

when the camera stopped rolling

Media Kit

September 2021



Contents

- Log Line 3
- One Paragraph Synopsis..... 3
- One Page Synopsis 3
- Director’s Statement 3
- Producer’s Statement..... 4
- Lilias Fraser Biography 6
- Credits 8
- Jane Castle Biography 9
- Pat Fiske Biography 10
- Ray Thomas Biography 10
- Contact Details 11



Log Line

A daughter turns her camera onto the life of her trailblazing filmmaker mother to find troubling shadows behind their stunning images.

One Paragraph Synopsis

The daughter of trailblazing Australian filmmaker, Lili Fraser, tells the epic tale of her mother's extraordinary life, her career and their challenging relationship. Driven by the need to understand and heal from their shared trauma, director/cinematographer Jane Castle digs deep, using the rich textures of a stunning, unseen part of Australia's cinematic history. Tenacious, enthusiastic and ambitious, Lili overcame huge systemic and personal obstacles to make over 40 films in her lifetime. But her success came at a cost – the early trauma that drove her also saw her unravel over time. Trapped in a destructive marriage, then battling alcoholism and single parenthood, Lili's trademark determination was pushed to its limits. Deeply moving and searingly honest, *When the Camera Stopped Rolling* reveals both the light and dark of this proto-feminist icon and a pioneering mother-daughter team. The triumphs and turbulence of their careers and their relationship are captured with clarity and compassion, set against a rich and historical tapestry of stunning visuals and a rich soundscape.

One Page Synopsis

Lili Fraser was a remarkable trailblazer of Australian film who overcame enormous obstacles to make over forty films at a time when women were largely excluded from the industry. Her daughter, Jane Castle, one of Australia's leading cinematographers, tells the epic tale of Lili's life, her career, their challenging relationship and the trauma that shaped it using the rich textures of a combined film archive spanning six decades.

Lili's trailblazing career kicks off in 1957 with *The Beach*, shot single-handedly on the coast of Queensland. But despite earning high praise for her cinematography, Lili is prevented from becoming a cinematographer by the men in charge. With her trademark determination, however, making the films that no-one else wants to make, she becomes a director and trailblazes her way into the Australian film industry. She cuts her teeth on educational films and 'industrials' and teams up with her husband who becomes the 'front man'. By the close of the 1960s Lili has made over 15 documentaries, including one of Australia's first land rights films, *This is Their Land*.

But life doesn't look as good as it does up on screen when the camera stops rolling. As the marriage begins to go off the rails, the family spirals into chaos, debt and violence. By the time Lili hits rock bottom and leaves her husband, the world has begun to change. It's the late 70s and a new generation of feminist filmmakers seeks her out as a role model. Meanwhile, Jane makes her first film, *Land of Shadows*, a dystopian reflection of her interior life in gritty black and white. So begins her own trailblazing career as she criss-crosses the globe shooting for pop icons like Prince, U2, INXS and Mary J. Blige. But, as with her mother, the trauma from the past catches up with her. As she hits her own rock-bottom, Jane reflects that "Just like the drinking didn't work for mum, being a workaholic wasn't working for me."

When the Camera Stopped Rolling dives deep into universal themes of motherhood, trauma, grief and healing. It offers a poignant insider's view of an unheralded Australian pioneer and a relationship that navigates vast personal, political and cultural challenges. As Lili meets her greatest challenge in her later years, her daughter begins to enter a place of understanding for her family's struggles and the mysterious power of healing, of which film plays a central part.

Director's Statement

The film is a dual-journey narrative that tells the story of my trailblazing filmmaker mother and of my own journey as a cinematographer and daughter across six decades of photography and filmmaking. It's also the story of intergenerational trauma and how it disrupted our relationship. As a recovering cinematographer I was determined to prioritise story over visual beauty and the result is a fusion of driving narrative and poetic metaphor. This form has allowed me to obliquely explore universal issues such as motherhood, trauma, grief and healing. One of the greatest challenges was to seek an ever deeper truth. This meant being radically honest with myself about the role I played in our challenging relationship. Although it's been unnerving to expose myself in this way, I believe it will allow audiences to enter more deeply into the story and resonate personally. Amidst the many layers, the power of the image to either hide the truth or reveal it has intrigued me; and despite my ambivalent relationship with film as an art form, it became the medium through which my mother and I have been finally able meet. My inspirations include Chris Marker's landmark *Sunless*, Sarah Polley's rivetting *Stories We Tell* and the powerful *I Am Not Your Negro* by Raoul Peck. Above my desk sits a picture of James Baldwin whose honesty, insight and precision I have constantly been challenged to match.

