

Tan Lines

Press notes

Festivals:

- Bent Lenses, Canberra Australia November 2007
- Manila Pride Film Festival, Philippines October 2007
- Romanian Gay-Lesbian Festival, Opening Night. October 2007
- Pride Film Festival, Perth Australia. October 2007
- Pittsburgh Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, USA Oct. 2007
- Q Film Festival, Jakarta & Bali Indonesia August 2007
- Reel Out! Film Festival, Halifax Canada, July 2007
- Ster Kinekor G&L Film Festival, Nationwide South Africa, September 2007
- Fort Worth GLFF monthly screening, USA 25 July 2007
- 28th Durban International Film Festival, SA 20 June to 1 July 2007
- TLVFEST, Tel Aviv June 2007
- San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival, June 2007
- NewFest, NYC May-June 2007
- Inside Out Film Festival, Toronto May 2007
- Melbourne Queer Film Festival, March 2007
- Queerscreen's Christmas Presentation, Sydney 2006
- Mix Brasil Film Festival, Brazil, Nov. 2006
- Image + Nation Film Festival, Montreal, Nov. 2006
- Philadelphia International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival 2006

Distribution:

- North America: TLA Releasing, July 2007
- UK: Peccadillo Pictures, 9th July, 2007
- German speaking territories: GMFilms, August 2007
- French speaking territories: BQHL, 2007

“...unflinching in his desire to show the complexities of both sexual desire and coming of age.” **Kelly McQuain, Afterelton**

“The film is sexy and oddly amusing, with a rather abstract subplot that dishes out a modern retelling of Great Expectations - if Miss Havisham was on crack.” **DNA Magazine, Australia**

“....a sexy, fun, irreverent film...” **DNA**

“...dynamic direction, excellent soundtrack and beautiful photography...” **Festival Mix Brasil**

Synopsis

Tan Lines is the story of Midget Hollows- surfer, teenager, partier, pervert...Living in an off-beat coastal town, Midget's surf grommet existence is turned upside-down when he falls in love with another male surfer. An intense and often surreal conflict ensues between Midget's new found love and the macho surf culture he inhabits...and that's not to mention his weird job at the McQuillan mansion...

Ed's profile

After graduating with top honours in Film Production at the University of Westminster, London, Ed has pursued a varied career in Film and Television.

Ed has lectured in Screenwriting and Film Production to undergraduates where he worked alongside acclaimed screenwriter Tony Grisoni.

Ed has also written screenplays for television in the UK and has directed drama, documentary and commercials that have aired internationally.

Ed has written and directed over fifteen short films ranging in subject from experimental to comedy. Ed's short films *Rubber Love* (shot in New York City) and *The Wait* have been aired in festivals internationally. His most recent short, *Healing* is currently on the international festival circuit, having shown in Sydney, London, LA and New York (among many others).

His non-narrative film *Astroboy's Fear of Gravity* was recently shown at the exhibition 'Blood, Severance, Magic' in Sydney alongside renowned artist Mike Parr and recently won the Surry Hills Film Festival.

Tan Lines is Ed's first feature film.

Conception

In a small room, in a Redfern terrace, on the cheaper side of Sydney, I sat down on my milk crate and banged out a script entitled 'Tan Lines'. I was a surfer and I was gay, but far from attempting to write a concept movie (the gay surf movie), I was interested in exploring the mind of an irreverent, disconnected, overtly sexual teenager...I figured that

I'd better do a film about teenaged sexuality while I was still in my twenties, thereby avoiding the label of 'old pervert'; which is invariably slung at middle-age directors such as Larry Clark or Bertolucci.

But even with a couple of feature scripts written, the idea of actually making a feature film seemed far off. Fast forward three years and I was still shooting short films and working casual jobs, when a conversation with a filmmaking friend kicked everything off. The conversation went something like "With today's technology and the balls, you could shoot a feature film for the same amount of cash that an expensive short would cost...and you can sell a feature...and no-one watches short films anyway..."

So I started to produce *Tan Lines* and it almost killed me...

Casting

The seemingly impossible task of casting the main character, Midget Hollows, lay in finding an actor, who would convince as a sixteen year-old surfer/skater, had a good sense-of-humour and who would be comfortable performing gay sex scenes.

After nearly a year of auditioning across the country in the traditional way (working with agents and casting directors, putting out open calls for actors) we hadn't found anyone to play the lead role. Those that were comfortable with the themes of the film were often too old to play a sixteen year-old or too overtly gay.

To clarify this last statement, the character of Midget is 'in the closet' and if he showed signs of obvious homosexuality it would make the secrecy absurd. Another reason that Midget needed to appear heterosexual was that the story is hinged on an exploration of his own sexuality. Part of his confusion stems from his own lack of innate homosexual characteristics (I understand that I am dealing in cultural stereotypes here).

So we switched to gorilla tactics, hitting the streets and approaching groups of young skaters and surfers. We would send Lorena (an incredibly hot chick) to chat to these guys and if they showed interest, only then would we let them know the film had gay themes.

And that's how we cast our lead roles. We met Jack (who went on to play Midget), Jed (Dan), Harry (Dickhead), Josh (Dogboy) and Daniel (Cass), approached them, did a daylong workshop with them and cast the lot. Although most of them had no acting experience, their natural exhibitionism, the dynamic between the friends and the fact they could skate and surf, were teenagers and were comfortable with playing gay made them ideal candidates.

The other parts were cast from actors and friends; like Theresa (Miss McQuillan) who I met in a gay bar when she was performing in a karaoke competition. Theresa has been a professional singer, dancer and ice-skater for much of her life, but this was the first time she had performed dialogue and I think she struggles through with true courage and more than a touch of eccentricity.

Production

With only one week of full-time pre-production the whole shoot was a little chaotic, which is just the way I like it. Decisions were made spontaneously and life was allowed to squeeze its way into our fiction. We would be shooting a scene in a house one day and production manager, Michael Stieders, would go out and take some pictures of locations, bring them back and we'd be shooting there the following day.

We shot in and around the city of Sydney, in the suburbs, in Bondi (where I, and a number of the cast were living at the time) and along the Northern Beach suburbs.

With a lack of funds, we couldn't afford to pay permits to shoot in public locations, so we simply pitched up and, with the small crew, attempted to stay under the radar. This worked pretty well and we shot the exterior scenes without too much hassle, except for the weather...

The only time we had a problem was in the changing room location. The location was next to a lifeguard station and they kicked us out on numerous occasions, forcing me to cut a couple of scenes. We did sneak in again, however, and shot the scene where Mr McKinzie gets beaten up, naked, in the shower...I know that Christian Willis, who plays McKinzie, was glad that we weren't disturbed on that one...

For further information: **www.tanlinesthemovie.com**