

PRESSEHEFT



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FILMVERLEIH

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KURZINHALT



Die australische Backpackerin Clare zieht mit dem Fotoapparat durch Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, besonders die alten DDR-Bauten haben es ihr angetan. Als sie den sympathischen Englischlehrer Andi kennenlernt, verstehen sich die beiden sofort. Er zeigt ihr Schrebergärten und den Kiez. Was als Romanze beginnt, nimmt eine unerwartet finstere Wendung: Am nächsten Morgen, Andi ist schon in der Schule, will Clare seine Wohnung in einem ansonsten leerstehenden Altbau verlassen und merkt, dass sie

eingeschlossen ist. Zunächst glaubt sie an ein Versehen. Doch Andi hat nicht vor, sie jemals wieder gehen zu lassen.

Mit BERLIN SYNDROM ist Cate Shortland (LORE & SOMERSAULT) erneut das beeindruckende Portrait einer weiblichen Selbstfindung gelungen. Basierend auf dem gleichnamigen Bestseller von Melanie Joosten sprengt BERLIN SYNDROM gängige Suspense-Konventionen und erzählt die Geschichte einer jungen Berlin-Touristin, die sich erst durch eine schier ausweglos erscheinende Extremsituation ihrer eigenen Kraft besinnen lernt. „Mich interessieren Charaktere in Extremsituationen und ihre Veränderungen“, sagt Cate Shortland. „Da ist Andi, der die einzelnen Teile seines Lebens in so klare Schubladen teilen kann, dass alles so vermeintlich vernünftig daherkommt. Und da ist natürlich Clare, die aus einer merkwürden Sehnsucht bei Andi bleibt und sich neu erfinden muss, als Kämpferin.“

Prominent besetzt mit Stars wie Max Riemelt, Teresa Palmer und Matthias Habich feierte BERLIN SYNDROM seine Uraufführung in Sundance 2017, seine Europapremiere im Panorama der diesjährigen Berlinale und wird bei den Fantasy Filmfest Nights 2017 gezeigt.

TECHNISCHE DATEN

Regie:	Cate Shortland
Mit:	Teresa Palmer, Max Riemelt, Matthias Habich
Originaltitel:	BERLIN SYNDROME
Land:	Australien
Jahr:	2017
Genre:	Thriller
Laufzeit:	116 Min.
Sprachfassung:	DtF / OmU
Format:	DCP, Blu-ray
Kinostart:	tba
FSK:	tba
Pressebetreuung:	Arne Höhne. Presse + Öffentlichkeit

TERESA PALMER (CLARE)



Teresa Palmer ist momentan dabei, eine der weltweit bekanntesten Schauspielerinnen zu werden. Sie hat bereits in vielen großen Filmen mitgespielt, darunter WARM BODIES zusammen mit Nicholas Hoult und John Malkovich, der auf dem berühmten Roman von Isaac Marion basiert, so wie in Micheal Bay und Steven Spielbergs Film ICH BIN NUMMER VIER an der Seite von Dianna Agron und Alex Pettyfer. Demnächst wird sie in Warner Bros.

hoch erwartetem Remake von POINT BREAK neben Edgar Ramirez und Luke Bracey zu sehen sein, doch davor wird Palmer noch in der Lionsgate Produktion THE CHOICE mit Benjamin Walker mitspielen. Der Film basiert auf dem berühmten Buch des gefeierten Autors Nicholas Sparks (WIE EIN EINZIGER TAG).

Kürzlich war Teresa Palmer in dem Thriller TRIPLE NINE zusammen mit Kate Winslet, Casey Afflek, Woody Harrelson uvm. als Teil eines Star-Casts im Kino zu sehen, ebenso in Terence Malicks KNIGHT OF CUPS mit Christian Bale. Einer ihrer größten Kinoerfolge war jedoch der Horrorstreifen LIGHTS OUT, der von James Wan produziert wurde, so wie Mel Gibsons HACKSAW RIDGE mit Andrew Garfield, Vince Vaughn und Luke Bracey.

Weitere Filme von ihr sind PARTS PER BILLION mit Josh Hartnett; LOVE AN HONOR mit Liam Hemsworth; WISH YOU WERE HERE mit Joel Edgerton; TAKE ME HOME TONIGHT mit Topher Grace und Anna Faris; Jon Turtelbaubs Film DAS DUELL DER MAGIER von Walt Disney mit Nicolas Cage; Adam Shankmans Komödie BEDTIME STORIES mit Adam Sandler; DECEMBER BOYS mit Daniel Radcliffe und RESTRAINT mit Stephen Moyer.

2011 wurde Palmer mit dem „Australians in Film: Breakthrough Award“ für Ihren großen Erfolg innerhalb kürzester Zeit ausgezeichnet. Screen International hat sie als einen von Australiens „Stars von morgen“ bezeichnet. Ihren ersten weltweiten Erfolg hatte sie mit dem Film 2.37, einer australischen Independent Produktion, der sowohl auf den Filmfestspielen in Cannes Als auch auf dem Toronto International Filmfest gezeigt wurde. Das Australien-Institut nominierte Palmer als „Beste Schauspielerin“ für ihre komplexe Darstellung einer High School Schülerin mit einem dunklen Geheimnis.

Neben ihrer Tätigkeit als Schauspielerin hat sie auch schon erste Versuche hinter der Kamera als Regisseurin, Autorin und Produzentin gestartet.

INTERVIEW MIT TERESA PALMER:

What is this story about for you?

It's an exploration into the dynamic between two individuals. It delves into themes of love, lust, control, sexuality, loneliness, personal suffering and growth.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

I loved the character of Clare and getting to explore her imperfections, her darkness and then her ultimate discovery of self. I hadn't played such an introverted and internal character before so it was a tremendous challenge for me. Above all, Cate Shortland was the biggest draw card. I've been a long-time fan of hers ever since I saw Somersault, I've been dying to work with her for years.

How did you prepare for the role of Clare?

I prepped mostly with Cate and Max in the rehearsal room. We really took apart the scenes and injected our own interpretations and discoveries of these characters and rewrote the scenes together. We found some really daring and intense parts of these characters and



once we felt as though we had journeyed through all facets of them we knew we were ready to get to work and play.

How was it working with Cate Shortland?

She has been my favourite director to work with thus far. She really knows how to highlight authenticity, it's what she is interested in and celebrates. I loved how excited she would be by actions that we would take which would generally be subconscious, like the picking of our nails, the tucking of our hair, how we moved our feet etc. she wanted to capture these moments as important character pieces. I've never worked with a director who still seems to see the world through the lens of someone discovering it for the first time.

What was it like working with co-star Max Riemelt?

Max was incredible to work with. We had to really trust each other and we had to become really enmeshed during this process. I feel he created a safe space for me to explore all sides of Clare, he was such a generous actor and he was truly chilling and complex in his portrayal of Andi.

What was your favourite scene to shoot?

My favourite scene to shoot was the Christmas scene. I play the accordion, we discuss our relationship; as Clare tries desperately to find some humanity and connection with Andi. Connection is her salvation so it's a really delicate scene, she can't push too hard but she also needs to be bolder than before as she feels her time is limited. I really enjoyed playing around with it.

Which scene was the biggest challenge for you and why?

