

THE OUTLAW MICHAEL HOWE



SCREEN AUSTRALIA AND SCREEN TASMANIA PRESENTS AN IN FILMS AND CORDELL JIGSAW FILM IN ASSOCIATION WITH AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION
DAMON HERRIMAN MIRRAH FOULKES RARRIWUY HICK "THE OUTLAW MICHAEL HOWE" MATT DAY DARREN GILSHENEN PIP MILLER
DIRECTED BY BRENDAN COWELL PRODUCED BY NIAL FULTON PRODUCTION DESIGNER FELICITY ABBOTT
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON HARDING EDITED BY PETER CROMBIE MUSIC BY ROGER MASON EXECUTIVE PRODUCER MICHAEL CORDELL

ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

© ATOM 2013

A **STUDY GUIDE** BY ANNE CHESHER



AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS OF MEDIA

<http://www.metromagazine.com.au>

ISBN: 978-1-74295-355-7

<http://www.theeducationshop.com.au>



INTRODUCTION

1814. Van Diemen's Land, the notorious British penal colony, has dissolved into chaos. Outlaws roaming the wilderness have pushed the colonial government to breaking point.

Driven by a deep sense of loyalty and an unquenchable hatred towards those he once served, English convict Michael Howe and a young Aboriginal girl turn a desperate band of convicts, deserters and bushmen into a fearsome guerrilla army and lead them in open rebellion against the brutal, corrupt establishment.

As the British hunt the outlaws, Howe remains an elusive prize. In desperation, the Governor makes the capture of Howe's pregnant girl his priority. An epic story of love and betrayal, *The Outlaw Michael Howe* (Brendan Cowell, 2013) chronicles the astonishing true story of the man who pushed Australia to the brink of civil war.



Curriculum

The Outlaw Michael Howe is an ideal resource for the teaching and learning of Australian history. It is particularly relevant to the Australian History Curriculum (ACARA 2009) for secondary school students Years 7–10, as the film is set during the settlement of Van Diemen's Land during the British criminal transportation era. The film presents a clear depiction of a period of voluntary and forced movement of people from the 'Old World' to the 'New World', and faithfully recreates the accompanying social, cultural and political developments. Additionally, the characters and personalities of key figures during that time – namely Governors Davey and Sorell, outlaws John Whitehead and Michael Howe, along with the fearsome 'Black Mary' and the traitorous Maria Lord – are closely examined. Embedded in the film is the theme of crime and punishment, and their consequences. By watching this film and addressing the accompanying tasks, students will gain a deeper appreciation of the past events from which modern-day Australia was forged.

THE FILM

Acclaimed Australian writer/actor Brendan Cowell (*The Slap*, *The Borgias*) steps behind the camera for the first time to deliver a thrillingly visceral slice of Australian outlaw history in this epic tale of love and betrayal. *The Outlaw Michael Howe* is the true story of one of Australia's most infamous and forgotten bushrangers. The film gathers an ensemble of gifted, dynamic new-generation stars – Damon Herriman (*The Lone Ranger* [Gore Verbinski, 2013], *J. Edgar* [Clint Eastwood, 2011]), Mirrah Foulkes (*Top of the Lake*, *Animal Kingdom* [David Michôd, 2010]) and Rarriwuy Hick (*Redfern Now*) – alongside some of Australia's finest character actors in Matt Day, Darren Gilshenan and Pip Miller.

A riveting, intense story of love and betrayal, masters and slaves, brutality and tenderness, *The Outlaw Michael Howe* is a rich addition to the Australian colonial history canon.



SYNOPSIS

1814. The notorious British penal colony Van Diemen's Land has dissolved into chaos. As small bands of outlaws push the British to breaking point, both sides agree to end the bloodshed under an unprecedented amnesty. But despite the apparent victory, violence quickly erupts.

Driven by a deep sense of loyalty and a hatred for those he once served, English convict Michael Howe and an Aboriginal girl called Mary turn a small band of desperate escapees, deserters and natives into a fearsome guerrilla army and lead them in open revolt against the brutal, corrupt establishment. As the British attempt to capture the outlaws, their leader remains an elusive prize. In desperation, the Governor sends every man at his disposal to hunt down Michael Howe.

