

CELEBRATING AUSTRALIA'S INDIGENOUS FILMMAKERS

# DREAMING IN MOTION



AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission
ACMI	Australian Centre for the Moving Image
AFC	Australian Film Commission
AFI	Australian Film Institute
AFTRS	Australian Film Television and Radio School
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AWGIE	Australian Writers Guild Award
BRACS	Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme
CAAMA	Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
FFC	Film Finance Corporation
FTI	Film and Television Institute. Western Australia
ICAM	Indigenous Cultural Affairs Magazine
ICTV	Indigenous Community Television
IF	Independent Filmmaker magazine
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Observance Committee
NIDF	National Indigenous Documentary Fund
NSW FTO	New South Wales Film and Television Office
PFTC	Pacific Film and Television Commission
SAFC	South Australian Film Corporation
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
SBSi	SBS Independent
TAIMA	Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association
WOW	Women on Women Film Festival

<b>Preface</b>	v
MAUREEN BARRON	
<b>Editor's Introduction</b>	vii
KEITH GALLASCH	
<b>Revolutions: The AFC Indigenous Branch</b>	1
SALLY RILEY	
<b>Indigenous Screen Culture: A Personal Experience</b>	7
LESTER BOSTOCK	
<b>Profile: Lester Bostock</b>	12
<b>Australian Indigenous Film: A Community of Makers</b>	13
KEITH GALLASCH	
<b>The Filmmakers</b>	21
<b>AFC Indigenous Branch Drama Initiatives</b>	68
<b>Distribution enquiries</b>	70
<b>Photographer credits</b>	71
<b>Index</b>	72



# PREFACE

MAUREEN BARRON  
CHAIR, AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT THE Australian Film Commission (AFC) presents *Dreaming in Motion*, celebrating both the achievements of Australian Indigenous filmmakers and the role played by the AFC's Indigenous Branch in mentoring and supporting these filmmakers.

2005 represented a watershed for Australian Indigenous film. The year began with Beck Cole's *Plains Empty*, Warwick Thornton's *Green Bush* and Tom Murray and Allan Collins' *Dhakiyarr vs the King* screening in competition at the Sundance Film Festival. This was quickly followed by *Green Bush* and Wayne Blair's *The Djarn Djarns* winning the Panorama Short Film Award and Kinderfest Crystal Bear respectively at the Berlin International Film Festival. The acceptance of Ivan Sen's *Yellow Fella* into Un Certain Regard at the Cannes Film Festival completed a string of international achievements signalling the arrival of Australian Indigenous film on the world stage. With the exception of *Dhakiyarr vs the King*, the AFC's Indigenous Branch played a crucial role in bringing all these projects to fruition.

But the development of Indigenous screen practice has not been an overnight success. 2005 represented the culmination of decades of groundwork by countless individuals and a range of organisations. As well as the AFC, various state government film agencies, Indigenous media associations (including CAAMA and Warlpiri Media), Film Australia, the ABC and SBSi, and training institutions like AFTRS have all played a significant role in the development of the Indigenous audiovisual sector.

The AFC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program was launched in July 1993, with the name changed to the Indigenous Branch in October of that year. The Branch quickly set about building upon a skills base already established by the

Indigenous media associations in the 1980s. The other key aspects of the Branch's initial brief were promoting the quality and diversity of Indigenous films, and developing a wider audience for films written, directed or produced by Indigenous Australians.

By the turn of the decade, the work of the Indigenous Branch was clearly evident with AFC-supported films like Rachel Perkins' *Radiance* (1998) and *One Night the Moon* (2001) and Ivan Sen's *Beneath Clouds* (2001) achieving mainstream theatrical release. Scores of Indigenous shorts and documentaries also won awards and screened on television and at festivals around the world.

Over the years, the Branch has carefully developed groups of Indigenous filmmakers through a sequence of drama series co-funded with state agencies and broadcasters. The first of these was *From Sand to Celluloid* in 1994, and the programs continue today with initiatives such as Bit of Black Business and Long Black. In 2001, the Branch also took over management of the National Indigenous Documentary Fund, now up to its eighth series.

The period since the turn of the decade has been one of unprecedented quality and diversity in Indigenous film, with a concurrent dramatic rise in the local and international profile of Indigenous work. The last few years have also seen the AFC's Indigenous Branch leading the way in solidifying the commitment of the organisation as a whole to Indigenous audiovisual culture, embodied in the Commission's formal adoption of an Indigenous Strategic Framework in 2005. The Framework's 10 key principles acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of Australia, and explicitly recognise the right of Indigenous Australians to control the maintenance and development of their

culture through audiovisual content.

There are initiatives across the AFC to achieve the aims of this framework and enhance the groundbreaking work of the Indigenous Branch. The AFC's new *Black Screen* touring film festival will see Indigenous films taken to communities across the country, while online, since 2005, the AFC has funded and hosts *The Black Book* Indigenous media and arts portal, created by Blackfella Films. Within the AFC itself, there is an increased Indigenous presence on the staff, and the National Film and Sound Archive has appointed an Indigenous Curator for the first time, to oversee the further development of the Archive's Indigenous collection.

The Indigenous Strategic Framework will continue to guide the AFC into its second decade of broad support for what has become one of the most critically lauded and successful sectors of the Australian film industry. While this book is both a record and celebration of the AFC's role in developing Indigenous film, this support would amount to little without the voices, visions and stories of Indigenous filmmakers. Their work and creativity has strikingly enriched not only Australia's screen culture, but the culture of the nation as a whole. This book is a tribute to their achievements.



# EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

KEITH GALLASCH

*DREAMING IN MOTION* CELEBRATES THE work of the Indigenous Branch of the Australian Film Commission (AFC), the achievements of the filmmakers it has supported and the nurturing network of film training institutions, funding agencies and Indigenous community media organisations that have made Indigenous filmmaking such a distinctive success.

In the first essay, Sally Riley, the Manager of the Indigenous Branch, writes about how the branch works, its history and successes. Lester Bostock, a prime mover in Indigenous filmmaking in the 1980s and 90s, reflects on the beginnings of Indigenous filmmaking and the training courses he was instrumental in initiating.

The final essay sketches the context from which the Indigenous Branch of the AFC evolved and the networks of which it is currently a key part. It details the festivals, associations, awards, training schools and schemes that collectively underpin Indigenous filmmaking. It also pays credit to the actors and other skilled film personnel who have collaborated with Indigenous directors in realising their dreams.

These essays are followed by profiles of 26 directors, producers and cinematographers, selected by the AFC for their achievements. Each entry is introduced by a brief statement from the filmmaker about what inspires and motivates their work. Included in the entries are detailed accounts of key films of the last decade from Indigenous directors comprising a précis of each film, credits, awards and significant screenings. The book concludes with two lists: one of all the films featured in the AFC Indigenous Branch's Drama Initiative Series, the other of the contact details for the distributors of the films where available.

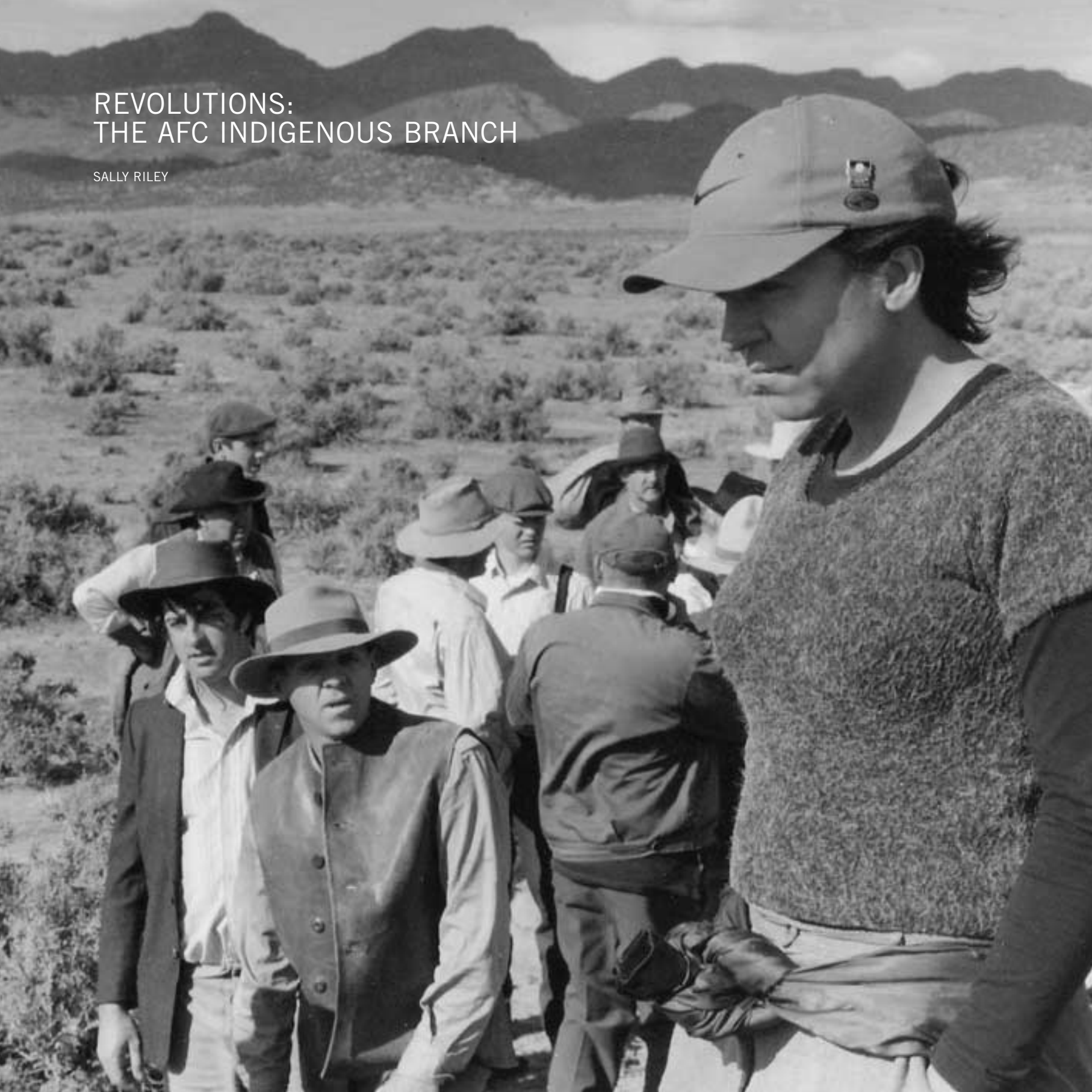
Every attempt has been made to accurately document in brief the careers of the filmmakers, the credits for their films and photographer attributions for the images reproduced here.

Rachel Perkins on location [One Night the Moon](#) · 2001



# REVOLUTIONS: THE AFC INDIGENOUS BRANCH

SALLY RILEY





Murray Lui, Wayne Blair on location [The Djarn Djarns](#) · 2005

IN MAY 2006 I WAS STANDING DUMBFOUNDED in the foyer of the Sydney Opera House, watching a huge crowd snaking out the door. It was the queue to see the documentary session at the Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival and there were twice as many people as seats available. Similar crowds arrived for almost every session on the weekend. The atmosphere during the screenings was electric and the interest shown during the filmmaker Q&As passionate.

The screenings at Message Sticks have always been free, but a few years ago the audiences just weren't there in the way they are today. This is testament to the interest of a mainstream audience in Indigenous film being produced both here in Australia and worldwide.

Why is it that Indigenous film has been so well received in Australia and on the world stage? What is it that makes the work distinctive, rich and sets it apart?

### A SUSTAINED VISION

The support of government agencies, both federal (AFC, FFC, Film Australia) and state (Film Victoria, NSW FTO, ScreenWest, PFTC and SAFC), alongside AFTRS and the national broadcasters SBS and ABC, have provided a sustained funding, training and screening platform that is unprecedented anywhere else in the world, for any filmmakers.

The AFC Indigenous Branch has, from its inception in 1993, provided stepping stone programs that involve practical professional development coupled with production funding.

The Indigenous Branch's first drama initiative, commencing in 1994, was both clever and revolutionary. The model of carefully mentored and monitored development, including a practical

workshop, was created by the early pioneers and supporters of the branch, led by inaugural director Walter Saunders. It is a model we still use today to great effect, the results speaking for themselves through six drama series.

The premiere screening of the first series, *From Sand to Celluloid*, in 1996 at the Chauvel Cinema in Sydney, was a revelation. It felt like being part of a history-making event. And every premiere since has replicated that atmosphere with varied programs of skilled and distinctive filmmaking.

*From Sand to Celluloid* included Richard Frankland's *No Way to Forget*, which won the AFI Award for Best Short Fiction and was selected for screening at the Cannes Film Festival. Not a bad start!

The drama initiative model has also been used to develop films supported by the National Indigenous Documentary Fund (NIDF). Originally funded by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), the annual documentary series commenced in 1997 and has been administered by the AFC's Indigenous Branch since 2001.

The Message Sticks Film Festival in 2006 premiered the latest NIDF documentaries, all of them compelling films. They included Kelrick Martin's *Island Fethlers*, Steven McGregor's *My Brother Vinnie and Footy—The La Perouse Way*, directed by Michael Longbottom. Three busloads of people from La Perouse in suburban Sydney joined the audience to see their community on the big screen at the Sydney Opera House. It was an example of how our programs empower Indigenous people around Australia, a microcosm of how Indigenous filmmakers feed the wider Indigenous community and non-indigenous communities alike.

I've had the privilege of presenting curated programs of Australian Indigenous film in Rotterdam, Berlin, New York and gathering a gift of films presented to the French Government. Every time, there is amazement—I'm asked, "Where do these films come from?" The answer is to be found in the talent, originality and the unique culture from which the work emerges.

### UNIQUE VOICES

To develop a great drama or documentary through these initiatives, you need talented filmmakers with original and compelling ideas.

The filmmakers we work with have varying backgrounds and experience. Some have trained formally through filmmaking institutions, some are artists, musicians, writers and performers who want to expand their artistic avenues. Others come to us with no background in film or the arts at all.

These filmmakers have original and interesting stories to tell, with a fresh vision that offers different perspectives from those experienced by most Australians, and for that matter, most people worldwide. The filmmakers' intimacy with their subject matter generates a sense of immediacy for audiences.

Over the last 12 years Australia's Indigenous filmmakers have consistently exposed to the world stories dealing with issues of culture, religion, family, love, politics and social welfare specifically rooted in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. At the same time as the films articulate where we are at in a contemporary world they also demonstrate where we have come from. Like all good films, through their uniqueness they speak universally.

Indigenous filmmakers as a group have an uncanny knack for representing their stories with a truthfulness on screen that resonates with many different audiences. And as the years have gone by, the technical skill and proficiency of the filmmakers have increased remarkably, which raises the bar higher and higher to inspire those following in their footsteps.

With their long oral tradition, varied histories and experience, it has been argued, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are natural storytellers. Somehow, as a group, these filmmakers know how to tease out great stories that surprise in their execution.

A history of being ignored and marginalised means there is a lot of grist for the mill. But how do you explain the brilliance of Erica Glynn's *My Bed Your Bed*, Beck Cole's *Flat* or Ivan Sen's *Tears*? These are films with distinctive directorial voices, displaying a confidence of vision and economy of storytelling that is rare.

Talking about his latest documentary Ivan Sen said, "I never meant these films to be political. These issues come up because of who [the subjects] are and where they are from. I don't make this stuff up for the fun of it. It is a living, breathing part of people's lives, not issues to be just kicked around." <sup>[1]</sup>

Understanding each other in a human way, and also an instinctive way, perhaps means that the common core of these films is about the human condition rather than simply exploring 'issues'. This gives the films their strong emotional resonance.

In an interview, filmmaker Catriona McKenzie said, "The more detailed you are in your storytelling, including emotional detail, the more



Danielle Maclean on location [Queen of Hearts](#) · 2003



Beck Cole on location [Plains Empty](#) · 2004



Rachel Perkins with Charles Perkins on location

[Freedom Ride](#) · 1993

universal the story is. It doesn't actually matter who the story's about if it's real; it's based in reality, it's got emotional truth, if the characters are three-dimensional and fleshed out. We're all human and it's just about relating on an emotional level to another human being.” <sup>[2]</sup>

After 12 years of consistently high quality in both drama and documentary, this body of work cannot be dismissed as fad or novelty. The interesting stories just keep coming. The diversity and originality of voice displayed over the years tells me we are here to stay as a distinctive force in the Australian film industry.

Lately talent scouts have begun to shine a spotlight on Australia's Indigenous filmmakers. Australian film journalist Sandy George wrote in *Screen International*, “Some of the most exciting new Australian talents are writers and directors from Indigenous communities, whose unique life experiences are rarely seen portrayed on the big screen from the inside out.” <sup>[3]</sup>

The selection of Ivan Sen's documentary *Yellow Fella* for the Un Certain Regard category in the 2005 Cannes Film Festival was extraordinary—a short documentary in a predominantly feature film event. In the same year, after accruing major critical awards, Warwick Thornton's short drama, *Green Bush*, won the IF Award for Best Short Film by popular vote. Following on from many awards received on critical merit, this was perhaps the sweetest victory.

#### TRACEY MOFFATT

I would like to make special mention of filmmaker Tracey Moffatt. Before the Indigenous Branch existed, Tracey made visually stunning short films embraced equally by the visual art and film worlds:

*Nice Coloured Girls* (1987) and *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy* (1989). Her feature film, *Bedevil*, coincided with the beginnings of the Branch in 1993. Today Tracey is an accomplished, internationally recognised artist who has made her mark in Australian filmmaking without the assistance to which Indigenous filmmakers today have access. She is an amazing talent who has been an inspiration for us all.

#### MICHAEL RILEY

Another inspiration to his fellow Indigenous filmmakers is the late Michael Riley, an acclaimed photographer and the maker of significant films on Aboriginal life (on trackers, tent boxers and visual artists), including his internationally screened art film, *Empire* (1998). *Sights Unseen*, a major retrospective of Michael's work, has been curated by Brenda L. Croft for the National Gallery of Australia and will tour into 2008 bringing his insights and achievements to the attention of many more Australians.

#### THE BIGGER PICTURE

We've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. I was asked recently when Indigenous filmmakers would become mainstream. ‘Mainstream’ implied feature films. Of course, there have been several features made over the years: Moffatt's *Bedevil*, Rachel Perkins' *Radiance* (1997) and Ivan Sen's *Beneath Clouds* (2002).

To develop a sustained series of features is a long-term process involving substantial script development, finance and production. In 2005 we launched the Long Black feature initiative, structured along the same principles as the short drama initiative. There are nine scripts of various

Warwick Thornton on location [Green Bush](#) · 2005



genres and budget levels in development and I'm confident we will see the films rolling out in the next couple of years. Warwick Thornton, Beck Cole, Wayne Blair and Romaine Moreton (poet and film writer, the subject of Erica Glynn's *A Walk with Words* [2000]) have been funded for feature film script development and were joined in the associated Writers Lab by Rachel Perkins, Darlene Johnson and Richard Frankland.

