



LUKE MAROUN

JULIAN MAROUN

DEPENDENT

THE MAD COLLAB PRESENTS **DEPENDENT** STARRING **LUKE MAROUN** AND **JULIAN MAROUN** DIRECTED BY **JOSEPH CHEBATTE**
SCREENPLAY BY **MARCUS KHOUDAIR** DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **EMMA ELIAS** EDITED BY **TYLER PHARO** PRODUCED BY **JULIAN MAROUN**
LUKE MAROUN **LENA ALBIN** AND **TRISTAN TRINGALI** EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS **JULIAN MAROUN** **DANIELA MAROUN** AND **KIM NORMAN**

MADE WITH CHADS X CARE BY
THE MAD COLLAB



DEPENDENT

(dir. Joseph Chebatte)

Running Time: **14 minutes 30 seconds**
Directed by: **Joseph Chebatte**
Screenplay by: **Marcus Khoudair**
Director of Photography: **Emma Elias**
Editor: **Tyler Pharo**
Production Company: **The Mad Collab**
Produced by: **Julian Maroun**
Lena Albin
Tristan Tringali

LOGLINE

In present-day Western Sydney, a devoted carer struggles with his own limitations while caring for his brother with Down syndrome and cerebral palsy, as news of a family tragedy tied to Middle Eastern conflict tests their bond.



BLURB

Set in present-day Western Sydney, *Dependent* follows Julian, a dedicated yet depleted carer, as he grapples with his own physical limitations and emotional strain while caring for his younger brother, Luke, who has Down syndrome and cerebral palsy. As Julian faces a testing medical diagnosis, the omnipresent weight of responsibility and concern for his brother's wellbeing overwhelms him. Amidst an increasingly haphazard daily routine, the brothers' bond is tested when news of escalating conflict in the Middle East strikes a deeply personal chord, forcing them to confront their worst fears—each in their own way. An honest and poignant snapshot of life's wonders and struggles, set against the backdrop of a complex and often volatile world, *Dependent* explores the burdens and beauty of brotherly responsibility and unconditional love. It examines themes of agency, interdependence, duty, and obligation—challenging traditional distinctions between the carer and the cared for, inviting audiences to reconsider not only the nature of responsibility but also their own assumptions about disability, autonomy, duty, and the dynamics of care.



SYNOPSIS

Sydney, present day. While his inquisitive brother LUKE (20s, living with Down syndrome and cerebral palsy) waits outside for him, dutiful carer JULIAN (30s) struggles to accept a chiropractor's diagnosis to avoid all strain. Julian exits the clinic in a huff and fixes Luke a drink of water - before he can do it for himself. Ignoring check-in calls from the family and news of conflict in the Middle East, Julian walks Luke home and dismisses his brother's desire to see something special in the other direction. An insistent Luke later prompts Julian to snap, who intercepts Luke leaving on his own. Julian submits and takes Luke to the special destination, a forgotten site of much childhood joy: a velodrome. They sneak inside. While Julian is occupied, Luke uses his brother's phone to hear news that Julian has kept from him. Their parents were in a drone strike overseas. Julian tears his shoulder while trying to control the situation - and Luke runs away. Exhausted, Julian returns home to find Luke sitting at the TV, watching home videos of the two brothers as children. Julian sits beside him. Luke drinks a cup of water that he poured for himself.



