



David Luff

FILM MAKER | CINEMATOGRAPHER



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Core Values

Dream big,
stay positive,
work hard,
and enjoy the
journey.

By mutual respect,
understanding and with
good will we can find
acceptable solutions to
any problems which exist
or may arise.

It is our collective and
individual responsibility to
preserve and tend to the
world in which we all live.

Who Am I

I am a Cinematographer and Camera Operator from the Adelaide Hills in South Australia. I have developed many skills in filmmaking, most notably Cinematography. I also enjoy Directing, Producing, Editing and Sound Designing.

While I have experience working on TV Drama, Reality TV and Feature Films, **Natural History** is where my main passion and heart is.

I currently reside in Bristol, UK, and have both my Australian and UK Passport.



PROJECTS

Here's some of my recent work

MALA	MEMOIR	WHEN THE SMOKE SETTLES	CAPE SOLANDER	LIFE WITH BATS	THE POWERFUL OWL
Wildlife docu-series	Nature short film	Bush fire short documentary	Surf Short Film	Wildlife short Documentary	Feature Wildlife Documentary
EP, Writer, Director, Cinematographer	Director, Writer, Cinematographer, Editor, Colour Grader, Sound Designer	Director, Writer, Cinematographer, Editor, Colour Grader, Sound Designer	EP, Director, Writer, Cinematographer, Editor, Colour Grader, Sound Designer	Director, Writer, Producer, Cinematographer	Director, Writer, Producer, Cinematographer, Editor, Sound Designer

The Powerful Owl

I could write a 60 page document on this project but i'll keep it relatively brief. This feature length documentary taught me SO much about producing, managing a team and effective leadership. While 99% of this project was done solely by myself, I had one shoot day where I filmed my Interview and re-enacted behind the scenes. I travelled interstate for this and hired crew to help with the day including HMU, BTS photographer, Gaffer/Cam Op and AC/Best person. Overall everything worked out, but it definitely didn't go 100% to plan. And that was great because it taught me a lot!

With this project, I not only honed in my Cinematography and wildlife observation skills, but also my Producing, Marketing and Social Media skills. I organised locations, crew contracts, per diems, health and safety, schedules and budgets. I also set out a plan on different organisations and audiences to target, and a strategy to execute which would utilise my time most efficiently.

Besides the principle photography of filming the owls, I spent 80-120 hours/week working on this project for 3 months. I completely finished the project only 6 days past my originally set deadline, which I think is pretty good!

The Powerful Owl



A David Luff Documentary
Coming 2022

The Powerful Owl

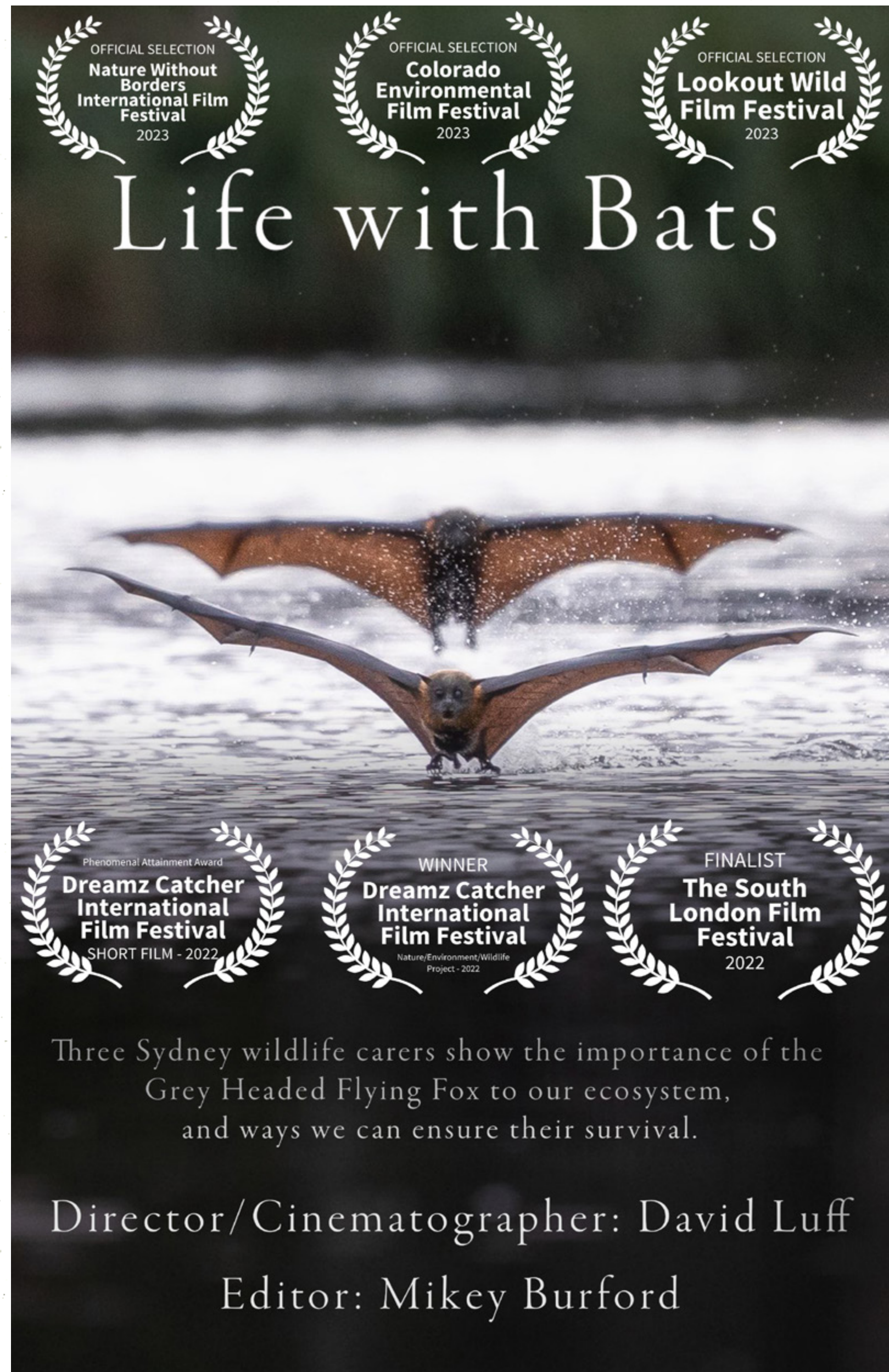
Minimal equipment - Geographically locked - Difficult subjects - Challenging Conditions - Low budget

