

## Screen Australia greenlights \$3.5 million for 5 new projects

**Wednesday 22 January 2020:** Nude retreats, marine poachers and hot-tempered chefs - Screen Australia has announced two feature films, one television drama and two online projects that will share in \$3.5 million of production funding.

Robert Connolly, writer/director of box office hit [Paper Planes](#), returns to Western Australia for a feature film adaptation of Tim Winton's acclaimed novel *Blueback*; creator and star of Kiwi hit *The Breaker Upperers* Jackie van Beek joins forces with Australian producers to create absurdist dramedy feature *Nude Tuesday*; and Erik Thomson teams up with South Australian hit-makers Closer Productions to produce new TV comedy *Yes, Chef!*.

Screen Australia's Head of Content, **Sally Caplan** said, "We are thrilled to be funding productions across four states and to be back collaborating with New Zealand on a co-production."

"*Blueback* is a great Australian fable coming to the screen from local IP that will have global appeal. And we have been waiting for more comedies so we're delighted to get behind *Yes, Chef!* and *Nude Tuesday*."

"We're also very pleased to provide two emerging teams with their first allocation of production funding through the Online fund. This avenue has proved to be an excellent way for creators to develop a profile and their audience," Caplan continued.

### The funded feature film projects are:

- ***Blueback*:** A feature film based on the best-selling novel by Tim Winton, from the filmmaker behind [Paper Planes](#), writer/director Robert Connolly with producers Liz Kearney and James Grandison of Arenamedia. The family-friendly film centres on Abby, a child who befriends a magnificent wild groper while diving. When Abby realises that the fish is under threat, she must take on the poachers to save her friend. Set on the coast of Western Australia and showcasing an extraordinary marine world, this is a story of friendship, family and nature. *Blueback* has also received principal production investment from the Western Australian Regional Film Fund (WARFF), supported by Royalties for Regions, and is financed with support from Screenwest and Lotterywest and Film Victoria.
- ***Nude Tuesday*:** A co-production between Australia's Good Thing Productions and New Zealand's Firefly Films. *Nude Tuesday* is an absurd dramedy about couple Laura and Bruno who are on the brink of breaking up, and spend a week at a new-age retreat in a bid to save their marriage. What results is one of the most outrageous, emotionally confronting weeks of their lives. Written by Jackie van Beek (*The Breaker Upperers*), the film will be performed in a fictional language, and will be subtitled by comedic writers after filming to create a number of completely different versions of the same story. This is the second film directed by Armagan Ballantyne (after *The Strength of Water* in 2009) and will be produced by Virginia Whitwell and Nick Batzias whose credits include [The Australian Dream](#), and New Zealand producer Emma Slade (*Come To Daddy*). The project has also received conditional production investment from the New Zealand Film Commission and is financed with support from Film Victoria.

The full list of feature film blocklines can be found [here](#)

### The funded television project is:

- ***Yes, Chef!*:** A six-part dramedy series for the ABC from Closer Productions. It follows a notorious celebrity chef who is forced to flee to his hometown in the Adelaide Hills after his latest outburst goes viral. But when he forms an unlikely business partnership with his 18-year-old pastry prodigy niece, he must learn to navigate a whole new world order - except old habits die hard. The creative team includes creator/writer/executive producer Julie De Fina, creator/writer/producer Matthew Bate ([Shut Up Little Man](#)), producers Rebecca Summerton ([The Hunting](#)) and Erik Thomson, along

with writers Matthew Vesely ([F\\*cking Adelaide](#)) and Jodie Molloy (TVNZ's *Agent Anna*). This project is financed with support from the South Australian Film Corporation. International sales will be handled by ABC Commercial.

The television drama blocklines can be found [here](#)

The online projects are:

- ***amazing Grace series 2***: A five-part series for Facebook and other online platforms that follows teenager Grace as she navigates life after the death of her father, starring Justine Clarke and Ben Wood. Off the back of [series 1](#), which was a finalist for Best Australian Drama at Melbourne Webfest in 2017, the second series will see Grace find solutions to more everyday challenges, aided along the way by the memory and advice of her dad. Based on her own life, this project is written by Grace Truman who stars as herself, and is written, directed and produced by Julie Money ([Wonderland](#)).
- ***Sonia & Cherry***: A seven-part comedy for Facebook and YouTube centred on two best friends who think they know each other until they become mums. While Cherry is into attachment parenting and sugar-free food, Sonia uses apps and feeds her kids whatever will keep them from complaining. The pair navigate their different approaches to parenting in this honest look at friendship after kids. This project is written and directed by Victoria Thaine and produced by Naomi Mulholland. Thaine also stars alongside Petra Yared and Dave Lawson.

The full list of online blocklines can be found [here](#)

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