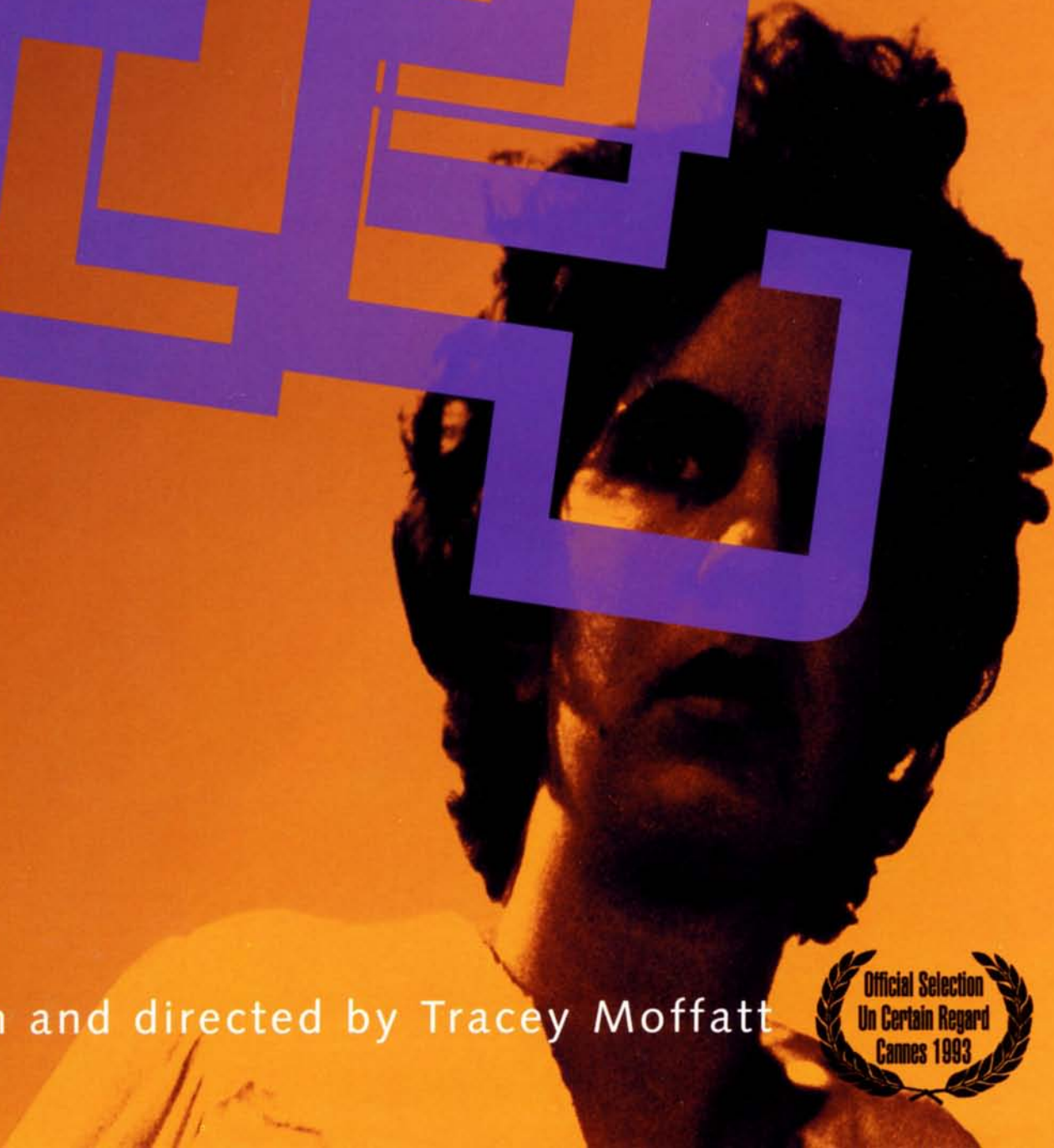


be Devil



when the unexplained happens

PG Low Level Coarse Language



written and directed by Tracey Moffatt



An innovative rendering of three childhood mysteries from the imagination of filmmaker, visual artist and photographer Tracey Moffatt. Moffatt's breathtaking style - drawing on influences as diverse as Vincente Minnelli and Masaki Kobayashi - makes Bedevil one of the most dazzling feature debuts in Australian cinema.