These were the issues that I faced while filming the Owls.

Due to the Covid lockdown restrictions, I was not allowed to travel greater than a 5km radius from my house. This meant that the only way for me to be creative filming was to film what was local to me. I had a small amount of camera gear (2x lens, 1 camera, gimbal, tripod and monitor) and without any funding I had no access to other equipment/rigging to aid in the filming. The owls were my subject of choice, but they positioned themselves high up in the tree tops, hidden away with lots of foliage blocking my view. This meant that I had to be extra creative in how I framed and filmed them. I wanted to have the highest production quality possible but knew that I had very limited options in regards to how I could achieve this.

Being nocturnal animals, night time provided the most action. But this posed the issue of low light levels. I REFUSE to use artificial light sources on nocturnal animals. I decided to shoot with a higher ISO, which brought in a lot of noise to the image, but to me the most important part of filmmaking is the story. And it is better to capture the behaviour in lower image quality, than to not capture the behaviour at all.

Watch the trailer [HERE](#)



Life with Bats

I wrote and filmed this over the course of two weeks, as my main Graduation Project had to be cancelled last minute due to border restrictions during the COVID pandemic. Luckily I had already started to film the bats and captured the final dipping sequence a month earlier, as it was a seasonal activity and I wanted to film it for archival purposes.

The interview and b-roll at the facilities had a tight filming schedule of only 40 minutes on location. I was the only crew there and handled the filming, lighting, audio and directing. All in all it worked out well, though of course if I had more time and/or more crew then it would have increased the production value even further.

Overall, considering the short time frame I was working with, this documentary was a huge success - becoming staff and student favourites at the multiple showcase screenings held at AFTRS.

Life with Bats is currently doing the Film Festival circuit and is sitting at a MASSIVE 100% success rate on festival selections so far.

UAE Drama series (x3)



In 2021 and 2022 I worked in the UAE on three standalone short series for FilmGate Productions as 1st unit B-Cam Operator and 2nd Unit A-Cam Operator. Each series has three episodes with a runtime of 30 minutes each.

UAE Drama series



Over the 2.5 months of filming I learnt a lot about big budget productions and how they operate.



I used this time to sharpen my camera operating skills in a drama style and had lots of practice at matching frames and ensuring the visual styles remained the same between the cameras.

Monogamy - Australia's Love Animals (MALA)



Monogamy - Australia's Love Animals is a series that was in development that showcases different Australian wildlife that live a monogamous life - meaning that they mate for life. **Due to the COVID lockdown this project has been put on hold.** Each episode has a focus on a certain animal, showcasing what they have to do to survive, their threats and physical attributes, as well as their more intimate moments with their partner.

Wearing many hats

MALA was intended as my University grad project. I tackled many logistical aspects as well as creative ones. As the EP I oversaw the budgeting, risk assessments and scheduling, creating all the documents and forms for the crew.

Leadership and organisation are two things that I love combining in my work. I try to set an example of how hard work and dedication pays off and what can be accomplished.

The risk assessment on the right show my organisation in preparing for production. Getting my risk assessments and schedules done early help me with realising the possibilities of our shoot, and ensuring it goes as safely and smoothly as possible. I like to be as prepared as possible.

