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CAUGHT BENEATH THE BREAK

JOY PRODUCTIONS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE AND RLC PRESENTS 'SALTY'

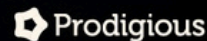
STARRING HYU MOTOKI, MAYLA DILLON, LUCA FARACI, EL SINGLETON, FLETCHER HUMPHREYS

CASTING BY HIGHWAY CASTING & DREAMHOUSE PRODUCTION DESIGNER DAS PATTERSON SOUND RECORDIST KWAMENA BRACE

MAKEUP & SFX MARIA NASRALLAH PHOTOGRAPHY/BTS LUCAS MILONE COMPOSER STEVEN D GRIFFITHS

POST SOUND BANG BANG COLOURIST DAVID GOLDSMITH DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MATT WOOD ONLINE PRODIGIOUS

PRODUCED BY DANIELLE SINGLETON WRITTEN BY MELISSA ZHEN ZHU RIEMER DIRECTED & EDITED BY JAKE ROBB



SYNOPSIS

Lachlan, a young surfing prodigy, spends an afternoon at the beach chasing waves, girls, and the fleeting thrill of youth. As the sun dips into evening, the carefree vibe turns fragile. Beneath his gentle demeanour lies the weight of his hidden troubles following an incident that has shook him to the core.

With flirtation and jealousy in the mix, Lachlan is confronted with a moment that triggers a mental breakdown, and Lachlan's friends—unequipped to understand—must make a decision that could change everything.

TECHNICAL SPECS

Size / aspect ratio: 1920 x 1080 px / 16:9 HD

Video codec / bit rate: H.264 high profile / 10 Mbit/s

Audio codec / bit rate: AAC / 320 Kbit/s, sampling rate 48 kHz

Sound | 5.1

Shooting format | 4-6K

Colour

Original language | English,
French subtitles available

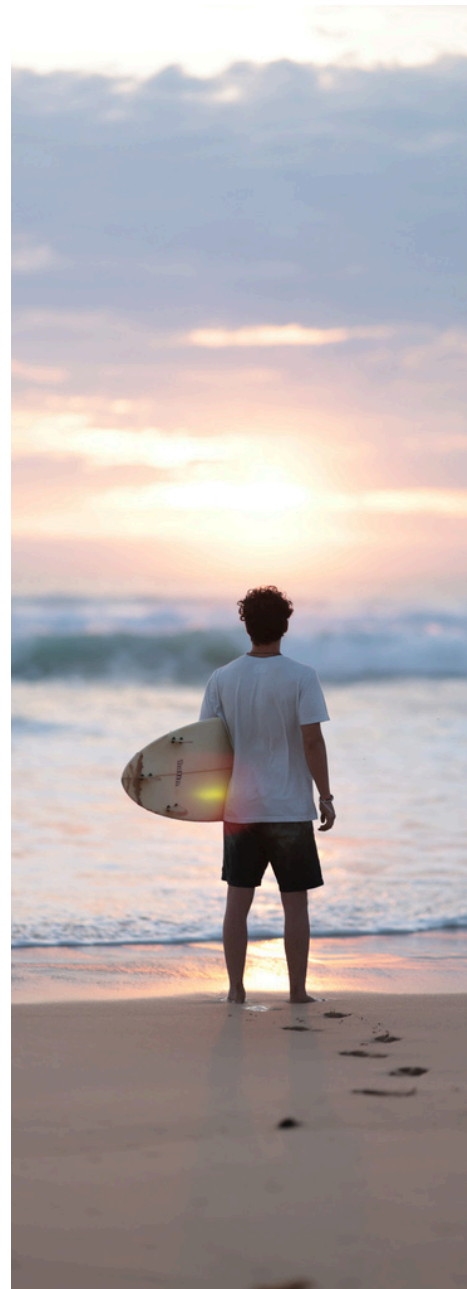
Year of production | 2024/25

World premiere | Pending

A-Camera - Alexa LF

B-Camera - Red Komodo

Runtime: 15 Minutes



A person with dark, curly hair is seen from behind, standing on a beach and looking out at the ocean. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt. The ocean has gentle waves, and the sky is a clear, pale blue. A white rectangular text box with a black border is centered over the image, containing the title and three paragraphs of text.

