

# SCREEN DAILY

## Swerve

26 July, 2011 | By Frank Hatherley



Dir/Scr: Craig Lahiff. Australia. 2011. 87mins

**A stylish, self-confident genre flick, *Swerve* hits the ground running with a spectacular car crash, some large explosions, a near-miss by a speeding train and a dead drug-runner's suitcase full of \$100 bills. Whereas other similarly budgeted Aussie movies with loftier concerns get local releases, this nifty, straight-up thriller, which premiered at the Melbourne Film Festival, is still looking for a local distributor. International sales by Moviehouse Entertainment have already begun.**



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Director/writer Craig Lahiff has done constrained, serious-minded work in the past: *Black And White* (2002) concerned real-life 1950s racism. Here he lets rip with some Hitchcockian style on a smartly told bent-cops-and-sexy-robbers caper set in the remote backblocks.



Our hero Colin (David Lyons) is on his way to a job interview in Broken Hill when an unexpected swerve, a fatal collision and Jina (Emma Booth), a smoldering blonde in distress, lead him —and the McGuffin suitcase — to the small oasis township of Neverest. Here he encounters, among other suspicious locals, strapping cop Frank (Jason Clarke), ex-army, psychotic and sexually deviant; and Charlie (Travis McMahon), a truly vicious villain. The plot's twists and turns are neatly revealed, only occasionally implausible.

Lahiff's careful close-ups and camera placements are backed by David Foreman's elegant widescreen cinematography. Both have fun with a descent into an abandoned mine shaft, and with the concluding sequences aboard a speeding passenger train. There's a suitably driving soundtrack from composer Paul Grabowsky.

All that's needed now is a distributor and an audience. And a marketing budget to compete with US thrillers offering no more thrills than here.

Production company: Duo Art Productions

International sales: Moviehouse Entertainment, [www.moviehouseent.com](http://www.moviehouseent.com)

Producers: Helen Leake, Kent Smith, Craig Lahiff

Executive producers: Mark Vennis, Gary Phillips, Bryce Menzies

Cinematography: David Foreman

Editor: Sean Lahiff

Production designer: Tony Cronin

Music: Paul Grabowsky

Website: [www.swervefeaturefilm.com](http://www.swervefeaturefilm.com)

Main cast: Jason Clarke, Emma Booth, David Lyons, Travis McMahon, Vince Colosimo, Roy Billing, Chris Haywood