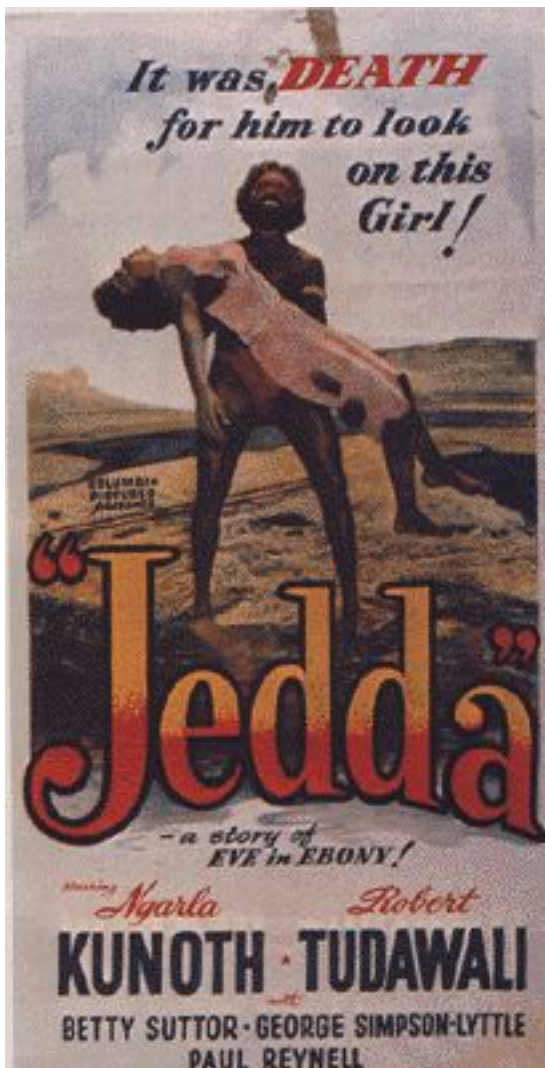




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***Jedda*, Australia, 1955, 73mins**

On a cattle station in the Northern Territory, an Aboriginal baby is adopted by a white woman, Sarah McMann (Betty Suttor), to 'replace' her own dead child. The baby is named Jedda (after a native bird) and is raised in forced isolation from her culture and people. The teenage Jedda (Ngarla Kunoth) is drawn to Marbuck (Robert Tudawali), an Aborigine wanted under white law, who arrives at the station looking for work. They run away together and return to Marbuck's tribe where he is rejected for breaking marital taboos. Refused by both cultures, Marbuck is driven insane and takes Jedda with him to their deaths.

Directed and produced by industry figurehead, Charles Chauvel, from a screenplay co-written with Elsa Chauvel, *Jedda* is renowned for its overt representation of racial relations and as the first Australian feature film shot in colour.

Jedda was produced in the years, which followed the introduction of the racial assimilation policy in Australia, and the broader social context was one of racial antipathy. The subject of the film and Chauvel's use of a non-professional Aboriginal cast was deemed a considerable risk by potential investors. While its politics of representation are still debated, its project is widely regarded as socially and economically radical.

Chauvel combined documentary elements with melodramatic structure. This unusual mix was heightened by some of the most magnificent pictorial use of the Australian outback. He employed colour stock, untested in harsh Australian conditions, for *Jedda's* elaborate location shooting.

The extensive promotional campaign leading up to and following the release of *Jedda* emphasised its national importance as a film that "restored confidence in a vision of a permanent local film production industry."

Jedda was cut by forty minutes for its 1956 British release. It was also retitled *Jedda the Uncivilised* for its 1957 American release.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY ITEM AVAILABILITY

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FOR ON-SITE VIEWING OR LOAN

ScreenSound Australia have VHS copies for sale or viewing in Canberra or at any of their State offices. They also hold a restored 35mm print and outtakes from *Jedda*. Some restrictions on access apply.

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