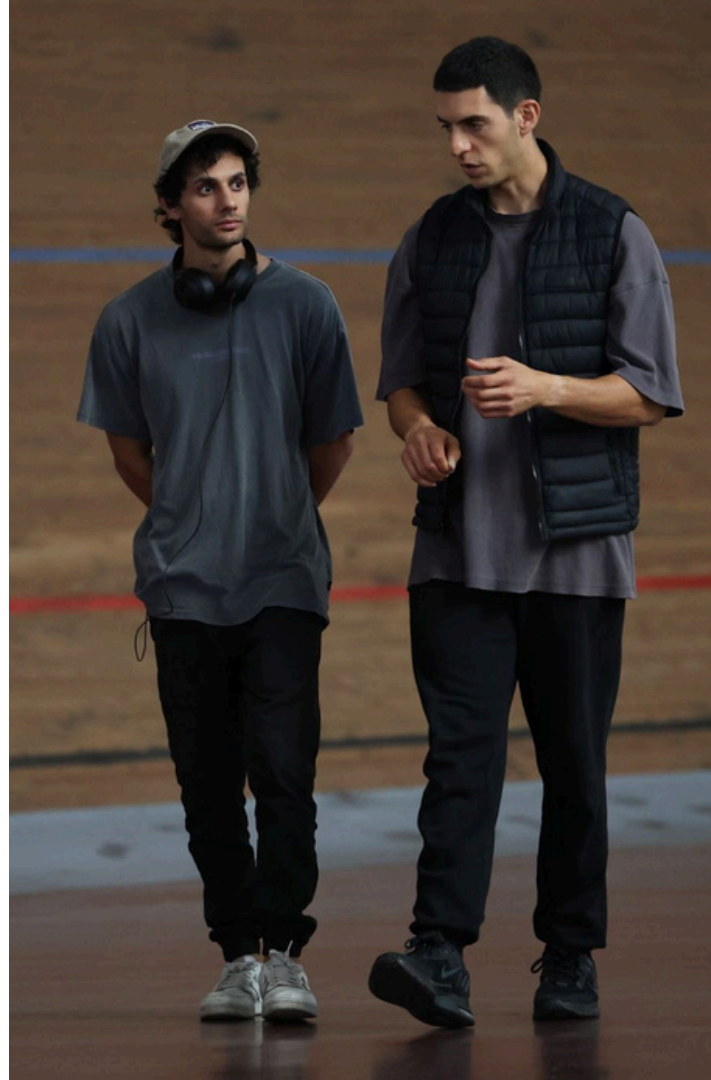
DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Dependent explores the intricate dynamics of human connection—the unspoken interplay between vulnerability and strength, the beauty and chaos of interdependence. This film is born out of a deep curiosity about the roles we inherit versus the ones we choose, and how our responsibilities shape our identities and relationships. A true testament to the magic of collaboration, *Dependent* examines brotherhood, responsibility, and fate through the unique bond between Julian and Luke. While the narrative follows their journey, the film's essence lies in the emotions that drive their actions—the chaos, tension, and shifting roles we are forced to play versus those we choose to bear. At the heart of the story is Luke, a young man with Down syndrome and cerebral palsy, whose perspective not only shapes the narrative but also influences the film's voyeuristic guise. His world is fluid and free, unencumbered by physical limitations or the constraints of conventional perception. My inspiration for *Dependent* stems from personal encounters with vulnerability and resilience, as well as from cinematic influences that celebrate the raw complexities of the human condition. I was moved by the delicate balance of control and surrender in our daily lives—the way we try to shield ourselves and those we love from life's harsh realities, even as we are bound by unavoidable truths. Films that embrace both humour and tension have taught me that storytelling can be as unpredictable as the emotions we experience, and I wanted *Dependent* to reflect that duality. The film's creative vision is to craft a narrative that feels as organic and unpredictable as the lives of its characters. Visually and structurally, the film adopts a voyeuristic lens, immersing the audience in Luke's perspective—a space where anything feels possible; a stark contrast to the emotional weight that defines Julian's reality.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

(continued.)

Dependent is a deeply vulnerable exploration of what it means to truly rely on another person—and the weight of that responsibility. It is a story of escape and return: the longing for freedom set against the inevitability of duty, of coming back to one another and to the burdens we must bear. Julian's role as protector is tested by his own limitations, while Luke, in a subverted dynamic, reveals a capacity for agency and influence that challenges traditional notions of dependence. Having witnessed Julian and Luke's relationship firsthand, I felt compelled to capture the emotional nuances of their bond through a fictional narrative. Equally important to me and the team was creating a space where Luke could perform and play freely. While there has been a rise in stories from diverse voices, I believe there is still room for greater inclusivity and deeper exploration of different worldviews. This is just one step toward that. I invite you to step into Luke's perspective—to experience, even for a moment, the profound bond between two brothers.



