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Filming underway on compelling new ABC drama **Wakefield**

ABC, Screen Australia and Screen NSW are thrilled to announce that production is underway on the intriguing eight-part drama series **Wakefield**. Made by Jungle Entertainment (*Mr InBetween*, *No Activity*, *Moody Christmas*) in partnership with BBC studios, *Wakefield* explores the fine line between sanity and madness, with humour and heart. Delving into the hidden world of the psychiatric hospital, this highly original series created by Kristen Dunphy, will be compelling television viewing.

British actor Rudi Dharmalingam (*Tin Star*, *The Split*), Mandy McElhinney (*Bad Mothers*, *Squinters*) and Geraldine Hakewill (*Wanted*, *Miss Fisher's Modern Murder Mysteries*) lead a terrific line-up of Australian talent including Dan Wyllie, Harriet Dyer, Ryan Corr, Felicity Ward, Harry Greenwood, Sam Simmons, Bessie Holland, Megan Smart, Pacharo Mzembe, Nadie Kammallaweera, Shapoor Batliwalla, Guy Simon, Miritana Hughes, Victoria Haralabidou, Wayne Blair, Heather Mitchell and Kim Gynnell.

Kristen Dunphy and Sam Meikle are the showrunners, writing the series with Joan Sauers and Cathy Strickland.

Directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse (*Stateless*, *Les Norton*, *The Dressmaker*) and Kim Mordaunt (*The Rocket*), *Wakefield* is a gripping psychological mystery set in the spectacular Blue Mountains. It unfolds with a potent blend of non-linear narrative, fantasy, music and dance that brings to life the fascinating characters - staff and patients - who populate Ward C.

At the centre of the show is Nik (Rudi Dharmalingam) - a gifted psych nurse, blessed with a powerful combination of common sense and intuition. Nik is easily the sanest person in what is a pretty crazy place. But when a song gets stuck in his head, a dark secret from his past begins to intrude into his present, forming an intriguing puzzle that comes together as the series builds to its heart wrenching conclusion.

Head of ABC of Scripted Sally Riley says, "Kristen Dunphy has created a complex, thrilling world in *Wakefield* that will grip audiences as much as it will challenge them. We're beyond excited to bring this multilayered story to the screen."

Screen Australia's Head of Content Sally Caplan says, "We are thrilled to support this experienced team, including producers Ally Henville and Shay Spencer, to create such an original drama that explores the complexities of mental illness with empathy and humour."



Jungle Entertainment Executive Producer Chloe Rickard says, “*Wakefield* is undeniably authentic, poetic and powerful. Despite one in five Australians living with mental illness in their lifetime, social stigma on the issue of mental health still prevails – this series gets right to the heart of this controversial issue, whilst being hugely entertaining.”

Wakefield will be filmed in Sydney, the Southern Highlands and the Blue Mountains.

Grainne Brunsdon, Head of Screen NSW adds, “Given the recent bushfire devastation that the Blue Mountains and parts of the Southern Highlands have experienced, we’re delighted that this production will help to bring welcome investment in the areas and help a number of local businesses during filming.”

Production Credit: Wakefield is a Jungle Entertainment production in partnership with BBC studios for the ABC. Major production investment from Screen Australia in association with the ABC. Financed in association with Screen NSW. Executive Producers Chloe Rickard, Jason Burrows and Kristen Dunphy. Co-Executive Producer Sam Meikle. Series Producers Shay Spencer and Ally Henville. ABC Executive Producers Que Minh Luu and Sally Riley. Writers Kristen Dunphy, Sam Meikle, Joan Sauers and Cathy Strickland. Directors Jocelyn Moorhouse and Kim Mordaunt.

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