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What characterises the Australian film industry and film making culture in the period 1989 – 2005 and has the global film industry in Australia had an impact on it?

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Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text. I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.



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Table of Abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission.
AD	Assistant Director.
AFC	Australian Film Commission.
AFI	Australian Film Institute.
AFDC	Australian Film Development Corporation.
DOP	Director of Photography.
FFC(A)	Film Finance Corporation Australia.
FLICS	Film Licensed Investment Company.
MEAA	Media Entertainment Arts Alliance.
MFC	Macquarie Film Corporation.
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service.
SPAA	Screen Producers' Association Australia.
TNC	Trans-national Corporation.

Chronology

1970

- *Australian Film Development Corporation (AFDC)* established. Australian film industry revival begins.

1973

- *Australian Content Regulations for TV* replaced by a points system aimed at achieving more and better quality Australian TV programming.
- *The Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS)* is opened as part of the Commonwealth Government's strategy to promote the development of Australia's cultural activity.

1975

- *AFDC* replaced by *Australian Film Commission (AFC)* by the Federal Government, to promote the creation and distribution of films in Australia as well as to preserve the country's film history. In 2007 it becomes part of the new government agency *Screen Australia*.

1980

- Australian Government offers tax incentives *10BA* and *10B* for private investment in qualifying Australian film.

1983 - 1985

- *10BA* and *10B* tax incentives scaled back.

1988

- *Film Finance Corporation (FFC)*, established as the Australian Government's principal agency for funding the production of film and television in Australia as an alternative film funding mechanism to *10BA*.

1989

- Australia plunged into economic recession.

1991

- *Warners/Roadshow Studio Complex* opens on the Gold Coast.

1997

- The Federal Government's review of the film industry, known as the *Gonski Review* is published.

1998

- *Fox Studios Australia* opens in Sydney.

1999

- Australian Government announces Content Capital Ltd and Macquarie Film Corporation Pty Ltd would be awarded licences to raise finance for films under the *FLICS scheme*.

2001

- Government's *Film Assistance Package* announced.
- The AFC commissions a report into the impact of foreign film production in Australia on the local Australian film industry.

2002

- The introduction of the *Taxation Laws Amendment (Film Incentives) Bill* to Federal Parliament signals a 12.5% refundable tax offset against Australian production expenditure for larger budget films –as part of its *Integrated Film Package*.
- The looming writers and actors strike in the US brings a production craze and unprecedented number of film and TV projects green lit with much of LA, Canada & Australia working to capacity.

2002

- Fox Studios Backlot closure boosts studio space at Fox Studios.

2004

- Melbourne's *Docklands Studios* open.

2007

- *Bilateral Free Trade Agreement* between Australia and the US finalised.
- In May 2007, the Australian Government announced the creation of a new agency, the *Australian Screen Authority* known as *Screen Australia*. The new agency will be formed by the merger of the Australian Film Finance Corporation, Australian Film Commission (which includes the National Film and Sound Archive), and Film Australia, and will take effect on 1 July 2008.

Abstract

This study is intended to examine Australian filmmaking culture and the state of the Australian film industry in the years 1989 – 2005 and to investigate the impact of increased foreign film production in Australia on it.

I have taken my research data from answers to questionnaires, interviews and surveys conducted during 2005/2006 with members of the Australian film industry: producers, directors, cast and crewmembers, working across both local and foreign films in Australia. These surveys serve as the basis of an evaluation of the differences between both film industries operating in Australia, the Local Australian and the global. Having produced an Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo* in 2005, I drew upon that experience and those of the cast and crew in a case study further examining the process of Australian feature film production and Australian filmmaking culture.

The research concludes that the proximity of the global film industry to the local Australian one is having a negative effect on the attitudes, expectations and working practices of Australian cast and crewmembers. Whilst on the increase however, foreign film production levels in Australia have not been consistent enough to offer cast and crews long-term sustainable employment.

With the production of a greater number of higher budget Australian films and the necessity for them to attract international investment in order to be made, comes pressure on filmmakers to make more internationally appealing films and less film culturally specific to the Australian experience and Australian audiences. It cannot be surmised from this however that our own Australian cultural film product or “national cinema” no longer has a place. Support for local Australian film remains strong amongst cast and crews and the Australian Government continues to protect it through its policy and funding. Despite this support however, no growth in local production in Australia has been seen for three decades, with local production in NSW at an all-time low in 2006.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Since the revival of the Australian Film Industry in the 1970s, the Australian Film Industry has been described as more of a “cottage” industry than an industry, largely funded by government agencies and producing a limited and far from stable number of predominantly low budget feature films per year. With an average of 30 Australian feature films per year produced in the 1980s, 26 in the 1990s and just under 20 in the 2000s¹, it is obvious not only that the Australian Film Industry has provided far from secure employment for the 48,000² people who rely on it, but that whilst erratic on a year-to-year basis, local Australian feature film production has been in steady decline for the past three decades.

Whilst production figures for Australian feature films in the 1980s were at a high due to the government’s tax breaks for private investment, in the 2000s with this support no longer available, Australian feature film production has almost halved. Whilst some sectors of the film industry have been vocal in announcing this demise, others have remained hopeful, largely due to the fact that when our local film production figures are added to rising levels of foreign film production and co-production in Australia, what results are healthy figures when it comes to annual film production in Australia.

In 2006, the situation for local Australian feature film production seems to be at its bleakest yet, with the NSW Film and Television Office reporting that there are currently no Australian feature films being filmed in NSW. And whilst production figures in the 2000s have been bolstered by foreign feature film production in the past, 2006 has also shown a noticeable decrease in foreign feature film production in Australia, with it being reported in September 2006, that Fox Studios’ production calendar is empty for the near future. It seems that production across both film industries operating in Australia, the “local Australian film industry”³ and the “global film industry”⁴ is in decline.

¹ *National Survey of Feature Film and Drama Production 2005*, Australian Film Commission, (Sydney: AFC 2005)

² Richard Phillips, *Australian film industry: the futility of calls for “cultural protection”*, 9 December 2003. At <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/dec2003/ozfi-d09.shtml>

³ See Definitions, p. 142.

Prior to the official opening of Fox Studios in Sydney in 1998, there was an organised tour of the studios for members of the local Australian film industry. Whilst the American tour guides were speaking of the benefits of American studio production at Fox to the local Australian film industry, the general mood was scepticism, with one older Australian producer telling the crowd that US studios in the UK were responsible for the demise of the local British film industry in the 1950s, and warning that similarly, this was the beginning of the end for the local Australian film industry. The controversy following the opening of the studios in Sydney was well reported in the local Australian media, and it was this that led me to research further the effects of having a “global” film industry operating on our shores. Working as a Producer, I am interested not only in the impact of foreign production in Australia on production statistics reported by the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and other Industry groups, but on changes for cast and crew members in their day-to-day work situations. I interviewed 50 Australian cast and crew members in the course of this research and it is their answers to questions about working on both local Australian films and foreign films in Australia, that form the basis of my chapters on Australian filmmaking culture and how it has changed as a result of crews working across both local and international films. Whilst the answers to surveys conducted are predominantly in an anecdotal format, they provide an insight into the views of those currently working in the Australian film industry. In speaking to cast and crew, the first thing that was immediately apparent was that all agreed that there is very little to no work on Australian film in 2006, and that most see this downturn in production as permanent unless drastic measures to support the local Industry are taken by the Australian Government. Most cast and crewmembers drew links between the demise of local film production and its associated businesses with what they believe to be governmental and industry focus and support of what has turned out to be an erratic “global” film industry operating in Australia.

The surveys prepared for this thesis targeted cast and crewmembers who had worked on both Australian films and global films in Australia in order that they compare their experience of both. Surveys were sent out to a group of crewmembers who listed both international and Australian films in their filmographies in the Encore Directory, were given to those working in and passing through the production and post production

⁴ Ibid.

houses I was working in, and were sent to cast and crew replying to a notice on the Metro Screen notice board for crewmembers interested in taking part in my research. Whilst I designed the surveys to be easily understood by cast and crewmembers and relatively quick to complete, I found that many sought clarification and found the survey difficult to respond to, as a result of not having had to previously identify what it is that makes up Australian filmmaking culture. Most however had ready comment when asked about the impact of global production on local Australian film production. Where available, I have used excerpts from interviews with prominent producers, directors and actors, conducted by Screen publications both locally and internationally, to add to my research. The italicised quotes that begin each section are quotes from these publications and my research interviews.

In 2005, I produced an Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo* and I have drawn upon that experience and those of the cast and crew involved to form the basis of a case study examining the experience of working on an Australian feature film. This case study is then discussed in the light of experiences of cast and crew working on large US productions in Australia and in particular *Superman Returns* which was filmed largely at Fox Studios in Sydney, in order to examine the differences in on-set culture and filmmaking practice between local Australian feature film and large budget international production in Australia.

It is acknowledged that the experiences of the cast and crew working on *Last Train to Freo* can't be generalised to represent the experiences of all cast and crew working on low-budget Australian feature films. The case study nonetheless, provides an opportunity for interviewees to provide anecdotal evidence of experiences they feel to be characteristic of working on either local Australian films or international films produced in Australia.

Whilst I will call those films funded primarily by Australian dollars and initiated and controlled creatively by Australians, "Australian film" and the industry producing them "the Australian film industry"⁵, I will differentiate it from those films produced in Australia primarily with foreign financing and controlled creatively by off-shore

⁵ Ibid.

entities. The latter I will call “global” films, by virtue of the fact that they are foreign films with offshore production locations, and I will term the industry that produces them “the global film industry”⁶. These definitions differ from those used by the AFC in classifying Australian Film, where a film originating in Australia with Australians in key creative roles is classified as Australian even if it is 100% foreign financed. I have deviated from the AFC in my classification in order to differentiate between the process and experience of making and working on traditionally low-budget and Australian government financed feature films and that of working on foreign films such as *Moulin Rouge*, that are classified as Australian by the AFC despite being large budget, foreign financed, American studio productions.

Many issues are spoken about when comparing the experiences of Australian cast and crew working on local Australian production and global production in Australia, but it is the clash of filmmaking cultures, and indeed the defining of Australian filmmaking culture that is of most interest to me in this research. It is obvious that Australian culture and national identity will come to the fore in any discussions about the importance and relevance of Australian film and the Australian film industry to Australians, it was in fact an industry built upon the notion of “nation”, “national cinema”⁷ and cultural product. With a lack of local Australian film in the face of Hollywood domination in the 1970s, the Australian Government was prompted to fund an Australian Film Industry through the establishment of film funding agencies, the main aim being to support the production of “national cinema”; film product that is culturally relevant to Australians, with Australians in the key creative production roles. In the 2000s, this policy still underpins our government funding of Australian film, and the responses to questionnaires for this thesis by Australian cast and crewmembers, confirm that there is still strong support by practitioners working in the local Australian film industry for such policy.

In Australia, our cultural production industries, including the Australian film industry, have been encouraged and supported by government policy to be vehicles for the development and reinforcement of a national culture, shared values, national identity, and an expression of our nation’s regional, ethnic and historical diversity. Successive

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Australian governments have supported the notion of “national cinema” and have accepted that, without government intervention, it is extremely difficult for small nations like Australia to produce cultural product that facilitates full expression of our stories, ideas and images.⁸

Whilst the premise of “national cinema” is vital to Australia’s development and expression of a national culture, governmental protection and regulation of it have left Australian film for many years predominantly in the realm of domestic territories in terms of marketing and distribution, which has obviously impacted on the capacity of the local Australian film industry to be competitive on an international scale. With our film industry becoming more and more a part of the global filmmaking environment, and with an increase in co-productions and Australians working in film industries outside of Australia, it is pertinent to ask just how relevant this 1970s model of Australian film regulation is to the current film making climate. With Australia entering a period where “global” film making has overtaken local production in terms of dollars spent and number of films made, it would seem that the concept of national cinema may be an old one, and changes to Australian government film funding body regulations and assessments over the past three years may reflect an acknowledgement by them, that the future of Australian film is more and more linked to its success in the “global” film arena.

It would be reasonable to expect, with the integration of our film into a global film environment, that Australian filmmakers themselves may be turning away from making films adhering the traditional concepts of “national cinema”. What we are seeing in our films and hearing in the attitudes of filmmakers responding to surveys for this thesis however, is quite the opposite, a re-embracing of concepts of nation and a continuing exploration of national identity and unreconciled national issues that were characteristic of Australian films in the 1970s.⁹ Films such as *Ned Kelly*, the outback western *The Proposition*, and *Kenny*, films of the 2000s, seem like throwbacks to an earlier era¹⁰ and

⁸ Ibid. p.91.

⁹ Felicity Collins and Therese Davis, *Australian Cinema - After Mabo* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 26.

¹⁰ Phillip French, *Review of The Proposition*. At film.guardian.co.uk/News_Story/Critic_Review/Observer_Film_of_the_week/0,,1728880,00.htm

add weight to the idea that Australian filmmakers are continuing to support the traditional notion of “national cinema”. Collins and Davis believe there to be two reasons for this support, the first being the long history of support for the economic policies that support subsidy for the Australian film industry and the second, the Liberal Government’s appointing of neo-conservatives on the Boards of key cultural organizations such as the ABC and SBS, with an agenda to restore national pride on the Anglo-centric model of national identity borrowed from One Nation.¹¹

So does this support also come from the casts and crews working on Australian film? In the 2000s Australian casts and crews are more often employed on “global” feature films than local ones, enjoying longer contracts and for the most part higher wages and better conditions, it is interesting therefore to consider whether or not their attitudes towards the production of the traditional concept of “national cinema” are changing. From the responses given in the surveys for this thesis, it is evident that they too are continuing to support “national cinema”, by continuing to work on low-budget Australian films as well as servicing the higher budget internationally marketable films. From responses to the surveys I conducted, the consensus is that more than ever in the face of increased “global” production in Australia, we must ensure that our own Australian stories are still supported and made, so that we continue to have a unique and recognisably Australian “face” in the global film arena. It seems to be the case that as Sumita Chakravarty states, “At a time when the world seems to be entering an era of full-blown globalisation, it is localisation in all its varied forms that has thrust itself centre-stage.”¹² The notion of “national cinema” was in fact born out of dissatisfaction at the domination of Hollywood on our screens.

Whilst support by Australian film makers and cast and crews for “national cinema” appears to remain strong, none deny that in the 2000s, they are tailoring their ideas and the content of their films more than ever to suit foreign investors and international market-places. Since the 1980s, Australian filmmakers acutely aware of the lack of funding from Australian government agencies have been trying to secure upfront distribution deals from international distributors with all the constraints and

¹¹ F. Collins and T. Davis, *op. cit.* p. 26.

¹² S.S. Chakravarty, *Fragmenting the Nation*, in M. Hjort and S. MacKenzie, *op. cit.* p. 223.

expectations that are attached to such deals. Rather than spelling the demise of the Australian element in these films, as was feared by many in the industry, it appears to have created a new genre of Australian film, one in which the Australian element has a place within the global film landscape and as seen Australian film “re-imagined” as a form of “international cinema”.¹³

Whilst many Australian films in the 2000s are exhibiting characteristics of early “national cinema”, it seems that most are exhibiting elements of dialectic between the global and the local. Many of the films that have competed for the Best Film Award at the AFI Awards in the 2000s, *The Dish*, *Lantana*, *Moulin Rouge* and *Look Both Ways* for example, fall into this category. Although there continues for the most part to be a clear divide between the means of production and content of global and the local film in Australia, it seems that even the most resolutely parochial Australian films are now attuned to trends in international cinema.¹⁴

This dual purpose or dialectic between the global and the local may be seen also in the policy of Australian film funding bodies. The FFC’s Mission Statement reflects a continued support for what Collins and Davis term, “cultural-interventionalist strategy”, its main purpose being, “strengthen(ing) a sense of Australian cultural identity”, by “entertaining and informing audiences with a diversity of Australian programs”¹⁵. It expresses also however, a commitment to what Collins and Davis term, “commercial-industrial strategies”, adding the aim to “enhance the commercial viability of Australia’s independent screen production sector and showcase Australia’s screen production industry to the world”. With the FFC playing the role of the primary Australian funding organisation for Australian feature film, it is likely that filmmakers in meeting the aims of the FFC in the projects they pitch for funding will be likely to take these two strategies into consideration.

This premise that Australian film is able to both strengthen our sense of national identity and be competitive in the global film arena has been met with scepticism by some critics, with much debate surrounding the pressure on Australian filmmakers to

¹³ F. Collins and T. Davis, op. cit. p. 24.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 28.

¹⁵ Ibid. p.28.

meet the needs of international distributors and global audiences. The belief being that this pressure could lead to a “watering down” of Australian-ness and the demise of localised storytelling. It seems that with films such as *The Tracker*, *Beneath Clouds* and *Look Both Ways* receiving both box-office support in Australia and international acclaim at film festivals such as Berlin and Venice, that it is indeed possible to meet the needs of both local and international audiences, but it is interesting to consider whether or not the content of Australian films in general is changing as a necessity in meeting the demands of funding body strategy and a competitive global marketplace. Interviews with Australian directors and producers undertaken for this thesis provide insight into the changing content choices of filmmakers in their attempts to have projects funded.

It is evident from this FFC Mission Statement that pressures on Australian filmmakers to make internationally viable films come not only from their dealings with international investors and distributors, but from Australian film funding bodies. In the late 1990s, early 2000s, these funding bodies are acutely aware of both the competitive international film arena and their small annual allocations of budgets for Australian film funding, and as a result, have been actively encouraging Australian producers to explore options in international film financing. Whilst the FFC has a number of different allocated budgets for film production in Australia, by far the most flexible and amount of money available, is to co-productions where international funding partners share the financial risks associated with film investment. Whilst it continues to safeguard the “Australianness” of a film through its need to qualify as “Australian” under the Australian Office of Literature and Classifications 10BA structure, the FFC’s push for producers to seek funds from abroad means that it is not only Australian funding bodies and commissioning editors that have input into the direction an increasing number of Australian films will take. It is unfair to expect that Commissioning Editors and international investors will not have some input in script and production decisions and whether or not these co-production arrangements are resulting in a new genre (hybrid) of Australian film, made with both local and international audience needs in mind, is an area that is worthy of exploration.

With the disparity in budget, means of production and Australian involvement, it is relatively easy to draw a distinction between the two film industries producing feature films in Australia, the Australian film industry and the global film industry in Australia.

With a country the size of Australia however, it stands to reason that these industries will need to share resources, in the form of cast and crews, facilities and locations, and as such, it is inevitable that the two will affect one another. Just what these effects are and whether or not the future of the local Australian film industry is dependant on the future of the global film industry in Australia are concerns of this thesis. The interviews with Australian cast and crew, producers and key film industry analysts undertaken for this thesis, form a basis from which to examine the state of both film industries in Australia, their impacts on one another and their futures.

For a local industry that was founded on and continues to rely on government support for its existence, it is vital that the government continues to acknowledge the importance of funding a local film industry. The Australian Government continues to demonstrate a level of support for the Australian film industry, with increased funding to film agencies and schools in 2005, as part of an acknowledgement that Australia needs to remain competitive and at the cutting edge technology-wise in the global film marketplace. The health and wealth of the local industry is however intertwined with the operation of a global film industry in Australia as far as federal and state government ministers are concerned, and whilst aid to the Australian film industry was forthcoming, aid to the “global” film industry in Australia was not forgotten. Tax incentives aimed at international producers making films in Australia were highlighted in the 2001 film assistance package.

Foreign producers and studios have not overlooked Australian Government benefits when making their production location choices, with Australian Government incentives rated highly by foreign producers on their lists of why they choose to make films in Australia. It is partially as a result of this Australian government push for runaway US production and US studio operation on our shores that foreign production in Australia is on the rise, but with this rise comes the question, what the implications for our local industry, in levels of local production, retaining of our filmmaking culture and the changing content of the films that we produce?

Whilst there are many instances of local businesses suffering as a result of the integration of the local Australian film industry into the global film industry, many believe that the global film industry may be the salvation of Australian cast and crew

struggling to find secure employment. The overall sentiment amongst many crewmembers in the Australian film industry that were surveyed, is that the Australian Government restricts the possibilities for Australian cast and crews by imposing such strict regulations on the international projects that they support financially. Many now view the Government/Industry collaboration “AusFilm”¹⁶ and its attempts to hire Australian crews to foreign film production companies, as their only chance of salvation and constant employment in the area of film production.

It may be, as a report by the Australian Film Commission into foreign production in Australia suggests, that the two film industries in Australia can happily co-exist, but what if global film produced in Australia is classified as Australian film and competes against low-budget local film, as was the case when *Moulin Rouge* competed for best film at the AFI awards in 2001? Is this indicative of the beginning of the selling out of our national cinema to global production? Some would say that Australian film is now just another type of international film in the global market, but with the reactions of voters against *Moulin Rouge* in favour of local Australian films in the 2001 AFIs it appears for now at least that the value of our predominantly tax-funded low-budget Australian feature is still well appreciated and supported in Australia.

By examining the experiences of other countries and the fluctuating figures related to global film production in Australia, it is apparent that regardless of the future of global film production in Australia, such production is erratic at best, and hopes for the future of our own local film industry shouldn't be pinned entirely on the future of global film production in Australia.

¹⁶ See Definitions, p. 142.

Chapter 2 – The Australian Film Industry

Australian National Cinema

A National Cinema is a vehicle for national identity, a concept which presupposes "common culture and a civic ideology, a set of common understandings and aspirations, sentiments and ideas, that binds the population together in their homeland".¹⁷

O'Regan in 1989, defined the product of our local Australian Film Industry as "national cinema"¹⁸, a term used to refer not only to the Australian Film Industry, but to film industries around the world operating outside of Hollywood, and differentiating themselves from it "culturally, verbally or formally."¹⁹ Whilst "national cinemas" by virtue of their local cultural content and production may be construed as an alternative to international cinema, they are in fact as O'Regan points out, also a result of it, with the idea of cementing a national cinema in Australia not coming until well after the dominance of Hollywood film in our Australian market.²⁰

The production of national cinema in Australia began in 1906, with the making of what is arguably the world's first feature film, "The Story of the Kelly Gang".⁴ For many years after, the local film industry continued to produce films, focusing on representing the Australian experience both to local and international audiences, until 1928, when feature film production in Australia began to decrease steadily.

Whilst foreign film production thrived in Australia early in the 1940s/50s, by the end of the 1950s, the Australian film industry had reached a crisis point, with local production almost negligible. A situation in Australia had arisen where foreign companies controlled both film production and distribution, the majority of films screened in Australian cinemas were American, and as a result, it became apparent that a whole generation of Australians were growing up going to the movies without seeing an

¹⁷ Anthony Smith, *National Identity*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), p.11.

¹⁸ Tom O'Regan, *Australian National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 10.

¹⁹ Jonathan Rayner, *Contemporary Australian Cinema* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p.3.

²⁰ Tom O'Regan, op. cit. p.51.

Australian film.²¹

The cultural and economic implications that this had for Australia went largely unchallenged until the late 1960s, when Australia's major cities, marked by social change and political protest, saw a kind of cultural re-examination emerge. With this new questioning of Australia's cultural heritage came nostalgia, and a renewed interest in a local film industry and "national cinema" as an essential vehicle for an exploration of Australian heritage. An environment was created which was conducive to lobbying the Government to stimulate a national film industry and to subsidise it, providing the requested financial support.²²

The Australian film industry was thus revived in the 1970s, with Government support matching pressure from lobbyists, the result being the establishment of a government film funding body, the Australian Film Development Corporation (AFDC) in 1970. Australian Government film policy regulated the revived industry, with all film funded by the Government needing to be classified as "Australian" under 10BA legislation in order to protect it from the cultural imperialism that had once threatened its existence. This Government regulation in policy, funding and practice, was in effect, a safeguarding of the production of films that tell Australian stories, develop uniquely Australian characters, and represent Australian experience to the world.

The establishment of the AFDC achieved the desired result of more Australian films on cinema screens, with the number of feature films produced in Australia growing each year after its formation. Some of these films, for example *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (1972) and *Alvin Purple* (1973) despite their uniquely "Australian" characters, even achieved a level of success at the box office.²³ But despite the successes of earlier years, by 1979, the industry was again slowing, with only three feature successes recorded in 1979. *Newsfront* and *My Brilliant Career* were amongst at least twenty commercial failures that year, resulting in the overall picture of Australian film

²¹ *The Australian Cinema – An overview*, Year Book Australia. At <http://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@nsf/Lookup/C83EBE935009D14CCA2569DE0025C18A>

²² Ibid.

²³ Dermody and Jacka, *The Imaginary Industry*, (Sydney: AFTRS, 1988), p. 61.

in this period being one of failure.²⁴

In order to encourage private investment to bolster the ailing industry, the Australian government offered generous tax incentives under the 1980 “10BA” and “10B” tax legislation, which outlined legislation allowing for investors in “qualifying” Australian films to receive a 150% tax deduction for their contribution. What followed was a boom in Australian film production which saw an unprecedented number of feature films made in the first few years of the 1980s, both with private Australian investment and investment from overseas.

Whilst there had been foreign investment in Australian film for many years before these tax concessions of the early 1980s, there was little to attract investors in any large numbers: salaries were low, budgets were small, there were no tax concessions and there was heavy government control of the creative elements. These 10BA concessions brought with them interest in Australian film from international investors. The Australasian Film Productions (UAA) promoted schemes to use Section 51 (1) to finance overseas films, like *Superman 3* and *Arthur*, and new producers appeared, like David Joseph (*The Pirate Movie*), and Andrew Gaty (*The Return of Captain Invincible*) whose large budgets (\$9million and \$7 million respectively) raised serious questions about the extent of overseas penetration into Australian tax shelters.²⁵

In order that the tax incentives were consistent with the government guidelines for supporting Australian film, a “qualifying feature” was defined by the legislation, as one that for Investment purposes, is able to be classified as an “Australian” film under Division 10BA of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936*, with the following elements being relevant in determining whether or not a film has significant Australian content: the subject matter, the location, the nationality and residence of the writers, actors, directors and other production personnel, as well as the owners of the copyright and shareholders in any company making the film; the source of finance, and aspects of how and where the film’s budget will be spent.²⁶ In addition, section 7 of the Act provides that the production must be “under the creative control of Australians”. Projects under

²⁴ Ibid. p.66.

²⁵ Ibid. p.182.

²⁶ See Definitions, p. 142.

Australian creative control are, in general, those, which use a combination of Australian actors, producers, directors and scriptwriters and where the program is produced and post-produced in Australia, regardless of whether it was filmed in Australia.

The production boom brought about by the 10BA legislation with its generous incentives for investors in Australian film continued through 1981, with 30 Australian feature films produced in 1981 in contrast to the 17 feature films produced in 1979/80²⁷. By 1983 however, with pressure from the Australian film making community, who believed that control of Australian films was now in the hands of film commissions and not filmmakers, the government decided that 10BA had failed to meet the aesthetic and cultural outcomes intended, and reduced the tax incentive. With tax concessions under 10BA no longer an attractive reason to invest in Australian film, the level of investment dropped and in 1983/84, only 21 feature films were produced.²⁸

Whilst reduced 10BA and 10B tax incentives are still on offer in the early 2000s, in 2005 they have failed to secure anything close to the level of private investment in Australian films in the early 1980s. At best Australian private sector investment in Australian features has been erratic in the 2000s, with highs and lows that can be best attributed to large amounts of investment in single films in some years. Whilst private investment in Australian feature films equalled \$32M in 35 films in 1998/99, it dropped to \$19M in 29 films in 1999/2000.²⁹ Discuss critical and commercial success of films privately financed in 1998/99 in contrast to 99/00.

Even without the tax incentives of the 1980s, private investment is still being utilised as a means to fund Australian film in the 2000s. In the years pre the formation of the FFC, filmmakers were able to find both private investment and government support, with the government monies helping to pay back private investor funding and it seems this arrangement may be making a come-back in the financing of feature film in Australia. In a similar way, Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo* was fully funded by a private investor in 2005, with the Screenwest investment in the film becoming a

²⁷ Australian Film Commission, *Get the Picture*. At www.afc.gov.au/gtp/mpfeatures1970.html

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ S. Maher, *Internationalisation of Australian Film and Television*, (Melbourne: Communications Law Centre, 2001), p.xii.

Distribution Guarantee that was paid back as recoupment to the investor after delivery of the finished film. Producer Greg Duffy believes that in an industry where Government funding is scarce and the competition is fierce, such arrangements are a necessary way to encourage private investment and it seems that Australian entertainment lawyers are largely in agreement that it will be these arrangements with private investments that will guarantee the survival of the Australian Film Industry.³⁰

It seems that perhaps due to an acknowledgement by key industry sectors that private investment is integral to the future of our feature film industry, and as a result an embracing of it by Australian producers, that private investment in Australian feature film has risen in 2004/05, from \$10.3M in the previous year to \$19.7M. Whilst this was largely due to the fact that *Jindabyne* was majority funded by private sources, it was also true that more feature films had funding from private sources in 2004/05 with 13 films securing private investment compared to only 7 in the previous year.³¹

Whilst these figures seem to show promise in terms of raising private finance for Australian feature film, in 2007 a major review of the Australian Film industry has revealed that the scaled back 10BA scheme has largely failed as a means of raising private investment.³² 2009 will see the production of the last Australian feature films financed under 10BA with a new “Producer’s Rebate” Scheme to replace it.

Foreign Film Production in Australia

In Australia, production that has come from another place is described as “foreign” or “off-shore” production, distinguishing it from wholly Australian production or Australian co-production. For the best part of a century Australia has played host to foreign film, with British and American film companies travelling to Australia in the years following WW2, producing films such as the Ealing Studio’s *The Overlanders*, Stanley Kramer’s *On the Beach* and Fred Zinnemann’s *The Sundowners*³³. More recently, in the early 1980s, two British directors produced films in Australia, Claude

³⁰ Michael Boland, *Quest for Finance*, in *Encore Magazine*, August 2005.

³¹ DCITA, *Australian Film Review*. At www.dcita.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/40781/Australian_Film_Review.pdf

³² *Ibid.*

³³ AuStats Website, *op. cit.*

Whatham made *Hoodwink* in 1981 and Ken Annakin made the American-financed *Pirate Movie* in 1982, and two European directors made films here, German Werner Herzog making *Where the Green Ants Dream* in 1984 and Yugoslav Dusan Makavejev making *The Coca-Cola Kid* in 1985.³⁴

In the 1990s, largely due to the fact that Australia became the beneficiary of the “runaway” productions and increased foreign production that traditionally had benefited the UK and Canada, foreign film production in Australia continued to grow, whilst there was a relative stagnation in Australian production.³⁵ Whilst telemovies have been the predominant form of foreign production in Australia between 1989 and 2005, accounting for 45% of productions, feature films have been a close second comprising 32%.³⁶ A major reason for foreign production moving to Australia is the low production costs here as a result of a weaker Australian dollar, with a US feature with an average budget of US\$54M, making below the line savings of 20 – 35% by shooting in Australia.³⁷ As well as these financial advantages to filming in Australia, there are many other factors that contribute to Australia’s popularity with foreign investors and producers; the availability of skilled crews, its production and post-production facilities, infrastructure and partnerships with Australian businesses, an English language base, a diversity of locations, and in the 1990s/2000s, Australia has further benefited the foreign producer with flexible work visa arrangements for overseas crews on overseas funded productions and an established studio infrastructure.³⁸

Largely due to US “runaway” film production³⁹, Australia and New Zealand have seen an increase in feature film production in the period 1998 – 2005 of 531%, from \$113 million to \$717 million⁴⁰. When it is taken into account that Canada and Eastern Europe have also seen a massive rise in US feature film production, it is evident that this gain will be matched by a loss in jobs and economic benefits in the United States.

³⁴ B. McFarlane, G. Mayer and I. Bertrand, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film*, (UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 228.

³⁵ S. Maher, op. cit. p.x.

³⁶ Nick Herd, *Chasing the Runaways*, (Sydney: Currency Press, 2004), p.25.

³⁷ S. Maher, op. cit. p.xi.

³⁸ Ibid. p.xi.

³⁹ http://www.cameraguild.com/news/genindustry/06_09_15_runaway.html

⁴⁰ Ibid.

The actors and technicians' Guilds in the US have been vocal about their fears of losing production to off-shore locations such as Australia and in 2001, a coalition of the American Film Industry, the Film and Television Action Committee (FTAC) was formed to lobby the US government to examine the impact of subsidies for off-shore production.⁴¹

Foreign Investment in Australian Film

Whilst we have played host to foreign film production in Australia for a century, foreign investment in Australian film is not new either. Since the 1920s, Australia has witnessed an integration of parts of the local film industry into the dominant Anglo-American industry and for many years has played an important role as a junior member of the Anglo-American team. It was predicted by media theorist Dorland in 1996, that a "growing proportion of our local industry would be increasingly integrated within transnational production" and it is now clear that this is a reality.⁴²

The Australian audiovisual industry, like those around the world, is being internationalised by the rise of global media trans-national corporations (TNCs) and their push into media markets. The Australian film industry has seen an influx of TNCs since Village Roadshow undertook a joint venture with Warners Roadshow studios in Queensland in 1991.⁴³ Since then, in terms of production, we have seen TNCs involved with Australian feature film production, including News Corp (Aust) involvement with *Soft Fruit*, through Fox Searchlight, and *Oscar and Lucinda* and *Holy Smoke* through Twentieth Century Fox. Whilst productions by US studios and producers have been visible through the high profile Warner/Roadshow and Fox Studios, Europe also remains a strong investor in Australian productions. France's CIBY 2000 backed *Muriel's Wedding* and *The Piano*, Gaumont financed *Me, Myself and I* and distributor Pandora invested in *Shine*.

Whilst the 1980s saw an increase in foreign film production in Australia, it also saw a waning of the dependence of Australian filmmakers on government subsidy with their

⁴¹ <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/exp/exp0112.pdf>

⁴² Dorland, in A. Moran, *Film Policy*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p.118.

⁴³ S. Maher, op. cit. p.7.

looking to private investors to finance films more than ever before. Private investors however, unlike the government, were keen for films to reach their profit potential and as a result, film makers were forced to look to the US and Europe for distribution deals, so as to guarantee their investors some kind of revenue. These distribution rights were to be sold prior to the film being made, and as a result, in 1984/85, there became a reliance on a number of international distributors who were willing to pay upfront advances for Australian films. These advances formed the bulk of the films' production budgets.

