

**INTERVIEW WITH MARY CALLAGHAN about her film TENDER HOOKS (called CONTACT at the time of the interview, prior to release in 1988)**

**Interviewer: Kim Lewis, sales agent for the film outside Australia-New Zealand.**

**Kim Lewis:**

Mary, how did Contact originate? What was the germ, the idea, what impelled you that this should be made in a film?

**Mary Callaghan:**

I was interested in obsession in a sense and the addictive personality. And I started to observe how that also functioned not only in terms of drugs, as people usually associate it, it's also in a behavioral sense, and that love often functioned in the form of a habit and people trying to find this external support system instead of trying to virtually sort themselves out. They're virtually lean, two people leaning, those two people leaning and they eventually collapsed. So it's about that. So what I tried to do in a sense was to find a narrative way, a storyline that could follow a relationship through, that could be something that anybody from any walk of life, even though it might not represent their storyline on what's happened in their life, but they can still relate to that emotional sense. That's what I attempted to do.

**01.11 Kim Lewis:**

And when you were first thinking this through, you were also thinking in mind, "Well, it's going to have to be a low budget feature shot on the run"?

**Mary Callaghan:**

At first, I thought when I first was seeking development money, I thought it would be a 50 minute. I thought that from Greetings, which was 43, go to 50 minutes, do it... progression. But then I started to film, no, the logical extension is because narrative was where my interests lay. And the difficulty with Greetings was that the 43 minutes is difficult to get a release. So obviously, if I was going to stay in narrative, I had to make that quantum leap and therefore, feature film.

**01.50 Kim Lewis:**

So it continues on from Greetings from Wollongong to the extent that you're marrying up... well, on the most basic way of describing this, documentary and drama.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah. But this is far more subtle than it was in Greetings. Like Greetings was a dramatized documentary and this isn't. In a sense, this might give you a bit of an understanding of the look of the film or the feel of the film was I didn't actually tell anybody this and how I know that I've been... I'll tell you the story. What I wanted to do was on social realism, I find at times, I mean, it's fine to just represent or what something, I mean, okay, this has happened, therefore I will present it on film, but that just will become illustration if it's not put against something that raises issues.

So what I wanted to do is I believe in the notion that an idea plus an idea creates a concept. So what I wanted to take is take social realism in terms of what's happening about life, but take obviously the essence or succinct moments or whatever and juxtapose them together in sort of

a sense of a cartoon or comic book with a foreground, something happening here in the background and all those elements. And in some senses it's kind of... I hope not melodramatic, but there's a level where I've tried to make it punchy, so I hope that's working. But what actually happened was that-

**03.16 Kim Lewis:**

Lots of business happening around the frame all the time.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, but different levels of interest. You can go to the background and pick up something that we... in conjunction with another element in foreground that will combine to have multiple meanings essentially. And that interests me in a visually aesthetic sense, but also in terms of the content. Rather than me sort of pedantically leading people through something actually trying to give a few signposts to trigger a few thoughts that would get certain responses. And so, they could actually draw on their own experience as well. But at the same time, hopefully I'll open up areas where they're prepared to look at things in a different light. And that's what I tried to do with the characters as well because...

**04.01** Well, I won't go into that immediately, but the comic book thing, how I know I have achieved that in one sense is that two people, three people actually independently of me, never mentioned this to me, have come up... one was the location manager and said that, "I don't know, I don't want to insult you, but I've been looking at the rushes and I think this reminds me of a comic book." So it's worked in some way, but it isn't an overt thing, it's subtle, but it's there. And so with the characters, again, that is what I've attempted to do. Reappraisals, quite often your immediate or superficial reading of something can look obviously logical and proper, etc. It can turn out to be quite false given the context. And therefore there's a lot of a pulling back. We have a situation where it starts off a young boy, Rex, who just gets out of jail, his first day out of jail, basically petty crimes and he's not properly... no big deal.

**05.00** Anyhow, he runs into a girl called Mitchell just through a series of coincidences, of pure coincidences, but they meet up and there is this sort of friendship basis that isn't the traditional sexual one. There is this undercurrent of friendship like that you experienced as a child in the schoolyard where you actually have an empathy with a certain person. So they've got that, that's happening. But also, he's trying to shape this sophisticated love affair, which he has no experience from. So he observes culture and how love is represented and you're supposed to go for picnics and you're supposed to do these sort of things. And so in a sense, that's what he's attempting to do. And so therefore they have this kind of... they're trying to present love or experience things through this sense, but in the light that he has very few social skills because of his experience.

**05.56** I mean, his social skills are related to prison, but not to the outside necessarily. Mitchell's appraisal, she comes from say upper working class, lower middle class background. And she's come to the city and she's only been there relatively a short time, which she kind of pick up. But her appraisal at times will be, she'll make quite stern judgements of what she thinks he's doing, but then something will alter that and she'll realize that from his experience from where he's coming, it does make sense, but it's not making sense in the reality that they're now trying to live, but it's a different environment and that's what keeps pulling him under. So they're the difficulties. I mean, I could be sort of deviating a little bit here.

**Kim Lewis:**

No, it doesn't matter.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah.

**06.43 Kim Lewis:**

The film's taken five or six years to get made in which time the screenplay has evolved, and I want to ask you to talk about that. And also I understand that Nique Needles and Jo Kennedy became involved at a fairly early stage and also played a part in shaping and reshaping the script.

**Mary Callaghan:**

No, that's not completely true.

**Kim Lewis:**

I got that from Encore ....

**Mary Callaghan:**

**07.05** Yeah, I know. But it isn't completely true. Jo did in fact, through someone, get a hold of it, would've probably been second draft, third draft, and approached me and said, "I like it and I'd like to work on it." And I said, "Fine." And we had talks about the character, but it was already formed. It was there. And I had to talk to Nique because he was interested. But beyond us just having discussions, we never sat down and they didn't say, "Look, we want to shape it this way or do it this way or whatever." No.

**Kim Lewis:**

In a way, disregard that question.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah. Yeah.

