

ANIMUS

A Dialectic in Five Illustrations



MEDIA KIT

A STATE OF MIND FILM IN ASSOCIATION WITH K29 PRESENTS "ANIMUS" WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY JAMIE MURRAY STARRING FENN LEON & CHRIS HARDY
PRODUCED BY KAYTEE ELLIOTT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY CALUM STEWART PRODUCTION DESIGNER EMILY KEMP EDITOR JAMIE MURRAY ANIMATION ZEE MURRAY
SOUND BY JO DUTAILLIS SCREENPLAY BY MICHAEL MCGLENNAN & MATTHEW MURRAY A 2025 STATE OF MIND FILM

*“He Who Makes a **Beast** of Himself...*

*...is Freed From the Pain of Being a **Man**”*

LOGLINE

A violent sociopath is interviewed by a prison psychologist to ascertain the motive behind a brutal assault

SYNOPSIS

In a dystopian near-future where animal species are on the brink of extinction, a violent sociopath is interviewed by an institutional psychologist after confessing to a brutal attack. In search of a motive, the psychologist realises he must sink his teeth into the one thing that his subject finds meaningful: an obsessive fascination with animal nature and evolution.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Born of Evil. Consume the Weak. Breed the Strong.

Dialectic dia.lec.tic n.

1. The art of discussion and reasoning by dialogue as a method of intellectual investigation

Animus emerged from a nightmare — an instinctive, bodily response to a pervading sense of inauthenticity, the uncomfortable truth that we are not okay. In a world built on comforting lies, the truth sounds madly unhinged, and we are all probably hiding a scar or two.

I have worked on the film for six years with much pleasure and pain. At times it has been the only thing that has made sense to me. The initial plan was simple: pit two opposing perspectives against one another and see which survives. What could be more entertaining than that? I had explored a similar concept in my first film, but this time the material pushed back. What I got was a beast that grew into something far more literal, a mutation symptomatic of a deeper cultural sickness, one that only reveals itself when examined closely.

Developed amid the societal rupture of the early 2020s, Animus bears the marks of its time. At its core it is a confrontation between two people who fundamentally disagree. Beyond this, it becomes a visceral reaction to an increasingly abrasive global climate and a world under environmental strain. Regardless of my intentions however I've probably only made another unavoidably personal psychodrama - any real meaning drawn from the film rests in the performances of its characters, and I would be glad to know that their questions had lingered after the lights came up.

In its form, Animus is a chimera: a collage of in-camera performance, hand-drawn animation, archival footage, and AI-generated imagery. From the outset I was instinctively drawn to mixed-media, before understanding how much it would ask of the work. In the end, I'm grateful for the persistence it took to dismantle the cut again and again — pulling it apart, melting it down, and refining what survived — until it no longer needed me.

The late inclusion of Generative AI, used sparingly as another tool at the bench, was not a choice I came to lightly, but it did feel an intriguing paradox to explore given the themes of the work: the evolution of a species that is both selfish and altruistic, a morality that is both innate and constructed, a medium that is simultaneously the antithesis of the manmade and the result of it.

Filmmaking is a constant battle, and arriving at what exists within these 24 minutes using the limited means we had at our disposal feels truly earned. I am deeply grateful to the brilliant cast, crew, and collaborators whose commitment made the film possible. Animus now meets its audience, and it is about damn time. As I unleash it, I can only hope that its bark is worse than its bite.

-James Murray, Sydney, January 10, 2026



Fenn Leon

Fenn Leon is an Australian actor and screenwriter from Naarm (Melbourne). He began his career as a teenager in NIDA Stage Performances, local theatre, and musicals.

*Fenn has led roles in Australian films across genres, including the dramatic feature *Everything in Between* (2022), the Jewish Film Festival favorite *Sasha's Game* (2023) and the queer comedy festival film *Honey Bear* (2024).*

Now based in Berlin, Fenn runs a film collective that produces live-cinema performances, collaborating with international talent.



Chris Hardy

Chris Hardy is a veteran performer with over fifty years of experience across film and theatre. He has lived and worked in Sydney, Tokyo, and London, performing with a range of companies in each city while also pursuing an extensive teaching career.

Alongside his performance work, Chris has taught acting and directing throughout his career, citing mentors Kevin Jackson and Carrie Zivetz as significant influences on his craft.