#### WITHOUT WHOM...

The enormous contribution of actors, cinematographers and technical crew in the development of Australian Indigenous film must be acknowledged, so too the commitment of a small group of dedicated Indigenous producers. Keen writer-directors abound, but a larger pool of talented creative producers would help guarantee the longevity of our fledgling industry. We need to concentrate on developing more of them.

I would also like to acknowledge the support received from the wider film community for the Branch since its inception. A large pool of non-Indigenous filmmakers has been instrumental in setting up the branch, involved in countless initiatives, in assessing on panels and mentoring at workshops. In addition, many local facilities and services have been constant supporters.

Our most recent workshop was for *Bit of Black Business*, a drama initiative for five-minute films by emerging directors and writers working alongside experienced film professionals like director Warwick Thornton and cinematographer Murray Lui. The thirteen films, a collaboration between the AFC, SBSi, NSW FTO and ScreenWest, will screen in prime time on SBS TV. It was fabulous to see such talents as Erica Glynn, Wayne Blair and Warwick

mentoring new filmmakers in the way they themselves had once been supported. With Warwick and others, I was one of the filmmakers in the very first Drama Initiative series in 1994.

We have a lot to look forward to from the exciting filmmakers profiled in this book—collectively the talent bank is enormous.

As the saying goes, a revolution comes more than once.

Sally Riley is the Manager of the Indigenous Branch of the Australian Film Commission

#### Notes

1 Emily Dunn "Sen and the art of dreaming", *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 2006; [www.smh.com.au/news/film/sen-and-the-art-of-dreaming/2006/05/11/1146940678789.html](http://www.smh.com.au/news/film/sen-and-the-art-of-dreaming/2006/05/11/1146940678789.html)

2 *George Negus Tonight*, "Screen Dreams", ABC TV, 6.30pm, June 9, 2003; [www.abc.net.au/dimensions/dimensions\\_in\\_time/Transcripts/s876004.html](http://www.abc.net.au/dimensions/dimensions_in_time/Transcripts/s876004.html)

3 Sandy George, 'A unique vision of Australia', *Screen International*, No. 1509, July 29–August 12, 2005



INDIGENOUS  
SCREEN CULTURE:  
A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

LESTER BOSTOCK



Martha Ansara (camera), Essie Coffey (car), on location  
[My Survival as an Aboriginal](#) · 1979

*The following is an edited version of a paper delivered by Lester Bostock at the 2003 Australian International Documentary Conference held in Byron Bay in northern New South Wales. In the same year Bostock was awarded a Centenary Medal for his services to Aboriginal media and his extensive community work.*

I WOULD LIKE TO FIRST PAY MY RESPECT to my elders, the traditional landowners, the Awaba clan of the Bundjalung nation whose lands we are now on. Being a Bundjalung man myself and born just a few miles from here at Box Ridge Mission, Coraki this is the first time I've been back in my tribal land for a long time.

### IMAGES & PROTOCOLS

In looking back over my life my first recollection of an Aboriginal program on television was watching Bill Onus, an Aboriginal person from Victoria, with his ABC TV *Alcheringa* series showing Aboriginal Dreamtime stories and legends. This I believe was the first Aboriginal program ever shown on Australian television. I think it was in early 1960, just a few years after television came to Australia. Since that time very little on Aboriginal issues was shown until the 1980s. A lot of this came about because Indigenous people were demanding to be a part of this process.

Remember that Indigenous Australians have been the subject of film since filmmaking was first introduced to Australia in the 1890s. The first film images were of Murray Islander dancers in 1898. Incidentally these images were used to support the claim in the Mabo land rights court case. In 1911 there were images of Victorian Aborigines from the Lake Tyers region. We used these images in the film *Lousy Little Sixpence* (directors Alec Morgan, Gerry

Bostock, 1982). Aboriginal and Torres Strait people have often been the subject matter of film and have had no control over how they have been portrayed. And an act was passed in 1927 banning Aborigines from attending picture theatres.

There are many examples of mainstream and commercial television stations and production companies entering Aboriginal communities without permission, with no regard for the cultural values of the inhabitants or adhering to local protocols and codes of conduct. They often created divisions within those communities that lingered on long after the production crews left.

I recall having disagreements with filmmakers about shots of Aboriginal women's breasts or thighs that had nothing to do with the telling of a story. Cameras would pan to a stack of empty wine bottles or rusting cars, killing the strong political points Aboriginal men were making in interviews.

There was the case in about 1980 when a commercial station current affairs journalist went to an Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory telling them he was doing a story on land rights and mining. That community opened their hearts to him, but when the story went to air it was about alcoholism. The people were so upset they barred all media from their community. This particular incident prompted me to write *The Greater Perspective* (Protocol and Guidelines for the Production of Film and Television on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, SBS Special Broadcasting Service, 1990, revised 1997).

In the past Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander communities often had to rely on mainstream media to highlight issues important to them. Later, Aboriginal producers and directors had to rely on non-Aboriginal camera crews who approached such images from their own cultural perspective, a

Previous page:

[Lousy Little Sixpence](#) · 1982



[My Survival as an Aboriginal](#) · 1979



*Lousy Little Sixpence* · 1982

situation that could create conflict. This had been the case until the 1960s when Indigenous people began to involve themselves in documentary filmmaking. This came about because a number of state and federal government legislative acts controlling Aborigines were changed or abolished. Previously, under the various state Aboriginal protection and welfare acts, Indigenous Australians were restricted from moving from one place to another without the authority of the police or government officials. I remember as a child being told to hide in the bush whenever any strange white men in suits came to the reserve. Some of these memories came back to me years later when I was working on *Lousy Little Sixpence*.

### BEGINNINGS

Then in 1972, Alessandro and Fabio Cavadini made the documentary *Ningla A-Na* (Hungry for our land; directors Alessandro Cavadini, Carolyn Strachan) in collaboration with people from Redfern, one of the very few times that filmmakers asked Aboriginal people to be involved. I first met the brothers in 1971 when they arrived from Italy to document the street demonstrations and the radical student movement in Australia against the war in Vietnam. However, in Sydney they met Aboriginal leaders from Redfern and people from the Tent Embassy. I was then the administrator of the Black Theatre where some meetings were held organising the Black Moratorium. So Alessandro and Fabio decided instead to document what was happening from the Aboriginal side of the movement. For the first time Aboriginal people were key advisers, making decisions and collaborating with white filmmakers.

In the 1980s, *Lousy Little Sixpence* and *My Survival as an Aboriginal* (director Essie Coffey, 1979) were some of the documentaries that began

to appear from an Aboriginal perspective and strong Aboriginal collaboration. Martha Ansara, who I had known for many years, was the director of photography and co-producer on *My Survival as an Aboriginal*. The film shows Essie passing on her bush craft to a younger generation.

Alec Morgan, Martha Ansara, my brother Gerry as co-producer and director, and myself as associate producer, all collaborated on the making of *Lousy Little Sixpence* about the removal by the New South Wales Government, from 1901 onwards, of children from their families. They were hired out to white employers as servants for little or no pay. My involvement began in about 1981 when Alec, who was developing the script, came to Redfern and met with a group of us Aboriginal people there. Gerry and I were appointed by the group to work on the project because we were the only ones there with any production experience. Our involvement smoothed the way for Alec to go into the Aboriginal community and make *Sixpence* the success it was. It broke new ground and told Australia's hidden history for the first time. We started showing it to schools and the reaction from school kids was that they became very angry with their parents for not telling them what had happened, for not telling the truth. I remember telling a couple of kids that their parents hadn't known either. That's the power of controlling information. Not long after that Gerry went to work with John Pilger on *The Secret Country* (directors Pilger, Alan Lowery, 1984).

Let me now take you back to the first documentary conference I attended, way back in 1987 outside Adelaide. I remember at that conference there were only about six Indigenous people who were involved in filmmaking. Along with myself and my brother Gerry and Lorraine Mafi-Williams, all from New South Wales, there were

three other Indigenous people from South Australia. When we discussed Indigenous filmmaking it was as a small workshop on the lawn and not an official part of the conference. We have come a long way since then especially when we look at the 2003 conference agenda and the number of Indigenous people winning AFI Awards and international prizes.

### COMMUNITY, LANGUAGE, NETWORKS

Many Indigenous video makers received their early training on the job and have gone on to become film and video makers in their own right, some working today as independent producers with their own companies. Video is still the first level of access for many emerging filmmakers. Now many of our people are using accessible digital technology.

Aboriginal involvement in filmmaking found a foothold in the development of Indigenous community media, especially with radio and video in the early 1980s with the establishment of CAAMA (Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association) in 1979, TAIMA (Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association) in 1981 and other community production groups such as Murriimage in Brisbane and the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA) which operates Goolarri Media Enterprises.

An important development in the 1980s was the establishment of Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities (BRACS) program. Now titled Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS), BRACS came out of a recommendation from *Out of the Silent Lands* (1984), a Federal Government Task Force report that looked into the state of Aboriginal communication and broadcasting in remote communities. BRACS was originally established to deliver a better telephone service for remote communities, but Aboriginal people saw it as a way to deliver radio and television and

maintain Indigenous language. RIBS is a basic satellite delivery service linked to a small transmitter sufficient to cover the average remote Indigenous community. The scheme allows remote Indigenous communities to receive ABC and commercial television and radio and to produce and broadcast locally produced programs appropriate to needs and in language. The RIBS network has its own licence, serves 153 Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities throughout Australia and is controlled by the local communities.

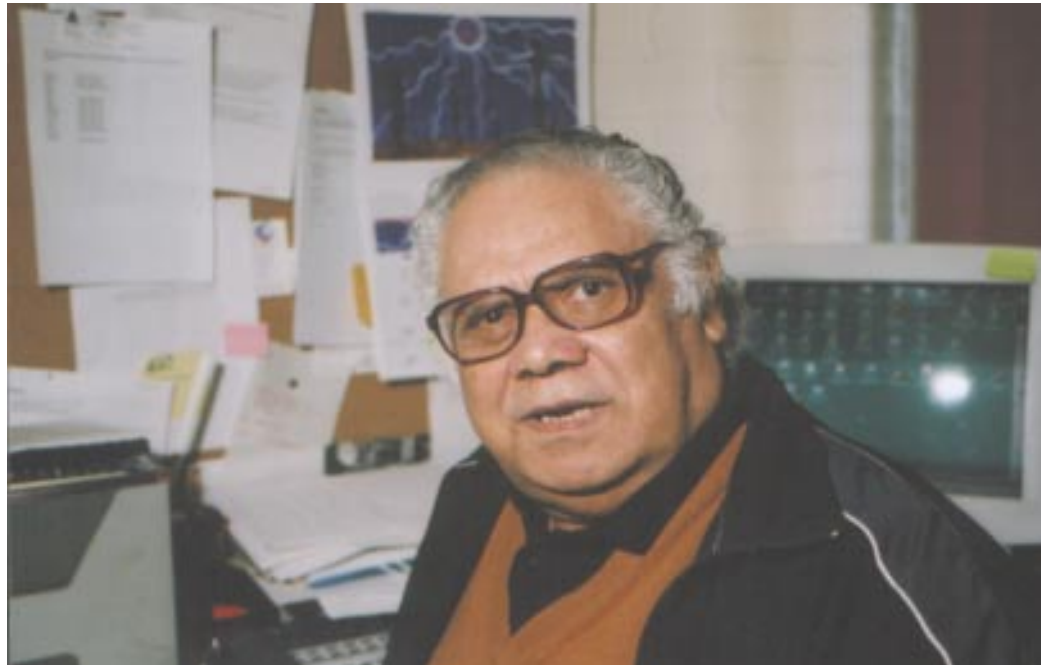
### A LONG JOURNEY

We have come a long way, from not being recognised to being given secondary roles with all of the racist and discriminatory attitudes, to now being accepted as part of the Australian landscape. I would like to pay respect to those early people who helped to make those changes. Just to name a few that come to mind who are no longer with us, who I was very proud to have been associated with, are Bill Onus, Hillis Marius, Lorraine Mafi-Williams, Bob Maza, Bryan Syron, Essie Coffey and the one who I regard as our first Aboriginal film star, Robert Tudawali.

## LESTER BOSTOCK

IN 1979 LESTER BOSTOCK ESTABLISHED the first Aboriginal radio program on SBS radio and then in 1987 was the associate executive producer for the SBS TV magazine program, *First in Line*. In 1982 he was the associate producer of the award-winning documentary *Lousy Little Sixpence*. In 1991 he wrote *The Greater Perspective*, protocol guidelines for film and video making when entering Indigenous communities. From 1994 to 1995 he developed an Indigenous television production training program at AFTRS for Indigenous people wanting to enter the film industry. Bostock subsequently developed and managed competency-based accreditation training in video production at Metro Screen which, under

his chairmanship, saw the development of the Indigenous video production mentoring program, renamed the Lester Bostock Scheme in 2003. Supported by NSW FTO, each year four emerging Indigenous filmmakers are offered equipment, facilities hire, stock, post-facilities and a budget. In 2004–05 Bostock was a member of the TAFE steering committee developing the certificate level Indigenous media and communication course. Recognised as one of the founding fathers of Aboriginal media, Lester Bostock works with the Inner West Aboriginal Community Company (IWACC) which provides a range of services to Aboriginal people in the inner suburbs of Sydney.



# AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS FILM: A COMMUNITY OF MAKERS

KEITH GALLASCH





On location [Five Seasons](#) · 2004

THE SUCCESS OF THE AFC'S Indigenous Branch in nurturing Indigenous film is the result of an inspired blend of vision and pragmatism. The branch's focused and carefully structured developmental approach involves a discerning eye for talent and its careful encouragement, building on foundations established in the 1980s. In that decade there was a substantial cultural shift, reflecting broader social changes, as Indigenous peoples became the makers rather than the subjects of film, sought training in film and television and, in cities and remote areas, played key roles in the emergence of community media organisations. In the 1990s the newly formed AFC Indigenous Branch, directed by Indigenous people, gave opportunities to filmmakers emerging from those organisations, training at AFTRS and working with ABC TV, SBS TV and Film Australia. In collaboration with key co-producers and partners, like SBSi (the independent production wing of SBS) and state government film agencies, the branch workshopped, funded and promoted filmmakers through a series of Indigenous Drama Initiatives. The films that emerged have been seen around Australia in cinemas, on television and in film festivals and have won numerous awards at home and internationally.

The success of the strategy is evident not just in the awards, but more significantly in the creation of a body of memorable Indigenous film from a small but highly productive and effective community of filmmakers. The Indigenous Branch became a key part of a rich, nurturing culture for filmmakers by offering new dimensions for their development, nationally and internationally.

The support for Indigenous filmmakers extends to national television broadcasts of Indigenous films, popular Indigenous magazine programs on ABC TV

and SBS TV, film festivals, touring film programs and a range of awards, prizes and scholarships and training programs in cities and remote areas.

### TAKING HOLD OF THE CAMERA

The beginnings of Australian Indigenous film are to be found in part in ethnographic filmmaking. From the 1890s to the 1980s Aboriginal peoples were more often than not the unwilling subjects of such filming, as Lester Bostock reminds us in his essay, but they also sometimes determined what should be filmed:

Aware of the power of film, Aboriginal people from remote areas requested that the [AIATSIS] film unit record ceremonial events of great importance. This brought status and legitimacy to their own personal involvement and to the religious significance of the ceremonies themselves. Filming became a ritualised activity, with filmmakers being taken to country and people's connection explained to camera.<sup>1</sup>

Although the 1980s witnessed the diminution of ethnographic filming, it offered some of the earliest training in film and video. For example Wayne Barker trained at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) from 1980. In the same period white filmmakers began to address Aboriginal people as embodying a living culture, one with various histories and immediate political concerns.

More significant was the desire of Aboriginal people to make their own films, including, among others, Gerry Bostock, Francis Peters-Little, Essie Coffey and Wayne Barker. The films included *My Survival as an Aboriginal* (1979), directed by Essie Coffey with Martha Ansara, and *Lousy Little*

Previous page:

Ivan Sen on location [Yellow Fella](#) · 2005

*Sixpence* (1982) by Alec Morgan and Gerry Bostock. The film's co-producer, Lester Bostock, saw the need for formal industry training and was instrumental in the establishment of courses at AFTRS and then MetroScreen, a Sydney-based screen development organisation where Indigenous filmmakers could train in certificated courses.

### CAAMA & COMMUNITY MEDIA

In remote areas of Australia, the 1980s witnessed the emergence of highly influential, incredibly productive and innovative community media organisations across Australia. Later in the 80s, through a federal government program utilising AUSSAT, the first Australian owned satellite, these organisations were able to link with each other and extend their reach considerably, as well as receive city-based television broadcasting. The program was Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities (BRACS). Now titled Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS), it links 153 communities.

The Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) has long been a leader among community media organisations and is the largest Indigenous media production house. Based in Alice Springs and founded in 1979 by John Macumba, Philip Batty and Freda Glynn, CAAMA established itself as a radio broadcaster playing extensively to remote communities in a number of states. By 1988, CAAMA had established Imparja Television, a commercial station with satellite extending its reach over 40 per cent of Australia.

From the early 1980s CAAMA has played a key role in preserving Aboriginal languages and culture and disseminating news and information locally, regionally and nationally. CAAMA's *Nganampa*

*Anwernekenhe* ('Ours' in the Pitjantjatjara and Arrernte languages) is a documentary television series spoken in local languages and subtitled in English. As Lisa Stefanoff wrote in her account of the 2005 Sydney Film Festival's celebration of CAAMA's achievements, this approach

"foreground[s] the film subject's voice, in his or her original language, and allow[s] it to shape the film." <sup>2</sup>

Some 30 full and part-time staff operate the organisation's television, radio, music and film companies and sales section. CAAMA Productions is responsible for a number of the films detailed in this book. Former CAAMA CEO Priscilla Collins was the executive producer of CAAMA Productions from 1998 to 2002, and herself produced significant films by Erica Glynn and Steven McGregor. CAAMA has also played a role in the development of the careers of Rachel Perkins (who pays tribute to Freda Glynn in particular), Allan Collins, Warwick Thornton and Beck Cole.

### WARLPIRI MEDIA

Warlpiri Media is based in Yuendumu, 300 kilometres north-west of Alice Springs. For over 20 years this pioneering non-profit community organisation has produced and broadcast programs on Imparja TV and radio. Key figures in its formation were Darby Ross, Francis Jupurrula Kelly and Kurt Granites.

