

Screen Australia announces \$2 million for seven documentaries

Wednesday 9 May 2018: Screen Australia today announced production funding for seven projects through the Documentary Producer and Documentary Commissioned programs, totalling just under \$2 million in funding. The slate of projects includes new seasons of ABC's influential series [War on Waste](#) and SBS's critically acclaimed series [Go Back To Where You Came From](#). New formats have also been funded including an immersive Virtual Reality (VR) experience of Antarctica, and an online exploration of the behavioural psychology behind social media led by scientist and YouTuber Vanessa Hill.

"We're constantly on the lookout for thought provoking documentaries that tackle powerful subject matter, engaging with audiences on all platforms," said Liz Stevens, Senior Manager of Documentary at Screen Australia. "We're thrilled to see innovative projects such as Vanessa Hill's new series *Attention Wars* in the Producer program as our focus on online and interactive content builds. These new formats are an important complement the marquee documentary series commissioned by our broadcasting partners, which have proven to be tremendous vehicles for meaningful, national conversation."

In total \$462,000 was allocated through the Producer program, and \$1.5 million through the Commissioned program.

The three funded Documentary Commissioned projects are:

- A fourth season of International Emmy-award winning SBS series *Go Back to Where You Came From Live* from Cordell Jigsaw Productions. Reimagined as an ambitious live television event over three consecutive nights, it will dig deeper into the asylum seeker and refugee debate with a heightened sense of urgency. Using the very latest in technology, a dynamic snapshot of the global refugee crisis will be presented using stories from the frontline delivered in real time. The series is being produced by [Toni Malone](#) (*Pauline Hanson: Please Explain!*) and executive produced by [Michael Cordell](#) (*Bondi Rescue*) and [Rick McPhee](#) (*Go Back to Where You Came From Series 1, 2 & 3*), and has also secured funding from Create NSW.
- Fredbird Entertainment's two-part television event *The Royals Down Under* for the ABC, charting the political and emotional history of Australia's relationship with the British Monarchy at a time when the country's ongoing republican debate has been reignited by political leaders. Executive produced by [Craig Graham](#) (*Hatch, Match & Dispatch*) and written and directed by [Bernice Toni](#) (*DNA Nation*).
- A second season of the enormously successful and influential ABC series *War on Waste* from Lune Media, with three new episodes that will delve deeper into the issue of waste in Australia. The first series sparked widespread discussion and inspired behavioural changes from schools, communities, retailers and policy makers, and averaged 1.4 million viewers (metro + regional) for the first three episodes within 28 days of broadcast on the ABC*. Series two will be written by [David Galloway](#), directed by [Jodi Boylan](#) and [Sandra Welkerling](#), with [Leonie Lowe](#) (*Struggle Street*) joining as executive producer alongside Galloway and Boylan. It has also attracted funding from Create NSW.

The four funded Documentary Producer projects are:

- Serendipity Productions' *Attention Wars* presented by Vanessa Hill, a science communicator who has forged a significant online presence through her YouTube channel [Braincraft](#) and in 2017 released [Mutant Menu](#) funded through Screen Australia/Google Skip Ahead and PBS Digital Studios. This one-hour documentary intended for SVOD distribution will examine the claim that the big tech companies are making billions by enabling the largest, most standardised and most centralised form of attention control in human history. Produced by [Margie Bryant](#) (*Who Do You Think You Are*), directed by Kirk Marcolina, and co-written by Bryant and Marcolina.
- Ratner&Co's *Little Joe* from emerging producer/writer/director [David Ratner](#), who has teamed up with experienced executive producers [Janine Hosking](#) (*A Modern Mutiny*) and Paul Watters (*The Get Down*). The 12 x 8min online series is based on the remarkable gritty true stories of a Western Sydney suburbs Lebanese debt collector, and will mark Ratner's documentary series debut after producing a number of award-winning and festival-selected short films.
- White Spark Pictures' *The Antarctica Experience*, an online VR expedition that will give viewers unprecedented access to the most remote and coldest place on earth. Based on an original concept created by emerging talent [Briege Whitehead](#), who will be mentored by executive producer [Ray](#)

[Predetti](#), Whitehead will also produce and co-direct with renowned VR creator Phil Harper (*David Attenborough's Great Barrier Reef VR Dive*). Designed for museum then online release, the 25min VR project has secured support from the Australian Antarctic Division, the West Australian Museum and Screenwest.

- Completion funding for *The Coming Back Out Ball - The Movie*, a feature documentary exploring the heartbreaking and heart-warming stories of a group of elder LGBTQI+ people as they prepare to attend a ball celebrating their gender and sexual identity. Produced, written and directed by [Sue Thomson](#) alongside producer [Adam Farrington-Williams](#); co-producers [Roger Monk](#) and [Tristan Meecham](#); and executive producers [Michael McMahon](#), [Shaun Miller](#) and [Tony Nagle](#). This project has also secured Film Victoria, Melbourne International Film Festival, The Post Lounge and Documentary Australia Foundation funding, as well as philanthropic donations from Fade to Black and Ignite Change. Previously this documentary received time-critical development funding through the Documentary Producer program.

Find more information about this round of successful projects [here >](#)

* Source: OzTAM and RegionalTAM, 5-city-metro, combined markets, total people, average audience, 28 day consolidated. Metro viewings = 972,000. Metropolitan data is copyright to OzTAM and Regional data is copyright to RegionalTAM and may not be reproduced, published or communicated in whole or part without the prior consent of OzTAM or RegionalTAM.