OUR STORY

Dependent is not just a project but a labour of love, crafted by a team deeply bonded by shared heritage and experience. The creative heads of this production—AFTRS Masters Graduate and cinematographer Emma Elias, writer and educator Marcus Khoudair, multi-award-winning director Joseph Chebatte, and actor/producer Julian Maroun—are all of Lebanese descent and hail from Western Sydney. Likewise, our leads—Julian and Luke Maroun—share a deep bond and a love of performance; a connection that infuses *Dependent* with honesty and nuance. We've found each other in this space, and our shared cultural roots have forged a close-knit, family-like environment that permeates every aspect of the film. This bond, combined with our passion for storytelling, ensures that this project is built on authenticity, collaboration, and a deep personal investment in bringing this narrative to life. The film is a raw, emotional exploration of brotherhood, resilience, and the ways we cope with both personal and global crises. With a strong focus on family, identity, and the lived experiences of people with disabilities, this project is more than just a story—it's a deeply personal narrative crafted by a team who share a close bond and cultural heritage.





Luke Maroun as **Luke**

Luke Maroun is an advocate for all abilities, representation, and inclusion, living and thriving with both Down syndrome and cerebral palsy. A passionate dancer and Zumba enthusiast, he is an active member of Infinite Abilities performing arts, where he showcases his love for performance. Luke's dream of becoming an actor and filmmaker was the driving force behind the inception of *Dependent*, his first short film, in which he also stars in the lead role. A regular on the red carpet alongside his older brother, Logie-winning actor Julian Maroun, Luke has appeared as an extra in various short films and TV series and starred in advertisements for the Australian Government-funded Carer's Gateway. As a budding social media influencer, he shares his dance journey and advocacy through engaging reels, inspiring others with his talent and infectious energy

Julian Maroun as **Julian**



One of Australia's leading actors, Julian most recently starred in AACTA nominated ABC Comedy *Aftertaste* (2022), alongside Rachael Griffiths and Erik Thomson. In early 2023, he appeared opposite Sam Worthington in STAN Original Film *Transfusion*. In 2021 Julian was added to the cast of FX Series *Mr Inbetween* directed by Nash Edgerton whilst also playing the recurring role of Detective Darren Nasser in Seven Network's *Home and Away*. Noted for his breakout role as Farid in STAN Original television series *Romper Stomper*, Julian was part of the ensemble that won Best Miniseries at the 2018 TV Week Logies. In the same year, Julian starred as Corporal Peter Abboud in *Fighting Season* for Foxtel/Sky UK. He also appeared opposite Adam Bakri in Partho Sen Gupta's 2020 feature film *SLAM*. First appearing on Australian television screens in the dual role of identical twin brothers Haris and Amir in the celebrated SBS series *Deep Water* (2016) opposite Noah Taylor and Yael Stone, Julian subsequently played supporting roles in ABC's *Cleverman* (2017), *Harrow* (2021), *Diary of an Uber Driver* (2019), and the final season of *Janet King* (2017). Other recent credits include regular cast roles as Detective Carlos Batista in Paramount+ series *The Secrets She Keeps* (2023) and supporting roles in STAN Original series *Year of* (2023), Netflix Exclusive Animated film *Mia & Me* (2023) and ABC's upcoming political drama, *Total Control Season 3* (2024). In 2024, Julian will star in ABC's anticipated six-part drama series 'Ladies in Black' (directed by Gracie Otto) alongside Debi Mazar, Miranda Otto, and Jessica De Gouw. In March 2024, he completed filming on the Kriv Stenders-directed international feature film 'The Correspondent' opposite Richard Roxburgh and Rahel Romahn.