Warlpiri Media is best known to many Australians for producing the hugely popular documentary and subsequent television series *Bush Mechanics*. The association makes documentaries about social issues and all manner of educational programs. *Manyu Wana*, broadcast on SBS TV, teaches children language, numeracy and storytelling in



On location [Ngangkari](#) · 2002



On location [Bush Mechanics](#) · 1999

Warlpiri, their first language. The subsequent series, *Arrkantele*, is in the Kaytej language. The organisation also records the oral histories of the elders at Laramba, predominantly in the Anmatjerre language. These are cultures where English is often the third, fourth or even fifth language spoken by community members.

#### **TAIMA, PY MEDIA. GOOLARRI**

Other prominent Indigenous media organisations are to be found in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. Formed in 1981, the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association (TAIMA) network broadcasts to over 20 Indigenous communities in north Queensland. The first Indigenous video production house in Queensland, TAIMA was conceived by brothers Bill and Mick Thaiday in the 1980s when they returned to Townsville from working in the BRACS system in Central Australia. PY Media also formed in the 1980s in north-western South Australia's Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara lands. In Broome, Goolarri is a dynamic young media company that has emerged from and is owned by the Broome Aboriginal Media Association (BAMA) in the north of Western Australia.

CAAMA, Warlpiri Media, TAIMA, PY Media, Goolarri and other companies, organisations and networks not only keep communities in touch with each other, preserve tradition and address current issues, but also nurture new generations of filmmakers and television broadcasters.

#### **AFTRS**

The Australian Film Television and Radio School has played a key role in the training of Australian Indigenous filmmakers in its collaborations with CAAMA and other community media organisations,

and through its responsiveness to the initiatives put forward by Lester Bostock in the early 1990s. From 1993 the school introduced intensive video production courses developed by Bostock. The 20-week 1993 Koori Television Techniques Course produced 15 graduates; the 1994 National Indigenous Television Training Course produced 17 graduates, among them cinematographer Murray Lui, producer Pauline Clague and director Rima Tamou. The five one-year scholarships first offered in 1993 soon became 14 and there was also a series of cross-cultural workshops.

In 1994, the school established its Indigenous Program Initiative (IPI) to upgrade the creative and technical skills of Indigenous Australians working in film and other media. Since 1995, IPI has offered numerous Career Development Scholarships and hosts a Myer Fellowship (awarded to Wayne Blair in 2006), a Macquarie Bank Indigenous Scholarship and the Macquarie Bank Indigenous Professional Development Program.

As of June 2006, 51 Indigenous Australians have graduated from AFTRS. Twenty three are from the school's full-time program, including 18 on merit-based scholarships and two supported by a former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) professional development program. There were 32 graduates from the television courses of 1993–94 mentioned above. In 2002 an honorary degree was awarded to Imparja co-founder Freda Glynn. As well, 54 people have been supported to attend advanced AFTRS short courses and another 13 have been involved in the professional development program from 2005 to 2006.

#### **WORKSHOPPING THE FUTURE**

A continuous stream of workshops is programmed across the country, some for emerging, some for

established filmmakers, others for young people. Recently in Rockhampton in northern Queensland, directors Wayne Blair and Rima Tamou worked with emerging filmmakers in the *Five Black Fingers* workshop facilitated by film producer Pauline Clague.

Schemes that encourage potential filmmakers include the *First Hand* project in Victoria, which involves the Koorie Heritage Trust, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and Koori communities in Melbourne and rural centres, Heywood and Ballarat. Five short films came out of the project in 2005, made by young people between the ages of 11 and 27 in collaboration with community elders as cultural advisors. In Western Australia, the Making Movies Roadshow is a touring unit of the Film and Television Institute (FTI), spending five days each in 10 separate regional locations each year, some of them Indigenous communities, teaching participants how to script, film and edit short dramas, documentaries, animations and music videos. The unit, with a tutor and two technicians, has visited remote communities as far north as Kununurra, as far east as Kalgoorlie, and as far south as Esperance, and visits new locations each year.

### THE POWER OF TV

ABC TV's *Message Stick* and SBS TV's *Living Black* are nationally broadcast, popular magazine programs that include news, current affairs and documentaries, many made by Indigenous filmmakers featured in this book, as well as films coming out of initiatives like the *Deadly Yarns* series from Western Australia. The documentaries are frequently of a high calibre and many can be found in the Film Australia and Ronin Films sales catalogues.



Catriona McKenzie on location [RAN](#) · 2006



Richard Frankland on location [The Circuit](#) · 2007

The FTI's *Deadly Yarns* series commenced in 2005 and has been broadcast on ABC TV's *Message Stick*. A joint initiative between ABC Television, ScreenWest and FTI, the aim is to develop production skills and broadcast opportunities for West Australian Indigenous filmmakers, especially writers, directors and producers by providing developmental and financial assistance. A number of the films (from directors Gary Cooper, Kyle Morrison, Gavin Narkle, Glenn Stasiuk and writer Karri-Anne Kearing) have been nominated in the Early Career section of the annual WA Screen Awards.

Television has recently generated wonderful opportunities for Indigenous directors. Catriona Mackenzie was co-director of *RAN* (acronym for Regional Area Nurse), a powerful drama series (2006) set in the Torres Strait Islands in Australia's far north-east and employing many local Indigenous performers, and now she's directing a new series, *The Circuit*, this time alongside fellow director Richard Frankland and set in Broome in north-western Australia. Both series have been produced by SBSi.

#### MAKING IT HAPPEN: ACTORS & PRODUCERS

Directors have been lucky to be able to draw on a substantial group of talented Indigenous actors. Some of them, like Aaron Pederson, Leah Purcell and AFI Award winners David Gulpilil and Deborah Mailman, are well known to Australian audiences through film and television. There are many others contributing to the visions of a generation of Indigenous filmmakers. Among these are Justine Saunders, Wayne Blair, David Page, Rachael Maza, Kylie Belling, Lillian Crombie, David Ngoombujurra, John Moore, Tom E. Lewis, Kelton Pell, Margaret Harvey, Ursula Yovich, Glen Shea, Trevor Jamieson, Bradley Byquar, Margaret Harvey, Luke Carroll and

Wayne Munro. Untrained actors, often in remote communities, have also made a significant contribution, working beside these highly experienced professionals.

No less vital to the development of Indigenous film are the Indigenous producers profiled in this book: Pauline Clague, Priscilla Collins, Rachel Perkins and Darren Dale. Along with a small group of white Australian producers that includes Kath Shelper, Teresa-Jayne Hanlon and Kylie du Fresne, they have enabled talented filmmakers to realise their visions.

### TALENT REWARDED

Aboriginal filmmakers have a strong record of winning awards both here and overseas as the filmmaker entries in this book attest. However, the rewarding of filmmakers with the nationally televised Deadly Awards or the film industry-specific Tudawali Awards (named after Robert Tudawali who was featured in Charles Chauvel's *Jedda* [1955]) plays a significant role within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, celebrating achievement collectively and promoting it to non-indigenous Australia.

Other awards further the careers of established artists. The Bob Maza Fellowship was created by the AFC as a tribute to Maza (1939–2000), an actor, activist and theatre and film advocate and mentor and the first Indigenous AFC Commissioner. In 2006 the fellowship was awarded to actor and director Leah Purcell. The AFTRS Myer Fellowship recognises the achievements and further potential of established Indigenous actors working professionally in the film, television and/or theatre industries. Each year the Lester Bostock Scheme, through Sydney's MetroScreen and with the support of the New South Wales Film and Television Office,

provides each of four Indigenous emerging filmmakers equipment, facilities hire, stock, post-facilities and a budget.

### CELEBRATION

Aboriginal filmmakers have fared well in international film festivals here and overseas with prize-winning short dramas and documentaries. While feature length films have been few (*Bedevil*, *Life*, *Radiance*, *Beneath Clouds*), they have been well received in international film festivals. Filmmakers have also won support in a range of Indigenous film events such as the annual Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival at the Sydney Opera House, the Colourised Festival held in Brisbane, and the Sydney Indigenous Arts Festival held in Parramatta in western Sydney as part of the annual NAIDOC Week. These festivals juxtapose film with live performance, visual art and explorations in digital media, and draw large audiences.

### MULTIMEDIA MESSAGE STICK

Aboriginal filmmakers and artists have been involved in new media developments, adapting quickly to digital technology and exploring its potential. The latest work by *r e a*, one of the most prominent of these artists, is *gins\_leap/dub\_speak*. Comprising four large enveloping video screens, it immerses the viewer in multi-layered images of *r e a*'s country, in northern New South Wales. The installation was featured by dLux media arts as part of the 2005 Message Sticks Festival at the Sydney Opera House and was later shown in a number of NSW country towns.

Rich in local lore, the innovative UsMob interactive website explores the lives of young people living in Central Australia, introducing them to a wide audience ([www.usmob.com.au](http://www.usmob.com.au)). UsMob



Rima Tamou on location *Sa Black Thing* · 2000

is the first project to be launched from the New Media and Digital Services AFC/ABC Broadband Production Initiative (BPI). Directed by David Vadiveloo, a lawyer and filmmaker working closely with Indigenous people, the site is made in association with the Tangentyere Council and in collaboration with young locals and members of the Central Australian film community.

The Australia Council for the Arts has funded workshops for Indigenous artists working with digital interactive media for a number of years through ANAT, the Australian Network for Art and Technology. In 2005, Brisbane's Colourised Festival staged *Still-Moving*, an exhibition of digital creations by Archie Moore, Leah King-Smith and Ivan Sen along with work by the late Michael Riley. In a Colourised Festival forum a Goori woman, Debra McLean, declared:

Traditionally, we had festival. That's what corroboree was. We did that from the beginning of time. We came together. We were multi-disciplined. We sang, we talked, we told stories, we made art, we created craft, we designed, we acted, and, hey, we didn't have film camera but if we had it we would have been using it. That's why we embraced the concept of multimedia so easily because it's our message stick and we will use it powerfully. So when we look at accessing what is currently a plethora of technology, we look at how we can do it our way. We want to use that technology because we are a very embracing culture, we embrace things.<sup>[3]</sup>

## COOPERATION: BLACK & WHITE

The focus of this book is predominantly on Indigenous filmmakers who write and direct their

own films. But filmmaking is intensively collaborative and, in their personal statements, many of the filmmakers acknowledge the attraction of this process. A number have worked in various capacities on each other's films, in the Drama Initiatives series and elsewhere. However, there are also ample examples of creative collaboration between black and white Australians in filmmaking going back to the beginnings of Indigenous film when Alec Morgan worked with Gerry and Lester Bostock and Martha Ansara with Essie Coffey.

Ned Lander, one of the great supporters of Indigenous filmmaking made the 1981 feature film *The Wrong Side of the Road* in close collaboration with Adelaide's Indigenous community and with Aboriginal people in lead roles. Lander produced and directed with Rachel Perkins on the *Blood Brothers* series (1993) and produced Perkins' feature film *Radiance* (1998). As commissioning editor and now general manager of SBSi, Lander has sustained support for Indigenous filmmaking. Actors like David Gulpilil, Deborah Mailman and Aaron Pederson have played memorable roles in non-indigenous Australian film and television and, as already mentioned, a number of key white producers continue to work with Indigenous filmmakers. This aside, what is striking about the present moment is that developments over the last decade have increasingly allowed Indigenous filmmakers to work with expert film personnel from within their own culture.

## THEN, NOW, NEXT...

The components of the Indigenous film culture I have sketched here from the 1980s to the present have looped together through networks, collaborations and partnerships to breed a generation of filmmakers strongly adapted to the

demands of production and with the capacity to work hands-on across a number of forms and media. Many of the current generation of filmmakers are writer-directors, not a few with the experience of wielding a camera or a microphone, composing a score, editing or acting on screen. Of course this is not just a story of successful young directors, but of all the other collaborators—cinematographers, editors, composers, actors, writers, producers—who have lent their talents to the making of so many memorable dramas and documentaries.

From these riches has emerged a body of highly distinctive Australian Indigenous filmmaking. It draws on the uniqueness of the culture from which it springs, from the land the films observe with such love and care, and does it with a sense of community and a deft story-telling in which past and present co-exist and where serious social issues are faced with challenging frankness and wry humour. With the continued support of government agencies, growing audience interest and courageous producers, we will enjoy and be challenged by further innovative short dramas and documentaries, but also an eagerly awaited increase in the number of feature length films side by side with the emergence of a new generation of Indigenous filmmakers.

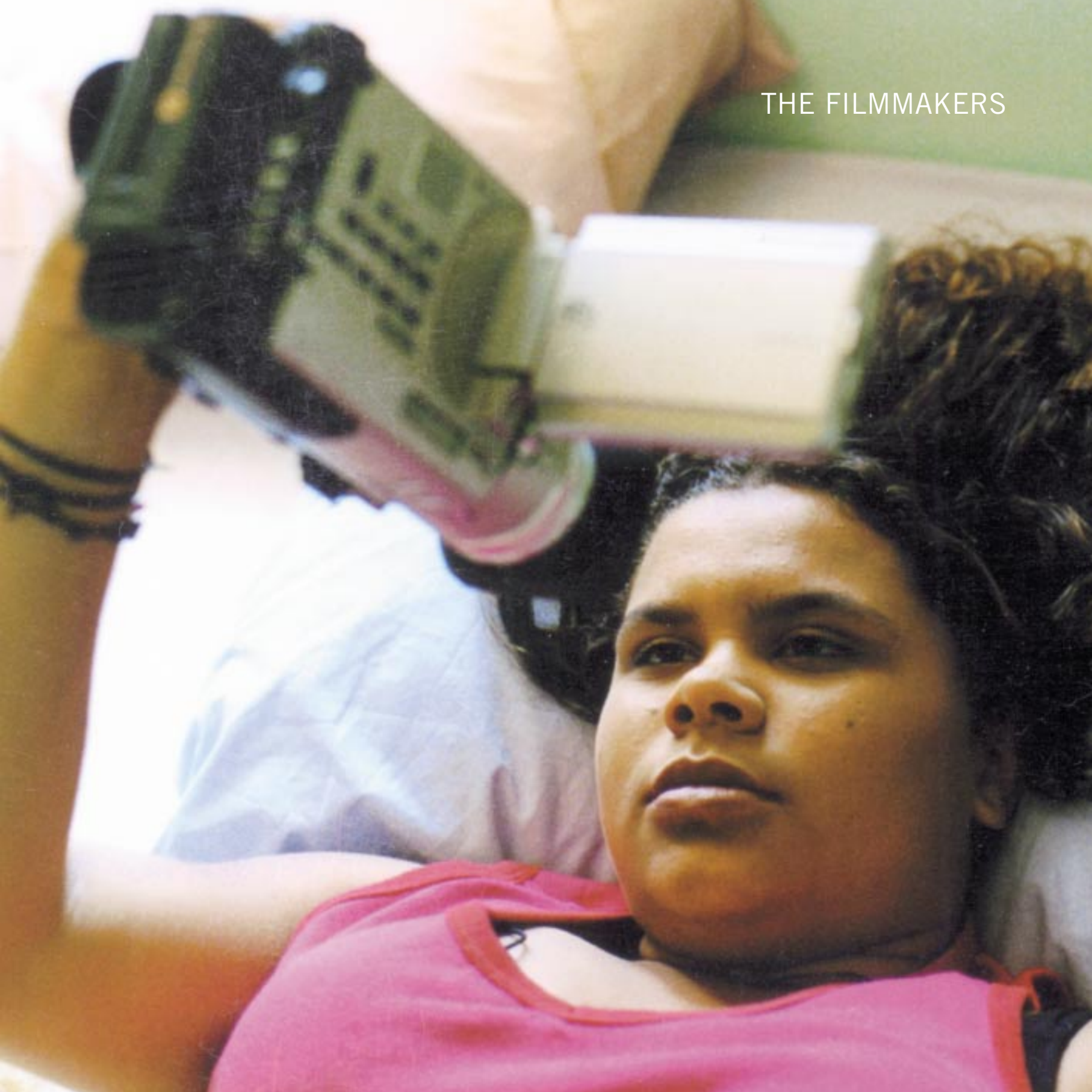
## Notes

1 Ian Bryson, Margaret Burns and Marcia Langton, "Painting with light: Australian Indigenous cinema", Section 13, "Film and communications", General Editors Sylvia Kleinert, Margo Neale, *The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture OUP*, 2005, p 299

2 Lisa Stefanoff, 'CAAMA: From the heart', *RealTime+OnScreen*, 67, June–July, 2005, p 19; [www.realtimemarts.net](http://www.realtimemarts.net)

3 Erik Roberts. 'The medium as the message stick', *RealTime+OnScreen*, 69, *OnScreen*, October–November, 2005, p 20; [www.realtimemarts.net](http://www.realtimemarts.net)

THE FILMMAKERS



# WAYNE BLAIR

Nation: Waka Waka/Butchala

## Black Talk

DRAMA, 2002, 12MIN

After years apart, cousins Tim and Scott reunite at a funeral. They playfully recall their shared childhood and reflect on the different directions their lives have taken them. But the funeral is for one of them. This gentle, deftly crafted film focuses on the relationship between place, friendship and a past which is always with us.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Wayne Blair

PRODUCER: Kylie du Fresne, RB Films Pty Ltd

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Murray Lui

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Elizabeth Mary Moore

COMPOSER: David Page

EDITOR: Alison McSkimming-Croft

CAST: Russell Page, Lawrence Clifford,  
Rhimi Johnson Page, Hunter Page-Lochard

DISTRIBUTOR: SBS

Dreaming in Motion, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi,  
NSW FTO

Best Short Film, Dendy Awards, Sydney Film  
Festival, 2003  
Black Hollywood International Film Festival,  
Los Angeles, 2003  
Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2003  
Brisbane International Film Festival, 2003  
Tokyo Berlin International Film Festival, 2003  
Hawaian International Film Festival, 2003  
Planet IndigenUs: International Aborigine Arts  
Festival, Toronto 2004

**I received an opportunity through the Uncle Lester Bostock Scheme at Metro Screen in Sydney. I made a five-minute film and I really loved the whole process—opened my eyes up to what one could do. That was six years ago and the passion has grown more. For me it was an attractive medium because I am also an actor. The thought of making films never crossed my mind, but when it did I just realised it was another factor to the storytelling process.**

**I want to tell stories that make the individual, the family, the group, the town, the city and the country take a good long look at themselves. But most of the time I just want to tell stories that make my immediate family and friends laugh and cry (mainly laugh, I think!).**

**I love how nervous I get. I also love the looks on people's faces when it all comes together and the team has achieved something as a whole unit. We're all working together for the common goal, and the community benefits and those future filmmakers benefit as well, black or white.**

WAYNE BLAIR IS A SYDNEY-BASED film director, actor and writer. His short dramas include award-winning films produced by Kylie du Fresne of RB films. *Black Talk* won the Dendy Award for Best Short Film at the 2002 Sydney Film Festival and was screened at the St. Kilda, Brisbane, Rotterdam, Tokyo and Hawaii film festivals. *The Djarn Djarns* won the Crystal Bear in the Kinderfilmfest program of the 2005 Berlin International Film Festival. Blair is also a well-known stage actor, recently playing US Secretary of State Colin Powell in the Company B Belvoir production of David Hare's political satire, *Stuff Happens*.



