# Southern Screens : Southern Stories

*Building a New Screen Culture in South Australia*

ADELAIDE

## thinkers
### in residence

**Peter Wintonick**
Thinker in Residence 2005

**Southern Screens : Southern Stories**
*Building a New Screen Culture*
*in South Australia*

Prepared by
Peter Wintonick

Department of the Premier and Cabinet
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www.thinkers.sa.gov.au

# Peter Wintonick



**The following partners were involved in Peter Wintonick's residency:**

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

South Australian Film Corporation

Department of Education and Children's Services

Flinders University

University of South Australia

Arts SA

Adelaide Film Festival

Australian International Documentary Conference

Based in Montreal, Peter Wintonick is an internationally pre-eminent figure in digital documentary media production. Peter has been a producer, director, critic, advisor, media activist and editor of all manner of independent film, video and new-media, an array which includes dramatic features, theatrical documentaries, web-sites and educational and socio-political works.

He is most noted for co-producing and directing, with Mark Achbar, one of the most successful documentaries in Canadian history *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*. The film played theatrically around the world in 200 cities, won 22 awards in more than 50 international film festivals and was broadcast in almost 30 markets in a dozen language versions.

In 2002, Peter Wintonick directed and produced, with Katerina Cizek, *Seeing is Believing: Handicams, Human Rights and the News,* an exploration into the political and social uses of handicams and new communications technologies, which won the prestigious Hamptons International Film Festival's Abraham Prize.

He directed the feature documentary *Cinema Verité: Defining the Moment,* about the history and contemporary legacy of that most important film revolution which was the special prize winner at the 2001 Banff Television Festival and winner of the Ecumenical Prize at the Berlin Film Festival.

Peter Wintonick is currently circumnavigating the globe, holding workshops, advising festivals, writing for numerous hardcopy and online magazines and post-producing several films he has directed, one of which investigates the inter-generational shift from old to new media throughout the world, made with his daughter Mira Burt-Wintonick.

# Foreword

Peter Wintonick's period as an Adelaide Thinker in Residence in 2005 was highly constructive, and it stimulated vibrant and necessary debate about the future of the South Australian film industry.

Through his wit, insight and experience, he delivered on the great promise of his residency – which was to engage, enthuse, and enable.

Peter's time in South Australia coincided with the State Government-instigated Adelaide Film Festival and the Australian International Documentary Conference, and he made a major contribution to both events.

More substantially, he met the four objectives of his residency:
- to contribute to a plan to develop South Australia's digital documentary industry;
- to help the State create global networks in the film industry;
- to provide advice on education policy, including curricula; and
- to strengthen the knowledge and skills of South Australian students and educators.

This report – *Southern Screens: Southern Stories* – is the culmination of Peter's work, and it's one I warmly welcome.

It provides a thorough analysis of the four 'spheres' critical to the creation of a thriving and globally plugged-in digital documentary sector in South Australia: education, the screen industry, the community and infrastructure.

The report also includes a series of valuable and challenging recommendations – covering everything from the promotion of greater 'media literacy' in our schools to increased support for the Media Resource Centre.

We in South Australia thank Peter Wintonick for helping us to see and think freshly about film, and for giving us the equipment – in our heads and our hands – to tell our own stories.

*Mike Rann*

**Mike Rann**
Premier of South Australia
Minister for the Arts
January 2006

# Acknowledgements



*Ngai wangandi marni nabudni Kaurna yertaanna* - The Adelaide Plains of South Australia are home to the Kaurna Aboriginal people.

At all the official functions I attend in South Australia, and indeed in my own country, Canada and throughout the world, I think it is always important to first acknowledge that we are working and living on the traditional lands of the First Peoples.

But I always also found find myself musing as the conventional greeting is announced: 'Well, that's all very fine to acknowledge the past, but what are we all going to do about it now, to make things right?'

The challenge is to make all of our stories come together, Aboriginal and other originals, and to be accessible to each other.

I would like to thank Premier Mike Rann, Warren McCann and the Cabinet for their support for a highly innovative, world-leading program, Thinkers in Residence.

In particular, I would like to thank the South Australian Film Corporation, the Adelaide Film Festival, the Australian International Documentary Conference, the Department of Education and Children's Services, The University of South Australia, Flinders University, Arts SA and the Thinkers Unit of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

I would also like to thank the hard working people in the Thinkers Office - Ann Clancy, Pamela James-Martin, Alyssa Late, Joanna Hughes, Brenda Kuhr, Denise Maddigan, Gabrielle Overton and Pauline Tuft, and my researchers and 'thoughtcatchers' Beth Neate and Rachael Thompson.

Also on a personal level, I want to acknowledge the hundreds of citizens of South Australia I have met along my thinking way. They have given me their ear, or an earful. They have been universally kind and generous with their ideas, their complaints, their wishes, their visions, and their opinions.

But mostly I want to acknowledge the brilliant media work shining out from all corners of the State, the work of young and first-time filmmakers, the work and promise of those emerging from the educational sectors, the work done with flair and social justice in the communities by groups like Carclew or Nunga TV, the work beginning in the schools by kids like Heidi the six-year old animator, facilitated by teachers who will take us all into a place I call Digitopia.

**Peter Wintonick**
Thinker in Residence
2005

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# Abbreviations

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|---|---|
| ABC | Australian Broadcasting Corporation |
| ACCC | Australian Competition and Consumer Commission |
| AFC | Australian Film Commission |
| AFF | Adelaide Film Festival |
| AFFIF | Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund |
| AFI | Australian Film Institute |
| AFTRS | Australian Film, Television and Radio School |
| AIDC | Australian Industry Development Commission |
| APY | Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara |
| DAARE | Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation |
| DECS | Department of Education and Children's Services |
| DFEEST | Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology |
| FA | Film Australia |
| FFC | Film Finance Corporation |
| GAIMSCOE | Games and Interactive Media Simulation Centre of Excellence |
| HESS | Higher Education Selection Subject |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technologies |
| NSWFTO | New South Wales Film and Television Office |
| PLICT | Professional Learning in Information and Communication Technologies |
| SA | South Australia |
| SAAME | South Australian Association of Media Education |
| SAFC | South Australian Film Corporation |
| SPAA | Screen Producers Association of Australia |
| SSABSA | Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia |
| TAFE | Technical and Further Education |
| TSOF | Technology School of the Future |
| VCA | Victorian College of the Arts |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |

# 1 Summary of Main Recommendations

My mandate in South Australia took me into four intersecting Spheres (or areas) of interest. My thinking, and the main recommendations detailed in Southern Screens : Southern Stories, are organised accordingly.

## Screen Education

### Recommendation 1
*Forefront media literacy in all of our State's schools.*

Media is the language of the twenty-first century, the language our children use, the language we use. Media literacy should be prioritized at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, using a number of proactive ideas, projects and programs to promote multiple media literacies.

A few examples: South Australia's Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS)

should continue its support for initiatives like ARTSsmart. It should also work with existing artists-in-schools programs and such organisations as the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS), the Media Resource Centre (MRC), or Carclew's Digital Media Division to promote short term mentorships, and in-school workshops by dedicated screen professionals.

New initiatives in distribution of student work, across all school years, such as the brilliantly conceived Upload, should be created and supported.

The State could establish a Premier's Media Challenge for all schools, to produce films and new media to be showcased in collective ways.

With partnerships forged between industry and education, the State could establish a dedicated broadband web distribution portal for student production.

All educational partners should establish proactive opportunities for media training for Aboriginal students and teachers, perhaps in conjunction with an envisioned Aboriginal Media Resource and Training Centre.

There should be State support for DECS involvement as a leading educational partner in the International Democracy Project. This could involve the production, in South Australia, of educational materials, web-sites, test-bed research and the production of local SA educational content around the theme of democracy. What a wonderful opportunity to showcase South Australia and to enhance DECS's international profile!

### Recommendation 2
*Establish a university-level school of media education within an existing faculty of education, to train teachers how to teach media.*

We must create a critical mass of skilled media educators.

Within the framework of an existing University's School, Faculty or Department of Education, at the UniSA, Flinders University or the University of Adelaide, a dedicated School for Media Education should be established to produce highly skilled media teachers for the system. This should be accomplished in co-partnership with all of South Australia's existing tertiary institutions as a collective operation with additional contribution from the State and DECS. There is already a precedent for this level of cooperation, in a new pan-university science initiative.

Media is a matter which should apply across the whole curriculum. In addition to the training of specialist media teachers, all new teachers will need to take courses and be trained in how to teach media.

### Recommendation 3
*Establish a specialised Secondary Media School of Excellence.*

Media is the ubiquitous language that our students speak.

DECS and the State should establish a specialised Secondary Media School of Excellence, perhaps in the southern, northern or western suburbs. Schools of excellence have already been established in other art forms

but, curiously, not in the art form which is most pervasive, and which means the most to the average student - media. Such a school could be right down the street from the essential Technology School of the Future, which could act as a guiding resource centre.

## Screen Industries

### Recommendation 4
*Support and sustain the Adelaide Film Festival and its Investment Fund, and the Australian International Documentary Conference, two world-class film industry festival and conference events.*

The Adelaide Film Festival (AFF) brings together South Australian audiences and the best of local, national and international cinema. Its dynamic and unique AFF Investment Fund gives proactive treatment to ideas, innovation and new works for the screen. A national initiative currently based in Adelaide, the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) is a great opportunity for the non-fiction world to arrive at Adelaide's doorstep. These two world class events offer much to South Australian society and its screen culture. They should be supported and sustained over the long-term.

### Recommendation 5
*Establish the Don Dunstan Film Fund to enable socially useful films for the strategic future of the State, and to provide opportunities for emerging filmmakers.*

The Don Dunstan Film Fund would grow out of the existing Educational Content Fund

currently administered by the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC). The idea was originally conceived by the State's visionary Premier, Don Dunstan, and incarnated as the Government Film Fund in the 1970s. A fund in his name should be established and funded to the levels he originally envisaged.

Many of the purposes of the proposed Don Dunstan Film Fund are those of the Educational Content Fund, which is a Government communication resource, a developmental strategy and an income stream for South Australian screen practitioners. The SAFC could perhaps administer the new version. I recommend that additional funding be provided to the Don Dunstan Film Fund / Educational Content Fund, with consideration given to broadening the criteria for the fund beyond educational content to also include socially responsible low budget full-length documentaries, shorts, new media, fiction and features.

A properly supported Don Dunstan Film Fund would support and produce documentary, digital, web, fiction, shorts, animation products that promote social progress and achievement of such goals and objectives of the State's long term Strategic Plan as sustainability, ecology, integration and social justice.

Most importantly, the Don Dunstan Film Fund would be an elegant, efficient way to take up the ever-increasing pool of new filmmakers, giving both emerging and experienced SA media makers opportunities to hone their skills on socially worthy films and media productions. Many of South Australia's most important senior filmmakers today developed because of the original Government Film Fund.

**Recommendation 6**
*Support and foster the South Australian Film Corporation in its renewal and growth as it meets the needs and technologies of a 21st century South Australian screen culture.*

South Australia should ensure the existence and sustained funding of a State screen agency that prioritises incubation, innovation and pro-South Australia policies. Innovation and incubation are vital to the viability of the screen industries and the ongoing provision of support to the next generation of screen practitioners.

The South Australian Film Corporation already undertakes a significant role and it is critical that such a State-based agency exists for these purposes. The SAFC would grow to imagine itself as a dynamic and visionary ScreenSA, fostering a holistic approach to the screen industry of the 21st century.

Guiding principles of innovation and incubation would foster an emerging, aspirational South Australian screen culture across all film, new media and next media platforms. The SAFC/ScreenSA would provide visionary leadership for the industry so that the South Australian film movement is viewed as the home for the truly independent screen arts.

**Recommendation 7**
*Establish the Fifty Cent Fund as a voluntary contribution from South Australia's cinema-going public to foster the growth of South Australia's own images on its own screens.*

As is the case in France and other jurisdictions where such quotas are supported, the State should ask SA filmgoers for a minimal, freewill 50 cent surcharge contribution on foreign and US cinema theatrical entries, in order to aid SA media production. Based on the recent history of film-going in South Australia, this measure could by most accounts add more than a million dollars to the SA production pie. Half of the proceeds would be for SA-based features, and half across the other genres to promote innovation in South Australian screen art.

Preliminary discussions with some of South Australia's leading home-grown exhibition professionals indicate that this recommendation may have wide support within the distribution sector, as I believe it will with the public at large. South Australia would be seen as leading the nation in this initiative. Making the Fifty Cent Fund voluntary would avoid collision with potential requirements of the federal US-Australia Free Trade agreement.

**Recommendation 8**
*Create Inter/Screen and a position of Screen Catalyst. Inter/Screen would be a South Australian inter-agency Forum and Council for screen industries, screen arts and screen education.*

With representatives from across all the sectors, Inter/Screen would be a multi-partner, consultative, advisory and research body to encourage dialogue and strategically enhance a whole-of-industry approach. A small directorate would be created and financially sustained and a project officer or Screen Catalyst would need to be appointed to manage Inter/Screen.

Arising out of the various circles of dialogue representing all screen sectors created with the Thinker's residency, and amalgamating an existing, rather dormant, Screen Industries Council, Inter/Screen should be established as an effective, properly financed, small directorate to facilitate dialogue and solutions, create on-line and real-life networking, conduct research and provide strategic advice to the State and to the SAFC/ScreenSA.

Inter/Screen would hold monthly, consultative forums, articulating the common interests of all screen institutions, individuals, educators, companies and associations.

It could, among other things, facilitate professional development, commission and study best practice, maintain databases, conduct research, and develop a South Australian screen marketing initiative.

## Community Media

**Recommendation 9**
*Enhance community-based media by dramatically increasing support for the Media Resource Centre (MRC). In parallel, create a sister organisation, an Aboriginal-based Media Production, Resource and Training Centre for emerging and existing Indigenous practitioners.*

The Media Resource Centre (MRC) serves hundreds of media-makers and practitioners as members, and delivers an incredible number of essential services to the media making community generally. The MRC deserves to have its minuscule funding substantially

## 1 Summary of Main Recommendations

increased and sustained over the long-term. Additionally, after consultation with all SA Aboriginal practitioners and organisations, the State should help fund and establish a totally inclusive, autonomous and adequately funded Aboriginal-controlled Media Production, Resource and Training Centre. This centre would serve the production, resource, networking and media educational needs of young, emerging and existing Indigenous media makers. It could bring together the existing best practice experiences from all the State's Aboriginal media groups. These would include PY Media and Port Augusta's Umeewarra Aboriginal Media Organisation; government agencies such as DAARE, Aboriginal Education and TAFE SA; advocacy groups such as Yaitya Makkitura; emerging makers at Nunga TV and experienced guidance from Aboriginal media pioneers like John Macumba Productions, a co-founder of CAAMA, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association.

### Infrastructure

**Recommendation 10**
*Create a South Australian Digital Visual Archive.*

Extending and building upon the ground-breaking work by the State Library of South Australia's SA Memory Project and the Aboriginal APY Land's Ara Irititja Archive, the State should support the capturing, in digital visual archives, the story that is South Australia. Empowered by an enhanced broadband backbone, the SA digital visual archive should be a media-rich web-plex that all South Australian citizens, students and institutions can contribute to, and freely use.

**Recommendation 11**
*Foster, finance and facilitate the creation of a screen industries and community Media Hub in central Adelaide.*

This would resemble the Film House in Copenhagen. A large building or a number of co-located buildings could house such a screen hub in Adelaide which could include SAFC/ScreenSA as the lead funding agency, the Media Resource Centre, representative agencies and practitioner associations, offices for a proposed Aboriginal media resource and training centre, screening facilities and office spaces for other production companies.

## 2 Introduction

I am South Australia's seventh Thinker in Residence. It's a unique position created by the visionary Office of the Premier and Cabinet and supported, in my case, by seven other Institutional partners in the film and educational sectors. I spent four months immersed in hundreds of meetings and consultations as the Thinker in Residence. My mandate was to observe all aspects of the State's screen culture - the screen industries, media education and community media practice - and to refract these observations through the personal prism of my 30 years as a director, producer, educator, writer and critic with professional experience around the world.

I acted as a catalyst, active listener, objective sounding board and observation post in order to make these humble recommendations and suggestions about how the screen arts in South Australia might best meet the realities and challenges of our digital age.

As an essential guiding philosophy, I believe a holistic approach is required. I have consulted with all the important players and so many generous, creative individuals to take the pulse of SA's screen culture and synthsize a common consensus. All of these ideas and strategies combine to create long-term solutions to the challenges South Australians face in their engagement with the screen. Some may consider these ideas slightly idealistic, others will find them practical and stimulating.

When implemented, I believe these common sense and feasible suggestions may help South Australians build their film and media industries into a screen culture that celebrates South Australian stories but also captures the world's attention. It will be one which favours innovation and incubation; and catches the exciting spirit of these digital times, fostering and encouraging independent vision and creativity.

It will be a place where:
- all of South Australia's media-makers can work and thrive, without having to go elsewhere - or nowhere
- 'film-making' in the widest possible sense is redefined as the Eighth Art. All of the screen arts - digital media, feature film, documentary, hybrid fiction, non-fiction, animation, games, cellphone films, video-podcasting and the web - will be a means to create our own stories, our own images, our own futures
- multiple media literacies are encouraged in our schools because digital is the language of the 21st century
- media can empower students and teachers to understand the over-mediated world around us
- community and media can be bound together with an invigorated sense of social purpose

- 'docu-mocracy' (documentary fused with democracy) serves an all-inclusive civil society with information and enlightenment
- one can face reality in the 21st century, where the informed screen takes its rightful, poweful place.

My mandate, thinking and activities in South Australia took me into four intersecting areas, or what I call Spheres of interest. As a result, Southern Screens : Southern Stories is organised accordingly.

### The Educational Sphere
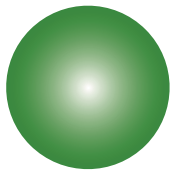
I observed, examined and worked within the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) and at South Australia's universities. I particularly looked at media education and film studies, how to develop multiple media literacies and screen competencies and how to encourage such things as educational career path efficiencies, resource-sharing and teacher training.

### The Screen Industries Sphere
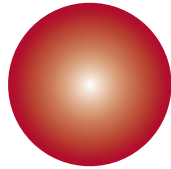
One of the main aspects of my residency was to observe and report on the film, TV and new media sphere of industries, what we call the screen industries. These range from digital documentary, through feature drama, webwork, animation, special effects and games to what I call the 'next media' or 'now media'. I looked at how the State can nurture best practice, both from big "I" industry and little 'i' industry perspectives.

### The Community Media Sphere
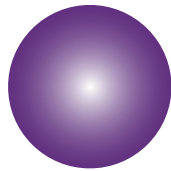
I examined many excellent best practice examples in South Australia's community media production, both in the Adelaide area and in several regions. I made a special point of including many fine Aboriginal screen initiatives which are highly innovative and responsive, but which are often hampered by a lack of support.

### The Infrastucture Sphere
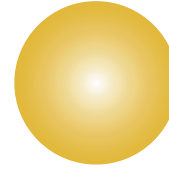
In this fourth sphere I reflect upon what I call Infrastructure. These are contextual issues sometimes determining, colouring or facilitating work in the other spheres.

### Building A Rainbow Bridge

After an early morning rain in Adelaide, I rushed to get my digital camera to capture a rainbow I could see was forming over my balcony. But I was a little disappointed because it was only a half a rainbow that I could see. The corner of my own building, literally and metaphorically, blocked out the rest.

But when I thought about it, perhaps half a rainbow is a symbol of the challenges that lie ahead for all of us here. We are all attempting to build the other half of the rainbow - to do our part to make South Australia into a creative capital, where everyone has the necessary tools and support networks to tell their own stories.

There is so much to do to complete that rainbow, not the least of which is a reconciliation reality check of the relations that different communities have with the First Peoples of this land. Part of my work includes how one might turn the First stories, using community and new media practice, into work we can all share.

South Australians are fortunate to be living in a time and place where art, technology and entrepreneurship can all work together towards a sustainable culture, where values of education are cherished equitably.

Completing the rainbow is a way of building a unique, internationally recognised South Australian screen culture and a new media movement for this digital age.

# 3 Some Reflection on
# Thinking in Residence

On my first day in Adelaide, as South Australia's latest Thinker in Residence, I went to the great green Oval where Australia was deftly handling a cricket team from the West Indies in a sport where the rules totally dumbfound this unenlightened Canadian.

I was made to feel welcome by those who inhabit the Hill. They happily spelled out for me the nuance, artistry and athleticism of the game, along with the rules. But what intrigued me most was the scoreboard. Here in an age of technological advancement, was an ancient mechanical object of extreme beauty. Handmade technology, totally functional, appropriate and accurate. A pure information system, documenting the game, wicket by fallen wicket, as new and useful as the day it was born. It was, for me, an analogy to the documentary film process, which is my line of sport. That was my Thought of the Day.

During this residency, as an amusing exercise, I came up with other random Thoughts of the Day, like developing a hybrid car factory in Adelaide and running a hybrid car race alongside the Clipsal 500; or putting a big drive-in movie screen in the middle of the Parklands which will only show South Australian films; or installing a speaker's corner video booth right across the road from Parliament House. Or creating a Festival of Festivals which would bring all together all the art forms, selecting from each of the other great festivals in the world, one single act or film or performance or individual or painting to showcase them together in Adelaide.

Those were my less practical Thoughts. You can judge, be inspired by or re-work the more serious ones which follow.

The Thinkers program is original. It must be, because a Canadian province is going to adopt the idea. It must be, because I even found my thinking self featured as a clue in a crossword puzzle in the Adelaide *Advertiser*.

As the Premier puts it, my mandate was to engage, enthuse and enable. That indeed has been the mandate of all the previous Thinkers, who bring expertise from outside the oval into South Australia's social, political, educational and business circles. They bring their own experiences, opinions and detached observations into view, offering examples of best practice. Working with South Australians, they generate new ideas and solutions. As the old Chinese proverb says, the frog can only see a small circle of the sky from inside its well. The advantage of having Thinkers visit South Australia is that they can watch both from outside in, and the inside out.

During my residency, I thought about how to grow South Australia's film and media arts sectors into a truly independent, internationally competitive brand over the next decade.

During my stay, I worked with community media groups in such places as Salisbury, the Parks and the Aboriginal APY Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, thinking about how documentary can empower individuals and societies in this digital age.

I brainstormed with educators and students on such practical matters as scripting and production, but more importantly, on how educational systems, along with government support, can provide unrestricted pathways for emerging talent.

In short, how can we provide a bedrock of media literacy to all of South Australia's citizens, and especially to our young daughters and sons who will be the next generation of the creative class, the innovative media makers and consumers, working both for art and for industry. They are the dream-keepers and storytellers for the future.

Being a Thinker has given me a new appreciation of the complex nature of building consensus in a democracy. It's that tough job that the Premier, the government, the public service and you, the reader, all have as citizens.

On the whole, the Thinkers project offers the people of South Australia new ways of seeing old problems. It offers lateral solutions instead of top-down, vertical ones, applied from on high. My work here catalysed action and communication across groups which may not have worked together in the past. It uncovers and reveals promising success stories which are already here.