SYNOPSIS

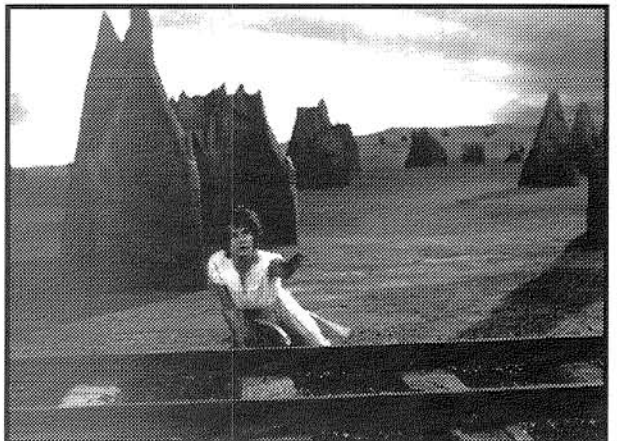
MR CHUCK

The sandy shores and the breezy bungalows of Bribie Island play host to a strange and eerie story. Years back an American GI drove his truck into the quicksand after a party. The pervasive malevolence of the GI's presence is still felt by many who live and have lived on the island. However, there is another underlying evil that remains unspoken. Rick experienced both and lives to tell the tale.



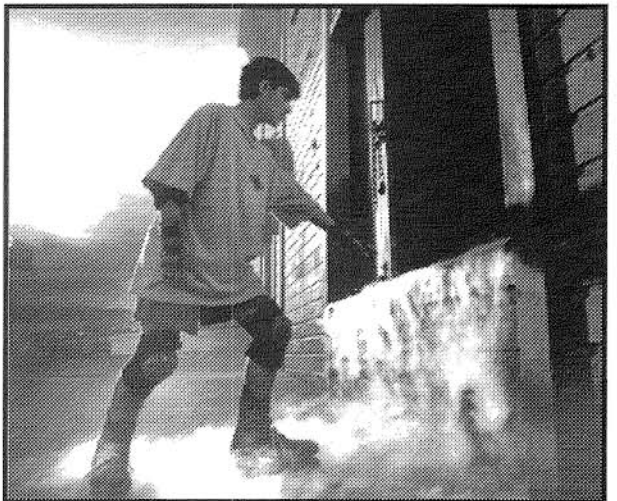
CHOO CHOO CHOO CHOO

The desolate plains of outback Queensland and a railroad track which starts somewhere in the past and never seems to end provide the parameters of another ghostly story. Ruby (played by Moffatt herself) and her family are haunted by invisible trains which run on the track beside their house. The ghost of a young girl killed by a train never finds peace. Her lament drives Ruby and her family away. After many years Ruby returns to experience the ghostly presence yet again.



LOVIN' THE SPIN I'M IN

Imelda's people are traditional folk of the Torres Strait Islands. When her son Bebe and his love, Minnie, leave their community to escape opposition to their marriage, Imelda follows them to a small northern Queensland town. Tragedy strikes - Bebe and Minnie die, Imelda, in her overwhelming grief continues to mourn the loss. But as the young boy across the road discovers, the doomed couple never find peace. The spirits of Minnie and Bebe dance on in the condemned warehouse as the would-be developers find that Bebe and Minnie will not be removed from the only home they know.



PRODUCTION NOTES

In her first feature film, Tracey Moffatt continues to stretch our expectations of the Australian landscape with the same diabolical intensity and dark humour, which saw her photographic work and her two previous short films lauded around the world.

Both *Nice Coloured Girls* (1987), and *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy*, (selected for official competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 1990), have netted the young filmmaker a reputation for vivid, emotive and highly original work - a reputation equalled by her work as a visual artist in the medium of still photography.

