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Film is – and has always been – a core part of what it means to be a Sydneysider. From the city’s first taste of the magic of film in a flickering parlour in Pitt St in 1894 to the cutting-edge innovative animation productions coming out of Sydney today, we can truly claim to be a City of Film.

I am determined to do everything we can to cement New South Wales as Australia’s premier destination for film and screen production. A strong local industry – and skilled staff – attract international productions to NSW, bringing millions of dollars of investment and creating hundreds of jobs.

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network is a great opportunity for an outwardly-facing city such as Sydney to connect with sophisticated global cities such as Berlin, Montreal, Lyon, Bradford, Edinburgh and of course our neighbour Melbourne.

So I am very excited about this bid for Sydney to be recognised as a City of Film by UNESCO and to join the expanding Creative Cities Network.

Sydney’s vibrant creativity is evident every day through its marquee events, its highly skilled population and its overall sense of buzz. Our vision is for Sydney to be recognised internationally as a crucial and vibrant centre of film production and screen culture. A UNESCO City of Film designation is a critical step in achieving that goal.

Kristina Keneally,
NSW Premier and Minister for the Arts
Sydney harbour from the air, Source: Tourism NSW
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Sydney has a strong case to make for becoming a UNESCO City of Film. Ever since the early black and white silent films, a strong tradition of film-making and screen culture has been established in Sydney. Sydney is now the undisputed film and television production hub in Australia with over half of all production taking place here. Sydney boasts cutting-edge innovation across all the forms of ‘moving image’: film, television, online, gaming and cross media content.

"Sydney is a vast city full of lovers of film who watch short films, animations, tentpole features, documentaries, student productions and more, whilst picnicking in parks, on the go on their mobile phones, floating in the ocean, watching it on buildings, in theatres and cinemas, big screens, small screens and in the growing number of festivals across this great city that are curated for every possible community and interest. Indoors, outdoors, winter or summer, midday or midnight, if it moves, we watch it! If we could project films on the moon and watch them we would. International guests to the Sydney Film Festival, one of the oldest continuous film festivals in the world, are blown away by the passion and knowledge of our audiences, and the fact Sydneysiders can so easily and directly engage with local and visiting filmmakers. They love the fact it is a festival for the people - inclusive and not exclusive. Sydney loves films and filmmakers . . . and to me that is a great part of its charm.”
- Virginia Gordon, Screenrights, and President, Sydney Film Festival

World-famous actors, directors and producers have called Sydney home, including Cate Blanchett, Nicole Kidman, Hugh Jackman, Dr George Millar, Mel Gibson and Baz Luhrmann. Sydney has provided Australia and the world with such film classics as *Babe, Happy Feet, Australia, Muriel's Wedding, Priscilla* and *Mad Max*.

“Sydney is one of the best places in the world to film and has the potential to be an ideal location for all types of production; cinema, television, documentaries, student, international and domestic. A City of Film badge of honour will acknowledge artistic and technical achievement while encouraging broader support for this vital industry.”  

*Cate Blanchett*

Sydney is serious about consolidating its reputation as a film capital – hence this bid to become a UNESCO City of Film. Contemporary Sydneysiders are passionate about film, loyally attending Sydney’s many diverse film festivals and enjoying a range of outdoor cinemas during the summer months. This bid will show how Sydney clearly meets all the criteria for a City of Film and will make a strong case for Sydney to receive the coveted UNESCO designation.

**A sustainable film industry**

To make a film, a film-maker needs several ingredients: the initial creative idea, the right people to create and fulfil the concept, an appropriate location where one can film easily, good facilities for making and refining the film, sufficient funding to get it off the ground, a distributor to take it to market, a venue to play it and of course an eager audience who will pay to see the finished masterpiece.

So to build a sustainable film industry and support a range of film productions, a city needs several key pieces of the jigsaw puzzle:

- An infrastructure which trains **people** to the highest standards and then offers them sufficient incentives to stay and make their home in the city.
- **Attractive natural landscape** and built environment combined with government film-friendly policies.
- An infrastructure of **facilities** such as studios, editing suites and visual fx houses.
- **Sufficient and diverse sources of funding**
- A network of **distributors and sales agents**
- A **population which embraces cinema and film** as a form of entertainment and is immersed in screen culture;
- A diverse choice of **cinema venues**; and
- An **understanding of the future of film**.

Over time, Sydney has piece by piece put all these elements of the puzzle together as this bid will demonstrate:

**The People**

The combination of good training institutions and a good overall quality of life have conspired to make Sydney an
attractive home base for film-makers such as Peter Weir, Bruce Beresford, Baz Luhrmann, Cate Blanchett, Hugo Weaving, Toni Collette and many others (see Chapter 4 – The People).

The Landscape

The landscape of NSW offers a range of coastal, rural, arid, alpine and tropical environments. Sydney itself is a city with both modern and heritage architecture as well as key iconic landmarks (see Chapter 5 – The Landscape). But good locations are irrelevant if film-makers encounter too many bureaucratic obstacles to filming. That is why the NSW government and funding body Screen NSW, together with 42 local city councils, has implemented a Film Friendly NSW policy. This slashes red tape and aims to ensure that NSW continues to be the ‘friendliest’ Australian state for screen production a good example of coordination across local and state government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSW Government Film Friendly Measures</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Create a presumption that filming activities will be allowed on community land, Crown reserves and National Parks, provided heritage and environmental values are preserved;</td>
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<td>• Require local councils to approve filming-related applications unless exceptional circumstances exist;</td>
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<td>• Require councils to give written reasons for refusing a film application;</td>
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<td>• Ensure fees associated with filming are limited to a transparent cost-recovery basis;</td>
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<td>• Exempt short-term filming activities on public or private land from requiring development approval;</td>
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<td>• Streamline the approvals process for temporary structures used in filming such as catering tents or sets;</td>
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<td>• Exempt large vehicles from the one-hour time limit when parked in connection with permitted filming activity;</td>
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<td>• Issue new RTA guidelines to give local councils a clear and consistent framework for managing film-related road closures and parking; and</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Apply a revised Local Government Filming Protocol to all councils</td>
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“Sydney is a film friendly place with the best locales worldwide all in one city and suited to the requirements of my script,” – Bollywood director Siddhartha Malhotra

The Facilities

Facilities such as studios, post-production and visual fx companies are crucial. Sydney is fortunate to have Fox Studios whose eight stages are large enough for major international features (such as Star Wars and The Matrix) but also flexible enough to accommodate smaller local film and TV productions. Global company 20th Century Fox clearly recognises the importance of Sydney as a production destination. The cluster of production and post-production companies such as Animal Logic and Sound Firm co-located on the lot provides helpful synergies (see Chapter 6 – The Facilities).

Funding

Funding is the next element. Screen NSW provides four main strands of financial support to film-makers – early research and development, advanced development and marketing, Slingshot professional development and Aurora script writing. In 2009/10, Screen NSW will provide some $9.17 million in direct support to the screen industry, attracting an estimated $79
million in production expenditure and sustaining some 1,700 jobs.

In March 2009, the NSW Government committed to double the Screen NSW Production Investment Fund for 2009/10, representing a major investment into the screen industry.

In addition to fostering the local industry, the State Government provides production attraction incentives, on a commercial-in-confidence basis, that have been successful in attracting many hundreds of millions of dollars in production investment in New South Wales.

Film-makers in Sydney can also benefit from investment by the federal funding agency Screen Australia, as well as funding incentives at a state and federal level (see Chapter 7 – Funding and Industry Support).

Distributors

Sydney has its own homegrown Icon and Hopscotch. Melbourne-based Dendy Films and Village Roadshow also operate in Sydney. (see Chapter 8 – Distributors).

The Audience

One of the most important parts of the jigsaw is the audience. Statistics show that Australians are a keen cinema-going population, especially when judged against other cultural pursuits. People were nearly three times more likely to go to the movies than to an art gallery or a popular music event in 2006. In that year, 65% of the population went to the cinema at least once. Compared with the rest of the world, Australia’s annual per capita attendance rate is the fourth highest internationally and, despite the small population, total admissions are the 15th highest internationally.

Australian residents and visitors spent $895.5 million buying movie tickets in Australia in 2007, $28.8 million more than in 2006. This box office gross is the second highest ever (the highest being 2004 with $907.2 million). In the past 20 years annual revenues have increased year on year in all except two years. There were 84.7 million cinema tickets sold in 2007. Sydney and NSW represents a strong proportion of these overall Australian figures, with 32.4% of Australian cinema-goers and 33% of Australian gross box office coming from NSW in 2006, both higher than any other state. There was an average attendance rate of 7.5 visits per person per year in 2008. Sydney’s love of screen culture is also evident in the myriad of film festivals, foreign films and film events around the city.

Exhibition

Finally, the audience needs somewhere to see the films. In this era of DVDs and online downloads, the venue becomes more crucial in creating a sense of occasion and shared collective experience. This trend is encouraging exhibitors to create more distinctive venues, whether it’s the latest 3D technology, the number of screens to choose from, or the smaller art-house intimate setting offering food, wine and coffee in the cinema.

In the past two decades, the number of cinema screens in Australia has increased from 712 in 1988 to 1,941 at the end of 2007, with most of that growth occurring in the 1990s. Exhibitors have been doing most of the building within suburban shopping centres and, to a lesser extent, outside the major capital cities. For many thousands of people this has made it easier to get to the cinema than ever before. The number of screens and theatres in NSW is higher than other states with 31% of screens in NSW/ACT compared to 27% in Victoria and 21% in Queensland.

So Sydneysiders are lucky to have a wealth of cinemas to feed their passion for film. As well as commercial multiplexes (increasingly equipped with 3D), there is the large screen imax seating 540 people in Darling Harbour, arthouse chains such as Palace and Dendy and historic local cinemas (see Chapter 3 – The History). Although Sydney’s good weather and outdoor lifestyle might suggest cinema-going would not be popular, Sydneysiders have simply combined the two experiences together with a unique suite of outdoor cinemas operating throughout the summer months (see Chapter 9 - Exhibition). Film festivals are also a huge factor in Sydney’s screen culture with two or three different festivals each month of the year.

Conclusion

The result of all these pieces of the puzzle being in place so comprehensively in Sydney is a vibrant and sustainable film industry in the city which has been in place for over 100 years. There is a clear vision for the future if Sydney as a City of Film (set out in Chapter 11).

Guide to the City of Film bid

Management Committee

The Sydney: City of Film bid process has been funded by the City of Sydney and the New South Wales Government. The bid has been prepared by a point person – Abigail Thomas and overseen by a Management Committee made up of:

Judith Bowtell, Arts New South Wales
Jan Campbell, City of Sydney
Kate Murray, City of Sydney

1 All statistics from Get The Picture, Screen Australia
2 All statistics from Get The Picture, Screen Australia
Margaret Tillson, producer and Creative Industries Innovation Centre
Renato Rispoli, Events New South Wales
Rachael Turk, film maker
Sue McCreadie, New South Wales Government Department, Industry & Investment
Tania Chambers, CEO and Judith Bovtill, Screen New South Wales
Virginia Gordon, President and Clare Stewart, Director, Sydney Film Festival
Clare Stewart, Sydney Film Festival

Stakeholders

A wide range of government, industry, academic and individual stakeholders across the film sector have been consulted in putting together the bid. There is broad support and a real sense of excitement about the concept of Sydney being recognised as a City of Film. A list of stakeholders is at Annex A, with their statements of support at Annex B.

How to read the bid

In order to become a City of Film within the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, a city needs to meet specific criteria. The following is a guide to how each chapter addresses these criteria:

- Notable infrastructure related to film-making ie film studios, cultural/movie landscapes – see Chapter 5 - The Landscape and Chapter 6 - The Facilities
- Historic links to the production, distribution & commercialisation of films, especially within a native/local and culturally relevant context – see Chapter 3 - The History
- Cinematographic legacy in the form of archives, museums, private collections and film schools – see Chapter 3 - The History, Chapter 4 - The People
- Birthplace, residence and/or workplace of creators and artists in the film industry – see Chapter 4 - The People
- Depiction of the city in films, preferable realised by native creators and artists – see Chapter 5 - The Landscape and Chapter 3 - The History
- Existing films about the city – Executive Summary and Chapter 5 - The Landscape
- Film-making schools and training centres – see Chapter 4 - The People
- Collaborative initiatives at a local, regional, international level – see Chapter 8 - Distributors
- Initiatives to encourage knowledge-sharing on foreign films – see Chapter 9 - Exhibition

Films made in Sydney

Over the last few decades, some seminal Australian and international films have been made in Sydney and right now several major film and television productions (both Australian and international) are being filmed in the city, evidence that Sydney truly can claim to be a City of Film.
International films shot in Sydney

Key international films shot in Sydney over the last couple of decades include:

The Matrix

The Matrix series featured shots of Sydney city life in its scenes. Bridges, streets and skyscrapers all featured prominently in the movies.

“I love Sydney. I love being in the country. I love the people. I love the crews we worked with. I would love to go back, so when we find something that works we’ll be there.” - Joel Silver, Producer, The Matrix

Mission Impossible: II

Another big-budget Hollywood movie filmed on location in Sydney was Mission Impossible: II directed by John Woo. The first half of the movie takes place in the US, but the story comes to Sydney with scenes at a local Randwick Race Track.

Moulin Rouge!