Directors Notes

As our story lives in a world of natural beauty, written with an honest and bare truth, so too was the way we approached the overall look and style of the film.

For our dialogue scenes, we captured the organic nature of the environment that our characters inhabited. Weaving in around our characters in a gentle, loosely free flowing way, the filmmaking aims to blur the line between steady documentary and narrative.

Conversely, scenes that depict Lachlan's psychological break were shot in a wild and chaotic way, uncoiling into a more impressionistic space. Erratic camera movement was layered into the vision, fast cut, with lensing and chromatic aberrations to confuse, disorientate and overwhelm our audience, mirroring what our character was going through.



THE STORY OF A

Film makers Approach

The film is divided into two distinct parts - the first being scenes of reality presented in a gentle and naturalistic sense, and the second being a more intense, allusive experience. For the scenes that involved dialogue and general plot movement we matched the real, organic performances of our talent with similarly observational, handheld camerawork. This naturalistic, gritty cinematography provided a foundation from which to accentuate the more esoteric visuals of Lachlan's dissociation and separation from reality.

When we shot Lachlan's psychological descent, we did so in a way that disorientates the audience, to give viewers a small but crucial glimpse into the inner workings of Lachlan's mind, to help them empathise with him as he works through his mental illness. We used lensing and refractive aberrations (with sea water on the lens, focus trying to catch 'sharps' like it's trying to catch breath, etc.) to accentuate the distortion of his world and reality. Imagery and frame-rates will be deliberately distorted, intentionally unsettling the audience to echo Lachlan's confusion.

I inserted cutaways that depict a glimpsed impression of a memory or past event. Taking inspiration from the impactful cinematic moments in "Euphoria," particularly Rue's spiraling sequences, we aim to challenge preconceived notions about mental health. This will provide a profound insight into Lachlan's breakdown, delivering a deeply visceral experience.

Background

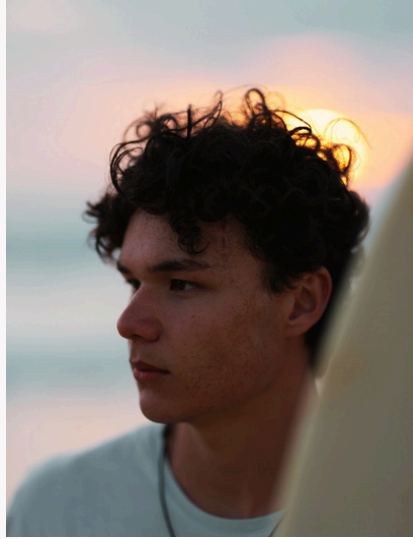
Salty is inspired by real experiences with mental health, exploring themes of PTSD, identity, and the deep connection between trauma and place. The story was developed into a short screenplay by Melissa Zhen Zhu Riemer, Danielle Singleton and Jake Robb, shaped by a desire to authentically portray the complexities of mental health. The film was brought to life with the support of industry professionals and emerging local talent, creating a raw and visually striking narrative set against the backdrop of Australia's iconic coastline. Set in the early 2000's there are subtle nods to the era, while keeping the story firmly relatable to modern day viewers.

CASTING

PROCESS

For our casting process, we partnered with Annabel Clayton from Highway Casting to find the perfect actor for our lead role, prioritizing a mixed-race performer from Melbourne to authentically represent our protagonist's story. Additionally, we searched for the right actor to embody antagonist 'Johno', ensuring a compelling on-screen dynamic.

Beyond this, we worked closely with The Dreamhouse Theatre Company to discover emerging teen talent from the Mornington Peninsula, giving local young actors the opportunity to be part of the film. This collaborative casting approach helped us build an authentic and diverse ensemble that brings Salty to life.



HYU MOTOKI

Hyu Motoki a Japanese/Aussie actor from Victoria, is a rising talent in both the local and international film scene, represented by Khan's Entertainment. With a thoughtful and nuanced approach to his craft, he brings depth and authenticity to his portrayal of Lachlan, shaping a character defined by humility, empathy, and emotional complexity.