**07.39 Kim Lewis:**

The period over which you were seeking to raise money and so on, were you fine-tuning the script all the time? Did you find it actually changed in terms of being a film about issues? I mean, it could have been a very hard-hitting film in some ways about rehabilitation of prisoners and the prison system and sort of taking a cool observation of that.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**08.01** Yeah, it could have been, except I can't write from that position, so that wouldn't have happened. But yeah, I could have fallen into... the problem I have is if people were going to take that attitude and see that I'm making moral judgment. So that's what I've attempted to avoid at all costs. What I was actually looking at was in a sense, I had a friend who was visiting someone in prison and I started to observe various things that were going on that were against what you... that didn't fit with the convention. Okay. So I'll give you a simple situation. Someone goes to visit someone who's in prison. So you start to think, "What am I going to talk to this person about?" Because you don't want to heighten their deprivations, they don't want to talk about the movie you went to see or whatever. And I've seen quite often the prisoner trying to put the visitor at ease.

**08.47** Now that's against what you'd necessarily experienced, things like that. And that's what I was trying to deal with, the human condition, how we function and how things... the syndrome where certain women actually take up relationships with men when they're in jail. The captive male syndrome, a whole lot of elements I was just observing and learning. I didn't decide I'm going to go out and research. I was drawn into it through a friendship thing. So I also had certain emotions there, but I also had the frustration of a certain person I was a friend of. He was trying to titillate his immediate life, which was quite dull and boring by doing pranks, etc. But it was getting into a situation that was getting out of hand because it was being viewed by the authorities as such as more than pranks. So he ended up at 19 doing five years in jail, and that's totally altered his life, which he hasn't got command of even yet.

**09.40** So what I was trying to do with this film is to show that, that quite often, because we haven't developed social skills in certain... I don't mean underprivileged, but in some working class areas, you have a bright kid that hasn't found a way to express that yet. So it becomes negative and that intelligence gets used in a negative sense. And this is what's happened with Rex in a sense, and he's got that immediate gratification thing throughout the film. He would like to play a guitar, but he can never sit down to learn. He wants to do it now and he wants it to be good now without the work. So even though he goes back to jail and just short of getting out of jail, he escapes, which is a ridiculous thing to do. And as he's explained to Mitchell, "Look, it just happened. I didn't think." And she's saying, "You chuck everything in on the whim." He said, "Yeah, it just happened. That's the way it is."

**10.30** But okay, so you've got that negative thing, but again, he's back in jail, but what has come out of it is that he sits down and he can play a tune. He in fact has used the time. So he is learnt that, and secondly, they both independently, simultaneously make the decision that they're going to part there, but it's not a sense like her saying, "He is no good for me, I will get rid of him." And it's not a sense of him saying that either. It's a sense of them understanding at the same time that they've got to sort their own stuff out and work it out together. If she was to tag along with him, he'd feel eternally guilty.

**11.07** And that would bring him down because he cares about her, bring her down. So he ends up saying, "Look, you've got..." he says it for her because if she said it then she'd feel guilty. He says it for her, he says, "Obviously, you have to bail out." He said, "It goes against my every instinct, so it has to be the right and proper thing to do." So it sort of ends in a bit of a joke like that. And so, it's always redeemed by a humorous element, which I think is the richness of these people. Even when they're being pulled down and under, there's humour rising above, there's an element of humour and that's what saves it. It's not a down film in any shape or form. And that's the distinction I think I have to make with this sort of notion of didactic... It's not that.

### **11.57 Kim Lewis:**

How did you become involved with Chris Oliver? I presume you'd know him back in the Swinburne days.

### **Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah. Well, we were in different years and we didn't really have any relationship beyond just seeing each other in the corridor. And I had approached the AFC with a treatment and I had money at that point to first draft stage, and he'd seen Greetings and I think he was going through... he was re-evaluating the types of projects he'd worked on. He was thinking that he has to start working with something that has some substance or content. If he's going to push something as hard as he'd been pushing films, they had to be worth pushing. I was coming along to the way of thinking that, "Okay, if I was going to expend this energy, et cetera, I wanted this film to go somewhere." So I was prepared to not necessarily compromise my content, but

learn how to put that content in a form that was going to be agreeable to a wider audience. And so, although we're like chalk and cheese in some respects, we came together on that element, but that's what we wanted to do.

**Kim Lewis:**

Did you ever at any time envisage shooting the film in Melbourne? It might've been easier with funding or was it ...

**Mary Callaghan:**

**13.04** Yeah, we did. We did at one point, but we'd already been... we were going through the AFC in Sydney and it is a Sydney film, I feel. It is.

**Kim Lewis:**

And how did your involvement with Ronin come about? What point did they offer to come in?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**13.20** Well, we showed Andrew {Pike} one of the really earliest scripts, and he actually really responded to it and gave a lot of encouragement and Chris started to make suggestions like how about putting some money into it? And Andrew was shocked. He hadn't thought about it in those terms. And then, he obviously was starting to think about it in those terms and it just came down to that level of interest. And I was prepared to listen to Andrew and take certain... I have respect for his opinions and views, et cetera. So that's what we...

I was prepared. I did several edits where I actually took on board other people's ideas, I said, "Okay, if you think that'll work, I'll throw it in." And quite often, in some instances, I proved to people that it didn't work by writing it down. Chris a few times. And sometimes, I proved that it did work and got a shock myself. So I mean, it worked both ways. I got to the point where I'm not going to be defensive about, "I wrote this, it's got to be this way." I'm prepared to look around because you quite often find out a lot more by doing that.

**14.20 Kim Lewis:**

Well, this is the whole conundrum of being an independent filmmaker with your back up against the wall or this is a cliché that people like to believe in. You are standing there and you're fighting the system and so on. But actually it's the same as working in mainstream cinema. It's a collaborative medium and you're working with a team of people each with different technical skills to realize a vision.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah. I had some people that were really helpful to me. There was a guy called Tom Hegarty who's written-

**Kim Lewis:**

Script editing and stuff?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**14.48** Yeah, and he actually did the screenplay for Power Without Glory. He is a great writer, and he was just at the AFC just for a short period of time. And what it ended up happening was I was telling him about what the film was about and he said, "That was great." Then he read the

script and he said, "Yeah, but what you telling me about sort of isn't there in the script," because I was so familiar I'd left out certain elements and he was just so constructive.

