

THE WEATHER DIARIES

Feature Documentary: 91 mins



LOGLINE

A mother's meditation on the future for her musician daughter as she grows up in the shadow of the twin threats of climate change and mass extinction.

SYNOPSIS

The Weather Diaries is an intimate chronicle of two simultaneous histories: on the one hand the darkly cataclysmic impacts of climate change and the extinction crisis on the forest ecosystems around Sydney, and on the other, the development of Drayton's daughter, Imogen Jones, from child to adult. Filmed over six years, *The Weather Diaries* reaches its climax in 2020, as temperatures soar, bushfires rage, and flying fox pups die in record numbers. Drayton ruminates on our failure to value these essential pollinators and the forests they sustain, and reflects on the implications for her daughter Imogen, a girl long inspired by Studio Ghibli's *Princess Mononoke*, who's emerging from the classical confines of the Conservatorium High School to embark on a career as an electronic pop artist. The film strikes a hard-won balance of optimism and pessimism, fear and hope, melancholia and illumination.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I've made this film in the knowledge that documentaries about climate change are seen in the industry as ratings killers, and that to find an audience, they need to offer substantial grounds for hope to their viewers. Tragically, with the rate of greenhouse gas emissions escalating year upon year, and the levels of atmospheric CO2 already higher than they've been in the past three million years or more, this is not grounded in reality. We've already lost more than one third of the Great Barrier Reef to coral bleaching, and the horrific megafires of 2019 -2020 incinerated half of Australia's World Heritage areas of ancient Gondwana rainforest, along with billions of animals and the habitat of hundreds of vulnerable and threatened species.

Most climate documentaries are based on the information deficit model of climate communication, based on the assumption that with more information, the public will recognise and support the urgent action on climate change we need to take. After three decades this approach has largely failed, and conversation around the science has become polarised. It suggests that the underpinnings of climate denial and apathy are emotional and irrational. People are filled with a sense of dread and powerlessness in the face of such an overwhelming threat, and prone to distancing themselves from it to focus on the minutiae of their everyday lives. It's difficult to engage people around such dark themes, but it's vital that we do.

The Weather Diaries attempts this by working within the traditions of contemplative, poetic and personal documentary to capture something of the hope and anguish suffusing mothering now as we watch our children grow in the knowledge their lives are overshadowed by the spectre of catastrophic climate change and mass extinction. In grounding the story in the lives of my daughter and I, and giving voice to my hopes, fears and sadness around the future she faces, I'm seeking to circumvent some of that resistance to enliven a heightened perception and reflection in the audience about the emotional and physical impacts climate change is already having on their own lives, and will have on the lives of the children they know and love. In forging an emotional intimate connection with the abstraction of climate change, I'm hoping to awaken an audience to its impacts already occurring at a local level, to imagine the possible futures it presents, in order to face the grief and fear it stirs in all of us, so we can move beyond the denial this triggers to focused urgent action.

In its focus on the beauty to be found in everyday life and our connections to the natural world, the power of dreams and stories and music in our lives, and the inspiration to be found in people working directly or indirectly with climate change, *The Weather Diaries* supports a modest hope, one that doesn't shy away from grieving the losses we're already suffering, but a realistic hope that with creativity, determination, and contributing in our various ways to the protection of the lives we love, we can make a difference. *The Weather Diaries* is ultimately a plea for swift, unified and ambitious action on climate change, and a re-engagement with the natural world.



TRAILER (DOWNLOADABLE):

<https://vimeo.com/424427124>

WEBSITE

<https://www.facebook.com/theweatherdiaries>

PRESS

“The film strikes a hard-won balance of optimism and pessimism, fear and hope, melancholia and illumination.”

Adrian Martin Screenhub

<https://www.screenhub.com.au/news-article/news/film/adrian-martin/women-on-top-sydney-film-festival-highlights-260527>

“...a poetic and evocative confronting reflection on the psychological stresses of climate change on everyday lives.”

Jason di Rosso The Screen Show: ABC Radio National

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the-screen-show/the-screen-show-18-june/12363400>

“If Princess Mononoke is a guiding force for Jones, Jones herself becomes such a force for her mother’s beautifully bleak documentary ...”

Jenny Valentish The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/jun/09/why-should-i-try-to-have-a-future-at-all-film-captures-hopelessness-amid-climate-crisis>

“...radiant with love, and full of a desperate hope...”

