

talent camp

2020



National

AFTRS



What is Talent Camp?

Talent Camp is a skills development program for emerging screen creatives. The program spans two years and begins with a week-long intensive workshop in each state. We then select up to 15 state participants to take part in our National Camp through a second-round application process.

Through National Talent Camp, we further finesse the participants' storytelling and screen writing techniques and aim to provide them with mentoring, internships, placements and production opportunities, where possible.

Talent Camp is a multi-partner screen industry initiative made possible with the support of AFTRS, AWG & Scripted Ink, Screen Australia, Screen Queensland, Screen NSW, Film Victoria, Screen Tasmania, South Australian Film Corporation, ScreenWest, Screen Territory and Screen Canberra.

Tomorrow's Storytellers



Biddy O'Loughlin

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Darkly funny filmmaker, musician
and stand-up comedian.

Biography

Biddy grew up in Alice Springs, where she began her film career by making movies in the backyard and performing in local youth theatre productions. She made her professional debut at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2011. The following year, she wrote and produced another solo show and was accepted into the VCA in 2013. Upon graduating, Biddy spent a year in France and the US, learning comedy writing and how to speak French. She wrote this bio in the third person.

Story

SUICIDERS: A very dark comedy about people who have suicided.

Project

The message of my dark comedy is "DON'T DO IT". I have lost many friends to suicide and have nearly lost my own life to it. I know it's dark, but I think it will appeal to a young audience who grew up on *The Simpson's* and *Family Guy*.



Emily Dash

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Disabled writer and actor whose work emphasises social justice.

Biography

Emily is a scriptwriter, producer and project manager for Maitree House. Her most recent film, *Groundhog Night*, was due to premiere at Sydney Film Festival 2020. She also participated in the Screen Australia and SBS Digital Originals initiative. Other film writing and performance credits include *The Milky Pop Kid* (2017 - Highly Commended for Writing at Sydney Film Festival), *The Cards I'm Dealt* (2016) and *I Am Not A Work Of Art* (2016). Through her internship with Matchbox Pictures in 2017, she was credited as a consultant on ABC's *The Heights*.

Story

PEARLY GATES: When the flamboyant Oscar Gates falls into a coma, his estranged group of friends must battle professional dilemmas and personal demons – as well as interference from the spirit world – to keep his cafe afloat.

Project

My then-collaborator Jesse Blackadder and I envisioned an authentic and diverse dramedy about letting go and learning to live. More inspiration came when I was on a set catered by people with disability.

The intended audience is members of the Australian disabled, LGBTQIA+ or culturally diverse communities, ages 18–35. It will appeal to those who enjoy watching offbeat relationship dramas. I am writing the pilot episode and have an idea of series arc.



Isabella Roldan

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Ask me about my cat.

Biography

Isabella stumbled into the world of stand-up comedy back in 2013 when she was just 16 years old. At the time, she was trying to impress her crush. Since then, the former class-clowner has cemented herself deep into the forest that is Tassie Comedy. After hunger-gaming it out in Melbourne as a RAW Comedy National Finalist, Isabella made her television debut in the 2nd season of the Tassie-filmed comedy *Rosehaven*. Though she has delighted audiences with her sassy demeanour and unapologetic stage presence, her crush still has no idea who she is. She also got her mum to write this bio for free and is taking all the credit, so will probably end up being a producer.

Story

OFF WHITE: When fresh-faced adult Maya decides to get a job and move out of her tight-knit Latin family, she finds herself caught between cultures in her misadventures.

Project

Having been raised in a Latin home and Aussie 'real world', I am on a constant and ongoing identity crisis. Containing experiences of my own life, *Off White* follows Maya and her family while exploring identity in a time when the migrant experience in Australia often lacks a platform.



Katrina Irawati Graham

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“Resistance is the secret of joy.”

– TASHI, ALICE WALKER’S *POSSESSING THE SECRET OF JOY*

Biography

Katrina is a writer and director, as well as an emerging playwright. She writes in many genres, but her true love is feminist horror. She celebrates her Indonesian-Australian heritage and champions gender equality and representations of diversity.

Story

MY MIDWIFE: When Aisha, an earnest but disempowered midwife, writes a scathing open letter calling for the decolonization of birth, she is forced out of an under-resourced hospital system. She decides to open a business as an independent midwife, in spite of the fact that she is a single mother to a teenage boy, has no clients and knows nothing about how to run a business. Aisha must also negotiate the bureaucratic red tape in a system designed by white men – one of whom is her powerful ex-husband.