And it was a sense that he was prepared to realize that I knew I had a lot of insight or knew about what I was dealing with. And he gave me some various... those tools of the trade. And that was really helpful. I was prepared to... I mean, someone that's written for 20 years, they must know something. And so, I got a lot of assistance that... well, I didn't... I mean, it took a while and it went through a lot of processes, but it was always, I think, for the best intentions. And sometimes you stand in your own light too. I mean, it's a learning process.

**15.45 Kim Lewis:**

There's an interesting comment you once made, and I'm quoting here, this is from an old interview somewhere. The thing that keeps me going is the movie playing in my head, a private vision as a filmmaker, I view my last film as history.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, did I say that? Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

A comment about that? I mean, in terms of talking about how it's all there in your head, and I mean when you were talking to Tom and he was saying, "This is not..." There are two separate things happening.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**16.17** That's right. Yeah. See, that's exactly right. I wasn't putting it down on paper, it was happening in there. Yeah, that's a thing I do. And I think a lot of this film is like a purge in a sense, because I had experienced quite a lot of what's in this film and I wanted to bring something positive out of it, and that's like getting rid of it, but in a constructive sense and I hope not in self-indulgent sense because it relates to other people.

**Kim Lewis:**

All right, I want to go back now to the start. How did you first become interested in the film? Sort of childhood...

**Mary Callaghan:**

**16.53** I was the type of kid that I remember going to see Lawrence of Arabia, which I thought was fabulous, but I'd be sitting there worrying about "How did they get that many people to do that all at once?" or I'd be worrying about the charge of the light brigade, about the horses, how they got the horses organized and if any of them fell over and I could never actually kind of just... I had to do it actually because I'd empathize so much I'd go cry and go into like a tragedy. I'd be so distressed that I had to keep telling myself, "It's only a film. It's only a film."

**17.23 Kim Lewis:**

So you had a fascination with the way stories were told, construction.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's right. But I got, as I said-

**Kim Lewis:**

As a kid, how did you see your life shaping ahead of you? I mean, apart from obviously enjoyed going to films as a recreation, but did you kind of feel you're going to get involved in the arts or-

**Mary Callaghan:**

**17.43** Oh, yeah. As a little kid, I wanted to write stories because I used to always tell stories. I was a big storyteller. I try and write them down, but I could never quite do that, that discipline. I'm still a procrastinator in that sense. I enjoy writing, but I'm scared to actually confront it, wise like that. And I was quite encouraged and my brother was really a good artist, drawing, etc. And if you've got an older brother that's got quite a dominant personality, this is... one thing that triggered me into film was that he was an art school and I had similar skills in that area and I thought, "Well, I don't want to go there and follow in his footsteps, so I might deviate and go into film."

**18.18 Kim Lewis:**

So where did you grow up? Weren't you born in Wollongong?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, in Wollongong. Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

And where did the trail come from Wollongong to Swinburne?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**18.26** Because when I left school in 1972, and that was when they had the first interim year at the Australian Film School, but I was only 17, and they weren't going to give you a chance there. And somebody knew Esben Storm and I just rang him up and he told me about it and said it was critical of it. But I said, "Yeah, but I need a chance to be critical too. You've got to go there and find out." And so, I went down there and found that was the only film school in Australia then. And so I applied, there's two girls out of, I think, 15 boys. Got in. Two girls and there was only me, only I was the only girl left at the end.

**19.06 Kim Lewis:**

And how did you find going to the film school? I mean, I'm just trying to say, did people look upon it as a vocational thing, it's a factory and you come out at the end of it having a whole lot of technical skills or did you also want to find out a lot about films and why certain things work in films, the theoretical part of it or-

**Mary Callaghan:**

I think I had a reaction against... because I was with so many boys and they could get into the technical stuff and I found that difficult, or I found it intimidating. That was difficult because in a sense I was trying to go against stuff before I understood it. You know what I mean?

**Kim Lewis:**

[inaudible 00:19:40] syndrome where you had to be twice as good to be on the same level too.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**19.44** Yeah. Also, I overreacted and tried to sort of dismiss certain conventions before I understood them, but in some ways I learned a few things because I did develop quite a strong visual aesthetic, even though I hadn't learnt how to construct... I deliberately attempted not to construct an informal narrative, whatever, but-

**Kim Lewis:**

What was your final year film like? Was that Women In The Media?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**20.10** No, it wasn't. It was called... What's it called? Image Plus. Technically, it's got quite a few sound problems because again, I didn't understand things I should have understood, but visually it's got a lot of energy, exciting. What I ended up doing was using some of the visual metaphors that I sort of developed in that kind of stylistic sense. I've now been able to adopt that and use that and the narrative stuff so I don't have to get dry, old, boring cup of tea stuff. I can still make it really, I think anyhow, visually intriguing. It's a film, I believe in that Godard notion that it is a film and that's part of reality. It's not reflecting reality. It is an aspect of reality.

**Kim Lewis:**

I guess it's just a general question, but what kind of filmmakers were influencing you or having a big impact on you [inaudible 00:20:59]-

**Mary Callaghan:**

At that time?

**Kim Lewis:**

Yeah.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**21.01** Godard. One of my favorite films was Lion's Love, Agnes Varda's film. Jean-Luc Godard in those days.

**Kim Lewis:**

A bit of a leper.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**21.13** Yeah, that's why you and Kenny and I used to get on so well because we had similar views on that. And there's also an Argentinian filmmaker, Raymundo Gleyzer, who made the film, Traitors. And he really influenced me and his approach to the political content, but through his aesthetic approach and the story, which is very fast-moving and visually very riveting, etc. And that's what I was attempting to do as well.

**Kim Lewis:**

So what happened after you graduated from Swinburne?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**21.44** Well, then I kind of figured that I'd had enough of bashing my head against the brick wall. I thought, "I'm going to actually try and go into the mainstream and see what it is they've got there and if it's worthwhile and stuff." So, I approached the guy who... What's his name? Brian Kavanagh, he'd just edited Jimmie Blacksmith. I just saw his name in the paper and I rang him up. It turned out that he was working on a film and we were able... Women's Film Fund had been floating this idea that they were prepared to support people that were training if they could get a position.

