

Talent USA: Australian creatives head stateside

Tuesday 13 June 2017: Eleven directors, six screenwriters and ten online creators are being funded by Screen Australia to travel to the USA in June for a series of career growth opportunities. The screenwriters' delegation is being co-sponsored by the Australian Writers Guild (AWG) and Scripted Ink.

The directors and screenwriters will participate in Screen Australia's Talent LA program taking part in a bespoke course of masterclasses, professional development activities and industry networking.

The online creators will perform and host workshops at the world's largest online video conference - **Vidcon**.

"Given the burgeoning international demand for distinctive and engaging screen content, it is more important than ever for Screen Australia to promote and profile both our best creatives as well as production companies to the international sector," said **Richard Harris**, Head of Business and Audience. "This Talent USA mission will showcase some of Australia's most exciting emerging creative talent across feature film, TV and online to the American industry, while at the same time offering them a unique opportunity to access some of the most plugged-in creative and commercial minds in the business."

TALENT LA (June 26-29)

Talent LA will be held at Charlie's and the Creative Collective, the Australians in Film space at Raleigh Studios in West Hollywood. Leading US screen industry practitioners including [Meg LeFauve](#), [Sheila Hanahan Taylor](#), [Joan Scheckel](#) and [Judith Weston](#) will host a series of professional development and creative masterclasses. The emerging Australia directors selected are:

- **Sarah Bishop** - known for comedy trio Skit Box, Sarah co-wrote/directed and starred in the sketch comedy series *Wham Bam Thank You Ma'am* and is currently in development on webseries *Plus Ones* for ABC iView and *Public Relations* for Revlover.
- **Corrie Chen** - writer/director of AACTA nominated short film *Reg Makes Contact*, director of ADG award-winning documentary *Suicide and Me*, a director on upcoming teen series *Mustangs FC* and currently co-writing/directing her first feature film *Strangers* and directing the SBS webseries *Homecoming Queens*.
- **Victoria Cocks** - writer/director of ADG award-winning webseries *Wasterlander Panda*, Victoria is currently directing her first feature film *In The Blood*.
- **Beck Cole** - director of AACTA award-winning series *Black Comedy*, as well as *The Warriors* and *Redfern Now Series 2*, Beck is also the writer of children's series *Little J and Big Cuz* and drama *Plains Empty*, writer/director of feature film *Here I Am* and documentaries *Wirriya; small boy*, *First Australians* and *Making Samson & Delilah*.
- **Sophie Hyde** - writer/director/producer of feature film *52 Tuesdays* which was awarded the Crystal Bear at Berlinale and best directing for world cinema at Sundance. Sophie produced *Sam Klemke's Time Machine* and *Shut Up Little Man!*, and is currently directing feature *Animals* and tv series *F**king Adelaide*.
- **Tim Marshall** - writer/director of award-winning short films *Gorilla* which won the Iris Prize, and *Followers* which screened at Sundance and SXSW. Tim is currently developing a feature version of *Followers* and a second feature *The Love Division*.
- **Jennifer Peedom** - BAFTA nominated writer/director/producer of documentary feature *Sherpa*, writer/director of *Life at 9*, *Life at 7* and *SOLO*, and producer of the Camera D'Or nominated *David Stratton: A Cinematic Life*. Jennifer's latest feature *Mountain* will premiere at the 2017 Sydney Film Festival.
- **Claudia Pickering** - writer/director/producer of feature film *Frisky* and short film *Potluck*, writer/producer of feature *Winning Formula* and short film *Quit Yer Lion!*, Claudia is also co-creator of a series of online videos as part of comedy trio Frothpocalypse.
- **Damien Power** - writer/director whose debut feature *Killing Ground* screened at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. Damien's short film credits include *Peekaboo*, *Bat Eyes* and *Boot* which have screened at film festivals around the world.

- **Luci Schroder** - writer/director/producer of short film *Slapper*, Luci was nominated for the Short Film Grand Jury Prize at Sundance and awarded Best Emerging Australian Director at Melbourne International Film Festival, Best Short Film at Sydney Film Festival and the ADG Award for Best Direction in a Short.
- **Nicholas Verso** - writer/director of award-winning debut feature *Boys in the Trees* which was selected for Venice, Toronto and Busan Film Festivals, Nicholas is also the director of shorts *Hugo*, *Apocalypse Bear*, *Flight*, AACTA award-winning *The Last Time I Saw Richard* as well as episodes of teen drama *Nowhere Boys* and *Grace Beside Me*.

The below six Australian screenwriters will attend Talent LA with the support of the AWG, Scripted Ink. and Screen Australia's Enterprise program:

- **Shelley Birse** - co-creator/writer of *Love Is a Four Letter Word*, Shelley has a long history in TV including *Satisfaction*, *Rush* and *Wildside*. Shelley is best known as the creator and producer of multi-award winning series *The Code*.
- **Kristen Dunphy** - Kristen has 25 years of experience writing television drama and has received three Australian Writer's Guild Awards - for *East West 101*, *The Straits* and *White Collar Blue*. In 2015, she co-created and co-wrote *The Principal* and is currently creating her own eight-part drama series.
- **Matt Ford** - an experienced television writer, producer, show-runner & story editor. His credits include the US series *Farscape*.
- **Chris Lee** - having held several senior roles on TV series *Police Rescue*, *Big Sky*, *Love My Way* and *The Secret Life of Us*, Lee has most recently written ratings hit mini-series *Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo* and *Howzat! Kerry Packer's War*.
- **Michael Miller** - co-creator of the upcoming ABC series *Pulse*, Michael also wrote critical and audience favourites *Cleverman* (series one) and *Peter Allen - Not The Boy Next Door*.
- **Sue Smith** - with over 30 years in the industry, Sue's work includes feature *Peaches*, co-writer for *Saving Mr Banks* and television series including *Mabo*, *Temptation* and *Brides of Christ*.

VIDCON (June 21-24)

VidCon is the largest online video conference in the world and showcases the most innovative and influential online video creators through a series of live performances, workshops and networking events.

The Australian delegation who will travel to this year's Vidcon, with the support of Screen Australia, include comedy trio **Aunty Donna** (**Mark Bonanno**, **Broden Kelly** and **Zachary Ruane**) who will give a live performance and also host a panel on performing sketch comedy; **Julie Kalceff** and **Rosie Lourde**, the team behind award-winning multi-platform drama *Starting From Now* who will host a writing workshop; comedy duo **Superwog** (**Theo** and **Nathan Saidden**) and comedy trio **Skit Box** (**Sarah Bishop** will represent the group).

PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL SHORTFEST (June 20-26)

[ShortFest](#) is the largest short film festival and market in North America and includes an Australian showcase of seven films in partnership with G'Day USA, Screen Australia and Ausfilm. The films in the showcase are:

- [A Short Film About Kissing](#) directed by Jordy Pollock
- [Beast](#) directed by Christopher Sferrazza
- [Smashed](#) directed by Sean Lahiff
- [The Record - World's Largest Family](#) directed by Cate Stewart
- [Third World Man](#) directed by Brad Sayers
- [Trespass](#) directed by Mirrah Foulkes
- [Split Me](#) directed by Andrew Shanks

All Australian creatives attending Shortfest have also been invited to some of the Talent LA sessions.