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Screen Australia announces over \$1.6 million for new documentary projects

Tuesday 9 April 2019: Screen Australia has announced production funding for seven new documentary projects through the Documentary Producer and Commissioned programs. The latest slate includes *The Beach*, a television series which follows award-winning director Warwick Thornton as he turns his back on the limelight and life in the fast lane, to experience life on an isolated beach in the remote Dampier Peninsula on the north-west coast of Western Australia.

“*The Beach* is one of the most important projects of my life. It’s about my life. It is my life.” said **Thornton**.

The other projects include a feature film about shark fanatic and filmmaker Valerie Taylor in *The Real Jaws: The Valerie Taylor Story* and an online animated series about the untold history of soccer, *A Game of Three Halves*.

Screen Australia’s Head of Documentary **Bernadine Lim** said: “We’re thrilled to see such a range of documentaries in this production slate, spanning environment, immigration, sport, true crime and personal profiles. Through these projects, audiences will experience the unique power of documentary to not only record our Australian stories, but offer a means to engage with them.”

A total of \$965,000 was allocated through the Producer program and \$720,000 through the Commissioned program.

Documentary Producer projects

- ***A Game of Three Halves:*** A six-part online series in partnership with global soccer platform Copa90 about some of the true and bizarre stories from soccer’s untold history. The project will highlight aspects of the sport that unite fans across the world through handmade animation. Producer Katrina Lucas and director Matthew Bate of South Australian Closer Productions, who previously collaborated on [The Art of the Game](#), will bring these shorts to life along with artist Case Jernigan.
- ***Lucy In The Sky:*** A feature documentary from writer/director Maria Dudko, whose mother Lucy spent seven years in prison for hijacking a helicopter in 1999 to break her lover, convicted armed robber John Killick, out of Silverwater Jail. With a personal view from Maria the film will explore the lead up to the event and the unexplained evidence around Lucy’s conviction. Producer Sam Griffin, co-producer Maya Kuzina and executive producer Chris Hilton ([Todd Sampson’s Body Hack](#)) are attached. This project was developed with support from Create NSW.
- ***The Fight:*** A feature documentary in co-production with ITVS by director Violeta Ayala and producer Daniel Fallshaw, who previously collaborated on [Cocaine Prison](#). This film looks into a unique protest led by social worker Feliza Ali and her husband Marcelo, which saw 2,000 people with disabilities march across the Andes to stand up to the Bolivian government about disability rights. Garnering the attention of the international media and the UN, the group ultimately forced the Bolivian government to listen to their requests for a basic monthly pension. This project also has the support of the Sundance Film Institute.
- ***The Real Jaws: The Valerie Taylor Story:*** A feature documentary from Wildbear Entertainment about Australian icon Valerie Taylor - a diver and filmmaker who captured the underwater world on camera for films like *Jaws*. With access to decades of personal film archives, this feature will reveal how Valerie defied gender expectations in her work, and dedicated her life to shark conservation. Director Sally Aitken ([David Stratton: A Cinematic Life](#)) will be joined by producer Bettina Dalton ([Dino Bird](#)) and executive producer Alan Erson ([Barrenjoey Road](#)).
- ***Wild Things:*** A feature documentary from Darwin-based 360 Degree Films about unfolding environmental campaigns across Australia, focusing on the crusaders who are standing up against coal mines, fracking and logging in Tasmania’s Tarkine rainforest. It will explore modern approaches to

Media enquiries: Lidia Williams
+61 2 8113 1091 | +61 468 784 170 | lidia.williams@screenaustralia.gov.au
www.screenaustralia.gov.au



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mass action through the internet as well as traditional methods which are still relevant, like when school students recently called a national strike demanding action against global warming. The creative team includes producer/director Sally Ingleton ([Indian Wedding Race](#)), co-director Caro Macdonald, line producer Annie Venables ([The Farmer's Cinematheque](#)) and executive producer Shaun Miller ([Mystify: Michael Hutchence](#)). This project is also supported by Screen Territory and Film Victoria.

Documentary Commissioned projects

- ***The Beach***: A six-part series for NITV, following award-winning filmmaker Warwick Thornton on an isolated, remote beach on the north-west coast of Western Australia. Living off the land and his wits, in one of the most beautiful yet brutal environments in the world, Thornton will attempt to disconnect from a life lived in the fast lane and reconnect with Country. This project will be directed by Thornton, renowned for [Sweet Country](#) and [We Don't Need A Map](#). It will be produced by Michelle Parker, Mitchell Stanley ([Servant or Slave](#)) and Tanith Glynn-Maloney ([She Who Must Be Loved](#)), and executive produced by Ben Nott from World Wide Mind.
- ***Who Should Get A Passport? (working title)***: an immersive, emotional, high stakes observational documentary series for SBS following the migration lawyers and agents who advocate for those who aspire to live in Australia. In 2017 more than 60% of our annual population growth was due to net immigration¹, and in 2019/20 up to 160,000 migrants will be granted permanent residency, amounting to approximately one person every three minutes². With unprecedented access this three-part series follows a range of applicants as they submit their cases and receive life-changing outcomes. The project will be produced by ITV Studios Australia's Ben Ulm and Elle Gibbons, whose credits include [Keeping Australia Safe](#).

Find out more information about this round of projects [here](#)

"We're also pleased to support 11 projects in the recent development round, including two natural history projects, a VR production and two original format series." said Head of Documentary at Screen Australia, **Bernadine Lim**. The latest round of development projects receiving funding can be viewed [here](#)

About Screen Australia Documentary Funding

The [Documentary Producer program](#) is designed to give producers the foundational funding required to leverage their projects creatively and commercially. It must have a clear path to audience but marketplace attachment is not required at the application stage.

The [Documentary Commissioned program](#) is designed to support the production of a diverse range of quality projects for television broadcast, VOD or similar. It must offer a compelling vision with a clear and enduring cultural value, and have a local presale with a minimum license fee at application stage.

[Click here](#) for more information about these programs.

¹ 25 Million Population Milestone, Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018,

<https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/25+million+population+milestone>

² Migration Program Planning Levels, Australian Government Department of Home Affairs 2019, <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/migration-program-planning-levels>

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Media enquiries: Lidia Williams
+61 2 8113 1091 | +61 468 784 170 | lidia.williams@screenaustralia.gov.au
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