



# FlickerLab 2024

A ONE-DAY JOURNEY FROM SHORTS TO FEATURES  
THURSDAY 25 JANUARY from 10am - 5.15pm

PRESENTED BY

## AFTRS

Australian Film Television  
and Radio School

FlickerLab gives you the chance to immerse yourself in the latest filmmaking trends as you spend the day with some of the industry's leading film experts, offering up their expertise and wisdom with a range of panels designed to enhance and develop your creative ideas and get your film noticed in the marketplace. The entire scope of the film making experience is covered, from initial concept through to script, producing, marketing, distribution and the latest cross platform and alternative distribution methods.

Listen, share, network and engage as our panellists guide you through the joys and challenges of filmmaking. Absorb essential tips and knowledge and be inspired on your own creative journey.

Our panellists on the day will include:

Writer/Director/Actor Alice Englert (Bad Behaviour, Beautiful Creatures), Producer Jodi Matterson (The Dry, Wolf Like Me), Director Darlene Johnson (Bluey, Rabbit Proof Fence), Writer/Director Samuel Van Grinsven (Sequin in a Blue Room), Jessica Ellicott (Transmission Films), Ulysses Oliver (Lonesome), Ronnie S. Riskalla (Streets of Colour), Producer Mahveen Shahraki (The Rooster), Peter Skinner (Lost Boy), Fiona Williams (Managing Editor SBS Movies), Producer Jamie Hilton (Runt, Sleeping Beauty) & David Michôd (The King, The Rover, Animal Kingdom)

**THURSDAY 25 JANUARY**  
**4 x1.5HR SESSIONS**

### **SESSION 1: FROM IDEA TO PAGE** **10.00am – 11.30am**

Everyone will tell you a good script is an essential ingredient for any good film. Our panel of experienced screenwriters will discuss turning a good idea into a good script, looking in detail at development, collaboration and script editing. They will share their insights about their own transitions from independent shorts to lauded feature films. Discussions will also include observations about writing for some of television's most successful and acclaimed dramas. This valuable session is a must for all budding screenwriters and filmmakers looking to develop and write scripts.

## WRITERS PANEL moderated by IMOGEN GARDAM



**Imogen Gardam** is a Development Executive at Screen Australia and has worked in development and production across film and theatre for Entertainment One Australia, Hopscotch Features, Griffin Theatre Company, Bell Shakespeare and The Festivalists. She co-founded independent theatre company Montague Basement, producing the group's twenty-one productions from formation in 2014 to 2022, and co-founded and ran independent theatre company FERVOUR., producing and developing the company's work from 2020 to 2022. Imogen was the 2018 winner of the Rose Byrne Scholarship for an Emerging Female Leader in the Arts, and served on the Board and as Deputy Chair for Theatre Network NSW

from 2018-2020. She has been published in Lumina Journal, Audrey Journal, Honi Soit and on Four Three Film. A graduate of Media and Communications from the University of Sydney, Imogen is currently completing a Masters of Research in Film Studies.



**Samuel Van Grinsven** is a critically acclaimed writer and director. Born in New Zealand and raised in Australia, his work has been selected for both domestic and international festivals including Cinequest California, Cannes Festival des Antipodes and Palm Springs. Samuel's debut feature SEQUIN IN A BLUE ROOM (2019) premiered at Sydney Film Festival where it won the Best Narrative Feature Audience Award. The film took home the Iris Prize in the UK, was nominated for Best Indie Film at the AACTA Awards. In 2020, Sam was nominated for an ADG Award. His sophomore film WENT UP THE HILL for Causeway Films and starring Dacre Montgomery and Vicky Krieps, is in post-production.



**Darlene Johnson** hails from the east-coast Dughutti people of the mid-north coast of NSW, Australia. She has a Bachelor of Arts, First Class Honours in Communications at the University of Technology, Sydney, specialising in Indigenous and Postcolonial cinema. Her career as writer/director started with the internationally acclaimed short film "Two Bob Mermaid". It deals with the effects of racism on a fair-skinned Aboriginal teenager and it struck a chord both nationally and internationally. It was nominated for the Baby Lion Award at the Venice Film Festival and took out Best Australian Short Film at the Australian Film Critics Circle of Australia and Best Dramatic Short at the Asia Pacific Film Festival.