**Kim Lewis:**

This tape's not going to go anywhere, is it?

**Mary Callaghan:**

No.

**Kim Lewis:**

No. I had a few dealings with him. He's a pretty idiosyncratic kind of character, isn't he?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Very.

**Kim Lewis:**

It's kind of like going in the deep end in a way.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Sure, I know. I didn't know any of this. Didn't know any of it.

**Kim Lewis:**

He's obviously a very good editor too.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**22.40** Yeah, well, I approached him and he sorted it through and he was really good. He said, "Yeah, this is really good. Do this." He got it sorted out. The Women's Film Fund didn't give me the money and I got so irate. I rang up and said... I was really rude and said, "Look, blah blah, this man's doing this and what are you doing now?" In the end, they did give me the money, and so all these people were saying, "Brian Kavanagh," but I didn't know anything about this. And in the end we got on really well, in fact, because I did what I had to do, which was edge numbering and I worked hard at it, and he was pretty kind to me. He didn't say much. I could see that he likes to shock and he could see that I just kept doing my work and I wasn't...

**23.20** And a few times he would turn because I was a second assistant and there was an assistant and he was a real groveler. Anyhow, he'd turn to him and say, "What do you think about this cut?" And the assistant would want to grovel and say, "I think that's fine and everything's right." And I just made a few comments. I thought of something. And it turned out that he had a lot of respect for that. So I was lucky in that sense and he was really supportive. And out of the blue when I did Greetings, there was a letter and telegram that he sent and he's been really... I would have to say that he was really helpful as far as my understanding of film, but I just thought, "That's too slow for me. I don't want to go through this second assistant and

assistant business." I went out to Film Australia and I actually did some work with Stewart Young. Again, edge number being really boring and stuff, and I had to do some test scenes.

**24.06** The AFC wanted test scenes for Greetings, so I thought, "I can't work here and do them, so I'm going to leave." And I was really scared thinking I was copping out, I should be staying here. And I said that to Stewart and he said, "I think you're really brave." He said, "I stuck at ABC 10 years," but I was thinking, "I've got no money and I've only..." Anyhow, I did it. I left and didn't even get the money, but got it a year later. I just stoically kept going, but I just said, "I'm not going to go through those channels. It's too slow." But I mean, my process has been slow too, in a different sense, but I just couldn't handle the ABC business, didn't work for me at all being an assistant editor, and I couldn't see how I'd ever become a director out of that unless I actually just went out and got the money and I made a film. That's what I did.

**Kim Lewis:**

Even setting up Greetings took a couple of years, didn't it?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**24.53** Took heaps. I mean, two weeks to shoot it. And I think it's a good... when you think in the terms of them... we had \$10,000 to shoot it. That's all we had. When we shot that film, we didn't have the money for post-production. We had to take the rushes in and say, "Look, will you give us some money?" And we got 17,000 for that. But yeah, my contention, my belief to this day is that just my persistence, the fact that I was not going to back down, just the only way they were going to eventually get rid of me was to give me the money. If I've got nothing else, I've got that kind of determination.

**25.26 Kim Lewis:**

I was reading this interview in Encore. I think Andrew Pike, who likes comedy, compares Contact with Letter to Brezhnev, a film which I don't personally like, but I can certainly see comparisons. I can see them, especially in something like Greetings from Wollongong, which was made what, five or six years ago.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

And it's got a kind of energy about it. It's a bleak industrial landscape, lot of economic hardship, but there's kind of an energy there with these kids that's also very satirical. How difficult was it to actually work with a cast, many of whom had had no training?

**Mary Callaghan:**

On Greetings.

**Kim Lewis:**

Yeah, Greetings. How did you actually... Did you go through intensive rehearsals? How did you explain to the kids what you wanted to do?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**20.16** No, it was really actually easy. Because I actually went and I just put an advertisement in the paper and I said, "It wasn't about whether you want to be an actor or not, it's about there's an opportunity. Do you want to say something about your experiences in being unemployed?" And this girl, I just knew she was the right one. And then she just sort of said to me, "It's like being slowly poisoned." She knows what it's about. And anyhow, we worked out from that basis. And then there was a young boy. I was trying to find a boy, and I tried to explain to him and he said, "That sounds pretty easy. I reckon I can do that." I thought he's got the right attitude, but it was scripted, but I just made sure that they understood what I was trying to say and if it wasn't coming over right, I'd end up saying "That sounded really good" - just very basically just talking to them. It's other people, but no, everyone's got this notion that it was ad-lib and it wasn't. We'd work it through and said -

**Kim Lewis:**

No, I'm not saying it was ad-lib. I just wanted to know what you're working methods were.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**27.09** No, it was actually really... I was really lucky, I must say. The woman who played the mother who worked in a factory, she was looking for something to do and she tried that toast, what do they call that?

**Kim Lewis:**

Toast?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, she didn't like that. Anyhow, she heard about this film when she came in and something about her I thought rang true. And later on I was telling her that and she said, "Well, in actual fact, I worked in a clothing factory for 12 years." She said, "I never thought it'd come in as an advantage." So that worked. So she fitted in and they just were allowed to actually exist within the parameters in which they knew. But at the same time, I knew the kids could not sustain long verbal... so I made it sharp and get this out, this way. And sometimes with one of the boys, you had to pedantically almost give him the intonation, but the girls were pretty smart and they found ways to communicate it, and there was areas where they sort of got into the whole sort of feeling for it, and there was that ad-lib and movement and energy that they put in it, but it was within certain restraints.

**28.13** But also, I was a great believer in the fact that you need professional people that understand, and that's why having someone like Louis Irving who is incredibly supportive. For instance, the day he arrived, I said, "Look, I know exactly what I want, but I'm not sure about how to do it. I haven't done drama in this sense." He said, "You block the action and get it happening with the actors. We'll work out how to shoot it." That's what we did and that's how it worked and we did it on this film again. It's about getting the performance and getting... I mean, it was easier in terms of Greetings than it was on this film in the sense that this was so big and so fast and so rapid, and sometimes you were not even given a minute to think.

**28.52 Kim Lewis:**

When you worked with people you trust, it's easy to delegate and everything turns out fine.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's right.