Moulin Rouge! was filmed entirely at Fox Studios in Sydney. This movie helped bring the Hollywood musical back from the ashes with films like Chicago, Rent, Dreamgirls, and Phantom of the Opera being released since the success of Moulin Rouge!

Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith

The ending of the modern era of Star Wars movies. Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith was filmed at Fox Studios in Sydney. Sydney can be proud to claim the best flick of the modern Star Wars trilogy. Many Australians worked as cast members and crew.

“IT’S got amazing crews and stages, fantastic acting talent and extraordinary locations...You have an unbeatable combination – great weather, great food, fantastic people – what else do you want?” - Rick McCallum, Producer, Star Wars

X-Men Origins: Wolverine

Starring local Sydney talent, Hugh Jackman, action thriller Wolverine was filmed largely at Fox Studios while also using the unusual venue of Cockatoo Island (a disused ship repair dock), Centennial Park and Rozelle hospital.

Superman Returns

This film took full advantage of the range of locations and facilities in Sydney. With interior scenes shot at Fox Studios, location shoots included all parts of the city: the Art Gallery of NSW, Australian Museum, central streets such as York St, Elizabeth St and Martin Place as well as Wynyard station, St Mary’s Cathedral and several schools and suburban streets.

Other films benefitted from the post-production, digital and visual effects (PDV) skills and facilities in Sydney, shooting elsewhere but coming to Sydney for PDV. These include Death Defying Acts (Gillian Armstrong, 2007), The Painted Veil (John Curran, 2006), The Ruins (Carter Smith, 2008) and 300 (Zack Snyder, 2006).

Australian films produced in Sydney

Australia (Baz Luhrmann, 2008) – the biggest budget film ever made in Australia, Baz Luhrmann’s epic is a love story set in northern Australia in World War II and encompasses the bombing of Darwin and the Stolen Generation of Aboriginal children. Filmed in several states, its studio base was Fox Studios in Sydney (and nearly all the post-production visual effects work was undertaken in Sydney). Australia became the second highest grossing Australian movie in the country ever (taking $38m at box office compared to Crocodile Dundee’s $48m) and also attracted huge audiences overseas.

Happy Feet (Dr George Miller, 2006) – the first Australian digitally animated feature film, Happy Feet is a comedy-drama about a tap-dancing penguin. It was directed and co-written by Dr George Miller and produced in conjunction with Kennedy Miller, Warner Bros and Village Roadshow Pictures. It won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature and the British Academy Film Award for Best Animated Feature Film (BAFTA) as well as several other awards. In addition to the critical acclaim, the movie was a worldwide success and grossed more than US$300 million at the box office. It was produced entirely in Sydney at Animal Logic’s digital visual effects facility at Fox Studios.

Lantana (Ray Lawrence, 2001) – Filmed entirely in Sydney (Balmain in the inner west, the beaches at Narrabeen and the national park at Pittwater), this film tells the story of four couples and the deceptions, affairs and miscommunications that characterise each relationship. Extremely popular in Australia and overseas, it is a contemporary tale of families and marriage which looks seriously at the issues but is not unrelentingly dark.
Babe: Pig in the City (Dr George Miller, 1998)
The city in the movie *Babe: Pig in the City* is Sydney. Though other world cities serve as a montage of locations for the movie, the original *Babe* was filmed in Australia so Sydney became a naturally featured city in the sequel. It was directed by Sydney filmmaker Dr George Miller. Although international in scale it qualified as an Australian film for funding bodies.

The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (Stephan Elliott, 1994) – A hilarious film about two drag queens and a transsexual from Sydney who go on an epic adventure into the Australian outback in their pink Volkswagen, Priscilla, captured a cosmopolitan Sydney spirit and enchanted audiences both in Australia and overseas. It starred Hugo Weaving as one of the drag queens, ‘Mitzi’ and won an Oscar for its costume design by Lizzy Gardiner as well as a ZAFI Awards and BAFTAs.

Muriel’s Wedding (Paul Hogan, 1994) – Featuring a young girl dreaming of her wedding day (the fantastic Toni Collette in her first hit film), this classic Australian comedy was filmed in and around Sydney as well as Queensland. It won four AFI awards and was nominated for a BAFTA. Toni Collette apparently still has fans all over the world shouting the famous strapline “You’re terrible, Muriel” at her 15 years later!

Strictly Ballroom (Baz Luhrmann, 1992) – This is a heartwarming romantic comedy which displays Baz Luhrmann’s typical visually spectacular style. It tells the story of a champion ballroom dancer who ignores the Australian ballroom dance community in order to dance his own steps. He meets Fran, a beginner dancer, and together they attempt to win the Australian Pan Pacific Championships with their new dancing style. Filmed in Marrickville and Pyrmont, it was hugely popular with audiences, and also won no less than 8 AFI Awards, 3 BAFTAs and a Golden Globe nomination!

Dead Calm (Phillip Noyce, 1989) – The terrifying story of an Australian couple taking a sailing trip in the Pacific who encounter, in dead calm, a ship with one survivor. While only partly filmed in Sydney, with the classic scary boat scenes filmed on the Barrier Reef in Queensland, this film is significant because it brought together Sydney’s next generation of talent for the first time. It was Nicole Kidman’s first feature film, after several years of TV work, directed by Phillip Noyce and produced by Dr George Miller and Doug Mitchell through their company Kennedy Miller Productions.
**Caddie (Donald Crombie, 1976)** – based on the true story of a Sydney barmaid set in the Depression era of the 30s, this Donald Crombie film was shot on 40 locations in the older parts of inner Sydney with the Cinesound studios at Rozelle used for interior pub scenes. It was extremely popular with audiences, taking $2m in its first year and winning a San Sebastian award for Best Actress (Helen Morse).

**Films currently being made in Sydney**

Sydney is a buzz of production this year with several major TV series and feature films currently underway. Most prominent of these are:

- *Happy Feet 2*, directed by Dr George Miller with the new joint venture company Dr D Studios doing the digital animation work, due for release in 2011.
- Animal Logic’s computer generated animation *The Guardians of Ga’hoole* (due to come out in late 2010)
- Dr George Miller’s *Mad Max 4 – Fury Road*, slated for release in 2011
- the ambitious futuristic tale of a tribe of teenagers adrift in an invaded country, *Tomorrow when the War Began* (due 2010)
- an SBS Television series *Secrets and Lives* about social issues
- a new FOXTEL TV series, *Spirited*, a ghost love story with Claudia Karvan, produced by Southern Star (due to be completed by early 2010)
- TV series *Underbelly III, The Golden Mile* - the previous series achieved the highest rating of any drama in the history of Australian television ratings.
- *Rescue Special Ops*, filmed on Bondi Beach and other city locations, for Channel Nine television.
- a huge Bollywood production, a remake of the US hit *Step Mom* with Bollywood stars Kareen Kapoor and Kajal.

"We are excited to showcase the very best that Australia has to offer and we hope to bring back some of the infectious spirit and charm that has become synonymous with Australia and Australians," - Karan Johar, Dharma Productions
Sydney harbour from the air, Source: Tourism NSW
Overview
Sydney is a beautiful, modern, sophisticated and creative city with strong ties to Asia and Europe. It offers an appealing lifestyle and is a competitive global city.

Geographical area
Sydney, the capital of New South Wales, is Australia’s largest city in terms of both population and economic activity. The city is set on one of the world’s most stunning harbours, and is fringed by easy-to-reach sandy beaches and national parks. Sydney Harbour separates the city into north and south, with harbour-side villages, beachside suburbs and inner city areas full of life and each with their own distinctive character.

Sydney is located on the east coast of Australia approximately halfway between the next two biggest cities, Melbourne and Brisbane. It sits on a plain bounded by low mountain-ridges to the west, south and north, although its urban influence extends to the industrial cities of Wollongong in the south and Newcastle in the north. Urban Metropolitan Sydney covers a total area of 3,797km² and is home to approximately 4.3 million residents, and a workforce of over 2.4 million. Sydney is defined for the purposes of this bid as bounded by Bondi (east), Penrith (west), Palm Beach (north) and Cronulla (south).

Climate
Sydney’s annual sunshine average is almost 7 hours a day. Its temperature ranges from a moderate average winter minimum of 9 and a maximum of 17 degrees Celsius to a peak summer maximum average of 26 degrees Celsius. Sydney’s rainfall averages 1213 mm a year, with around 11 wet days per month. More than 40% of this falls between March and June. The mild climate supports Sydneysiders’ love of the outdoors, whether for socialising, sport, leisure or entertainment.

History
The Aboriginal peoples have inhabited the area surrounding Sydney for several thousand years. The traditional owners of the Sydney City region are the Cadigal people. Their land south of Port Jackson stretches from South Head to Petersham. The “Eora people” was the name given to the coastal Aborigines around Sydney. The word Eora simply means “here” or “from this place”. Local Aboriginal people used the word to describe to the British where they came from and so the word was then used to define the Aboriginal people themselves. The name Eora is proudly used today by the descendants of those very same people. Central Sydney is therefore often referred to as “Eora Country”. The settlement of Sydney was established in 1788 as a convict colony ruled by British Governors, and was incorporated as a city in 1842. It is one of the oldest municipalities in Australia.
Infrastructure

Sydney is well served by public transport, with all of the major rail lines converging on and passing through the City Centre. A comprehensive bus network connects the surrounding suburbs with the City. Ferry services also connect the City to many harbour side locations, as well as the world famous Taronga Zoo and Manly. Within the CBD, a light-rail system and monorail operate, with construction beginning on a major new Sydney Metro.

Given its location as the economic and cultural heart of the Sydney metropolitan area, the City of Sydney is highly and densely urbanised. Its land is intensively used for a variety of purposes including residential and commercial use as well as tourist and cultural attractions, and parks and open space. Indeed, it is home to the highest commercial and residential densities in Australia. Given its density, approximately half of all floor space in the City of Sydney is used for commercial purposes, devoted to financial, retail, tourism and entertainment, with the rest used for residential and other non-commercial uses. There are over 12.5 million m² of building floor space within the Central Business District (CBD) of the City. Over 30% of this of internal floor area is devoted to office uses. This is the largest CBD office market in Australia and within the top 20 world-wide.

Population and character

Sydney has a population of 4.3 million with a median age of 35. Almost half of city residents are aged between 18 and 34. The high proportion of younger people living in the central city adds a degree of vibrancy to many of its precincts. Up until about 30 years ago, Metropolitan Sydney remained largely culturally isolated from its nearest neighbours in Asia. It drew migrants initially from Britain and Ireland and then, during Sydney’s post-war manufacturing boom, from countries in continental Europe, notably Italy, Greece and the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Over the past few decades, migration from Asian countries has expanded significantly. Largely due to the massive increase in its residential population over the past decade, the City of Sydney comprises a diverse ethnic mix with half of its residents born overseas. Nearly one-third of the resident population speaks a language other than English. Apart from English, the most common languages spoken at home are Chinese, Indonesian, Korean and Greek. The City is home to one of Sydney’s largest communities of Aboriginal peoples. Over a quarter of City residents are currently attending an educational institution. Sydney’s population benefits
from an open and extensive education system that has provided it with one of the highest rates of participation at both secondary and tertiary level. The result is a highly skilled and educated workforce. The skill-base has been enhanced by high levels of social cohesion and political stability which has been achieved through our basic value-systems, a “fair-go” attitude and effective social infrastructure.

Tourism

Sydney is the major tourist gateway for Australia, and a significant destination in its own right. It is often regarded as one of the most beautiful and picturesque cities in the world. Major tourist attractions in Sydney include the Opera House and Bondi Beach, as well as key cultural events such as the Sydney Festival, Mardi Gras and Tropfest. Over 2.6 million international visitors came to the Sydney Metropolitan area in 2008, more than half of all Australia’s international visitors. With 60% of all hotel rooms in the Sydney Tourism Region, the central city played nightly host to 9.5 million guest nights in financial year 2007-2008. The central city is also the main convention and conference location in Australia and is ranked 8th in the world – just below London and Paris, but ahead of Rio, Madrid and Berlin. International tourism to Australia produced more than 11% of total export earnings, and is higher than exports of coal and of iron, steel and non-ferrous metals.

Economy

There are more than 2.4 million people currently working within Metropolitan Sydney. Within the CBD and Pyrmont-Ultimo area alone, the workforce has increased by 50% since 1991. Sydney is the financial and business services hub of Australia with more than 80% of all Australia’s foreign and domestic banks. The financial services workforce of Sydney is nearly half the size of London’s and New York City’s. Sydney was ranked as the 9th Global Financial Centre in a study commissioned by the Greater London Authority. The Mercer Index ranks Sydney in the top 10 global cities by quality of life. Based on industry-mix and relative occupational wage levels, Economic Activity (GDP) generated in the City of Sydney in 2007-2008 is estimated at $80 billion. This represents 8% of the total national Australian economy, over 30% of the Sydney metropolitan area and almost 25% of the NSW state GDP. Sydney boasts 7 of the top 10 most popular international visitor attractions. Sydney is the prime driver of both the Australian and NSW economy. The city has a diverse mix of businesses, ranging from large multi-national corporate head offices, to a multitude of small retail and food establishments. There are approximately 20,000 separate businesses in the City of Sydney. The city is the location of almost 40% of the headquarters of the top 500 Australian corporations and almost half of the regional headquarters of multi-national corporations in Australia.