Darlene wrote and directed "Stolen Generations", which was nominated for an international EMMY Award and an AFI Award; "Stranger in my Skin"; The Making of Phillip Noyce's "Rabbit-Proof Fence, "Following the Rabbit Proof Fence"; Gulpilil - One Red Blood, a biography of the actor David Gulpilil, nominated for a LOGIE Award, and a supernatural fictional drama, "Crocodile Dreaming" featuring the first-time pairing of legendary Aboriginal actors David Gulpilil and Tom E Lewis, which won Best Short Film at the Santa Fe Film Festival and Best Short Film at the Winnipeg Film Festival, and was nominated for Best Visual Effects at the AFI Awards and Best Short Film at the IF awards.

Next was Johnson's poetic and moving portrait of Frances Djulibing, "River of No Return". It explores the complexities of becoming an actor and living in a remote community. It was chosen as the opening night film at Toronto's 2008 ImagineNATIVE Film Festival. Darlene has produced documentaries for the Message Stick series for ABC TV. She wrote, directed and produced the independent documentary "The Redfern Story" for which she

received an Australian Directors Guild nomination for Best Direction in a Documentary. It won Best Social Political Documentary at the ATOM Awards and was a finalist in the Walkley Awards and the Sydney Film Festival Documentary Foundation Awards. Her short film “Bluey” premiered at the Sydney Film Festival, where it won the Events Cinema Award for Best Screenplay as well as winning Best Direction in a Short Film at the ADG Awards, going on to win 14 awards at numerous Australian and international festivals, including USA, Montreal and Mexico.

In 2019 Darlene won the Inaugural International Screen Scholarship in New York City, awarded by the Australian International Screen Forum and the American Australian Association.

She was the first recipient of the Inaugural Shadow Directorship, an Australian Directors Guild and Screen Australia’s Gender Matters initiative and completed a shadow directorship which led to her directing on the long-running serial “Home and Away”. Darlene went on to direct episodes of the new TV drama serial “The Heights” for Matchbox Pictures and episodes of Neighbours. Darlene received her third Australian Directing Guild Award nomination for her directing work on “The Heights.” Since then, Darlene has directed on the ABC-TV series “Born to Spy” and completed a director and producer's attachment on the TV series “Savage River” & was the 2nd Unit Director for the whole series.

In 2021, Darlene was the Indigenous Advisor on the animated children's series SPACE NOVA for ABC and was a writer on IRREVERENT for NBC Universal, Matchbox Pictures and Netflix.

In 2021, Darlene was also the Inaugural recipient of the Deutsche Bank First Nations Creative Fellowship in partnership with the Sydney Film Festival. She has a number of original TV and feature film projects in development.

## **SESSION2: THE DIRECTOR’S JOURNEY**

**11.45am – 1.15pm**

Intimately follow the career path of an esteemed Australian director from independent short filmmaker to feature film director. Areas of discussion will include script development, working collaboratively, casting, directing actors, where ideas come from and how to make the leap from shorts to features.

### **DIRECTOR’S PANEL moderated by Fiona Williams**



**Fiona Williams**, as Head of Curation for SBS On Demand, is part of the leadership team of Australia’s most diverse and distinctive streaming destination.

Fiona manages a team of curators and content specialists, dedicated to showcasing more than 15,000 hours of movies, TV series, sport, news and factual programming from around the world, in over 60 languages.

Fiona’s career in the Australian screen industry includes entertainment journalism and film criticism, and she is also the host and producer of SBS Australia's award-winning *Eyes On Gilead: The Handmaid's Tale* Companion podcast.





**David Michôd's** debut feature, *ANIMAL KINGDOM*, won Sundance's 2010 International Competition Grand Jury Prize, earned Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for supporting actress Jacki Weaver, and was named Best First Film by the New York Film Critics Circle. David's second feature, *THE ROVER*, starring Guy Pearce and Robert Pattinson, premiered at Cannes 2014.

He wrote and directed the 2017 feature film, *WAR MACHINE*, starring Brad Pitt, for Netflix, and co-wrote and executive-produced the 2019 Hulu limited-series adaptation of Joseph Heller's *CATCH-22*.

His fourth feature film, *THE KING*, starring Timothée Chalamet and Joel Edgerton, premiered at the Venice Film Festival in 2019. He is currently completing his fifth movie, *WIZARDS!*, starring Pete Davidson and Franz Rogowski, for A24.