The biggest challenge was probably finding the right balance of emotion, yet control during the scene when Andi comes home once I've realized he has decided to keep me captive. I had to ensure that all the right emotional beats were being hit yet Clare still has hope of escaping and is in survival mode so I had to weave that in there too.

What was it like transitioning between locations, Berlin and the studio in Melbourne?

It was great! It was nice breaking up the exterior and interior shoots. Berlin was very much about our meeting and that's where we started the shoot so it was organic to have Max and I getting to know each other during that period, it worked for the filming experience. By the time we got to Melbourne we knew each other really well and could delve in to the more intimate scenes in the movie.



**M A X R I E M E L T
(A N D I)**

Max Riemelt wurde in Berlin geboren und entdeckte während seiner Schulzeit seine Liebe für das Schauspiel. Nach seinem V-Debut in Matthias Steuers Mini Serie ZWEI ALLEIN 1998, folgte bereits ein Jahr später der Fernsehfilm EIN WEIHNACHTSMÄRCHEN, so wie Dana Vavrovas Kinder-Abenteuer Film DER BÄR IST LOS.

Seinen Durchbruch hatte er 2000 mit seiner Rolle in Dennis Gansels Teenager Komödie MÄDCHEN MÄDCHEN und seinem Auftritt in Friedemann Fromms Fernsehfilm BRENNENDES SCHWEIGEN. Seitdem ist er regelmäßig in Film und Fernsehen zu sehen. 2004 setzte er seine Rolle des Flins in MÄDCHEN MÄDCHEN 2 fort, bei dem Peter Gersina Regie führte. Durch seine Rolle des 17-jährigen Friedrich Weimar in Dennis Gansels NAPOLA – ELITE FÜR DEN FÜHRER erhielt Riemelt neue Aufmerksamkeit der Presse und wurde für seine Darstellung bei dem Karlovy Vary Filmfest als „Bester Schauspieler“ ausgezeichnet und stellte den Film persönlich als einer der „Rising Stars“ auf den Hamptons International Film Festival vor.

In Dominik Grafts DER ROTE KAKADU spielte Max Riemelt an der Seite von Jessica Schwarz und bekam für diese Rolle den Bavarian Film Award als „Bester Schauspieler“ so wie die Auszeichnung als „Bester junger Schauspieler“ auf dem Marrakesch International Film Festival. 2006 wurde Riemelt von der European Film Promotion als einer der europäischen Shooting Stars der Berlinale bezeichnet. Der Film DIE WELLE vereinte ihn wieder mit dem Regisseur Dennis Gansel, für den sie 2008 zu dem Sundance Film Festival eingeladen wurden. Für seine Rolle in MARKO bekam Max den Austrian Undine Award als „Bester junger Schauspieler in einem Spielfilm“.

2011 übernahm er die Hauptrolle in der deutschen Fernsehserie IM ANGESICHT DES VERBRECHENS, die von der russischen Mafia in Berlin handelte und ihm seinen ersten deutschen Fernsehpreis und seine erste Nominierung als „Bester deutscher Schauspieler“ bei der Goldenen Kamera beschaffte. Mit den Regisseuren Eran Rikilis (PLAYOFF 2011) und Jeannine Meerapfel (UN AMIGO ALEMÁN 2011) fing er seine ersten internationalen Projekte an.

Erst kürzlich erhielt Riemelt internationales Aufsehen für seine Rolle in dem Kultfilm FREIER FALL, für die er auch den Gunter Rohrbach Preis als „Bester Schauspieler“ erhielt. Sein deutsches Post-Kriegs Drama AUF DAS LEBEN wurde mit dem Vienna Film Award 2015 als „Bester deutscher Spielfilm“

ausgezeichnet. Im Juni 2015 wurde die Netflix Serie SENSE8 veröffentlicht, mit Max als einem der 8 internationalen Hauptdarsteller. Die Serie wurde auf der ganzen Welt gedreht, Regie führten Lana und Andi Wachowski.

M A T T H I A S H A B I C H (A N D I S V A T E R)

Habich wuchs in Hamburg-Harburg auf und besuchte die Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Drama. Er studierte 1966 ein Semester lang am Conservatoire de Paris und nahm Schauspielunterricht bei Lee Strasberg in den USA. Danach spielte er an Theatern in Chur, Baden-Baden, Basel, Wuppertal, Zürich und München.



Sein erster großer Erfolg ist 1973 die Hauptrolle im Fernseh-Sechsteiler DIE MERKWÜRDIGE LEBENSGESCHICHTE DES FRIEDRICH FREIHERRN VON DER TRENCK unter der Regie von Fritz Umgelter. Danach folgen mit DIE UNFREIWILLIGEN REISEN DES MORITZ AUGUST BENJOWSKI und DES CHRISTOFFEL VON GRIMMELSHAUSEN ABENTEURLICHER SIMPLICISSIMUSs gleich zwei Vierteiler unter dem gleichen Regisseur mit ihm (beide ausgestrahlt 1975). Spätestens jetzt ist er einem breiten Fernsehpublikum in Deutschland bekannt. Sein Kinodebüt gibt Habich 1976 als eiskalter preußischer Offizier in DER FANGSCHUSS. Es folgen Rollen in Kinofilmen, mit denen er sich seinen Ruf als eindrucksvoller Charakterdarsteller verdient.

Nach zahlreichen Rollen in Theater und im Fernsehen spielt er sich 1999 mit der Hauptrolle in der TV-Serie KLEMPERER – EIN LEBEN IN DEUTSCHLAND endgültig in die erste Liga der deutschen Charakterdarsteller. 2001 erhält er den Deutschen Filmpreis für seine Leistung in Caroline Links vielfach preisgekröntem Drama NIRGENDWO IN AFRIKA. Im Kino ist er 2009 neben der internationalen Produktion DER VORLESER, an der Seite von Kate Winslet und Ralph Fiennes, auch im Drama WAFFENSTILLSTAND zu sehen. Für seine Rolle im Fernsehfilm EIN HALBES LEBEN erhält Habich gemeinsam mit seinen Schauspielerkollegen Josef Hader und Franziska Walser sowie Regisseur Nikolaus Leytner den Grimme-Preis. Nach zwei Kinofilmen 2010 wirkt Habich vor allem wieder in Fernsehproduktionen mit, u.a. 2012 im Thriller DAS KINDERMÄDCHEN, als Familienpatriarch, der mit der dunklen Vergangenheit seiner Familie konfrontiert wird. Unter der Regie von Margarethe von Trotta spielt Habich 2015 in DIE ABHANDENE WELT schließlich wieder eine Kinohauptrolle, als Witwer, der auf einem Zeitungsfoto seine angeblich tote Frau wiederzuerkennen glaubt. Mittlerweile hat Habich in circa 100 Film- und Fernsehproduktionen mitgewirkt.