1 latest available figures from the ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association)
Sister cities

The City of Sydney has six Sister City relationships: San Francisco, USA (since 1968), Nagoya, Japan (1980), Wellington, New Zealand (1982), Portsmouth, England (1984), Guangzhou, China (1985) and Florence, Italy (1986). The main aims of the Sister City Program are to perpetuate understanding between people of different cultures; to bring together interest groups in each city; and to develop economic, trade, cultural and educational exchanges.

Government

Councils of Sydney

There are 42 local or municipal government areas within metropolitan Sydney. The City of Sydney is the central civic authority for the central area of the city and its Local Government Area covers approximately 26km² on the southern side of Sydney Harbour, and approximately five kilometres north of Australia’s busiest airport.

NSW State Government

The NSW State Government is responsible for health, education, culture and other key policy areas across the state.

Federal Government

The federal government of Australia is responsible for defence, higher education, taxation and coordination of the state governments across the country. The following NSW state government departments operate in the cultural arena. Federal funding and policy agencies Screen Australia and the Australian Council for the Arts support the screen and cultural industries across Australia.

Screen NSW (formerly the NSW Film and Television Office)

Screen NSW, a partner agency of industry and investment NSW is the State body responsible for the economic and cultural growth of the film and television industry in New South Wales, providing funding for script development, pre-production, production investment and production loan finance for features, television drama and documentaries. Strategic development programs include the young filmmakers fund, industry and audience development grants, new media initiatives, digital FX traineeships, a fellowship scheme and directors’ attachments.

Arts NSW

Arts NSW is the NSW Government’s arts policy/funding body and is part of Communities NSW. It advises the Government and arts sector on effective support for the arts, funds key arts organisations, and manages a portfolio of cultural properties. The Premier and Minister for the Arts is the Hon Kristina Keneally, MP.

Industry and Investment NSW (formerly Department of State and Regional Development)

Industry and Investment NSW aims to attract investment to NSW and support innovative, sustainable and globally competitive businesses, industries and sectors. It provides business assistance and advice, strong technical knowledge and scientific capabilities. It works in close partnership with other agencies such as Tourism NSW and Screen NSW and manages the Film and Television Industry Attraction Fund which provides competitive incentives for footloose productions. Its core aim is to create jobs within NSW across a range of industries.

Events NSW

Events NSW aims to position Sydney and New South Wales as a preferred event destination by working with government and industry partners to develop existing events, attract new events and maximise the economic, strategic and community benefits of events. Part of the challenge is to get the right balance of cultural, sporting, lifestyle, entertainment and business events to ensure Sydney’s future as a global destination. In 2009, Events NSW created a Master Calendar of events to ensure consistent year-round activity.
Tourism NSW

Tourism NSW promotes and supports the development of sustainable tourist destinations and experiences by marketing NSW destinations and holiday experiences to domestic and international markets, developing sustainable destinations, working with industry to stimulate investment and developing private/public sector partnerships to grow tourism.
New South Wales’ museums, art galleries and performing arts companies are an important stimulus to the growth of the creative digital industry. The State’s cultural institutions hold vast and diverse cultural collections valued at over $3.6 billion.

The State’s major cultural institutions – the Art Gallery of NSW, Australian Museum, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, State Library of NSW and the Sydney Opera House – are funded and supported by Arts NSW, the state government arts department. These institutions collectively manage assets worth billions of dollars, including heritage buildings and internationally renowned collections. They attract audiences in excess of five million a year.

**Art Gallery of NSW**

The Art Gallery of NSW is one of Australia’s foremost art museums, with significant collections of Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, European, Asian and contemporary art. The gallery also runs the Brett Whiteley Studio in Surry Hills. Its 300 seat cinema screens free films related to exhibitions and attracts 35,000 people each year. These are often restored or remastered versions of classics and world cinema, screened on 35mm film.

**Australian Museum**

The work of the Australian Museum relates to Australia’s natural history, evolution, the cultural heritage of its Indigenous population and the peoples of the near Pacific and Indonesia, the cultural diversity of the Australian continent, biodiversity and the environment. One of its most popular permanent exhibitions is *Dinosaurs* which uses cutting-edge digital media to create vivid reconstructions of the dinosaur age.

**Historic Houses Trust of NSW**

The Trust manages 13 properties, 11 of which are open to the public as museums. The Trust’s properties also play host to theatre, music and dance performances, lectures, workshops, seminars, conferences and community events and are used as film locations.

**Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences**

This includes Australia’s largest museum, the Powerhouse Museum, and the Sydney Observatory. The Powerhouse Museum collects and displays materials in the areas of science, technology, industry, design,
decorative arts and social history, and presents lectures, performances, interactive displays and educational programs. The Sydney Observatory is a museum about astronomy and its history, which presents regular night tours and telescope viewing sessions, as well as exhibitions and education programs.

**Museum of Contemporary Art**

The Museum of Contemporary Art is Australia’s only museum dedicated to exhibiting, interpreting and collecting contemporary art from across Australia and around the world. It was opened in 1991 to fulfil the visionary bequest of Australian expatriate artist John Power (1881-1943), who left his personal fortune to the University of Sydney to inform and educate Australians in the contemporary visual arts.

**State Library of NSW**

The State Library of NSW is the State’s major reference and research library and includes the State Reference Library and the Mitchell and Dixson collections. It also hosts the Australian Silent Film Festival each year.

**Sydney Opera House**

The Sydney Opera House, as one of Sydney’s most significant buildings, is Australia’s premier performing arts centre and tourist attraction. The House is operated and maintained for the NSW Government by the Sydney Opera House Trust. The Trust also acts as producer and co-presenter for some performances and activities.

**Museums and galleries**

The National Maritime Museum showcases naval history and displays many ships. As well as these major institutions, there are over 540 museums, 34 regional galleries, 27 artist-run spaces, 175 historical societies and 266 libraries throughout the state.

**Theatres**

Sydney’s theatres include the Sydney Theatre Company, now run by Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton, the Bell Shakespeare Company, the Seymour Theatre Centre, and the Sydney Opera House’s Drama Theatre. There are also independent theatres to support new and upcoming work like the Griffin Theatre, Enmore Theatre, Belvoir St. Theatre, Ensemble Theatre, Darlinghurst Theatre, Legs on the Wall and Performance Space. Some of the city’s oldest and most central theatres such as the Lyric Theatre, Capitol Theatre and State Theatre play host to large international shows and musicals. In Western Sydney, the Riverside Theatre, Parramatta is an important venue. One of Sydney’s newest spaces is Carriageworks.

**Dance companies**

Sydney’s dance companies include the Sydney Dance Company and Bangarra Dance Theatre which celebrates and performs Indigenous dance as well as The Australian Ballet which has offices in both Sydney and Melbourne.

**Opera**

Opera Australia, the country’s national opera company, has offices in both Sydney and Melbourne. Its opera program is performed all year round at Sydney Opera House, offering a mixture of classic operas and experimental new works. Pinchgut Opera is also a Sydney based Opera company.
Orchestras
Sydney has a number of dedicated orchestras such as the Sydney Symphony, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. It is also a base for national orchestras with presences in both Sydney and Melbourne such as the Australian Youth Orchestra and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

Writers
Sydney writers are supported at the NSW Writers’ Centre and Sydney Writers’ Festival. The Australian Writer’s Guild based in Sydney supports all forms of writing: literature, poetry and screenwriting, amongst others.

Cultural centres
There are a number of key cultural centres in Sydney which house a cluster of cultural organisations and act as venues for audiences:

- Wharf 4/5 at Walsh Bay and Sydney Theatre at Dawes Point are home to major arts companies, dance classes, rehearsals, and literary events during the Sydney Writers’ Festival.
- The Gunner at Woolloomooloo houses organisations such as the Biennale of Sydney, Artspace, and the Gunner Studios, attracting over 20,000 people each year.
- Arts Exchange and the Vault in The Rocks house organisations such as the Sydney Festival, the Australian Youth Orchestra and the Sydney Writers’ Festival.
- Cambelltown Arts Centre.
- Q Theatre at Penrith.
- Casula Powerhouse at Liverpool.

Digital Arts
Several recent organisations have emerged to promote and support digital arts. d/Lux/MediaArts is one of Australia’s key screen and media arts organisations, committed to supporting the development, engagement and experience of contemporary screen and digital media culture. Vibewire particularly supports young people who are working innovatively in media, arts and social entrepreneurship. ICE (Information and Cultural Exchange) supports innovation in digital media (see Chapter 8 for more detail).

Innovative venue: Carriage Works
Opened in January 2007, CarriageWorks is a new home for contemporary arts in Sydney. CarriageWorks is housed in the old Eveleigh Rail Yards at Wilson Street, located within the emerging Redfern Waterloo precinct. Formerly a repair warehouse for trains, its distinctive lofty ceilings and long narrow performance spaces provide a unique and unusual backdrop for art exhibitions, plays and festivals. The mission of CarriageWorks is to provide a multi-venue centre focused on the creation and presentation of contemporary art. With large flexible theatre spaces, gallery and exhibition space, rehearsal rooms, a scenery workshop and office space, it is intended to create a working hub for practitioners and audiences of the small to medium arts sector.

In its first two years of operation, it has been used as a venue for Sydney Festival events, the Sydney Children’s Festival and television shows such as Network 10’s So you think you Can Dance: Australia. CarriageWorks’ architects, Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, received the Architecture Award for Public Buildings and the Greenway Award for Heritage at the Australian Institute of Architects NSW Architecture Awards.

In 2009, the underdeveloped bays at Carriageworks is being leased out as a motion capture studio to Kennedy Miller Productions for their Happy Feet 2 production, and development work on Fury Road (Mad Max 4), an exciting new addition to Sydney’s film infrastructure.

CULTURAL EVENTS
Sydney’s Cultural Events Calendar
As well as its permanent cultural institutions, Sydney is building up a reputation internationally as the home for key cultural events throughout the year. The state government agency, Events NSW, has developed a ‘Master Events Calendar’ which showcases the best of Sydney’s creativity and vibrancy. Its key cultural events are Vivacity in January, Vivid in June and Crave in October.
Vivacity – January

Vivacity focuses on outdoor events when the city comes to life and there is a strong sense of excitement and buzz in the air. It kicks off with the world-famous Sydney New Year’s Eve with fireworks against the backdrop of the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It includes the much-loved Sydney Festival, Chinese New Year and Australia Day.

Vivid – June

Vivid is a new public festival focussed on music and light. It uses iconic public buildings such as the Sydney Opera House and the Museum of Contemporary Art as a backdrop for spectacular light projections. Vivid showcases Sydney as a major creative hub in the Asia Pacific region. It incorporates the Sydney Film Festival, Smart Light Sydney (focussed on sustainable light installations), the Biennale, Luminous music festival, Creative Sydney (creative industry discussion forums) and Fire Water (a free event where fire installations were shown aboard historic boats in the harbour).

Crave – October

Crave is a spring festival celebrating Sydney’s outdoor lifestyle. Focussed on food, entertainment and outdoor experiences, it includes Art and About (with public art), Breakfast on the Bridge (a new event where Sydney Harbour Bridge is transformed into a picnic ground for 6000 people), Darling Harbour Fiesta, Seven Bridges Walk, Sydney Harbour Island Hopping, Sydney International Food Festival, World’s Funniest Island, Sydney Children’s Festival and Sculpture by the Sea.

Sydney Festival

Sydney Festival first took place in 1977 and it has since grown to become the most attended cultural event in Australia with 1 million people attending all of its events. It is a celebration of Sydney; its style and energy reflect the confidence, diversity and vigour of one of the world’s most beautiful cities.

For three weeks each January the Festival offers a rich program of around 80 events involving upwards of 500 artists from Australia and abroad covering dance, theatre, music, visual arts, cross media and forums across venues throughout the city. Sydney Festival also presents a number of free outdoor events such as the long-running Festival in the Domain with jazz and symphony orchestra concerts, each attracting up to 100,000 people. The Festival has introduced a new opening event, Festival First Night, which sees the city streets transformed into a series of free stages and precincts. 300,000 people enjoyed Festival First Night in January 2009. The Festival has a history of presenting Australian premieres as well as bringing many of the world’s great artists to Sydney for the first time.
Biennale of Sydney

The Biennale of Sydney is Australia's largest and most exciting international visual arts event. Created in 1973, its aim was to challenge traditional thinking and the event proved to be a natural fit with Sydney, reflecting the blend of experiment, innovation and energy that has always been a hallmark of Australia's largest city.

The Biennale of Sydney is held in Sydney's leading museums and galleries with a series of free tours, talks, film screenings and special events complementing the main exhibition. In recent years the distinctive Cockatoo Island venue has also been used, with disused ship yards being transformed into startling gallery spaces.

From a small start, the Biennale is now widely considered to be among the pre-eminent international contemporary art events today. In the 35 years from 1973 to 2008, the Biennale has brought the work of 1355 artists from 82 countries to Australia. The Biennale was among the first to show Indigenous art in an international contemporary art context, and the first to focus on Asia and the contemporary art of our region. One of its core objectives is to encourage international cultural exchange.