**Alice Englert** wrote, directed and composed the music on her first short film, *THE BOYFRIEND GAME*, starring Morgana Davies and Thomasin McKenzie, premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2015. The film screened at Berlin International Film Festival in the Short Films Generation Kplus category, Melbourne International Film Festival 2016, Flickerfest 2017 and won Best Screenplay at St Kilda Film Festival 2017.

Alice wrote & directed her second short film, *FAMILY HAPPINESS*, starring Ben Whishaw and Alice Englert, premiering at Sydney Film Festival 2017, screening at BFI London Film Festival 2017, Melbourne International Film Festival 2017 and St Kilda Film Festival 2018. Cast includes Ben Whishaw and Alice Englert.

Alice wrote, directed, & composed the music on her debut feature film, *BAD BEHAVIOUR*, starring Jennifer Connolly, Ben Whishaw, Dasha Nekrasova and Alice Englert. The film had its world premiere as part of World Cinema Dramatic Competition at Sundance Film Festival 2023 and went on to screen In Competition at Sydney Film Festival and Melbourne International Film Festival in 2023.



**Peter Skinner** is an Australian-born writer and director best known for his St Kilda best film winning and Australian Directors Guild nominated short film *LOST BOY* (2020) and his breakout short film *STRANGER* (2018).

Starting his career as a figurative sculptor studying at Sydney College of the Arts where he graduated with honours, he then followed his passion for film with a Masters of Film Theory at Sydney University before two stints at the Australian Film Television and Radio School, completing a Graduate Diploma in Directing in 2013 and a Masters in Directing in 2019.

Peter's films have played all over the world, citing Flickerfest as his first festival selection. He works as a guest lecturer at AFTRS and throughout the industry as a mentor, 1st AD, editor, producer and runner.

Peter is a founding member of the production company Seymour Pictures which he and fellow filmmakers Orla Doyle and Julia Gardell started in 2023.

Peter is currently in Post-Production on his debut feature, *TWO UGLY PEOPLE* and is developing a longer-form *LOST BOY* project.

## SESSION 3: MAKING IT HAPPEN

2.00pm – 3.30pm

The Producer oversees the entire film from the initial idea, right through to production and distribution. They are key in *making it happen*. Our panelists discuss the role of the producer, from budgeting and financing to marketing and distribution and everything in between. All producers are different and this diverse and hard-working panel will share their differing approaches to the very important task of getting the film made.

### PRODUCER'S PANEL moderated by Andrea Ulbrick



**Andrea Ulbrick** has been working as Investment and Development Manager in Screen Australia's Scripted Content Department for 2 years.

Recent projects she is managing include THE NEWSREADER SERIES 3, THE NARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP NORTH, LADIES IN BLACK (the TV series for ABC), BLACK SNOW and BAY OF FIRES. She has been working in the film and television industry since she first began as a television news reporter in 1990.

Andrea joined Screen Australia in May 2022 after six years as Screen Investment Manager at Screen NSW where she managed projects including The Stranger, Carmen, Mystery Road, Girls Can't Surf and Playing with Sharks. Andrea previously worked as a commissioning editor at the ABC in Factual.

Formerly an award-winning documentary director/filmmaker, Andrea has also produced and directed a range of domestic and international observational, science and history co-productions for ABC TV, SBS, CBC, Arte France, BBC, Channel 4, WNET, National Geographic and Discovery. She has a Master of Arts (Film and Television) from AFTRS (2000).



**Jodi Matterson** serves as Managing Director of Australia, partner and producer of Made Up Stories.

Jodi recently produced THE LOST FLOWERS OF ALICE HART starring Sigourney Weaver for Amazon which set the record for the most watched Australian streaming series worldwide climbing to the top three in 42 countries and the top five in a further 78 countries and STRIFE starring Asher Keddie for Foxtel Binge which as officially become its biggest original launch ever.

