

# Gino & Juliet

*Star-crossed lovers of an older generation*



PRESENTED BY CHRISTINE FIRKIN AND ROSS GIANNONE

A ROSS GIANNONE FILM

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY SUSAN LUMSDON EDITOR GRACE VAUGHAN SOUND DESIGN JOHN HRESIC

PRODUCED BY CHRISTINE FIRKIN AND ROSS GIANNONE

WRITTEN BY CHRISTINE FIRKIN DIRECTED BY ROSS GIANNONE

PG

Parental guidance  
recommended





# **PRESS KIT**

**Directed by ROSS GIANNONE**

**Written by CHRISTINE FIRKIN**

**Format NARRATIVE SHORT FILM**

**Running Time 22 mins**

**Aspect Ratio 2:29:1**

**Themes** Love in older age; blending of cultures;  
family relationships.

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**Website and socials**  
**<https://ginoandjuliet.com.au/>**



# LOGLINE

Star-crossed lovers of an older generation.





# SYNOPSIS

A modern twist on Romeo and Juliet set in the world of the senior citizens, this romantic comedy follows Gino and Juliet, two older individuals in search of connection. Gino, an Italian immigrant to Australia since his twenties, has lived alone for the past decade after losing his wife to cancer. Juliet, a lively woman nearing 70, has been single for 20 years since her divorce. Both have grown-up children who are now independent.



Seeking comfort, companionship, conversation, and intimacy, Gino and Juliet turn to online dating, but their efforts prove fruitless. Just as they're about to give up, a chance meeting brings them together. Despite their families' disapproval—who see them as too old for romance, among other objections—they navigate through various challenges, eventually proving that love can bloom at any age.





# THEATRICAL TRAILER







# ROSS GIANNONE

## Director / Producer

Ross Giannone is very passionate about storytelling for the screen.

With a career spanning 35 years at ABC TV, he has developed extensive expertise in film and television production in various production roles. Ross started in 1980 undertaking a three-year traineeship at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in Sydney.

His diverse roles at ABC TV have included Videotape Editor, Cameraman, Vision Mixer, Course Manager, Floor Manager, Assistant Director and Director.

He worked as Floor Manager on iconic programs such as 'Playschool', 'Bananas in Pyjamas' and 'Mr Squiggle.' Ross was an Assistant Director on drama programs 'Police Rescue', 'GP' and 'The Leaving of Liverpool.'

He also directed the news programs 'Midday Report' with Ros Childs, '7PM News' with Juanita Phillips and 'Stateline NSW' with Quentin Dempster.

Ross has directed Tropfest drama entries 'The Hitchhiker' and 'The Witness' and the short film 'Oysters Have Eyes!'

A devoted supporter of the South Sydney Rabbitohs, Ross shares a passion for the team with Russell Crowe.

He left the ABC to explore independent filmmaking opportunities.

## Director's Statement

Ross is keen to promote Italian culture and acknowledge the contributions of Italian migrants to Australia, which motivated his involvement with 'Gino & Juliet.'

He brings his extensive skills and experience as a Director to 'Gino & Juliet.'





# CHRISTINE FIRKIN

## Writer/Producer/Performer

As a writer, Christine initially focused on creating scripts for school stage productions.

Whilst living in London in 2015 to 2019, amongst many workshops in singing and acting, Christine attended a Writing for the Stage short course at the Arcola Theatre in Dalston.

A highlight of her time in the UK was the creation of her one-woman show, *The Roads I Didn't Take*, which was performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2017.

Upon returning to Sydney, Christine leveraged her international experience on several exciting projects, including collaborating with singer/songwriter Kay Proudlove to create a new piece of gig theatre. Their show, *See You Later Mum*, premiered at the Adelaide Fringe Festival in 2021, was featured at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2022, and returned for a short season at the Sydney Fringe Festival, where it earned a nomination for a Sydney Fringe Festival Award for Theatre. Christine received acclaim for her writing on this project.

Recently, after completing a screenwriting course with Jonathon Ogilvie at AFTRS, Christine wrote the screenplay for *Gino & Juliet*. The short film was designed for festivals and Christine also stars in the title role. She is currently developing the feature-length screenplay and is enthusiastic about its progress.



# SUSAN LUMSDON

## Director of Photography

Susan's portfolio of work includes a broad range of moving image projects including feature films, streaming and television drama and documentaries. In all her work she strives to use the camera to create evocative images that reflect and explore character journeys and story themes. She is known for eliciting high production values and working as part of a team.



Flexible and easy going, Susan has a strong work ethic and high-level technical knowledge.

Her credits include three drama series for Film Gate Productions / Netflix in the United Arab Emirates which won several awards internationally. Feature film *Bloodshot Heart*, which won Best Cinematography at 18° Salento International Film Festival 2021. *Risen*, released by Vertical Entertainment, is a sci-fi set in the American mid-west and shot in Canada and Australia, which won Best Cinematography at the New York Independent Cinema Awards.