World's Funniest Island, Cockatoo Island

Cockatoo Island was the venue for a new two day comedy festival in 2009, gathering 200 of the best Australian and international comedians together, offering audiences comedy, music, food and drink, art and an inbuilt campsite. The combination of indoor venues (disused warehouses and even an old convict prison) and outdoor grassed areas with harbour views made it a perfect venue for a comedy festival. World's Funniest Island is now set to become an annual event as part of the spring Crave program.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Definition of creative industries

The importance of creativity and innovation in driving tangible economic outcomes is clear. There is a strong link between creativity and innovation and productivity growth. The creative economy is widely regarded as a key to Australia's global competitiveness.

While all industries involve creativity, the term 'creative industries' captures businesses from sectors which rely on individual creativity to generate wealth and jobs through new intellectual property and content. The creative industries are defined as music and performing arts, film, television and radio, advertising, marketing, software development, interactive content, writing, publishing, print media, architecture, design and visual arts.

AUSTRALIA

Creative industries in Australia

Recent research conducted by the federal government estimated that 438,000 people are employed in the creative industries in Australia, representing 4.8% of total employment and the industry gross product was $31.9 billion, contributing 2.8% to Australia's gross domestic product. Clearly, the creative industries are an important contributor to the overall Australian economy. In 2009, the Federal Government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions recognising the importance of the cultural industries.

Film, television and radio in Australia

Film, television and radio (covering film and video production, radio services, free-to-air television and subscription television services) contributes 15% of total industry gross product (IGP) of the creative industries in Australia and employs around 12% of the overall industry's workers. Overall the film, TV and radio segment demonstrated faster growth than the creative industries as a whole, as well as faster growth in employment and industry gross product than the aggregate Australian economy.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Creative industries in NSW

The NSW state government places a high priority on encouraging and stimulating jobs in the creative industries. Creative digital industries have been targeted in the NSW Government’s Statement on Innovation to help grow the State’s economy. The creative workforce is most highly concentrated in NSW, with 170,000 employees. This represents 38.9% of the overall creative workforce in Australia and is the single biggest concentration. It also represents 5.9% of total employment in this state and has 36,000 of

1 SUMMARY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ECONOMIC ANALYSIS, 30 June 2009, produced by Centre for International Economics - www.TheCIE.com.au
2 As above, figures from 2006
the nation’s creative digital businesses. NSW companies are leading exporters of creative and technology service valued at $2.2 billion, placing them among the State’s top 20 exports; this has grown at 3.4% per year over the last five years. The NSW State Government is undertaking an in-depth analysis of the creative industries in the state in order to assist in the development of these industries.

**ICT and New Media in NSW**

Digital media in NSW is underpinned by Sydney’s strength as the home of Australia’s largest ICT industry, worth $31 billion a year and with a skilled workforce of 100,000. Over three quarters of Australia’s ICT regional headquarters and regional operating centres are based in Sydney including digital media outlets FOXTEL Digital, News Corporation, Pacific Magazines, Legion, Vodafone, Optus, AAPT, Yahoo, Seven, Fairfax Digital, ABC and 3.

**Film, television and radio in New South Wales**

Australian film, TV and radio businesses are disproportionately based in NSW. Of the total 6543 employees in this sector in Australia, 3168 are based in NSW, representing 48.4% of the national employment figure. Film, television and radio is also the largest creative industry segment for NSW with 48.4% of all creative industry employees working in that sector. Output per employee in the film, television and radio sector has grown over the last four years by 3% while other segments within the creative industries have actually declined. The overall creative industries segment has grown modestly by 0.4%. Work on the *Stars Wars*, *Matrix* and *Superman* film productions has cemented NSW as a global player in film production. In the five years to 2006–07, almost $1.3 billion was spent on film and television production in NSW.

**Creative Industries Innovation Centre**

One important recent initiative is the successful bid by the University of Technology, Sydney to run a newly formed Creative Industries Innovation Centre (CIIC) in February 2009. This has been funded by federal Government (AUD $17m over three years) and was the result of a competitive bid process with other bids coming from the Queensland University of Technology and other states. The success of Sydney’s bid is a recognition that a strong creative industries hub already exists within the city.

The CIIC aims to assist small and medium sized enterprises within the creative industries to improve their productivity and competitiveness through the provision of business mentoring and advice. The CIIC also has an important networking role, encouraging collaboration between its academic, business and government partners. This will enable creative businesses to take advantage of the latest technologies and research being explored in universities.
MEDIA INDUSTRY IN SYDNEY

Overview

Sydney is the media capital of Australia - the base for the two national broadcasters (ABC and SBS), core operations for the three commercial television stations (Seven, Nine and Ten), home of myriad public and commercial radio stations, headquarters for subscription television service FOXTEL, base for the national telecommunications provider, Telstra, daily newspapers The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph and more recently the centre for an energetic digital media industry of online and mobile content and service providers.

Television

The television sector consists of free-to-air broadcasters (both government-funded national broadcasters and commercial broadcasters) and subscription services.

One of the national broadcasters is the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), founded in 1932 which offers three television channels, five national radio channels, 60 local radio channels, a comprehensive website, mobile service and various other digital platforms. It has offices in 60 regions of Australia with its headquarters and half its staff based in Sydney. It began as a single radio station in Sydney. The ABC recently received an injection of government funding to support Australian drama, allowing it to commission 5 or 6 feature films a year. Samson and Delilah benefitted from ABC investment and screened on ABC2.

“The film and television are one of the most vibrant forms of popular culture. Australian screen content plays an important role in people’s lives, allowing them to understand themselves, hear their own stories and celebrate their own culture. Sydney is home to some of Australia’s greatest film-makers so City of Film would be a fitting tribute to this creative city.”
- Kim Dalton, Director, ABC Television

The other national broadcaster is the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) which was established in 1975 to cater for Australia’s increasingly multicultural society. Its aim is to provide ‘multilingual and multicultural’ radio and television services. There are now 68 languages spoken on SBS Radio, programs in more than 60 languages broadcast on SBS Television and audio-on-demand and text stories in more than 50 languages online.

The third and newest national broadcaster is National Indigenous Television (NITV), founded in 2007 to reflect Indigenous stories and voices. With its head office in Alice Springs and its production office in Sydney, NITV offers a free-to-air television channel which is also beamed via satellite to remote areas.

Commercial television is dominated by three major metropolitan-based networks, the Seven Network, Nine Network and Network Ten. Each of these networks owns stations in capital cities around Australia and is affiliated with independently-owned regional broadcasters such as Prime Television (affiliated to Seven), WIN (affiliated to Nine in most areas) and Southern Cross Ten (affiliated to Ten).

The broadcasting industry in Australia is currently making the transition from analog to digital television, with digital television introduced in 2001 and several new digital free-to-air channels launched since then (ABC2, ABC3, SBS two, One HD, Go! And 7Two). Analog switch-off is underway and is slated for completion by the end of 2013.

Subscription television is offered in Sydney by Optus and larger FOXTEL which has over 120 channels and also provides interactive television and a personal hard drive recorder.

Newspapers

Sydney has two dedicated daily newspapers, the broadsheet The Sydney Morning Herald which has been published since 1831 and the tabloid The Daily Telegraph. It is also served by the specialist business and financial newspaper, The Australian Financial Review and Australia’s national daily broadsheet, The Australian. These newspapers are operated by the two major media organisations, Fairfax Media (SMH, AFR) and Murdoch’s News Ltd (The Australian and The Daily Telegraph). Fairfax has its headquarters in Sydney as does News Ltd’s digital arm, News Digital Media.

Magazines

Most magazines in Sydney are published by ACP Magazines, a member of the PBL Media group which is a sister company to the Nine Network. Its titles include the Australian Women’s Weekly, Woman’s Day, Australian Gourmet Traveller, Australian Geographic, TV Week, Ralph, Empire, Cleo, Cosmopolitan, Dolly and specialist magazines on PCs, finance, sport, music, lifestyle and trade. ACP Magazines has its headquarters in Sydney. News Ltd also publishes a range of 30 magazine titles including Gardening Australia and delicious (with the ABC), GQ Australia, Vogue Australia, Two Wheels and many others. They are particular leaders in food, owning 80% of food magazines in Australia.
Radio

Sydney was the first city in Australia to have regular radio broadcasts when the 2SB station began in 1923. This later became the first ABC radio station (now ABC 702) when the ABC was founded in 1932. At that time the ABC broadcast 12 stations (two in Sydney, two in Melbourne and eight in other major cities of Australia which were the foundation for the ABC Local network and its national Radio National service) and the commercial sector had 43 radio stations.

Now the ABC has four national radio networks (Radio National, Classic FM, Triple J, News Radio), all of which operate in Sydney, as well as its original local Sydney station, ABC 702 and 59 other regional stations. In 2009, the ABC launched its digital radio services with four new stations. SBS Radio is a national service which broadcasts 650 hours of programming in 68 languages each week. Originally launched in Sydney and Melbourne in 1975 as a 3-month experimental service to explain Australia’s new healthcare system, SBS Radio was formally established 3 years later and quickly grew into a national service to meet the needs of Australia’s diverse cultural communities.

Commercial AM and FM radio stations in Sydney include the major talkback services, 2GB (owned by Macquarie Radio Network) and 2UE (Fairfax Media) as well as Nova (DMG Radio Australia), 2DayFM (Austereo) and MixFM (Australian Radio Network). Commercial stations are simulcasting their stations on digital radio and several digital-only radio stations have also launched in languages such as Lebanese, Greek and Arabic to cater for Sydney’s multicultural community. There are also a number of community radio stations such as Muslim Community Radio, Bankstown Community Radio and Koori Radio which broadcasts to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in central Sydney.

Digital radio started in 2009 with both national and commercial broadcasters simulcasting their AM and FM stations on digital and also launching some new digital-only radio stations. The ABC has four new digital stations - ABC Dig Music, ABC Country, ABC Jazz and ABC Grandstand. New commercial digital stations Radar (Austereo) plays independent music; NovaNation plays dance music; Koffee offers variety music (both owned by DMG); The Edge (Australian Radio Network) plays RnB and dance. A new station Gorilla Radio, plays dance music and has live DJs, catering for Sydney only.

Online and digital media

Many of the media organisations mentioned above have now extended their operations to the online and digital space, catering to the shift in audience trends.

The most popular media websites in Australia are ninemsn (Channel Nine and Microsoft), Yahoo7 (Yahoo! and Channel 7), smh.com.au (Sydney Morning Herald), news.com.au (News Ltd) and abc.net.au (the ABC). New online news services are emerging to take the place magazines once held such as the satirical online journal, Crikey or News Ltd’s The Punch. Individual blogs and social media sites are also increasingly capturing audience attention.

Many of the telecommunications companies are also now very actively promoting themselves as content providers with Telstra’s BigPond service online, on mobile and shortly on IPTV. Mobile carriers such as Vodafone, 3, Optus and Virgin have
also for some time licensed and created content for the mobile platform.

Digital content and service providers taking advantage of the burgeoning new technologies are all starting to cluster in Sydney with companies like Firelight Productions, MOD Films, Viocorp, Clear Blue Day, The Project Factory, 2ergo, Massive Interactive and The Farm all based here as well as search engine marketing companies such as Adstream, Outrider and DGMAustralia. The national digital industry guild AIMIA (Australian Interactive Multimedia Industry Association) has its headquarters and annual Awards ceremony in Sydney.

Games providers (online, video, console or serious games) are also an important new industry sector in Sydney. Key companies are The Feds, Wasabi Digital, The Project Factory and Plastic Wax.
With thanks and acknowledgement to Graham Shirley, Senior Curator, Film, National Film & Sound Archive for consultation and input into this chapter

1894–1896 - Audiences see cinema for the first time

Australians’ first ever experience of moving images was on 30 November 1894 in a kinetoscope parlour in Sydney’s Pitt St. Here the Edison Kinetoscope was set up to demonstrate 20 second loops of film. Over a five week period, 22,000 people queued up to see this marvellous spectacle before it embarked on a tour to other Australian cities.

With this kind of audience hunger, it did not take long before the first agent from the French Lumiere Brothers arrived in Sydney to open the city’s first auditorium dedicated to films. Their agent Marius Sestier opened the Salon Lumiere in the centre of Sydney in 1896. Sydney-siders were entranced right from the start by this magical new technology.

1896 – 1910 – First attempts at production

Early films tended to be focussed on news-worthy events or ‘actualities’ (everyday scenes from real life). As early as 1896 Sestier filmed experimental footage of Sydney Harbour; the most famous was Passengers alighting from Ferry ‘Brighton’ at Manly as well as scenes of Sydney Harbour and beach-goers at Bondi Beach. One of the first films made in Sydney was the Salvation Army Limelight Department’s recording of the Federation ceremony in 1901 which captured the birth of the new nation of Australia.

1910-1914 – Bush-ranging films take off

Film-making in Sydney started to take off in 1910 and 1911 with a boom in production – in 1911 alone, 52 narrative films were created. At this point, Sydney film-makers were creating their own traditions since they were separated geographically and communication-wise from their peers in the northern hemisphere. Before the ‘western’ tradition had fully developed in the US, Sydney film-makers were creating their own bush-ranging genre. The US classic The Great Train Robbery was in fact being produced at exactly the same time as The Story of the Kelly Gang in Australia.

