

all my friends are leaving
brisbane

If you're in your twenties, single and hate your
job, you've got to get out of this town

Indi Rom Com Feature Film
Running Time 76mins
Distributor: Accent

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Anthea is 25, single and hates her job – and all her friends are leaving Brisbane. Should she follow the herd to Sydney or London? Is there anything worth staying for now that her best friend Michael finally has a girlfriend? This film tells a universal story about finding your place and yourself.

The Story

Anthea is undergoing a crisis of confidence: overworked, no boyfriend, struggling at work – and all her friends are leaving Brisbane. She is tempted to leave herself, but is opposed by her long time best platonic male friend Michael.

Michael thinks people who leave Brisbane are copycats who follow the crowd; he is quite happy to stay in Brisbane, he is in a stable job and a stable very low-maintenance sex-with-the-ex relationship with his ex-girlfriend, Stephanie. He is in a rut.

Anthea's temptation to leave Brisbane increases with the impending departure of her flatmate Kath. However, she then hears that her ex-boyfriend Jake is coming back to Brisbane to live. To Michael's annoyance, she dreams of a great future with him.

Michael is thrown out of his comfort zone by starting a new relationship with a girl he meets at work; Simone. Slightly "alternative" and good natured, Simone is totally different from the sorts of girls he normally deals with, and he finds himself in a relationship over which he does not have total control.

On her last day in Australia, Anthea and Michael finally resolve their feelings for each other.

Production Summary Page

Title: All My Friends Are Leaving Brisbane
Production Company: Bunker Productions International Pty Ltd
Running Time: 76 Minutes
Shoot Gauge: Super 16mm
Deliver Gauge: 35mm, Digital Betacam, DVD
Screening Gauge: 35mm, Digital Betacam, DVD
Sound: Dolby Digital
Screen Ratio: 1:1.85
Reels: 5

Festival Screenings

2007 – Brisbane International Film Festival – August

Key Crew

Director / Producer: Louise Alston
Writer: Stephen Vagg
Producer: Jade van der Lei
Director of Photography: Judd Overton
Production Designer: Hayley Egan
Editor: Nicola Scarrott
Composer: Caitlin Yeo

Key Cast

Anthea: Charlotte Gregg
Michael: Matt Zeremes
Kath: Cindy Nelson
Tyson: Ryan Johnson
Simone: Romany Lee
Jake: Gyton Grantley
Stephanie: Sarah Kennedy

Production Notes

All My Friends are Leaving Brisbane is a contemporary romantic comedy set in Brisbane. Louise Alston first saw *All My Friends are Leaving Brisbane* as a play at the Cement Box Theatre. She could see that the story would make an ideal rom com feature film and worked with writer Stephen Vagg on developing the script.

Louise then got a fellow producer on board, Jade van der Lei, and scraped together a budget of \$42,000. The film was shot in the middle of a Queensland summer, January 2006, over a three week period. The filmmakers successfully applied for post-production funding from the AFC, which enabled some additional shooting to be done in June. The film completed post production in early 2007 and is making its world debut at the Brisbane International Film Festival.

Director's Notes

Louise Alston's first aim was to make an extremely appealing, watchable film – an “indie movie”, but one that Bridget Jones would like. She wanted to create something original on film, the world of young people in Brisbane in the no-man's land between university and “settling down”. Because there have been so few films made in Brisbane, she was able to turn the look and the feel of Brisbane summer into a unique celuloid world.

Locations:

Many scenes from the film were shot in the director's house! The big old Queenslander, located in the inner city suburb of Paddington, also doubled as accommodation for up to 16 crew members during the shoot. The old fashioned tongue-and-grove style house added to the Queensland look. Other scenes were shot in Wynnum, Griffith University, the Royal Exchange Hotel, Bundaleer Gardens at Brookfield, the Botanical Gardens and on “Brisbane's most liveable street 1992” Moray Street in New Farm.

Cinematography:

Louise Alston and DOP, Judd Overton wanted to create the look of hot summertime in Brisbane. Using hot oranges contrasted with cool blues, the film makes the heat a character in the story. Shooting on 16mm gives the film an intimate, hand crafted look. Sections of the film are video montages. This captures a wider perspective on the city and adds to the hand made, young person's perspective.

