

GUY PEARCE

JACQUELINE MCKENZIE  
TILDA COBHAM-HERVEY

#ALANOVVNN

HE'S BACK!

BLACK COMEDY TV SERIES

6 EPISODES x 30 min - 4K

PLANET MARS



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*"Dorodango is an ancient art form in which earth and water are molded by hand to create delicate shiny spheres"*



# ***WELCOME TO ALANTOWN. HOME TO THE WORLDS NEWEST CULT.***

---

HALLELUJAH!! CHRIST HAS RISEN!

... and HE's living in the Adelaide Hills.

Alan Pepper says he's the reincarnation of  
Jesus Christ but is he the Blessed Hope...

Or the Holy Terror?

***“Until you've walked a kilometre in  
My Converse you couldn't possibly  
understand...”***

***Alan Pepper AKA Jesus***



# THE STORY

***Hallelujah! OR should we say AL-lelujah!***

A group of dedicated followers have left their lives in the real world and moved to ALANTOWN, a commune where they follow the word of Alan - a likeable bloke who says he's Jesus - but who is still coming to terms with the revelation that he is Christ reborn.

***“I didn’t ask to come back as Jesus. It’s a lot of pressure...but I suppose it’s better than coming back as Jack the Ripper. Or Anna Nicole Smith.” ALAN PEPPER AKA JESUS***

Through comic trial and error, Alan and a core group of believers, including his best friend Peter and love interest “Mary” – navigate the ups and downs of growing a commune with a controversial new leader whose followers look to him for instruction, guidance and a sense of belonging. And with one post which sees ALAN trending on twitter – they must also provide for the needs of their every-growing followers on social media. When news of the supposed Second Coming spreads to the outside world the compound is labeled a “cult” and as membership grows so does Alantown’s list of enemies...who will stop at nothing to bring Alantown to it’s knees.

***“Is there any religion that’s not a cult?”***

**Vincent Venamore**



WELCOME  
TO PARADISE!

*LETTERS OF  
COMMITMENT*

# SHANAHAN

21 June, 2019

Marie Patane, Producer - planetMARS  
mailplanetmars@gmail.com

Rodrigo Vidal Dawson, Producer - BLACKFISCH  
rodrigo@blkfsch.com

Alex Alexander, Producer - 412 Entertainment  
alex@412.com.au

Dear Marie, Rodrigo and Alex,

Re: Guy Pearce – ALANTOWN 12 PART TV SERIES

I write to confirm the interest of our client Guy Pearce in playing the lead role of Alan in your 12 x 30min TV series ALANTOWN to be written by Marie Patane.

I confirm that Guy has agreed to attach his name to the project and producing team for the purpose of raising finance for a period of 12 months from the date of this letter.

It is expressly understood that Guy's attachment to ALANTOWN is subject to his first right of refusal to play the role of Alan, his availability, approval of final scripts and director, an approved schedule and successful negotiations.

We very much look forward to hearing from you as financing progresses.

With best wishes,



ANN CHURCHILL-BROWN  
acb@shanahan.com.au



# MARQUEE

August 8, 2019

RODRIGO VIDAL DAWSON (Blackfish)  
MARIE PATANE (Planet Mars)  
ALEX ALEXANDER (412 Entertainment)  
ALANTOWN Producers

RE: JACQUELINE MCKENZIE - "ALANTOWN" - TV Series

Dear Rodrigo, Marie and Alex

I am writing to confirm the interest of our client, Jacqueline McKenzie, in the role of MARIA LUCK in 'ALANTOWN' a TV series, to be produced by Blackfish, Planet Mars and 412 Entertainment.

I can also confirm you can attach Jacqueline's name to the project for the purposes of raising finance for a period of 12 months from the date of this letter and the agreement to use her name is given subject to Jacqueline having the first right of refusal to play the above mentioned role upon successful funding of the project.

Jacqueline's involvement in the production would be subject to a formal offer, successful funding & contracting negotiations, as well as subject to Jacqueline's professional availability at the time of production.

I look forward to hearing from you as the funding of the production progresses and wish you the very best in bringing it to screen.

with best wishes,



DAVID SHERIDAN

Studio 4, Level 2 (PO Box 3375)  
55 Great Buckingham St  
Redfern NSW 2016  
Phone 02 9019 0565  
[www.marquee.com.au](http://www.marquee.com.au)



united management

19<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

Marie Patane (planetMARS)  
Rodrigo Vidal Dawson (Blackfish)  
Alex Alexander (412 Entertainment)  
ALANTOWN Producers

Dear Marie, Rodrigo and Alex,

Re: ALANTOWN

I am writing to confirm Tilda Cobham-Hervey's interest in the 12 x 30 minute television series ALANTOWN.

Please accept this letter as confirmation of Tilda's attachment to the project, pending her professional availability and an agreed fee. We understand that at this time, you are planning to film towards the end of 2020.

As Tilda is being asked to provide a letter of interest in regards to this project, we respectfully request that Tilda retains first right of refusal over the role of ABCDEE/Mary 2.

Tilda is also happy to agree to her name being publicly mentioned in relation to your project.