Bush-ranging films were particularly popular as they broke out of the constraints of simply filming theatrical productions and took advantage of the great outdoors, showing dramatic events against an Australian landscape. Raymond Longford (a prolific silent film director) summarised how easy it was to create a bush-ranging film:

“All they needed was horses hired from stables in Redfern, some uniforms, guns, a stagecoach and enough men to play troopers and rangers. They would take their gear down to the bush at Brookvale, outside Manly, camp out for a week, and – without any script – make a film. Their action was usually a stagecoach hold-up, a lot of galloping and a shooting match.”
– Raymond Longford, director
Bushranging was the most popular subject for films in 1911 but suffered a major set-back in 1912 when the NSW Police banned filmic depictions of bushranging as it was seen to encourage and glorify crime as well as ridicule police! The ban remained in place until the late 1940s, effectively preventing the national myth-making around bush-ranging in Australia’s most populous state. The Hollywood Western, already evolving, took the place of bushranging films on screens Australia-wide.

“Cinema has been central to the growth of Australia’s national identity from the very foundation of the medium and the Sestier brothers’ footage of the Melbourne Cup in 1896. Since then Australians’ affection for the cinema has been sustained from energetic roots in the silent era, through a passion for the newsreel up until the late 70s and has seen the rebirth of a substantial creative renaissance since the mid 70s in a wealth of diverse features. Sydney - a richly diverse multicultural city representative of modern Australian society - has always been a focal point in the development of the audio visual media industry and has been the hub of the artistic, production, distribution and exhibition facets of cinema across our nation. Sydney today is home to the headquarters of most of the key television, new media companies and studios in Australia and is central to the national creative and commercial personality of Australian cinema equally.”  - Kim Williams AM, CEO & Managing Director, FOXTEL

1914–1918 – The War Years

During the early years of the war, various patriotic films such as The Hero of the Dardanelles (Alfred Rolfe, 1915) were made. This told the story of the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli only weeks after the actual event had taken place in Turkey. It was based on reports and photos from war correspondents and was filmed at Tamarama Bay in Sydney.

In the later World War 1 years, escapist comedies were more popular such as Beaumont Smith’s The Hayseeds come to Sydney (1917). These films were more suited to audiences who by 1917-18 had experienced too many losses and privations thanks to the war.

1918–1930 - A thriving silent film industry

New directors

1910-1930 saw a thriving film industry start to develop in Sydney. Raymond Longford, one of Sydney’s most prolific silent film directors, produced 27 films between 1910 and 1934 together with his business and life partner Lottie Lyell including the still-popular The Sentimental Bloke in 1919. The McDonagh sisters (Paulette, Phyllis, and Isabel) were three distinctive and influential early film-makers during the late 1920s. The sisters collaborated intensely, resulting in highly original and creative films. Their early features were society dramas examining themes of romance, class and family loyalty which used American production techniques to attract large audiences.

The first cinemas

The first purpose-built cinemas in Australia were constructed in Sydney in 1907 and this was the start of a boom in construction with many ‘picture palaces’ built along Sydney’s central artery, George St in the 1920s. One of the most striking early cinemas was The Crystal Palace built by J.D. Williams in 1912. A number of these early cinemas (especially the Art Deco ones built in the late 20s) still survive today.

Open air cinemas were also popular during this early period and hastily constructed cinemas were often erected for fairly impromptu screenings. Moonlite premiered in December 1910 at an open air theatre in the centre of Sydney. It tells the story of Captain Moonlite, ‘a gentleman bushranger … who robbed the rich for the poor, and never wronged a woman’ and was shot on location in Sydney’s Victoria Barracks.

Construction of film studios

New film studios opened in Sydney during the 1910-1920 period, the most prominent of these being the Rushcutters Bay studio opened by Cozens Spencer in 1912 which was subsequently used by Australasian Films for its Australasian Gazette newsreel. Throughout the 1910s Bronte’s former Wonderland amusement park was used for feature film exteriors as well
as interiors, and for a short time the Australian Life Biograph Company ran a studio in Queenscliff, adjacent to Manly, taking advantage of the district’s then comparatively rural character. In Sydney’s eastern suburbs, Carroll-Baker Productions used an old mansion, ‘Palmerston’ for interiors and exteriors in 1920. Even into the late 1920s, ‘interiors’ were often filmed out of doors using natural sunlight.

**Distributors and exhibitors**

Permanent and travelling exhibition and distribution companies started to emerge in Sydney during the 1900s and 1910s including Spencer’s, West’s, J.D. Williams, the merger of Australasian Films and Union Theatres in 1913 known as ‘the combine’, and eventually Hoyts. The large-scale ‘combine’ now controlled both distribution and exhibition and began to squeeze out independent production companies because theatres were forced to agree to screen only those films supplied by ‘the combine’. At the same time as the early flourishing of Australian talent, intense competition from rapidly growing American studios had started. So ‘the combine’ focussed from the outset on the always cheaper and proven imported films. Local production suffered a severe setback, and Australian production shifted to focus predominantly on newsreels and other forms of actuality film (many of them known under the collective title ‘documentary’ after 1930).

![Image](https://example.com/cinesound_review.jpg)

**1930 – 1939 - Talkies begin and newsreels dominate**

In 1928 talkies first emerged in the world film market and by 1930, Australian film-makers were starting to make the transition from silent films to sound. Some actors and directors managed the transition better than others.

Arthur Smith, a Sydney-based former radio technician was an early inventor among those experimenting with Australian-made sound-on-film recording processes. Working out of the old Australasian Films Studio in Bondi Junction, Smith and co-inventor Clive Cross developed their own system which they called ‘Cinesound’. After several system-proving short sound films made at Australasian, the system was used for Ken G. Hall’s breakthrough feature, *On Our Selection* (1932). At the same time the process also began to be used on the newsreel Cinesound Review which ran twice a week from 1931 to 1970. In addition to newsreels, Cinesound made another 16 profitable feature films at Bondi Junction between 1931 and 1940. Rival newsreel and documentary company, Movietone, was established in Sydney in 1929 and these two companies became the core news media providers of the day, providing weekly newsreels to be played in cinemas as part of an evening’s entertainment. Newsreels, documentaries and commercials acted as the training ground for many cameramen, directors and writers who would later migrate to television. Frank Hurley was the main Australian documentary maker during the 1930s, making many sponsored travel and ‘industrial’ films, most of them produced in his time at Cinesound.

During the 1930s, production costs increased because of the introduction of sound and other new technologies. More specialised studios with expensive equipment emerged and film production was consolidated into a big professional business rather than the amateur companies of the early days. The most expensively outfitted of these new studios – and one of the rare Sydney film studios to be purpose-built from the ground up before World War 2 – were the Pagewood studios which continued to be used into the 1960s. The Depression also had a negative impact on cinema exhibition, although audiences slowly climbed after the Depression’s worst years of the early 30s.

![Image](https://example.com/pagewood_studios.jpg)

**1939-1945 - World War 2**

During the Second World War, it was almost impossible to secure nitrate film as its component parts were needed to manufacture ammunition. However news and propaganda films were extremely important to the Australian Government, and under the auspices of the wartime Department of Information (DOI), Cinesound and Movietone were among the private-enterprise producers who produced newsreels, propaganda films, fund-raising films and instructional films for the duration of the war. Cinesound staff accompanied soldiers as civilians in uniform, and were even offered honorary military ranks. Footage shot at the front was pooled and duplicated before being made available to Cinesound Review, Australian Movietone News and assorted overseas newsreels. Remarkably, the original, uncut footage shot during the war is still held in its ‘rushes’ form by the Australian War Memorial.

Cinesound formally abandoned feature films for the duration of the war but newsreels continued to reach huge audiences. Admissions to Australian cinemas even reached a peak of 151 million a year in 1944-45. Documentary maker Frank Hurley was initially sent to the frontline as the official government cinematographer. Together with Damien Parer and others, Hurley shot spectacular footage in New Guinea and other war zones. Cinesound’s Ken G. Hall used Parer to give a personal introduction to the New Guinea story, and the resulting 10-minute newsreel special, *Kokoda Front Line*, received Australia’s first-ever Academy Award when it won the Best Documentary Oscar in 1942. Ken G. Hall proudly retained the Oscar until the 1980s, until he sent it on permanent loan to the National Film and Sound Archive.
After the war when film stock again became widely available, Cinesound contemplated restarting its feature film production, but history repeated itself when the combine’s corporate successor and Cinesound’s parent company, Greater Union Theatres, decided to lower their risk by showing almost exclusively imported features. Cinesound then concentrated entirely on newsreels and documentaries, although the Cinesound Bondi studio was also used for Ken Hall’s last feature, the Columbia Pictures-backed *Smithy* (1946) and Charles Chauvel’s pioneering epic, *Sons of Matthew* (1949). The background to Greater Union’s decision not to re-embark on its own features was its sale to the British Rank Organisation, which unsurprisingly favoured British films. Local actors departed in increasing numbers to work in the US or UK. Independent producers like Charles Chauvel continued to struggle to make their increasingly rare local productions. By the end of the 1950s, fully funded Australian feature films had almost disappeared.

After Cinesound moved its operations to the old Amusu Theatre in Rozelle, the Bondi studio served for a short while as a soft-drink factory before seeing new life as the production base for several feature films and television from Chips Rafferty’s company, Southern International. The studio continued to be used by documentary, television and occasional feature filmmakers into the early 1970s, with one of the last features shot there being *The Removalist* (1975). The building, which had begun life decades before as a roller-skating rink before becoming a film studio and film lab, is today a discount store.

Telvision hit Australia in 1956 with Bruce Gyngell’s immortal and much-quoted words: ‘Good evening, and welcome to television’. At this point, Australian television in Sydney consisted of the national broadcaster, ABN-2, run by the then Australian Broadcasting Commission, and the commercial channels, TCN-9 and ATN-7. From 1951, federal legislation demanded that all advertisements on television had to be made in Australia, giving rise to a significant TV advertising industry, nurturing film-makers through the feature film drought and keeping them based in Sydney which became a hub of Australian television production during the 1950s and 60s.

The advent of television was a big challenge for newsreel companies who started to specialise, by necessity, on ‘specials’ or magazine style content. In 1970 Cinesound and Movietone joined forces to become Cinesound Movietone Productions, producing Australian Movie Magazine out of the former Movietone studio in Camperdown, recognising the inevitable move away from newsreels to television. The final famous newsreels were one-off ones created for big disasters like Cyclone Tracy and the Granville train crash, both in 1974. Australian Movie Magazine ceased production in 1975, the year that Australian TV commenced colour transmission.

During the 50s and 60s the early prolific Australian film industry fell into decline and was forgotten, with the main emphasis on new television technology, which gradually – driven often by the need to beam sport into remote locations – developed wide-reaching television networks around Australia. Although there had been a growing post-war film culture in Sydney that appreciated European and other forms of non-mainstream cinema, Australian audiences still largely relied on British and American films for cinema entertainment. Much of Australia’s, and especially Sydney’s earlier and thriving film industry was documented and celebrated by Anthony Buckley in his 1967 documentary *Forgotten Cinema*, which had a big
impact on its first audiences. This documentary, along with well-publicised activism from a new generation of film-literate producers, directors, writers, actors and unions, excited an interest in politicians to revive the Australian film industry and ultimately led to the creation of a national film school and feature and experimental film funds by Prime Minister Gorton in 1969 when he declared:

"Through the exciting seventies and at the end of them, I hope there will be established here a film industry, not yet as great as those in other countries, but so great that its ultimate greatness cannot be denied and cannot be prevented. And if this does come about, then this will be one of the most delightful things for me personally because I will feel that I have had some part in it and I will feel it is a thing worth having done."

The steps taken by the Federal government were to herald a renaissance in Australian film-making during the 1970s.

1970-1979 – Australian New Wave – Film renaissance

In the 1970s Australian film-making experienced a resurgence after three decades of decline. Federal funds were provided for a federal film funding agency (the Australian Film Development Corporation), a national film and television school (AFTRS – the Australian, Film, TV and Radio School) and an experimental film fund (administered by the pre-existing Australian Film Institute).

Eager to attract production and jobs to their state, state governments from the mid-1970s started funding film production. Australian mainstream distributors and exhibitors also began to invest again in Australian features. This diversity of government and private funding sources helped stimulate the industry.

During this period a group of film-makers called the Sydney Film-makers’ Cooperative emerged. It included now-famous directors and producers such as Phillip Noyce, Peter Weir, Gillian Armstrong, Albie Thoms, Dr George Miller and Bruce Petty. The Coop focussed on experimental film-making and distributed its own films independently, also showing them at their own small theatre in St. Peter’s Lane, Darlinghurst. The Cooperative provided a focus for radical film debate, created underground as well as more accessible films, published a regular newsletter (ultimately the influential Filmnews magazine) and lobbied against film censorship.

Classics such as *Alvin Purple*, *The Cars that Ate Paris*, *The Man from Hong Kong*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *The Getting of Wisdom* and *The Last Wave* came out in this decade and enjoyed great success at the box office. Yet again Australian audiences were showing their enthusiasm for Australian features, continuing a trend that had started with audience embrace of long-running Australian TV drama shows such as *Homicide* and *The Mavis Bramston Show*. Surfing films also appeared during the 70s and appealed to niche audiences, as did other non-mainstream documentaries and travel movies.