Zöe Almeida Goodall Roughcut Film

<https://roughcutfilm.com/2020/06/12/review-the-weather-diaries-speaks-to-parenting-in-an-environmental-crisis/>

PRODUCER CONTACTS:

KATHY DRAYTON

Independent

kathy.drayton@gmail.com

17 Stokes Ave

Asquith

NSW AUSTRALIA 2077

+61 2 424 264 932

TOM ZUBRYCKI

Jotz Productions

tzub@ozemail.com.au

171 Elswick St

Leichhardt

NSW AUSTRALIA 2040

+61 2 414 683 231

KATHY DRAYTON: DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Kathy Drayton comes to filmmaking from a background in editing. She wrote, directed and edited two short films in her early career, both of which screened in Australian and international film festivals, and she edited a variety of award-winning short films for her peers. After working as an editor for SBS Television for 15 years, she left to write and direct the documentary ***Girl in a Mirror: A Portrait of Carol Jerrems***, which was highly acclaimed both nationally and internationally. She has made ***The Weather Diaries*** as the major component of a doctorate she's completing at the University of Technology, Sydney.

FILMOGRAPHY

2020	The Weather Diaries	Documentary	91 mins
2005	Girl in a Mirror	Documentary	55 mins
2001	Beach Story	Short Drama	15 mins
1988	Eat	Experimental	18 mins

TOM ZUBRYCKI: PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY

Tom Zubrycki is an award-winning documentary filmmaker renowned for his distinctive observational story-telling style and his ability to get close to his subjects. During the course of a long career spanning 40 years, Tom's documentaries have focused around a personal response to the issues of the day. Tom has directed 17 documentaries, and produced another 20 with mainly new and emerging directors. Recent films including ***TEACH A MAN TO FISH*** about a father/son relationship, indigenous identity and fishing, and ***UNDERMINED – TALES FROM THE KIMBERLEY*** (2018, 90 mins) about the Kimberley region and the threat of mining, pastoralism and irrigated agriculture, and what this means for our First People. Tom's current projects include ***ABLAZE***, which follows the journey of Opera singer Tiriki Onus to solve the mystery surrounding a recently discovered old movie believed to be made by his Aboriginal grandfather. Tom is recipient of the Stanley Hawes Award "in recognition of outstanding contribution to documentary filmmaking in Australia".

TOM ZUBRYCKI: FILMOGRAPHY

2017: Hope Road (103 mins. Director/Producer)
2011: The Hungry Tide (83 mins. Director/Producer)¹
2007: Temple of Dreams (89 mins. Director/Producer)
2005: Vietnam Symphony (52 mins. Director/Producer)
2003: Molly & Mobarak (85 mins, Director/Producer)
2001: The Secret Safari (52 mins, Director)
2000: The Diplomat (84 mins, Director)
1995: Billal (87 mins, Director/Producer)
1993: Homelands (79 mins, Director/Producer)
1991: Bran Nue Dae (55 mins, Director/Producer)
1990: Lord of the Bush (55 mins, Director/Producer)
1990: Amongst Equals (90 mins, Director)
1989: Strangers in Paradise (56 mins, Director/Producer)
1985: Friends & Enemies (90 mins, Director/Producer)
1984: Kemira - Diary of a Strike (62 mins, Director/Producer)
1981: Waterloo (48 mins, Director/Producer)¹
1974: We Have To Live With It
1974: Fig Street Fiasco

SCREENINGS OF THE WEATHER DIARIES

Sydney Film Festival (virtual edition) 2020	June 10 th – 18th
National Film and Sound Archive - Feature (online)	Sept 10 th 2020
Cinema Launch:	
Event Cinemas George St Sydney (sold out)	
Indooroopilly Brisbane Qld	Sept 24 th 2020
Bondi Cinema Club (online)	October 20 th 2020
Hornsby Event Cinemas The Greens (sold out)	November 3 rd 2020
Melbourne Women in Film Festival - sold out	Feb 20 th 2021
Waverley Council Summerama (online)	Feb 18 th 2021
Mount Vic Flicks - sold out	Mar 2 nd 2021
Roseville Cinema for Bradfield Can Do Better	May 5 th 2021
Lake Macq Council Glendale Event Cinemas	May 19 th 2021
Narooma Kinema for Eurobodalla 350.org	Jun 23 rd 2021
Forum 6 Cinema Wagga for The Greens	July 25 th 2021

CREDITS

The filmmakers acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land where this film was made, and pay their respects to Elders past and present.

