Top End filmmakers get valuable funding boost

Top End filmmakers and film lovers are big winners in the latest rounds of the Territory Government’s Screen Grants Funding Program Minister for the Arts and Museums Gerry McCarthy announced today.

Minister McCarthy said more than $75,000 has been granted to 5 local filmmakers and film groups to develop, produce and screen short films and documentaries.

“The Territory is home to some of Australia’s most powerful story tellers and the Territory Government is please to be able to help support them to deliver more great Territory films,” Minister McCarthy said.

“We’re investing $20,000 to support the Darwin International Film Festival which will bring Territorians more films during the Festival in September.

“Film provides an important medium to help us tell stories and help develop the Territory’s unique identity - we’re committed to stimulating industry to bring our films to bigger national and international audiences.

“We’re committed to continuing to help more Territory filmmakers to break into the film industry, and provide more opportunities for Territorians to enjoy our local films.”

Northern Territory Screen Grants Funding Program recipients include:

- $20,000 to the Darwin Film Society towards holding the second Darwin International Film Festival at Deckchair Cinema in September.
- $20,000 to Darwin based director Steven McGregor and writer/producer Danielle MacLean to produce the documentary *Croker Island Exodus* which tells the story of the journey of the women and children who trekked from Croker Island through the bush to safety during World War Two. Funding of this project has helped to trigger production in the Territory worth over $500 000.
- $9,940 to the NT Writers’ Centre to offer three mentorships to screenwriters in the fields of both television and film.
- $20 000 to Emma Masters to produce the feature length documentary *Spirits in the Stone* about Margaret Katherine, an Aboriginal elder of the Jawoyn people, and the story of her people’s cultural reclamation through the discovery of some of the world’s oldest rock paintings.
- $5,000 to Mary Anne Butler to produce *Half Way There* which explores life, lust, death and taxes in a remote wild corner of the Northern Territory. *Half Way There* is an adaptation of the successful stage play of the same name.

2011 Northern Territory Screen Grants Funding Program recipients from Central Australia include:

- $20,000 to PAW Media and Communications in Yuendumu to produce documentary *Coniston: Telling it True* which tells the stories of those who survived the brutal Coniston Massacre of 1928. The documentary is being co-written and co-directed by Francis Kelly and David Batty of *Bush Mechanics* fame.
• $20,000 to David Curl Pty Ltd in Alice Springs to continue developing documentary *The Kangaroo, the Kingfisher and the Cuckoo*. This grant will support the development of a draft script and additional principal photography.

• $20,000 to GRB Special Projects, producers Dr Lisa Watts and Ms Rachel Clements to produce *GRB* the story of George Rurrumbug Burarrwanga, former lead singer of the Warumpi Band, and his extraordinary contribution to Indigenous contemporary music and to Australian reconciliation.

• $5,000 to Fringe Dweller Films Pty Ltd in Alice Springs to continue to develop the documentary *Lucky Country*, about an Arrernte man and his horse. *Lucky Country* gained national interest when presented to broadcasters at the Australian International Documentary Conference in Adelaide this year.

• $13,900 to Red Hot Arts Central Australia for Cinema by the River (previously Cinema in the River) a vibrant and well loved element of the Alice Desert Festival which provides audiences with the rare opportunity to see locally made content alongside films of national and international standard and profile. Cinema by the River also includes *Lens Flair*, a local short film competition which ran for the first time in 2010.

• $5,000 to CAAMA Productions Pty Ltd for the 21st anniversary screenings of Nganampa Anwernekenhe which will took place at the Message Sticks Indigenous Film Festival in Alice Springs recently.

• $4,206 to Katherine Regional Arts towards Feast Your Eyes on This - A Cultural Feast of Movies, Bushfoods, Damper and Popcorn which is being held as part of the inaugural Moon Dreaming Cultural Festival in the Bulman-Weemol community.

Minister McCarthy said past recipients of Territory Government grants have gone on to win national and international awards including AFI’s and the prestigious Camera d’Or at Cannes and have their films screened at national and international film festivals including the Cannes Film Festival, and on national and international TV.

“In 2010-11 period more there $300,000 in funding was provided through the Territory Government’s Screen Grants Funding Program helping to bring 20 new stories to the screen,” Minister McCarthy said.

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