By 1975, inflation had increased and colour television reduced revenue from cinemas. At this point the industry began to rely more heavily on government subsidy to soak up losses where box office takings could not cover the cost of production. Although it was a peak time for production, 70% of films were failing to recover their own costs. In 1978, the Federal Government introduced tax concessions for investors to assist with funding.

1980-1999 – Successful exports

During the 80s and 90s, the continuation of federal tax concessions (10BA) which allowed many small private investors (or even friends and family) to donate to films as a tax-deductible cause. Key Sydney-based films made during this period include *Winter of Our Dreams*, *Heatwave*, *A Street to Die*, *The Killing of Angel Street*, *Crocodile Dundee*. At the end of the decade the tax concessions were wound back and replaced by direct subsidy from the newly established Film Finance Corporation. Sydney based films supported by the FFC included *Strictly Ballroom*, *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Muriel’s Wedding*, all of which achieved outstanding box office success. This continued a trend that had started in the mid-1970s – Australian feature films as an important cultural export for the country.

2000–2009 – The ride continues

The Australian film industry tends to experience a rollercoaster ride with a crop of great movies followed by some dark years. *Lantana,*
Moulin Rouge and Looking for Alibrandi achieved global success while others failed at the box office. In 2007 the Federal government introduced a new producer offset for Australian productions which is regarded as one of the most generous in the world. 2009 has been a very successful year for Sydney films with a crop of very strong locally-made productions such as Australia, Beautiful Kate, Balibo, Mao’s Last Dancer and Samson and Delilah.

Future challenges

The construction of the National Broadband Network and the changing audience trends in digital media consumption are a challenge and an opportunity for Sydney’s film industry. New ways to distribute movies and engage with audiences through interactive media are exciting but also challenge established business models. As over a century of film-making has shown, film-makers need to grab hold of the new technologies and hang on for the ride if they want to survive and prosper! One of the main benefits for new and emerging filmmakers in the digital age has been the comparative affordability and wide availability of digital production and post-production technology, democratising the industry in a way generally unseen since the low budget days of pre-1930 silent era. As audiences for such Sydney institutions as the Tropfest and Flickerfest short film festivals can attest, ‘credit card films’ made for short film festivals and essentially as a calling card for aspiring feature filmmakers are becoming more affordable with each new advance in technology.

PROFILES OF KEY FIGURES IN SYDNEY FILM INDUSTRY

Raymond Longford

Born in 1878, Raymond Longford had a long and impressive career during the silent film period, directing 27 films from 1911 to 1934. His most famous movies, apart from The Sentimental Bloke are The Fatal Wedding, The Mutiny of the Bounty, On Our Selection, Rudd’s New Selection and The Romantic Story of Margaret Catchpole. He worked alongside his business (and ultimately life) partner, Lottie Lyell who had significant creative input into the casting and direction of the film, as well as playing lead roles in many of them. Longford was unable to make the transition to the ‘talkie’ era and, devastated by Lottie Lyell’s early death from tuberculosis, he ended his film career in the 1930s, and ultimately worked as a watchman on the Sydney wharves. He died in 1959. The AFI recognised his ability to convey the unique Australian character on film, and his important contribution to the development of the Australian film industry, with a Raymond Longford Award for “Lifetime Achievement” in 1976.

Charles and Eleanor Spencer

Australia’s first female projectionist, Eleanor Spencer, was based in Sydney. She was the wife of Charles Cozens Spencer, an early flamboyant exhibitor and ‘movie mogul’ who toured films through Australia, New Zealand and Canada in 1905 and
later remodelled Sydney’s Lyceum Hall theatre into a permanent cinema. He opened a permanent production company and built the Rushcutters Bay studio in 1912 which later focussed on newsreels and actualities. Ever the showman, Spencer promoted his wife as ‘Senora Spencer, the only lady operator in the world’ for several years.

Frank Hurley

Frank Hurley was one of Sydney’s most respected photographers and cinematographers. Born in Sydney’s Glebe in 1885 as one of five children, he ran away from home aged 14 to work on the Sydney docks. He bought his first camera (a Kodak Box Brownie) when he was 17 and taught himself photography, initially establishing himself in the postcard business. Most famous for his role in documenting Antarctic expeditions, he accompanied explorers Douglas Mawson (1911-13) and Ernest Shackleton in two separate trips as official photographer. Ernest Shackleton’s expedition set out from Australia in 1914 but was marooned until August 1916. The only photographic evidence of this trip is Frank Hurley’s startling monochromatic 35 mm film coverage, and both black-and-white and colour still images (for some of his stills he used the then very new Paget process of colour photography which had only been marketed in 1913 and was discontinued in the early 1920s). While tough decisions had to be made about what to carry with them while they trekked over ice on foot once their ship had been abandoned and sunk, Frank Hurley always prioritised his camera and his films. At one point he had to cull his glass-plate negatives from 500 down to 120, helped by Shackleton and could take only his Kodak pocket camera and two rolls of film for the remainder of the expedition. Hurley later joined the Australian Imperial Force as official war photographer and honorary captain in 1917, and captured rare battlefield scenes of World War 1 at great personal risk. He also acted as official war photographer during World War 2 and shot notable footage of the war in the Middle East for the Australian Department of Information as well as in New Guinea (for Kokoda Front Line!). Hurley died in 1962.

Ken G. Hall

Born in Sydney in 1901, Ken G Hall started as a journalist and moved into silent films as a publicist. Initially under the auspices of Australasian Films, ultimately Cinesound Productions, he produced the Cinesound Review newsreel and a series of sponsored documentaries (some of them directed by Frank Hurley). He also made 17 financially successful feature films from 1931 to 1940 including the Dad and Dave series and other comedies, action adventure films and a musical. As an executive producer and occasionally supervising director, his newsreel output included Kokoda Front Line! which won an Academy Award in 1942. He later migrated to television, becoming TCN Channel 9 (Sydney’s) longest serving early manager. Hall died in Sydney in 1994 aged 93. In 1995 the Australian National Film and Sound Archive inaugurated the annual Ken G. Hall Award, which is presented by the Archive each year to a person, organisation or group that has made an outstanding contribution to Australian film preservation. Winners of the Award have included Rupert Murdoch (1995), Peter Weir (1996), Anthony Buckley (2000), archivist and historian Graham Shirley (2004) and feature filmmaker Phillip Noyce (2005).

Stuart Doyle

Stuart Doyle was an executive of Australasian Films and Union Theatres who loved the glamour of film and aspired to be a Hollywood studio head. He guided the design and construction of the ornate State Theatre in Sydney which is still used to host the Sydney Film Festival as well as key Sydney live events. He encouraged Australasian to support local production in 1925 a decade after their focus had been established on imported films. To this end, he founded Cinesound Productions along with Ken G. Hall in 1932. Doyle had a real sense of showmanship and a commitment to providing the public with the kind of entertainment they would enjoy. This clear sense of how to reach an audience helped ensure that all of Cinesound’s feature films made a profit or broke even.

Charles Chauvel

Born in Queensland in 1897 but spending most of his career as a director in Sydney, Chauvel made a number of classic Australian films including Errol Flynn’s feature debut In the Wake of the Bounty in 1933. He studied art in Sydney, worked briefly as a bit player in Australian silent features, then went to the US to get practical experience in filmmaking. He returned to Australia to make his first feature film The Moth of Moonbi in 1926. The worldwide success of 40,000 Horsemen in 1941, which celebrated the Australian Light Horse Brigade, led to several other war documentaries. The Rats of Tobruk in 1944 was a drama about Australian soldiers in World War 2’s Middle East conflict. Chauvel made Australia’s first locally funded colour narrative feature, Jedda (1955), the story of an Aboriginal woman adopted into a white family. Charles Chauvel persisted in producing Australian films during the tough years of the 50s and he believed that the only way to give an Australian film international appeal was to make it wholly Australian. He died in 1959. The Chauvel cinema, an arthouse/cinematheque venue in Sydney’s Paddington, is named after him.
CASE STUDY 1: THE SENTIMENTAL BLOKE (RAYMOND LONGFORD, 1919)

One of Sydney’s most famous and best-loved early movies is Raymond Longford’s The Sentimental Bloke. Filmed near the wharves at Woolloomooloo in the centre of Sydney, it is a simple, romantic and appealing tale of a working class larrikin hero (the ‘Bloke’) and his romance with Doreen (played by Lottie Lyell, Longford’s long-time business and romantic partner). Based on the popular narrative poem of the same name by C.J. Dennis which was published in Sydney in 1915, the film was immediately successful at the box office when released in 1919. It was regularly revived and at a Royal Commission into the Australian film industry in 1927 it received the most regular praise of any Australian film made to that date.

Bloke was also distributed in Britain where it received very favourable reviews: ‘the film has extraordinary charm...[with] its rich shrewd humour and its simple humanity’.

The film was rediscovered in the 1950s when just two boxes of film survived a nitrate fire of a private film collection. They were sent to the National Library of Australia (which later became the National Film and Sound Archive), and from there to a Sydney laboratory to be pieced together. Anthony Buckley, who later became a prolific cinematographer, editor and producer, was at that time working as a junior lab technician and was given the painstaking task of resplicing the film’s one surviving tinted nitrate 35 mm print. Due to the National Library’s practice at that time of only reduction copying archival film to 16 mm for preservation, it was a black-and-white 16 mm print that was shown to the second-ever Sydney Film Festival in 1955. But the film’s impact was enough to reignite interest in Australia’s early film industry. However, over the ensuing years, most of the Bloke’s 35 mm nitrate print somehow became lost.

The film came to light again in an American nitrate vault in 1973 where six cans erroneously labelled ‘The Sentimental Blonde’ were found by a NFSA staff member visiting George Eastman House, Rochester, New York state. What the staff member found was the film’s original negative which had been re-edited in the early 1920s for US release. It was not until 1999 that funding became available to undertake the significant restoration work which, blending the recently discovered 35 mm negative with the surviving 16 mm Australian release version of the film, led to The Sentimental Bloke finally being re-released as a full restoration in 2004.

Accompanied by music by Jen Anderson and the Larrikins, Longford’s The Sentimental Bloke was presented to contemporary audiences at the 2004 Sydney Film Festival where it was voted ‘Most Popular Feature Film’ by audiences, some 85 years after it was first released. Unusually naturalistic for its time, the acting in The Sentimental Bloke is subtle. This, the film’s essential humanity, enduring comedy and its value as a vivid snapshot of early ‘Australian-ness’ are why it still resonates so strongly with audiences today. Thanks to chance and the persistence of archivists, The Sentimental Bloke is one of the earliest Australian examples of a complete silent film which still survives today.

CASE STUDY 2: HISTORIC LOCAL CINEMAS

In the 20s there was a burst of cinema building in Sydney to meet the huge demand from audiences hungry for film. The combination of cheap tickets and a high minimum wage made cinema a perfect mass entertainment and Australia had the highest cinema going attendance in the world at that time. Attendances were boosted, as they had been in the USA, by the construction of ‘picture palaces’ such as the Prince Edward, the Capitol, the Regent and the Plaza in Sydney, along with numerous suburban cinemas that were an integral part of the suburbs that proliferated that decade well beyond the CBD fringe.

Although many of these cinemas are long gone, a few historic examples survive and are well-loved by contemporary Sydney audiences. The Roseville cinema in the northern suburbs of Sydney is a beautiful art deco cinema which operates as an independent family owned cinema, dedicated to art-house film.

“Sydneysiders have a great and eclectic appetite for film – whether it’s the big blockbusters, the niche art house films or even the classic surfing movies over summer. Sydney is distinctive for its love of film in all its forms...whether watching it in a state of the art suburban multiplex cinema, an historic art deco theatre or the open air cinema opposite the Opera House.” - Stephen Basil-Jones, Motion Picture Distributors’ Association of Australia
The Randwick Ritz is another example of art deco architecture which is often used for fundraisers, parties and local community events, providing a central hub for the local community.

Opened in 1935, the Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace at Cremorne on Sydney’s lower north shore originally seated 1700 people. Restored in the 1980s in order to replicate its original art deco fittings and lighting, it now has six screens. One of the screens still has a Wurlitzer organ which is used for ‘movie luncheons’.

**CASE STUDY 3: WAKE IN FRIGHT (TED KOTCHEFF, 1971)**

*Wake in Fright* is a shocking tale of Australia’s outback. Filmed partly on location in Broken Hill and partly in Sydney at the former Cinesound studio in Ebley Street, Bondi Junction, it tells the story of an outback schoolteacher who becomes stranded in a rough mining town, loses his money in a gambling game, takes part in a violent kangaroo hunt and ends up on the skids. It was Sydney actor Jack Thompson’s first feature film and Chips Rafferty’s last.

*Wake in Fright* disturbed Australian audiences on its first release in 1971 because of its negative image of Australia and also the impact of its climactic kangaroo hunt. It was critically well received however, including at Cannes, where it screened in the Official Competition in 1971.

Much like the fate of *The Sentimental Bloke*, the original negatives for *Wake in Fright* were lost for a long period from 1972 to 1996. Anthony Buckley, the film's original editor, developed a mission to restore the film. After tracking down a copy in a Pittsburgh film vault which was marked ‘For Destruction’, Buckley then motivated the National Film and Sound Archive and E-Film, a division of Deluxe (formerly Atlab) Laboratories in Sydney to restore the film.

