



Film's run time: 102 mins, MPAA rating: PG, rated PG for thematic elements and some language,
Aspect ratio: 2:35

Short Synopsis

Broken Hill – The Movie

Tommy McAlpine (Luke Arnold) was born and raised on a drought ridden sheep station in the middle of the Australian Outback into a world of sheep and football.

He is torn between the legacy of his deceased mother, who instilled in him a passion for music, and a desire to appease his father, who believes his future is on the family farm.

A series of events forces him to participate in community service at the local jail alongside his unrequited high school crush Kat Rogers (Alexa Vega).

This opportunity allows him to use prisoners to perform his music in a prison band competition which he has also organized to be his audition to the elite Sydney Music Conservatorium.

BROKEN HILL

Long Synopsis

Broken Hill – The Movie

Tommy McAlpine (Luke Arnold) was born and raised on a rocky, drought-ridden sheep station in the middle of the Australian Outback. His now deceased mother has instilled in him a passion for music and to experience life on a broader stage. His father, George McAlpine (Timothy Hutton), is a lonely, crusty, third generation farmer who believes Tommy's only chance for a future is on the family farm, making a living from the dry Outback land.

Tommy has a genuine gift for music and aspires to attend the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Torn between the legacy of his mother and a desire to appease his father Tommy works on the farm and even plays Australian Rules Football, but in his heart he wants to be a great musician. The local town is small and the world is about sheep and football. No one can carry a tune and Tommy's gift remains unseen.

When Tommy's unrequited crush on a visiting American high school classmate named Kat Rogers (Alexa Vega) gets him into hot water with the police, Tommy discovers a new opportunity. He chooses to do community service at the nearby jail in order to use the prisoners to perform his music. That choice creates a new set of challenges for Tommy and his father.

But the stakes for Tommy are raised even further when his music teacher and mentor, an Aboriginal musical genius named Pindari, lands him an audition for the elite music conservatorium in far off Sydney. Afraid that he won't get approval from the prison warden, Tommy manipulates events to bring his choir to a prison band competition where a talent scout from the conservatorium can see the performance.

During the prison band performance in Broken Hill, an isolated mining city in far western New South Wales, Tommy unwittingly helps his star prison musician escape, ruining his chances at a conservatorium scholarship in Sydney, and Tommy's own chance to escape seems even more remote.

Despite the odds, Tommy finds a way to bring his music to life and that becomes the key to a second chance for all of them. BROKEN HILL is "Billy Elliot" meets "August Rush" set in the Outback. It is the story of an artist who learns to reach for the stars.

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Alexa Vega Biography *Kat Rogers*

Alexa Vega has been acting since the age of four when she landed the role of Burt Reynolds's daughter in the acclaimed television series, "Evening Shade." She became known worldwide in 2001 with her role as Carmen Cortez in the Spy Kids trilogy. Alexa also made her Broadway debut in 2007 when she played Penny Pingleton in the Tony Award winning Broadway version of Hairspray. Alexa is currently starring in the ABC Family Show sitcom "Ruby and the Rockits" with David Cassidy. Alexa will also be seen in the films "The Mine," "Café," "Helix," and "Broken Hill."

The multi-talented Alexa also recorded two songs for the soundtrack of the Spy Kids film and is fluent in Spanish.

At an age where most roles are for typical teen movies that lack in inspiration, Alexa sets herself apart from other young actresses in her search for roles with depth and meaning. Her role as Kat Rogers in Broken Hill was a chance for Alexa to play a character that differs from the likeable roles she normally chooses. The role allowed her to explore the complexity of the character as Kat is more than just the mean girl. Her behaviour is a response to the constant travelling with her family, which she likens to homelessness. Kat therefore finds it difficult to create relationships, like all the characters in the film Kat battles with isolation. Kat's interaction with Tommy (Luke Arnold) opens her up to a new perspective of the world and provides an insight into her true character.

Morals and values were an important aspect of Alexa's upbringing. It is evident in her maturity and roles choices and her awareness that these choices will affect the longevity of her career.