Understandably, the international distributors made the added demand that the film not only have an "Australian character and flavour", but be attractive to an international audience and hence Australian film makers faced the challenge of making their films pleasing to both local and international audiences, a challenge which was compounded by the tension between the objectives of developing an Australian cinema and the need to meet the supply needs of distributors. Australian Filmmakers however, responded to this challenge by developing diverse styles and narratives exploring different genres of filmmaking and new representations of the Australian character, landscape and mythologies. This diversity is reflected in such films as *Australian Dream* and *Emoh Ruo*, comedies, *A Street to Die*, *Fran* and *A Test of Love* –quasi documentaries, *Empty Beach*, *Fair Game* and *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* – Action Dramas, and *Cactus* and *The More things Change* – human relationship films.⁴⁴

The introduction of the official Co-production Program in 1986 helped to establish foreign investment as a major source of financing of Australian feature films throughout the 1990s and 2000s.⁴⁵ The level of foreign investment in Australian feature films reached its highest point in the last half of the 1990s, eclipsing both government and private Australian sources, with foreign investments in qualifying features reaching 64% in 1999/2000, a rise from the 48% of 1995/96.⁴⁶ In the 2000s, foreign investment in Australian film has been erratic, largely due to the impact on figures brought about by high investment in single films in some years. Where a filmmaker has an international profile, there are cases where their films have been fully financed by

⁴⁴ www.abs.gov.au/.../abs@.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/c83e935009d14cca2569de0025c18a!

⁴⁵ <http://www.afc.gov.au/gtp/mpfeaturesfinance.html>

⁴⁶ S. Maher, op. cit. p.x.

overseas sources, for example, George Miller's *Happy Feet* financed by Warner Brothers, *Babe: Pig in the City*, financed by Universal, *Moulin Rouge* financed by Fox and Jane Campion's *Holy Smoke* financed by Miramax.⁴⁷

A large amount of foreign financing in these single Australian films has seen foreign investment levels rise and fall dramatically on a year-by-year basis. Whilst foreign financing was at a meagre 9.2% in 2002/2003, the next year saw it reach a high to rival that of the late 1990s with 63.5%, falling again to 19.7% in 2004/2005⁴⁸. In order to gain a realistic view of the contribution of foreign finance to Australian feature film production, it is more relevant perhaps to consider that it has accounted for an average of 48.6% of the total funding of Australian feature films in the decade from 1995 and has been responsible for investing in an average of 8 films per year in these years. The average number of Australian films each year during this period is 26.⁴⁹

Australian/International Co-production

*"(The) strange beast known as co-production... an amalgam of Australian elements with overseas elements... Maybe this is the real genre of the 1990s, the 'hybrid cinema', like one of those foldout children's books of characters with a lion's head, a zebra's middle and an emu's feet."*⁵⁰

The scaling back of 10BA tax concessions in the mid 1980s forced Australian producers to find other means by which to fund their films, and with their growing awareness of the international marketplace, international co-productions became an attractive way to finance films in Australia.⁵¹ Although initially resistant to encouraging co-productions for fear of compromising their commitment to the production of Australian cultural content, the Australian Film Commission (AFC) from 1984, began to work on a policy for regulating co-productions and early in 1985, announcing that they were bringing in a two-year trial system of controlling co-production between Australian film and

⁴⁷ <http://www.afc.gov.au/gtp/mpfeaturesfinance.html>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Appendix 2.

⁵⁰ Moran, *Film Policy*, (London: Routledge, 1996), p.245.

⁵¹ S. Maher, op. cit. p.25.

television producers and overseas companies.⁵² The first project to be approved under the new scheme was *Not for Glory, Not for Gold*, a \$4.2M mini-series co-production with Canada, written by David Williamson and the second a Roadshow, Coote and Carrol telemovie, *The First Kangaroos*, the first Australia-UK production, for which the AFC reached an agreement with Channel 4.⁵³

In the 2000s, foreign investment and partnerships in qualifying Australian feature film productions can take the form of “official” co-productions, “unofficial” co-productions or straight equity investment, with all co-productions involving a level of shared creative control.⁵⁴ Official co-productions may occur only with those nine countries with which Australia has a co-production treaty or Memorandum of Understanding, these currently include the UK, Canada, Italy, France, Israel, Northern Ireland, Germany and New Zealand and Vietnam,⁵⁵ although there are obviously many more co-production opportunities on the agenda for Australian producers, with an MOU signed between Australia and India in 2005, and a further bilateral film co-production agreement proposed between Australia and Singapore. Negotiations have also begun on a co-production agreement with China.⁵⁶ As of January 2003, 25 official co-production feature films had been made in Australia, with a total budgeted cost of \$267.3M, although not all of the negotiated treaties have yet been used. Even though they have been in place for some time, Australia has not yet embarked on feature film co-productions with Ireland, Israel or Vietnam.

It is evident that some co-production agreements have been more beneficial for seeing the production of Australian co-production than others. Understandably, with a sharing of much broadcast material already, Australia and the UK have put together 21 co-productions since 1990, making the UK Australia’s major partner in co-productions. These co-productions have been largely made up of series for television, although 16 feature films have also been made under the treaty. The Australian-Canadian co-

⁵² Dermody and Jacka, op. cit. p.57.

⁵³ Ibid. p.59.

⁵⁴ S. Maher, op. cit. p.25.

⁵⁵ Australian Film Commission, *Foreign Film and Television Production in Australia*, Report June 2002. At

http://www.afc.gov.au/policyandresearch/policy/foreign_prod.aspx

⁵⁶ Ibid.

production treaty is responsible for the next highest number of co-productions, with 20 productions,⁵⁷ nine of which are feature films. A further 17 official co-productions have been undertaken with France, six being feature films, 1 with Germany, a feature film, three television co-productions with Ireland, 1 feature film co-production with Italy, and finally six co-productions have resulted from the Australia/New Zealand treaty, with three feature films produced.

Official co-productions mean that the Australian film funding bodies can protect Australian film from being totally controlled creatively by the foreign partner, with the treaties and MOUs negotiated by the Australian government endeavouring to protect the Australian elements of co-productions. The FFC for example, regularly invests in co-productions and in doing so gives regard to: the overall level of Australian content; the participation of Australian in key creative roles, especially cast, writer and director; whether the project has been originated in Australia; where it is to be shot; and the number of co-productions financed in a particular year's slate⁵⁸. In addition to these considerations, the FFC will only fund the cost of the Australian elements of a co-production. Films that have been made in this way under official co-production agreements include, *Ned Kelly*, *Black and White*, *Sirens*, *Welcome to Woop Woop*, *Dingo*, *Green Card*, and *Map of the Human Heart*, and whilst they are made with foreign investment, under the treaty they were bound to retain Australian creative control, be based on Australian stories and use Australian cast and crew.⁵⁹

Any co-financing arrangement that is made outside of these co-production treaties is known as an “unofficial” co-production. *Black Robe* (Bruce Beresford, 1992) with Canada and *The Piano* (Jane Campion, 1993) with France were un-official co-productions and foreign financing from the USA, Italy and France also realised films like *Muriel's Wedding* (PJ Hogan, 1994) and *Bad Boy Bubby* (Rolf De Heer, 1994).⁶⁰ Whilst Australia makes both official and unofficial co-productions, the latter is often easier to arrange, as there are less formal agreement requirements set out.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Nick Herd, op. cit. p. 25.

⁵⁸ AFC website, op. cit.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ S. Maher, op. cit. p.xii.

⁶¹ Ibid. p.25.

The dramatic increase in foreign investment and production across the audiovisual industry in Australia in the second half of the 1990s was not due to official and unofficial co-production alone however, with international finance in the form of presales seeing Australian features receiving about 40 per cent of their budget finance from overseas.⁶² At conferences and in funding initiative partnerships, Australian film funding bodies, acutely aware of both the competitive international film arena and their small annual allocations of budgets for Australian film funding, have actively encouraged Australian producers to source international funding and presales for their projects. Typical of film industry conferences of the 2000s, the 2002 SPAA conference saw 14 international broadcaster and distribution representatives brought to Australia for Australian producers to pitch their projects to; 9 Americans, 3 British, 1 Canadian and an Indonesian. Making it even more evident that foreign investment in Australian film was high on the agenda, seven sessions over the four days of the conference were devoted to different international co-production options. The Australian government's film investment body, the FFCA (previously the AFFC), has a number of different allocated budgets for film production in Australia, with by far the most amount of money available to co-productions where international funding partners share the financial risks associated with film investment.

There is a concern amongst Australian film industry analysts that a push for producers to operate within a primarily business context has meant a loss of a certain integrity and commitment to the art of filmmaking in Australia. Instead of focussing their energies on the creative process, film makers are being asked to be up front business men and women diverting their energies in order to satisfy purely commercially demands.⁶³ Whilst it is obvious that creative decisions could indeed suffer at the expense of business ones, it is also true that Australia cannot support its film and television production solely on the strength of domestic box office receipts and television sales alone. Revenue from overseas has long been a part of Australian filmmaking and it is clear from the level of success in raising foreign finance for Australian film, that in the

⁶² David Hancock, *Global Film Production*, (Unpublished working paper for Venice Conference, 1998). At http://www.obs.coe.int/oea_publ/eurocine/global_filmproduction.pdf.en

⁶³ Screen Producer's Association Australia. At e:\z archive and remove\for beulah\spaa_pdfs\jan00sub.doc

business context, Australian programs are capable of obtaining wide international distribution, and hence are attractive to foreign investors.

With relationships with international co-production partners becoming commonplace in the 2000s, it is interesting to examine the impact of international investors and broadcasters with their specific needs and expectations, on the content of Australian films. It may be that filmmakers concentrating on making their films appealing to the international marketplace are changing their film ideas to meet both local and international audience needs. It is relevant also, to investigate whether or not these changes are as a result of pressure from international investors/broadcasters, local funding bodies or engaging in a kind of self-censorship when deciding which stories should be told when pitching a project. It is justifiable to pose the question, "Are the script and aesthetic choices of Australian filmmakers being influenced by the big budgets available to be making "global" and hence "marketable" film product?"

Many Australian filmmakers admit to making decisions and choices both on content and casting to please the international investors in their projects. Ann Turner, Australian director of *Irresistible* in 2006, chose to cast American actress Susan Sarandon in the lead role in the film even though an Australian would easily have fit the role. The reason for the choice was the pressure put on her by her international investors, English, Germans and Italians to have a "star" name in the film. She attributes the fact that the film sold to an incredible 27 international territories to the fact that she decided to cast an American star.⁶⁴ These changing choices appear to extend to content also, with one Australian Director of an Australian feature documentary with a US distribution deal, admitting to choosing only experts from the U.S. She believed that by having Australian experts, the Australian accent would undervalue the information for a U.S. audience. Many films such as the Macquarie Bank funded *Danny Deckchair*, have an obvious pitch to an American audience and are further examples of this kind of tailoring of content to suit international audiences.

Along with pressures from international investors, come pressures from our own Australian film funding bodies and broadcasters to tell less parochial stories with more

⁶⁴ Jim Schembri, Sydney Morning Herald, October 13, 2006.

global storylines, hence giving projects a greater chance of international distribution and foreign investment. From the late 1990s, Australian film funding bodies have begun to hold “International Market Seminars” for writers and directors, giving tips for selling to Europe and America at international marketplaces. The FFCA invited filmmakers to meet international distributors and broadcasters in their offices, in the hope that allegiances would be formed, allowing Australian filmmakers to access international funding and hence increase their budget potential and the ambitiousness of their film projects. Australian filmmakers believe that the overwhelming response of international broadcasters to investing in their projects upfront is, “is there relevance for my audience?”

Whilst there is an increase in pressure on Australian filmmakers to make projects that more international appeal, there is mounting pressure also on the Australian Government to re-evaluate some of the criteria for the sourcing of Australian Government funding for international co-production. The regulations as they stand mean that even if a film has an Australian Producer and Director, if its script originates anywhere other than Australia, it is ineligible for Australian Government funding. Producers like Heather Ogilvie, who are dealing with large international co-productions, feel that this rigid classification structure for Australian film needs to be re-visited in the current global filmmaking environment⁶⁵. Some would argue however, that changes to assessments in the FFC have already happened as a result of a growing focus on Australian film as part of an international marketplace, and have resulted already in smaller more localised Australian films having less chance of being funded.

American Studios in Australia

Whilst many countries have produced feature films in Australia, the United States is the source of most of the foreign production that comes to Australia and all of the foreign studio production.⁶⁶ With Hollywood prioritising international production in the late 1980s due to both an increase in demand for new product driven by an expanding

⁶⁵ Panelist Discussion, Australian International Documentary Conference, Adelaide, 2004.

⁶⁶ Nick Herd, *op. cit.* p. xi.

US domestic audiovisual economy, and the rising cost of film production in the US⁶⁷, production was largely relocated to countries such as Australia, Britain, Canada, Mexico and Europe,⁶⁸ making Hollywood itself not so much a place anymore, as a means of production that is distributed around the world. Australia was a popular choice for American studios to set up, due to its diversity of landscape, cultural proximity, secure political environment, cheap but skilled labour due to a favourable currency exchange rate, government incentives for foreign production and in the years after the establishment of foreign studios in Australia, the availability of studio infrastructure for production.⁶⁹ With Hollywood boasting of the budget savings afforded by shooting in Australia, Australian crews became known as “Mexicans with mobiles”⁷⁰.

Although co-productions and other foreign production have contributed to the increase in “global” film production in Australia and the numbers of films made, it is the establishment of American studios in Queensland and NSW that have greatly bolstered the amount of money spent on feature film in Australia each year, leading many Australians to believe that there are huge benefits to both Australia and our local film industry in being a part of this “transnational” or “global” studio production. The expected ‘benefits’ to NSW resulting from “global” studio production at Fox Studios in Sydney were identified in the NSW Government’s policy objectives in the agreements it made with Fox, amongst them were; “securing the future of a culturally significant, employment generating film industry for the state of NSW” and “establishing a strategic position for Sydney in the international film arena”.⁷¹

The first American studio opened in Australia in 1991, when a joint venture between Australia’s Village Roadshow and the Warner Brothers film Studio saw the establishment of the Warners/Roadshow Studio complex on the Gold Coast,⁷² and the

⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 23.

⁶⁸ Maher, S. (2001) *ibid.* p.ix.

⁶⁹ Herd, Nick. (2004) *op. Cit.*, p. 23.

⁷⁰ "Australia as a Film Location: Wallaby-Wood." *Economist*, 30 May 1998, p. 84.

⁷¹ At

<http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/publications/reports/performance/1997/showgd/ch11.htm>

⁷² T. Miller, N. Govil, J. McMurria, and R. Maxwell, *Global Hollywood* (London: British Film Institute, 2001), p. 67.

first time a major Hollywood Studio had invested in production infrastructure in Australia⁷³. For Stanley O'Toole, managing director of what later became the studio; Queensland was the perfect location choice for a studio, it was an "LA without smog" and what was built there was a studio boasting six sound stages and production offices, geared towards large budget international co-productions and foreign productions, with rents out of the league of the majority of Australian producers and productions.

The Warner Roadshow studio on the Gold Coast has subsequently produced many high budget foreign feature films in the 1990s/2000s, including *Streetfighter* (1995), *Fortress* (1993), *The Phantom* (1996) *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (1997), *Peter Pan* (2002) and *Ghost Ship* (2002). In its fifteen years of operation, the studio has drawn investment from CBS, Viacom, ABC, Fox TV, Disney TV, Disney Channel, Fox and Warner Bros., aided by Australian Government tax credits on labour of up to 10%.⁷⁴ Whilst traditionally lagging behind NSW and Victoria in production statistics, the arrival of the studios saw Queensland's production expenditure soar in 1995/96, accounting for 35% of Australian production expenditure, for the first time more than both of the other states.⁷⁵ In the 2000s, the studios continue to actively encourage foreign productions to Australia and provide advice and assistance in the areas of work visas and local Workplace agreements, with the Pacific Film and Television Commission in Queensland actively recruiting and providing assistance to offshore productions.

Twentieth Century Fox followed suit and opened Fox Studios in Sydney in 1998, with Fox investing \$200 million in the joint venture with developer Lend Lease. Whilst the commencement of large studio production at Fox Studios, offered on the surface salvation to a small, barely economically viable local Australian film industry, fears were that it would also pose a threat to the smaller local industry and its traditions of film making. When Lachlan Murdoch stated at the opening of Fox Studios in 1998, "At last the Australian Film Industry has a home, Fox Studios", many prominent members of the Australian film industry, cast and crew, voiced their concerns over supporting a global film industry in Australia that could potentially see the demise of local

⁷³ S. Maher, op. cit. p.20.

⁷⁴ T. Miller, N. Govil, J. McMurria and R. Maxwell, op. cit. p. 67.

⁷⁵ S. Maher, op. cit. p.21.

production. Many predicted that it would signal the end of the local filmmaking as we knew it.

Whilst Queensland was keen to focus on the establishment of studios to aid foreign feature film production, the Carr government in NSW, aware of the concerns of the local filmmaking community, decided that incorporating local film production with global film production was the only way to ensure prosperity for the Australian film industry. The establishment of Fox Studios in Sydney in 1998, saw the Carr Government in NSW enter into an agreement with Fox Studios, the primary motive to see this “global” Australian film industry flourish, allowing for members of the local industry to be a part of an economically viable and sustainable industry in Australia.

So keen was the Carr Government to see an agreement reached, that it put together an attractive package of benefits in order to settle the deal with Murdoch and the Fox Studios Australia consortium. The land at Moore Park, classified as an “urban conservation area”⁷⁶ by the National Trust, was leased to the American studio for 40 years, giving Fox a \$24.3M contribution from the NSW State Government⁷⁷ and under a business development package for Fox Studios Australia, the NSW Government pays the payroll tax for employees engaged by Fox and its associated companies as well as employees engaged by other companies using the studio facilities for production. This scheme was worth \$6.1M in the 8.5 years ending in June 2005.⁷⁸ Fox’s side of the agreement with the NSW Government, saw them agree to retaining and restoring the heritage listed buildings and to ensure that 40% of the land was to be retained as dedicated public space. The Back Lot enterprise with Lendlease Australia, giving the public access to studio related entertainment comprised a large part of this public space allocation, but it was expensive and not popular and subsequently closed in 2002 with a financial loss to Lendlease of \$80 million. Fox immediately announced that construction would begin to expand the studio facilities by 40%, a move seemingly out of line with the terms of the agreement, but when the first evaluation of the meeting of

⁷⁶ J. Smith, *From Cows to Cameras – The Making of an Industry*, May 1998. At http://www.dbce.csiro.au/inno-web/1299/fox_studios.htm

⁷⁷ Tracey Prisk, *Mechanic Praises FSA*, *Encore*, Vol 16, Issue 6, 6 May 1988, p.4.

⁷⁸ S. Maher, op. cit. p.21.

the terms of the NSW Government/ Fox Studios Agreement was undertaken in 2005, the State Government was satisfied that Fox Studios had so far honoured the agreement.

Media reports at the time of Fox Studios' opening in Sydney in 1998 were hailing the opening of the studios as "leading to Australia's biggest production boom yet, and another renaissance of the local Australian film industry"⁷⁹ and on paper it certainly appears that Fox Studios in Sydney has indeed contributed to NSW maintaining a dominant position in Australia's audiovisual production. In 1999, the local NSW industry was estimated to be worth over \$300M, trebling in value over the previous two financial years and in 1999/2000, total production from local, foreign and co-production activity rose again to \$348M.⁸⁰ This seemingly healthy figure however, does not reflect the true state of the local Australian film industry, with 2002 seeing a decrease in the production of Australian feature films from 31 to 26 and Australian productions accounting for only \$312 million of total expenditure on productions, a decrease of \$47 million on 2001.

Victoria followed NSW and Queensland in its bid to attract large budget foreign film production when in July 2001, the Victorian Government released information pertaining to the design and operation of film studios on the Docklands site, using State land.⁸¹ In a deal between the Victorian Government and the consortium Central City Studios (CCS), in exchange for a loan to build the studios, CCS had to amongst other terms, ensure the sound stages were utilised for a minimum 70% of the year, and from 2004/05, serve at least \$100M of production per annum. In addition, at least \$25M of the additional production had to come from Australian productions⁸² In 2004, Melbourne Central City studios opened, with the American film *Ghost Rider*, with a budget of \$120M the first to be filmed there in 2005.

In the 2000s, US major studios dominate the global film economy, with total runaway production to Australia having increased on average by 26% across the 1990s. Although producing a relatively small amount of films a year, the revenues that have resulted

⁷⁹ J. Smith, *Oz Cinema*, May 1998. At www.ozcinema.com/articles/1998/may/foxstudios.html

⁸⁰ AFC, *National Production Survey 1999/2000*, p.6.

⁸¹ Nick Herd, op. cit. p. 76.

⁸² Ibid.

through their integrated distribution mechanisms run into tens of billions of dollars⁸³. In its deals with the American studios, the Australian Government expressed its hope that the studios would “open up a whole range of creative opportunities for Australian filmmakers and performers” and boost Australia’s “reputation as a viable offshore production alternative”.⁸⁴

There is no denying that there have been benefits to Australia playing host to large budget American film productions. The technologies developed and used on these high budget studio films in Australia have meant Australia’s special effects and post-production teams have had access to leading technologies, and as a result, are some of the most highly trained crews in the world. O’Regan believes that the benefits provided by these opportunities are great, with Fox Studios closing the technology gap that has previously prevented the Australian production sector from participating in productions driven by special effects.⁸⁵

Whilst benefits to particular sectors of the Australian film industry are apparent, on an examination of the statistics concerning Australian crew members working on US studio films, it appears to be the case that for the bulk of this Hollywood offshore production in Australia, the trend is to employ Australian cast and crews in secondary or support roles.⁸⁶ As a result of this, there are concerns that with increased studio production in Australia comes the danger of the Australian film industry being swallowed up by the Hollywood machine and being labelled as a Hollywood Back Lot. Whilst this would have undoubtedly been the case in the 1950s when local production was non-existent, what may prevent this from happening in the 2000s, is the fact that the Australian film industry is now “firmly established in its own right” and continues to enjoy a steady stream of Australian government funding.⁸⁷

⁸³ D. Hancock, op. cit.

⁸⁴ J. Smith, *Oz Cinema*, op. cit.

⁸⁵ Tom O’Regan, *A Tale of Two Cities – Dark City and Babe II Pig in the City*, in Verhoeven, Deb (ed) *Twin Peaks: Australian and New Zealand Feature Films*, (Melbourne: Damned Publishing, 1999), p.195.

⁸⁶ S. Maher, op. cit. p. xi.

⁸⁷ S. Maher, op. cit. p.9.

<http://afc.neuro.com.au/downloads/policies/Internationalisation%20FINAL.pdf>

The American studios are aware that they may be perceived as a threat to local film industries and as such, they have made moves to be involved in local production also. American studio involvement in the production of Australian films during the 1990s indicates that they are willing to engage in local production under Australian creative control to compliment their offshore work. Not only US features are being made at Fox Studios in Sydney, high budget Australian features such as Gillian Armstrong's *Oscar and Lucinda*, George Miller's *Babe* (fully financed by Universal), Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge* (financed by Fox) and Jane Campion's *Holy Smoke* have also been produced there.⁸⁸

With local television drama and commercial production down in 2005, it was the offshore sector in its busiest year in Australia that gave some reasons for optimism about the Australian film industry. Due to the production of Warner Bros' *Superman Returns*, Paramount's *Charlotte's Web* and Sony's *Ghost Rider* the US studios in Australia were booked out, employing many Australian cast and crewmembers. It seems however, that this upturn was not to be permanent, with 2006 seeing both a downturn in production at Warner Brothers on the Gold Coast and Fox Studios without any substantial bookings after September 2005 when *Superman Returns* finished.⁸⁹ Whilst in 2006 Warner Brothers continues to be booked by US productions with World Wrestling Entertainment's production *Condemned* shooting at their Gold Coast studios, Fox Studios in Sydney remains without bookings, leaving the future of production there uncertain.

Although foreign film production increased in Australia in the period 1998 – 2002, it is not necessarily easy to correlate it with production levels at the studios in Australia, Fox in Sydney and Warner Brothers on the Gold Coast. In this period, none of the foreign productions financed by Fox were filmed at Fox Studios and Warner Brothers have used the Warner Roadshow's Studios only on three occasions.⁹⁰ Whilst the studios undoubtedly boast the highest budget films, the number of foreign films produced at American studios in Australia since they opened is low in comparison with the total

⁸⁸ S. Maher, op. cit. p21.

⁸⁹ Michaela Boland, *Quest for Finance*, in Encore production magazine, August 2005, p.30.

⁹⁰ Nick Herd, op. cit. p. 24.

number of foreign films produced here, with 7 films made at Fox Studios in Sydney between 1998 – 2002 and 18 films made at Warner Brothers on the Gold Coast out of a total of 21 foreign films produced in NSW and 34 in Queensland.⁹¹ Out of over 50 Australian feature films and telemovies produced in NSW in the period 1998 – 2002⁹², only 7 of them utilised the facilities at Fox Studios.⁹³

Whilst it is obvious that most of Fox Studios' productions are large budget and are funded and produced by off-shore companies, one of the hopes of the NSW State Government was that the studio would keep Australian film crews in work, and give them the training necessary to see them compete in an international arena.⁹⁴ It seems however that whilst many have received valuable training on international production in Australia, the American studios here are not able to offer the stable and ongoing employment that was anticipated.

Whilst the levels of production at Fox Studios appear to be low, in 2003, it was reported to the NSW Parliament that Fox Studios had met all of the NSW Government's expectations of it in terms of continuity of production and number of jobs created, with employment in the production industry escalating by 82% since 1985.⁹⁵ This boom in expenditure on foreign production in NSW was confirmed by data produced by the AFC, with foreign drama production in NSW increasing from \$5M to \$143M in 2001/02.⁹⁶ This apparent boom however was short-lived. In 2002/03, the year after these findings were reported, NSW suffered an overall drop in the value of production of 60%, the worst since 1995/96. It became apparent that single high budget films were responsible for inflating production expenditure in NSW, and an absence of such a single high budget foreign film would thus have a great impact on the State's production economy.⁹⁷ With the experience of such a drop in the value of production in

⁹¹ Nick Herd, *op. cit.* p.93.

⁹² NSW Government, *Premier Launches Sydney Production Of Happy Feet 2*. At http://www.screen.nsw.gov.au/data/publish/473/HappyFeet_Premier_040210.pdf

⁹³ Nick Herd, *op. cit.* p.68.

⁹⁴ J. Smith, *op. cit.* At www.ozcinema.com/articles/1998/may/foxstudios.html

⁹⁵ Nick Herd, *op. cit.* p.70.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

2002/03, it is evident that reliance on studio production for a consistent production economy is not realistic.

So what determines the number of large budget US productions that are made in Australian studios? It appears that the greatest influence on US production in Australia is the value of the American dollar here. During the boom period of 1999-2003, when *The Matrix*, *Star Wars*, *Scooby-Doo* and *Farscape* were made, the Australian dollar was between US50c and US65c.⁹⁸ In 2009/10, with the Australian dollar hovering around the US90c mark, production at the studios has plummeted. Not only has Australia lost two films with budgets of \$US150m within 6 months; Warner Bros' *The Green Lantern*, expected to film at Sydney's Fox Studios, and Universal Pictures' *Battleship*, but there appears to be little interest in filming here whilst the Australian dollar remains strong.⁹⁹

Australian Government and Foreign Investment Incentives

Changes to Australian Taxation Law in 2002 were in part to create a subsidy to compete with other jurisdictions such as the UK and encourage foreign production to Australia. The introduction of the *Taxation Laws Amendment (Film Incentives) Bill* to Federal Parliament signalled a 12.5% refundable tax offset against Australian production expenditure for larger budget films and was part of what the government called its *Integrated Film Package*. The package stipulates that films with expenditure between \$15 million and \$50 million need to spend 70% of their total expenditure in Australia to qualify, whilst films with over \$50 million expenditure don't have to meet the 70% requirement. It is well documented that foreign investors and producers, most notably Twentieth Century Fox, lobbied the Australian Government for the implementation of this refundable tax offset.

Whilst the 10B concession continues to operate side-by-side with the new offset, films aren't eligible to receive both concessions, with those films receiving capital from the FFCA or a Film Licensed Investment Company (FLIC) not eligible for the new financial incentive. The Australian Government anticipated that the new legislation would produce concessions of \$4.7 million for the financial year 2001/2002, rising to

⁹⁸ NSW Government, *Premier Launches Sydney Production Of Happy Feet 2*, op. cit.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

\$53.4 million for 2005/2006. Since its introduction, more than \$500M has been spent by overseas productions filming in Australia, including the *Matrix* trilogies, *Superman Returns* and *Star Wars*.¹⁰⁰

In addition to tax incentives offered to foreign production companies to make their films in Australia by the federal government, state governments in Australia offer various further incentives to foreign producers. In New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland these include payroll tax exemptions, while Victoria offers grants and Western Australia offers project funding. Queensland has recently announced a special post-production incentive and South Australia now offers a labour cost rebate.¹⁰¹

In New South Wales, the NSW Film & Television Investment Attraction Fund (FIAT) is based on a rebate of payroll tax, but also takes into consideration the amount of money spent by the production in NSW. To be eligible for the fund there must be a minimum spend of AUD\$5m in NSW or a postproduction minimum spend of AUD\$3m. The rebate is made available after production has been completed and audited figures have been submitted and in addition to the attraction fund offered by the NSW Film & TV Office, Fox Studios Australia provides a rebate on productions that shoot at the Studio in Sydney.

Queensland is even more overtly a film friendly production paradise, with its government authorities having been familiar with foreign studio production for longer. Government incentives for foreign film production in Queensland include a Payroll Tax Rebate, which means full reimbursement for projects with a minimum AUD\$3.5m spend on production in Queensland for single projects or a AUD\$5M Queensland spend for a bundling of two or more projects. In addition there is on offer a Cast and Crew Rebate, equating to 8-10% of a weekly wage, a Public Safety Rebate up to AUD\$50,000 and an Internship Scheme. The Pacific Film and Television Commission (PFTC) administers these incentives and can assist with location recommendations, crew and cast directories and other film and television.

¹⁰⁰ Remco Marcelis, *Growing the Digital Pie*, in *Encore production magazine*, November 2005.

¹⁰¹ Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Film in Australia - The big picture*, op. cit.

As is the case in NSW and Queensland, a range of direct and indirect financial incentives are available to productions filming in South Australia. A payroll tax exemption on eligible productions shot in SA reduces the film's payroll total by approximately 6 per cent, but this functions as an up-front exemption not a rebate. To be eligible for the exemption, projects must be produced wholly or substantially within South Australia, employ SA residents, and provide significant economic benefits to the State. Other incentives offered in SA include: competitive location fees, affordable living and accommodation costs, cooperative state and local government authorities - making access to locations easy, police and fire services are free of charge in most cases.

Film Victoria like the other states has incentives to attract foreign film production to Victoria. With the Melbourne Central City Studios opened in 2004, Victoria too boasts studios capable of hosting large-scale production. Under the Production Attraction Incentive Fund (PIAF), rebates are offered to interstate and offshore productions that have a minimum spend in Victoria of \$3.5M.¹⁰²

Whilst the refundable tax-offset and State Government initiatives have done much to encourage international production to Australia, it seems that other countries have now followed suit in an attempt to win the international studio production dollar. In a number of recent cases, these incentives offered by other countries, particularly South Africa and some US states¹⁰³, have been the deciding factor in where the production has been made and as a result Australia has lost out on tens of millions of dollars of potential work.¹⁰⁴ As much as lifestyle, a skilled crew base and diverse landscapes are attractive to producers when considering Australia as a production option, it seems that financial savings are paramount in the final decision in many cases.

¹⁰² Film Victoria Website. At <http://film.vic.gov.au/www/html/101-funding.asp>

¹⁰³ Michaela Boland, *op. cit.* p.30.

¹⁰⁴ Remco Marcelis, *op. cit.* p.28.

Tandem Film Industries

“We do not rely on foreign production to build our domestic or indigenous industries”, he said, “But we know that the two can coexist and there is some potential, if not real, flow-on benefit to the domestic industry by having these foreign productions.”

(Science Minister Peter McGauran, Encore, March 2002)

In the sixteen-year period, 1989 – 2005, the number of foreign productions in Australia has fluctuated, but the general trend has been upwards, and with this increase it is clearer than ever in the 2000s that there are two film industries operating in Australia, the “local” Australian film industry characterised by Australians in key creative roles, ideas that have originated locally and Australian government funding and the “global” film industry in Australia, distinguished by large American studio production, off-shore production, large budgets and global storylines.

What we are witnessing is a division of the Australian film industry into the traditionally low budget and Australian government funded “local film” and film which is produced in Australia, but has somewhat higher budgets as a result of international investment. To describe the existence of these two types of Australian film, it is relevant to use Dermody and Jacka’s definition of “tandem film industries” in Australia, with Industry 1 being a local industry concerned with the production of cultural product and favouring government safeguards of Australian cultural product and character, and Industry 2, being a “global” industry representative of the concerns of distributors and exhibitors and focused on marketability and success in an international arena and not concerned with the problems associated with American cultural imperialism.¹⁰⁵

Even within the local Australian film industry this divide is apparent. Whilst feature films produced in Hollywood for the international marketplace average budgets of \$80million, “local” Australian features, relying almost entirely on Australian Government funding, average closer to \$4 million, leaving those with higher budget films to try and raise the extra funds in the international marketplace. With global storylines, comes a greater chance for international distribution and hence foreign

¹⁰⁵ Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka, *The Screening of Australia, vol 1: Anatomy of a Film Industry* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1987), p.198.

investment and so those producers looking to source funds internationally are often more concerned with the issues of marketability and distribution than the ideals of “national cinema”.

With a rise in the number of Australian feature films made with foreign investment, it is obvious that international funding has become an important factor in producing Australian feature films in the 1990s/2000s. With the relatively small size of the Australian market, profit for feature films through domestic release alone is unlikely and as a result, Australian productions increasingly rely on international sales and international co-productions to spread the costs.¹⁰⁶ In 1999/2000, aside from *Moulin Rouge*, all Australian features were made for under \$6M, with 42% being made for less than \$1M.¹⁰⁷ Australian film producers wishing to make more expensive and adventurous films are hence keen to access the funds that an international co-production deal affords. Increasingly it is the case in Australia, that feature films need foreign investment if they are to make it to production,¹⁰⁸ with filmmakers aware of the associated need to make their films as internationally appealing as possible.

Many internationally successful Australian films have been produced with the aid of international funding in the 1990s, for example, French money helped bankroll *The Piano* and *Muriel's Wedding* whilst American money part financed *The Adventures of Priscilla*.¹⁰⁹ These films have been celebrated as “Australian” both in the media and at Australian Film award ceremonies, irrespective of their funding sources, due in part to having Australian key creatives and cast, but in the case of *Muriel's Wedding* and *Priscilla* with the duality of local and global in content also, with elements of traditional Australian national cinema in the recognisably Australian landscapes and characters.

In the 30 years since Australia's film renaissance in the 1970s, Australia's audiovisual sector remains regulated in order that the cultural objectives that underpin public support for it are met. Whilst these cultural considerations are still a major concern, cultural and trade objectives are intersecting more and more in what is a “global media

¹⁰⁶ S. Maher, op. cit. p.ix.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p.xii.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p.16.

