

# Making Porn

## Anna Brownfield the SPAA and The Money Shot

**T**he SPAA fringe kicks off today and the theme of this year's conference seems to be all about guerilla filmmaking. And who better to discuss the process, then SPAA guerilla filmmaker - Anna

Brownfield - whose project *The Money Shot* - a light hearted look at making porn was shot for just \$2000 over 18 days with a crew of nine and an allstar cast of 24.

Brownfield is one of those hands on DIY types - in the few years since she left uni she's directed 14 low budget features, worked as an actor, cinematographer, sound recordist, visionswitcher and art director - in fact think of a job in film and she's probably done it - or could point you in the direction of a friend who could probably help you out.

It seems she's embraced guerrilla filmmaker rule no 1. Do it Yourself, or call in a favour from a friend - just get it done!

On the line from Melbourne - she explains how her first feature ended up being a satirical look at porn. "I was actually approached by a guy in Brisbane and asked to produce a porn film" laughs Anna, "And I did seriously consider it for a while, but he had no idea, really about what it takes to make a film. He wanted to produce one every two weeks which seemed pretty unrealistic to me."

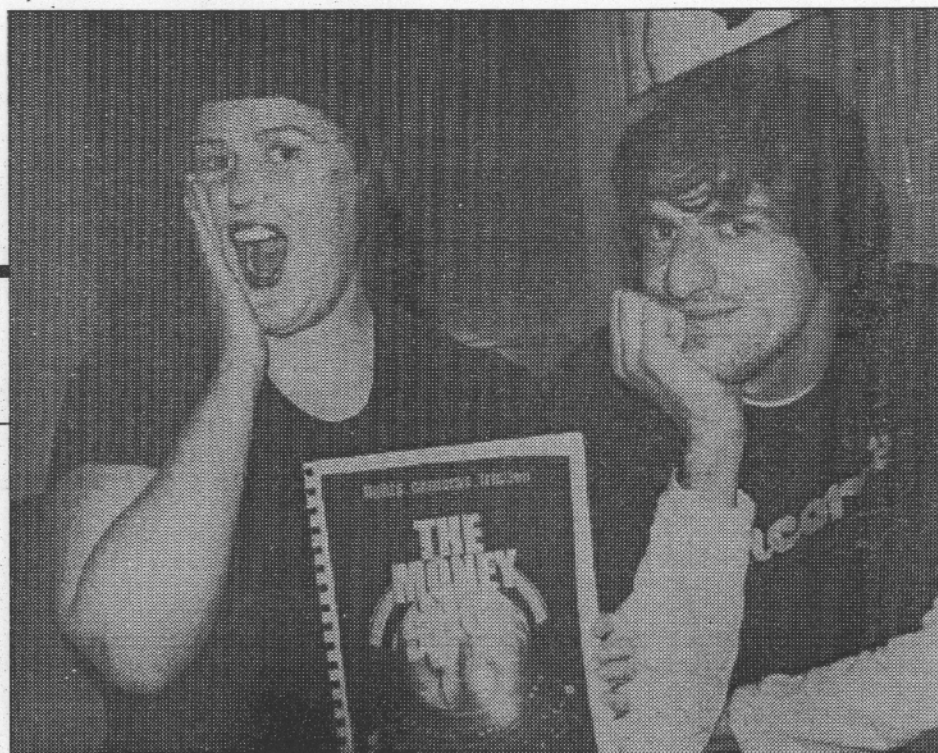
So you were inspired by personal experience? I query.

"I suppose you could say that" she says amused. "My partner and I originally wrote the

script with the idea of selling it - but as we were writing, we realised it was a good film - so we thought, 'why not make it ourselves.'"

Armed with a DVC, ("We wouldn't have been able to shoot it otherwise" she says in aside) Brownfield set about looking for cast, crew and locations. Without the traditional funding sources available, Anna went the way of many an independent filmmaker and funded the film by credit card - "which I'm still paying off - joy oh joy" she chuckles.

She describes the film as "sort of a road movie set in a house" Which prompts me to ask - how difficult it was to find someone willing to have their home turned into the location for a mockumentary on porn? "We did have some trouble with location - but not in that way - we lucked upon what we thought would be the perfect house to use - it was a friends place - and we approached the landlord to sign a location agreement - explaining to him it was a no money, no budget feature...but he didn't think the insurance was enough. Which was kind of ridiculous cause it was for a million dollars" she says bemused. "And then he wanted a fee of two and a half thousand - I said 'maybe I could pull together a \$100 but that \$2500 was more than the budget for the whole film' - so it ended up he wouldn't let us shoot and it was a week before the film, and we'd already had the DOP in there planning



things and the art director working on things so it was quite dicey. But then Lance (Petrie, co-director) had been to one of the actor's house and had thought it would be perfect for the film, so we ended up asking if she wouldn't mind if we shot in her house and luckily her housemates were agreeable." (the nature of guerilla filmmaking - one even ended up as the boomswinger). So disaster was averted.

Whilst everyone would love the luxury of shooting on 35mm - Brownfield enjoyed "the freedom of shooting on digital" She comments: "It's much more relaxed and we could afford to have a 1:5 shooting ratio. And if something looked really terrible we could re-shoot - which did happen on one occasion. I like digital" she explains, "compared to analogue tape it holds colours really well, and I think it looked superb for our location. Plus we shot in widescreen so when we go to a big screen it will look fine."

Anna admits you couldn't make a film for so little money without calling in a huge number of favours - and fortunately, she's also had the assistance of the SPAA.

"I joined SPAA's guerilla filmmaking scheme which was immensely helpful. It meant I had access to cheap public liability and insurance which is really important some filmmakers have lost their film's because of accidents - and they also really helped me with contracts and awards."

Meanwhile, Anna's searching for the cash to finish up the post on her film and hopefully she'll be able to pitch it to a few people at the SPAA fringe today.

**Cec Busby**

*Want to know more about guerilla filmmaking - then check out the SPAA fringe from Nov 8-10 at the Chauvel.*