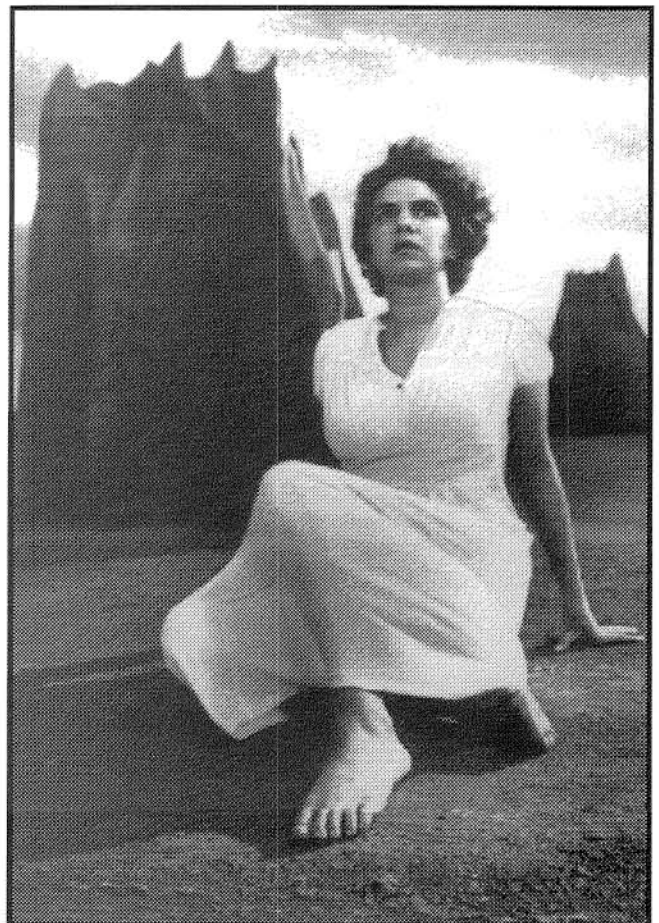
Now *BeDevil* represents a step further down the track towards her own brand of surreal, psychic exposure, assuring her place with Campion and Armstrong, at the forefront of contemporary Australian film-making.

A graduate of the Queensland College of The Arts, where she studied film and video production, Moffatt worked as a photographer and filmmaker throughout the 1980s, producing her own films as well as documentaries for Film Australia, SBS, and various Aboriginal organisations. Her photography is represented in major public and private collections throughout Australia.

To her first feature she brings the distilled imagery and idiosyncratic signature style of a committed visual artist, as well as the rich cultural legacy of both her white Australian and Aboriginal upbringing. The three ghost stories which comprise *BeDevil* were culled from Moffatt's childhood recollections, "both my Irish and Aboriginal relatives".

A garish, rather eerie, even Gothic landscape evolved in her mind. "I wanted to put down on celluloid the ghost stories which sent shivers up my spine as a child, and which over the years had become family myths " she says. "Because they were ghost stories I didn't feel compelled to approach them in a conventional way. Bizarre things happen. Not all of them are explained."

BeDevil went into pre-production in 1992, but Moffatt had already been working with producer Tony Buckley (*Caddie*, *The Night The Prowler*, *Bliss*), and production designer Stephen Curtis (*Twelfth Night*, *Breathing Under Water*, and *Night Cries*) since 1991. The script went through five drafts, into which all aspects of the design were fully incorporated.





BIOGRAPHIES

TRACEY MOFFATT, DIRECTOR, SCREENWRITER

Tracey Moffatt was born in Brisbane in 1960. She is a graduate of the Queensland College of the Arts where she studied film and video production. She moved to Sydney in 1983 and has since worked as an independent filmmaker, photographer and exhibition curator. She has also made documentaries for Film Australia, SBS Television, and various Aboriginal organisations. Her photography is represented in private and public collections throughout Australia.

Tracey's work has been invited to international art and film festivals in New York, Toronto, Torino (Italy), Montreal, London and Edinburgh. Her short film, *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy* was selected for official competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 1990. *BeDevil* was screened as part of Un Certain Regard in the 1993 Cannes Film Festival.

In recreating the ghost stories of her childhood, Moffatt admits she has made them "much more flamboyant, more nightmarish. The settings are tropical northern Queensland. Heat pervades throughout. I come from a family of drama queens, so while the stories are tinged with reality, you never know just how much they are made up."

