

## MEDIA RELEASE

Media enquiries Victoria Buchan, The Lantern Group  
Tel +61 2 9383 4033 | Mobile 0408 114 864 | victoria@lanterngroup.com.au

[www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au)

### Screen Australia wraps up 2009 with investment in 22 projects

**Wednesday 16 December 2009:** Screen Australia today announced approval of 22 projects including four feature films, four television dramas and 14 documentaries. The organisation committed more than \$13 million to these projects, triggering production valued at over \$65 million.

“2009 has been a strong year for the Australian screen industry. A record number of films have achieved theatrical release, the Australian share of the box office looks set to exceed the five-year average, and television drama and documentary continue to draw strong audiences,” said **Ruth Harley**, Screen Australia’s Chief Executive Officer. “The 22 projects announced today reflect the diversity of Australian storytelling and build on the success enjoyed by Australia’s talented practitioners this year.”

Amongst the feature projects to be approved is *Bait 3D*, the first Screen Australia-funded 3D dramatic feature, and *Burning Man*, a new feature by critically acclaimed writer/director **Jonathan Teplitzky**.

*Bait 3D* is Australia’s first high-octane 3D action film. When a freak tsunami hits a sleepy seaside town on the Gold Coast dozens of local shoppers and tourists find themselves trapped in a flooded underground supermarket and car park. Trapped, with the water rising, they find they’re not alone; the tsunami has brought some unwelcome visitors from the Deep ... a pack of hungry tiger sharks! They must now band together with all of their resources before they get eaten and entombed in a watery grave! The film was written and will be directed by **Russell Mulcahy** (*Razorback*, *Highlander*) and produced by **Gary Hamilton**, **Todd Fellman** and **Ian Maycock** with **Chris Brown** and **Mike Gabrawy** serving as executive producers.

*Burning Man* is a reckless, romantic, irreverent and ultimately tear-jerkingly beautiful story of a father and son’s struggle to deal with the unimaginable. The film marks writer/director Jonathan Teplitzky’s (*Better than Sex*, *Gettin’ Square*) return to the big screen following a period directing television and commercials. Teplitzky will co-produce along with **Andy Paterson**.

Television drama to be approved includes a third season of the award-winning SBS series *East West 101* (p: **Steve Knapman**, **Kris Wyld**, d: **Peter Andrikidis**) and *Like a Virgin* (p: **Liz Watts**, w: **Marieke Hardy**, **Kirsty Fisher**), a mini-series about a woman whose sexual history catches up with her in the most unusual of ways.

Documentaries to receive Screen Australia support include *Fromelles’ Lost Soldiers*, the story of the worst 24 hours in Australian military history, to be screened on

Channel 7, and *Machete Maidens Unleashed!*, a fast-moving odyssey into the subterranean world of the rarely explored province of Filipino genre filmmaking populated by miniature James Bonds, karate kickin' soul sisters and anorexic Rambos.

The Board also congratulated the winners of the Australian Film Institute awards, noting that Screen Australia-funded films and programs had taken out 29 awards including Best Film, Best Television Drama Series, Best Documentary Series, Best Telefeature, Mini-series or Short-run Series, Best Childrens' Television Drama and Best Short Fiction Film. "We are very pleased to have played a role in bringing these productions to audiences," Dr Harley said.

## **Features**

### **BAIT 3D**

**Arclight Films, Pictures in Paradise & Story Bridge Films in association with Black Magic Design Films**

**Executive Producers** Chris Brown, Mike Gabrawy

**Producers** Todd Fellman, Gary Hamilton and Ian Maycock

**Writer/Director** Russell Mulcahy

**Sales and Distribution** Paramount, Arclight

**Synopsis** When a massive tsunami hits the Australian coastline, a pack of tiger sharks threaten survivors trapped inside a flooded supermarket.

### **BLAME**

**Factor 30 Films Pty Ltd and 3 Monkey Films Pty Ltd**

**Executive Producer** David Lightfoot

**Producers** Ryan Hodgson, Melissa Kelly and Michael Robinson

**Writer/Director** Michael Henry

**Sales and Distribution** The Pack, Highpoint

**Synopsis** A group of young vigilantes seeking revenge for a sexual betrayal fall far from grace. When the truth is out they find themselves on the dark side of justice.

### **BURNING MAN**

**Meercat Films Pty Ltd**

**Producers** Andy Paterson, Jonathan Teplitzky

**Writer/Director** Jonathan Teplitzky

**Sales and Distribution** Transmission, Filmbox

**Synopsis** The reckless, romantic, irreverent and ultimately tear-jerkingly beautiful story of a father and son's struggle to deal with the unimaginable.

