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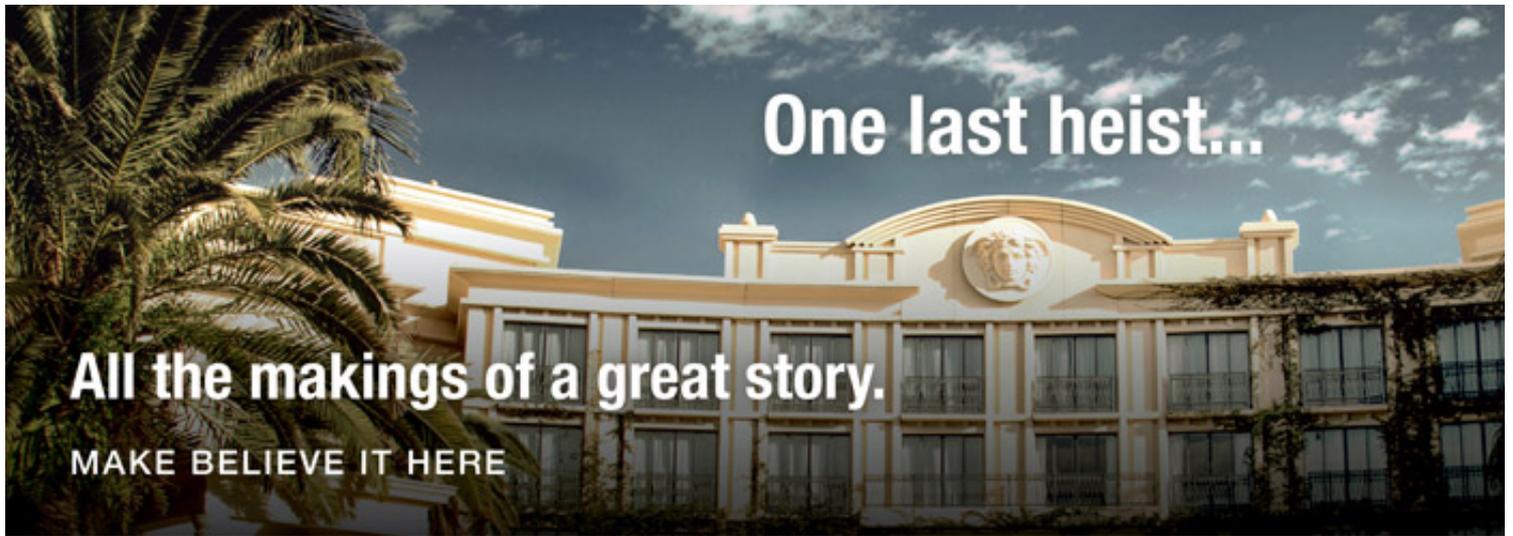


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Clara Chong's 'Dark Noise' is among the first pandemic feature shoots

Don Groves · Film News · June 1, 2020



Clara Chong and Ben Allan on set (Photo: John Slaytor).

Director/writer Clara Chong and producer/DOP Ben Allan are shooting *Dark Noise*, one of the first features to roll during the pandemic, in Sydney.

Imogen Sage plays the lead, Abigail 'Jack' McFadden, a young woman who is alone in the forest listening for frogs when she hears something she shouldn't have.

Chong and Allan started developing the project two years ago and decided to start filming last Thursday after raising the budget from private investors and to take advantage of the cast's availability.

They developed COVID-19 protocols before the industry's COVID-Safe guidelines were released, based on medical and scientific advice, vetted and approved by Dr Himanshu Brambadtt.

A former principal scientist of the CSIRO, Brambadtt is joint CEO of EnGeneIC Cancer Therapeutics, where he is researching the coronavirus and its treatment.

The 25 day shoot of eight hour days is taking place in short blocks in the Sydney CBD and in Sydney's North-West, with a maximum of 10 cast and crew on set. The production is covered by a basic insurance policy.

Everyone is given hand sanitizer and temperature-tested three times a day. Among other precautions, there is restricted handling of equipment, props and wardrobe.

Imogen Sage in 'Dark Noise' (Photo credit: John Slaytor).

Allan came up with the premise of the thriller: a young woman with headphones is alone in a rain forest listening for frogs when she hears something she shouldn't have.

That inspired Chong to devise a series of 'what if's,' including making the protagonist a female foley artist who is holding her own in the male-dominated industry of high tech video games.

Also: What if the foley artist stumbled on Australia's first cocaine plantation while Internet access and police radio were hacked to the extent that a one-man police station had to fend for itself?

The producers discovered Sage, a London-trained theatre actor, via a mutual friend, she self-tested and nailed the part.

The cast includes Callan Colley as Constable Myangi, Lauren Clair as Jack's mother Cassandra and Leah Vandenberg as her father's lover Dr Croker.

Chong made a few minor revisions to the script due to the pandemic, such as having Vandenberg's character based at Edinburgh University instead of Sydney and conversing via Zoom rather than face-to-face.