Project

MY MIDWIFE is an aspirational 8 x 1hr drama series that weaves my passions for birth advocacy, diverse cultural representation and healing storytelling.

Primary audience: Women between 20–40 years old who resonate with the birth and woman-centric stories embedded in *One Born Every Minute*, *My Maori Midwife*, *Call the Midwife* and *Love Child*.

Producer, Ana Tiwary (IndiVisual Films) and I are seeking development partners.



Kim Ho

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Kim is a playwright who is branching out into screen. His work takes a subversive approach to genre and form.

Biography

Kim is a Naarm-based writer and performer who is interested in exploring cross-cultural storytelling, magic realism and genre subversion. Kim's short film *The Language of Love* screened at over 30 film festivals worldwide, including Sundance. His play *Mirror's Edge* won the 2018 Patrick White Playwrights Award, and his newest work *Buried Kingdom* received a reading at London's 2019 Typhoon Festival and was shortlisted for the 2019 Queensland Premier's Drama Award. Kim is a passionate advocate for the representation of marginalised voices.

Story

MELBOURNE VICE: When Brunswick University replaces its security staff with volunteer student detectives, mismatched loners Natasha and Simon must work together to bust crime on campus. The biggest mystery they'll have to solve is how to get along with each other.

Project

Melbourne Vice is an 8x15-20 crime-comedy web series which imagines university students as detectives. It aims to merge crime and coming-of-age genres to dramatise young adults exploring right from wrong.

I have a clear outline for the series, but I need a producer and enough support to flesh out my characters, plot the episodes in a writers' room and get it to production.



Lata Periakarpan

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Creative with an affinity for chai tea and rom-coms.

Biography

Lata Periakarpan is a Malaysian-Australian screenwriter. Upon completing her Film and Writing degree in 2018, she moved to Canada for a year to work as a set designer and film production assistant. Since returning to Australia, Lata has worked in various Western Australian writers' rooms as a notetaker and creative contributor. Her writing revolves around young, strong and diverse protagonists who are often grounded in a coming-of-age or dramedy story.

Story

90s BABY: A twenty-five-year-old woman rekindles a romance with her first love, forcing her to confront repressed memories from over a decade ago.

Project

I workshopped a YA version of this story during the WA State Talent Camp, but it has since evolved into a drama that will most likely appeal to adult females. It's set in the present-day life of twenty-five-year-old Farrah Singh, with flashbacks to her fifteen-year-old self. It explores diverse familial relationships and the repercussions of undealt with trauma.

The link between the two timelines is through Farrah's first love coming back into her life – but what starts as a tale of perennial love ends as a love letter from Farrah to her family. Currently, I have a series outline and pilot script.



Martine Delaney

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The Sex-Change Soccer Star Cyber-Tranny Granny, having an amazing time after stumbling into the industry!

Biography

Most recently, I've been an LGBTQI advocate, comedian, briefly dead, ghost tour guide, book in a Human Library and a federal election candidate – all while raising a child abandoned at our home twelve years ago.

Three years ago, frustrated by employers not wanting an outspoken transgender employee, I tried writing a feature film. Optioned, it's in slow development. This led to inclusion in Screen Australia's inaugural Develop the Developers initiative and subsequent work with Hobart's Roar Film on documentary, educational and drama projects.

Story

LEATHER AND LATEX PTY LTD: Becoming dominatrices seemed an interesting way of getting out of debt – except latex is sweaty, clients die in awkward situations and crims probably won't like you.

Project

The idea was born during Hobart's State Talent Camp, watching a *Good Girls* trailer. Later, my phone must've been listening to my conversation about an article on dominatrices – bang, my news feed featured a story on an accidental dominatrix! My brain asked: *what if?* And the project has been unfolding ever since.

It's currently a pitch document with an accompanying draft first episode. The show is aimed at a (primarily female) adult audience wanting drama with a funny side.



Neilesh Verma

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Rick Ross Starter Kit.