In 2009, the restored *Wake in Fright* was released at the Sydney Film Festival (again following a similar path to *The Sentimental Bloke*) and played to a packed audience on a Sunday morning at the State Theatre. In its first four weeks, it took $200,000 at box office which was far higher than expected, and certainly far exceeded the film’s Australian reception in 1971. With 38 years of hindsight, the audience was able to appreciate the humour and irony of the film much more. In a neat bookend, the film was selected for the Cannes Official Selection Classics for 2009 respecting its early Cannes success. It is currently touring Australia as part of the Travelling Film Festival.

Now, 38 years later, *Wake in Fright* is regarded as one of the best Australian films ever made because of its integrity and its beautiful underplaying of iconic Australian characters.

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**ARCHIVES**

**Overview**

As one of the earliest places in Australia to show and produce films, Sydney values its historical traditions. Archives are a crucial way of recording and preserving that history. Through Sydney’s libraries, museums, broadcasters and archives, it has a huge collection of film, photographs and documents relating to film-making dating back to the 19th century. As public institutions, most of these collections are open and accessible to the public. Indeed, some organisations are making a particular effort to digitise and open up their archives for public use.

Private collections from individuals and companies are also an important contributor to the city’s archives. Several commercial companies had key roles in film production during the 20th century and have preserved many of these for today’s generation. Many of these collections have also been donated to public institutions, with large collections of photographs forming founding collections for the State Library and the Powerhouse Museum.

**PUBLIC ARCHIVES**

**National Film and Sound Archive**

The National Film and Sound Archive’s primary aim is to develop a comprehensive collection of Australian works and materials representing the history, technology and culture of the audiovisual media, from their origins to the present time.
The NFSA also collects international material selectively. Its headquarters are in Canberra with an office in Sydney.

The National Collection includes more than 1.4 million items. In addition to discs, films, videos, audio tapes, phonograph cylinders and wire recordings, the Collection includes supporting documents and artefacts, such as photographic stills, transparencies, posters, lobby cards, publicity, scripts, costumes, props, memorabilia and sound, video and film equipment.

The NFSA celebrated UNESCO World Day for Audiovisual Heritage by throwing open its doors for tours through the preservation labs. The open day also celebrated the NFSA's 25th anniversary and its first year of operation as an independent statutory authority. Twenty five years since its creation, the NFSA is now internationally renowned for the knowledge and expertise of its staff and its rich collection. The NFSA is very supportive of the City of Film concept and has provided many of its images to illustrate this bid.

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation Archive**

The ABC is home to Australia’s largest media collection, with over 75 years’ coverage of news, current affairs, sport, science, natural history, arts, drama and many other subjects.

The Collection includes stock footage and audio for use in television commercials, documentary and feature films, audio visual content in DVD and MP3 formats, multimedia presentations, corporate videos and gallery exhibitions. The Sound Library includes music and spoken word recordings used in ABC productions. The Radio Archives are a collection of radio output from its beginnings in 1932 to the present day. There is a specific Natural History Audio and Natural History Vision collections created over 20 years by the ABC’s Natural History Unit which contains wildlife sounds and vision and from Australia, Papua New Guinea and Antarctica – this is the most extensive natural history collection in the southern hemisphere. The Television Archives include thousands of hours of television material.

**Powerhouse Museum Archive**

The Powerhouse Museum’s archives cover science, technology, industry, design, decorative arts and history. Records exist in many different formats – correspondence and subject files, reports, minute books, photographs, videos, audio-recordings, plans and drawings, newspaper cuttings and Museum publications (books, serials, guides, exhibition catalogues, posters, educational leaflets and articles written by staff).

One particular collection is the Tyrrell Collection which consists of 7903 glass plate negatives from the studios of Charles Kerry (1857-1928) and Henry King (1855-1923) who had two of Sydney’s principal photographic studios in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Tyrrell Collection provides an important record of city and country life at the time with a number of broad themes: Sydney and suburbs; south coast; Blue Mountains; transport; rural New South Wales; shipping; caves; sports; Indigenous peoples of Australia and the South Pacific.

The archives are used by staff for the Museum’s research, exhibition and publication programmes and are also available to public researchers. Since 2008, the Powerhouse has embarked on an innovative way of opening up its archives to public access. Many of the images from the Tyrrell Collection are being progressively released online so that the public can download them for free, tag them and help the Museum identify their locations. This is being done through the Creative Commons site on the photo-sharing site, Flickr, and new photos are being uploaded each week.

**State Library of NSW Archive**

The State Reference Library collection contains over two million items providing an extensive range of Australian and international research material including printed books, journals, government reports, statistics, audio-visual and electronic resources. This large research collection contains a broad range of both historical and current research material with collection strengths including history and literature, business and management, social sciences, applied science, biography, health and law.

The Library's photographic collection is one of the nation’s largest and most important, comprising over one million images, about half of which are photographic negatives. Although the Library’s principal focus is on Sydney and New South Wales, significant historical collections exist of New Guinea and Pacific Islands. An outstanding documentation of early Antarctic exploration can be found in the 2100 negatives from the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (1911-1914) and other journeys in that region, thanks principally to photographer and later documentary maker Frank Hurley.

**Australian Film, TV and Radio School Library Archive**

The Jerzy Toeplitz Library (named after the Founding Director of the School) serves the film, broadcasting and media industries as well as staff and students of AFTRS. The library holds the most comprehensive collection of training and research resources related to film, television, radio and digital technology production in Australia. It includes books, reference works, periodicals, scripts, online databases and over 4000 feature films, documentaries, mini-series and short films which are often hard to find elsewhere and can be viewed in the library.
PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Several key Sydney based corporations have extensive private film and photographic collections, dating back to the 19th century.

Shell in Australia

Shell has a huge range of films in its private collection, largely because it established its own Shell Film Unit in 1948. The unit was run by John Heyer who had been a senior producer in the Federal Government’s Film Division. Many of the films were very technical, covering petrochemical refining and processing while others covered sporting events, travel, farming, nature and conservation. Key national engineering initiatives such as the Snowy Mountains Scheme were filmed by Shell. Probably the most famous film in Shell’s collection is Back of Beyond, 1954. Produced and directed by John Heyer, it was the result of a brief from Shell to make a “prestige” documentary that would capture the essence of Australia. He chose as his subject an outback postman on the weekly Birdsville Track mail run. It won the Best Film title at the Venice Biennale in 1954 and became an Australian classic, attracting audiences of 750,000 in its first year of release and was afterwards televised and shown at international festivals. This was a period when very few Australian feature films were being made (between one and three a year from 1950 to 1958) so Shell’s contribution to the film industry was significant.

Cinesound

Cinesound was established in 1931 principally as a newsreel company which produced the Cinesound Review from 1931 until 1970, reporting and producing its twice weekly newsreels and documentaries together with producing 17 feature films between 1931 and 1940. During WW2, Cinesound continued to produce its newsreels and many patriotic documentaries. At the cessation of hostilities Cinesound returned to its normal operations of producing newsreels until 1970. In 1970 Cinesound merged its productions with “Australian Movietone Productions” and became “Cinesound Movietone Productions”. It ceased producing newsreels in favour of the “Australian Movie Magazine” which continued in production for a further five years. CMP finally ceased film productions as a production company in 1975 and became a stock footage library supplying the industry with its vast array of image content.

To this day the Company continues to maintain all Cinesound collection rights and manages the Movietone rights on behalf of 20th Century Fox Australia. In 1986 with video technology commencing as the new image delivery medium CMP began the process of transferring its film images to video formats and during this period CMP also began to preserve its film collection onto new master positive film stocks for the collection’s long term preservation; each year the company continues to allocate a proportion of funds for the maintain all of its documentary collection.

However in the early 1990s a joint venture programme entitled ‘Operation Newsreel’ began in conjunction with National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra. This joint venture involved a $4m donation from Cinesound Movietone Productions to the NFSA whereby the Companies entire newsreel collection was transferred to the NFSA for the express purpose of cataloguing the entire collection and preserving the original image and sound negatives to their original quality, many of them spanning over half a century of content.

Whilst CMP and the NFSA continue to maintain the preservation programme, this vast collection of valuable archival film can now be accessed by the entire industry. TEM (Thought Equity Motion), a Sydney based stock shot Company operates the licence on behalf of CMP to market the newsreel collection under its banner; in doing so the collection can now be appreciated globally. In August 2009, in recognition of this important preservation work, UNESCO honoured Cinesound Movietone Productions for its archival film footage collection, with the prestigious award of being added to the Australian Memory of the World Register.

“Our Company is very proud of achieving this prestigious honour. As a major supplier of uniquely Australian and historical world footage to the industry, CMP remains mindful of its responsibility to ensure this wonderful collection survives for future generations of the Australian public to enjoy.” - Glenn Eley, CMP Operations Manager

BP had a very significant film collection for many decades, which has now been donated to the National Film and Sound Archives and RTA (Road & Transport Authority) has a collection of stills and video which was started in 1950.

UNESCO: SYDNEY, CITY OF FILM
Many world-famous actors, producers, directors, cinematographers, screen composers and costume designers were born in Sydney. Some of these are still living and working in Sydney while others have gone on to make successful international careers, or indeed combine international work with Australian productions. Actors include Nicole Kidman (Australia), Hugh Jackman (Wolverine), Hugo Weaving (The Matrix series), Toni Collette (Muriel’s Wedding), Bryan Brown (Beautiful Kate, Australia), David Wenham (Australia), Claudia Karvan (Love My Way), Anh Do (Little Fish) and Joel Edgerton (Ned Kelly). Famous Sydney-born or bred directors include Peter Weir (Master and Commander, The Far Side of the World), Bruce Beresford (Breaker Morant, Driving Miss Daisy), Phillip Noyce (Rabbit Proof Fence), Bob Connolly (Rats in the Ranks), Rachel Perkins (Bran Nue Dae), Darren Dale (First Australians), Serhat Caradee (Cedar Boys), Khao Do (Missing Water). Key Sydney-born producers include Pat Lovell (Gallipoli, Picnic at Hanging Rock) and Emile Sherman (Disgrace, Candy).

Many film-makers who were born elsewhere in Australia or overseas have trained in Sydney at schools such as the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) or the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS) and later made Sydney their home because of the buzz of activity in film-making and production. Actors include Cate Blanchett, (Elizabeth, The Golden Age) originally from Melbourne and now closely associated with Sydney because of her role in running the Sydney Theatre Company, Mel Gibson, who trained at NIDA and now has a base in Sydney as well as Los Angeles (Mad Max series), Miranda Otto (Lord of the Rings), Judy Davis (My Brilliant Career), Rebecca Gibney (Packed to the Rafters), Matt Day (Muriel’s Wedding), and Ben Mendelsohn (Beautiful Kate).

Producers and directors who have trained in Sydney or base themselves in the city include Jan Chapman (Lantana), Jane Scott (Shine, Strictly Ballroom), Dr George Miller (Happy Feet), Baz Luhrmann (Australia), Jane Campion (The Piano), Gillian Armstrong (My Brilliant Career) and Rachel Ward (Beautiful Kate). Composers, costume designers and cinematographers based in Sydney include Chris Gordon (Master and Commander), Catherine Martin (who worked on Baz Luhrmann’s visual masterpieces), Lizzy Gardiner (who won an Oscar for costume design on Priscilla), Andrew Lesnie (who won an Oscar for his cinematography on The Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring), Dion Beebe (Memoirs of a Geisha) and Dean Semler (another Oscar winner for his cinematography on Dances with Wolves). The full list of Australian Oscar winners is extensive and can be found at Annex D.

“Everyone knows that Sydney is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. But this city also continues to make an incredible contribution to international cinema, with some of the international community’s most prolific and successful filmmakers. City of Film status would finally give Sydney the recognition it deserves internationally as a highly creative and vibrant city.” - John Polson, Director & Founder, Tropfest

Sydney production companies
Many production and post-production companies are based or headquartered in Sydney including Screentime Productions (which won 14 AFI nominations in 2009, a record number for a single production company), Animal Logic, Omnilab,
Blackfella Films, Fuel, Bazmark, Kennedy Miller Productions, Jan Chapman Films, Beyond International, Deluxe, Rising Sun Pictures, Cutting Edge Post, eFilm and Trackdown. Dr D is a new production company – a joint venture between Kennedy Miller Productions and Omnibab, created to work on Happy Feet 2 and upcoming films in order to maintain the creative talent in Sydney.1

Film-related jobs in Sydney

The statistics show that the number of film, TV and radio jobs is higher in Sydney than in any other part of Australia. Of the total 6543 employees in this sector in Australia, 3168 are based in NSW, representing 48.4% of the national employment figure, compared to 26% in Victoria or 12.2% in Queensland. NSW has the highest density of film employees of all states. Within all the creative industries (which include music and performing arts, visual arts etc), NSW shows a higher proportion of employees than all other states but this pattern is most marked for film.1

International success of Sydney film-makers

A recent study found that the top 12 Australian actors based in Hollywood have appeared in films that have generated AUD $10.6 billion at box office in the US2. The most successful financially has been Hugh Jackman, born on the north shores of Sydney, whose films have made $1.68 billion in the past eight years, followed closely by Cate Blanchett with AUD $1.2 billion, linked mostly to her roles in popular epics such as Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Rings and last year’s Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull. Of the highest grossing movies of all time globally, six star or feature Australian talent:

1 Titanic (1997) $58 million
2 Shrek 2 (2004) $50m
3 The Return of the King (2003) $49m (including Cate Blanchett, Miranda Otto, David Wenham, Hugo Weaving)
4 Crocodile Dundee (1986) $48m (Paul Hogan)
5 Fellowship of the Ring (2001) $47m (Cate Blanchett, Hugo Weaving)
6 The Two Towers (2002) $46m (Cate Blanchett, Miranda Otto, David Wenham, Hugo Weaving)
7 The Dark Knight (2008) $46m (Heath Ledger)
8 Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone (2001) $42m
9 Star Wars I: The Phantom Menace (1999) $40m
10 Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen (2009) $40m (Hugo Weaving)

PROFILES OF SELECTED SYDNEY FILM-MAKERS

Nicole Kidman

Nicole Kidman, known as one of Hollywood’s top Australian imports, has acted in 53 movies and is most famous for her starring roles in Australia (2008), Bewitched (2005), Cold Mountain (2003), The Hours (2002), Panic Room (2002), Moulin Rouge (2001), Eyes Wide Shut (1999) and her first international breakthrough alongside Sam Neill, Dead Calm (1989). This was closely followed by her first starring role with Tom Cruise in Days of Thunder (1990) which led quickly to their wedding that same year. She was born in 1967 to Australian parents who travelled for work but settled back in their native Sydney when Nicole was three years old. She dropped out of school at 16 to pursue a full-time acting career, featuring in Australian film and TV productions such as Bush Christmas (1983), BMX Bandits (1983) and Vietnam (1987), for which she won her first Australian Film Institute (AFI) award. She has demonstrated her acting range with comic parts in To Die For (1995), action thrillers, The Peacemaker (1997) and costume dramas, Portrait of a Lady (1996). During her Hollywood career, she has maintained a house in Sydney’s Darling Point, returning regularly to her hometown.