"*Dark Noise* is an atmospheric, quirky genre film with an indie edge," Clara says. "It's a high concept, low budget film that will thrill, shock and entertain."

TAGS

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- #CLARA-CHONG
- #DARK-NOISE
- #IMOGEN-SAGE
- #LAUREN-CLAIR
- #LEAH-VANDENBERG

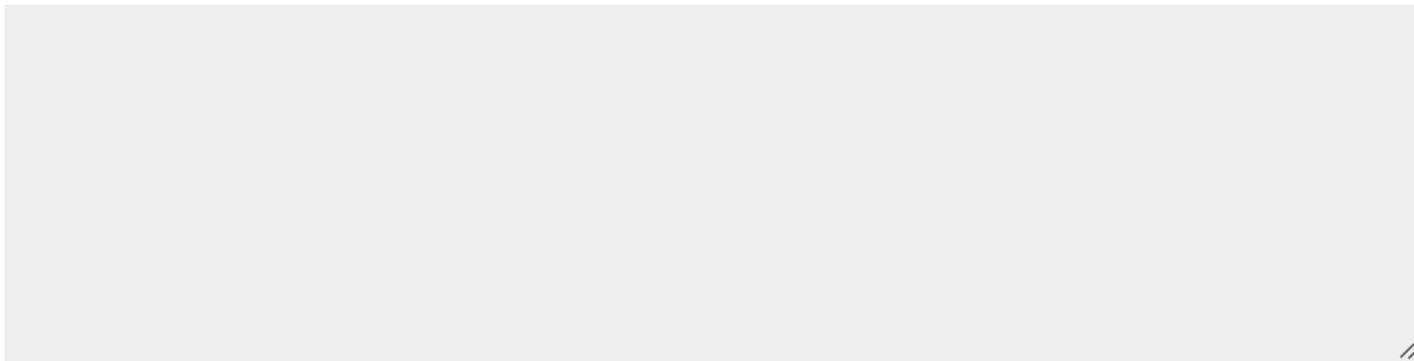


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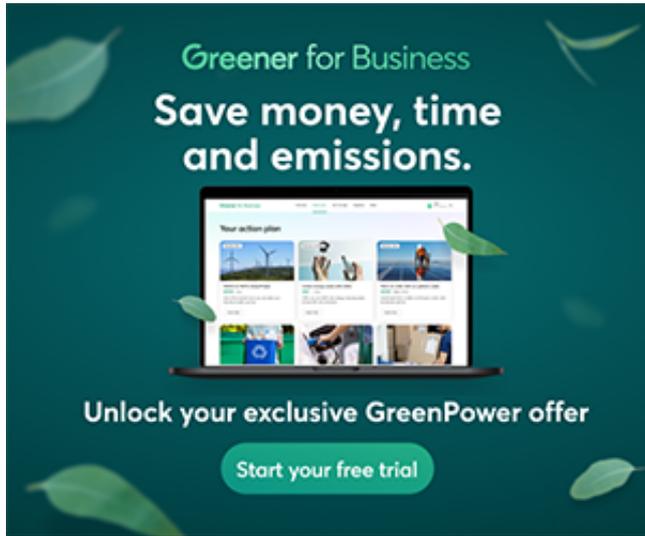


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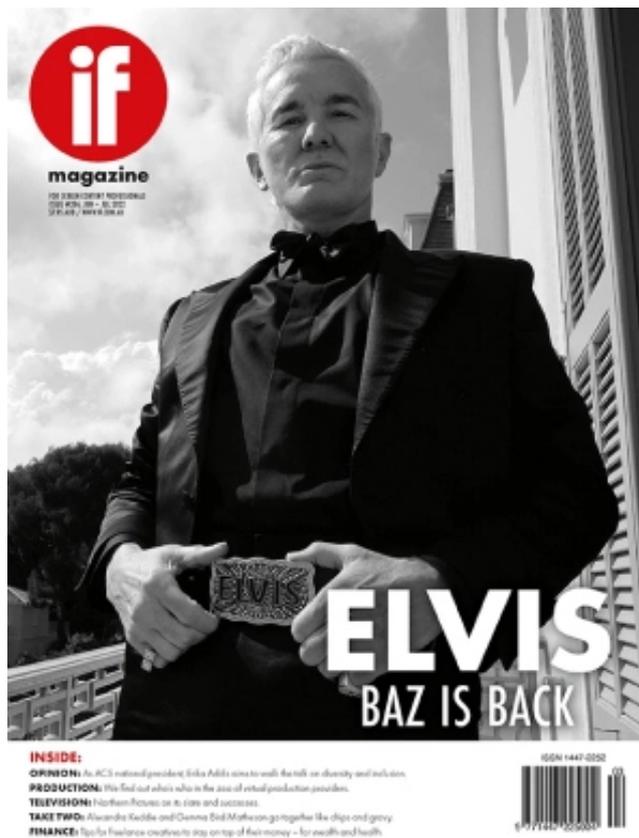


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