

RELEASED: Monday 14th August, 2017

Cameras roll on telemovie **Riot**.

Come out Fighting

ABC and Screen Australia are pleased to announce that filming is underway in Sydney on the telemovie event **Riot**.

Riot shines a spotlight on Australia's 1970s Gay Rights Movement and the passionate individuals who were unwavering in their fight for decriminalisation, recognition and equality.

Lance Gowland is a devoted activist, steadfast and dedicated to actively fighting for his beliefs while juggling family, work and relationships. With the system against them and ever present adversity, Gowland and his fellow activists decide to come out fighting in their celebration of diversity.

An important, integral and inspiring part of LGBTQ history in Australia and the world, *Riot* explores the origins of the activism that led to Australia's most famous street parade. Directed by Jeffrey Walker, the cast includes **Damon Herriman** as Lance Gowland, **Xavier Samuel** as Jim Walker, **Kate Box** as Margaret McMann and **Jessica de Gouw** as Robyn Plaister.

ABC Head of Scripted Production **Sally Riley** says: "It could never be more relevant than now to tell this story of identity, courage and love as a marginalised community finds its voice and rises up to fight oppression and injustice. With a cast as extraordinary as this, *Riot* promises to be a stirring, landmark television event in time for the 40th anniversary of the birth of Mardi Gras."

On behalf of Werner Film Productions, writer **Greg Waters** expressed that: "At a time when the struggle for LGBTQ rights is far from over, it was a privilege to explore the lives of pioneering activists who sacrificed so much to drag Australia towards equality."

"*Riot* will examine a hugely significant milestone in Australian history that is both culturally and socially important," said **Sally Caplan**, Head of Production at Screen Australia. "Next year will mark the 10th anniversary of Lance Gowland's passing and in the safe hands of Joanna Werner and Louise Smith - who have an exceptional track record for creating high quality local drama - now is the perfect time to tell the story of this iconic and highly effective activist."

Create NSW CEO **Michael Brealey** said: "*Riot's* true tale of the rich LGBTQ history in Sydney will undoubtedly strike a chord across the country. As we strive to increase the awareness, voice and participation of under-represented groups across the Australian screen and industry, we're excited to be a part of this production and look forward to its timely premiere next year."

Filming will take place in and around Sydney over the next four weeks. *Riot* will screen on ABC in 2018.



Media Release

Production Credits: Werner Film Productions in association with ABC Television, Screen Australia and Screen NSW. Produced by Joanna Werner and Louise Smith. Executive Producer Joanna Werner. Directed by Jeffrey Walker. Story by Carolyn Anderson. ABC Executive Producers Brett Sleigh and Alastair McKinnon. ABC Head of Scripted Production Sally Riley.

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