

Australian titles *The Moogai* and *Every Little Thing* selected for Sundance Film Festival 2024

8 December 2023: Two Australian features will screen at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival including Jon Bell's psychological horror [The Moogai](#), which will have its world premiere and be the first Australian First Nations title in the Midnight section of the festival. *Every Little Thing* written and directed by Australian Sally Aitken will make its world premiere in the US Documentary Feature Competition at the festival which runs from 18 - 28 January 2024.

Screen Australia's Head of First Nations **Angela Bates** said of *The Moogai*, "The First Nations Department is immensely proud to have supported this film. Its selection for Sundance Film Festival as the first Australian First Nations title in the Midnight Section heralds a significant moment for First Nations storytelling, continuing the momentum in showcasing our talents on a global stage. Congratulations to writer/director Jon Bell, co-producers Mitchell Stanley from No Coincidence Media, Causeway Films' Kristina Ceyton and Samantha Jennings, the cast for their incredible performances including Shari Sebbens, Meyne Wyatt and rising star Jahdeana Mary, and the entire team for bringing this authentic and powerful narrative to life. It's a tremendous achievement for everyone involved."

First Nations writer/director Jon Bell's debut feature *The Moogai* is co-produced by Causeway Films' Kristina Ceyton, Samantha Jennings ([The Babadook](#) and [Talk to Me](#)) and No Coincidence Media's Mitchell Stanley ([We Are Still Here](#), [Larapinta](#)). Based on the award-winning short film written and directed by Jon Bell, the feature film stars Shari Sebbens, Meyne Wyatt, Tessa Rose, Bella Heathcote, Jahdeana Mary and Clarence Ryan. *The Moogai* received development and production funding through Screen Australia's First Nations Department.

Jon Bell said, "What a truly great honour it is for *The Moogai* to premiere at Sundance Film Festival. I still can't really accept that it's true. Sundance has had such a long history with First Nations peoples that getting to put this film alongside all of the others is something that just feels like it's not real. Nothing is made in a vacuum and I have such a great team to share this with. I'm over the moon."

Kristina Ceyton, Samantha Jennings and Mitchell Stanley said, "We are so honoured and thrilled that Jon Bell's feature debut has been selected for Sundance Midnight. For us, this was always the dream launch for the film, and we're so grateful to all the wonderful cast and crew who worked so hard and to our many incredible investors, including Screen Australia's First Nations Department, Screen NSW, Spectrum Films, Kojo Studios and Maslow Umbrella Ahi, our international partners Bankside Films and Head Gear Films, as well as our EPs Michelle Pearce, Anahat Films' Anjali Patil, and Salmira Productions' Salman Al-Rashid and Sam Frohman. We can't wait to share (and scare) audiences in Park City in January!"

Head of Screen NSW **Kyas Hepworth** said, "Screen NSW is absolutely thrilled to be supporting writer/director Jon Bell, the inaugural Screen NSW First Nations Fellowship recipient, in bringing his debut feature *The Moogai* to the world-stage at the Sundance Film Festival. Supported by the Made in NSW Fund, Regional Filming Fund and PDV rebate, and produced by one of NSW's preeminent feature film production companies in Causeway Films, along with No-Coincidence Media, *The Moogai* is set to take the world by storm, bringing compelling First Nations storytelling to the forefront. Congratulations to all of the extraordinary NSW creatives involved."

Also making its world premiere is feature documentary *Every Little Thing* written and directed by Sally Aitken ([Hot Potato: The Story of the Wiggles](#), [Playing with Sharks](#)) and produced by WildBear Entertainment's Bettina Dalton ([Rachel's Farm](#), [Playing with Sharks](#)). The film has been selected to screen in the US Documentary Feature Competition at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival, and is the second time in recent years the duo has had a documentary invited into official competition at the prestigious US film festival.

Sally Aitken said, "It's not every day you wake up to this kind of exhilarating news. Incredibly proud and thankful to the team who were behind the vision for this film from day one. Sundance is one of the world's



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premier film festivals where the bar is so high, and craft is paramount. To be invited for a second time is thrilling. Can't wait to share this special story with the world."

Bettina Dalton said, "It is such an honour to have one of our documentaries accepted into Sundance for a second time. We screened *Playing with Sharks* in 2021 and are so thrilled to be back in 2024, this time in the US Documentary Competition. *Every Little Thing* is the only official Australian film to screen in the US Documentary Competition this year. It is wonderful to see Australians take part in this section of the festival, and more broadly, in Sundance itself. The selection is affirmation that our Australian films, no matter where they are set, can touch audiences universally on the world stage."

Australian Director/Screenwriter Jennifer Kent's *The Babadook* will also screen in the festival's 40th Edition Celebration program. *The Babadook* premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival in the Midnight section, where it was acquired by IFC Midnight. The film's skilful exploration of motherhood and grief, coupled with its innovative approach to the psychological horror genre, earned *The Babadook* widespread critical acclaim and cemented a loyal following.

Sundance has a history of launching Australian works into the US market including recent success from 2023 with [Shayda](#), [Run Rabbit Run](#), [Blueback](#) and the thrilling [Talk to Me](#), which has grossed close to \$138 million at the worldwide box office.

Australian productions that have received international recognition off the back of Sundance Film Festival include [You Won't Be Alone](#) in 2022, [Relic](#) in 2020, [52 Tuesdays](#) in 2014 and [Animal Kingdom](#) in 2010.

A history of Australian titles at Sundance is available [here](#).

AUSTRALIAN PROJECTS AT SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2024:

The Moogai

Screening Section: Midnight

Causeway Films and No Coincidence Media

Writer/Director: Jon Bell

Producers: Kristina Ceyton, Samantha Jennings, Mitchell Stanley

Australian Distributor: Maslow Umbrella Ahi Entertainment Pty Ltd.

International Sales: Bankside Films

Synopsis: Sarah and Fergus, a hopeful young Aboriginal couple, give birth to their second baby. But what should be a joyous time of their lives becomes sinister when Sarah starts seeing a malevolent spirit she is convinced is trying to take her baby.

Production credit: Major production investment from Screen Australia's First Nations Department in association with the Screen NSW, and financed with support from Spectrum Films, Kojo Studios, Anahat Films, Salmira Productions and Head Gear Films.

Media contact: [Kristina Ceyton](#) and [Mitchell Stanley](#)

Every Little Thing

Screening Section: US Documentary Competition

WildBear Entertainment

Writer/Director: Sally Aitken

Produced by: Bettina Dalton p.g.a.

International Sales: Dogwoof

Synopsis: Amid the glamour of Hollywood, Los Angeles, a woman finds herself on a transformative journey as she nurtures wounded hummingbirds, unravelling a visually captivating and magical tale of love, fragility, healing, and the delicate beauty in tiny acts of greatness.

Production credit: Co-produced with investment from WildBear Entertainment, Dogwoof and HHMI Tangled Bank Studios.

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