



**MADMAN**

# THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM

IN CINEMAS AUGUST 22



DIRECTED BY **DANIEL GORDON**

RUNNING TIME **106 MINS**

RATED **TBC**

**MADMAN ENTERTAINMENT PUBLICITY CONTACTS:**

**CAROLINE WHITEWAY – [caroline.whiteway@madman.com.au](mailto:caroline.whiteway@madman.com.au)**

<https://www.madmanfilms.com.au/the-australian-dream/>

#AustralianDream

[FACEBOOK](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#) | [TWITTER](#)

*The producers acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the sovereign lands where this documentary was filmed.*

## **LOGLINE:**

When the truth of history is told, we can all walk together.

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

The Australian Dream is a documentary that uses the remarkable and inspirational story of Indigenous AFL legend Adam Goodes as the prism through which to tell a deep and powerful story about race, identity and belonging.

For the first time Adam reveals his profoundly emotional journey in his own words and asks fundamental questions about the nature of racism and discrimination in society today. Walkley award-winning writer Stan Grant and BAFTA award-winning director Daniel Gordon join forces to tell this remarkable story of one of the most decorated & celebrated players in AFL history. A man who remains a cultural hero; the very epitome of resilience & survival, who continues to fight for equality and reconciliation.

## **SYNOPSIS**

From shy country kid to two-time Brownlow medallist and Australian of the Year, Goodes is an inspiration to many. The footy field was where he thrived; the only place where the colour of his skin was irrelevant. Goodes' world fell apart when he became the target of racial abuse during a game, which spiralled into public backlash against him. He spoke out about racism when Australia was not ready to hear the ugly truth, retiring quietly from AFL heartbroken.

Using the stunning athleticism of Goodes at the peak of his powers as well as the game itself as the film's backdrop, THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM prompts questions about Australia's relationship with racism and its ability to confront its own past. This compelling, provocative and cinematic film uses interviews from both sides of the debate to ask probing and fundamental questions about what it means to be Australian and what it takes for any individual to stand up for what they truly believe in. Featuring Goodes and all the key players from his story, including Grant, Michael O'Loughlin, Brett Goodes, Natalie Goodes, Tracey Holmes, Nova Peris, Nicky Winmar, Gilbert McAdam, Linda Burney, Paul Roos, John Longmire, Nathan Buckley, Eddie McGuire and Andrew Bolt, THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM is also a deeply personal and comprehensive exploration of Goodes' own journey which saw him retreat from everyday life only to return determined to rise above the ugliness he had been forced to confront.

The Australian Dream is something people reach for and many people obtain, but there's an emptiness at the heart of it because Australia has not resolved the questions of its history. If the Australian Dream is rooted in racism, what can be done to redefine it for the next generation?

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

### **DANIEL GORDON**

I make films and tell stories to move audiences. Whenever I look for a project to direct, I look for a subject, a story, that I feel offers me the opportunity to make a film that can impact as large and as far-reaching an audience as possible.

The next key factor for me is ascertaining whether the story I want to tell offers me as a filmmaker the opportunity to tell it in a way that transcends an already compelling core story enabling it to resonate far wider than that core story.

The Australian Dream offered me that opportunity in so many ways. The story was both engaging and enraging. As with many of my films, it had the world of top-level professional sport as its backdrop and as (nearly) everyone loves sport, this provided a broad audience with the perfect access point. The story itself takes place in a country that is on the surface familiar to us all, outwardly sunshine and surf and great outdoors, yet that shiny veneer - once scratched at - reveals a nation in the throes of an internal struggle with itself as reflected by a much more sinister landscape.

The core story is remarkable, an extraordinarily talented and dignified man, Adam Goodes, a sporting hero of Australia, once decorated and revered yet over a two-year period broken by that same nation turning its back on him and, worse still, turning on him and driving him out of his chosen profession for which he had been so celebrated.

And they didn't just force him out. They racially abused him out.