**Kim Lewis:**

Now, the Greetings from Wollongong was hugely successful in terms of winning lots of awards that even played in New York with, I think, 14's Good, 18's Better.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, it did quite well too.

**Kim Lewis:**

Great press there too. How did it go in Wollongong? How did the (unclear) react to it?

**Mary Callaghan:**

That's what's great about it. I was trying to say that... I was telling people this last night, the funniest thing that happened-

**Kim Lewis:**

How'd it go down at the Vista Theater?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**29,21** Oh, it went down well. But the best promotion I ever got was the Mayor who... Kelly was a bit of a dag. We'd gone and seen him so many times trying to get assistance from him and never got much. But anyhow, so he must have forgotten this. God knows how, because we used to really... on his back all the time. Anyhow, he saw this from Greetings from Wollongong, so he thought it was this promotional film, you see? And so, he got it out and showed it to the council members and suddenly this film comes up that's critical. So he freaked out and there's big headlines in the local Mercury about this film that slanders Wollongong, and this is when the retrenchments in the steel-works and they're trying to promote tourism and I'm doing this, and he used this metaphor, "If someone had buck teeth, you didn't point them out" and all this sort of stuff.

**30.08** Anyhow, this sort of started happening, and so that local TV station started ringing me up saying, "What did I feel about this and how did I react to it?" And I ended up getting so sick of it that I actually said, "Look, that it's insulting to even enter into this discussion." I ended up just telling the guy to get fucked and people said maybe I shouldn't, but I didn't think he could print it and he didn't. But what ended up happening was. instead of me defending it, all these people started to write in to the paper and it got this big debate going on between the mayor and people that it generated such an interest that the local library decided to put it on and they had to put it on three weekends in succession because too many people turned up and he created that himself. So I thought sometimes adverse or something like that, that's the best promotion I ever got. It really happened that way.

**Kim Lewis:**

It felt like doing a 28 up and going back and seeing how things are six years on, your main character, is it Gina?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**31.02** Yeah. Well, I know what she... No, not really, because it wasn't biographical in a sense. It wasn't their story, so they were... and they took it on as that. I explained, I sort of went through a process of editing and I let them know what film was about, and one of the girls was really interested and would ask Louis certain things and ask John Whitteron things about sound, and they actually started to learn about film in that sense. They were very aware they were doing a film. They weren't just being themselves. It was a story. And no, I wouldn't go back and do that, I don't think.

**Kim Lewis:**

Now even at the time you were doing Greetings, the idea of Contact was in your mind?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**31.40** Yeah, it was in my mind pretty solidly. It was a certain element of fear. I mean, the notion of sort of like, would I ever be able to film in a real jail? We ended up filming in Long Bay. We're the first narrative film to ever get into Long Bay.

**Kim Lewis:**

Was it difficult getting permission to go in there?

**Mary Callaghan:**

They were really good, really reasonable. We were only filming in the visiting section, but that still meant certain inconvenience to them, but they were fantastic. Yeah, really supportive.

**Kim Lewis:**

I think Ray Argall, someone made the comment that you didn't really have to dress it up or anything because once you got a whiff of the place, the atmosphere came across so strongly.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's right. That's right.

**Kim Lewis:**

A lot of your crew... I mean, I haven't .... This is going to be rude, but I know a lot of your crew people have actually come from Melbourne.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's right.

**Kim Lewis:**

And they've had a lot of experience on these kind of... the musical films, kind of assembly line, low budget filmmaking, and obviously it's one of those labours of love where they'd probably be working on low wages for long hours.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's right.

**Kim Lewis:**

Can you tell us a bit about the shoot and the number of locations and logistics of it? Was it pretty intense?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**32.54** It was very strenuous. We sometimes had five, six set-ups in one day, maybe three locations. Mike Gilfedder who was the gaffer was just tremendous. And Ray Argall was just so supportive and Pat Fiske and everybody. But the whole thing was in a sense... The compromise was that we just did not always have the time to spend on performance. That was a difficulty, but I found that I didn't have to go and plead and ask people. In fact, I was feeling compromised by the fact that these people were coming and wanting to give extra. It was amazing.

**Kim Lewis:**

Tell me about the music that's in the film. Is it Buzz Bidstrup?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

Forgive my ignorance.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Buzz Bidstrup.

**Kim Lewis:**

Did he do the music for Greetings, didn't he?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Greetings, yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

What's his story? Is he a musician?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, he was in The Angels, a drummer, Angels-

**Kim Lewis:**

Oh.

**Mary Callaghan:**

And then he was in-

**Kim Lewis:**

I have heard the name.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, then he's in that band now, Ganggajang, but he actually did some work with Cameron Allan and-

**Kim Lewis:**

Yeah, and Emoh Ruu.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**33.56** Yeah, etc. Anyhow, Cameron was a friend of mine and he was going to do the music for Greetings, but was too busy. So he said, "Oh, Graham..." and Graham was just great. So this time I just thought, well, I know him. So I approached him and what was really good about it is we sat down with the script and just talked about the type of music that we wanted to have and whether it came through the radio or whether somebody was singing. Because we've got a little bit of people just singing, not as performers, but say they're having a show or something, might sing a few lines of a song. And so we're hoping to release a record, which will... the context being that the music is various characters or whatever, but it'll be diverse kind of music.

We've got traditional Scottish song and then we've got some country and western music, and then we've got... it's through buskers, there's a lot of stuff on the street, and there's buskers and it's all original, mostly original music except for a few covers like we're buying... Don't Sleep in the Subway, Darling. That's a song that Jo and Nique just sing, just sort of... not performance, again, just running down the street. So it's got a lot of that sort of stuff. We've got Reg Mombassa from Mental As Anything. There's a really great scene where he plays this, how they've let a lot of the people out of psychiatric hospitals?