CAST LIST

MR CHUCK

Shelley
Rick
Young Rick
Rick's Sisters

Blonde Boy
Blonde Girls
Swamp Ghost

DIANA DAVIDSON
JACK CHARLES
BEN KENNEDY
DAPHNE BYERS
LAVINA PHILLIPS
DESARAE MORGAN
JORDAN HAMMOND
HALEY MCGOVERN
BENJAMIN COLLARD

CHOO CHOO CHOO CHOO

Ruby Morphet
Stompie Morphet
Jack
Older Ruby
Ronnie
Maudie
Bob Malley
Old Mickey
Ghost Girl

TRACEY MOFFATT
BANULA (DAVID) MARIKA
PAULINE MCLEOD
AURIEL ANDREWS
SHAUN SAUNDERS
MAWUYUL YANTHALAWUY
CECIL PARKEE
LES FOXCROFT
KAREN SAUNDERS

LOVIN' THE SPIN I'M IN

Dimitri
Voula
Spiro
Beba
Minnie
Emelda
Conos
Fong
The Artist
Roxy
Bob
Rollerblade Boys

LEX MARINOS
DINA PANOZZO
RICCARDO NATOLI
PINAU GHEE
PATRICIA HANDY
DEBAI BAIRA
JOHN CONOMOS
KEE CHAN
LUKE ROBERTS
MIDIANA DANIELS
JOSEVA RATU
BENJAMIN MOFFATT
FLYN CUTHBERTSON

CREW LIST

Producers	ANTHONY BUCKLEY CAROL HUGHES
Director	TRACEY MOFFATT
Screenwriter	TRACEY MOFFATT
Director of Photography	GEOFF BURTON ACS
Production Designer	STEPHEN CURTIS
Art Director	MARTIN BROWN
Sound Editor	FRANK LIPSON
Film Editor	WAYNE LE CLOS
Composer	CARL VINE
Stills Photographer	ELISE LOCKWOOD
Sound Recordist	DAVID LEE

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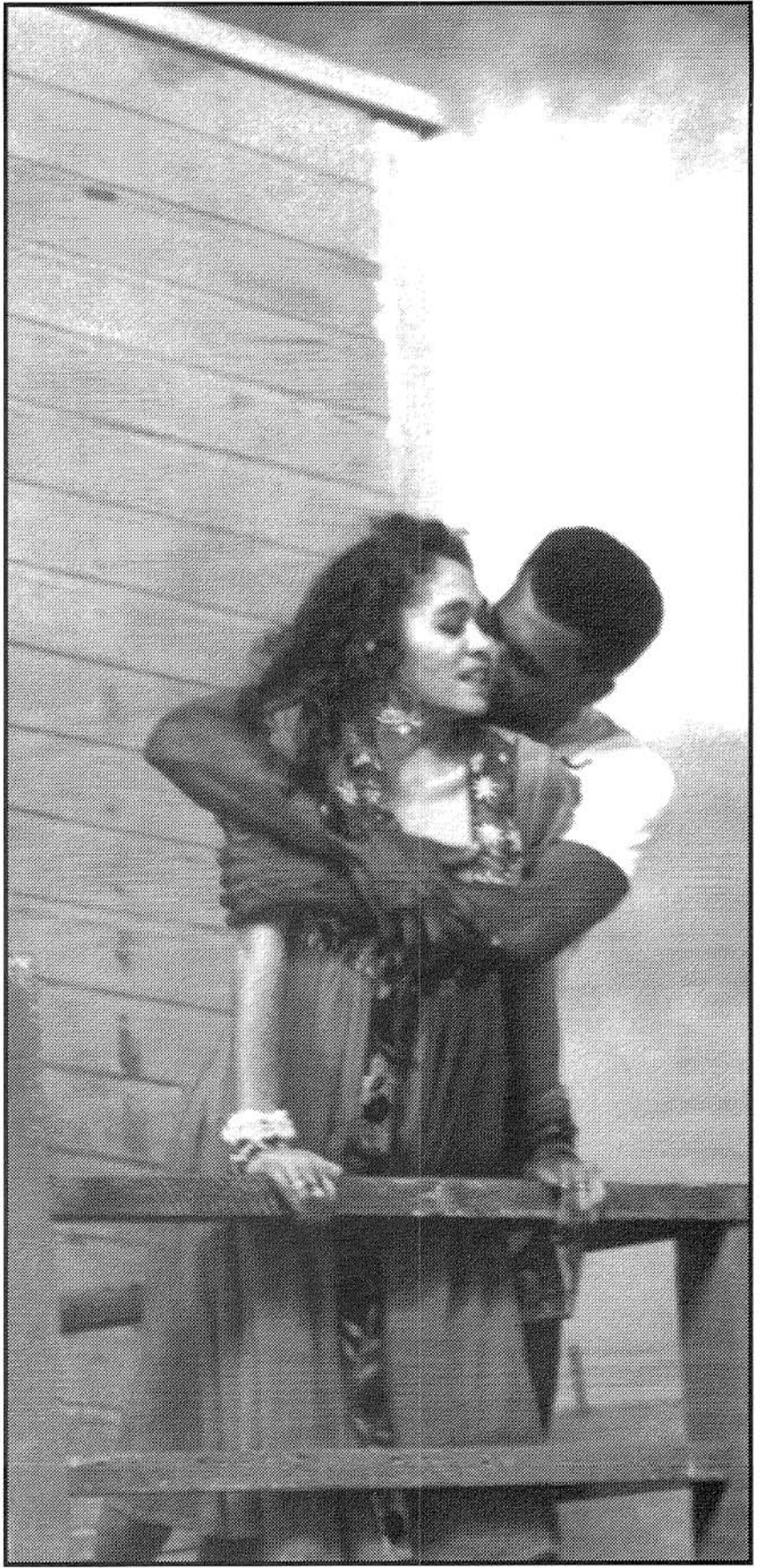


