

Life in Berkeley inspires new film

By MATTHEW JONES

STOP by Warrawong's Gala Cinema tonight for a home-spun tale of love, crime and regret.

The result of more than four years of blood, sweat and tears from a group of Berkeley youths, the film, titled 2506, compresses the tales of fictional characters Jake and Boo into a 15-minute drama, to screen for the first time tonight.

The plot is based on real-life experiences of many of the film's stars.

Boo, 17, is in love with Jake, a young man with a turbulent relationship with the law.

A series of poor choices lands Jake behind bars for the second time in their relationship, and Boo is forced to decide if their love will be worth waiting for.

Inspired by years of creative workshops with not-for-profit group Beyond Empathy, 2506 is an unusual blend of hip-hop and musical theatre dubbed "hip hOPera" by Beyond Empathy film and digital media

creative producer Phillip Crawford.

"We thought we might as well go for a style people haven't seen before," he said.

Just as unique is the medley of devices on which the film was captured, ranging from professional cameras to mobile phones.

But the real highlight would be seeing the efforts of talented young people come to fruition, Crawford said.

"Some of these young people haven't necessarily gotten the most recognition, even though they are talented," he said.

He expected 2506 to make an impact well beyond the Illawarra.

"These films that are made in an unconventional way can have a real appeal to a wider audience," he said.

Tonight's free screening starts at 5.30pm. Contact Crawford on 0427 697 173 or Gemma Parsons on 0410 546 767 for bookings. Limited first-come, first-served seats will be available.



Lives on film: Jess Rees (left) and Lucas Buchanan in scenes from 2506, a film based on the real-life experiences of a group of Berkeley youths.