## Crossquiz 3071

**ACROSS**

1 A pacifist, which candidate for the presidency of the United States wrote about how to bring up children? (8,5)

7 Who was the premier of South Australia from 1979 to 1982? (5,6)

9 The SA Government has established a thinker in residence program, which Canadian documentary film-maker is the present thinker? (9)

10 Orphaned at the age of three, which child, who became a Gothic writer, did John Allen adopt? (3)

11 When the weather is bitingly cold it is colloquially called what? (5)

13 Who set out his controversial theories of evolution of human behaviour in *African Genesis* (1961)? (6)

**DOWN**

1 Which set of low mountains is found between Shoalhaven and Clyde Rivers in New South Wales? (8,5)

2 She is an Australian actor, producer and director, who said: "Artists have a role to play in the unfolding of our national narrative"? (5)

3 What is something or someone that has both male and female characteristics? (11)

4 Where did Joe Rosenthal take his famous photograph of Easy Company? (3,4)

5 What term describes a being that is at every place at the same point in time? (11)

6 A film has recently been made about him, who wrote the controversial *Sexual Behavior in*

# 4 South Australia and
# Digitopia

*Utopia (Uto´-pia) noun. A visionary, imaginary State with perfect political and social conditions. A paradise. (from Sir Thomas More's book about an imaginary island  nation Utopia, published 1516.) Etymology: from the Greek ou, (not) and topos, (a place). In other words,* Nowhere.



I am now half way through shooting a major film about utopias, in more than a dozen countries. I am making it because I want to offer a little hope to the world in the form of a film and an internet web-plex.

Utopias are about how we wish to visualise an ideal world, and how we reconcile and manage that vision against the sometimes irrational impulses of the real world. That's my definition of utopia.

In terms of the film arts, media education and the screen industries, I want to imagine here what it will take to rebuild South Australia's screen culture into a digital utopia, or 'Digitopia'. But before we build the future, we must know the past.

## A Utopian History Lesson

The dominant narrative of the modern history of South Australia is that it was born as a utopia. Like Plato, who designed his Republic, the colonial 'founder' of what is now called South Australia, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, had a vision of a perfect pattern of society laid up in the heavens.

That vision came into being in the Proclamation of December 28, 1836 which created South Australia as a great free Colony. I note that, in the second paragraph of that Proclamation, the same protection was extended to the Native Population as to the rest of His Majesty's subjects.

In Wakefield's vision, the greatest happiness could be achieved in a balanced community of enlightened citizens. He prophesied no adoration of wealth, no oppression of the poor, no need for dissent, because everyone would be happy. Life would be perfect. Instead of granting land free to settlers, land should be sold.

Many of the white settlers who came to South Australia were Nonconformists, or Dissenters, who believed Wakefield's plan offered them more freedom. Thus Adelaide was born not only as a city of churches, but also as a Paradise of Dissent.



King William Street c1910 photo courtesy of State Records South Australia

South Australia has been the location for a number of historical firsts - the first to champion free and compulsory education in 1875, the first to recognise the rights of Aboriginal Peoples, the First Housing Trust in the 1930's.

But South Australia is also home to a little delusional thinking. I worry about a place that says it has 'No Worries' all the time.

## The Piping Shrike of Creativity

The official State animal of the 'Utopia' of South Australia is the Hairy-Nosed Wombat. I would recommend that could be changed.

And then there's South Australia's official State crest. In 1901, the graphic artists of the time morphed an image of an eagle from Germany into what South Australians call the Piping Shrike (or is it Pipping Shrek?), but which is actually an Australian magpie. A very, very smart bird.

In the original painting, above the head of the bird was a beautiful red pomegranate, the King of Fruit. The Pomegranate represents

Knowledge, or what we would call today Creativity. But in 1901, the Premier at the time decided to axe it. He just took his pen and scratched out the pomegranate.



I recommend that it's time to bring the Pomegranate back into the State crest.

In other words, it's time to bring creativity and innovation back into the picture.

To make South Australia the Knowledge State - where the State of knowledge leads the nation. To make South Australia the Art State where the State of art is second to none. To make South Australia the State where the screen is both a mirror and an agent for change.

## 4 South Australia and Digitopia

### Don Dunstan: The Beginnings of Digitopia



photo courtesy of The Advertiser

Don Dunstan created the South Australian Film Corporation, the first such agency in Australia.

*'Throughout his career Don was prepared to put his neck on the line whenever he believed the principle of an issue was important. Don fought for fundamental reforms that we now take for granted. As Premier, Don led South Australia out of a dull conservatism to make us a pace-setter in this nation … Don moved South Australia from rock bottom to Australian pre-eminence.'*

Those actual words were written by Premier Mike Rann in the *Labor Herald*. Mike, when he was young, used to work for Don. Mike continues:

*'In the arts, Don Dunstan showed that a small State could not only become an international centre for culture, but could take the arts to ordinary people, not just to the privileged. In developing an Australian film industry, Don led the way.'*

As Thinker in Residence, I did my little bit by spending almost four months of twelve hour days, seven days a week on research, consultation, study, speech-making, writing, conferencing, lecturing and listening as I continued on my quest seeking a map to a new Paradise of Dissent, to a Digitopia in South Australia.

In the end, I have come to the conclusion that it will be up to all South Australians to continue the quest, to build it for themselves, in their own images.

## 5 The Educational Sphere
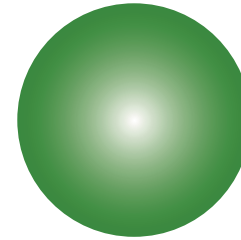


### Highlights of Recommendations for Education

- Support Aboriginal media training.
- Set up proper accreditation for media literacy.
- Create a pan-university School for Media Education to teach teachers how to teach media.
- Create a secondary Media School of Excellence with flow-ons for primary and early and preschool years students and staff.
- Foster new initiatives in production.
- Create new initiatives in distribution of student media.
- Create a student-based web portal TV channel.
- Establish the Premier's Media Challenge.
- Foster the development of media mentors.
- Support the International Democracy Project though local initiatives.
- Take measures to make more resources available for teachers.
- Create and sustain an inter-agency Media Literacy Umbrella Group.



### Media Education

In South Australia today, there is a sense of hope and promise. Change is in the air. For me, the most important aspect of my work here has been in the educational sphere.

I have been re-educated through my work with the State's education system. It's been heartening to engage with the evolved thinking at the top echelons of Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS), facilitated by the DECS representative at the Thinkers Office. Together, we have accomplished much with the dedicated teachers in the Salisbury public schools, and with the University of South Australia and Flinders University.

In Canada, I recently worked with others to develop competencies in digital and documentary production for use by educational systems in my own country. Most appreciate that filmmaking is an art, a craft and a business. It rests upon a series of essential elements. Some are given or innate: passion,

personal identity and talent. But there are many other essential competencies that can be learned and acquired. This is where the educational sphere enters the picture. Many skills are necessary to build the ideal media artist: academic background, knowledge, culture, personal experience, the ability to articulate ideas, to analyse and synthesize information, to make decisions, to manage budgets and finally, numerous technical skills necessary to make, or study, media.

## The Work: Results and Outcomes

I'd like to outline a few of what are called 'outcomes' in *systems speak*. I dislike the word outcomes. I'd rather call them tangible, visible results.

My objective has been to provide strategic advice about current and future educational policy, programs and pathways relating to screen media. I helped facilitate collaboration between universities and secondary education media teachers, and advised on curriculum development for South Australian universities that are teaching production, digital media and communications.

I contributed to teaching and mentoring students who are developing specializations in screen studies at Flinders University. I've inspired a series of films made by third year students serving the social needs of the Parks Community Health Centre. At the University of South Australia I worked directly with the School of Communication, Information and New Media's advanced film and video production students to help them explore how

their skills can be applied to working within a new digitally converged environment. I also lectured to staff at the Centre for Public and Professional Communication and addressed the School's teaching and research community, including Honours and PhD students, and worked with media creators in the Architecture and Design schools and at the Wearable Computer labs at UniSA.

One of the most important aspects was working with partners to create a Curriculum Dialogue Group (CDG) working on all aspects of screen education and media literacy. This group represents everyone in the sector, from bottom to top:

- Curriculum Policy and Futures Connect people in the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS)
- teachers and students at individual schools (covering birth to Year 12)
- Salisbury Schools District staff and Learning Band Coordinators
- Technical and Further Education (TAFE)
- Senior Secondary Assessment Board of SA (SSABSA)
- ArtsSA
- SA Association of Media Education (SAAME)
- University of SA
- Flinders University
- Media Resource Centre (MRC)
- Technology School of the Future (TSoF).

This group provided strategic advice about current and future educational policy, and pathways relating to screen media. Many of the comments and suggestions I make in the education sphere are directly due to the work done by the Curriculum Dialogue Group and the DECS facilitator.

I recommend that the valuable work of our Curriculum Dialogue Group continue with the establishment of a Media Literacy Umbrella Group within the educational sector. This would be an ongoing, working body to champion, facilitate and continue this important dialogue for media education, identifying common pathways and potential blockages. Headed by a media education champion or catalyst, the group will be light, responsive, non-bureaucratic, and risk-taking - not risk averse. Representatives from the Media Literacy Umbrella Group will also be part of Inter/Screen, an envisioned Forum and Council which I recommend elsewhere in this document, in Section 6, The Screen Industries Sphere.

During my stay in South Australia, I met with executives and senior managers in DECS to inspire, challenge and inform DECS about the impact and potential of digital technologies and film media. I've helped build educators' and learners' capacities by developing their understanding, critical skills and knowledge about the construction, role and potential of digital screen media. I discussed applications in a digital environment which can enable socially inclusive improvements to policy, curriculum and vocational futures. I also mentored teachers and students in the use of non-fiction screen media to engage the voice of students and those at risk of leaving school.

With DECS and others, I also catalysed a very successful experimental project which has led to a range of films being conceived and produced by students in four Salisbury Schools: Burton, Pooraka and Mawson Lakes Primary

Schools, and Parafield Gardens High School. Students there have made short animation films, documentaries and public service announcements. This work will spur others to take up the model.

One whole school, Pooraka, which had never before engaged with media-making, turned its total attention to the idea of Fear. There were classroom activities about fear, poems, community surveys and powerful discussions about the ethics of filming about fear. The school made a film about fear which included Jason walking across a swing bridge for the first time in his life. With a fellow student filming from the riverbed, and his teacher filming from the bridge, Jason before our eyes and in real time, overcame his fear by coming face to face with it, inspired by the power inherent in the filmmaking process itself.

## Observations In Media Education: The Current State



South Australia's DECS primary and secondary education systems show world leadership in its guiding principles of democracy,

decentralisation and valuing the teacher and student voice in decision making. DECS is building a culture of inquiry throughout its curriculum.

But at the post secondary level, Australia, once known for its leadership in media literacy and media studies in the 80s, now risks falling behind the curve. This decline has happened for a number of reasons, some of them economic, some of them through neglect. But in the context of this new media-centred century, it is urgent for all students, educators and government agencies, in a lifelong way, to begin to understand the power of the mass media - and to begin to make their own. We need to develop students and citizens into *produsers* (individuals who can embody two ideas simultaneously as they both produce their own media but also use and consume media).

In South Australia, up to the end of year 10, media is mandated as a part of the Arts curriculum within the SA Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework, and stage one and two courses are offered within the Studies of Society and Environment field in the SA Certificate of Education (SACE). Both the SACSA Framework and SACE define literacy in broad terms that are inclusive of media literacy, production and analysis. However, while SSABSA data indicates consistently high numbers of students studying SACE Stage 1 Media Studies over the past decade, the number of sites and places offering the subject at Stage 2 has reduced from 27 five years ago to only 18 in 2005. This trend must be reversed.

I believe the main factor contributing to this drop at Stage 2 is the subject's tertiary education HESS (Higher Education Selection Subject) Restricted status. Although this all may seem like technospeak the real end effect is that this discourages schools from offering the subject, thus denying students a pathway for proceeding to the next level of their education in media. This must change.

I would acknowledge that SSABSA has recently agreed to change its definition of literacy as it applies to year 11 and 12 students, effective since 1 January, 2006, to encompass visual communications. I would encourage DECS to publicise and support this alternative avenue for students to respond to major issues of study, across areas of the curriculum as diverse as business studies, biology, Japanese, chemistry, community studies, and mathematics.

Other factors that appear to restrain an engagement with media include perceptions about the high cost of media production, teacher training, equipment and relative importance as set against other departmental priorities. Across primary, secondary and tertiary education, student learning pathways in media are not clearly aligned nor articulated and assessment practices continue to privilege written responses over audio-visual articulations. There is an apparent contradiction between promoting digital screen media and an assessment system that still privileges writing.

## Tensions, Issues and Perceptions

### There are tensions and issues in regard to resources and funding.

There is a variety of media education providers: Vocational Education and Training (VET), schools, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), universities, registered training organisations. But there is a lack of connection, coordination and focus across sectors. Schools have developed a wide range of good resources which are not shared. The DECS Technology School of the Future is a real point of connection, but is not utilised to its maximum potential.

There is a lack of an implemented and integrated media-rich curriculum across different levels of education. Media vision is too localised and fragmented and not driven or overseen by an overarching government policy framework. While many children are comfortable, expressive and literate in the domestic products of the new technologies and while there is increased availability in the average home of simple and sophisticated media technologies for consumption and production, from mobile phones to digital stills cameras to handicam videos to mp3 players to games and software, there is a perceived lack of similar resources at school.

There is the misguided perception about the cost of technology to the schools and a need to continually update equipment. This is a legacy from the days when the equipment was a burden. Cheap digital pro-sumer hardware has overcome this problem. There is a perception that there is a lack of access to technology in some schools and preschools, a lack of trained

staff to utilise technology or a lack of school support staff to maintain and support teachers and students, all of which can be overcome with resource management and mentor systems. There is a perception that SA is not providing adequate funding. As well, some children don't have equal access due to lack of finances or a low socio-economic profile. Country and regional schools are currently disadvantaged in their access to training and development and industry contacts.

### There are tensions and issues in regard to Media Education and Media Studies.

Media Studies as part of the SACE framework is not as valued as traditional subjects. Media Studies are often viewed as an add-on, or as a specialist area, whereas it should be seen as cross-curricular. The study and creation of digital screen media should not just be about the end product, but about the skills which can be developed by using media across the whole curriculum. In other words, how media contributes to the whole-of-curriculum Key Competencies and Essential Learnings as outlined in the SACSA Framework. And generally, there is the continuing need to discuss the purpose of media education: Is it to provide 'fodder' for industry, or to provide a 'holistic' education?

### There are tensions and issues in regard to teaching.

South Australia has an ageing teaching force who are, in general, not as confident as they should be in digital technologies. DECS teachers have varying levels of skills in the area. Teachers need time to investigate new *trendencies* in media making; to learn,

talk, collaborate, plan and prepare on-the-ground projects. Teacher training is a key issue. Students are savvy in Information and Communication Technologies. They are born into this brave new digital world as digital natives. The more traditional transmission model which would have teachers standing at the front of the classroom telling students what is good for them, where a teacher is in total control - is out of place in an environment where the student often knows more than the teacher. This is the real digital divide.

**There are tensions and issues in regards to pathways.**
There is a lack of a clear pathway between primary and secondary schools and media courses in universities, and between schools/universities and the industry.

Some issues are context-bound, and may not be amenable to universal solutions, and must be localised. Support from the education system is crucial in supporting that.

## A Thousand Flowers Blooming In a Digital Sun

All of these notions, tensions and problems can be minimised or overcome. And when they are, then the powerful, measurable results gained by studying and making media, across all learning situations, will be incontestable.

Thoughout South Australia, I have personally watched how teachers, students, parents and communities can be engaged and enabled by the power of being in control of one's own

media, one's own voice, one's own music, one's own vision, one's own creativity, one's own stories. I have seen with my own eyes how a once dormant desert can bloom into a garden of digital sunshine.

One day, in a workshop at the Adelaide Film Festival, I watched a young student, living in a home where the internet had not yet arrived, busy working with mentors from Britain's the-phone-book Group. With their gentle empowering guidance, she was able to learn, within two hours, how to make her own stop-frame movies. Shooting image by image with her digital stills camera and using simple software, she was able to make a sophisticated plasticine animation film. The look of pride on her face, and her parents' broad smiles as they all left the room arm in arm, made for an unforgettable moment.

The kids are teaching the teachers. In our experience working with the Salisbury schools, I watched six year old Heidi work with two young colleagues to make a little stick figure story using iMovie software. My jaw dropped in awe when I heard the fifteen year old boys in the workshop ask our six year old Heidi if she could teach them how to use the software too! Let each one, teach one, as Nelson Mandela would say.

With media, children are telling their own stories, choosing their own topics, shaping their world, shaping their ideas. Stories of Us, a three part series on schoolyard bullying, romance and student stress, is a fine example of student generated media. Directed by an accomplished Adelaide filmmaker and supported by DECS and

the Education Content Fund at the SAFC among others, it was written and filmed in collaboration with drama students at three high schools, including Underdale High in Adelaide.

As one teacher told me: 'Teaching media is really about challenging myself to think about things in different ways. About broadening my own mind to expand definitions of documentary, audience, and the uses of technology.'



## Understanding Media

In a world where media is the very air we breathe, we need to expand our view of literacy to include media literacy. In other words, how to 'read' and 'write' with light, where the pen is now the camera, where the writing's on the wall - in the form of a screen. Where 'the product' or 'measurable outcome' or test can just as easily be an essay assignment made with images, sounds and digital tools and handed in as a DVD.

Digital media is a tool for teaching and learning, a multifaceted literacy tool. It can be fiction or non-fiction, animation or a game,

documentary or a web-based video blog. Digimedia can be studied and used at all levels of education. It caters to individual learning styles and needs. It can be done by eight year-olds or eighty year-olds and look equally sophisticated. It can be biased, personal, public or poetic. It can depict a particular point of view and it can be influenced by viewers' perceptions. It is powerful, provocative, emotional and influencing. It can be spontaneous, contrived, or interactive. It can be ethical. It can be judgmental. It can be critically analysed - by critical, active, interpretive students and viewers, who are made aware of the author's purpose, visual language systems and message.

Digital media is influenced by culture, economics, government, politics, social identity and consumers. It can build community capacity. According to the manifesto of the South Australian Association for Media Education, media education is essential to make Australians literate in the use of new forms of communication. In doing so, we will have also have citizens who can effectively participate in a democratic system and contribute to Australia's economic growth.

## On The Need For Media Literacy

Literacy is the ability to understand, analyse, critically respond to, and produce appropriate spoken, written, visual and multi-media in different contexts. It is as ubiquitous as the air we breathe. We must understand what it is, what it does and how it works. And how to make it ourselves.

This is necessary for what the internationally respected liguist Noam Chomsky calls 'Intellectual Self Defence' - protecting students and citizens from propaganda in this mass media age. We must always remember, that even if Adelaide may be the home to some of the finest universities in the world, it was also the original home to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, one of the largest media empires in the world.

In media, we can all teach about software and hardware. But I want students (and adults) to be 'mediaware' (i.e. to develop media awareness).

I am not just talking about training kids to be filmmakers or training them to study media as a unique subject. No, this is all about using the digital tools and fostering film expression, and the documentary process, which is an ethical process, as learning aids to every subject in the curriculum. Media needs to be in everybody's toolkit.

Granted, we do need to teach kids how to write and analyse texts, and books and plays. But we teach such essential skills, not with the expectation that all of our kids will become the next Shakespeare, but because one needs to read and write to understand the world. We teach our kids how to count, so they can

figure out how to solve problems and negotiate their way in the economic world.

The same goes for teaching media literacy. We teach media literacy, not to make every student into the next Steven Spielberg or Rolf De Heer or Scott Hicks, but because media is the language of the twenty first century. It is the language that our children speak.

What we do with the old literacies we must do with media literacy - because it is the language of our future.

In Britain, teenagers who traditionally took two subjects - English and English Literature - are now being encouraged to take exams in English and media studies instead, according to the report, *Media Matters*. The number of students taking Media Studies has risen by nearly one-third since its introduction in 1986.

### If we don't engage in media literacy
- We risk the loss of South Australia's unique view on culture, as we will continually view the world through the eyes of storytellers from other States or other nations, particularly the United States.
- We risk further alienating a cohort of disenfranchised youth who already view school as an institution imposed upon them, rather than one of the most valued experiences in their lives.
- We risk sending our students into a media rich society without the critical skills needed to analyse the messages that surround and influence their lives daily.
- We risk losing a way of engaging students in dialogue with their peers and mentors about issues that occur in personal, public and global arenas.

- We risk losing the individual's voice to tell their own story as they consume a daily diet of mass produced, stereotyped formulas pitched firmly at the consumption dollar rather than a desire to inform and/or understand the world in which we live.
- We risk further constraining the voice of those who may be physically or mentally challenged, those who do not excel in the current methods of storytelling (ie creative writing) by not allowing them to explore other avenues of representation that they recognise are already accepted by the wider community.
- We risk not utilising a huge resource, those current new-media-savvy students in primary, secondary and tertiary sites, who are ready and willing to engage in mentoring roles in a subject that they value and are passionate about.
- We risk condemning the study of media and its influence on society and culture to a small specific subject valued by the few rather than the many.

### If we do engage in media literacy
- We will sustain the uptake and growth in the use of media as the benefits in engagement become obvious to the majority of classroom practitioners.
- We will develop a generation of media and technologically literate individuals who may rapidly surpass the skills of the classroom teacher in their passion to tell their story in the most effective way possible.
- We will create innovative thinkers, with a strong student voice, who will showcase their local and State communities and

package their stories in a medium that is readily accessible to all.

Of course, there may be challenges in teaching media literacy. If we teach students how to make and understand media, we may alienate a cohort of teachers who view change, and often technology, as an imposition rather than the opportunity to grow as educators and citizens of a global community. We may risk demanding too much from a screen industry in the form of structured work placements, work experience and mentoring. We may risk channeling students into a career pathway in which the number of direct jobs are limited. It is worth those risks.

## Teaching Media

To fear media literacy is to fear democracy. Creating more engaged media-literate students is about making more opportunities available in the education system, not less. As students graduate and join the massive and emerging creative class, media literacy is also about building a screen industry and a screen culture in South Australia which can lead Australia, if not the world, as it harnesses and fosters creativity, innovation and independent vision in the field.

It is therefore important that State and federal governments immediately implement policies and strategies to ensure that all Australians, especially our children, become educated consumers of media who can also access, use and produce their own media.

By working with educators and students to develop skills of media literacy, one can create new models of curriculum, teaching and learning. Screen media have an important function in community life. A recognition by the community that students are using a variety of media as a multimodal form of communication is an important, resonant result.

Learning media can bring benefits to the whole of the system. Teaching media can show us how to engage and fulfil students on the edge, and on the margins, by bringing them into the story-telling tent. It's about student voice, and it also reflects community voice.

Teaching digital media is about learning to learn; it's about moving to a culture of inquiry, as DECS calls it. Teaching media is about connecting teachers to an array of best practice with a sense of vocation and self-renewal.

If we are asking our teachers to develop critical faculties, flexibility, media literacy and creativity in our students, then our educators must possess and model these capacities in themselves. They must be positively supported

in the acquisition of all the skills that are necessary to make this happen.

Teaching media is about young people developing the tools to think laterally, and with dexterity, no matter where life takes them.

Teaching media is about creating a culture of communication that is essential to our social survival.

