

JESSIE

Circus star 'The Amazing Jessie' dreams of joining "The Greatest Show on Earth" and travelling the world, but 1920s rural Australia is no land for women - or their dreams. Relying on her fearless spirit and daredevil stunts, Jessie must flee from injustice and find her way through the wilderness, outwitting the men who want to possess her, the law, and her own fears.



Name *Jessie M. Intyre alias Bell*

Portrait was taken

15-8-1913. " Pay



31 1m. 18

27 0m

(No of previous Portrait.....)



ONE PARAGRAPH

Set in the beautiful Upper Hunter Valley of New South Wales, in the aftermath of WW1, 'Jessie' is inspired by the true life exploits of the outlaw Jessie Payne.

It's 1921. Audacious young circus star, Jessie Payne, dreams to join the Greatest Show on Earth. She falls from grace after stealing a horse and is bonded as a domestic on a remote cattle farm. Jessie finds solace in her friendship with Aboriginal stock worker, Jack. When she is unjustly accused of murder, she escapes into the wilderness on her beloved horse, Houdini, determined to find a way to America and realise her circus dream. She must use all her daring to outwit her pursuers, including a cop with a dark secret, and Jack, who is intent on saving her. As she heads deeper and deeper into the magical realm of the mountains, an unexpected encounter with Aboriginal sisters and their children, makes Jessie realise that to be truly free, she must also face her ghosts.

SYNOPSIS



Hunter Valley 1921. Daredevil young circus star, Jessie Payne, dreams of joining the Greatest Show on Earth. She falls from grace after stealing a horse and serves time bonded as a domestic to Fitzgerald 'Fitz' Henry on a remote cattle farm.

When she breaks a wild horse, revealing an incredible affinity to animals and horse-breaking skills, Fitz is attracted, but his courtship turns to rape when she rejects him. Ashamed, he leaves Jessie alone.

Despite discovering she is pregnant, Jessie decides to see out her bond. She finds solace in her friendship with handsome Aboriginal stock worker, Jack. Kindred spirits, they share a love of magic and the circus. Jessie reveals she is funny and whip smart. Jack loves her spirit and her grace.

Fitz isn't used to rejection and his anger simmers. He tries again to woo her. Jessie makes it clear she has other plans. A struggle ensues and she kills him in self-defence while protecting her unborn child. Jessie escapes into mountains on her beloved horse, Houdini, determined to cross over to the port of Newcastle and jump a ship to America.

Fitz's volatile young son, Lyall, pursues Jessie bent on revenge. Meanwhile, cop Barlow, an ex-soldier with a dark secret, sets off to bring Jessie in. Despite his mistrust of the law, Jack decides to help Barlow realising he must find Jessie before Lyall does.

Using all her daring and skills, the mountain wilderness proves formidable and Jessie loses her premature baby. Heartbroken, she keeps riding, higher and higher, trying to find a way to cross. Below her, Jack uses his expert bushcraft to keep apace with Lyall, while he and Barlow connect in an unexpected way, when Jack learns Barlow's secret.

Jessie is desperate for water. Lost and wandering, she encounters a group of Aboriginal women, Alice, Rose and Molly, who offer to help her. She learns they have rescued their children from a mission. Jessie is moved by their courage. When she helps save one of their babies, her grief of losing her own child surfaces, and her emotional healing begins.

An idyllic time follows as Jessie travels with the family, experiencing the landscape through their eyes as a place of beauty and wonder. They take her through a hidden valley before parting. Jessie feels a surge of hope when she sees the glimmering lights of Newcastle.

She thinks she has lost her pursuers, but Lyall ambushes her. Barlow saves her, only to arrest her, but he doesn't count on Jack's loyalty to Jessie.

As with all magic, the hand is faster than the eye, and Jack gives Jessie a playful message only she can understand. Barlow is outwitted, and Jessie triumphant as she escapes, Houdini-like, to fulfill her circus dream.





◇ Technical Specifications
Title: Jessie (Working Title)

Based on the novel

The Burial By Courtney Collins

Format: Digital

Duration: 90min

Colour

◇ Production Team

Director – Jasmin Tarasin

Producer – Lucy Maclaren

Writer – Polly Watkins

Story Editor – John Collee

Production Designer – Chris Kennedy

DOP – Katie Milwright

Costume Design – Margot Wilson

Make Up Design – Zeljka Stanin

Soundtrack – Warren Ellis and Cat Power

Editor – Gabriella Muir



Director



JASMIN TARASIN

Jasmin Tarasin is an award-winning film director who works across narrative, documentary, art installation and commercial content. Jasmin's ability to find authenticity and humanity in her work has been an integral part of her success as a director. Her creativity and honest and unaffected approach have brought attention to her work worldwide.

As a commercials director Jasmin was recently listed in the Top 5 directors worldwide for her commercial work on Ad Forum.

Her award-winning documentary series *The Closet Tales*, commissioned by SBS, was described by The Age as "a tapestry of beautiful imagery and therein lies the appeal". She also directed a one-hour documentary for ABC1 entitled *Utopia Girls*, the history of women's rights. This documentary was a finalist at the 2012 national AACTA Awards and the NSW Premier's History Award.

Jasmin's large-scale video installations have both been showcase works at Sydney Festival. *Live* (2010), featured musicians including Jarvis Cocker, Martha and Rufus Wainwright, Feist, Warren Ellis and many more, in raw performances. *The Vine* wrote that '*Live succeeds on every level to give an unbridled glimpse into the complex and intriguing art of self-expression. This is a really fresh idea executed to perfection*'. In 2018 Jasmin created a video installation entitled *Ghost Train*, this work transforms the archetypal amusement park ride into a thrilling, sensual, psychological experience. *Ghost Train* was listed as the festival's hot pick and was sold out for the season.

In the last three years Jasmin has also been the driving force and ambassador for *Free the Bid Australia*, a gender equality initiative for women working in the film industry.

Jasmin is currently developing *Jessie* with assistance from Screen Australia and Film Victoria. She is also developing a TV series with assistance from Create NSW and Dame Changers entitled *Family Happiness*.



Producer

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LUCY MACLAREN

Lucy is an award winning features and documentary producer. She recently co-produced the feature film *Miss Fisher And The Crypt Of Tears* which premiered at Palm Springs International Film Festival this year.

Over the last ten years Lucy produced documentaries at Renegade Films including the three part series for SBS *Immigration Nation* (a finalist in the Prime Minister's Literary Awards) and the award winning *Inside The Firestorm, Utopia Girls* (a finalist in NSW Premier History Awards and AACTA awards) and *Subtopia* for the ABC. In 2015 she produced the one hour documentary *The Diplomat, The Artist And The Suit* and in 2018 *Aftermath* both for the ABC.

In 2000 she produced her first feature film *Strange Fits Of Passion* written and directed by Elise McCredie, which was accepted into Critic's Week at the Cannes Film Festival. This was followed by the highly acclaimed dramatised documentary *Love Letters From A War*. She has produced several short films including the AFI Award winning *My Second Car, Life Forms, Cable* and *Dragon*, which she also directed, all of which screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival.

A graduate from Swinburne Film and Television school, Lucy has been Investment and Project Manager at the Australian Film Commission and Film Victoria, and worked as a Line Producer on many feature film projects.

Lucy is currently developing several feature and documentary projects.

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