Film and Best British Film, winning Best Actress), and winner of Best Foreign Film at the Independent Spirit Awards; *A Long Way Down* based on the best-selling novel by Nick Hornby, adapted by Jack Thorne, directed by Pascal Chaumeil and starring Pierce Brosnan, Toni Collette, Aaron Paul & Imogen Poots; and Dustin Hoffman's directorial debut *Quartet*, written by Ronald Harwood, starring Maggie Smith, Tom Courtenay, Billy Connelly & Pauline Collins. *Quartet* was produced by Finola under her Finola Dwyer Productions banner.

Earlier personal producing highlights for Finola include the features *Backbeat* (1994, Iain Softely) and *Me Without You* (2001, Sandra Goldbacher), *Tsunami: The Aftermath* (2006) a 2-parter for HBO and *The Hamburg Cell* (2004, Antonia Bird) a single for HBO/Channel 4, and for Amanda, the features *Fever Pitch* (1997, David Evans) starring Colin Firth, and the US remake (2005, Farrelly Brothers) starring Drew Barrymore and Jimmy Fallon.

#### **ABOUT AQUARIUS FILM**

Aquarius Films, a creative partnership between Angie Fielder and Polly Staniford, has built a reputation for high quality, prestige films and television series that are both commercially successful and critically acclaimed. Recent credits include *Lion*, produced in association with See-Saw Films, directed by Garth Davis and starring Dev Patel, Nicole Kidman and Rooney Mara, which premiered at Toronto International Film Festival, made more than \$140 million at the worldwide box office and was nominated for six Academy Awards® (including Best Picture) and four Golden Globe Awards; and *Berlin Syndrome*, directed by Cate Shortland written by Shaun Grant and starring Teresa Palmer and Max Riemelt, which premiered at Sundance and Berlin and was picked up by Netflix.

Previous projects include: David Michôd's award-winning shorts, *Crossbow* and *Netherland Dwarf*, twice Archibald Prize-winner Del Kathryn Barton's film, *RED* starring Cate Blanchett; and *Wish You Were Here* starring Joel Edgerton, Felicity Price and Teresa Palmer, directed by Kieran Darcy-Smith, which opened the Sundance Film Festival in 2012 in the World Cinema Dramatic competition, and won numerous awards including the AACTA Award for Best Screenplay and the Film Critic's Circle Award for Best Film.

#### **ABOUT CORNERSTONE FILMS**

Founded in 2015 by Alison Thompson and Mark Gooder, Cornerstone Films is a London/LA based production, sales and financing company with a focus on feature films of enduring quality and distinctive story-telling. Working closely with our German partners, X Filme and Beta Cinema, the Cornerstone team is passionately committed to curating a diverse range of films that reflect the world around us, ranging from authored, intimate film-making, to commercial wide release films. We immerse ourselves in every stage of a film's journey collaborating closely with our partners from inception through to exploitation.

Cornerstone's current slate includes: Bart Freundlich's remake of Susanne Bier's *After the Wedding* starring Academy Award Winner Julianne Moore and Golden Globe Winner, Michelle Williams, BAFTA Nominee, Gurinder Chadha's *Blinded by the Light* featuring music from Bruce Springsteen, Sophie Hyde's *Animals*, starring Holliday Grainger and Alia Shawkat, Mirrah Foulkes' feature film directorial debut, *Judy and Punch* starring Mia Wasikowska and Damon Herriman; Academy Award Nominee Henry-Alex Rubin's crime-thriller *Semper Fi* starring Nat Wolf and Jai Courtney; BAFTA Winner, Chiwetel Ejiofor's directorial debut *The Boy who Harnessed the Wind*, BAFTA Winner Mike Leigh's British historical drama *Peterloo* which had its world premiere, screening in competition, at the Venice Film Festival; Academy Award Winner, Christoph Waltz's directorial debut *Georgetown* starring Christoph Waltz, Academy Award Winner, Vanessa Redgrave, and Academy Award Nominee, Annette Bening; *The Kill Team* directed by Academy Award Nominee, Dan Krauss, starring Nat Wolff and Alexander Skarsgård; Daniel Kokotajlo's award-winning *Apostasy* which had its world premiere in the Discovery section 2017 TIFF; Julien Temple's *Ibiza – The Silent Movie* featuring music by world renowned DJ Fatboy Slim; boxing drama *Journeyman* by writer, director and actor Paddy Considine which had its world premiere at the London Film Festival; John Turturro's dramatic comedy *Going Places* starring Turturro, Academy Award Winner, Susan Sarandon, BAFTA Nominee, Audrey Tatou and Bobby Cannavale.