But, unbeknown to the Governor, Howe has forged a relationship with the wife of the wealthiest settler in the colony, and together they plot to throw down the government and assume control of the entire colony.

With Howe's legend and gang growing more powerful by the day, in a last desperate attempt to quell the imminent uprising, the Governor sends every bounty hunter, bushman and armed convict at his disposal after Howe. Finally cornered by soldiers

in a marsh, a heavily pregnant Mary is surrounded, and as Howe attempts to kill her captors he accidentally shoots her.

Assuming his wife and unborn child to be dead, and relentlessly harassed by armed trackers, Howe escapes. But his shot isn't fatal and Mary, convinced Howe has betrayed her, turns against her former lover.

One by one, Governor Sorell hunts down the remaining members of Howe's gang, hanging and impaling their heads on spikes. But Howe remains the elusive prize. As his once notorious gang is broken apart, his legend grows amongst the poor and downtrodden of Van Diemen's Land and he quickly becomes the most wanted man in the British Empire.

This is the remarkable true story of how Michael Howe led a four-year convict rebellion against the British Empire, forged a viable counter-culture in the wilderness and pushed Australia to the brink of civil war.

An epic story of love and betrayal, masters and slaves, of heroes and anti-heroes, *The Outlaw Michael Howe* chronicles the story of the brave men and women who refused the chains of oppression and those with the unenviable task of maintaining order in Van Diemen's Land – an island prison teeming with condemned, desperate convicts, outcasts and misfits. It is in this chaos that they must choose sides and lay the foundation for a new world ...



PRODUCER'S NOTES

In *The Outlaw Michael Howe*, we examine the remarkably complex relationship between the Van Diemen's Land outlaws led by Michael Howe, the British establishment, the convicts, settlers and Aborigines and chart the growth of this utterly unique society.

Our film is concerned with a distinct phase in the metamorphosis of the penal colony. Firstly, the emergence of the outlaw gangs offering a significant counter-culture to that of assigned servitude, secondly, the rise of a new form of brutal penal reform to counteract the threat of the outlaws, and finally, the end of the outlaws as a prelude to the tragic frontier war and attempted genocide against the now-outlawed Indigenous Tasmanian people.

This film examines the tension produced by siting the principal goal of the empire in what proved to be a remarkably benevolent land. This paradox is at the very heart of Van Diemen's Land's history and has important implications for the nation as a whole. Nowhere else on earth, including New South Wales, did convicts, former convicts and their descendants constitute the majority of the population over such a long period of time. This was society stripped to its essentials of the powerful and powerless – jailer and jailed – and proved a fertile bed for the tradition that righted the wrongs, the vicarious revenge of the weak against the strong.

Richard Howitt wrote in his *Impressions of Australia Felix* (1845):

Outlaws, runaway convicts ... the more gentlemanly of them in Van Diemen's Land are there what Robin Hood and Rob Roy were in Britain ... of these famous robbers, none is so much talked of for their generosity, their invariable respect and tenderness for women and children, as Michael Howe.

In this place of extremes, convict, settler, administrator and Aborigine alike all faced a new, uncertain future. The rulebook had yet to be written and as lines were drawn in the sand, each side recognised a unique opportunity existed to exert their absolute authority. On this small island, in the darkest corner of the British Empire, a war was fought over fifteen years between some of the most colourful characters in our nation's history.

The Outlaw Michael Howe will focus on the incredibly complex relationships that existed in Van Diemen's Land and how a chain of actions and subsequent reactions took the island to the very brink of civil war. The story of Michael Howe, Tom Davey, William Sorell, Maria Lord and the young Aboriginal girl Mary will help us better understand the wider complexities of this unique colonial experiment.

The film will focus less on how those who found themselves in Van Diemen's Land changed their new environment than on how it changed them. The island was not only their prison; it was their only source of hope.

Nial Fulton
Producer



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Making *The Outlaw Michael Howe* was an intense experience and one I will never forget. I was handed a document containing everything there is to read about the Yorkshire highwayman, which comes to a humble yet fascinating thirty pages, only six weeks before we shot the film. Our intrepid producer Nial Fulton and I then spent weeks nutting out a structure for the film, a subgenre – which we decided would be a tragic love story with the political climate as backdrop – and set out to write a script whilst casting roles whose size and nature were still forming.