DIRECTOR, Joseph Chebatte

Joseph Chebatte began his career as a film-lighting technician, mastering the technical intricacies of filmmaking. His hands-on experience, combined with collaborations alongside Australia's most respected directors and cinematographers, laid a robust foundation for his directorial journey. Fresh out of film school, Joey wrote, directed, and produced his first student short film, *Three Hearts*. The film's artistic brilliance was swiftly recognised, landing it a coveted spot on the shortlist at the Dances with Films festival in Los Angeles and premiering at the iconic TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Over the next two years, *Three Hearts* dazzled audiences across Europe, China, and the United States on the festival circuit. Building on this momentum, Joey's second short film script, *Entrenched*, garnered acclaim and high placements in prestigious screenwriting competitions like Cinequest and HollyShorts. The pinnacle of his early career came when *Entrenched* secured third place at the 2016 Slamdance Screenwriting Festival in Los Angeles. This success unlocked new doors, leading to Joey being awarded the WestWords Emerging Writers' Fellowship and a coveted mentorship with veteran actor Bryan Brown. Joey directed his award-winning short script, *Entrenched*, which left a lasting impact on audiences and critics alike, clinching numerous awards and ultimately winning Best International Film at the GI Film Festival, America's largest military-themed film festival. Today, *Entrenched* captivates viewers on the esteemed Omeleto YouTube Channel. Joey's next venture, *Mother Dearest*, showcased his directing prowess and mastery of camera language in a gripping one-man performance. Given only a monologue, Joey's direction transformed it into a riveting, thought-provoking short film, earning it a place on the distinguished online platform DirectorsNotes. Currently Joey's crime comedy feature film, *What Ensues*, is in development after being optioned by Thousand Mile Productions.

PRODUCER, Julian Maroun

Julian Maroun is an accomplished producer, writer, and actor based between Los Angeles and Sydney. Born and raised in Sydney's West to Lebanese immigrant parents, Julian's multicultural background has influenced his diverse and unique approach to storytelling. In 2020, he co-founded The Mad Collab Creative Services with his sister, Daniela Maroun, and, as Lead Creative Producer, has been instrumental in establishing it as a key player in entertainment and corporate media. With a keen interest in screen production, Julian honed his skills through formal education at the University of Technology, Sydney. His dedication and talent were evident early on in his career when, at the age of 21, he produced and starred in the short film *Three Hearts*. The film's remarkable storytelling and production quality earned it a nomination for Best Short at the prestigious Dances with Films Festival in Los Angeles in 2015. In 2018, Julian once again demonstrated his creative prowess by producing the short film *Entrenched*, co-starring opposite Toby Wallace. Working with a self-funded budget of \$40,000, Julian's resourcefulness, determination and strong industry relationships ensured the short film's success and enduring relevance. *Entrenched* received recognition in several international film making competitions, including Cinequest and Hollyshorts. It also achieved third place at the 2016 Slamdance Screenwriting Festival, going on to win Best International Film at the 2019 GI Film Festival in San Diego and Best Direction at the LA Indie Film Festival in the same year. In 2019, Julian produced *Mother Dearest* in Los Angeles, further demonstrating his ability to bring compelling stories to the screen. It was nominated for Best Short Film at the 2020 Creative Film Awards in Los Angeles. His versatility as a producer, writer, and actor, combined with his entrepreneurial skills, has made him a rising star in the entertainment industry. With a commitment to excellence and a passion for storytelling, Julian continues to push boundaries and leave a lasting impact on audiences worldwide.

WRITER, Marcus Khoudair

Marcus Khoudair is a feature screenwriter and school educator based in the Bankstown area of Sydney. Marcus was ten years old when he started writing in 2004, and since then, this obsession to create has been shaped by his ongoing investigation into the postwar refugee and migrant histories of his maternal and paternal families. A recent graduate of the Master of Screenwriting program at AFTRS, where he researched communal co-creation and facilitated workshops with Parramatta Actors Centre, Marcus is in development on several film projects with collaborator directors Chloe de Brito, Veniamin Gialouris, and Joseph Chebatte—and has received mentorship from Franz Rodenkirchen, Gabrielle Kelly, and Courtney Wise. Marcus' recent writing credits include the Flickerfest-screened shorts *Goodbye Text* and *Agoge*, and his feature screenplay *He's Not Here* was selected by PlayLab Films for their co-production initiative *Feature Films 2025*. Outside of filmmaking, Marcus was previously Leading English Teacher at Matrix Education and currently works full-time with Story Factory as a Storyteller in primary and high schools. Marcus has also appeared on *Hard Quiz* and *Mastermind* for his love of dinosaurs, and on dance floors near you for his love of freestyle.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, Emma Elias