Look and Feel of the Film:

In *All My Friends*, Brisbane city plays a big part in grounding the story and the look. The film opens with a montage of travel photos and video cut in with images of Brisbane streets and street signs. One test audience member said that she felt a rush when she saw this: “Yeah! These things can happen here! In Brisbane!”

Performances

What do you do when you can afford big Aussie stars? You find undiscovered Aussie stars. We combed fringe theatres, short films and acting schools to find the best and brightest new talent. We wanted this to be one of those films like *Love and Other Catastrophes* and *The Outsiders*, packed with “stars of tomorrow”.

Edit Style

All My Friends has an edgy feeling to the edit. Surreal asides, like on the TV show *Scrubs*, expand ideas and comment on the action. For example, a list of Anthea’s ex’s roll across screen during an argument with Michael; Tyson and Jake’s travel stories are illustrated by montages of travel pics.

Music

Music plays a big part in the emotional journey of the film. The tracks of the film come from some of Brisbane’s most exciting artists, including Dave McCormick, Intercooler and the Boat People. The score was written by Caitlin Yeo; one of her tracks, “Big Kisses” from the end of the film is included on the soundtrack because of its ability to reduce listeners to big sappy tears!

Production and Costume Design

Designer Hayley Egan and Louise found ways to add “extraordinary ordinariness” – the beauty in the every day. For example, Kath’s Australian flag bikini, Anthea’s Kangaroo Point flat, Michael and Tyson’s accounting firm.

Themes

All My Friends are Leaving Brisbane is a story about people leaving home in their twenties, working out what they want their lives to be like. Anthea is unsure as to whether she should travel to London or stay in her home town in her safe, unsatisfactory job.

Most young Australians migrate in their 20s. Whether it’s to a big city, a bigger city or overseas, it is part of the nature of young Australians to want to see the world.

The film describes first and second wave travellers. Tyson says he was a “first wave” traveller; he went overseas when he first left school, slummed around working in bars and returned for uni. Jake is a “second waver”. He went overseas as a young professional to a well paying job in London.

It’s very Australian to conquer the tyranny of distance and satisfy curiosity. People in their twenties test themselves, explore possibilities and make big decisions about the shape of their future. This is a story set in that ordinary but very high stakes world.

Cast Biographies

Charlotte Gregg: Anthea

Charlotte has made many appearances on TV drama, most recently in *All Saints* and *Home and Away* (where she had a six month stint playing a baby kidnapper!). She works extensively on stage, as a voice over artist and as a reporter on Nova radio. She will be seen soon in the high quality tv drama, *Underbelly*.

Matt Zeremes: Michael

Matt starred in the indi feature film *Burke and Wills*, a film he co wrote and directed, which screened at Robert de Niro's Tribeca Film Festival in New York. He has had success on TV in Channel Ten's *The Surgeon* and in the theatre including the recent sell out stage hit *Holding the Man* at the Opera House in Sydney.

Ryan Johnson: Tyson

Ryan Johnson has been seen in a number of Australian and international feature films including *The Ghost Rider*, *Son of Mask*, *Thunderstruck* and *The Wannabes*. He has also been seen on the small screen in high quality drama such as *Secret Life of Us* and *Head Start*, and riding on top of a bus on the Coke Zero ad.

Cindy Nelson: Kath

Cindy has been on the Brisbane fringe stage for several years, including the world premiere production of *Friday Night Drinks*, also by Stephen Vagg. She has juggled *All My Friends* with managing a suburban Blockbuster Video store in Brisbane!

Gyton Grantley: Jake

A well known face to Australian cinema audiences, Gyton's feature film credits include *Man's Gotta Do*, *Under the Radar*, *Blurred* and *Danny Deckchair*. His television credits include the dramas *Home and Away* and *Headland* and he can currently be seen singing a version of Lionel Ritchie's "All Night Long" in an ad for Brisbane's Treasury Casino.

Romany Lee: Simone

Following in the footsteps of her father, Mark Lee (*Gallipoli*), Romany landed the role of Simone straight out of the acting course at QUT.