CINEMATOGRAPHY

For *BeDevil's* Director of Photography, Geoff Burton A.C.S., whose previous credits include *Sunday Too Far Away*, *Storm Boy*, *Flirting*, *Aya*, *Frauds*, *Vietnam*, *Dirtwater Dynasty* and *Bangkok Hilton*, the studio environment was a major switch. "I've been known as a naturalistic DOP" he explains, "and *BeDevil* gave me the opportunity to show I could work quite differently. Studio based shooting provides a cinematographer with total control." One of Burton's key reference points was Steven Spielberg's *Hook*.

But Moffatt also needed to simulate documentary footage for present day sequences which were filmed on location at Queensland's Bribie Island, and the town of Charleville, 800 kms west of Brisbane. "After five weeks of indoor shooting, the crew were getting restless" she recalls. "But also for the audience I wanted the outdoor shots to work like breathers in the film."

This tension between fake authenticity, and artificial reality is one of the most memorable, even amusing, aspects of the film.



PRODUCTION DESIGN

"It was very inspiring for me" recalls Curtis, "to have imagery given such weight by a director. Australian film design tends to be treated as a decorative element, but Tracey is interested in using it so that it's much more than that. She is aware of the conventions, but in a wonderful, unselfconsciously brazen way, she is able to break them."

Curtis and Moffatt developed the film through story-boarding sessions which took place over a full year. "We had such a close understanding, there was never a need for a 'design meeting' as such," says Curtis.

Moffatt, who cites Nicholas Roeg and Peter Weir as favourite directors, was strongly influenced by Japanese cinema of the 1960s

for *BeDevil*, particularly the highly stylised, artificial, aesthetic of Ozu and Kobayashi. Kobayashi's *Kwaidon*, a trilogy of three Japanese ghost stories, was one of her direct inspirations. "We wanted to be less self-consciously beautiful" says Curtis. "But there was never any question of interpreting the script in a literal or naturalistic way."

In the Moffatt tradition of studio controlled settings, *BeDevil* was filmed almost entirely at the Mentmore Studios in Sydney. With its swamps and derelict buildings, dissolving scenery, para-normal railway tracks and perspective dwindling to infinity, *BeDevil* might have looked on paper like a Spielbergian exercise in special effects excess. "Some people thought it could never be made" says Curtis. "But we approached it in an economical way. Not just budget-wise, but philosophically, paring each scene back to its essential ingredients."