### **RED HILL**

**Red Hill Films Pty Ltd**

**Executive Producers** Greg Mclean, Rob Galluzzo, Craig McMahon

**Producer** Al Clark

**Writer/Director/Producer** Patrick Hughes

**Sales and Distribution** Transmission, Arclight

**Synopsis** A young Melbourne police officer relocates to the small high-country town of Red Hill with his pregnant wife. When news of a prison break in Melbourne sends the local law enforcement officers into a panic, his first day on duty turns nightmarish. A modern take on the 'revenge-Western'.

**Television Drama****EAST WEST 101 – SERIES 3****East West 101 Season 3 Pty Ltd****Producers** Steve Knapman, Kris Wyld**Director** Peter Andrikidis**Sales and Distribution** SBS Content, Target**Broadcaster** SBS

**Synopsis** The new season explores the ramifications of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan through crimes committed in Australia. What happened during the war in the opium fields of the Chora Valley in Afghanistan, and the collateral damage to civilians in Tikrit in northern Iraq, comes home to the main streets and malls of Lakemba.

**LIKE A VIRGIN (mini-series)****Porchlight Films Pty Ltd****Producer** Liz Watts**Created and Written by** Marieke Hardy, Kirsty Fisher**Sales and Distribution** ABC Commercial, Portmans**Broadcaster** ABC TV

**Synopsis** A series about a woman whose sexual history catches up with her in the most unusual of ways.

**RAKE****Essential Media & Entertainment Pty Ltd****Producers** Ian Collie, Peter Duncan and Richard Roxburgh**Writer/Director** Peter Duncan**Writer** Andrew Knight**Sales and Distribution** ABC Content, DCD Rights

**Synopsis** Criminal barrister, Cleaver Greene, is reckless, brilliant, self destructive, funny and bloody minded – and that's just his private life. Professionally he is driven to win the unwinnable and defend the indefensible.

**RESCUE SPECIAL OPS – SERIES 2****Southern Star Entertainment Pty Ltd****Producers** Sarah Smith, Julie McGauran**Writers** Michael O'Brien, John Ridley, Sarah Smith, Dave Warner, Tim Lee and Sam Meikle**Directors** Peter Andrikidis, Arnie Custo, Shawn Seet and Garth Maxwell**Sales and Distribution** Southern Star International

**Synopsis** Continuing on nine months after the climactic events that closed Series 1, this one-hour action drama series is based around the lives and loves of the elite Rescue Special Operations Unit – ordinary heroes bonded through an extraordinary job, saving lives every day.

**National Documentary Program (NDP) Including History****I, SPRY****Blackwattle Films****Executive Producer** Peter Butt**Producers** Peter Butt, Anna Grieve**Writer/Director** Peter Butt**Broadcaster** ABC

**Synopsis** The rise and fall of Australia's master spy, a complex Machiavellian character, who attempts to counter the Communist threat, but finds himself in a 'wilderness of mirrors' where nobody is who or what they seem.

### **MAKING AUSTRALIA HAPPY**

**Heiress Company**

**Executive Producer** Daryl Karp

**Producer** Jennifer Cummins

**Writer** Will Parry

**Director** Kalita Corrigan

**Broadcaster** ABC

**Synopsis** Taking the science of positive psychology to Australia's most miserable city.

### **OUTBACK KIDS**

**Screenworld**

**Executive Producer** Mark Hamlyn

**Producer** Mike Bluett

**Writers** Mike Bluett, Marc Radomsky

**Director** Marc Radomsky

**Broadcaster** ABC

**Synopsis** Following the work of the Brahminy Group in the Northern Territory which helps troubled youth and street kids reclaim their lives.

### **Domestic Documentaries – One Offs**

#### **DANCING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER**

**November Films**

**Producer** Anne Delaney

**Director** Lara Cole

**Broadcaster** ABC TV

**Synopsis** This is the story of the first ever national Aboriginal Debutante Ball. The women who, in white, nylon, tulip-skirted dresses and beehive hairdos, 'came out' to Australian Prime Minister John Gorton in 1968.

#### **FROMELLES' LOST SOLDIERS**

**Tattooed Media**

**Executive Producer** Daryl Karp

**Producer** Sally Regan

**Director** Wain Fimeri

**Broadcaster** Channel 7

**Synopsis** The Battle at Fromelles has been described as the worst 24 hours in Australian military history. But with the discovery of six unmarked mass-graves in Northern France it is now possible to unpack in forensic detail the terrible events of 1916 and put names to the bodies of some of those buried. And as the first new Commonwealth war cemetery nears completion, we track down living descendants, people who 90 years later, are still trying to find resolution to a loss that only a marked grave can bring.

