



Amongst the crashing waves and big name actors, young thesp, AARON GLENANE, proves to be the biggest scene stealer in the new Aussie surfing drama, *DRIFT*.

BY ERIN FREE

He's quite cool, isn't he?" young Aussie actor, Aaron Glenane, laughs of his character, Gus, in the surfing flick, *Drift*. "When I first read the script, I actually thought, 'Bloody hell! I'm auditioning for one of the more complex characters in this film!' He provided me with a lot of material to sink my teeth into. I really enjoyed creating the arc for his character."

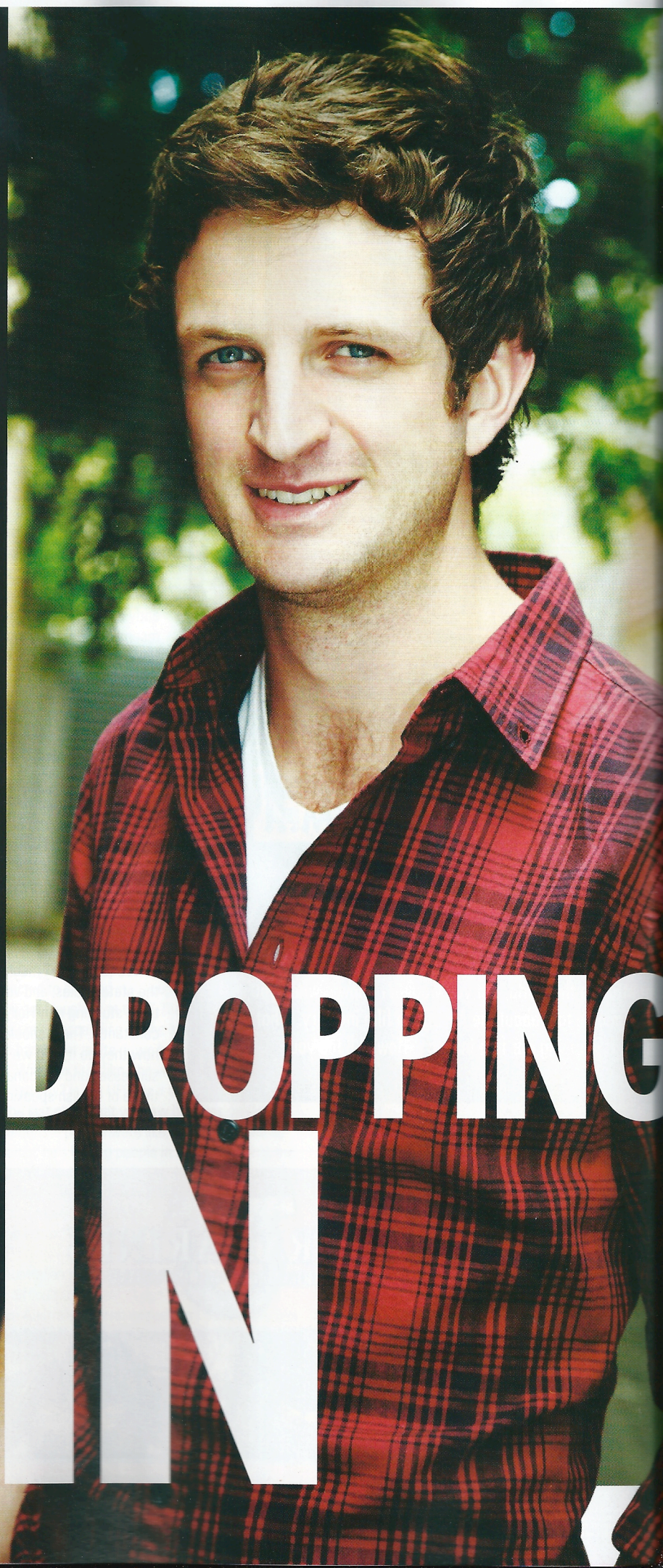
Though ostensibly the tale of surfing brothers, Andy and Jimmy Kelly (Myles Pollard and Xavier Samuel), who start up a surf wear company in the seventies, and taste both the sweet rewards and bitter disappointment of success, there is much scene stealing done in *Drift* by Aaron Glenane, who proves richly adept at harnessing both his character's light and dark sides. His Gus is both friend and thorn-in-the-side to Andy and Jimmy – a whiz with surf boards, the wisecracking polio survivor also has a dangerous taste for life's darker temptations, which ultimately threatens the brothers' burgeoning business. "It was definitely a dream-come-true role," says Glenane, who has previously appeared on TV shows such as *Packed To The Rafters* and *Home And Away*, and in the powerful feature film, *The Black Balloon*.

It was the kind of character that allowed Glenane to free-fall right into the whole process. "I did a lot of research into both the drug side and the polio side," the actor says. "I read a lot of articles on the side effects, short and long term, physically and psychologically. I spoke to an addict who is fifteen years sober, and he told me countless stories. I watched videos, I went to Kings Cross to absorb the atmosphere, and once I'd developed some character traits, I took it out onto the street to test whether I was believable or not. There's nothing quite like testing a character in reality! I did the same with the polio. I spoke to a great guy who had developed polio as a child, and he informed me a lot on not only the physical restraints, but also about how this affects you emotionally, and how you act because of this. It was great to gain an understanding of these other aspects of life, and then to put them into Gus."

Glenane also had to learn all about surfing for the film. "I grew up in Ballarat, and the most amount of surf there is about a 10cm swell on Lake Wendouree," he laughs. "I was given lessons in the weeks leading up to the shoot. It's fair to say that I got hammered out there!"

With upcoming roles in the indie thriller, *Concealed* ("I play a small-time dealer of dodgy goods! He's very weasely and cunning. It's a cool character"); the ABC mini-series, *Janet King*; and a lead role in the short, *Never Innocent*, Aaron Glenane is picking up momentum on the local acting scene. "If I keep putting in the work, and if this fire in my belly to explore characters creatively keeps me excited, then something is bound to come up," he says. "It's just a matter of when. I've learnt about having a good balance of patience and preparation in this industry!"

Drift is released on May 2 and reviewed on Page 84. ■



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