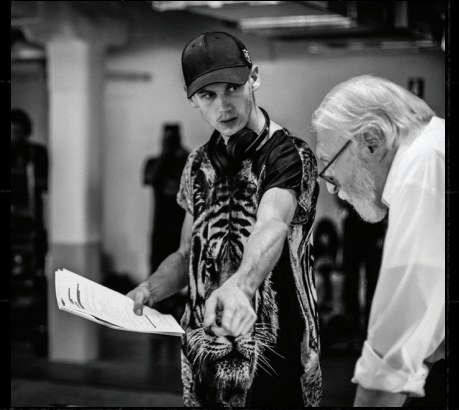
For the past four years, he has served as Artistic Director of the Austin Theatre Group, where he regularly stages productions with both current students and alumni.



KEY CREW

Writer-Director | James Murray

James is a Sydney-based filmmaker whose debut short film Nangana was applauded at film festivals, earning several laurels, including winning best screenplay at MCIFA. His sophomore short, Animus, is set to commence its festival run in 2026. James has directed music videos for signed artists, achieving broadcast exposure on MTV and garnering tens of thousands of online views. He collaborates with the now Sweden based production house 376 Films and currently has both a short and a feature screenplay in development.



Producer | Kaytee Elliott

Kaytee is an executive producer and founder of the Sydney-based production company K29 Studios. Her producing credits include the comedy series We Kill Clowns, the short-form television drama Lady Alpha's Undercover Romances (ShortMax), and Runaway Prince's Secret Vacation (Vigloo). She is drawn to stories that resonate beyond initial impact, leaving a lasting impression on audiences. Kaytee is currently developing several pilot projects for broadcast and web.



Cinematographer | Calum Stewart

With a career spanning both Australian cinematography and international productions, Calum has delivered high-end work for major broadcasters including the ABC, BBC, CH10, ITV and SBS. His debut feature Akoni earned multiple accolades, including an Australian Cinematographers Society award and a feature in Australian Cinematographer magazine. He also lensed the AACTA Award-winning Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt) and recently shot The Way, My Way, which enjoyed a major theatrical release in Australia and worldwide distribution.



Production Designer | Emily Kemp

With a strong visual sensibility and an affinity for abstraction, Emily has established a niche within the horror and thriller genres. Her early credits include short films such as Prehension (2017), Nangana (2018), and Pinch Me (2020), before progressing to feature-length work on the Australian zombie-action thriller Wyrnwood: Apocalypse (2021). She worked closely under Production Designer Esther Rosenberg, further developing her craft. Emily's commercial portfolio includes work for clients such as Sony and the Australian Museum.



SHOOTING A BEAST

1. The opening prison sequence was filmed at the high school where actor Chris Hardy once taught English and Drama to director James Murray.

2. Animus was shot over just four days, with principal photography taking place in a converted flour mill in Summer Hill.

3. Actor Fenn Leon was fasting for medical reasons during filming; his gaunt appearance is largely natural.

4. The assault victim in the film is portrayed by the director's father, Matthew Murray.

5. Post-production took three years, driven by extensive hand-drawn animation by the enigmatic animator Zee.

6. Scouring hours of archival footage and experimentation with early AI-assisted methods also contributed to the lengthy process of completing the five illustrations that mark the chapters of the film.

7. A rigid colour palette was enforced throughout production, with any stray colours corrected in post to preserve the film's distinct visual identity.



