

## Screen Australia announces \$2 million for eight documentaries

**Thursday 4 May 2023:** Screen Australia has announced two documentaries funded through the Commissioned Program and six projects through the Producer Program that will share in over \$2 million of production funding.

The projects include *This Is Us*, about the gender equality success story of the Australian Women's football team, ABC's *The Way We Wore*, exploring the history of the Australian fashion industry, *Ellis Park* about Australian musician Warren Ellis and his wildlife sanctuary in Sumatra directed by Justin Kurzel and *Rewards for the Tribe* which follows the collaboration between two acclaimed Australian contemporary dance companies.

Screen Australia's Head of Documentary **Alex West** said, "This new mix of projects will provide insights into aspects of Australia's past as well as contemporary issues, highlighting relevant topics such as wildlife conservation, gender equality in sport and the public healthcare system. We are proud to support these documentaries and I'm confident they will strike a chord with local audiences and beyond."

### The projects funded through the Commissioned Program are:

- ***Life on the Hospital Frontline* (working title):** A 3 x 52-minute documentary series for SBS that explores the challenges faced by the Australian public health system by going behind the scenes at one of Australia's busiest public hospitals - St Vincent's in Sydney. *Life on the Hospital Frontline* (working title) is series produced by Jo Siddiqui, written/directed by Anthony Barwell and executive produced by Dan Brown whose credits include [What Does Australia Really Think About?](#) and [Claremont: A Killer Among Us](#). The series is financed in association with SBS with support from Screenwest and Lotterywest.
- ***The Way We Wore:*** From Stranger Than Fiction and Wheels Rolling, this 3 x 60-minute series for the ABC is a definitive history of the Australian fashion industry. The series will unpack the cultural and historical significance of the Australian fashion industry and explore how the clothes we wear provide an unexpectedly intimate insight into the evolution of our country. Filled with archival material, gorgeous animation and interviews from the most highly regarded fashion faces in the country, *The Way We Wore* will ask why fashion matters and what it says about who we are and where we are going. Writing, directing and producing is Nel Minchin whose credits include [Firestarter: The Story of Bangarra](#) and [Folau](#), with Mel Hayward ([Hotel Coolgardie](#)) also writing. Also producing is Jo-Anne McGowan ([Mountain](#)) and Sarah Noonan, with Jennifer Peedom ([Mountain](#)) attached as executive producer. ABC Commissioning Editor Kalita Corrigan. It is financed in association with the ABC with support from Screenwest and Lotterywest and Screen NSW.

### The projects funded through the Producer Program are:

- ***Aquarius:*** Coined the anti-Woodstock, the Nimbin Aquarius Festival in 1973 was a radical 10-day social experiment where idealists faced down police interference, internal chaos, drugs and personal dramas, highlighted in this 75-minute documentary. Through extensive collaboration and with hours of precious newly-uncovered footage, *Aquarius* explores the Festival, its inception and its aftermath and examines the power one event has in continuing to shape history. It is written and directed by Wendy Champagne (*Taxi*) and directed by Oren Siedler ([Bruce and Me](#)). Sam Griffin ([Going Country](#)) is producing, with Chris Hilton (*The GoBetweens: Right Here*), Rhoda Roberts AO ([In the Gutter? No Way](#)), Tom Zubrycki ([Ablaze](#)) and Paul Wiegard ([River](#)) attached as executive producers. It is financed with support from philanthropy via Documentary Australia and is distributed by Madman Entertainment. Developed with assistance of Screen NSW.
- ***Ellis Park:*** This feature documentary follows Australian musician Warren Ellis, member of rock groups Dirty Three and Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. In the dark times of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ellis found his way to make a difference by helping create a wildlife sanctuary in Sumatra - giving life and



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dignity to animals rescued from human captivity. *Ellis Park* is a documentary about hope, redemption and how even little efforts can make a big difference. Attached is writer/director Justin Kurzel ([Nitram](#)) and producers Nick Batzias ([The Australian Dream](#)) and Charlotte Wheaton ([Clean](#)). *Ellis Park* is financed in association with McCorkell Brown, with support from the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) Premiere Fund. It is developed and produced in association with VicScreen.