## Media Literacy and South Australia's Strategic Directions

Globalisation, advancements in digital technologies and the development of 'knowledge economies' demand inclusive societies that build capacities for critical and creative thinking. Therefore, it can be forcefully and factually argued, media literacy is an essential component in a sustainable, prosperous, informed, progressive, creative and articulate society. In that light, links to South Australia's Strategic Plan and the Department of Education and Children's Services Priorities are shown below.

| South Australia's Strategic Plan | DECS Priorities |
|---|---|
| Fostering Creativity - Objective 4. Creativity T4.1 Improve learning outcomes in the Arts and other learning areas that utilise enterprise education T4.9 Grow industry T4.3, T4.4, T4.5 Improve partnerships and connections between education and industry T4.10 Internet usage T4.7 Increase Learning Together and school-community arts and recreation T4.11 | Strong beginnings for all children Excellence in learning provision, achievement and pathways Engagement and wellbeing Quality teaching Build workforce capacity and resilience Access to integrated services Interdependence Sustainability |

## Fostering a Culture of Creativity and Industrial Development

Developing media literate students and citizens can only but encourage innovation, and thus create new jobs vital for economic growth where creative capital is paramount, where knowledge is currency.

Media literate citizens can begin to contribute to a living culture, economic vitality and a social history as active agents and members of their communities - both local and global.

A strategic design for the State which values media education as an entitlement is underpinned by principles which include storytelling as fundamental to personal and social development. By broadening the uses of audio-visual media and career possibilities, a proposed Inter/screen Forum and Council (outlined elsewhere) should be part of that plan, as an inter-agency working group that can develop strategies to expand a diverse industry, develop collaborative relationships between key stakeholders and identify and map existing expertise and facilities for sharing, collaborative networking and specialisation.

## A Future Vision for a Media Literate South Australia

What do those of us who believe in media literacy see in South Australia's future?

We see a South Australia which will be a leader in media literacy, a State with a clearly articulated future-learning context for Information and Communication Technologies.

A South Australia which is seen as an incubator for young, media literate students. A State where media literacy is a valued, legitimate part of everyday learning, providing its students with a set of transferable skills. A State where values of tolerance and fairness are supported through the study of media. Where students and a whole community of South Australian citizens contribute to national identity through their artistic and cultural activities. A State where, from an early age, our youth begin to contribute to our society in a manner which sustains the environment, and the health and welfare of all Australians.

A State where, throughout their schooling, students acquire a set of media literacy competencies which allow them to construct their own learning. Where learners communicate and design multi-media projects with confidence, applying high level technical skills toward making socially inclusive projects. Where, through media literacy, students discover alternate ways of knowing, understanding, viewing reality and having a 'voice'.

It's a future where students flow with ease between geographical learning locations, in an environment which enhances relevance, their choices and enthusiasm. Where greater student attendance is evident, particularly in the public sector, as student numbers increase in high school and at a tertiary level. Where strong interrelationships and connections exist between our learning institutions, and the broader screen industries. Where mentoring and coaching programs are an accredited form of learning in all educational institutions.

It's a future where teachers are skilled practitioners and media literacy is embedded in both pre-service and in-service teacher training.

At the end of one workshop at a high school in Salisbury, a young student left an anonymous note on my desk. It read: 'Please. Just give us the tools, and we can do anything.'

We work for a time when a media literate South Australia as a Digitopia is the reality and not some faraway dream.

## Recommendations For The Educational Sphere

Here are recommendations for the Educational Sphere. Some are administrative, some need financing, some need imagineering. All need proactive support:

**Aboriginal media training needs support**
The State's educational systems should establish proactive opportunities for media training for Aboriginal students and teachers, perhaps in conjunction with an envisioned Aboriginal Media Resource and Training Centre (see Section 7, The Community Media Sphere).

**Media literacy needs to be properly accredited**
In order to ensure that senior secondary students wishing to pursue screen studies and screen production can rightfully pursue their dreams and destinies and in order to reinforce the importance of media literacy in all students' learning, we should immediately unblock any and all bureaucratic impediments for proper accreditation. This means that all

screen studies, media production or related media education subjects are not considered HESS restricted subjects in the SACE but as approved, general competencies or subjects, in every possible way.

**A pan-university School for Media Education needs to be created to teach teachers how to teach media**
Within the framework of an existing School, Department or Faculty of Education, at UniSA, Flinders University or the University of Adelaide, a dedicated, pan-university, School for Media Education should be established to produce highly skilled media teachers for the system. This should be a collective operation with contribution from all of the State's existing universities, tertiary institutions and DECS, with input perhaps included from the brilliant national Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS). There is already a precedent set for this in a pan-university science initiative where all the universities are contributing to one goal.

**A Secondary Media School of Excellence needs to be created**
DECS should establish a specialised Secondary Media School of Excellence. Such schools have already been established in other art forms, and in sports, but not in the art form which is most ubiquitous, most pervasive, and which means the most to the average student - media. Such a school would be a centre of excellence and an incubator which could fast track talented kids. Such a focus centre could offer immersion and scholarship opportunities for more disadvantaged students, and could also include remote or virtual learning for regional candidates.

A Secondary Media School of Excellence might be located in the southern, northern or western suburbs or be right down the street from the wonderful Technology School of the Future (TSoF), which could act as a guiding resource centre and facilitator. DECS should reinvigorate and expand the use, role and access to the TSoF as a centre of excellence in media literacy. In addition to the universities' courses and programs, there are a few existing individual post-secondary courses in media production at campuses like the Helpmann Academy or MAPS at Hamilton College, and workshops occasionally offered by registered training organisations in small scattered pockets of the State's education system. But these do not fulfill the need for the comprehensive dedicated Secondary Media School described here.

**New initiatives in student media production need to be fostered**
Media literacy has to happen across all areas of the curriculum and is therefore an issue for all teachers, all students and all parents. We can encourage new cost-effective initiatives in student media production. In the digital media age, a mobile digital studio resource, like the old idea of a library van that served under-resourced schools, should be equipped with cheap yet appropriate production, editing and exhibition technologies. The Mobile Media Van can go from school to school for week-long training sessions, serviced by experienced mentors. A few skilled specialists would work across a range of sites to share resources between schools which could also link to community libraries or digital archives as resource centres.

**New initiatives in distribution of student media need to be created**
New initiatives in distribution of student work, across all school years, should be created and supported, such as the brilliantly conceived but not yet funded Upload, which will be both a bi-annual festival and a training initiative throughout the year. A range of awards, festivals and events should be supported or enhanced to celebrate student media literacy work to add to existing programs such as Giffoni, Come Out, and the essential Adelaide Film Festival.

**A student-based TV channel or web portal needs to be created**
With partnership from industry and education, the State should establish a dedicated broadband web distribution portal for student production. In other words, an SA-based student TV educational channel, video-podcast or WebTV. Perhaps such a TV channel for schools could be run out of TSoF, and could also cross-promote best practice through the community TV channel, C31, and community radio.

**A Premier's Media Challenge needs to be created**
The State could establish a Premier's Media Challenge to all schools, in which students watch, critique and make their own productions during the year, which are then showcased collectively for the community. This Premier's Media Challenge would augment the Premier's awards and challenges in other arts and music, and the highly successful book reading challenge. It could also work in conjunction with other initiatives like Crank! at Come Out.

**Media mentors need to be fostered**
DECS should continue and expand its support and strategies for arts education and creativity in SA schools and preschools with initiatives like ArtsSmart to strengthen digital media, multimedia and the screen arts. Such projects encourage a continuing engagement of young people in arts education, partnerships between arts educators and arts practitioners, and lifelong learning.

DECS should also work with existing artists-in-schools programs, promote short term mentorships, and in-school workshops by dedicated screen professionals, and identify artists-in-schools programs that include digital media and film: Organisations such as Carclew's brilliant Digital Media Division, or the effective and innovative Directing the Hero Within Projects, local workshops provided by the local office of the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, and workshops provided by the under-funded Media Resource Centre are leading the way in such school-mentorship programs.

Leadership positions can be created across institutions and agencies incorporating a coordinated approach that is supported and resourced centrally and implemented locally. A twinning, databased exchange program can match media teachers and teachers of media literacy to industry practitioners. Resources should be made available to enable teachers to undertake professional learning and training. The system can offer certificate accreditation for student placement in on-the-job training with opportunities to work with film-makers/digital media producers and industry mentors.

Mentors should include senior students, TAFE students, university students, expert teachers and industry practitioners. One can establish a system for identifying students who show talent to support them to become local mentors. Media coaches can be deployed and trained to work across districts and schools based on the existing highly successful model of the Statewide Learning Technologies Coaches program currently managed by Technology School of the Future.

**The International Democracy Project needs to be supported**
During this Residency, many of us were able to catalyse and capitalise on the visit of major international public television commissioning editors to the AIDC Documentary Conference. These broadcasters are creating the International Democracy Project, a series of short and medium length documentary films and educational out-reach projects around the theme of democracy. In 2007, around the world, democracy will rule, with the results of the Documentary Project simultaneously playing out in education systems and across scores of international public TV networks, in many languages, including the BBC, SBS, France's ARTE, the US's PBS, The Sundance Channel and NHK Japan.

DECS, known as an educational system which promotes decentralised and democratic voice, has been asked to participate in the Democracy Project as a leading educational partner. I would recommend that DECS take up the challenge, fund a project office and appoint a project manager for the Democracy Project. This office could involve itself with

the production of educational materials, web-sites, test-bed research and the production of local SA educational content and resources around the theme of democracy for schools, pre-schools and their communities. What a wonderful opportunity to showcase South Australia and to enhance DECS' international profile!

South Australia's contribution to the International Democracy Project would be to engage the education sector and the broader community in media literacy learning as a critical and empowering capacity of the 21st Century; and to support the generation of dialogue about, and practice of, democracy in the local and international community by:
• developing the content for resource materials which support the documentaries and stimulate dialogue and discussion about democracy with different age groups and diverse audiences
• creating networks to test the resource material for each film and evaluate the effectiveness of the resource material amongst different ages, cultures, etc
• igniting opportunities for students to make and share documentaries and other media forms exploring the theme of democracy
• modelling the principles of democracy through the project
• developing new and improved relationships internationally, inter-State, cross-agency, and with business
• providing opportunities for young people to build relationships intra-State, inter-State and internationally
• promoting and demonstrating creativity and media as career pathways

• promoting and publicising student achievements in media literacy
• empowering youth voice
• providing a model for other cross-agency media related projects (for example, Upload)

**Measures need to be taken to make more resources available for teachers**
To help educators create a media literate educational culture, several cost effective and simple measures need to be taken. In general, a systemic and creative media educational culture needs to be fostered and developed, allowing for more flexible and accessible approaches to staffing, resourcing and facilities management. These measures need to be studied, quantified, financed and prioritised, to facilitate a system of media education which enables educators and students to use media in rich ways.

The system can offer and design many viable, cost effective solutions and measures to alleviate teachers' fears of being overwhelmed by technology, costs, management issues and the burdens of uptake. These fears can be overcome by simple measures which should include in-service training, beginning with the acknowledgement of multimedia work as part of teacher time.

The schooling system should introduce as many as possible of the following strategies:
• co-teaching arrangements which will enable smaller, temporary breakaway media production sub-groups to operate within whole classes

## 5 The Educational Sphere

- media coaches modeled on the DECS Professional Learning in ICT program
- access to existing resource packages for teachers
- cheap video cameras for all schools
- easy ways for teachers to use part of their required professional development hours to learn about media literacy including acknowledgement of editing and production time for film and multimedia work
- enable skilled staff to work on media-related innovations independent of the school timetable
- teacher release for industry placement
- staffing allowances for the workload of media teachers, including class size capping
- staff sharing arrangements across schools in clusters
- professional renewal programs for existing media teachers
- compulsory media components in teacher education courses
- time set aside to allow teachers to investigate, collaborate, reflect and contribute
- ensure that the pre-service training of all teachers incorporates media and that specialist programs are offered with real technology that is out there
- ensure that Learning Band Coordinators are trained and supported to use media in their everyday practice
- provide a process for schools that demonstrates media work as part of Moving Forward with SACSA
- undertake investigations and research

into the impact of 21st Century media on teaching and learning and integrate methods to clarify and underpin media literate strategies and goals
- examine resourcing needs, timelines and strategies for longevity, sustainability and the costing implications for training initiatives and updating equipment.

**An inter-agency Media Literacy Umbrella Group needs to be created and sustained**
To continue the dialogue which has begun in media literacy with this residency, and with the Curriculum Dialogue Group that developed with it, DECS, the universities, TAFE systems, along with other educational institutions, Catholic and Independent Schools, private colleges, etc., and representatives from relevant government departments should establish a top level ongoing, inter-agency Media Literacy Umbrella or Steering Group, headed by a champion or catalyst. A principle of this dynamic systems group should be that it be light, responsive, powerful, non-bureaucratic, and risk taking - not risk averse.

Representatives of the Group will also join Inter/Screen, the proposed Inter-agency Forum and Council for all the screen industries, screen culture and screen education (see Chapter 6, The Screen Industries Sphere).

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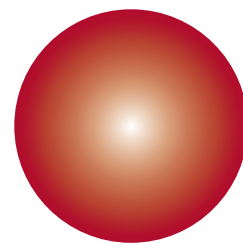


## Highlights of Recommendations for The Screen Industries

- Support and financially sustain the Adelaide Film Festival, the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund and the Australian International Documentary Conference.
- Establish the Don Dunstan Film Fund to provide opportunities for established and emerging filmmakers to hone their skills on socially worthy films and media productions of general benefit to South Australian society. This might be achieved by expanding the scope and providing additional funding to the existing Educational Content Fund, with consideration given to broadening the criteria beyond educational content to also include socially responsible low budget full-length documentaries, shorts, new media, fiction and features.
- Establish the Fifty Cent Fund as a voluntary contribution from South Australia's cinema going public to foster the growth of our own South Australian images on our own screens.

- Create Inter/Screen as the South Australian inter-agency forum and council for Screen Industries, Screen Arts and Screen Education and create the management position of a Screen Catalyst.
- Enhance community-based media by dramatically increasing support for the Media Resource Centre and by creating an Aboriginal-based Media Resource and Training Centre for emerging and existing Indigenous practitioners.
- Re-imagine the South Australian Film Corporation as ScreenSA and support and foster its renewal and growth to meet the needs and technologies of 21st Century screen culture across all film, new media and next media platforms.

### Reality Check: The Rebirth Of Documentary

I have been working in the film industry for thirty years. Initially, I was involved with educational films, industrials, sponsored films for government departments, campaign films for our then Prime Minister, and even a few commercials. A bit later, in the fiction world, I worked in various roles: on locations, as a production manager, a first assistant director and as an editor of feature-length films.

But since the early 1980s, I jest that I have taken the 'documentary vow of poverty'. Not to disparage the poor, but as a reflection of the commitment it takes for all filmmakers who work outside the box, outside of Hollywood, in other genres of filmmaking. Over the last two decades, I have worked almost exclusively

in the factual, non-fiction and documentary form as a producer, director, writer and editor, as well as editing and writing for international film magazines, organising conferences and advising film and new media festivals.

For more than a decade, I have also been a practitioner and apostle for non-linear, web-based and digital media, especially as it intersects with non-fiction.

I bring all of this experience to my Thinker's analysis of South Australia's screen culture, fused with a positivist philosophy which wishes to see it develop with benefits to the whole community. My mandate has been to look outside the frame. But in the final analysis, regardless of what I may write or suggest, it is South Australia's governments, agencies and media-makers who will have to put workable models into practice.

Let me begin with documentary.

There has never been a brighter, more profitable time to be working in documentary. The great news is that we are experiencing a reality renaissance. Let's look at the evidence. As I write, there are a dozen feature length documentaries playing in regular cinemas in New York City. One doco about penguins has grossed about 100 million Australian dollars! Currently, there are half a dozen non-fiction films playing in my city, Montreal. This phenomenon has been replicated in Australia, and to a proportional extent, in Adelaide.

For too many years documentaries were like medicine for most people: you knew they

were good for you, but you related to them as painful educational experiences. Today, there's a veritable explosion of doc-channels, docfests and docs at the bijou. New reality-infused platforms are popping up every day - from video blogs to video podcasts. Exhibitors and broadcasters are scrambling to pick up titles for theatrical, educational and web distribution.

It always puzzles me that, within the book publishing industry, the non-fiction form has enjoyed total legitimacy, huge audiences, critical attention, and lots of shelf-space. Sometimes it feels like the Diet and the Self-help sections of bookstores are the only things that keep reading alive. And yet until recently, non-fiction films and audio-visual works have needed to fight to breathe and stay alive.

But lately there has been a noticeable shift in consumer consciousness and viewer preferences. I believe that audiences now feel that they can derive from documentaries all the enlightened entertainment, stories, suspense, drama, humour, tragedy, and pleasure that they need, as they interact with the screen, no matter what the size. Once these were values we only experienced with fiction films.

The documentary art form, in all its hybrid incarnations, is reaching theatres as persuasive political essays, video verité character studies and neo-propaganda (a)musings that assuage the lies our mainstream media have been telling us. The rebirth of documentary is arriving at a time when mass audiences realise that documentaries provide what I call 'a Real News network', an alternative international

information system. Docs are closer to real lives lived by real people.

Documentary is alive and well and living everywhere, enabled by the impact of digital technologies. A new generation of cyber-docs, DVDocs and digi-docs are finding huge audiences on web-screens. The wireless world is exploding with documentary. The digital documentary is a site of renaissance, and of diversity for the future. We are now living in the 'hear and now' of a revolutionary wave, the digital revolution, where everyone, literally, can become a filmmaker.

The very definitions of film, television, broadcasting and the public are being blurred. The dominant Hollywood and televisual theocracies, and the structures which support them, are changing. In this paradigm shift, the future is now. As a result, agencies, governments, corporations and the public need to respond today to meet the promise of tomorrow.

More evidence: Ofcom, the British regulatory commission for communications industries, issues a major report proclaiming that Public Service Broadcasters will transform into Public Service Publishers, catering to individuals not masses. The Australian government's ambitious Smart Internet 2010 report explores future possibilities for Australia in open source and social network technologies, eHealth, digital games, voice applications and mobiles. It identifies possible outcomes that are relevant to innovation strategies and sectoral development.

Back in the UK, the BBC announces an individual webplayer so you can view your customised myBBC on the net. CNN counters with its Pipeline. Britain's C4 creates a new channel where the public can upload their own four minute films. All over the world, people create and share visual content on their mobile phones. Vblogs (video web logs) are replacing mass journalism; video podcasts, time-shifting personal video recorders and shape-shifting electronic program guides demonstrate that the niche, micro-market is ascendant.

Bit-torrent video downloads supersede traditional distribution channels. They transform a reluctant film industry in much the same way that the music industry was asked to reinvent itself because of peer-to-peer sharing through Napster, Limewire and their MP3 clones. Through tsunamis, subway terror attacks and pandemics, citizen viewers witness the world armed with camcorders, as individual produsers (producer/consumers). These trendencies are not speculations nor hypotheses: this is here. Now. Filmmakers and those who support them must respond, or be overwhelmed.

As a result, in this Screen Industries Sphere, I take the definition of film and documentary in its widest, and newest, digital form. For me, living in the D-age, alongside an emergent Generation D, the documentary has been reincarnated as the Document - as a digital document which may, at times, embody elements of fiction, reality, animation, graphics, cybertext languages, audio, TV and even games design. Films and media can all be seen as Content, for all platforms and delivery systems.

In this new world, definitions dissolve, and hybrids emerge. New media forms are about blend, about fusion, about trans-boundaries, transgressions and trans-genres. For the average, flexible person, they expand the language of acceptable cinema, and we go with the flow of the new. Everything is document. In this conception, the internet itself can be seen as the greatest, largest documentary in the world. As a universal audio-visual-textual library, infosystem and key portal to all things real.

**The prognosis and the promise**
But with all this factual good news in the factual world, it is occasionally necessary to touch the ground. Despite the promise in the prognosis, the fact is that South Australia's current documentary production is very under-represented on the national scene. It accounts for just two per cent of the country's output, whereas it should at least be seven or eight per cent to reflect the weight of SA's population. But that sad fact is not for lack of potential or talent.

I will suggest measures which might be taken here to right this balance. But for now, as an exemplary parallel, I will cite several advances made in support of documentary in Canada over the last few years. Beginning with a small group of filmmakers in Montreal and Toronto, I helped co-found the Canadian Independent Film Caucus, (now called the Documentary Organization of Canada) which has now grown to more than 600 members in four chapters across Canada, which is an indication of documentary's success story. Hundreds more documentary entrepreneurs,

enterprises, and artists, along with government agencies, broadcasters and funds now make up the Canadian documentary industry. They have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the Canadian economy. In Canada, we have our own documentary TV channel and many private and public broadcasters feature enormous quantities, if not qualities, of reality-based material. On all federal and provincial levels, public agencies and para-public funds are using measures such as tax credits to develop proactive policies in consultation with the communities they serve. Everyone is taking non-fiction seriously these days.

After several years of lobbying by our documentary organisation, all the agencies have started to work together in annual documentary summits, on areas of common concern, such as streamlining and systematising funding requirements. The main federal agency, Telefilm Canada, and partners like the Canadian Television Fund, The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Film Board of Canada, an arm's length federal agency, have worked together to create Feature Documentary Funds. The Federal Department of Heritage, which manages film, communications and broadcasting, is considering a large influx of money dedicated to documentary. The National Film Board of Canada has created a world documentary fund in cooperation with domestic and international broadcasters. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, where many documentaries have migrated to its second news channel, has created an innovative third, web-based, digital channel where, among other forms, digital documentaries can find a home.

Across the country, documentary workshops, training initiatives, festivals, conferences, magazines, summer institutes, pitching possibilities and incubators have all been created. Documentary groups, associations, and cooperatives of young media-makers, like Lucioles in Montreal, have sprung up. Given that good documentaries cost a lot less than average television situation comedies and fiction featyre films, as most reality programming television channels have discovered, and given that factual films historically provide better returns on the investment dollar, Canadians have discovered that there can be both economic rationales and creative and socio-cultural reasons to give docs their fair shake.

Not that all of these measures can be mirrored exactly in South Australia, but the Canadian model gives an indication of the possibilities. They can be studied, rejected, customised or adapted.

In my comments for the Screen Industries Sphere, I try to take a holistic approach. My ideas about digidocs, documents, screen, next media, and film imply a fair and equitable balance across all the genres. As definitions blend, cheaply made web-only viral doc(uments) or web-mations on the internet are pulling as much cultural weight, and audiences, as an overblown, star-laden Hollywood fiasco.

I take as a premise that all genres are interrelated and co-dependent. Many of the general principles or specific suggestions that I make here for one genre or another can

apply to all forms: to documentary, fiction, new media, games design and others. Industrial and State incentives and programs, necessary to develop a dynamic South Australian screen culture, can be applied across the playing field, while at the same time being careful to address real sectoral differences, deficiencies and imbalances. For example, the values of incubation and innovation are generally applicable, and the proactive and affirmative measures that are needed to increase higher percentages of South Australian-based production are values which transcend genres. If adopted, they will help build a new culture of creativity.

With the proper government and agency support, South Australia can better position itself for the non-fiction production of both compelling classic documentary and emerging docs for alternative screen platforms.

Creating a dynamic screen culture takes active, creative collaboration and relationship-building between players and across genres, between the new and the established.

