

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

CAIRNS AND TOWNSVILLE FILMMAKERS TO CREATE AUTHENTIC SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

This month, Queensland filmmakers from Cairns and Townsville start production on their short documentary projects, as part of *Authentic* – a Screen Queensland initiative, delivered by Australia’s premier regional screen industry organisation, Screenworks.

Opened in October 2020, *Authentic* is a fully funded \$4,000 opportunity for three filmmaking teams, based in Far North Queensland and extending to North Queensland, to produce short films about significant personalities in their region.

Each team will work closely with a mentoring producer from ABC to refine their shooting scripts, production planning, rough cuts and final edits, with potential for completed work to be greenlit to screen on ABC platforms.

The project aims to create opportunities for the local screen industry, pursuant to the *Advanced Queensland Far North Queensland Screen Production Strategic Plan*, launched in August 2019 by Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk.

Screen Queensland Chief Creative Officer Jo Dillon congratulated the recipients, saying that one of the agency’s primary objectives is to invest in exciting talent across the entire state, as part of its brief to support diverse and original storytelling for screen.

“We are delighted to announce Cairns teams Janne Rytönen with Samantha Martin, and Shontell Leah Ketchell with Ewan Cutler, alongside Townsville-based creative Robert Crispe, as recipients of the *Authentic* initiative.

“By providing access to mentoring from expert decision-makers at ABC, we’re actively growing local screen know-how in northern parts of our state, while opening pathways for emerging practitioners to develop strong concepts with broadcast potential.”

Screenworks CEO Ken Crouch said he was excited about the impact these projects will have on the growth of the screen industry in the region.

“This program is designed to develop the professional skills and capabilities of regional screen practitioners based in the North and Far North, and should lead to more local stories and productions being made in the region.

“Screenworks is delighted to partner with Screen Queensland to continue offering these types of invaluable opportunities and ongoing support for the burgeoning screen industry in FNQ and beyond,” he said.

Director of ABC Regional & Local, Judith Whelan, said ABC content-makers based in Townsville and Cairns look forward to working with the region’s emerging filmmakers.

“Local storytelling is at the heart of everything the ABC does in regional Australia and this initiative from Screen Queensland and Screenworks gives us the opportunity to foster and develop the storytellers of tomorrow,” said Ms Whelan.

“Not only is it a wonderful opportunity for this year’s recipients to enhance their filmmaking skills, but also it gives back to our audiences in North and Far North Queensland by relaying the stories of prominent people in their communities.”

For more information on Screen Queensland opportunities, visit screenqueensland.com.au . For Screenworks initiatives, go to screenworks.com.au

RECIPIENTS – PROJECT DETAILS, BIOS AND QUOTES

Janne (Yahn) Rytönen (Far North Queensland)

Janne will be teaming up with mentor and indigenous consultant Samantha Martin and will be working with Brendan Mounter, Features Reporter, ABC FNQ. His documentary subject is **Leah Reuben**. Leah was a walking youth crime statistic before she took up boxing at 15, claimed a national title at age 18, started work as a youth support officer at 19, and began dreaming of a world championship at age 20.

Janne (Yahn) Rytönen was born in Finland, immigrated to Australia at a very young age, and grew up in various parts of the continent and Papua New Guinea. He has worked in a range of jobs, including teaching, journalism, and freelance photography. Janne is a relative newcomer to film, but he approaches the moving image as a naturally flowing extension of the decisive moments of still photography. He has called Far North Queensland home base for the last 30+ years. Janne is married and has three children. To view some of Janne’s photography, visit www.jannerytonen.com

Quote from Janne Rytönen: “I’m excited to be a part of the *Authentic* filmmaking project, where we get to share the stories of inspirational Far North Queenslanders with the rest of Australia and the world,” says Janne Rytönen. “The recognition and support for our work from Screenworks Australia, Screen Queensland and the ABC is a real honour.”

Samantha Martin the founder and director of Tribal Voice Connections, a cultural

consultancy business, that works towards education and bringing awareness of the significance of cultural connections. For the past 22 years Samantha has worked in the corporate, education, tourism, and hospitality industries, spending 11 of those years being a guest lecturer on luxurious six-star German cruise liners MS Europa working for the Australian Tourism. She was asked to join Coral Discovery to create a program for their guests giving them a taste of Bush Tukka on board. Samantha has spent the past 10 years travelling around the world with the Australian Embassies to promote the richness and diversities of her cultures. Ms Martin is passionate about sharing her knowledge of basic survival skills, of how to hunt, prepare and cook bush foods. Known as the 'Bush Tukka Woman', her four-part documentary My Bush Tukka Adventures with Samantha Martin, has been screened on SBS/NITV (National Indigenous TV station) since 2006. In 2014 Samantha become an author and published her Bush Tukka Guide through Hardie Grant and Explore Australia. Samantha works continuously as an Indigenous mentor sharing her stories and engaging schools and Indigenous Health services around the Kimberley, Northern Territory and Cape York Region to encourage the young Indigenous youths to find ways to tackle mental and emotional health and wellbeing and looking at ways to be aware of their own adversities.