¹⁰⁹ Tom O'Regan, *Australian National Cinema*, op. cit. p.16.

marketplace."¹¹⁰ It is evident that during the 1990s, Australian film producers and production companies have extended their international operations significantly through "take-overs, mergers, joint ventures or partnerships with foreign firms or through expanded activities in foreign territories"¹¹¹. With the reality of a global media marketplace and the increase in foreign investment in Australian film, the federal Australian Government commissioned a report in 1997, drafted by Hoyts' chairman David Gonski, into the role of Government funding in the Australian Audio-visual industry. The resulting report is known as the "Gonski Report".

This report confirmed the need for ongoing Government support of Australia's audiovisual industries in order that a viable production industry be sustained, one that fulfilled the cultural objectives of a diversity of products, views and visions. In addition, it highlighted the fact that "Commonwealth assistance and foreign investment were complimentary rather than substitutes for one another", acknowledging that the Review was "premised on the now international character of film production, distribution and exhibition".¹¹² Subsequently, this report identified three different forms of foreign investment occurring in the audiovisual industry, namely: investment by foreign companies in audiovisual infrastructure in Australia, production of foreign film and television in Australia, and foreign studio investment in qualifying Australian film and television productions.¹¹³

It is clear from funding statistics that the Australian government continues to support both local Australian film production and foreign production in Australia, the former due to a commitment to support an industry formed by government funding and policy, and the latter due to a desire to see the Australian film industry competitive on an international scale and to enhance the careers of Australian film industry practitioners. It seems however, that the level of support has not been able to secure feature film production levels in either the local Australian film industry or foreign feature film production in Australia.

¹¹⁰ S. Maher, op. cit. p.1.

¹¹¹ Ibid. p.x.

¹¹² Ibid. p.1.

¹¹³ David Gonski, *Review of Commonwealth Assistance to the Film Industry*, (Canberra: Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, March 1997), p.7.

What we have been left with in the 2000s is a small number of local Australian feature films per year and a small number of foreign feature films produced in Australia each year, neither being enough to sustain the Australian cast and crewmembers that rely on the film industries in Australia to sustain them.

Chapter 3 - Australian Films 1989 - 2005

Production Trends

The Australian Film Industry was revived in the early 1970s, with the Australian Government supporting the establishment and financing of what has become known as “national cinema” in Australia, largely as a response to the domination of Hollywood films on our screens. A government film-funding agency the Australian Film Development Corporation (AFDC) was established in order to fund films that qualified as “Australian”, with criteria for “Australianness” including content, nationality of cast and crew, and locations.¹¹⁴

With the establishment of the AFDC in 1970, local Australian film production was again underway, but it was the government tax incentives for investment in Australian film that commenced in 1980, that signalled the beginning of a production boom in Australia. With a 150% tax return on investment in Australian film, known as the 10BA tax deduction, many more Australian feature films were being produced than ever before, but with mounting concerns in the film industry that control had moved away from filmmakers to film commissions, and that cultural and aesthetic outcomes weren't being met, by 1985 the tax concessions had been scaled back significantly.¹¹⁵

Along with the demise of 10BA, the production downturn in feature film production in Australia in the late 1980s corresponded with the economic depression in Australia, with the Australian film industry suffering due to high interest rates, bankruptcy of financiers and production and talent leaving the industry or relocating overseas through a lack of employment, This contributed greatly to a diminishing of film production resources in Australia and in 1990, AFC rates of production fell to one project produced for every nine invested in.

¹¹⁴ Stuart Cunningham, *The Media in Australia: Industries, Texts, Audiences* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1993), p.77.

¹¹⁵ Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka Eds., *The Imaginary Industry: Australian Film in the late '80s* (Sydney: AFTRS, 1988), p. 13.

Due to an increase in foreign and American studio feature film production in Australia, the latter years of the 1990s saw an upturn in figures related to expenditure on feature film in Australia. These erratic but none-the-less stronger levels of production carried through into the early 2000s, with spending on Australian feature film and television drama jumping 8 per cent to \$662 million in 2001. While budgets boomed in 2001/2002 however, it appears that it was to be short-lived, with concern in 2002 about a dramatic drop in local production, across both locally made television drama and feature film. Whilst not one adult television mini-series was made in Australia in 2002 for the first time in more than 20 years, the number of Australian feature films produced dropped from 31 in the previous year to 26, with the total expenditure on feature film production in Australia falling by 35%, from \$127 million to \$82 million.¹¹⁶ Again a slump in Australian feature film production was evident, due both to a smaller number of projects being produced, and the fact that there were no films in the \$20 million plus budget as was the case in previous years with *Moulin Rouge* in 99/00 and *Babe* in 97/98. It had become apparent that large budget films such as these were mostly responsible for the healthy figures in expenditure on feature film in Australia from 1998 – 2000. In effect, the large budget US productions produced in Australia were responsible for both the extreme highs and then relatively low lows being reported in Australian feature film production figures.

In August 2004, the Australian Film Commission reported Australian drama production had further declined in 2002/2003, with 19 Australian feature films made compared to 26 in the previous year, and a production value of \$49 million, compared to \$131 million in the preceding financial year.¹¹⁷ The total spent on feature film production in Australia in 2002–03 was reported by the AFC to be \$232 million, compared to \$342 million in the preceding financial year, but from this total budget \$166 million was not spent in Australia.¹¹⁸ In addition, the value of co-productions was \$14 million, down \$14 million from the year before.¹¹⁹ These figures made it evident that the downturn in production in Australia related to both foreign production in Australia and local Australian film production, and prompted SPAA president Stephen Smith to open the

¹¹⁶ AFC, *National Production Survey 2000/01*, op. cit.

¹¹⁷ AFC, *National Production Survey AFC, 2002/03*.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

annual SPAA conference in 2004 with, “Ladies and Gentlemen, our film industry is stuffed! I have not revealed anything that we nor our industry supporters don’t already know”.¹²⁰

Whilst it is evident that foreign film production in Australia is erratic, there is no denying from AFC report production figures in the last decade, that foreign films have been playing an increasing role in the amount of feature production activity in Australia and that co-productions and American studio productions have resulted in an impressive rise if not in feature film production, in expenditure on feature film in Australia since 2000, with total expenditure on film production in Australia increased by 6% to \$608million in 2002. With high-budget titles such as *Star Wars II & III*, the *Matrix* films, *Stealth*, *Superman Returns*, *Ghost Rider*, *Son of the Mask* and *The Quiet American* shooting here, our levels of feature film expenditure over the years they are produced in, appear to be healthy, for example in 2004/05, feature film spending in Australia totalled \$331 million. Of this impressive figure however, foreign productions accounted for \$243 million, with Australian films only accounting for \$60 million and co-productions for the other \$27 million.¹²¹

Foreign production in Australia continues to be erratic, due to a number of factors. The writers and actors strike in US in 2002 for example, meant a foreign production craze in Australia, with an unprecedented number of film and TV projects green lit in order to complete production ahead of the strike, much of LA, Canada & Australia were working to capacity by late 2002. As a result, foreign productions spent \$191 million locally in Australia in 2002, higher than the late 1990s and almost double that of 2001, with Queensland alone having an increase of \$44 million due mainly to production there of the large budget foreign production *Scooby Doo*. It was however, a particularly low year statistics-wise for Australian film production.

Whilst foreign production and co-production figures have boosted the total expenditure on feature film in Australia and the number of feature films made, especially since 2000, what needs to be examined is the drop in number of local feature films made in

¹²⁰ Tracey Prisk and Fiona Williams, *SPAA proposes industry fix-it*, in *Encore Production Magazine*, September 2004, p.29.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

these years and whether or not a decline in this number can be attributed at all to a redistribution of funding to co-production and the demands that a large number of co-productions place on small pools of Australian film funding body money and resources.

The increase of foreign production in Australia has given Australian filmmakers a taste of what larger budgets can buy, and in increasing numbers they are chasing co-productions, in the hope of raising larger production budgets. This coupled with the focus of local agencies on Australian film as part of an international marketplace, may be contributing to a downturn in the number of low-budget local Australian films being made in 2006. Distributors also are steering Australian filmmakers away from producing our small films, reporting in *Encore* in 1999, that they are finding small – medium films harder and harder to release viably and hence are moving away from distributing small Australian films towards those with larger budgets and marketing potential outside of Australia.

Whilst many Australian filmmakers continue to make films that may be classified as fitting in to the traditional classification of “national cinema”, it appears that many more are heeding the advice of funding bodies and distributors and making films demonstrating elements of both the local and the global, in order to finance and market their films. As a result of the increased budgets sought from local funding agencies for these higher budget films, it appears that we are seeing a lower number of Australian films produced per year with the limited Australian government funding available.

Box Office Performance

The Australian cinema box-office continues to be dominated by high-budget American films in the 2000s, largely due to the vigorous and well-resourced marketing campaigns run by the studios backing them.

Over the past thirteen years, Australian films have earned 5.0 per cent of the box office (\$436 million out of a total of \$8,757 million), with the figures fluctuating greatly from year to year as a result of single high performance films in some years. With the success of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Muriel's Wedding* in 1994, the percentage of box office for Australian films reached 10%, the highest reached in that

period and in 1999, *Two Hands* opened in 1st place at Box Office, making it 1st Australian film to make number 1 since *Babe* in 1985. 2001 saw a record \$63.5 million earned by local films, including *Moulin Rouge*, *Lantana*, *The Man Who Sued God* and *Crocodile Dundee in LA*, but sadly, even with this level of success for Australia film, it represented only 8 per cent of the total box office that year.

In 2000, it appeared that audiences for Australian films were on the rise, with a 7.9% box office share continuing into 2001 when figures remained strong with 7.8%. This high level was short-lived however, when in 2002 figures for Australian film at box office showed that they are prone to fluctuate greatly as a result of single films performing well in some years, and figures dropping to 4.9%, due mostly to the fact that 2001 had *Moulin Rouge*. Whilst the overall 2002 box-office figures were down, the performance of Australian films remained strong in relative terms, with three Australian films earning over A\$5M and another ten taking more than A\$1M. 2002 was in fact one of Australia's top three years in Australian films earning over A\$1M, along with 1982 and 1998.¹²²

It seems that most recently, in 2005, Australian films are consistently faring well below the 5% average for the preceding years, with the Australian share of box-office in 2005 being only 2.8 per cent (\$23.1 million)¹²³, whilst US films took 85 percent of Australian box office receipts which is consistent with their market share worldwide. In addition, 2005 also spelt a particularly bad year for cinema box-office takings in general, with the total box office in Australia decreased by 10 percent on the previous year. This downturn was also echoed internationally, with box office receipts in most major overseas territories falling last year, with for example, Japan down eight percent, Germany down 18 percent and North America down four percent.

In some countries, particularly those whose first language is not English, local films are able to maintain a larger share of domestic box office. For example, French films received an average of around 36 percent of domestic box office share over the last five years while Japanese films received around 34 percent of Japan's box office

¹²² Australian Film Commission, *Policy Research and Information*, 2002.

¹²³ Australian Film Commission, *Get the Picture*, 10th May 2006.

earnings. However, the average number of local titles released in that period in France was 214 (41 percent of total releases) and in Japan it was 270 (42.5 percent of total releases).

In Australia, the average market share of box office for domestic production was 5.2 percent over the five-year period from 2000–04 and the number of local releases was 22, about 8.2 percent of total releases in Australia. For this same period, Canada’s average share of box office for domestic production was 3.2 percent and its average number of local releases was 69, 17 percent of its total releases. Local Canadian films managed an even smaller share of the total Canadian box office than Australian films at the Australian box office, despite the fact that the number of Canadian local releases was almost double the number of Australian local releases. This not only demonstrates that the problem of competing with significant English language production hubs is not just confined to Australia, but that whilst local films at box-office seem to fair poorly in Australia, our audience support for them is greater than that of audiences in other areas of the world for their local film.

International Sales

We have surprised the world. We simple, sun-bronzed vulgar yobs are producing films characterised by a delicate portraiture of human sensibilities. We have taken over and developed the idiom of Losey without falling into the trap of being arty-crafty after the fashion of French filmmaking.¹²⁴

Australian films in general don’t fare well at international box offices. Whilst distribution deals with international broadcasters have many Australian films screen widely internationally, they make up the small proportion of US box-office “foreign” film and hence struggle to find sizeable audiences that would see them be competitive.

One of the major obstacles to Australian film faring well at US box office is the parochial nature of the US marketplace. Films such as *The Castle* have had all their jokes told to US audiences in subtitling, rendering the humour somewhat overstated and

¹²⁴ Max Harris, *What’s Yank for Stupid?*, in *The Weekend Australian*, 3-4/5/1980.

misinterpreted. Whilst difficult to place in the parochial US marketplace however, Australian films are faring well on the international festival circuit and as a result, are continuing to attract UK and European distribution, and theatrical release in all territories.

Most of the recoupment on investment in Australian feature films comes from international sales, as contributions from the Australian market are usually cash-flowed into the production budget in the form of pre-sales and distribution guarantees. Since the late 1990s, there has been a contraction in the number and size of sales of Australian (and other independent) feature films to overseas markets. This has had a negative impact on the profitability of Australian feature films and recoupment levels.

Whilst international marketability is paramount to securing international distribution deals, it seems that extremely localised Australian film is increasingly being seen as a valid part of the global film landscape and hence is quite capable of securing international distribution deals and exhibition outside Australia. Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo* prides itself on being a West Australian story, which examines Australian class divisions and suburban class-divides. Whilst Australian distributor Dendy Films secured the Australian distribution rights, three international distributors, one British and two Americans bid to be the distributor internationally, all quite confident that the film would fare well in international territories.

The US distributor vying for rights to distribute *Last Train to Freo* believes that the international marketplace is now a diverse place, with greater opportunity for exhibition outside of traditionally hard to break into large distribution company controlled multiplexes in the US. It is the expansion of the smaller distributors and exhibitors to cater to other smaller markets in the US interested in genre and international film that mean greater chances of international distribution and exhibition for films such as *Last Train to Freo*. Whilst box-office for films in this category is unlikely to ever rival that of films with multi-screen exhibition at the multiplexes, their smaller production budgets mean that box-office profit is on a different scale in any case and pitching them to smaller international niche markets may see them more likely to break even than ever before.

Whilst the enthusiasm of the US distributor was appealing, the decision was made to use a UK distributor with strong ties to the European marketplace for *Last Train to Freo*. Whilst the US distributor believed that the prevalence of the global film marketplace is changing attitudes to foreign films on American screens, the US is renowned for their parochial film taste. British and European audiences in comparison are well used to Australian films, with the UK, France and Germany amongst others, having partnered Australian production companies on a number of feature films under co-production treaties with the Australian Government.

Australian Content in a Global Marketplace

The middle course is the right one - making films that are intrinsically Australian but thematically have international subjects. (McElroy, 1976:44)

Whilst the early 70s showed a commitment to what is termed by O'Regan as the "ocker" film¹²⁵, it was acknowledged amongst funding bodies that this genre of film whilst popular with Australian audiences was not necessarily going to be a box office hit in the international arena. In the late 70s, funding bodies addressed this issue, and showed support for films with a wider outlook, films which moved towards a critiquing of Australian culture and a telling of less parochial stories. What was termed the "quality film"¹²⁶ was born and supported by government agencies, but is now acknowledged to have done little to reflect 'contemporary realities of an urban, middle class, postcolonial multicultural society'.¹²⁷ Whilst films of this genre were beautiful and un-troubling, they were 'politically conservative', and 'said virtually nothing about contemporary Australia'.¹²⁸

The 80s saw a questioning of the relevance of "quality film" and a move back to an essentialising of Australian culture with what Dermody and Jacka refer to as "the AFC era", films that harked back to the ideals of "national cinema" and represented

¹²⁵ Tom O'Regan, *Australian Film in the 1970s: the ocker and the quality film*. At <http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/film/1970s.html>

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Graeme Turner, *Art Directing History: the Period Film*, in Tom O'Regan and Albert Moran eds., *The Australian Screen* (Ringwood, Vic: Penguin, 1989), p.115.

¹²⁸ Ibid. p.104.

something of a unitary concept of Australian culture and experience. The Australian films of the 1990s are a combination of both, films that have been made to represent the Australian condition and to critique Australian society and what were termed as “quality” films of the late 1970s, those films that deal with the larger, more global issues. In addition in the late 1990s, Australian films are beginning to reflect something of the international film arena that they are now a part of, exhibiting dialectic between the local and the global in their content.

Australia and being Australian in 2002 is still represented in Australian film in some respects with the “realistic aesthetic combined with a unitary conception of Australia’s national identity”¹²⁹ as represented in the rhetoric of policy documents in the 1970s. The representations of Australian identity evident in films such as *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* and *Stork* in the 70s are replayed in recent Australian films such as *Bad Eggs*, *The Boys*, *Crackerjack* and *Kenny*, films that O’Regan would term “ocker films”. The stereotypical Australianness of the male larrikin, the ideal of mateship and the anti-authoritarian sentiment that has characterised the Australian experience from *The Story of the Kelly Gang* to *Gallipoli* is still apparent in some Australian films in 2006.

In the late 1990s/2000s, although continuing to examine the Australian experience, Australian film is more than ever reflecting the diversity of that experience, an essential role of cultural production in a multicultural society if we are to realistically critique our growth as a nation. Whilst we are contemplating the diversity of the Australian experience and examining our history from a variety of other angles however, there is pressure from local funding bodies and broadcasters at festivals and conferences, away from the production of very localised Australian stories and towards more universal narratives, for the purpose of appealing to overseas investors and their marketplaces. Hence what we are seeing in the 2000s is two types of Australian film, that which continues to be concerned with Australian cultural product and that which is concerned more with viability in the international marketplace than with the concerns of national cinema.

¹²⁹ Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka, *The Screening of Australia, vol 1: Anatomy of a Film Industry*, op. cit. p.120.

The low budget “comedy” feature films of which there has been a plethora of in the late 1990s/2000s, are part of this group of films, and as a result, generally do well at the box office in Australia but do not export. For Australian films to perform better at international box office, many believe that they need to step up into a new league, of more complex, interesting stories and greater production values. This is not to say that all of the successful Australian films at international box office to date have been other than local Australian film, but the most successful, those such as *Mad Max*, *Crocodile Dundee*, *Babe* and *Moulin Rouge* have had the larger budgets that more complex, higher production value films tend to require. Of course larger budgets also mean half as many films are able to be produced with the available FFCA funds, and hence with the production of these larger films, comes a need to source more funding, whether government, international or private investment in order that a level of local Australian feature film production be sustained also.

It is evident in 2006 that with the local is evident a global element in many of our Australian films. Australian producer Jan Chapman believes that regardless of whether they exhibit local or global concerns, there continues to be a visible conservatism in our films that is holding them back from being truly competitive in an international arena. She believes that this “conservatism” on the part of Australian filmmakers, may be a result of their being afraid to take any chances with the product they make as a result of the doom and gloom attitude of the Australian film industry.¹³⁰

It may be the stylistic conservatism on the part of Australian filmmakers that Jan Chapman speaks about that has prevented our film by being embraced by the global film marketplace on a large scale. The films of what Dermody and Jacka refer to as part of the “AFC genre” of the 1980s reflected the level of government regulation of our film and the bid to preserve to the Australian character in all forms of cultural production including film.¹³¹ With the Australian film industry still reliant on government funding and hence the policies that underpin it, experimental film making practice in feature films is rare. One example of innovation in Australian filmmaking however is *Look Both Ways* directed by Sarah Watt in 2005, which used the unconventional device of mixing animation with live action in a feature drama. It was

¹³⁰ Tracey Prisk and Fiona Williams, op. cit. p.29.

rewarded for its innovation by 21 awards and 19 nominations both in Australia and internationally.

Whilst there are many opportunities for film makers to push the boundaries of feature film making, funding is always competitive and hence as Jan Chapman notes, there is a fear to take any chances with the product and hence film makers more often than not keep to tried and successful film making formulas.

¹³¹ Susan Dermody and Elizabeth Jacka Eds., *The Imaginary Industry: Australian Film in the late '80s* (Sydney: AFTRS, 1988), p.117.

Chapter 4 – Filmmaking In Australia

Australian Filmmaking Culture

“To work with us is to love us”... (Australian Assistant Editor)

Attempting to come up with a unitary definition of Australian culture is fraught in the context of our multicultural policy and the diversity of Australian communities. We are all familiar however with the cultural stereotypes pervading discussion of Australianness: “an easy-going demeanour”, a “she’ll be right attitude”, “an irreverent sense of humour” and “a dislike of authority” amongst others.

Discussions of contemporary Australian society in texts and films of the 1990s/2000s have seen something of a challenge to the narrow constructs of Australianness that were represented and reinforced in the characters of Australian film in the 1970s, moving in the 2000s towards a representation of the Australian psyche as being also partially informed by its multicultural policy and communities. It seems however, that the stereotyping of Australian character evident in early Australian film, and commented upon by George Miller in his documentary about Australian identity in film, is still evident in our film in the 2000s, and furthermore, that the words used by Miller in categorising the types of Australian character evident in early Australian film, words such as “larrikin” and “anti-authoritarian”¹³² are essentially the same as those used by Australian casts and crews in the 2000s in an attempt to define their experiences of each other and Australian film making culture.

Attempts to define and characterise the Australian film industry have seen it portrayed somewhat as a “cottage” industry, with a small group of people making a small number of films for very small budgets. What is not so apparent in these discussions and definitions is what characterises the film making process and experience in Australia, something that may be termed “Australian film making culture”.

¹³² George Miller, *A Century of Cinema: 40,000 Years of Dreaming*, 1995. (Documentary)

Being a small industry, the Australian film industry is somewhat close-knit, with cast and crews being familiar with one another to a great extent and often moving from feature film to feature film as a team. This “closeness” has ramifications for the film making process itself, with crewmembers willing to bring along their mates and ask favours of colleagues in order for a film to have the equipment needed for an affordable price.

I interviewed fifty cast and crewmembers currently working in the Australian film industry about what it is that defines Australian film making culture. I chose cast and crew primarily on the basis that they had worked on both local and global film production and hence could draw comparisons and examine the differences in their experiences on each. By placing ads on film industry message boards for cast and sending letters to cast and crew whose details are in the “Encore Directory”, I was able to gather completed surveys from a group of fifty.¹³³

In reading the interviews undertaken with the group of Australian cast and crew, one thing is immediately apparent, that all of those working in crew roles claim an Australian work ethic that sets them aside from other crews. Two crewmembers elaborate on this, stating that the Australian film crew ethic is one that international producers and crews are drawn to. According to an Australian cinematographer interviewed, the reason Australian film crews are well liked by international producers, is their ability to make things happen despite the odds and to keep a sense of humour whilst they do it.

Whilst investigating how Australian crewmembers characterise Australian film making culture, it became apparent that some of the terms they were using were very similar to those used in attempts to define Australian culture and character in general. Words such as “larrikinism” are often used in describing Australia male behaviour, but they have also been used by crewmembers when referring to on-set behaviour of predominantly male technicians.

¹³³ Appendix 6, *Filmmaker Survey Responses*.

Obviously characteristics of behaviours that are identified as being stereotypically Australian will be apparent within Australian work-place culture, with the Australian film industry being no different to other workplaces. In interviews conducted with Australian crewmembers, they primarily characterised themselves and their Australian colleagues as larrikins, hardworking, having good senses of humour, and not being afraid to take on management over issues.

One of the actors on low-budget Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo* began to compile a list, “You know you’re working on a low budget Australian film when....” It is this list that serves as a launching pad for discussion of Australian filmmaking culture and practice.

1. The producer bums cigarettes off you.

“Yes there is a fair bit of overlap - helping each other out and being involved in each other's areas. It works for these sorts of films”. (Rolf De Heer, on *Bad Boy Bubby*)

The Australian Film Industry is based on egalitarian work practices according to the cast and crewmembers interviewed for this thesis and this hasn’t gone unnoticed by the American producers that have worked here. American Line Producer Anne Bruning addressed a seminar on film production in Australia at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverley Hills in October 2003, commenting, “Australian crews do not like authority and are very egalitarian in their work ethic.” She also mentioned that a distinctive part of Australian filmmaking was “the collaboration between everyone on set” adding, “the crew are owner drivers and want to be treated with respect and equality”.

This culture of teamwork and an egalitarian sharing of the creative process is commented upon by many working in the Australian film industry and is particularly apparent when it comes to low-medium size Australian feature films. This is not to say that there aren’t leaders and final creative decision makers in relation to these films, but that most of those in key creative roles, i.e. directors, producers, and cinematographers, actively encourage suggestions by all in the planning stages of the film shoot. On low-budget Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo*, first time feature film director Jeremy Sims made it clear to the full crew at a production meeting that all suggestions were

welcome, as many there had more experience and expertise than he had when it came to film production. This is indicative of a sharing of the creative process by Australian directors. The fact that there are more first time or emerging directors taking the reigns on Australian feature films than on Hollywood films and the substantially lower budgets and smaller crews, mean that the professional development opportunities afforded the director often outweigh the associated financial risks for Australian film funding bodies. Whilst Hollywood films need to gross large profits at box office to make back the 10s of millions spent on production, the AU\$1 – 4M budgets of Australian feature films mean that the pressure to make it big at box-office is significantly less.

This valuing of career opportunity above security at box-office may be changing however. With an increasing emphasis on sourcing international finance in the 2000s comes an increased emphasis on profit and marketability, and hence whilst there are still the feature film initiatives for first time directors, it is evident in the annual production reports that it is more difficult to secure funding for a second film when competing against more established film makers. The majority of feature film funding in Australia appears to be allocated to established directors who are less risky to investors and funding bodies.

2. Your makeup supervisor, hairdresser and stand-by wardrobe is the same person.

“In the end I find that the value you bring to the image on screen is so much higher if you spend more time on it with a smaller crew ... you know, shoot twice as long with half the crew”.

(Rolf De Heer, Bad Boy Bubby)

Whilst roles are clearly delineated on the sets of large American funded feature films due largely to union demarcations, the tighter budgets and looser control on Australian films has meant that crew roles are often multi-faceted and multi-tasking is common. Whilst there was a gripping crew of ten on *Star Wars III*, a low-budget Australian feature film gripping department usually consists of a key grip and maybe an extra grip if the location set-up calls for it. As a result, the grip may share a best boy with the gaffer and the camera assistants may be called on to assist the grip. This multi-tasking

and crossing of departmental lines to assist other crewmembers in other departments results in a tight knit crew on Australian feature films. When you compare a crew of thirty on an Australian feature film to a crew of 328 on *Star Wars III*, it is easy to understand why Australian crews are able to form close teams, sharing resources, staff and ideas.

This low-budget Australian feature film “multi-tasking in roles” scenario is played out on the majority of Australian films to some extent and is largely attributed to the Australian crew attitude of going beyond the call of duty to ensure that films are produced to budget and on time. On Australian low-budget feature film *Envy*, the producer, Michael Cook doubled as driver for most of the cast and some of the crew, as well as being an extra, part-time caterer and underwater camera assistant. The Director recalls his multifaceted role that involved being on-set more than producers on larger budget films would be, remembering in particular “seeing him sitting shivering in his bathing suit at one of (the) major locations after being in the water for six hours...”. In a similarly multi-tasking role, the post-production supervisor on Australian feature documentary “Forbidden Lies”, found herself dubbing all 200 hours of footage to DVD for transcription at home with her own DVD burner, to avoid telling the Director it was unable to be done due to budget constraints.

One Australian grip who works on both Australian and international productions believes that in the 2000s budgets for Australian films are tighter than ever, and more often than not he is expected to work without an assistant. On the last Australian feature film he worked on, he used the production assistant as his cable wrangler whilst he operated the jimmy jib. This necessity to use untrained crew in a multitude of roles of course has implications in terms of OH&S responsibilities, the speed of work, and the overall production values of a film. It may be that whilst dollars are saved in the reduction of crewmembers and the use of untrained or volunteer crewmembers, it can result in spending extra on overtime and fixing mistakes they may make. In the course of filming *Last Train to Freo* whilst the work of volunteers was greatly appreciated, it meant that shooting time was lost due to the rotation of staff and the training involved in getting them up to speed with the technology, especially in the highly technical area of rear projection.

So why are crews happy to multi-task and work well above and beyond the call of duty on Australian films? It seems that everyone is aware that Australian feature films are never well funded and to have production values that look well above what our budgets can actually afford is the aim of many of the cast and crewmembers working on Australian productions. In order to be competitive on the big screen, our productions must compete with Hollywood films with budgets at least ten times that of the average Australian film, but instead of saying to the director, this is all we can afford, Australian crews are much more likely to say, “well, if that’s all you’ve got, let’s see how we can make it happen”.

A culture of favours has grown around the Australian film industry, almost a barter system, where a favour will be remembered and repaid when next the crewmember has a paid gig. It seems to be that it is partly this hope of securing work on the next big job that drives crewmembers to bring themselves and their equipment to very low or no budget Australian films. This is especially the case when it comes to helping out emerging directors on short films. Where there is a belief in the script and the possibility of the director having a career ahead of them, many are willing to work for free to become a part of that Director’s team, with the expectation that the team will stay together with the director on his/her next project. Of course the reality is, that only a handful of Directors directing Australian short films will ever have a career directing feature films, but it is of course impossible to predict who will make it and who won’t.

3. The producer is making the crew presents themselves.

“When we did Bad Boy Bubby, I worked out what the budget should be - \$800,000 at that point - and a producer would then usually come in and say, 'OK, we have five weeks to shoot'. That's not my approach. It is, how long do I need to shoot this film? I need nine weeks. I have \$800,000; how do we do it for that?” (Rolf De Heer)

It is no secret that the Australian Film Industry is largely reliant on a small pool of Government funds that are stretched to ensure that as many films as possible are made with them. Producers are well used to being asked to bring their budgets down by the government film agencies assessing their applications, and as a result, all in the Australian film industry are used to making the most of small department budgets. In

the lowest of low budget feature films in Australia, the largely “self-funded” feature films this is of course most apparent. The Director of low-budget Australian feature film *Envy* for example, tells the story of it being more cost effective to write her dog into the script than to put her in a kennel for the period of the shoot, which was at her home.

The inventiveness that comes with low-budget filmmaking is evident in all areas of the Australian film industry, it seems that Australian crews have mastered the art of making inexpensive shots look expensive. Australian DOP Allan Collins says this is what his job is about, finding out what the Director’s vision is, and achieving it with the little money available. He has created expensive looking tracking shots using a hand-held technique and the actors walking holding a piece of string and cheated shots in inappropriate locations many times. He believes that is what working on Australian film is about, the challenge of making “magic” using the resources available. Collins tells that crews from the US especially are very surprised at the level of ingenuity shown by Australians and need to know how they managed to achieve what they did with so little time, money and equipment.

It seems that Australians bring this “ingenuity” and creativity to the relatively large budget international films they work on also. An American crew working on “Dead Poet’s Society” in New Zealand were exceptionally impressed by the spontaneity and ingenuity of the Australian DOP. When they awoke one morning to find it had snowed heavily and the light was beautiful, the DOP and the Director Peter Weir hauled everybody out into the snow to film an impromptu scene, which was to become one of the most beautiful of the film. The crew were quick to comment on the fact that they were unused to filming an unplanned scene, let alone one that was shot with no set-up time or lighting. Producer Stephen Jones agrees that Australian crews are inventive, giving the example of those who worked on the US feature film *Son of Mask*, which didn’t enjoy the same budget as features such as *Mission Impossible 2* or *Matrix* and didn’t have producers “throwing money at it” as they often do with other American films. As a result of the somewhat tight budget, the technicians working on *Son of Mask* had to be inventive and innovative and he believes that in that respect “the Australian crew really shone through”.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Sascha Epstein, *The Big Mask Task*, in IF Magazine, April 2005, p.19.

Cost cutting measures are not only employed in relation to the “shooting” of Australian feature films. With limited budgets, it is often the case that the area of post-production is often seriously under-budgeted and post-production houses are well used to making deals with producers in order to see the film finished to its full potential. It is more often than not the case that whilst a post-production house will quote for services on an Australian feature film, they are prepared for negotiations with the producer that will see them cutting their costs significantly. One Adelaide based Animation Company admitted to being prepared to work on Australian films for whatever they could afford, and working with producers to make sure they worked out a plan that was satisfactory to both parties. In addition to a discount, the same company agreed to complete work outside the agreed budget in exchange for an upfront titles design credit, something they deemed to be very valuable on a film with international distribution.

My experience as a producer on *Last Train to Freo* involved many instances of making a small budget stretch to the demands of a feature film. In order to avoid the costs of having a Perth Transit safety officer present on location and having to have safety training for all of our cast and crew for the night shoots on actual trains, I prepared risk assessments on each train station to be used and on filming on the train itself and presented the Transit Authority with a twenty page document that was fortunately approved. Whilst usually the domain of OH&S and safety officers, this risk assessment involved my studying of Perth Transit OH&S procedure as well as Australian film industry OH&S procedure, and saw me deliver a safety brief to cast and crew at the beginning of every evening.

Whilst it is customary on films to give gifts to the cast and crew at the end, a small budget will obviously limit what is affordable for 60 people. Wanting to offer the cast and crew of *Freo* something as a memento, I spent the majority of the wrap party going to and from the green room where I made cast and crew t-shirts with transfers I had prepared and printed on my computer. Throughout the evening many people came and chatted to me and observed the process, and whilst they had a handmade quality about them, no one gave up the opportunity to own one. The lead actress, accidentally leaving hers behind, contacted myself and the other producer on numerous occasions until I was

able to make another one and send it to her, leaving us mystified as to why it had such great importance.

At the cast and crew screening of *Last Train to Freo*, I spoke about the fact that had the film been a Hollywood film, there would have been expensive technology and crew to move our studio train carriage and make it appear to be moving through night suburban landscapes. As we could only afford four nights on an actual train, we built a train carriage for the film and had teams of volunteers rocking it, swinging lights outside it and projecting pre-taped backgrounds from donated old technology G3 Macintosh machines. The process was slow and the computers broke down often, but the result, whilst volunteer-labour intensive is a seamless moving train.

4. The film's ending is still being written in the last days of the shoot.

Far from the secrecy of Hollywood scripts, cast and crew are all issued with full shooting scripts in pre-production on Australian feature films. According to some Australian cast members however, it is usually the case that rewrites of scripts are issued daily on Australian films, with endings often being decided in the final days of shooting. The ending for *Last Train to Freo* was delivered to actors the day before the final day of shooting, not due to secrecy on the part of the writer, director and producers, but due to the fact that there were so many possibilities and the right one obviously needed to be chosen as the pivotal part of the film.

Development time on Australian features is at least 1/3 of that of Hollywood films, hence it is realistic to expect that even until the end of the shoot, the script on an Australian film is something of a "work in progress". What this does mean, according to some cast and crew, is that the cast and crew often have input into shaping the script throughout the shoot.