C A S T

Clare Havel	TERESA PALMER
Andi Werner	MAX RIEMELT
Erich Werner	MATTHIAS HABICH
Franka Hummels	EMMA BADING
Jana	ELMIRA BAHRAMI
Peter	CHRISTOPH FRANKEN
Elodie Zadikian	LUCIE ARON
Aaron Hurwitz	NASSIM AVAT
Lene Junnell	MALIN STEFFEN
Billy Dharma	THUSO LEKWAPE
Josie Lamarque	MORGANE FERRU
Silke	LISA MARIE MÜLLER
Junge 1	ELIAS ESSER
Junge 2	CLAUDE HEINRICH
Mutter	NADINE PESCHEL
Jakob	MATTHIAS RÜSSEL
Mascha	MASCHA WOLF
Benni	VIKTOR BASCHMAKOV
Junge Frau	CHARLY THORN
Natalie	SASHA SELEZNEVA
Squatter	PETER YOUNG
Coal Man	RENÉ BARRA
Russian Girl	KRISTINA KOSTIV
Young Girl	MARIELLA JOSEPHINE AUMANN
Stall Owner	ENGIN KARAVU

S T A B

Regie:	CATE SHORTLAND
Produzent:	POLLY STANIFORD
Drehbuch:	SHAUN GRANT
Buchvorlage:	“BERLIN SYNDROME” von MELANIE JOOSTEN
Executive Producer:	ANGIE FIELDER

Director of Photography: GERMAIN MCMICKING
Schnitt: JACK HUTCHINGS
Produktions Design: MELINDA DORING
Kostüme: MARIA PATTISON
Make Up/Haare: CHIARA TRIPODI
Sound Designer: LUKE MYNOTT & ROBERT MACKENZIE
Musik komponiert von: BRYONY MARKS
Music Supervisor: JEMMA BURNS
Casting: ANJA DIHRBERG, KIRSTY MCGREGOR
Executive Producer: TROY LUM, OLIVER LAWRENCE, FLORENCE TOURBIER, SCOTT ANDERSON, PHOTOPLAY FILMS, EMILIE GEORGES, NAIMA ABED, TANJA MEISSNER, NICHOLAS KAISER

C A T E S H O R T L A N D (R E G I E)

Cate Shortland hat einen Bachelor auf Arts von der Universität Sydney und ein Abschluss Diplom von der australischen Schule für Film und Radio. Für die preisgekrönten Kurzfilme PENTUPHOUSE (1998), FLOWER GIRL (2000) und JOY (2000) schrieb sie das Drehbuch und führte Regie – genauso wie bei ihrem Spielfilm-Debut SOMERSAULT. Der Film feierte seine Premiere 2004 auf dem Filmfest Cannes und bekam zahlreiche Preise.

Ihr zweiter Spielfilm LORE, bei dem sie Co-Autorin und Regisseurin war, basierte auf dem Roman THE DARK ROOM von Rachel Seiffert und hatte seine Premiere auf dem Sydney Film Festival 2012, lief auf zahlreichen weiteren Festivals. Cates dritter Spielfilm BERLIN SYNDROM basiert auf dem gleichnamigen Buch von Melanie Joosten und wird 2017 veröffentlicht werden.

Shortland hat bereits bei einigen Fernsehserien Regie geführt, z.B. THE SECRET LIFE OF US und THE SILENCE. Sie verfilmte Chris Tsiolkas Roman THE SLAP für ABC TV und wurde dafür mit dem BAFTA AWARD und den Emmy nominiert und erhielt 2012 einen AWGIE für die "Beste adaptierte Mini-Serie". Zu Ihren weiteren Produktionen gehören THE DEVILS PLAYGROUND; DEADLINE GALLIPOLI und THE KETTERING INCIDENT.

I N T E R V I E W M I T C A T E S H O R T L A N D

What is this story about for you?

Berlin Syndrome is the story of a young woman, desperate to explore a cooler, more cultured place than "backwards" Australia. She wants to reinvent herself as an artist, hoping that Berlin will take away the stench of suburban Brisbane. She doesn't realize - like most of us - that the ordinary, the mundane, the simple is often filled with its own magic. When she meets Andi, he seems to encompass the European ideal – she is enraptured and soon entrapped. For him, she is a vessel to hold and fill with fantasies. He wants nothing of the real. Andi and Clare are the answer to each other's dreams. But Clare does not want violence; she wants inspiration and love. She is addicted to love. He is addicted to control.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

I was interested in the characters and the extreme situation.

Clare is obsessed with details. Details end up making her days. She escapes her physical body and becomes her mind to survive. She is fragile and self-conscious and becomes strong and resourceful. Nothing is clear-cut with her. Nothing makes sense. As the film progresses she realizes she may die. She also realizes the beauty of what she left behind in Australia: family and the place that created her. She is an extreme version of many of us: rejecting her childhood life and then coming to see the beauty of it. She goes through various stages in the film: fighting to get out, living in fear, and then coming to acceptance. But this acceptance shifts suddenly, when death is shoved in her path. She becomes a fighter in the end.

Sociopaths interest me, so I was fascinated by a character like Andi that can completely compartmentalize his life. Someone who can bury his transgressions and remake himself – both these characters reinvent. That interests me: the idea that underneath the construction we are fluid. Clare reinvents out of need, she watches him, listens and reacts. Out of pure survival. Andi reinvents himself by hiding what he is from society. An English teacher who romanticizes his ideal woman but then wants to entrap her, make her his perfect study, utterly under his power. Andi is the product of his environment, brought up in the GDR, a shadowy utopia, missing his mother, and perhaps hating her for leaving.

What themes do you explore in this film?

Various themes are intertwined in this story: sex and violence, the idea of power, and the idea of creating and metamorphosis. Both characters are running from the ordinary. Clare first longs for intimacy and then freedom.

Andi longs for perfection. He wants his dream relationship and will subjugate and violate to obtain it. When Clare, his subject becomes too familiar he longs to get rid of her, to replace her with a new model. Violence and murder a bi-product of his goal.

How did you prepare for the shoot, what was involved?

I spent a lot of time working on the script. In Berlin, I worked closely with Franz Rodenkirchen – a great script editor and inspirational mind, who I also worked with on Lore. And at the same time Polly, production designer Melinda Doring and I were exploring locations. We discovered so much during this time that later inspired the design choices of the film. We kept seeing all these exercise bikes and running machines in deserted wallpapered rooms in East Germany. I loved their forlorn shapes, the dreams these strange mechanized objects seemed to hold. Perfect body, perfect mind, now lost. I had the idea that Andi should have a massage chair. I really loved shooting the scenes around this chair - its vibrating mass of black vinyl.

We had a solid rehearsal period with the actors in Berlin and then a week when we came back to Melbourne. We had a difficult but inspiring time exploring ideas and working on the script and this made each of the actors feel like they had ownership of the characters. It really grounded and connected us. We worked with the Choreographer Danielle Micich for a full day on the violence and sex - on ways of inhabiting the characters without judging them. Just feeling. This was one of the best days, she taught us all so much. And constantly asked why? Why would he do that, why would she move there? Everything had to come back to instinct.

Where was the shoot, how long was it, and what was involved?

We shot in Berlin and Melbourne for 6 weeks. It was a difficult shoot as we had strict scheduling restraints and a lot of location moves. Thankfully it was made possible by the wonderful crews we had both in Berlin and Melbourne, and our key creatives who traveled with us to both locations. Everyone worked really hard to piece together the puzzle of two countries pretending to be one.

Polly Staniford and I knew that making two countries work as one was going to be difficult. I fought to shoot it all in Berlin, but in the end I took Polly's advice and was relieved at how well the Melbourne studio shoot went - it really focused us. Once in the studio, we shot with Max and Teresa for 3 weeks and mostly shot in sequence.

