



Australian Government



MEDIA RELEASE

Talent USA 2018 recipients heading to New York

Friday 9 February 2018: Thirteen emerging creatives will be funded to travel to New York in March to attend the inaugural Australian International Screen Forum where they will partake in high level networking and professional development opportunities.

The emerging filmmaker contingent includes four screenwriters, one director and eight writer/directors working across various platforms, including Alice Englert (*The Boyfriend Game*) and Dylan River (*Nulla Nulla*).

“Australia’s population size dictates that our stories must always travel to be commercially viable, and it’s essential that we support our talent to be able to work both here and overseas,” said **Graeme Mason**, CEO at Screen Australia. “Screen Australia has been assisting our stories to get overseas for years in terms of festival and market presence, but now with opportunities like Talent USA we are able to help emerging writers and directors form creative and business relationships abroad.”

“The Australian International Screen Forum at the Film Society of Lincoln Center is not only an incredible opportunity for Talent USA attendees, but also for our experienced creators, with the program including screenings of Simon Baker’s *Breath*, Jennifer Peedom’s *Mountain* and the restored print of Gillian Armstrong’s *Starstruck*.” For more information about the program visit www.australianscreenforum.org.

The successful Talent USA 2018 applicants are:

- **Kacie Anning** (NSW) directed all episodes of the comedy series *The Other Guy* for Stan and was a director on the sketch series *Wham Bam Thank-You Ma’am* for ABC and Seeso. Kacie wrote, directed and starred in online comedy series *Fragments of Friday*, and won the Australian Directors Guild (ADG) Award for Best Direction in an Original Online Project for series two.
- **Dave Carter and Nikos Andronicos** (NSW) are an animation team based in Sydney who have been collaborating since high school. Currently they’re making the short-form series *Psychotown* for FX and developing a satirical series with Ed Helms’ Pacific Electric Picture Co. Their work has been commissioned by Mike Judge, MTV and Verizon.
- **Natalie Erika James** (VIC) wrote/ directed and produced *Creswick*, which has screened at 45+ festivals including New York, Fantastic Fest and Fantasia, and was awarded a 2017 **AWGIE Award** for Best Short Form screenplay. Natalie will make her feature directorial debut on *Relic*, which was originally developed through Gender Matters Brilliant Stories, and will be produced by Carver Films and co-written by Christian White.
- **Alice Englert** (NSW) enjoyed wide success with her first short film *The Boyfriend Game*. It premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, and screened at Berlin, Melbourne and Flickerfest, winning Best Screenplay at the St Kilda Film Festival. Her second short film *Family Happiness* premiered at Sydney Film Festival, and screened at the BFI London and Melbourne International Film Festivals. Alice is also known for her acting work, including her recent appearance in *Top of the Lake: China Girl*.
- **Julie Kalceff** (NSW) is the creator of hit online drama *Starting From Now* and recently wrote and directed *First Day* as part of the ABC/Screen Australia *Girls series*, which focused on a transgender girl starting high school. She is currently in development on a feature, *Out of Bounds*, and drama series *Torn* through Gender Matters Brilliant Stories.
- **Stephen McCallum’s** (WA) debut feature *1%*, is a Shakespearean tale of loyalty, ambition and betrayal set within the primal world of outlaw motorcycle gangs. It premiered at the 2017 Toronto International Film Festival to wide acclaim and will be released theatrically in all major territories in 2018, including by A24 in North America.
- **Alexei Mizin** (VIC) and **Ryan van Dijk’s** (QLD) first feature screenplay *Vanished* won the Monte Miller Award at the AWGIE Awards and is slated for production. The writing team has been supported by Film Victoria, Screen Queensland and Scripted Ink through a range of initiatives, and has a vast slate of projects including a new drama series in the works with AMC Studios in the US.
- **Catherine S. McMullen** (VIC) is a screenwriter for film, TV and VR. Her script *The Other Lamb* (2017 Black List, Blood List) was optioned by Rumble Films (*Drive, Whiplash*). She recently worked in a

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writers' room for Warner Brothers Digital, and her pilot *Living Metal* won the International Emmy Ustinov Award.

- **Billie Pleffer** (VIC) is an award-winning writer and director. With two awards at the Berlin International Film Festival, an AWGIE win and [ADG](#) and [AACTA](#) nominations under her belt, Billie has just completed writing and directing the series [Deadlock](#) for the ABC.
- **Dylan River** (NT) is an accomplished filmmaker with shorts [Nulla Nulla](#), [Black Chook](#) and [Coat of Arms](#) screening at festivals around the world. Furthermore, Dylan was the Second Unit Director / DOP for the critically acclaimed Warwick Thornton western [Sweet Country](#) and his documentary *Buckskin* won the Foxtel Documentary award at Sydney Film Festival.
- **Miley Tunnecliffe** (WA) is the gold place winner of [2017 PAGE Award for best TV Pilot](#) for *Disorder* and is also the recipient of [Screenwest's Bill Warnock Writer's Award](#). Miley's writing has placed in the Nicholl Fellowships and she has produced several award winning short films, including [Love in a Disabled Toilet](#). Miley has written on yet-to-be-announced Matchbox Pictures production for the ABC and is the writer, director, producer and star of the upcoming Screenwest-funded comedy series *Calling*.

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL SCREEN FORUM

The inaugural Australian International Screen Forum New York City is hosted by the Film Society of Lincoln Center. The Forum will include screenings, industry-focused events, seminars, roundtables, keynote conversations, master classes and educational activities to showcase Australian film, television and digital content in the U.S.

Event partners include Screen Australia, Ausfilm, the Chris and Francesca Beale Foundation, IFP, The Australian Consulate-General, Qantas and Arthur. J. Gallagher & Co.

The four-day event will take place from March 19 - 22, 2018 at Film Society of Lincoln Center. For more information visit <https://www.australianscreenforum.org/>.

ABOUT TALENT USA

Talent USA was originally offered as a once-off [opportunity in 2017](#) but proved so successful that it was repeated. Reflecting on her time in last year's program, writer/director Sarah Bishop said, "Talent USA was an incredible experience, both creatively and professionally. I heard from some amazing storytelling minds including A-List writers and directors, and had access to some of the top studio and network executives, with whom I am continuing to talk to about Australian and international projects."

"It was an absolute game-changer in terms of my professional development and I made some great connections with my fellow alumni in the process."

In addition to having access to bespoke networking and workshops, each Talent USA 2018 attendee is supplied with AUD \$5000 to cover expenses (creative duos share the expense funding allocation).