The problem of script development time on Australian films has not gone unnoticed by Australian funding bodies. A number of State funding body initiatives such as the New South Wales Film and Television Offices' "Aurora" program have targeted this problem specifically, choosing scripts in the early development phase and fostering the

key creatives, producer and director, through the draft stages, with intensive workshopping and guidance from key industry professionals.

5. Half the crew are volunteers.

Quite typical of Australian film making, is the situation where the opportunity to gain experience in another role, is just as valuable to crewmembers as financial reward. During the 1990s especially, this volunteer crew culture grew out of limited places at the few film schools in Australia, and the encouragement of those film schools such as AFTRS to form extensive volunteer lists from which all but key creative roles were filled. Many of these volunteers gained the necessary experience to then find themselves places at AFTRS or attachments to key creatives that would last into their professional careers. Many of the volunteer crew I worked with at AFTRS in the 1990s, especially in the camera department, have gone on to have successful careers in the Australian film industry.

The AFC reported in 1993, that out of a total of 82 400 people working in film/video in Australia only 28 300 were in paid work only, which is further evidence of the large number of people volunteering their services in order to gain much needed experience in this period.¹³⁵ It seems that the culture of having volunteers on Australian films continues to be active in 2006. Actor and director Leah Purcell agrees that the culture of working for experience rather than cash is still a large part of the Australian film industry. Her 30- minute horror film *Wandhi* was crewed for free by crewmembers she met whilst acting on the Australian feature film *Jindabyne*. Leah asked the focus puller from *Jindabyne* to be the DOP on her film and the 2nd AD to be the 1st Assistant Director and they agreed, eager for the chance to gain experience and a credit in a higher role. As the film was extremely low budget, the DOP arranged a gaffer friend of his to provide the lighting truck and equipment and to work on the film for free. This Gaffer actually turned out to be the owner of a lighting company with a lack of film work, eager to build new relationships in the Australian film industry. Australian feature film *Last Train to Freo* had thirty volunteers to work alongside the thirty paid crewmembers as assistant directors, rear projection operators and unit

¹³⁵ Australian Film Commission, *Get the Picture*, op. cit.

assistants. All were film students or had made short films and wished to gain experience in the Industry. If it weren't for such a dedicated team of volunteers, it would have been impossible for the film to have been made in such a short period of time and to budget. The rear projection of train backgrounds alone took a team of four projection assistants and four lighting assistants, with six people required to rock the train. Despite the fact that the hours were long and the demands placed on the volunteers were great, all of the volunteers agreed that the experience offered them more than anything in their film courses had thus far and were quick to thank the producers for giving them the opportunity.

The volunteers on *Last Train to Freo* listed what they gained from working on the film as; making film industry contacts, learning and practicing technical skills, gaining confidence on set, making friendships, gaining experience to aid job-seeking, something to add to their CV, gaining an insight into the realities of filmmaking, and learning to live with a lack of sleep.

With the growth of film courses and film schools in Australia in the 2000s has come the reality of needing to pay large course fees in order to study film and television. University and TAFE courses have become competitive and volunteering on professional film shoots has become a viable option for many not financial enough to pay for a film education. In addition, many people wanting to gain training and experience for their CVs are opting to self-finance short films and even low-budget feature films, with the premise being that \$6000 spent on producing your own short film brings a greater level of experience than \$6000 spent at a film school. One young Director who self-financed a short film on 35mm that went on to win awards at Australian film festivals is a great advocate of this, explaining that on the strength of this, she now has a feature film script in development in LA with a US producer. She believes however, that if the film had not been shot on 35mm, she would not have been able to convince her crew to volunteer their time and equipment, for it was the interest of especially the DOP and camera crew to have a 35mm film on their CVs and show-reels to pitch for further work.

6. The Producer is asked to throw the prop as he is the best cricketer.

“It's funny what runs through your mind when you win an Oscar. Andrew Lesnie had two thoughts: ‘don't trip on the stairs and don't speak for longer than 45 seconds or the orchestra will drown you out.’”¹³⁶

What Australian crews rate highest when it comes to the differences between Australian and US crews, is the Australian sense of humour. It pervades Australian film set culture as much as any Australian setting and is viewed as an essential ingredient to the smooth running of a film. Whilst the Australian crews value a sense of humour, they point out that one major difference between themselves and US crews is the “seriousness” of US crews.

Along with their seriousness, Australian crews are quick to point out that US cast are much more used to the “star system” than Australian cast on the whole. One Australian Production Manager pointed out that this “star system” is often apparent also with US crews also, who are quick to complain about food, accommodation or how boring the night life in Sydney is. She believes that Australian/NZ crews are much more amendable to roughing it when the location or budget demands it, citing the example of a DOP from NZ who was happy to stay in a caravan in major capital city on a reasonable sized budget with a non-Australian director.

But it doesn't seem that international crew preciousness is purely the domain of the Americans, a German crew who were in Australia to film volcanic caves in far north Queensland were outraged when they discovered their 4 star accommodation was in train carriages and demanded the production manager sweep the immaculate rooms for spiders before they would enter. They subsequently turned their noses up at the camp breakfast and asked where the nearest café was.

It is noted by many Australian crewmembers in their comments about working in the Australian film industry that what is unique about Australian filmmaking culture is the

¹³⁶ Jinman, Richard, *What Oscar did next*, March 15 2003. At <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/03/14/1047583697734.html>

willingness of Australian crews to pitch in and help in any department requiring their assistance. As a result, Australian crews view filmmaking as a team effort and forge lasting friendships on even short shoots.

Above all else, what was mentioned most by crewmembers describing working in the Australian industry was their work mates' willingness to pitch in and their ability to laugh in a crisis. One Australian DOP recalled an incident where a junior clapper loader accidentally opened a black bag at the end of a long and particularly hard days shooting. She immediately burst into tears and although devastated himself, he said the most important thing for him to do at that moment was to re-assure her and make her laugh.

Also rated highly by crews, was the level of friendship and familiarity amongst cast and crewmembers on Australian films. As the number of Australian feature films produced is low, it stands to reason that the people working on them are usually acquainted with one another. It is often the case that a director is already acquainted with the actors he/she wants to cast in roles, and that the Producer and Production manager already have crew that they prefer to work with. On *Last Train to Freo*, the fact that the Director was aware that one of the Producers was a good cricketer was due to the fact that he, the producer and the lead actor, have all played on the same local cricket team for the past five years. This mixing of cast and crew in both work and social situations is quite common in the Australian film industry and it is social networking that most cast and crew agree results in securing employment in the industry. Word-of-mouth recommendations are highly regarded by Producers in the Australian Film Industry and it is more often than not, these recommendations that form the lists of crew to be interviewed for work. One Australian producer admitted to being asked by another producer about to commence production to "watch" a 1st Assistant Director and give her feedback re his performance and suitability for work on her production. It seems that whilst foreign producers working in Australia prefer to choose crew by looking at CVs, Australian producers prefer the recommendations of their peers.

7. The artistic Unit Manager draws your tattoos on when the Make-up Artist is off sick.

“Above and Beyond Down Under”.

(George Lucas/Rick McCallum Advertisement in ‘Weekly Variety’).

As well as being multi-tasking in the roles they undertake, Australian crews are willing to go beyond the call of duty in order to ensure that the film goes ahead despite the difficulties it may be encountering. It is not unusual for Australian crewmembers to offer their services in any area they may be skilled in and to work extra hours if necessary to ensure the film stays on track.

This “can do” attitude of Australian film crews is spoken about by Chris Murray, editor of an Australian film magazine, in relation to the local Australian visual effects industry. He believes that rather than rely on tried and true methods, Australian teams are prepared to make real magic happen by pushing the boundaries of traditional effects and making the seemingly impossible a reality. It is this fresh approach to filmmaking and the fact that we’ve still got a “can-do” attitude, that he believes puts Australian effects teams at the cutting edge of their field and sees them sought after by international effects companies and producers. He cites the success of the effects work on *The Matrix* as an example of both the ingenuity of Australians and the quality of their work.

This attitude is one which is not only the domain of post-production in Australia, crew members across roles in the Australian film industry tell of the importance of saying “yes” first and working out how to make it happen later. It is undoubtedly the case that this kind of attitude is born of an industry that works on a shoestring and applauds a show of initiative and the desire to make a \$1M feature look like a \$10M feature.

During the filming of *Last Train to Freo*, the production was sent into chaos when the make-up artist left one week into the shoot taking her assistant with her. The main characters needed to be tattooed daily, and due to the Perth’s small industry, replacements were difficult to find at such short notice. The crew were aware of the situation, and the unit manager, a volunteer who was also an artist, stepped in to do the

tattooing, with the stand-by wardrobe girl as his assistant. Whilst this situation would be unacceptable under the demarcations insisted upon by unions in the US, it is commonplace in Australia for crewmembers to pitch-in in a crisis and to undertake any work they are capable of in order to prevent a loss of shooting time.

It is this team spirit and the genuine love of film making that is the main difference between working on medium to low budget feature films in Australia and working on large budget international productions according to the replacement Make-up Supervisor on *Last Train to Freo*. She states that this is the reason why she continues to prefer to work on Australian film, adding “it’s certainly not for the money as the wages are poor”.

8. The Production Manager spends more time on set than in the office.

“Australian film crew members are definitely not scared of taking on Management over issues”. (Australian Production Coordinator).

Early Australian film saw Australian directors grappling with issues related to defining a uniquely Australian culture, one that could be easily distinguished from the British Empire. In his documentary on Australian culture in film, George Miller defines all these attributes as having been important stereotypes in the stages of depiction of Australian culture and character in film. Whilst films such as *Wake in Fright*, *The Odd Angry Shot* and *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* depicted the Australian male as a “larrikin”, “Gallipoli” presented the “digger” and the anti-authoritarian streak of Australians keen to challenge British rule.

This anti-authoritarian streak has been mentioned by Australian crewmembers in their discussions of Australian crews and is especially relevant where Australians are working with heads of department of other nationalities on large US films. On *Matrix 2*, Australian crew members including the Director of Photography were replaced, the reason according to a US producer being that the Australian crews were unable to take orders from the US Heads of Departments in what he called “cultural differences”.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Interview with Australian Entertainment Lawyer/Producer.

When it comes to a “fair go” it seems that Australian crews are more than willing to stick up for themselves and others, challenging management over decisions to do with working hours, catering, location choices, scheduling and safety. And so it seems that Australian Directors and Producers are more than willing to listen to issues raised by their cast and crews. One Australian Production Manager agreed that Australian crews are only too ready to voice their opinions on anything and everything decided by the production office, but that this is rarely seen as being out of line. The beginning and the end of the day, she said, are “taken up with visiting set and resolving issues that crew members may have”. She believed however, that crew members concerns are taken very seriously and that almost in every case, action is taken to resolve the concern. “There is almost nothing that can’t be resolved in my opinion” she said, “anything from the size of the monitor that the continuity person has to watch, to the distance of the washing machine to set, can be resolved to everyone’s liking”.

As a result of catering to individual crew needs, Australian producers are often tailoring contracts to each crewmembers needs, splitting wages over different financial years, and paying negotiated per diems depending on locations and working conditions. One feature film producer believes that the crewmembers who have worked on international productions are very savvy when it comes to “getting every perk available” and that is creating more work for the production office and tension between the office and those on-set.

One well-established Australian production manager, well-used to working on large international production, harassed the producer she was working for every day for a fortnight in order to be paid the \$62 in holiday pay she believed she was entitled to. The producer eventually had the production accountant pay her dues, but was quick to say that she would never work with her again.

The Impact of global filmmaking on the creative choices of Australian filmmakers.

With a globalised film market comes the pressure to exploit all avenues of the market, hence the need to raise higher production budgets and secure larger audiences. One Australian producer interviewed told of trying to raise finance for a local feature film and being advised by an Australian government film finance representative, that without

international finance, her film was unlikely to raise a budget higher than A\$2M. The question is whether or not Australian filmmakers are making aesthetic and script choices as a result of broadcaster/funding body pressure to be more international in appeal, and hence able to raise higher production budgets.

Of the 11 interviewees who have a role in the writing and aesthetic choices made in the filmmaking process and whose project involved international funding, all 11 agreed that they had made aesthetic and script choices as a result of a pressure to be more international in appeal. In addition to this, all 11 agreed that their film would have been different had there only been Australian investment in it.¹³⁸

The areas they identified as ones in which international investors/broadcasters had influenced their creative decisions were casting, selection of crew, locations, program length, and content, including characters and plot lines. One Australian Director on accessing US funding for an Australian feature film, has recast the lead to accommodate an American actor, and has turned what was to be a local Australian story into the story of an American coming to Australia and immersing himself in the local culture.

Global Meets Local – A Clash Of Cultures?

*Australian Cinematographer Andrew Lesnie left the Sydney set of Mission Impossible II late last week and could not be reached for comment... a spokeswoman for the production cited "stylistic differences" with director John Woo. "It was all very amicable and no reflection whatsoever on Andrew. John has a certain way of shooting and a certain speed, and Andrew had his way, and happily they agreed to part company," she said.*¹³⁹

It is evident from my own experiences working on Australian film and from the responses of the cast and crewmembers working in the Australian film industry that we do indeed have a uniquely Australian filmmaking culture. So what happens when our cast and crew as is often the case in the 2000s, go to work on large budget foreign films

¹³⁸ Appendix 6 – Australian Filmmaker Survey Responses.

¹³⁹ *M:i-2*. At <http://www.movie-page.com/1999/MissionImpossible2.htm>

in Australia? Is there a culture clash that results from people from two different filmmaking cultures working together as a team?

Superman Returns Director Bryan Singer was reported to say that filming in Australia “is like summer camp but a really brutal summer camp” and when asked about reports of friction between Australian crew and the producers of *Mission Impossible 2* in 2000, *Star Wars 2* and *3* producer Rick McCallum called the shoot, “a disaster... one of those films that tried to impose its will on Australian film industry culture”. So what are the issues arising from the clash of Australian film making culture with Hollywood?

Whilst it's obvious that cultural differences between Sydney and LA are noticeable to American Producers, casts and crews, what is interesting to investigate are the differences in film making culture between the US and Australia, whether or not these cultural differences are noticeable in the mix of Australian and American crews in the studios in Australia, and whether or not there are as a result, clashes of filmmaking cultures.

It may partly be the anti-authoritarian streak spoken about by George Miller in his documentary that has seen clashes between US producers and directors and their Australian crewmembers. Whilst this clash has been documented in relation to *Mission Impossible 2*, one of the earlier US feature films to be made at Fox Studios, many Australian crew members point to the impersonal and rigid approach to film making taken by those in key roles on American studio films for problems that arise.

It seems however, that whilst there are reports of American producers unhappy with Australian crews, there are also those who praise the experience of working with Australians. Whilst the *Mission Impossible II* producers saw the Australian film crews' attitudes as a problem, sacking the DOP on the first day, *Star Wars* producer Rick McCallum praised Australian film crews, saying that their "flexibility" gave them an advantage above and beyond the favourable exchange rate. Dollar for dollar he said, "You can't do what you do here in the UK or Ireland."¹⁴⁰ Similarly, when the AFC conducted interviews in Los Angeles with a sample of producers who had recently

¹⁴⁰ IMDB, *Star Wars 2 & 3 Going All-Australian*. At <http://www.imdb.com/news/sb/1999-11-08>

filmed in Australia, they found that along with the obvious financial incentives, it was Australian “filmmaking culture” that attracted American producers to Australia. American producers interviewed there stressed that our crews play a pivotal role in building the kind of relationships that keep overseas producers coming back to Australia. One LA producer elaborated on this, stating that he believed part of embracing Australia is embracing the egalitarian culture here, and doing so is what brings success for American films shooting in Australia. He believed that the success also came from the fact that Australia has a very real film industry that makes films with a definite point of view and great passion, and that it is not just a support for the US as some other countries. He praised Australian crews, saying, “every individual takes great pride in every aspect of filmmaking (in Australia) like nowhere else in the world.”¹⁴¹ American executive producer Geoff Hayes who has worked in Australia for over 20 years agrees, stating, “The thing I fell in love with was the spirit of Australians when they come to work... They take great pride in their work and are extremely talented in what they do”.

For all their praise however, it seems that American crews are undergoing culture shock to some degree when working on films in Australia. It was reported by Geoff Boucher of the Los Angeles Times that “despite the activity there is still a lazy feeling to the Fox Studios Australia complex” and he goes on to say that whilst the “predictability (of Sydney) always makes accountants and studio executives breathe easier... the cast and crews have to stifle a yawn”. *Son of Mask* Producer Stephen Jones believes agrees that some American crews are not keen to shoot in Australia, but he believes the hardest thing to take when working with them, is the attitudes they have before they get here. According to him, many American crewmembers still ask questions implying that they think they are coming to a third world country to work, and they want to bring all their equipment with them as they’re not sure they can get it in Australia. He goes on to say that many misunderstandings occur because of the language, but that in the end the Americans are pleasantly surprised and have a good laugh at Aussie dry humour.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Australian Film Commission, *Foreign Film and Television Production in Australia*, Report June 2002, op. cit.

¹⁴² Sasha Epstein, op. cit. p.20.

Producer Stephen Jones believes that there is no point in going to another country and telling them how to do things, and that is what the Americans did at the studios in Australia in the early days of their operations. He believes that what has happened more recently, is that the Americans have realised this to an extent and just as Australian crews have learnt from Hollywood coming here, he would like to think that there's been a reciprocal effect. Whilst many would complain that Australia is a sweatshop for American films, Jones believes that we put something of our own into American films, not just the great light and landscape but a work ethic that shows in the films.¹⁴³

Australian crews tend to work long hours as a result of tight schedules and low budgets, but it seems that the work hours set by the Australian union MEAA are less than those stipulated by unions in the US. Where Australians work a 50hr, five day week, Americans tend to work 60 hour weeks often over six days. Whilst Australians are forced to work hard in order to meet budgets and schedules, it is obvious that the pay-off is relaxing with a beer at the end of the day. Whilst a tightening of drink driving laws has put a limit to the amount of alcohol consumed, a shooting day without "wrap beers" at its end is thought of in a very dim light, especially by the grips, gaffers and camera crew, traditionally male dominated and having the more physical of crew roles. Socialising is viewed as very important on Australian film shoots, with crew often forming lasting friendships and working relationships after meeting on a shoot. One Australian DOP told of his surprise that the producer on a large international co-production didn't once buy wrap beers on a Friday. The DOP as a result, ended up buying them for the entire crew out of his own pocket.

For the Australian crews working on large US productions, it seems that there is little opportunity to socialise with the main crew and cast. Those interviewed pointed out that one reason for this segregation is the "star" mentality that seems more prevalent on large American films. It was pointed out by one Australian crewmember however, that whilst US cast members working in Australian cities and studios expect star treatment, their attitudes change when they are working in more remote locations with limited resources and it is in these remote and rural locations, that everyone socialises in a less formal manner. Furthermore, it was noted by an Australian production manager

¹⁴³ Ibid.

working predominantly with US crews, that the US crews appreciate working in the more rural locations more than Australian crews do, enjoying the “romance” of the Australian bush landscape.

It seems that the problem of culture clash may be less and less of a problem the more US features that are produced in Australia and whatever misunderstandings the clash in filmmaking cultures has brought about in the past, *Son of Mask* producer Stephen Jones believes that they happen very rarely in 2006, as a result of the volume of US production that has come to Australia. Whilst the early US productions in Australia such as *The Island of Dr Moreau* were difficult, he believes that most Australian crewmembers also have grown through their experiences on Hollywood films and now know what to expect from working on them.¹⁴⁴

Results from crew surveys indicate that producers and crew believe that they enjoy closer relationships on Australian films that they do on the large “global” films, with crews feeling that Australian producers are genuinely concerned for their wellbeing. Australian crewmembers working on “global” production in Australia however, believe that producers on these films “don’t care about the crew” and only care about “what the end budget will be”.

Working on Australian films, according to an Australian Grip, offers you a chance to be “close” to the drama. What he is referring to is the integral part that each crewmember takes in the making of an Australian film, and usually being a member of a small department, each crewmember has a working relationship with the Director and/or Cinematographer.

Work on large US productions rarely offers such opportunity. The original Make-up Supervisor on *Last Train to Freo* was hired partially due to her impressive resume, and her long history of work on Hollywood films and with Hollywood stars. Producers were hence very worried and surprised when cast and crew on the first day of shooting expressed concern on her lack of understanding of on-set etiquette, and the delays it was causing them. On speaking to the Make-up Supervisor, they discovered that as she had

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

always worked as part of a large team on US productions, she had never actually worked “on-set” in a stand-by role doing final checks etc., and as such, did not understand what was expected of a make-up artist outside of the make-up room. After a week of frustrations and on-set communication breakdown she left the production to the relief of the rest of the crew. The Australian crewmembers involved were stunned that a make-up artist could have so many film credits and yet never had worked on-set.

Son of Mask producer Stephen Jones believes that it is this scale of production that is the most striking difference between a Hollywood film and an Australian film is the scale of the production. He believes that it takes time for Australian crews to get used to the large of scale of Hollywood production and not be scared by it, and that this is by and large happening on US productions in 2006.

Confidentiality

*“Not a lot of people get to see this”, she said with a conspiratorial whisper as her key clicked open the lock”.*¹⁴⁵ (*Superman Costume Designer to the Chicago Tribune*)

Whilst Australian film crewmembers overwhelmingly believe they have a say in the film making process on Australian films, they believe the opposite when it comes to their roles on Hollywood films in Australia. Rather than being a part of a small team, in the words of an Australian sound recordist/rigger in his interview, “working at Fox Studios you are just a worker in the “sausage factory”. This sentiment seems to go further than just the size of the crews that each member is a part of, it also relates to the level of information sharing and dissemination that occurs on large American studio productions. A member of the costume department on *Matrix 2* at Fox Studios told of her sewing of an arm for a garment that she was never to see the whole of, let alone a pattern or sketch. This privacy is pretty much the norm on large American studio films, the design team on *Star Wars 3* were expected to work on planning through pre-production for the film without ever being shown the script. Six months before the

¹⁴⁵ Geoff Boucher, *'Superman Returns' Offers A Traditional, Invulnerable Man Of Steel. But On Screen And Off, It's A Different Place For His Kind Of Heroics*, Los Angeles Times, January 15, 2006. At <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/jan/15/entertainment/ca-superman15>

shoot, Production designer Gavin Bocquet told of the team's need to "move when called upon and be ready to go quickly" as soon as details are revealed. Whilst they knew they were doing the technical drawings for a new ship for one of the film's heroes, they weren't to know until the last minute whether they would need a full-size cockpit or a full-size ship. They would prepare drawings for all possibilities, even if they were never built.

In the digital era when mobile phones carry cameras, uploading of footage exposing character, costume or plot can spell a potential box office disaster. The signing of confidentiality and security releases designed to "protect trade secrets"¹⁴⁶ are commonplace when it comes to Hollywood films, and they don't only apply to cast and crew. The workshops for *Matrix II* were in a warehouse in the Everleigh rail yards, housing local Australian theatre circus groups. Before construction on the *Matrix* set began, each adjoining warehouse was visited by *Matrix* production staff and the Australian federal police, with occupants needing to sign confidentiality agreements for anything they may see being constructed in the *Matrix* space. Similarly, extras on *Superman Returns* had to sign confidentiality agreements and in addition were not permitted to take mobile phones into the studio just in case they took photographs of the set. Those who were caught trying to take photographs with phones or cameras had them confiscated and the contents erased.

A producer on an Australian feature film was amused to hear a worker on the latest Hollywood film to be shot at Fox Studios in a heated argument with another worker at the back door of their studio. She screamed at the girl, "those boys aren't to step foot in here again, they haven't signed confidentiality agreements". Her amusement was due to the fact that whilst secrecy was of utmost importance, she believed that everyone in the building next door knew the ins and outs of the production and it was in fact the worst kept secret in Sydney at that time.

On large US productions, secrecy extends across all areas of production, and is evident in a lack of access to the shooting script to all but a small handful of key creatives. Whilst it is commonplace on Hollywood films that the extras are only given the pages

¹⁴⁶ *Confidentiality Agreement*. At <http://www.filmstvcontracts.com/products.cgi?116>

of the script with their lines on them, the Australian extras on *Superman Returns* weren't given any script pages at all, they were merely briefed on their actions by the AD just prior to the shot. On a low-budget Australian film, whilst resources are wasted on changes of script, the idea of a Head of Department working without a script in pre-production is quite unheard of. The resources required to plan for every eventually just aren't available. Instead, the Head of Department works closely with the Director and then with his/or her team to achieve the vision of the Director in interpreting the script. Secrecy extended beyond the script to knowledge of the cast in the scene according to an extra on *Superman Returns*, he tells that "sometimes in a briefing we were told who we would be acting with the next day, but it was definitely on a need to know basis!"

The reasons for such secrecy is no doubt linked to marketability and the box office dollar. The element of surprising the audience is valued highly and it is feared that should script secrets be revealed, the cinema going public will be less motivated to go and see what their heroes are up to, especially in the case of films which are sequels.

A German Camera Assistant interviewed who is working on international production in Australia disagrees with the "sausage factory" analogy in relation to US studio production, stating that there is much more skill involved and that is what local members of the film industry are employed for, their skill. He saw the main difference between working on local and global film as the time allocated in the schedule for shots. Whilst on Australian films everyone is flat out to meet the schedule for the day, on an American film in Australia, you may only be scheduled to shoot one plate for CGI in the entire day, and whilst it still has its challenges, it is nowhere near as frantic as the pace of tightly scheduled Australian films.

Problems arising from clashes of film making cultures in Australia are not confined to Australian/US Producer/Director/Crew relationships. 2002 saw the height of Bollywood film production in Australia, with Australian/Indian producer Anupam Sharma responsible for bringing a number of Indian crews to Australia to work alongside local Australian crews. Sharma believes that the working together of the Australian/Indian crews highlighted the inherent differences in the filmmaking cultures. Language barriers meant that Australian crews were often at a loss to understand what was expected of them, whilst Indian crews struggled with the local cuisine. What resulted was an often-humorous mix of work practices and cultural expectations.

Union Regulation

On any Australian feature film low budget or otherwise, the producer will need to pay the cast and crew according to the MEAA award rates and provide conditions for them according to the union regulations. Whilst producers adhere to the latest MEAA agreements in making sure the requirements are met, there is still an understanding with crew that when required they will go above and beyond the call of duty to see the project is finished. On *Last Train to Freo* whilst crew rates were negotiated and contracted, like on most Australian films, the negotiated rates are well above the awards suggested by the Unions. Due to the fact that Australian crews are not employed a full 52 weeks of the year; it is commonplace that fees take this into account. The deal however is reciprocal, and whilst overtime is put on timesheets and charged for, many of the key crew throw in extras, working on tests, rehearsals and gear checks with a minimum of hours charged for. On *Last Train to Freo* for example, the gaffer threw in gels from his own truck and only charged for the amount used in order to avoid the cost of the producer buying full roles from the lighting equipment company. He also provided light globes from his own supply and didn't charge for replacement globes or burn-time as a gesture of goodwill towards the producer and the production.

And whilst going above and beyond is a common trait with Australian cast and crew, it seems that a failure to do is taken in a very dim light. An Australian Director currently in post-production on her feature film, expressed her frustration with her editor, something that was caused primarily she believed, by the editor's treating the project as "just a job". "I'm used to working with people who live, eat and breathe my film until it's finished", she said, adding, "there's no compromising, she'll just have to work Saturdays!" When it was suggested to her that the person may need a life outside of the film, she replied, "Why? This is a great life!"

Flexibility when it comes to negotiating between what the production can afford and what is required is typical of Australian film shoots as a result of tight budgets that are always stretched to their limits. An Australian extra who worked on *Star Wars* both in Australia and in the UK, believes that working in the UK was different because English filmmaking had a more 'industrial' feel compared to Australia, and everything was done strictly to union regulations. It seems that regardless of problems that they may have

encountered, the majority of those in working in the Australian film industry expect that this flexibility is something that will be expected of them.

Security

Whilst security on any feature film is obviously an important issue, it becomes more of an issue on large American feature films partly as a result of the big names in cast that are typical of them and partly because of the level of confidentiality involved. The studio where *Last Train to Freo* was filmed had front gates that needed to be attended at all times, but this was more a case of being at the ground's caretaker's request to keep his dog from escaping onto the road, than from any fear of a security risk. As such, volunteers were placed at the gate to keep a daily gate list and to close the gate in preference to the expense of a security guard.

Whilst American Studio films in Australia obviously employ security to protect actors and confidentiality, it seems that Australians may not be as aware of security as their US counterparts. An extra on *Star Wars* commented that, "At first the security at Fox was abysmal, with people referring to the security they had at Leavesden which was near watertight in comparison". It was when it was reported that people were coming through from the public backlot that security was beefed up. Whilst Fox Studios has security at the only gates accessible by the public, their presence is very low and it seems that whilst there is an obvious commitment to keeping on-lookers out, the studios retain a relatively casual and open atmosphere.

Changes in Australian filmmaking culture

"Our local Australian film industry has changed as a result of its proximity to the global film industry, and not for the better". (Head of large post-production house, Sydney)

Whilst there are examples of a change in attitude of crews as a result of their having worked on both American and Australian films, this seems mainly to pertain to their attitudes toward delineation of roles, use of extra crew, adherence to union regulations and payment. It does seem however, that Australian producers still have the power

when it comes to hiring crew and there are experienced crewmembers that will compromise, either due to their understanding of the nature of the lower budget Australian film or their desperation for work in an at best unpredictable industry.

According to an Australian Production Manager in her interview, “Crews expect higher rates as a result of having worked on high budget US films”, but due to the unpredictability of the industry, it is unlikely that they will always get them. Whilst contracts may be longer on American films, there are still not enough being produced to ensure that all Australian film crewmembers are employed consistently, so the majority still need to take whatever work in the local industry that they can find in-between times.

Veteran Australian film producer John Maynard believes that studio production in Sydney has made the production of local Australian features there near impossible and he fears that the studios in Melbourne will have the same effect on feature film production there. What has changed as a result of studio production in Sydney according to Maynard, is if you follow the production of *Mission Impossible 2*, *The Matrix* or another big production at the studios, you inherit “bad practices, bad habits, greedy people, in fact a whole culture that’s been turned arse about face for some sort of glamour thing there”.¹⁴⁷ He believes that this not only affects the crew culture, but also extends to the attitudes of the city councils and governments making decisions on location agreements fees and levels of support. With producers noticing that on a production level, making films has become more difficult since Fox Studios opened in Sydney, it may be that whilst Australian governments and councils are actively encouraging and supporting foreign production, they may be doing so to the detriment of the local industry.

In speaking with production crew across a wide range of feature film production in Australia, there is consensus that the attitudes and expectations of crew in regards to payment and conditions are changing. Far from having one person form an entire wardrobe department, the average size of a wardrobe department on an American feature film is 30, the size of an entire Australian crew on a low budget feature. As a

¹⁴⁷ John Maynard, *Interview*, in *Inside Film Magazine*, April 2005, p. 34.

result of working as part of such large crews, Heads of department are demanding more than ever extra assistants and extra wages for taking sole responsibility for departments. When crewing *Last Train to Freo*, the first two make-up supervisors were passed up as they required extra paid assistants and weren't willing to work with trainees, known as "attachments". As the film had a cast of three men and two women it was decided that the job would be more than adequately handled by a Make-up supervisor with a make-up attachment who had had some experience in the film industry. The two make-up artists demanding extra assistants had been working on a large budget German/Australian international co-production prior to the "Freo" shoot and believed that the film was a training ground.

The Production Designer interviewed, who had also worked on the German production in Western Australia the previous year, labeled it an "open cheque book" production, where every request was met without question. One year after the shoot, the sewing machines, washing machines and complete wardrobe, were still housed in the Perth Studio where filming had taken place.

It seems that whilst our local Australian film industry is partially being absorbed into the larger "global" industry now operating in Australia, there is also through a process akin to "fragmentation" a maintaining or even strengthening of the desire to re-enforce our uniquely Australian identity, both in our films and in our film making culture. Whilst communication systems are coming together and impacting on our societies and cultures and making them more similar, the process of fragmentation sees a celebration of difference as small groups celebrate their own identities and cultures.¹⁴⁸ This is most apparent when Australian crewmembers are working on "global" productions with crewmembers from other countries. It was noted by an Australian production assistant interviewed that whilst working on a US production, the Australian on-set crew members were taking greater pride in being "Aussie" by re-enforcing the "can-do" and "will do" attitude that stereotypically reinforces that Australian character.

Working as part of a small government funded industry, Australian crews have long been used to irregular work, low-budget films and hence a culture based on "favours"

¹⁴⁸ Michael O'Shaughnessy, *Media and Society: An Introduction*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.257.

and foregoing extras such as overtime and loadings in order to get the film made. The work regulations and agreements governing foreign and US studio production in Australia, have meant for the most part that crews have been able to enjoy longer work contracts, more regular work, and even though the wages are often little more than the award, conditions and loadings are guaranteed.

Production Managers on low-budget Australian films have noted overall, that the most notable change in the attitudes of Australian crews as a result of working on both “local” and “global” productions is their attitude towards wages and conditions. Where crew members used to ask “what can you afford” when considering a film job, most crew who are also working on US production are taking longer to consider working on low-budget films, where wages, assistants and the equipment available to them are limited.

There is concern amongst some Australian producers that Australian film crews are becoming more unionised as a result of working on both US and Australian productions. Whilst MEAA ensures that Australian film crew members are paid adequately and work under suitable conditions, filmmakers such as Rolf de Heer speak about the necessity for flexibility in arrangements with crew members and unions when it comes to making Australian films. In the case of *Epsilon* directed by de Heer for example, the shoot was going to take a year, and to pay the cast and crew conventionally in weekly wages would have cost \$10 – 15 million. De Heer explained to the union and the crew that he was offering \$800 a week for a year, but if it was calculated on the actual number of days they were shooting, being 153, they would earn less than that. When all were satisfied that they had “guaranteed income for a year on an adventure and time off”, they agreed to the wage and the film cost \$1.75million.

Rich McCallum, co-producer of the *Star Wars* sequels produced in Australia, preferred the work culture in Australia in Australia to that of Hollywood, which he said, “represents everything repugnant... it’s so unionised”.¹⁴⁹ It is this unionisation that is feared by Australian producers also. On a local Australian feature film, one producer admitted steering clear of hiring two particular film crewmembers because of their

¹⁴⁹ T. Miller, N. Govil, J. McMurria, and R. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 68.

reputations on previous shoots as being over-unionised. She believed that their attitude to charging overtime for every minute would not suit the demands of the production and the production budget. It appears that working on US productions has increased crew awareness of their rights and responsibilities, with a couple of producers also noting that Heads of Department on low-budget Australian features were beginning to delineate roles and refuse to undertake tasks from outside their departments.

It seems that the unionised film industry in the US effects not only Australian cast and crewmembers working on US films in Australia, but those seeking to work on US features abroad. One Australian DOP was given the job to shoot a large feature in the US by its producers, only to be told weeks before his departure that due to union regulations, the production was unable to hire an Australian DOP.

