

## Screen Australia announces 2019 Developing the Developer participants

**Wednesday 13 November 2019:** Screen Australia has today announced the 11 creatives who have been selected to take part in the Developing the Developer workshop for 2019, which will be held in Sydney from 21-24 November. In its third year, the four-day workshop aims to diversify the pool of professionals developing Australian stories for the screen.

Head of Development at Screen Australia **Nerida Moore** said, "It's important that we identify, nurture, and collaborate with the new generation of fiction developers to ensure there are a greater diversity of voices and ideas reflected in the content we see on screen. Louise Gough and Screen Australia Industry Development Executive Bali Padda have put together a fantastic workshop for the participants this year."

"Developing the Developer has proven to be an effective identifier of people with a broad range of story skills and has launched a number of careers in the screen industry. I look forward to following the careers of these 11 Australians as they bring their unique perspectives and skill sets into the industry."

The workshop will provide an opportunity for practitioners to enhance their existing screen story development skills, and build a development toolkit across platforms and genres.

It will be co-run by script developer Louise Gough and Screen Australia's Industry Development Executive Bali Padda, who was a participant in the first Developing the Developer workshop in 2017 before joining Screen Australia in 2018.

Presenters at the workshop include Julie Kalceff ([Starting from Now](#), [First Day](#)), Kodie Bedford ([Mystery Road](#), [Robbie Hood](#)), and Penelope Chai ([Other People's Problems](#)).

Of the creatives who took part in Developing the Developer in 2018, seven went on to secure work placements: Sarah Bassiuni at Freemantle, Amy Stewart at Matchbox Pictures, Hiroki Kobayashi at Berg Shanley Productions, Dan Prichard at Lingo Pictures, Li-Kim Chuah at ABC, Vidya Rajan at Tony Ayres Productions, Jean Tong at Goalpost Pictures, and Leticia Cáceres at Seven Studios.

### 2019 DEVELOPING THE DEVELOPER PARTICIPANTS:

**Amal Awad:** A writer, director and performer, Awad was a recipient of Screen Australia's [Gender Matters Brilliant Stories](#) funding for [Sex in the West](#) (dir. Fadia Abboud). She has participated in numerous writers' rooms, including [Muhammed Jones](#) (2017) and [Aleph](#) (2019). In 2017, she was selected for SBS's Diversity Talent Escalator, a national initiative focused on increasing the representation of Australia's diverse communities within the television production sector. She wrote and directed the short film [The Doorknock Appeal](#), which screened at [Colourfest](#) in 2013, and is the author of five books. Awad has consulted on film and TV projects, including SBS series [Muslims Like Us](#) (2018). She has multiple projects in early development.

**Jack Dowdell:** An aspiring writer and disability advocate, Dowdell participated in the [Createability Internship program](#) earlier this year and worked at Goalpost Pictures. He is currently working on a short horror film script and a slate of future projects. Dowdell is extremely passionate about disability representation and authentic casting in film and TV and has spoken on a number of panels on this subject. He currently runs a movie review website called That Other Movie Blog.

**Taryne Laffar:** A producer who descends from the Bardi and Jabbar Jabbar peoples of the Dampier Peninsula in Western Australia, Laffar was selected for the 2019 Screen Producers Australia 'Ones to Watch' program. Last year she received [Screenwest's Spark funding](#) a professional and project development initiative and worked as a producer on ABC iview comedy series [KGB](#). Her previous work includes documentaries [Who Paintin' dis Wandjina?](#) (2007) and [Rainforest Warriorz](#) (2013). She also co-wrote and co-produced [On Country Kitchen](#) (2016) and produced five short documentaries for NITV including [Aden Eades](#), [Rev. Sealin Garlett](#), [Healing Songs](#), directing on two - [Rubeun Yorkshire](#) and [Beccy Garlett](#). Laffar recently joined the [Screenwest Industry Advisory Group Committee](#) and is the head of the Women in Film and Television (WIFT WA) diversity taskforce.

**Gina Lambropoulos:** A Melbourne-based screenwriter Lambropoulos' feature script *That Time of the Year* (aka *The Princess and the Bear*) won the [2016 Australian Writers' Guild's Open Channel New Writer's Script Competition](#). It's currently in development with Matthewswood Productions and has received [development support from Screen Australia](#) and Film Victoria. In 2015 Lambropoulos wrote and produced the short film *The Escape Hatch* which screened in over 50 festivals worldwide including [Frameline41](#) and the Melbourne Queer Film Festival. She is also a community broadcaster on JOY 94.9, Australia's only LGBTQI+ radio station.

**Melissa Lee Speyer:** A graduate of NIDA (Playwriting) in 2011, Lee Speyer also studied at AFTRS (Screenwriting) after winning the inaugural Foxtel Diversity Scholarship in 2017. Her television screenwriting credits include ABC drama series [The Heights](#), series two of [Random and Whacky](#), and the first season of *forReal!*. Lee Speyer has also written a number of short films - her co-written short [Jadai The Broome Brawler](#) won the 2018 Sydney Film Festival Lexus Australia Fellowship, and premiered at the 2019 Sydney Film Festival. Lee Speyer's theatre credits include *TickTickBoom* (2018, The Actors Pulse) which won the 2015 Silver Gull Play Award, *A Christmas Carol* (2017, KXT Bakehouse) and *Trade* (2017, Adelaide Fringe and Old 505 Theatre). She is a founding member of The Collective, an Asian-Australian performing arts collective. Her theatre practice is divided between traditional text-based, writer-driven plays and experimental, collaboratively-devised work incorporating movement, technology and whatever happens to be handy.