In that month of writing and casting I watched every western, bushranger, Australian gothic piece of film I could get my hands on, stemming from *Django Unchained* (Quentin Tarantino, 2012) to *The Unforgiven* (John Huston, 1960) to *Once Upon a Time in the West* (Sergio Leone, 1968). Here was a chance to tell a brilliant Bonnie-and-Clyde tale that spoke volumes of our nation, but also, had been conveniently written out of history.

Luckily for me, being my first film, I was surrounded by legends of much experience in their departments, which I could learn and work off. Simon Harding, who had just completed production on *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (2012) with Peter Jackson, was director of photography and the reason why our film looks so good. Our cast all put in brilliant performances. Casting renegade

Kirsty McGregor helped me find Scottish, English and Irish actors, plus some wonderful new talents such as Benedict Hardie and Rarriwuy Hick, of whom I am sure we will see much more.

It was brilliant to finally work with the stunning and smart Mirrah Foulkes and have my friend Damon Herriman in the lead. Damon is such a powerful actor, yet is rarely afforded lead roles. With his pitch-perfect Yorkshire accent (coached by Paul Stewart) and stillness, our Howe is a complex and terrifying hero of sorts. Large cheer to Peter Crombie, our stand-up editor, with whom I spent a good couple of months in the darkness trying all sorts of things to find the film inside the film. It really is true when they say the script is written in the edit.

A huge part of the success of *The Outlaw Michael Howe* is down to our Production Designer Felicity Abbott and her team. The authenticity of this piece was always paramount to me. Often in period films the aesthetic, the costumes, the 'look' can feel so shiny and new, almost modern retrospective, whereas with Howe our brief was always to present a world that was cracking apart. The dichotomy, which Howe himself articulates when he lands, is that this is one gorgeous land, a heaven-like place, but was full of so much horror the juxtaposition was almost

unbearable. The production team were consummate in providing a breaking-apart world where the buildings and the landscape look as desperate as the men and women who fought for it – the palate is rich and raw at once.

I am grateful to Nial Fulton and Michael Cordell for allowing me to dive into filmmaking. I learned as much about Australia as I did about the craft. In many ways Michael Howe is Australia, a young criminal with a poet's heart, torn between the chance to learn of his land from the people who love, respect and know it, or take it all for himself and relish in the power – a dilemma I feel continues deep into our short life as a nation, and I hope resonates with viewers of this film.

Brendan Cowell
Writer/Director





PRODUCTION

The Outlaw Michael Howe began when producer Nial Fulton decided to research the events leading up to the creation of the infamous penal settlement Sarah Island. Following his 2009 film *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* (Michael James Rowland, 2008), Nial was keen to return to the period and explore the history of Van Diemen's Land further. The story of Michael Howe offered Nial the opportunity to tackle his favourite genre in an intrepid and confronting manner:

I love westerns. John Ford, Sam Peckinpah and Robert Altman are the reason I wanted to make films. I had struggled to find a story that would allow me to explore the genre but offer something new to say about where we came from. But the Michael Howe story was new. It was like reading a western set in one of my favourite places on earth, Tasmania. It felt vivid and alive and unique. Here was a guy who took it to the man. He wasn't afraid of the consequences and held all the aces. His Achilles heel, of course, was the fact that he had two women on the go. And both weren't afraid to do whatever was necessary to survive! In many ways, the story held



some of the same narrative beats found in Altman's masterpiece McCabe & Mrs. Miller (1971).

The next two years proved to be a rollercoaster of near-starts and disappointing setbacks for the production. Like any production, deadlines pass, money falls over and people come and go. This project suffered as those who championed it within the broadcasting or respective funding agencies moved on to newer pastures. The project almost fell through the cracks and it needed a new home.

Nial finally found a home for the film:

I approached one of Australia's most experienced EP's, Michael Cordell, about the possibility of a co-production and he and everyone at Cordell Jigsaw simply rolled up their sleeves and climbed into the trenches. Put simply, without their support, this film would never have seen the light of day. Cordell Jigsaw made this film a reality. Once Cordell Jigsaw came onboard as co-producers, the film had new, solid foundations. But the ambition remained terrifyingly high.