Local Benefits Of Global Production

“You just have to look at the Lamborghinis and other luxury cars parked outside of the animation/Fx houses in the Fox Studios Lot to see who is benefiting from global production”. - (Australian Feature Film Producer)

It appears that gains brought about by working on “global” production in Australia differ depending on the area of production in which the crewmember is engaged. Whilst crew members employed in post-production roles, especially where special effects and the use of new technologies are involved, on the whole believe that “global” productions offer them opportunities far beyond those offered on low-budget local productions, those working as assistants in areas such production and make-up, believe there to be little more to be gained from a role on a “global” production.

One of the aims of the AFC’s report into the impact of foreign production on the local Australian film industry was “to explore the experience of Australian crewmembers working on foreign productions and, in particular, the role of foreign Production in the professional development of crewmembers.”¹⁵⁰ The AFC report identifies benefits of experience on foreign productions to post production

¹⁵⁰ Australian Film Commission, *Foreign Film and Television Production in Australia*, op. cit.

crewmembers, but mentions that large budget foreign film production in Australia fails to employ Australians in key creative roles. Nick Herd agrees with this supposition, identifying the three groups that don't benefit from foreign production in Australia as writers, directors and producers, "the people at the heart of cultural creation in screen production".¹⁵¹ *Son of Mask* which shot in Sydney in 2005 only had two Australians in key crew roles, Producer Stephen Jones and 1st Assistant Director Toby Pease, which was according to Jones, due to the fact that most American directors have their own established team of collaborators.¹⁵²

Whilst large budget foreign production in Australia employs many crewmembers in assistant roles, many Australian crewmembers complain that their work on large US features goes un-credited. One production assistant on a recent US feature confirmed this, stating that she had sent through a complete list of Australian crew to be appropriately credited and still none of them made the credits list. The Australian crewmembers that are credited on "global" productions, speak about the credibility given to those who have worked on larger productions in Australia. Whilst more likely to gain employment on other "global" productions and on foreign productions outside of Australia, these crew members also believe that they are more likely to gain employment on a local production when in competition with other local crewmembers.

It seems that work for Australians on large US productions apart from being competitive, may also be relatively scarce. When asked about the preparations *Star Wars III* at Fox Studios in Sydney, the Production Designer Gavin Bocquet reported "there's a local crew but it's pretty minimal". So just what percentage of these large crews on global films being produced in Australia are Australian? The AFC survey into foreign production, shows that of 13 foreign feature films produced in Australia, only 47% of credited roles were held by Australians.

When the US production *I-Robot* was to be post-produced in Australia, a local post-production house in Sydney spent a large amount of money upgrading their equipment to meet the needs of editing such a film. As it turned out, the Director decided that he wanted to post-produce the film in the US, and so local crews and post-production

¹⁵¹ Nick Herd, op. cit. p.89.

¹⁵² Sascha Epstein, op. cit. p.19.

houses missed out on the opportunity and wasted much time and money. Whilst many American films are filmed in Australia, it seems that by and large the directors are keen to return home and not to spend the six months or so required for post-production in Australia. Whilst effects companies in Australia continue to work on large American films, they do so largely by posting their work on the Internet and sending hard drives around the world.

The result of US studio production in Australia and George Lucas' long association with partially post-producing films in Australia, is the reputations of our post houses and post crews as being well-trained and at the cutting edge of post technology, especially in the field of effects and animation. Murray Pope of Animal Logic, a visual effects house working out of Fox Studios, sees much of the organisation's technical infrastructure as being largely paid for by foreign productions.¹⁵³ Collins and Davis warn however, that whilst films like *Moulin Rouge* mark a step forward for the local Australian special effects industry, they also represent "a downgrading of national cinema into an off-shore service industry for global Hollywood".¹⁵⁴

Goldsmith and O'Regan point out, the establishment of US studios in Australia have meant a relationship between the two industries, the "local" and the "global", with both Fox and Warner Roadshow indicating their availability to local feature film producers both in their willingness to negotiate lower rates and through initiatives such as Tropnest which is now defunct. Whilst there are very rarely local productions making use of the sound stages at Fox Studios, where the relationship does come in is in the crossover of personnel between the two industries and the opportunities afforded to local below the line crew to upgrade their equipment due to the larger budgets available.¹⁵⁵

Whilst crews working on "global" production in Australia are often given the opportunity to work with equipment and new technologies that are not common on low budget Australian features, they are also given greater exposure to the "business" of

¹⁵³ B. Goldsmith and T. O'Regan, *Cinema Cities, Media Cities: The Contemporary International Studio Complex*, (Sydney: AFC, 2003), p. 70.

¹⁵⁴ Felicity Collins and Therese Davis, *Australian Cinema After Mabo* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.30.

¹⁵⁵ B. Goldsmith and T. O'Regan, op. cit. p. 10.

filmmaking and are given a more realistic view of what their “role” entails according to some Australian crew members. Working as part of a large crew gives crewmembers an opportunity to see the micro and macro workings of a film industry according to a veteran Australian Grip. Crews in Australia are forced to multi-task and so the divisions between roles are often not so discernible on Australian films. For the majority of Australian film crew members, however, working on a foreign film or US studio film in Australia means working in an assistant role, and whilst there is still opportunity to work within a larger team with more money available for equipment and sets, what is learnt is often less than what would be learnt on low-budget Australian feature film, where the fact that the budget and departments are smaller means that everyone must multi-task and teach others to assist them in order that the tight schedules and budgets be met.

One benefit of having American studios producing feature films in Australia is the fact that Australian actors have access to international roles without having to travel overseas or be based in Hollywood. Many Australian actors, who have left Australian shores to pursue careers in Hollywood, have voiced their approval at being able to work on large US productions in Australia and have indicated a desire to return home to do so.

There are industrial advantages to Australian cast and crew working under the US and UK actors’ agreements that means that they are given higher wages, but also have access to the more lucrative residual payments that are specified.

With the budgets of Australian feature films averaging \$4M and the budgets of US features averaging \$80M, there is no doubt that a major difference for those working on a US production is the amount of money available to their department. This money often translates into crews working with equipment and sets on a scale that is not available to them on local production. By far the most common response to the question of whether or not working on “global” production offered anything that the local Australian film industry didn’t, was that working on global productions gives you the opportunity to work with larger budgets, and hence the chance to work with technology and equipment that is seldom used on Australian films. Stephen Jones the Australian producer of *Son of Mask*, believes that many Australian technicians, especially lighting teams, grips, camera teams and special effects teams have grown enormously in

knowledge and taken that back into Australian films. He makes special mention of the benefit of private Australian post company Animal Logic, which is at the forefront of the Australian visual effects industry largely due to its work on Hollywood blockbusters *The Matrix*, *Moulin Rouge*, *Face/Off* and *The Thin Red Line*.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Sci-fi film *The Matrix* snared an Oscar in 2000 for special effects house Cineffects for its time-bending pyrotechnics.

The problem of the post-production houses in Australia however, is the cost associated in remaining state of the art when production in Australia is in decline. All technologies now in sound, editing and visual effects change so rapidly that post production houses need constantly to update expensive technology. When there is a downturn in production, not only do these organisations have problems staying in business, they have difficulty being able to afford to keep up with developing technologies. Some post houses however are willing to take the risk and outlay large amounts of money to upgrade equipment that they hope will continue to be in use after the US feature it has been purchased for. Sydney post house Frame, Set and Match spent \$90 000 on a HD telecine machine, believing that it would not only service large budget US features, but also the local Australian film industry who are utilising the HD format more and more. In order to undertake work on *The Son of the Mask* however, they needed to turn down the majority of local work for that period, and whilst it was a difficult time, all of the staff agreed that working on the US feature was worth the trouble.¹⁵⁷

Whilst some post-productions houses have been able to secure work on large budget international feature films, it is no guarantee that they have secure employment from the international feature films shooting in Australia. One of the biggest problems currently is that offshore productions which film in Australia, generally take the footage back to the US for postproduction. With the shortage of Australian feature film production funds, Australian films are increasingly being financed through co-productions with

¹⁵⁶ Sascha Epstein, op. cit. p.20.

¹⁵⁷ David Hull, *Mask*, in *Encore Production Magazine*, April 2004.

other countries, which requires expenditure in those countries and this generally ends up being postproduction, thus robbing Australian facilities of work.¹⁵⁸

Despite the invaluable experiences of those Australians who work in post-production on large budget US films, it is more the case that the Australians working on set on these large US feature films production in Australia, are for the most part undertaking tasks which are similar to those in their roles on Australian films. An Australian Make-up Supervisor described her job as being easier in Europe. Due to higher budgets, she had a larger team and more resources and being paid well was a bonus. Whilst she noted cultural differences, she believed that on the whole, the process of filmmaking and the day-to-day running of the set was pretty much the same.

Of those working in roles on-set, there are only a small number in key creative or Heads of Department roles. The AFC survey into foreign production, shows that of 13 foreign feature films produced in Australia, only 47% of credited roles were held by Australians. Key creative roles such as DOP tended to be filled by imported crew, and almost no Australian directors were used. Foreign television drama however tended to employ Australian directors. Australian production designers were used on foreign feature films over 60% of the time, whilst editors didn't fare as well, being credited on less than 20% of productions. This reflects the preference of foreign productions to return home after completion of principal photography for the convenience of the director. Australian writers were used least of all since scripts came ready for production.¹⁵⁹ On the US feature *Son of Mask* filmed at Sydney's Fox Studios, the majority of Australian crew were employed in the areas of camera, location, and design.¹⁶⁰

The AFC report agreed with the sentiment that it is in the area of post-production that the most benefits are given to Australian crew members, with their reporting a wider range of roles in technical areas and opportunity for an international career in post-production. It goes on to say that Australian Designers have been sought after for big

¹⁵⁸ Sue Milliken, *Submission To The Inquiry Into Future Opportunities For Australia's Film Etc. Industries*, June 24th 2003. At <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/cita/film/subs/sub031.pdf>

¹⁵⁹ Nick Herd, op. cit. p. 29.

¹⁶⁰ Sascha Epstein, op. cit. p.20.

budget films overseas with no Australian connection at all as a result of their experience on “global” films in Australia. Whilst this is a positive for them, Australian Line producers, production managers, and 1st ADs haven’t moved as easily into international production, with only a few given the opportunity to demonstrate their ability on big studio films, or working on international films out of Australia. The main difficulty for Australian crewmembers wishing to work in America continues to be obtaining a green card.

An American working as an assistant editor on films in Australia, states this as her main objection to US production in Australia. She believes that whilst the majority of crewmembers working on US production in Australia are American, there is a very small chance of Australians obtaining the necessary visas to work on production in the U.S.

One of the most obvious benefits to the local Australian film industry of having foreign production in Australia, has been the broadening of range of local production services and production support available, casting agents, crew booking services, security agencies and travel/freight agencies. In addition, the surge in foreign production in Australia has encouraged Australian crew to update their own equipment more regularly and supply it with their service.

Whilst “global” film production in Australia has resulted in employment opportunities for Australian film crews, it is limited by the fact that often it is the same crew employed production to production. An AFC production survey shows that of all Australian freelance crew, only 20% have worked on foreign productions. It appears that having worked on foreign production is the pre-requisite for working on foreign production, so those who were employed on the earlier international feature films shot in Australia have been fortunate in securing work on these productions when they come to town.

For Australian Grips and Gaffers, working in the “global” film industry has meant the luxury of working with assistants that are now more than often done away with on Australian films. One Australian grip spoke of not having worked with an assistant on an Australian film for over two years, due to budgetary constraints. He stated that this not only makes for a longer set-up time when equipment is being rigged, but it is also

dangerous in many instances, especially when production assistants and un-trained volunteers undertake assistant roles.

The gains from working on “global” production in Australia are, according to Australian crewmembers “a two-way street, with Australians able to expand on their craft, especially due to larger budgets and more equipment available through foreign productions¹⁶¹ and foreign crewmembers learning from our egalitarian and efficient work practices.¹⁶² Goldsmith and O’Regan speak about the delicate relationship between the existing industry and the studio in cities such as Sydney where substantial infrastructure and film services already existed.¹⁶³ In such places a productive relationship needs to be developed and the negotiating of such can be the source of much controversy.

In Sydney there was concern over the government favouring international production, but also over whether or not the businesses that operated on the studio site would enjoy some sort of benefit over others. Certainly Fox wooed post-production companies with the prospect of constant work before it opened, according to the owner of a large post-production house on the Fox lot. “They spoke about at least three Australian features and half a dozen telemovies being produced at Fox each year. In reality, there have been a few internationally funded Australian features and no telemovies in the eight years since it opened its doors. They have offered us nothing, have you seen any Fox films being edited here?”

There are a small number of high profile directors who choose to do their post at Fox, but on the whole this doesn’t attitude doesn’t drive the business for the post-production houses there. In fact, according to the manager of a post-production house that moved from Willoughby, the sentiment was the opposite in the early days, with local Australian film producers expressing their disgust that the company was moving to Fox.

Whilst some cast and crew are benefiting from an increasing number of foreign productions and co-productions being produced in Australia, associated film businesses

¹⁶¹ AFC, *Report into Foreign Production in Australia*, op. cit.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ B. Goldsmith and T. O’Regan, op. cit. p.40.

and professionals are also employed as a result. Entertainment lawyers in Sydney have noticed an increase in work due to the increase of co-productions especially and the complicated agreements that need to be constructed. One lawyer speaks of the fact that “drawing two seemingly incompatible systems together and making them work is a challenge”; but that co-productions are often the only shows in town and certainly the only chance to work on anything big budget.¹⁶⁴

Crew preferences - “local” or “global”?

“Where opportunity arises (I will work on global film), but (my) most positive experiences have been on either small, short films, or low-budget Australian feature films where everyone strives hard to make it happen and gives their utmost and believes in it”.

(Australian Make-up Supervisor)

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that crews move easily between offshore and Australian productions,¹⁶⁵ and it is evident, that whilst crews are happy to work on global productions with their longer contracts and better fringes, they are still more than willing to work on the smaller budget Australian films, to enable them to gain professional development experience in a role that they are new to, and also to work amongst friends and colleagues in a less serious and more creative environment.

The answer to the question of whether or not Australian crews prefer to work on “local” or “global” films is therefore that they are happy working on both, but for different reasons.

Whilst box office figures for Australian films are low in comparison to those of Hollywood films, there remains a commitment by Australian casts and crews to make them and audiences to watch them. A Sydney Grip working on many of the “global” films that come to Australia, believes that whilst working on these films gives him an “insight into what can be done with a decent budget... (It also gives) a realisation that (he) prefers to work on smaller local projects”.

¹⁶⁴ Michaela Boland, op. cit. p.31.

¹⁶⁵ Nick Herd, op. cit. p.30.

Australian casts and crews are quite defensive when it comes to speaking about the production of Australian film. The majority believing that we need to continue to produce our own Australian cultural product, in order to differentiate ourselves as a nation, and to represent ourselves and our experience in an international arena. Ninety percent agreed that they would continue to work for low wages in order to see the continuation of Australian feature film production.

The majority of the Australian crew surveyed equated the likelihood of their working on global film in Australia to the likelihood of their being offered work. Most hope they will continue to work on global film but believe that work on international production in Australia is still quite hard to come by, and that only when the largest of productions are being made at the US studios is there enough work for a decent number of Australian crew to be employed. The question remains whether or not levels of foreign production and foreign studio production in Australia will ever be sufficient to sustain an entire local film industry. With Fox Studios in 2006, having no foreign feature production booked into its studios, where is the foreign film production in Australia? The Warner Brothers studios on the Gold Coast are booked out late in early 2007 with the US feature film *Fool's Gold*, and already crewmembers from Sydney have begun to make the move to Queensland to work on the film. It is however the cast and crew that have already worked on the large US productions that are likely to secure the work. Extras on *Star Wars II* were told that the producers wanted to keep as many of the existing people who have worked with them before for the 3rd episode.

Not only are Australian crews competing against each other for work on large US production, they are also competing against crews and teams of people from everywhere else in the world who are vying for work. One Australian stunt performer however, expressed his dismay at auditioning time and time again for large US productions at Fox Studios, only to find that the stunt team employed was one brought in from overseas.

It seems also, that when a production returns overseas for completion, as *Star Wars* did when the Australian studio was needed for another project, very few of the Australian cast and crew are invited to be a part of the international shoot as a result of budgetary

concerns. For the *Star Wars* shoot, the producer recalled other extras that worked had worked on the 1st episode in Britain rather than have the Australian extras travel again.

Many Australian crew members would of course prefer the security of full-time longer contract work, and for many, this is the attraction of working for American studios such as Fox. Whilst a low-budget Australian feature shoots for 4-5 weeks, a feature at Fox may offer employment for 6 months – 1 year. These crewmembers however, when asked which they would prefer to work on, chose the Australian films for the comradery, enjoyment and creativity, all elements that appear to be unique to the smaller Australian film making culture.

Whilst foreign film production in Australia has employed many Australian cast and crewmembers, many also choose to work on foreign productions overseas in order to forge careers in the “global” film industry. Australian DOPs have been working in Hollywood shooting Hollywood films for many years. Andrew Lesnie shot *Babe*, *Lost in Translation*, *King Kong*, whilst Dion Beebe’s feature film debut was the NZ film, *Crush* in 1992. Beebe has shot predominantly US features ever since, including *Collateral* and *Memoirs of a Geisha*.

In order for Australian DOPs to gain enough experience to reach the top of their field, they need to work as part of a larger industry such as Hollywood. With an average of less than twenty feature films made in Australia each year, and in the vicinity of 200 DOPs with Screen accreditation, it is unlikely that most will shoot even one film a year. It has become the case that Australian film industry professionals must either work overseas or work across genres in order to survive, with directors and DOPs working on commercials and television as well as feature films. Feature film Director Jonathan Teperowsky, director of *Better than Sex*, directs commercials for a large advertising company in order to survive in a small local industry, as do many others. American crewmembers say the same of work in the US. Most are working on commercials and television in order to maximise the time they are working.

Australian cast similarly often look internationally for work once they have feature film experience in Australia. Tony Collette’s debut feature film was *Spotswood* in 1992 and she went on to act in another three Australian feature films before being offered a role

in the US/UK production *Emma* in 1996. Since then, she has acted mainly on US and UK productions and continues to be in demand for international feature films. Based in Australia, she has however continued to work on local films starring in *Dirty Deeds* in 2002 and *Japanese Story* in 2003.

Son of Mask producer Stephen Jones believes that whilst he and other Australians working primarily on large budget US films would love the opportunity to work on Australian films again, whilst big budgets are exciting, he loves story, character and watching something come alive as is the case with working on Australian films.

The Global Film Industry and the Future of the Australian Industry

“The Hay Day is over and it’s not coming back”. – Australian Sound Recordist speaking of the Australian Film Industry.

It is evident in all the figures on film production published by the Australian Film Commission, that our local industry has seen a downturn in production, and that this has coincided with the introduction of larger corporate work such as that at Fox Studios, something that is according to producer John Maynard, not unrelated. The effects that studio production has on local production however may be its most visible when examining its erratic nature, and hence the inconsistency of work it generates. According to an Australian Grip working on the majority of “global” films being produced in Australia, “the Australian industry has grown dramatically in all ways due to “global” productions coming to our shores and providing better budgets”. He goes on to say however, that whilst it looks impressive that films such as *Superman Returns* are creating 400 jobs, unless the Australian Government capitalizes on that fact and offers more support to the local industry, what we will be left with when the production finishes is “400 people out of work”. In addition, the locations and businesses that have charged higher rates to the higher budget American productions, will continue to charge these rates to low-budget Australian feature producers, hence pricing local films out the market.

Not only are “global” films being made in Australia bringing their own crews to work here, it seems that Australians making films overseas are hiring foreign crews, rather

than pay the costs of travel and accommodation to take Australian crews with them. An Australia Sound Recordist who's worked in the Australian Film Industry for thirty years, tells of a Director he has worked with for many years making a feature documentary in the US. He quoted for the job, with what he believed to be a very reasonable quote, only to lose it to a US Sound Recordist due to budgetary concerns.

As a result of this positioning of Australian cinema in an international film arena, impact has also been made on the policy and processes of our Australian film funding bodies. In 2004, the Film Finance Corporation revised its evaluation process for feature film production, and it may be that this new process, combined with the move of funding bodies towards supporting co-productions, has had an impact on local Australian films being financed. In a report on the health of the Australian film industry by Australia's entertainment lawyers, it was stated that some "quintessentially" Australian films don't stand a chance with the current financing models and that films costing between \$3M - \$7M, which is most Australian films, are becoming the most difficult to finance due to the fact that their inability to attract big enough cast with those budgets means they can't attract finance either locally or internationally.¹⁶⁶

One Australian producer who recently had her project abandoned by the FFC, agrees that there is a downturn in support for "quintessentially" Australian films and a sentiment that we've been there, done that in our feature film, with stories about rural Australian characters and landscapes. This has largely come she believes, from the FFC's association with international distributors, who play a part in the film securing their financing and their desire to see what they believe to be a diversity of Australian film on the big screen.

¹⁶⁶ Michaela Boland, *op. cit.* p.31.

Chapter 5 – Case Study – *Superman Returns* vs. *Last Train to Freo*

By examining the experiences of Australian cast and crew on two films, one a local Australian production *Last Train to Freo* and the other a large American film *Superman Returns* filmed largely at Fox Studios in Sydney, it is possible to gain an insight into two different codes of film making practice and the cultures surrounding them.

In November 2005, after much speculation, it was announced that Fox Studios in Sydney would play host to *Superman Returns*, directed by American Bryan Singer. With a crew of 328 and a budget estimated at US\$200 million, it was reported in the US, that the NSW Department of State Development expected it to inject \$80M into the local Australian economy, and to employ 10 000 people.

Last Train to Freo by contrast, is a low-budget Australian feature film, the debut feature film for actor/director Jeremy Sims. It was filmed in Perth Western Australia in 2005 and completed post-production in Sydney in 2006. With a paid crew of 30 and a budget of A\$1.2M, it was the first feature film to be filmed in Western Australia for twenty years.

As a result of surveys conducted with cast and crew of both films, the following list of characteristics was compiled for comparison and discussion.

	<u>Last Train to Freo</u>	<u>Superman Returns</u>
Length of Development	2 years	10 years
Length of Pre-production	8 weeks	6 months
Length of Shoot	4 weeks	6months
Number of Cast	5	18 principal cast
Number of Crew	30 full-time	200 full-time
Department Size	3	20-30
Percentage of Crew Australian	100	47
Percentage of Heads of Dept. Australian	100	0
Budget A\$	A\$1.2M	A\$250M
Box Office A\$ First Weekend	A\$32,000	US\$52.1M

A Comparison

A comparison of the two films begins with the development periods of each, in which script drafts were written, cast and crew were secured and the Director and Producer began planning schedules and locations.

The development period for *Superman Returns* spanned almost two decades and was fraught with many problems over that time, including losing directors and key cast members on a number of occasions. It was reported that the development period for cost US\$60M. The development time for *Last Train to Freo* in contrast happened over a three-year period, with Australian government funding bodies contributing A\$25,000 to the film's development.

Once the *Superman Returns* project was moved to Sydney it became a quicker process, with the main and final pre-production/production period taking place from October 2004 to November 2005, just over a year. The pre-production/production period for

Last Train to Freo took place between February 2005 and May 2005, just over 3 months.

Whilst *Superman Returns* was in post-production in 2005 for 8 months and was premiered in the US on June 30th 2006, *Last Train to Freo* was in post-production from May 2005 – February 2006, 9 months, and premiered in Perth, Western Australia on August 31st 2006.

Obviously there are many differences spoken about when cast and crew detail their experiences on both local and global film production in Australia. When it came to differences noted between the experiences of crew working on *Superman Returns* and crew working on *Last Train to Freo*, most spoken about was the size of the crew and hence the size of departments that crew were working within and the ramifications this had for day to day working practices.

It is evident that the larger the department, the more structured the work hierarchy and hence the less the crewmembers further down the chain are in active decision-making and creative input. On *Superman Returns*, the departments consisted on average of 20-30 people, whilst on *Last Train to Freo*, the largest department consisted of 3 people. As is common on US studio films in Australia, Australians take mainly secondary roles in production, and as a result, the Australian crewmembers working on *Superman Returns*, were well aware that they were small parts of a huge crew, and as such were only given production information on a strictly “need to know” basis. Extras for example, were only given the lines of the scripts relating to them by the 2ADs on the mornings that they were shooting and were kept from knowing who the actors were that they would be working with in these scenes.

Whilst the crew on *Last Train to Freo* acknowledged that their work was overseen by a Head of Department, all felt that they played a part in the creative decisions related to their particular department, given that the size of that department was three people, working very closely together. As is the case on many Australian films, the Heads of Department on *Last Train to Freo* brought their own assistants with them and as such the departments all worked as close teams, communicating with one another creatively and planning work flow together.

Australian crewmembers on *Superman Returns* by contrast, were well aware that they were well down the pecking order when it came to decision-making or showing initiative. They were rarely invited to production meetings, and whilst supervised by an immediate superior, they were well aware of being low down within multiple layers of hierarchy. Complicating the communication process for the Australian crewmembers is the fact that the Heads of Department on *Superman Returns* were all American, well entrenched in the large-scale American studio work culture that keeps script and production information well secreted and holds privacy of information to be of utmost importance.

The strict guidelines for Australian crewmembers working on *Superman Returns* meant that there was very little room for creative input of any kind. Crew working on *Last Train to Freo* in comparison, were happy that they had a level of creative input and were privy to full script and production meetings in which details were revealed and discussed.

Whilst those working on *Superman Returns* told of long working hours and socialising with very few people outside of the Australians working alongside them in their departments, the crew working on *Last Train to Freo* spoke of the friendly working atmosphere, with cast, production assistants and runners socialising together and even catching up on weekends off. As a producer on the film, I had the 2nd Assistant Director and Production Assistant sleeping in my lounge-room in order to save them from their long drives home at the end of each shoot day. Extras on *Superman Returns* demonstrate however something of this closeness between Australian cast and crews, with one extra telling of the big brotherhood within the extras community, due largely to the fact that whilst the American cast members are well-used to the scale and excitement of Hollywood production, the Australians still have a huge level of excitement.

Scheduling is another area where differences between Australian filmmaking and US studio production become apparent. Whilst working on *Superman Returns*, Australian members of the camera crew noted that quite often they were only scheduled to shoot “2 or 3 shots a day”, which meant that whilst working hard, they never really felt the stress of behind schedule. Whilst those working on US films commonly enjoy extended

schedules and set-up times, the crew working on *Last Train to Freo* had entirely the opposite experience. As a result of only being able to film on an actual train during the hours of 12a.m. and 4.15a.m, when trains stopped running, the crew were required to work quickly and set-up time was limited. Compounding the train scheduling restrictions were the budgetary restrictions of only being able to afford four nights on the actual train. As a result, it was imperative that all of the shots involving moving into and out of stations were completed as per the tight schedule.

Choice of location on *Superman Returns* had nothing to do with matching the reality of the script with the physical characteristics of a town or city. As is evident in the offshore nature of Hollywood production in the 2000s, Hollywood is no longer a location; it is a means of production of global proportions, with its manufacturing taking place in predominantly offshore locations. The reasons for this re-location of Hollywood are purely financial, and the choice of Australia for production due to the weaker Australian dollar, the skilled film crews, the common English language, and in the 2000s, fully equipped film studios and Government tax incentives. For this reasons, Hollywood producers in the 2000s are more likely to film a Kansas farmhouse in Sydney than in Kansas. *Superman Returns* Producer Chris Lee, says that many Americans ask him why the most American of heroes is having his latest movie made in Australia, and he replies, “the simple answer is economics”.¹⁶⁷ And as a result, the producers of ‘Superman Returns’ brought 6 tons of lumber to a rural parcel on the Breeza Plains of Australia and built a Kansas farmhouse”¹⁶⁸.

With many Australian films, the fact that a proportion of the audience will recognise the location and identify with it, is very important in the purpose for making the film and its subsequent marketing strategy. This was the case with *Last Train to Freo*, funded through a Screenwest initiative, it was always intended that the Western Australian audience see their suburbs and experience reflected to them in the characters and location of the film. Whilst the landscape is not visible from the moving train, each stop announced is true to the train journey from Midland to Fremantle, and the night lights

¹⁶⁷ Chris Lee, *Island Voices*, The Advertiser Los Angeles. At <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Jan/07/lh/lh08p.html>

¹⁶⁸ Geoff Boucher, *Los Angeles Times*, op. cit.

projected on screens were true to the actual points of the journey that the train was said to be passing through.

Confidentiality is a feature of all American studio productions, with *Superman Returns* no exception. Whilst all working on the production signed secrecy clauses and all non-essential crew were unable to take mobile phones on set, many of the Australian crew expressed their disappointment that there were times when they knew they were about to film something good and everyone except essential crew were ushered off the set. On Australian films this degree of secrecy is rare, with the set of *Last Train to Freo* a good example of the open way in which information and experience is shared within the Australian film industry. Whilst a gate list was prepared and volunteers manned the gate into the location on a daily basis, all those who arranged an on-set visit were accommodated and allowed to watch some of that day's shooting. This included film teachers and students, investors and their families, friends and relatives of cast and crew and other film industry crewmembers and colleagues.

Whilst *Superman Returns* opened globally, with first week revenue in the millions, *Last Train to Freo* opened only in Australia, on a single screen in most major cities, and two in Sydney. Whilst it gained much publicity and media in the weeks preceding its release, it cannot be compared to the advertising and triling that led up to the release of *Superman Returns*. It continues to be this disparity in marketing and distribution that reflects one of the largest differences between Australian feature films and "global" feature films.

Chapter 6 – Addressing Current Dangers and Dilemmas

Government support

“Private investment will always have a role, and foreign sources are particularly important in financing higher-budget local features, but direct government funding sources continue to underpin the core Australian feature slate. Our analysis indicates that, on average, government agencies have consistently provided more than 42 per cent of the funding for locally financed features each year.” (AFC Chief Executive, Kim Dalton, at the release of the National Survey of Feature Film and TV Drama Production 2001/02).

When it comes to examining reasons why the Australian film industry is struggling in the 1990s/2000s, much criticism is aimed towards the Liberal-National coalition government who have slashed more than \$100 million from local film and television funding between 1996 and 2001. When faced with the figures pointing to a significant decrease in local production in the Australian audio-visual industries in 2000, however, it seems that the Federal Australian Government did something to heed the cries that the local Australian film industry was indeed facing crisis, announcing in 2001 that there was to be an increase in funding to the local film industry of \$92.7 million over the period 2001 – 2006, and a new refundable tax offset for qualifying large film productions. The funding package was named the “integrated film package”.

Whilst the move saw increased funding to our local agencies and broadcasters, it was apparent that a large part of the rationale was to ensure that Australia remained on the cutting edge of new technology and that Australian film continued to compete in an increasingly global marketplace. Evidently, inherent in its decision to increase funding to the local Australian film industry, the Federal Government had in mind both the interests of both local film producers and international studios and production companies. In the Government press release with news of the increased funding, it was stated that this increased support for production, development and the use of new technologies was not only to ensure that Australia remained at the cutting edge of

production and post-production, but to provide tax incentives for foreign productions to be made in Australia.¹⁶⁹

In 2002, these changes to Australian Taxation Law spoken about in the 2001 film package, were introduced as the *Taxation Laws Amendment (Film Incentives) Bill* to Federal Parliament, signalling a 12.5% refundable tax offset against Australian production expenditure for larger budget films. The Government's intention in creating these tax incentives was to create a subsidy to compete with other jurisdictions such as the UK and to attract foreign filmmakers to Australia. The Government were quick to dismiss any fears that they were supporting foreign production interests over local film industry interests, with Science Minister Peter McGauran stating that, "we do not rely on foreign production to build our domestic or indigenous industries... but we know that the two can coexist and there is some potential, if not real, flow-on benefit to the domestic industry by having these foreign productions."

The benefits to the local film industry were distributed across the local film funding agencies, with an additional \$7.5 million allocated to the FFC in 02/03, increasing to \$10.5 million from 03/04 for children's and adult television drama produced by the independent sector and the AFC receiving increased funding of \$3million in 02/03, rising to \$5 million in 03/04 to enable it to better support the development of Australian film and filmmakers, AFTRS received an additional .5 million in 01/02, and additional \$1 million from 02/03 to lease digital equipment and the Film Industry's investment attraction body. Industry and Government formed AusFILM, received an extra \$1million per annum to provide one stop shop for foreign producers, enabling them to meet their requirements at all levels of Government.

Rather than replacing the existing 10B and 10BA tax incentives, these tax concession are able to continue to operate side-by-side with the new offset, although films are not able to receive both concessions, with films which receive capital from the AFFC or a Film Licensed Investment Company, not eligible for the new financial incentive. On launching the new concessions, the Government anticipated that the legislation would

¹⁶⁹ Screenwest, *Government Delivers Film Industry Package*. At <http://www.screenwest.com.au/...on/displaynews.cfm?newsID=1&articleID=152>

produce concessions of \$4.7 million for the financial year 2001/2002, rising to \$53.4 million for 2005/2006.

As a result of the 2001 *Integrated Film Package*, the contribution to feature financing by Australian government agencies, mainly the FFC, rose significantly in 2002, with government agencies contributing \$44 million to 14 titles compared with \$27 million to 15 titles last year. In reality this saw an average of 3.1 million invested per film in 2002, compared to 1.8 million invested per film in the previous year. Maybe in response to the generous new tax incentives for foreign film producers making films in Australia, 2002 also saw the highest number of foreign feature films produced in Australia in the period 1989 – 2005, with 8 features produced.

Since the introduction of the Australian Government's refundable tax offset¹⁷⁰ for large budget film production, 20 film and television projects have been certified for the offset, with films like *The Matrix* trilogy, *Peter Pan*, *Star Wars Episodes II and III*, *Scooby Doo*, *The Great Raid*, *Son of the Mask*, *Inspector Gadget 2*, *Ghost Ship*, *Stealth*, the mini-series *Salem's Lot* and the UK–Australian co-production *Ned Kelly* produced in Australia. The Australian Film Commission's National Survey of Feature Film and TV Drama Production 2004-05 shows production spending in Australia by foreign feature films has increased considerably since the introduction of the offset in 2001, with expenditure reaching \$243 million in 2004-05, well above the 10-year average of \$129 million.¹⁷¹ Building on this success, in 2005, the Government introduced legislation to extend the incentive to large-budget TV series production.¹⁷²

For over thirty years the Australian Commonwealth Government has supported initiatives promoting Australian cultural film product through its film agencies. Recently however, their initiatives have also supported economic rather than cultural outcomes, evident in their support for film studios and the attraction of foreign

¹⁷⁰ See Definitions, p.142.