We wish you every success as you proceed –

Kind regards,

*Trish McAskill*

Trish McAskill

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PLANET MARS



412  
ENTERTAINMENT

# THE SYNOPSIS

**ALANTOWN** is a fledgling regional commune that's quickly labelled a cult when their leader, ALAN PEPPER - claims to be the reincarnation of Jesus. But Alan isn't your typical, religious, authoritarian figurehead. He doesn't look like "The Second Coming" nor does he behave like Christ reborn. When we first meet him, he's a bit of a mess, struggling to accept who he is and deeply frustrated by his inability to remember the details of his first life. In his current, transformative state, Alan is unable to articulate a reason for his return or what Alantown's shared mission or ideology might be.

Despite this yet unknown purpose, his followers remain faithful and full of hope that their enigmatic leader will eventually get his shit together. Blindly content, they are enamoured by his natural charm and his genuine ability to empathise, validate and connect with each and every one of them.

So far, their isolated existence and slow and steady "word of mouth" approach to announcing Alan's return as Jesus has allowed him and his disciples to fly under the radar, but overnight, everything changes...

If you're going to claim you're The Second Coming expect retribution and judgment from sceptics in the outside world. Alan's arrival hasn't gone totally un-noticed, sparking the interest of young journalist Vincent Venamore, who has a very personal mission to destroy Alan, hell bent on exposing him as a con-artist.

This sends the once peaceful 'Alanians' into a spin, forcing Alan and his disciples to defend their existence and "come out" before they're ready.

As the series progresses and Alan's first life memories start to return, a new, more 'spiritual' and less 'religious' Jesus emerges... claiming to have been misrepresented throughout history and both misquoted and misinterpreted in the Bible. Alan's purpose is becoming clear: HE'S a 'new type' of, Next Gen Son-of -God! All of his human flaws are seen as rather refreshing by followers and as a more relatable figurehead - the kind of guy you can both have a beer with at the pub and divulge your inner most secrets to without fear of judgment. Before long, Alan's "Jesus" starts to resonate with the current day masses.

Of course, with growing popularity comes a growing list of enemies, led by Vincent, who will stop at nothing to expose Alan as a fraud and bring Alantown to its knees.

After publishing a series of damning articles about the group on a local news website, other media outlets start picking up the story and before long, Alan is labelled a fraud and Alantown - a CULT.

# *ALANTOWN - THE TV SERIES*



# ALANTOWN THEMATIC

Alantown is unique in that it will have its audience laughing and thinking in equal measure. It's told from the inside looking out - rather than the outside looking in which will give the audience a whole new perspective on these controversial groups and the people that join them. The reality of the subject matter - a religious commune seen by some as a burgeoning CULT - is that even as skeptics, we find their daily existence fascinating.

Alantown is a comic and sometimes-dramatic look at the formation, recruitment and logistics involved in starting and growing your own cult - as well as the unpredictable and funny nature of communal living.

*Alantown* is also an interesting insight into why our current culture might inspire people to search for greater meaning and a sense of belonging. It also explores the reasons behind why seemingly normal people seek out leaders to follow and why now, more than ever, people are searching for a sense of community. And with Alan's modern, more spiritual version of "Jesus" this series will have the audience questioning the story of this man that we've been fed by religion and culture. Alan's claim that he was misrepresented the first time around and that now he's back to "set the record straight" is not only humorous - it's controversial. On one level, the idea of *Alantown* is quite simple. It's a story about a guy who thinks he's Jesus, but ultimately it explores some really interesting and timely themes.

There are obvious references to the Bible with incidents occurring on the compound like "The Burning Bush" and "The Immaculate Conception" and occasionally a miracle occurs - seemingly at the hands of *Alan*.

The audience will be challenged to question what religion and culture have told us about Jesus including what he said, what he stood for and most importantly who he was.

Social media has given this new "Jesus" a global platform to control his own narrative, which makes Alan a controversial figure and the penultimate 'influencer'!

Compound living comes with lots of benefits but it also has its downsides. Although everyone arrives with the best intentions the reality of living in this closed community is that there are unpredictable relationship dynamics, personality clashes, power struggles and loads of unopened baggage full of all types of unresolved trauma- creating a dysfunctional free for all. *Alantown* also looks at the minutiae of day to day life in this new world - trying to establish a semblance of normalcy amidst the chaos- Just like a regular family.

*Alantown* explores the many and varied reasons as to why people seek out these cults as an alternative to mainstream society in search of answers to life's big questions: "why are we here?", "what's my purpose?", "am I truly happy?" and "who am I?"... They are all questions that are addressed by Alan's spiritual awakening manifestos\*

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS SPIRITUALITY CONNECTION

# WHY ALANTOWN?

## **"WAKE UP" IN ALANTOWN!**

If you think you're not the sort of person to fall under Alantown's spell - think again! Everyone yearns for a sense of belonging and in Alantown followers are surrounded by love and acceptance 24/7.

"Wake up in Alantown!" has a double meaning - Followers are not only literally waking up in the compound called Alantown, they are lured by the promise of being spiritually awakened too. When Alan realises his purpose is to bring people of all races, religions, and cultures together again - he encourages his followers to help "spread the word" giving them a shared mission and reason for being there. Under Alan's Jesus, followers are put through a "waking up" initiation and invited to be part of a new movement to bring peace, hope and love back into a world that's teetering on the edge.

Through the series both Alan and the audience discover the secret and mystical energy that allows Alan to create order from chaos, mindfulness from madness and love amidst diversity.