The weird thing about producing any film is that it's almost like alchemy. You play around with all these ingredients and sometimes something just doesn't flare up and other times it's just pure luck, and you get a big bang.

In reality, we were proposing to make what was effectively a feature film on a documentary budget. And shoot it on location. Everyone thought we were completely insane. Perhaps we were. But we pulled together a remarkable group of people, pitched them the idea and asked them to hop on the train with us. Of course, we had absolutely no idea where that train was going to end up but we backed ourselves enough to know that we could, given the opportunity, produce something extraordinary.

When our first director had to withdraw from the project due to personal problems, the project looked for all money like it was going to topple over. We were two weeks out from pre-production and



now had no director and no script! That's when I found Brendan Cowell.

Acclaimed Australian writer/actor Brendan Cowell was preparing to direct his first feature film and was keen to talk about the possibility of working with us. I pitched him the idea, told him we were starting pre in two weeks and we had no script! All alarm bells should have gone off but to his eternal credit, Brendan stuck his hand up. From the moment he came onboard, we had our big bang. Brendan's visual sense is really particular and he constantly looked and thought in a unique way. He brought a whole new energy to the film and suddenly it felt like we might just pull it off.

Director Brendan Cowell was keen to work with Damon Herriman, who was forging a remarkable career in the US on shows such as *Justified*, *Breaking Bad* and *Vegas*.

When we began to audition for Michael Howe, we really wanted to find someone who felt real. Someone who had the capacity to play violent but had a real authority to them. A person that others would follow. And when Damon came in and we talked about the project, we knew we had our man.



THE SHOOT

The Outlaw Michael Howe was shot over fourteen days in regional New South Wales (Old Sydney Town, Gosford) and across Tasmania.

The derelict colonial theme park Old Sydney Town offered a remarkable opportunity to film in near-perfect period surrounds. Production designer Felicity Abbott and her team built four main sets in the park – the Governor's Quarters, the convict settlement, Maria Lord's house and Howe's outlaw camp. Old Sydney Town offered it's own unique set of challenges. Snakes, spiders and leeches were in abundance and two of the crew suffered nasty spider bites during filming. Torrential rain caused damage to some of the sets and a veritable army of extras was engaged to help create the ambience of the convict settlement.

Each extra was allocated a gun, a hat, a costume and then sent off to get 'broken down'. The results speak for themselves. Our costume and make-up department delivered above and beyond what could reasonably be expected. Half an actor's motivation and their character's *raison d'être* can come from the right location. But taking a cast and crew and placing them in the actual locations where their characters once

existed offers another level of engagement with the story.

At significant cost and effort, the production shot the exteriors of *The Outlaw Michael Howe* in and around the Franklin/Gordon Wild Rivers National Park in the central highlands of Tasmania. They also shot on top of, around and beneath the majestic Mount Field – country that Michael Howe and his gang had roamed 200 years earlier.

For some on the crew, this was a reunion in Tasmania (following the success of *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce*), but for most, the opportunity to explore this magnificent state was incredibly intoxicating. The production crew was based in the small, cheerful hamlet of Derwent Bridge. To its immediate north is Lake St Clair, an inland body of water deeper than Bass Strait and black like Ming jade. Lake St Clair marks the end of the overland trail from Cradle Mountain – a four-day trek that wilts the most well equipped explorer. To the east is the Franklin Gordon National Park, a spectacular wilderness encompassing high alpine forests, vertical scrub, snow-capped basalt mountains, booming waterfalls, leech-infested rainforests and rolling button-grass plains the colour of burnt

umber. To the south-west is the road to Hobart, a strip of bitumen that after dusk becomes a veritable zoo packed with local fauna – wombats, wallabies, spotted quoll, devils and the truly fearful logging truck.

For Howe's apocalyptic demise, the production relocated south to the enigmatic Mount Field, one of the most extraordinary places imaginable. Gale-swept alpine slopes, towering gums and vast boulder fields in all directions offered sweeping wilderness, no matter where we parked our camera. Mount Field left an indelible mark on everyone.