In response to the treatment that Adam Goodes was subjected to, a cast of characters reveals itself. Some of these characters are ugly and bitter who reveal a deep-rooted underbelly of racism that has cast a shadow over large sections of Australian society. But, in direct contrast, many are brave and inspirational, who suggest that there are forces at work, benevolent and bold, who offer the nation a clear path to accountability and reconciliation. None more so than the remarkable Stan Grant.

Stan Grant is a modern-day Civil Rights hero. In his powerful and emotive words, we hear echoes of so many who have gone before him, iconic people like Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

Stan Grant deserves his place alongside those men because Stan, like Adam, has lived the life of the oppressed and has risen above it. And like those inspirational men he bears no resentment or anger, he just wants people to listen and learn and for the plight of Australia's Indigenous community to improve dramatically. And now, he feels, at last, it seems people are listening. Stan truly believes that for the first time there is the possibility of real progress. And Adam, in his life today, exemplifies that possibility of progress.

In Adam and Stan, I see the kind of characters one is rarely lucky enough to find, and rarely lucky enough to build a film around. But we had them both in THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM and they offered

me the perfect access point for an unknowing audience to connect with this story. It is just impossible not to be deeply moved and inspired by them both.

THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM is a film that resonates on so many different levels. It is Adam and Stan's story, but it is also the story of a nation, Australia, large swathes of which remains trapped in its own past, stubbornly refusing to progress, to emancipate and to make amends for the horrendous racism of its history and struggling to chart a comprehensively redemptive course in its present. It is a film about family values, about the power of family ties and how to be a caring parent and a loyal child. It is a film about bigotry, about racism much like the racism that has prompted so much global rage over the decades. Australia refracts Apartheid and Black Lives Matters, its policy towards its Aboriginal community has been just as degrading, just as violent, just as white. But it is also a film about redemption, a redemption spearheaded by remarkable and brave people, who stood up to the bigotry and racism and showed there was another way. And then, bottom line, it is a film about a supremely talented sportsman, who rose up above all hardship to become the very, very, very best, and when brought to his knees, he rose again, calmly, with such dignity and spoke up gently in the name of all of those who had suffered and in the hope that many more won't have to suffer the same.

This film has all the ingredients and more than I could ever wish for and I am truly excited to make it and bring it to the world stage.

## **WRITER'S STATEMENT, STAN GRANT**

In the winter of 2015 Australia turned to face itself. It happened in that place most sacred to us: the sporting field. Adam Goodes an indigenous footballer, one of the greatest players of his generation, was abused and humiliated until he could take no more.

As this man retreated from the field Australia was forced to confront the darkest parts of its own history. Black and white we are all formed by this. We carry the blood of each other in our veins. Yet, we meet across a vast divide.

This wasn't about sport; this was about our shared history and our failure to reconcile. Some sought to deny this, some to excuse it – to explain it away – but when thousands of voices booed Adam Goodes, my people knew where that came from.

To us it sounded like a howl: a howl of humiliation that echoed across two centuries of dispossession, exclusion, desegregation. It was the howl of people dead on the Australian frontier; killed in wars Australia still does not speak about. It was the howl of people locked up: a quarter of the prison population is Indigenous. It was the howl of hungry children; women beaten and men in chains.

In Australia today the first people of this land are the most impoverished. They die on average ten years younger than their fellow Australians. They have the worst outcomes in health, housing, education and employment. Aboriginal kids under the age of 15 are ten times more likely to take their own lives than other Australian children.

This is the stain on Australia's soul. It is a deep wound that refuses to heal.

And yet, there is hope. There is hope in the struggle of Indigenous Australians for citizenship and equality. It is the hope of Indigenous students graduating university in increasing numbers. It is the hope of Australians black and white marching for reconciliation.

We are more than a nation: we are a family. Indigenous people draw our ancestry from white and black. I am descended from an Irish rebel convict who left behind a family: no longer Irish no longer just Aboriginal but something new: Australian.

This film tells the story of Adam Goodes: but it also tells a bigger story of how we find ourselves. It is not a story of Australia; it is a story of humanity. How a nation refuses to look away and asks how it can be better.