Simply put, living up to the expectations of mainstream society is utterly exhausting! A cult like Alantown offers people an alternative way of living and an opportunity to wipe the slate clean on their old lives and start again.

# WHY ALAN?

Alan has a natural magnetism and like all cult leaders, a certain charm and charisma that draws followers to Alantown with the promise of providing what society can't. When we first meet Alan, he is still "waking up". He's a bit of mess, and still coming to terms with the realisation he's Christ reborn.

But, apart from an abnormally large collection of shiny balls in his shed, Alan also possesses the gift of making people feel seen and heard in a world where they are increasingly invisible.

He makes them feel radically accepted, gives them a sense of belonging, and a home where they feel unconditionally loved. As Alan's memories come flooding back it becomes very clear in his actions and words that he is not "The Second Coming" that everyone - even he, was expecting. He remembers his first life very differently to how it was recorded throughout history and he finds himself disagreeing with religious interpretations of his first assignment. In contrast to the "Jesus" we've read about, Alan remembers himself to be more of a mystic, an all embracing, all inclusive, spiritual being who has come back to "wake up" humanity, bring people back together and offer hope in a world that so often seems hopeless.

## **\*A note about Alan's BALLS...**

Alan's love of the ancient art of 'Hikaru Dorodango' keeps him connected to the earth and serves as his own personal healing practice. His collection of "balls", infused with his emotions and energy, represent the healing power of Earth and there is an undeniable force manifested through them in his unwavering belief that everything and everyone is connected. This also serves as an analogy to his ultimate purpose in uniting humanity through diversity. The transformation that takes place from mud to shiny things of beauty is not only how he sees his own journey, but it's what he hopes to achieve in the world. Whether the audience believes this to be true or simply a self fulfilling prophecy, will rest in the eye of the beholder. However, there will be an undeniable connection between Alan, his "balls" and the magic that seemingly ensues.

The answers to "Life's true meaning", Alan's magnetism and the source of Alantown's power rest solely and solemnly on Alan's balls and ultimately on his ability to control them.

# FORMAT

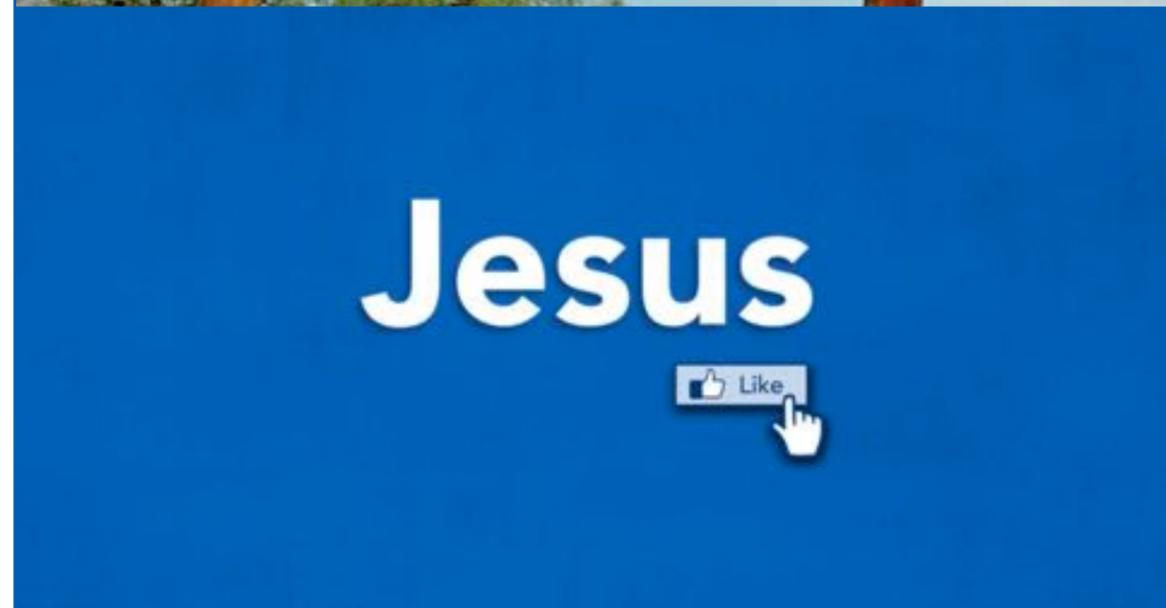
**ALANTOWN** is a 30-minute television dark comedy about day-to-day life in a modern day cult and how Social Media – particularly Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, has undoubtedly changed the way these groups connect, communicate with and inspire their followers.

**ALANTOWN** will be told in 12 instalments – broken up into 6 episodes in Series 1 and 6 episodes in series 2.

Set in wine country, it will look beautiful whilst remaining organic - in all the best ways – to reflect the way *Alanian's* live.

Each episode will be its own contained story but carry threads of an overall story arc for each of the core characters.

Episode 7 – the first episode of season 2 takes viewers back in time to reveal the past lives of Alan, Peter and the core cast of followers and how they came to be.



# STORY OUTLINES - SEASON EPISODES

## SEASON 1

### EP 1: **READY OR NOT HERE I COME**

A hierarchy is established when Alan's core group of followers settle into their new home in the Adelaide Hills; and Garth and Sandy bond over a mutual love of gardening when they're relegated to the tented area. With strong encouragement from Peter and Colleen and the help of a PR Guru, Alan stars in a recruitment video and reluctantly announces his return as 'Jesus' on social media - with life changing results.