Whether working on desert or swamp imagery, Curtis took a detour round the stereotypes. Moffatt's penchant for lurid B grade iconography was satisfied, rather surprisingly, through direct references to the Australian bush. "I tried to forget the clichés and take my cue from nature" Curtis says. "The melaleuca swamp in Bribie Island, for example, is not all palm fronds and murky greenery. There's a formality, a disquieting symmetry to the landscape because all the trees are the same size. I used rather neutral cinnamon tones, like bark. Then played against the acid green of the sky which I took from my memories of those tropical Queensland pre-storm skies." Because of the underlying threads of violence in the film, Curtis pushed the colour range away from naturalism. "At times that green sky takes on a comic tone which is strangely disturbing, even nasty."

Although *BeDevil* is about landscapes that go on forever, the claustrophobia of the studio environment works to contradict the clichés of Australia's wide open spaces. This is a land crowded with ghosts, visual tricks and disturbances. "To create the false perspective we had to use theatrical methods of deceit" explains

Curtis, whose extensive background in Australian theatre stood him in good stead. For the warehouse in the third story, *Lovin' The Spin I'm In*, each individual board tapered to a vanishing point, and so did the window panes. "It was technically very tricky to construct," he says.

Similarly, in *Choo Choo Choo Choo*, the second story, set by a deserted railway track, every sleeper had to be a different size. Even the gravel was hand graded, the dust at the end sifted, and the trees graduated from branches to twigs. "The art department found themselves up late at night" recalls art director Martin Brown, who last worked on *Strictly Ballroom*. "There we were, obsessively working towards infinity, fiddling with bits of dirt and little sticks."

The accelerated perspective and raked rostra were "a major challenge for us" Brown says. "We were running three carpentry workshops at a time to build the three different sets, but the craftsmen really got into it despite the overtime because the film and the production design were so art oriented. The scenic treatment was theatrical, so the problem solving was too. *BeDevil* is an art department tour de force."



CASTING

The landscape of the film was not complete however without its cast of characters, and to find them Moffatt did much of the casting herself. "I had a lot of help from Suzy Maizels" she says, "but actors' agencies just don't carry enough black actors. For most of the roles I got out on the street and begged people to be in my film. Then I took out my little video camera and screen tested them in their homes."

For the role of Stompie, the still-tribal Dad in *Choo Choo Choo Choo*, Moffatt turned to the Bangarra Dance Theatre in Redfern, casting Banula Marika, a member of the famous Marika family of Arnhem Land. "I cast people because of their physical qualities" says Moffatt. "I needed an actor for the desert scene who could walk like a hunter, so I couldn't use anyone from Sydney for that role. Banula had never acted before but he had a quality of stillness which was exactly right."

For the role of the older Ruby, who returns years later to the ghostly railway track in *Choo Choo Choo Choo* with a lively TV cooking segment, Moffatt cast country and western singer Auriel Andrews. "I remember Auriel from the *Reg Lindsay Show* on Saturday afternoons" says Moffatt. "She was called the Chocolate Princess and put out several albums as well. I found one in a second hand shop one

day with a picture of her in a gaberdine miniskirt. Then I saw her play Gary Foley's mum in *A Country Practice*, and I knew she would work."

For the cast in the third and final story, *Lovin' The Spin I'm In*, Moffatt needed Torres Strait Islanders. "People don't realise there are two different black cultures in Australia" she says. "I grew up with a lot of Islander people. They're a much more boisterous, vibrant, bunch." She cast Lex Marinos as Dimitri "because I just think he's got a fantastic face." And two more Bangarra dancers, Pinau Ghee and Patricia Handy, as the doomed lovers whose restless passion finds no respite in death.

Apart from casting theatrical actors in the documentary scenes, and non-actors in the more surreal parts, Moffatt also made a habit of casting Aboriginal actors in white roles. "Why not? It's always the other way round" she grins. "The little ghost girl in *Choo Choo Choo Choo* for example, is an Aboriginal kid, with blonde hair."

