

# Late entry to film world was all part of the script

IF ALL good things come to those who wait, then Matt Cooney may be on the right track with his film career.

"I didn't start until I was 40," the recent graduate of Sydney Film School says.

Before studying, Cooney worked full-time in advertising.

"I'd always been into film and dabbled with writing," he says. "But I realised if I didn't get off the corporate bandwagon, I'd miss out on doing something different."

Cooney took 18 months to complete the Sydney Film School's diploma of screen and media (the course can be done full-time in one year).

"There are hundreds of film schools in Sydney but the advice I got from people working in the industry was to do a course where you did a little bit of everything and with a very practical focus," Cooney says.

He feels he made the right choice. "It's a good balance of theory and practice. A lot

of people are just taught about film theory – and we had that – but it's a balance between science and art."

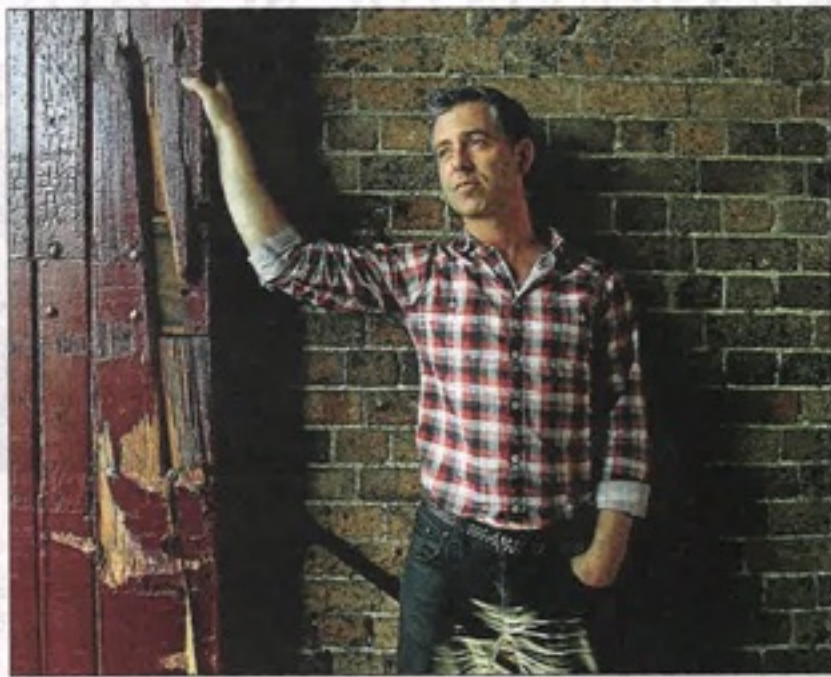
The course also showed him there's more to film than directing.

"Everyone wants to be a director but SFS is good at showing you the whole picture," he says. "Everyone gets taught focus, learns some editing and has to write something. You [learn] that you can't produce a film without each other."

While he now knows his way around a camera, the course confirmed Cooney's passion for writing and directing. He's since had success directing a short film, *Ol' Blue Eyes*, about a Sydney taxi driver. It won best student documentary film at the inaugural Antenna International Documentary Film Festival.

"I'd like to continue doing short films and keep writing," he says. "The real test is now."

Sue White



Cinematic ambitions ... Sydney Film School graduate Matt Cooney. Photo: Anthony Johnson