Written & Directed by

Kathy Drayton

Producer

Tom Zubrycki

Producer, Cinematography & Editing

Kathy Drayton

Animation

Melody Li

Music

Imogen Jones

Nathan Moas

Mara Schwerdtfeger

Sound Post Consultant

Annie Breslin

Sound Editor

Peter Johnson

Mix

Andrew Belletty

Editing Consultant

Anna Craney

Script and Story Consultant

Miro Billbrough

Fine Cut Mentoring

Jackie Wolf aka Farkas

Online and Grade

Roan Davis,

Central Business Digital

<p>Additional Flying Fox Cinematography Fabio Cavadini James Muller Joanne Parker Vivien Jones</p> <p>Animation Assistants Shelley Wang Ada Xu Florence De Jong Lenko Wu</p> <p>Animation Voices Clancy James Jemima James Finn Webster</p>		<p>Additional Sound Mandy King</p> <p>Archive Peter Duff – NSW Rural Fire Service Fire and Rescue NSW Jaala Presland – Singleton Bat Rescue Triple J Radio Imogen Jones ('Infinite Colour') ABC Library Sales Deborah Kelly – Imonoke photograph</p> <p>Legals Stephen Boyle Nicholas Cole</p> <p>Production Accountant Christopher Coote & Co.</p>	
<p>Music</p> <p><i>The Infinite Colour</i> <i>The Secret</i> <i>Eyes Unclouded</i> <i>Statues</i> <i>Numb</i> <i>Pull Me Under</i> <i>Comfort in Numbers</i></p> <p>Written and Performed by Imogen Jones as</p> <p>Lupa J</p>	<p><i>Follow</i> <i>Blood</i> <i>Ghost</i> <i>Blue</i> <i>Why Am I Underwater</i></p> <p>Written and Performed by Mara Schwerdtfeger as</p> <p>Mara</p>	<p><i>Glacial</i> <i>Thrived and Undone</i> <i>Dawn</i></p> <p>Written and Performed by Nathan Moas as</p> <p>Land Systems</p>	
<p><i>Breathe In</i> Written by Gab Strum Performed by Japanese Wallpaper Featuring Wafia ©Native Tongue & Gaga</p> <p><i>Sonatina for Violin and</i> <i>Looping Pedal</i> Written and Performed by Imogen Jones © Imogen Jones</p>	<p><i>Requiem in D minor K 626</i> Composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Performed by The Conservatorium High School 2011</p> <p><i>Ceol na Fidlhe</i> Composed by Maria Grenfell Performed by Imogen Jones and Jasper Rasmussen ©Maria Grenfell</p>	<p><i>Fantasia no 7 from '12</i> <i>Fantasia's for Violin Without</i> <i>Bass',</i> Composed by Georg Philipp Telemann Performed by Imogen Jones</p>	

<p>Thanks to</p> <p>Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney</p> <p>Tim Pearson Storm Stanford Adrian J Caruana Deborah Martin Rhonda Hansen Meg Churches Teneale Hayes Dr Kerry Parry-Jones Jessie Grace Dr Peggy Eby Dr Billie Roberts</p>	<p>Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment Western Sydney University</p> <p>Professor Mark Tjoelker Dr John Drake Angelica Varhammar Burhan Amiji Tamara Weyman Michael Aspinwall Dushan Kumarathunge David Tissue Craig Barton Tim Shiel Declan Byrne</p>	<p>Conservatorium High School Sydney</p> <p>Jasper Rasmussen Matthew Castle Nicki Kim Jane Anderson Ian Barker Mara Schwerdtfeger Nathan Moas Alexandre di Francesca (Violin Teacher) Adrian Jones Barbara Drayton Ted Drayton</p>
<p>Thanks also to</p> <p>Mel Broe John Janson-Moore Tara McLennan Sydney Screen Studies Network Kerry Brewster Ken McLeod Judith Horvath Bettina Dalton</p>	<p>Sassy Park Lisa Nicol Helen Bowden Catherine King Katharine Tebbatt Antenna Doc-Lab Tingjia Wang Rowena Crowe</p>	<p>Karl Schwerdtfeger Mitzi Goldman Philippa Bateman Margot Nash Sue Castrique Brendan Randles Anette Bremer Rowena Lennox</p>

Thanks to University of Technology Sydney

Project Supervisors

Dr Andrew Taylor
Dr Jeremy Walker

Scholarships

Australian Postgraduate Award – University Technology Sydney
Professor Alison Lee Doctoral Top Up Scholarship

FINANCED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
SCREEN AUSTRALIA

© 2020 JOTZ PRODUCTIONS