

Media Release

Thursday 8 February, 2018



SBS On Demand premieres diverse collection of Australian LGBTIQ shorts

SBS On Demand today launched *Queer for Short: Home Grown*, a series of short films showcasing LGBTIQ stories from creative teams across NSW. Now available to stream, the collection, developed in partnership with Create NSW's *Generator: Emerging Filmmakers Fund*, celebrates LGBTIQ diversity through a wide scope of themes.

The six short films include *Concern for Welfare* (directed by Fadia Abboud), *Black Lips* (directed by Adrian Chiarella), *Cherry Season* (directed by Joshua Longhurst), the bilingual *Tomgirl* (directed by Vonne Patiag), *Joy Boy* (directed by Stef Smith) and *Disco Dykes* (directed by Sara West).

Marshall Heald, SBS Director of Television and Online Content said, "SBS's partnership with Create NSW builds on our ongoing commitment to provide opportunities for creatives and talent from diverse backgrounds both on and off screen. Through the lens of individual perspectives, these short films explore a range of universal human experiences and are a great way to start SBS's Mardi Gras programming."

Don Harwin, NSW Minister for the Arts said, "This varied selection of shorts from talented emerging LGBTIQ NSW creatives is a perfect accompaniment as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival. I trust these stories will touch a lot of hearts and I look forward to seeing more from these filmmakers."

Fadia Abboud, Director of Concern for Welfare said, "Working with the teams at SBS and Create NSW has been an invaluable experience. I feel incredibly lucky to have been part of a project that champions diversity within the industry and allows us to share our authentic stories from a range of different perspectives."

Queer for Short: Home Grown is available to stream via SBS On Demand from Thursday 8 February, with a special broadcast series hosted by *The Feed's* Pat Abboud on Thursday nights from 15 February, 8pm on SBS VICELAND, featuring exclusive access and interviews with the filmmakers.

SBS On Demand audiences can also binge on a range of new and classic LGBTIQ dramas, documentaries and movies including Swedish series, *Don't Ever Wipe Tears Without Gloves*

(SBS On Demand exclusive premiere), *Brokeback Mountain*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Carol* and more.

CJZ (makers of *Gruen*, *House of Bond*, *House of Hancock* and *Go Back To Where You Came From*) served as Executive Producers for the short films.

ENDS

For more information visit [sbs.com.au/ondemand](https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand)

2017 Create NSW Generator: Emerging Filmmakers Fund projects

CONCERN FOR WELFARE (11 mins)

Genre: Drama

Company: Red Seeds Production

Key Creatives: Director: Fadia Abboud, **Producer:** Alissar Gazal, **Writer:** Nick Parsons

Shooting Locations: Canterbury, Hurlstone Park and Merrylands

Synopsis: Ali is a gay Lebanese probationary constable and kicking against her Muslim brother's controlling behaviour. When she attends a 'concern for welfare' and discovers the body of an elderly man who died alone and unnoticed, she realises the value of a loving family, even if they can be misguided.

Key Creative Team: To date, director Fadia Abboud and producer Alissar Gazal have worked together on several projects, most notably the web Identity series 'I LUV U BUT', nominated as the Most Engaging YouTube Channel in Lebanon. Fadia has previously co-directed an episode of 'Here Come The Habibs' (Nine Network) and *Concern for Welfare* is based on a character from an upcoming Create NSW supported feature film *Leaving Lebanon* which she continues to develop with writing partner Nick Parsons.

BLACK LIPS (15 mins)

Genre: Drama/Contemporary Social Issues/History

Company: Brick Road Pictures

Key Creatives: Producer: Rebecca Janek, **Writer/Director:** Adrian Chiarella

Shooting Locations: Western Sydney and Royal National Park

Synopsis: A lonely abalone trader is awakened by a longing he's never explored before.

Key Creative Team: Writer, director and editor Adrian Chiarella graduated from the Australian Film Television Radio and School (AFTRS) in 2012 and first met producer Rebecca Janek several years ago. The pair are currently in pre-production on another short film *Dwarf Planet*. In addition to working with Rebecca, Adrian has worked with *Black Lips* cinematographer James Brown for many years and also worked as an editor on Craig Boreham's *Teenage Kicks*. Rebecca has production experience across a range of commercial projects and built EPK production experience on films including *Alien: Covenant* and *The Water Diviner*.

CHERRY SEASON (15 mins)

Genre: Drama

Company: Wintergarden Pictures

Key Creatives: Director: Joshua Longhurst, **Producer:** Rosie Braye, **Writer:** Tim Spencer

Shooting Location: Young

Synopsis: Shantelle works at the local supermarket in her hometown of Young, NSW. Between stacking the shelves with cherries and scrolling through women on Snapchat, there doesn't appear to be much going on in her life to keep her there. But when she discovers her wayward teenage sister, Tamara, posting nude pics online, Shantelle must hunt her down and, with the help of a callow workmate, stop Tamara crossing a dangerous line. Faced with the bigotry of her small country town as she attempts to balance the duality of her responsibility and her sexuality, Shantelle must choose who to protect – her sister, herself or a young gay man at risk.

