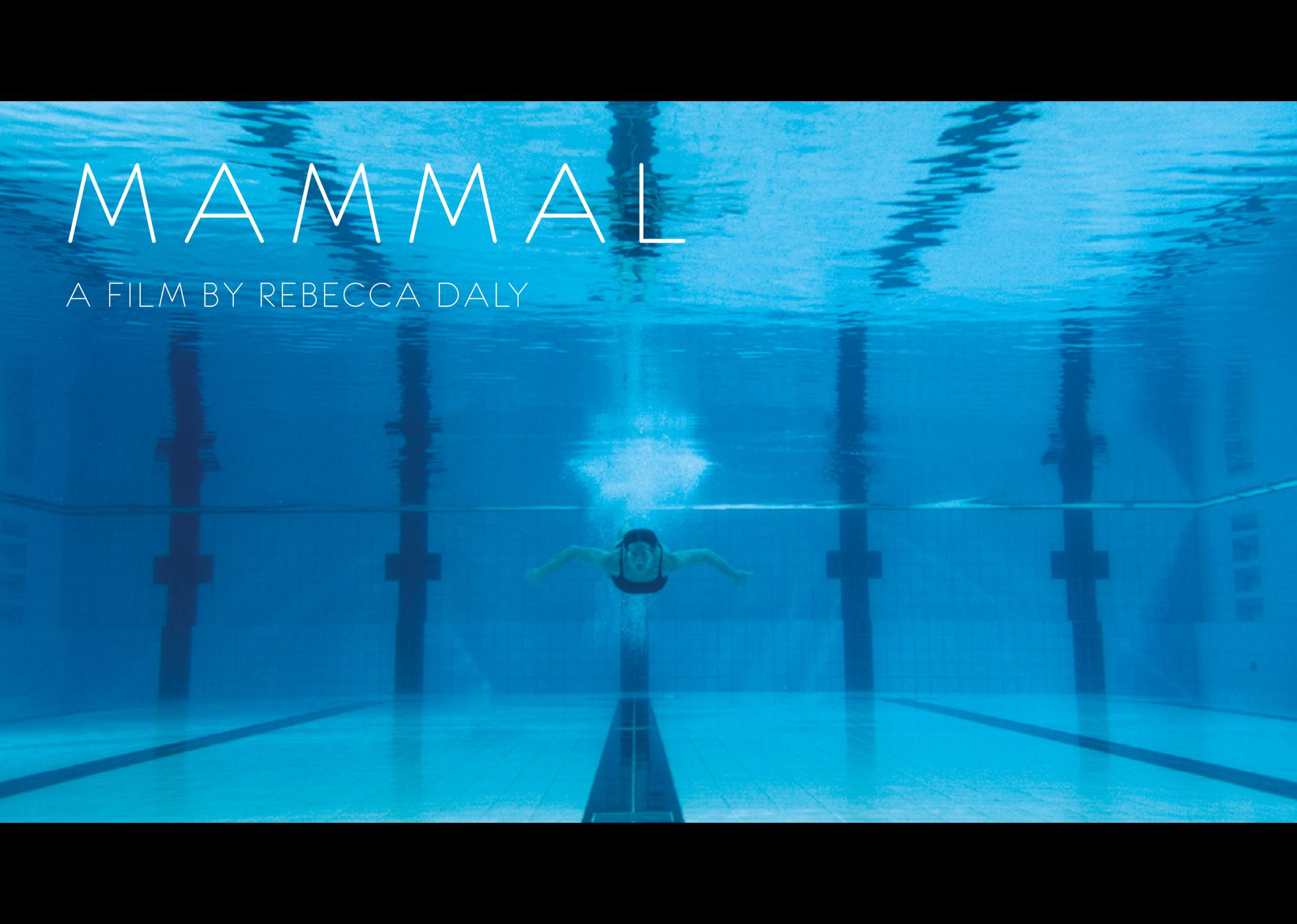


# MAMMAL

A FILM BY REBECCA DALY





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## SYNOPSIS

*Margaret, a divorced woman living alone in Dublin, learns that her teenage son has been found dead. Enduring her unsettling grief privately, she escapes daily to the local swimming pool.*

*One day at the pool she runs into Joe, a homeless youth she found injured late one night in the deserted laneway behind her work.*

*Margaret offers Joe a room in her house and an unorthodox relationship starts to develop between them. Margaret's ex-husband Matt begins to turn up randomly in Margaret's life.*

*As Margaret and Joe's mutual reliance grows their tentative trust is threatened by the escalation of Matt's grieving rage and Joe's involvement with a gang of violent youths.*



## THE DIRECTOR - REBECCA DALY

### ABOUT

Rebecca Daly studied theatre directing and acting and then went on to study film. Her first short, JOYRIDERS (2006) won the Irish Film Award for Best Short and several international awards. Her first feature film THE OTHER SIDE OF SLEEP (2011) premiered in Directors' Fortnight at Cannes Film Festival and in the Discovery section of Toronto International Film Festival.

Rebecca was selected to participate in the first Berlinale Residency with her second feature MAMMAL (2015).

She is currently in development on the feature project GOOD FAVOUR.

### STATEMENT

I started this film with the idea of exploring an alternative kind of mother; the one who leaves, the one who doesn't know how to mother. It troubles me that women are typically more harshly judged than men in relation to how they parent or don't parent their children. This is complex and tied up in a view of the mother as more essential to a child's development but the result is that her identity is automatically more subsumed by becoming a parent than is the case for men. I wanted to see what the audience could feel about this woman who chose to leave her child, not for any great ambition but just because she couldn't, or didn't know how to, live the life of mother and wife.