The South Australian Film Corporation has a strong awareness of the important role of documentary making in the 21st Century. It has conducted a number of programs aimed specifically at the genre, with particular emphasis on professional development including regular assistance and feedback to aspiring practitioners, da few documentary incubators and documentary workshops like the dococom experiment that I was involved in. Given that docs are hot, with more SAFC support, it shouldn't take too much to

encourage more South Australians to pursue a career in documentary making.

Artists and entrepreneurs need to feel that they are being nurtured for the long term, and not just supported for the early stages of a project's life. Sometimes this can become an endless circle of development hell, where films only ever get developed - but never made. Filmmakers also need money for production. Emerging media makers also need to see a picture of a possible world where they can see themselves fitting in, where they don't have to leave South Australia to lead a creative life. South Australia can attract more docmakers to produce in the State through a climate which supports innovation regardless of form.

This can happen through innovative dynamic policy design, through intra-agency cooperation, by domestic and international co-production, and broadcaster involvement. But a viable industry also needs to wean itself away from dependency only on the broadcast model, which is an old model. New models centered on filmmakers, projects, new technologies, new delivery platforms and social enterprise can lead to more creative futures.

In the end, a film, however one labels it or defines it, is the product of an active imagination. And that is what must be encouraged in South Australia.

## Scope Of The Screen Industries Consultation

Filmmaking is an international system, based on local production. I have been familiar with the rich tradition of Australia's film culture since the mid-1970s when the first wave of great independent Australian feature films burst upon the international scene. Since the mid-1980s, I have been directly and professionally familiar with Australia, as the Canadian co-producer of Peter Watkins' *The Journey*. Since 1990, I have had direct experience working with SBS on pre-sale productions. I've also had fine experiences with Australian distributors.

As a cinematic citizen of the world, I have also been familiar with the policies and personalities involved in Australia's film industries, the Australian Film Institute (AFI), the Film Finance Corporation (FFC), the Australian Film Commission (AFC), the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA) and others.

I have visited Australia many times over the last decade. Being a Thinker in Residence allowed me to return to South Australia and Adelaide for the fifth time in the last six years. So, over time, I have been able to gain knowledge of the evolution of the screen industries here, and the agencies that serve them.

My Thinker's spreadsheet of appointments took me to more than a hundred meetings with several hundred people involved with the screen industries, in circles large and small, private and public. Screen practitioners,

feature film makers, animators, new media artists, emerging screen makers, internet people, software developers, gamesters, Aboriginal media makers, venture capitalists and IT specialists, along with key agency leaders, and government and institutional heads. I've also had several hundred individual, collective and online consultations via email, list-serve groups and forums.

Other work in South Australia allowed me to set out strategic objectives for the 2005 and 2007 Adelaide Film Festival and the 2005 and 2006 Australian International Documentary Conference. With others, I helped catalyse and facilitate an international presence of international commissioning editors at the AIDC; with the SAFC, I was able to meet round tables of South Australian practitioners, and helped introduce Canada's Bell New Media Fund and Canadian new media and animation makers to their South Australian counterparts; and I worked with groups of community media filmmakers including those on a SAFC-sponsored dococom community media experiment, which is a fine success.

I've had briefings by, and for, all levels of government, in a wide range of portfolios.

I've read a thousand pages of commissioned studies, including an important precursor to this one, *South Australia's Film, Television and Audio-Visual Industry: A Development Strategy* by Bruce Moir and Barry Burgan, December 1999. This useful report analysed the industry and its contribution to the SA economy. It focuses on the impact of convergence and the need to build the SA production base across film, TV and the rapidly growing digital content creation sector.

I also read several recent Annual Reports of the South Australian Film Corporation, and dozens of other reports, web pages, an online forum and dialogue about SA's screen industries, portable document files and online posts concerning the film and digital industries in Australia and South Australia, including material about the new streamlined versions of Arts SA. I immersed myself in economic and industry studies from the Australian Film Commission, Film Australia, the Australia Council and the Film Finance Corporation, and for comparison, materials from British and Canadian screen agencies, and Australia's Film Victoria, the New South Wales Film and Television Office and Screen West, the agency which does the same for Western Australia.

With all of this, it has been my goal to get the big picture and to place my suggestions, ideas and recommendations into a comparative mix with three decades of my own experiences and observations of best practice around the world. My thinking is about institutions, systems and ideas, and is not directed at individuals. I hope these words open up a conversation that South Australia's whole screen industry will initiate and complete soon, in its own way.

## Creative Industries in South Australia

Many governments around the world have increasingly accepted the argument that the cultural, creative and aesthetic fabric of any society is a key element of its economic performance. Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* has been particularly influential in this view and the South Australian government, through its Strategic Plan, has

# 6 The Screen Industries Sphere

targeted Florida's Top 10 Regions Creativity Index as a measuring tool for the State's creativity. The Strategic Plan sets a target of achieving a top three ranking within ten years.

## Observations: The Screen Industries

This is what I observe: There is unlimited creative talent here in SA, with as many stories to tell as there are South Australians. There are exciting sectors of the screen industries which marry innovation with progress; the digital creatives, the animation, games and new platform media sectors are fine examples of these.

ABS statistics indicate that the creative industries in South Australia employ 15,761 people or 2.5 per cent of total State employment, generating estimated wages of some $640 million, a turnover of $2 billion and contributing almost $1 billion towards gross State product. The related ICT industries employ many more thousands of people. It is estimated that in South Australia's motion picture, radio and television sector last year approximately 2200 people were employed with $380 million of turnover, $91.4 million in wages and a $173.0 million contribution to the gross State product.

Although Adelaide is not the biggest production zone in Australia, in several meetings it was suggested that the relatively 'small pond' of Adelaide and South Australia can be seen as an advantage. The close proximity of practitioners, companies and ideas to each other makes lateral thinking and cross-genre/cross-media hybridisation possible.

## Success Stories

SA is home to some of Australia's most creative media-making communities. One of my favorite South Australian films, *Fritz Gets Rich*, is a beautifully rendered animation. I've been also blown away by a new soundtrack for Fritz Lang's restored classic *Metropolis*, as well as by the surreal short film *Carcass*, and by UsMob.com a multiplatform Aboriginal-driven web project, just to name a few of many possible examples. There continues to be solid feature fiction work coming from South Australian directors.

South Australian-related productions have won Australian Film Institute and international awards, including Golden Globes, an Emmy and an Oscar. There is a wealth of talent here. Accomplished work is emerging from entrepreneurial companies ... Smoking Gun, Duo Art, Planet Earth, Re/Angle Pictures, Vertigo Productions, Archangel Australia, the United Film Group, Katalyst Web Design, Closer Productions ... among a hundred others. Work principally shot in South Australia includes features like Human Touch, Rabbit Proof Fence, The Tracker and Wolf Creek, and documentaries such as Opal Fever and We of Little Voice. The SAFC has been involved in supporting, in one way or another, many of these stories.

The fastest growing companies in the creative industries are within the digital creative category. They have formed, or are forming, scalable and sustainable businesses that have developed international markets and employ significant numbers of South Australians. The digital creative sector in particular has a great potential to contribute to the economic and cultural success of South Australia.

Success stories include but are not limited to:
• Anifex • Fusion • Imagination Entertainment • Kojo Group • Ratbag Games • Rising Sun Pictures. These six companies alone employ almost 320 full time equivalents and the five largest had an aggregate turnover of $40m for 2003/04. They represent the type of digital creative company that can potentially grow quickly and make a disproportionately large contribution to State development.  And they are joined by other digital creatives that are emerging: • A-Rage • Brave Vision • Digital Monkey • Kukan Studio • Logic Films • Monkey Physics • Nylon Films • People's Republic of Animation • Plexus Films.

As well, visionary South Australian companies like Internode, m.net, cine.net and others are growing innovation and creativity. Some are locally grown telcos, working in broadband, wireless and infrastructure in service to the industry. These new-style companies join traditional South Australian-based screen funding agencies and organisations to serve the industry.

In addition to the existing talent, the South Australian education sector generates hundreds of potential southern 'stars' every year, potential filmmakers, graphic artists, editors, camerapersons, web designers, composers, digi-doc makers, all hoping to emerge and merge into the existing SA media industry without having to go elsewhere - or nowhere. Those are the people I am worried about.

## A General Appraisal

'Film' is quickly becoming an expendable term, a relic of the 20th Century. There are adaptive sectors within the screen industries, but outside of animation, games and new platform media, other parts of SA's industry could better equip themselves to take South Australia down the proper paths to sustainability five years from now.

Economic sustainability is a problem for the independent film sector everywhere, and more so in Australia because of the relatively small marketplace. Even though South Australia spends more per capita on culture than any mainland State, the annual arts and culture budget is just about one percent of the total annual budget.

David Throsby and Virginia Hollister's 2003 survey, *Don't Give Up Your Day Job*, concludes that the economic returns to artists in all of Australia remain low, but are not a true measure of their real contribution to society. Half of Australia's artists in 2000-01 earned less than $7,300 from their creative practice before tax, and half earned less than $30,000 from all sources. The two most significant factors restricting artists in the pursuit of their creative work remain the lack of work opportunities and the lack of return from their creative practice.

In these fiscal realities, there is no reason to believe that screen artists are any different from other artists.

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According to the AFC's production statistics, in the fastest growing genre in the screen world - documentary production - South Australia can only claim two per cent of the national share (and the national share of documentary vis à vis other genres is not very significant to begin with). I was told that 70 per cent of those who have had an opportunity to make a first film in SA do not get the opportunity to make a second. I was also informed that no young South Australian filmmaker was officially supported or developed to make a first-time feature film in South Australia in almost a decade. Several other first timers have been supported, but they have been from outside the State.

In my consultations, others remarked that sometimes there is a lack of collective self-confidence in South Australia, which results in a tendency to serve the needs of inter-State producers and broadcasters over local needs and objectives.

And then there are the gaps in what would be a practitioner's career path:
- between educational qualification and promise of employment
- between promise and resources
- between experience and the expectation of further nurturing
- between established credits and perceived rights of entitlement
- and between the lines in the oldest circular story in the book, the chicken and egg story: No experience, no track record. No track record, no job. No job, no experience.

Those who are emerging into the career stream from South Australia's film, documentary, new media, design, IT and communications schools every year need support.

Some expressed a desire for a 'whole of life' vision for career-building in the SA film and digital media industry. Others pointed to a lack of professional development and mentoring, and a lack of industry transparency which manifests itself as lack of communication and cross-industry dialogue. There is also a widely expressed need for advocacy, in the form of a strategic and lobbying body. All agreed that the industry would benefit by developing a 'unified voice' and stronger advocacy to, and by, government.

While the public applauds its local screen successes, there is limited opportunity for it to do so, since only a small percentage of South Australian films actually make it in the competitive theatrical marketplace. The tendency to allocate its scarce resources to higher budget productions provides limited potential for growing a sustainable industry or culture of success, risk and innovation.

We see these same kinds of critiques in Canada, and elsewhere. Nevertheless, they need to be taken seriously and addressed. In this context, the SAFC, as the State's existing film funding body, can take more of a leadership role in responding to these changing times.

I believe a new screen culture has to be imagined and fostered in South Australia. A versatile new set of funding instruments, and a new generation of public funding initiatives have to be embraced and developed here, favoring screen innovation and the development of human creative capital. This kind of thinking is also now being embraced in other Australian and international jurisdictions, such as in Western Australia and Nova Scotia in Eastern Canada. South Australia is in a good position to meet the challenge. Otherwise, the 21st Century - the Century of Media - is in danger of leaving SA behind.

If South Australia is growing into a creative society, based more on the knowledge industries than older resource-based ones; if, as Richard Florida and others claim, a significant percentage of Australia's workforce is now rapidly joining the growing creative class; if 15,000 people in South Australia are already involved in the creative industries; if there are hundreds of talented media-making students emerging into the SA job force every year wanting to create a future in South Australia; then I believe South Australia needs to meet those facts with proactivist zeal.

There is much to applaud within the existing SAFC, and a culture of change is beginning to be recognised as necessary on individual and entrepreneurial levels, but nevertheless, the screen industries in South Australia need a dynamic re-balancing and re-imagineering which embraces the notion of 'screen' rather than just 'film'.

## The Context: History and Screen Culture



South Australian film culture has a long, long history. In fact, some of the first films ever made in Australia were made in SA. Born in South Australia, J.P. McGowan went on to become one of Hollywood's most prolific silent era filmmakers, with 600 titles to his credit. Flash forward to documentary adventurer Alby Mangels and then flash again to the future with the current hothouse studio, the extremely brilliant People's Republic of Animation.

I believe that the myth and character of the South Australian people can be seen to be shaped by three things: its utopian history as a Paradise of Dissent, its relationship to the tranquil sea and its mythological relationship to the harsh, mysterious, outback. This is where its stories are born.

A beautifully produced locations guide from the South Australian Film Corporation points out that many of the greatest Australian films ever made were made in South Australia's outback. The classic of Australian cinema, *The Back of Beyond*, was shot here in 1954, and starred the other Tom Kruse, the Outback Postman.

The South Australian outback is where Australian films have been born. *Breaker Morant, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome, Rabbit Proof Fence, Gallipoli, Sunday Too Far Away, The Tracker.* I was able to visit some of these locations during my residency.

South Australia's own golden age of film was fomented by visionary Premier Don Dunstan's creation of the South Australian Film Corporation more than thirty years ago. Many of the films that I've named were from that age. Although many were shot in SA, very few were actually made by South Australian filmmakers.

I will argue here, as a film critic, that what really drove that golden age of Australian cinema were not only visionary government policies and tax breaks. Yes, they were crucial. But more importantly there was a certain spirit, a capturing of the Zeitgeist by a group of talented Australian filmmakers, producers, writers, storytellers and their teams who collectively made up that first wave of the Australian Film Movement. They were young, innovative, independent and creative.

I believe that every successful film, screen or media movement in history, in countries which have been as restricted in population or funding resources as South Australia's, can be characterised by a philosophy of risk, and a belief in the creator rather than the dealer. Movements are marked by artists supported by industry and not vice versa.

Times have changed since Dunstan's 1970s.

These days, the average Hollywood film budget for the average Hollywood film is up to $US100 million when you factor in the marketing costs. It's hard to think that South Australia's film culture can compete with that. But it can play its own game, on its own terms, I believe, if it foments innovation.

We are living in a digital age where the hardware and software tools needed for film and media creation, for production, post-production, distribution and exhibition are developing at an incredible rate. They are getting portable. They are getting cheaper. They are getting easier to use. Now the skills and tools are available to everyone. This can be an empowering or threatening thing, depending on your point of view.

Only a few years ago, the now industry standard high definition camera was unaffordable to me. Today, I can walk around the streets of Adelaide with a high-definition prosumer handicam camera which cost me $A 5,000.

I wear my studio around my neck as a portable USB memory stick. The cell phone is both a camera, and a means of distribution. A PDA is my television set. The web is my projection room. Today my physical post-production studio in Montreal is virtually rendered obsolete because I can put all my editing, sound editing, graphics and mixing software onto my Powerbook.

I believe that the conditions which created a richly textured South Australian cinema movement in the past, which was brought about both by proactive agencies and the creative spirit, youthful vision and innovation of its creators, have to be brought forward into the 21st Century.

The audience wants to see its own stories reflected upon the screen, but sadly, only two or three percent of Australia's theatrical screens are given over to Australian films each year. Compared to the latest Hollywood film, or heavily subsidised European co-productions, with tens of millions of dollars in an average production and marketing budget, South Australia will find it impossible to compete, as it can bring very little money to the production table, let alone marketing.

In light of this, I believe that the SA industry needs to promote creative screen development and incubation to encourage innovation and creativity in all the screen arts. There should be an integrated whole-of-industry approach including government, screen arts and industries, digital communities, the education systems and the interests of the SA community as a whole.

## The Adelaide Film Festival

With only two editions behind it, the Adelaide Film Festival (AFF) is already an innovative, world class event with a strong international reputation. In 2005, the AFF engaged record public support, but also support from the industry at large, through a series of programs responsible to the South Australian screen community.

Under outstanding leadership and management, the AFF is already wonderfully envisioned, powerfully articulated and branded.

As someone who has been to over 200 film festivals, from Cannes to Berlin to Sundance, I can say the AFF already shouts out way beyond its size and years. The AFF in its class, is second to none. I know that it takes the average festival seven years to get itself organised, a dozen years to find its way in the world, and twenty years to overcome an inevitable mid-life crisis. The AFF is already recognised, and given its spirit of renewable energies, and continuing government support, it should never know crisis.

## The Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund

The Adelaide Film Festival's Investment Fund (AFFIF) with its philosophy of placing ideas and creators first should be the model of all institutions and agencies. It invests in culturally resonant and economically sound projects across a wide variety of genres. The last round invested in an innovative original feature, shorts, a documentary, an animated film and a cross-media TV/digital platform work both from inside and outside the State. The AFF's investments are predicated upon curatorial principles which forefront the idea and the role of the filmmaker and prioritise a first-in, startup philosophy.

I would wholeheartedly endorse the AFF and the AFF Investment Fund.

# 6 The Screen Industries Sphere

**Recommendation**
That the AFF's continued existence be guaranteed, and that its budgets be sustained, augmented and supported over the long term. The State should continue to sustain and expand the AFF Investment Fund to allow it to continue to invest in a wide range of screen projects with the same curatorial breadth which has guided it thus far.

I would also recommend that the AFF expand its existing Don Dunstan lifetime achievement award for outstanding contribution to the national film industry and establish a slate of awards - the AFF Don Dunstan Awards for Excellence. Cash prizes should be given for the best South Australian, national and international works, documentaries, and dramas, digiworks, and animations as well as the best 1st or 2nd feature at the festival. A press prize, facilitated by a strategic alliance between the Festival and the International Film Critics Organisation, FIPRESCI, could also be established.

The festival should continue its workshop and developmental arm. Perhaps these AFF initiatives can extend during other parts of the year, through collaboration with ongoing laboratories like Crossover or in partnership with other screen agencies.

By way of advice, the Festival could look at tightening up its dates, and respond to public demands by adding repeat screenings. The AFF could find ways of providing clear pathways into its program, so that the public at large, from all points of their screen awareness, can enjoy the Festival with ease.

The AFF is so good that it should think about becoming an annual affair.

## The Australian International Documentary Conference (Aidc)

The AIDC is the second organisation which has captured the spirit of these times. It is the AFF's sister conference.

With energized visions of its directorate, the 2005 edition of the AIDC was, by all measures, the most successful in the Conference's almost two decades of history.

A record number of the television world's most important documentary commissioning editors attended the AIDC's Documart Co-financing Day; the AIDC hosted the only meetings in the southern hemisphere of the International Democracy Project; there were Pitch and Punts, a series of day long panels around digital technologies, an international co-production summit, training sessions for pitchers; countless networking and screening opportunities for SA doco-makers; budgeting sessions co-presented with AFTRS; a keynote from Richard Florida. A record number of delegates from around the world, and large international delegations attended, including those led by the Bell New Media Fund in Canada. This will have future positive economic outcomes co-partnering Canadians with South Australian practitioners.

**Recommendation**
Although it is a national organisation, I would recommend that the State explore ways to cement Adelaide as permanent home to AIDC alongside the Adelaide Film Festival. The goal would be to make the AIDC a flexible organisation, permanently based in SA, with a national outlook and international outreach, but with SA imperatives.

As well, the State could establish, with the AIDC, a Human Rights or Indigenous Documentary Fund, Award or Scholarship. The State could also collaborate with AIDC and other SA bodies to stimulate documentary production here.

I would suggest that the AIDC's continued existence be guaranteed, and that its budgets be sustained, augmented and supported over the long term.

## The Don Dunstan Film Fund

**Recommendation**
That the Don Dunstan Film Fund be created.

The existing Educational Content Fund, currently administered under the South Australian Film Corporation, was formerly the Government Film Fund started by Premier Don Dunstan in the 1970s. With a budget of $800,000, its aim was to help finance films in the interest of the State. The existing Educational Content Fund, whose budget has been diminished by three-quarters, now funds works which have educative values, and are not necessarily driven by market forces.

I believe that, under the SAFC's administration, the existing Educational Content Fund should be upgraded and renamed the Don Dunstan Film Fund (as a kind of Social Justice Media Fund) with funding restored to the levels that Don Dunstan envisaged.

Many of the purposes of this proposed Don Dunstan Film Fund are those of the Educational Content Fund, which is a Government communication resource, a developmental strategy and an income stream for South Australian screen practitioners. I recommend that additional funding be provided to the existing Fund, with consideration given to broadening the criteria for the Fund beyond educational content to include also socially responsible low budget full-length documentaries, shorts, new media, fiction and features.

A properly supported Don Dunstan Film Fund will support and produce documentary, digital, web, fiction, shorts, animation products that will promote social progress and the goals of the State's long term Strategic Plan and objectives on sustainability, ecology, integration, social justice etc.

Most importantly, the Don Dunstan Film Fund would be an elegant, efficient way to take up the ever increasing pool of new filmmakers, giving both emerging and experienced SA media makers opportunities to hone their skills on socially worthy films and media productions. Many of SA's most important senior filmmakers today developed because of the original Government Film Fund.

## The Fifty Cent Fund

### Recommendation
That the Fifty Cent Fund be established.

This would be sustained as a voluntary contribution from South Australia's cinema-going public to foster the growth of our own South Australian images on our own screens.

As is the case in France and many other jurisdictions, the State should ask SA filmgoers for a minimal, freewill 50 cent surcharge on foreign and US cinema theatrical entries, in order to aid SA media production. Based on South Australia's history of film-going attendance, this could, by my accounting, add perhaps a million Australian dollars to the SA production pie. Half could be used for SA-based features, and half across other genres to promote innovation in South Australian screen art.

Preliminary discussions with some of South Australia's leading home-grown exhibitors have indicated initial interest and support. As a symbolic initiative, it would be welcomed by the public. South Australia would be seen as leading the nation with this initiative. Making the fund voluntary would avoid collision with the potential requirements of the US-Australia Free Trade agreements, even if the State itself is excluded from those provisions.

South Australia has one of the 'softest' art house markets in the country - not just for Australian film but for all art house film. I hope that a holistic approach to critical engagement with the screen runs generally through all of these recommendations, but especially through the Fifty Cent Fund proposal. There is an 'educational effect' to the fund that can have a simple audience development outcome. In effect, the box office becomes an open window for audience-industry dialogue, as a discussion starter about many aspects of South Australian screen culture.

## Creating Inter/Screen

### Recommendation
That the creation of Inter/Screen be fostered as the South Australian forum and council for screen culture and that a management position of Screen Catalyst be created.

Over the last couple of years, many members of South Australia's screen community have come together in ad hoc real or virtual ways to discuss how to foster the local industry. Many saw the need to create a Screen Council and the 2004 Forum Steering Committee recommended the establishment of a 12-member interim Industry Council with members representing the broader film community.

That original Council is rather inactive, except for an occasional consultation. Granted that production people are very busy trying to scratch out a daily living and cannot participate to such collective volunteer initatives all the time, or every time, but nevertheless, during my residency, from across all corners of the screen industry and media education communities, I heard an expressed need to create a responsive, consultative, whole-of-industry body.

I recommend that, in place of the present Industry Council, the industry should actively build a broad new consultative body, which I call Inter/Screen.

## How Inter/Screen and the Screen Catalyst Could Work

Inter/Screen would be the South Australian forum and council for screen culture. It would include membership across all the screen industries, screen arts and screen education. Its purpose would be to encourage dialogue and strategically enhance a whole-of-industry, holistic approach.

