

## Screen Australia announces \$320,000 in funding for four online projects

Thursday 17 May, 2018: Screen Australia has today announced \$320,000 in funding for two animated comedies *Bonnie the Elephant*, and *Mining Boom*, a satire for ABC iView *The Housemate*, and a virtual reality (VR) project *30 Minutes of Danger*, based on a popular children's novel by Australian author Jack Heath.

"It's critical for us to find and champion compelling and unique creative ideas, supporting creatives at the right time with sufficient resources to properly bring their visions to life. Whether that be by further development, facilitating critical collaborations or in the instances of these four projects, providing production investment, Screen Australia is committed to supporting online creators," said Rosie Lourde, Investment Manager for Online Production at Screen Australia.

"*Bonnie the Elephant* is a refreshingly original idea and with its sassy sexual overtones, and voice work from Matilda Brown, we are confident it will find an audience. *Mining Boom* is a distinctively Australian animation, with an engaged online audience through their YouTube channel with views reaching almost a million."

"Likewise, the sharp wit of *The Housemate* has already struck a chord with audiences online with [the pilot](#) racking up more than 250,000 views on Facebook."

"*30 Minutes of Danger* is an exciting VR adaptation of the bestselling book. This experienced creative team helmed by Grant Scicluna are experimenting with innovative distribution methods utilising pathways to audience through the existing fan base in ways not previously explored for VR in Australia," continued Lourde.

Including these new titles, Screen Australia has provided production funding for nine online projects this financial year, plus four ABC [Fresh Blood](#) productions, and five [Skip Ahead](#) projects.

The four new projects are:

- Cheeky animated comedy series *Bonnie the Elephant*, is set inside a children's storybook world and follows the adventures of an adorable elephant called Bonnie as she sets off through the forest looking for love. Narrated by Matilda Brown (*Let's Talk About*, *Am I Okay*) this 4x3min series comes from Swim Like a Boss Productions, was written, directed and produced by Holly Hargreaves, and co-produced by Jerome Velinsky and Nigel Huckle.
- Animated comedy series *Mining Boom* from Thirsty Head Productions, is an ensemble workplace comedy that follows an eclectic team of FIFO (Fly in, Fly out) miners as they slip up, cover-up and shortcut their way through remote Australian mine sites. Written, produced and directed by Peter Harris, alongside writer and producer Philip Denson the 5x6min series is for [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#). Harris has worked in the mining industry for the past 17 years and drew from his own experiences whilst developing this series.
- *The Housemate* ([previously announced](#)), a new 6x5min comedy series from Chips and Gravy Films, premiering on ABC iView later this year. Definitely not based on *The Bachelor*, the series is created, written by and stars creative duo, Alexandra Keddie and Gemma Bird Matheson. It follows Alex and Gemma as they get to know a host of potential housemates over several weeks, eliminating them from the competition one by one until they finally find the housemate of their dreams. Through heartbreak and heartache, Alex and Gemma learn who is ready to put themselves on the line for an affordable, good-sized, light-filled room with built-ins in Melbourne's inner-east.
- Based on the bestselling novel *300 Minutes of Danger* by Australian author Jack Heath, *30 Minutes of Danger* is a 10 minute VR project produced by Happening Films and The Pulse Originals. It follows Nassim who is mistaken for Kim, a jewel heist witness, and poisoned in a revenge attack by a deadly assailant. Nassim can only get an antitoxin if he gives up the 'bloodstone', prompting a cat and mouse game where Nassim is at a clear disadvantage.



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Reuniting for the first time since their acclaimed 2015 feature film [Downriver](#), the project is written and directed by Grant Scicluna and produced by Jannine Barnes. George Kacevski and Melody Ha also produce, alongside executive producers Brett Heil and Michael Agar.

#### About Online Production at Screen Australia

Lee Naimo will start at Screen Australia as Investment Manager for Online Production in the coming weeks. Lee is a comedian, producer, musician and creator best known as one-third of musical comedy trio The Axis of Awesome. The Axis of Awesome were one of the first recipients of the Screen Australia Skip Ahead program in 2014 and Lee is also Creative Producer of Insert Coin, which was nominated for official selection at the 2017 Melbourne Web Fest. Lee will be working alongside Junior Investment Manager for Online Production, [Alyce Adams](#). Both will be based at the Screen Australia Melbourne Office.

Screen Australia has a long history of funding online creators including [Aunty Donna](#), [The Katering Show](#) and the [RackaRacka](#). The Online Production fund is open all year for applications, in addition to special initiatives including Google Skip Ahead and ABC Fresh Blood.

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