What is your favourite scene in the film?

Shooting at Andi's father's house was a highlight, as this was one of my favourite locations. We became friendly with the owner whose parents had built the house just before WW2 and as a teenager he had lived there under the GDR. He had many stories and the most wonderful garden and ceramics.

I always love shooting in nature so shooting in the forest was also a great day. We shot in one location all day – heaven.

I also liked the Christmas scene where Clare speaks of home – of the Cicadas in Queensland. This dialogue came out of rehearsal, so felt really fresh and real to me. Clare was both vulnerable and strong here and Andi hates her for revealing her humanity. Her history. She makes him realise how lonely he is. It is the moment he decides to kill her. But I have to say that working with Germain McMicking made every day good. He is a really intelligent and calm person. He is unafraid and willing to take great creative risks.

What was it like working with Max and Teresa?

Max and Teresa are good people and both wanted to do something raw and truthful. I came to like them both enormously. We could be vulnerable around each other, so we could explore without trying to be impressive. Like many directors, I wanted them to be comfortable enough so they could stop trying and just be the characters. We laughed a lot. They supported and respected each other tremendously, which made each day a joy. At the end they gave me a beautiful bangle engraved with "meine" which means mine, a line from the film. We all have a piece of each other, after such an intense time.

POLLY STANIFORD – PRODUCER

Polly Staniford is an award-winning creative producer, writer and director and co-founder of film and TV production company Aquarius Films.

Polly has produced 8 award-winning short films, which all sold internationally and have screened in high profile film festivals all over the world including Venice, Berlin and Sundance.

Polly has worked in many areas of the Film and Television industry for a variety of companies including Fremantle Media, and Inside Film. Employed for nearly 3 years by award-winning production company Matchbox Pictures, Polly worked on a number of film and television projects with internationally renowned producers Tony Ayres and Michael McMahon. Whilst working with Matchbox Pictures, Polly also produced 4 documentaries for the ABC including the second series of ANATOMY and MISS SOUTH SUDAN AUSTRALIA. Polly was one of the writers on NOWHERE BOYS, the AACTA and Logie winning children's drama series produced by Matchbox Pictures for ABC3 and she also wrote and directed BRAIN, a 30-minute documentary for ABC1 about Jamie and Andrew Daddo (part of the fourth series of ANATOMY). Most recently she wrote a one-hour documentary for the ABC about internationally acclaimed architecture firm Denton Corker Marshall called THE DIPLOMAT, THE ARTIST AND THE SUIT.

Along with business partners Angie Fielder and Cecilia Ritchie, she is currently developing an exciting slate of feature films including romantic comedies THE POST OFFICE written by Lou Sanz and THE ASSISTANT written by Tristram Baumber as well as three TV series, THE NIGHT GAMES written by Tom Holloway with director Samantha Lang which is being

developed with support from Screen NSW and two projects supported by Screen Tasmania - a 13 part gothic/ thriller TV series, VERA GRAY and crime thriller THE PARCEL. Polly is a Masters graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts School of Film & TV in Melbourne and has also participated in the internationally acclaimed Berlin Talent Campus.

What is this story about for you?

Berlin Syndrome is a cautionary tale about love and the desperate measures people will go to get it and keep it. It's essentially a very dark love story that explores obsession and the loneliness that can be found both in a foreign city full of strangers and in an apartment shared by two people. It's an exciting, intoxicating, claustrophobic thriller that will ultimately make us all question decisions we've made and wonder who we can trust.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

As soon as I read the novel I could see the huge potential for a film adaptation. The story was tense, taut, evocative, surprising and original and had a commercial, high concept premise. It was also a fairly contained story - a lot takes place inside Andi's apartment and I felt it was a project that could be developed fairly quickly. I was drawn to the unusual relationship between the two main characters - the complexity, danger and intensity of their union and I also loved the setting - Berlin is a wonderful city with a rich and dark past and it's this history that serves as a kind of metaphor for what's happening in Andi's apartment. Like the imposing wall that divided the city for so long, the walls of Andi's apartment close in around Clare leaving her feeling trapped and unable to escape the oppressiveness of the unfortunate predicament she unwittingly finds herself in.

What was the process of getting the film off the ground?

I optioned the book in 2011 and soon after attached Shaun Grant to write it. Shaun had just won the AACTA award for his work on Snowtown and I was excited by his ability to bring beauty to very dark material. I then sent Cate Shorthand the first draft of the screenplay and the book for consideration. I knew we needed a great director to helm this project - someone who could work intimately with our two lead characters and bring a sensitive and emotional style to the genre. Luckily for me Cate responded to the material and came on board. The attachment of Cate as director of this project represents the marriage of a multi-award winning auteur director to what is inherently commercial material which made it a very enticing and distinctive proposition for sales and distribution. We had a huge response when I took the project to Cannes in 2013 - and had offers from a number of leading sales agents. We decided on Memento Films International who are based in Paris and had handled Cate's previous film, Lore. Locally eOne boarded the project for ANZ distribution.

Shaun, Cate and I worked very collaboratively during the development phase. We received 4 rounds of development funding from Screen Australia and held regular script workshops to discuss the story as a team. During the final phase of development Cate became more involved and wrote a couple of drafts in the lead up to production.

We secured finance in April 2015 from Screen Australia, Film Victoria, Fulcrum Media Finance, DDP Studios, Memento and eOne and went into production in September of the same year.

What was it like transitioning between locations?

Very challenging. We shot all the exteriors and distinctively German locations in Berlin and then built Andi's apartment as a set back in Melbourne at the Docklands Studios. However the exterior of Andi's apartment including the courtyard and POV's from the window were also shot in Berlin so the continuity was extremely tricky and important. Luckily we had an incredible production design team led by Melinda Doring and a fantastic cinematographer

Germain McMicking - the transitions are seamless but a lot of work went into the planning of this to make sure it worked. We also worked with a great VFX team from DDP Studios.

What was involved in the casting process?

In Berlin Syndrome there are two active protagonists struggling against each other within the confines of a powerful and chilling premise. We knew we needed two fantastic actors for the roles of Clare and Andi - they needed to really carry the film. We also needed to completely believe their connection and also experience the fear and horror of the situation that unfolds for Clare. Unlike many thrillers, we also get to know Andi - his work life, his family, his past and come to understand a little about what makes him tick. We were so lucky to find Teresa and Max - they literally embodied their characters both physically and emotionally. Both undertook a dramatic transformation and during intensive rehearsals with Cate really let go of all ego, vanity and any pre-conceived ideas and laid themselves bare. We worked with Anja Dibrberg in Berlin for the role of Andi and Kirsty McGregor in Sydney for the role of Clare and saw a lot of actors for both parts. Teresa and Max both surprised us with their performances and they worked so beautifully together throughout the whole shoot. They definitely exceeded my expectations and I feel blessed we found such a wonderful cast for the film.

What is your favourite scene in the film?

I think the scene when Andi comes home to find the apartment in disarray is a favourite. Clare has finally truly realised her predicament but still thinks she can negotiate with Andi. The scene moves through so many great emotional beats - as Clare tries everything she can to reason with the man she had trusted but she soon discovers he is far from who she thought he was. I also love the scene where they meet on the streets of Berlin - this scene is very true to the original novel and it's a moment we can all relate to. The charm and seduction of a handsome stranger in a new city. The promise of something exciting, the early seeds of a new relationship. It's a happy, joyful scene with all the colour and life of Kreuzberg where we shot the scene.