As a hot-wired organisation, Inter/Screen would be viable, vigorous and dynamic. Its Forum and Council would be funded with pan-industrial and government financial support.

Inter/Screen would have several roles.

- Inter/Screen would help build dynamic relationships with the total industry at all levels. It would facilitate and articulate the common interests of all screen institutions, individuals, companies and associations working within the big 'I' screen industry driven by more corporate or market imperatives and the little 'i' industry driven by independents, individual screen artists and cultural imperatives, media education, screen arts, screen culture, and community media practice.
- Inter/Screen would have membership from all sectors - across all the film, TV, documentary, next media, information and communication technologies, animation and the games industries. The educational sectors would be represented by DECS, TAFE, the tertiary media education sector and community media sectors. It would include related and appropriate government agencies, the SAFC and the lead arts ministry, Arts SA.
- Inter/Screen would be a public forum, meeting monthly or quarterly, and open to all those who wish to attend from across all the sectors of the screen communities.
- Inter/Screen would also create and house a smaller, multi-partner Consultative Council, with representatives elected or selected from across all the screen sectors, with advisory, strategic and research roles and capacities.
- Inter/Screen would be managed by an extremely small, effective directorate which would need to be created and properly financially sustained.
- Inter/Screen would create a management position of Screen Catalyst as a project officer, champion and executive director. The Screen Catalyst would facilitate strategic dialogue and an overview of the Statewide screen sector, identify opportunities and gaps within the industries, and work with all key bodies.
- The Screen Catalyst would help to develop the State's screen profile and unique brand through action. Their role would be to make it inclusive, open and accountable. The Screen Catalyst would also facilitate, coordinate and chair the public Inter/Screen Forum.
- Inter/Screen, with consultation as its core activity, would facilitate dialogue

and solutions, create online and real-life networking, conduct research and provide strategic advice to the State, the SAFC and Arts SA.
•   Inter/Screen could facilitate professional development by maintaining networking databases and would maintain an open-to-all internet discussion forum.
•   Inter/Screen could commission relevant and necessary screen research and gather together other reports and research, for example: it could look at and report on best practice nationally and internationally or map and track career pathways as a snapshot of the State of screen arts in Australia and South Australia.
•   Inter/Screen could commission, for example, a study which would suggest how the SA's screen industries can model themselves after the vision and roll-out of the wine industry in regard to creating a unified presence and developing international marketing strategies. The South Australian success story, the wine industry, has been sectorally strategic, efficient, collaborative and incredibly imaginative. Certainly it has a century old tradition of producing a high quality product, but recent history has seen it work proactively and collectively to make an essentially niche boutique product, developed by a small, independent cottage industry, into one of the most successful brand marketing case studies in the world.

Ever the optimist, I would hope that one day the world may well want to take a South Australian film off the shelf, or download it on some pay4web site as

readily as they now shop for the latest pinot noir from the Adelaide Hills.
•   Inter/Screen could help develop a South Australian Screen Marketing Initiative. With public and private partnership, it could act as a sales agent and distribution collective, promoting SA screen generally. It could offer expertise, pool common resources and enable filmmakers, producers and their film and other screen products to reach appropriate markets, in various territories, and to visit professional development conferences and festivals.
•   Inter/Screen could perhaps work from a purpose-built Office for the Screen Arts in a proposed Screen Hub where the Forum and Council could be hosted.

## The South Australian Film Corporation

The South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC), the oldest such agency in Australia, is a statutory body established under Premier Don Dunstan with the 1972 South Australian Film Corporation Act. It reports to the Minister for the Arts through Arts SA. The SAFC has a Board of Directors, appointed by the Governor in Executive Council on the recommendation of Cabinet and the Minister for the Arts.

Since 1972, the SAFC has helped foster an industry within South Australia, with the production of feature films, television dramas, digital media and documentaries. In 1994, the SAFC ceased its production role, and became the South Australian government's lead development and investment agency for the strategic support of the screen industries

through such instruments as revolving loan funds, and a suite of support programs and production investment.

The SAFC's Screen Industry Programs Department manages development and investment funding to help support the screen industries in South Australia. The Marketing and Location Services Department actively promotes SA as a viable base for film production and post-production. The SAFC's Studio Services oversees the production and post production facilities of the SAFC, including sound stages, production offices, and sound mix, foley and ADR dubbing facilities.

The South Australian Film Corporation has been rebounding after some difficult years and is now back on its feet. The SAFC has made significant contributions to many of the success stories cited in this report, either by direct investment or by supporting or investing in SA organisations. This includes investment in the projects supported by the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund and contributions to the AIDC (Australian International Documentary Conference).

As the SAFC was a partner in this Thinker's Residency, I have had very rewarding experiences working in consultation with the organization, especially through an opportunity to work with several SAFC project officers on a trial dococom.com community media project and on a visit to the APY Lands in the northern part of the State studying Aboriginal media initiatives. You will find more information about the SAFC and it's current policies, strategies, programs and projects in the appendix.

## Our Paradise of Dissent

In jurisdictions all over the world, in an arts industry as diverse as the screen industry, there are always other views which may differ from, or add nuance to, the policies outlined by national and State film agencies, organizations and other media funds. From producers, filmworkers and makers, exhibitors and the public, there are often either positivist suggestions or contrarian opinions which emerge about how industry and government might best serve screen culture. Some of these views are critical, some affirmative. Some are original, some tried and true. Some are different, some dissenting. Some are minority views. Some have broad-based support. But in my view, all players and stake holders universally wish to be consensual and to make contributions to what can be healthy community and democratic debate.

There is, in my opinion, a significant perception within the SA screen community that intra-industry communication needs to be addressed to facilitate that debate.

Over the last year there have been concerted efforts made at the SAFC to be part of the dialogue. Helen Leake, the CEO told me that 'the door is always open at the SAFC.' It may be just as easy as that, and any alternative voices or alternative visions which have somehow felt excluded from the big picture in the past, could be included and made welcome.

In the Paradise of Dissent there will always be differing, yet equal views. For South Australia, a ramped-up Inter/Screen and Screen Council could facilitate the dialogue.

Outside of a perceived need to broaden the circle of communication, there are other practical realities, as I perceive them. From the SAFC's Annual Reports I surmise that there are limited resources available to properly fund all of its intended programs. I observe that the financial emphasis is generally balanced in favour of one genre - fiction features - over and above all the others. For example, there is relatively less support for documentary, which is the fastest growing screen genre in the world. And little relative support for important calling card films, as only two short films are officially financed.

Assuming my reading is accurate, and allowing for yearly variations and change, I believe that this genre mix could best be re-balanced, and re-mixed, with equal emphases placed equally upon feature length films, other fiction, digital platforms including animation, documentary, shorts, and professional and industry development.

I tend to have a positivist and optimistic outlook. I believe that the SAFC can be better, in fostering, creating, rebuilding and leading a new South Australian screen culture - one that includes all aspects of the film, digital, documentary, shorts, fiction, animation and games industry. One that could put cultural, creative imperatives first. One that supports all film and media artists within a new culture of public funding for screen innovation and incubation.

I believe that one measures the success and positive outcomes of an entity like a State's screen culture not by 'product', or 'turnover' nor by numbers or prizes but by how policies and programs lead to the development of a critical mass of creative media makers who bring collective economic and cultural benefits to the State's population over the long term.

In this new era, I believe that the South Australian Film Corporation can use its leadership to respond to the technological changes and challenges of this century and to the needs of all those working in South Australia's screen community.

If the SAFC believes it needs to maintain existing funding for the same number of fiction features every year, then its total investment budget allocations and appropriations must be augmented substantially from government sources, so it can equally fund all the other genres, and industry innovation.

I believe that the SAFC can, with all the partners in South Australia's screen communities, contribute to building a new wave in South Australian screen culture. A next wave, a unique wave. A future wave.

A new South Australian Screen Movement.

## ScreenSA

### Recommendation
Re-imagine the South Australian Film Corporation as ScreenSA and support and foster its renewal and growth to meet the needs and technologies of 21st Century screen culture across all film, new media and next media platforms.

Out of my four months of consulting, listening, reading, and observing ... oh, and yes, thinking, I will try to articulate and synthesize some of the many ideas I've heard in the Zeitgeist of SA's screen culture today. I imagine that in the spirit of these fluid times, and as the SAFC's additional information in the appendix would suggest, that some of these ideas have been taken up or been initiated at the SAFC or are being actively considered. How others may finally be addressed, rejected or incorporated into the fabric of South Australia's screen culture will be up to all members of the industry, the screen community and independent audio-visual artists, along with their government supporters, to determine.

As I collate, process and articulate a menu of observations from individuals and groups across all of South Australia's media making communities, in the end, I can only mix and filter them through my own lens as a Thinker in Residence and as a filmmaker with three decades of experience around the world.

So, what follows is a visualisation of what my ideal agency would look like in a less-than-ideal world, a couple of years down the road.

Over the next year or so, and with intense consultation with all interested parties the South Australian Film Corporation could transform itself and emerge reborn as South Australia's new peak screen agency, ScreenSA.

ScreenSA would be seen as a framework, an accessible storefront, an umbrella superstructure carrying forward new policies for the existing SAFC. This change would be more fundamental than a re-branding change in public relations 'optics'. The transformation would be significant and complex, involving both a reality shift and a perception shift, not just superficial labeling.

With ScreenSA, the existing programs which best meet the screen communities' articulated needs would be maintained, or improved, and many new policies and concrete programs would also evolve and flow from the re-vision.

The existing, well-known SAFC label could well remain within ScreenSA, with important special functions assigned to it. For example, it could foster the development of feature films and projects with essentially market-driven imperatives. It would take its famous historical brand and trade on it.

I do not believe that the changes or philosophical shifts to bring about ScreenSA would require any changes or amendments to the SAFC's original act of incorporation, but others can argue about that. It's the will that counts.

Re-imagining the SAFC as ScreenSA would be about balanced slates, innovation and incubation. It would be about South Australian screen development, first and foremost. ScreenSA would demonstrate responsibility to all its client communities and to its ultimate financier, the tax-paying South Australian public. ScreenSA would openly address the complex issues facing all screen agencies today, about how to protect local culture in the face of global markets.

# 6 The Screen Industries Sphere

The major mission of ScreenSA would be to fund, emphasize and encourage creative development in all the screen arts (including theatrical film, television, documentary, digital media, next media, experimental, and community-based media).

The main emphasis of ScreenSA would be on long-term human and cultural development. ScreenSA would not be focused on serving the capital intensive needs of the big 'I' Industry but would be about building a mission vision which serves the little 'i' industry by fostering human creativity and talent.

ScreenSA would think laterally, and innovatively, to create a boutique industry, and targeted niche markets for its productions, based on original screen and film media that fit both the marketplace's needs and cultural imperatives. Not films and new media as product, but as new works of screen art, stimulating new ways of seeing. A boutique industry fostering a brand which will make everyone in the screen world take notice of South Australia as a most innovative space for indie-media.

ScreenSA would provide a vision for those sub-sectors which are lagging behind, such as SA's documentary community, so that they can be brought up to speed, re-purposed and re-invigorated.

ScreenSA would use leading edge production and distribution technologies and serve the aspirational goals of the newly emerging, well-educated digital creatives. ScreenSA would clarify and articulate lifelong pathways for film and media makers.

ScreenSA would take an incubator approach stressing innovation and creativity, through labs, hothouses, and modular incubators for emerging filmmakers and first-timers. This kind of risk may well be less risky than putting all of one's funding eggs into one basket.

ScreenSA would emphasise the emerging screen artist equally with the experienced practitioner.

ScreenSA would work with the education and the other screen sectors to create pathways for new graduates, to offer programs that can bridge the gaps and help build careers, and the gaps facing experienced media makers who may already have developed a track record but who find building a sustainable career, a film life, or a market-savvy business, a problem.

ScreenSA could develop entrepreneurial and professional skills and give the market its just emphasis. It would help create a critical mass and a new Screen Movement.

The kind of adaptations which I am suggesting are now being articulated, embraced and practised in other Australian and international jurisdictions. They should be examined and their best features adopted for the SA context.

For example, the Nova Scotia Film Development Corporation, in a Canadian province with the same population base as South Australia's, has accomplished much with little overhead and administration. The British industry has been reborn, aided by proactive government intervention. The Danish industry is holistic. New Zealand's industry is booming, and

not only because of successful Hobbits, but through a long-term philosophy in screen culture development.

In Australia, ScreenWest in Western Australia, the Australian Film Commission and FilmVictoria provide models to be studied, emulated or rejected.

## Visualisations and Suggestions for Policies And Directions For SAFC/ScreenSA

The new re-vision for SAFC/ScreenSA would evolve from the combination of existing policies and programs which were seen as positive in consultations with the community, along with newly developed policies and innovative programs for building a new SA screen culture. Below are a number of examples, suggestions and practical ideas fashioned as speculative conjecture for a future SAFC/ScreenSA agency.

### ScreenSA's mission
ScreenSA would develop a clear, serious vision or mission Statement, and long-term strategic plan, which would give priority to the development of local SA creators getting SA stories onto the screen. Innovation and incubation would be the guiding principles.

In a brief sketch, ScreenSA's mission would be to develop South Australian-based producers, directors and key creatives who would be supported with initiatives including:

- production funding across all genres

- project development, some of which would be tied to projects in incubator labs; investing in laboratories and incubators. There would be at least three labs a year, one for features and documentaries, one for interactive projects, one for animation. Supervised by ScreenSA, the production of these labs could be outsourced.
- career development programs including training and attachments; short training courses would be done by such third party organisations as AFTRS, the Australian Writers Guild, the Media Resource Centre for entry level courses, etc.
- producer-support programs including marketing, international travel grants and annual Australian delegations sent to key market events
- industry-wide development including marketing, visibility at industry events, and ScreenSA-funded production launches.

### Study other models
ScreenSA would undergo a comprehensive review of the relevant funding structures elsewhere, particularly with regard to administration and streamlined process. Below are some examples.

- Canada, the Film Development Corporation in Nova Scotia and the Bell Fund.
- Film Victoria, which has a mission stating, among other things, that 'Film Victoria embraces the values of creativity and innovation - promoting experimentation and challenging established ways'.
- Western Australia's ScreenWest has been able to identify niche markets nationally and internationally and it allows WA's

industry to grow to meet those needs. It is also innovative in using proceeds from the lottery system to develop screen culture in Western Australia.

WA's share of documentaries broadcast nationally (1996-2003) was eight per cent. South Australia's was two per cent. All serious documentary filmmakers in Perth are very well known to national funders like the Film Finance Corporation, Film Australia, Australian Film Commission, ABC, SBS, to the commercial networks and to many broadcasters in Europe, Asia and Canada. This is because WA's producers make it their business to meet the right people and have been supported in this desire.

ScreenSA, by prioritising the development of an SA screen culture, would support innovation by privileging risk-taking without the necessities of pre-sales. ScreenSA would run initiatives that are not dependent on broadcasters, or distributor interest.

ScreenSA would explore the Film Finance Corporation's model which, in assessment processes, balances ideas against commercial activity. ScreenSA could follow the lead of Film Victoria, ScreenWest, the NSW FTO and the FFC's Innovation Fund for non-market attached programs, by selecting projects for development without necessarily requiring broadcaster endorsement.

ScreenSA would maximise support for emerging and established South Australian documentary makers to attract national investment and national/international cross-media broadcast opportunities.

**Silos with equal funding**
Instead of allowing different genres to compete against each other in development or production funding rounds, ScreenSA would establish discrete genre divisions or silos, so that, for example, animation could not be considered in the same funding round as features.

One would consider a structure which has four or five dedicated divisions, equally and equitably financed and budgeted, one each for: drama (low budget feature and shorts), digital (including cross-platform, next media, and computer-generated animation), documentary genres and development (both professional and industrial).

With the focus always on SA people first, ScreenSA would set annual targets for a specific number of locally directed and produced features, a specific number of locally directed and produced documentaries and specific numbers of short documentaries, animations and fiction shorts and digital interactive projects.

There would be regular calls for submissions and projects. Each of the programs would have at least two rounds a year, tied to the production cycles in the industry. There would be articulate, visionary strategies for funding initiatives/grants programs, and the amounts available to each initiative would be made public. There would be limits to discretionary spending available to each silo, with only a small number of funds being open all the time for quick response.

**Adventure capital: feature films**
While ScreenSA's priority would be as an incubator and developer, market-driven objectives especially in fiction features, and other forms, could be met by retaining the SAFC brand name label for a special unit.

This division of ScreenSA, would not act as a producer, but as an investor or enabler. It could be a funder of low-budget, innovative feature film development and scripts, but also work to increase its small capital base by offering small production guarantees to risky, low-budget, market-driven features and projects with cost recoverability as a goal. Such genres as children's, horror, experimental fiction or 'art' films would all be possible.

Given the skyrocketing budgets of even the most modest feature film, SAFC, as the market driven section of ScreenSA, would act with boldness and managed risk. It would make available appropriate and innovative fiscal tools, offered to the independent industry as production guarantees, grants and loans, script development hothouses, investment incentives and venture capital initiatives.

**A South Australia first and foremost policy**
The mission of ScreenSA would aim to earn major credits for South Australia's key creatives, writers, directors and producers. ScreenSA would not work like a national film funding agency. ScreenSA would promote a South Australia first and foremost policy. Faith would be placed on South Australian practitioners and less emphasis on non-State broadcasters or off-shore producers.

ScreenSA would acknowledge that local producers, writers and directors are the anchors of any successful local industry and it would invest more in local directors and producers and less in in-bound and 'foreign' or 'external' productions that employ a small number of local crew.

If ScreenSA did invest in an out-of-State production, it would only be as an official inter-State co-production. A 'Co-production Fund' would be open to SA co-producers willing to shoot or post-produce in SA. All projects would need to meet marketplace requirements and prove to be of economic benefit to South Australia.

Projects with the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund would be given preference. The AFF Investment Fund already works with inter-State and international agencies and funding bodies. The AFFIF invests in in-bound productions, so ScreenSA would not, in and of itself, need to do many such films, as ScreenSA could partner with the AFF Investment Fund's projects, allowing ScreenSA to focus on developing SA's local industry and local talent.

Simultaneously, in recognition of the substantial impact that any federal tax breaks could make to attract inter-State production to SA, ScreenSA would ensure that quality working and production conditions are met and maintained for SA media workers on any external production shot in SA. ScreenSA would ensure that, for those projects, a meaningful proportion of SA film investment would be spent on development and production of South Australian key creatives, that SA filmworkers

would not be exploited, and that project developers would clearly agree to articulate this in terms of Key Performance Indicators for the State.

**Transparency**
Transparency, accountability, and governance would be priorities for ScreenSA, so that lines of communication to the production community and the public are always open. There would be continuing consultation between practitioners and funding agencies in developing guidelines and initiatives through the envisioned Inter/Screen Forum and Council.

ScreenSA would ensure that relations between agencies and producers would be regulated by a code of practice similar to the BBC's. The BBC's Code of Practice ensures that relations between the BBC and independent producers are conducted on a fair and transparent basis. The Code recognises that the BBC has a role as the nation's principal public service broadcaster to help stimulate and support the development of the independent production sector. It is a good model. This would be set for the South Australian context, to smooth the dialogue among film agencies, their clients and communities of practice.

ScreenSA could explore the Canadian Industry Summit model which established clearer communication between funding agencies. There are also initiatives by Film Australia following Terms of Trade discussions with the Documentary Council (SADC). These set out protocols, with particular reference to editorial issues and creative rights that codify best practice in the production process.

ScreenSA would release its draft funding guidelines every year, followed by a face to face discussion with the whole community through the proposed Inter/Screen Forum. This forum would be followed by the release of final guidelines that are published. This can be a simple, regular, well-planned process.

ScreenSA would establish an up-front, qualitative assessment process for funding and investment. Decisions would be governed by a fair, peer jury assessment of applications. The Canada Council for the Arts and many other large agencies now work this way. ScreenSA would work with local practitioners to develop a funding criteria scorecard as a guide to evaluate all applications (i.e. factors could include market interest, new talent, employment opportunities for SA, bringing an SA creative into spotlight, giving an SA writer/director/producer a screen credit, etc). This scoring guide would streamline the funding process.

ScreenSA would ensure that the process of selecting different peer assessment committees and juries is open and transparent by initiating an annual application and selection process for jurors.

All ScreenSA board members would have an understanding of the local as well as the national and international scene. ScreenSA would ensure that time be set aside for the board to meet and engage with the community of local makers.

## Visualising Screen SA's Budget

A minimum of five per cent of ScreenSA's budget would be dedicated to fund Indigenous projects across the genres and programs.

ScreenSA would spend 80 per cent of its funds on projects with a South Australian director or producer attached, without necessarily having the requirement of prior broadcaster or distributor commitment.

ScreenSA would spend all of its allocated budget money each year, in each of its assigned silos, with a goal not to have any discretionary funds, or unspent monies, near the end of the fiscal year.

ScreenSA would standardise its administration costs in all areas, with a cap for each division (of 10 or 12 per cent or the standard allowable government rate), to ensure that more money ends up on actual production with the community of practitioners.

ScreenSA would declare the amount of funding they have for each program silo or sector. All funds would have deadlines. This is a proven model the world over which ensures transparency. ScreenSA would advertise how much money is available in each round. Industry practitioners would easily understand that the funds are not discretionary. The separate funds would be clearly set out on the agency website so that people understand how the funding works and what they can access.

ScreenSA would standardise the reporting methodologies so that all could simply see

what money is coming into and flowing out of ScreenSA. Everyone would then have a clear picture of revenues and expenditures through funding approvals, administration costs, the maintenance of services/facilities, etc.

ScreenSA would fully fund many kinds of projects, but many of its investments would also stimulate funding from other sources, such as the AFC or AFFIF or FFC.

ScreenSA would not stop investing in feature films, but would ensure that track record performance indicators, including benefits to employing South Australian key creatives, would be made part of the judging criteria.

## Visualising Incubation and Career Development

**Incubation**
In designing labs and incubators it would be crucial for ScreenSA to articulate a framework and guidelines for the type of projects and creative people it wanted to develop, and to articulate the big picture aim of these labs. ScreenSA's labs would focus on getting SA directors and writers their first major credits.

ScreenSA would research models so that it could develop labs that would grow to be recognised at an international level.

Great story ideas in a State which prides itself as being a State of Ideas would be fostered by ScreenSA generating, supporting and facilitating several specific labs in documentary,

drama, animation and cross-platform story-telling. These labs would be for SA teams only but would be led by national and international mentors so that SA makers could create links with the international market. Some labs could be linked to the AIDC, the AFF and other agencies. The labs could be tied into Key Performance Indicators with targets established for production in South Australia.

An example: Film Australia and NSW's Film and Television Office have had a pilot industry Hothouse Scheme for Documentary and Factual Producers which fulfils Film Australia's strategic objective to be the creative hub of a healthy documentary sector. The Hothouse supports the development of a creative, highly skilled documentary industry in Australia through collaborative working relationships, funding initiatives and the provision of services and facilities. It supports entrepreneurial independent documentary producers wishing to establish a viable business structure and nurtures the expansion of the skills-based documentary.

ScreenSA would accelerate the career paths of local film, video and new media makers by putting them through labs in other jurisdictions with international mentors. It would make those projects and makers relevant in the international marketplace by assisting their travel regularly to markets, conferences and festivals.