## **INSPIRING QUOTES FROM CONTRIBUTORS**

“Sport has a way of really capturing the essence of what's happening in society.” – **Stan Grant**

“What we saw ultimately was the true measure of who we are. It wasn't the booing; it was the people who stood up to the booing. It can never be too late. it can never be too late for that. Our history is a history of violence and racism and it's a history of people over coming that. People reaching across that divide.” - **Stan Grant**

“Sport in this country really goes to the heart of what the country is, how the country sees itself” - **Tracey Holmes**

“I believe racism is a community issue, which we all need to address and that's why racism stops with me” - **Adam Goodes**

“You don't want to be the person who has to stand up and has to fight battles every day of your life. Who wants that? And it takes a huge toll. But it takes a greater toll to walk away.” - **Stan Grant**

“When the truth of history is told, we can walk together.”- **Ken Canning, Invasion Day 2018.**

“It [the booing] was not respectful, it did not show the best of us. It was ignorant. And often someone has to break for that to cease, unfortunately.” – **Nathan Buckley**

“Mostly the body stops players. The heart and the mind is willing but the body says no and when you are in Adam's circumstance, I reckon his heart was broken.” – **Nathan Buckley**

## QUOTES ABOUT THE FILM

“This is one of the great untold sporting stories of our times, a film that is more relevant today than probably at any time in the past. This is a film that everyone should see, a film that resonates across nationalities and boundaries, a genuinely emotional story of our times” - **Dylan Jones, Editor-In-Chief, GQ**

“A brilliant and timely reminder of the importance of community and the power of sport for the dream of a tolerant society.” - **Chiwetel Ejiofor**

“I think that “The Australian Dream” redefines what it means to be an Australian today. And it instilled a great sense of hope inside of me. It’s raw and impactful and worked to explain, through a figure as notable as Adam Goodes, some of the feelings I’ve always known, but could never describe, about what it means to be an Indigenous person in Australia today.” - **Aretha Brown**

"Compelling and thought provoking " - **Dr John Moriarty, AM**

“It’s a well-rounded thought-provoking film that takes you behind the scenes to share the absolute truths, which made me even more so admire Adam Goodes as a man and athlete. It was a great reminder to continue the fight against racism.” - **George Rose**

## **KEY CONTRIBUTORS BIOGRAPHIES:**

### **ADAM GOODES, AFL FOOTBALLER, AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR, GO FOUNDATION FOUNDER**

There are not many bigger names in Australian sport than Adam Goodes. Dual AFL Brownlow Medallist and premiership player for the Sydney Swans, four-time All-Australian, member of the Indigenous Team of the Century and representative in the International Rules Series, Adam holds an elite place in Australian Football League's history.

But his career transcends the football field. In 2014, Adam was named the Australian of the Year. This distinguished award recognised Adam's community work and advocacy in the fight against racism, empowering the next generation of Indigenous Australians.

Born in South Australia, Adam moved to Victoria as a young boy and developed a passion for AFL. His natural ability saw him ascend through the football ranks early, being drafted by the Sydney Swans from North Ballarat U18s. Adam soon became one of the game's leading players and had a much-celebrated career spanning over 17 seasons.

He announced his retirement from AFL in September 2015, leaving the field as the Swans' games record holder on 372, and one of the most decorated players of all time. Some of the many accolades Adam received during his career include: the prestigious Rising Star medal in his debut year (1999); leading his team as co-captain (2009-2012); celebrating premierships (2005 & 2012); and being awarded the AFL's highest honour of Brownlow Medallist twice (2003 & 2006).

Adam is known equally for his involvement and leadership within the Indigenous community. In 2009, Adam set up The Goodes-O'Loughlin Foundation (GO Foundation) with teammate Michael O'Loughlin. GO Foundation's vision is to create a brighter future for Indigenous children through education. In 2014, he joined the board of Supply Nation, a government-funded body aimed at growing the Indigenous business sector through the promotion of supplier diversity in Australia.

Adam's work within the corporate world extends to advising large organisations such as David Jones and Lend Lease, on their Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP). He is also currently an ambassador for many prominent brands including Toyota, David Jones, Qantas and Woolworths. With the supermarket giant, he is a board member for Support Through Australia Natural Disasters (STAND), a disaster relief program founded by Woolworths and The Salvation Army.