Actors are trained in the world of cause-and-effect. A good actor must find a path that reconciles lines of dialogue, scripted behavior and given circumstance within the confines of a single character in concrete time. This craft, when practiced by talented actors and combined with a considered script, often reveals profound human truths. Having laboured hard to shepherd these historic words into dramatic form, it was exhilarating to work with the cast as they plunged into the moment-to-moment realities of this tragedy, a task often made profound by the setting – some of the last truly wild and overwhelming country in Australia's treasury.



PRODUCTION DESIGN

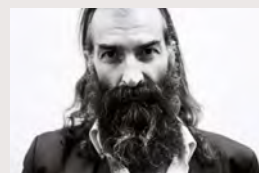
Drawing on portraits and landscape paintings of the period for research and inspiration, the design in *The Outlaw Michael Howe* adheres to a carefully selected muted palette to portray Van Diemen's land in the early nineteenth century. Specific attention to detail was given to convey the lush excess of the Governor's chambers, in contrast with the stark existence of the free settlers' bark slab dwellings.

A decision was made to develop a visual style that maintained sufficient reference to historical accuracy that would then allow a stylised departure from this when deemed appropriate by the drama, such as the 'heightened' outlaw camp, filled with the spoils of their looting. The contrasting visual narratives of Hobart Town and the outlaw camp underpin the rise of Howe's outlaws and slow decline of the settlement as they endure harsh climactic conditions and declining resources. It was important to portray the struggle, filth and decay ever-present in the early settlement.

As opposed to other less naturalistic representations of period, where the lighting is often anachronistically bright, we chose to celebrate natural light and shade and acquired replica whale-oil lamps and tallow lanterns to illuminate dark rooms faithfully. This level of detail and authenticity in period set decoration underpins the visual narrative and allows the actors to fully inhabit character. The influence of Mary's character was important in the evolution of the design of Howe's camp and their development and understanding of bushcraft and survival from an Indigenous perspective. Temporary bark structures and multiple camps allowed them to move about quite freely and survive off the land in ways that the town settlers struggled to achieve.

Fires rage continuously in the background to this epic drama, providing a constant threat of menace and plotting the journey of Howe's gang as they move to secure Van Diemen's Land.

Felicity Abbott APDG Production Designer



SOUNDSCAPE

The soundscape to *The Outlaw Michael Howe* reflects the narrative – in parts biblical and epic, a world full of menace and uncertainty and the real threat of death to be found everywhere.

The hills of Van Diemen's Land were teeming with people from all parts of the world – there was this interesting cross-pollination between the predominately Scots Irish outlaws and convicts, European free settlers, native Tasmanians and a smattering of Polynesians.

Acclaimed composer Roger Mason produced a hauntingly beautiful score. The Drones were kind enough to allow us to use the majestic 'How To See Through Fog' and Sarah Blasko recorded a song with Warren Ellis specifically for the film. We deliberately pushed the score away from the familiar sounds of the period and asked the musicians to sing and play songs that aren't standards from the era but have qualities that are reminiscent.

It's a dynamic, eclectic mix – old colonial melodies, hymns and fiddles mixed with contemporary Australian rock and soul. It's given us a fresh, raw, kinetic energy.

In many ways, not unlike Michael Howe.



COSTUME DESIGN

Very early on in the development of the project, I discussed how the film would look with the producer, director and production designer and then set about unlearning everything I thought I knew about the period! The research was extensive and we drew upon a multitude of sources, not only in Australia but from various other colonial outposts of the time. Then I sketched and assembled character boards for each scene and produced a palette board. I had previously worked on a film from this location and similar era, so I was able to bring some prior knowledge to the project.

Because the film is a large ensemble piece, it was important that the costumes visually reflect the social standing of each of the three major groups in the film, namely earthy greens and browns for the outlaws, blacks and greys for the Governors and magistrates and a washed out, almost bleached



aesthetic for the convicts/settlers. Van Diemen's Land was the darkest corner of the Empire and so everything that was sent there had travelled from London, often though Africa or the Middle East, down through Pacific, into Sydney and then finally to Hobart. So everything needed to be broken down, filthy, threadbare and washed out. Nothing was new. Each costume had its own backstory! We took enormous care ageing and breaking down the costumes and then when we thought we were close, the producer would send them back to have more dirt added!

In a western, the most important aspect of a costume is often the hat. We wanted our outlaws to look distinctive, so once a character was assigned a hat, it was theirs for the duration.