**Kim Lewis:**

... in the streets.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**35.13** Yeah. Well, we've got a character called Yawn who's played by Robert Menzies, and he's sort of gone downhill a bit, got back into drugs and stuff. So he's sitting in the subway and there's Reg, and he's one of those people from the psychiatric hospital and he's singing this song, "There's a train in my head that has no driver", and it's just fantastic. Just little moments like that. We've got great little moments like that. There's a Scottish lady who's 85, and there's a barbecue scene where we've got the policeman, it's his barbecue and there's a beer fight and we've got him being grotesque and all this sort of stuff. Nice. But in the same sort of location, we have a situation where Jo sings this Scottish lady, just a little song. It's in the context of, oh, we just sing Gran song and she's Scottish. She was in fact Scottish and she did in fact cry, real... when she sang. She'd sitting there for hours. That could have been the reason. But these moments really work, really diverse.

**Kim Lewis:**

A few cameos of people like your Reg Mombassas and so on.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**36.15** Yeah, there's a couple of buskers, a guy called Paul Burton. People won't know them at the moment, but they'll know them soon. Yeah, it's quite a good-

**Kim Lewis:**

One of the main characters in the film is going to be Sydney-

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

... and the Darlinghurst Kings Cross area where one of the scenes-

**Mary Callaghan:**

**36.37** Yeah, one of the prevailing sort of things in the film is nearly everywhere we are, there's sort of excavation or building going on.

**Kim Lewis:**

[inaudible]-

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, it's absolutely incredible. We've got one scene at Darlinghurst. But everywhere, even the motel at the end's being renovated while we're filming there, everywhere, it's all over the place.

**Kim Lewis:**

Did you do a lot of nighttime shooting?

**Kim Lewis:**

**36.58** Yeah, I did a considerable amount of nighttime shooting, which was pretty difficult. Starting at sort of... in the afternoon, going through to sunrise, etc. Yeah, but we did quite a lot of stuff in the street. We filmed a substantial amount of the first part of the story in this really old private hotel in Manly called Earls Court, which was consequently pulled down as soon as we completed the film, and it's just an absolutely beautiful building. And we filmed then in a sort of supposed penthouse in Bondi, which is a friend of mine's that's got on the top of a roof of this private hotel. It's just really bare minimal stuff, but that was great. So we've got a lot of interiors, but exteriors as well. There's this sense that they often go around these really back streets and traps, but then we counterbalance that with the views of Sydney, but it works. Yeah.

**37.50 Kim Lewis:**

How do you think Contact, the way it's shaping up... I don't want to pigeonhole it, but as you know, I haven't seen it. What kind of genre does it fit into when I say genre, I don't... you know what I mean? There's been comparisons with films like Dogs in Space and Going Down.

**Mary Callaghan:**

No, it doesn't fit in with either of those.

**Kim Lewis:**

Does it have recognizable ancestors in maybe Australian cinema films that it has some kind of an affinity with-

**Mary Callaghan:**

Not any that I've seen.

**38.26 Kim Lewis:**

Is Contact probably going to be the finished title?

**Mary Callaghan:**

No, we're searching for another title.

**Kim Lewis:**

You're trying to contact another one at the moment, hey?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

And now that the film's over... well, what I'm trying to say is, for you as a filmmaker, do you find the post-production process the most exciting? I mean, it takes so long to get the film made that the actual shooting process strenuous though it is may only be a matter of weeks or does it become exhilarating now on the editing process, the post-production, sit down and look at it and assemble it?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**38.59** Yeah. Yeah, but it was fabulous working with Jo and Nique and Robert. They were great, and I've got to give them every credit in that area. And the crew was great. So in actual fact, I mean, I did get a lot of support and energy and it's great there, but it's a sense of relief in the sense that it's here now. You've got it. But I don't know at this point whether... I mean, the problem with the post-production stage is that here it is and there's a level of things that you... I mean, there's certain... You have to face the music. You can't go out and re-shoot it. So I mean, you have to find ways for it to work. So I mean, it's problematic, but it was great to actually have that, to actually be able to work with actors was tremendous.

**39.48 Kim Lewis:**

Without getting too personal, how have you managed to support yourself financially over what must've been difficult periods when you were trying to raise finance and reworking scripts and so on?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**39.58** Yeah, with some script editing work and intermittently having to go on the dole or working in a bar or whatever, just scraping along basically. But the AFC were very good in terms of script development money. I've got script development money each stage of the draft, but that's intermittent over the year. But that would help me keep going. But yeah, just taking rotten jobs here and there, that sort of stuff.

**Kim Lewis:**

What are your future plans in the immediate future?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah. Well, I'd like to start writing something else.

**Kim Lewis:**

You don't have another Contact burning over though?

**Mary Callaghan:**

I've got a few ideas going, but I don't want to commit myself to any of them just yet. I just want to work out-

**Kim Lewis:**

But do you want to keep working in the same mode that you are now?

**Mary Callaghan:**

It's a hard one. It's a really hard sort of lifestyle.

**Kim Lewis:**

Because there must be great satisfaction to get together with a committed crew like that and get it done, but the down line of that is it's taking you so long to do it.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, I know. Well, I mean-

**Kim Lewis:**

You take some cushy job on some big production where you may compromise, but at the same time-

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, get a lot of money in that.

**Kim Lewis:**

A lot of money and comforts. Is that kind of a continuing kind of dilemma in a way?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, it is. Because I mean-

**41.18 Kim Lewis:**

Like Tony Ginnane might come up to you and say, "Listen, I could have done Contact or something. We could have done it for 6 million. Instead having Jo Kennedy though, we would've had..." well, not Annie Lennox, but someone, does that kind of thing happen?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**41.31** No, it wouldn't have been the same kind of film. I mean, I had Jo's experience as an actor, Nique and Robert's and a whole lot of people and Ray, etc. So it really was collaborative. They had respect for my idea, and as Ray said, the fact that I was trying to strive to get the performance made him... he was trying to get the look. So I mean, we worked in that way, but I don't think at this point in my understanding of film, that I could just go onto somebody else's project.

**42.01** And I really think I have to learn more. I mean, I think now I know how I should have shot Contact. At the end of it, I know how I should have approached it. I mean, it was quite frightening. And at times it was difficult coming to grips with the fact that there were this many people that were here giving more than what they necessarily had to give to your idea. And that sort of was difficult for me to cope with. But now I realize that not to take that on is... you've got to, otherwise you're insulting them. You've got to say, "Thanks, great," and take it along. But sometimes I was too modest or whatever it is to do that. And that ends up in fact obstructing other people in a way.