MAYLA DILLON

Mayla's natural talent effortlessly translates to the screen, drawing from years of stage experience with the Dreamhouse Theatre Company in Mornington Peninsula. A rare discovery, Salty marks her on-screen debut, and her captivating presence proves she is one to watch.

COMMUNITY

The Salty Project brought together local Mornington Peninsula youths, aged 13–18, paired with award-winning filmmakers and acting professionals, giving them hands-on experience in creating a short film.

The project was supported by Mornington Peninsula Shire with an Arts grant and inspired young people by offering a relatable story they could connect with and actively contribute to through both storytelling and performance. Participants gained practical knowledge and skills that they can apply to future careers in film and television.

Beyond film making, Salty empowered the voices of the next generation, enriching the arts and culture scene while fostering a deeper conversation about mental health and community well-being.



LUCA FARACI

At just 16, Luca Faraci is a commanding presence on screen, delivering a performance well beyond his years. His remarkable talent shines as he masterfully navigates the nuances of friendship and jealousy in his dynamic with lead character



FLETCHER

HUMPHREYS

Needing barely any introduction, Fletcher Humphreys has appeared in many films and TV series such as Romper Stomper, The Stranger, The Dressmaker, Underbelly and much more. As a mainstay on Australian and international screens, Fletcher brings his seasoned performance ability and knowledge to the Salty story.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES



DIRECTOR - **Jake Robb** founder of the acclaimed Fiction Film Company, has enjoyed a career in film and television spanning 20 years. Noted for his ability to craft memorable and compelling visual narratives, Jake's work has earned numerous prestigious international awards, including the Yellow DA&D Pencil, the Asia Spikes Golden Spike, and the coveted Golden Mobius Award in Los Angeles, highlighting his exceptional skill in film craft and direction.

Robb is known for his impressionistic and cinematic style, often bringing a nuanced, emotionally charged perspective to his projects. His unique perspective has established him as a leading figure in the industry, renowned for creating deeply resonant and visually striking work.

www.jakerobbdirector.com



CREATOR/WRITER - **Melissa Zhēn Zhū Riemer** is Australian/Canadian and draws from being Chinese/German while navigating an intriguing worldly landscape. Her script was a top finalist in the Landed Entertainment script writing competition. Former senior editor for Terroir magazine, which focused on the artistic process of working Hollywood actors, she is also a freelance writer for 987.com based in North America with ties to Live Nation.

She is currently in development for her first TV series, *Boys of Summer* and recently was accepted into the prestigious writing intensive Scripted Series Lab led by Netflix showrunner, Michael MacLennan, while also serving as a judge for the Vancouver Short Film Festival and GEMFEST gender equality in media script writing competition.

www.melissariemer.com



CO-CREATOR/PRODUCER - Danielle Singleton has a Master of Producing qualification at VCA Film & Television. Her passion for storytelling and an interest in the human condition has gained her production credits across the film, tv and commercial space. Notably a producer on Ch 10's *Advancing Australia*, Ch 9's *The Healthy Cooks*, web series *The Chef's Secret* and field producer for Animal Planet's *Whale Wars* in Antarctica.

The narrative short films and music videos she has produced were selected by film festivals globally winning countless awards. Her biggest goal is to create positive change in the mental health and well being space.

www.daniellesingleton.com.au

CREW BIOGRAPHIES



CINEMATOGRAPHER - **Matthew Wood** has been working in the Film & TV industry as a cinematographer for the past 19 years. Shortly after graduating at VCA, Matt went on to win Gold at the Australian Cinematographers Society Awards in 2003 amongst numerous other awards across the world. He has worked on a youth project funded by Mornington Peninsula in 2006 and has lensed 3 short films centering around alcohol use and violence, where teens shadowed crew. For over a decade Matt was a guest lecturer at the Footscray Film & TV school, as well as a shoot supervisor on student films. He has also worked with Sudanese students, teaching filmmaking for community engagement and youth affairs.

www.mattwood.com.au



PRODUCTION DESIGNER - **Das Patterson** creates environments for audiences to experience through film, theatre and installation. His early credits include working with Green Room Award winning Four Larks Theatre, London's Secret Cinema and The Other Cinema. Das has been an art department assistant on Australian feature films *The Dressmaker* and *Holding the Man* as well as designing countless award-winning short films and music videos. Das' production designed the feature film *The Legend of Ben Hall* and was nominated for best Set Decoration for a Feature Film by the Australian Production Design Guild awards 2017. He has also guest lectured at VCA on *Designing on a Shoestring Budget*.

www.daspatterson.net



COMPOSER - **Steven D Griffiths** is an award winning pianist, composer, and electronic musician based in London, UK. Working alongside various featured artists, his music combines classical piano composition with modern electronic production sounds to create both instrumental and vocal pieces, often with an ambient-pop vibe. Alongside work released under his own name, he also produces for a variety of other musicians and bands.