#### **A VERY SHORT WAR**

**Conti Bros Films**

**Producer** Karl Conti

**Writer** Susan Young

**Directors** Bill Young, Myles Conti

**Broadcaster** History Channel

**Synopsis** A heartening story of great loss and the ripple effect it creates, as it follows the quest by the nephew Cliff never knew, to unravel the truth behind the ultimate sacrifice made in a lonely place far from home.

### **Domestic Door – Documentary Series**

#### **DYING DAYS**

**Cordell Jigsaw Productions**

**Executive Producers** Michael Cordell, Nick Murray

**Producer** Rick McPhee

**Director** Jen Peedom

**Broadcaster** SBS

**Synopsis** Death is often hidden away in modern society. This series takes audiences inside Sydney's Sacred Heart Hospice where staff care for patients in their final days.

#### **THE REAL FIGHT CLUB**

**Mindful Media**

**Executive Producer/Writer/Director** Paul Scott

**Producer** Isabel Perez

**Broadcaster** SBS

**Synopsis** Before television, tent boxing was a major form of entertainment in Australia, North America and the UK, with boxing troupes touring small towns so volunteers could fight for cash. Over the last four decades, tent boxing has been banned nearly everywhere for safety reasons. Queensland is now the only state where tent boxing is both legal and viable. Fred Brophy runs the last surviving tent boxing troupe in the world and in 2010 he will embark on his final boxing tour. Infamous for taking in drifters, ex-jailbirds and addicts and helping them get their lives back on track, we follow Fred and get inside this unique subculture to discover what drives rural Australian men and women to fight.

#### **BOXING FOR PALM ISLAND**

**Pursekey Productions**

**Executive Producers** Marian Macgowan, Miranda Culley

**Producer/Writer** Michaela Perske

**Writer/Director** Adrian Wills

**Broadcaster** ABC TV

**Synopsis** There is a new generation of warriors coming out of Palm Island, a place with a dark history and a less than stellar reputation. A new era of hope, strength and courage is about to show the world that the kids from Palm Island are fighting back and have the makings of champions, but within this gilded cage come stories of generational poverty, stories of disadvantage, stories of the vicious cycle of intergenerational trauma. This group of boxers are defying stereotypes and taking the future into their own hands with the help and support of Uncle Ray – the man who has brought boxing back to Palm Island.

#### **NGANAMPA ANWERNEKENHE – SERIES 22**

**Caama Productions**

**Executive Producers** Ray Lillis, Robyn Nardoo (Ep 4)

**Series Producer** Tanya Fraser

**Directors** Mitch Torres, David Tranter, Robyn Nardoo and Steven McGregor

**Broadcaster** Imparja

**Synopsis** A series of half-hour documentaries on aspects of Australian Indigenous culture, both ancient and modern, and featuring Australia's foremost Aboriginal filmmakers.

**International Documentary****DINO STAMPEDE****Prospero Productions**

**Producers** Ed Punchard, Julia Redwood

**Writer** John McCourt

**Distribution** NGTI

**Broadcaster** ABC, BBC Scotland

**Synopsis** Combining stunning CGI with major high-tech adventure, *Dino Stampede* reveals how scientists are using battlefield forensics and the latest CGI technology to study the footprints of dinosaurs and unearth incredible details about the predation and social behaviour of these once enigmatic creatures.

**MACHETE MAIDENS UNLEASHED!****Fury Productions/Bionic Boy Productions (SPV)**

**Producer** Veronica Fury

**Writer/Director** Mark Hartley

**Sales and Distribution** ABC Content Sales

**Broadcaster** ABC TV

**Synopsis** A fast-moving odyssey into the subterranean world of Filipino genre filmmaking. Populated by miniature James Bonds and karate kickin' soul sisters, this is the ultimate insider's account of a country fighting back to reclaim its very own special national identity – while at the same time creating films that were so commercial they went beyond mainstream.

**FIRING THE MAGIC BULLET****Rymer Childs Films**

**Producer** Bevan Childs

**Producer/Writer/Director** Judy Rymer

**Sales and Distribution** Off The Fence

**Broadcaster** SBS

**Synopsis** In the coming months, two Australian scientists at the cutting edge of cancer research take their successful trials from the animal kingdom to humans. Ten years of scientific and business struggle is on the line. As they juggle the science, big pharmas, clinicians and investors, we reveal how hard it is to get science to market, even though this discovery could revolutionise cancer treatment.

**DIVORCE SHARIA WAY****Jennifer Crone Productions**

**Producer/Writer/Director** Jennifer Crone

**Sales and Distribution** SBS Content Sales

**Broadcaster** ABC TV

**Synopsis** Investigates the reality of Sharia marriages and divorce in Australia by following couples as they attempt to obtain a divorce, and the Imams, as they mediate and make judgments on divorce cases.