Screen SA would create or partner with such documentary incubators at the Berlin Talent Campus, the Discovery Campus, Sundance or the IDFAcademy and Binger Institute in Amsterdam.

ScreenSA would create incubators for SA based writing/directing teams.

ScreenSA could establish a trial program which, like a fellowship, funds $50,000 for two years for writers to create scripts which then must be filmed in SA.

If a major goal and mission of ScreenSA is to develop South Australian directors, producers and writers, with a target of producing two or three major projects per year for the next five years with South Australians in key creative roles, then workshop labs have a perfect part to play in that vision.

ScreenSA could establish a drama laboratory or incubator for four SA feature teams which would then have, as an outcome each year, a guaranteed fully-financed, extremely low-budget feature production with a budget up to $500,000. The writer, producer and director must be resident in SA for the grant process. ScreenSA would bring in national script editors and international mentors, in much the way that the Indievision initiative has done.

Many of the best young award-winning directors around Australia have come out of aggressive, intense initiatives being run by State funding bodies. One way to bring new SA director/producer teams to the fore would be to focus on local creatives in the same way. These new people never simply rise up on their own, without support.

ScreenSA would aim to invest in one or two incubated features per year from a new SA director and would put strategies in place to get these directors prepared. The best way might be to invest in intensive labs like Victoria's Spark and NSW's Aurora Labs both of which are based on the model of France's Equinoxe laboratory. Berlin's Talent Campus and the Sundance Institute also run labs of this type, linked to their famous film festivals.

Aurora, for writers, producers and directors, consists of a week long residential lab featuring one-on-one sessions with four professional international and Australian advisors working collaboratively on refining the vision and drive for projects. No actual writing occurs at the lab. Then, each team is given $35,000 to work on the next draft of their script. A final workshop includes feedback, a read-through and more meetings with mentors in finance and distribution.

ScreenSA's incubator philosophy could prioritise cross-platform projects, following the Canadian model, with meaningful partnerships with TV broadcasters and their new media arms.

One only has to look at the prolific outcomes from South Australia's Crossover Lab in 2003 to see how brainstorm opportunities can grow into realised projects. The Crossover Lab spent time shaking everyone out of the normal comfort zone of a 'conference' style experience, and got people to think in new ways. It was a huge success and produced SA convergent producers within a year.

Crossover, or a similar lab, should be a biannual event, with an adequate budget, established as an ongoing initiative in partnership with others, perhaps alongside the AFF or the AIDC, taking advantage of shared resources, guests, expertise and schedules, thus adding to a critical mass of activity.

I will caution that while the examples cited above in other States have been successful, the environment and context are very different from State to State, and it is not always possible to make direct comparisons. For example, anecdotal evidence from some in other States is that South Australia also has facilities and initiatives that have been envied, if not emulated.

**Career development**
In the idealised flow-chart image of a typical career path in SA's screen industries, the development of a fortunate South Australian director into a renowned media-maker is supposed to go something like this:

secondary school media studies
↓
university screen studies
↓
using the (over-stretched) resources at the Media Resource Centre to make no-budget projects
↓
some access to creative development funds at the film agency which funds a short film or, if you are a documentarian, accessing the Educational Content Fund (Don Dunstan Film Fund) which funds a documentary
↓
finally getting agencies and or broadcasters to invest in your first feature film, your first major documentary or significant digital work as a South Australian director.

But this scenario is not happening often enough. The first couple of stages may work well or a lucky few, but then most practitioners get stuck in the wheel.

A normal career path needs a continuous re-ignition of opportunity. Local producers and directors rarely have a chance to fail in SA because they don't get enough chances to be in production. And media makers, more than most, learn through their failures as much as their triumphs. As it stands now, filmmakers get a chance to make one short film with State

support and that's about it. There is funding available for only two official short films per year, with more than 30 practitioners applying for them.

ScreenSA would help foster more mentor programs on the local and national level, and more genuine opportunities for paid attachments, placements, formation and internship.

ScreenSA would also facilitate more opportunities for directors and producers to dedicate time as mentors in the media education system as outlined in Chapter 7, The Education Sphere. So-called cadet programs in other States can give early-to-mid-career producers an opportunity to acquire a diverse range of skills by working closely with one or two other high calibre local producers.

ScreenSA would get representatives from out-of-State film organisations, broadcasters, distributors, top-flight producers, directors and writers to come to Adelaide regularly to engage in short-term workshops, to ensure the production community gets face-to-face communication with decision makers and are exposed directly to examples of best practice.

ScreenSA would help foster a nimble, collaborative, innovative industry. One that would be trusting and open, marked by intelligent dialogue and networking opportunities.

## Visualising Documentary and Digital Opportunities

**Documentary**
While there are skill and project development opportunities, at present there is limited production and post-production funding available for the talent working in the non-fiction form in SA. ScreenSA would provide proactive support through assistance in development and production, and the setting up of incubator labs.

Some documentaries by local SA makers would be fully funded by ScreenSA, in some cases without the necessity of an attached broadcaster. New SA documentary teams would be developed who can use their work as a calling card to broadcasters in Australia and around the world.

SA's documentarians would be sent regularly to Hot Docs, IDFA, and Sunnyside of the Doc in La Rochelle, to immerse them in the international documentary scene so they can make the most of it in South Australia. And so that they can take advantage of SA's hosting of the AIDC documentary conference.

At least 20-25 per cent of ScreenSA's major development and production investment funds would be quarantined for documentary each year. This would cover documentary across all genres and hybrid definitions, including feature-length, TV and digital docs.

ScreenSA would raise its share and contribution to the national percentage of documentary production to fairer, equitable levels.

ScreenSA would help bring non-fiction partners to the table - local and national broadcasters, Australian and international funders. A dedicated documentary budget at ScreenSA would help stimulate partnership and investment with international funds, such as the Sundance Documentary Fund or the Jan Vrijman Fund, and with international broadcasters. ScreenSA would oversee project development funding, linked to a ScreenSA documentary lab.

**Digital**
ScreenSA would work to fully develop multi-platform, cross-media, trans-genre digital projects that are truly interactive and integrated - driven by content and not simply as re-purposed marketing for existing works or feature films. ScreenSA would work to bring as much status to cross-media producers as those working in other aspects of the industry.

ScreenSA would ensure that its digital media funds were for new digital media projects and would include interactivity as a pre-requisite. No more than the standard 10-12 per cent of the digital media funds would be spent on administration.

ScreenSA would also fund special digital initiatives with local SA partners, such as Internode, the AFFIF, the Fringe, local ABC TV, etc.

## 6 The Screen Industries Sphere

The perfect partner for these kinds of digital initiatives are the new media arms of the TV stations. They give digital work a platform for delivery and they invest in-kind services. My Space and Us Mob.com are fine examples of this.

Like the AFC, ScreenSA would run most of its digital initiatives without an a priori need for distributors or broadcasters to be attached to a project. This would include initiatives in interactive screen culture and on-line projects.

### Screen Culture for ScreenSA

ScreenSA would actively foster relationships and broker connections right across all screen sectors.

ScreenSA would recognise the importance of all aspects of SA's screen culture. It would recognise and value the Media Resource Centre, community-based media resources, Indigenous media organisations, and the university and other educational screen sectors - and work in partnership with them all. It would do this through its everyday work and contact with the screen community and, formally, through the proposed Inter/Screen Council and Forum. Beyond supporting hundreds of its young and innovative member media makers, organisations like the MRC also act as the industry feeder to the next stages or levels, and as a training ground. A newly envisioned Aboriginal Screen Media Resource and Training Centre would also be fully supported by ScreenSA in this re-envisioned Digitopia. There are other specific recommendations made for

those organisations in Chapter 7, The Community Media Sphere.

### Aboriginal media

ScreenSA would prioritise, encourage and fund Aboriginal screen media organisations, training and production.

A minimum of five per cent of ScreenSA budget would be dedicated to fund Indigenous projects across the genres and programs. PY Media, a long-standing leading-edge Aboriginal training and remote broadcast initiative, would have increased support. The Umeewarra Aboriginal Broadcast, Radio and Media Centre in Port Augusta would be supported with State funding to augment what little federal support it receives.

After consulting all SA Aboriginal practitioners, Indigenous organisations, training organisations, relevant State government departments, inter-State and federal organisations, ScreenSA would help foster an Aboriginal owned, run and controlled Aboriginal Media Resource and Training Centre. Those who would need to be consulted include, among others: PY Media, John Macumba Productions, Umeewarra Aboriginal Media, the Aboriginal Centres in Maree and other regions, Yaitya Makkitura, the screen advocacy organisation, TAFE SA's Aboriginal Education, DAARE, DFEEST and Employment and Skills Formation's Aboriginal Employment Programs which provide a variety of employment and skills development opportunities to the Aboriginal community.

An Aboriginal Media Centre could be housed at a proposed Screen Hub, co-located near the MRC, perhaps with small satellites in Port Adelaide, and in the remote northern areas of the State.

See Chapter 7, The Community Media Sphere for other comments.

### Screen education

With more than 60,000 people in the State's universities, and tens of thousands in other post-secondary educational situations, ScreenSA would foster better partnerships between ScreenSA and the institutions that deliver screen education to the State's younger citizens. Early career development would be fostered and funded in a meaningful way.

SA's university and other tertiary institutions are delivering hundreds of screen and media students into the job-force every year. Through Inter/Screen, ScreenSA could help advise and produce industry relevant curriculum and competencies. Many of the screen entrepreneurs and producers I consulted, especially in the digital and animation sectors, commented on the need to produce well-rounded, adaptable students who are able to work in a team, and who are multi-taskers, and not just skilled only in one particular, or limited aspect of a discipline or software.

ScreenSA would offer repatriation incentives and post-education scholarships to those South Australians who complete screen training at recognised national and international institutes like AFTRS in Sydney

or the VCA in Melbourne. There are talented new SA producers and directors who are living away from SA who could be motivated to return to produce their films in SA with SA crews, if most of SA's production funding was quarantined for SA only purposes.

A notable example of the screen industry and screen educational sectors working well together is the Games and Interactive Media Simulation Centre of Excellence (GAIMSCOE) proposal which assists in developing more relevant training models. GAIMSCOE aims to establish a virtual centre of excellence and part of its charter is to encourage the education sector to increase its responsiveness to industry requirements.

### Infrastructure for ScreenSA

ScreenSA would be an efficient, lean funding body, with fewer but more experienced staff adding greater value to their interaction with makers, and more informed application of more flexible funding guidelines. It will have incubation, innovation and inclusiveness at its core.

More of ScreenSA's annual budget would be put into development and production than into administration and physical infrastructure. In other words the money goes on the screen - so we build people not buildings.

These days there is the temptation in many jurisdictions around the world to enter into ruthless international competition with each other to entice 'Hollywood' and big ticket

productions to set down production roots in one particular country or another. For example, there has been competition between the Babelsberg Studios in Berlin, and other similar giant infrastructures in Vancouver, Sydney and New Zealand to attract the next big thing, in the mistaken belief that this alone will stimulate local production and career development. A few years ago it was my city, Montreal, where the US-Canadian dollar differential, and well-trained service crews in secondary positions could entice the George Clooneys and the Spielbergs. The trouble with with kind of thinking is that 'Hollywood' goes where its cheapest to go. Now, they have migrated elsewhere. This year it may be Romania, The Czech Republic or the Ukraine. Next year it may be Beijing. I can't tell you exactly how many of the 20 or more giant film studio building that were built in the boom years in my city have been left as empty shells, but I do know that our local film people are suffering because that boom has bust. In the past, film location agencies, industrial and economic development departments and public film funds all have rushed to outdo each other, as incentives were drawn from the public purse, and promises were made to build giant studios and a supporting infrastructure under the illusion that the trickle down financial fallout would be a boom for everyone. This rarely happens, or is at best ephermeral. Such grand infrastructure schemes may be fine for commercial risk capital to venture into, but they do so at their own peril, and they can also take flight over borders. This is part of the reason why I argue for long-term planning to support the real, local infrastructure, which is the creative class, the artists, the people.

With those general thoughts in mind, over the next few years, the ScreenSA agency would think about decentralising, or after close study, be prepared to lose, sell off, or close its existing physical plant. The office and studios at the present Hendon site contain small sound stage studios and sound mixing facilities which will need upgrading soon. ScreenSA would choose to let them go, rent them at cost, or donate them and subsidise their free use by the educational, community and independent screen communities. ScreenSA would separate the mixing theatre and sound stages budget from the budget for its development and investment programs and fold any savings into production.

With consultation, the existing locations service work, not buildings but services, that are undertaken to attract inter-State productions to shoot in South Australia could be handed over to the Department of Tourism or the Economic Development Board. Or these services could remain as a very small arm of ScreenSA.

ScreenSA's administration offices would move to smaller offices in the centre of Adelaide as part of an envisioned dynamic screen Hub. A strategic mapping of the screen industries in South Australia identifies specific areas where most screen businesses and companies are located. Those neighbourhoods are also on, or near the high speed broadband, wireless, SAbrenet and cine.net backbones. ScreenSA should be there.

ScreenSA would most likely adapt the existing levels of staff and part-time contract workers to fit the new economy. There would still be essential staff needs: a CEO, a comptroller, a legal affairs person, perhaps four project officers, a manager, a marketing and communications director and a few assistants, etc., depending on its reconfiguration. Other positions could be contracted temporarily, or supplied from other government departments, as needed.

**Screen hub**
Moving ScreenSA 's administration offices into the city or near-city would be part of creating an organic physical space or hub within which to house many related agencies, organisations and companies working in screen.

This would resemble the Film House in Copenhagen which houses the Danish Film Institute, the Danish Cinematheque, the European Documentary Network, DOX, Danish Distribution, the CPH:Dox festival, screening rooms and a cafe. A large building or a number of co-located buildings could house such a screen hub in Adelaide. The hub could include SAFC/ScreenSA as the lead funding agency, the Media Resource Centre, representative agencies and practitioner associations, offices for a proposed Aboriginal media resource and training centre, screening facilities and office spaces for other production companies.

Such a hub in downtown Adelaide might, for example, occupy the city-run business incubator at the Greater Union Cinemas complex near Arts SA, or the vacated former facilities of Arts TAFE near Adelaide's Central Market, or other empty buildings in the city centre or adjacent neighbourhood.

**Arts SA**
ScreenSA would clarify its role and define its relationship with its parent agency, Arts SA, which provides a vast majority of the funding for agency programs.

Arts SA is in the process of an exciting and dynamic re-organisation which bodes well for the future of all culture in South Australia. Arts SA is creating an imaginative, rational and economically viable vision for change. Its new structure recognises the differing needs of three sets of organisations and individuals which drive culture: the art makers, the collectors and the presenters.

Arts SA's newly envisioned Strategy, Policy and Initiatives Branch will strengthen their capacity for research and analysis. It will provide a policy link between the 'presenting' organisations, which include the SAFC, the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, Country Arts SA, the SA Youth Arts Board, the Adelaide Festival Corporation and the Adelaide Fringe. The Strategy, Policy and Initiatives Branch will also oversee funding to initiatives, such as the live music strategy, a creative industries strategy and intergovernmental relations.

Such a culture change is promising, in that it seems to reflect some of the same social discourse that motivates many of my own recommendations for screen culture, screen education, screen arts, screen industries and screen communities.

How Arts SA's and ScreenSA's new initiatives and structures will develop remains a question for the future. Several scenarios could be imagined.

It is my hope that an open dialogue with all these questions and visualisations can nurture and support the conditions which will be necessary for building a re-imagined and viable screen culture in South Australia.

**Marketing support**
Across the board in SA, there is a desire to place more emphasis on marketing. South Australian makers need a dramatic increase in available funding to be able to attend international markets and festivals. ScreenSA would run State delegations to one documentary event per year, one feature event, one animation event and one cross-platform event. Getting filmmakers, producers and their productions into the appropriate professional development conferences, markets and festivals is key to developing a new screen movement for SA.

ScreenSA would investigate how to set up a SA screen industries distribution and marketing initiative, or a collective sales agency for SA's screen 'products'.

The South Australian success story, the wine industry, has made a small niche boutique product into one of the most successful small brand marketing case-studies in the world. SA's Screen Sector, operating at a similar cottage industry level, can do the same.

After commissioning a study of the wine industry's marketing strategies, the proposed Inter/Screen Council could, with others, establish a SA Screen Industries Marketing Office. With public and private partnership, this office could act as a sales agent and distribution collective and could offer expertise, pool common resources and enable filmmakers, producers and their products to reach appropriate markets.

**Financing**
ScreenSA would continue to be funded and report under the general direction of the Minister for the Arts through the peak department, Arts SA.  To ensure viability, ScreenSA would establish a long-term plan and be annually funded to the extent that its targets and goals are met.

ScreenSA would at least retain its existing funding levels. In addition, to account for re-balancing and re-configuration, on a program to program basis, its annual operating appropriation would similarly be increased. The annual working budget would also be augmented with contributory funding, personnel exchanges, and services-in-kind from other appropriate government agencies and departments. It is reasonable to think that an increase in the ScreenSA's budget would create more critical mass and a more stable yet progressive screen industry. ScreenSA could multiply its effectiveness, exponentially.

For example, existing locations services could be funded with support from the Department of Tourism. Professional development could be partially financed from DFEEST. Other specific allocations from the Economic Development Board could help finance more market-driven initiatives, domestic and international marketing advice, support and funding.

Some of the budgetary pressures on the existing agency could be alleviated by measures already suggested, such as contributions from the proposed Fifty Cent Fund and the more market-driven features unit of ScreenSA.

ScreenSA would also consider and suggest bold new mechanisms for tax rebates and credit incentives on the State and federal levels, employment credits, and labour and capital cost allowances for screen investments.

Ways could be found to augment funding by allocating a small amount of money as venture capital on a cost recoverable basis, by seeking international co-production monies. Perhaps monies for the general operation could be augmented by the State placing a claim for an equitable part of the social benefits package and proceeds which flow from the public Telstra T3 sale and for benefits deriving from the future privatisation or conglomeration of other public utilities and media sector corporations.

**Lottery monies**
In Britain, making lottery monies available for film, media and screen organisations has helped spur a fantastic growth of new British cinema and media over the last decade. Similarly, in Western Australia, innovative policies have allowed substantial proceeds from gambling to resurrect their screen industries. South Australia needs to follow suit.

With more study, I propose a more equitable sharing of SA's unclaimed lottery monies, casino profits and/or pokies taxes, and a fairer share in the distribution of profits from existing community development and sports envelopes. These would be applied to the under-funded cultural sector generally, including the screen sector. This would be done without infringing on any of the entitlements due to the health services and hospital regimes, and it should not necessitate any new additional legislative action or any unnecessary re-writing of Acts. Subsection16C (4) of the State Lotteries Act 1966 requires the Commission to pay 50 per cent of the amount derived from unclaimed prizes into a reserved Pool to the Recreation and Sport Fund and to retain funds for certain designated purposes.

I would argue that, yes, even in Australia, Culture is as important as Sport. Yet, culture is becoming an endangered species. A proper sharing of such resources could add hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to the funding of community screen culture.

## 6 The Screen Industries Sphere

### ScreenSA in Partnerships

South Australia must embrace the wider notion of 'screen' rather than 'film' and link this to the development of partnerships.

For example, in partnership with the Adelaide office of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and others, the time is ripe for ScreenSA to co-finance and facilitate the production of a very local weekly half hour of documentary television or an anthology magazine series for the local ABC on local issues. Preliminary discussions that I have had with the ABC indicate that there may be an opportunity to make this happen, with imaginative support from ScreenSA.

Imagine fifty different digi-doc films by fifty different SA filmmakers a year. With micro-low budgets and license fees, young emerging SA filmmakers could marshal the cost effectiveness of the new technologies, develop their skills and find matching funds to guarantee both viability and local content for local broadcast. Some of this local docmedia could also make it into a national arena.

### Final Words:
### Challenges for Change

The most important partnership for ScreenSA to establish would be the one it establishes with the community that it has the responsibility to serve. From that community comes a wealth of talent and ideas to build upon.

South Australia's production communities can always be called upon to provide functional, practical ideas which have no 'best-before' expiry date and are relevant to tomorrow's circumstances today. These suggestions revolve around creativity, innovation, and a faith which enables a climate of risk taking across the sector. Risk in terms of the form and content where ideas and creators dominate, but also risk in terms of the State's ability to support and invest in the future of screen.

I acknowledge that there are significant issues with implementing each and every one of the recommendations and visualisations articulated in this report. Some might involve unnecessary overlaps, or be a financial stretch. But all of them are offered in good faith as stimulations and positivist projections, as a means of testing what is now, or what could be.

With the will to change, with consensus from the community, and with enlightened, far-reaching and substantial support from the State, the current SAFC (or future SAFC/ScreenSA) as the umbrella organisation can perform many complex functions as the lead agency, and can deliver the visionary outcomes that everyone wants, and needs.

Only SA's screen industry can determine that. Only the screen communities themselves, with proactive State government support, can meet these challenges for change.

## 7 The Community Media Sphere
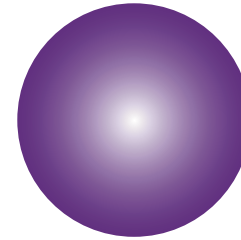


### Highlights of Recommendations for Community Media

- Enhance community-based media by dramatically increasing support for the Media Resource Centre (MRC) and sustaining the many local community initiatives in Adelaide and other South Australian regions.
- Create an Aboriginal media resource and training centre for emerging and existing Indigenous practitioners.
- Increase support for existing Aboriginal practitioners and organisations in the State.
- Foster the creation of a physical screen industries and community-media hub to create community media synergies. Sustain support for urban and regional organisations using community and digital media as part of the process.



### The Globalocal Village

*'Satyagraha (non-violent resistance) means Truth-force. Truth is the soul or spirit.'*
*M.K. Gandhi*

This is what I observe: In the words of another Canadian media theorist, Marshall McLuhan, the world is a global village. Community is everywhere. But, Adelaide proper is a very walled garden. Literally, psycho-socially, and to a large extent, economically, there is a separation between the city and its suburbs, the urban space and the region. Outside of the lovely, civil, yet gated core city, lies a whole world apart in the hinterland, and in the distant regions of South Australia. Sometimes they are disadvantaged, or opportunities lie distant.

Community media can help bridge the gap of exclusion and empower the powerless, shedding light on both the dark and light places. Community media can be agents for personal and collective story-telling outside the professional circles.

We may now be in the middle of a revolution and not even know it. In some ways, these days, everyone is a filmmaker. Think back to the indelible TV images of the natural disaster of the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the flooding of New Orleans, the Subway bombings in London or New York's World Trade Centre buildings collapsing before our very eyes. The images you remember were all amateur images from amateur documentary cameras. Those images catalysed the world into action. This is the power of community media.

Camcorders are causing the greatest upheaval since the industrial revolution. The first handicam was invented in 1985 by a team led by Shoji Nemoto, an engineer who is now president of SONY's 'personal imaging division'.

In the minds and hands of community artists and activists of various persuasions, across all ideologies, these technologies are given their Gandhian truth force.

Today, the communication of rights and the right to communicate is a fundamental human right at the heart of social struggle. The right of communities to tell their own stories, is a part of the struggle for greater digital dialogue, pluralism, tolerance, social inclusion, and participation.

