

Magpie

Pitch Document



MAGPIE

LOGLINE

A man mourning his wife during lockdown turns to online dating with terrifying consequences.

View 'teaser' [here](#).

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Lockdown. A man mourning the death of his wife over 12 months ago moves into a new house – hoping to forget his recent tragic past. In an attempt to ease his pain, he turns to online dating for comfort – not realising that he is making contact with the dead former inhabitant of his home, bent on moving back in at whatever the cost.



MAGPIE

GENRE

Supernatural Cyber Thriller

WRITER/PRODUCER

Darren Markey

PRODUCER

Kate Whitbread

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Lorne Film and KW Films

LOCATION

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

SHOOT DATE

October 26, 2020 (2 weeks principle photography)



SYNOPSIS

Jack is mourning. It's been 12 months since his beloved wife Lara passed away – and Jack remains inconsolably lost. To compound matters the world has gone into lockdown – further isolating him from a world he found increasingly difficult to engage with. Jack's only contact is with his elderly mother living in a nursing home on the other side of the country – and a family of magpies in his backyard silky oak. Jack is still settling into his new home – having moved there just prior to the lockdown in an effort to further distance himself from his recent tragedy. Jack tries to console himself by watching videos of Lara – and in particular her last days as she urges him to find someone else once she has gone. Jack also spends time trying to complete his latest novel – but is getting nowhere. Adding to Jack's fragile existence is the onset of agoraphobia – further imprisoning him in the claustrophobic surrounds that bind him.

With the encouragement of his mum, Jack reluctantly sets up a profile on an online dating platform and begins his search for something to ease his pain. Before long he makes contact with Sally – a single mother with secrets of her own. Jack begins to tentatively speak with Sally – eventually face to face online, as they begin their friendship. As they do so Jack detects that all is now well with Sally – despite her sunny demeanor.

The beginnings of this tender relationship are sabotaged when Jack is contacted by another member of the dating platform – who refers to herself only by her profile name, Magpie. Magpie quickly conveys to Jack a sense of terrible loneliness. Jack can sense something else – a certain decrepit mystery to Magpie. As they talk Magpie reveals to Jack that her husband broke her heart when he left her for someone else.

Jack's nightly online correspondence with Sally takes a strange turn – she senses someone else in the house with Jack, at the same time revealing to Jack that she is going blind. Over the coming nights a series of disturbing nocturnal events unsettle him even further with an increasingly enigmatic Magpie revealing intimate knowledge of his home. Jack's situation takes a tragic turn with the sudden death of this mother, as he contacts the sales agent responsible for selling him the house – who hints at the house having a recent dark history. When Jack finds the clips of Lara wiped from his hard drive, he begins his descent into darkness as an increasingly manic Magpie insists on visiting him. Jack goes online to find his home was the scene of a gruesome murder/suicide – with a jealous wife taking the life of her cheating husband before hanging herself from the back yard silky oak.

Jack's physical condition goes into steep decline – as he pushes on and finally completes his novel – just in time for Magpie to pay him a visit in the night, with Jack making a pact with his ghostly visitor that breaks his binds and sets him free.

Sally answers a knock at her door to find Jack standing with his completed manuscript. She reaches out – now completely blind – and strokes his cheek. They both smile.

The real estate agent shows a new couple through Jack's previous residence. The magpies watch on from the silky oak.

THE TEAM

The team behind MAGPIE are responsible for the creation and development of LORNE FILM – a film entity committed to developing and producing high quality independent Australian film.

LORNE FILM also ran an exciting, well renowned film festival from 2013 – 19, developing a reputation within the local industry for innovation, excellence and leadership.

