

BIOGRAPHIES

Baz Luhrmann, Catherine Martin and Bruce Hunt

Tourism Australia's transformation campaign was conceived by Baz Luhrmann and his Bazmark production team and directed by Bruce Hunt.

BAZ LUHRMANN (writer/producer/director) has captured popular and critical imagination internationally with a diverse range of commercially successful projects in film, opera, theatre, music, multi-media and events. As the founder and director of Bazmark. Inq. and subsidiaries Bazmark Live and Bazmark Music, the huge commercial success of Luhrmann's projects reveals an instinctual ability to anticipate audience tastes, and to tap into the spirit of the times.

"Moulin Rouge!", Luhrmann's most recent feature film, which he developed, co-wrote, produced and directed, starring Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor, opened the Cannes Film Festival in May 2001 and went on to open in the number-one position in the UK, France, Australia and Switzerland. Worldwide theatrical sales have surpassed US\$170 million and the film has been showered with many prestigious awards including a Golden Globe for Best Musical or Comedy, National Board of Review and Producers Guild of America Film of the Year Awards, and two Academy Awards® for Catherine Martin (and 6 nominations including Best Picture). Luhrmann also received BAFTA nominations for Best Director and Best Screenplay and a Golden Globe nomination for Best Director. Luhrmann was the executive producer of the film's two soundtrack albums which went multi-platinum and have sold over 6 million copies worldwide.

Luhrmann is also renowned for his audacious adaptation of "William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet" for Twentieth Century Fox, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes. Luhrmann co-wrote the screenplay, directed and produced the international box office hit on location in Mexico. The film opened in the number-one position in the U.S., grossing over US\$140 million worldwide and garnered numerous awards, including four BAFTAs (including Best Direction and adapted screenplay), two Berlin Film Festival Awards (again for Best Direction), a Golden Bear (Best Actor for Leonardo DiCaprio) and an Academy Award® nomination for Best Art Direction for Catherine Martin. The soundtrack albums, executive produced by Luhrmann, went triple platinum in the U.S and have sold more than 7 million copies worldwide.

"William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet" followed the international success of Luhrmann's film debut, "Strictly Ballroom". Grossing more than \$80 million at the box office, "Strictly Ballroom" premiered at Cannes Film Festival where it won the Prix de la Jeunesse and a special mention for the Camera D'Or before going on to win numerous other international awards, including three BAFTAs and eight AFIs (Australian Film Institute awards). The feature film "Strictly Ballroom" evolved out of a play that Luhrmann conceived, co-wrote, staged and directed while studying to be an actor at Sydney's National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA). The play, which also began Luhrmann's long term collaboration with writer Craig Pearce, was to have several further award-winning stage incarnations including a first run during Luhrmann's stint as Artistic Director of the experimental theatre company Six Years Old (for the Sydney Theatre Company), before eventually becoming a hugely successful film in 1992.

After NIDA, in between incarnations of “Strictly Ballroom”, Luhrmann served as the Artistic Director of another experimental theatre group, the Ra Project for the Australian Opera, where he created the critically acclaimed opera *Lake Lost* with composer Felix Meagher. This production marked the beginning of his collaboration with designer Catherine Martin. “Lake Lost” was followed by “Dance Hall”, a large scale musical event staged by Luhrmann and Martin at the Sydney Town Hall. Several more original and classic operas followed, including their highly acclaimed 1990 production of Puccini’s “La Boheme” for the Australian Opera which was awarded a MO for Operatic Performance of the Year and which was completely re-staged in 2002 and opened to enormous critical acclaim on Broadway. “Baz Luhrmann’s Production of Puccini’s La Bohème on Broadway” was nominated for seven Tony Awards (including Best Revival and Best Director for Luhrmann) and won for the ensemble cast, set design and lighting. After more than 200 performances, the opera toured to the Ahmanson Theatre in LA in January 2004 for a limited engagement and was nominated for seven Ovation Awards, winning for ensemble cast, set design, lighting and sound.

Luhrmann has also staged his interpretation of Benjamin Britten’s version of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, set in colonial India, for the Australian Opera. After successful seasons in Sydney and Melbourne, the production went on to win the Critics’ Prize at the Edinburgh Festival. Also that year, Luhrmann, Martin and Bill Marron served as guest editors for a signature edition of Vogue Australia featuring Nicole Kidman and Kylie Minogue.