What were the biggest challenges of the shoot?

We had big ambitions for the film and as is always the case not enough time or money as we would have liked. Shooting over two countries was a big challenge but we had such a talented team of creatives who helped make this as smooth as possible.

SHAUN GRANT – SCREENWRITER

Shaun Grant's chilling debut feature film, SNOWTOWN (directed by Justin Kurzell) was released in 2011 and saw him win the AACTA Award for Best Adapted Screenplay in 2012. Produced by Anna McLeish and Sarah Shaw, SNOWTOWN was Warp Film Australia's first feature release and has established Shaun as one of Australia's most exciting screenwriters.

First screening at the BigPond Adelaide Film Festival, it won the Audience Award for Best Feature Film, and went on to Critics Week at Cannes, Toronto Film Festival and London Film Festival - winning numerous awards along the way including the AWGIE for Best Adapted Screenplay and the Greg Teppar Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Victorian Screen Industry.

A graduate from RMIT in Creative Screenwriting, Shaun was one of four writers who wrote and developed the drama series KILLING TIME and among other works, won another AWGIE award for his work on the critically acclaimed mini series, DEADLINE GALLIPOLI (directed by Michael Rymer and produced by Matchbox/NBC Universal).

Shaun recently completed two adaptations of best selling novels. JASPER JONES (directed by Rachel Perkins and produced by Porchlight Films) and BERLIN SYNDROME (directed by Cate Shortland and produced by Aquarius Films), both slated for release in the second half of 2016/ early 2017.

Shaun is currently writing multiple projects including; a new untitled feature film for See-Saw Films, THE LAST DUEL for Studio 8 with Francis Lawrence (HUNGER GAMES) attached to direct and TRUE HISTORY OF THE KELLY GANG reuniting with Justin Kurzell to direct.

Shaun currently splits his time between Australia and the USA.

What is this story about for you?

For me Berlin Syndrome is about many things, be it man's never-ending search for meaning and connection in life, or the destructive impact that past events can have on you if you let them. I also wanted to touch on the loneliness and isolation I've felt when travelling, despite being surrounded by people.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

Melanie's novel is so beautifully written that it drew me in straight away. Also at the time, I had just seen a relationship end and became interested in dramatising the breakdown of a relationship, where one person wishes to escape but where the other desperately clings onto the idea of what the couple could be.

How did you approach the adaptation? What were the biggest challenges?

Like I do any adaptation I looked to convey the tone and heart of the source material without limiting myself to its plot, action or characters. Thankfully, the author was supportive of me 'opening up' her work and bringing to it my own ideas, beliefs and themes and crafting the best possible screen story that I could.

GERMAIN MCMICKING – DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Germain McMicking has worked extensively within the commercial and entertainment industry, shooting documentary, narrative film and television and is a much sort after Director of Photography.

In 2012 Germain worked with director Rachel Ward and producers Goalpost Taylor Productions, shooting the TV movie for ABC TV THE ACCIDENTAL SOLDIER, which garnered Germain a 2013 ACCTA nomination for Best Cinematography. Germain also shot in 2012 COCKLESHELL, a segment of THE TURNING feature film for Director Tony Ayres and based on the Tim Winton novel.

Prior to this, Germain shot the feature film screen adaptation of Christos Tsiolkas' award winning novel DEAD EUROPE, directed by Tony Krawitz for Porchlight Films and See Saw Films. This film premiered in competition at Sydney Film Festival 2012, and also screened at the Toronto and London Film Festivals. This was the second collaboration with director Tony Krawitz, Germain shot Tony's award winning feature documentary THE TALL MAN for Blackfella Films. The film focuses on the infamous death in custody of Cameron Doomadgee on Palm Island in 2004. Germain was nominated for an AACTA award for Best Cinematography in a Documentary in 2012.

Other credits include HAIL, directed by Amiel Courtin Wilson with Flood Projects. HAIL is a love and vengeance story featuring a cast of brilliant non-actors. It premiered at Adelaide

Film Festival in 2011, and has screened at numerous international festivals since, including Venice Film Festival. Germain also collaborated with Amiel on his short film CICADA, and his feature documentary about Jack Charles called BASTARDY which screened on SBS TV and was released theatrically to critical acclaim in 2009. TV credits include the second series of WILFRED for SBS TV, John Safran's RACE RELATIONS for ABC TV, JOHN SAFRAN VERSUS GOD for ABC TV, and Eddie Martin's LIONEL.

In 2013 Germain shot the feature film PARTISAN with director Ariel Kleiman and producers Warp Productions, winning the 2015 World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Cinematography at the Sundance Film Festival. Latest projects include the epic TV series GALLIPOLI for producers Southern Star Productions, the Nine Network and director Glendyn Ivin; the feature film HOLDING THE MAN, for producers Goalpost Pictures and director Neil Armfield. In 2016 Germain will shoot the highly anticipated 2nd series of TOP OF THE LAKE, with writer/director Jane Campion.

What is this story about for you?

Berlin Syndrome is about two characters that meet by fate on the street one day. Clare is a backpacker from Australia and Andi is an English teacher, Berlin born and bred. They're sort of inextricably drawn to each other through past traumas. Both seeking love and intimacy, but both with very different ways of approaching this. Clare approaches it with openness, and Andi approaches it with a need to control, which leads him to lock her up in his apartment.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

When I first read the script I was blown away, it was such a page-turner. I couldn't put it down. It's a survival story, a love story and it has a lot of intimacy to it that was extremely powerful. I was particularly interested in the characters in the film and the way they are drawn to each other, despite being on different ends of the spectrum of good and evil.

How did you prepare for the shoot? What was involved?

My pre production time on Berlin Syndrome was quite intense. From the moment we landed in Berlin, I spent almost every day with Cate, going through the script, looking at visual references, and absorbing the world in Berlin and living out the story. We spent a lot of time travelling around together, feeling out each environment, absorbing the light, observing the people, and trying to get a feel for the characters. We were very focused on figuring out who Andi was and where he would have grown up, and how it would feel to be Clare with wide eyes looking at this new world, how she would see things, and how she could potentially be vulnerable in this situation.

What camera did you shoot on?

We worked with a couple of different types of Arri cameras: the Alexa, the Amira and the Mini, paired with Leica Summilux lenses.

What were the biggest challenges of the shoot?

Like a lot of Australian films, the biggest challenge on Berlin Syndrome was time. Trying to get it all shot in the time that was available to us. It inevitably creates this environment where you have to get things done very, very quickly and be quite immediate in trusting your instincts and just going for it. It's always a bit of a rollercoaster ride trying to get through it in a day, and incredibly stressful wondering whether you've made the right decision. It's a constant grind on you just trying to make sure you're doing the very best you can for the film, the director, the actors, and the whole team.

What was your favourite scene or filming location during the shoot?