Seasons 1 & 2 of the genre-bending romantic comedy WOLF LIKE ME for Peacock starring Isla Fisher, Josh Gad and Edgar Ramirez, ROAR starring Nicole Kidman and Judy Davis for Apple, NINE PERFECT STRANGERS, starring Nicole Kidman and Melissa McCarthy for Hulu which has been their most watched original series of all time, THE DRY, from director Robert Connolly and starring Eric Bana which has broken records at the Australian box office, as well as the film adaptation of the international best-seller, PENGUIN BLOOM, starring Naomi Watts, which premiered at the 2020 Toronto International Film Festival and released by Netflix.

In 2018, Jodi produced Abe Forsythe's LITTLE MONSTERS starring Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2019 and was distributed by Neon and Hulu.

Upcoming film projects releasing in 2024 include: FORCE OF NATURE, the sequel to the feature film THE DRY with Eric Bana reprising his role as Aaron Falk and ADDITION based on the novel by Toni Jordan starring Teresa Palmer and Joe Dempsie.

Jodi is currently in production on THE LAST ANNIVERSARY, based on the book by Liane Moriarty, starring Teresa Palmer, Miranda Richardson and Danielle Macdonald for Binge, BBC and Sundance Channel, along with the second series of NINE PERFECT STRANGERS for Hulu starring Nicole Kidman, Christine Baranski and Annie Murphy. Prior to Made Up Stories, Jodi produced her first film THUNDERSTRUCK in 2003 with director, Darren Ashton, starring Sam Worthington. Her second film RAZZLE DAZZLE screened at more than 20 international film festivals including Berlin.

NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN directed by Oscar Nominee Peter Templeman and starring Sarah Snook in her first lead role, DOWN UNDER from Abe Forsythe and 2:22 starring Teresa Palmer and Michel Huisman.

Jodi had also previously been one of the top producers for commercials in Australia with over sixty commercials with renowned Australian and International directors.



**Jamie Hilton** is an Australian film and television producer, and founder of See Pictures. Jamie has produced or executive produced more than 20 feature films, including the adaptation of Tim Winton's *Breath* (Simon Baker, Elizabeth Debecki), *Devil's Peak* (Billy Bob Thornton, Robin Wright), *Swinging Safari* (Kylie Minogue, Guy Pearce), *The Waiting City* (Joel Edgerton, Radha Mitchell), *Backtrack* (Adrian Brody) and Josh Lawson's cult comedies, *The Little Death* and *Long Story Short*.

His productions have played Official Competition at Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and Sundance, and he is a Best Picture winner and three-time nominee at the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards.

Jamie was selected for the Screen International Future Leaders showcase in Cannes 2015, he has taught production at the University of Technology Sydney, and the Australian Film, Television and Radio School. Before making movies, Jamie produced over 120 music videos for artists such as Blink 182, Kasey Chambers, Eskimo Joe and Guy Sebastian.

Jamie is a founding partner of Home Fire, who are working with the Western Australian government to build sound stages in Perth; due to open in 2025. He is also a founding partner of new Australian production services company Servo.



**MahVeen Shahraki** Originally from Iran, discovered her film family in Australia, she is passionate about bringing talented individuals together and collaborating on making captivating films.

Her film "Ellie & Abbie (and Ellie's Dead Aunt)" was the first Australian film to open Mardi Gras Film Festival 2020. It became a program highlight in numerous festivals around the world and went on winning the 2021 AACTA Award for Best Indie Film.

As an Executive Producer, MahVeen collaborated with Georges Films in France in delivering "The Translator" starring Miranda Tapsell and David Field.

MahVeen was selected as a 'One To Watch' Producer by Screen Producers Australia in 2020. Her latest project, "The Rooster," starring Hugo Weaving and Phoenix Raei, has just finished its festival run around the country & will come to cinemas on February 22nd.



## SESSION 4: MARKET TO MARKET, CONQUER THE WORLD ON ALL PLATFORMS; DISTRIBUTION, FESTIVALS & MULTI-PLATFORM DISTRIBUTION

3.45pm – 5.15pm

Now your short film is finished. What next? How do you launch your next project? This informative session puts the spotlight on current marketing and distribution trends to get your feature, web or TV series seen by the largest audiences possible. The panel will dissect traditional distribution models and offer up innovative cross platform alternatives. In the age of digital distribution, find out how these new models can enhance the viewing potential of your film and build your filmmaking reputation.