But when it came to the role of the young mother Ruby, who finds herself drawn to the haunted railway track at night, Moffatt was completely stumped until she decided to take the role herself. "*Choo Choo Choo Choo* came from a story my mother told me about living out west" she says. "In the end I couldn't bear the thought of anyone else playing her but me."



SOUND AND SOUNDTRACK

In terms of the soundscape for *BeDevil*, the same philosophy applied. "It was the most fun I've ever had on a film" recalls Frank Lipson, sound editor, whose previous credits include Geoffrey Wright's *Romper Stomper*. "It will probably be a long time before I get to work with that much creative room again."

The sound of the film was not only important to Moffatt, but also to producers Tony Buckley and Carol Hughes. "They were committed to giving us time to experiment" says Lipson. Consequently, each sound effect used in *BeDevil* is much more than the sum of its parts. The train shooting past in *Choo Choo Choo Choo* was built on a tiger's roar and an F1-11, as well as shunting metallic sounds. The swampish

bubbling mud in *Mr Chuck* was fleshed out with possums grumbling. To get that hot corrugated-roof feeling, the desert scenes were underscored with the sound of a roaring furnace and pitched down vocal sounds.

This layered aural assault was also part of composer Carl Vine's plan. "I liked the way the film needed a dream feel" he says, "and a relationship between surrealism and reality. At first Tracey wanted it to sound like a James Bond movie, and the opening credits still have that 1960s jazz flavour. But that wasn't right for the whole film. In the end I used a large body of live string players, plus various weird electronic sounds, and the interplay between them, to represent different layers of reality."



ANTHONY BUCKLEY, AM, PRODUCER

Anthony Buckley is virtually a pioneer of the Australian film industry. He has been involved in one way or another since the age of 15. Originally a documentary filmmaker, Buckley was a key player during the renaissance of the Australian film industry in the late 1960s. He independently produced and directed a film on the life of Frank Hurley, *Snow, Sand and Savages*, at that time, as well as *Forgotten Cinema*, a documentary about the early decades of Australian cinema.

During a stint as Acting Head of Production with Film Australia, Buckley produced the acclaimed *The Fifth Facade* which presented the official portrait of the building of the Sydney Opera House. He also produced *A Steam Train Passes*, one of Film Australia's most enduringly popular films, and *Now You're Talking Part 3*, one of a series on the history of Australian cinema. Other credits include *Palace Of Dreams*, produced to celebrate Sydney's magnificent State Theatre for Greater Union's 75th birthday in 1985. He completed the 11 part documentary series *Man On The Rim - The Peopling of the Pacific* for the ABC in 1989.

Buckley is best known, however, as a feature film producer. His first feature *Caddie*, made in 1975, won 14 awards, including the San Sebastian Jury Prize for Best Film. *The Irishman*, *The Night The Prowler*, *The Killing Of Angel Street* and *Kitty And The Bagman* followed. *Bliss* was selected for competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 1985, and won Best Film

at the Australian Film Institute Awards in the same year.

His television credits include the acclaimed series *The Harp In The South* and the sequel, *Poor Man's Orange*. He also produced the mini-series *The Heroes* for TVS Films, an episode of the Winner's series, *Mr Edmund*, for the Australian Children's Television Foundation, and in 1991, *Heroes 11 - The Return*.

Buckley is currently developing Robert Drewe's *Sweetlip* and George Whaley's *On Our Selection*.

He was awarded the Order Of Australia for his services to the Australian Film Industry in 1977.

CAROL HUGHES, PRODUCER

BeDevil is Carol Hughes' second feature film as a producer. The first was *Say A Little Prayer*, directed by Richard Lowenstein and screened officially at the 1993 Berlin Film Festival.

From 1984 to 1989 Hughes worked as a production manager on various television series including *A Country Practice*, *Harp In The South*, *Poor Man's Orange*, *Heroes*, *Ring Of Scorpio* and *Heroes 11# - The Return*.

She was also production manager on the feature films *Evil Angels* and *Salute Of The Jugger*.

CARL VINE, COMPOSER

Carl Vine composed his first film score at the age of 17. "I always knew I would get back to it. I just didn't figure it would take this long."

In the meantime, he has written over 40 works for various chamber music ensembles, and recently completed his nineteenth ballet score, including the critically acclaimed *Poppy*.

