AFC Writer Fellowships Announced

Wednesday 28 June 2006: The Australian Film Commission (AFC) today affirmed its ongoing support for Australian feature films with the announcement of five new Writer Fellowship grants for the development of feature film scripts.

This year's Fellowship recipients include Cannes Camera d'Or winner Shirley Barrett, AWGIE Award-winner Louise Fox, and the winner of the 2005 AFI Award for Best Screenplay in Television Jacquelin Perske.

Teams awarded Fellowships this year are Best Original Screenplay AFI Award-winners Stavros Kazantzidis and Allanah Zitserman; and Academy Award nominees Anthony Lucas, Mark Shirrefs and Julia Lucas.

The Writer Fellowships are designed to acknowledge the success and achievements of Australian writers who have received significant local and international awards and/or have enjoyed commercial success. The program supports the development of distinctive features at an early stage on the basis of the writer or writer/director's track record and the strength of the story idea.

The AFC’s Acting Director of Film Development Lori Flekser said, "The AFC is delighted to support these talented Australian writers in the development of their screenplays. Australian film scripts have gone from strength to strength in recent years, and we hope that initiatives such as the AFC's Fellowship program will continue to play a part in supporting the work of successful scriptwriters."

Project details

Bonaparte’s Retreat: Shirley Barrett

Bob Beddoes is a 64 year-old lint-removal salesman, suddenly forced to forge a relationship with his two young Mennonite daughters who he hasn't seen for almost ten years.

Shirley Barrett is a writing/directing graduate of AFTRS. Her debut feature, Love Serenade, won the Caméra d'Or after being selected to screen in Un Certain Regard at Cannes in 1996. She has recently been writing for The Alice and directing the television series Love My Way.

Fig Tree: Stavros Kazantzidis and Allanah Zitserman

Ben Brown takes his dysfunctional family away to Fig Tree, an idyllic country retreat, where they find themselves caught up in a parricidal plot in which Fig Tree is to be torched, with someone inside...

Stavros Kazantzidis graduated from AFTRS with the AFI-winning short Road to Alice. He co-wrote the AFI-nominated Love and Other Catastrophes, wrote and directed True Love And Chaos, co-wrote and produced Strange Planet, and was an additional writer on Jane Campion's In the Cut. He directed Horseplay and Russian Doll, both of which he co-wrote with Allanah Zitserman. Russian Doll earned the pair an AFI Award for Best Original Screenplay.

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**Flying Man:** Jacquelin Perske

*When a middle-aged man discovers he can fly, it changes his life and the lives of those around him forever. A story about marriage, kids, love, losing the ground beneath your feet and living with your head in the clouds.*

Jacquelin Perske wrote the Rowan Wood-directed feature *Little Fish*, for which she received an AFI Award nomination for Best Original Screenplay and an IF Award nomination for Best Script. She received an AFI Award for her work on the television series *Love My Way* (which she also co-created and produced), and has worked on the television series *The Secret Life of Us, Fireflies* and *Big Sky*.

**Jasper Morello and the Ebenezer of Gothia:** Anthony Lucas, Mark Shirrefs and Julia Lucas

*Jasper’s back in a gothic existential romantic action adventure where he faces the toughest decision of his life: to have the woman he loves or to save the people of Gothia.*

Anthony Lucas is an animator with a number of Australian and international nominations and awards, including a nomination for Best Short at Cannes for *Hold Your Breath*, a BAFTA nomination for *Bad Baby Amy*, and AFI nominations for nearly all of his shorts. He won the Best Short Animation AFI Award for *The Mysterious Geographic Explorations of Jasper Morello*. Mark Shirrefs co-wrote *Jasper Morello* with Anthony Lucas, which also earned them an AWGIE for Best Screenplay, the Grand Prix at Annecy, and nominations for an Academy Award and a BAFTA.

**Pan’s Daughter:** Louise Fox

*Rosaleen Norton’s persona of Roie the Witch liberated her as an artist and a woman in conservative 1950s Australia, but also trapped her and destroyed what was the great love of her life.*

Louise Fox has worked as an actor, a dramaturge in theatre, a script editor and a director. Her writing spans theatre, radio and television, and her credits include the comedies *Full Frontal, Fast Forward* and *Jimeoin*, and the children’s program *Round The Twist*, for which she won an AWGIE. Louise has also written adult drama including *Fireflies, Always Greener* and *Love My Way*, the latter of which garnered her an AWGIE award and a nomination for the Queensland Premier’s Literary Award. Her 1999 AFC-funded short *Help Me* picked up a Dendy nomination and travelled to a number of festivals including Telluride.

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