[The Djarn Djarns](#) · 2005

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Double Trouble*, 2006, TV series: director

*Lochie Leonard*, 2006, TV series: director

*The Djarn Djarns*, 2005, drama: writer, director

*Kathy*, 2002, drama: writer, director

*Black Talk*, 2002, drama: writer, director

*Jubulj*, 2000, drama: writer, director

*Klowns*, 2000, drama: writer, director

*Fade 2 Black*, 1999, drama: writer, director



The Djarn Djarns · 2005

## The Djarn Djarns

DRAMA, 2005, 26MIN

Eleven year-old Frankie Dollar is a member of *The Djarn Djarns*, a traditional dance group performing for visitors at a cultural centre. Filmed and performed with a perfect mix of wry humour and poignancy, the story centres on Frankie's unresolved grieving for his much loved, dead father, the pressure of sexual abuse and the responsibilities, cultural and personal, that he now bears.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Wayne Blair

PRODUCER: Kylie Du Fresne, RB Films Pty Ltd

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Murray Lui

SOUNDTRACK: Steve Francis

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Pete Baxter

COSTUME DESIGNER: Wendy Cork

CAST: Hunter Page-Lochard, Blake Herzog, Ben Maza, Kerrod Melton, Alexa Miller, Scott Angeles, Lafe Charlton

DISTRIBUTOR: Flickerfest

Dramatically Black, 2005, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO

Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival, 2005

Winner: Crystal Bear, Kinderfilmfest Berlin

International Film Festival, 2005

Newport Beach Film Festival, 2005

St Kilda Film Festival, 2005

Melbourne Children's Film Festival, 2005

Brisbane International Film Festival, 2005

New Zealand Film Festival, 2005

Deadly Award for Director, 2005

# WAYNE JOWANDI BARKER

Nation: Yawuru/Djabirrabirr

## Strike Your Heart

DRAMA, 1997, 17MIN

In 1967, in Broome, a coastal town with a rich mix of cultures in far north-western Australia, a young boy's mother decides it's time to send him away to get a white man's education. The pressure of separation from his ebullient family and his new girlfriend weigh on him in this quietly observant drama, the first to be made in the Kimberley region, of the moment before Australia's Aboriginal peoples were granted citizenship.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Wayne Barker

PRODUCER: Nicki Lukacs

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Alex McPhee

EDITOR: Liz Goldfinch

MUSIC: Wayne Barker

SOUND RECORDIST: Toivo Lember

SOUND EDITOR: Rose Farrell

CAST: Rami Rahman, Petris Torres, Jimmy Edgar, Attika Edgar, Alison Torres, Sylvia Clarke, Stephen 'Baamba' Albert

AFC, SBSi, ScreenWest

Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival, 1997  
Festival Cinema Douranenez, 1997  
Broome Arts and Music Festival, 2005

**Filmmaking is a wonderful craft which allows us as Indigenous people to tell our stories, heal our spirit, address our past and face our future. Those of us who have become filmmakers have a medium that is boundless and we apply our vision to it with all the artistry and knowledge given to us by our heritage. What we create will remain as a lasting testimony of Indigenous Australia.**

WAYNE JOWANDI BARKER is a musician and filmmaker based in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. He trained in ethnomusicology, film and video at AIATSIS from 1980. Since then he has worked at home and abroad, with strong connections in France, independently producing films with his company, Gunada Productions, as well as working as a writer, broadcaster and musician, and training young people in Kimberley communities. In 1994, Barker's documentary *Milli Milli* received a Certificate of Merit at the Chicago International Film Festival, a High Commendation Award at the Hawaii International Film Festival and won the Andris Slapindish Award in Estonia. Barker is currently developing feature films and a major television series in a French-Australian TV co-production.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Spirit of Anchor*, 2001, documentary: director, co-writer

*Strike Your Heart*, 1997, drama: writer, director  
*Milli Milli*, 1994, documentary: writer, director, producer

*Balgo Art*, 1986, documentary: writer, director, producer, editor

*Ngaangkiti*, 1984, documentary-drama TV series: writer, director, producer

*Cass: No Saucepan Diver*, 1983, documentary: writer, director



Strike Your Heart · 1997

# NICHOLAS BOSELEY

Nation: Eastern Arrernte

**Indigenous people are in a constant fight for equality. Our past reeks of political and personal survival and of failure as well. There is a yearning to tell such stories, sometimes an inner obligation to illuminate them.**

**Our culture, as we experience it, is ever present in our films as it is inseparable from ourselves. It can at times direct us and seep into our films without us being conscious of the extent of it. It is part of who we are and bigger than who we are.**

WRITER, DIRECTOR AND EDITOR Nicholas Boseley's films include *Fragments*, the life story of Tani, an 80-year-old Indigenous woman told in vignettes, and *Shit Skin*, a short drama about a woman facing up to her experience as part of the Stolen Generations. Boseley has also written and directed *Night Sky Dreaming*, a multimedia drama about Indigenous astronomy for Museum Victoria's Planetarium.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Night Sky Dreaming*, 2004, multimedia drama:  
writer, director

*The Girls*, 2004, drama: co-writer

*Shit Skin*, 2002, drama; director, writer

*Fragments*, 1999, drama: writer, director, producer



*Shit Skin* · 2002

## Shit Skin

DRAMA, 2002, 13MIN

An elderly woman of the Stolen Generations journeys with her grandson through Arrernte country in the Central Desert to reunite with her family. Fearing the enormous distance between them and herself, and blaming her mother for her removal, she attempts to turn back. But the persistence of her grandson (himself of mixed race—"shitskin") and her growing engagement with the land (seen in hauntingly beautiful images) bring her back to her heritage and deepen her relationship with her grandson.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Nicholas Boseley

PRODUCER: Kimba Thompson, Sista Girl Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Kim Batterham

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Stan Antoniades

COMPOSER: Bryony Marks

EDITOR: Bill Murphy

CAST: Freda Glynn, Kirk Page

Dreaming in Motion, 2002, AFC  
Indigenous Branch, SBSi, Film Victoria

Sundance Film Festival, 2003



## BECK COLE

Nation: Yawuru/Djarbera-Djabera

### Plains Empty

DRAMA, 2004, 26MIN

In this finely crafted, suspenseful film, a young woman moves to an isolated opal mining camp in Central Australia with her husband. Left on her own in the bleak landscape she encounters a ghostly presence, both frightening and revealing.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Beck Cole

PRODUCER: Kath Shelper, Film Depot

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Warwick Thornton

SOUND DESIGNER: Liam Egan

COMPOSER: Cliff Bradley

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Sam Wilde

EDITOR: Andrew Macneil

CAST: Ngaire Pigram, Gerard Kennedy, Kerry Naylor,

Tina Bursill, Josef Ber

DISTRIBUTOR: Flickerfest

**Only recently I've admitted that I'm a filmmaker. I use to think that one day I'll get a real job. But it's so addictive, you know, travelling, meeting people and recording stories. Over the years my family has grown because of the relationships that filmmaking has enabled me to develop. That sounds corny but I believe it. People open up and reveal some of their most intimate stories and experiences and then trust that you will go off and interpret it for the screen in a way that serves their story justice. It's a pretty big responsibility when you think about it and a real privilege and honour. I really couldn't stop now; I've just started.**

Plains Empty · 2004

Dramatically Black, 2005, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO, SAFC

Sundance Film Festival, 2005

Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival, 2005

Uppsala Film Festival, Sweden, 2005

Hawaii International Film Festival, 2005



BECK COLE WRITES AND DIRECTS for film and television.

She has worked extensively on CAAMA productions and is an AFTRS graduate. Her documentaries include *The Lore of Love*, the story of 18-year-old Jessie who returns to her Pintubi homeland to learn the lore of love from her grandmothers, and *Wirriya—Small Boy*, a day-in-the-life portrait of a seven year-old boy from a community on the outskirts of Alice Springs in Central Australia. *Wirriya...* won Best Film at the 2004 Women on Women Film Festival in Sydney. Her short drama *Flat* was shown at the Sundance and Edinburgh Film Festivals in 2004. Cole's *Plains Empty* has screened at numerous international festivals including Sundance in 2005, and won her a nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Film and Television at the 2005 Deadlys, the Indigenous cultural awards ceremony. She is currently developing her first feature film, *The Place Between*, and is co-writing and co-directing with Rachel Perkins an eight-part television series, *First Australians*.

### FILMOGRAPHY

*First Australians*, 2007, documentary series: director, writer

*The Lore of Love*, 2005, documentary: writer, director

*Plains Empty*, 2004, drama: writer, director

*Wirriya—Small Boy*, 2004, documentary: writer, director

*Flat*, 2002, drama: writer, director

*Missing in Alice*, 1999, documentary: writer, director

Wirriya—Small Boy · 2004



**Wirriya—Small Boy**

DOCUMENTARY 2004 26MIN

*Wirriya—Small Boy* affectionately documents the daily life of the exuberant seven year-old Ricco, cared for by his aunties in Hidden Valley, a desert community near Alice Springs in Central Australia. The intimate and informal filming exquisitely captures Ricco's energy, his eagerness to learn, his misbehaviour, his hostility to drunks, and his sadness: "I got no story about my mother".

**WRITER, DIRECTOR:** Beck Cole

**PRODUCERS:** Beck Cole, Citty Williams, CAAMA Productions

**CAMERA:** Warwick Thornton

**SOUND:** Vance Glynn

**EDITOR:** Karen Johnson

**DISTRIBUTOR:** CAAMA Productions

Imparja Television, ABC, AFC

Nominee, Best Documentary, IF Awards, 2004  
Best Film, WOW Festival, 2004

# PRISCILLA COLLINS

Nation: Eastern Arrernte

**As a filmmaker I can strengthen, protect and promote the unique cultural identity of Indigenous people ... I love the idea of coming up with a story and working closely with a great team so we all have the same vision, and then seeing it on the big screen.**

**It is just so exciting working with films, because you can make just about anything you want, be very creative and bring audiences in from all around the world ... I can use film to educate people and give them an appreciation of Aboriginal films and culture.**

ALICE SPRINGS BASED Priscilla Collins has been the CEO of the CAAMA Group, the largest Indigenous owned and operated multimedia organisation in Australia. Collins has also worked as series producer and then executive producer for the National Indigenous Documentary Fund series broadcast on ABC and SBS. She has a Master of Arts from AFTRS in producing (1999) as well as a Degree in Video Production (1991). From 1998 to 2003 Collins was executive producer of the *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* series, episodes of which have been shown at international film events in USA, Switzerland, Austria (winning awards at the Festival of Nations), Canada and Holland. She has produced many significant Australian Indigenous films and is the Executive Producer of the first Indigenous Children's Television Series, *Double Trouble*, to be broadcast commercially on Channel 9 and the Disney Channel.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Dhakiyarr vs the King*, 2004, documentary: producer  
*Big Girls Don't Cry*, 2002, documentary: producer  
*Cold Turkey*, 2002, drama: producer  
*Moses Family*, 2002, documentary: producer  
*Trespass*, 2002, documentary: producer  
*For Who I am—The Bonita Mabo Story*, 2001, documentary: producer  
*Minymaku Way*, 2001, documentary: producer  
*The Third Note*, 1999, drama: producer  
*Figures in Motion*, 1999, drama: producer  
*Apekathe—Being Aboriginal with White Skin*, 1997, documentary: producer

*Dhakiyarr vs the King* · 2004



# PAULINE CLAGUE

Nation: Yaegl

**I am of the generation that has been given opportunities due to the struggles of the previous generations, and they have allowed me to have certain freedoms due to their fighting for justice. The least I can do is to pay back, whether it be by way of helping other people who want to be filmmakers, by telling stories that need to be told, by allowing people to laugh and escape into another world, or by giving our next generations the tools of recorded history and drama that they can learn and dream from.**

PAULINE CLAGUE ENTERED the industry through an introductory course at AFTRS in 1994 and since then has produced eight short films through Core Original Productions, now known as Core Films, including *Round up* and *Sa Black Thing* with director Rima Tamou, as well as a number of documentaries. She has worked as series producer for the AFC on the Indigenous Drama Initiatives *Shifting Sands* and *Crossing Tracks*, and the WA Shorts Initiatives, *Deadly Yarns* and *Deadly Yarns 2*, as well as for the ABC's *Message Stick* for the Indigenous Programs Unit. Clague is currently developing a feature film.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*The Clague Clan*, 2007, documentary: co-writer, producer  
*Sa Black Thing*, 2005, drama: producer  
*Sisters in the Black Movement*, 2002, documentary: producer  
*Desperate Times*, 2001, documentary: producer  
*Dare to Dream*, 2000, drama: producer  
*Saturday Night, Sunday Morning*, 1999, drama: producer  
*Promise*, 1997, drama: producer  
*Box*, 1997, drama: producer  
*Round Up*, 1996, drama: producer

*Sa Black Thing* · 2005



# ALLAN COLLINS

## Dhakiyarr vs the King

DOCUMENTARY, 2004, 56MIN

In the 1930s, in Arnhem Land, northern Australian, the great leader of the Yolngu people, Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda, finds a policeman chaining his wife and kills him. Dhakiyarr is tried and found guilty, but the High Court reverses the result and releases Dhakiyarr. On the same day, he disappears, presumed murdered. Seventy years later, reconciliation between the Yolngu and the family of the policeman takes place in a moving ritual ceremony on a grand scale in the Northern Territory Supreme Court. Beautifully filmed, *Dhakiyarr vs the King* is rich in Yolngu lore, images of the land and the passions and wisdom of the descendants of two cultures.

**DIRECTOR:** Tom Murray

**CO-DIRECTOR:** Allan Collins

**PRODUCER:** Graeme Isaac, Film Australia

**WRITER:** Tom Murray

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Allan Collins

**EDITOR:** James Bradley

**COMPOSER:** Alister Spence

**SOUND RECORDIST:** Chris West

**SOUND DESIGN:** Liam Egan

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Film Australia

Film Australia National Interest Program, ABC,  
CAAMA Productions

Montreal World Film Festival, 2005

Vancouver Film Festival, 2005

Telluride Film Festival, 2005

Chicago International Documentary  
Festival, 2004

Nominated for World Cinema

Documentary Award, Sundance Film Festival, 2005

Rouben Mamoulian Award, Dendy

Awards, Sydney Film Festival, 2004

NSW Premier's Audio/Visual History

Award, 2004



Road · 2000

**As soon as I had a camera in my hands, I knew I liked it. It's an addictive thing. When I'm shooting I just love it. It's like playing a game, it's great fun... and it's so complex an artform, you can never quite master it. You keep learning and learning, and I like that.**

**I want to do things to improve Australia's understanding of itself, and my understanding of it. The majority of what I've done has been related to Indigenous issues, but my interests don't stop there. I'm interested in the whole human condition, the whole thing.**

ALLAN COLLINS IS ONE of Australia's leading cinematographers. He began his career in news and commercials, working for Imparja Television in Alice Springs and then extensively for CAAMA Productions (1993–98). Collins graduated in cinematography from a one-year full-time extension course at AFTRS in 1997 and was the first Indigenous person to be accredited to the Australian Cinematographers Society. His award-winning association with director Ivan Sen goes back to 1996 and involves five films including the feature *Beneath Clouds* for which he won, among other awards, Best Cinematography in a Feature Film at the 2002 AFI Awards.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Dhakiyarr vs the King*, 2004, documentary:

co-director, director of photography

*Cold Turkey*, 2002, drama: director of photography,  
camera operator

*Beneath Clouds*, 2002, drama: director of  
photography, camera operator

*Mistake Creek—Steven Craig*, 2001, documentary:  
director, cinematographer

*Whispering in Our Hearts*, 2001, documentary:  
director of photography

*Road*, 2000, drama: director of photography,  
camera operator

*Dust*, 2000, drama: director of photography,  
camera operator

*Wind*, 1999, drama: director of photography,  
camera operator

*My Colour Your Kind*, 1998, drama: director of  
photography, camera operator

Dhakiyarr vs The King · 2004



# DARREN DALE

Nation: Bundjalung



Mimi · 2002

**Producing Indigenous films that connect to the widest possible audience is vital to changing the way we as Australians see our cultural and historical landscape. This is what drives me as a creative producer, to work on projects with leading Aboriginal filmmakers to bring our inspiring stories to big and small screens, here and around the world.**

PRODUCER DARREN DALE began his career with SBS Television in 1997 working on ICAM (Indigenous Cultural Affairs Magazine). He has been a production manager for SBS TV and was associate producer on *Headlines across Australia*, an Indigenous news and information series. With Rachel Perkins he produced *Mimi* for director Warwick Thornton and *Flat* for Beck Cole, and has co-curated the film programs for the Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival at the Sydney Opera House in 2002, 2004 and 2006.

Dale is currently working as executive producer for Blackfella Films on the history series *First Australians*, a joint project of SBS and the Film Finance Corporation (FFC) in collaboration with the NSW Film and Television Office, ScreenWest and the South Australian Film Corporation. This major television series is co-written and co-directed by Rachel Perkins and Beck Cole.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*First Australians*, 2007, documentary series: executive producer

*National Indigenous Documentary Fund, Series 7*, 2005, documentary: supervising producer

*Mimi*, 2002, drama: producer (with Rachel Perkins)

*Flat*, 2002, drama: producer (with Rachel Perkins)



Flat · 2002

# RICHARD FRANKLAND

Nation: Gunditjmarra



Harry's War · 1999

**I want to make films that facilitate voice. I believe that when you have art you have voice and when you have voice you have freedom.**

**To overcome what I see as an inherent national blindness to Indigenous history and contemporary happening we have to get into people's loungerooms, into their homes. Film, television and music are great ways to do that. When I began making films there was some ten thousand hours of film footage at AIATSIS that had Indigenous content, over 90 percent of that footage was written, directed or produced by non-indigenous Australians. We needed to have more than just a consultant role in telling our stories. In essence I wanted to humanise what Australia had de-humanised.**

**I have made life-long friends within the film industry and have gotten an amazing amount of support. Perhaps I'm some sort of masochist, but I love the whole process: the thinking up of an idea, bouncing it off a couple of mates, the seemingly never-ending, tortured act of writing it. I think though, one of the most exciting parts of the whole process is when the cast and crew stamp their own brand of ownership on a project, when they say, "You might have written this, you might own it, but it's ours now as well, we're gonna make this together".**

WRITER, DIRECTOR AND MUSICIAN Richard Frankland first became involved in film when he co-wrote and featured as an actor in the award-winning documentary *Who Killed Malcolm Smith* (directors Nicholas Adler, Caroline Sherwood, 1993). The film focused on a case which had involved Frankland when he was a field officer and investigator with the Australian Government's Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. In 1996, drawing on this experience, he wrote and directed the short drama *No Way to Forget*, winning the AFI Award for Best Short Film and screening in the Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes Film Festival. In 2002, his next short drama, *Harry's War*, about the impact of World War II on his soldier uncle, won an ATOM (Australian Teachers of Media) Award, Best Short Film at the 2000 St Tropez Film Festival and

the Jury Award for Best International Short Film, Hollywood Black Film Festival.