Ms. Vega has appeared in the films "Repo! The Genetic Opera", "Twister" as the young Helen Hunt, "Little Giants", "Nine Months", "Ghosts of Mississippi", "Deep End of the Ocean", "Sleepover", and "State's Evidence". Her television credits include "Ghost Whisperer," "Ladies Man" opposite Alfred Molina, "ER," "Chicago Hope," and the lead in the Lifetime feature, "Odd Girl Out." She also starred in the HBO film, "Walkout" and the independent film, "The Beautiful Ordinary".

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Luke Arnold Biography **Tommy McAlpine**

Luke Arnold's first taste of being on a film set came when he was 18. His sword fighting experience led to him acquiring a job on the set of PJ Hogan's *Peter Pan* in the action department. Luke taught the cast how to swordfight and helped to choreograph scenes. When the film was wrapped he immediately set about training himself for a professional career in acting, and was accepted into one of Australia's leading performance training institutions, WAAPA (The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts). WAAPA accepts only 9 male and 9 female students from around the country and lists Hugh Jackman as a former student.

Once he graduated he had his first television roles in *The Elephant Princess*, Channel 9's *McLeod's Daughters* and *The Strip*, and Steven Spielberg's *Band of Brothers: Pacific*, one of the most expensive mini series ever made.

Luke continued working in theatre securing the lead role in the production *Like Stars in my Hand*. In early 2008 Luke was offered the chance to audition for Tommy McAlpine in the Australian film *Broken Hill* and landed the role a week later.

Broken Hill was filmed in South Australia and offered Luke the chance to act beside American stars Alexa Vega and Academy Award winner Timothy Hutton, and along with fellow Australian Rhys Wakefield.

He then returned to his own projects, writing and directing his first short film *Chicken 'n' Chipps*. In February 2009 he played the lead role in Colm O'Murchu's *A Day in the Life* and scored a guest role in Channel 9's upcoming series *Rescue: Special Ops*.

Luke is now preparing for the upcoming release of both films, and a trip to LA to further his career.

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Timothy Hutton Biography
George McAlpine

In a career marked by exceptional and award-winning performances, Timothy Hutton continues to push the boundaries of his craft.

Hutton will be seen starring in the second season of TNT's action-packed drama series, *Leverage*. The series follows a team of thieves, hackers and grifters who seek revenge against those who use wealth and power to victimize others, in a dark, modern-day take on *Robin Hood*. Hutton plays a former insurance investigator (Nate Ford), who quits his job after his own son is denied insurance coverage by his employer and left to die.

In addition to his television series, Hutton will next be seen in Jonathan Liebesman's *The Killing Room*, opposite Chloe Sevigny; and in Cheryl Hines' *Serious Moonlight* with Meg Ryan and Kristen Bell. In *Broken Hill* he plays a third generation Australian farmer who is at odds with his son and fails to understand his passion for music and lack of interest in working on the farm and playing Australian Rules Football. The movie is an inspirational journey about following your dreams against the odds and overcoming isolation in its many different forms.

Hutton's riveting performance in Robert Redford's directorial debut *Ordinary People* earned him the film industry's highest accolades, including an Academy Award, Golden Globe, BAFTA and Los Angeles Film Critics Award. To this date, Hutton is the youngest recipient of an Academy Award in the category of Best Actor in a Supporting Role.

His career includes stellar performances in films such as Harold Becker's *Taps* opposite Tom Cruise and Sean Penn, a role that garnered him another Golden Globe nomination; as well as *Daniel*, *The Falcon & The Snowman*, *Made In Heaven*, *Q&A*, *The General's Daughter*, *French Kiss*, *Beautiful Girls*, *Sunshine State*, *Kinsey*, *Secret Window*, *The Good Shepherd* and *Lymelife*.

On television, Hutton starred in *A Long Way Home*, for which he received another Golden Globe nomination; produced and starred in Showtime's *Mr. & Mrs. Loving*; played the title role in the acclaimed *Aldrich Ames: Traitor Within*; co-starred in the docudrama *WW3*; and was the executive producer, director, music supervisor and star of A&E's critically acclaimed series of movies based on Rex Stouts famed detective novels, *Nero Wolfe*.