Margaret's choice to leave underpins her reaction to Patrick's death and her attempt to mother Joe. If she felt she had the right to grieve her own son it's unlikely that she would seek out a substitute. But while this is still an element of the film, what emerged finally is a complicated love story; the story of a woman who tries to love her son too late and the complex relationship she forms with a surrogate.



## KEY CAST - RACHEL GRIFFITHS

### ABOUT

Rachel Griffiths is an Academy Award nominated Australian actress. Having previously worked on stage in Australia she made her movie debut in P.J. Hogan's *MURIEL'S WEDDING* (1994), for which she won an Australian Film Critics Circle Award and the Australian Film Institute's Award for Best Supporting Actress. Rachel went on to appear in *JUDE* (1996), *COSI* (1996), *CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION* (1996), *WELCOME TO WOOP-WOOP* (1997) and *MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING* (1997). In 1998, she received a Best Supporting Actress Oscar nomination for her performance in *HILARY AND JACKIE*. Most recently, Rachel has starred in hit American TV series *SIX FEET UNDER* (2001-2005), for which she has won a Golden Globe for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role, and *BROTHERS AND SISTERS* (2006-2011), for which she has won two Golden Globe nominations and two Primetime Emmy nominations.

### STATEMENT

Margaret in this movie is a character I probably haven't ever been asked to play. I tend to be asked to play the more expressive, tell-it-like-it-is, driving-type characters. So it had been a long time since I'd gone to that place in my self, a shy, less articulate person who struggles to understand the relationships between people, and I found that quite attractive at that moment in my life. I think *MAMMAL* is a very challenging film that makes us contemplate or reframe what many media messages about motherhood are about, that you're going to love being a mother, you're going to embrace it, and you're going to spend your life just wanting more time to make cupcakes. Some women don't necessarily have that experience of motherhood, some women don't feel the things we're supposed to feel. And in fact it's the thinking we're supposed to feel something different that can lead some women to feel depressed or inadequate, because they're comparing the feelings they're having to what they think they should be having, rather than trusting that those instincts will come in their own time. I think *MAMMAL* is really exploring that idea of what's instinctual and what gets in the way of that.



## KEY CAST - BARRY KEOGHAN

### ABOUT

Barry Keoghan is a young Irish actor. His first role in a feature film came in Mark O'Connor's *BETWEEN THE CANALS* (2011). Since then he has gone on to appear in *LIFE'S A BREEZE* (2013), *STAY* (2013), *,71* (2014), *NORFOLK* (2015), and *TRADERS* (2015), among other films. He also had a recurring part in the hugely successful RTE drama *LOVE/HATE* (2013) written by Stuart Carolan.

Recently the 22-year-old Dubliner has been selected for UK Stars of Tomorrow 2015 by the BFI London Film Festival and Screen International.

### STATEMENT

I knew Joe straight away. There are bits of Joe in my friends, and there are bits of Joe in me. I just knew who he was, I knew what he looked like, and I just said, "I'm doing that. That's my part. I can play him." Then I got to meet the lads who play my friends [in the film]. That's really important to me because that's where he started. I think if there was a pre-MAMMAL script it would be with his friends, with the guys he's hanging around with for four or five months. So we went into town, we hung out for two weeks, we got into different little scenarios and we messed about, and I kind of got to know Joe through that, and started wearing things he might wear just prepping in small ways like that. The magic of these types of films is that you feel you're that character for the time of the shoot, and even after the shoot, it still belongs to you. It's a challenging role, and that's what I want, there was a lot required. He has a tough journey and he's trying to mask it, when deep down all he wants really is to go home.



## KEY CAST - MICHAEL MCELHATTON

### ABOUT

Michael McElhatton is an Irish actor and scriptwriter. He won the IFTA Award for Best Actor in 2003 for his role in the comedy series *PATHS TO FREEDOM* (2000), which he also co-wrote. He is probably best known for his roles in *ALBERT NOBBS* (2011), *SPIN THE BOTTLE* (2004), *PERRIER'S BOUNTY* (2009) and the BBC drama *THE FALL* (2013). Michael has starred in the last four seasons of *GAME OF THRONES* (2012-2015) as Lord Roose Bolton.

### STATEMENT

I loved the script when I read it. The dialogue is very minimal and the subject matter is very dark and intriguing. There was a lot to play for with the chemistry between the three characters. I play Matt and I am the ex of Margaret. We were together a long time ago and we had a child. We haven't seen each other in 18 years. I come back to her to tell her that our son has gone missing, the child who she has had no contact with in that time. I try to rekindle the relationship, through grief really, and I am looking for some connection through our son. Working with Rebecca was great. She knows exactly what she wants and she is very precise.



## CREDITS

### CAST

Rachel Griffiths - Margaret

Barry Keoghan - Joe

Michael McElhatton - Matt

Johnny Ward - Sully

Rachel O'Byrne - Lucinda

Nika McGuigan - Ann Marie

Aoife King - Claire

Kathy Monaghan - Alison

Annabell Rickerby - Shop Assistant

### CREW

Director: Rebecca Daly

Screenplay: Rebecca Daly and Glenn Montgomery

Director of Photography: Lennart Verstegen

Editor: Halina Daugird

Casting Director: Amy Rowan

Production Design: Audrey Hernu

Art Director: Mark Kelly

Costume Design: Uli Simon

Composer: Rutger Reinders

### PRODUCTION

Production Companies: Fastnet Films (Ireland), Calach Films (Luxembourg), Les Films Fauves (Luxembourg), Rinkel Film (Netherlands)

Producers: Conor Barry, Macdara Kelleher

Executive Producer: John Kelleher, Rory Gilmartin

Line Producer: John Keville

Co-Producers: Jesus Gonzalez, Gilles Chaniel, Reinier Selen and Frank Groot

## PRODUCTION

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