Alantown registers on journalist Vincent Venamore's radar.

### EP 2: **THE LOAVES, THE FISHES....AND A GOAT.**

Needing some time alone to digest his newfound notoriety and blissfully unaware his friends have been taken to a deprogramming facility against their will, Alan spends the day practicing the ancient art of Dorodango and fishing in the dam - making an unlikely friend in the process. Meantime, the followers return in time for housewarming festivities - with a couple of new members whom immediately upset the dynamic of the group, including Colleen's teenage daughter Paisley, whom Alan thinks might be the devil and a mysterious, other worldly woman named Abcdee, whom Alan thinks might be an angel.

The failed intervention makes Vincent more determined to expose Alan as a fraud and he publicly brands Alantown a cult.

### EP 3: **DOUBLE TROUBLE: WILL THE REAL JESUS PLEASE STEP FORWARD?**

There's a new "Jesus on the Block" and when Peter realises there's holy competition next door he suggests inviting the core group of doppelgangers over for lunch - which sets off an hilarious sequence of events that ultimately reveals the fake Messiah. Meanwhile, growing rivalries between Colleen and Abcdee, whom the group are now calling Mary 1 and Mary 2, force Alan to make a difficult choice.

Paisley accuses Alan of getting rid of her new puppy because he is allergic, causing even greater tension between the two, but when the opportunity arises for her to leave, she decides to stay.

### EP 4: **A BIRTHDAY PARTY..... IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL**

The past catches up with Alan when two young adults (one African and one Japanese) arrive in Alantown claiming to be his children - one of them older than Abcdee. Despite this, Peter takes an urgent "business trip" and the group continue with plans to throw Alan a surprise Birthday party on the compound. Meantime, Garth digs foundations for a marquee and finds something unexpected in the garden - Sandy's ex husband.

# STORY OUTLINES - SEASON EPISODES

## SEASON 1 (Continued)

### EP 5: **SEE YOU IN PARADISE...BITCHES!**

When a celebrity follower seeks refuge in Alantown to escape the media and an unfolding scandal, Peter worries he's a bad influence on Alan, who is missing Colleen and struggling to deal with increasing demands of followers. As the compound descends into a cesspit of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll, Bible enthusiast Garth is forced to act, when Peter tells him that Alan and his new celebrity friend are re-writing the Big Book, giving it a modern-day spin. Meantime, Paisley makes her first Dorodango ball.....and falls in love.

### EP 6: **NAILED YA JESUS....BLESSED HOPE OR HOLY TERROR?**

It's Easter and in an attempt to counteract negative publicity and recent claims that Alan is a fraud, the group throw open its doors for an Ultimate Frisby competition and giant Easter Egg hunt. But festivities are brought to a halt by the arrival of Vincent and the Police, who search the property for Sandy's missing husband, destroying all of Alan's precious Dorodango balls in the process. Unaware Garth has moved her ex-husband's body, a nervous Sandy is surprised and relieved when they find nothing and suggests the group cool off in the dam - even a couple of cops and a defeated Vincent jump in. But there are secrets lurking underneath and they slowly begin to float to the surface - one body part at a time - leaving Garth to wonder just how many ex-husbands Sandy has.

With a cluster of dead bodies, including one missing dog, Paisley shows her true colours, ensuring this Friday isn't going to be a "Good" one after all....and confirming Alan's belief that she's the devil.

Vincent is delighted when Alan is arrested for murder and escorted from the property. Alantown is in tatters. Peter calls his "secret" wife and says it's time for her to join them.

## SEASON 2

### EP 1: **IN THE BEGINNING...**

It is Easter Weekend and whilst Alan sits in a prison cell at the local Police Station, we go back in time to reveal how it all began....

We learn how Alan and Peter first met - in a hotel where Alan's mother and Peter's father conducted an extramarital affair. Each time, Peter reads the room's bible to Alan to comfort him and cover the sound of their parents having sex. Then for reasons still unknown the affair abruptly ends, forcing the friends apart. It's not until later in life when the two meet in serendipitous circumstances that their journey to establishing Alantown together begins.

We will also see how the core group of followers came to meet and why Vincent Venamore was always destined to be the "thorn" in Jesus's crown.

# LOCATION & SETTINGS



*ALANTOWN* is set in the *Adelaide Hills*

The small town of *Mt. Magnificent* in the Adelaide Hills is the perfect place for a burgeoning cult - a compound that's close to the city of Adelaide - for access to people - but far enough away to go unnoticed.



ALANTOWN

ONE WAY

KEY PEOPLE



## **MARIE PATANE - CREATOR / PRODUCER**

Marie Patane graduated with a Law degree from the Queensland University of Technology in 1995 and has worked for over 25 years as a presenter, interviewer, producer and writer in the television and corporate worlds. She is Managing Director of Planet Mars, a boutique production company known for creating quirky online content.

Marie was employed by the Nine Network for 10 years, working as both a reporter, writer and presenter. Her credits include Brisbane EXTRA and National Nine New (Queensland) and The Today Show. She co-anchored the Australian version of Entertainment Tonight and hosted one of Australia's first renovation shows - "Dream Home". Marie also fronted specials for the Network including Cleo Bachelor of the Year and co-hosted the Red-Carpet Arrivals at the TV Week Logies. Marie has also worked as on camera talent for the Seven Network on lifestyle show "Lights. Camera, Auction" and FOXTEL.