His first three symphonies have been released on CD, performed by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and conducted by the late Stuart Challender.

As musical director and composer for The Sydney Dance Company, Vine created *Beauty And The Beast* early in 1993. His music for the Queensland Ballet production of *The Tempest* has since opened to unanimous acclaim.

Vine has also composed music for 7 plays. While working on *The Master Builder* at Belvoir Street Theatre in 1991, Vine met Tracey Moffatt and agreed to compose the score for *BeDevil*. His other feature credit *You Can't Push The River* has yet to be screened in Australia.

STEPHEN CURTIS, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Curtis was very excited by the idea of creating massive studio sets for Tracey Moffatt's *BeDevil*. He had already worked with the director on her second short film *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy*. Renowned for his theatre work, he graduated from the National Institute of Dramatic Art in 1978,

and has worked for all the major state theatre companies since, including The Sydney Dance Company.

"The great thing about working with Tracey" he says, "is the complete confidence she inspires. She allows people a lot of room to make a creative contribution. And she's wonderfully brazen about film."

GEOFFREY BURTON, ACS, DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

One of Australia's leading cinematographers, Geoffrey Burton is internationally renowned for the tender, pellucid, naturalism of his work. His feature credits include the classic, *Sunday Too Far Away*, *Storm Boy*, *Aya*, the remarkable *Flirting*, and most recently *Frauds* (which was invited to the Cannes Film Festival in 1993). For television he has shot *Cowra Breakout*, *Vietnam*, *Dirtwater Dynasty* and *Bangkok Hilton*. Previously a devotee of 'naturalistic cinematography' Burton says the opportunity to work on a film as unusual and visually challenging as *BeDevil* proved an "exciting" step in a new direction.

CAST NOTES

LEX MARINOS

Lex Marinus plays Dimitri in the *Lovin' The Spin I'm In* episode of *BeDevil*. Lex is one of Australia's most versatile actor/directors. His screen appearances include *Cathy's Child* and *The Last Days of Chez Nous*. He directed *An Indecent Obsession* and *Boundaries of the Heart*. In television he's probably best known for *Kingswood Country* and *Embassy*. His theatre credits include *The Siege of Frank Sinatra*, *Wet Dreams*, *Dynamite*, *Hamlet On Ice* and *The King and I*. Lex also works as a radio broadcaster.

DIANA DAVIDSON

Diana Davidson plays Shelley, the narrator of the first story, *Mister Chuck*. She began her career with the Independent Theatre and is much loved in Australian theatre and by television audiences. Her theatrical triumphs include performances in Ray Lawler's *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and David Williamson's *The Perfectionist*, as well as *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Day In The Life Of Joe Egg* among others. Her television experience goes as far back as *The Dick Bentley Show*, *Homicide* and *Division 4* for Crawfords. More recent roles include *A Country Practice*, *Chances* and Verity Lambert's *Boys From the Bush*, still to be seen in Australia but already a great success in the U.K.

DINA PANOZZO

The wonderful role of Voula in *Lovin' The Spin I'm In* is played by Dina Panozzo. Her experience is considerable in both theatre and television and more recently in film, appearing in Monica Pellizzari's award-winning short film, *Just Desserts*. *BeDevil* is her first feature. Television roles have included *The Sullivan's*, *Carson's Law*, *A Country Practice* and *G.P.* Theatre includes *Winter's Tale*, *Richard III*, *A Touch Of Silk*, *Sisters* and *A Little Like Drowning*.

OTHERS

Familiar faces Les Foxcroft and Cecil Parkee join the cast of *BeDevil*, along with Mawuyul Yanthalawuy who was also in *Manganinni*. Mawuyul plays Maudie in *Choo Choo Choo Choo*. Les plays Old Mickey in the same story. Les' film credits include *Daydream Believer*, *Bliss*, *Burke and Wills*, *The Fourth Wish* and *Newsfront*. Cecil plays Bob Malley, also in *Choo Choo Choo Choo*. Bob is based on the real life character, Bob Malley, the Curator of Historic House, Charleville, in which *BeDevil* was partly filmed.