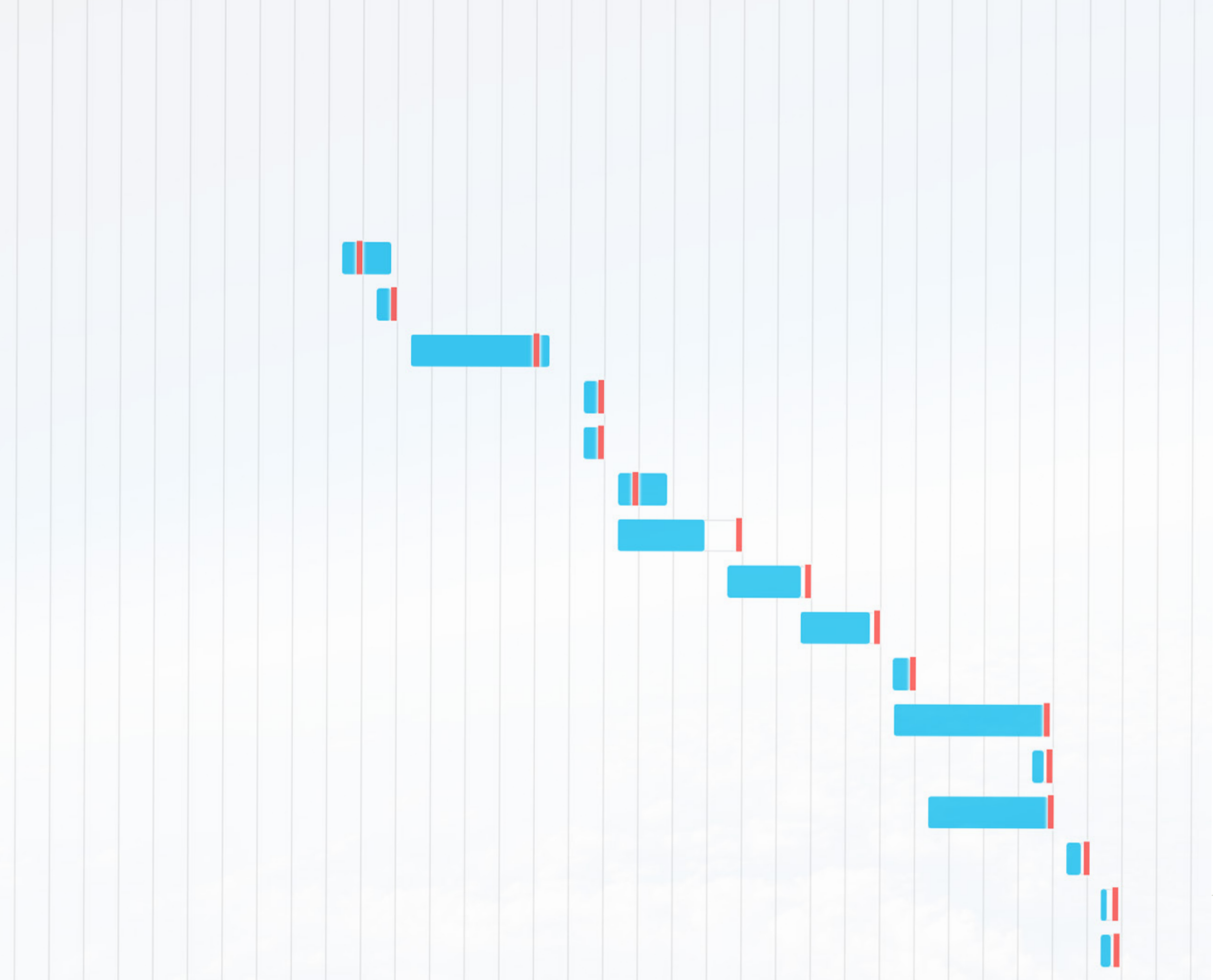
RISK MATRIX

CLASS	RISK FACTOR	POTENTIAL	CORRECTIVE ACTION
1	High	The hazard/s identified for this shoot are potentially fatal or may permanently maim or kill cast or crew	It is extremely important to do something about the hazard/s immediately.
2	Medium	The hazard/s identified for this shoot may cause serious injury or illness that will temporarily disable cast or crew	It is extremely important to do something about the hazard/s as soon as possible.
3	Low	The hazard/s may cause a minor injury which would not disable cast or crew and no lost time is involved.	It is important to do something about the hazard when possible.

