



The DROWNER

A story of love, passion, madness, death and human frailty

A major motion picture based on the best selling novel by Robert Drewe



The DROWNER

Screenplay by John Collee
Based on the novel by Robert Drewe

The Drowner is set in the gold-crazed mining boom of the fledgling Swan River colony of a century ago. Then, the greatest obstacle in the scramble for riches was lack of water. Fast forward to today, and Western Australia is experiencing a resources boom to rival the 1890's – and in a drought-stricken environment. Water has never been more important.

Robert Drewe's multi-award winning novel mingles history, myth, adventure, romance and technology with a modern cinematic and poetic imagination. Using the remarkable story of the visionary leader JOHN FORREST and the engineering genius C Y O'CONNOR, this tale chronicles one of history's most remarkable engineering feats – the pushing of water uphill for a vast distance. O'Connor's extraordinary challenge was to build a pipeline to pump water from the coast to the arid goldfields.

Forrest confidently raised 3 million pounds from London to underwrite the project – a staggering \$27 billion in today's money.

The focus of the story is a young engineer WILL DANCE, who arrives from England to assist O'Connor in his ambitious quest. Will's father is a Drowner, famous in the Wiltshire Downs for creating and guiding waterways and saving farmer's crops. Will arrives in Australia with the breathtakingly beautiful actress ANGELICA, the daughter of renowned thespian HAMILTON LLOYD.

The goldfields of the fledgling colony of Western Australia are a melting pot of humanity attracted by the incredible allure of gold and the chance to escape previous lives. We meet INEZ GOSPER, a former Victorian socialite now nursing the typhoid-ravaged prospectors;

DR JEAN-PIERRE MALEBRANCHE, the bordello-loving physician determined to uncover the cause of typhoid; AXEL BOEHM, the mysterious German photographer with a fascination for Inez; FELIX LOCKE, the American undertaker and frustrated poet; and last but not least, the pivotal figure of MAHOMET MAHOMET, the Afghan cameleer.

As the pipeline lurches through doubt and crises, tragedy befalls the project. The climatic scheduled opening of the waterway enmeshes the characters in final ironic twists.

The Drowner is an epic story and a capital-“R” Romance in the vein of The English Patient. It is a film of dreams, passion, riches and mankind's most basic need – water.



FILM DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND

West Australian filmmaker Stephen Van Mil, Impian Films, is producing the feature film in conjunction with Mel Gibson's Icon Productions and UK Co-Producer Robert Jones. Renowned Australian-based screenwriter John Collee (Master and Commander, Happy Feet) is contracted for the script adaptation.

Van Mil has secured development funding largely from Australian private investors, ScreenWest, and Screen Australia. It is anticipated the project's budget will be approximately \$60 million. The producers are currently in negotiations with internationally acclaimed director Fred Schepisi. Cate Blanchett, Liam Neeson, James McAvoy, Emily Blunt and Barry Humphries are some of the cast already approached.

Media attention has been exceptional and the film has the full support of the WA Government, Screen West, Screen Australia, the National Trust, the Water Corporation and WA Tourism. The benefits to Perth, the WA Goldfields and Australia generally, both short and long-term, will be vast. This is a project Australians should justifiably be very proud of.



GOLDFIELDS SUPPORT

WA Premier Colin Barnett and Planning, Culture and the Arts Minister John Day have thrown their support behind this predominantly West Australian project. Several leaders of our Mining industry couldn't wait to put their hats in the ring to invest and be considered for the bar room brawl scene, in which legendary Western Australian Dennis Lillee has offered to throw the first punch!

The Goldfields community support has been exceptional, with investment, sponsorship and provision of services, spanning a huge range of the region.

This project is not just a film, but an event, that will capture the imagination of the people and the beauty of the region and it's famous identities.



DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

The terms below are solely for the purpose of outlining those terms pursuant to which a definitive agreement may be entered into and do not at this time constitute a binding contract.

BACKGROUND: Through the Production Agreement with Icon Productions, up to US\$2million PLUS a 30% premium is underwritten as a guarantee in the Production Budget. The Producers have raised the majority of the development funding, and now seek to finalise the the budget to see the project through to pre-production and commencement of filming. These funds will allow the completion of further script versions, the attachments of key cast and crew, production budgeting, and presentation and marketing of the film to world's leading studios, on the terms set out in the Development Investment Agreement.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT:

At the commencement of Principal Photography, the Investor will be entitled to recoup their full investment cost plus thirty (30) percent.

FURTHER INVESTMENT:

The Investor can roll over their initial development investment, including the thirty (30) percent return, into the Production Funding for the budget of film, as an equity investment participant on the same basis as the Producer.

OPTIONAL BENEFITS:

The Investor is entitled to any or all of the following optional benefits;

Privacy – The Investor can require not to be named as an investor in the credits for the Film and in promotional material for the film.

Media Exposure – The Investor can agree to be acknowledged in media exposure associated with the film.