BROKEN HILL

Timothy Hutton Biography Continued *George McAlpine*

As a member of New York's Circle Repertory Company, Hutton originated the lead role in the Broadway Production of Craig Lucas' *Prelude To a Kiss* and starred in *Babylon Gardens*. In addition, he appeared in the Los Angeles stage production of *The Oldest Living Graduate* a role he later reprised for a live broadcast on NBC. Hutton also directed Nicole Burdette's *Busted* for the New York-based theatre company, Naked Angels.

Working behind the camera, Hutton has directed a number of music videos, including "Drive" by the Cars, "Not Enough Love" by Don Henley, and the Neil Young concert film "Freedom." He also directed an episode of Steven Spielberg's *Amazing Stories* entitled "Grandpa's Ghost," which was adapted from a story he wrote. His feature film directorial debut, *Digging to China* starring Kevin Bacon, Mary Stuart Masterson and Evan Rachel Wood, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 1998 to standing ovations.

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Rhys Wakefield Biography
Scott Price

Rhys Wakefield played Lucas on *Home and Away* for three years, his role on the show led to a Logie nomination in 2006 for Best New Talent. Prior to this he had a guest appearance on the television series *Don't Blame Me* and has worked with Opera Australia in *La Boheme* and The Australian Ballet in *The Nutcracker*. He won an acting scholarship to McDonald College - School of the Performing Arts.

He has worked on a number of short films and in 2008 secured his first lead role in *The Black Balloon* playing Thomas Mollison. He starred alongside Toni Collette and Gemma Ward. The film secured Berlin Film Festivals Crystal Bear winning the Generation 14 plus category. This role also led to nominations at the 2008 AFI Awards, IF (Inside Film) and FCCA (Film Critics Circle of Australia) Awards for Best Actor in a Feature Film.

Rhys has since featured in the Australian movie *Broken Hill* which won three awards at the Giffoni Film Festival in Italy in the Generator 13 plus category, playing the role of Scott.

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Che Timmins Biography **Kalai Takalua**

A graduate of Victorian College of the Arts, Drama, Che started his career on stage performing in *Take Me Out* for the Melbourne Theatre Company. An accomplished theatre performer, he has also appeared in *Vincent of Gilgamesh* at the Melbourne International Festival.

Che has portrayed a vast range of characters in his screen work – playing Jimmy Hendrix in the US telemovie *Nightmares and Dreamscapes* and Radio Man for the *Matrix 2* directed by the Wachowski Brothers.

He has appeared in the BBC production of *The Ship* as well as the feature film *Visions* by acclaimed indigenous director Richard Franklin. Che is a much sought after television performer in Australia- appearing in *Last Man Standing*, *Something in the Air* and *Sea Patrol* to name a few.

He was cast as prisoner Kalai Takalua in the Australian film *Broken Hill*, where he was able to use his musical skills as he is an extremely accomplished musician.

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Andy McPhee Biography

Bear

Andy has been a stalwart of the Australian film and television industry since the late 1980's. His career began in his hometown of Adelaide, from this successful base Andy moved to Melbourne and threw himself into all aspects of the industry. His size and look initially had him cast in 'tough' styles of roles from bikers to all manner of heavies. As Andy's flexibility and talent became more highly appreciated, he began to win more everyday roles in all mediums.

From 1989 to 2001 Andy was cast in approximately 40 roles in film and television varying in size and complexity. From 2001 he has been cast in major television guest roles and lead roles in film and all manner of corporate productions.

Andy's break came in 2002 when he was cast in the award winning film *One Week at a Time*, written and directed by emerging creative talent Jaime Browne. He was then cast as Cutthroat Jack in J.M. Shiff's television series and later film sequels *Pirate Islands*. Since this time the roles have become more varied, from Tiny the caring biker in *Silencer*, Leon the fatherly thief in *Tom White* with Colin Friles, to the savage Bazza in Greg McLean's seminal horror feature *Wolf Creek*.