Marie is also well known for her work as presenter with QANTAS Airlines. For close to 12 years she was a regular "face" on its In-flight Entertainment channels. Marie presented a monthly entertainment show called "What's On" and travelled the world as interviewer and host of the airline's documentary style Travel Guides - which can still be seen on both domestic and international flights. She also voiced many of the airlines in-flight presentations.

Marie is also an award winning writer and has a great passion for telling stories. She has written, produced and directed many short films - most notably - her short film series "How Many Doctors..." won her the Best Comedy and the prestigious Women and Film awards at Tropfest in 2006 and 2012 respectively. Marie's short Documentary "Bride of the Year" also won her a place in the finals at the NSW Golden Yowie awards. Marie also writes scripted content for corporate and advertising clients and is known for creating quirky corporate and digital content. Most recently she wrote, produced and directed a series of short comedy films for SWISH - a new real estate ap.

Marie is also a casual lecturer at the Australian Film TV and Radio School (AFTRS) in Sydney where she runs the Television Presenting courses for adults of all ages. Marie has also taught courses in Public Speaking, General Presentation and Writing Skills. Marie regularly teaches the children's TV presenting courses at AFTRS too - which include modules for public speaking, drama, creative writing and on-camera presence. She also works as a media trainer for AFTRS and some of her clients have included Fairfax, Newscorp, NSW Transport and the National Australia Bank.



## **RODRIGO VIDAL DAWSON - PRODUCER**

Rodrigo is a Sydney based Executive Producer, Creative and Cinematographer. A graduate of The Australian Film Television & Radio School. His experience encompasses a wide range of narrative, commercial, art and documentary projects. Having Produced Feature films, documentaries and countless hours of content for brands such as Adidas, Sony, Destination NSW to count as a few major clients.

In his work Rodrigo seeks to discover the dramatic and personal 'spirit' of a story and tell this story through emotive imagery. Rodrigo has also shot feature films , documentaries and hundreds of Hours of Commerical and Corporate content.

Prior to completing Cinematography Program at the prestigious AFTRS, Rodrigo spent 13 years working his way up the ranks in the Camera & Production departments, undergoing an intensive apprenticeship on feature films, television, documentary series and commercials under the guidance of some of the world's top cinematographers and Producers, both here and Abroad. Rodrigo's work has screened at numerous international film festivals.

In the past few years establishing Blackfish (**BLKFSCH**), Currently Executive Producer & Head of Scripted . A collective experience spans Long form TV Series & Feature Films, VR/AR, Documentaries, Animation Design & Creative Strategy - Community, corporate and commercial productions. Backed by a strong body of work, and a shared passion for great yarns, and big themes. Having produced feature films *Indigo Lake* and *Observance*.

Blkfsch is a majority owned and operated indigenous company, supporting cultural awareness and social progression through the power of Visual Narrative. Believing in *STORY* with depth, and vision with soul.

Outside of the Film Industry. Rodrigo has travelled extensively and Studied Story & Poetry at the Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile



## **ALEX ALEXANDER - PRODUCER**

An expert storyteller, incubator of new entertainment properties, multi-platform specialist , Producer, deal maker , ball breaker and all round nice guy.

Alex sits at the juncture of Marketing, Content, Commerce and Story. Having held CMO and Marketing Director positions across media, publishing and entertainment companies, Alex understands the business of entertainment and practices Producerology: defined as the fine art of making shit happen with extraordinary results .

Creator and Producer of the Movie Maker Project SA in 2008, Alexander produced and directed the award winning original YA feature film and yearlong multi-platform experience 'Alma Mater High'.

Alex EP'd and co-created NBCUniversal's interactive crime series Precinct 13 – Seasons 1 and 2 , an original Multiplatform series spanning online, TV, print and social media . A crime story where the viewer decided the outcome.

Alexander has produced and created TV series for NBCU's E!, Style and 13th Street channels including: Changing Faces, Unveiled and Filthy Gorgeous non-scripted factual formats.

Unveiled launched on E! In Australia and was the top 10 reality show on Netflix US and UK in 2018. The series has since sold to BBC and Discovery around the world with a second series in the works.

A thought leader and International speaker on the Future of Storytelling and Entertainment, Alex was recently appointed Adjunct Professor at United Institute of Technology, NZ where he created a syllabus development for the Masters in Creative Practice.

He has been an International Speaker and mentor on Multiplatform production, pitching and project financing at Media Lab Switzerland, MIPCOM in Cannes and NZ.

In 2013 Alex won the coveted Content 360 at MIPTV for his Multiplatform pitch 'Step 1', for MTS and CTC in Russia and created a cross platform immersive experience for the Russian audiences in 2014.

Alexander is currently EP and show runner on Undocumented a 10 x 30 min TV drama series in pre production , and EP on a 412 Entertainment and Beyond International co-production for the true crime Thriller "Pretty Girl Killer".