PRODUCTION SPECS

Country of Production | Australia

Production Budget | \$20,000 AUD

Language | English

Production House | State of Mind Films & K29 Studios

Distribution | 376 Films

Year of Production | 2021

Year of Release | 2026

Runtime | 24:31

Shooting Format | 2K QHD Digital

DCP Resolution | 1998x1080 DCI Flat

Sound Format | 5.1 Dolby Surround

Aspect Ratio | 16:9

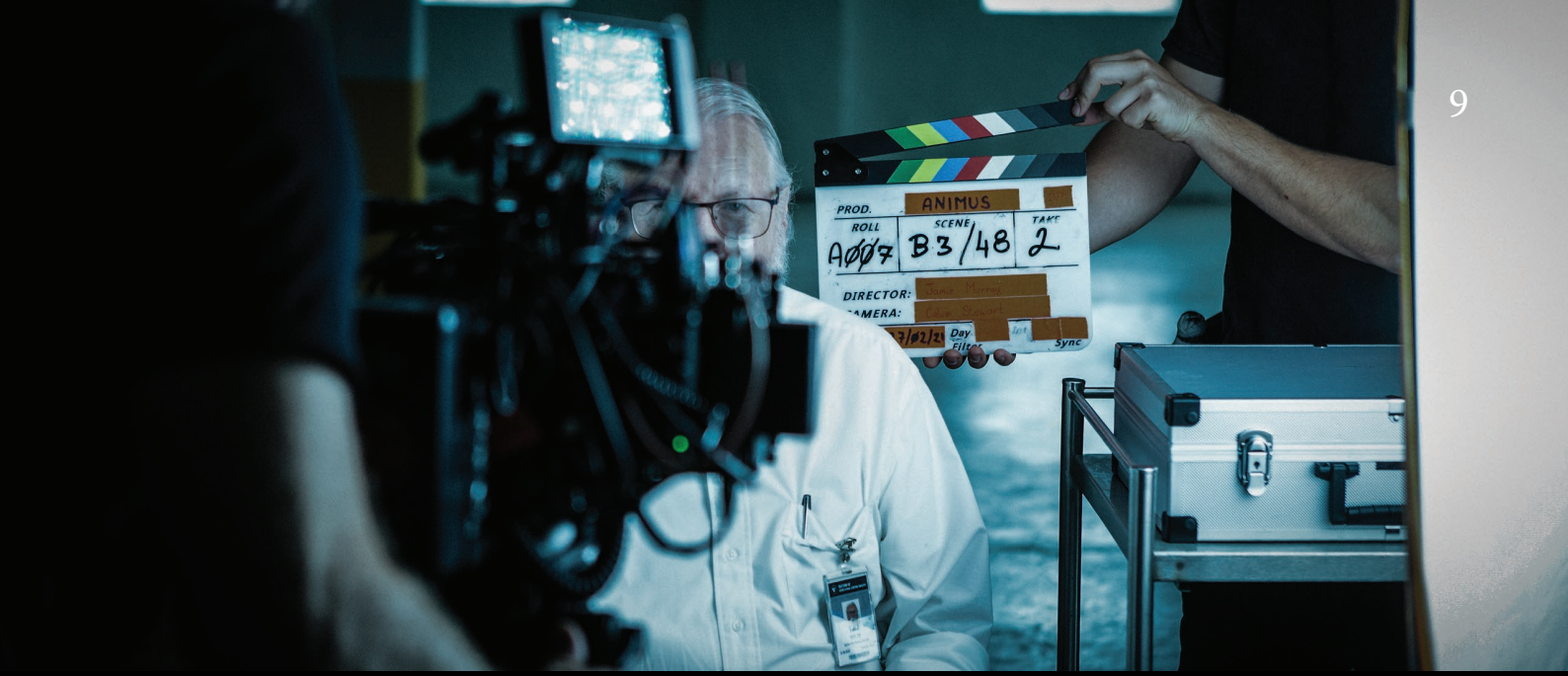
DCP Frame Rate | 25 FPS

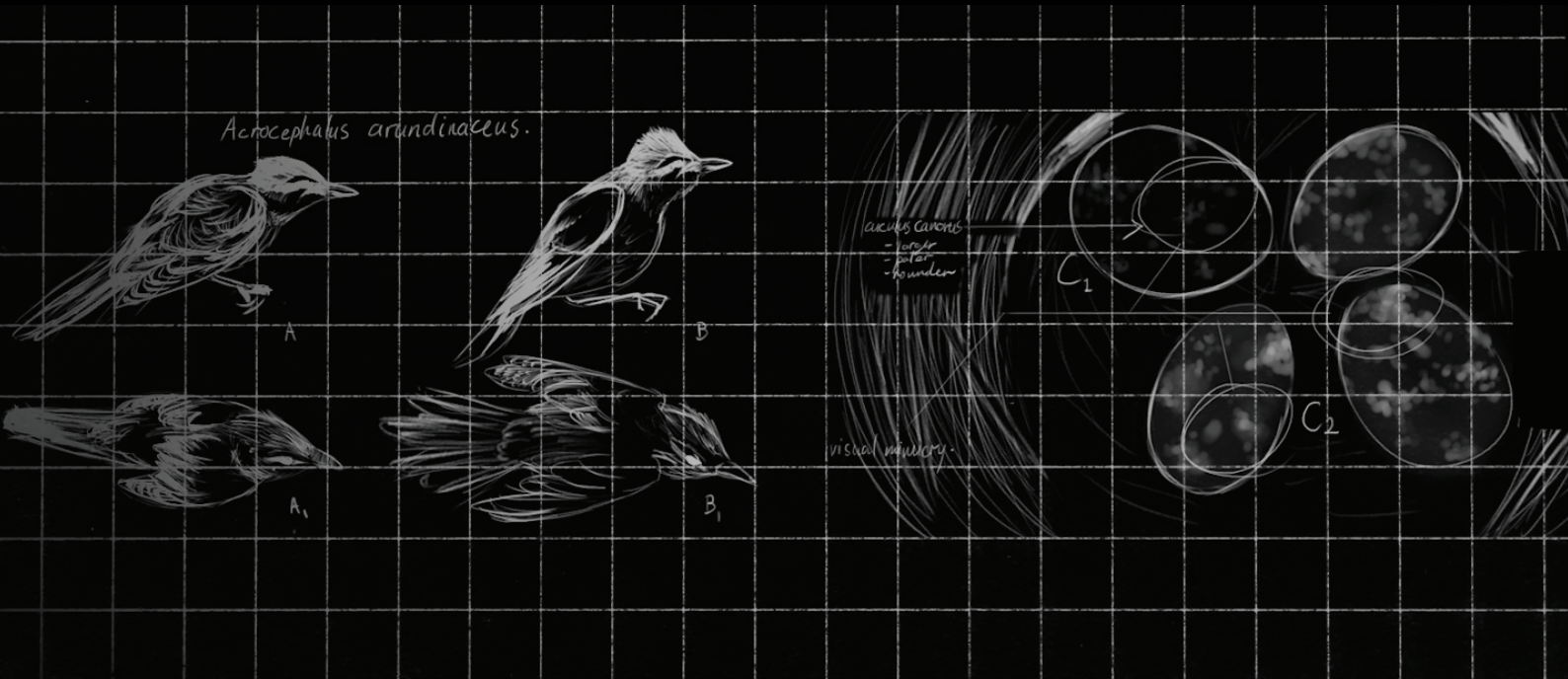
Colour Space | REC 709



GALLERY







State of Mind Films Presents *Featuring*

ANIMUS

Starring

Fenn Leon & Chris Hardy

Matthew Murray

Carmen Soriano

Steve Sampson

Mark Fox

Jay Nonnemacher

Matthew Wheelahan

Anthony Skinner

Written & Directed by Jamie Murray

Producer.....Kaytee Elliott
Director of Photography.....Calum Stewart
Production Designer.....Emily Kemp
Editor.....Jamie Murray
Script Editor.....Michael McLennan
Script Consultant.....Matthew Murray
Script Supervisor.....William Hadinata
1st AD.....Mat Bosevski
Gaffer.....James Bartlett
1st AC.....Shaun Graham
2nd AC.....David Svec
Camera Assistant.....Justin Layug
