

PRESS KIT

# BENEATH THE WAVES



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KRIS FELIX

HIGIN PRAZMO

# BENEATH THE WAVES

A JAMES CUNNINGHAM FILM



PRESIDENTIAL PRODUCTIONS presents  
featuring KRIS FELIX and HIGIN PRAZMO in "BENEATH THE WAVES"  
written and directed by JAMES CUNNINGHAM cinematography by MATT LOUCAS  
editing by VIVEK ASRI original music by SEBASTIAN BENEGAS title design by ALLAN PHIN  
produced by VANESSA ABBOTT and JAMES CUNNINGHAM with SLADE PHILLIPS

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## PRESS KIT

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Kris Felix and Higin Prazmo in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## **TAGLINE**

Two brothers. One swell.

## **LOGLINE**

Two brothers embark on a surfing trip along the remote Western Australian coastline, attempting to bury past grievances in the process. As their surfing adventure unravels, so do the fragile bonds of brotherhood.

## **SYNOPSIS**

‘Beneath the Waves’ is an Australian short film starring Higin Prazmo and Kris Felix, filmed along the remote Western Australian coastline.

Two brothers set out on a surfing trip that becomes more than a pursuit of big waves. Haunted by unresolved history and lingering tension, they paddle out into open water seeking not only the perfect break, but a chance to heal what has kept them apart.

As the surf builds, the ocean draws out what the brothers have avoided on land. Each swell and shift of the tide uncovers buried emotion, testing the limits of their fragile bond. In ‘Beneath the Waves’, the crashing sea becomes a metaphor for their internal storm and for the difficult work of rebuilding a relationship.





Kris Felix and Higin Prazmo in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## DEVELOPMENT

‘Beneath the Waves’ developed in mid-2017 as an independent narrative drama requiring a crew capable of working across interior locations, exterior and surf-based underwater filming environments.

Western Australia-based photographer and cinematographer Matt Loucas came onboard early after responding to a local call-out for a Director of Photography, leading to lengthy creative discussions during pre-production with writer-director James Cunningham in Perth.

The script was conceived without dialogue, with the story intended to unfold entirely through visual storytelling. Coming from a background in stage writing and directing, Cunningham deliberately chose to cast surfers rather than trained actors, prioritising physical authenticity and lived familiarity with the ocean over traditional performance technique. This approach shaped both narrative and the production methodology from the outset.

Local surf breaks were selected for their isolation and filming aesthetics, including Yanchep Beach, about 50km north of Perth.





Higin Prazmo in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## CREATIVE

At its core, 'Beneath the Waves' explores estrangement, brotherhood and unresolved grievance through physical action rather than spoken language. The absence of dialogue places emphasis on gesture, physicality, proximity and movement, allowing tension to emerge through shared space and silence.

Surfing functions not as lifestyle imagery, but as an emotional and narrative device. The ocean becomes the arena in which buried conflict resurfaces, with environmental conditions tide, swell, weather mirroring the instability of the brothers' relationship. Then overcast skies and choppy surf were embraced rather than avoided, reinforcing the film's sombre tone and metaphorical weight.

## WRITER & DIRECTOR

**James Cunningham** is an independent Australian writer, filmmaker and producer. His works explore masculinity and the psychological fractures hidden beneath ordinary lives.





Higin Prazmo and Kris Felix in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## CHARACTERS

At the centre of 'Beneath the Waves' are two brothers bound by an ambiguous shared history and unresolved tension. Their relationship is defined not by exposition, but by proximity, physical interaction and silence. Meaning is carried through body language, restraint and the manner in which each character occupies space both on land and in the water.

The brothers' surf trip functions as both reconnection and confrontation. In the absence of spoken dialogue, small gestures, hesitation, distance, cooperation, avoidance become the film's emotional vocabulary. The ocean strips away distraction and forces a reckoning; the brothers are left with only their shared past and the physical demands of the environment.

Cunningham's script called not only for surfing skills but also a pivotal shower scene whereby the brothers share a communal beach shower.

Their conflict is understated but persistent, emerging gradually through rhythm and repetition rather than dramatic escalation.





Kris Felix in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## CASTING

Casting for 'Beneath the Waves' was approached with authenticity as the primary consideration. Rather than working with actors, writer-director James Cunningham deliberately cast local Western Australian surfers whose lived experience in the ocean could carry his demanding narrative without dialogue.