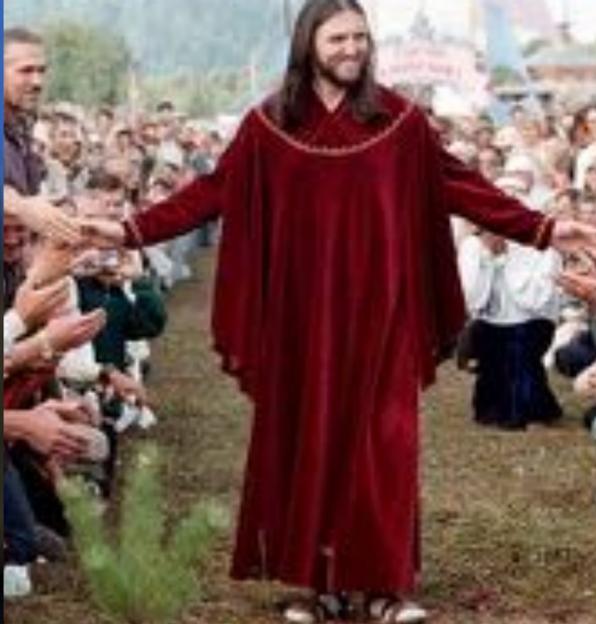
## **MATT CAMERON - SCRIPT CONSULTANT**

An award-winning screenwriter and playwright, series creator, producer and showrunner.

Matt Cameron began his professional career in 1992 as a comedy writer, penning monologue jokes for a national tonight show, before moving into sketch comedy then narrative comedy then long form drama. Since that first drama foray with regular collaborator, Andrew Knight, on *Seachange*, he has written some of Australia's most successful dramas: the ABC's *Jack Irish* starring Guy Pearce (two telemovies adapted from the Peter Temple novels as well as two subsequent original six part series, the last of which he also produced), the Foxtel political thriller *Secret City* starring Jacki Weaver and Anna Torv (serving as showrunner on the recent second series), the Logie winning Seven Network mini-series *Molly* starring Samuel Johnson as Molly Meldrum, the AACTA and AWGIE Award-winning Best Mini Series *Sunshine* starring Anthony LaPaglia (series creator and co-producer) and the acclaimed *Safe harbour* for SBS.

Other writing credits include ABC crime series *OLD SCHOOL* starring Sam Neill and Bryan Brown; Network Ten's *Crashburn*; Shaun Micallef's satirical comedy *Newstopia* for SBS; Eric Bana's sketch show *Eric* (also producer) for the Seven Network; the AWGIE award-winning Foxtel comedy *Introducing Gary Petty* (creator and director); and ABC's comedy classic *Kath & Kim* (script editor).

Matt has also written numerous plays for the theatre, including *Ruby moon*, which have been produced locally and internationally. His writing awards include the ANPC/New Dramatists Award, the Wal Cherry Play of the Year Award and the British Council New International Playwriting Award. His feature film debut, *Poor Boy*, adapted from his original play and directed by Guy Pearce, is scheduled for production in 2019 with Aquarius Films.



# CASTING



PLANET MARS





# ALAN PEPPER JESUS CHRIST

Alan is the “face” of the cult and genuinely believes he is the reincarnation of Jesus Christ – albeit reluctantly. Charismatic, warm and a genuinely good bloke, Alan has all the good traits of a cult leader and seemingly none of the bad. Alan is humble and lacks self confidence - despite the realization he is Jesus reborn - and doesn't necessarily like the attention his newfound status as a cult leader brings (although he does occasionally take advantage of it). Despite his insecurities, and probably because of them, Alan is an extremely relatable leader with an undeniable magnetism - and like all great leaders – has the ability to amass a following.

Alan is never short of partner – male or female – but has never managed to find peace with just one person. When we meet him he is in a relationship with a woman named Colleen, who believes she is the reincarnation of Mary Magdelene. As the series progresses Alan's inability to commit and love just one person gets him into trouble and threatens to crumble the very foundations of the community they've built.

He has faults, which he doesn't hide from his followers, and this imperfect facade is what sets him apart from other power hungry, attention seeking cult leaders. Alan's sudden rise in popularity on social media and unexpected success as an influencer on Instagram boost his confidence on one level but heighten his anxieties on another.

Alan is still struggling to remember certain aspects of his first life on earth as Jesus and in this life, doesn't profess to know all the answers...just yet. His internal struggle and the reluctance to sit fully in his power - make him even more likeable – and even harder for his enemies to take down.

Alan practices Hikaru Dorodango – the ancient Japanese art of making extremely beautiful shiny balls – made of dirt. It's a hobby that takes him away from the group and gives him much needed time alone and is like meditation for him. This hobby seems to help memories from his first life on earth come back to him, since he is struggling with the detail. He has hundreds of balls that he's made which are very precious and kept in a special room. He's very protective of them and no one is allowed to touch “Alan's balls”. Alan is always on the lookout for dirt – and often stops randomly to collect samples. It's a hobby that sees him working with and touching the earth – to which he has a very strong connection.

Before realizing he was the reincarnation of Jesus, Alan was in the entertainment industry – a ‘triple threat’ actor, dancer and singer who enjoyed some level of fame on a soap in the mid 90's. He still has contacts from his past that show up every now and then – most of them – female.



# COLLEEN *Mary 1*

Pretty and absolutely devoted to Alan - Colleen is his partner at the beginning of the series. Colleen claims to be the reincarnation of Mary Magdalene and believes she and Alan were meant to be together in this lifetime - tolerating his behaviour and obvious indiscretions. She's smart, opinionated and outspoken but at times speaks as though she's been brainwashed and is devoted to the point of ridiculousness. At times, even Alan is uncomfortable with her level of devotion to him.