Susan's most recent work, currently in post production, includes the indigenous road movie *Promise Mum*, and the Australian horror film *Salt Along the Tongue*, being distributed by Umbrella Entertainment.

Susan won an 2023 US Women in Media Altitude Award for Technical & Artist Achievements in Cinematographic Arts.

Susan loves the challenge of bring a director's vision to the screen.





# GRACE VAUGHAN

## Editor

Grace still loves doing jigsaw puzzles, but these days spends more time piecing together video. A 2016 graduate of AFTRS, in 2017 she edited her first feature film, *The Casting Game*, a heartfelt family rom-com. She also worked on the successful indie Instagram drama series *The Out There*, picked up by US based Adolescent Content, and web series *Whirld* (Winner - Best Web Series, Paris Play Film Festival 2021).

Grace has edited a number of short films, including futuristic sci-fi *Bubble* (Official Selection Melbourne Underground Film Festival 2017 and For Film's Sake Festival 2017), coming-of-age drama *Undertow* (Official Selection Byron Bay Film Festival 2017 and Best Shorts

Competition 2017), psychological drama *Sydney* (Best Editing - Los Angeles Film Awards and Top Shorts Film Festival 2018), and comedy-horror *Zebra* (winner of 10 Best Horror awards at various film festivals 2019).

Grace has worked extensively in documentary, primarily in the fields of education, health, and disability, with career highlights being filming in schools in remote Indigenous communities in NSW, WA and the NT.

Grace lives by the sea with her partner and two young children on Dharawal Country in the Illawarra.



# JOHN HRESIC

## Sound Designer

John is a Re-recording mixer and Sound designer for the Sydney Sound Brewery, a Post Production House for Film and TV.

John began his career as a music producer/music recording engineer in 1984, working in some of Australia's most prestigious sound studio's such as EMI 301 Rhinoceros and Paradise Recording Studios. He then transitioned to TV in 1995 working for Australia's first cable network Foxtel as a Sound Designer for Promo's and TV series catering for more than 30 channels at the time. After leaving Foxtel in 2007, John freelanced as an audio director/sound mixer for Australia's Digital TV Channels whilst also working at audio post houses such as Zero One Zero, Corner Post, and Cutting Edge.

In 2012 John, created his own studio to cater for the Film and TV industry, founding the Sydney Sound Brewery in Waterloo, eventually moving to the amazing premises at Church Street studio's in 2021.

John's work includes recording, editing, sound designing and sound mixing, and spans indie art house classics to award winning documentaries and features.. This versatility allows him to bring a dynamic energy to his work giving each project a unique approach. He will always take time to understand the narrative that is specifically required to the task at hand.

Since 1999 John has been credited on over 180 films with a majority of films spanning from short films to features receiving local and international awards.







## NICK BOLTON

### Production Consultant

Nick Bolton is our Production Consultant. Nick is a Creative Industry Business Advisor via the NSW Government's 'Business Connect' scheme and mentored us throughout the production journey.

Nick is Chair of Screen Illawarra and a filmmaker from Sydney. His production company TEN ALPHAS focuses on corporate and commercial content, whilst TEN ALPHAS FILMS is for creative and original content. He was Executive Producer on *Finding Addison*, the Australian Academy Best Short Film for 2024, whilst his previous film *Mate* was Oscar longlisted in 2023 following it being the first Australian film to ever win the Grand Prix in Clermont Ferrand.

## MADELEINE EASTON

### Music Co-ordinator

The Australian violinist Madeleine Easton is internationally recognised for her versatility and expertise on stage. Throughout her career, a desire to combine period and modern playing has led to unique opportunities to work with a variety of ensembles worldwide. She performs internationally, appearing as soloist, concertmaster and director of some of the world's most respected ensembles and orchestras.

In 2016, she formed Australia's newest dedicated J.S. Bach orchestra, Bach Akademie Australia, which has gone from strength to strength, performing to sell out houses in both Canberra and Sydney. Madeleine plays on a 1682 Giovanni Grancino violin.

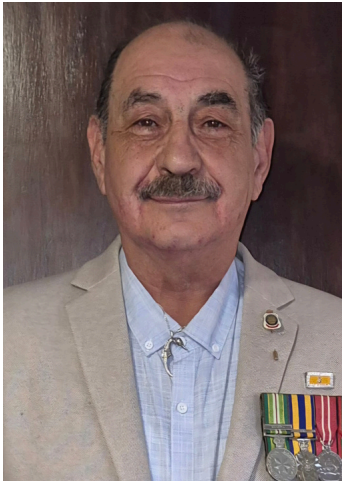
For the film *Gino & Juliet*, she sought out Australian composer Andrew Howes for the perfect opening piece, which she plays herself. The film is honored to showcase her remarkable talent.





# THE CAST

## In Order of appearance



### **GINO - DAVID VILLANTI**

David's acting career began in 2000 in Karratha, Western Australia, where he joined the local theater group after his final army posting in the area.