**Ratidzo Mambo:** A Zimbabwean-born award-winning actor, creative producer and distribution consultant, Mambo has extensive experience as a sales agent and consultant for distributors. Mambo consulted for Vision Films, Switch International, Looking Glass International and Big Media TV where she managed film and TV content rights working with broadcasters across free-to-air, subscription TV, digital, mobile and inflight platforms. Specialising in the African and North American territories, she has attended content markets including MipTV, AFM, NATPE and DISCOP Africa. Balancing both career paths, after winning Best Actor at the [Hollywood Short and Sweet Festival](#), she was selected as an Australian in Film Heath Ledger Scholarship finalist in 2017. Mambo recently toured around Australia with the award-winning play *The Prize Fighter*, winning the 2019 Best Ensemble Matilda Award, and was nominated for the 2019 Helpmann and Green Room Awards. She is featured in the upcoming Stan drama series [The Gloaming](#) and feature film [Escape from Pretoria](#) with Daniel Radcliffe.

**Moreblessing Maturure:** Maturure is a Zimbabwean/Australian inter-disciplinary artist, [TEDx Speaker](#) and the Creative Director of [FOLK Magazine](#). Her work across literature, stage and screen as writer and performer has included engagements with Playwriting Australia, Australian Theatre for Young People, and Sydney Theatre Company (STC). She has also worked with STC, Darlinghurst and Outhouse Theatres as dramaturg, outreach producer and cultural advisor. The award-nominated actor is currently developing a [Screen Australia funded](#) online series [Afro Sistahs](#), alongside a new commissioned work for [Next Wave Festival](#) 2020. She is a proud member of Actors Equity and MEAA's Equity Diversity Committee.

**Oliver Ross:** A writer, designer and producer who has worked across 70 projects in film and theatre, Ross has served on boards and committees with the MEAA, Union House Theatre, Transgender Victoria, Ruby Theatre Company, University of Melbourne and the Equity Diversity Committee. Focusing on dramaturgy and creative development, he has worked as a rough cut consultant with Arenamedia on upcoming feature [The Dry](#), and runs the reviewing website [Shakespeare Oz](#). Ross is currently working as producer for Melbourne's [tilda](#) Trans and Gender Diverse Film Festival. He also works as a project coordinator for Transgender Victoria as part of the Peer Support Program team run in collaboration with the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

**Danielle Stamoulos:** An actor and writer of Greek heritage who was one of the writers for the world's first hijabi comedy web series [Halal Gurls](#) for ABC iview. Stamoulos was the script co-ordinator on [The Letdown](#) and was selected as an emerging producer from Western Sydney by Co-Curious and Emerald Productions for their [Behind Closed Doors](#) program. Her acting credits include [Love Child](#) and the 2019 NYC Web Fest selected murder comedy series [Sydney Sleuthers](#). She received a 'Best Ensemble Cast' 2016 Sydney Theatre Award nomination for Patricia Cornelius' *Slut*, which she also co-produced with her theatre company [Edgeware Forum](#).

**Courtney Stewart:** An actor, director and dramaturg Stewart has worked on numerous productions and developments of new Australian work such as *Single Asian Female* by Michelle Law, *Australian Graffiti* by



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Disapol Savetsila and *White Pearl* by Anchuli Felicia King. Stewart recently directed *Confessions of a Custard Melon Pan* by Arisa Yura, which was nominated for two Sydney Fringe Awards. Courtney is a proud member of MEAA and is the Chair of the Equity Diversity Committee as well as serving as a Board Member for Contemporary Asian Australian Performance.

**Adam Thompson:** An emerging short fiction writer from lutruwita (Tasmania), Thompson has a keen interest in writing for screen. Thompson has received various awards during his short writing career including the [Tamar Valley Writers Festival](#) Indigenous short story competition (2016), and the [Emerging Tasmanian Aboriginal Writers Award](#) (2017). In 2018, Thompson was selected for a [Copyright Agency Fellowship](#) for Indigenous writers at Varuna Writers house. Also in 2018, he was as one of 10 recipients of the [Next Chapter](#) initiative through the Wheeler Centre in Victoria. During NAIDOC week 2019, Thompson was presented with the award for Tasmanian Aboriginal Artist of the Year. He has received several arts grants in Tasmania, including a grant to co-write a short form comedy web-series through Screen Tasmania, which is currently under development. Thompson works part-time at the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre.

### WHAT IS A DEVELOPER?

For the purpose of this workshop, a 'developer' refers to a practitioner who already works in or aspires to work in story development and is passionate about facilitating other people's creative visions on any platform. This includes roles such as script reader, script assessor, script consultant, script editor, script coordinator, script producer, development executive and dramaturg.

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