Biography

Neilesh Verma is a Pakistani-Australian writer, director and former stand-up comedian. His award-winning short films and music videos have screened at both local and international film festivals and on television networks such as MTV (India), Triangle TV (New Zealand) and SBS (Australia). In the past, he has performed at both the Sydney Comedy and Sydney Fringe Festivals and has recently finished writing his first feature film – a horror-thriller entitled *Koan*.

Story

MACHANS: An unflinching, darkly comic portrait of Sydney through the eyes of two brown guys: sheltered and whitewashed Rohan and his unsolicited cultural consultant, Ganesh.

Project

Based on the real-life friendship between show creators Neilesh and Suren, *Machans* is *Atlanta meets Ramy*, with an Australian identity. Our goal is to carve a niche with an audience of first/second generation Australians who would otherwise seek overseas programming to see themselves reflected, whilst also presenting an authentic portrayal of Australian migrant life to mainstream audiences. As our protagonist escapes his middle-class bubble, his eyes (and the audience's) are opened to the struggles, joys, eccentricities and the seemingly foreign (yet ultimately relatable) realities of immigrant life.

At this stage, we have outlined a five-episode series and have written a pilot script.



Nelya Valamanesh

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A jack of all trades, Nelya has done a lot and isn't stopping anytime soon.

Biography

Nelya is an Adelaide-based narrative artist who has developed and produced works on a range of different platforms, including: radio programming, DJing, co-facilitating theatre workshops and freelancing in the film industry. She is currently in development on her new web series, which has received funding from the South Australian Film Corporation. Nelya is also workshopping a new idea for theatre with funding from the South Australian State Theatre.

Nelya's vision through all of her creative avenues is to speak her truth as a proud queer Persian/Australian woman and to be an ally to the many unspoken voices of colour in Australia's film and theatre industries.

Story

RULES TO BEING A FUCKGIRL is a 6 x 15-minute comedy/satire web series about the political and social struggles of being an independent woman in her late 20s.

Project

This story came to be after my close friends and I discussed how sick we were of constantly being undermined when it came to our relationship status – along with the assumptions made about us as women of colour in the casual dating scene. I realised this wasn't just something I experienced and *Rules to being a Fuckgirl* was born.



Ra Kyung Lee Chapman

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Writer/actor marinating in the mess of being human through stories about belonging, shame and hope.

Biography

Ra is an alumnus of the Besen Writers Group (Malthouse Theatre) and was awarded the 2018 Hot Desk Fellowship (Wheeler Centre). Her play *K-BOX* will premiere on the MainStage at Malthouse in 2020, where she is currently an Artist in Residence. Ra was selected for StoryLab, a Cinespace/FilmVic program for diverse screenwriters and was the StoryLab 2.0 Program Coordinator.

Story

JANE THE WAEGUKIN (foreigner): When Jane – a 30-year-old, ‘try hard’ Korean adoptee – throws herself into a quest to go to Korea and connect with her birth family, she finds herself embarrassingly ill-equipped to navigate between her ‘Aussie’ upbringing and the Korean culture and family that are completely foreign to her.

Project

JTW is an 8 x 30-minute dramedy that will bring a fresh perspective to the screen, as it explores the brutal and hilarious challenges of being a transracial adoptee in 2020. The primary audience is people in their 30s who are female identifying and consume bold and edgy content. *JTW* will also have massive appeal internationally, due to the demand for stories exploring interracial belonging. Current *JTW* materials include a series outline and sample pages.



Rafeif Ismail

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“Once the imagination is unshackled,
liberation is limitless.”

– ADRIENNE MAREE BROWN AND WALIDAH IMARISHA

Biography

Rafeif Ismail is an award-winning emerging multilingual Western Australian writer. In her work, she explores the themes of home, belonging and 21st century Australian identity as a third culture youth of the Sudanese diaspora. Rafeif’s work has been published across Australia, and she is committed to creating diverse works and spaces.

Story

BRAVE AND STARTLING TRUTHS: We Survive. Across countries and centuries, we continue to survive. To thrive.

Dana and Aziza try to build a life together. Maia and Haydur search for the reason they cannot seem to die. Sana navigates a strange world, while Amira takes on an unstoppable force. *BAST* follows these stories and more, exploring the interconnected lives of six young people across space and time.

Project

BAST follows the adventures and misadventures of Afro-diasporic youths across space and time. This anthology was born from a passion for science and speculative fiction, and a desire to see more SSF with characters of colour on the screen. I have treatments for all of the Season One episodes.