Usually shooting on location is my favourite thing to do, being out in the real world, in real locations. The feeling you get from this is very hard to emulate in a studio. Particularly, the excitement you get out of reacting to natural light and the real things that happen that force your hand in a way. On this film, we got to film on some amazing locations in Berlin, but shooting in the studio in Melbourne was especially enjoyable. Largely because of the scheduling restraints, we were quite time poor, so we had to be able to work very quickly, and often on a shoot moving around from one location to the next soaks up a lot of time that you could be using to experiment. So once we got back to Australia, where we shot all the interiors of Andi's apartment, we found that we had a bit more time to play. I found it to be a great challenge having to emulate the light from Europe from Summer through to Autumn and Winter and it was lots of fun.

JACK HUTCHINGS – EDITOR

Jack Hutchings is a freelance editor who is based in Melbourne. Jack's first short film CRACKERBAG, written and directed by Glendyn Ivin, won the Palme d'Or at the 2003 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for Best Editing for a Non-Feature Film Award at the 2003 Australian Film Institute Awards. Jack's next short film NATURE'S WAY, written and directed by Jane Shearer, was in competition at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival and won the Jury Prize for Best Short Film at the 2007 Paris International Film Festival. Next Jack worked with Dustin Fennelly on his short HAWKER, which was selected to premiere at the London International Film Festival.

In 2007 Jack edited JERRY CAN, a short film for director Julian Avery which won the July Prize at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival. Other credits include the Michael Spiccia short film YARDBIRD which was selected for the 2012 Cannes Film Festival.

In 2008 Jack edited his first feature film LAST RIDE, directed by Glendyn Ivin, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. Following on from this, Jack worked with director Amiel Courtin-Wilson on his documentary BASTARDY, receiving a 2009 AFI Nomination, Best Editing for a Documentary.

Following from this Jack teamed up again with director Julius Avery on his first feature film SON OF A GUN; and then director Ariel Kleiman on his first feature film PARTISAN, which premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. Jack is currently working on BERLIN SYNDROME with Aquarius Films and director Cate Shortland.

Jack also regularly cuts TV commercials through his production house The Butchery (<http://www.thebutchery.com.au/?page=showreel&reelID=22>) and many of the commercials Jack has edited have won major awards around the globe and a commercial for Boots Pharmacies, directed by Garth Davis, has been included in the permanent collection of film at MOMA, the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

What is this story about for you?

The story for me is a psychological love story. There are elements of Clare as a person looking to find something that is outside of her home, and I could relate to that having travelled at a similar age. She's seeking connection, and it can be a wash of emotions being away from family and friends in a foreign place. You can feel very lonely. She finds a connection with someone that is essentially preying on this vulnerability. I remember thinking when I first read it that it's also about someone who is obsessed with the idea of perfection. Andi uses his camera later in the film and it's revealed that it's in a ritualistic way for him and the film comments on the ideas and themes of pornography being an image and the idea of something which the character can't actually deal with the reality of.

Obviously the abandonment issues and issues of a country divided which perhaps caused this are touched on but we are really sheltered from the exact details in a way that Andi has repressed and hides these things way way down in his being. Still waters run deep as the saying goes.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

I loved how Clare and Andi connected on a number of levels, and obviously the physical connection was strong. I liked how things were revealed from his side of the story and drip fed piece by piece until you realise that things that might have seemed entirely innocent at first glance, or perhaps were only tinged with a sense of 'something not being right' were actually hiding very dark parts of his personality and past. I remember thinking that it all relied on the chemistry between the two characters, and that if that worked during the shoot, then we'd have something magic. When the rushes started coming back I knew we had something special, as the tension between the characters felt quite electric.

How did you prepare for the edit? What was involved?

Cate mentioned a few films at our meeting; so I did rewatch a few films again; and searched out one or two that I hadn't seen. The most commercial film Cate mentioned was MISERY; and I realised watching that film, that not a frame is wasted. It's incredibly taught and literally every shot is telling the next part of the story and it's very lean. We ended up somewhere between that as a guide, the idea of not letting the story slacken and to keep the interest up in a genre trope way, and a love story which at times needs to just 'sit' and be with them totally immersed in their passion, or their stillness whether alone or together.

We also rewatched scenes from Audiard's RUST AND BONE, more of a stylistic cutting sense of Cate wanting me to remember that the emotional cut is the most important aspect at all times, and not to worry about matching things; feel free. We also referenced the killer whale scene in relation to the moment that Andi connects with Franka in the gym, paying particular attention to the music and sound design. The moment is literally our character seeing something that should be incredibly innocent but we portray this in a way that allows us to get inside his head and feel that he's realizing this young teenage girl could be something more than just a student in his classes, in his warped world. The moment needed to slow down; and things fall into place both visually and metaphorically. It's a beautiful moment of innocence colliding with this dark character who is capable of anything... which is essentially a good analogy for the film as a whole.

What program did you edit on?

We cut on Avid Media Composer at DDP Studios in Melbourne. We had an assistant for the shoot and assemble stage (Paul), and then one for the later edit stage of the film (Andrew).

What was your favourite scene of the film?

Favourites would be the Gymnastics scene, the IKEA chair assemble scene and the scene on the couch with Andi cutting Clare's fingernails. All of the action scenes were fun to cut, door slamming etc as were the sex scenes and the post coital chat scene.

One sequence that really jumped out at me in the script as being transcending in style and which really lifted off the page was the chat with the father in the kitchen about Andi's new girlfriend - and then showing the reality of that situation. That was changed around a bit during the edit and at one point wasn't showing Clare while they spoke, but we went back to it and I think it's strong and affecting; and it was fun to cut.

What were the biggest challenges during the edit?

The biggest challenge at first was the post schedule, we started off with 11 weeks but

ended up pushing out to 12 weeks, which was invaluable as there were still a lot of big decisions being made in that last week of the cut. Other than that the challenges were; condensing the start of the film to get them to the apartment quicker, we had to cut out several moments, sometimes whole scenes, from the script and find a neat way to condense the story.

The scene with the Schrebergarten was one of the biggest challenges to cut - it was the first scene shot with Max and Theresa, and the light was going as it was approaching evening, so overall the coverage was a challenge on this one. But we got there in the end! We also had the usual repetition of information in places in the film that were easily fixed and then some making sure that Clare's character felt like she was at the right place in 'her journey' once inside the apartment - this required a fair bit of careful manipulation to get the arc right.

Besides a few tricky scenes, it really was a hugely pleasurable experience working on the edit with Cate, Polly, Angie, Troy Lum and the overseas Memento guys.

MELINDA DORING – PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Since graduating with an MA in Film & TV Design from the Australian Film, Television and Radio School in 1998, Melinda Doring has designed a number of highly regarded Australian feature films and Television projects.

Melinda has just completed work on the Australian/Irish Co-Production feature, STRANGERLAND directed by Kim Farrant, produced by Dragonfly Pictures and Fastnet Films starring Nicole Kidman, Hugo Weaving and Joseph Fiennes. The film was shot on location in Sydney, Canowindra and Broken Hill.

Melinda designed the critically acclaimed film TRACKS, See Saw Films adaptation of Robyn Davidson's epic journey across Australia, directed by John Curran, shot on location by DOP Mandy Walker in the Flinders Ranges and the Northern Territory. TRACKS premiered at the 2013 Venice Film Festival and was picked up by the Weinstein Company for international distribution.

