

Six Australian projects bound for South by Southwest Festival in US

Monday 22 January 2024: Six Australian screen projects have been selected for the 2024 South by Southwest (SXSW) Film & TV Festival which will take place in Austin, Texas from 8-16 March.

Making their respective world premieres are feature film [Audrey](#), documentary short film *The Big Wait*, and animated augmented reality (XR) project *Many Worlds*.

Mystery-thriller [Birdeater](#) will make its international premiere and the First Nations psychological horror film, [The Moogai](#) and [Every Little Thing](#) will also be showcased at SXSW following their [world premieres at Sundance Film Festival](#) this month.

Screen Australia's CEO **Deirdre Brennan** said, "Congratulations to the teams behind these unique projects on their SXSW selection. This important recognition highlights the demand for compelling Australian content across all genres and formats globally. Participation in SXSW, a festival known for innovative and ground-breaking work, demonstrates the high calibre and audience appeal of our homegrown stories. I'm absolutely thrilled about their selection."

Audrey, the dramedy written by Lou Sanz ([The PM's Daughter](#)) and directed by Natalie Bailey ([Bay of Fires](#)) will have its world premiere at SXSW Film Festival in the Narrative Feature category. The story follows self-appointed Mother of the Year, Ronnie who has given her daughter Audrey everything. When Audrey selfishly falls into a coma, Ronnie has no choice but to keep her dreams alive by assuming her identity.

Director **Natalie Bailey** said, "I am so thrilled to be invited to premiere *Audrey*, my debut feature at SXSW Austin in the Narrative Feature Competition. This means so much to myself and the team who worked tirelessly to make this weird tale of suburbia come to life."

Producer **Michael Wrenn** said on behalf of the production team, "For a comedy that walks an edgy fine line, SXSW, with its irreverent indie slant, music focus and comedy side bar - not to mention a focus on inclusion and diversity - is the perfect fit for *Audrey* and we are tickled pink to be there."

Also making its world premiere in the Documentary Shorts Competition is *The Big Wait* by writer/director Yannick Jamey. The film is about a remote desert town, which has a population of two and is kept in pristine condition waiting for visitors that never seem to arrive.

First Nations writer/director Jon Bell's debut feature, [The Moogai](#) will screen in SXSW's Festival Favourite category. *The Moogai* is co-produced by Causeway Films' Kristina Ceyton, Samantha Jennings ([The Babadook](#), [Talk to Me](#)) and No Coincidence Media's Mitchell Stanley ([We Are Still Here](#), [Larapinta](#)). Based on the award-winning short film written and directed by Jon Bell, the feature film stars [Shari Sebbens](#), [Meyne Wyatt](#), [Tessa Rose](#), [Bella Heathcote](#), Jahdeana Mary and [Clarence Ryan](#). *The Moogai* received development and principal production funding through Screen Australia's First Nations Department.

Screen Australia's Head of First Nations **Angela Bates** said, "Following *The Moogai*'s world premiere at Sundance, and now being selected for SXSW, it's fantastic to see First Nations stories being recognised and celebrated globally. This impressive achievement is a tribute to the talented cast and crew behind the film and underlines the significant impact of our voices and culture on audiences around the world."

Producers **Mitch Stanley** and **Kristina Ceyton** said, "The team are excited to return to SXSW where the short film was well received, winning the Jury Prize in the Midnight section in 2021. We're honoured to now have the feature version of *The Moogai* screen at SXSW and are excited to share our film with their supportive audiences once again in 2024."

From debut directing duo Jack Clark and James Weir is mystery-thriller *Birdeater*, which will make its international premiere in the Festival's Visions section. Produced by Stephanie Troost, Ulysses Oliver and Ben Ferris of Breathless Films, the story follows a bride-to-be who reluctantly joins her fiancé's bachelor party on



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a remote property in the Australian outback. As the festivities spiral into beer-soaked chaos, uncomfortable details about their relationship are exposed, and the celebration soon becomes a feral nightmare.

Producer **Ulysses Oliver** and executive producer **Ben Ferris** from Breathless Films said, “We are stoked that our true indie production *Birdeater* has been selected to compete on such an international stage. It’s a real testament to the passion and grit of our talented cast and crew that the film has been acknowledged by a festival renowned for its commitment to innovation and artistic excellence. We are eternally grateful to SXSW for such a significant opportunity, and can’t wait to see how the film goes down with international audiences. Yee-ha!”