Producer's Statement

Making documentaries is my passion! I've been directing and/or producing now for 47 years. I love the power of documentaries to tell stories that can move people, provoke, inspire, or stimulate them into action. As a producer, I work closely with directors, I need to love their idea, have a feel for their vision and get along well. It's a creative and constructive contribution to projects that can take 2, 3, 5 years, or even longer, as it has been for this film! I came to know Lilia Fraser in the late 1970s, when she secured a job at the Sydney Filmmakers Co-op. She was amazing - energetic, fun and was always eager to help. In the late 80s I got to know her daughter Jane when she was a student at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, and later we sometimes worked on the same films. Jane was quiet, intelligent, determined and talented. When Jane approached me about producing a film she wanted to make about death, I was curious. The film evolved over a long time, getting better and better, becoming the beautiful, moving, engaging and thought-provoking film we can't wait to share.





Lilias Fraser (1930-2004)



Biography

In 1957 Lilias Fraser, decades ahead of her time singlehandedly shot her own movie, *The Beach*. Soon after, she travelled to Paris at the height of the French New Wave and became the first Australian to study at the National Film School of France (IDHEC). After working on films by Paul Paviot and Le Groupe des Trente she returned to Australia to launch her directing career with her husband as 'front-man'. While Lilias honed her skills on nation-building industrial documentaries of the 1960s, her politics lay elsewhere and, in 1970, she made one of Australia's first land rights films, *This is Their Land*.

Despite her success as a filmmaker, the violent and debt-ridden marriage she became trapped in finally caused Lilias's career to spiral down and exacerbated her struggle with alcoholism. By the late 1970s, at the nadir of her personal and professional life, she started from scratch, found sobriety and discovered, and was

discovered by, the nascent community of feminist filmmakers. This was Lilias's awakening. It catapulted her into a new phase of personal and political filmmaking, starting with *Women of the Iron Frontier*, a feminist reframing of her vast catalogue of mining films.

Selected Film Credits of Lilias Fraser

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>Beach Film</i> (1957) | <i>This is Their Land</i> (1970) |
| <i>Nests in the Bush</i> (1958) | <i>The Young Producers</i> (1971) |
| <i>Robert Richard Torrens</i> (1962) | <i>Switched on Set</i> (1972-73) |
| <i>Water Birds of the Inland</i> (1964) | <i>Those Who Make the Way</i> (1973) |
| <i>Irrigation Farming in the Riverina</i> (1964) | <i>Metal Makers</i> (1974) |
| <i>Australian by Design</i> (1966) | <i>Hands Off</i> (1974) |
| <i>Hamersley '66</i> (1966) | <i>Sand Harvesters</i> (1975) |
| <i>Dairying in Australia</i> (1967) | <i>Dillingham and Fraser Island</i> (1975) |
| <i>Sugar from Queensland</i> (1967) | <i>Coal in North Queensland</i> (1982) |
| <i>Australia's Wheat</i> (1968) | <i>Crusader Oil</i> (1982) |
| <i>Weevils Mean Business</i> (1968) | <i>Mineral Sands and You</i> (1982) |
| <i>Australian Aluminium</i> (1968) | <i>Somerville House</i> (1984) |
| <i>Working Together</i> (1969) | <i>Pueblo Viejo (Dominican Republic)</i> (1986) |
| <i>Wheat from Australia</i> (1969) | <i>Blair Athol Coal Project</i> (1988) |
| <i>Mining Men</i> (1970) | <i>Isa Smelt: A New Age</i> (1989) |
| <i>Beyond the Boom</i> (1970) | <i>Women of the Iron Frontier</i> (1990) |
| | <i>Mount Isa Mines Today</i> (1992, 1994, 1996) |