Unbeknownst to the group and Alan, she's left her angry husband Bob, and a teenage daughter Paisley, in the outside world who show up at the compound for answers. When Colleen's cast aside for a mysterious woman Alan believes to be the 'actual' reincarnation of Mary Magdalene, she leaves the compound with a broken heart..... and a plan for revenge - made worse by the fact Bob and Paisley choose to stay.



## *ABCDEE Mary 2*

Smart mouthed, bold, interesting and young - Abcdee arrives at the compound after meeting Alan in a bar one night at which she's working as a cocktologist (a cocktail waitress). She's not as eloquent or elegant as Colleen but turns up claiming to be the real Mary Magdelene, causing confusion within the group and driving a wedge between Alan and Colleen. Abcdee and Alan have an undeniable chemistry and Alan can't help but fall head over heels. Having never seen Alan so devoted, Peter feels threatened, causing tension between the friends. It's not until Peter realizes making the perfect screwdriver isn't Abcdee's only talent, that he accepts her as Alantown's new female figurehead - and Colleen is stepped down.

Abcdee has never put down any roots in her life and has never been able to have children - perfect for Alantown's "no children" policy. But are her intentions as pure as she says they are, does she genuinely believes she is the reincarnation of "Mary" and does Alan make a mistake by letting go of Colleen?



# SANDY

A good Christian, Sandy is a beautiful, jolly soul who has kindly donated the home and surrounding property she once shared with her ex-husband Jeffery, to the cause. She prides herself on being a “servant” and spends her days making life as comfortable as she can for everyone around her - although often making them uncomfortable in the process!

She has anointed herself head cook (the group often pray an actual good cook will arrive at the compound soon!) and no one has the heart to express their real feelings about the food she serves. She is a green thumb, loves tending to Alantown’s garden and in her spare time loves “guerrilla gardening” at night if she can’t sleep (donning gloves and a mask she gardens on land she does not have the legal rights to cultivate - often taking Garth with her).

***“It’s a great day for photosynthesizin!”***

Sandy loves music and dances as if no one is watching. She is greatly loved and feels like she’s finally found a “family” amongst the core followers of Alantown - something she’s been searching for her whole life.

Sandy often talks about her ex husband Jeffery, is always quoting him and speaks of him fondly...but Sandy is hiding a secret about her marriage - a secret that’s *literally* uncovered throughout the series.



# PETER POTTS

Alan's best friend and the "brains" behind ALANTOWN, Peter leads the charge for Alan's outing as The Second Coming and his faith is unquestionable. He has left everything in the outside world to support his holy friend - including a high powered, high paying job.....and a family.

Peter is private, closed and super smart - almost savant like. He has a wife and kids whom he sometimes sneaks out of the compound to monitor - without them knowing. He is fascinating in his quietness and in his ability to puppeteer people. Pleasantries don't come naturally to Peter - he is not a "people person" and lacks the warmth and charisma of his holy best friend...and perhaps this is why he's not the leader of the cult himself. In a group setting he is super honest, often offensive and makes no apologies to anyone for simply telling the truth. His bluntness is comical.

This coldness can come off as callous but Peter is extremely loyal and if anyone's in trouble - Peter is the man to see. He's responsible for the groups finances and is an integral part of its survival. Peter could also be the reason Alantown doesn't collapse into a polyamorous free-loving hippie commune!

Peter and Alan are like brothers with a complicated history that's cemented a seemingly unbreakable bond between the two men. They are almost co-dependant and have a very close and sometimes competitive relationship and each have different strengths - making them a formidable team. And the fact Alan has a revolving bedroom door suits Peter because his lovers are never around long enough to take Peter's place as Alan's closest confidant.

Together, Alan and Peter are brilliant. Apart, things could get messy. so when Alan meets a woman he falls head over heels for....Peter's position is threatened.

Peter keeps Alan calm, focused and big headed with continual encouragement and praise - but occasionally lets him know that ALANTOWN would not be possible without him. The truth is though, Alan gives Peter a purpose and without him Peter would be back to the empty, unfulfilling life he felt he had before the two friends reconnected.



# GARTH

An Ex addict, Garth has transformed his life and follows the word of God to a tee. He carries a Bible around with him and often excitedly quotes from the Big Book when trying to make a point. If he can't remember a passage he feels frustrated and like a failure. This is a guy that's been saved by turning to religion so the idea that Jesus has come back makes him weak at the knees. He is infatuated with Alan and truly believes he is The Second Coming but also gets frustrated when he's overlooked or ignored in his quest to prove that he could be the reincarnation of one of Jesus' original Apostles.

Whilst his disposition is cheery, when Garth feels threatened or insecure, his disposition changes drastically. Garth has to work hard to remain positive - it doesn't come naturally.

Garth refers to himself as having the 'voice of an angel' and in fact he does. He sings, plays the guitar/ukulele at group gatherings and has recruited some musicians to form the "Lambs of God" band. Before becoming a founding member of Alantown Garth had a troubled past. Social disorders prevented him from singing on stage but after building up the confidence to audition for The Voice his life spiralled out of control when he failed to get any of the judges to turn their chairs. In Alantown though, he feels like a rock star - a status that's threatened when a real life rock star seeks refuge in Alantown later in the series.