Prop Maker.....Olivia Dodd
Make Up Artist.....Elizabeth Lewis
Hair Designer.....Khatijah Jamalluddin
Art Assistant.....Kaitlyn Symons
Lead Animator.....Zelda Murray
VFX Supervisor.....Harrison Molling
VFX Artist.....Evan Zazula
Colourist.....Antonio Centonze CSI
Sound Designer & Mixer.....Joseph Dutaillis
Sound Recordist.....Joseph Dutaillis
Catering.....Fiona Murray
Production Assistant.....Tim Duncan
Stills Photographer.....Ibrahim Faraj
BTS Videographer.....Jay Nonnemacher
Location Manager.....Gareth Bussey



AI Imagery Generated By
Stable Diffusion & Veo 3



ARRI

POND5

Archival Images Licensed By
Pond 5, Getty Images & Shutterstock

gettyimages



State of Mind Films & K29 Presents

ANIMUS

A Dialectic in Five Illustrations

Watch the Trailer (1:03)

vimeo.com/376films/animustheatricaltrailer

Private Screener (Festival / Press Use Only)

vimeo.com/376films/animus

Password: thehandthatfeedsyou

**Please do not share without permission*

CONTACT



@animus.film



Animus Short Film



jamie.376films@gmail.com



+61 404 845 266



376films.com/animus

DISTRIBUTION

376
F I L M S

