



***Stateless* to start production featuring all-star cast**

Brand new drama *Stateless* has been commissioned for a powerful six-part limited series starring a multi award-winning cast including Yvonne Strahovski, Jai Courtney, Asher Keddie, Fayssal Bazzi, Dominic West and Cate Blanchett. Additional cast members include Rachel House, Kate Box, Clarence Ryan, Claude Jabbour, Rose Riley and Helana Sawires.

The ABC and Screen Australia have joined forces with Matchbox Pictures and Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton's Dirty Films, with production set to begin in South Australia in June, based at Adelaide Studios. *Stateless* is an urgent and compelling drama about four people caught up in an immigration system that profoundly affects their lives. Each character deals with the contradictions of protection and border control from a unique perspective, offering relevant and timely insight into issues that countries are grappling with around the world.

Stateless received major production funding from Screen Australia and the ABC and is financed with support from the South Australian Film Corporation. It will be distributed worldwide by NBCUniversal.

Co-created by Cate Blanchett, Tony Ayres and Elise McCredie, the series centres on four strangers in an immigration detention centre in the Australian desert. They are an airline hostess escaping a suburban cult, an Afghan refugee fleeing persecution, a young Australian father escaping a dead-end job and a bureaucrat caught-up in a national scandal. When their lives intersect they are pushed to the brink of sanity, yet unlikely and profound emotional connections are made amongst the group. Inspired by real events, the series intertwines gripping and devastating personal stories revealing a system struggling with the irreconcilable contradictions of border protection.

Tony Ayres, co-creator and executive producer says, "We have assembled the most extraordinary array of Australian talent to make this show, both in front of and behind the camera. In each case, people were drawn to *Stateless* because it asks one of the most vexing questions of our times - how do we as a nation maintain control of our sovereign borders whilst retaining our own humanity?"

Co-creator, executive producer and actor **Cate Blanchett** says of the story, "Whilst this story centres on Australia, the dilemmas that it explores through four absorbing characters will resonate globally: the desire for personal freedom, the need for social stability, an escalating lack of faith in the political process and the deeply unsettling impact this has on individual lives."

Sally Riley, Head of Scripted Production at the ABC says, "The ABC is proud to be collaborating with such a high calibre of homegrown talent to create this thought-provoking, ambitious and gripping series that is sure to connect with Australians and audiences around the world."

Sally Caplan, Head of Content at Screen Australia says, "Emma Freeman and Jocelyn Moorhouse are two directors at the top of their game, and combined with this immensely talented cast I look forward to seeing this remarkable story on screen."

Alastair McKinnon, Managing Director of Matchbox Pictures says, “*Stateless* is at once both intimate and epic in its scope and ambition, and this stellar cast is testament to the power of this story. Thrilling, courageous and intensely relevant, this is certain to be an unmissable drama series.”

Courtney Gibson, Chief Executive of the South Australian Film Corporation says, “We were so pleased to support the development of this landmark series, with its all-female writing and directing team including some of Australia’s leading key creatives. We look forward to full production and post at Adelaide Studios and locations in South Australia, with SA producer Paul Ranford working alongside the team at Dirty Films and Matchbox, together with Matchbox SA’s Kirsty Stark, who is a co-producer on this major series.”

Stateless is written by Elise McCredie and Belinda Chayko and will be directed by Emma Freeman and Jocelyn Moorhouse, produced by Sheila Jayadev and Paul Ranford for Matchbox Pictures with Cate Blanchett, Andrew Upton and Tony Ayres as Executive Producers. Elise McCredie is Showrunner and Executive Producer and Liz Watts will serve as Executive Producer. ABC Executive Producers are Sally Riley and Andrew Gregory. The series will be distributed worldwide by NBCUniversal International Distribution.

Emmy and Golden Globe nominated Yvonne Strahovski is represented by Paradigm, McKeon/Myones Entertainment and Sue Barnett and Associates, Jai Courtney by Morrissey Management, Silver Lining Entertainment and UTA, Asher Keddie by United Management and Independent Talent Group, Fayssal Bazzi by Shanahan, BAFTA winner and two-time Golden Globe winner Dominic West by WME, Tavistock Wood Management and Narrative PR and two-time Academy Award winner Cate Blanchett is represented by CAA, Wolf-Kasteler PR and RGM.

Rachel House is represented by Kathryn Rawlings Actors Agency, Kate Box by Shanahan, Clarence Ryan by RGM, Claude Jabbour by Marquee Management, Rose Riley by United Management and Helana Sawires by Smith&Jones Management.

Production Credit: *Stateless* is a Matchbox Pictures and Dirty Films production for the ABC. Major production investment from Screen Australia and the ABC. Financed with support from the South Australian Film Corporation. Matchbox Pictures is an NBCUniversal International Studios company.

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