Other credits include soundtrack work for clients such as Volkswagen.

www.stevendgriffiths.com/

SHOOT & LOCATION

Set to the iconic backdrop of Aussie back-beaches and summer lifestyle, the soundtrack is crashing waves and local Aussie indie music. The cinematic approach was be inspired by shows such as Euphoria and Sharp Objects.

Shot in the coastal region on Gunnamatta Beach, Mornington Peninsula, we utilised the natural surrounds of the seaside locale within the Eastern coastline of Victoria, Australia. The beach and rockpools served as a perfect location, not only for its amazing other worldly landscapes but equally for the personal and emotive themes covered in the film.



KEY PRODUCTION CREDITS

Writer/Creator: Melissa Zhēn Zhū Riemer

Co-Creator/Producer: Danielle Singleton

Executive Producer: Russell Cunningham

Director: Jake Robb

Cinematographer: Matt Wood

Production Designer: Das Patterson

Costume Designer: Irene Riemer

SFX/Makeup: Maria Nasrallah

Film Editor: Jake Robb

Sound Recordist: Kwamena Brace

Composer: Steven D Griffiths

Stills/Key Art: Lucas Milone

1st AD: Jess O'Farrell

Production Manager: Heidi Aitkins

Continuity: Leo Mitchell

2nd AC: Lucas Wroe

Camera Operator: Jake Simkin

Drone Operator: Chris Lansell

Online: Prodigious

Post Sound: Bang Bang Studios

Casting Director: Highway Casting and Dreamhouse Theatre Company

Cast

Lachlan: Hyu Motoki

Johno: Luca Faraci

Kylie: Mayla Dillon

Lisa: El Singleton

Mikey: Keenan Lord

Frank: Fletcher Humphreys

Stunt Surfer: Jamie Townsend-Kopp

Country of Production: Australia

Date of Completion: 2025

Shooting Format: Various - 4-6K

Ratio: 16:9 HD

Duration: 15 Minutes

Genre: Drama

PARTNERS & SPONSORS



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CASTING

balin

Prodigious

BANG!
BANG!
STUDIOS

Rye
RSL CLUB

Throughout pre-production and principal photography, Salty was met with incredible community support. We are deeply grateful to our generous sponsors and partners who contributed their time, funding, locations, nourishment, and products. Their invaluable support played a crucial role in bringing this project to life, and Salty wouldn't have been the success it was without them.



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MRS PALMERS

ocean
mind

A person with curly hair, wearing a white t-shirt and shorts, stands on a beach at sunset. They are holding a surfboard under their arm. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The ocean waves are visible in the background, and the person's reflection is visible in the shallow water on the sand.

Press Release

Salty is a powerful short film exploring youth mental health, identity, and resilience, set against the raw beauty of the Mornington Peninsula coastline.

The story follows Lachlan, a young surfing prodigy, whose carefree afternoon with friends unravels when past trauma resurfaces, forcing him to confront the pull of the ocean as both his solace and his struggle.

Created through the Salty Project, the film united students aged 13–18 with award-winning industry professionals for hands-on workshops across all areas of filmmaking. The initiative not only equipped young people with skills and pathways into the screen industry but also highlighted the strength of community and the importance of positive relationships as a way of addressing the mental health challenges faced by youth. Since production, many students have gone on to work on commercial and film sets or begun creating and strengthening their own projects.

Directed by Jake Robb, produced by Danielle Singleton, and written by Melissa Zhen Zhu Riemer, Salty combines naturalistic storytelling with dreamlike, visceral sequences to capture the turbulence of PTSD, the fragility of youth, and the power of connection. The film also serves as a prequel and platform for the upcoming series Boys of Summer.