Since 2002, Frankland has directed for television and written and directed *Conversations with the Dead*, an award-winning play which he is developing as a feature film, alongside another script, *To Hell and Bourke*. In 2005 Frankland was the recipient of an AFC Writer Fellowship to develop a feature-length screenplay. In 2006 he was writer and director on *Double Trouble*, a children's drama for CAAMA Productions, Disney and the Nine Network.

Harry's War · 1999

[continues over]

## Harry's War

DRAMA, 1999, 28MIN

A young Australian Aboriginal soldier fights and dies for Australia in a Papua New Guinean jungle. Based on the experiences of the filmmaker's uncle, *Harry's War* is a moving testament to sacrifices made by Aboriginal soldiers in World War II, friendships made between black and white Australians, and the sad reality of racism.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Richard Frankland

PRODUCERS: John Foss, Richard Frankland, Golden Seahorse Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Peter Zakharov

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Margaret Eastlake

EDITOR: Jill Bilcock

COMPOSER: Richard Frankland

SOUND DESIGNER: Neil McGrath

CAST: David Ngoombujarra, Peter Docker, Glenn Shea, Bob Maza

DISTRIBUTOR: FrontRow Video

Crossing Tracks, 1999, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, Film Victoria

Melbourne International Film Festival, 1999  
AFI Award nomination, Best Screenplay, 1999  
Best Australian Short Film Promoting Human Values, International Catholic Organisation, 1999  
Best Australian Short Film, Flickerfest International Short Film Festival, 2000  
Best Short Film, Hollywood Black Film Festival, Los Angeles, 2000  
Best Screenplay, St Kilda Film Festival, 2000  
Best Short Film, ATOM Awards, 2000  
Best Short Film, St Tropez Film Festival, 2000



## No Way to Forget

DRAMA, 1996, 12MIN

An Indigenous investigator is haunted by his experience of working for the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1987–1990). In this emotionally tense drama, a journey home on a dark night turns into a nightmare as memories of death and grieving threaten to overwhelm the spiritually exhausted driver.

**WRITER, DIRECTOR:** Richard Frankland

**PRODUCER:** John Foss, Golden Seahorse Productions

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Peter Zakharov

**SOUNDTRACK:** Anthony Norris and Richard Frankland

**EDITOR:** Michael Collins

**CAST:** David Ngoombujarra, Amy Saunders, Christina Saunders, Kylie Belling

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Film Australia

From Sand to Celluloid, 1996, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, Independent Filmmakers Fund of Victoria

Cinema des Antipodes, France, 1996

Best New Director, St Kilda Film Festival, 1996

Un Certain Regard, Cannes International Film Festival, 1996

Best Short Non-Feature Fiction and Best Sound in a Non-Feature Fiction Film, AFI Awards, 1997

Nominee, ATOM Award, 1997

Göteborg Film Festival, Sweden, 1997



No Way to Forget · 1996



### FILMOGRAPHY

*Convincing Grounds Massacre*, 2006, documentary: writer, director

*The Circuit*, 2006, TV drama series: director

*Double Trouble*, 2006, drama: writer, director

*The Innocents*, 2003, documentary: writer, director

*Harry's War*, 1999, drama: writer, director

*After Mabo*, 1997, documentary: executive producer

*No Way to Forget*, 1996, drama: writer, director

*Who Killed Malcolm Smith*, 1993, drama: writer, actor

No Way to Forget · 1996



# ERICA GLYNN

Nation: Kaytej

## Ngangkari

DOCUMENTARY 2002 26MIN

In Glynn's unique documentary venture two traditional healers, Ngangkari, return lost spirits to ailing patients, seek out young proteges, check the quality of food in the local store, consult in the area's medical clinic side by side with white doctors, and worry that the effects of marijuana smoking and petrol sniffing are beyond their curative powers. These engaging older men make for great hosts on this journey of discovery.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Erica Glynn

PRODUCER: Will Rogers, PY Media

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Warwick Thornton

EDITOR: Karen Johnson

SOUND: Brian Deutschmann

DISTRIBUTOR: Ronin Films

NIDF#5, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, ATSiC

Message Sticks Indigenous Arts Festival, 2002

SBS TV, 2002

Adelaide Film Festival, 2003

**A combination of luck, opportunity, family connections and a desperate desire not to be a secretary, propelled me into filmmaking.**

**I cut my 'screen' teeth making videos in various Central Australian Indigenous languages. In those days 90 per cent of the job was about convincing people they were good enough to be on screen and that speaking with accents or in our languages rather than 'proper white-fella English' was good, valid, interesting, and 'permission was granted'. No one was gonna say we 'couldn't or shouldn't'. It was hard work. Happily it's not the same today and just about every black person I meet has a story that they think is worthy of being on screen.**

**Anything remotely romantic, religious or political—I guess that means everything—holds an attraction for me, especially if it reveals an aspect of my community that is not commonly acknowledged. This doesn't necessarily have to come from me though. The work being made by my mob now is close to my dream come true.**

**I love what I'm doing at the AFC, working with filmmakers, watching them define and refine their stories and skills. They're brave and they're inspiring, and they are making an impact. What could be better?**

ORIGINALLY FROM CENTRAL AUSTRALIA, writer-director

Erica Glynn began her career at CAAMA

Productions and later completed a three-year

course in drama direction at AFTRS. In 1999

her short film *My Bed Your Bed* won a Dendy

Award for Best Short Film. Her other films

include the short drama *My Mother, My Son*

and the documentary *A Walk with Words*.

*Ngangkari*, about two senior traditional healers from the Central Desert region, was shown at the 2003 Adelaide International Film Festival.

Erica currently works as a Project Manager for the Indigenous Branch of the Australian Film Commission.



Ngangkari · 2002

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Ngangkari*, 2002, documentary: writer, director

*Minymaku Way*, 2001, documentary: director

*My Mother, My Son*, 2000, drama: writer, director

*A Walk with Words*, 2000, documentary: director

*My Bed Your Bed*, 1998, drama: writer, director

*Redreaming in the Dark*, 1998, drama: director



My Bed Your Bed · 1998



## My Bed Your Bed

DRAMA, 1998, 17MIN

Performed with disarming naturalism, this is a funny and tender portrait of Della and Alvin who are embarking on an arranged marriage in a remote desert community. The young newlyweds appear to be fond of each other but attempts to achieve sexual intimacy are fraught with reticence and impatience captured by intimate, exquisitely framed cinematography.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Erica Glynn

PRODUCER: Penelope McDonald, Chilli Films

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Warwick Thornton

EDITOR: Dany Cooper

SOUNDTRACK: Sion Tammes

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Daran Fulham

CAST: Trevor Jamieson, Terry Miller, Ursula Yovich

DISTRIBUTOR: Film Australia

Shifting Sands, 1998, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi

Nominee, AFI Award, Best Short Fiction Film, 1998

Best Fiction over 15 Minutes, Dendy Australian

Short Film Awards, 1998

Special Commendation, Cork Film Festival, 1998

Hawaii Film Festival, 1998

Best Short Film, Sydney Film Festival, 1998

8th Festival of Pacific Arts, 2000

Telluride Film Festival, 2000

Best Direction in a Short Film, Tudawali Film and Video Awards, 2000; Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, France, 2003



# DARLENE JOHNSON

Nation: Dunghutti

## Two Bob Mermaid

DRAMA, 1996, 15MIN

In this evocative recreation of 1957 rural Australia, Koorine, a fair-skinned Koori girl who passes as white, is desperate to enter the swimming carnival, although it means cutting herself off from friends and family. Public swimming pools, like many venues at that time, were racially segregated. The film is rich with images of the pleasures of swimming and the pain of social exclusion.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Darlene Johnson

PRODUCER: Antonia Barnard, Unthank Films

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Kim Batterham

MUSIC: Tiddas

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Laurie Faen

EDITOR: Liz Goldfinch

CAST: Carrie Prosser, Tessa Leahy, Jie Pittman, Stephen Blair, Megan Drury, David Page, Gary Sweet

DISTRIBUTOR: Film Australia

From Sand to Celluloid, 1996, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO

Window on Images, Venice International Film Festival, 1996

Cinema des Antipodes, France 1996

Best Short Film, Australian Film Critics Circle Awards, 1996

Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival, France, 1997

Best Short Dramatic Film, 41st Asia Pacific Film Festival, 1996;

8th Festival of Pacific Arts, 2000



**I didn't decide that I wanted to be a filmmaker. Filmmaking chose me. There's definitely a political drive to what I do, a certain desire to redress the imbalance of Indigenous people in film, see more black faces on screen, do something to counter that invisibility factor. It's important for me to present an alternative cultural point of view, a perspective which challenges the white colonial historical agenda. And at the end of the day you're making films about yourself, who you are personally, and your position in the world. As an Aboriginal person I feel that my work as a filmmaker is inherently political.**

DIRECTOR DARLENE JOHNSON is a graduate of the University of Technology Sydney where she specialised in Indigenous and post-colonial cinema. Her debut film was the award-winning short drama *Two Bob Mermaid* in the AFC-SBSi *From Sand to Celluloid* series. Her 2000 documentary, *Stolen Generations*, was nominated for numerous awards (among them an International Emmy and an AFI Award) and has been sold to television in eight

overseas territories. Other documentaries include an account for television of the making of Phil Noyce's feature film *Rabbit Proof Fence* and *Gulpilil: One Red Blood*, a biography of Aboriginal actor David Gulpilil. Johnson's most recent film, the short drama *Crocodile Dreaming*, stars Gulpilil and Tom E. Lewis and premiered at the 2007 Adelaide Film Festival. *Obelia*, her first feature film will be produced by Phil Noyce.

Two Bob Mermaid • 1996



*Crocodile Dreaming* · 2006

#### FILMOGRAPHY

*Yappa's Story*, 2007, documentary: writer, director  
*Crocodile Dreaming*, 2006, drama: writer, director  
*Gulpilil: One Red Blood*, 2002, documentary: writer, director  
*Following the Rabbit Proof Fence*, 2002, documentary: writer, director  
*Stranger in My Skin—Ray Lotti*, 2002, documentary: writer, director  
*Stolen Generations*, 2000, documentary: writer, director  
*Two Bob Mermaid*, 1996, drama: writer, director

#### **Gulpilil: One Red Blood**

DOCUMENTARY 2002 55MIN

David Gulpilil leads a dual existence as a prominent Australian film actor and Yolngu elder in Arnhem Land, northern Australia. Beautifully shot by Robert Humphreys, Darlene Johnson's intimate and frank documentary portrait introduces us to the tensions between a film career and family life. Side by side with excerpts from his film appearances, we see Gulpilil at home, out hunting and cheerfully struggling with the challenges of Aboriginal life in a remote community.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Darlene Johnson

PRODUCER: Tom Zubrycki, Jotz Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Robert Humphreys

SOUND/SOUND DESIGN: Darlene Johnson, Leo Sullivan, Chris Bollard, Tom Zubrycki

COMPOSER: Felicity Fox

EDITOR: Emma Hay

DISTRIBUTOR: Ronin Films, ABC Content Sales

FFC Australia, ABC

*Gulpilil: One Red Blood* · 2002



# LAWRENCE JOHNSTON

## Eternity

DOCUMENTARY, 1994, 56MIN

Lawrence Johnston's lyrical documentary recreates the strange life of Arthur Stace (1884-1967) who for 40 years chalked the word 'Eternity' in elegant copperplate script some half a million times on Sydney's city pavements. For 30 of those years his identity was a mystery. Johnston's film shares Stace's elegance with a deft merging of archival footage, newspaper clippings, dramatic recreations (in evocative black and white) and interviews with artists inspired by the man's mission.

**WRITER, DIRECTOR:** Lawrence Johnston

**PRODUCER:** Susan MacKinnon, Vivid Pictures

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Dion Beebe

**MUSIC:** Ross Edwards

**SOUND:** Liam Egan

**EDITOR:** Annette Davey

**PRODUCTION DESIGNER:** Tony Campbell

**CAST:** Les Foxcroft

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Ronin Films

AFC, NSW FTO

Best Documentary Feature, Los Angeles  
Documentary Association, 1994

Kino Award, Creative Excellence in Australian Short  
Filmmaking, 1994

Australian Film Critics Circle Award, Best  
Documentary, 1994

Crystal Heart Award, Heartland Film Festival, USA,  
1994

Winner, Best Cinematography, AFI Awards, 1994  
Best Documentary, Sydney Film Festival, 1994

**The wonderful thing about the movies is that they have the capacity to contain beauty and emotion and express it on a portable scale to a wide audience in any part of the world. I think films have to be emotional. They have to be affecting in some way to really reach their audience. Films which people can identify with can be the most profound, and there is nothing better than being able to watch a film again and again. My interest is in human behaviour and the representation of the human spirit and what it means to be alive.**

**I do consider myself to be politically driven to an extent. I feel that all my work has had a humanist edge. Politics in cinema is about representation. There are many ways to be political and some of the best work has done this in representations of our culture and also been able to touch and affect people.**

WRITER, DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER Lawrence Johnston graduated from Victoria's Swinburne Film and Television School in 1990. His films have garnered awards locally and internationally. His first film, *Night Out*, screened in the 1990 Cannes Film Festival's Un Certain Regard program and was named "one of the year's best" by Village Voice. His next film, *Eternity*, about Sydney's legendary 'Mr Eternity', Arthur Stace, won the Los Angeles International Documentary Association Award for Best Feature and Best Cinematography (for Dion Beebe) at the 1995 AFI Awards. Johnston's feature film, *Life*, won the FIPRESCI International Critics' Prize at the 1997 Toronto Film Festival. In 2000 Johnston joined the AFC as a Project Manager in Film Development. He is currently in production on his feature documentary, *Night*.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Once a Queen*, 2006, documentary: writer, director, producer

*The Dream of Love*, 2005, documentary: writer, director, co-producer

*The Way Back*, 2003, drama: writer

*Life*, 1997, drama: director, co-writer

*Eternity*, 1994, documentary: writer, director, associate producer

*Night Out*, 1990, drama: writer, director, editor



*Eternity* · 1994





Eternity · 1994

# FRANCIS JUPURRULA KELLY

Nation: Warlpiri

## Bush Mechanics

DOCUMENTARY, 1999, 33MIN

After food, water and shelter, what's more important to a person of the desert than their car? Without trade certificates or formal training, these mechanics are the epitome of outback ingenuity. With good humour and resourcefulness, they make sure the car gets back on the road. This wonderfully informal documentary was such a success that the makers went on to create the four-part television series of the same name.

**DIRECTORS:** David Batty, Francis Jupurrula Kelly

**PRODUCER:** Tom Kantor, Warlpiri Media

**WRITERS:** Francis Jupurrula Kelly, David Batty

**CAMERA:** David Batty

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Bill Davis

**TRANSLATION/DIRECTION/PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT:**

Adrian Nelson, Donovan Rice

**EDITOR:** David Nixon

**DISTRIBUTOR:** enquiries to Warlpiri Media; TV series – ABC Content Sales

NIDF#2, ABC, AFC Indigenous Branch, Australia Council for the Arts' Community Cultural Development Fund

ABC TV, 1999

Nominee, Best Original Concept, AFI Awards, 2000

8th Festival of Pacific Arts, 2000

Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2004

**I wanted to make films for my people, for my community. We started out doing it pretty quietly, making rebel films without a licence. We made our own receiver aerials out of copper so people in the community could watch them.**

**In the old welfare days, outsiders would just come along and take pictures and go away and you'd never see them again. But now with Warlpiri Media we can make films for the community, broadcast them and archive them for the grandchildren and others that follow on. Filmmaking is growing. We're sharing things around to each other: new things, old things. All around you can hear people listening.**

FRANCIS JUPURRULA KELLY is based in the remote Central Desert community of Yuendumu. He was one of the key figures in the establishment of the Yuendumu Television Project which would later evolve into the Warlpiri Media Association. He was

involved in the making of *Coniston Story* (1984), *Jardiwarinpa* (Fire Ceremony, 1988), *Journey to Lapi* (1984) and has worked in every role from camera operator to news anchor on hundreds of video productions for community broadcast, as well as nationally broadcast programs such as *Manyu Wanna*, a series for children dubbed 'the Warlpiri *Sesame Street*', and the popular series *Bush Mechanics* which followed on from the acclaimed 1999 documentary of the same name.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Bush Mechanics*, 2001, TV series: co-writer, co-director (with David Batty)

*Bush Mechanics*, 1999, documentary: co-writer, co-director (with David Batty)

Bush Mechanics · 1999



# ERIC MURRAY LUI

**The first thing that attracted me to filmmaking? A girl in a sun-dress holding a stills camera. Filmmaking, in three words: LOVE YOUR WORK!**

ORIGINALLY FROM THURSDAY ISLAND in the Torres Strait, Sydney-based cinematographer Eric Murray Lui began his training at AFTRS in 1994. After completing the Indigenous Television Production course with Lester Bostock, he went on to complete an MA in Drama Cinematography in 2000. Since then he has counted SBS, SBSi, ABC and France's Canal+ among his employers and has shot various documentaries, short dramas (including Wayne Blair's *Black Talk* and *The Djarn Djarns* and Warwick Thornton's *Green Bush*), film clips, corporate videos, commercials, and features, including *Orange Love Story* (director Tom Cowan) and the IF Award winner, *The Finished People*, directed by Khoa Do. Most recently, he worked as

Camera B operator on the mini-series *RAN (Remote Area Nurse)* and *The Circuit* for SBSi.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Bit of Black Business*, 2007, TV series: director of photography

*The Circuit*, 2006, TV series: B Camera Operator  
*RAN, Remote Area Nurse*, 2006, TV series: B Camera Operator

*Green Bush*, 2005, drama: director of photography  
*The Djarn Djarns*, 2005, drama: director of photography

*Orange Love Story*, 2004, drama: director of photography (with Hugh Miller)

*The Finished People*, 2003, drama: director of photography (with Oliver Lawrence)

*Mimi*, 2002, drama: camera operator

*Black Talk*, 2002, drama: director of photography

*Black Talk* · 2002



## Road

DRAMA, 2000, 26MIN

Two young Aboriginal men from the country are caught up in big city violence. Hotly pursued after a brutal encounter with a racist, homophobic taxicab driver, they find moments of repose, singing a traditional song in a playground or dancing on a beach cliff-top. But tragedy looms in this morally complex drama, filmed with visceral energy, spare dialogue and a driving musical score.

