

Green light for UK/Australian co-production *Falling for Figaro*

Friday 1 September 2017: Screen Australia, in association with Film Victoria, have announced production investment funding for official UK/Australian co-production *Falling for Figaro*, a romantic comedy about an aspiring opera singer who heads to the remote Scottish Highlands to pursue her dreams.

Directed by Ben Lewin (*The Sessions*) and written by Allen Palmer, *Falling for Figaro* is produced by Philip Wade, Charles Hannah and Donall McCusker, with executive producers Tim White, Judi Levine and John Wade and co-producer Daniel Einfeld. The film will be distributed in Australia by Becker Film Group and international sales will be handled by WestEnd Films.

In *Falling for Figaro*, fund manager Mimi is about to settle down with her unimaginative boyfriend when she pleads for a year off to try to win a contest that would launch her operatic career. Alas, the only recognised coach who will take her on lives in the remote Scottish Highlands. Max, the charismatic working class guy behind the bar, is training with the same coach for the same grand prize and Mimi naively thinks they'll be great mates, but Max has eyes only for the prize. *Falling for Figaro* is the story of a woman who has to face her fears, a guy who's forced to question his priorities, and a bunch of football-loving farmers who are about to become latte-sipping opera critics.

"*Falling for Figaro* reminds me of an Ernst Lubitsch romantic comedy ... classy, intelligent and with the potential to reach a wide international audience. After being attached for some time, it's gratifying to see the film fully financed with the support of Screen Australia and Film Victoria," said director **Ben Lewin**.

Sally Caplan, Screen Australia's Head of Production said, "Co-productions have proved time and again to be incredible vehicles for Australian creatives and our unique storytelling sensibility. Our long-standing co-production treaty with the UK has resulted in an incredible 44 projects in over 25 years, and is a testament to the creative partnerships forged between our production communities. *Falling for Figaro* is a story full of irresistible charm, melding music, dry wit and a lot of heart, making for a film we're confident will travel well."

Producer **Philip Wade** said, "This world class team, alongside market leaders Becker Film Group & WestEnd Films, and significant private investment, is evidence of the huge commercial potential of this story."

Falling for Figaro will be filmed in the UK, with post-production in Australia. Production will commence early 2018, with casting to be announced shortly.

Film Victoria CEO **Jenni Tosi** said, "We're delighted to welcome the return of director Ben Lewin and his producing partner Judi Levine to their home state of Victoria to complete post production on this project. *Falling for Figaro* promises to be a highly entertaining romantic comedy and we look forward to this co-production striking a chord with audiences at home and abroad."

Australia's co-production treaty with the UK has been in force for over 25 years, during which time 44 film and television projects have been co-produced, including the upcoming feature [Mary Magdalene](#) as well as [The Railway Man](#) and [Oranges and Sunshine](#). More information on official UK/Australian co-productions is available [here](#).