We also wanted to stay clear of anything that looked like a caricature of the period. British red coats often look absurd on camera, so we decided to break them down and pull them apart. The intention was to show that everyone was suffering in Van Diemen's Land, so even the wealthiest



landowner would be missing a few buttons on his best jacket!

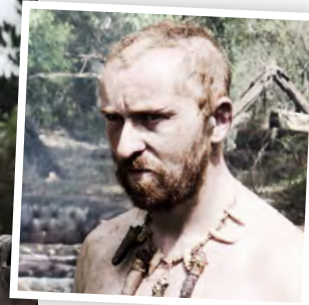
The right hat, the right tailoring and the right ageing. Only once we had ticked those three boxes were we happy.

Xanthe Heubel Costume Designer

CASTING

Damon Herriman (Michael Howe)

Damon Herriman (born 31 March 1970) is an Australian actor known for his film and television work in Australia and the United States. His natural talent and raw energy has seen him work with Clint Eastwood, Gore Verbinski and Steven Soderbergh.



Director/Writer
BRENDAN COWELL

Producer **NIAL FULTON**

Executive Producer
MICHAEL CORDELL

Director of Photography
SIMON HARDING

Production Designer
FELICITY ABBOTT
APDG

Editor
PETER CROMBIE

Costume Designer
XANTHE HEUBEL

Composer
ROGER MASON

Co-producer
FIONA MCCONAGHY

First Assistant Director
JOHN 'JC' CLABBURN

Second Assistant Director
ANDY PANTE

Casting
KIRSTY MCGREGOR

ACTORS:

DAMON HERRRIMAN

Michael Howe

MIRRAH FOULKES

Maria Lord

RARRIWUY HICK

Mary

MATT DAY

Robert Knopwood

DARREN GILSHENAN

Governor Davey

BENEDICT HARDIE

Peter Septon

PIP MILLER

Magistrate Humphrey

KEVIN MCISAAC

John Whitehead

NICK FALK

Captain William Nairn

IAIN LANG

Worrell

PATRICK CONNOLLY

Carlisle

NICHOLAS CASSIM

Governor Sorell

CHARLIE GARBOUR

Edward Lord



In 2011 he played the convicted kidnapper of the Lindbergh baby, Bruno Hauptmann, in the Clint Eastwood–helmed *J. Edgar* and in 2012 played one of the Cavendish gang in Gore Verbinski's *The Lone Ranger*. Herriman is best known to Australian audiences for playing Claudia Karvan's workmate and friend George Wagstaffe in the critically acclaimed Foxtel series *Love My Way* and more recently as Marcus Dwyer in the ABC comedy *Laid*.

Mirrah Foulkes (Maria Lord)

Mirrah has appeared in several major Australian films since 2006, including *Spider* (Nash Edgerton, 2007), *Dying Breed* (Jody Dwyer, 2008), *Animal Kingdom* and the mysterious drama *Sleeping Beauty* (Julia Leigh, 2011). In 2005, Foulkes had a two-episode guest role in *Blue Heelers*. In 2009, she appeared in *All Saints*, playing the character Jo Mathieson. In 2010, Mirrah was nominated for best new female talent at the Logies. In 2012, she played Rebecca Bourke in the TV series *Devil's Dust*. She is due to play Simone in the Jane Campion's *Top of the Lake* in 2013.

Rarriwuy Hick (Mary)

Rarriwuy is a young Yolngu woman from a remote community in north-east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. First and foremost a dancer and choreographer, Rarriwuy has performed at a number of high profile events, including the 2004 Deadly Awards, the 2005 Danish Royal Visit and the Sydney



Dreaming Festival 2005–08. Founder and choreographer of the dance group Yapa Mala, Rarriwuy choreographed a dance piece performed for the former US Vice-President Al Gore. Theatre credits including the lead role in *Wrong Skin* (Ngurrumilmaramiruwu) and *Bloodland* with the Sydney Theatre Company and the Bangarra Dance Company.