Lo c No	Sc No	Hazards and Consequences Description Action, characters, environmental etc	Ra w Risk	Proposed Control Measures	Revised Risk
1	AL L	Cold Water affecting our physical and mental health	1	Ensure that we are wearing dry suits to provide better thermal protection. Hot drinks and towels on standby in the boat <u>In</u> case one of us suffers from hypothermia. Dive hoods and/or beanies worn underwater to keep warmer. If/when one of us gets cold then we come up straight away, no questions asked.	3
1	AL L	General dangers of scuba diving	1	Both have rescue course certificate. Limit the max depth we dive to <u>15 meters</u> so we minimise decompression sickness risk substantially. Contact authorities and boat captain in advance to ensure we have <u>100% pure oxygen on board</u> at all times, and a decompression chamber location is known. We will have our SMB inflated the whole time, so that the boat knows where we are.	3
1	AL L	Regulator or <u>bcd</u> malfunction	1	We will check our kits the night before and also when we enter the water. We will have a plan in place for malfunctioning regulators or dry suits.	3
1	AL L	Running out of air	1	Every 5-10 min we do an air check on each other. We estimate 50-60 minutes out of each tank. At 70bar we decide to ascend back to surface, giving us plenty of spare air reserve in case of unpredictable emergency. Potentially we can use Nox tanks also (If we are both certified).	3
1	AL L	Covid transfer when using each other's regulators in case of emergency.	2	Divers get covid tests at least the day before underwater filming. Assuming we both show negative results; when preparing gear, we make sure all regulators are working fine. Then we disinfect our regs in case we need to use each other's underwater. This ensures all regulars are sanitised.	3
1	AL L	Core safety protocols relating to buddy system	1	BTS video will be a <u>Gopro</u> attach to body and mask so that I can focus on being the dive buddy.	3
1	AL L	Rocks and infections Barnicle cuts	1	We will wear Neoprene gloves and boots to protect ourselves.	3
1	AL L	Potential presence of Great White sharks	1	Monitor area regularly to know if we're in danger. Visibility needs to be 5-10 meters at <u>minimum</u> so we have enough sight for potential sharks. Don't swim at dawn or dusk. Don't swim near seal colony.	2
1	AL L	Potential presence of <u>Bronze</u> whaler sharks	1	We will stay away from the bait ball and the sharks, using a zoom lens for close ups. I will pull back Nays if he gets too close to the bait ball.	3

Name	Active	Deadline ^
Organise Mercedes Van	1	July 5, 7:26 pm
Get Robbie to sign off on Risk Assessments		July 19, 7:00 pm
Feasibility Meeting		August 6, 7:00 pm
Evening Pitch for Y1 & Y2 students		August 11, 7:00 pm
COVIDSafe Workshop		September 7, 7:00 pm
GREENLIGHT MEETING		September 10, 7:00 pm
Final Production Meeting		September 13, 7:00 pm
Mercedes crew drive to Portland		October 5, 7:00 pm
Fly crew to Melbourne		October 6, 7:00 pm
Shooting commences		October 10, 10:00 pm
Crew Drive to Melbourne then Fly to Sydney		October 12, 7:00 pm
Editor collects drives		October 12, 7:00 pm
Mercedes crew drive to Sydney		October 13, 7:00 pm
Editor starts assembly edit		October 16, 7:00 pm
Edit 1st draft of film		October 18, 7:00 pm

- Feasibility Meeting
- Evening Pitch for Y1 & Y2 students
- COVIDSafe Workshop
- GREENLIGHT MEETING
- Final Production Meeting
- Mercedes crew drive to Portland
- Fly crew to Melbourne
- Shooting commences
- Crew Drive to Melbourne then Fly to Sydney
- Editor collects drives
- Mercedes crew drive to Sydney
- Editor starts assembly edit
- Edit 1st draft of film
- Edit second and final cut of film PICTURE LOCK
- Sound Design
- Colour Grade
- Record Narrator
- Sound design second run
- Editor syncs colour graded picture to sound design
- Upload for Moodle submission
- Submit Film



I like to have an organised Gantt chart early on so I can see what areas will be busier, and where we need to focus attention. It helps me to stay organised and on top of everything. Not only does organisation help increase the success rate of my production, but it also helps assure the crew that they are in good hands, that everything has been thought through and mistakes are minimised.

Cinematography

I like to lay out my ideas in a style bible and storyboard. It helps me to see the overarching style that I go for as well as how the scenes and shots work together.

As seen here on the right, I have created a style of oranges and yellows in the sky, which is reflective of the Gannet's colors.

My storyboard includes shot types and descriptions, which are then put into a shot list and categorised accordingly.

This level of organisation helps everyone involved understand what we are aiming to achieve, as well as ensuring we are able to film the content we need the first go, without having to conduct pickup shots.



Colours

Colours reflective of the colour of the Gannets - white, orange, yellow and black.

The warmer spectre of colours in the sky at sunrise and sunset will contrast with the cooler colours of the ocean, rocks and shrubs.



Visual style

Glamorous and soft visual approach to the Gannets, with slow camera movements in all shots except for the courtship ones.

