

# Mother-daughter *dream team*

Meet the Aussie 'Gilmore Girls', Chrys Phillips and her daughter Mikaela, who are breaking moulds and proving Aussies, and women, can dominate the film industry

**L**ike mother, like daughter, that's the saying right? And it rings true to Chrys who is the Executive Producer, Writer and Director behind *Counter Play* and daughter Mikaela. Mikaela is not only her righthand man with all things production and behind the scenes of the show, but she also co-produces the show and stars in the show as the lead character.

## How did the two of you get into the entertainment industry? Was it a case of the daughter following the mother's steps?

**CP:** For many years on and off I've worked in different areas of entertainment and the arts, however, with limited opportunities, I learnt quickly that I had to create my own path within the industry. From working in radio, to theatre where I directed, produced and wrote, and writing and publishing several of my novels, I've always been working in the industry.

**MP:** I think in some ways it is... It's not like my only choice was to follow, I've always been able to make my own creative decisions and Mum supported them, however, growing up with a very creative and arty mum and diverse childhood, that contributed a lot and showed me many forms of art to explore, create and enjoy.

## What are each of your career highlights?

**MP & CP:** First Australian women to independently produce a show for Australian TV, and Amazon Prime with no assistance from Australian guilds.

**MP:** Youngest host ever to be accepted into the world's largest online network, AfterBuzz TV at age 18, with my celebrity interviews being some of the highest ranked on YouTube.

**CP:** On set of many TV shows including *The Vampire Diaries*, *Revenge* and other TV pilots; toured the States with debut book series which is currently being optioned for film.

## We hear you sold everything at a \$1 Garage Sale and ventured to LA a few years ago to pursue your dreams with many ups and downs, can you tell us about some of these?

**CP:** I remember landing in LA for the first time ever in my life and sitting in Jerry's Deli and thinking 'What have I done? I don't know anyone here.' The pressure of having a young daughter with me was also an extended drive to ensure that I would achieve my

goals in the entertainment industry in America. I did experience the highs and lows of the Hollywood clichés; I got to meet leading actors, be on location of popular TV shows, attend red carpet and entertainment events. However, it's a tough place and the lows included having a book of mine stolen and experiencing representation that neglected their responsibilities and many opportunities for my career were lost. However, you've just got to keep getting up, jumping the hurdles and reaching that fabulous finishing line of success!

## What is the relationship between you two like?

**MP:** What you see is what you get! We're very close, not your typical mother-daughter relationship, and everyone says we are the Aussie 'Gilmore Girls' — and it's so true! Of course, there are differences between us and those characters, but we joke, banter, laugh, love, fight (yes, occasionally, and it doesn't last very long!) and are best friends all in all.

## Some people couldn't imagine working alongside their mother! What makes your situation different?

**MP:** Mum and I have always been close and, for so long, it's pretty much just been us against the world. We also talk quite openly (in general) which keeps our communication open, which, from a business perspective, is very important and key.

## Are there ever trying times between the two?

**CP:** Growing up with trying times of neglect and adversity myself, I don't see anything that warrants to say on any level our relationship experiences 'trying times'. Growing up without parental role models conditioned me to be, unknowingly, a different type of mum.

**MP:** We do have our moments where we butt heads or have a difference of opinion, but, once we get it all out it's normally pretty much back to normal! I've always respected mum and known what she's done for me and, I think when you get

to a more adult age, that's when you can fully and really appreciate the relationship on another level.

## This month is Mother's Day so, Chrys, can you tell us the best thing about being mother to Mikaela?

**CP:** Mikaela has my sense of humour (which means we can mess around and understand each other's jokes). She has an intuitive respect for who I am and what we achieve together. We have this crazy and unique bond and it's great knowing that someone loves you unconditionally.

## And Mikaela, what's the best thing about having Chrys as a mother?

**MP:** She's the best mum I could ask for; she's always there for me and not many people can say they have such a great relationship with their mum, like I do.