CONTACT & LINKS

Website: www.saltyfilm.com.au

Contact -

boysofsummersaltyproduction@gmail.com

Producer - Daniellejsingleton@gmail.com

+61 421 465 270 (Australia)

Media Inquiries - Melissa@Heliummediagroup.com

+1 778 809 7747 (North America)

Social Media

Instagram - www.instagram.com/salty_the_film

Facebook - www.facebook.com/saltythefilm

TikTok - www.tiktok.com/@salty_film

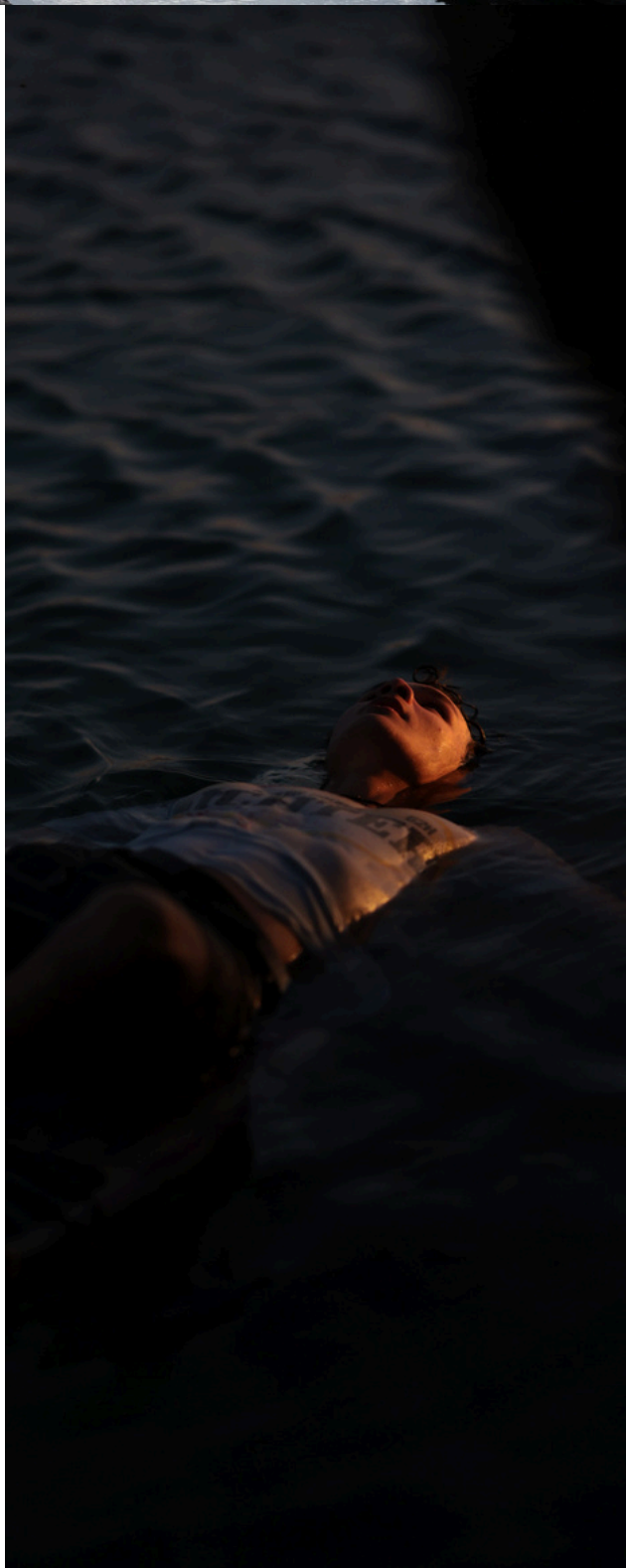
Bluesky - saltythefilm.bsky.social

Film Stills -

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oSEPwhOI5QmCli6qaX_4WvnI59n6jFx?usp=drive_link

Behind-the-scenes Stills -

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1c6k0CnEuRksFFWF-epOLEiFYcB7HZ7q?usp=sharing>



SALTY

*IF YOU CAN'T
TRUST YOUR MIND,
WHAT CAN YOU TRUST?*

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