## Community Media : Observations, Best Practice And Outcomes

There is new and rich practice in South Australia: from pilot programs like the excellent Digital Journeys and Digital Masters initiatives produced through the Carclew Youth Arts Centre, to the essential Media Resource Centre to volunteers struggling to maintain Channel 31 as a viable community TV, to innovative work done by Aboriginal makers at PY media in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in the northern part of the State.

## The Media Resource Centre

I have seen innovation flow out of the Media Resource Centre in Adelaide. The MRC is a focus for young, talented media artists, but it is dramatically under-funded and under-resourced.

The Media Resource Centre serves hundreds of media-makers and practitioners as members, and delivers an incredible number of much-needed services to the media making community, from camera and equipment rentals, to editing and post-production facilities to workshops in practical issues. With the Mercury Cinema, it serves the community as a whole in its role as the city's cinematheque.

Supported by a grant from the Australian Film Commission and another subsidy which flows from Arts SA through the SAFC, the MRC is still dismally under-funded.

Because the MRC offers many essential programs which suffer because of lack of financial resources, because there is a very large community to serve, because there are regional initiatives to extend, because there are so many emerging media makers who need their first shelter, because there is so much to do to build a future, I recommend that the Media Resource Centre have its funding substantially increased from its inadequate levels now and that it be sustained over the long-term. The MRC deserves continued support. If warranted, to create synergies and enhance efficiencies, the MRC could be brought out from under any unnecessary burdens of bureaucracy and be funded as an autonomous organisation.

## Carclew

I've seen the Carclew Youth Arts Centre in lights, camera, and action. All of their programs are, ounce for ounce, dollar for dollar, totally top-notch. Carclew's Digital Media Division gives voice and vision to young people, from the ground up. It nourishes their talent with mentors, and empowers them with entrepreneurial skills. Carclew's Digital Journeys and Digital Masters projects, made by young people in the suburban town of Elizabeth, are short, light-hearted documentaries concerned with aspects of public transportation. Some of these films are shown on a big screen at Adelaide's main train station, and on a TV monitor on the free tourist bus that serves the City of Adelaide's central business district.

I recommend that Carclew's funding continues to be sustained.

## ARTSsmart

I've seen the brilliant nurturing of disaffected youth in Elizabeth on one of the ARTSsmart's projects. ARTSsmart is a community-based initiative of the Department of Education and Children's Services and Arts SA to promote collaboration in arts education.

The ARTSsmart Peachey Belt project is a multimedia, music, dance, theatre, art and video project which developed creative and life skills while at the same time improving literacy and communication skills.

This approach is effective for engaging and empowering young people who have been exposed to a range of social difficulties and are candidates who do not 'fit' the traditional education system and are at risk of leaving school. The project included a series of workshops that explored issues including: alcohol abuse, drug abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, homelessness and unemployment. It includes a dozen very energetic young people mentored by a creative team made up of an artistic director, arts workers and a social worker. There is an on-going focus so that those involved can continue to be linked, post-project, with alternative learning programs, opportunities and assistance.

The Peachey Belt project involved a partnership between DECS and Arts SA, along with the Carclew Youth Arts Centre, the Australian Festival for Young People, Playford City Council and the SA Social Inclusion Unit, among others.

ARTSsmart initiatives deserve support.

### Directing The Hero Within

I saw how quickly the Directing the Hero Within Project can empower young filmmakers when I visited the Loft Community Centre in Mt. Gambier. In the middle of a Housing Estate, the Loft offers community workshops and space for local marginalised and disengaged young people.

Directing the Hero Within is a multi-purpose, South Australian training initiative and guide to filmmaking for young people. It has financial assistance from the SAFC, Arts SA, Healthy Initiatives, Country Arts SA, Regional Arts Funds, the Office for Youth, Youth Empowerment Grant, the South Australian Youth Arts Board and the Australian Festival for Young People.

Filmmakers from tallstoreez productionz devised the project to train young people to make media. They are given tools to tell their own stories. The aim is to establish a sustainable youth media network which connects regional centres across South Australia with the filmmaking/training hub in Adelaide. They also hope a website will connect the communities and showcase their work.

The final products of the process include an interactive DVD used as a peer education tool, containing step-by-step training modules and tutorials, and samples of work produced by the young participants. These DVDs are made available for individual use, for schools and by youth arts and health workers.

This State-wide project to bridge the digital gap has gained support and momentum, in part, because of its networking and feedback process. This requires the ongoing support of local adults, who are also trained, and the purchase of basic media equipment, cameras, computers and software. Currently, the Hero Project runs workshops with youth/arts/health groups in Coober Pedy, Mallee, Mt. Gambier, Port Pirie, Port Augusta and at Gepps Cross Girl's High School. Ongoing training workshops are tailor-made to suit the needs of each regional group.

tallstoreez productionz plans for the young participants to screen their work during Come Out 2007 and to participate as peer educators. Their documentaries have already influenced and changed the communities they live in.

The Directing the Hero Project deserves support.

### The Parks Project: Challenges for Change

During my residency, I initiated, with Flinders University, the production of a series of several short, socially useful films and documentaries made by third year production students at Flinders. They gathered stories and worked closely with the community support team at The Parks, northwest of the city. The Parks is a community health and services provider which reaches some of the most economically disadvantaged people in the State. But there are also stories of hope, and a desire to use documentary to aid in developing those.

The surrounding neighbourhoods are the sites of the largest urban re-development scheme in Australia, which is having a tremendous dislocation effect on community members. Five years into a fifteen year urban 'renewal' job, the percentage of public housing is destined to diminish from 75% to close to 20%. In the mainstream media, the community has been branded as a dangerous area, full of street people and substance abusers. This is far from the truth.

To right this balance, the Flinders students have made proactive films about the community. There are films about the Parks organisation, about housing, about young local artists responding to their surrounding conditions, about immigrant communities, about a soon-to-be-lost commons. Digital filmmaking projects are about oral histories from Aboriginal citizens, examinations of the Somali community living there, or powerful hip-hop socially-engaged music messages, like a short, Hitting the Bricks.

The Parks digital filmmaking and internet development must be supported.

### Dococom.com

There is a rich Community Media practice in South Australia, but not everyone knows about everyone else. It has been my role to help point out best practice and catalyse connections.

During my stay in SA, along with the SAFC which wished to support a 'Wintonick experiment' we catalysed a project I call

Dococom - a word which fuses documentary to community. It is an experiment in trans-platform digital documentary, evolving from the work as Thinker in Residence and my own general support for community media-making. Dococom analyses and promotes existing best practice media examples, emerging from creative environments in the film and digital domains, media education systems and ever-developing community media.

With main financial and administrative support from the SAFC, with additional in-kind services donated from others, Dococom is a pilot project which commissioned four modestly budgeted, quick turnaround short digidocs, micro-films and new media projects which look at best community screen practice in the State. The SAFC funded the project officer for the initial phases of the experiment and Adelaide's community-conscious Internode server helps host the web-site.

Dococom's pilot micro-project created four teams of filmmakers, consisting of new media/web/graphic digital artists, working together with representatives from grass-roots communities-in-need and mentor/advisors. The four commissioned projects were with Young Mums, A Poverty Action Group, the No Strings Attached disabled theatre group, and Nunga TV, an initiative by Aboriginal students.

Dococom.com, an extended internet version, is a web-plex showcasing the four projects on the web. It could grow to be a clearing house or nodal portal for networking all community media in South Australia together, so people can find out about each other.

Dococom.com on the web could be an open source contributory 'wiki' and community media interchange. It is expected that the website can grow to be an important switchboard for information on all manner of community media in South Australia and beyond, with individuals, groups, associations and projects able to upload, by themselves, trailers, texts, images, blogs, forum chat and links explaining and highlighting their roles in the developing community media landscape. The four pilot projects also stand alone as a DVD and linear video.

The dococom 'experiment' allows developing media makers to explore alternative production processes, story-telling devices and distribution models - without imposing the usual parameters of broadcasters, strict funding agency requirements or constraints on form.

These micro-movies act both as incubators and as dynamic documents in, and of themselves. Collectively, they act as moving snapshots of existing practice or imagined futures in SA's community media. They blend the ideas of democratic media, documentary and community with the state of the arts communication media.

Dococom deserves any, and all support.

## Recommendations for Regional Media and Community Networks

- Initiatives like Carclew Youth Arts, ARTSsmart and other community media initiatives are essential and must be sustained.
- On-line initiatives like SA's dococom.com - the web portal which will provide catalytic synergy for best community practice, the directing the Hero Within website, and a proposed web-site for the Inter/Screen Forum are necessary and should be supported.
- With the recent disengagement of support for both digital and community arts development by the Australia Council, the State should continue to step up with support for media projects within Community Network SA and Country Arts SA.
- Additionally, ways should be found to enhance and support community media development both in Adelaide with Channel 31 but also in South Australia's smaller centres and regions, from the needs of location service dependent centres like Parachilla/Wilpena area in the Flinders Ranges, to Williams Creek to Mt. Gambier.
- Currently, the Directing the Hero within Project has begun to achieve initial goals of establishing youth media groups in the regions with community support. During workshops in the regions, participants identified the need for continuing support including venues; an active youth/health worker; funding for basic camera and editing equipment, approximately $5,000 per community; and ongoing training

in film narrative, storyboarding and equipment use to convert their ideas into powerful films. This needs to be supported.
- Regional representatives also requested that centralised institutions like the Media Resource Centre in Adelaide extend their services into the regions. Participants were keen to network and get access to professional equipment and information about further multimedia education and career pathways.

## Aboriginal Media



In the Community Media sphere, there must be a future for young Aboriginal media makers.

South Australia's first storytellers lived on this land for thousands and thousands of years. They were pushed off their lands through more than a century of colonial expansion and development. In recent years, their descendants have been undertaking a cultural revival which has included both language and ceremony revival and lately, a whole range of art, music,

writing and cultural production, including audio-visual media-making and digital production.

Sadly, the young Aboriginal media makers in schools, along with the State's professional Aboriginal practitioners and the few Aboriginal organisations that exist to support them are not very well served by State agencies. While there is some support on the infrastructure level, there is little money available for actual screen and digital media development and production. Perhaps due to antiquated concepts of traditional roles and responsibilities, what support exists appears to come more from federal than State agencies.

Some indigenous people have been dismayed at the exploitation of Indigenous stories by people from outside their communities. In the past, several Indigenous content films have been funded and been made without proper regard to protocols, proper levels of Indigenous control, or profit-sharing. Several films have been made by non-Aboriginal film makers (writers, directors and producers) who make films about Aboriginal people and issues. This can also be a legitimate process, if Aboriginal communities choose legitimately to collaborate with non-Aboriginal makers and/or Aboriginal people outside their own community.

## Scope of The Consultation in Aboriginal Media

I've consulted with many groups and organisers in South Australia's First Nations community. I've met with many organisations working as advocates for Aboriginal screen initiatives, Aboriginal education and Aboriginal employment programs. During my residency, I consulted and visited Aboriginal media centres and groups in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, Umeewarra Media in Port Augusta, others in Adelaide, Maree, near Leigh Creek, the Coorong and in the Northern Territory. I've met with representatives of the Kungajuta Irati Wanti women in Coober Pedy who use media to campaign for rights.

In any consideration of 'making it right' for Aboriginal media practice in the State, those who need to be consulted include, among many others: PY Media in the APY Lands, John Macumba Productions, Umeerewa in Port Augusta, the Maree Aboriginal Centre, and Yaitya Makkitura, the screen advocacy organisation.

Those to be consulted in education should include TAFE SA's Aboriginal Education which provides vocational education and training programs specifically to the Aboriginal community, TAFE SA Centre for the Arts which offers courses in video production, Employment and Skills Formation's Aboriginal Employment Program and the relevant departments at Adelaide's universities. As well, Lefevre High School has developed Indigenous film and new media as a subject for Aboriginal students. Funding from Social Inclusion supports an

Indigenous Multimedia Artist to work at the school. Other sites at Warriappendi Aboriginal School, Salisbury High School, Ceduna and Port Lincoln are also developing ways forward in the use of film and new media with Aboriginal students. Appropriate government agencies such as DAARE, the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, the SAFC and the Aboriginal Office at Arts SA must also be brought into the circle.

## Macumba Media

John Macumba, who holds a Masters Degree in Media and Communications from the University of Technology, Sydney, was the Indigenous consultant for my Residency. Established in Adelaide in 1986, Macumba Media was the first Indigenous production house to be established in South Australia and is the only media production company in Australia owned and controlled by an Aboriginal person with traditional knowledge. It services the communications needs of private and public sector organisations through film and video, web, radio and print production.

Macumba is one of the most respected figures working in Aboriginal media today. He is also an award-winning film-maker now pioneering new ways to meet the communication needs of Indigenous peoples. Of Pitjantjatjara / Yankunytjatjara descent, John was born in northern South Australia and started his career as a Community Development Officer in the Oodnadatta region.

In 1979-80, he played a pivotal role in co-founding and establishing CAAMA, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association. In 1989, John was commissioned by the ABC to set up Umeewarra Media, an Aboriginal radio station at Port Augusta in South Australia. In 1995, he received a Special Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Indigenous Media Association.

John Macumba believes that a small remote training centre where young Aboriginal media makers can be trained to record the traditional stories needs to be set up in the Oodnadatta region of South Australia, so that young people don't have to succumb to the lures of the city to receive proper training.

Macumba Media deserves support.

## Media in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands

I took an incredibly moving trip to the APY Lands in the northern-most reaches of the State, with John Macumba and Melissa Juhanson, project officer at the South Australian Film Corporation. The SAFC is doing an audit of media resources with a goal to create a strategic support program.

The trip to the APY lands was a powerful, important experience for me, on professional and personal grounds. Although the conditions were extreme and harsh on most levels - meteorologically, geographically, socio-economically and culturally - the whole trip was organised with professionalism and care.

Through his spirit, social concern and first hand knowledge, Macumba sensitised me to the complex realities facing many of the First Peoples living in South Australia. The journey also attracted me to the work that media organisations such as PY Media and other dedicated teams are doing there and elsewhere in SA. The whole experience left me with hope, anger, empathy and a great desire to work to support Aboriginal media, in any way I can.

The APY Indigenous population suffers from the well publicised and serious problems of many Indigenous communities. Illiteracy is very high and unemployment reaches 90% in some sectors. However, significant improvements are being made by having local communities manage their own affairs and make their own media. Indigenous people have a pragmatic attitude and are not afraid to use any available, useful technology as long as it serves a purpose for them.

We traveled to meetings at Amata, Ernabella, Umuwa, Fregon and Mimili in the APY Lands. In the schools, I witnessed heartening examples of teachers and students working together. Some schools were equipped with new computers and software like Apple's Garage band, which enables 'ordinary' people to record and mix their own music and songs.

Our main focus in the Lands was PY Media, an efficient, dedicated organisation which is an innovative, world class leader in the delivery of communications technologies and training in remote areas.

PY Media started as a spin-off of Ernabella Video and Television (EVTV) in the early 1980s. In 1987, members of the APY Lands decided it was necessary to develop the services provided by EVTV in all communities across the APY Lands. PY Media was incorporated as the regional body to assist communities to develop their own community media centres. In the mid-1990s PY Media moved to Umuwa to set up a regional office that enabled fair representation for all communities. They now also have offices in Alice Springs.

PY Media manages a number of communication and media projects including services to 14 communities on the APY Lands and four NT communities; radio, video and IT training, maintenance and upgrades; the iConnect telephone project; WaruTech UHF broadcast maintenance; four TV and two radio services; PYComputers; Channel 31 broadcasting on the Imparja satellite footprint; video conferencing installation, training and maintenance. PY Media is developing a strategic five-year plan that will include future income-generating business ideas.

PY Media operates a UHF CB network which has coverage for most of the APY Lands. This is highly valued and widely used by the Indigenous communities. The Talk Back service enables live band, council and political meetings to be broadcast over standard radio into the remote corners of the Lands, into homes, offices and vehicles. By using the CB network, citizens can listen and talk to each other, critique and talk back, thus enhancing their local democracy.

PY Media deserves significant State support.

### Nunga TV

Many students at Warriappendi Aboriginal School in western Adelaide have multiple and diverse needs, often lacking the emotional bonding that provides the basis for learning in a safe, happy and secure environment. To engage in learning, students need programs with familiar contexts embedded in daily experience.

Nunga TV is a half-hour amateur TV show which is currently produced by Aboriginal teens at Warriappendi. It screens every two weeks on C31 community television. The program is a catch-all for content of interest to Indigenous teens. In the capable hands of mentor David Salomon, Nunga TV engages students at every stage of production: the art department, set construction, camera and studio crew.

Nunga TV demonstrates the empowering engagement that TV production brings to student learning. Being on the screen, instead of watching it, moves students from the role of follower to leader.

Nunga TV deserves support.

### US Mob. Com

An important community-driven project comes from the Aboriginal community in Hidden Valley, NT. Originated and supported by the local Tangentyere Council, Us Mob was facilitated by SA producers, the Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund and the Education Fund at the SAFC, among others. Us Mob is an interactive series of short films with

multiple endings, developed with, and starring, some of the brightest young Aboriginal 'non-actor' actors around. It is directed by the very accomplished David Vadiveloo, and was broadcast on ABC and functions as a collaborative web-site.

It is a prime example of the highest values of community involvement, and the very highest production values create a multi-platform project which is exemplary in its design, innovation and educative values.

Us mob deserves support.

## Recommendations for Aboriginal Media

### Establish an Aboriginal media resource and training centre

An essential recommendation is that a totally inclusive, well funded, autonomous Aboriginal-controlled media production, resource and training centre be created in the urban milieu to serve the needs of the urban community, where most Aboriginal people are living.

Similar to the role that Tandanya, Ernabella Arts and the State's other Aboriginal regional art centres perform for the visual arts, an Aboriginal media centre would serve the production, resource, educational, training, networking and media educational needs of young, emerging and existing Indigenous media makers and their support organisations.

The Aboriginal media centre would be run with input from all the Aboriginal communities.

The centre would bring together, and forward, the existing best practice experiences from all the State's Aboriginal media groups.

The Centre could perhaps co-locate with MRC to share resources in a screen community hub. Perhaps an Aboriginal media centre could also have affiliated offices in Port Adelaide or in any other existing regions where Aboriginal media making is taking place.

### Other recommendations on Aboriginal media

All organisations serving the needs of Aboriginal media-making are facing severe budgetary constraints in the delivery of essential services to Aboriginal people in South Australia. They must be sustained and supported.

PY Media is doing much with so little support. With its innovative satellite, IP Radio and workshop training programs; with its policy of developing appropriate use for appropriate communications technologies, PY Media is demonstrating world-class leadership in communications technologies for remote areas. It must be supported on the State level.

Umeewarra Media, the Aboriginal radio and media centre in Port Augusta, is woefully under-funded. This is a critical time in that city's development, as conflict risks arising without the mediating effect of community media. It deserves support.

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Yaitya Makkitura Incorporated, as an Aboriginal advocacy, production and training body in the State, should secure State funding to develop the talent of local Aboriginal film makers and to produce media about Aboriginal people and their South Australian stories.

In the Oodnadatta region, Macumba Media could be funded to set up a remote pilot school workshop to record the original, traditional stories of the people of that vast region. This is necessary because it is not always appropriate to remove from their familiar natural surroundings and Aboriginal lands, the young students who want to make media. It is risky to force them to migrate south to an urban centre to study and pursue their lives with all the inherent consequences that they will encounter with such a culturally shocking urban lifestyle.

### Creating a Community Media Hub

(See also Chapter 6, The Screen Industries Sphere): After extensive study, consultation and consensus, I would recommend that the State look at fostering, financing and facilitating the creation of a physical community-media Screen Hub in central Adelaide. This hub would be a nexus point which would rationalise, energise and catalyse several community screen and media industry organisations into one accessible, street-friendly location, without losing existing public facilities in partner organizations, like cinemas.

A large re-possessed building or a number of related co-located buildings forming the Screen Hub could be renovated or established to house the administrative offices of SAFC/ScreenSA as the lead funding agency, the Media Resource Centre, representative agencies and practitioner associations, offices for the proposed Aboriginal Media resource and training centre, and screening facilities and office space for other production companies. Such a hub in the centre of Adelaide, or nearby Kent Town or Norwood, could, as a suggestion, occupy the City Incubator at the Greater Union complex near Arts SA, or the vacated former facilities of Arts TAFE near the Adelaide Market, or any one or another of the many empty building complexes at, or near the city centre.

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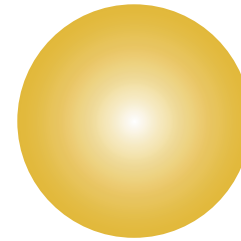


### Highlights of Recommendations for Infrastructure

- Create a South Australian Digital Visual Archive.
- Expand the availability of broadband, and extend the existing and planned super capacity broadband out from the State's universities, research communities and government departments and into all of the State's schools.
- Support State, public agencies and private partnerships in setting up a top-level inter-agency Screen Council and Forum, or Inter/Screen. (See Chapter 6, The Screen Industries Sphere for more detail.)
- Examine the implications and potential of issues affecting South Australia's cultural/screen future such as the privatisation of public telecommunications, freedom of expression, the creative commons, open source software, urban policy and free trade.

### Observations

The screen industries, media education and community media spheres are inter-related. They create synergies. They react to the world at large. There are big issues at work, as well as local outcomes. There are also real-world circumstances which affect us all, the globalisation of media culture, for instance.

Under the Infrastructure Sphere, I make specific, contextual observations about some of the factors which influence the other spheres. These observations focus on the interplay of structural questions with the spheres.

The Infrastructure Sphere is more an open set of questions about social, cultural and economic contexts which determine how one can enhance and build a State of knowledge in South Australia, the Knowledge State. A State of Visual Culture.

They include comments on the roll-out of broadband into the regions, the wiring-up

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of schools to high speed internet access; developing a State-based digital visual archive to help SA preserve its collective memory.

## Privatisation of Public Resources

I'll start with this question. Can socially useful benefits flow to the State from the next rounds of privatisation of the nationally owned public telecommunications giant, Telstra?

A significant, equitable percentage of the sale price should be diverted to the creative cultural industries in Australia, and on a pro rata basis, to South Australia. These proceeds can be funneled into supporting a dynamic screen culture here in South Australia. We do similar things in Canada.

When the Bell Canada public monopoly was broken up, Canada's diligent government regulatory agencies required that the new parent company create the Bell New Media Fund to finance public, digital new media initiatives and organisations. With several million dollars a year of operating capital, the Fund finances a range of multi-platform digital and broadcast productions.

Similarly, the monopolistic Canadian cable television providers are annually required, through regulation, to place a certain amount per subscriber into a common fund, which, when matched by the Canadian Federal government, creates the Canadian Television Fund. That CTF is the financial backbone of the Canadian film, documentary and television industry.

Across the board, whenever media mergers or privatisation moves are suggested, Canada's whole screen community expects a certain percentage of the proceeds and profits from the sales to benefit the whole Canadian society, including the screen culture.

## Free Trade or Fair Trade

Another couple of questions: How can the screen industries in South Australia defend themselves from the negative impacts of the US-Australia Free Trade Agreement? How can those effects be moderated or modified?

The experience in my country Canada was that, despite the so-called protections to culture afforded by clauses in the NAFTA agreement, there has been a continual erosion of Canadian culture since the late 1980s.

In Australia's past, such measures as the 10BA and other such tax credits once drove the film industry and created a boom. Unfortunately, through abuse, that bubble burst, and the economic write-offs and tax deferment advantages saw tax benefits reduce from 150% to 100%. Investors now find more lucrative advantage in more stable, less risky resource industries.