Following its world premiere at Sundance Film Festival in January, feature documentary *Every Little Thing* will screen as part of SXSW’s Festival Favourites strand, which celebrates acclaimed standouts from festivals around the world. The documentary is written and directed by Sally Aitken ([Hot Potato: The Story of the Wiggles](#), [Playing with Sharks](#)) and produced by WildBear Entertainment’s Bettina Dalton ([Rachel’s Farm](#), [Playing with Sharks](#)).

Animated Augmented Reality (XR) project *Many Worlds* will have its world premiere in the XR Experience Competition.

A history of Australian titles at SXSW is available [here](#).

ENDS

AUDREY

Screening Section: World Premiere - Narrative Feature Competition

Production company/s: Invisible Republic and Orange Entertainment Co.

Directors: Natalie Bailey

Writer: Lou Sanz

Producers: Michael Wrenn, Dan Lake, Shannon Wilson-McClinton, Diya Eid

Executive Producers: Kurt Royan, Roxana McMullan, Mitchell Williams, Stephen Kelliher, Sophie Green

Australian Distributor: Rialto Distribution

International Sales: Bankside Films

Synopsis: Self-appointed Mother of the Year, Ronnie has given her daughter Audrey everything, so when Audrey selfishly falls into a coma, Ronnie has no choice but to keep their dreams alive by assuming her identity.

Production credit: Major production investment from Screen Australia in association with Screen

Queensland. Financed with support from the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) Premiere Fund.

Media contact: pr@audreyfilm.com

BIRDEATER

Screening Section: Visions - Narrative Feature

Production companies: Birdeater Pty Ltd, Breathless Films Pty Ltd, Fax Machine Pty Ltd

Directors: Jack Clark and James Weir

Writers: Jack Clark

Producers: Stephanie Troost and Ulysses Oliver

Executive Producers: Ben Ferris, Ulysses Oliver, Chris Thompson, Jack Clark, James Weir, Jack Stephens

Australian Distributor: Umbrella Entertainment

International Sales: Blue Finch Films

Synopsis: A bride-to-be is invited to join her own fiancé’s bachelor party on a remote property in the Australian outback. But as the festivities spiral into beer-soaked chaos, uncomfortable details about their relationship are exposed, and the celebration soon becomes a feral nightmare. *Birdeater* is a mystery-thriller that explores the rapidly evolving image of traditional relationships and gender roles among contemporary Australians.

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EVERY LITTLE THING

Screening Section: Festival Favourite

WildBear Entertainment

Writer/Director: Sally Aitken

Produced by: Bettina Dalton p.g.a.

International Sales: Dogwoof

Synopsis: Amid the glamour of Hollywood, Los Angeles, a woman finds herself on a transformative journey as she nurtures wounded hummingbirds, unravelling a visually captivating and magical tale of love, fragility, healing, and the delicate beauty in tiny acts of greatness.

Production credit: Co-produced with investment from WildBear Entertainment, Dogwoof and HHMI Tangled Bank Studios.

Media contact: [Jillian Heggie](#)

THE MOOGAI

Screening Section: Festival Favourite

Production Companies: Causeway Films and No Coincidence Media

Writer/Director: Jon Bell

Producers: Kristina Ceyton, Samantha Jennings, Mitchell Stanley

Australian Distributor: Maslow Umbrella Ahi Entertainment Pty Ltd

International Sales: Bankside Films

Synopsis: Sarah and Fergus, a hopeful young Aboriginal couple, give birth to their second baby. But what should be a joyous time of their lives becomes sinister when Sarah starts seeing a malevolent spirit she is convinced is trying to take her baby.

Production credit: Major production investment from Screen Australia's First Nations Department in association with Screen NSW. Financed with support from Spectrum Films, Kojo Studios, Anahat Films, Salmira Productions and Head Gear Films.

Media contact: [Kristina Ceyton](#) and [Mitchell Stanley](#)

THE BIG WAIT

Screening Section: Documentary Shorts Competition

Production company: Yannick Jamey

Directors and writer: Yannick Jamey

Producers: Lucy Pijnenburg, Yannick Jamey

Synopsis: A remote desert town, with a population of two, is kept in pristine condition waiting for visitors that never seem to arrive.

Production credit: Yannick Jamey (Self-funded)

Media contact: [Yannick Jamey](#)

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