Key Creative Team: Wintergarden Pictures is comprised of AFTRS graduate and award-winning emerging LGBTIQ filmmaker Joshua Longhurst, emerging producer Rosie Braye (armed with nearly a decade of film distribution and publicity experience) and Green Room Award-winning writer, Tim Spencer. Joshua's first short *Ravage* premiered at the Sydney Film Festival Dendy Awards in 2013 and his 2016 directorial debut *Oasis* (written by Tim Spencer) has now screened at most major domestic and international LGBTIQ film festivals.

TOMGIRL (9 mins)

Genre: Drama

Company: In-Between Pictures

Key Creatives, Producer: Maren Smith, **Writer/Director:** Vonne Patiag

Shooting Location: Blacktown

Synopsis: Justin, a young Australian-born Filipino boy who is constantly bullied for being different, announces to his Uncle Norman that he'd like to dress as a girl because "girls don't get hit." Norman, a migrant dealing with his own restricted forms of self-expression in Western Sydney, reveals himself to be a cross-dresser in the sexually-fluid 'Bakla' tradition, and together they hit the main streets of Blacktown dressed in drag, celebrating their shared Filipino culture.

Key Creative Team: Vonne Patiag and Maren Smith are an award-winning filmmaking team whose recently launched production company In-Between Pictures creates narratives that explore contemporary intersectional Australian identities. They were recently awarded a Hot Shots Plus grant from Screen Australia to develop and produce the pilot episode of an online series described as a contemporary take on male friendship in Western Sydney with themes around LGBTQIA culture, class and ethnicity. Vonne's shorts have won numerous awards at Made In The West Film Festivals and Maren's feature *One Less God* won the Grand Jury Prize and Industry Choice Award at the Dances With Films Festival in LA in June this year.

JOY BOY (9 mins)

Genre: Drama

Company: unko

Key Creatives, Producer: Belinda Dean, Morgan Benson-Taylor, **Writer/Director:** Stef Smith,

Writer: Jonny Hawkins

Shooting Locations: Northern Beaches, central and southern Sydney

Synopsis: Based on a true story. We first meet young Jonny as he prepares to give the performance of a lifetime; a private rendition of Happy Birthday, Mr President in the style of Marilyn Monroe. He is elated, but receives a lacklustre response from his parents and their guests. We next meet Jonny in his early 20s. He's become a youth leader at a hip, modern Christian Church. After the service he is greeted by his girlfriend and we wonder, how did THAT boy, become THIS boy? Joy Boy follows through a series of fractured events in Jonny's journey to fully embracing his inner self, his sexuality and his joy. This is the true story of Jonny, his mother's little joy boy.

Key Creative Team: Award-winning actor Jonny Hawkins, co-writer of the screenplay performs the lead role of Jonny in Joy Boy. Writer and director Stef Smith recently directed the ABC iView comedy sketch series 'The Lost Tapes' as part of the 2017 Fresh Blood initiative and completed a Director's Attachment under Trent O'Donnell for the ABC/Netflix series 'The Letdown'. In 2017 she also produced Screenability Film Fund recipient Broken with Daniel Monks and Stevie Cruz-Martin as Director. Belinda Dean is a producer with 20 years' experience across a range of industry roles. She most recently produced the Screen Australia/ABC supported documentary The Funny Ones for ABC ME and a series of sketches with The Bondi Hipsters for the Foxtel program The Slot. Producer Morgan Benson-Taylor has led advertising, short film and content projects and currently has a number of feature and series projects in development.

DISCO DYKES (11 mins)

Genre: Comedy/Drama/Family

Company: Someone Like U Productions

Key Creatives: Director/Writer: Sara West, **Producers:** Jordan Cowan, Grace Taylor

Shooting Location: Windsor (Western Sydney)

Synopsis: Gert's a weirdo – she's an outcast at school, questions her own sexuality and loathes her little sister who bursts with confidence on a bad day. To make things worse, Gert's mum Sal has decided, since leaving her husband, that she'd like to have a girlfriend. When Tex, Sal's new girlfriend, rolls into town in her decked out semi-trailer to take the girls on a wild ride, it's time for the ultimate test – will they survive the dreaded family road-trip?

Key Creative Team: Director and writer Sara West's writing credits include her play The Trolleys for the Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP), short films Split Me, Teenage Filth, Dirt Girls and River Water, which she also directed. Sara was awarded Best Emerging Filmmaker Award at the 2014 South Australian Screen Awards and is currently in post on short film Mutt and developing two feature films and a TV series. Jordan Cowan is a producer and actor, awarded Emerging Artist of the Year at the 2013 Critics Circle awards and Best Female Performance at the 2013/2014 Adelaide Theatre Guide awards. Her first theatre production won the 2016 Theatre Guide's Best Theatre Production award and she has since worked with West to produce Split Me and Mutt. Her acting credits include Wolf Creek 2, Red Ink and the supernatural series 'Jade of Death'. Grace Taylor was the production manager for the 2016 Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship recipient short film How the Light Gets In, and the Create NSW 2016 Generator: Emerging Filmmakers Fund recipient short film Sherbert Rozencrantz, You're Beautiful.