Sarah Kennedy: Stephanie

Sarah Kennedy is a favourite on the Brisbane stage. She works regularly with La Boite Theatre Company and the Queensland Theatre Company.

Casting Notes

All of the actors in *All My Friends are Leaving Brisbane* are from Brisbane.

Charlotte Gregg, who played Anthea, was the first person cast. Louise and Stephen had worked with her before in a theatre production and they knew that she was lovely, talented, always laughing and a hard worker. She was the perfect person to take on a treacherous feature film journey. She made the klutzy Anthea charming and loveable.

Louise met Ryan Johnson (Tyson) while making a short film. He was super keen as soon as he read the script. Louise knew how perfect he was for the role and she was paranoid that he would get a big paying role and wouldn't be able to do the film. But thankfully he was available for the shoot.

Romany Lee (Simone) was discovered in an open casting. Gyton Grantley (Jake) is the real life ex boyfriend of Charlotte Gregg, but both Gyton and Charlotte were pleased to get the chance to work together. Sarah Kennedy was cast on the basis of her excellent stage work – then Louise found out she was Charlotte's sister-in-law. That is Brisbane – one degree of separation...

Cindy Nelson (Kath) hadn't done any acting for a couple of years and was managing a Blockbuster video store when Louise tracked her down. She had been the set designer on the original stage production of *All My Friends*, but Louise had seen her act in the original production of Stephen Vagg's play *Friday Night Drinks*.

Casting Michael was difficult and took some time. Matt Zeremes was a good mate of Ryan Johnson's, and Ryan told him about the role. Matt's subtlety and smouldering boy next door good looks impressed Louise immediately. In the past twelve months he has established himself as one of the most exciting actors in Australia.

Key Crew Biographies

Louise Alston: Director/ Producer

All My Friends are Leaving Brisbane is Louise's first feature film. Louise has directed several short films, TVCs and Video Clips. She has created and produced two television series for cable TV as well as producing fringe theatre in Sydney and Brisbane.

Stephen Vagg: Writer

Stephen Vagg is a Brisbane writer. His plays include *Friday Night Drinks* (AWGIE nomination 2003), *Nerd Formal* and *Trivia*. A graduate of the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, Stephen has worked in TV drama, currently works for the Commonwealth DPP and has recently completed a biography of Australian Hollywood actor, Rod Taylor. He has a short role in the film as "Drunken Cousin Greg" who makes a boring wedding speech.

Jade van der Lei: Producer

Jade has produced short films, corporate videos and music clips non stop since graduating from film school at Brisbane's Griffith University. She is the Brisbane Event Co-ordinator for the *48 Hour Film Project* and is currently working on the new Chris Nyst film, *Crooked Business*, on the Gold Coast.

Judd Overton: Director of Photography

Judd Overton's other feature film work includes *Left Ear* and Rolf de Heer's *Dr Plonk*. He has shot numerous TVCs and short films and is a cinematography graduate of the Australian Film, Television and Radio School.

Nicola Scarrott: Editor

Nicola cut her teeth editing Steve Irwin's *Crocodile Hunter*, where her work was nominated for an Emmy. Associate editor of *48 Shades*, Nicola has won awards for her short film editing.

Hayley Egan: Production Designer

Hayley grew up on the Pacific island of Tonga before moving to Brisbane to attend film school. Since working on *All My Friends are Leaving Brisbane*, Hayley has gone on to work on *The Contender*, *Fool's Gold* and Baz Lurman's *Australia*.

Bunker Productions International

Bunker Productions International Pty Ltd is a production company founded by Louise Alston and Stephen Vagg. It began in an underground flat producing fringe theatre. Bunker now produces across film, TV and theatre above ground but still with the can-do attitude of the original "Bunker".

Music Notes

The soundtrack includes music from the Brisbane indi scene and is being released as a soundtrack CD. The highlight of the soundtrack is a new version of the Go Between's hit *Streets of your Town* by David McCormack (ex Custard) with Fi Claus. Favourites include Giants of Science, Iron On, Intercooler and Tara Simmons. Also, from the dark corners of late 80's Brisbane music comes Indecent Obsession's 1989 hit *Say Goodbye*. The score, including the instrumental, "Big Kisses" is by Caitlin Yeo.