Credits - The Investor shall be entitled to a rolling end-credit in the film substantially in the following form: “Developed with the assistance of [name of Investor]”.

Film Set – The Investor will receive two (2) transferable one day passes to visit the film set.

Be An Extra - Subject to any requirements of the MEAA, the Investor will be entitled to two (2) transferable positions to go on-set as extras in the Film.

Wrap Party – The Investor will receive two (2) transferable tickets to the director’s “Wrap Party” to be held at the conclusion of principal photography in Kalgoorlie.

Australian Premiere – The Investor will receive two (2) transferable tickets to the Australian red carpet premiere of the film and the Investor will receive a Screener DVD of the completed film.



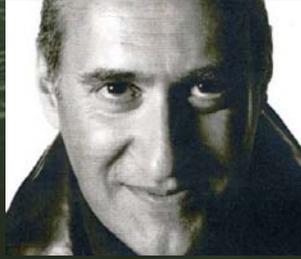
Stephen Van Mil, Australian Producer

Stephen Van Mil founded the independent Australian film production company which began in Sydney. Impian Films first feature film based on the book *The Drowner* began development in 2008 with production expected to begin early 2012. Stephen's passion for film was borne out of 20 years experience in television, print and film. With a Veterinary background, previous productions include wildlife documentaries *White Lions – King of Kings* (2006) for Discovery Network/Animal Planet International and *Saving Orangutans* for the Ten Network Australia. Made in conjunction with Fork Films, the multiple award winning *The Last Trimate* (2008) is a world released documentary narrated by Mel Gibson and featuring the amazing life-work of Birute Mary Galdikas and orangutans in Indonesia. Upcoming feature film projects include the adaptation of Tim Winton's award-winning novel *Shallows*, also as a co-production with Icon Productions, and *Black Honeymoon*, a romance-thriller set in Africa and France, made in conjunction with Martin Brown Films and based on a John Collee original screenplay, in which John will make his directing debut. Stephen is also producing the documentaries *Big Fish*, a global odyssey to unravel the mystery of the remarkable whale shark, the biggest fish in our oceans, *Elephant Wars*, examining the alarming escalation in human-elephant conflict and *Tipping Point* which exposes the growing unsustainability of planet earth. *The Track* is a docu-reality series profiling the racing game.



Robert Drewe, Author

Robert Drewe grew up on the West Australian coast, the setting for his best-selling memoir, *The Shark Net*. His many novels, including *The Drowner*, *Our Sunshine*, *Grace and Fortune*, and his short-story collections, *The Bodysurfers* and *The Bay of Contented Men*, have been widely translated, won national and international prizes, and been adapted for film, television, radio and the theatre around the world. *The Drowner* made Australian literary history by winning the Premiers' literary awards in every State, as well as the Adelaide Festival Prize. *Our Sunshine*, an imaginary life of Ned Kelly, was made into the international film *Ned Kelly*, starring Heath Ledger, Orlando Bloom and Naomi Watts, while *The Shark Net* and *The Bodysurfers* were adapted for ABC and BBC television mini-series. His latest book, *The Rip*, has just been published by Hamish Hamilton/Penguin.



Robert Jones, UK Co-Producer

Formerly a professional music recording artist, Robert has 28 years experience in the feature film industry and has built an impressive track record both working with established filmmakers and identifying and developing new talent and commercial feature film material. His various roles encompass a wide range of activities including production and post production, script development, film financing and investment, multi-territory film rights acquisition, theatrical and video marketing and distribution, TV sales, public funding, strategic planning and film education (including current position as Chair of The LCC/Ealing Screen Academy Board) His production credits include Academy Award™ winners The Usual Suspects, Gosford Park and The Constant Gardener as well as Paul Thomas Anderson's Hard Eight, Stephen Frears' Dirty Pretty Things, Mike Leigh's Vera Drake, David Schwimmer's Run Fat Boy Run and Neil Marshall's Centurion.



John Collee, Scriptwriter

John studied Medicine in Edinburgh, Scotland, and subsequently worked as a doctor in the UK, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, the Solomon Islands and the former Soviet Union. His published novels include Kingsley's Touch, Paper Mask and The Rig, all published by Penguin. Since becoming a full time screenwriter he has collaborated with directors Phil Noyce, George Miller, Peter Weir, Jean-Jacques Annaud, Guillermo del Toro and Steven Spielberg. His screen writing credits include Happy Feet (2006), Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World (2003), The Heart Surgeon (TV 1997) and Paper Mask (1990). He has worked as a script editor on the forthcoming adaptation of Tim Winton's Dirt Music, and the Heath Ledger movie Candy (2006). His latest film "Creation", about the tortured creative life of Charles Darwin, was released this year.

The DROWNER

Coming Soon.



THIS IS A PROJECT WEST AUSTRALIANS SHOULD JUSTIFIABLY BE VERY PROUD OF

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