Shontell Leah Ketchell (Cairns)

Shontell has teamed up with fellow Cairns filmmaker, Ewan Cutler and will be working with Brendan Mounter, Features Reporter, ABC FNQ. Her documentary subject is **Naomi Wenitong**. This story details the journey, the strength and the resilience of the gifted singer, songwriter, and rapper, Naomi 'Nay' Wenitong from Cairns.

Shontell Leah Ketchell, is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative from Cairns, Far North Queensland. An early career screenwriter; who also works in the mining and resources sector in Central Queensland. In 2018 she was accepted into the Advanced Diploma in Screenwriting: Feature Film course at AFTRS. It was a challenge at times to juggle her studies and working remotely. Regardless of the challenges, it has been an incredible journey so far. In the short time Shontell has been screenwriting she has had a number of amazing opportunities to work with producers and other writers across Australia. She was selected to be a part of the ABC sketch comedy series 'Black Comedy', season four writers' workshop. Her first feature film screenplay, 'Adorkable', was selected by Screen Queensland for development funding and is currently under an option agreement with Bonsai Films. She also had the rewarding chance to work with Cairns PCYC in 2020, to teach youth how to screen write and assist them in developing a short film script. Shontell's long-term goal as a screenwriter is to contribute to the representation of her people and share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories from their diverse perspectives.

Quote from Shontell Leah Ketchell: "I feel so fortunate to be selected to be a part of this initiative, as it provides an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

storytellers and filmmakers, like myself, with a chance to fine tune our craft, and have a platform to share our stories from our perspective, showcasing our culture, our diversity and our deadly talent to not only our mob, but to non-Indigenous Australians and the world. The Authentic Initiative will give me the opportunity to contribute to the representation of my people, and be a part of ABC's, Screenworks' and Screen Queensland's legacy in advancing Australian Indigenous filmmaking and storytelling."

Ewan Cutler is a film director from Cairns, FNQ. With over 10 years in the industry; he's had extensive experience shooting around remote Australia and globally in the commercial and government sector. www.hudsonfilms.com.au

Robert Crispe (Townsville)

Robert will be working with Dwayne Wyles, Features Reporter, ABC North QLD. His documentary subject is **Craig Crichton**. Craig, a resident of Yunbenun (Magnetic Island) takes us on a kayak around the bay introducing us to the unique pull the island has on him while touching on the traditional stories, environmental beauty and local personalities to be found there.

Robert Crispe first discovered his passion for filmmaking whilst studying for a Bachelor of New Media Arts in his hometown of Townsville. After graduating in 2012, Robert relocated to London and worked as an in-house content director/editor for a creative ad agency before returning to Australia to work in Sydney in a similar role. During this time Robert worked on commercial campaigns, whilst independently developing passion projects and directing music videos for artists in Australia and abroad. His work has been recognised with gold, silver, and bronze Cannes Lions, screened at festivals in America, Europe, and Australia, and has featured online in The Guardian, The Creators Project, and more. Robert is now based in Townsville, North Queensland, using his hometown as a testing ground to evolve his visual style and develop new concepts. Exploring themes relating to home, discovery, identity, and the human connection, Robert continues to collaborate with regional and national organisations, brands, and artists. Whether it's short documentaries, scripts, music videos or artwork, he draws inspiration from his regional upbringing and channels this into the stories of his craft.
www.robertcrispe.com

Quote from Robert Crispe: "I'm very excited and count myself pretty lucky to have this opportunity. Magnetic Island is a beautiful place, but I'm keen to look beyond that lens of a tourist and uncover why and how this is a unique spiritual home for some."

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Images of the recipients are downloadable from this dropbox link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sokw5h2vor0b88o/AACtgeUTLHRNXoIFiE6pggRa?dl=0>

ABOUT SCREEN QUEENSLAND

Screen Queensland is a Queensland Government owned company that invests in talent and production to grow a creative, innovative and successful screen industry with a focus on stories and audience, secures production and post, digital and vfx to Queensland, and delivers an active screen culture through festivals and events funding across the state.

Screen Queensland invests in stories and talent through a range of mechanisms including development, production investment, initiatives, sqhub and mentorships. Screen

Queensland is deeply committed to increasing diversity in the screen industry to reflect the Australian community. For more information visit screenqueensland.com.au

ABOUT SCREENWORKS

Screenworks is a registered charity that provides support, leadership and vision for the regional screen industries in Australia. The principal objective of Screenworks is to promote and advance the screen industry in regional, rural and remote Australia, with a focus on the industry cluster in the Northern Rivers region of NSW. Their principal activities provide screen-related development and networking opportunities, programs and initiatives specifically designed to support people living in regional, rural and remote Australia.

Screenworks is a home-grown not-for-profit, membership-based association managed by a board of volunteer directors that provide industry, management and screen industry knowledge and experience

www.screenworks.com.au

