



Australian Government



MEDIA RELEASE

## 10 documentaries to receive \$2.3 million of production funding from Screen Australia

**Wednesday 14 July 2021:** Screen Australia has announced \$2.3 million of documentary production funding for eight projects through the Producer Program and two projects through the Commissioned Program.

The projects include feature documentaries about Australian music icons John Farnham, Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter, and legendary racehorse WINX; as well as *Embrace Kids*, a follow up to hit 2016 documentary [Embrace](#).

**Alex West**, Head of Documentary at Screen Australia said, “We’re proud to announce this impressive mix of projects which rounds out our documentary funding for 2020/21. It’s great to support so many feature documentaries covering a range of exciting topics, including shining a light on a number of Australian icons, and I’m confident they will captivate audiences.”

### The Commissioned projects are:

- **Nurses:** A 10-part series from ITV Studios Australia for the Seven Network about the nurses in NSW - save a life, you're a hero. Save 100 lives, you're a nurse. With privileged access to three of Sydney's busiest hospitals, this documentary will shine a light on the diverse workforce and the life-or-death decisions they make every day. Director/producer Lisa Storer (*Medicine or Myth?*) is joined by producer Lexi Landsman ([Australia's Deadliest](#)) and executive producers Ben Ulm ([Who Gets to Stay in Australia?](#)) and Steve Bibb ([Great Southern Land](#)).
- **Outback Ringer series 2:** A seven-part series from Ronde Media for the ABC about the families that risk their lives catching feral bulls and buffalo in the Australian Outback. Returning for series 2 are series producer Liam Taylor, series director (field) Tom Lawrence, producer Jess Brown ([The Secret Life of Four Year Olds](#)) and executive producer Ben Davies. They are joined by producer Cian McCue. This project has received production investment from the ABC.

### The Producer Program projects are:

- **Embrace Kids:** A feature documentary from filmmaker and activist Taryn Brumfitt, following on from her breakout documentary [Embrace](#) which explored the global issue of negative body image. Written, directed and produced by Taryn, this film will focus on why 70% of Australian school kids consider body image to be their number one concern, and what can be done about it. The creative team includes producers Anna Vincent ([Chasing Wonders](#)) and Bonnie McBride ([Demonic](#)) and the executive producers are comedian Celeste Barber, actor Teresa Palmer and Natasha Stott Despoja AO, Australia's former Ambassador for Women and Girls. This project is financed with support from the South Australian Film Corporation and is being distributed in ANZ by Transmission Films.
- **Gloriavale:** A feature documentary about the infamous Gloriavale Christian Community and the institutional failures that have allowed one of the world's biggest and longest running cults to continue. Told through the personal journey of a man fighting to save his family, the film follows a group of unlikely heroes as they interrogate accusations of abuse and modern day slavery within this isolated community. *Gloriavale* is written, directed and produced by Noel Smyth and Fergus Grady who previously collaborated on [Camino Skies](#). The executive producers are Kim Ingles (Impact Producer on [The Australian Dream](#)) and Richard Fletcher (*This Could Go Anywhere*).
- **Ithaka:** A feature documentary that follows Julian Assange's father John Shipton as he teams up with Assange's fiancé and legal advisor, Stella Moris to fight to free his son. Directed by Ben Lawrence whose 2018 documentary [Ghosthunter](#) won Best Documentary at Sydney Film Festival, this film is produced by Assange's half-brother Gabriel Shipton ([Emu Runner](#)) along with Moris's brother Adrian Devant. This project is financed with support from Film Victoria and will premiere at this year's Melbourne International Film Festival.

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- **John Farnham - Finding the Voice:** A feature documentary about John Farnham’s life and career, his journey to find an artistic voice and become one of Australia’s most beloved performers. This project is the feature debut from director Poppy Stockell ([Miracle Hospital](#)), who teams up with producer Olivia Hoopmann ([Destination Flavour China](#)) and executive producer Martin Fabinyi and writer/executive producer Paul Clarke whose credits together include [Blood + Thunder- The Story of Alberts](#), and [Whitlam: The Power and the Passion](#). This project is supported by the ABC and Sony Pictures.
- **Knowing the Score:** A feature documentary from Serendipity Productions centred on trailblazer Simone Young, the first woman to be Chief Conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in its 90-year history. Getting up close and personal with Young, this documentary also explores gender parity in the classical music industry and the impact of COVID-19 on the arts more broadly. The creative team features writer/director Janine Hosking ([The Eulogy](#)), director Simon Target ([The Talented Mr Stone](#)), producer Margaret Bryant ([Who Do You Think You Are?](#)) and executive producer Jonathan Page ([In My Blood It Runs](#)). This project is supported by Outlook Distribution, Bonsai Films, the ABC, Arte, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and philanthropy via Documentary Australia Foundation.
- **The Giants:** A feature documentary that paints a cinematic portrait of environmentalist Bob Brown intertwined with the Forest. This film draws on emerging science about trees and Brown’s life of activism to inspire a new chapter in our relationship with trees. The creative team features General Strike director/producer Laurence Billiet and executive producer Helen Panckhurst of Matchbox Pictures, who previously collaborated on [FREEMAN](#). This project is developed with assistance from Film Victoria and financed with support from Madman Entertainment and philanthropy via Documentary Australia Foundation.
- **Wash My Soul In The River’s Flow:** A feature documentary about the lives and love story of musicians Ruby Hunter and Archie Roach, as told by their own songs in a cinematic reinvention of their 2004 Helpmann Award-winning concert *Kura Tungar: Songs from the River* - a collaboration with Paul Grabowsky and the Australian Art Orchestra. This film will explore Hunter’s connection to country and the joy of coming home. Roach is a producer and the film will be written and directed by Philippa Bateman ([Jindabyne](#)). The creative team also includes producer Kate Hodges ([Frackman](#)) and executive producers Emma Donovan, who has toured with Roach and Hunter, and Ian Darling ([The Final Quarter](#)). This project is financed with support from the Shark Island Institute, philanthropic donations and Screen NSW.
- **WINX:** A feature documentary that tells the story of the bay filly from Lot 329 who went on to be crowned the best race horse in the world. Writer, director and producer Janine Hosking ([The Eulogy](#)) teams up with writer Andrew Rule (author of *WINX: The Authorised Biography, Underbelly*) and producer Katrina McGowan (associate producer on [The Eulogy](#)). This project will be distributed by Transmission.

The full list of documentary funding blocklines is available [here](#).

The projects receiving documentary development funding can be found [here](#).

#### CHANGES TO ONLINE DOCUMENTARY FUNDING

Since 1 July 2021, documentary projects that have a primary release on a social media platform are able to apply for funding via Screen Australia’s Online Production fund. Applicants with documentary projects designed for release on other platforms, including on SVOD services, should continue to apply through the Documentary funding programs. More information is available [here](#).

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