Melinda won the 2013 AACTA & APDG awards for Wayne Blair's musical feature THE SAPPHIRES, produced by Goal Post Pictures, inspired by Tony Brigg's successful play and based on the true story of 4 indigenous women who performed soul hits to the American troops in Vietnam in 1968. Filmed in both Australia and Vietnam THE SAPPHIRES received a standing ovation at the 2012 Cannes film festival.

In 2012 she designed the telemovie, UNDERGROUND, based on Julian Assange's early years as a hacker, Mendax in Melbourne in the late 1980's, directed by Robert Connolly for Matchbox Pictures.

In 2011 Melinda completed work on Matchbox Pictures mini series, THE SLAP. This multi award winning show based on Christos Tsiolkas novel gave her the opportunity to work with some incredible directors including Robert Connolly, Tony Ayers, Jessica Hobbs and Matt Saville. In 2010 Melinda designed Paperbark Films' ambitious feature, THE EYE OF THE STORM, set in Sydney in 1972 and based on the Nobel Award winning novel by Patrick White and directed by the legendary Fred Schepisi. Melinda won the inaugural 2012 AACTA award for her work on this film.

In 2009 and early 2010 Melinda designed ORANGES AND SUNSHINE, a UK/Australian coproduction

for Sixteen Films and See Saw Pictures, directed by Jim Loach (based on "EMPTY CRADLES", the incredible, true story of the UK Nottingham social worker/ whistleblower, Margaret Humphreys and her investigations into the Child Migration Policy which led her to Australia in the mid 1980's.

In 2008 Melinda was production designer on the UK/Australian co-production (Miramax/ Tiger Aspect/Southern Light Films) THE BOYS ARE BACK, which called for a complete build of the central characters house. The film was shot on location in South Australia and London and directed by Scott Hicks.

Prior works include: The supernatural UK/ Australian Thriller TRIANGLE directed by Christopher Smith, the stop animated feature \$9.99 directed by Tatia Rosenthal for See Saw Films, THE HOME SONG STORIES directed by Tony Ayres, for which she won both an AFI award and an IF award for Best Production Design in 2007, UNFOLDING FLORENCE a feature documentary directed by Gillian Armstrong, the AFI awarded short feature by Porchlight Films JEWBOY, directed by Tony Krawitz and the critically acclaimed SOMERSAULT, directed by Cate Shortland for which Melinda won an AFI in 2004 for Best Production Design (the film was selected for Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2004). Melinda is also a well-regarded costume designer, her credits include, SUBURBAN MAYHEM directed by Paul Goldman, and LITTLE FISH directed by Rowan Woods.

What is this story about for you?

Berlin Syndrome is the story a young Australian woman about to embark on a trip of a lifetime, she wants to experience life to inform her creative process to be inspired and invigorated by all that travelling the world offers, with all it's diversity, culture and history. Something that many young Australians do as a right of passage. Unfortunately for Clare at the beginning of this journey she takes a very quick unexpected turn. Clare's brief passionate liaison with a handsome Berlin man becomes the fight for her life.

What was it about this story that you were drawn to?

What drew me to this story was that I myself did a very similar journey to that of Clare. Having left art school in the early 1990's, I felt I had to explore and experience the world so I could become world-wise and inspired. Berlin was one of those cities I was desperate to see and experience and since it was not long after the wall had come down, it really had this amazing atmosphere of change and a lot of young artists like myself wanted be apart of that unique moment in the city's history. Berlin has always attracted artists and I loved that Clare is drawn to the city to explore that past, and document something she has a real passion for.

I backpacked all around Europe on my own, often finding myself in tricky situations. As a young woman travelling on your own you often feel vulnerable, and it's easy to see how situations could have gone bad. I think many women can place themselves in Clare's situation and wonder "what if that had happened to me" scenario. Unfortunately it is very easy to see how this kind of thing can happen, and "if it happened to me" – "how would I deal with it? Would I have survived?"

What was it like working with Cate?

I have worked with Cate many times. We first met in 1998 after I had just graduated from AFTRS and someone recommended I meet Cate for a short film she had just received funding for, which was PENTUPHOUSE. From our first meeting I had such a wonderful connection to her. She had such exciting ideas and incredible enthusiasm. We both have a background in visual arts so that gave us an immediate point of connection. What I loved was that Cate showed me visual references that up to that point, I had not explored as

inspiration in filmmaking, photographers such as Todd Hido and Nan Goldin. Cate has this ability to push you into new ways of seeing things, she really knows how to bring you into the world she wants to create for a film and inspire you.

Later that same year (1998) we worked on another short film FLOWER GIRL. Many of that team went onto work on Cate's first feature SOMERSAULT. This film was my first feature as production designer and gave me my first AFI award. After SOMERSAULT we worked on another project called THE SILENCE a two-part mini series for the ABC.

Between THE SILENCE and BERLIN SYNDROME we had about 10 year gap where we were both been busy on other projects. Yet I still found working with Cate on this film so effortless as we have this amazing short hand from past projects, and having had a break just meant that we could both bring other experiences to the working relationship.

On BERLIN SYNDROME we would meet several times in pre-pre to talk about the kind of film Cate wanted to make, we shared many reference images trying to work out the character of Andi and Clare and how we wanted the film to look. We both collected reference images individually and as we went into pre this image collection grew. Cate is very interested in detailing things that will help identify the characters and help with the story telling. Seeing her image collection helped understand the types of details that would be important in the design of the film. As we got closer to making the film we spent a lot of time trying to develop the character of Andi and understand how that character would live and the thought processes involved in the environment he has created to imprison Clare.

What is it like working in Berlin? In what ways has the city inspired your design choices?

Berlin was a great city to work in. It is such a wonderful place with so much energy and creativity. It would be hard not to be inspired by Berlin. Everything from the apartment I stayed in to the locations we visited, people we met and worked with, all of this had an impact on choices we made in terms of design.

One of my favourite things to do was visit one of the many flea markets that Berlin has - so much of a young Berliner's style is found at these markets. The area of Kreuzberg where I was staying also had some interesting shops - I made friends with a wonderful guy who had a unique collection of lights. His lifelong passion has been collecting designer vintage light fittings from all over Europe... it was like visiting Aladdin's cave of light fixtures. I purchased several old DDR designed light fittings from his store and the flea markets to help make our Berlin set in Australia feel authentic.

I think the first location recce to Berlin we did 6 months before initial pre was the most inspiring part of my design process, during this period we visited several locations and absorbed so much, photographing every detail - as you never no later on down the track what information you gather may prove to be important. All those photos we took of various old derelict apartments and other scripted locations help create the set we needed to build or provided inspiration for colour palette or ideas for details in the film. I also used this time to research elements of DDR architecture and interior design that was some of the backstory of the film and one of the reasons the character Clare is drawn to Germany.

How did you find working between locations and a studio set?

It was extremely challenging shooting half the film in Melbourne whilst the film is set entirely in a very distinctive European city. It was also challenging having to portray various season changes to show time passing.

As a chunk of the film is set in Andi's apartment we created a studio set for the interiors. This proved difficult in many ways. First we needed to find an existing Berlin apartment block that felt unoccupied and un-renovated and finding abandoned apartment blocks in Berlin was not as easy as it may have been 20-30 years ago. Berlin is a hugely populated city that is rapidly developing, and so abandoned properties were hard to come by.

The first step in designing an interior set build for Andi's apartment was to find the exterior we needed to match it too. Cate's biggest fear was that the apartment studio set had to be

absolutely believable - not only for the audience but for the cast as well.

