

# *Viewtires*



*Tate Brown.*



## *On the cover*

### *Credits.*

Talent. Toto Bruin  
Interview. Vanesa Miraglia  
Photography. Eivind Hansen

### *Special Thanks.*

Lucas A. Ferrara

### *Staff.*

Vanesa Miraglia

### *Get in touch with us.*

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T.B.







A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Toto Bruin." The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Toto" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Bruin."

Over Toto's burgeoning career, they've become known for their exceptional acting abilities and their captivating writing skills. Their exceptional talent as a writer was recognized when their screenplay, *TWOFOLD*, won this year's competition in the 2022 Film Fund. The script is a gripping exploration of themes such as love, deception, power, and consent, as two women confront their shared past on New Year's Eve. Toto's work was chosen from an intense competition with over 80 submitted scripts, but it stood out as unique and thought-provoking. Additionally, their acting work, most notably as *Lucy Tozer* in *It's A Sin*, has garnered critical acclaim. In an engaging conversation with Vanesa Miraglia, Toto shares their experiences and the motivation behind their writing and acting career.





**Ella Greenwood (Director), Maya Bartley O'Dea (Co-Producer), Toto Bruin (Writer) on set.**





**V:** By way of introduction, I would like to start our conversation by asking you to tell us how you first became immersed in the world of cinema and discovered your passion for acting and writing. What was it first, or was it another art form that later introduced you to these practices?

**TB:** I got bit by the acting bug pretty early. I think someone cast me as the Virgin Mary in my first nativity and main character syndrome kicked in pretty fast. From then onwards it's been a lot of hustle. As a kid I'd spend hours on google hunting down open auditions for musicals, and due to either not really being qualified in tap dancing, or just bad luck, they always went really badly. Luckily as a teen I found 'The Young Actors Theatre' a community theatre in North London, started doing classes and got on their agency, which was good for my parent's electricity bill. I think that's where I found my spark. The agency had mainly local kids from all different backgrounds auditioning for tv, film and theatre shows, whilst all going to acting classes together once a week, so everyone knew each other. It was a very special place. Still is!

Writing came along as something I began to explore as I was doing acting jobs and working in a cinema just after I'd left school. I decided not to go to university so I call it my "paid film school". I was exposed to a lot of films there and started writing my own shorts. I didn't really know what I was doing, but I knew what I liked and what I didn't. I wrote my first short film 'Pelicans' out of curiosity, which gathered dust on my laptop for about two years, and on a whim submitted it to an open script call out from a film director (Ellie Heydon) on Twitter and won. I'm aware that is quite a lucky fluke experience. I had an amazing time making it, and the rest kind of snowballed from there.

**V:** Once you experienced both arts, how did you realise that you were actually good at these professions?

**TB:** As an actor I think if you don't think you're good, no one else will. But you can have confidence and also not be a terrible person. Two very important attributes.

I'm not sure if a writer ever knows if they are good? One minute you think your draft is a work of genius, and the next minute it's trash, so it's a perpetual cycle of crisis either way. I'm sure that won't change and I guess that's fun. In the scheme of things, it's a pretty silly job to be in crisis about fictional people. I'm at a point now where I have three shorts, and am moving into writing for TV.

I've just been selected for a mentorship programme with the Edinburgh TV Festival's TV Foundation called 'The New Writers Collective' which I'm super excited about. So I guess I'd say now I'm feeling good and like it's starting to come together, but ask me again in a week and I'll probably be spiralling into a packet of hobnobs.

The importance of opportunities and outreach is so key though. 'Twofold' was a script that I submitted to the Broken Flames Productions x The Lucas A. Ferrara Film Fund and won. It's a fund that the production company run in association with the producer Lucas A. Ferrara to fund short films focusing on stories about mental health. It's a really special platform to raise awareness for mental health issues through film, and a really unique opportunity to get scripts like mine from page to screen.

**V:** I feel we don't talk about this too much, but I think it's important to ask about your response when it comes to criticism, rejection, expectations and pressure in an industry that, at times, can be tricky. What helps you to stay focused when it comes to trusting the process and dealing with the negativity of this job?

**TB:** Sometimes I feel like it's all I talk about! Joking, but speaking solely for the actor's experience I think the criticism and rejection do take their toll on everyone. We work really hard and there's very little control. So I decided the aim for me was to keep creating and telling stories on my own terms when I could. I found writing as my outlet, but it's whatever that means to you and by no means limited by that. Sing! Roller-skate! Make pasta art! I would if I could. And know that your stories are important and will find their place, whether someone gives you that opportunity or you decide to try and carve that out for yourself.