Title: Monogamy – Australia's Love Animals			Page:
Scene No.	Shot No.	19	
Shot: Panning Drone WS Gannets diving down.			
Scene No.	Shot No.	20	
Shot: MCU Underwater Gannets swimming/eating fish.			
Scene No.	Shot No.	21	
Shot: CU Underwater Gannet diving for fish.			
Scene No.	Shot No.	22	
Shot: Boat MLS Slow motion Gannet diving into water.			
Scene No.	Shot No.	23	
Shot: WS underwater Slow motion Gannet diving into water.			
Scene No.	Shot No.	24	
Shot: WS Underwater Dolphins swimming underwater.			

Memoir



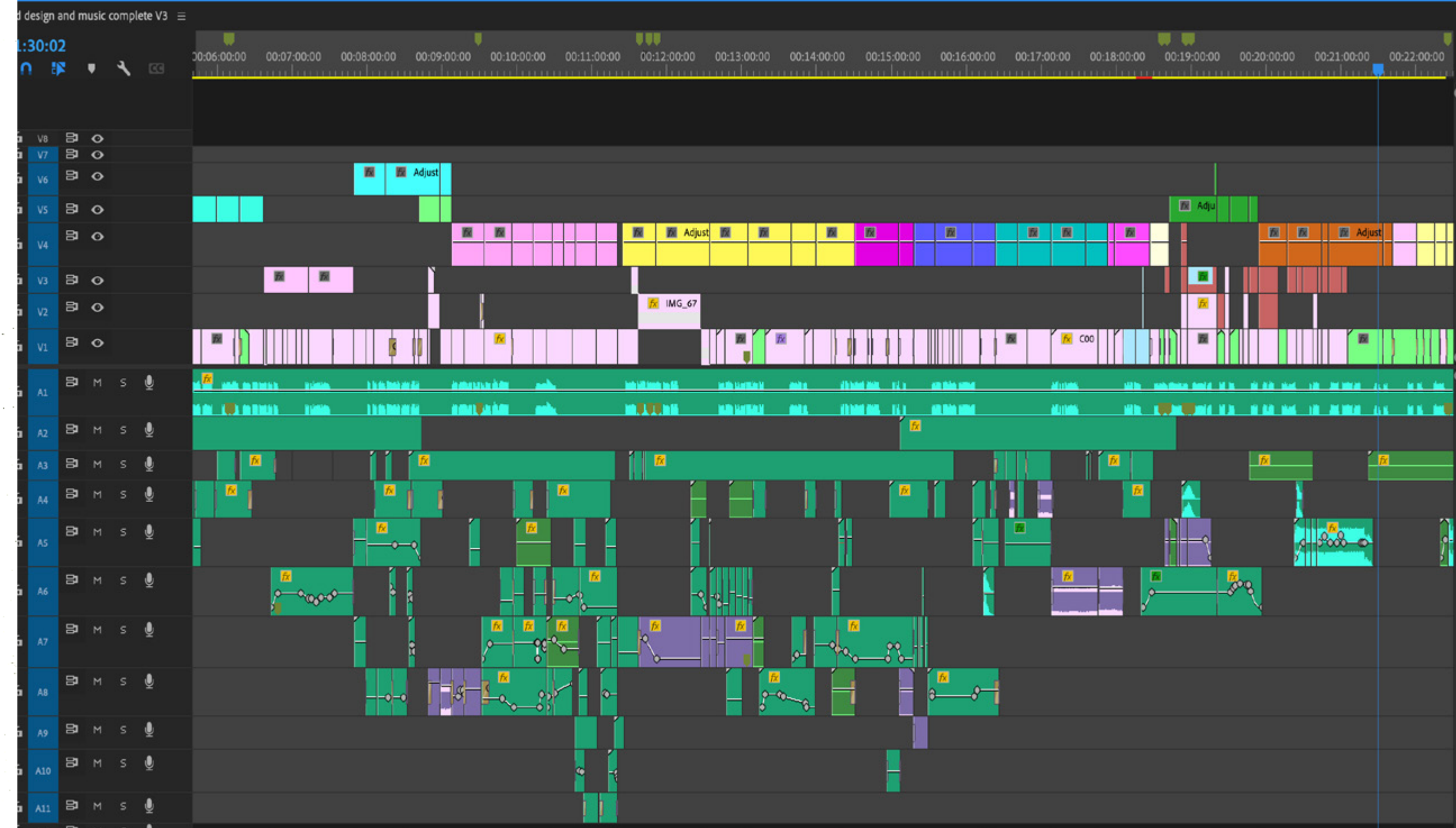
"Memoir" is a tale told by the wind about its observations along Sydney's eastern coastline. A truly cinematic experience delving into nature's harmony and balance not often observed by humans.

STEP INSIDE MY HEAD.

Since moving to Sydney to study at AFTRS, I found myself exploring the Eastern Coastline a lot. I felt in awe at the natural beauty of the landscape.

I decided to film and film and film, but that wasn't satisfying enough. I needed to make a film - a short film, to try and express the feeling I felt while exploring. And with this, Memoir was born.