### DISTRIBUTOR'S PANEL moderated by Robbie Miles



Robbie Miles is an AFTRS alumnus (Graduate Certificate: Screen Drama – Directing & Screenwriting, 2009) and an experienced producer and development executive. Robbie spent several years working in Los Angeles and New York as a Development Executive for Full Clip Productions on projects such as *Deadline Gallipoli* and *Danger Close*, as well as producing branded content for Bonds, Coca-Cola and Australian fashion label Kahlo.

He returned to Australia to produce his first feature film, *Crushed*, with fellow AFTRS alumni Megan Riakos, and develop a diverse slate of feature film and television projects, including the Nicholl Fellowship-winning *Great Falls*. Robbie produced the ABC iView series *Sarah's Channel* starring Claudia O'Doherty and also worked for Animal Logic's genre label, Truant Pictures, as Development & Production Executive.

After several years as Subject Leader for Producing & Production at AFTRS, Robbie is now Head of Industry & Alumni Engagement, consulting with companies, guilds and agencies to support the future of screen & audio storytelling in Australia.

Robbie has a passion for story development and inept protagonists and has presented everywhere from El Dorado Film Festival in Arkansas to the Australian Comic Arts Festival Canberra, Oz Comic Con and the San Diego Comic Con.



**Ulysses Oliver** brings over two decades of experience to the media production landscape, serving as the Managing Director and Founder of Select Field.

His leadership is evident in the establishment of the Sandfly Film Festival, a platform that showcased international shorts in diverse locations such as Sydney, regional NSW, Paris, New York, Tokyo, LA, and Bogotá.

A graduate of the Sydney Film School, Ulysses has excelled in writing, directing, and producing across genres, with notable works include the award-winning short films "Amanecer" (2009) and "The Telegram Man" (2011) as a producer, and the feature film "The Perfect Weapon" (2016) as a writer. As a founding director of Breathless Films.

Ulysses has contributed significantly to producing five feature films. Notable projects include "Lonesome" directed by Craig Boreham, "The Longest Weekend" helmed by Molly Haddon and written by Jornden Daley, and "Birdeater" by Jack Clark and Jim Weir.

In 2023, Ulysses made his feature directorial debut with "Love Road", premiering at Sydney Film Festival. "Birdeater" was recently selected to screen at SXSW 2024 in Austin, Texas.



**Jessica Ellicott** is a distribution executive and film programmer with over a decade of industry experience.

She currently works in marketing at Transmission Films, and previously held roles at Golden Age Cinema & Bar, SBS Movies and Sydney Film Festival.

As a critic, her work has featured in The Big Issue, ABC, SBS, IN BED Journal, Runway and 4:3.



**Ronnie S. Riskalla** is an award-winning Screenwriter and Director who produced dozens of films as a young child with only a Betacam. In High-school he studied film and drama in and performed regularly in school talent shows.

He then attended a private film college before going on to attend workshops at AFTRS. and studying at UCLA film-school extension learning from professional crew working in Hollywood. In his professional life he has worked in the cinema industry for over 20 years as a Projectionist & Technical Manager, managing 35mm projectors and into the digital cinema era. He also ran special event

screenings to filmmakers and distributors.

It was only after attending The Hollywood Film School run by film guru Dov S-S Simens he produced & directed his experimental feature film: The Day Hollywood Died which was the official selection at (ECU) The European Film Festival in France. In 2011 his production company Rising Pictures acquired the distribution rights for ANZ for feature film Mooz-Lum, a film starring Danny Glover and Nia long.

He then worked for Deluxe Entertainment where he project managed the digital delivery and QC of hundreds of feature film and TV content for the major Hollywood studios. Ronnie S. Riskalla' s 2nd feature film 'Streets of Colour' an urban coming-of-age drama shot in Western Sydney which tackles racism and cultural identity, recently finished its theatrical release across Australia and is now available on all major digital platforms.

Streets of Colour has been nominated for The Australian Academy Awards (AACTA) for BEST INDIE FILM and is also nominated for BEST FILM PRODUCTION at the Screen Producers Association Awards (SPA).

Through his production company SkyCross Entertainment, Ronnie is currently developing a crime-thriller, supernatural-horror feature film, a comedy and a true-crime tv-series. onnie is currently working on Kriv Stender's new feature film - The Correspondent as the Director's Attachment which is currently in Pre-Production.

PRESENTED BY

**AFTRS**

Australian Film Television  
and Radio School