Since 2002 Andy has featured in over 70 international and local feature films and television series. Recently he has featured in the Australian film *Broken Hill* as the prison inmate Bear. As well as his dedication to his own career he is instrumental in the careers of his two children. Who have played roles in *Neighbours*, *The Road* and *Romulus my Father*.

BROKEN HILL

CAST

Peter Lamb Biography
Officer Jack Taylor

Peter first started acting in high school, participating in school musicals; he continued acting at university whilst completing an arts degree. He started performing professionally in the Brisbane theatre scene in the mid 1980's. After working extensively in Queensland, he moved to Sydney in the late 90's to perform with the Bell Shakespeare Company, playing Macbeth in a touring production.

Peter has performed in many shows with Bell Shakespeare, and worked with many notable directors, including Steven Berkoff, Jim Sharman, and of course, John Bell.

He has appeared in a number of Australian television series over the years including guest roles in productions such as *Underbelly Two*, *Wild Side* and *Bastard Boys*. He has had ongoing roles in *Fireflies*, *All Saints* and *Home and Away*.

In film, he had roles in the *Matrix Reloaded* and *Matrix Revolutions*, *Chameleon Three*, and *South Pacific*.

He has recently appeared in the Australian films *Accidents Happen* and *Broken Hill* and is currently working on his first novel and co-writing his first screenplay.

BROKEN HILL

WRITER AND DIRECTOR

Dagen Merrill Biography

Dagen Merrill a writer and director got his first professional film job at age 13 working pyrotechnics in the jungles of Western Samoa. He received his MFA from the University of Southern California's Peter Stark Producing Program and is an Honorary Fellow of the American Film Institute (AFI).

Dagen was named a Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmaker and his short film *Accomplice* placed him as a top four finalist in the Project Greenlight competition at Sundance Film Festival. At the 2006 Cannes Lions Festival he was included in the Saatchi & Saatchi New Director's Showcase as one of twenty-five emerging directing talents worldwide.

In 2006 he completed shooting *Beneath*, a suspense-genre feature film for Paramount Classics and MTV Films that he directed and co-wrote with his writing partner Kevin Burke. They are both currently under contract with Kickstart Productions (*Painkiller Jane*, *Wanted*) adapting the comic book *Necrotic*.

Dagen wrote and directed *Broken Hill*, an independent feature film shot in the Australian outback.

BROKEN HILL

PRODUCER

Chris Wyatt Biography

Chris “Doc” Wyatt, a USC graduate holding an MFA from the Peter Stark Producing Program, has produced six feature films: “*Napoleon Dynamite*” (Fox Searchlight, 2004), “*Think Tank*” (CF Entertainment, 2005), “*Beneath*” (MTV Films, 2006), “*Coyote*” (Maya Releasing, 2009), the Australian family drama “*Broken Hill*” (for release September 2009), and “*Café*” starring Jennifer Love Hewitt (now in Post-production).

Wyatt’s work on *Napoleon Dynamite* and *Think Tank* earned him a nomination for the 2005 IFP Indie Spirit “Producer’s Award”. Wyatt’s next film, “*Dodge*” is projected to begin production in 2009.

Broken Hill received three awards at its premier screening at the Giffoni Film Festival 2009 (Italy). The film explores the themes of isolation, perseverance and following one’s dreams and is set in the Australian Outback.

A native of Atlanta, Wyatt now lives in Los Angeles with his wife Laura and son Liam.

BROKEN HILL

PRODUCER

Julie Ryan Biography

Based at the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) in Adelaide, Julie Ryan formed production company, Cyan Films, with fellow producer, Kate Croser in 2007.

In 2008 Julie produced two feature films: *My Tehran For Sale* shot entirely on location in Tehran; and *Broken Hill*, a musical drama set in the Australian outback and produced with *Napoleon Dynamite* producer Chris "Doc" Wyatt.

Prior to setting up Cyan, Julie produced five feature films and two documentaries with Rolf de Heer at Vertigo Productions. *The Old Man Who Read Love Stories* (2000), shot in French Guyane, South America, starring Richard Dreyfuss and Hugo Weaving, was nominated for Best Film at the 2005 Film Critics Circle, Australian Film Institute and IF Awards.