I learnt a lot about sound design in this film, as I created most sounds with foley, and mixed all the channels.



MY APPROACH

Through filming I had a chance to work on my cinematic style. I found that with filming the natural environment, a lot can't be catered for in the same way as a drama production. I had a lot of times where I just missed the moon rise or got rained out, but it all taught me lessons on how to calculate things and prepare for weather accordingly. You can watch my BTS video [HERE](#) where I talk about my approach to filming the moon rise.

Seen here on the right, I created my own rainproof cover to protect my camera, monitor and Sony 200-600mm lens. I couldn't afford or find any suitable weather protectors for it so I figured why not make my own! I used a plastic camera gear cover, which cost me a grand total of \$2.95, and some gaffer tape to cut and mould it to shape. A cover that I still use to this day!



When The Smoke Settles



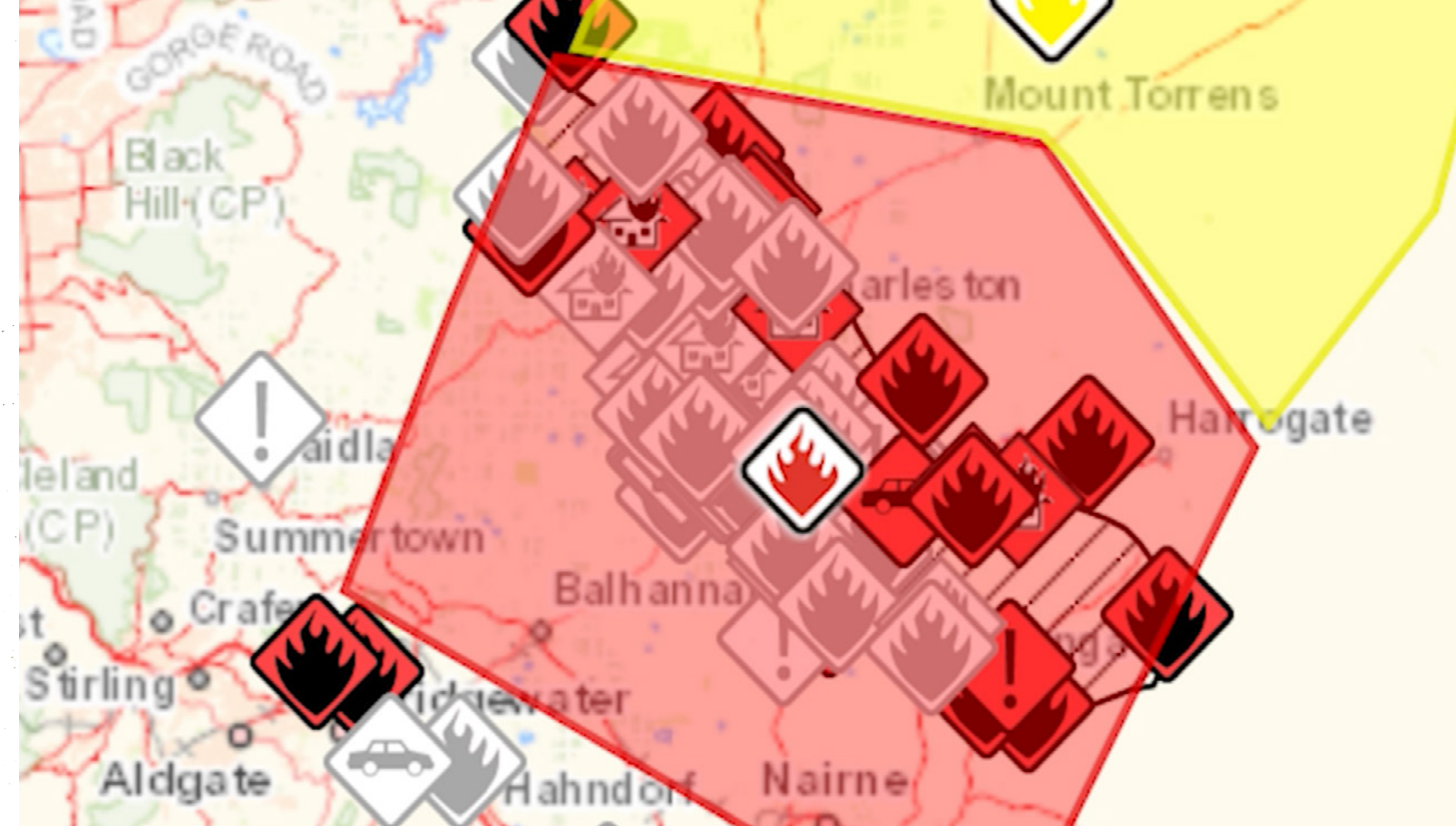
"When The Smoke Settles" is a documentary about my experience during the 2019-20 Black Saturday Fires in which we had to evacuate our home.