Since retiring from AFL, Adam has been able to invest more time in the GO Foundation and his new business Indigenous Defence & Infrastructure Consortium (IDC), which helps establish sustainable practices for Indigenous entrepreneurs.

## **STAN GRANT, JOURNALIST, WRITER**

Stan Grant was born in Griffith, NSW and is a proud Wiradjuri man. He is one of Australia's most respected and awarded journalists, with more than 30 years' experience in radio and television news and current affairs. Stan has a strong reputation for independence and integrity and has interviewed international political and business leaders, including prime ministers and senior ministers. Stan served for a decade as a Senior International Correspondent for CNN in Asia and the Middle East, broadcasting to an audience of millions around the world. As a journalist, he has received a string of prestigious international and Australian awards. In 2015, he published his bestselling book *Talking to My Country*, and won a Walkley award for his coverage of indigenous affairs. In 2016 he was appointed to the Referendum Council on Indigenous recognition. Ever prolific, he has published two new books this year. *Australia Day* is a continuation of *Talking to My Country* and *On Identity* is a companion piece exploring the existential dilemma of identity for anyone with mixed ancestry.

## KEY CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES:

### DANIEL GORDON, DIRECTOR

Daniel Gordon is a British documentary film director best known for his double BAFTA winning and critically acclaimed feature documentary, *Hillsborough*, which is the definitive account of the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster. Daniel's previous films include a series of ground breaking documentaries from North Korea including, *Crossing the Line*, (Premiere: Sundance Film Festival); feature documentary '9.79\*' investigates the infamous and controversial 1988 Seoul Olympic men's 100m final, won by Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson, who was subsequently stripped of his gold medal after testing positive for performance-enhancing drugs. (Premiere: Toronto International Film Festival); *I Scored a Goal in the FIFA World Cup Final*, a series of 34 short documentary films featuring testimony from the only 34 men alive today to have scored a goal in a World Cup Final, and feature documentary *George Best: All By Himself* which premiered at the 2016 60th BFI London Film Festival.

### STAN GRANT, WRITER

Stan Grant was born in Griffith, NSW and is a proud Wiradjuri man. He is one of Australia's most respected and awarded journalists, with more than 30 years' experience in radio and television news and current affairs. Stan has a strong reputation for independence and integrity and has interviewed international political and business leaders, including prime ministers and senior ministers. Stan served for a decade as a Senior International Correspondent for CNN in Asia and the Middle East, broadcasting to an audience of millions around the world. As a journalist, he has received a string of prestigious international and Australian awards. In 2015, he published his bestselling book *Talking to My Country*, and also won a Walkley award for his coverage of indigenous affairs. In 2016 he was appointed to the Referendum Council on Indigenous recognition. Ever prolific, he has published two new books this year. *Australia Day* is a continuation of *Talking to My Country* and *On Identity* is a companion piece exploring the existential dilemma of identity for anyone with mixed ancestry.

### SARAH THOMSON – PRODUCER

Prior to joining Passion Pictures in 2017, Sarah spent 4 years at Universal Pictures working in acquisition and distribution. At Passion, Sarah works alongside founder John Battsek contributing editorially across the documentary output as well as producing on specific titles. The Australian Dream is the first feature documentary conceived and produced by Sarah. Hailing from Darwin, the Adam Goodes' story was one that struck Sarah as being shocking, important and timely. Making initial contact with Adam back in 2016 Sarah then spearheaded the development and production of the project working alongside partners at Madman and Good Thing to secure the finance out of Australia as well as the UK. Sarah is currently overseeing development and production on a number of projects including a series on gun violence, a feature documentary about the pharmaceutical industry and a feature documentary about Wall Street.