**DIRECTOR:** Catriona McKenzie

**PRODUCERS:** Lisa Duff, Enda Murray, Virus Media

**WRITERS:** Catriona McKenzie, Matt Ford

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Allan Collins

**COMPOSER:** Steve Francis

**PRODUCTION DESIGN:** Karla Urizar

**EDITOR:** Tinzar Lwyn

**CAST:** Shane O'Mara, Gavin Richie, Mary Johnson, Tim Bishop

**DISTRIBUTOR:** enquiries to Virus Media or Lisa Duff

On Wheels, 2000, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO, AFTRS, Australia Council for the Arts, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

SBS TV, 2000

Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, 2003



## CATRIONA McKENZIE

Nation: Gurnai

**I started making films after doing a course with Lester Bostock, and I feel like I owe a lot to him for getting me started. The first script I wrote was a satire called *Cow*, which was the story of white colonisation from Daisy's perspective, Daisy being a Fresian cow [not native to Australia] with a guilt complex.**

**The first thing that attracted me to film was the power and the creative challenge that I saw in the essentially visual language of the medium. You can say so much with so few words. I love everything about the process. I love the conception, the way it boils away in the back of your brain. The writing can be tough, because it's so solitary. But then you band together with a group and all of a sudden it becomes collaborative. It's kind of heroic, you feel like you're in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Indigenous Filmmaking!* The process makes you bigger than yourself, forces you to access so many different parts of your brain and put such a wide variety of skills into action. I love that challenge.**

WRITER-DIRECTOR CATRIONA MCKENZIE studied scriptwriting in Lester Bostock's Koori Course at AFTRS in 1995. She attended the New York Film School (NYU) in 1996 in an exchange program and graduated from AFTRS in 2001 with a Master of Arts Honours in Directing. She has won numerous awards for her widely screened short dramas, such as *Road* and *Grange* (for ABC TV), and documentaries which include *Mr Patterns*, about the beginnings of the contemporary Aboriginal art movement in Central Australia in the 1970s. McKenzie was co-director (with David Caesar) on the groundbreaking series *RAN (Remote Area Nurse)* for SBSi about a white nurse working with an Indigenous community on an island off north-eastern Australia. She is currently developing her first feature film, *Satellite Boy*, and was set-up director on *The Circuit*, a mini-series filmed in Broome for SBSi.

Road · 2000



#### FILMOGRAPHY

*The Circuit*, 2006, TV drama series: director  
*RAN, Remote Area Nurse*, 2006, TV drama series: director  
*Mr Patterns*, 2004, documentary: director  
*Grange*, 2003, drama: writer, director  
*Fireflies*, 2003, TV drama series: writer, director  
*Macumba*, 2003, documentary: writer, director

*Redfern Beach*, 2001, drama: writer, director  
*Road*, 2000, drama: writer, director  
*The Third Note*, 1999, drama: writer, director  
*Gunje*, 1999, documentary: director  
*Rites of Passage*, 1999, documentary: director  
*Box*, 1997, drama: writer, director

*Mr Patterns* · 2004



#### **Mr Patterns**

DOCUMENTARY, 2004, 55MIN

In the early 1970s a schoolteacher, Geoff Bardon, encouraged the people of Papunya, west of Alice Springs, to transfer their traditional skills in sand art to canvas, reinvigorating local culture and triggering the international success of the Western Desert Art movement. Interviewing Bardon shortly before his death and including some of his own 16mm films, the filmmakers have created a fine tribute to the man and the Indigenous community with whom he collaborated.

**DIRECTOR:** Catriona Mackenzie

**WRITERS:** Nic Testoni, Jo Plomley

**PRODUCERS:** Nic Testoni, Jo Plomley, Megan McMurphy, Reelworld Productions

**EDITOR:** James Bradley

**DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Kim Batterham, Allan Collins

**COMPOSER:** Steve Francis with Michael McGlynn

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Film Australia

Film Australia, ABC, AFC, NSW FTO

Emerging Australian Filmmaker Award, Melbourne International Film Festival Short Film Competition, 2004

Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival, 2004

Best Documentary under 60 mins, Film Critics Circle of Australia, 2004

Best Documentary Film, Hawaii International Film Festival, 2004

Best Editing in a Non-Feature Film, Australian Film Institute Awards, 2005

London Australian Film Festival, 2005

ABC TV, 2005

## My Colour, Your Kind

DRAMA 1998 12MIN

Filmed with striking economy, *My Colour, Your Kind*, conveys the intense plight of an albino Aboriginal girl. In both black and white worlds her colour seems aberrant, either to be covered up or, like sin, to be washed away in a Catholic mission. Reduced to silence, staring deep into herself in a mirror, she must decide to which world she belongs.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Danielle Maclean

PRODUCER: Steven McGregor, CAAMA Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Allan Collins

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Catherine Mansill

SOUND DESIGN: Livia Ruzic

MUSIC: David Bridie, John Phillips

EDITOR: Nicolas Lee

CAST: Melissa Middleton, Christine Palmer,

Rob Wencke, Sylvia Merrick

DISTRIBUTOR: Film Australia

Shifting Sands, 1998, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi

Nominee, AFI Award, Best Screenplay in a Short Film, 1998

Gold Award, Australian Cinematographers Society Awards, 1998

Best Cinematography in Australian Short Film, Flickerfest Short Film Festival, 1999

8th Pacific Festival of the Arts, 2000

Telluride Film Festival, 2000

Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, 2003

## DANIELLE MACLEAN

Nation: Luritja/Warumungu

**A lot of my films have dealt with issues relating to identity. What makes someone who they are? Is it their background or is it purely environment?**

**I want to make films about Indigenous Australians, about their lives, their struggles and joys and about the policies that help shape their lives. I want to show Indigenous Australians in all their guises, not just as the drunk on the street corner but as mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, as grandparents and friends. I want to put Indigenous characters in situations that make the audience realise that we are all the same even though our beliefs may be different. As humans we all share the will to survive, to be happy and to provide for our families. But our environment has a definite influence in the outcome of our lives.**

**It is exciting to be able to work with others to make what you have written come to life. There is definitely a sense of community, a sense that you are all working towards a common goal.**

DARWIN-BASED WRITER-DIRECTOR Danielle Maclean worked at CAAMA throughout the 1990s as a production assistant as well as a writer-director on *Nganampa Anwernekenhe* ('ours' in Pitjantjatjara and Arrernte), a groundbreaking television series addressing Indigenous issues in the traditional languages of the region. Following this she made her own short drama, *My Colour, Your Kind*, as part of *Shifting Sands*. In 2003, she wrote and directed a short feature film, *Queen of Hearts*, about a young girl's experience of death. It won an AFI Award for Best Non-Feature Screenplay in 2004 and Certificate of Merit at the Chicago International Television Competition.

Maclean has also directed documentaries, including *For Who I Am—Bonita Mabo*, about the partner of the land rights activist Eddie Mabo. She has worked as a writer on the CAAMA children's drama series *Double Trouble* and is developing a new documentary, *Croker Island Exodus*, about a 3,000 kilometre cross-continental journey taken by 95 Stolen Generation children and their missionary carers in 1942 to escape the invading Japanese.



*My Colour, Your Kind* · 1998



### **Queen of Hearts**

**DRAMA, 2003, 48MIN**

Tensions are rife when 10-year-old Penny and family visit their Alice Springs relatives at Christmas. Nana is seriously ill and Penny's plans to make life easier for her go badly awry. *Queen of Hearts* is a wise, funny and sad film about love and responsibility, and a determined, observant child's first steps towards maturity.

**WRITER, DIRECTOR:** Danielle MacLean

**PRODUCER:** Charlotte Seymour

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Warwick Thornton

**PRODUCTION DESIGNER:** Sam Hobbs

**EDITOR:** Jane Moran

**COMPOSER:** David Bridie

**CAST:** Kirsty McDonald, Lillian Crombie, Lisa Flanagan

**DISTRIBUTOR:** SBS

SBSi, AFC Indigenous Branch, Film Victoria, NSW FTO

50 Minutes from Home Australian Film Festival, 2003  
SBS TV, 2003

Certificate of Merit, Feature Length Telefilm (Drama),  
Chicago International Television Competition, 2004  
Best Screenplay in a Short Film, AFI Awards, 2004

[Queen of Hearts](#) · 2003

#### **FILMOGRAPHY**

*Double Trouble*, 2006, TV series: writer

*Mparntwe Sacred Sites*, 2004, documentary;

*Nganampa Anwernekenhe* series episode: director

*Queen of Hearts*, 2003, drama: director, writer

*For Who I Am—Bonita Mabo*, 2001, documentary: director

*My Colour, Your Kind*, 1998, drama: director, writer



# STEVEN MCGREGOR

## **Cold Turkey**

DRAMA, 2002, 50MIN

*Cold Turkey* is an explicit account of a man's cruel emotional manipulation of his younger brother, using alcohol and deceit. The film unfolds at an engagingly leisured pace, building in intensity and delirium as the mystery of what happened on a drunken night ride in a stolen car is revealed through eerie flashbacks, fine performances and immersive cinematography.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Steven McGregor

PRODUCER: Priscilla Collins, CAAMA Productions

LINE PRODUCER: Kath Shelper

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Allan Collins

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Sam Hobbs

COMPOSER: David Bridie

SOUND DESIGN: Mike Gissing

EDITOR: Karen Johnson

CAST: John Moore, Wayne Munro, Kelton Pell

DISTRIBUTOR: CAAMA Productions

AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi

Nominee, Best Screenplay in a Non-Feature Film;  
Open Craft Award for Acting (John Moore), AFI  
Awards, 2003

Jury Commendation, Milan International Film  
Festival, 2003

St Kilda Film Festival, 2003

Adelaide International Film Festival, 2003

Message Sticks Festival, 2003

Winner, Best Film, International Down Under Film  
Festival, 2003

International Indigenous Film Forum, Switzerland,  
2003

**I was interested in cameras and it just evolved from there really. I'm motivated to tell honest and engaging stories about our community. Making a film is the scariest ride you can have. You set out to tell a story and therefore put yourself out on a limb. The end product can always be improved. That's why you do it all over again.**

BASED IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, writer-director Steven McGregor has produced a substantial number of films since 1996. He first worked in news broadcasting for Imparja Television as a cameraman and editor. He has made many music clips, commercials and corporate videos, was the series producer and a director on *Corroboree Rock*, an Indigenous music program, and has produced and directed programs for ABC TV's *Message Stick*. McGregor graduated from AFTRS in 2002 with a Master of Arts degree in Drama Directing. His documentaries as writer-director include *Apekathe*, *Merrepen* and *5 Seasons* (an Australian-Canadian co-production). In 2006 he directed *My Brother Vinnie* from a script by actor Aaron Pedersen. His 50-minute drama *Cold Turkey* has been screened at many international film festivals, nominated for a number of awards and received a Milano International Film Festival Jury Commendation in 2003.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*My Brother Vinnie*, 2006, documentary: director  
*Merrepen*, 2005, documentary: producer, director  
*5 Seasons*, 2003-04, documentary: director,  
co-writer

*Arafura Pearl*, 2002, documentary: story producer  
*Cold Turkey*, 2002, drama: writer, director  
*Willigans Fitzroy*, 2000, documentary: writer,  
associate producer

*The Watchers*, 2000, drama: producer, director  
*Apekathe*, 1997, documentary: writer, director



*Cold Turkey*, 2002





Cold Turkey 2002

# JULIE NIMMO

Nation: Wiradjuri

## Pioneers of Love

DOCUMENTARY, 2005, 104MIN

*Pioneers of Love* is an engrossing and moving two-part documentary set in tropical far north Queensland, employing rich archival material, recreations and interviews. It begins in 1910 with the forbidden love of a Russian immigrant, Leandro Illin, for a Ngadjon woman, Kitty, a 20-year-old widow with three children. Originally refused the right to marry, the couple flee and are protected by Aboriginal people. They marry but Kitty dies, leaving Leandro committed to his family and helping the Aboriginal community. The couple's descendants carry on a legacy of fighting for human rights to the present day.

**DIRECTOR, WRITER:** Julie Nimmo

**PRODUCER:** Richard Dennison, Orana Films

**CO-PRODUCER:** Mark Chapman, Big Island Films

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Ulrich-Stephan Krafzik

**EDITOR:** Michael Balson

**RECREATIONS CO-DIRECTOR:** Jan Cattoni

**ART DIRECTION:** Mark Norris

**MUSIC:** David Skinner, David Page

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Orana Films

SBSi, FFC, FTO, PFTC

**When someone tells me their story it's a privilege and so, to me, they're not just interviews they're cultural artefacts and they're very precious.**

**Interview, *Message Stick*, [www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au)**

JULIE NIMMO IS A REPORTER, producer and director who since 1996 has created a diverse range of television programs covering Indigenous affairs, multicultural and multimedia arts, Australian history, news and current affairs. She has worked primarily for SBS TV on ICAM and for the ABC on *Message Stick* where she directs regularly. Her recent films include *The Lost Ones*, *The Future of the Tent Embassy* and a profile of the activist Stephen Hagan. In 2002, she was the first Indigenous filmmaker to receive a prestigious Walkley Award for Journalism for the documentary, *No Fixed Address*, about homeless young people in Sydney.

In 2005, Nimmo completed writing and directing a two-part, two-hour documentary for SBSi, *Pioneers of Love*, a story about race set in tropical far north Queensland. She has recently worked with producer Chris Hilton on a documentary, *Songlines to the Seine*, about the opening of the Musee du Quai Branly in Paris, due for broadcast in 2007.

*Songlines to the Seine*, 2006, documentary: director  
*Pioneers of Love*, 2005, documentary: writer, director  
*No Fixed Address*, 2002, documentary: director  
*World of Dreaming (St Petersburg)*, 2000, documentary: director



Pioneers of Love · 2005

# RACHEL PERKINS

Nation: Arrernte/Kalkadoon

**People make films for so many reasons and each film has its own unique catalyst which gives it life. The films I have worked on have had different reasons for capturing my imagination. But one passion drives all my work and has remained the same since I began. This was articulated by Freda Glynn who gave me my first job. She argued that in a world only recently, but now completely dominated by another culture, it is critical for Indigenous Australians to have a voice. We, her Indigenous trainees at the time, were a conduit for that voice.**



**I believe filmmaking at its best, can restore pride, promote culture, give recognition, open minds and above all touch people in a way that few other mediums can. Indigenous Australians are now beginning to harness this medium and I see my work as part of this movement. It is difficult to assess what are often the intangible results of this work. But I hope Indigenous filmmaking can help restore our people to their rightful place as the heart of our society and culture in Australia in the 21st century.**

ORIGINALLY FROM CENTRAL AUSTRALIA, director and producer Rachel Perkins trained at CAAMA in Alice Springs, making her first programs for broadcast on the Aboriginal-owned Imparja Television. She was awarded the first Indigenous scholarship to study producing at AFTRS in 1995. Perkins has directed and produced a number of documentaries and television series. She directed the widely admired feature film *Radiance* (1998) about the traumatic reunion of three Aboriginal sisters. In 2001, she directed *One Night the Moon*, an innovative award-winning music drama.

Perkins has worked as executive producer for both SBS TV and ABC TV in their Indigenous Units. While at the ABC she commissioned the first National Indigenous Documentary Fund program as well as *Songlines*, the Aboriginal music program for ABC TV. She negotiated funding for the first AFC Indigenous Drama Initiative, *From Sand to Celluloid*, in 1994. In 1993 she established the production company, Blackfella Films which she operates in partnership with Darren Dale.

Blackfella Films focuses on innovative films by Indigenous people. Perkins is currently on the Board of Commissioners for the AFC and is also on the board of National Indigenous Television (NITV). She has also served on the boards of AFTRS and NSW FTO and is the current chairperson of Indigenous Screen Australia. In 2002 she was awarded the Byron Kennedy Award from the AFI for her contribution to the Australian film industry.

With Beck Cole, Rachel Perkins is co-writer and co-director of the forthcoming eight-part television series, *First Australians*, which is being produced by Blackfella Films with SBSi, FFC, ScreenWest and SAFC.

## Radiance

DRAMA, 1998, 80MIN

A mother's death reunites her three estranged daughters in their childhood home, a dilapidated house on a remote Queensland coast. Tensions escalate as the women are confronted with their mother's legacy of half-truths and unfinished business. The situation is made all the more complicated by the very different lives of the sisters as revealed in exceptional performances and the engrossing, richly textured cinematography.

**DIRECTOR:** Rachel Perkins

**PRODUCER:** Ned Lander, Andrew Myer

**WRITER:** Louis Nowra

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Warwick Thornton

**PRODUCTION DESIGNER:** Sarah Stollman

**COMPOSER:** Alistair Jones

**EDITOR:** James Bradley

**CAST:** Deborah Mailman, Rachael Maza, Trisha Morton-Thomas

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Ronin Films

AFC, SBSi, NSW FTO, Showtime Australia, PFTC

Best Feature Film, Audience Prize, Sydney Film Festival, 1998  
Best Feature Film, Audience Prize, Melbourne International Film Festival, 1998  
Best Feature Film, Audience Prize, Canberra Film Festival, 1998  
London Film Festival, 1998  
Toronto Film Festival, 1998  
Stockholm International Film Festival, 1998  
Best Performance (Deborah Mailman), AFI Awards, 1998  
Best Achievement, Sound Design and FX, Australian Screen Sound Guild, 1998  
Jury and Audience Prizes, Best Full-length Film, Festival Internazionale Cinema Delle Donne, Italy, 2000  
Best Debut Feature, Australian Critics Circle Award, 1998  
Honourable Mention, Hollywood Black Film Festival, 2000

*Radiance* · 1998

[continues over]

## One Night the Moon

DRAMA, 2001, 57MIN

In 1930s rural Australia, a child, enchanted by the moon, climbs through her bedroom window and vanishes into the bush. Albert, an Aboriginal tracker, has the skills to find the girl, but her father won't have 'blacks' on his land. Inspired by a true story, this innovative and haunting musical drama challenges a powerful trope in white Australian mythology—the lost child.