MY PROCESS

I do a lot of filming, documenting and archiving. During Christmas, just before the 2020 Covid hit Australia, I visited my family in Adelaide during an intense heatwave.

I documented everything on camera, including the evacuation orders we had due to a dangerous bush fire nearby. This footage turned into the documentary above.

I edited and did the sound design for it, and overlaid my own narration. The project gave me the confidence to create documentary pieces by myself.



Cape Solander



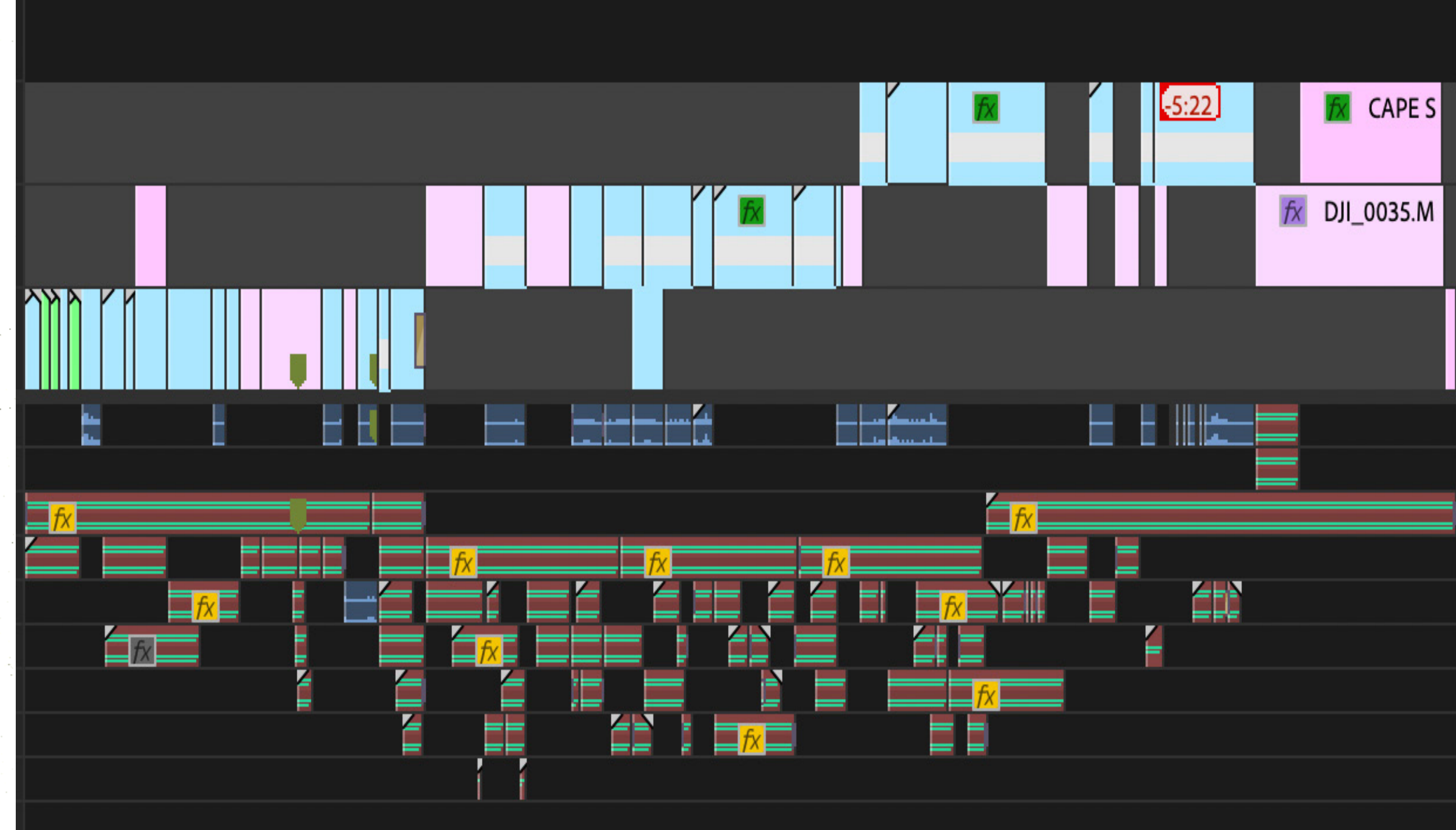
"Cape Solander - Ours" is a short surf film following Duke Kelleher as he battles one of Australia's toughest slabs.

ON A WHIM

I remember about 24 hours before we went out to film, Duke told me he's thinking of surfing 'Ours' tomorrow morning and wanted to know if I wanted to come to film. 'Well of course!' I said.

I handled the filming, editing and sound design aspects. I distinctly remember filming with my camera on tripod, while my drone controller was taped to the v-lock battery of the camera so I could operate two camera systems at once!

