

## 10 LGBTQI filmmaking teams funded through the Love Bites initiative

Friday 20 October 2017: ABC Arts and Screen Australia have selected 10 projects created by filmmakers from the LGBTQI community to receive Love Bites production funding. Love Bites is a joint documentary initiative created to mark the upcoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in 2018.

From a radical 1980s lesbian erotic magazine to an internationally renowned Samoan-Australian drag performer, what it means to grow up with same-sex parents and the ubiquity of dating app culture, these 10 projects will showcase the diversity and artistic expression of Australia's LGBTQI community.

Each team will receive \$10,000 to make a 5 minute documentary to screen on the Arts channel on ABC iview in 2018, to coincide with the 40th Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Film Victoria has provided additional production funding support for the four projects from Victorian filmmaking teams.

"There could not be a better time to celebrate the extraordinary diversity that is flourishing in our Australian LGBTQI communities," said **Terese Cau**, CEO of Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. "The Love Bites initiative has just unleashed 10 amazing documentary teams who will bring us fresh new contemporary LGBTQI stories to enjoy as part of the 40th celebrations of Mardi Gras. We can't wait to see the outcome!"

"Love Bites is ABC TV Arts' contribution to a pan-ABC approach to celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mardi Gras. We look forward to working with filmmakers in the LGBTQI community to present a suite of short documentary films that will explore the lived experiences of this rich and diverse community," said **Linda Brusasco**, Acting Head of Arts at ABC TV.

"The Love Bites documentaries will invite us into the lives of the LGBTQI community and explore the incredible diversity within the broader Australian rainbow family," said **Liz Stevens**, Senior Manager of Documentary at Screen Australia. "At a time when empathy and understanding is so publicly battling with fear and ignorance, the art form of documentary can really come into its own by showing reality without judgement. We look forward to seeing these stories hit screens next year."

The funded projects are:

- *Beyond the Mirrorball* (NSW) from producer Josh Feeny and producer/director Luke Cornish, that will ask what comes next for the over-50s generation of the LGBTQI community moving on from the disco lights of the party scene.
- *Club Arak* (NSW) from producer Alissar Gazal and director Fadia Abboud, which will tell the story of Sydney's original queer Arab dance party that has for 15 years created a safe space that empowered and encouraged Arabs to gather and celebrate their cultural identity.
- *Dances* (VIC) from producer Stephanie Westwood and director Ramon Watkins - an innovative exploration of queer experiences with dating app culture, told through dance and animation.
- *Dani Boi* (VIC) from producer Zena Bartlett and director Logan Mucha, about a provocative drag king and how radical performance art can play a role in challenging gender conformity.
- *Desperately Seeking Shavers* (VIC) from producer Christina Radburn and writer/director Emmett Aldred, which will look at the role facial hair plays in expressing and actualising identity for Trans and gender diverse people.
- *FEZ* (QLD) from producer Jessica Magro, executive producer Kate Paul and director Jermaine D'Vauz - a celebration of the life of Samoan-Australian entertainer Fez Faanana who represents Australia on the world stage in dazzling drag and co-founded the all-male burlesque company 'Briefs Factory'.
- *Monsta Gras* (NSW) from producer Jain Moralee and director Kelli Jean Drinkwater, about one of Sydney's most legendary art parties hosted by The Glitter Militia, and the feminist political playground that redefines what it means to be queer.

- *Queen Biryani* (NSW) from producer Kate Vinen and director Gary Paramanathan, which will tell the story of new Pakistani migrant Ali who challenges gender norms by serving up delicious South Asian cuisine through his catering company donned in glittering saris.
- *Same Same* (NSW) from producer Lizzie Cater and writer/director Thomas Wilson-White who will draw from his own life for a documentary about growing up with gay parents, and reimagine the many possible versions of Australian families.
- *Wicked Women: There's No Stopping Us Now* (VIC) from producer/director Anna Brownfield, a history of the lesbian erotic magazine *Wicked Women* which launched in 1988 and turned lesbian Australia upside down - liberating lesbian sex for generations to come.

Find out more information about these projects, [click here >](#)