Garth is a recovering alcoholic and chronic pot smoker. Although he no longer touches drugs he still likes to have contact with them. He distills his own spirits on the compound and grows weed - distributing it to others for free - until business savvy Peter suggests he turn it into a business.

***"And be not drunk from wine which leads to debauchery but be filled with the spirit....in particular - my homemade vodka."***

Sandy and Garth form a close bond having been relegated to tents so that Alan, Peter and Mary can sleep in the house. Sandy often drags Garth along on her guerilla gardening adventures and Garth helps Sandy cover up secrets from her past.

## **ROBERT/BOB**

Colleen's husband, Bob seeks help from Vincent and Frank to stage an intervention. He believes Alantown is a cult and his wife has been brainwashed by Alan into believing she is the reincarnation of Mary Magdelene.

## **BILLY/BILLIE THE OFFICE MAN/WOMAN**

He is just that – an Office boy – efficient, doesn't say too much, Billy shows up just in time to relieve Alan and Peter from having to answer all of the online requests coming in since Alan's online presence. Billy appears one day at the compound and never leaves and we always see him in the back ground – sometimes praying for online followers as a substitute for Alan. (Alan doesn't have time to pray for everyone!) What the followers don't notice is that 'Billy' is slowly morphing into 'Billie' and his look has dramatically changed just in time for the Police to turn up looking for Billy – who by that time no longer exists....

## **HEINZ**

***“Don't worry Heinz is harmless, they could never prove anything..”***

Owner of the Alantown's neighbouring property – Heinz is a man of few words. He looks scary and his past is shrouded in secrecy but he becomes one of Alan's closet friends – despite being an atheist and very critical of religion in general.

## **VINCENT VENAMORE**

The thorn in Jesus's crown, Vincent is a gung-ho investigative journalist whose career is floundering - with no personal life to speak of. For a reason explained later in the series Vincent is continually trying to expose Alantown's leaders as frauds. He joins forces with Frank from the anti-cult facility and a few of the followers family members and as the series progresses, becomes more and more obsessed with bringing Alantown to its knees.

## **SIMON**

Garth's only relative that still speaks to him, Simon is Alan's bodyguard and the 'protector' of the group. Simon is grossly overweight and the only one that genuinely likes Sandy's cooking. He openly admits to initially joining the group for the free food and board but quickly becomes a devoted member. He's also probably a little too fond of Alan – often bear hugging him and invading his personal space. He is gently spoken and soft hearted – it's just his size that's intimidating.

## **PAISLEY**

Colleen and Bob's teenage daughter. When she unexpectedly moves to Alantown she and Alan don't have the step father/step daughter relationship Colleen was hoping for. Paisley and Alan do have a connection – an intense connection – but it's not positive. Since her arrival Alan is unable to concentrate on his Dorodango and “his balls” are turning out imperfect and cracked. Alan doesn't know what it is about Paisley but something about her makes him think she could be the devil and time will tell if she's on the side of good or evil.

## **FRANK MOLL**

Ex member of the “Moonie” cult , Frank and his wife now run a “deprogramming” facility for people who have been brainwashed by religious sects. They believe Alan and Peter are in the beginning stages of forming an evil mind control cult and are continually trying to rescue followers and convince them they're being brainwashed.

# CHARACTER ARCS

Despite some teething issues, Alan is sure of WHO he is, and this is obvious to Alantown's founders and his wider group of followers - he's just not sure of WHY he's come back and this is why he isn't fully embracing his power.

Luckily, best friend Peter Potts has happily taken the reigns on Alan's behalf.

With Alan as the "face" of the group and Peter as the "brains" -these two have a symbiotic existence brought about by a long and complicated history. Initially, they believe they need each other for this to work but eventually, as Alan starts to understand why he is here, it becomes obvious this spiritual version of Jesus doesn't align with Peter's staunch religious beliefs or his growth and marketing strategy for their new type of CULT (Short for cultivate) causing drama and conflict between the lifelong friends.

Alantown's founding members also include love interest Colleen, who believes she is the reincarnation of Mary Magdalene; Bible enthusiast Garth who has committed every passage and verse in the big book to memory; and green thumb Sandy, a motherly figure who has kindly donated her

# THE FOLLOWERS

The possibilities for the types of characters that would join a cult and move to Alantown are endless and diverse, funny and sad – and always interesting.

People think cults are full of the weak, weird and emotionally unstable but that's simply NOT TRUE. Of course there are the clichés – those seeking validation, those with low self esteem, those who seek answers, those who are running from something in the outside world and those who are just plain crazy. But many cult members are intelligent, attractive and skilled. The reality is cults are full of all sorts of people who look like you and me.

Cult members often don't realize that they're in a cult, and the rest of us want to think it could never happen to us. But in today's world, could it? More than ever people are searching for the meaning of life. The desire to drop out of a society in which you have been judged a failure can lead to a fanatical desire for immersion within a group like Alantown...a group where past identities are erased.

People join cults because they fall in love with a beautiful dream. They see something they desperately want or need. They feel like they've found The Answer to life's problems. If you're capable of falling in love, you're capable of joining a cult.

And then of course there are always the serial cult members – those people looking to join a cult – any cult - doesn't matter which one.

*"I hope you eat meat in Alantown? I never really understood what a "vegan" was but I left the last cult I was in shortly after the first communal meal."*

**Serial Cult Member**

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**PLANET MARS**