### **NICK BATZIAS – PRODUCER**

Nick Batzias has 16 years of acquisition, distribution and production experience. Recently he founded Good Thing Productions after over 15 years at Madman Entertainment (MME) and as Head of Madman Production Company (MPC). Good Thing focuses on the production of Narrative and Factual projects for screens big and small. At MME he worked on the release of over five-hundred feature and documentary films across various rights exploitation. As a key part of his role, Nick has assessed hundreds of scripts, treatments and rough cuts with a view to acquiring the films for distribution in Australia and New Zealand. At MPC, he produced a range of critically acclaimed and award-winning films, both narrative and documentary. Most recently Nick produced feature documentaries *All For One*, *Westwind: Djalu's Legacy* and *Spookers*, Matthew Saville dark comedy *A Month of Sundays* starring Anthony LaPaglia and AACTA winning Australian box office doco smash *That Sugar Film*. Nick recently produced feature documentary *2040* (premiered Berlinale 2019) and feature film *Below* set to premiere at MIFF 2019.

### **VIRGINIA WHITWELL - PRODUCER**

Virginia Whitwell is a highly experienced film practitioner and producer with over twenty years in the industry. She is the Head of Production at Good Thing Productions after five years as Head of Production at Madman Production Company. She has co-produced and produced many scripted and factual projects including award winning *That Sugar Film*, *A Month Of Sundays*, *All For One* and the recently released *2040* directed by Damon Gameau (premiered Berlinale 2019). Hailing from the UK, she has worked on numerous productions all over the world. Her extensive production experience includes projects for Warner Bros, HBO, Lucasfilm, EON, 20th Century Fox and Universal. Virginia is currently producing feature film *BELOW* set to premiere at MIFF 2019.

### **JOHN BATTSEK – PRODUCER**

John Battsek is the MD and founder of Passion Pictures, a double Academy Award winning, four times Academy Award nominated, independent production company and one of the most successful and prolific producers of feature documentary films in the international marketplace. In 1999, Battsek conceived and produced Academy Award-winning *One Day in September* and he has since been responsible for over 30 high profile feature documentaries including; Academy Award nominated *Restrepo*; Prime Time Emmy winning *The Tillman*; Prime Time Emmy winning *Manhunt*; BAFTA Outstanding Debut Winner *The Imposter*, and Academy Award and BAFTA winning *Searching for Sugar Man*. John also produced Peabody-winning and 2016 BAFTA nominated *Listen to Me Marlon*, and the 2016 Academy Award Nominated *Winter on Fire*. More recently, John produced *Eric Clapton: Life In 12 Bars* - and *The Final Year*, which offered an unprecedented look at the shaping of US foreign policy of former US President Barack Obama's administration and *Studio 54*, the real story behind the greatest club of all time which premiered at Sundance in 2018. John has been nominated three times for a PGA Award and was the recipient of 2013 prestigious Grierson Trustees Award for Outstanding Contribution to Documentary.

## **MATT WYLLIE - EDITOR**

In a 25-year career Matt has worked for every broadcaster in the UK and many across the world. His work has won numerous Royal Television Society, BAFTA and Emmy awards. However, in recent years he has specialised in feature documentaries. His films have twice been nominated for the Grierson Award (*Clough* 2009 and *The Fall* 2017) and in 2012, *The Fight of their Lives* was nominated for a BAFTA. In 2015 *Steve McQueen: The Man & Les Mans* premiered at the Cannes Film Festival and later went on to be long listed for an Academy Award. Matt also formed his own production company Deadpan Films in 2010, which has been responsible for the SJA award winning series *Sports Life Stories* and the Netflix series *The Mavericks*.

## **DYLAN RIVER - DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Dylan River is an award-winning filmmaker from Alice Springs. His debut short documentary *Buckskin* (2013) won the Documentary Prize at the 60th Sydney Film Festival and was selected for the Adelaide Film Festival. Dylan's first short film *Nulla* (2015) premiered at the Berlin International Short Film Festival in 2015, followed by a selection for the Toronto International Film Festival and later won the AACTA Award for Best Short Fiction Film. In 2017 Dylan worked as cinematographer alongside his father Warwick Thornton on AACTA award-winning *Sweet Country*. In 2018 Dylan debuted his first feature documentary *Finke: There and Back* which premiered at Melbourne International Film Festival.