Emma Elias is a cinematographer and photographer based in Sydney, Australia. She actively works on narrative and commercial projects, alchemising story into visual landscapes with passion. Her Lebanese-Australian heritage guides her drive to tell human-centric stories, using her work as an instrument for joy and deep connection to her practice. Emma welcomes collaborations of all kinds, with an interest in narrative, commercial, music, and dance projects.

EDITOR, Tyler Pharo

Born in Denver, Colorado, Tyler Pharo currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California. For the past 10 years, he has been fully immersed in post-production as an Assistant Editor and Editor. He also has a wide range of experience as a Photographer, Writer, and Videographer. His skillset has allowed him to consult, travel, work on, and create a multitude of projects and stories that fulfill his time and creative itch. Tyler finds inspiration in the contrasting landscapes of city and nature, as well as the creative individuals who capture them.



PRODUCTION DETAILS

Project Type:	Short
Country of Origin:	Australia
Genre:	Drama
Stage:	Completed
Language:	English
Format:	Digital, 3200K, 1:66:1, Colour

The film has been completed, with a budget of \$13,026 AUD. The project has been self-funded to date, and we are now actively accepting contributions to support its distribution. Our ultimate goal is to expand this story into a feature film, delving deeper into the protagonists' family dynamics and the complexities of care within their household.

KEY CREATIVE

Directed by:

Joseph Chebatte

Screenplay by:

Marcus Khoudair

From an Idea by:

**Joseph Chebatte and
Marcus Khoudair**

Inspired by the Lives of:

Julian and Luke Maroun

Director of Photography:

Emma Elias

Editor:

Tyler Pharo

Produced by:

**Julian Maroun, Luke Maroun,
Lena Albin and Tristan Tringali**

Executive Producers:

**Julian Maroun, Daniela Maroun
and Kim Norman**

Associate Producers:

Ian Mayer and Rob White



SUPPORTING CAST

Chiropractor:	Leonard Fung
Woman at Reception:	Helen Chebatte
Aunty (V/O):	Mishline Jammal
Journalist (V/O):	Sarah Armanious
Medical Receptionist:	Lena Albin
Medical Centre Extra:	Elise Maroun



Production Manager:
First Assistant Director:
Production Assistant:
Production Assistant:
Production Assistant:
Script Supervisor:
Sound Recordist:
Sound Recordist:
Camera Operator:
1st Assistant Camera:
2nd Assistant Camera:
Assistant Camera:
Camera Attachment:
Gaffer:
Production Designer:
Set Dresser:
Wardrobe:
Directing Support for Luke:
Hair and Make-up Artist:
BTS Videographer:
Stills Photographer:

Menachem Spielman
Leonard Fung
Lucy Blay
Nola Bartolo
Jordan Leigh-Estephan
Ganu Bhalerao
Dylan Frost
Keiran Arthur
Zac Hardaker
Tane Palise
Hiruni Dharmasena
Arden Kelly
Kaylem Miller
Tom Brian
Isabella Andronos
Henriette Gabreal
Elise Maroun
Elise Maroun
Elise Maroun
Nathanael Hopkins-Smith
Don Arnold

Composer:
Colourist:
Proxy Wrangler:
Conversion of Archive Footage:
Camera & Grip Equipment:
EPK and Publicity:
Post Sound Engineer:
Sound Engineer Asst.
Post Sound Studio:

Thomas Colbert
Marcus Friedlander
Daniel Di Marchi
Ziyad Moussa
Panavision
Daniela Maroun
Nathaniel Watkins
Kate Toohey
Villain Sound





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