**42.46 Kim Lewis:**

How do you unwind when you've had a really rough week, you've been to... investors who are giving you the shits and you've got problems in the editing or whatever. How do you-

**Mary Callaghan:**

Not very effectively.

**Kim Lewis:**

I'm not asking you to tell me you're going to see movies or something, but how do you get out of the whole thing of-

**Mary Callaghan:**

Not very effectively. I find it very difficult.

**Kim Lewis:**

Can't relax?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, still trying to find that one out.

**Kim Lewis:**

Well, put it another way, what happens if you've had a very successful year and Contact's ready to be shown at Cannes or whatever, and you said, "Right, you've got a month off." How do you ...

**Mary Callaghan:**

I want to go on a trip overseas. I like going for long drives. That relaxes me and starts thinking about other things too.

**Kim Lewis:**

That's all I've really got to ask.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's good.

**Kim Lewis:**

This act just go on forever. It seemed like we talked a lot longer than 45 minutes.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**43.38** It's going to give people a surprise, I think, from what they're feeling about it, how sort of ascetic it is and how colourful. I mean, I'm not in the great belief that if you've got something sad happening that you have to portray that by having really dull colours around or something like that. I mean, I'm really interested in sort of contradictions and actually going beyond the predictable. So it is in fact a really colourful film and a lot of energy and music and a lot of humour. And so, sometimes you sort of... people are going to be wrenched through moments where they're going to be really distressed and moments when they're really laughing.

**Kim Lewis:**

Now, you said it's not at all like *Going Down* or *Dogs in Space*.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Well, I don't think so. No.

**Kim Lewis:**

Well, yeah, they're films that have a certain degree of documentary realism. Do you see your film as being maybe in some ways a bit more stylized?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**4.34** Yeah, I think it's a little bit more stylistic, but I think it's got a lot of... the truth. When it really goes to the nitty-gritty, when it hits it, you reckon people will feel the pinch if they've ever... if they know anything about certain elements. It's not softened by its style, it's in fact... it's just heightened.

**Kim Lewis:**

And is it going to be a very fast-paced film or a bit more kind of languid with long takes?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**45.00** No, it's fast. It is fast. I mean, that's how my mind races. My mind does... I have several thoughts going on. I mean, it's fast. Yeah.

**Kim Lewis:**

And that applies to the soundtrack as well, the dialogue?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**45.17** In a sense. There are moments. I mean, to be true to... for instance, Robert Menzies, who's a tremendous actor, I mean his style because his character is a lot slower. So there's moments and sometimes when watching it in performance, I thinking it's far too slow, but when I watch it on-

**Kim Lewis:**

But in the overall effect is you've got a roller coaster ride in other ...

**Mary Callaghan:**

Very much so. Yeah, very much so. Really. That's how I've actually described it. It is like that. Yeah, a roller coaster. Very rapid, very quirky actually. If you read that, that's what... if I was to try and express what my approach to filmmaking is, that's my approach. But I mean, that's said very well.

**Kim Lewis:**

Who's that, VS?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Victor Serge. But I mean, that is what I feel about my form of narrative too.

**46.10 Kim Lewis:**

**(reading)** Everything in this book is fictional and everything is true. I've attempted for literary creation to bring out the general meaning and human content of a personal experience.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**46.23** And just change literary and book for film and visual. Yeah. That's how I would explain it. I don't want people to think that this is somebody's story because it's not. It really is.... It's my construction. It is fiction, but based on elements of experience, observation and constructed out of my imagination. But the source and the emotions are real that generated the motivation to do it.

**46.52 Kim Lewis:**

This is obviously in putting this together and casting it, a very hands-on approach, I assume you haven't left it to someone else to do your casting and the minor roles, that you kind of gone through everybody?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**47.05** Well, nearly, but Anna Grieve, the production manager, and Chris Oliver, the producer, they in the end in some of the smaller roles because it was just... I had just too much and that was okay. But no, I did all the casting and most of the secondary characters too, myself with Chris. Yeah, I was very lucky. I've got very strong crew. I would only say there's three performances which are a bit touch and go, and they're really minor like extras. Everyone else is pretty solid. I mean, there's a few difficulties here and there.

**Kim Lewis:**

Well, so Jo Kennedy and Nique Needles obviously worked a lot together, but what you're saying is the chemistry kind of came together for everybody else.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**47.46** The performances are very strong. Nique Needles is great. I mean, Jo had the hardest part, and I think she really came to the fore and really put a lot into it. Very difficult part because

a lot of her character is not what's said, it's what's not said. How I'd explain her character is it's not about making statements, it's about asking questions, which is difficult for an actor. If she's saying, "What am I trying to say? What am I saying?" You're trying... you do not have an answer. You don't understand. You're not trying to tell people what you're trying to find out. So you're forever asking and re-evaluating and questioning, and that's a difficult position. If you can't give someone a slogan, this is where you are. But she really worked at understanding that, and she gave a lot.

**48.31** Nique really understood what his character was about. It was sort of... I suppose a lot of it was handed to him. He had a lot of the humour that makes it easy. And the audience is going to like him. And Jo had the stuff where you've got really... difficult stuff. She had to sometimes be the one that raised the issue, the argument or whatever to get... because he would avoid at all times. He'll avoid any issue. So she had that position and that makes it difficult. We had to really work against it appearing that she would ever become like whingy or whatever. I mean, it had to be done in a sense that she retained her independence, she's not stuck to him. If she doesn't want to be there, she can go. But she's raising issues to make him think, in other words.

**49.22 Kim Lewis:**

These are characters that are very street wise. I'll just ask you, in a film of this nature, how difficult is it to give the film a lived-in appearance? I mean, obviously you've got very strong characters and that, but when you're actually physically set about designing the production and the wardrobe and all that kind of thing, how do you go about really defining the characters in the environment?

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah, that's very difficult.

**Kim Lewis:**

Come about in the pre-production, the rehearsals, talking it through, work shopping?

**Mary Callaghan:**

**49.51** I'm very specific about that, and therefore can be hard to work for, from the art director's point of view because I am very specific and I write it into the script and I know what I want. And I found that difficult because there wasn't the time always to convey that. And there were people that I just had never met. So I mean, I don't know what their aesthetic or whatever it is, but Kerry Brown understood. ... I think overall it's strong visually.

