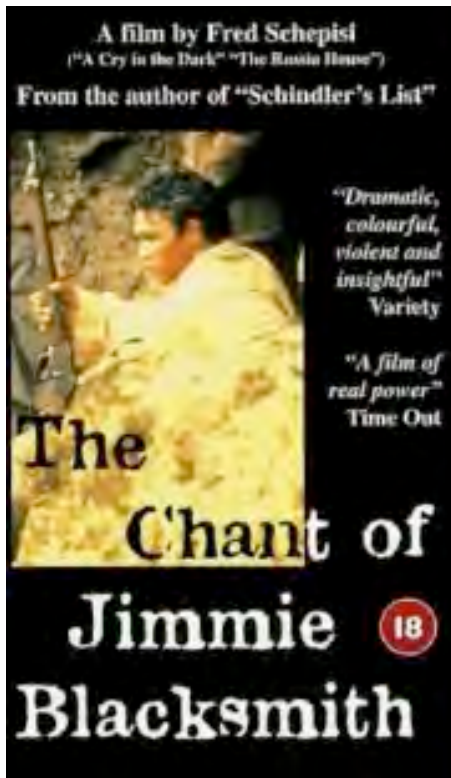


THE CHANT OF JIMMIE BLACKSMITH

AUSTRALIA, 1978

FRED SCHEPISI



SYNOPSIS

The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith is a shocking indictment of the racism inflicted on the Indigenous people of Australia.

Jimmie is a half-white, half-Indigenous young man raised by a Methodist minister. Feeling outcast among the Aboriginal people, Jimmie moves to the city and gets a job working for a white family.

When a white serving girl at the estate becomes pregnant, everyone is convinced that Jimmie is the father; to spare the girl's honor, Jimmie marries her and is allowed to live with her on the estate.

But after the child is born, everyone realizes that the father was a white man, not Jimmie; he is still willing to accept the child and stand beside his wife, but his employers now feel that he married a white girl under false pretenses, and they bar him from the estate.

Forbidden to see his wife and fired without receiving his pay, Jimmie finally explodes in a fury of violent revenge.

TECHNICAL DATA

Director: Fred Schepisi

Producer: The Film House / Victorian Film

Cinematographer: Ian Baker

Cast: Tommy Lewis, Freddy Reynolds, Ray Barrett, Jack Thompson, Angela Punch McGregor, Steve Dodds, Peter Carroll, Ruth Cracknell

Music: Bruce Smeaton

Runtime: 120 Min

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

vvFred Schepisi (born in Melbourne, 1939) began his production career in the advertising world and served as head of the Film House for almost 20 years where he directed both commercials and documentaries. His first feature-length film was the semi-autobiographical *The Devil's Playground* (1976) which won 6 AFI awards including Best Film and established Fred's reputation as a talented director and writer. The success of his second film *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (1978) took Fred to the U.S. where he directed *Barbarosa* (1981), *Iceman* (1983), *Plenty* (1985), and *Roxanne* (1987) before returning to Australia to co-write and direct *Evil Angels* (*A Cry in the Dark*, 1988). *Evil Angels* received numerous awards and nominations including the AFI Best Achievement in Direction and Best Screenplay Adaptation and 2 Golden Globe nominations for Best Screenplay and Best Director.

Fred also directed the screen adaptation of John Guare's play *Six Degrees of Separation* (1993) starring Stockard Channing, Donald Sutherland and Will Smith. His other film credits include *The Russia House* (1990), *Mr. Baseball* (1992), *IQ* (1994), *Fierce Creatures* (1996), *Last Orders* (2001) and *It Runs in the Family* (2002).

Fred's most recent project was the film adaptation of the best-selling novel by Richard Russo *Empire Falls* (2004). Starring Paul Newman, Ed Harris, Joanne Woodward, Robin Wright Penn and Helen Hunt, the film debuted in the U.S. on HBO, was nominated for a number of awards and and recently won a Golden Globe for Best Mini-Series or Motion Picture made for Television.

Fred was recently awarded the Order of Australia for his service to the Australian film industry as a director, producer and screenwriter.