Matt Day (Knopwood)

Matt Day was born in Melbourne in 1971. When he was eleven years old he went to live in the United States with his father, who was a newspaper correspondent, and it was there that he became interested in acting. In 2009 and 2010, Day was in *Tangle*. Also in 2010, he was in *Underbelly: The Golden Mile* and in *Rake*, again acting with Richard Roxburgh, who he had appeared with in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (David Attwood, 2002). In 2011, he was in ABC1's telemovie *Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo*.



Darren Gilshenan (Governor Davey)

Darren graduated from the three-year Acting course at NIDA in 1988. Darren has been nominated for various awards including a Sydney Critics Award for *The Government Inspector*, Green Room Awards, a Logie for Outstanding Comedy Show (*Derrick* – Writer, Director and Actor) and an AFI for Best Comedy. He won the 2004 Helpmann Award for Best Actor in a Play as 'Truffaldino' in *The Servant of Two Masters*.

The Outlaw Michael Howe is an In Films / Cordell Jigsaw Production (2013) in association with Screen Australia, Screen Tasmania and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, produced with the assistance of Screen New South Wales Regional Film Fund.



STUDENT LEARNING TASKS

1

In 1815, Tasmania was still known as Van Diemen's Land.

- Who was the first European to discover Tasmania?
- In what year did he make this discovery?
- Why did he name his discovery 'Van Diemen's Land'?
- Who found that Van Diemen's Land was an island, and in what year?
- When and why was Van Diemen's Land renamed 'Tasmania'?

2

Colonial Tasmania began as a penal settlement. Explain what this means and describe three different types of people who went to Tasmania during the period of transportation.

3

In the 1800s, conditions in Tasmania's convict prisons were horrendous and most certainly did not abide by human rights. Do some internet research to learn about the following aspects of criminal life:

- three different types of crimes convicts may have committed;

- three different kinds of jobs convicts had to do;
- three different forms of punishment in the prisons;
- the dates during which this prison system operated.

4

Outlaws (people living outside the law) and bushrangers (runaway convicts living at large in the bush) were commonplace in the early days of Australian settlement. Write a 250-word description of how these people lived, mentioning two skills required to survive in the bush.

5

Michael Howe was one of Australia's most notorious outlaws. Find out some background about this man and write a paragraph to describe him that includes where he was originally from, what he looked like, why he was transported to Australia, in what year he arrived in Tasmania and how he became an outlaw.

6

In talking of his female companion, Black Mary, Michael Howe said, 'She

had her own war inside'. Explain what he meant by this comment, keeping in mind the treatment of the Aboriginal population by the British.

7

Compare lifestyles in the penal colony of Tasmania with modern Australia, focusing on the following:

- Clothing
- Housing
- Food
- Transport
- Infrastructure (roads, bridges, electricity etc.)

8

Some people make better leaders than others. Write a paragraph each about Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Davey and Lieutenant-Governor William Sorrell, each of whom was in charge of Van Diemen's Land during Michael Howe's reign of terror.

9

Explain what is meant by the following terms:

- Bounty hunter
- Ticket of leave
- State of Emergency
- Martial law

10

Maria Lord played a pivotal role in the story of Michael Howe. Do some Internet research and write a 500-word biography of her.



REFERENCES

University of Tasmania
http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/
Australian Dictionary of Biography – Michael Howe
<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/howe-michael-2206>
Australian Dictionary of Biography – Maria Lord
<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lord-maria-13052>
Roots Web: Australia/Tasmania

Ancestry Archives
<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/AUS-Tasmania/2011-02/1296713445>
Australian Bureau of Statistics – Tasmanian Year Book
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/7d12b0f6763c78caca257061001cc588/063382c07938d5f4ca256c320024172f!OpenDocument>
Tasmanian Government – Tasmania's Heritage
<http://www.linc.tas.gov.au/tasmaniasheritage/>



This study guide was produced by **ATOM**. (© ATOM 2013)
ISBN: 978-1-74295-355-7 editor@atom.org.au

For information on **SCREEN EDUCATION** magazine, or to download other study guides for assessment, visit <<http://www.metromagazine.com.au>>.

Join ATOM's email broadcast list for invitations to free screenings, conferences, seminars, etc. Sign up now at <<http://www.atom.asn.au/lists/>>.

For hundreds of articles on Film as Text, Screen Literacy, Multiliteracy and Media Studies, visit <<http://www.theeducationshop.com.au>>.