## **MICHAEL TIMNEY – DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Michael Timney has been a DOP for over 13 years, working across award winning drama, feature documentary and TV documentary. He has filmed diverse subjects in equally diverse environments and in over 90 countries shooting both fiction and documentary. He has shot on a variety of formats, from Super 8 to 4k and on most camera systems. Drama credits include *WW1 The Final Hours*, *The Interrogation of Tony Martin*, *The Mentalist*. Single documentary films and series include *George Best: All By Himself*, *The Fall*, *Cutting Edge*, *Modern Times*, *Storyville*, *Body Shock*, *One Life*, *Dispatches* and *Horizon*.

## **COMPOSERS – CORNEL WILCZEK, PASCAL BABARE, THOMAS E ROUCH**

**Cornel Wilczek** is an Australian award-winning screen composer and music producer. He is driven by experimentation and the desire to find something new in music. Working with colour and contrast, he combines lush, acoustic sources with home-made electronics to take listeners to new places and help create unique worlds for his projects.

His feature film work includes *Cut Snake*, *These Final Hours* (Best Score at Festival International Du Film Fantastique de Gérardmer), *The Mule* and Academy Award winner, Eva Orner's *Chasing Asylum*. His TV work includes *Glitch* (AACTA Award for best music score in television), *Offspring* and the international award-winning children's show *Nowhere Boys*. His music production work includes 2015's (AMP Awards nominee) *Severe* by My Disco, Wagon's Rumble, *Shake and Tumble* and his own electronic music under the moniker *Qua*. Cornel runs and owns Electric Dreams Studio (opened 2009), in South Melbourne, Australia. It is a high-end, acoustically designed space that facilitates creative

development, broadcast composition and mixing, surround for TV and film, as well as album production. The studio houses 9 employees, including producers, composers, sound-designers and engineers. He has an MA (2007) in Sound Art, RMIT.

**Pascal Babare** is a Melbourne based musician, composer, and producer. He makes music under his own name, composes music for TV & film, and plays in bands AT/ALL, Mallee Songs, Magic Hands, and Aleks & The Ramps.

Pascal completed RMIT's Bachelor of Fine Art Sound in 2012 with distinction, and has since been working at Melbourne music studio Electric Dreams. There he's composed music for BBC's *Top Of The Lake – China Girl* (season 2); Channel Ten's *Offspring* (seasons 6 & 7); ABC's *Glitch* (season 1); NBC's *Nowhere Boys* (seasons 1, 2, & 3); ABC's Corey White's *Roadmap To Paradise* (season 1); and feature length documentary *Westwind* (2017).

He's also composed music for documentary shorts *Fighting Forward* by Kylie Beale; *Please Attach Proof* by Sam McGilp (2013); animated short *The Wolf, Demon And The Moon* by Leanne Lee (2012); short film *Spit* by Amy Dellar (2011); and composed and produced the score for theatre production *The Waiting Place* by Ahmarnya Price (2011), which won Melbourne Fringe Festival's 2011 'Best Original Australian Work award'.

Pascal wrote and recorded his solo LPs "Thunderclap Spring" (2009) and "Sorry, Morning" (2014) between Melbourne, Kyoto, and Berlin, and since returning to Melbourne in 2009, he's mixed, co-composed and produced LPs "Rough River" (Rough River, 2013); "Natural Times" (Mallee Songs, 2015); "Sun Dog" (At/All, 2016); "The Leaving" (Rough River, 2017); "Suburban Horse" (Mallee Songs, 2018); his third solo LP "Endless Room" (2018); and "Left Open In A Room" (Lucy Roleff, 2019).

**Thomas E Rouch's** work as a film composer, music producer and musician is united by his vision to connect people and tell stories through the power of music and sound. Based in Melbourne Australia, Thomas has scored seven feature films earning him multiple screen music award nominations and winning the award for Best Music at the British Independent Film Festival 2014. Thomas has also worked on some of the US and Australia's highest rating TV shows such as Hells Kitchen Australia, The Bureau Of Magical Things and The Biggest Loser franchise and his music can also be heard around the globe, licensed to hit factual, drama and reality TV.