It was after “William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet” that Luhrmann set up his Sydney-based company Bazmark.Inq. and began working on his concept album “Something For Everybody”. The album featured the inspirational “Everybody’s Free to Wear Sunscreen” which entered the UK charts at No. 1 and went gold in the US, receiving extensive break-out radio play. Under the direction of Catherine Martin, Bazmark then produced acclaimed Australian fashion designer Collette Dinnigan’s 1998 Autumn/Winter Collection at the Louvre in Paris. The Bazmark Live team followed this up by conceiving and designing the streetscape for Fox Studio’s (Australia) Backlot, producing as part of this, the show “Lights Camera Chaos”, written and directed by celebrated Australian theatre director Barrie Kosky.

In 2004 Luhrmann conceived, produced and directed a groundbreaking worldwide cinema and TV campaign for *Chanel No. 5* perfume, which featured his “Moulin Rouge!” star Nicole Kidman and Brazilian rising star Rodrigo Santoro. The campaign received the US Cinema Advertising Council award for Top National Spot.

Most recently Luhrmann has turned his focus to a trilogy of epic works, the first feature film of which is “Australia” starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman to be released November 13th. This is his third collaboration with Nicole Kidman and the most recent project with his creative partner of more than 20 years, his wife Catherine Martin.

CATHERINE MARTIN (Co-Producer, Production & Costume Designer) is the double Academy Award® winning design force of Bazmark Inq. Her rich and distinctive aesthetic has been an essential ingredient in Baz Luhrmann’s feature films, operas, plays and live events. Along with Luhrmann, Martin is a partner in Bazmark.Inq., which, with its subsidiaries Bazmark Live and Bazmark Music, is one of the world’s most innovative producers of film, theatre and entertainment.

For her work on “Moulin Rouge!”, Martin won two Academy Awards® for Costume Design and Art Direction; Australian Film Institute Awards for Best Production Design and Best Costume Design; a Los Angeles Film Critics Award for Best Production Design and numerous other awards.

"William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet" (on which she was also associate producer), won Martin a BAFTA for Best Production Design and an Academy Award Nomination for Best Art Direction. Three years earlier in 1993, Martin made her film debut with Luhrmann designing the hugely successful "Strictly Ballroom", for which Martin won Best Production Design and Best Costume Design at both the BAFTA and AFI Awards.

Martin began collaborating with Luhrmann when she was studying at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in Sydney. There, in her final year, she designed Luhrmann's production of "Lake Lost" for the Australian Opera. This earned Martin and colleague Angus Strathie (her fellow costume designer on "Moulin Rouge!") a Victorian Green Room Award for Best Design. Martin has designed all of Luhrmann's subsequent productions, including the extended stage version of "Strictly Ballroom", Puccini's opera "La Boheme" updated to 1957 and featuring striking monochromatic sets and costumes and, Benjamin Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for the Australian Opera for which she won the Sydney Theatre Critic's Award for Best Opera Design. Martin designed Luhrmann's re-working of Puccini's "La Boheme" in 2002 which opened on Broadway to critical acclaim and won her the coveted Tony Award for Production Design.

A notable exception to her work with Luhrmann has been Martin's set design for Sydney-based theatre director Neil Armfield's award-winning production of "Diary of a Madman" starring Oscar winner Geoffrey Rush.

Martin's other projects with Luhrmann include guest editing the first signature edition of Vogue Australia (January, 1994) and establishing Bazmark.Inq. and its subsidiaries, in 1997. Martin made her directorial debut with fashion designer Collette Dinnigan's Autumn/Winter show of 1998, produced by Bazmark Live at the Louvre in Paris. Also for Bazmark Live, Martin led a design team in creating the streetscape design of Fox Studio Australia's backlot in Sydney.

In 2004 Martin designed the look of the lavish "Chanel No.5: The Film" global campaign starring Nicole Kidman, working with Karl Lagerfeld on costumes.

In September this year, Martin will launch her first collection of rugs with Designer Rugs, and premium paint and wallpaper with Porter's Paints. Martin is currently working on the designs for a print-intensive range of homewares focusing on bed, bath and tableware for worldwide distribution into mid-up market retailers in 2009.

Catherine Martin lives with husband, Baz Luhrmann, and their two children, Lillian Amanda (4) and William Alexander (3).

BRUCE HUNT (Director)

Bruce Hunt began his career as an illustrator / designer in the early 1980s for a prestigious computer graphics company XYZAP, marking the beginning of a 20 plus year relationship with the film industry that still continues today. His keen eye for design, during this time, did not go unnoticed and it wasn't long before Bruce was approached to direct commercials in the mid 1980s.

Since this time, Bruce has four times been named Director of the Year in Australia for his commercials work, his feature film credits include second unit director on The Matrix and Dark City and director of The Cave. Bruce Hunt is one of the most awarded directors internationally. Bruce is represented by Revolver in Australia and Asia, Believe Media in the US and Home.corp in London.

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