Those tax credits and other such measures for film, media and screen makers must be revisited and augmented and the State should investigate how new local measures can be supported. One rebate scheme was recently announced, but it only applies to projects with budgets of more than a million dollars. Taking

any stance which will enable and preserve Australian culture will no doubt come in conflict with the hard-nosed bargainers on the US side of the free trade tables, but the right of South Australians to make their own films and their own media must take precedence. In Canada, federal and provincial tax credits together make up about 20 per cent of our film, television, documentary and new media budgets, and other tax incentives are offered to 'foreign' productions.

The State should look at how it can advantage SA producers in these realms. Indeed, it may be able to invent non-federal tax incentives and schemes to enhance and protect SA producers which will be outside the culturally damaging terms of the Free Trade Agreement.

## Broadband Infrastructure

We are living in an era where high speed internet and wireless broadband should be as ubiquitous, available and free as water. Broadband and wireless will be the backbone of all communications needs in the screen, community and educational spheres in the future.

In my consultations with the State's broadband experts, and from my position as a practical media maker, I would endorse the State's general goals and recommendations in the field.

I am assured by some, that many of the technological barriers are being overcome.

But what use is all that capacity, if there is no content?

I believe that the existing, and planned, high capacities broadband, including so-called black fiber info pipeline, Sabrenet, should be extended out from the State's universities, research communities and government departments and reach into and serve all of the State's schools.

With some strategic State government proactivity, the broadband revolution can serve all of South Australians in a flash.

An example of private sector proactivity is Internode, a South Australian company which builds regional networks for a living and has pioneered distant high speed access to even the most remote corners of South Australia. Internode has enabled super fast ADSL2+ right now for its customers, way ahead of the larger monopolies. That's the attitude that's needed across all the industries, sectors and spheres, throughout the State.

Governments can have a role in making the future happen now. The ACCC can take action against those who have an economic lock on power, and have forgotten the public.

On State and federal levels, brave governments should place more confidence and investment in local entrepreneurs and domestic media, and let them get on with the job of fixing problems. Governments could support regulatory fixes, which cost only bravery and not money. But bravery can be a rare commodity with so many trans-national media monopolies knocking

at the door. Grant projects for broadband enhancement do exist, but unfortunately, governments do not always spend all the money available, which happens too often in a risk-averse culture.

The State should do what it can to bring all South Australians, and especially its young, into the broadband future.

## Archives

### The Digital Visual Archive Project

I love archives. 'We don't know what we've got, 'til its gone' to paraphrase Canadian folk-artist Joni Mitchell. I use archives in my films. I use them for research. But more importantly, I believe that the historical notions and lessons that are inherent in archival documents, whether original or digitised, are necessary to build a better future. A picture's worth a thousand words. An archival image is worth a thousand more.

The digital revolution extends into what I call the collective visual memory - the motion pictures, the photos, the graphics and accompanying sound archives that are a visual testament to both our history and our future.

I propose that South Australia digitises all of the significant visual archives residing in all the major and minor public institutions along Adelaide's North Terrace and at smaller collections around the State.

Many institutions have already begun this, but they must be funded, coordinated, collated and made universally accessible.

A State wide digital visual archive would build upon the ground-breaking and visionary work of the State Library of South Australia's comprehensive SA Memory project and the Aboriginal APY Land's Ara Irititja Archives. These projects can be seen as the core and key to such a digital visual archive project and should be supported and properly financed.

There are still many questions related to archives, and we can't begin to answer them all here. Questions about the physical management of our past works, most often kept in poor storage conditions, or on formats which have an effective shelf life of less than five years, questions about the science and art of preservation. But there is no question about the value of digital archives.

The State's digital visual archive would include a space to collect all the professional and amateur films ever made in SA; video and new media products made here throughout history; all the films made by all of SA's film students over time, all the community media practice through the ages, all the best home movies and video.

These archives would not be collecting dust on some shelf somewhere. In the digital form they could be searchable online and be available free for use, for all to use. With the existing and planned high speed broadband already rolling out across the State, one can imagine that every library, every school, indeed, every household could soon have access to the digital archive.

Imagine the school, educational, media literacy, community media, and professional projects which can be facilitated by such access. This is about history, but also about today and tomorrow.

### The State Library's SA Memory project

The State Library of South Australia's SA Memory project could be the ground base for the State's digital visual archive. SA Memory is a series of interpretive websites, acting as portals to key primary and secondary sources held in collections throughout the State. They include sites on the River Murray, South Australians at War and the Bradman Collection. The Memory project also provides links to other relevant organisations and websites. The Library aims to involve other institutions and communities throughout the State to produce a gateway for South Australian memories. Audio visual materials will form an integral part of the success of the project. The Library is currently working on websites for the themes represented in the exhibitions within its Mortlock Wing and are working with the National Library and other State libraries on access and digitisation projects such as MusicAustralia <www.musicaustralia.org> and PictureAustralia <www.pictureaustralia.org>. These provide a common search interface to resources held nationally in libraries and other institutions. The State Library is also exploring ways for the Library to be involved in online curriculum development through such projects as the Le@rning Federation.

### Ara Irititja archive

In South Australia, the Ara Irititja Archive Project is a world class, home-grown example of how to do an archive right. It has collected together all the images made in the APY Lands and presented them in an open, elegant, culturally sensitive way.

Ara Irititja, a project of the Pitjantjatjara Council, commenced in 1994 when it was realised that a large amount of archival material about the Anangu was not controlled by, or accessible to them. This material was held in museums, libraries and private collections. Items held by private individuals were often at risk of being damaged or irretrievably lost. Developed in response to the specific cultural needs of the Anangu, where possible, the Pitjantjatjara language is used. Innovative software protects and/or restricts access to private, sensitive and offensive materials.

Whereas most archives manage static collections, Ara Irititja's archive is structured around a dynamic database. When viewing records, Anangu can add, expand, or correct data and historical details. Its culturally-sensitive software design is at the forefront of its field. The Ara Irititja database already holds over 40,000 records. This includes many thousands of still photographs, hundreds of hours of movies and sound recordings, art and craft works, traditional objects, diaries, journals and manuscripts. The archival storage of these materials in high quality digital format facilitates the development of educational materials, multimedia, CD-ROM and other innovative electronic productions. Oral history recording is an integral part of the project.

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Priority is given to recording, transcribing and translating the stories of elderly Anangu living on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands. Ara Winki: Life of the Pitjantjatjara Lands, is a fantastic interactive educational program which tells the story of the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people and their land.

On the Lands, extreme conditions and unsteady power sources threaten computer operations in the bush camps, dry creek beds, as well as community halls and classrooms. In response to these restrictions, Ara Irititja created the Niri Niri, the Pitjantjatjara word for a scarab beetle, a unique autonomous mobile workstation that houses a computer full of images, a data projector, a printer and an uninterruptible power supply unit. Anangu are using digitally-based information technology to protect and secure their past, and ensure their future.

**The BBC Creative Archive**
In Britain, the BBC and others have led the way to digitise all their materials and lend them out without charge, with the creation of their Creative Archive, facilitated by the Creative Commons concept. South Australia could follow suit.

A process predicated on re-use and sharing of ideas, expression and creativity, the Creative Archive initiative allows the UK public to download, listen, watch and re-use the material in their own creative endeavors. BBC is doing this because it believes that this will provide the fuel for a truly Creative Nation. Others, like Rick Prelinger, who donated his collection to the US Library of Congress, and created the Internet Archives, are at the forefront as well.

This world wide Creative Commons movement now challenges arcane intellectual property laws. In building public value, the BBC says:

"We look forward to a future where the public have access to a treasure-house of digital content, a store of value which spans media and platforms, develops and grows over time, which the public own and can freely use in perpetuity. A future where the historic one-way traffic of content from broadcaster to consumer evolves into a true creative dialogue in which the public are not passive audiences but active, inspired participants." - "Building Public Value", a speech by BBC Director General, Mark Thompson.

## Open Source Software

All these free access movements are predicated upon the Free and Open software community which has been successfully using alternate licensing agreements to foster creativity among software developers for the last 20 years. This has led to the creation of an extraordinary body of software including Linux, now a major player in the software marketplace, and to other software we all use and take for granted every day. More recently, organisations such as creativecommons.org and new licensing agreements that major music corporations and pharmaceutical companies are now being forced to enter, have ported alternative licensing frameworks to the world of content - providing new models and legal concepts for new communications and screen industries.

Perhaps, South Australia could look forward to the future and promote now the use of an Open Source Software philosophy which would wean the State off proprietary, locked down or inflexible software solutions. Or dependency on monopolies. In many jurisdictions around the world, a world-wide open movement is afoot. The Government of Brazil intends to turn its IT needs open source by 2010, and foresees a saving of hundreds of millions of dollars annually. In SA, turning to more open solutions could also result in building a software industry here with open source companies providing a flexible suite of products to the government. All of these initiatives would enhance the screen culture of South Australia.

## Access to Information

On many fronts, we are being insulted and assaulted by what I call the privatisation of memory. Access to information is essential to research, journalism and to democracy. And yet it is getting harder to access archives and public files. A recent federal Australian case in point was the ABC's crude attempt to limit access of its archives to a filmmaker making a film about immigration. Access to information really became a contradiction in terms. And private archives are only worse. Most often it is an economic question - the right to sell at market prices what the market will bear.

But must all human transactions be measured in hard currency? What about the currency of the collective good, the commons, our shared right to know and see our own visual history?

All of this is to say: Why not preserve our cultural audio/visual heritage in the way it was intended? As a public, human resource.

## Freedom of Expression

The creation of films, documentaries and new media works can only take place in a democratic space where the essential right of freedom of expression is paramount.

Is freedom of expression another victim of the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001 and the ensuing war on terrorism? And where freedom of expression has been eroded, what consequences does that erosion entail?

How freedom of expression has fared in this climate, as the famous writers advocacy group PEN (Publishers, Editors and Novelists) views it, is pressing. I urge every South Australian citizen, every screen maker, every educator to speak out loudly and forcefully against any suppression of the inherent right to communicate that any government or institution wishes to force forward. And in a climate where limits are being placed on the free space which has developed in web culture, there is the need for what I call for a Social Protocol for the Internet.

If there are limits on anyone's freedom to express themselves in any medium they so choose, then there are limits on all our freedoms. Fortunately, South Australia is still a haven for free expression, and in many ways, a paradise of dissent.

## 8 The Infrastructure Sphere

All those working in the screen media in South Australia, and the governments and agencies which support them, must be on the vanguard of defending the rights of creators to make any films or media they wish to make.

### Urban Issues

In any Digitopia, I would also want to think about how urban issues are reflected in the larger screen.

I've commented in the Screen Industry and Community Media Spheres on the need to create a screen industries incubator hub, such as the one developing in Adelaide for the science and technology sectors. Such a cluster zone would be a place to gravitate to, in order to accentuate efficiencies and synergies in the screen industries.

Similarly, given that policies will be put in place that, in the long term, will make emerging SA filmmakers want to live in South Australia, the State should also look to public policies which will proactively foster SA as a centre of creative capital and a dynamic creative class.

The State could foster a domestic cluster zone for the digital creatives and screen makers, making affordable social housing and workspace available in the city for young and emerging artists.

In my Adeltopia, I would create affordable housing for regular people in all those empty wool shed buildings in Port Adelaide. And quick mass transit to get them to and from the city. I could even build them in the downtown core. Lofts for artists and emerging filmmakers and shared apartments for students and the 25 per cent of South Australians who live near the poverty line.

Of course, such plans are not utopian. They are practical and economic. The creative class is the biggest growing class since workers joined the industrial revolution. They make things. They buy things. They employ people. As the ideas of previous Thinkers, and the State's own strategic plans for sustainability begin to take hold, future priorities will move South Australia away from old resource-based dependencies depleting resources, away from ancient ideas like the petrol guzzling cars, and the cost inefficiencies inherhent in wars and the 'defence' industry.

Instead, the dividends of a peaceful, creative economy will take shape and take precedence. One which prefers putting money into culture, education, health - and the screen. Into new technologies and sustainable ecologies, into water management and wind power, into science and humanity, rather than into inefficient, non-sustainable industries where the economic output is always exaggerated and forever short-sighted.

### About Sustainability: Inter/screen

The intersection of the spheres.

Where two or more circles or spheres overlap is a place where synergy, and cinergy is born. There is a technical name for the intersection of circles or spheres. It's called a Mandorla, from the Roman word for almond, because the little overlapping areas between circles or spheres are almond-shaped. At the intersection of all the spheres, at those mandorlian crossroads, I believe the State, public agencies and private partnerships should set up a top-level inter-agency screen council and forum, or Inter/Screen, as I call it. You can investigate more details on Inter/Screen in Chapter 6, The Screen Industries Sphere. Inter/Screen must be created and properly funded for the long-term sustainability of screen culture in South Australia.

During my time in South Australia, a broad-based representative Steering Group came together many times in roundtables to offer up ideas and solutions, based on widespread systems analysis, experiences, community input and research. These discussions were open, positivist and frankly facilitated using such discussion tools as blue-sky brainstorming and even a 'thinking exercise' called the Dalmau enneagram process. I was was orginally skeptical, but they generated many results.

I believe that the inter-agency dialogue that we've already started with my Thinker's Residency should be continued and formally established through Inter/Screen. The State,

along with public and private partners, would work to ensure ongoing progress and set the spheres in motion.

Inter/Screen's role will be to foster and sustain a vision and a dialogue for South Australia's digital media and film industry development. It would foster media literacy and the development of a unique SA screen culture and a new screen movement.

Proposed roles of this top-level inter-agency group would be: to create a sustainble vision for SA digital media development, to identify and showcase talent, to identify and implement measurement research, to invigorate the industry; to review funding structures; to build community engagement and mutual goodwill, to prioritise Indigenous and youth participation; to review the roles and purposes of related agencies; to review the curriculum from preschool to tertiary and provide advice to educational institutions; to celebrate South Australia's points of difference and to showcase results for ongoing motivation and inspiration.

Inter/Screen would operate on these kinds of guiding principles:
- First Nation, first principles
- Open and democratic
- Transparent
- Consultative
- System critical
- Flexible
- Responsive
- Positioned for emergence
- Committed to positive outcomes - with a 'can do' approach.

## 8 The Infrastructure Sphere

Inter/Screen would hold several Forums every year, open to anyone and everyone working in screen culture. It will have a directorate and an elected representative advisory Council. Inter/Screen would create and appoint a management position of Screen Catalyst, a role to be funded for at least the next five years.

### And How Will We Pay for all These Recommendations?

Several ideas have been offered throughout these chapters. But I'll mention a few. One can begin by augmenting the State's budget for culture from its current low-end levels.

**Lottery monies**
Lottery money is what resurrected the British film industry and the film industry in West Australia. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, The Screen Industries Sphere.

**The Fifty Cent Fund**
You can see more details about this in Chapter 6, The Screen Industries Sphere. This would, based on historical film going patterns by South Australians, add a million dollars to the production pie. There is already some preliminary indication that SA-based exhibitors and distributors would support it.

### And Then, a Thought of the Day...

As I mentioned in my foreward, with more than a little tongue in cheek, during the course of my residency I have had some unusual ideas or 'Thoughts of the Day' which just might help raise some funds. Here's my most recent thought.

Every world class city has its iconic building - the Eiffel Tower, the Taj Mahal, the giant Ferris Wheel, the Empire State Building. And of course, Sydney has its Opera House.

Well, I want to propose creating something which will attract the world to Adelaide's doorstep.

Of the 400 cities of the world with a population of more than a million, Adelaide is near the top of the list as the least in population density. It's more than 50 kilometres from end to end.

As a result of these distances, everyone in the Adelaide area seems to really, really, really love their cars. As a result, not only is this a city of Churches, and the City of Pubs, but is also a city of Car Parks.

There are so many car parks in the city. More than 40,000 spaces, at last count, and that's only in the downtown core. The whole infrastructure which is needed to support the automobile takes up so much precious space, not to mention pumping so much dangerous carbon into the dying air. Not to mention the parking tickets.

I want to recommend that we take all of the car park buildings in Adelaide, and collect them all together in one place. And then we'll pile them up and up and up, one upon the other upon the other, to make one great big gigantic sky-scraping car park. At 120 stories tall, it will be the biggest carpark in the world. It should be big enough to hold every car in Adelaide at one time.

And they will come from everywhere in the world to see our carpark. It will be a giant tourist attraction. And how will the biggest carpark in the world help pay for some of my Digitopian recommendations? Why, I will combine Adelaide's love of gambling with my Big Car Park Idea.

Every noon hour, there will be a big lottery, and the random number of a unique car park space in the Biggest Car Park in the World will be drawn out of a hat. If your car happens to be parked on the right floor in that right winning space, then you win! And what do you win, you may ask? Why, free parking for a month, a thousand dollars and the right to make your own movie!

# 9 Epilogue

Screen culture forms, and informs, our personal and social lives.

South Australia's screen culture can be a site of renaissance, the sight of diversity, and foresight for the future.

A new Screen Movement in South Australia can be an international agora where all worlds can meet. It can provide us with digitized snapshots of the State of the Eighth Art - one which converges celluloid with electroid. It will illuminate visible evidence which brings fiction closer to faction. Poetics to the Public. These are the screen arts and the screen industries which will bring us all together - interface to interface.

It will take several years to develop a new screen culture, to wean ourselves off conventional ways of raising money, producing, shooting and distributing film. But the next wave is here and now. In the emerging generations of South Australia's creative people.

Imagine, in your mind's eye, Breughel's famous painting of the Tower of Babylon. It is the blueprint for a new Babylonian Tower built for Screen Culture.

As we prepare to build this new Tower, we discard a pile of useless stones into a corner. These represent all the base elements of all the conventional mass media that we have come to distrust. 'Reality-based' unreal TV. The Mercantile Movies. The Exploitative Web. The Vampryic. The Pedantic. The Propagandistic. The Greedy. The Sexist. The Racist. The Violent.

We start our foundation using an alternate pile of building blocks. These represent all the qualities of the screen media we love. The Poetic. The Innovative. The Imaginative. The Experimental. The Educative. The Communitarian. The Humane. The Emotive. The Questioning. The Inclusive. These blocks provide the foundation and base for our new Tower.

As our Tower to Screen Culture is built, we will come to understand that creative, cultural and financial forces intersect with one another. Sometimes they are compromised; sometimes they mutate.

But, as our new structure takes shape, a prominent feature comes into clear focus. Near the top is a watch-tower, from which we set sight on an elusive ideal: to make poetic and informed truth.

The screen is a place where all South Australians can share their vision-quests, and their stories.

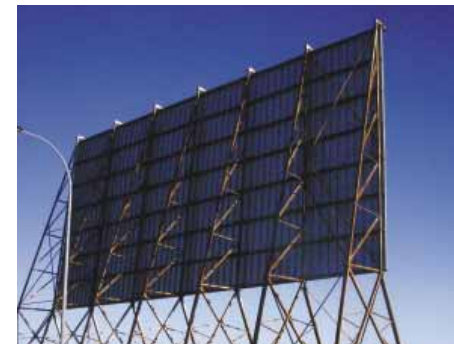As a new day emerges, a juggler appears, balancing four spheres.

Cinema, in all its myriad masques and guises, is re-inventing itself for the 21st century, over and over again.

As a new Screen Movement for South Australia. As a new Screen Culture for the Digital Age.

As Southern Screens and Southern Stories.

**Peter Wintonick**
Adelaide/Montreal 2005-2006

# 10 Appendix

## South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC)

### Information about its Current Strategies, Priorities and Programs
Like all the partner organisations which contributed to the evolution of this report with observations and commentary, the SAFC was invited, and provided further information about its programs, strategic directions and the significant changes that it feels have occurred over the past twelve months. This is reflected in the paragraphs which follow in this section.

### Career pathways and development
The SAFC has a strong focus on career pathways and development across all aspects of screen culture. Some of its initiatives include:
- funding for activities such as laboratories, incubators, short courses, seminars, conferences, workshops and speakers' programs for practitioner and industry development
- facilitating on the job experience in film, television or digital media production through internships and attachments
- facilitating mentoring programs, including a new mentoring scheme, Rocket Science, which is provided to emerging and established writer/producer/director teams
- attendance grants, which allow practitioners to travel to key festivals and interState award ceremonies where they are being recognised for their work
- practitioner development funding which provides support for professional and career development across screen cultures

- producer development funding for general development expenses and other project related and business development expenses
- market attendance funding for film, television, documentary and interactive digital media producers to travel to international markets to attract market place finance for projects
- two short films are funded for up to $50,000 per project to assist emerging screen practitioners to develop their skills to progress towards long form feature film, television drama, documentary and digital media production
- funding to support the development of feature and television projects, documentary, interactive digital media projects including interactive/online dramas, documentaries, animation, computer games and innovative education programs
- development of an Indigenous media strategy, including in particular career pathway and development initiatives.

### Production investment
The SAFC also invests in production across a variety of genres such as feature film, television drama, documentary and digital media production (an Australian first). Projects that are creative and original, possess overall appeal to diverse audiences, display good market prospects, and have significant economic benefits to the South Australian production and post-production sectors are invested in by the Corporation. The SAFC has a strong pro-South Australian policy. Funding of non SA based productions is always on the understanding that such ventures provide benefits to South Australians, including economic benefits and employment generating opportunities.

The Educational Content Fund is available for the production of educational, sponsored and government-related projects across all platforms. In 2004-05, six such documentary projects were funded, a record number of approvals.

The SAFC also provides a $3 million revolving loan fund to sustain and increase film, television and documentary production in South Australia.

### Production incentives
The SAFC now offers incentives to encourage productions shot in SA including a payroll tax exemption of approximately six per cent on the film's payroll. A ten per cent employment rebate was also introduced in April on all eligible SA labour expenditure on film, television and documentary productions produced predominantly in South Australia.

### Production support
SAFC's comprehensive production facilities, including a Dolby licensed mixing theatre, sound stages, production offices, an art department and wardrobe facilities, assist and encourage the production of feature films, documentaries and short films in South Australia. The newly created Sound Post-Production Fund will allow emerging film makers the opportunity to access a world class mixing theatre to complete their work.

### Marketing
Promotion of the State's talent and assets is a very important function of the SAFC. The services include a location showcase providing examples of South Australia's wide range of locations and a production liaison service, connecting producers with facilities and crew.

### Partnerships
The SAFC has very strong relationships with equivalent organisations in other States and on the national stage. The constant information exchange ensures that the SAFC remains abreast of all models and developments in other States.

In South Australia, the SAFC is actively working with other screen organisations such as the Media Resource Centre (MRC), the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) and the Screen Studies Department of Flinders University to better develop career pathways for emerging screen practitioners and better utilise resources.

The SAFC has made significant contributions to the success stories listed throughout this report, whether by direct investment in the feature film or documentary or by way of support or investment in the various organisations. This includes investment in the films of the Adelaide Film Festival and contributions towards the Australian International Documentary Conference.

# 10 Appendix

**South Australia's Strategic Plan**

South Australia's Strategic Plan has a particular focus on the screen industry. The three targets are to continue to expand South Australia's share of the feature film industry, increase television production and grow the audiovisual sector in this State.

The SAFC has a significant leadership role in achieving these targets. The Plan will continue to inform the particular priorities and strategic direction of the Corporation for the next ten years.

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