In 2005, David earned a Certificate III in Performing Arts from ACTU Sydney and was signed by acting agent Gina Stoji, leading to several significant credits. His film work includes roles in *Hobby Farm* and television appearances as Abe Saffron in *Family of Crimes*, Dario in *Rake*, and contributions to *Special Air Rescue Ops*, *Deadly Women*, and *Behind the Mason Walls*. His documentary *Exit Wounds* explores his transition from military service to the performing arts, addressing his experiences with PTSD.

David has also featured in numerous short films, with his most recent role in *Gino and Juliet*. Reflecting on his experiences, David says, "It was a remarkable opportunity to work with a highly skilled production crew and a talented cast. I hope the audience enjoys the film as much as I enjoyed being a part of it."



### **MARCO - DAVID MURDOCH**

David John Murdoch is a Scottish Australian actor. He has trained in Los Angeles with Howard Fine, at the Actors Connection TV and Film School in New York, and locally at the Sydney Actors Association. He has appeared in several TV commercials and worked on various series and films, including a lead supporting role in Mostofa Farooki's 2022 film *No Lands Man*. In 2022, he won Best supporting Actor at the LA Actors Awards for his role in the LGBT drama *Unbarred*. Passionate about comedy and horror, David showcases a range from villains to vulnerable characters. He enjoys collaborating with new filmmakers and finds joy in exploring new techniques, uncovering the layers of the human psyche in his ongoing pursuit of challenging and interesting characters.







## **JULIET - CHRISTINE FIRKIN**

Christine was born in the United Kingdom, raised in Sydney, Australia, and has a rich background in performance, directing, and teaching. She began dance training at the age of 3, took on her first stage role during high school, and has since immersed herself in all aspects of theatre.

In 2015, Christine moved to London to pursue a professional performing career. There, she showcased her talents across various genres on stage and on camera while enhancing her skills through numerous screen acting workshops and courses.

In Sydney, Christine has been pleased to work with Sam Haft at the Sydney Actors Association to continue to develop her screen acting skills.

Christine is represented by Smith and Macdonald Creative Management.



## **MAGGIE - REBECCA MATTHEWS**

A classically trained Actress, Singer, Director and Teaching Artist, Rebecca's career spans over three decades. With a solid foundation in Theatre, Film and Television beginning at The Q Theatre & Three Stage Independent School of Theatre, Film & TV. Her most recent credits include work on *Single Ladies* (comedy), *The Disappearance* (drama), TV series *The Artful Dodger* (family) & short film *Gino & Juliet* (romantic comedy).





## **MARTIN - MANNY KATTS**

Manny Katts is a talented and highly respected Australian actor with over 20 years experience in Australian Television. Manny's acting experience is supported through his formal training at the Australia's Acting Centre. He studied under Dean Carey and Adrian Barnes for theatre and drama. Furthermore Manny has also been studying under Pat Wilson for voice and musical theatre. Manny's commitment is to continuously drive him to develop his skills by participating in courses such as Ivana Chubbuck "The power of the Actor" work shop.

Together with his strong acting ability Manny has developed other technical and practical skills. Some skills are Martial Artists, Acrobatics and Boxing.



## **CAROL - DEBBIE NEILSON**

Debbie Neilson graduated *Screenwise*, where she holds a diploma in screen acting. Notably, she stars in the Australian film *Fragmentary*, currently streaming on Amazon Prime, under the direction of the acclaimed Jace Pickard.

In the theatre realm, Debbie's achievements are numerous, with standout moments such as her work on the self-penned play *Not so Enchanted* for Short and Sweet Festival. This Festival underscores her multifaceted skills in writing, directing, and acting.

Debbie has toured for eight years with *Meerkat Productions* a Theatre In Education company and has also hosted live shows with Humphrey B Bear.



## **THE JUDGE - JEANNIE GEE**

English-born Jeannie Gee trained at The Independent Theatre School in North Sydney. She worked in various aspects of Film Production for 20+ years until the theatre eventually beckoned her back. She then enjoyed performing in many stage productions around Sydney, until she decided to focus on screen acting. Jeannie is known for the films *Shaken*, *Safe To Assume* and, *Where Rosemary Goes* to name a few. Plus stints on the TV series, *Deadly Women* and *Home & Away*. She has also appeared in several TV commercials and, is represented by Natalie Hall Management.



## **PETER - MATTHEW EDWARDS**

Matt is a solar scientist, musician, drone photographer and actor from Sydney.

Matt starred in years of theatre productions such as *Così*, the Venetian Twins, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, as well as musicals and pantomimes such as *Clue* and *Pinocchio*, and has a film credit in Australian production *Event Zero*. Matt was also the guitarist and singer for Sydney indie acts *Allie & Ivy* and *Creepy Robert*. Matt's drone photography has taken him around the world with freelance mini documentaries in places like Iceland and Germany.



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**DIRECTED BY**

Ross Giannone

**WRITTEN BY**

Christine Firkin

**PRODUCED BY**

Christine Firkin and Ross Giannone

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Susan Lumsdon

**EDITOR**

Grace Vaughan

**SOUND DESIGN**

John Hresic- Sydney Sound Brewery  
Luke Stacey