Rhianna Malezer

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Weaving contemporary and diverse stories with humour, colour, hope and joy.

Biography

Rhianna is Butchulla/Kamilaroi woman who, after years of working within the art departments of the Australian and New Zealand film industries, began shifting gears into writing and directing in 2019. Driven to create narrative screen content that reflects her family and community, Rhianna combines humour and pathos while crafting engaging stories.

Rhianna is a writer on ABC's *Black Comedy*, Bunya Production's *Nice Shorts* and is currently engaged in writers' rooms for several productions.

Story

BITING DUST: When her Nan suddenly passes and questions of the past are left unanswered, Tamika sets out on a quest to 'fill in the blanks' of her identity, uncovering deeply-buried family secrets – sometimes aided, but mostly hindered, by her colourful (and often hilarious) overactive imagination.

Project

As an Indigenous woman from a stolen generation family, I am no stranger to complex family dynamics or gaping holes in family story, cultural identity and personal identity. *Biting Dust* explores these themes through a story that is both humorous and poignant. Appealing primarily to audiences ages 20–35, this series would suit platforms such as ABC or SBS. A draft pilot episode and series outline for this project currently exist.



Sebastian Chan

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Those who can imagine anything,
can create the impossible.

Biography

Sebastian Chan is an award-winning filmmaker from the ACT. His short film writing/production credits include *I Am Steve* (screening on SBS and Foxtel), *Bus Trip* (winner of Focus on Ability Festival 2018) and *The Sacred*. In 2019, Sebastian was one-of-five regional filmmakers selected to participate in the 'Croak' Development Lab, led by Nash Edgerton and the Van Vuuren Bros. Sebastian is currently working on several projects which will launch in 2020.

Story

CADETS: When a young cadet discovers his twin brother has been assassinated by a secretive cult, he recruits his closest friends to help him find and protect the truth in order to bring those responsible to justice.

Project

Cadets is a fresh take on the military drama from the approach and enthusiasm of young enlistees. The series combines political intrigue with a modern murder mystery, similar to 'Secret City' and 'The Code'. The idea first came to me when thinking about other stories that could be set in Canberra. The intended audience is 25–55 years old. *Cadets* is currently in development.



Suren Jayemanne

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Industry darling adjacent.

Biography

Suren Jayemanne is a Sri Lankan-Australian comedian and writer. Recognised as one of the best emerging comedians in the country, Suren has featured on *Comedy Up Late* (ABC) and written for *Tonightly* (ABC). In 2018, his debut TV hour special aired as part of the ABC's *Comedy Next Gen* series. His comedy, which explores race and class in contemporary Australia, has been praised as insightful, thought provoking and, most importantly, hilarious.

Story

MACHANS: An unflinching, darkly comic portrait of Sydney through the eyes of two brown guys: sheltered and whitewashed Rohan and his unsolicited cultural consultant, Ganesh.

Project

Based on the real-life friendship between show creators Neilesh and Suren, *Machans* is *Atlanta* meets *Ramy*, with an Australian identity. Our goal is to carve a niche with an audience of first/second generation Australians who would otherwise seek overseas programming to see themselves reflected, whilst also presenting an authentic portrayal of Australian migrant life to mainstream audiences. As our protagonist escapes his middle-class bubble, his eyes (and the audience's) are opened to the struggles, joys, eccentricities and the seemingly foreign (yet ultimately relatable) realities of immigrant life.

At this stage, we have outlined a five-episode series and have written a pilot script.



Travis Akbar

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Creative, driven, political.

Biography

I've been writing my whole life, but only decided to pursue it professionally around 18 months ago. Balancing full time work, family and writing all at once is difficult, but I want to make a career in the creative industry through writing and, eventually, directing and/or producing.

Story

BLACK DICKS: Two female private detectives catch a case that could make their careers.

Project

This story came to me after seeing some clips of Stephanie Tisdell perform stand-up comedy. I thought she was hilarious and needed to be in a series, especially as a private detective with a partner – I am visualising her working with Elaine Crombie. Then the crude title *Black Dicks* came to me (i.e. two black women who are private detectives).

The audience is anyone with a crude sense of humour, but age-wise I would put it down to 15–55. I am still in the process of writing the pilot episode, though it is progressing slowly as I have several other projects on the go.

Tomorrow's Storytellers