**V:** Moving onto your current work, TWOFOLD, tell me about coming up with the idea to write this screenplay? What inspired it or what was this based on?

**TB:** Twofold came from a place in me that really wanted to write a story about power dynamics. It is an intimate and at times claustrophobic two-hander, about two women who re-meet for the first time after ten years. We don't know anything about them, and we try and understand their relationship as they reacquaint in secret in the kitchen of a New Years Eve Party; one of them a waitress and one of them a guest. But everything isn't quite what it seems. I wanted to write a story that would ask the question- if a relationship is born out of an imbalance of power, can that see-sawever be flipped? >>



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knew what I liked and what I didn't.

***TOTO BRUIN***

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<< These two characters have very different motives once they're in the room, but ultimately want power over the other. It's a short that puts a microscope on power moves, desire, and manipulation.

V: As you were writing this, did you picture ideas in your head about how it could be represented visually? Do you enjoy getting involved as a writer and working hand in hand with the director and producer of the film?

TB: Yes! The film is shot in one-take, which was an idea that both the team and I had had separately; so when they suggested it I was excited and very on board. The story takes place in one location, so we felt one-take would really allow us to stay in this moment with them, whilst reminding us that time is not on their side.

Working with the Broken Flames Productions Team has been a really special experience. Ella Greenwood (Director), Lucas A. Ferrara (Producer), and Maya Bartley O'Dea (Co-Producer) were amazing and extremely collaborative from the start, it was a real treat to be involved in both the pre and post-production process. The cast Phoebe Campbell, Rebbeca Calder and Clinton Blake give truly remarkable performances, and getting to sit back and watch them unfold in one-take was magic.

V: The themes explored in the film touch on abuse. How did you approach this information to put it on paper with such sensitivity?

TB: Power and abuse of power unfortunately famously come hand in hand, and this short explores the darkest sides of that. I wanted to handle it with sensitivity and write both characters from a place of honesty. In order to understand them I needed the audience to experience this relationship through the idealised lens of the characters first, a love story, before then discovering and interrogating the truth for themselves.

V: Which were the things you didn't allow to limit you in the moment of structuring this story?

TB: I really wanted to capture this fleeting but life-defining exchange between these two women, and in eve-

ry draft it always flowed as one continuous scene. Allowing these characters to work out this pretty charged moment together, where there's so much that could be said, but easily nothing at all, and it could all come to an end at any moment. It was quite liberating really!

V: What are you most looking forward to the audience seeing in the film, and how are you hoping it impacts society?

TB: The Lucas A. Ferrara Film Fund focuses on mental health stories, and we hope this short shines light on a story of abuse that we haven't seen portrayed in this way on screen before, and speaks to anyone that has ever felt powerless at the hands of another. I hope people see it and it starts conversations.

V: When writers are blocked, they sometimes get inspiration from dreams or other methods they go to. What was the rarest situation in which you found inspiration?

TB: I had a life-changing idea on a sleeper train once, but then I fell asleep and forgot it! Still waiting for that one to come back around.

V: Before we wrap this interview, I want to ask you something that has been on my mind lately. What do you think it means to be respected as an artist?

TB: I'm a fan of not taking yourself too seriously. But I do believe you should allow yourself to take up space, and be creating spaces for others to do the same \*cartwheels away\*.

V: This last question is a little personal to me since I am of Argentine descent; I'd like to ask what you know about the country, about its art and culture. So, I wonder if you have ever seen or experienced any type of art/culture from Argentina?

TB: I haven't made it to Argentina yet, but would absolutely love to get there soon! And not just because I could eat empanadas all day! I would love to learn more about the art and culture of the country. I quite recently watched 'Official Competition' by Gastón Duprat and Mariani Cohn which was first class.



# TWOFOLD

Starring PHOEBE CAMPBELL, REBECCA CALDER & CLINTON BLAKE  
Director ELLA GREENWOOD Writer TOTO BRUIN Producer LUCAS A. FERRARA  
Co-Producers MAYA BARTLEY O'DEA & ELLA GREENWOOD  
Cinematographer XENIA PATRICIA Editor EMMALIE EL FADLI  
Composer GABY AMBLER

Made by BROKEN FLAMES PRODUCTIONS  
Produced in Association with LUCAS A. FERRARA

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**ELLSA GREENWOOD  
FERRARA**

The Lucas  
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