**50.45** But no, I'm very serious about detail and people not getting veneers of what they feel makes this character, whatever. I'm not interested in all that bullshit. And even when we went out to Long Bay, for instance, all these prisoners and I got into trouble and the PR guy raced up and said, "You can't talk to these guys," whatever. Anyhow, they were getting really worried. They said, "What's going on? There's a film here." And I said, "Yeah." And they said, "What's it about?" And I said, "Oh, it's about a boy that goes to jail," blah, blah. And they said, "Oh, how long do he do?" And I said, "Oh, he got five years." And they said, "Oh, that's pretty poncy. That's not very much, is it?" Blah, blah.

**51.21** And then I explained it to him, it's a first offense. And then I sort of said, "Look, it isn't from his point of view, it's from the visitor's point of view," which I know I don't know about being in jail, but I know what it's like to visit someone that's in jail. And I just handed him the scenes. He was obviously the ringleader in this particular group that I had there. And he read through

them and I said, "Are they okay?" He said, "Yeah, they're okay." Because they always deal with understatement to get, "That's okay, you're doing fine."

**51.49** And that was far better to do than to leave them worried and anxious because he's like, "It's their place." And that got everything sorted out. And then in other words, when people were playing volleyball, we were able to ask them to stop because we're shooting dialogue, but the authorities still wanted to do it the other way where you don't tell them anything and you put a rope across so they can't come over and all of that shit. But they said to me, "Look, you've got to understand that you might have..." I was eating a biscuit, and a guy asked me for a biscuit, and they said I gave him some biscuits. And they said, "You've got to understand that we don't know, but there might be sort of hash in these cookies." I said, "Yeah, I wish there were." But anyhow, it just got... I mean, I feel that I'd be a bullshitter if I said, "I can tell you what it feels like to be inside jail."

**52.36** But I have seen what it does to people when they're on the outside after they've been in jail. And that's what interested me, the fact that someone is put in a position where... okay, when sometimes someone goes to jail, they re-evaluate their life and they can be remorseful in genuine terms, but they're put in a position where they cannot effectively do anything about it. They're paralyzed. And the only way that they can operate in the outside world is through someone else. And that connection becomes that visitor. And what happens, okay, they've got good intentions and etc, etc, but that's all they can be, good intentions. They can't carry them out. But what ends up happening is because they become, in a sense, impotent is a way of describing it. As I've seen people become almost obsessively demanding, asking for almost impossible things to test out this person's love or affection or to be able to operate on them in a sense, and therefore operate in the outside world. And that's what becomes of Rex, that's what he starts to do, he starts to demand.

**53.40** And that sense of him walking out of jail two months before he's virtually going to be released is statistically proven that quite often a lot of people, when they know they're about to get out, there's just something that's got haywire and that's what happens to him. But as he's trying to explain, it's just spontaneous. And once it's done, it's done. It doesn't matter if you're out for a day or a year, you're still an escapee. They don't accept, "Sorry, I made a mistake." And that's true. And that's what's happening to these people, that they don't get an opportunity to re-assess and to order like we do. Middle-class people usually do these things. "I made a mistake, I'm sorry." A lot of work. They don't. And they get stamped and that stamps indelible and it's really hard to wash off. And that's what I was observing. I was seeing the prison system makes these people, which in a sense was this special... keeping the prison system alive. We're talking about nineteen-year-old kids that you can especially have influence on, but they weren't interested in doing it.

**Kim Lewis:**

So the character of Rex, it's actually a journey of self-discovery or something. At the end, he faces these responsibilities.

**Mary Callaghan:**

**54.49** Yeah. Well, the girl too, because I mean, what is it in her that makes her feel guilty about the fact that she can cope and has a perspective on the world? I mean, she wants him to have it too, because it's traditional that the male should be the leader, or at least she finds it hard in a sense. She has certain strengths that he really needs to get through this world. But at the same time, his perceptions and understandings, she learns a lot from. So it is a mutual thing. I don't have anybody getting the up on anybody else. It really is a mutual give-and-take, which I really

felt was important. I'm sick of that revelation at the end and that sense... because I don't think it's what happens.

**55.32** I think you take... the experience can become positive if you can learn something from it. A negative experience can be positive if you can take... and therefore, I don't see the film having an ending. The optimism in that film is it has a beginning that you feel that they have learned something and therefore are going somewhere. And that's why it's optimistic and that's really important to me. And I think that the humour does that. I'll just give you, this is the last thing I'll say, but just a little bit sense of the humour and to give a sense of Rex's understanding of the world and Mitchell's understanding of the world. Okay, they're sitting on this rock and you've got this great expanse of beautiful ocean and view, and you hear Mitchell say... There's a commercial being shot over here, and you get a bit of that, but that's just immaterial.

Okay, so then you hear her say, "Look, okay, you just eat them. I don't like... I'm allergic to prawns." And he's going, I can't remember the exact sequence of the dialogue but she's saying, "Look, you eat the prawns. I'm happy. I'm not hungry." And she's eating an apple. And he's saying, "But look, every time I try to please you, it doesn't work out." And she's saying, "Look, why is it so important to please me?" He says, "It makes me feel good." And she says, "It makes you feel good?" And he goes, "Yeah." He said, "I thought everybody liked prawns. They're so fucking expensive" instead of...

That's the kind of humour, and you get his understanding of it too, but it's sort of also, you get her trying to show him without exactly going da, da, da, da, da. That if he would just have some belief in himself, he wouldn't always have to be give, give, bribe, bribe, like me. And that's what it's about. It's demanding and exhausting for both of them. And it's about that sort of self-realisation. And until he has some respect for himself, his behavior towards others will never... it won't work out. And that's something that she instinctively knows, but ensnared by the fact that he is a very charismatic character and she enjoys his company and likes him and he's fun. And every time she makes the decision, "I got to get out of this," he has a way of just... and I think the audience will feel that too, that he's likable.

**Kim Lewis:**

Sounds like it could travel.

**Mary Callaghan:**

Yeah. So that's the end. Yeah.