

COUNTER PLAY...

We caught up with local mother and daughter duo, **Chrys** and **Mikaela Phillips**, to chat about their television drama, *Counter Play*, their multiple roles within this program and what they've learnt along the way.

First up, give us an overview of *Counter Play* in your words?

Mikaela: *Counter Play* is a drama series based in an affluent, beach-side town called South Point. It's storyline centres around mystery male protagonist Jake Spector and the three large families of the town – their family lies, scandals and secrets, and the love triangles, greed and corruption that ensue between them, not to mention the tangled web of other characters. It's definitely the first show of its kind to be fully produced, created and come out of Australia within its genre, and the glossy feel of filming proves Australia can produce content that is similar to what overseas shows do.



Tell us about your roles in *Counter Play* – behind the scenes and in front of the camera?

Mikaela: I've been juggling two roles on production of *Counter Play*, between acting in front of camera and producing. In front of camera I can be seen as one of the series' leads throughout both seasons – the wealthy, independent and blue-blood Faith Morgan. It's been such fun stepping into the shoes of this character and navigating her emotions, beliefs, motives and luxury lifestyle! This character and this show have allowed me to experience some amazing film locations – from luxury sports cars to private boats and even a jaw-dropping gorgeous mansion estate! No part of filming or creating *Counter Play* has been dull or boring and I've thoroughly enjoyed being a producer of the series too, working alongside mum in this capacity on everything behind the scenes, from pre and post-production to location scouting, prop sourcing and everything else in between! Both have been very demanding and time requiring roles, at times pushing me, and I have learnt a lot and have loved both parts equally!

Chrys: Haha! That's a question that makes me smile; my roles behind the camera are as a producer, creator and director. I also have a small cameo as Lady Morgan in front of camera. Behind the camera responsibilities, literally take up 15 hours a day, from filming through to pre and post-production. Basically, if you don't have the passion to create your own TV show, the hours would definitely be exhausting.

However, I love the characters and the *mystery in the storyline.*



It's been such fun stepping into the shoes of this character

Where did the inspiration for *Counter Play* come from and what drew you to create the series?

Chrys: The inspiration for *Counter Play* came from watching Australian television for years, and after living in the US for several years I wanted to come home and create a show that showcases Australians in a new light – that is, not our usual outback or horror-themed dramas and comedies. Something that would measure up to the world's high-end; polished TV shows that we all watch here but never have an Australian made version of. Therefore, *Counter Play* shows us Australians as devious, affluent, sexy and dramatic – a nice change from the 'norm'.

How do you feel about being referred to as the *Gilmore Girls* of Australia?

Chrys: I actually quite like this. I am a fan of the show and I think it's quite a lovely compliment and really, it does fit us – if you hang out with us, you'd notice, haha!

Mikaela: Haha, well it definitely is quite a title... and I love it! It's actually so amazing how many people call us that or refer to us as that in real life and on social media. We're very close and it definitely is a compliment to be referred to as the *Gilmore Girls* of Australia, I think we'll happily take that, haha!

What have you learnt from producing this series?

Chrys: I think any career-project that anyone begins, there's always something to learn. In this role of producing the series I learnt that not every talent that is cast is always dedicated to their job role. Many people think acting is instant fame and sadly aren't ready for the hard work, and this – along with some prejudice from a few males not wanting female direction – was one of the biggest learning curves.

For more on *Counter Play* please visit:

www.counterplayseries.com

Chrys web: www.chrysphillips.com

Mikaela web: www.mikaelaphillips.com