## **ABOUT FILM4**

Film4 is Channel 4 Television's feature film division. Film4 develops and co-finance films and is known for working with the most distinctive and innovative talent in UK and international filmmaking, both new and established.

Film4 has developed and co-financed many of the most successful UK films of recent years, Academy Award®-winners such as Martin McDonagh's *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*, Lenny Abrahamson's *Room*, Alex Garland's *Ex Machina*, Asif Kapadia's box office record breaking documentary *Amy*, Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave*, Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* and Phyllida Lloyd's *The Iron Lady*, in addition to critically-acclaimed award-winners such as Lynne Ramsay's *You Were Never Really Here*, Andrea Arnold's *American Honey*, Rungano Nyoni's *I Am Not a Witch*, Yorgos Lanthimos's *The Lobster*, Mike Leigh's *Mr. Turner*, Chris Morris's *Four Lions*, Shane Meadows' *This is England*, Clio Barnard's *The Selfish Giant*, Jonathan Glazer's *Under the Skin*, Andrew Haigh's *45 Years* and David Mackenzie's *Starred Up*.

Film4's recent releases include Bart Layton's *American Animals*, Pawel Pawlikowski's *Cold War*, Lenny Abrahamson's *The Little Stranger*, Iain Morris's *The Festival*, Andrew Haigh's *Lean on Pete*, Clio Barnard's *Dark River*, Michael Pearce's *Beast* and Yorgos Lanthimos's *The Killing of a Sacred Deer*. Forthcoming releases include Yorgos Lanthimos's *The Favourite*, Steve McQueen's *Widows*, Sebastián Lelio's *Disobedience*, Tinge Krishnan's *Been So Long*, Mike Leigh's *Peterloo*, Stephen Merchant's *Fighting With My Family*, Tom Harper's *Wild Rose* and Jim Hosking's *An Evening With Beverly Luff Linn*. Films in production include Armando Iannucci's *The Personal History of David Copperfield*, Asif Kapadia's *Maradona*, Sarah Gavron's 'Untitled Girls Film', Nick Rowland's *Calm With Horses*, Justin Kurzel's *True History of the Kelly Gang*, Coky Giedroyc's adaptation of Caitlin Moran's *How To Build a Girl* and *Chaplin* from Peter Middleton and James Spinney.

For further information please visit [www.film4productions.com](http://www.film4productions.com).

## **ABOUT INGENIOUS MEDIA**

For 20 years, Ingenious has been at the forefront of investing in the global creative economy and in that time has raised and deployed over \$10 billion. Ingenious has been involved in the production of a diverse slate of films, including the award-winning *Life of Pi*, *Avatar*, Oscar®-nominated *Carol*, *Brooklyn* and *Selma*, five films in the successful X-Men franchise, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* and *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, breakout British hits *Suffragette* and *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, as well as acclaimed television programmes such as *The Fall*, *Dr. Foster* and *The Honourable Woman*.

Titles currently in production include *Judy* starring Renée Zellweger, Gurinder Chadha's *Blinded by the Light* featuring the music of Bruce Springsteen, Lone Scherfig's *The Kindness of Strangers*, Bart Freundlich's *After the Wedding* starring Julianne Moore and Michelle Williams, Peter Cattaneo's *Military Wives* and Benedict Andrews' *Against All Enemies* starring Kristen Stewart and Jack O'Connell. Titles currently on release in US cinemas include *Juliet, Naked* based on the novel by Nick Hornby and *The Little Stranger*, directed by Oscar®-nominated director Lenny Abrahamson.