**DIRECTOR:** Rachel Perkins

**PRODUCERS:** Kevin Lucas, Aanya Whitehead, Paul Humfress, MusicArtsDance Films

**WRITERS:** Rachel Perkins, John Romeril

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Kim Batterham

**PRODUCTION DESIGN:** Sarah Stollman

**COMPOSERS:** Kev Carmody, Paul Kelly, Mairead Hannan

**EDITOR:** Karen Johnson

**CAST:** Paul Kelly, Kelton Pell, Kaarin Fairfax, Memphis Kelly, Ruby Hunter, Chris Haywood, David Field

**DISTRIBUTOR:** Dendy Films

AFC, ABC, NSW FTO, Australia Council for the Arts, OzOpera, SAFC

Best Television Original & Golden AWGIE, Australian Writers Guild Awards, 2001  
Best Feature Film, Moondance International Film Festival, Colorado, 2002  
AFI Open Craft Award for Musical Score, 2001  
AFI Award Best Cinematography in a non feature film, 2001  
Sundance Film Festival, 2002  
Hawaii International Film Festival, 2001  
Moscow International Film Festival, 2001  
Melbourne, Brisbane & Perth International Film Festivals, 2001  
New York International Independent Film & Video Festival, 2001  
Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) Festival, 2001





#### FILMOGRAPHY

*First Australians*, 2007, documentary series: writer, director, producer

*Mimi*, 2002, drama: producer (with Darren Dale)

*Flat*, 2002, drama: producer (with Darren Dale)

*One Night the Moon*, 2001, drama: director

*Radiance*, 1998, drama: director

*Songlines*, 1997, TV music series:

director, executive producer

*Crim TV*, 1996, documentary: director, producer

*Payback*, 1996, drama: producer

*Freedom Ride*, 1993, documentary: director

*From Spirit to Spirit*, 1993; documentary series: producer

*From the Bush*, 1993, documentary: director

*Blood Brothers*, 1993, documentary series: producer, director

*One Night the Moon* · 2001

## SALLY RILEY

Nation: Wiradjuri

### Confessions of a Headhunter

DRAMA, 2000, 33MIN

Starting out as a taut murder mystery, *Confessions of a Headhunter* soon briskly under-cuts all kinds of assumptions. The Dutchman learns that his heritage is Aboriginal, not Anglo-Indonesian, and that the statue of a 19th century Aboriginal leader, Yagan, has recently been twice decapitated. In an act of vengeance, the Dutchman and his newly found Indigenous cousin cross Australia collecting the heads of the statues of white colonial heroes. But their protest becomes art and vengeance restitution in this wryly irreverent film.

**DIRECTOR:** Sally Riley

**PRODUCER:** Kath Shelper, Scarlett Pictures

**WRITERS:** Sally Riley, Archie Weller

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Robert Humphreys

**SOUND DESIGNER:** Liam Egan

**COMPOSER:** Roger Mason

**PRODUCTION DESIGN:** Gavin Barbey

**EDITOR:** Martin Connor

**CAST:** Bruce Hutchison, Kelton Pell, Matt Potter, John Gregg, Morton Hansen

On Wheels, 1999, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO, ScreenWest

Cinema Nova Award for Best Short Fiction Film, AFI Awards, 2000

Nominated for, Best Short Fiction Script, AWGIE Awards, 2000

Best Music for Short Film, Australian Guild of Screen Composers Awards, 2000

8th Festival of Pacific Arts, 2000

Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, 2003

**I've been hooked on film ever since I was a kid making the weekly trek to the local drive-in with a car-load of family and friends. Along with the films, what sticks in my memory is the communal gathering, sitting on our bean-bags under the stars with a couple hundred other people. This for me is what film can do—bring people together to experience the world from another person's perspective. That's what drives me as a filmmaker—taking the audience into worlds that they have not experienced and giving people a voice. My films have mostly been about identity, family and belonging—personal stories that I have a deep desire to explore.**

**It is a real privilege to work with other filmmakers on their films. Finding ways to give them what they need to fulfil their vision is incredibly challenging and satisfying. We are at a key moment in the history of Indigenous filmmaking and I'm proud to be a part of it.**

WRITER-DIRECTOR SALLY RILEY has worked as a theatre director and as writer-in-residence at CAAMA TV in Alice Springs. While working as a trainee producer at Film Australia, she wrote and directed her first film, *Fly Peewee, Fly!*, which was shown at a number of international film festivals. Her documentary *In Search of Archie*, about writer Archie Weller, was commissioned by the Indigenous Programs Unit of the ABC. The short drama, *Confessions of a Headhunter*, won Best Short Fiction Film at the 2000 AFI Awards. A strong advocate for Aboriginal self-representation in the Australian film industry, Sally Riley is currently the manager of the AFC's Indigenous Branch.

### FILMOGRAPHY

*Confessions of a Headhunter*, 2000, drama: director  
*In Search of Archie*, 1998, documentary: director, writer, producer

*Fly Peewee Fly*, 1998, drama: director, writer



Confessions of a Headhunter · 2000



# MICHAEL RILEY

Nation: Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi

## Empire

ART FILM, 1998, 18MIN

*Michael Riley's work addresses processes of assimilation: the removing of Indigenous peoples onto reserves to 'die out' and the imposed conversion to Christianity. Recognising both negative and positive outcomes of his upbringing, Riley seeks to make sense of a history that defies simple resolution.*

Catalogue, Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art, 2000 Adelaide Festival

With a poetic vision that emerged from his work as both photographer and documentary filmmaker, Michael Riley laterally evokes a decaying British empire and a threatened Indigenous people through his lyrical visual and aural treatment of iconic images of the land, of native and introduced animals and the artefacts of cultural invasion.

**DIRECTOR, WRITER:** Michael Riley

**PRODUCER:** Michael Riley, ABC TV Indigenous Production Unit

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** David Maguire

**EDITOR:** Philippa Byers

**COMPOSER:** Anthony Partos

**DISTRIBUTOR:** ABC Content Sales

BORN IN DUBBO AND RAISED on Talbragar Reserve in western New South Wales, Michael Riley (1960–2004) trained in photography from 1982 at the Tin Sheds Gallery, University of Sydney, and later became the photographic technician at the Sydney College of the Arts. Over an impressive career, in which he established himself as one of Australia's leading visual artists, Riley created a substantial body of work encompassing black and white portraiture, film, video and large-scale digital works. In 1986 he was one of the founders of the influential Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative, set up in Sydney to promote urban Aboriginal arts. He wrote and directed *Boomalli: Five Artists* (1988), his first film, while working at Film Australia. His subsequent films included *Dreamings* (1988) and a number made

freelance for ABC TV including *Poison* (1991), *Malangi* (1991), *Tent Boxers* (2000) and *Blacktracker* (1996), based on the life of his grandfather, Alexander 'Tracker' Riley.

Riley's best known work, the film *Empire* (1997), has been shown around the world in exhibitions and film festivals. A major retrospective of his work, *Sights Unseen*, is being staged at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra in 2006 and will tour nationally into 2008.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Tent Boxers*, 2000, documentary: director, producer  
*Empire*, 1998, documentary: director  
*Blacktracker*, 1996, documentary: producer, director  
*Poison*, 1996, drama: producer, director





# SAMANTHA SAUNDERS

## Turn Around

DRAMA 2002 12MIN

*Turn Around* is a light-hearted love story filmed and performed with a suspenseful, sexy intensity. In a country town Charlie finds a wallet belonging to an attractive city girl. He decides to return it in person but has to hitch a ride with the girl next door, Glenni, and finds himself on a very different romantic journey.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Samantha Saunders

PRODUCER: Jenny Day, Spirited Films Pty Ltd

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Justine Kerrigan

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Andrew Hays

COMPOSER: Basil Hogios

EDITOR: Karen Johnson

CAST: Lisa Flannigan, Wayne Munro

Dreaming in Motion, 2002, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO

Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, 2003

Sao Paulo International Film Festival, 2003

Sundance Film Festival, 2004

**I have been writing screenplays for the past nine years. The majority of my work focuses on Aboriginal characters who live in the contemporary world. I write to break down borders. My sensibility has always been global and my passion is always to find expression through films to bring individuals seemingly apart closer in understanding.**

WRITER SAMANTHA SAUNDERS' first film as director, from her own screenplay, was *Turn Around*. Her second was a documentary for the ABC TV Indigenous Programs Unit, *Home Away from Home*. Filmed in the Cherbourg Mission in Queensland, it focuses on the reunion of children schooled there from 1941 to 1943. Saunders is currently developing a feature film with the assistance of Film Victoria, drawing on the lives of women servants who were effectively slaves in white households in the 1950s.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Home Away From Home*, 2004, documentary: director

*Turn Around*, 2002, drama: writer, director



Turn Around · 2002

# IVAN SEN

Nation: Gamilaroi

**I see drama as something so special that I only want to save it for the special stories. ...In the meantime I shoot and usually edit all my own documentary work, which is very hands-on. You just can't beat that as a learning experience. Editing pictures together has a lot of influence on my scriptwriting. I don't know what it's like for other people, but you get to the stage where you realise that feature filmmaking, especially in this country, is a part-time job. So you have to do your number one job and do features on the side. But in saying that, the documentary subjects that I've been working with over the last year or two ... they're so fulfilling and rewarding, and finding that kind of satisfaction in drama is really rare.**

**Interview, AFC News, May 2006. [www.afc.gov.au](http://www.afc.gov.au)**

RAISED IN INVERELL, NEW SOUTH WALES, director, writer and composer Ivan Sen trained in film, video and photography in Brisbane and went on to AFTRS where he completed a degree in directing. He has made numerous award-winning films, including short dramas, documentary and experimental works. His feature film, *Beneath Clouds*, premiered in competition in the 2002 Berlin International Film Festival. The film was selected for the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, won the Premiere First Movie Award in Berlin and Best Director in the 2002 AFI Awards.

Sen's 2004 documentary, *Who Was Evelyn Orcher?*, dealt with a relative, one of the Stolen Generation, who was abducted from her family at 14 years of age and reunited with them 31 years later. His documentary about actor Tom E. Lewis' search for his white father's grave, *Yellow Fella*, was screened in the Cannes Film Festival's Un Certain Regard selection for 2005. The latest episode in Sen's *Shifting Shelter* series, tracing the lives of young Aboriginals, was shown at the 2006 Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival at the Sydney Opera House. His most recent documentary, *A Sister's Love*, premiered at the 2007 festival.

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## Beneath Clouds

2002, DRAMA, 87MIN

Two reticent young people meet on the vast open roads of rural Australia in a wonderfully sustained and subtle exploration of interior lives. Vaughan, an Aboriginal, has escaped a prison farm to visit his dying mother. Teenage Lena has left her Aboriginal mother in search of her white father. A tense but rewarding, if provisional, relationship unfolds yielding quiet insights into race and age.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Ivan Sen

PRODUCER: Teresa-Jayne Hanlon

DIRECTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Allan Collins

COMPOSERS: Alister Spence, Ivan Sen

EDITOR: Karen Johnson

CAST: Danielle Hall, Damian Pitt, Jenna Lee Connors, Simon Swan, Mundarra Weldon

DISTRIBUTOR: Dendy Films

AFC, NSW FTO, Dendy Films, Axiom, SBSi

Best First Film, Best New Talent (actress Danielle Hall), Berlin International Film Festival, 2002  
Durban International Film Festival, 2002  
Best Direction and Best Cinematography, AFI Awards, 2002

Best Direction, IF Awards, 2002  
Sundance International Film Festival, 2003  
Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival, 2003  
Goteborg International Film Festival, 2003

*Beneath Clouds* · 2002



## Yellow Fella

2005, DOCUMENTARY, 25MIN

Film and stage actor Tom E. Lewis first appeared in the feature film *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (director Fred Schepisi, 1978) in the title role. Like Blacksmith, Lewis has found himself torn between two cultures. Sen's film follows him on an emotionally demanding search for the grave of his Welsh stockman father. His Aboriginal mother, a traditional Ngungubuyu woman of southern Arnhem Land, is a quiet presence, accompanying Lewis on his quest while Sen quizzes his subject from behind the camera.

**DIRECTOR:** Ivan Sen

**PRODUCER:** Citty Williams, CAAMA Productions

**WRITERS:** Tom E Lewis, Fleur Parry

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Ivan Sen

**EDITOR:** Alison Croft

**SOUND:** Kuji Jenkins

AFC Indigenous Branch

**DISTRIBUTOR:** CAAMA Productions

NIDF#6, AFC Indigenous Branch, FFC, SBSi

International Festival of Oceania Documentary Film,  
Tahiti, 2006

Cannes International Film Festival, 2005

## FILMOGRAPHY

*A Sister's Love*, 2006, documentary: writer, director

*Auntie Connie*, 2006, documentary: writer, director

*Shifting Shelter 3*, 2006, documentary: writer, director

*Yellow Fella*, 2005, documentary: writer, director

*Who Was Evelyn Orcher?*, 2004, documentary: writer, director

*The Dreamers*, 2003, documentary: director

*Beneath Clouds*, 2001, drama: director, writer, composer

*Dust*, 2000, drama: director, writer

*Wind*, 1999, drama: director, writer

*Tears*, 1998, drama: director, writer

[Wind](#) · 1999



[Yellow Fella](#) · 2005





# RIMA TAMOU

Nation: Bulgunwarra/Ngati Ruanui (Maori)

## Round Up

DRAMA, 1996, 16MIN

Faced with the unfamiliar environment of a big city, two antagonistic country boys, one white and one black, learn that they are not as different as they thought. Tamou alternates visceral action with moments of quiet reflection as the young men edge towards maturity and an unspoken friendship.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Rima Tamou

PRODUCER: Pauline Clague, Core Original Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Kim Batterham

COMPOSER: David Page

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Kylie Mclean

EDITOR: John Scott

CAST: Ben Oxenbould, Gary Cooper, Lillian Crombie

DISTRIBUTOR: Film Australia

From Sand to Celluloid, 1996, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO

Cinema des Antipodes, France, 1996

Dendy Ethnic Affairs Commission Award, 1996

The Australian Collection, ABC TV, 1997

Best Short, ATOM Awards, 1997

Best Short, 42nd Asia-Pacific Film Festival, 1997

RAKA Kate Challis Award for Scriptwriting, 1999

**I started making films because, like a good song, a good film can make a lasting impression. It's a very powerful medium.**

**I seem to gravitate towards issues like inequality and identity probably because at this point in my development I feel that I relate to them more. It's only natural that we view life through our own political, cultural and personal experiences. That's who I am and that's where my passion for making films comes from.**

**I've always been drawn to the collaborative process of filmmaking. When it works, the combination of creative and practical people producing work under pressure gives rise to, if not a sense of community, then definitely a sense of camaraderie.**

Round Up · 1996

WRITER-DIRECTOR RIMA TAMOU comes from Innisfail in far north Queensland. He studied at Griffith University with a view towards a career in Foreign Affairs but discovered his passion for filmmaking when he also enrolled in Media Production. His first film, *Lost in my Homeland*, starred a then unknown Deborah Mailman. He went on to study under Lester Bostock at AFTRS and has subsequently directed dramas, documentaries and corporate videos. Tamou worked as a field producer for the ABC's Indigenous Programs Unit on the *Black Out Back* and *Songlines* series, and continues to work freelance for the television magazine programs *Message Stick* and *Living Black* while developing several feature film scripts.



#### FILMOGRAPHY

*Sa Black Thing*, 2005, drama: writer, director

*Ankula Watjarira*, 2003, documentary: director

*Desperate Times*, 2002, documentary: co-writer, director

*Saturday Night, Sunday Morning*, 1999, drama: director, co-writer

*Round Up*, 1996, drama: writer, director



*Saturday Night, Sunday Morning* · 1999

#### **Saturday Night, Sunday Morning**

DRAMA, 1999, 26MIN

When Melanie, a white teenager in conflict with her single father, is abducted by three young men, two of them Aboriginal, she learns something about race and about her own strength. Sensitively realised, *Saturday Night, Sunday Morning* is suspenseful and urgent.

**DIRECTOR:** Rima Tamou

**PRODUCER:** Pauline Clague, Core Original Productions

**WRITERS:** Rima Tamou, Archie Weller

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Warwick Thornton

**PRODUCTION DESIGN:** Kylie McLean

**SOUND DESIGN:** Nigel Christensen, Andrew Belletty

**EDITOR:** Milena Romanin

**CAST:** Peter Browne, Luke Carroll, Alyssa McClelland, Sam O'Dell, Jie Pittman

Crossing Tracks, 1999, AFC Indigenous Unit, SBSi, NSW FTO, ABC

Best Original Concept, Longer Format Drama,  
Tudawali Film and Video Awards, 2000  
Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, 2003

# WARWICK THORNTON

Nation: Kaytej

## Green Bush

DRAMA, 2005, 26MIN

DJ Kenny works the night shift in a remote radio station in Central Australia in the early 1980s, hosting a program for the local prison audience and their friends and relatives. The night takes an eerie turn as a succession of elderly visitors appear, equipment breaks down and domestic violence intrudes. In a film full of suspense, humour and insight, set against a background of posters and music of Aboriginal pride and protest of the time, we observe Kenny's feelings of helplessness as he attempts to hold his small nocturnal community together.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Warwick Thornton

PRODUCER: Kath Shelper, Film Depot, CAAMA Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Murray Lui

SOUNDTRACK: Liam Egan

PRODUCTION DESIGN: Daran Fulham

EDITOR: Roland Gallois

CAST: David Page, Ted Egan, Audrey Martin, Leo Wayne

DISTRIBUTOR: Flickerfest

Dramatically Black, 2005, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi

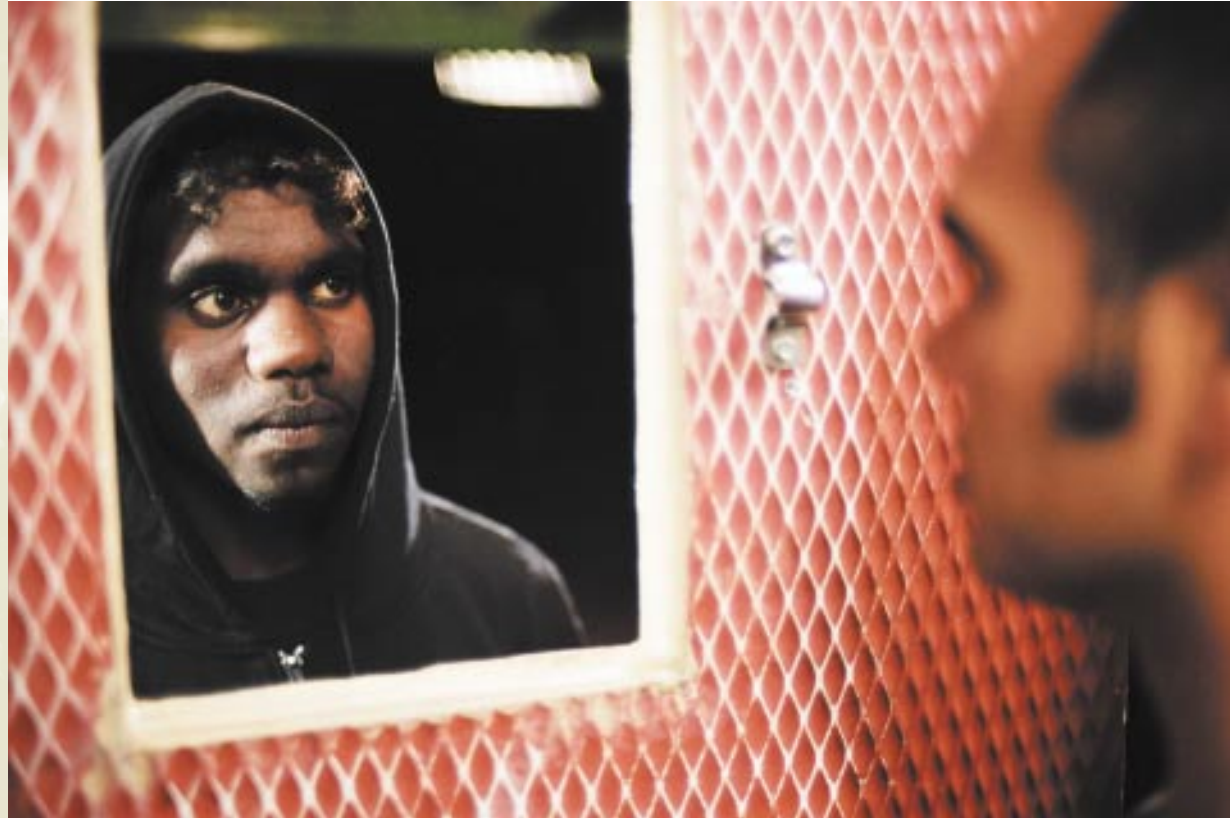
Dendy Award and Rouben Mamoulian Award, Sydney Film Festival, 2005

Best Short Film, Panorama Berlin Film Festival, 2005

Official Selection, Sundance Film Festival, 2005

Official Selection, Hamburg Short Film Festival, 2005

London Film Festival, 2005



**I don't know what drives me; it's a bit of a love/hate relationship. If I ever find out I'll probably stop making films. It's the only thing I know ... or don't know.**

ALICE SPRINGS-BASED writer-director Warwick Thornton commenced his career as a cameraman for CAAMA in 1990. His mother was one of CAAMA's founders, and Thornton grew up assisting on the organisation's film and radio projects. He graduated in cinematography from AFTRS in 1997. Later that year he shot his first feature film, *Radiance*. In 1998 he was cinematographer on the award-winning short dramas *My Bed Your Bed* and *Promise*. Subsequent credits include *Queen of Hearts*, *Flat*, *Buried Country*

and *Plains Empty*. Thornton has directed numerous documentaries including *The Good, The Bad and The Loud* about the history of CAAMA Music, and *Rosalie's Journey*, a half-hour documentary about Rosalie Gnarla Kunoth, who played the title role in the 1955 feature film *Jedda* (director Charles Chauvel).