- **Never Get Busted!**: This 4-part series tells the story of Barry Cooper, who was once a highly decorated narcotics officer in Texas. That is until he turned against the police force to expose crooked cops and corruption - becoming the law-evasion guru and drug reform activist he is known as today. This is the story of one man's fight to turn the tide on the international War on Drugs, if he doesn't get busted in the process. From Projector Films, *Never Get Busted!* is created by David Ngo and Erin Williams-Weir, written by David Ngo and directed by Stephen McCallum (*Outlaws*). It is produced by Daniel Joyce ([Martha: A Picture Story](#)), Erin Williams-Weir and David Ngo. Chris Smith (*Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem and Madness*) and John Battsek (Academy Award-winning *One Day in September*) are attached as executive producers. It is financed with support from Library Films, Ventureland, Pinnacle Films, Sons Of Rigor, Mind The Gap and the South Australian Film Corporation.
- **Rewards for the Tribe**: A feature-length documentary following the collaboration between two acclaimed Australian contemporary dance companies, Chunky Move and Restless Dance Theatre. Using intimate personal reflections on dance and on the body, alongside choreographed dance sequences, *Rewards for the Tribe* is an emotive, timely insight into the transcendence of dance, connection and collaboration. It is written and directed by Rhys Graham ([Murundak: Songs of Freedom](#)) with script collaborator and director mentee Jana Castillo. Attached as producers are Philippa Campey ([Anonymous Club](#)) and Molly O'Connor ([Running 62](#)), with associate producers Bus Stop Films. It is financed in association with the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund, with support from Chunky Move. Developed in association with VicScreen.
- **This Is Us**: This 30-minute documentary is the story of Australian Women's Football's transformational journey from striking for equal pay to co-hosting the biggest women's football tournament on the planet. With a focus on Australia, co-hosts of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, this documentary takes a deep-dive into how societal shifts have supported the long-overdue visibility and success of the team and the wave of change in women's football currently sweeping the planet. Writing, directing and producing are Maggie Miles ([Dare to be Different](#)) and Maggie Eudes, with Lucy Maclaren ([Carbon: The Unauthorised Biography](#)) also producing. *This is Us* is financed in association with MECCA M-POWER and developed and produced in association with VicScreen. It is set to stream on FIFA+ and FIFA's YouTube Channel.
- **Welcome to Babel**: A feature-length documentary about the life and work of Chinese-Australian artist Jiawei Shen and his new work - a parable of the history of the Communist movement in which famous characters, artworks, love stories and battles jostle for space in a painting the height of a three-story building. Jiawei and his artist wife Lan tell their life stories with passion and humour, from the tumult of Mao's China, through their unlikely love story, to their new lives in Australia. Directing/producing is James Bradley ([Ochre and Ink](#)), with Graeme Isaac ([Bran Nue Dae](#)) and Carl-Ludwig Rettinger also producing and Andrew Myer ([The Dry](#)) attached as executive producer. *Welcome to Babel* is financed in association with ZDF-Arte and Lichtblick Film, with support from Nirvana Films, Mayfan Films and philanthropy via Documentary Australia.

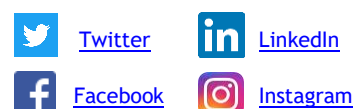
The full list of documentary blocklines is available [here](#).

The latest projects funded for documentary development are available [here](#).

#### ABOUT DOCUMENTARY FUNDING AT SCREEN AUSTRALIA

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.

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The [Documentary Commissioned program](#) is designed to support the production of a diverse range of quality projects for television broadcast, SVOD 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.

The [Documentary Development program](#) aims to assist documentary makers in achieving planned outcomes for the development of their projects. Screen Australia also supports documentary projects through targeted initiatives such as Fresh Cuts with the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) and Curious Australia with SBS.

Documentary projects that have a primary release on a social media platform are able to apply for funding through the [Online Department](#).

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