¹⁷¹ Review of Division 376 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, May 2006. At http://www.arts.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/51676/Fox_Studios_Australia.pdf

¹⁷² Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Film in Australia - The big picture*. At http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/film_australia.html

production to Australia.¹⁷³ Whilst the government are quick to point out that this support of foreign film production in Australia does not mean an end to support for the local Australian film industry, it undoubtedly means that funds are allocated across the two industries in order that both receive support, and as a result, subsidies for local film may be less than otherwise expected.

The Federal Government's support of the Australian film industry was brought into question they did not support any exemptions for culture in the Free Trade Agreement with the US, with many Australian Film Industry representatives stating that this meant the end for a local industry. An examination of levels of funding for Australian Film over the period 1989 – 2005 however, shows that financial support for a local film industry has continued, regardless of the Agreement.

With incentives for foreign production to come to our shores, the question of whether or not the incentives for local film production are equivalent and appropriate is valid. Whilst the AFC commissioned a report into the impact of foreign production on the Australian Film Industry in 2001, there is in 2005, a further extensive review into the Australian Film Industry underway, the results of which will further explore these questions.

The AFC Report

In 2001, the AFC commissioned a report into the impact of foreign film production on the Australian film industry, as did the Communications Law Centre, Victoria. Both reports were born out of concerns for a local industry whose production figures were down on previous years, and an interest in the extent to which increased foreign production had played a role in this. Whilst both reports agreed that the level of foreign investment in Australian feature films has far outweighed both government and private Australian investments in the last half of the 1990s, they failed to identify any significant effects on local filmmaking culture and practices as a result of the surge in foreign production and dismissed any fears that the foreign film making in Australia is having a negative effect on local Australian film production.

¹⁷³ Nick Herd, op. cit. p.ix.

In its report, the Australian Film Commission reported that offshore production was being sustained at a level where it had become a significant part of the local landscape, and conceded that whilst some figures illustrated the undeniable impact on the local sector of foreign production, it was a vital component of the domestic scene, and demonstrated Australia's competitiveness with other international locations in attracting Production. It also cautioned us not to lose sight of the fact that our crews have learnt and honed their skills on largely low budget Australian productions.

In fact the AFC didn't identify any significant negative impact of foreign film production on local production, with their report stating that they believed much of the debate about the impact of the largely US runaway production consisted of anecdote and hearsay, deciding that whilst the growth of offshore production has clear implications for the local industry at many levels, the balanced growth of the entire industry is an appropriate national goal.

Whilst the AFC report into foreign production tells of a mutually beneficial relationship between domestic film and television production and international projects attracted from offshore, the AFC's National Survey of Feature Film & TV Drama production for 2001/02 revealed the number of Australian features produced in 2002 dropped to 26, compared to 31 in 2001, with total feature production falling by 35%, from \$127 million to \$82 million. Foreign productions on the other hand spent \$191 million locally in 2002, almost double their expenditure in 2001.

The AFC conceded that whilst some figures illustrated the undeniable impact on the local sector of foreign production, for example, foreign drama shot in Australia in 2000/01 spent \$191 million here, accounting for almost a third (31%) of that year's drama production spending, it made it clear that foreign production was a vital component of the domestic scene, and demonstrated Australia's competitiveness with other international locations in attracting production.

The AFC spoke to 160 Australians who have worked on foreign productions to elicit their experiences and insights and reported that a key theme highlighted by crewmembers' experience was the extent to which skill transfer was a 'two-way street'. Australians are able to expand on their craft, especially due to larger budgets and more

equipment available through foreign productions, while foreign crewmembers learn from our egalitarian and efficient work practices.

They interviewed Hollywood producers who had recently filmed in Australia about why Americans are attracted to Australia as a production destination, and reported that while financial factors will always be a central element in studio decisions on where to film, it was stressed that our crews play a pivotal role in building the kind of relationships that keep overseas producers coming back to Australia.

The AFC report illustrated that the Australian production industry is increasingly interconnected with foreign production; that domestic and foreign film and television production should be seen as a holistic entity, underscoring the internationalisation of our audio-visual industry.

The AFC highlighted the professional development and training opportunities for Australian crews to make Australian films and television programs will also foster and encourage further foreign production. Foreign productions do not take risks on untried key crew. The valued roles go to those who have made a reputation on high profile Australian productions. The AFC report states that with careful management, Australia can continue to reap the economic benefits without jeopardising the cultural benefits Australians derive from the Australian industry, and that a healthy mix of various kinds of production activity will be part of this.

Overall the report depicts the relationship between Australian domestic film and television production and international projects attracted from offshore, as complex and sometimes competitive, but ultimately mutually beneficial

FLICS

As a result of the Gonski Report, late in 1997, the Australian Government in 1999, gave the go-ahead to a scheme to attract private capital to fund Australian film, the pilot scheme, known as Film Licensed Investment Company (FLIC), saw two licensed companies, Content Capital Ltd and Macquarie Film Corporation Pty Ltd awarded licences under the FLICS scheme to raise up to \$20 million concessional capital each by

the end of the next financial year for the investment in the production of qualifying (under 10BA) Australian films. The scheme operated parallel to existing tax concessions and gave investors 100% tax deductions on investment in film.¹⁷⁴ If it was successful in raising finance for Australian feature film, the Government planning to begin scaling back the FFC.¹⁷⁵

In October 2000, MFC in conjunction with the Australian-based US distributor UIP, reached an agreement to release a minimum of three locally produced features per year, the deal complimenting UIP's three equity investments in MFC projects, which totalled \$3M in 2000. In 2002, Macquarie Films funded *Bad Eggs* starring Judith Lucy and Mick Molloy, which was released in Australian cinemas in August 2003. In 2003, Macquarie Films embarked on a co-production *Getting Square*, with Mushroom Pictures/Working Title and Nine Films, who also funded the Australian film *Dirty Deeds* starring Toni Collette in conjunction with Hoyts Distribution in 2002.

As a result of FLICS being launched, the Australian Government closed the Commercial Television Production Fund that feeds into the feature film sector. The initiative, set up by the previous government was worth around A\$13.5M to filmmakers and its demise has meant more Australian producers need to look internationally for funds.¹⁷⁶

In 2006, the FLIC scheme, which made a significant contribution to financing Australian features in its final year of operation investing around \$16 million in nine titles, eight of which shot in 2002, ended. Whilst it raised \$22.4M in private sector investment, this was considerably short of the \$40M permitted, with no investment coming from FLICS or Macquarie Nine Film and Television funds in 2004/05.¹⁷⁷ In July 2006, it was reported that the newly appointed FLIC failed raise the allowed \$10 million in concessional capital from private investors and in addition, Future Films decided to return investor funds because of what they claim are 'processing inefficiencies' by the ATO. As a result of the demise of FLICS, and a looming

¹⁷⁴ David Hancock, *Global Film Production*, op. cit. p.1.

¹⁷⁵ David Tiley, *Macquarie Bank: FLIC flicked*, in Screen Hub, Friday 13 October, 2006.

¹⁷⁶ David Hancock, op. cit. p.1.

¹⁷⁷ Sean Maher, op. cit. p.xii.

structural crisis in financing for Australian film and television programs, the governments' need to do something to allow for more substantial private investment to flow into the Australian production industry is again on the agenda.¹⁷⁸

AusFilm

If this new film group make headway, we might be saved. – Australian Gaffer speaking about Ausfilm and the future of the Australian Film Industry.

Ausfilm is a not-for-profit organisation, which markets Australia as a destination for film production and provides advice on all aspects of filming in Australia. A screen industry-government partnership, it comprises some 40 private sector companies, Australia's State & Territory film agencies, and the Australian Government through the Department of Communications, IT & the Arts. Whilst affiliated with the government, Ausfilm is not bound by the same level of policy restriction as the state funding agencies and hence is able to initiate schemes for Australian film crews that are beyond the scope of the other agencies. Whilst the other agencies are concentrating on facilitating Australian originated co-productions for reasons of cultural policy, Ausfilm is promoting an alternative solution to attracting smaller productions, that of concentrating on encouraging foreign-originated co-production to Australia, in order that larger numbers of Australian cast and crew be employed.

Ausfilm has begun to include information on foreign-originated co-production in its marketing material, directing interested producers to the state agencies, rather than the Film Finance Corporation, to attract medium-scale European production. Its Director John Woods believes that unlike the Americans “Europeans are interested in the finance”, and as a result AusFilm has been promoting to them overseas-originated films that have found finance here.” The examples they are using include *Opal Dream*, *The Proposition*, and the Irish children's series *Foreign Exchange*, which was filmed in Western Australia.

¹⁷⁸ Owen Johnson, *Private investment crisis: The Ghosts of 10ba Past*, in Screen Hub, Friday 7 July, 2006.

AusFilm are aiming for a level of cooperation between federal and state film funding bodies in order to promote the building an Australian film industry and are examining the infrastructure of the industry here and what it can sustain in order to fill gaps in our current production patterns.

Free Trade Agreement

The globalisation of markets can be described as the promotion of free trade through numerous multilateral agreements between individual nation states.¹⁷⁹ In 2002, the Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the United States looked like becoming a reality, with members of the Australian Film Industry voicing their concern in the media through Industry Bodies such as SPAA. It was apparent that the main concern for the local film industry was a lack of provision for protection of local media content in the agreement. Kim Dalton of the AFC, stated, Australia's official position as expressed to the WTOs Council of Trade in Services in 2001:

“Australia remains committed to preserving our right to regulate audiovisual media to achieve our cultural and social objectives and to maintain the broad matrix of support measures for the audiovisual sector that underpin our cultural policy; including retaining the flexibility to introduce new measures in response to the rapidly changing nature of the sector.”

Audiovisual services fall under the WTO classification of the “information communications sector” which forms a major component of the trade in services of the global economy. In 1994, output from the information communications sector was valued at US\$1.5Trillion. Media comprised 21% of this, with the rest made up of telecommunications and computing.¹⁸⁰ Australia, along with 42 other WTO member countries, has commenced incursions into the audiovisual sector, by seeking cultural exemptions under audiovisual trade.¹⁸¹ There have been repeated calls on behalf of the Australian audiovisual industry, that current assistance levels be maintained, not as a

¹⁷⁹ Sean Maher, op. cit. p.2.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. p.3.

¹⁸¹ Ibid. p.3.

means of keeping foreign product out of Australia, but as a means of safeguarding Australian content as a viable component in the programming mix.¹⁸²

Freelance policy analyst Owen Johnston, reported that although the limitations imposed by the Free Trade Agreement with the United States are yet to be really tested, it is clear that the Agreement has placed a ceiling on regulation in the current media environment. Whilst the ramifications of Australia signing the Bilateral Free Trade Agreement with the United States are yet to become clear, what is definite is that the government is unable now to regulate for more Australian content than what we currently have.¹⁸³

The future of the Australian Film Industry.

Australian cast and crew support

“I’d love to work on an Australian film this year, but the local Industry’s dead in the water.” – (Australian Production Accountant)

In answering surveys for this thesis, Australian cast and crews have predominantly voiced support for Australian film and the Australian film industry, voicing dismay and concern over what they perceive as an industry in crisis. The lack of work on local production and the struggles of local production and post-production companies have not gone un-noticed. Most blame the Howard Government for its lack of support for the Arts. When asked whether or not this crisis in the Australian film industry is worse than those in previous years, all 50 interviewees responded that it is.

A negative cutter in Sydney, now out of work largely due to few films being shot on film, believes this crisis is far worse than any others that she has witnessed over the past twenty-five years. This is largely due to the fact, she believes, that many industry professionals are now losing jobs, homes and businesses for a second time. Whilst they still retained the motivation and positivity to rebuild after the first time, they now feel defeated and see no chance of a revival.

¹⁸² Ibid. p.3.

¹⁸³ Owen Johnston, op. cit.

Despite the doom and gloom, it is evident however, that the importance of the place of Australian film and Australian film making culture is secure in the hearts and minds of those in the Australian film industry. Whilst some cast and crew are working on foreign production and working internationally, all tell of their love of working on Australian films. One production accountant spoke of the frustration of not having worked for seven months and the impact it was having on her family. Whilst she is one of two production accountants preferred by Southern Star, her lack of work was due only to the fact that there are no Australian films in production. Whilst desperate for work, she was still prepared however to wait it out for an Australian film to go into production, and turn down offers to work on TV series' such as *Big Brother*.

When asked whether or not the 2000s were just another period of crisis for the Australian Film Industry, cast and crewmembers were largely of the opinion that the crisis now is far larger than ever before, due to the fact that local production has largely been replaced by “global” production in Australia. It may be however that a series of crises in the industry have resulted in older members of the Australian film industry being less likely this time around to stick out the hard times. Chris Rowell, a negative cutter working out of Film Australia quoted a colleague who said to her with the decline in production in 2006, “I have to leave the film industry, I can’t lose my house for a second time”. Chris herself is weighing up a job offer in China, also certain that the hard times for the Australian film industry will last at a least a few years. Whilst she believes that the Australian film industry has been through similar crises a number of times before, she believes that what is different this time, is the fact that Australian film industry veterans no longer have the energy to ride such low points.

Australian Cinema Audience Support

The views of Australian audiences on Australian film can be gauged somewhat on their attendances at Box Office. This is however not an entirely accurate reflection of a desire to support Australian film, as if we move out of our major cities and in fact out of the CBDs of our major cities, it is almost impossible to find an Australian film being screened.

The vast majority (64 per cent) of the films screened in Australian cinemas over the past 22 years have come from the USA, although in 2005 there was a smaller proportion with 175 US titles out of a total of 329 (53 per cent). Local titles comprised 8 per cent of films screened in 2005, just under the 22-year average (10 per cent). The US dominance is even greater when it comes to box office earnings 81 per cent in 2005.

Australian films have earned 5.0 per cent of the box office (\$436 million out of a total of \$8,757 million) in the past 13 years. Only once in that period did the Australian share reach 10 per cent: in 1994, with the success of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Muriel's Wedding*. 2001 saw a record \$63.5 million earned by local films, including *Moulin Rouge*, *Lantana*, *The Man Who Sued God* and *Crocodile Dundee in LA*, but this represented only 8 per cent of the total box office that year.

Only five Australian films make it into the 50 top films of Australian box office of all times:

Crocodile Dundee, Hoyts, 30 Apr 1986, 47,707,045

Babe, UIP/Universal, 14 Dec 1995, 36,776,544

Moulin Rouge, Fox, 24 May 2001, 27,431,931

Crocodile Dundee 2, Hoyts, 26 May 1988, 24,916,805

Strictly Ballroom, Ronin, 20 Aug 1992, 21,760,400

The Australian films that have been most successful at box office may say something about the type of Australian films that Australian audiences like to watch. Whilst *Babe* and *Moulin Rouge* were studio produced and foreign financed, with budgets far beyond that of local Australian films, *Crocodile Dundee* and *Strictly Ballroom* were made for more modest amounts. *Crocodile Dundee* however, whilst having relevance to Australian audiences, was based on universal themes, and was set partially in the US. *Strictly Ballroom* was also far from parochial, with universal themes at its core.

It seems that many of the “ocker” films characteristic of the 1970s and still being made in the 1980s and 1990s, fail to rate in a major way at Australian box office. Even the “quality” films of the late 1970s, early 1980s, films like *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, whilst

faring well at box office, failed to rate against American films such as *Sleepless in Seattle* and *Sister Act*.

In 2006, local mock-u-mentary *Kenny* is further proof that Australian audiences continue to support parochially Australian film. After six weeks on screens in Australia, *Kenny* has already reached A\$3M as has the higher budget *Jindabyne*.

The Australian Film Commission has commissioned reports into cinema attendance patterns in Australia, including how Australian films fare at the Box Office. Whilst the figures could be construed as a lack of Australian audience support for Australian film, what it is also reflective of is lack of distributor and multiplex support for Australian film resulting in short runs and exhibition on few screens. Some industry analysts believe that the unfortunate box office performance of Australian films in the 2000s may start to show in our ability to secure healthy distribution deals.

The Future Of Global Production In Australia

Nick Herd asks the blunt question in his book, “Should foreign production be regarded as the icing on the cake of a prosperous domestic industry, or as an essential ingredient of the cake itself?” With foreign and studio production on the increase due to the attractiveness of Australia as a location, foreign production now represents 44% of the total expenditure on feature film and television drama production in this country¹⁸⁴ and whilst these figures indicate that Australia continues to be successful in attracting these foreign productions in an increasingly competitive global market, the competition is ever increasing and as such the future of “global” film production in Australia can’t be assured. New incentives for offshore film production have been announced in a number of countries such as Fiji, Hungary and Iceland, and recently New Zealand announced an incentive based on Australia’s refundable film tax offset.

State governments in Australia continue to offer various further incentives to foreign producers to make their films in Australia. In New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland these include payroll tax exemptions, while Victoria offers grants and

¹⁸⁴ Nick Herd, op. cit. p.xi.

Western Australia offers project funding. Queensland has recently announced a special post-production incentive and South Australia now offers a labour cost rebate. Australian Producer and Policy Analyst Owen Johnston believes that relying on servicing foreign productions might make the bottom line look good for Australian Treasury, but “it is volatile and it won’t ensure a future for Australian programming.”¹⁸⁵ And many experienced Australian producers are agreeing with the fact that foreign production in Australia is not secure enough to pin any hopes for our industry on. Producer John Maynard speaks of the fact that Fox Studios in Sydney is like a ghost town most of the year and is undoubtedly one the “great failed Murdoch ventures”. Stating that “capital” has no “cultural responsibility”, he believes that as soon as a better deal for the US studios is on the table, they will continue to shift from one country to the next.¹⁸⁶

So is the future of the global film industry as insecure as many would have us believe? And what will we lose if the American studios move out? As the Australian dollar continues to strengthen, many worry that the Americans will leave our shores for “cheaper” pastures, and this is in fact what is already beginning to happen. The post-production of *I-Robot*, shot in Canada in 2003, was scheduled to take place in Sydney and was at the last minute rescheduled to the US for reasons unknown, although cost and creative control issues were said to be major factors. The fourth series of *Farscape* was axed in 2002, after the sci-fi network in the US exercised a last minute ‘out’ clause and cancelled the series. As a result, 400 – 500 jobs in Australia were lost.

Sentiment amongst Australian crewmembers is that the work in the “global” film industry is far from secure and whilst the government boasts about the jobs created by international film production in Australia, these jobs are short term, with the crewmembers often being out of work at the end of the film. Our increasing dependence on the global film industry in Australia to create a sustainable film industry with secure employment for our casts and crews may in fact be increasing their vulnerability.

Star Wars producer Rick McCallum praised Australian crews to a US film magazine, saying that their “flexibility” gave them an advantage above and beyond the favourable

¹⁸⁵ Owen Johnston, op. cit

¹⁸⁶ Maynard, John, Interview in Inside Film Magazine, April 2005, p.34

exchange rate. Dollar for dollar he said, "you can't do what you do here in the UK or Ireland"¹⁸⁷ and he went on to state that most of the speaking and non-speaking roles in the next two *Star Wars* movies are likely to go to Australians, the only exceptions being the mainly British leads who are holdovers from Episode 1. He also indicated that by the time Episode 3 goes into production, the crew would be 98 percent Australian. In reality though, whatever the sentiment of US producers, American studio production is well entrenched in the process of employing Australians only in secondary roles and only 40% of the crew on *Star Wars 3* were Australian.

Whilst Australian crewmembers have concerns about the number of Australians employed on large US studio productions and the roles they undertake, understandably, not all Americans in the film industry are happy with US runaway production either. When it comes to American cultural icons such as *Superman* being filmed in Australia, many Americans are unimpressed, with one US newspaper headline criticising it with the headline, "Truth, justice and the Australian way". This political group of American cast and crew, Film and Television Action Committee, are acting to change legislation and aim to stem the flow of film production away from the US and are acting with unions in the US to fight to protect the rights of local US crews. If taken seriously by American politicians, this group may ultimately have an impact on the future of offshore US production in Australia and the employment of Australians on films in the US, but in the near future, it seems that the might of the studios is protecting runaway studio production. Easier for the American Unions to control however, is the level of employment offered to foreigners on productions in the US and many Australian crewmembers have commented on just how difficult it is for them to secure work on films in the US.

At the end of the day, global film producers are unashamed at making decisions on where to shoot primarily on the basis of the money they can save and Australia is only one country in the bidding war for American film production to come to her shores. American studios have already been established in Canada, Britain and Mexico, with Africa being the latest country to join the international bidding war with cheap crew and location costs. *Mad Max 4* was set to be shot in Namibia" in preference to Australia

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.imdb.com/news/sb/1999-11-08>

until Mel Gibson got cold feet at the thought of shooting in Africa. Paul Cox said of Hollywood, “They’ve taken over cinemas from Poland to China and put American films in them, totally killing the indigenous film culture”. Whilst this may seem an extreme statement, local film production figures seem to indicate that local production is indeed on the decrease.

Whilst production at Fox, and other off-shore production has resulted in the soaring of Australian production figures, recent studies by the AFC shows that local feature film production has been down by up to 40% in the four years since Fox Studios opened its doors. In 2002-03, for the first time in eight years, feature film and TV drama production dropped in Australia; total expenditure fell from \$663 to \$513 million, due largely to a drop in foreign television production. In evidence, the Committee heard that this decrease was due to Australia not being sufficiently competitive on cost, which was related to other countries offering greater financial incentives.¹⁸⁸

Having large American Studios such as Fox operating in Australian cities has meant the “global film industry” and the local Australian one sharing resources on a number of levels. Whilst Australia boasts well-trained and professional film crews, and well-equipped post-production houses, the numbers have been sufficient to sustain a small local industry. With many eager to earn a decent and consistent wage, they now have a choice between work at Fox and on other offshore productions and the work still offered by the local industry. In addition locations in Sydney especially have been in demand as a result of large-scale productions such as *The Matrix* being underway here.

Whilst the AFC stops short of identifying any negative impact brought about by a surge in foreign production and co-production, they do state in their report into the impact of foreign co-production with Australia, “If there is evidence that treaty co-production is displacing wholly Australian production then the ABA will need to consider whether the minimum requirements for Australian content need to be increased”. It continues however by reinforcing their support of such co-production by adding, “The evidence

¹⁸⁸ Mr J. Lee, Cutting Edge Post, Transcript of Evidence, 25 July 2003, pp. 17-18.

from our co-production partners is that treaty co-production tends to enhance rather than replace domestic production if supported by strong local content regulation”.¹⁸⁹

Whatever the future of the “global” film industry in Australia, it is obvious that it isn’t a secure one and as such, shouldn’t be relied upon to ensure the future of our own film industry. Whilst some years have been boom years for feature film production in Australia as a result of the high budgets of foreign production, the next year is not necessary going to build on that success. For example, whilst 01/02 saw \$353M spent on film production in NSW, 02/03 saw the worst year on record since the early 1990s with \$141M.

So is the future of the Australian Film Industry inextricably linked to the uncertain future of the global film industry in Australia? There is already evidence to suggest that the increasing integration of our parts of our local industry into the global has had ramifications for the survival of smaller local film businesses. In 2001, Jenny Cornish Media, one of Australia’s only distributors of Australian independent film and documentary, announced that it was shutting shop, with Jenny Cornish herself moving to Beyond International, to head the creative development team. After taking much of Jenny Cornish’s catalogue of Australian Film with it, Beyond International reported a net loss for the next year, 2002, blaming soft advertising revenue in key TV and film markets. It reported a net loss of \$22 million, with revenue slumping 45% to \$53.2 million, leaving the Australian film industry uncertain as to its future.

Whilst local post-production houses in Sydney are offering cut-price rates to attract business, Spectrum, the post-production edit facility on the lot is short on Avids and space to meet the demands of its clients. The only way to prosper according to Spectrum’s Manager is to have a part of the international foreign production that is taking place in Australia and New Zealand. And whilst the company is working on projects in New Zealand, with four Avids in New Zealand on co-production feature films, their meetings with Fox Studios Australia have revealed that in the near future, foreign production in Sydney is almost non-existent. Whilst they are keen to undertake work on foreign production, due to its long form and high budgets, it is no secret that

¹⁸⁹ Australian Film Commission, *Foreign Film and Television Production in Australia*, op. cit.

the resources required to take on this large-scale work mean less is available to the local industry in terms of facilities and equipment.

The new post-production company Kojo, a consortium of animation, sound post and picture post houses, working out of Sydney and Adelaide, believes that the only way they can continue to give competitive quotes to local Australian films and support them by meeting their budgetary requirements is to work on large budget international projects which will bring in the money they need to survive and expand. They are currently working on a number of co-productions and as a result have had to implement the technology to split the post-production process and send files between cities as remote as Berlin, Los Angeles and Beijing. They currently outsource their film finish requirements to a company in New Zealand.

Whilst these businesses have been successful in integrating into the global film making environment and the world of balancing local film commitments with international co-production and foreign production requirements, many Australian film related businesses and cast and crew are not equipped to do so, and are equally unable to continue to ride the highs and lows of local film production in Australia. For example, after fifty years of operating in Melbourne's South Yarra, it was well publicised the print media in 2001 that the Longford Cinema was forced to close after 3 years of competition for prints and audiences with a multiplex nearby. Radio National reported on 20th July 2001, that being unable to secure a print of *Moulin Rouge* had been "the nail in the coffin" for the Longford.

Whilst many businesses have closed their doors in the past five years, many cast and crew are now leaving or preparing to leave work in the film industry for other careers. One Australian assistant editor of twenty years tells that in the 1990s there were more assistant editors than jobs, and now, in the 2000s there are only a handful left. She also is looking for an alternative career due to the unstable nature of film work in the 2000s. She believes that whilst a feature film job in the 1990s would ensure you solid work for six months, a job in the 2000s doesn't have the same security. Due to budget constraints, producers are commonly deciding to give assistant editors a "few weeks off" during a production, with very little notice and no chance of their being paid a retainer.

Whilst it is evident that the global film industry is indeed having an impact on the local film industry and associated businesses in Australia, it cannot be said that the future of the Australian film industry rests entirely with the future of the global film industry in Australia. Goldsmith and O'Regan state that whilst the two industries are becoming "more convergent", there will nevertheless remain "a parallel quality" to the relationship. Whilst the "global" films that are made here are part of a "larger international industry" and are headquartered elsewhere, domestic production catering for both local and international markets starts its "internationalisation" from within Australia, and as such will always contain a component of "domestically oriented production".¹⁹⁰

Whilst this ensures that our local industry has a place in the production of film in Australia, it is also for the time being supported and protected by government policy. Whilst it is "global" film that dominates our cinemas and home-video stores, the "local" has not been abandoned by government, filmmakers, crews or audiences in Australia.

¹⁹⁰ B. Goldsmith and T. O'Regan, *op. cit.* p.83.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

Whilst the Australian film industry is now firmly entwined with global film production in Australia, sharing resources, crew, facilities and expertise, it continues to produce films that have Australian cultural content and have elements of the “national cinema” that marked its beginnings.

Australian cast and crew continue to work on both low-budget Australian feature films and Hollywood blockbusters, with a high proportion of them working both locally and overseas. They welcome the opportunities and training afforded by the higher budgets and new technologies of especially US production, but are keen to bring this experience and expertise to smaller Australian productions, in order to continue to support the smaller industry in which they began their careers.

In the 2000s, it is best to think of the Australian film industry as two tandem industries, the “local Australian film industry” and “the global film industry in Australia” as the product of the two are easily distinguished by their budgets, cultural content and target audiences, if not by their classification by Australian film agencies and organisations.

With the signing of a Free Trade Agreement with the US in 2005, there are new threats to the production of Australian cultural product, and whilst the governments continue to create initiatives to fund Australian film, the majority of these initiatives now have our competitiveness in the global film arena as a goal.

It appears that our local Australian film industry has changed in the period 1989 – 2005, and still continues to evolve. Whether it be our film making culture, the working environments of our casts and crews, the funding available to local production or the classification of “Australian” film, all have changed as a result of the proximity of the global film industry to our own and the integration to a degree of the local industry into the larger global one. Our cast and crews are working both locally and internationally on local and foreign film productions and foreign audiences aren’t always aware that they are Australian and a product of our own local industry. When I was teaching a group of American media students at UNSW in Sydney in 2001, they argued that Nicole Kidman was American, due to her accent and presence on their screens. It is

evident that the global film industry is about making cast, crew and locations part of the “global” landscape, which at this time reflects mostly the dominant culture creating it.

Whilst levels of foreign production and co-production have dominated film production in Australia in recent years, there is still overwhelming support for the local Australian film industry from government and cast and crews. Far from feeling that production of our national cinema is outmoded, Australian cast and crews are just as keen as ever to voice their support for a local industry for the same reasons as they supported its inception in the 1970s, to ensure that our own Australian cultural product has a place within the influx of international film.

As Goldsmith and O’Regan point out, “attention needs to be paid to specifying... the intersection of local and international production” and to finding ways that this intersection could be more productive and mutually advantageous”.¹⁹¹ Australian producers and crews agree, that in order for the relationship to be truly profitable, attention needs to be paid to a sustainable relationship and to a maximising of benefits to the local Australian film industry.

What is evident as a result of examining the statistics regarding feature film production in Australia in the past thirty years, is that whilst the number of Australian feature films being made has fallen steadily, the number of foreign feature films and co-productions is very small in comparison to the number of local feature films, and so that at least for now, we can be sure that whilst foreign production seems to be having an impact on our local feature film production, it has not replaced it.

The argument that the global film industry in Australia has impacted on local feature film production has some foundation, although it seems that the level of foreign feature film production in Australia is quite low in comparison with other countries. The local Australian film industry is small and hence when a large US feature film is in production, most of the available pool of skilled crew is taken up by that production, leaving local production scrambling to fill roles on their productions.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. p.86.

In 2006, the Australian Government is being lobbied to reassess the 10B and 10BA tax legislation with a view to increasing incentives for private investment in local film the hope being that it will revive an industry dependant on a small pool of government funding. Meanwhile, Australian producers continue to look overseas for distribution deals and investment to boost their budgets, and whilst this enables the production of larger budget films, it also sees to a degree, a compromise in Australianness of content, and hence a new genre of Australian film that is integrated into the global marketplace. This is not to say that film financed solely with Australian funding is outside the global marketplace, as we are witnessing an embracing of extremely localised Australian film in both prestigious international film festivals and by international distributors confident of its marketability on an international scale.

There seems to be consensus amongst Australian producers and other members of the Australian film industry, that salvation for the Australian film industry lies in making investment in Australian film attractive to the private investor, and that this power lies primarily with the Australian Government with the tax incentives that can be offered. Whilst foreign financing and presales are enabling Australian producers to make films with higher budgets, for the survival of local Australian film that is not necessarily international in its appeal, this private investment is vital in conjunction with the government funding available.

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Definitions

Australian Feature Films

Films produced under Australian creative control, where the key elements are predominantly Australian, the project was originated and developed by Australians, and was funded by Australian financing.

Australian Film Commission (AFC)

The Australian Film Commission is a government agency established in 1975 as the Australian Film Development Commission. The mandate of the body is to promote the creation and distribution of films in Australia as well as to preserve the country's film history. The AFC has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

The AFC is funded in part by the national government and in part from its return on investments in film production as well as interest on film development loans. It financially assists film and television production and also produces some of its own production.

In 2008 the AFC became part of the Australian Government Screen Agency Screen Australia.

Australian Film Industry also known as the “local” Australian Film Industry.

The Industry producing “Australian film”.

Global Feature Films

Foreign films with offshore production locations, primarily with foreign financing.

Global Film Industry

The Industry producing “global film”.

Co-productions

Projects where control is shared between Australian and foreign partners and there is a mix of Australian and foreign elements in the key creative positions.

DoCita

Department of Culture, Information Technology and the Arts

The Department supports and promotes excellence and creativity to enrich the cultural life of Australia by:

Official Co-productions

Projects made under the Australian Government's official co-production program with any of the nine countries with which Australia has Treaties or Memorandums of Understanding.

Ausfilm

A screen industry-government partnership, comprising some 40 private sector companies, Australia's State & Territory film agencies, and the Australian Government through the Department of Communications, IT & the Arts.

Refundable Tax Offset For Film Production

The Australian Federal Government's refundable tax offset for eligible film and television productions. The tax offset is worth 12.5% of the production's Qualifying Australian Production Expenditure, and may be claimed by the production company through the company's tax return.

SPAA

Screen Producers Association of Australia represents the interests of producers on issues that affect the business and creative aspects of screen production in the Australian independent film and television industry.

10B & 10BA

As well as the 12.5% tax offset rebate, the Federal Government encourages private investment in screen production through tax incentives under Division 10B and 10BA of the Tax Act.

Integrated Film Package

The Australian Government's 2001 increase in funding to the local film industry of \$92.7 million over the period 2001 – 2006.

Film Licensed Investment Company (FLICS)

The Australian Government scheme in 1999 which awarded Content Capital Ltd and Macquarie Film Corporation Pty Ltd licenses to raise up to \$20 million concessional capital each for the investment in the production of qualifying Australian films.

Appendix 2 – List of Feature Films Made in Australia 1989 - 2005

The following is a complete list of feature films produced in Australia from 1989 – 2005. It has been compiled from my research over a number of publications, AFC Reports and Film Industry Publications and magazines. It is often the case that different publications will give different years of production for a film, differing by up to three years, depending on whether or not they list the year of production, delivery or exhibition. In order to standardise my list of films, I have listed the year that the film was in production, in accordance with the lists compiled by the Encore Directory.

As a result of grouping films according to their production years, the number of Australian films produced per year in this table may differ from those stated in AFC reports and other publications. In some years the number of films produced varies greatly from that stated by the AFC, and this may be also attributed to the fact that feature films that were self-funded or made outside traditional funding arrangements have been included in my list.

Whilst I have based my thesis on figures supplied by the AFC, due to a necessity to examine the state of our film industry, from the perspective of numbers of films made with predominantly government funding, it is also important to acknowledge that many feature films are made annually outside these funding arrangements and to examine trends in self-funded films in order to examine further what is happening in the Australian film industry.

Production information such as funding agencies, production budgets and distribution arrangements has been added where available, but, as some of this information is optional in production surveys, there is information missing for some films. Where production budget figures and box office figures are stated, they have been calculated at the 2005 value of the amount.

Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	Aust. Box Office in yr of production
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1989										
1989	Action Replay	Sara Hourez	Sara Hourez				x			
1989	Against the Innocent	Daryl Delora	Richard Jones	AFC Film Victoria	AFI, Home Cinema, Cinemia		x			
1989	Arigato Baby	Greg Lynch	Greg Lynch		Force Video		x			
1989	Beyond My Reach	Dan Burstall	Frank Howson		Warner		x			
1989	The Big Steal	Nadia Tass	David Parker Timothy White		Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, Cinemia, National Library		x			\$2.4M
1989	Blood Oath	Stephen Wallace	Charles Waterstreet/ Brian A. Williams/ Denis Whitburn		Roadshow Reel Movies Premier Home Movies National Library		x			\$633,000
1989	Blowing Hot & Cold	Marc Gracie	Rosa Colosimo	Funded by producer.	Colosimo Film Productions, Blue Ridge Film Trust, Force Video		x			
1989	Boys in the Island	Geoffrey Bennett	Jane Scott				x			
1989	Breakaway	Don McLennan	Jane Ballantyne Don McLennan Les Lithgow		Beyond		x			

1989	Candy Regentag	James Ricketson	Graeme Isaac			\$750,000	x		
1989	Cappuccino	Anthony Bowman	Sue Wild Anthony Bowman	AFC	Cinemia, Home Cinema		x		
1989	Celia	Ann Turner	Timothy White Gordon Glenn		Col-Tri, National Library, Sixteen Millimetre, First Release Home Entertainment	\$1.3M	x		
1989	Closer and Closer Apart	Steve Middleton	Rosa Colosimo				x		
1989	Compo	Nigel Buesst	Joanne Bell Nigel Buesst Matthew Lovering		Unreleased Sunrise Picture Company		x		
1989	The Crossing	George Ogilvie	Sue Seary		Beyond, Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre		x		
1989	Daisy and Simon	Stasch Radwanski Jr.	Pamela N. Borain Paul D. Barron	AFC WA Film Council The Film & TV Institute WA	Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre		x		
1989	David Williamson's Emerald City	Michael Jenkins	Joan Long	NSW Film Corp.	Beyond, Roadshow, Cinemia		x		
1989	Dead Calm	Phillip Noyce	Terry Hayes Dr George Miller Doug Mitchell		Roadshow, Reel Movies, Warner, Cinemia		x		\$2.2M
1989	The Delinquents	Chris Thomson	Alex Cutler Mike Wilcox	AFFC	Roadshow Village Roadshow Reel Movies, Cinemia		x		\$752, 000
1989	Devil in the Flesh	Scott Murray	John B. Murray	JCW	Col-Tri,	\$1.6M	x		

					First Release Home Entertainment, National Library					
1989	Driving Force	Andrew Prowse	Rod Confesor Howard Grigsby				x			
1989	Fatal Sky	Frank Shields	Antony I Ginnane/ Stephen Strick		IFM Film Associates, Home Cinema, ITC Entertainment, Trimark				Aust/USA	
1989	Father	John Power	Damien Parer Tony Cavanaugh, Graham Hartley, Paul Barron		Barron Entertainment, Sixteen Millimetre, Cinemia, Satellite Entertainment.		x			
1989	Flirting	John Duigan	Terry Hayes/ George Miller/ Doug Mitchell		Warner, Reel Movies		x			\$1.5M
1989	Flynn	Frank Howson/ Brian Kavanagh	Frank Howson		Roadshow		x			
1989	Georgia	Ben Lewin	Bob Weis		Col-Tri, Fox, Lorber Associates, Ascanbee, Cinemia, 21 st Century Pictures		x			
1989	Ghosts of the Civil Dead	John Hillcoat	Evan English	Outlaw Values	Sharmill Films, Home Cinema, National Library, Cinemia.		x			
1989	Glass	Chris Kennedy	Patrick Fitzgerald/ Chris Kennedy		Oilrag Productions, Cori Film Distributors, Home Cinema		x			
1989	Harbour Beat	David Elfick	Irene Dobson/ David Elfick		Palm Beach Pictures		x			
1989	Hunting	Colin South/ John Tatoulis	Colin South/ John Tatsoulis		Roadshow, J&M Entertainment, Beyond, Warner, Skouras		x			

1989	In Too Deep	Colin South/ John Tatoulis	Colin South/ John Tatoulis		Media World, Skouras, Home Cinema, Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, Cinemedia				Aus/USA	
1989	Incident at Raven's Gate	Rolf De Heer	Rolf De Heer Marc Rosenburg	SAFC	Filmpac, Hemdale International	\$2.5M	x			
1989	Isabelle Eberhardt	Ian Pringle	Joan Petit/ Daniel Scharf		Palace				Aust/ France	
1989	Island	Paul Cox	Paul Cox Samantha K. Naidu	Film Victoria	Newvision , Fox		x			
1989	A Kink In the Picasso	Marc Gracie	Will Spencer		MC Stuart, MP Consulting		x			
1989	Linda Safaro	Joan Ambrose/ Peter Jeffry/ Tibor Meszaros/ Laszlo Ujvari	Tibor Meszaros		Soundstage Australia		x			
1989	Luigis Ladies	Judy Morris	Patric Juillet		Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, First Release Home Video.		x			
1989	Minnamurra	Ian Barry	John Sexton		Col-Tri, Roadshow		x			
1989	Mull	Don McLennan	D. Howard Grigsby	Filmpac	Filmpac, Cinemedia		x			
1989	Quigley Down Under	Simon Wincer	Stanley O'Toole		Pathe			USA Non-studio		
1989	Return Home	Ray Argall	Cristina Pozzan		National Library, Home Cinema, AFI, Cinemedia		x			
1989	The Salute of the Jugger	David Peoples	Charles Roven	Filmpac	Filmpac, Roadshow, Ascanbee				Aust/ USA	
1989	Sebastian & the Sparrow	Scott Hicks	Scott Hicks	AFC, SAFC, the Kino Film Fund, International Year of Youth.	Kino Film Co., Beyond, Young Media Australia, Home Cinema		x			
1989	Sons of Steel	Gary L. Keady	James M. Vernon	Big Island Pictures	Virgin, Vision Home Video	\$3M	x			

1989	Spirits of the Air, Gremlins of the Cloud	Alex Proyas	Alex Proyas Andrew McPhail	AFC Creative Development Fund, MMA Films	Home Cinema, Cinemedia		x			
1989	A Sting in the Tail	Eugene Schlusser	Rosa Colosimo Reg McLean	Rosa Colosimo	Colosimo Film Productions		x			
1989	Strangers	Craig Lahiff	Wayne Groom/ Craig Lahiff		Beyond, Col-Tri		x			
1989	Struck by Lightning	Jerzy Domaradzki	Trevor Farrant Terry J. Charatsis		Beyond, Satellite Entertainment, Sixteen Millimetre, National Library.		x			\$253,000
1989	Sweet Talker	Michael Jenkins	Ben Gannon				x			
1989	Sweethearts	Colin Talbot	Lynda House				x			
1989	Sweetie	Jane Champion	John Maynard William MacKinnon	NSW Film Corp. AFC	Filmpac, National Library, Cinemedia		x			
1989	Tender Hooks	Mary Callaghan	Chris Oliver		Ronin, Cinemedia, Home Cinema, National Library		x			
1989	Til There Was You	John Seale	Jim McElroy				x			
1989	Wendy Cracked a Walnut	Michael Pattinson	John Edwards		ABC International, Col-Tri, Cinemedia, Sixteen Millimetre		x			
Total 1989							50	1	4	

Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	Box Office
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1990										
1990	Aya	Solrun Hoas	Denise Patience Solrun Hoas		National Library Col-Tri Ronin Cinemia		x			
1990	Beyond My Reach	Dan Burstall	Frank Howson		Unreleased Warner		x			
1990	The Big Steal	Nadia Tass	David Parker Nadia Tass		Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, National Library, Cinemia		x			\$2.4M
1990	Blinky Bill	Yoram Gross	Yoram Gross/ Sandra Gross		Beyond, Reel Movies, Cinemia, Roadshow		x			\$1.6M
1990	Bloodmoon	Alec Mills	Stanley O'Toole		Roadshow Applause Home Video		x			
1990	The Castanet Club	Neil Arnfield	Glenys Rowe		Col-Tri		x			
1990	Dead Sleep	Alec Mills	Stanley O'Toole		Warner Village Roadshow				Aust/ USA	
1990	Dead to the World	Ross Gibson	John Cruthers		Huzzah Productions, AFI, MC Stuart, Cinemia		x			
1990	Deadly	Esben Storm	Richard Moir		Beyond, Col-Tri, Cinemia, Sixteen Millimetre		x			

1990	Death in Brunswick	John Ruane	Timothy White			x			\$2.6M
1990	Demonstone	Andrew Prowse	Antony I Ginnane		Video Distribution Co., Entcorp Australia, Fries Entertainment	x			
1990	Dingo	Rolf De Heer	Mark Rosenburg Rolf De Heer		Col-Tri Ronin Sixteen Millimetre			Aust/ France	
1990	The Fatal Bond	Vincent Monton	Phillip Avalon/ Gary Hamilton		Beyond, Col-Tri, Home Cinema, Sixteen Millimetre	x			
1990	Friday on My Mind	Frank Howson	Frank Howson		Unreleased	x			
1990	Garbo	Patrick Cook	Hugh Rule		Beyond, Col-Tri, Video Box Office, Sixteen Millimetre	x			
1990	Golden Braid	Paul Cox	Paul Ammitzbohl/ Paul Cox/ Samantha Naidu		Beyond, Cinemedia, First Release Home Entertainment	x			
1990	Greencard	Peter Weir	Jean Gontier/ Peter Weir		Roadshow, Reel Movies, Buena Vista, Cinemedia			Aust/France/USA	\$10.6M
1990	Heaven Tonight	Pino Amenta	Frank Howson		ABC International, Warner.	x			
1990	Holidays On The River Yarra	Leo Berkeley	Fiona Cochrane		CIC Video, First Release Home Entertainment, Cinemedia	x			
1990	Hurricane Smith	Colin Budds	Stanley O'Toole		Roadshow, Warner			Aust/USA	
1990	Jindalee Lady	Brian Syron	Briann Kearney		Teapot Cottage Industries, Donobri International Communications	x			
1990	The Magic Riddle	Yoram Gross	Yoram Gross		Beyond, CEL Home Video, Reel Movies, Roadshow			Aust/USA	\$1.4M
1990	Nirvana Street Murder	Aleksi Vellis	Fiona Cochrane		New Vision Film, Fox, Cinemedia, National Library	x			
1990	Phobia	John Dingwall	John Mandelberg		MCEG Sterling Entertainment	x			

1990	Proof	Jocelyn Moorhouse	Lynda House		Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia, Roadshow		x			\$1.9M
1990	The Prisoner of St. Petersburg	Ian Pringle	Daniel Scharf, Klaus Sungen		AFI, Cinemedia		x			
1990	Raw Nerve	Tony Wellington	Michael Lynch		Home Cinema		x			
1990	The Returning	John Day	Trisha Downie						Aust/NZ	
1990	Sher Mountain Killings Mystery	Vince Martin	Phillip Avalon		Beyond, Sixteen Millimetre, First Release Home Entertainment		x			
1990	Spotswood	Mark Joffe	Richard Brennan/ Timothy White		Beyond, Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, National Library, Cinemedia		x			
1990	Stan And George	Brian McKenzie	Margot McDonald		Cinemedia, AFI, Curzon, National Library		x			
1990	Tasmania Story	Yasao Furuhata	Seichi Ichiko, Shinya Kawai					Japan Non-studio		
1990	Turtle Beach	Stephen Wallace	Matt Carroll				x			
1990	Until The End Of The World	Wim Wenders	Julia Overton		Roadshow				Aust/Ger many/Fra nce	
1990	Waiting	Jackie Mckimmie	Ross Matthews				x			
1990	What the Moon Saw	Pino Amenta	Frank Howson		Warner, Touchstone Home Video		x			
1990	A Woman's Tale	Paul Cox/ Barry Dickens	Paul Cox/ Santhan Naidu		Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures, Col-Tri, First Release Home Entertainment		x			
Total 1990							29	1	7	

1991											
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.		
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin		
1991	Australian Ninja	Mario Di Fiore	Mario Di Fiore Victor Sawicki				x				
1991	Backsliding	Simon Target	Sue Wild Basil Appleby	Channel 4, Cast Films	Palace Entertainment		x				
1991	Black Robe	Bruce Beresford	Robert Lantos /Sue Milliken/ Stephane Reichel		Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, Network Entertainment				Aust/ Canada		\$1.9M
1991	Blackfellas	James Ricketson	David Rapsey		Beyond, Barron Entertainment, Sixteen Millimetre, Cinemia, 21 st century pictures.		x				
1991	Bloodlust	Jon Hewitt/ Richard Wolstencroft	John Hewitt/ Richard Wolstencroft		Home Cinema, Cinemia		x				
1991	Breathing Underwater	Susan Dermody	Megan McMurchy	AFC Channel 4	Ronin, Jane Balfour, National Library		x				
1991	Come and Get it	Ron Becks	Nerida Joy		Straight to Video		x				
1991	The Custodian	John Dingwall	Adrienne Read		Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures		x				
1991	Deadly Chase	Duncan McLachlan	Andrea Buck		Rocvale Films		x				
1991	Death in Brunswick	John Ruane	Tim White	AFFC	Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemia		x				\$2.6M

1991	Deliver Us From Evil	Richard Wolstencroft	Frank Howson		Cinereel		x			
1991	Eight Ball	Ray Argall	Timothy White		Southern Star		x			
1991	Fantasy	Geoffrey Brown/ Derek Strahan	Geoffrey Brown		Col-Tri, Combridge International		x			
1991	The Final Stage	Frank Howson	Frank Howson		Cinereel		x			
1991	Fortress	Arch Nicholson	Ray Menmuir		Village Roadshow			USA Warner Bros Studio		
1991	Get Away Get Away	Murray Faye	Murray Faye		Total Films, Video Box Office		x			
1991	Greenkeeping	David Caesar	Glenys Rowe		Ronin, 21 st Century Pictures, National Library		x			
1991	Hammers Over The Anvil	Ann Turner	Ben Gannon/ Peter Harvey-Wright		Roadshow, Premiere Home Entertainment, Beyond, Cinemedia		x			
1991	The Last Days of Chez Nous	Gillian Armstrong	Jan Chapman	AFFC	Col-Tri, Beyond, Cinemedia, Sixteen Millimetre		x			
1991	The Long Line	Aaron Stevenson	Laurie Basten/ Gavin Pavey/ Aaron Stevenson		MC Stuart		x			
1991	Love In Limbo	David Elfick	David Elfick/ Nina Stevenson/ John Winter		Beyond, Triumph Releasing		x			
1991	Mad Bomber in Love	James Bogle	George Mannix		Potential Films, Pinchgut Productions		x			
1991	Map of the Human Heart	Vincent Ward	Linda Beath/ Tim Bevan/ Vincent Ward		Col-Tri, Cinemedia, Sixteen Millimetre				Aust/Canada/ France	
1991	Nostradamus Kid	Bob Ellis	Terry Jennings		Ronin, Cinemedia, Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures, National Library		x			
1991	On My Own	Antonio Tibaldi	Leonardo Pescarolo/ Elisa Resegotti/ Will Spencer/ Stavros Stavrides		Festival Records, 21 st Century Pictures, Cinemedia				Aust/Canada/ Italy	
1991	Over the Hill	George Miller	Robert Caswell/ Bernard Terry		Roadshow, Applause Home Video		x			
1991	The Piano	Jane Campion	Jan Chapman		Goldwyn Films,					\$9.2M

					Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia				Aust/ France/ NZ	
1991	The Presence	John Rhall	John Rhall				x			
1991	Reckless Kelly	Yahoo Serious	Warwick Ross Yahoo Serious		Roadshow, Warner (international)		x			\$5.8M
1991	Redheads	Danny Vendramini	Danny Vendramini		Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures		x			
1991	The Refracting Glasses	David Perry	John Prescott		AFI, National Library, Cinemedia		x			
1991	Resistance	Paul Elliott/ Hugh Keays-Byrne/ W Macau Collective			Macau Light Film Corp, 21 st Century Pictures		x			
1991	Romper Stomper	Geoffrey Wright	Ian Pringle Daniel Scharf		Roadshow, Fox-Lorber Associates, Cinemedia		x			\$2.8M
1991	Say a Little Prayer	Richard Lowenstein	Carol Hughes		Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures, Cinemedia		x			
1991	Secrets	Michael Pattinson	Lynda House/ Michael Pattinson		Beyond, Buena Vista, National Library				Aust/NZ	
1991	Seeing Red	Virginia Rouse	Carol Bennetto		Seawell Films, Goomerah Films		x			
1991	Shotgun Wedding	Paul Harmon	Charles Hannah/ David Hannay		REP Film Distribution, Beyond, Triumph Releasing		x			
1991	Slow Night At The Kuwaiti Cafe	Marc Gracie	Frank Howson				x			
1991	Sniper	Luis Llosa	Jim Gorman, Bob Rosen		Baltimore Pictures			USA Non-studio		
1991	The Wide Sargasso Sea	John Duigan	Sara Risher				x			
1991	Wind				American Zoetrope			USA Non-studio		
Total 1991							33	3	5	

1992										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1992	Alex	Megan Simpson	Tom Parkinson Philip Gerlach	Aust/NZ					Aust/NZ	
1992	Backsliding	Simon Target	Basil Appleby Susan Wild	Channel 4 films	Palace				Aust/UK	
1992	Bloodlust	Jon Hewitt Richard Wolstencraft	Jon Hewitt Richard Wolstencraft		Cinemedia			x		
1992	Body Melt	Philip Brophy	Rod Bishop/ Daniel Scharf		Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures, Festival Records, Cinemedia			x		
1992	Broken Highway	Laurie McInnes	Richard Mason		Ronin			x		
1992	Come by Chance	Lara Dunston	Lara Dunston	Self-financed	Self			x		
1992	Come Rain or Shine	Frank Howson	Frank Howson		Cinereel International.			x		
1992	Cops and Robbers	Murray Reece	Tony Winley	NZFC	Total Films				Aust/NZ	
1992	Crimetime	Marc Gracie	Frank Howson		Cinereel, Sixteen Millimetre			x		
1992	The Cult of Death	Geoffrey Brown	Geoffrey Brown		AFC			x		
1992	Dawn of the DMFs	Darrell Martin Chris Summers	Darrell Martin Chris Summers		Not released in cinemas			x		
1992	Daydream Believer	Kathy Mueller	Ben Gannon		Beyond, Sixteen Millimetre, Col-Tri			x		
1992	DeVILS' TasMania	Di Nettlefold	Di Nettlefold		Di Net Films			x		

1992	Exchange Lifeguards	Maurice Murphy	Phillip Avalon		Beyond, Sixteen Millimetre, Col-Tri, Triumph Releasing		x			
1992	Fatal Past	Clive Fleury	Phillip Emanuel		Roadshow		x			
1992	Frauds	Stephan Elliott	Andrena Finlay/ Stuart Quin		Latent Image, J&M Entertainment, First Release Home Entertainment		x			
1992	Gross Misconduct	George Miller	David Hannay/ Richard Sheffield-MacClure		Beyond, REP, Cinemedia, Sixteen Millimetre		x			
1992	The Heartbreak Kid	Michael Jenkins	Ben Gannon		Roadshow, Beyond, Cinemedia		x			\$2.7M
1992	Hercules Returns	David Parker	Philip Jaroslow		Beyond, Roadshow		x			
1992	Kevin Rampenbacker And The Electric Kettle	Murray Reece	Tony Winley		Total Films, NZ Film Commission		x			
1992	Lex and Rory	Dean Murphy	Scott Andrews/ Dean Murphy		Colorim International Releasing, 21 st Century Pictures		x			
1992	Living Colour	Neal ME Taylor	Rene Nagy Jnr		MC Stuart		x			
1992	No Worries	David Elfick	David Elfick/ Eric Fellner		Roadshow, Cinemedia				Aust/UK	
1992	The Nun and the Bandit	Paul Cox	Paul Ammitzbohl/ Paul Cox		Roadshow, Applause Home Video		x			
1992	Red Rain	Jim Kaufman	Rosa Colosimo/ Will Spencer				x			
1992	The Silver Brumby	John Tatoulis	Colin J South/ John Tatoulis		Roadshow, Cinemedia		x			\$1.3M
1992	Tempting A Married Man	Adam Lynton	Adam Lynton				x			
1992	This Won't Hurt A Bit	Chris Kennedy	Patrick Fitzgerald				x			
1992	You Can't Push The River	Leslie Oliver	Robert Alcock				x			
Total 1992							24	0	4	

1993										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1993	The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert	Stephan Elliott	Al Clark Michael Hamlyn Rebel Penfold-Russell	AFFC	Roadshow Polygram		x			\$14.8M
1993	Australian Ninja 2	Mario Di Fiori	Mario Di Fiori				x			
1993	Bad Boy Bubby	Rolf De Heer	Domenico Procacci Giorgio Draskovic Rolf De Heer	AFFC	Roadshow Cinemia				Aust/ Italy	
1993	Bedevil	Tracey Moffatt	Anthony Buckley Carol Hughes		Southern Star, Ronin Films Cinemia		x			
1993	Broken Highway	Laurie McInnes	Richard Mason		Ronin		x			
1993	Country Life	Michael Blakemore	Robin Dalton		United International Pictures		x			
1993	The Custodian	John Dingwall	Adrienne Read		Beyond, 21 st Century Pictures		x			
1993	Dallas Doll	Ann Turner	Ross Matthews Ann Turner	Co-pro Aus/UK ABC, BBC Films	21 st Century Pictures, Festival Records				Aust/UK	
1993	Ebbtide	Craig Lahiff	Paul Davies Craig Lahiff Helen Leake		Unreleased ABC Video		x			
1993	Encounters	Murray Faye	Murray Faye		Total Films, Video Box Office		x			

1993	Everynight... Everynight	Alkinos Tsilimidos	Alkinos Tsilimidos		Siren Entertainment, Cinemedia		x		
1993	Exile	Paul Cox	Paul Ammitzball		Beyond		x		
1993	First Strike				Unknown			Hong Kong Non-studio	
1993	Gino	Jackie McKimmie	Ross Matthews		Southern Star Film Sales		x		
1993	The Good Fruit	Stephen Prodes/ Will Usic	Harriet Spalding/ John Swaffield/ Will Usic		Mezmo Pictures		x		
1993	Lightning Jack	Simon Wincer	Paul Hogan Greg Coote Simon Wincer		Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia		x		\$6.4M
1993	Metal Skin	Geoffrey Wright	Daniel Scharf		Reel Movies, Roadshow, Cinemedia		x		
1993	Muriel's Wedding	Paul J. Hogan	Lynda House Jocelyn Moorhouse	AFFC	Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia		x		\$1.6M
1993	Napoleon	Mario Andreacchio/ Michael Bourchier	Mario Andreacchio/ Michael Bourchier/ Naouori Kawamura		Col-Tri, Sixteen Millimetre, Film Australia		x		
1993	No Escape	Martin Campbell	Gale Anne Hurd		Pacific Western Productions			USA Warner Bros Studio	
1993	Offspring	Richard Ryan	Phillip Emanuel		Roadshow		x		
1993	Open City	Bill Mousoulis	Bill Mousoulis		Innersense Productions		x		
1993	Police Rescue: The Movie	Michael Carson	John Edwards/ Sandra Levy		Reel Movies, CIC Video, Rainbow		x		
1993	Rapa Nui				Majestic Films			USA Non-studio	
1993	The Roly Poly Man	Bill Young	Peter Green		Total Films, Triumph Releasing, Sixteen Millimetre		x		
1993	Rough Diamonds	Donald Crombie	Damien Parer		Southern Star Film sales		x		

1993	Signal One	Rob Stewart	Phillip Avalon		INI Entertainment, 21 st Century Pictures		x			
1993	Sirens	John Duigan	Sue Milliken Sarah Radclyffe	AFFC	Reel Movies, Touchstone Home Video				Aust/UK	\$2.7M
1993	Spider and Rose	Bill Bennett	Lyn McCarthy, Graeme Tubbenhauer		Dendy, Col-Tri, Cinemia		x			
1993	The Sum Of Us	Geoff Burton/ Kevin Dowling	Hal McElroy		United International Pictures, Reel Movies, CIC Video, TLA Video, Dangerous To Know, Rainbow, Cinemia		x			\$3.2M
1993	Talk	Susan Lambert	Megan Mc Murchy				x			
1993	That Eye, The Sky	John Ruane	Peter Beilby				x			
1993	Traps	Pauline Chan	Jim McElroy				x			
1993	Vacant Possession	Margot Nash	John Winter				x			
Total 1993							28	3	3	

1994										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign Country of Origin Studio or non.	Co-pro. Countries of Origin	
1994	Angel Baby	Michael Rymer	Jonathan Shteinman Timothy White		Sixteen Millimetre, Cinemedia		x			
1994	All Men are Liars	Gerard Lee	John Maynard		Arena Films, 21 st Century Pictures, Pinnacle Pictures, Sixteen Millimetre		x			
1994	Babe	Chris Noonan	George Bill Miller Doug Mitchell		Reel Movies, Cinemedia, United Intenational Pictures		x			\$10.9M
1994	Back of Beyond	Michael Robertson	John Sexton		1 st Release Home Entertainment		x			
1994	Billy's Holiday	Richard Wherrett	Tristram Miall		Roadshow, Premiere Home Entertainment, Reel Movies, Beyond		x			
1994	The Boy who Dared to Dream	Frank Howson	Frank Howson		Cinereel International		x			
1994	Dad and Dave, On Our Selection	George Whaley	Anthony Buckley Bruce Davey Carol Hughes		Majestic Films International, Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia		x			\$1.2M
1994	Epsilon	Rolf De Heer	Rolf De Heer/ Domenico Procacci		AFC, Intra Films		x			
1994	Hotel Sorrento	Richard Franklin	Richard Franklin Helen Watts		Beyond, Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia		x			\$1.2M

1994	Ladykiller	Bill Mousoulis	Bill Mousoulis		Innersense Productions		x			
1994	The Life of Harry Dare	Aleksi Vellis	Terry Charatsis		Total Films, Cinemedia		x			
1994	Love Stories	Murray Faye	Murray Faye				x			
1994	Lucky Break	Ben Lewin	Bob Weis		United International Pictures, CIC Video		x			
1994	Mary	Kay Pavlou	Rosemary Blight		Ronin, Sixteen Millimetre, 21 st Century Pictures, Cinemedia		x			
1994	Mighty Morphin Power Rangers				20 th Century Fox			USA Warner Bros Studio		
1994	Mushrooms	Alan Madden	Brian Rosen		CIC Video		x			
1994	Sex Is A Four Letter Word	Murray Faye	Murray Faye		Total Films, Home Cinema, Winfalz International		x			
1994	Streetfighter	Steven de Souza	Edward Pressman, Kenzo Tsujimoto		Shadalo Productions			USA Warner Bros Studio		
1994	Tunnel Vision	Clive Fleury	Phillip Avalon				x			
1994	Under The Gun	Miranda George	Paul Elliott, Richard Norton				x			
Total 1994							18	2	0	

1995										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1995	Billy's Holiday	Richard Wherrett	Tristram Miall Denis Whitburn		Reel Movies, Beyond Distribution, Roadshow, Premiere Home Entertainment		x			
1995	Brilliant Lies	Richard Franklin	Richard Franklin Sue Farrelly		Beyond, Reel Movies, Roadshow, Cinemedia, Premiere Home Videos		x			
1995	Children of the Revolution	Peter Duncan	Tristram Miall	FFC Roadshow	Roadshow, Cinemedia		x			
1995	Cosi	Mark Joffe	Richard Brennan	Miramax Meridian	Miramax, Roadshow		x			\$2.8M
1995	Cthulhu	Damian Heffernan	Kevin Dunn Damian Heffernan		MC Stuart		x			
1995	Dating the Enemy	Megan Simpson Huberman	Sue Milliken		United independent Pictures, Total Films, Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia				Aus/NZ	\$2.6M
1995	Dead Heart	Nicholas Parsons	Bryan Brown Helen Watts		Reel Movies, Roadshow, Fox-Lorber Associates, Cinemedia		x			
1995	Fistful of Flies	Monica Pellizzari	Julia Overton		United International Pictures, Total Films, BMG Video		x			

1995	Floating Life	Clara Law	Bridget Ikin		Hibiscus Films		x		
1995	Idiot Box	David Caesar	Glenys Rowe		Beyond, Globe Film Co, Network Entertainment, Cinemedia		x		
1995	The Island of Dr Moreau	John Frankenheimer	Ed Pressman		New Line Pictures			USA Non-studio	
1995	Life	Lawrence Johnston	Elisa Argenzio		Dendy, Intra Films, Video Box Office, AFC		x		
1995	Lilian's Story	Jerzy Domaradzki	Marian MacGowan Mike Wilcox		Col-Tri, Cinemedia		x		
1995	Love Serenade	Shirley Barrett	Jan Chapman		NSW FTO, Globe Film Co.,Beyond, AFC, Cinemedia, Siren Entertainment		x		
1995	Love Until	Bedrich Kabriel	Bedrich Kabriel/ Karel Kabriel		UD Productions		x		
1995	Lust and Revenge	Paul Cox	Jane Ballantyne/ Paul Cox		Seawell Films, 21 st Century Pictures, Cinemedia		x		
1995	Mr Reliable	Nadia Tass	Michael Hamlyn/ Terry Hayes/ Jim McElroy		Polygram, Sixteen Millimetre,		x		
1995	The Phantom	Simon Wincer	Alan Ladd Jnr, Richard Vane		Paramount Pictures, Roadshow			USA Warner Bros Studio	
1995	The Quiet Room	Rolf De Heer	Rolf De Heer/ Sharon Jackson/ Fiona Paterson		Intra Films		x		
1995	Race the Sun				Tristar			USA Non-studio	
1995	River Street	Tony Mahood	Lynda House		Roadshow, Applause Video		x		
1995	Road to Nhill	Sue Brooks	Sue Maslin		Ronin Sixteen Millimetre National Library		x		
1995	Sanctuary	Robin de Crespigny	Andrew Steuart		Seawell Films		x		

1995	Shine	Scott Hicks	Jane Scott		Ronin, AFC, Sixteen Millimetre, 21 st Century, Cinemedia		x			\$3.4M
1995	Sorry My Love	Ghassan Hariri/ John Hooper	Simon Dagher		Stars Production		x			
1995	To Have And To Hold	John Hillcoat	Denise Patience				x			
1995	Turning April	Geoff Bennett	Lael McCall, Heather Ogilvie						Aust/ Canada	
1995	Under The Lighthouse Dancing	Graeme Rattigan	David Giles				x			
1995	Violet's Visit	Richard Turner	Andrew Steuart				x			
1995	What I Have Written	John Hughes	Peter Sainsbury				x			
1995	The Zone	John Tatoulis	John Tatoulis, Colin South		Beyond, Roadshow		x			
Total 1995							25	3	2	

1996										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1996	Acri	Tatsuya Ishii	Junichi Shinoto		Cappadocia			USA		
								Warner Bros Studio		
1996	The Alive Tribe	Stephen Amis	Stephen Amis	Low budget	Revolution Pictures		x			
1996	Black Ice	James Richards	Rob Greenough		Wedgetail Films			x		
1996	Blackrock	Steven Vidler	David Elfick		Beyond Polygram, Sixteen Millimetre			x		\$1.1M
1996	Dark City	Alex Proyas	Andrew Mason		New Line, Roadshow			x		\$3.3M
1996	Diana and Me	David Parker	Matt Carroll		Roadshow			x		
1996	Dirty Laundry	Suzanne Brown	Suzanne Brown					x		
1996	Doing Time for Patsy Cline	Chris Kennedy	Chris Kennedy John Winter		Video Box Office			x		
1996	Dust Off the Wings	Lee Rogers	Lee Rogers Ward Stevens		Southern Star Film Sales			x		
1996	Girl	Peter Thompson	Phillip Emanuel					x		
1996	Heaven's Burning	Craig Lahiff	Al Clark/ Helen Leake	AFFC	Beyond, REP film distribution			x		
1996	Hotel De Love	Craig Rosenburg	Michael Lake/ David Parker		Roadshow, Reel Movies, Cinemedia			x		
1996	The Inner Sanctuary	Chris Clarke	Chris Clarke		Southern Star			x		
1996	Joey	Ian Barry	Michael Lake		Roadshow			x		

1996	Kiss or Kill	Bill Bennett	Bill Bennett		New Vision		x			
			Jennifer Bennett Corrie Soeterboek		National Library 21 st Century Cinemia					
1996	Love and Other Catastrophes	Emma-Kate Croghan	Stavros Andonis Efthymiou		New Vision Film Beyond 21 st Century Pictures Reel Movies Cinemia		x			\$1.6M
1996	Love In Ambush	Carl Schultz	David Hannay/ Jean Pierre Ramsay		Becker, Sixteen Millimetre				Aust/France	
1996	Maslin Beach	Wayne Groom	Wayne Groom/ Andrew Steuart		Open Eye, Rocvale Films		x			
1996	Mr Nice Guy	Hung Kam Po Sammo	Chua Lam		Golden Harvest			Hong Kong Non- studio		
1996	Napolean	Mario Andreacchio/Michael Bourchier	Masato Hara						Aust/Japan Non-official	\$1.7M
1996	Oscar and Lucinda	Gillian Armstrong	Robin Dalton (UK)/ Tim White		20 th Century Fox		x			\$1.7M
1996	Out of the Blue	Phil Avalon	Julian Saggars				x			
1996	Paradise Road	Bruce Beresford	Greg Coote/ Sue Milliken		Roadshow		x			\$2.9M
1996	Paws	Karl Zwicky	Andrena Finlay/ Vicki Watson		Polygram Filmed Entertainment		x			
1996	Phantom	Simon Wincer	Alan Ladd Jnr/ Richard Vane		Village Roadshow			US		
1996	Portrait of a Lady	Jane Campion	Monty Montgomery Steve Golin		Sixteen Millimetre Polygram Filmed Entertainment		x			
1996	Screemer	Gary Young	TC Fields		The Film Factory		x			
1996	Terra Nova	Paul Middleditch	Peter Masterton		Dendy		x			
1996	Thank God He Met Lizzie	Cherie Nolan	Jonathan Shteinman		REP, Sixteen Millimetre, Becker Home Video	A\$2.25M	x			

1996	True Love and Chaos	Stavros Kazantzidis	Ann Darrouzet		Beyond Cinemia		x			
1996	Welcome To Woop Woop	Stephan Elliott	Antonia Barnard, Finola Dwyer	AFFC					Aust/UK	
Total 1996							25	3	3	

1997										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1997	Aberration	Tim Boxell	Chris Brown Tim Sanders		Grundy, Victor Film Co.		x			
1997	Back from the Dead	Craig Godfey	Tony Francis Craig Godfrey				x			
1997	Blackrock	Steve Vidler	David Elfick Melanie Ritchie		Beyond, Polygram Filmed Entertainment, Sixteen Millimetre		x			
1997	Bored Olives	Bruce Redman	Bruce Redman Judy Hamilton		Red Movies		x			
1997	Brothers at War	Richard Bradley	Howard Rubie Terry Vincent Jim George				x			
1997	The Castle	Rob Sitch	Debra Choate		Roadshow, Cinemia		x			\$10.3M
1997	Crackers	David Swann	Chris Warner		Sharmill Films, Beyond, Sixteen Millimetre		x			
1999	The Drover's Boy	Chris Langman	Ted Egan/ Stuart Menzies		Open Eye		x			
1997	Flashlight	Garnet Mae	Chris Mae		Rayon Productions		x			
1997	Head On	Ana Kokkinos	Jane Scott		Southern Star		x			\$1.8M
1997	A Little Bit of Soul	Peter Duncan	Peter Duncan/Simon Martin/Martin McGrath/Peter Voeten		Col-Tri, Beyond, Sixteen Millimetre		x			