Thornton's short dramas, *Payback*, *Mimi* and *Green Bush*, have been screened at international film festivals. *Green Bush* won Best Short Film in the Panorama Section of the 2005 Berlin International Film Festival and two Dendy Awards for Australian Short Film at the 2005 Sydney Film Festival. Warwick Thornton is currently developing a drama series and two feature films.



Green Bush · 2005

#### FILMOGRAPHY

*Green Bush*, 2005, drama: writer, director  
*Plains Empty*, 2004, drama: director of photography  
*Rosalie's Journey*, 2003, documentary: director, writer, director of photography  
*Mimi*, 2002, drama: director, writer, director of photography  
*Willigans Fitzroy*, 2000, documentary: director of photography  
*My Bed Your Bed*, 1998, drama: director of photography  
*Radiance*, 1997, drama: director of photography  
*Payback*, 1996, drama: director, writer, director of photography

#### Payback

DRAMA, 1996, 10MIN

In this suspenseful film, shot in black and white, Paddy has served his sentence of many years in jail under white law, but a ghostly figure warns that a traditional retribution ceremony, payback, awaits him. Paddy leaves jail to bravely face media cameras and spears.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Warwick Thornton

PRODUCER: Penny McDonald, Chilli Films

CO-PRODUCER: Rachel Perkins, Blackfella Films

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Warwick Thornton

SOUND DESIGN: Andrew Belletty

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Daran Fulham

EDITOR: Anne Pratten

CAST: George Djilaynga, Charlie Matjiwi, Peter Datjng, Larry Yapuma

DISTRIBUTOR: Film Australia

Sand to Celluloid, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, NSW FTO

Telluride Film Festival, USA, 1996

Cinema des Antipodes, France, 1996

Clermont-Ferrand international Film Festival, 1997

8th Festival of Pacific Arts, New Caledonia, 2000



Payback · 1996

## Promise

DRAMA, 1998, 10MIN

As she advises her grand-daughter on how to make damper, an old woman relates the story of a life without choice. Given by her parents to an aunt who taught her traditional practices, she faced the challenge of a promised marriage and its slow road to affection. This is a gentle, conversational film, the making of the damper providing an effective metaphor for a life of sharing.

WRITER, DIRECTOR: Mitch Torres

PRODUCER: Pauline Clague, Core Original Productions

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Warwick Thornton

SOUND DESIGNER: Andrew Belletty

PRODUCTION DESIGNER: Daran Fulham

EDITOR: Melanie Sandford

CAST: Sylvia Clarke, Ali Torres

DISTRIBUTOR: Film Australia

Shifting Sands, 1998, AFC Indigenous Branch, SBSi, ScreenWest

Nominee, Best Short, Bombard Film Festival, 1998  
Nominee Best Short, WOW Festival, 1998

## MITCH TORRES

Nation: Yawurru/Goonyandi

**Stories have a message for everyone from all walks of life, all cultures, religions, whatever. So when I have found one that pulls at my heartstrings, I know it will have the same effect anywhere in the world. These are the stories I have looked for to make into visual stories and I hope, in the end, they speak for themselves. All my films have been a labour of love and I hope that they contribute to a better understanding of what it means to be an Australian.**

WRITER-DIRECTOR MITCH TORRES brings to film her experiences as journalist, radio broadcaster, actor and playwright and her knowledge of her hometown, Broome, in north-western Australia. Her people are from the Kimberley region. She has been working freelance as writer, director and researcher since 1998, creating dramas and documentaries. The powerful *Whispering in Our Hearts* is about the massacre of an Indigenous community in 1916. *Case 442*, for CAAMA and ABC TV, is about a man's 60-year search for the

mother he was taken away from as part of government policy when he was five years of age.

As part of Film Australia's *Everyday Brave* series, Torres directed *Saltwater Bluesman—Uncle Kiddo Taylor*, a documentary about one of the musical fathers of the unique 'Broome sound', conveying the complex cultural heritage of the town—Aboriginal, Japanese, Malay, Filipino, Indonesian, Chinese and European.

### FILMOGRAPHY

*Case 442*, 2005, documentary: director, writer  
*Whispering in Our Hearts*, 2002, documentary: director  
*Saltwater Bluesman—Uncle Kiddo Taylor*, 2002, documentary: director  
*Mistake Creek—Steven Craig*, 2002, documentary: writer  
*Bungarung Orchestra*, 1999, documentary: story producer  
*Promise*, 1998, drama: director, writer



Promise · 1998

Case 442 · 2005



# DRAMA INITIATIVE SERIES

Films developed and produced in association with the Indigenous Branch of the Australian Film Commission

CODE  
w writer d director with developed with the assistance of p producer cp co-producer db distributor [1] duration in minutes

## 1. FROM SAND TO CELLULOID [1996]

No Way to Forget	wd Richard Frankland	p John Foss, Golden Seahorse Productions	with SBSi, Filmmakers' Fund, Film Victoria	db Film Australia	[10]
Round Up	wd Rima Tamou	p Pauline Clague, Core Original	with SBSi	db Film Australia	[16]
Fly Peewee Fly!	wd Sally Riley	p Adrienne Parr, Film Australia	with SBSi	db Film Australia	[10]
Black Man Down	d Bill McCrow	wcp Sam Watson	p Bruce Redman, Red Movies	with SBSi, PFTC	db Film Australia [11]
Payback	wd Warwick Thornton	p Penny McDonald	cp Rachel Perkins	with SBSi, NSW FTO	db Film Australia [10]
Two Bob Mermaid	wd Darlene Johnson	p Antonia Barnard, Unthank Films	with NSW FTO, SBSi	db Film Australia	[16]

## 2. SHIFTING SANDS [1998]

Grace	wd Wesley Enoch	p Owen Johnston, Justin Malbon	with SBSi PFTC	db Film Australia	[16]
My Bed Your Bed	wd Erica Glynn	p Penelope McDonald	with SBSi	db Film Australia	[19]
Passing Through	wd Mark Olive	p Helen Lovelock, Green Island Films	with NSW FTO, SBSi	db Film Australia	[13]
Promise	wd Mitch Torres	p Pauline Clague, Core Original	with ScreenWest, SBSi, Lotteries Commission WA	db Film Australia	[15]
My Colour, Your Kind	wd Danielle Maclean	p Steven McGregor, CAAMA Productions	with SBSi	db Film Australia	[12]
Tears	wd Ivan Sen	p Teresa-Jayne Hanlon, Autumn Films	with SBSi	db Film Australia	[15]

## 3. CROSSING TRACKS [1999]

Saturday Night, Sunday Morning	wd Rima Tamou,	w Archie Weller	p Pauline Clague, Core Original	with SBSi, NSW FTO	[26]
Harry's War	wd Richard Frankland	p John Foss, Richard Frankland, Golden Seahorse Productions	with SBSi, Film Victoria, ABC	db FrontRow Video	[28]
Wind	wd Ivan Sen	p Graeme Issac, Mayfan	with NSW FTO, SBSi, ABC	db Ronin Films	[35]

#### 4. ON WHEELS [2000]

<b>Dust</b>	<b>wd</b> Ivan Sen	<b>p</b> Teresa-Jayne Hanlon, Autumn Films	<b>with</b> NSW FTO, SBSi	<b>db</b> SBS	<b>[20]</b>
<b>Road</b>	<b>wd</b> Catriona McKenzie	<b>w</b> Matt Ford	<b>p</b> Lisa Duff, Enda Murray, Virus Media	<b>with</b> SBSi, NSW FTO, AFTRS, Australia Council, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs	<b>db</b> Virus Media, Lisa Duff <b>[26]</b>
<b>Confessions of a Headhunter</b>	<b>wd</b> Sally Riley	<b>w</b> Archie Weller	<b>p</b> Kath Shelper, Scarlett Pictures	<b>with</b> SBSi, NSW FTO, Screen West	<b>[33]</b>

#### 5. DREAMING IN MOTION [2002]

<b>Black Talk</b>	<b>wd</b> Wayne Blair	<b>p</b> Kylie Du Fresne, RB Films	<b>with</b> SBSi, NSW FTO	<b>db</b> SBS	<b>[12]</b>
<b>Flat</b>	<b>wd</b> director Beck Cole	<b>p</b> Rachel Perkins	<b>cp</b> Darren Dale, Blackfella Films	<b>with</b> SBSi	<b>[13]</b>
<b>Mimi</b>	<b>wd</b> Warwick Thornton	<b>p</b> Rachel Perkins	<b>cp</b> Darren Dale, Blackfella Films	<b>with</b> SBSi, NSW FTO	<b>[14]</b>
<b>Shit Skin</b>	<b>wd</b> Nicholas Boseley	<b>p</b> Kimba Thompson, Sista Girl Productions	<b>with</b> SBSi, Film Victoria	<b>[13]</b>	
<b>Turn Around</b>	<b>wd</b> Samantha Saunders	<b>p</b> Jenny Day, Spirited Films	<b>with</b> SBSi, NSW FTO	<b>[12]</b>	

#### 6. DRAMATICALLY BLACK [2005]

<b>The Djarn Djarns</b>	<b>wd</b> Wayne Blair	<b>p</b> Kylie du Fresne, RB Films	<b>with</b> SBSi, NSW FTO	<b>db</b> Flickerfest	<b>[26]</b>
<b>Sa Black Thing</b>	<b>wd</b> Rima Tamou	<b>p</b> Pauline Clague, Core Original	<b>with</b> SBSi	<b>db</b> SBS	<b>[26]</b>
<b>Plains Empty</b>	<b>wd</b> Beck Cole	<b>p</b> Kath Shelper, Film Depot	<b>with</b> SBSi, SAFC, NSW FTO	<b>db</b> Flickerfest	<b>[26]</b>
<b>Green Bush</b>	<b>wd</b> Warwick Thornton	<b>p</b> Kath Shelper, Film Depot	<b>with</b> SBSi, CAAMA Pdtns	<b>db</b> Flickerfest	<b>[26]</b>
<b>Crocodile Dreaming*</b>	<b>wd</b> Darlene Johnson	<b>p</b> Sue Milliken	SBSi, SAFC, NSW FTO. All Roads Film Festival, Adelaide Film Festival	<b>[25]</b>	*2006

#### 7. BIT OF BLACK BUSINESS [2007]: 13 5-MIN DRAMAS WITH SBS, NSW FTO, SCREENWEST

# DISTRIBUTION ENQUIRIES

Most of the films in this book are distributed by the following companies and organisations.  
Where a film entry does not list a distributor we have provided where possible the contact details for the producer.

## DISTRIBUTORS

### ABC Content Sales

#### ABC Enterprises

GPO Box 9994 Sydney NSW 2001 Australia  
Ph +61 2 8333 1500  
Fax +61 2 8333 1051  
<http://abcenterprises.com.au>

### CAAMA Productions

P.O. Box 2608 Alice Springs NT 0871 Australia  
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### Dendy Films

34 Lennox St Newtown NSW 2042 Australia  
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[info@dendyfilms.com.au](mailto:info@dendyfilms.com.au)  
[www.dendyfilms.com.au](http://www.dendyfilms.com.au)

### Film Australia

PO Box 46 Lindfield NSW 2070 Australia  
Ph +61 2 9413 8705  
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[sales@filmaust.com.au](mailto:sales@filmaust.com.au)  
[www.filmaust.com.au](http://www.filmaust.com.au)  
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### Flickerfest

PO Box 7417 Bondi Beach NSW 2026 Australia  
Ph +61 2 9365 6877  
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[info@flickerfest.com.au](mailto:info@flickerfest.com.au)  
[www.flickerfest.com.au](http://www.flickerfest.com.au)

### FrontRow Video Distribution

PO Box 80 West Brunswick VIC 3055 Australia  
Ph +61 3 9387 3047  
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[frontrowvideo@frontrowvideo.com.au](mailto:frontrowvideo@frontrowvideo.com.au)  
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### Orana Films

12 Tarrant Avenue Bellevue Hill NSW 2023 Australia  
Ph +61 2 9326 1915  
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### Ronin Films

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### SBS Content Sales

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[www.sbs.com.au/contentsales](http://www.sbs.com.au/contentsales)

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### Blackfella Films

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[www.blackfellafilms.com.au](http://www.blackfellafilms.com.au)

### Core Original Productions

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### Film Depot

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[www.filmdepot.com.au](http://www.filmdepot.com.au)

### Lisa Duff

450 Wilson St Darlington NSW 2008 Australia  
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### Golden Seahorse Productions

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### RB Films Pty Ltd

PO Box 283 Annandale NSW 2038 Australia  
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[info@rbfilms.com.au](mailto:info@rbfilms.com.au)  
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### Sista Girl Productions

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### Virus Media

8 The Boulevard Lewisham NSW 2049 Australia  
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### Warlpiri Media Association

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Further information can be found at:  
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[www.blackbook.afc.gov.au](http://www.blackbook.afc.gov.au)

# PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

## Film

Beneath Clouds  
Black Talk  
Bush Mechanics  
Case 442  
Cold Turkey  
Confessions of a Headhunter  
Crocodile Dreaming  
Dhakiyarr vs the King  
Empire: Flyblown series  
Eternity  
Five Seasons  
Flat  
Freedom Ride  
Green Bush  
Gulpilil: One Red Blood  
Harry's War  
Kangaroo Dance  
Lousy Little Sixpence  
Mimi  
Merrepen  
Mr Patterns  
My Bed Your Bed  
My Colour, Your Kind  
My Survival as an Aboriginal  
Ngangkari  
No Way to Forget  
One Night the Moon  
Payback  
Pioneers of Love  
Plains Empty  
Promise  
Queen of Hearts  
Radiance  
RAN  
Road  
Round Up  
Sa Black Thing  
Saturday Night, Sunday Morning  
Shit Skin  
Strike Your Heart  
The Circuit  
The Djarn Djarns  
Turn Around  
Two Bob Mermaid  
Wirriya—Small Boy  
Yellow Fella  
Photograph of Lester Bostock

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CAAMA Productions  
Blackfella Films  
City Pictures  
Film Depot, CAAMA Productions  
Ronin Films  
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Blackfella Films, Tom Cowan, Ned Lander, Michael Riley Foundation  
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Blackfella Films  
Message Stick, ABC TV  
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Film Depot  
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Seymour Films  
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Chapman Pictures  
Lisa Duff, Catriona McKenzie  
Core Films  
Core Films  
Core Films  
Sista Girl Productions  
Wayne Barker  
Media World Productions  
RB Films  
Spirited Films  
Unthank Films  
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CAAMA Productions  
Mervyn Bishop

# INDEX



## FILMMAKERS

Barker, Wayne Jowandi 14, 24  
Blair, Wayne 16, 22, 23  
Boseley, Nicholas 25  
Bostock, Lester 8, 12, 14  
Bostock, Gerry 8, 11, 14  
Clague, Pauline 29  
Coffey, Essie 10  
Cole, Beck 26–27  
Collins, Allan 30  
Collins, Priscilla 15, 28  
Dale, Darren 32  
Glynn, Erica 36–37  
Frankland, Richard 18, 33–35  
Johnson, Darlene 38–39  
Johnston, Lawrence 40–41  
Kelly, Francis Jupurrula 42  
Lui, Murray 43  
Mackenzie, Catriona 17, 44–45  
Maclean, Danielle 46–47  
McGregor, Steven 48–49  
Moffatt, Tracey 4  
Nimmo, Julie 50  
Perkins, Rachel 51–53  
Riley, Michael 4, 56–57  
Riley, Sally 54–55  
Saunders, Sam 58  
Sen, Ivan 59–61  
Tamou, Rima 62–63  
Thornton, Warwick 64–65  
Torres, Mitch 66

## FILMS

Beneath Clouds v, 4, 18, 59  
Black Talk 22  
Bush Mechanics 42  
Cold Turkey 48  
Confessions of a Headhunter 54  
Dhakiyarr vs the King v, 30  
Empire 4, 56  
Eternity 40  
Five Seasons 14, 48  
Green Bush v, 4, 64  
Gulpilil: One Red Blood 39  
Harry's War 33  
Lousy Little Sixpence 8, 10, 14  
Mr Patterns 45  
My Bed Your Bed 3, 37  
My Colour, Your Kind 46  
My Survival as an Aboriginal 10, 14  
Ngangkari 36  
No Way to Forget 2, 34  
One Night the Moon v, 52  
Payback 65  
Plains Empty v, 26  
Pioneers of Love 50  
Promise 66  
Queen of Hearts 47  
Radiance v, 19, 51  
Road 44  
Round Up 62  
Sa Black Thing 29  
Saturday Night, Sunday Morning 63  
Shit Skin 25  
Strike Your Heart 24  
The Djarn Djarns 23  
Turn Around 58  
Two Bob Mermaid 38  
Wirriya—Small Boy 27  
Yellow Fella v, 4, 60