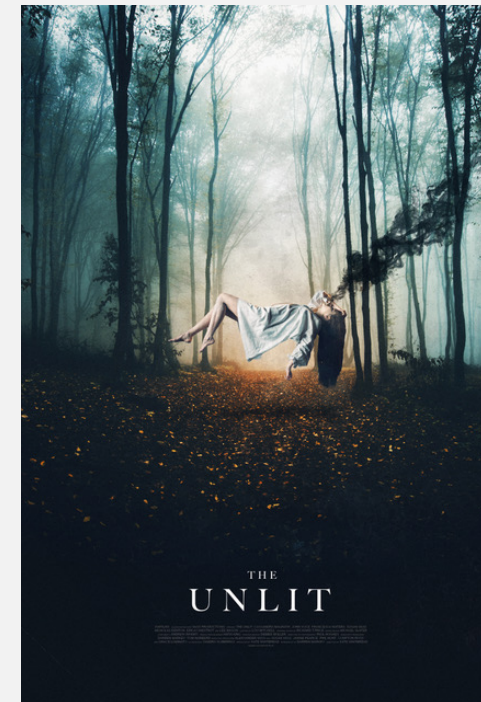
LORNE FILM was involved firsthand with the development, writing and production of THE UNLIT, a supernatural thriller that was to enjoy a cinematic release during May 2020. THE UNLIT will now appear on streaming platforms 2020/21.

LORNE FILM has a number of feature film projects in development. These projects include THE TUTOR, a psychological horror/thriller – and THE PLOVER'S CRY a romantic saga/thriller set between Iceland's remote Northwest and the Australian outback.

The team behind MAGPIE have the experience, knowhow, drive and eye for excellence required to not only bring this feature film to life, but also to usher it through the sales/distribution path.

THE UNLIT is due to open at The Lido Cinema, Hawthorn on Thursday August 6, 2020.

More information re THE UNLIT [here](#).



THE TEAM

DARREN MARKEY – SCREENWRITER/PRODUCER

Darren has written, directed, produced and acted in some 13 stage productions with his 2001 production of *The Watch in the Window* earning critical acclaim from the national press. Darren worked as Resident Director at Karnak Playhouse, Far North Queensland, completed his first screenplay *Lilly*, and travelled to Los Angeles to begin his journey as writer/producer.

Returning home led to the production and his direction of the planned TV series *The Blessed* and a subsequent slate of screen projects. Darren's supernatural thriller script, *The Tutor*, recently did the rounds at Cannes 2016 and is slated for production in 2021. Darren was writer and associate producer on the feature supernatural thriller, *The Unlit* – due for release in 2020. Darren is also founder and festival director for Lorne Film, an international film event held in Lorne, Victoria from 2013 – 2019.



KATE WHITBREAD - PRODUCER

Kate is an award-winning Australian film director and producer, and a screen acting coach. In 2002 Kate raised private finance for and produced the independent low budget film *Deeper than Blue* with Colin Friels. Her feature film *The Caterpillar Wish* won both an AFI for Suzie Porter's performance in a Supporting Role and an IF Award for Best Production Design.

Kate is currently developing the psychological thriller *Burn* and the drama, *Wolf of Rostov* – and recently produced and directed the supernatural thriller, *The Unlit* – written by Darren Markey. Kate is also co-founder of distribution company Momo Films and acted as Industry Liaison for the international film event, Lorne Film.



www.kwfilms.com.au

SUMMARY

A supernatural cyber/horror/thriller where *The Ring* meets *Wuthering Heights*, MAGPIE is a tale of grief, love and redemption that asks if the only way forward is to stop looking back – and if the very thing we fear is what will ultimately save us.

It is a story with significant market appeal set to capitalise on the dearth of content created by the current global environment – and offers a rare and unique opportunity to become involved with a finely crafted, beautiful yet chilling feature film set to find a niche market share, now and into the future.

This project has been developed and will be implemented by a team with a proven track record. This team is well positioned to produce the film, and to maximise existing relationships to see the film through distribution and sales – thereby significantly increasing the chances of success – and the returns inherent to this success.

To view MAGPIE 'teaser' click [here](#).

For further details contact:

Darren Markey
+61 401 387 176

darren@lornefilm.com