In 2002 Julie produced *The Tracker* (2002) with legendary Aboriginal actor David Gulpilil in the lead, was shot in the stunning outback at Arkaroola. It was selected in Official Competition at the Venice International Film Festival in 2002, won Best Film at the 2002 Film Critics Circle and IF Awards, and received a Best Film nomination from the AFI Awards.

Alexandra's Project in 2003 was a thriller starring Gary Sweet. It was selected for Official Competition at the Berlin Film Festival, and was also nominated for Best Film at the Film Critics Circle and AFI Awards in 2003.

The 2006 film *Ten Canoes* was made with the Aboriginal community of Ramingining in Arnhem Land, and won the Special Jury Prize in Un Certain Regard at the 2006 Cannes International Film Festival. It also won Best Film at the Film Critics Circle and AFI Awards in 2006.

Her last film with de Heer, *Dr Plonk* (2007), a black and white, silent comedy, was selected for the Visions Programme at the 2007 Toronto International Film Festival.

Julie's documentary credits include: *Heather Rose Goes To Cannes* (1998) which won the Celebration of Ability Award, International Day for People with a Disability in 1999; and *The Balanda and the Bark Canoes* (2006) which won the Audience Award for Documentaries at the Sydney Film Festival in 2006.

Julie is currently a budget assessor for Screen Australia and NSW FTO, and has been a SAFC board member since May 2008.

BROKEN HILL

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Nick Mathews Biography

Nick is a cinematographer and film producer. He studied film at Flinders University before moving to Europe in 1998 where he worked on productions including the Steven Spielberg/Tom Hanks produced HBO series *Band of Brothers* and the Hugh Grant film *About a Boy*.

In 2001 he returned to Australia and has since photographed Alex Frayne's feature film *Modern Love* which Nick also wrote (Best Foreign Film, European IF festival, Paris, 2006). He co-edited and co-produced Murali Thalluri's *2:37* which was officially selected at Cannes and Toronto festivals in 2006, and won an ACS gold award.

He operated the 2nd unit and "B" camera on Greg Reid's thriller *Like Minds* starring Toni Colette and Richard Roxborough. Nick also photographed Anthony Maras' AFC funded shorts *Azadi* (AFI nominated for best short and a golden tripod at the 2006 ACS awards) and his latest film *Spike Up*, which stars Marcus Graham (winner of the 2007 AFI for best short film).

Nick also shoots and produces music clips and commercials. He has worked for Mitsubishi Motors and he photographed and produced Sia Furler's recent clip *Sunday* from her album *Colour the Small One* for Astralwerks records in the US. In 2008 Nick shot the Australian feature film *Broken Hill*, starring Oscar winner Timothy Hutton (*Ordinary People*) and Alexa Vega (*Spykids*). Nick also shot the 2nd unit on Rachel Ward's feature film *Beautiful Kate*.

BROKEN HILL

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Robert Webb Biography

Robert Webb is a Production Designer, currently based in South Australia. Robert has a wealth of experience and relationships within the Australian film industry, having made his start working in the Art Department on films such as *Rabbit Proof Fence*, *One Night the Moon* and *Aussie Rules*. He quickly rose to Art Department Head on the award winning film *Modern Love*. He has since designed over ten feature films, including *Ten Empty*, *Beautiful*, and *The Caterpillar Wish*, for which he won the Inside Film (IF) Award for Best Production Design.

Robert then designed Greg McLean's break out hit, *Wolf Creek*, which screened at Sundance and sold to Dimension Films. He then went on to design McLean's \$30M follow up, the croc thriller *Rogue*, where he headed up a team of over 40 people. On this film he had the extraordinary opportunity to build vast sets including an island, crocodile lair, tourist boat and the atmospheric General Store.

2008 saw a busy year for Robert designing three feature films; including the effects-heavy horror film *The Loved Ones* which will premiere at the Melbourne International Film Festival in 2009; actor John Jarrett's producing debut *Savages Crossing*; and *Broken Hill* for US producer Chris Wyatt.