So prior to the actual pre production Cate, Polly and myself went on a location recce in Berlin in order to find the apartment block and other key locations. We had a fantastic location scout Marei Wenzel who found us 3 apartment blocks for us to look through, each offered pro's and con's, but one thing that became evident was that building a set for the interiors was essential - as the un-renovated ex DDR apartment blocks of the old eastern parts of Berlin, looked great but would have proved very difficult to shoot in.

When it came to our actual pre, only one of the apartment blocks we had looked at was actually available for shooting and what made it also tricky was that parts of it were still occupied, so we had to create the illusion of the block feeling totally empty, by working with the residents and boarding up windows etc.

Working in Berlin did present a few challenges - I had a wonderful local team, including Art Director Silke Fischer who worked with Cate on the film LORE, and Set Designer Stephen Speth who was involved in drafting the set so that we could get the build underway in Melbourne whilst we were still shooting in Berlin.

Janie Parker my Australian Art Director came to Berlin for a short while to make sure we had the set elements that needed matching for direct continuity - for our Melbourne set build at Docklands Studio. This involved buying construction elements to be used in both our Berlin apartment set and the Melbourne build, recreating scenic finishes, matching door furniture, light switches, doors, windows, even the stairwell and parts of the facade. Other issues involved special FX and VFX creating various seasons whilst shooting in the studio and on location (shooting winter in Berlin during Summer/Autumn). This required a combination of in-camera FX in Berlin and VFX for elements shots with green screen in our studio apartment set.

Did you have a favourite scene, set or location?

My favourite set would have to be Andi's apartment as it was the biggest design challenge of the film. But my favourite location was Erich's house (Andi's father's house). This was one of the first locations we found on our initial recce before we started on official pre. What I love about shooting on location is some of the people you meet, people who actually inhabit the places that we film in, who let us come into their lives and takeover their homes for a while. The owner of Erich's house was a wonderful man and we spent several days getting the house ready for filming, bringing in character details and changing elements to suit our colour palette, using snow FX around the exterior of his house to make it feel like Winter when we were actually shooting in the tail end of Summer, plucking leaves off trees at the front of his house.

What was your biggest challenge during pre-production or filming?

The biggest challenge was working between two countries and two different time zones, building a set in one country whilst shooting in another.

My Art Director Janie Parker would email me a bunch of questions during her day (my night) and then we would try to Skype when we could get a time that would work for both of us. Fortunately Janie and I have worked together on numerous projects so we have a short hand and I could totally trust her to make decisions without me if required to keep things moving.

Dealing with the different ways a crew works in another country is always a challenge, especially when you don't speak the language. Art departments are run slightly differently in Germany, so it took a while to get use to the different ways of doing things. In Berlin they use prop stores to source most of the set dressing elements whereas in Australia we tend to buy most things from scratch. I had a wonderful crew in Berlin, a very small hard working team but when my Berlin Art Director Silke Fischer ended up in hospital during our first week of shoot that added even more pressure onto the art department team in Berlin. So it was a very hectic time!

What were the overarching visual concepts, themes or palettes that you explored in the film?

Cate, Polly, Germain and I all got together early in pre and created our own visual mood look books for the film. This helped us communicate ideas on everything from details in the set, to colour palette and style and character.

My mood boards were very inspired from details from our earlier location recces and a variety of other imagery including elements of old DDR design to everything that is apart of Berlin-style now. We identified from these images what would help us understand Clare and Andi and how the spaces around them would reflect these elements of their character. One of the main design elements of the apartment set that we had to consider was that it had to portray both Andi's home and Clare's prison. So we had to work out how this apartment would look based on those two things and how it evolves due to the passage of time and the changes in their relationship over the period of Clare's imprisonment.

Germain, Cate and I spent a good deal of time working out colours, textures and lighting for the set - making sure that the layout of the set worked for the drama and the shooting style. This approach was in all our character sets, Erich's house had a very muted colour palette that leaned towards his DDR background, the characters Peter and Jana had a really vibrant creative Berlin style apartment full of colour and life which we hoped would portray a stark contrast to the half life Andi has given Clare.

M A R I A P A T T I S O N – C O S T U M E D E S I G N E R

Maria's latest credit is as Costume Designer on acclaimed director Cate Shortland's feature BERLIN SYNDROME, shot in Berlin and Melbourne in 2015, starring Teresa Palmer and Max Riemelt - currently in post-production.

In late 2015, Maria was nominated for an award for Best Costume Design at the 5th Annual AACTA Awards for her work on PARTISAN (dir. Ariel Kleiman) starring Vincent Cassel that was in competition at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.

Costume Design credits include SATELLITE BOY (dir. Catriona McKenzie) and SUMMER CODA (dir. Richard Gray). Maria also worked as Assistant Costume Designer with Cappi Ireland on feature film BALIBO (dir. Robert Connelly) starring Anthony La Paglia and Oscar Isaac – nominated for an AFI for Best Costume Design.

Other credits include Costume Buying for the Sundance World Cinema Jury Prize Winner ANIMAL KINGDOM, Aaron Eckhart feature I, FRANKENSTEIN, critically acclaimed television series THE SLAP, Glendyn Ivin's GALLIPOLI – Winner of the 2015 APDG award for Best Costume Design in a television drama and Garth Davis' highly anticipated feature LION starring Dev Patel, Nicole and Rooney Mara- to be released in 2016.

Maria has a Bachelor in Creative Arts and has recently completed graduate studies in Anthropology at the University of Melbourne.

What is it about this story that you were drawn to?

When reading the script, the concept of the 'ideal' in Andi's perspective is both incredibly twisted and yet intriguing - the interplay between this and the real life experience of Clare's interaction with Andi makes us question our ideals. Also, I found myself drawing on personal experiences of when I was 24 and backpacking through Berlin, and how I felt during that time as a young woman, hungry for life experiences and totally at the mercy of where this could lead you.

In what ways did Berlin inspire your design choices?

Berlin is an inspiring city to work with and within. This has a lot to do with it's dense history and the contemporary change surrounding this. It's incredibly rich culture makes it a great place to achieve a specific visual ambition. From my initial meeting with Cate and Melinda, we established early on the importance that the history of Berlin plays in this film. The

East and West was a place that seemed to both grate against and inform the character of Andi and his environment. Choices were made based on colours and photographs of the 'Wall' period, and I was informed by this in terms of colour and style, both generally and specifically, for example in the costuming of Andi and Franka's school. A lot of the ideas for the colour palette grew from here.

How did you find translation between working on location in Berlin and on set in Melbourne?

Working in a new city or a new country, with a new team, and different systems, without your usual contacts is always a huge challenge. But then sometimes restrictions inspire creativity and I definitely found that to be the case for Berlin Syndrome.

Did you have a favourite scene or favourite costume?

I think that Andi's father Erich incorporated a lot of history and contributed to the character development of Andi, so it was a joy finding elements in the costume for this character that really helped us discover Erich. For example, Erich's leather jacket in the lecture theatre - it was a subtle element but says a lot.

What was your biggest challenge during pre-production or filming?

The biggest challenge was walking the line between pushing a visually stimulating look and tone in with the mood/ story, and telling the story of the journey of time passing and what is unseen whilst also keeping it real.