Credits

Writer, Director, Narrator, Cinematographer
Jane Castle ACS

Producer
Pat Fiske

Editor
Ray Thomas

Composer
Kyls Burtland

Sound Design and Mix
Sam Petty

Grade, Title Design, Archival Restorations
Roen Davis, Central Business Digital



Jane Castle

Director / Writer

Jane Castle is a multi-award-winning filmmaker and cinematographer. She's shot feature films, documentaries and a vast range of music videos for performers such as **Prince, U2, Mary J Blige, Usher** and **INXS**. Among her awards she has won the Stockholm, Kodak and Australian Cinematographers Society awards for Best Cinematography. From 1990 to 1995 Jane lived and worked in the US and in 1993 became the second ever woman to be accredited by the Australian Cinematographer's Society. Jane's directing work includes the award-winning short, *Roadside Café*, the SBS TV documentary *Sixty Thousand Barrels* and her first feature documentary, *When the Camera Stopped Rolling*. Jane combines her filmmaking with environmental activism, producing and directing campaign videos for groups such as Greenpeace and the Total Environment Centre.

Selected Filmography

2020	Writer, Director, Cinematographer <i>When the Camera Stopped Rolling</i>	1994	Director of Photography <i>Fresh Kill</i>
2013-16	Videographer, Photographer <i>Greenpeace Australia Pacific</i>	1993	Co-Director, Cinematographer <i>Sex Fish</i>
2010	Director, Cinematographer, Editor <i>E-waste Zombies Come to Town</i>	1993	Director of Photography <i>Leprechaun 2</i>
2003	Director, Cinematographer <i>Sixty Thousand Barrels</i>	1992	Director, Cinematographer <i>Stories From the Streets</i>
1998	Cinematographer <i>Urban Clan</i>	1991	Director of Photography <i>Dead to the World</i>
1996	Director of Photography <i>Fistful of Flies</i>	1988	Cinematographer <i>Women of the Iron Frontier</i>
1995	Cinematographer <i>Ask Any Woman</i>	1987	Director <i>Roadside Cafe</i>
1994	Co-Director, Cinematographer <i>Sex Bowl</i>	1981	Director, Cinematographer, Editor <i>Land of Shadows</i>

Selected Music Video Cinematography Credits

Prince, U2, Mary J. Blige, Usher, Mavis Staples, INXS, Arrested Development, Diesel, Spin Doctors, Live, A Few Good Men, Foreigner, Midnight Oil, Divinyls, Squeeze, Paul Kelly, James Reyne, Transvision Vamp, Squeeze, Ian Moss, Material Issue, Keith Sweat, Subway, KC, Hunters and Collectors, Usher, Julianna Hatfield.

Awards

1997	Fistful of Flies	Best Cinematography, Stockholm Film Festival
1995	Sex Bowl	Winner, Metro Television Award, Queer Screen
1994	Just Desserts	Best Cinematography, Silence Elles Tournent Festival, Montreal
1994	Tip of My Tongue	Best Cinematography, ACS Awards
1989	Crack in the Curtains	Best Cinematography, Kodak Awards, St Kilda Film Festival
1987	Roadside Café	Winner, Toowoomba Film Festival; Finalist, GUO (Dendy) Awards
1985	Lost Love	Best Cinematography Nomination, AFI Awards
1982	Land of Shadows	Highly Commended, 6th Youth Film Festival



Contact Details

When the Camera Stopped Rolling is produced by Freckled Duck Films with Bower Bird Films. Funded by production investment from Screen Australia, assistance of Screen NSW and donations made through the Documentary Australia Foundation.

Distributor: Australia / New Zealand / Associated Islands and Territories
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Running time | 75 minutes

Exhibition formats | DCP, H264, H265, MXF OP1A, Blu-Ray, DVD

Aspect ratio | 16:9 **Sound** | 5.1 **Media** | Film / Digital; Colour / B&W

Original language | English / English Subtitles

Production date | March 2021

Principal Development and Production Investor

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