The Main Feature
Season 37 - Issue 13 screening 23.3.17

Australia   2013
Cert 15   1hr 58m

Director, Writer, Cinematography, Music and Editor – all roles performed by Ivan Sen!!!

Aaron Pedersen	Jay
Hugo Weaving	Johnno
Jack Thompson	Mr. Murray
Ryan Kwanten	Pete
Tony Barry	Sergeant
Tasma Walton	Mary
Robert Mammone	Constable Roberts
David Field	Mr. Bailey
Damian Walshe-Howling	Wayne
Jack Charles	Old Boy
Samara Weaving	Peggy

(she is the niece of Hugo)

Mystery Road was shot in the small country town Winton, which is almost 1500km inland in western Queensland, and has a population of less than 1000. It is famous for being the town where Australia's most famous song, Waltzing Matilda, was written by early poet, Banjo Patterson.

The driving force behind the project, Ivan Sen recalled "There's a lot of big sky imagery which is partly why we came out here. Some of the problems we had related to the weather especially in the climax of the film. I really wanted to have a very big blue sky in that part of the film so we had to delay for a week for the rain to go away. We came back and waited for the blue sky and it just looked amazing.

Mr Sen says many locals were used in minor roles. "One of the drawbacks of shooting in the outback is the distance, so you really want to use as many local people in the film so you don't have to pay all the expense of bringing people out here. Winton really delivered many, many good supporting actors and extras and very interesting looks as well."

The story elements are largely drawn from my own country life experience. A few years ago, a distant cousin of my mother was found dead under a roadway in northern NSW. She had been stripped and brutally murdered. The police have seemingly done very little to bring her killer to justice and this has brought resentment from the local Indigenous community. I have also wanted a chance to express the gun culture from my childhood. In the country, people rarely go into nature purely for the nature experience. There's usually always a reason for it.

I grew up surrounded by a hunting culture."

"We consciously sat down together – me, the producers, the actors and talked what we were going to do with this film," Ivan says. "We weren't trying to experiment."

Jay was a character created by Ivan Sen especially for Aaron Pedersen. Ivan first approached Aaron about making a film together more than eight years before filming began His initial idea was to have Aaron play a city based detective negotiating the attitudes of the predominantly white police force while trying to solve a murder. But the idea evolved into a story about young girls in a country town, inspired by Ivan's relatives unsolved murder.

The director remarked "Mystery Road is essentially a Murder Mystery thriller. It's a genre which doesn't get used so much these days in the cinema, though it is commonplace on television in many different forms. The challenge was to make it cinematic in every filmic detail. We were incredibly blessed to have the involvement of many of Australia's finest and most talent actors. All of whom came on board with a love for a project they felt very strongly about. All of the actors were incredibly generous and supportive, as was every single crew member, for that matter. I involved Aaron Pedersen from the scripting stage, and that was the early beginning of our journey together."

"I think once word got out that the script was good, there was a real sense that people wanted to come and support Ivan," producer David Jowsey says. "It's absolutely lovely that major actors in Australia came out of their way, literally into the middle of the outback, to support our film."

"Mystery Road is a Cowboy Western film, and that evolved through determining the look and the attitude of the lead character," says Jowsey. "Aaron was always going to be the lead in the film… and Ivan wanted Aaron looking like a cowboy. He wears a cowboy hat, he slings a pistol and he's wearing cowboy boots. Once that was established the film itself became a Western."

Iain McGlashan

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2017 Oscar winners list

Best picture

•**Winner: Moonlight**

•Arrival

•Fences

•Hacksaw Ridge

•Hell or High Water

•Hidden Figures

•La La Land

•Lion

•Manchester by the Sea

Best actress

•**Winner: Emma Stone - La La Land**

•Isabelle Huppert - Elle

•Ruth Negga - Loving

•Natalie Portman – Jackie

•Meryl Streep - Florence Foster Jenkins

Best director

•**Winner: La La Land - Damien Chazelle**

•Arrival - Denis Villeneuve

•Hacksaw Ridge - Mel Gibson

•Manchester by the Sea - Kenneth Lonergan

Moonlight - Barry Jenkins

Best foreign language film

•**Winner: The Salesman - Iran**

•A Man Called Ove - Sweden

•Land of Mine - Denmark

•Tanna - Australia

•Toni Erdmann - Germany

Best actor

•**Winner: Casey Affleck - Manchester by the Sea**

•Andrew Garfield - Hacksaw Ridge

•Ryan Gosling - La La Land

•Viggo Mortensen - Captain Fantastic

•Denzel Washington - Fences

Best supporting actress

•**Winner: Viola Davis - Fences**

•Naomie Harris - Moonlight

•Nicole Kidman - Lion

•Octavia Spencer - Hidden Figures

•Michelle Williams - Manchester by the Sea

Best supporting actor

•**Winner: Mahershala Ali - Moonlight**

•Jeff Bridges - Hell or High Water

•Lucas Hedges - Manchester by the Sea

•Dev Patel – Lion

•Michael Shannon - Nocturnal Animals

Best animated feature

•**Winner: Zootopia**

•Kubo and the Two Strings

•Moana

•My Life as a Zucchini

•The Red Turtle

Comments and reactions to: **Suffragette**

Everyone should see this film – an important period of social history.   **Wow!**

Brought into focus the sacrifices made by many brave women   *Good choice*

Excellent – well acted and portrayed: very enjoyable   ***Very moving***

Humbling – should be shown in secondary schools   *Most moving film*

Harrowing account very convincingly told   ***Very realistic and moving!!***

A blot on our history which it took a war to change   *Why did it take so long?*

Inspiring – never give up for what you believe in   ***Incredibly courageous women***

Inspiring film, but sisters, our battle isn't over yet, not by a long way.

Beautifully made film – thought provoking: should be shown in schools

Very well acted, especially "Little George"   *Good acting let down by a leaden script*

Excellent reminder of the work and suffering of the suffragettes – good acting and direction

Mulligan's strong performance gets to the heart of the matter; despair ignites into hope and aspiration

Very sad. As most suffragettes were middle class, why only focus on a working class woman?

Subject very good – technical part of filming left something to be desired

A fine story, but I found the hand held camera and over-boiled sound track hard to take

Frenetic editing at times was irritating – but the Derby scene was well handled. The lecherous laundry owner was probably a step too far.

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	~	~	~	~	~	1	5	10	14	10	4

No of reaction slips received = 44   Average Score = 7.89

Position	Film	Average Score
1st	Bridge of Spies	8.24
2nd	Spotlight	8.17
3rd	Suffragette	7.89
4th	Brooklyn	7.85
5th	Eddie the Eagle	7.79
6th	The Good Lie	7.5
7th	Lemon Tree	7.35
8th	Carol	6.97
9th	Gunfight at the OK Corral	6.9
10th	The Big Parade	6.82
11th	Hector	6.44
12th	Comme Une Image	5.82

Next on 13 April we have a double bill: