

## \$7.4 million for nine projects across film, TV and online

Wednesday 14 March 2018: Screen Australia has announced a slate of production funding investments including directorial debuts from acclaimed actors Rachel Griffiths and Guy Pearce, as well as new TV series for SBS, Foxtel, Channel Seven and one for Network Ten led by *The Project* co-host [Peter Helliar](#). In total \$7.4 million in funding has been allocated through the feature film, television and online production programs.

"*Ride Like a Girl* is the second [Gender Matters: Brilliant Stories](#) project - and first feature - to progress from development through to production, following online series [Sheilas](#) which was confirmed last year," said **Sally Caplan**, Head of Production at Screen Australia. "We are incredibly excited to see it helmed by one of Australia's most iconic actors Rachel Griffiths who, along with Guy Pearce and his passion project *Poor Boy*, is making the move into directing features for the first time. It is also fantastic to see four brand new scripted television shows commissioned by SBS, Channel Seven, Network Ten and Foxtel."

The funded feature film projects are:

- The Film Company and Magdalene Media's *Ride Like A Girl*, produced by [Richard Keddie](#) and [Rachel Griffiths](#) who will also direct this biopic of Michelle Payne, the first female jockey to win the Melbourne Cup. Written by [Andrew Knight](#) and [Elise McCredie](#), with confirmed casting of Teresa Palmer and Sam Neill. This film has also been financed by Film Victoria, and will commence production next month.
- Wildheart Films' *Poor Boy* produced by [Al Clark](#) and [Andrena Finlay](#). Directed by and starring Guy Pearce with a script by [Matt Cameron](#), the paranormal mystery drama tells the story of a little boy who announces to his family on his seventh birthday that he is a stranger named Danny - a grown man who died seven years earlier. Film Victoria have also financed the film, which is slated to commence production in August. In addition to Pearce and Carice van Houten, attached cast includes Frances O'Connor, Richard Roxburgh, Callan Mulvey and Sarah Peirse.

Emerald Productions' thriller/drama [Undertow](#) - produced by [Lyn Norfor](#) and written and directed by [Miranda Nation](#) - also received completion funding.

The funded television projects are:

- Princess Pictures' and Pablo Pictures' eight-part comedy drama *How To Stay Married* for Network Ten, starring Logie award-winning actress Lisa McCune and comedian [Peter Helliar](#), who has also co-written the script. It tells the story of Greg (Helliar) and Em (McCune) whose 13-year marriage is put to the test by a new job, an unexpected house guest, a redundancy and an experimental sex move. Produced by Jess Leslie, executive produced by [Andrea Denholm](#) and [Emma Fitzsimons](#), and directed by [Natalie Bailey](#) from a script by Helliar and Nick Musgrove. This series has also been financed by Film Victoria.
- Lingo Pictures' mystery thriller *Lambs of God* for Foxtel, about three eccentric secluded nuns who live on a remote island - forgotten by time and the Church - until a priest unwittingly happens upon them. The two-part drama is produced by [Jason Stephens](#), [Sarah Lambert](#) and [Elisa Argenzio](#); executive produced by [Helen Bowden](#), [Mark Fennessy](#) and [Carl Fennessy](#); directed by [Jeffrey Walker](#), and written by [Sarah Lambert](#). The mini-series has also been financed by Create NSW and Screen Tasmania.
- Screentime's comedy *Orange is the New Brown* for Channel Seven - a six-part series that will reflect contemporary Australian life using one-off sketches, original and recurring characters and TV parodies. Produced by Jack Kain, executive produced by Johnny Lowry, directed by [Hayden Guppy](#) and written by Nazeem Hussain, [Joel Slack-Smith](#), Sophie Braham, Richard Thorp, [Penny Greenhalgh](#) and [Heidi Regan](#). This series has also been financed by Create NSW and is currently in production.



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MEDIA RELEASE

- Lingo Pictures' drama *The Ropes* for SBS, a four-part miniseries set in Sydney's Western suburbs that follows a young Iraqi-Australian woman chasing her dream to become an elite boxing trainer. Produced by [Helen Bowden](#) and [Courtney Wise](#), executive produced by [Jason Stephens](#), directed by [Shannon Murphy](#), and written by [Tamara Asmar](#), [Adam Todd](#) and [Ian Meadows](#) - with additional funding from Create NSW.

The funded online projects are:

- [Lynette Wallworth](#)'s AR/VR project *Awavena* created in collaboration with the Yawanawa, an Indigenous Amazonian people. The project had its international premiere at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival in the New Frontier program in January, and uses hybrid technology to allow the viewer to enter the spirit world as seen by the Yawanawa elder shaman Tata and his disciple Hushahu, their first female shaman. Written and directed by Wallworth who also produces alongside [Nicole Newnham](#), it is co-produced by Tashka Yawanawa and Laura Yawanawa, and executive produced by Sandy Herz, Marcie Jastrow, Gigi Pritzker and Nico Daswani. It has also received additional funding from Create NSW.
- A second season of Deadrock Media's fantasy action thriller *Skinford - Skinford Chapter Two*. Season one of the Blackpills-commissioned series [premiered on SBS on Demand](#) in Australia in late 2017. The second season focuses on a small town crook and an immortal woman who must cure the curse of her eternal life to end a violent turf war that threatens to destroy them both. Produced by [Christopher Seeto](#) and [Tom Pope](#), executive produced by [Enzo Tedeschi](#), [Antoine Disle](#), [Tess Meyer](#) and [George Kacevski](#), and written and directed by [Nik Kacevski](#) - with additional funding from Create NSW.

For more information about the feature projects, [please click here>](#)

For more information about the television projects, [please click here>](#)

For more information about the online projects, [please click here>](#)