It's safe to say that editing and sound design take up 80% of the production time for me. But I love it!



Debugging Diversity



Debugging Diversity explores why there are so few women in tech but more importantly, what can be done to change that.

Come on a journey that explores the history of computing and its effect on today's technology culture. You'll meet some incredible organisations working to empower women in technology as well as some of their inspiring founders.

FOR A GOOD CAUSE

- + I love being apart of creating something useful and educational for society.
- + Working on this project has taught me so much about the gender imbalance in the tech industry as well as industries in general.
- + We have a strong approach to filming in a consistent manner so that our shots will mesh well in the edit.
- + It's been a great opportunity to handle multi-cam shoots and setups.



What's your flava?



Six bisexuals enter the Flava house on the quest for love. They make food, small talk and – if they're brave enough – a move.

PLAYING WITH LIGHT

- + As a cinematographer, I love playing with and manipulating light. That's why I work as a gaffer on sets occasionally - to enhance my skills.
- + As seen in some of the pictures on the right, I have a varied style from practical to stylistic.
- + I loved working on this project because I was able to try out some new ideas.
- + I always desire excellent cable management, not for any OCD reason (ok a little for OCD), but most importantly for safety and troubleshooting.



Awards

STATE



GOLD AWARD

I was fortunate enough to receive a Gold Award at the NSW State ACS awards for Memoir in 2020.

NATIONAL



GOLD AWARD

Memoir then went on to win a Gold award at the National ACS awards in 2021.

Life with Bats

DREAMZ CATCHER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
WINNER - Best Nature/Environment/Wildlife Project
PHENOMENAL ATTAINMENT - Short Film

SOUTH LONDON FILM FESTIVAL
FINALIST - Documentary Short

COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL
Official Selection - Short Films

LOOKOUT WILD FILM FESTIVAL
Official Selection - Conservation Film

NATURE WITHOUT BORDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Official Selection - Wildlife/Nature Documentaries

Work History

The Powerful Owl
Feature Wildlife Documentary
Director/Writer/Cinematographer/more

Dreams Drawn in Dust (UAE)
Drama Series (3x 30 min)
1st Unit B-Cam Op & 2nd Unit A-Cam Op

Scattered Barriers (UAE)
Drama Series (3x 30 min)
1st Unit B-Cam Op & 2nd Unit A-Cam Op

The Home of Life (UAE)
Drama Series (3x 30 min)
1st Unit B-Cam Op & 2nd Unit A-Cam Op

Inspector Jamshed
Feature Film
2AC / Backup A-Cam Op

Duabi Racing
Multi-Cam Event Function
Camera Director

Life with Bats
Documentary
Director/Cinematographer/Sound

PERVERT
Drama Series (8x 45 min)
1AC/Camera Operator

Debugging Diversity
Documentary Series (3x 25 min)
Camera Operator

Married at First Sight Season 8
Reality TV Series
Jib Assist

Clear the Shelter Campaign RSPCA
Corporate Promotional Video
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

Heidi Finds a Home RSPCA
Corporate Promotional Video
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

Memoir
Short Film
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

The Brumby Project
Wildlife Documentary
Sound Designer/Mixer

The Lonesome Ship
Sci-Fi Short Film
Cinematographer/Gaffer

What's Your Flava?
Reality TV Series (5x 5 min)
Gaffer

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
Drama (3x 3 min)
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

KTC School Videos
3x Music Videos, 2x Dance Videos
Cinematographer/Editor

The Real Love Boat
Aus & USA Series 1 Reality TV
Camera Assist & Operator

NSW Gov & Tafe NSW
Corporate Promotional Video
1AC/Camera Operator

While Rome Burns
Sci-Fi Short Film
Cinematographer

Half Human
Sci-Fi Short Film
Cinematographer/Gaffer

Dear Seattle
Music Video
Gaffer

Amongst The Gumtrees
Horror Short Film
1AC

The 88'ers
Drama Short Film
Gaffer

Cape Solander
Surf Short Film
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

Ave Ventura
Corporate Interview
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

Psyence Fiction
Event Promotional Video
Cinematographer/Editor

Dub In The Park
Festival Recap Video
Cinematographer/Editor

LBB
Brand Promotional Video
Cinematographer/Sound/Editor

Education & Qualifications

High School: Australian Science and Mathematics School

TAFE SA - Diploma in Screen: Film & TV Production

AFTRS - Bachelor of Screen: Production

Advanced 30m Scuba Diver

RePL Drone License (Australia sub 7kg)

Safeguarding Children Course

Provide CPR & First Aid

Advanced & Aggressive Driver Training

17 AUSTRALIAN CINEMATOGRAPHERS SOCIETY AWARDS FOR AFTRS STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

16 Nov, 2020



Zoë White, David Luff, Calum Riddell, Bonnie Elliot

----> [Check out the article here](#) <----

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YouTube: [David Luff Pictures](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)