**Kris Felix** is a local surfing coach, bringing professional familiarity with the water and an ease within the surf environment that anchors the film's realism. **Higin Prazmo**, a local tradesman, contributes a grounded physical presence shaped by everyday labour and discipline. Their differing backgrounds inform the brothers' dynamic on screen, lending texture and credibility to their relationship.

Both performers worked closely with Cunningham during rehearsals to develop the physical language of the film. Sessions focused on surf and fight choreography, movement and body language, preparation for a nude scene and the emotional beats of their relationship, allowing the story to be communicated visually.

By working with non-actors and shaping the performances through rehearsal and observation, 'Beneath the Waves' achieves a naturalism that aligns with the Cunningham's restrained, visual storytelling approach.





Kris Felix and Higin Prazmo in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## **PRODUCTION**

Surf sequences were carefully choreographed during pre-production between Cunningham, Loucas, and the two lead performers, both experienced surfers. Filming in the water yielded around two hours of surfing and underwater footage, later distilled into concise sequences within the film's final cut.

The beautiful location was selected for its relative isolation, allowing the sense of remoteness to be embedded into the visual fabric of the story. Additional scenes were filmed locally at Mullaloo Surf Life Saving Club and a nearby motel, grounding the narrative in recognisable yet understated coastal aesthetic.

## **CINEMATOGRAPHY**

'Beneath the Waves' was shot by Matt Loucas on a Sony A3000 in 4K resolution, with surf and underwater footage captured using waterproof diving equipment. The film's cinematography balances controlled coastal imagery with dynamic, handheld work in the water, allowing the volatility of the ocean to contrast with composed land-based scenes.

In post-production, Loucas also graded the film, drawing inspiration from surf photography traditions while pursuing a contemporary aesthetic. Visual references included the fashion photography by Hard Cider New York, as well as the work of vintage 1960s surf culture photographer LeRoy Grannis.





Kris Felix and Higin Prazmo in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions



## EDITING

Editing for 'Beneath the Waves' was undertaken in Sydney by **Vivek Asri** with restraint and precision, preserving the film's dialogue-free structure and allowing visual rhythm to carry the narrative. The cut prioritises duration, repetition and pause, mirroring the physical patterns of surfing and the unspoken tension between the brothers.

Transitions between land and water are handled deliberately, with pacing shifting in response to environment rather than plot.

The edit avoids overt dramatic emphasis, reinforcing the film's internalised emotional arc and maintains continuity between the natural world and the characters' psychological state.

## SCORE

An original score for 'Beneath the Waves' is composed remotely by Argentinian musician **Sebastian Benegas**, written specifically to support the film's silent narrative structure.

Surf, wind and underwater acoustics are treated as integral components of the soundtrack, with the score rising and receding in response to the brothers' shifting dynamic.

Tension and release are shaped through texture and restraint, allowing music and natural sound to coexist without overpowering the image. The score complements the ocean's changing energy while maintaining the film's quiet, contemplative tone and feeling.







## FESTIVALS & SCREENINGS

- **Award Finalist** - Sicily International Film Festival (2018)  
Sicily, Italy
- **Semi-Finalist** - A Rebel Minded Film Festival (2018)  
New York City, United States
- **Semi-Finalist** - Kathmandu World Film Festival (2018)  
Kathmandu, Nepal
- **Official Selection** - Oz International Film Festival (2018)  
Melbourne, Australia
- **Official Selection** - International Short Film Festival (2018)  
London, United Kingdom
- **Official Selection** - Paladino d'Oro Sport Film Festival (2018)  
Palermo, Italy
- **Official Selection** - Inshort Film Festival (2018)  
Lagos, Nigeria
- **Official Selection** - International Shorts Film Festival (2018)  
Melbourne, Australia
- **Official Selection** - Voices from the Waters Festival (2018)  
Bangalore, India





Kris Felix and Higin Prazmo in 'Beneath the Waves' © Presidential Productions





## **BENEATH THE WAVES (2018)**

Drama / Short  
Running Time 8:20

Contains mature themes and nudity.

Featuring - Higin Prazmo and Kris Felix  
Written & Directed - James Cunningham  
Producers - Vanessa Abbott and Slade Phillips  
Cinematography - Matt Loucas  
Editor - Vivek Asri  
Original Score - Sebastian Benegas  
Title Design - Allan Phin


Produced by Presidential Productions.

Filmed on location in Perth, Western Australia.

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