Cate Blanchett

Born in Melbourne in 1969, but moving to Sydney to study at NIDA, Cate Blanchett became a popular theatre, film and television actress shortly after graduating. Early theatrical roles at the Sydney Theatre Company were followed by a starring television role in ABC TV’s drama Heartland (1994) and the popular series Police Rescue (1994). Her first feature film was Paradise Road (1997) followed closely by her award-winning performances in Elizabeth (1998) and later Elizabeth: The Golden Age (2007). She has played starring roles in large international features such as the Elf Queen Galadriel in the Lord Of The Rings trilogy and as female lead in Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (2008). She has also taken time to work on edgier independent Australian productions such as Little Fish (2005) about heroin addiction in western Sydney and Oscar and Lucinda (1997) based on Peter Carey’s Australian novel. She won an Oscar for her role in Aviator (2004) and several Oscar nominations for Elizabeth: The Golden Age (2007) as well as multiple BAFTA, AFI and Golden Globe awards. Cate Blanchett is now based in Sydney with her husband, Andrew Upton, with whom she runs the Sydney Theatre Company. Cate Blanchett is supportive of the idea of Sydney as a UNESCO City of Film:
Peter Weir
Born in Sydney in 1944, Peter Weir has made a remarkable career for himself as a director. Part of the Sydney Film-makers Cooperative in the 1970s along with Phillip Noyce, Gillian Armstrong, Bruce Beresford and others, he played a big part in the renaissance of Australian film in the 1970s. He directed classic films such as Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975), The Last Wave (1977) and Gallipoli (1981) which consolidated the Australian national myth of ANZAC soldiers dying needlessly at Gallipoli during World War One. He was also responsible for one of Australia’s most famous television comedies, The Aunty Jack Show (1973). In the last three decades he has worked on large international feature films such as Dead Poets Society (1989), Green Card (1990), The Truman Show (1998) and Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World (2003), all of which had great box office success.

Jan Chapman
Most famous for producing The Piano (1993), Jan Chapman has been responsible for key Australian films which have gone on to become well-known internationally such as Lantana (2001) and Somersault (2004). Born in Newcastle in 1950 she now lives in Woollahra, Sydney, where she has her own production company, Jan Chapman Productions. She has produced 20 films and TV series including most recently Bright Star (2009), Keats’ love story. She was awarded the Australian Centenary Medal in the 2001 Queen’s New Years Honours List for her services to Australian society and Australian film production and in 2004 was awarded the A.O. (Officer of the Order of Australia) for her services to the Australian film industry as a producer and as a contributor to organisations providing strategic direction to the industry. She was married to film director Phillip Noyce (Rabbit Proof Fence) and they later divorced. Jan Chapman is supportive of the idea of Sydney becoming a UNESCO City of Film:

“Sydney is the home, or birthplace, of so many distinctive contemporary directors Jane Campion, Gillian Armstrong, Peter Weir, Ray Lawrence, Phillip Noyce, and actors such as Nicole Kidman, Cate Blanchett, Russell Crowe, and Sam Worthington to name a few. It has provided the location for films such as Lantana, Two Hands, The Matrix, The Last Days of Chez Nous, Muriel’s Wedding, Strictly Ballroom, Happy Feet, not to mention the shorts of an enormous number of young filmmakers. A vibrant and progressive film school in AFTRS and drama school in NIDA have helped create the original voices from Sydney which make such a unique contribution to world cinema.”
- Jan Chapman, producer

Dr George Miller
Dr George Miller is best known for writing and directing the Mad Max series. Born in Queensland in 1945, George Miller qualified as a doctor and subsidised his early films such as Mad Max (1979) by working in hospital emergency rooms in Sydney. His first film was made over an Easter weekend with producer Byron Kennedy: Violence in the Cinema Part 1 (1972). This was a 20 minute short film which satirised the issue of screen violence and became internationally successful. This led to the formation of a production company in partnership with Byron Kennedy - Kennedy Miller Productions, which has since produced many films such as the Mad Max series, Babe: Pig in the City (1998) and the Oscar award-winning Happy Feet (2006), soon to be followed by Happy Feet 2 in 3D (slated for 2011). Miller’s business partner, Byron Kennedy was killed in a helicopter crash at Warragamba Dam in Sydney in 1983 and the AFI award for contribution to the Australian film industry now carries his name. Dr George Miller was awarded the A.O. (Officer of the Order of Australia) in the 1996 Queen’s Birthday Honours List for his services to the Australian Film Industry as a
Hugh Jackman

Well-known in Hollywood for his starring role in *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009), which was filmed partly in Sydney, Hugh Jackman has acted in 36 films and has another 10 in development. He starred as the Drover in Baz Luhrmann's *Australia* (2008) and is currently working on *Guardians of Ga’Hoole* with Animal Logic. Born in Sydney in 1968, Hugh Jackman studied communications and then drama and went on to star in the ABC TV prison drama, *Correlli* (1995) where he met his future wife, Deborra-Lee Furness. He has also done theatre and song work. His Australian feature films include *Erskineville Kings* (1999), for which he received an AFI Best Actor nomination, *Paperback Hero* (1999) and *Happy Feet* (2006).

Film Education in Sydney

**Overview**

Film education is very strong in Sydney in secondary schools through the work of Metro Screen and UTS's summer schools as well as in tertiary training institutions such as NIDA, AFTRS, COFM (UNSW) Sydney Uni, UTS, and the private film schools youth training at the Australian Theatre for Young People and PACT Youth Theatre, and through ongoing training initiatives for emerging and established film-makers through Screen NSW.

**CASE STUDY – ROBIN ANDERSON AWARD**

One of Sydney's new initiatives to encourage screen literacy and film-making skills among secondary schools is the Robin Anderson Film Awards. These were established in 2009 to commemorate internationally recognised documentary filmmaker, Ms Robin Anderson, who made films such as *First Contact*, *Black Harvest* and *Rats in the Rank* with her business partner and husband Bob Connolly. It is an annual award for secondary school filmmakers, with winning entries screened at the festival. With the Robin Anderson Film Awards, Sydney Film School offers a 1 year scholarship for the Diploma of Screen and Media Program.

**CASE STUDY – UTS SUMMER SCHOOLS**

Screen literacy expert Associate Professor Jane Mills has been designing and delivering screen literacy programs for school students in the Sydney region at Priority Schools for several years. The students all come from low socio-economic backgrounds and a wide range of culturally and ethnically diverse families. Most recently she designed a summer school at UTS (University of Technology, Sydney) in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education and Training which will be repeated in 2010. For this project, Years 9 and 10 students from the western suburbs of Sydney with low levels of literacy and engagement, come for a two week course and are set the challenge to make a short film in that time. The aim is not so much to teach film-making skills but to encourage screen literacy and critical thinking. The process of making a film involves planning, writing a script and understanding what works visually – all of this helps these students with their day-to-day literacy skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing and motivates them to become engaged in the learning process. Interestingly, the children love to make genre films such as horror, science fiction or action and are less keen to tell stories about their own lives. One young boy from a non-English speaking background attended one of these projects and his first words in English were "All quiet on the set".

**CASE STUDY – AFTRS**

Built in 1973 by the Australian Government as a key strategy in the revival of the Australian film industry the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) is the national screen arts and broadcast school with an international reputation for excellence. AFTRS offers courses ranging from Screenwriting to 3D Animation, with digital media embedded across all courses.

In 2008, AFTRS moved from its Ryde location to a purpose-built centre at Fox Studios with vastly improved facilities and the chance to be co-located with some of Sydney’s top production and post-production companies. This allows students...
to work more easily on industry placements. With a new location and a strong focus on industry integration, AFTRS has positioned itself as a leader in the development of a sustainable screen industry and culture. LAMP (the Laboratory of Advanced Media Production) is one of the world’s leading emerging media development labs, running hothouse programs designed to get innovative projects off the ground through seminars, workshops and ongoing project development with mentors from TV, mobile, broadband, games and multi-user virtual environment industries.

CSB (The Centre for Screen Business) is focussed on improving the sustainability of the screen and media industries in Australia by undertaking research and disseminating knowledge, skills, data and ideas to business owners and managers. It delivers media economics and business planning classes to full-time students and produces ‘The Knowledge’, a series of interviews with leading screen industry figures.

In 2008, AFTRS CEO Sandra Levy launched a free weekly event for the public and industry - 'Friday On My Mind', a weekly Q&A with Australia’s brightest thinkers across film, television, new media and the performing arts; and, in 2009, *Lumina*, a biannual journal of essays, interviews and reflections examining the artistic and corporate parameters that define the screen industry.

AFTRS alumni include Academy Award winners Jane Campion (Best Original Screenplay, *The Piano*), Andrew Lesnie (Best Achievement in Cinematography, *The Lord of the Rings*) and Dion Beebe (Best Achievement in Cinematography, *Memoirs of a Geisha*), as well as Phil Noyce, Gillian Armstrong, P J Hogan, Alex Proyas, Robert Connolly, Rowan Woods, Jacqueline Perske and the 2009 Cannes Camera d’Or winner Warwick Thornton.

**CASE STUDY - NIDA**

NIDA is Australia’s National Institute of Dramatic Art, a centre of excellence in training for theatre, film and television. NIDA’s primary role is to select and train exceptionally gifted young people at a tertiary level, preparing them for careers in theatre, film and television.

NIDA was established in 1959 and has just celebrated its 50th birthday. Starting out with only 23 students, two full-time staff and a single course in acting, NIDA now offers a range of accredited courses in design, stage management, event management, lighting, sound, costume making, wardrobe management, scenery construction, properties and special effects. Graduates from these courses are in great demand, and are often employed even before they graduate. They go on to work in theatre, film, television, opera, dance, production management, events management and arts administration, with many going on to achieve international success. Examples of famous NIDA graduates include Cate Blanchett, Mel Gibson, Baz Luhrmann, Judy Davis and Toni Collette.

NIDA’s courses are also accessible to the public through the Open Program for children and adults, and to corporates. NIDA is located in Kensington, close to the Fox Studios complex and AFTRS, with whom it works closely. A recent collaboration to celebrate NIDA’s 50th anniversary was the jointly commissioned feature film Before the Rain which involved 100 students from both schools working under the direction of professional film-makers. The film was launched in Sydney in late 2009 and screened for two weeks at the Hoyts cinema in Fox Studios.

**CASE STUDY – PRIVATE FILM SCHOOLS**

Sydney boasts two private film schools - Sydney Film School and Sydney International Film School. These complement the Australian Film, TV and Radio School and NIDA and are nurturing Australian and international film students through film courses.

**Sydney Film School**

Opened in 2004, Sydney Film School is housed in a spacious warehouse in the central Sydney district of Waterloo, an area with tremendous cultural heritage and creative energy. In addition to providing teaching, screening, and student common areas, the Sydney Film School premises afford students the opportunity to design and build large film sets in generous production spaces.

wSydney Film School offers a nationally accredited Diploma of Screen and Media, a vocational course focussed on student collaboration. Students produce 16mm narrative films and documentaries to build up their portfolios. It is recognised as a lead-in course to further study at universities and colleges. Sydney Film School is now Sydney’s fastest growing filmmaking community. Since 2004, 32 Sydney Film School films have screened in 44 prestigious film festivals locally and abroad with 9 first prizes. Sydney Film School has had its films broadcast in most major territories and secured international and local DVD distribution deals for its films.

“Sydney Film School aspires to be a gateway between the Eastern and Western film cultures, continuing to build strong local relationships, while attracting and interacting with students and practitioners from around the world.” Dr John Saunders, Chairman, Sydney Film School