

The Cockatoo Inn

An original story by Gorana Jovanović and Kyla Simone Bruce



Short Synopsis

The Cockatoo Inn is a candid, sharp-witted road movie that explores the complicated relationship between two estranged best friends.

AL (25) and BAMBI (26) used to live in their own little world; filled with late nights, dirty jokes and playful jibes, until it all came crashing down when Al got pregnant, gave her newborn baby up for adoption, and then disappeared without a word. They haven't spoken to each other for five years, and Al has just turned up at Bambi's out of the blue. It isn't clear what she wants from her, but, in the confined space of Bambi's Datsun Cherry, on the meandering roads between Glasgow and Weymouth - we are bound to find out!

They set off; old friends feeling like strangers and tentatively pry into each other's new lives. As they catch up, they fall back into familiar patter, but seem unwilling to dive in deep. Al reveals her plan to open The Cockatoo Inn, a dreamlike B&B, where she and Bambi would live as eternal guests. During the trip Al and Bambi test their relationship; gauging whether the other has changed and, on reflection, whether they have changed themselves. As they travel towards the coast, the barriers Al holds against the past are slowly broken down, revealing an inability to cope with the emotional pain of a thwarted motherhood. Bambi's sympathy for her old friend is sparked, but a creeping fear of Al's hidden motive is building in the back of her mind.

The film explores themes of guilt, responsibility, co-dependency and self-acceptance. Bambi and Al are two people haunted by past decisions, both on a quest to mend things, but in search of two very different goals. Through the course of the film we see the fine line that their friendship treads.

At its heart *The Cockatoo Inn* is about the importance and fragility of love, motherhood and friendship.

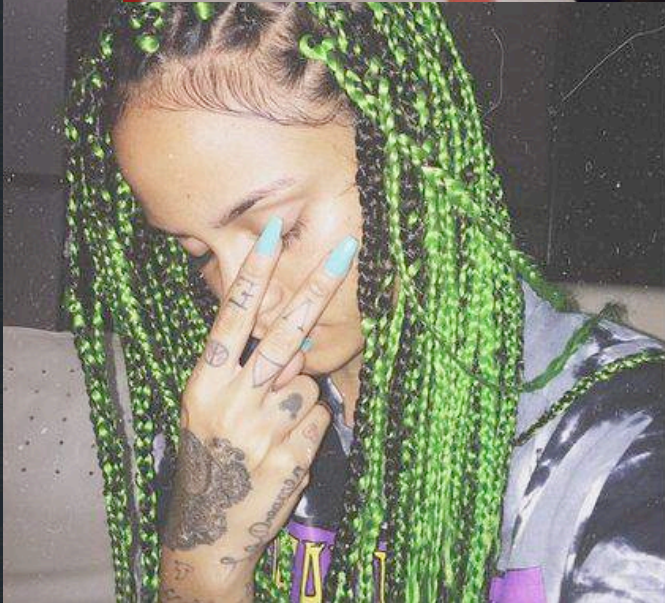
Mood Film available to stream here: <https://www.kylasimonebruce.com/the-cockatoo-inn>

Characters

Bambi (26): Bambi is intelligent, yet insecure and socially awkward, which gives her a certain innocent charm. Always in her own head and worrying what other people are thinking of her, she tries to be what people want her to be. She hasn't figured herself out yet and isn't comfortable in her own skin. She is pretty, prettier than she knows, but hasn't quite grown into her looks. An introvert, until she gets drunk and becomes the confident person she wants to be. Her self-doubt means she stands in her own way of progress. She over analyses everything and doesn't know how to communicate what she is really feeling. She acts as a self-appointed saviour to AI and makes AI's problems her own - doing whatever she can to repair the messes AI gets herself into. This gives Bambi a sense of worth and purpose, as well as being a distraction to her own issues. Both AI and Bambi used to be quite cut off from other friends and Bambi always relied on AI for entertainment, companionship and honesty. Bambi missed AI terribly after she did a runner, not knowing who she was without her, and now that she is suddenly back in her life, a lot of unresolved issues are bubbling under the surface.

AI (25): AI is a free spirited wild child. People gravitate towards her; the life and soul of the party. She exudes self-confidence and can turn on the charm when she wants something. Lives in the moment, spontaneous, very creative, outrageous and energetic. She has made having fun into an art form. An extrovert. Beautiful in an unconventional and adaptable way. She has a unique look where you can't place her origins or categorise her style. She really knows who she is and what she wants, she is always honest with herself, even if she comes across as being creative with the truth. However, getting pregnant is the exception to the rule; a powerful contradiction that shakes her world. She is deeply damaged from her life experiences, but is determined that it won't hold her back, as life is too short. This darker, raw side is what makes her intriguing. However, not always dealing with her emotions means they have a tendency to force their way out in strange ways, which can put people off. AI grew up in care, moving from one foster home to another and doesn't really have any family. Bambi was always the one constant thing in her life that she could depend on. After AI gave her baby away for adoption, she couldn't bare the pain and just had to get away. Now she is back and needs her best friend to lean on, more than ever.

MOOD IMAGES





We are exploring cinematic devices for filming as most of the drama happens within the very confined and limiting space of a car interior. The choice of car will of course be paramount, but equally the choice of camera, lenses and shooting style. This is another crucial part of the project development, and we are able to experiment with when we shoot "Mercury". We also want to zoom in to Bambi's ultimate dilemma - should she help her friend, do as she requests, or learn to say 'no'? This final resolution requires Bambi to grow, to recognise the fragility of these precious relationships, the absence of straightforward absolutes in all things relating to human bonds and responsibilities. For this final moment, we would like to allow the drama out of its protective shell, and make the moment bigger. In the end, the outcome and realisation is the same, that these two fragile and complicated women have grown in their own separate ways, both learning massive life lessons, however more than ever their love for each other is strong and their friendship will prevail.

VISUAL REFERENCE - Light & Framing: Wim Wenders' 'Paris, Texas'