1997	My Blessings	Bill Mousoulis	Bill Mousoulis		Innersense		x			
1997	Radiance	Rachel Perkins	Ned Lander Andrew Myer		Beyond		x			
1997	The Sugar Factory	Robert Carter	Anthony Buckley/ Jenny Woods		Beyond		x			
1997	The Truth About Tarot!	Mark Thackray, Susannah Thackray	Mark Thackray, Susannah Thackray				x			
1997	The Venus Factory	Glenn Fraser	Jason Gooden, Julian Saggars				x			
1997	Wanted				Unknown			Korea Non-studio		
1997	The Well	Samantha Lang	Sandra Levy		Globe Film Co. Triumph Releasing	A\$3.25M	x			
1997	The Wiggles Movie	Dean Covell	Hilton Fatt				x			\$1.5M
Total 1997							18	1	0	

1998										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1998	Aftershocks	Geoff Burton	Julia Overton				x			
1998	All the Way	Marque Owen	Marque Owen		Beyond		x			
1998	Amy	Nadia Tass	David Parker Nadia Tass		Roadshow		x			
1998	Babe, Pig in the City	George Miller	George Miller Bill Miller Doug Mitchell		Kennedy-Miller		x			\$3.4M
1998	The Beggars Opera Café	Victoria Fisher	Victoria Fisher Holly Fisher		VHS		x			
1998	Big Fish	Pascal Franchot	Robert Crane				x			
1998	The Big Night Out	Tim Boyle	Tim Boyle				x			
1998	The Big Steal	Nadia Tass	David Parker Timothy White		Col-Tri Sixteen Millimetre National Library Cinemia		x			
1998	Black Box	Pete Ford	Andrew Dibble		MC Stuart		x			
1998	Bloodrush	Mark Stone	Mark Stone		NRG Enterprises, MP Consulting		x			
1998	The Boys	Rowan Woods	Robert Connelly John Maynard		Axiom Films/Footprint		x			
1998	Cats' Tales	Ralph Marsden	Ralph Marsden	Ralph Marsden	Ralph Marsden		x			

1998	A Change of Heart	Rod Hay	Rod Hay Murray Faye				x		
1998	Dags	Murray Fahey	Murray Fahey		Total Films/Producer		x		
1998	Dance Me to My Song	Rolf De Heer	Rolf De Heer Guiseppe Pedersoli Domenico Procacci		Palace, Intra Films		x		
1998	The Day Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon	Michael J. Rivette	Michael J. Rivette				x		
1998	Dead End	Iren Koster	Iren Koster Murray Sestak Tracey Silvers Salik Silverstein David Teitelbaum		B&B Films		x		
1998	Dead Letter Office	John Ruane	Deborah Cox Denise Patience	AFFC	Southern Star/Polygram		x		
1998	Demons in My Head	Neil Johnson	Jane Rowland Neil Johnson				x		
1998	Drop Dead Gorgeous	Richard Turner	Phillip Emanuel/ David Hannay		Open Eye		x		
1998	Envy	Julie Money	Michael Cook				x		
1998	15 Amore	Maurice Murphy	Brooke Wilson Maurice Murphy				x		
1998	Forever Fever	Glen Goei	Jeffrey Chiang/ Glen Goei				x		
1998	Four Jacks	Matthew George	Robert Gough/ Stephen Stanford				x		

1998	Fresh Air	Neil Mansfield	Rosemary Blight Ben Grant		SBS/AFC/Beyond/Channel 4, PMP/Show Channel		x		
1998	The Game Room	Joe Tornatore	Mary Wong Jenkins Joe Tornatore				x		
1998	Holy Smoke	Jane Campion	Jan Chapman				x		
1998	Hurrah	Frank Shields	Julie Marlow John Wolstenholme		Mayfair Entertainment		x		
1998	In a Savage Land	Bill Bennett	Bill Bennett Jennifer Bennett				x		
1998	In the Winter Dark	James Bogle	Rosemary Blight Ben Grant		UIP/Globe Film Co.		x		
1998	The Interview	Craig Monahan	Craig Monahan		UIP/Globe Film Co		x		
1998	Justice	Ron Elliott	Robert Roget				x		
1998	Kick	Lynda Heys	Mariel Beros, Sharon Kruger, Ross Matthews				x		
1998	Komodo	Michael Lantieri	Tony Ludwig, Alan Riche		Scanbox Asia Pacific			USA Warner Bros Studios	
1998	Looking for Alibrandi	Kate Woods	Robyn Kershaw		NSW FTO, Roadshow		x		\$8.3M
1998	Love Brokers	Garnet Mae	Christopher Mae Garnet Mae				x		
1998	Matrix	L & A Wachowski	Andrew Mason Joel Silver		Warner Bros		x		
1998	Me Myself I	Pip Karmel	Pip Karmel Fabien Liron Andrena Finlay		NSW Film & Television Office, BVI		x		\$2.7M
1998	The Missing	Manuela Alberti	Lynda House Jim Stark				x		

1998	Mr Pumkin's Big Night Out	Priscilla Cameron/ Michelle Warner	Priscilla Cameron/ Michelle Warner			x			
1998	Muggers	Dean Murphy	David Redman Nigel Odell			x			
1998	Murrabinna	Justin Schneider	Justin Schneider			x			
1998	Occasional Coarse Language	Brad Hayward	Brad Hayward/ Trish Piper		Roadshow	x			
1998	Oscar & Lucinda	Gillian Armstrong	Robin Dalton Timothy White		20 th Century Fox	x			\$1.7M
1998	Paperback Hero	Anthony Bowman	Lance Reynolds John Winter		Beyond, Polygram	x			\$1.3M
1998	Passion	Peter Duncan	Matt Carroll		Beyond	x			
1998	Past Master	Steve Jodrell	Carmelo Musca/ Paula Paizes			x			
1998	Pitch Black	David Twohy	Tom Engelman, Anthony Winley		Intrepid Pictures		USA Warner Bros Studios		
1998	Powder Burn	Stephen Prime	Gillian Phillips Tim Nicholls Gregory J. Read			x			
1998	Praise	John Curran	Martha Coleman		Southern Star	x			
1998	Prem Aggan				Unknown		India Non-studio		
1998	The Real Macaw	Mario Andreacchio	Margot McDonald		REP Film Distribution	x			
1998	Redball	Jon Hewitt	Meredith King Phillip Parslow		Gray Malkin	x			
1998	Reflections	Geoffrey Brown	Cathy Brown		Combridge International	x			
1998	Sally Marshall is Not An Alien	Mario Andreacchio	Terry Charatsis/ Micheline Charest		UIP			Aust/ Canada	\$1.3M
1998	Sample People	Clinton Smith	Emile Sherman Barton Smith			x			
1998	Saturday Night	James Balian	Charles Doane			x			

1998	Shooting Blanks	Davor Dirlic	Trish Carney, Davor Dirlic, Nina Nola			x			
1998	Siam Sunset	John Polson	Al Clark			x			
1998	Snowdrop	Julie Money	Michael Cook			x			
1998	Soldier				Unknown		India Non-studio		
1998	Somewhere in the Darkness	Paul Fenech	David Webster Paul Fenech Brendan Fletcher			x			
1998	The Sound Of One Hand Clapping	Richard Flanagan	Rolf De Heer		Palace	x			
1998	Spank!	Ernest Clark	David Lightfoot			x			
1998	Soft Fruit	Christina Andreef	Helen Bowden		\$600 000 box office	x			
1998	Strange Fits Of Passion	Elise McCredie	Lucy Maclaren			x			
1998	Strange Planet	Emma-Kate Croghan	Stavros Kazantzidis Anastasia Sideris			x			
1998	The Thin Red Line		Robert Geisler, Grant Hill		Fox 2000		USA Non-studio		
1998	Two Hands	Gregor Jordan	Marian McGowan		REP	x			\$5.4M
1998	Waste	Tony de Pasquale	Tony de Pasquale Geoffrey Cooper			x			
1998	A Wreck A Tangle	Scott Patterson	Nicki Roller			x			
Total 1998						69	5	1	

1999										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
1999	Angst	Daniel Nettheim	Jonathon Green				x			
1999	Big Night Out	Tim Boyle	Tim Boyle				x			
1999	Bigger than Tina	Neil Foley	Grant Hardie		Backyard Productions		x			
1999	Birthday Girl		Eric Abraham, Steve Butterworth, Diana Phillips		Film Four/Hal/Mirage			UK Non-studio		
1999	Bootmen	Dein Perry	Hilary Linstead				x			
1999	City Loop	Belinda Chayko	Bruce Redman				x			
1999	Code Black	Jacques Wood	Johan Earl							
1999	The Craic	Ted Emery	David Foster Marc Gracie Jimeoin		Roadshow		x			\$5.2M
1999	The Cup	Khyentse Norbu	Raymond Steiner Malcolm Watson						Aust/ Bhutan	
1999	Cut	Kimble Rendall	Bill Bennett Jennifer Bennett Martin Fabinyi	SAFC	Beyond		x			
1999	Dancing on Glass	Kenneth G Ross	Kenneth G Ross Peter Scott Helen Strickley-Thompson				x			

1999	Dear Claudia	Chris Cudipp	Jim McElroy				x		
1999	The Diaries of Vaslav Nijinsky	Paul Cox	Paul Cox, Aanya Whitehead						Aust/ Germany/ Sweden/ Holland
1999	Dogwatch	Laurie McInness	Richard Brennan				x		
1999	Erskineville Kings	Alan White	Annette Simons				x		
1999	The Goddess of 1967	Clara Law	Julio Caro		Palace		x		
1999	He Died with a falafel in his hand	Richard Lowenstein	Domenico Procacci Andrew McPhail						Aust/Italy
1999	Hildegarde	Di Drew	Heather Ogilvie David Hannay				x		
1999	In The Red	Glenn Ruehland	Glenn Ruehland				x		
1999	The Incurable Romantic	Kathie Armstrong	Kathie Armstrong						
1999	Innocence	Paul Cox	Paul Cox/ Mark Patterson				x		
1999	The Inside Story	Robert Sutherland	Robert Sutherland				x		
1999	The Long Lunch	Antony Redman	Beth Frey				x		
1999	Mallboy	Vincent Giarrusso	Fiona Egger		Buena Vista		x		
1999	The Merchant of Fairness	Shane Luther	Shane Luther	Low-budget			x		
1999	Mission Impossible II				Paramount			USA Fox Studios Australia	
1999	Molokai- The Story of Father Damien	Paul Cox	Grietje Lammertyn, Tarsicius Vanhuyse						Aust/ Belgium
1999	The Monkey's Mask	Samantha Lang	Robert Connolly/ John Maynard				x		
1999	Mr Accident	Yahoo Serious	Yahoo Serious Warwick Ross				x		
1999	My Mother Frank	Mark Lamprell	Phaedron Vass/ Susan Vass/ John Winter				x		
1999	Neophytes And Neon Lights	Shane T Hall	Shane T Hall				x		
1999	The Old Men Who Read Love	Rolf De Heer	Michelle de Broca						Aust/

	Stories								Holland/ Spain/ France	
1999	Radio Samurai	Nicholas Levy	Nicholas Levy			Direct to DVD	x			
1999	The Red Planet		Bruce Birman, Mark Canton, Andrew Mason		Village Roadshow			USA Non-studio		
1999	Risk	Alan White	Marian Macgowan				x			
1999	Selkie	Donald Crombie	Jane Ballantyne				x			
1999	Serenades	Mojgan Khadem	Sandra Levy				x			
1999	Walk The Talk	Brenda Pam	Jan Chapman		20th Century Fox		x			
1999	Wogboy	Aleksi Vellis	John Brousek, Nick Giannopolous		Fox		x			\$11.4M
1999	Yolngu Boy	Stephen Johnson	Patricia Edgar, Gordon Glenn		Palace		x			
Total 1999							27	3	5	

2000										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
2000	The Bank	Robert Connolly	John Maynard		Footprint Films \$2.5M box office		x			\$2.4M
2000	Better Than Sex	Jonathan Teplizky	Frank Cox Bruna Papandrea				x			
2000	Beware of Greeks Bearing Guns	John Tatoulis	Lakis Lazopoulos Dionyssis Samiotis Colin South John Tatoulis		Palace				Aust/ Greece	
2000	Bigger than Tina	Neil Foley	Grant Hardie				x			
2000	Chopper	Andrew Dominik	Michele Bennett		Palace		x			\$5.7M
2000	Cracking On	John Meagher	John Meagher/ Margie Wentworth				x			
2000	Crocodile Dundee in LA	Simon Wincer	Paul Hogan Lance Hool Conrad Hool		UIP/Universal				Aust/US	\$7.7M
2000	Cubbyhouse	Murray Fahey	Chris Brown/ David Hannay				x			
2000	Dalkeith	Leigh Sheehan	John Chase		Producer		x			

2000	The Dish	Rob Sitch	Santo Gilauro, Tom Gleisner, Jane Kennedy, Rob Sitch		Roadshow		x			\$16.8M
2000	Enemies Closer	Steven Aldridge	Linda Fraser				x			
2000	La Spagnola	Steve Jacobs	Philip Hearnshaw, Anna Maria Monticelli		New Vision		x			
2000	Lantana	Ray Lawrence	Jan Chapman		Palace		x			\$9.8M
2000	Let's Get Skase	Matthew George	Colin South, John Tatoulis, Sue Taylor		Roadshow		x			
2000	The Magic Pudding	Robert Smit/ Karl Zwicky	Gerry Travers				x			
2000	Moloch	Ernest Clark	David Rowe				x			
2000	Moulin Rouge	Baz Luhrmann	Fred Baron, Martin Brown, Baz Luhrmann		20 th Century Fox			USA/Fox Studios		\$27.4M
2000	Mullet	David Caesar	Vincent Sheehan		Dendy/Globe		x			
2000	Narcosys	Mark Bakaitis	Mark Bakaitis				x			
2000	Rabbit Proof Fence	Phillip Noyce	Phillip Noyce/ Christine Olsen/ John Winter		Becker/Ocean		x			\$7.5M
2000	Scratch	Michael Ralph	David Rowe				x			
2000	Subterano	Esben Storm	Richard Becker/ Barbi Taylor		Direct to DVD		x			
2000	Star Wars:Episode 2	George Lucas	Rick MacCallum		Lucas Film		x	USA Fox Studios Australia		
2000	Stygian	Shannon Young, James Wan	Shannon Young				x			
2000	Tempe Tip	Michael Ralph	David Rowe				x			
2000	Queen of the Damned	Michael Rymer	Jorge Saralegui		Warner Bros/Village Roadshow			USA Non-studio		
2000	Willfull	Rebel	Vicki Watson				x			

		Penfold-Russell								
Total 2000							23	3	2	

2001										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
2001	Australian Rules	Paul Goldman	Mark Lazarus	FFC Adelaide Festival of Arts 2002 SAFC SBSI	Palace Showtime		x			
2001	Beneath Clouds	Ivan Sen	Teresa-Jayne Hanlon		Dendy		x			
2001	Beta 1				Unknown			India Non-studio		
2001	Bodyjackers	Michael Ralph	David Rowe		Straight to DVD		x			
2001	Charlotte Gray	Gillian Armstrong	Sarah Curtis Douglas Rae						Aus/Germ any/UK	\$4.1M
2001	Darkness Falls				Blue Star Production			USA Non-studio		
2001	Dirty Deeds	David Caesar	Deborah Balderstone Bryan Brown		Hoyts \$5M box office		x			\$5M
2001	Dope	Jerald Harkness	Jerald Harkness Mark Patterson				x			
2001	The Elixir	Colm O'Murchu	Colm O'Murchu				x			
2001	The Finder	Phil Avalon	Frank Shields		Direct to DVD		x			

2001	Garage Days	Alex Proyas	Topher Dow, Alex Proyas		Fox	\$6M	x			
2001	Getting The Dirt On Trish	Suzanne Brown	Suzanne Brown				x			
2001	Hostage to Fate	Angelo Salamanca	Michael Agar				x			
2001	Inspector Gadget				Disney			USA Non-studio		
2001	Kangaroo Jack				Warner Bros			USA Fox Studios Australia		
2001	Low Fat Elephants	Phillip Marzella	Phillip Marzella			Low-budget	x			
2001	The Man Who Sued God		Ben Gannon		Buena Vista		x			\$8.1M
2001	The Monkey's Mask	Samantha Lang	Robert Connolly, John Maynard		Footprint Films		x			
2001	The Pact	Strath Hamilton	Phil Avalon				x			
2001	Paradise Found	Mario Andreacchio	Mario Andreacchio/ Georges Campana						Aust/ France/ Germany/ UK	
2001	The Quiet American	Phillip Noyce	Staffan Ahrenberg, William Horberg, Sydney Pollack					Fox Studios Australia US/UK		
2001	Razor Eaters	Shannon Young	Nick Levy/ Paul Moder				x			
2001	Rooms for Rent	Zoltan Fesco	Zoltan Fesco/ Dion Matchan				x			
2001	Russian Doll				UIP/Beyond		x			
2001	Scooby Doo	Raja Gosnell	Charles Roven		Warner Bros/Atlas			USA Warner Bros Studios		
2001	Sensitive New Age Killers				Tidepool		x			
2001	Silent Partner				Palace		x			
2001	Teesh and Trude	Melanie Rodriga	Melissa Hasluck				x			
2001	The Tracker	Rolf de Heer	Bridget Ikin, Bryce Menzies, Domenico Procacci				x			

2001	Undead	Michael Spierig, Peter Spierig	Michael Spierig, Peter Spierig				x			
2001	Walking On Water	Tony Ayres	Liz Watts		Dendy		x			
2001	When Strangers Appear	Scott Reynolds	Sue Rogers						Aust/NZ/ US	
Total 2001							23	8	3	

2002										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
2002	Alexandra's Project	Rolf De Heer	Rolf De Heer Domenico Procacci Julie Ryan				x			
2002	Baghvati				Unknown			India Non-studio		
2002	Black & White	Craig Lahiff	Helen Leake Nik Powell		New Vision				Aust/UK	
2002	Blurred	Evan Clarry	Chris Brown Chris Fitchett		Becker/Magna /Showtime		x			
2002	Charlotte Gray	Gillian Armstrong	Sarah Curtis, Douglas Rae		UIP/Universal				Aust/ Germany/ UK	\$4.1M
2002	Close to the Heart				Unknown			India Non- studio		
2002	Crackerjack	Paul Moloney	Stephen Luby Mick Molloy		Roadshow \$9M box office	\$7M	x			\$7.7M
2002	Crocodile Hunter- Collision Course	John Stainton	Judi Bailey Arnold Rifkin John Stainton	Copro Aus/US	Fox MGM				Aust/US	\$3.8M
2002	The Crop	Scott Patterson	David Wood				x			
2002	Eloise	Brenden Danaaher	April Born				x			

			Brenden Dannaher							
2002	George of the Jungle 2	David Grossman	Gregg Hoffman Jordan Kerner		Disney	\$12M		USA Non-studio		
2002	Getting' Square	Jonathan Teplizky	Martin Fabinyi, Trish Lake, Tim White	Mushroom Pictures Working Title	Hoyts	\$8M	x			\$2.1M
2002	Ghost Ship	Steve Beck	Gilbert Adler, Joel Silver, Robert Zemeckis		Ghost Ship Films			US, Warner Bros Studios		
2002	The Great Raid	John Dahl	Lawrence Bender Marty Katz		Miramax/ Village Roadshow	\$70M		USA Non-studio		\$10M
2002	Guru Wayne	Letitia McQuade	Ross Daniels, Letitia McQuade		DV1 Aust (DVD), ITN		x			
2002	The Hard Word	Scott Roberts	Al Clark		Roadshow		x			
2002	Hollywood	D. Rajendra Babu		Films & Casting Temple (Aust) Ramu Enterprose	Ramu Enterprise	\$3M		India Non-studio		
2002	Horseplay	Stavros Kazantzidis	Allanah Zitserman	Macquarie Film Mushroom Pictures			x			
2002	Inspector Gadget II	Alex Zamm	Peter Green, Charles Hirschhorn		Walt Disney			USA - Non-studio		
2002	Japanese Story	Sue Brooks	Sue Maslin		Palace		x			\$3.9M
2002	The Killbillies	Duke Hendrix	Ringo Ray		Direct to DVD	Low-budget	x			
2002	Love's Brother	Jan Sardi	Sarah Radclyffe, Jane Scott		Palace				Aust/UK	\$977,106
2002	Magnificent Deed	Shahzrad Davarkhah	Kouros Davarkhah				x			
2002	A Man's Gotta Do	Chris Kennedy	Chris Kennedy, John Winter		Hopscotch		x			
2002	The Matrix Reloaded	Andy & Lana Wachowski	Joel Silver		Warner Bros	\$150M		USA Fox Studios Australia		\$282M
2002	The Matrix Revolutions	Andy & Lana Wachowski	Joel Silver		Warner Bros	\$150M		USA Fox Studios Australia		\$140M

2002	Ned	Abe Forsythe	Darryl Robinson	NSWFTO AFC Showtime	Becker/icon		x			
2002	Ned Kelly	Gregor Jordan	Lynda House, Nelson Woss	AFC, FFC, Working Title	UIP/Universal		x		Aust/UK	\$8.3M
2002	The Night We Called it A Day	Paul Goldman	Peter Clifton, Nik Powell, Emile Sherman		Icon		x			\$501,833
2002	The Nugget	Bill Bennett	Bill Bennett, Jennifer Cluff	FFC Macquarie Films Showtime	Roadshow, First Look International		x			
2002	Peter Pan	PJ Hogan	Lucy Fisher, Patrick McCormack, Charles Newirth, Joe Roth, Douglas Wick		Universal/ Columbia/Rev olution			USA	Warner Roadshow Studios	
2002	Rabbit-Proof Fence	Phillip Noyce	Phillip Noyce, Christine Olsen, John Winter	AFC, FFC, Screen West, Showtime.	Becker/Ocean Till	\$6M	x			\$7.5M
2002	The Rage In Placid Lake	Tony McNamara	Marian Macgowan		Palace		x			
2002	The Real Thing	Stephen Amis	Stephen Amis, Mark Pennell			\$1M	x			
2002	Reign In Darkness	David W Allen, Kel Dolen	David W Allen, Kel Dolen	Low Budget	Straight to DVD		x			
2002	Searching For Mr Right.Com	Samantha Pierce	David Hart				x			
2002	Signs of Life	Adam McInnes	Adam McInnes, Aaron Smith	Low Budget			x			
2002	Something About AJ	Adam Todd	Adam Todd				x			
2002	Swimming Upstream		Andrew Mason, Howard Baldwin, Karen Baldwin				x			
2002	Take Away	Marc Gracie, Mark O'Toole	Marc Gracie, David Redman				x			
2002	Til Human Voices Wake Us	Michael Petroni	Thomas Augsberger, Matthias Emcke, Shana Levine, Dean Murphy, Nigel Odell, David Redman		Globe/Instinct		x			
2002	To Become One	Neil Johnson	Jane Rowland	Low Budget	Straight to DVD	\$1,000	x			

2002	Toast to Love	Shusuke Kaneko	Takashige Ichise		Toei Company			Japan Non-studio		
2002	Travelling Light	Kathryn Millard	Helen Bowden				x			
2002	Trojan Warrior	Salik Silverstein	Murray Sestak, David Teitelbaum		Triple Three Films		x			
2002	The Turner Affair	Geoff Cox	Geoff Cox, Pascale Cox		Straight to DVD		x			
2002	Visitors	Richard Franklin	Richard Franklin, Jennifer Hadden				x			
2002	Walking on Water	Tony Ayres	Liz Watts		Dendy		x			
2002	The Wannabes	Nick Giannopolous	Tom Burstall, Nick Giannopolous				x			
2002	Yakka Oy	Bradley Diebert	Miroslav Cacija, Warren Coulton				x			
Total 2002							35	9	4	

2003										
	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign Country of Origin Studio or non.	Co-pro. Countr ies of Origin	
2003	Bad Eggs	Tony Martin	Stephen Luby Tony Martin Greg Sitch		Roadshow		x			\$2.3M
2003	Bondi Tsunami	Rachael Lucas	Anthony Lucas-Smith	Self		\$150,000	x			
2003	A Bullet in the Arse	Robin Brennan Paul Moder David Richardson	Robin Brennan Paul Moder David Richardson				x			
2003	Caught II	Adam Todd	Adam Todd			\$1M				
2003	A Cold Summer	Paul Middleditch	Paul Middleditch		Potential Films		x			
2003	The Cruel World	Michael Henry	Michael Henry				x			
2003	Danny Deckchair	Jeff Balsmeyer	Andrew Mason				x			
2003	Darkness Falls	Jonathan Liebsman	John Fasano John Hegeman		Village Roadshow				Aust/ US	
2003	Deck Dogz	Steve Pasvolsky	Bill Bennett Jennifer Bennett				x			
2003	Deeper than Blue	Sandra Sciberras	Kate Whitbread				x			
2003	Fat Pizza	Paul Fenech	Tanith Carroll, Paul Fenech, Jeff Purser		Roadshow		x			\$3.6M
2003	Finding Joy	Billie Dean	Andrew				x			

2003	The Finished People	Khoa Doa	Khoa Doa and Anh Do				x			
2003	Guardian	Ben Warner	Michael Clarkin, Stephan Kern, Mara Warner				x			
2003	The Honourable Wally Norman	Ted Emery	Jonathan Shteinman				x			
2003	The Human Touch	Paul Cox	Mark Patterson		Dendy/ Beckers		x			
2003	Iced Lolly	Stephen Kern, Seumus Next	Michael Clarkin, Jason Munn, Ben Warner				x			
2003	The Illustrated Family Doctor	Kriv Stenders	Catherine Kerr		Palace		x			
2003	Josh Jarman	Pip Mushin	Eva Orner				x			
2003	Killer Robot	Peter Rasmussen	Peter Rasmussen		Straight to DVD		x			
2003	Koi Aapsa								India	
2003	Liquid Bridge	Phil Avalon	Phil Avalon				x			
2003	Love and Valour	Tony Teulan	Tony Teulan	Independent Feature			x			
2003	The Magician	Scott Ryan	Scott Ryan, Nash Edgerton, Michele Bennett		\$160,000 Box-office	\$3,000	x			
2003	Peaches	Craig Monahan	Craig Monahan, Don Reynolds		Hopscotch		x			
2003	Picture This	John Fisk	John Fisk, Tina Lennon	Low Budget			x			
2003	Prisoner Queen	Timothy Spanos	Timothy Spanos				x			
2003	Nancy Nancy	Timothy Spanos	Timothy Spanos				x			
2003	The Oyster Farmer	Anna Reeves	Anthony Buckley, Piers Tempest		Sherman/ Becker				Aust/ UK	\$2.3M
2003	Star Wars: Episode III	George Lucas	Rick McCallum					US - Fox Studios		
2003	Strange Bedfellows	Dean Murphy	Nigel Odell, David Redman		Becker		x			\$4.8M
2003	Thunderstruck	Darren Ashton	Jodi Matterson		Icon		x			\$908,294
2003	Tom White	Alkinos Tsilimidos	Daniel Scharf, Alkinos Tsilimidos		Palace		x			
2003	Trail of Passion	Mark Savage	Susanne Hausschmid, Mark Savage					US - non studio		
2003	Under The Radar	Evan Clarry	Chris Brown, Chris				x			

			Fitchett							
2003	You Can't Stop the Murders	Anthony Mir	Anastasia Sideris	Low Budget			x			
Total 2003							28	2	2	

2004										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign Country of Origin Studio or non.	Co-pro. Countries of Origin	
2004	Call Me Mum	Margot Nash	Michael McMahon		SBS TV		x			
2004	Creatures of Creation	Robin Queree	Adam Todd							
2004	The Extra	Kevin Carlin	Bruno Charlesworth/Stephen Luby/Mark Ruse	Nine Films/Macquarie Bank	Hoyts	\$6M	x			
2004	Get Rich Quick	Samuel Genocchio	Samuel Genocchio			Shoe-string	x			
2004	Ghost Rider	Mark Steven Johnson	Avi Arad Gary Foster Michael De Luca		Columbia	\$110M		US		\$116M
2004	Godzilla - The Final War	Ryuhei Kitamura	Geoff Martin					Japan		
2004	Happily N' Ever After	Paul Bolger Yvette Kaplan	John H. Williams		BFC	\$47M		Germany		\$16M
2004	Hating Alison Ashley	Andrew Prowse	John Brousek, Elizabeth Howatt-Jackman		Hoyts		x			
2004	House of Wax	Jaume Collet-Serra	Susan Levin, Joel Silver, Robert Zemeckis		Village Roadshow			US Warner's Movie World, Gold Coast		
2004	Look Both Ways	Sarah Watt	Bridget Ikin		Dendy/Footprint	\$3.8M	x			\$2.7M
2004	Lost Things	Martin Murphy	Ian Iveson				x			
2004	Man Thing	Brett Leonard	Avi Arad			\$7.5M		US		\$200.000
2004	The Marine	John Bonito	Joel Simon		World Wrestling	\$20M		US		\$19M
2004	Mask II	Larry Guterman	Erica Huggins		New Line			US		

2004	Mosaic	Aaron Catling	Aaron Catling			\$15 000	x			
2004	One Perfect Day	Paul Currie	Paul Currie, Phil Gregory, Charles Morton				x			
2004	Orange Love Stories	Tom Cowan	Tom Cowan, Murray Inglis	Low Budget			x			
2004	The Order	Luke Polti	Daniel Byrne				x			
2004	Pobby & Dingan	Peter Cattaneo	Lizie Gower, Nick Morris, Emile Sherman			\$4.5M			Aust/UK	
2004	Puppy	Kieran Galvin	Melissa Beauford Kieran Galvin			\$1M	x			
2004	Rapid Fear	Geoff Cox	Geoff Cox, Pascale Cox, Norman Wilkinson		Direct to DVD		x			
2004	Right Here Right Now	Matthew Newton	David Gross				x			
2004	Safety In Numbers	David Douglas	Kelvin Crumplin David Douglas		Image Entertainment		x			
2004	Scratched	Travis Bain	Travis Bain	Low Budget			x			
2004	Somersault	Cate Shortland	Anthony Anderson		Hopscotch		x			\$2.1M
2004	Spring Rhapsody						x			
2004	Stealth	Rob Cohen	Mike Medavoy, Neal Moritz, Laura Ziskin		Columbia			US - non studio		
2004	Sum of Existence	Jon Cohen	Jon Cohen, Tim Maddocks	Low Budget			x			
2004	Three Dollars	Robert Connolly	John Maynard		Dendy/Beckers		x			
2004	Twists Of Fate	Mark Eder	Annmarée Bell				x			
2004	Wolf Creek	Greg McLean	David Lightfoot, Greg McLean	SAFC, Private investment	Arclight/Mushroom/Roadshow	\$1.3M	x			\$5.8M
2004	You And Your Stupid Mate	Marc Gracie	Mark Gracie, David Redman		Hoyts		x			
Total 2004							15	3	1	

2005										
Year	Title	Director	Producer	Funding Source	Distributor	Budget	Aust.	Foreign	Co-pro.	
								Country of Origin	Countries of Origin	
								Studio or non.		
2005	Aquamarine	Elizabeth Allen	Susan Cartsonis, Steven McGlothen		Fox 2000s			US		
2005	The Bet	Mark Lee	Caroline Gerard				x			
2005	Bitter and Twisted	Christopher Weekes	Bridget Callow				x			
2005	Blacktown	Kriv Stenders	Kriv Stenders				x			
2005	The Book of Revelation	Ana Kokinos	Al Clark	FFC, NSW FTO, Film Vic	Palace			x		
2005	Candy	Neil Arnfield	Margaret Fink, Emile Sherman	FFC, NSW FTO	Dendy			x		
2005	Caterpillar Wish	Sandra Sciberras	Kate Whitbread	AFC, SAFC	Palace \$500 000 Box Office	\$1.4M		x		
2005	Charlotte	Ryan Osmond, G.J. Rouvellas	Tara Clark					x		
2005	Charlotte's Web	Gary Winick	Jordan Kerner		Paramount			US		
2005	Crash Test	Sam Voutas	Melanie Ansley					x		
2005	Dark Love Story	Jon Hewitt	Gregory J Read					x		
2005	Elephant Tales	Mario Andreacchio	Mario Andreacchio/ Georges Campana					x		
2005	Fatality	Angela Hernandez	Adam Todd					x		
2005	Feed	Brett Leonard	Melissa Beauford					x		
2005	Fink!	Tim Boyle	Tim Boyle, Peter Taylor					x		
2005	Footy Legends	Khoa Doa	Megan McMurchy					x		
2005	48 Shades	Daniel Lapaine	Rob Masala					x		

2005	Goodnight	Gregory Dark	Jed Blaugrand, Joel Simon		World Wrestling			US		
2005	Irresistible	Ann Turner	Tatiana Kennedy, David Parker				x			
2005	I Know How many Runs You Scored Last Summer	Stacey Edmonds, Doug Turner	Stacey Edmonds, Doug Turner				x			
2005	Jindabyne	Ray Lawrence	Catherine Jarman	FFC, April Babcock Brown	Village Roadshow		x			\$5.3M
2005	Kokoda	Alister Grierson	Catriona Hughes, Leesa Kahn	FFC, PFTC	Palace		x			\$3.1M
2005	Last Train to Freo	Jeremy Sims	Sue Taylor, Lisa Duff, Greg Duffy			\$1.2M	x			
2005	Little Fish	Rowan Wood	Richard Keddie, Vincent Sheehan, Liz Watts		Icon		x			\$3.8M
2005	Like Minds	Gregory J Reed	Jonathan Shteinman, Piers Tempest						Aust/UK	
2005	Lost And Found	David Blake	David Blake				x			
2005	M (MacBeth)	Geoffrey Wright	Martin Fabinyi				x			
2005	The Proposition	John Hillcoat	Chris Brown, Chiara Menage, Jackie O'Sullivan, Cat Villiers		Sony				Aust/UK	\$2.1M
2005	Rats And Cats	Tony Rogers	Jason Byrne				x			
2005	The Rival	John Meagher	John Meagher, Margie Wentworth			\$640,000	x			
2005	Salaam Namaste							India		
2005	6000 miles from Hollywood	Billy Milionis	Jeff Bollow, Billy Milionis				x			
2005	Space Travel		Lizzette Atkins, Beth Frey				x			
2005	Suburban Mayhem	Paul Goldman	Leah Churchill-Brown	FTO, FFC	Icon	\$4.2M	x			
2005	Superman Returns	Bryan Singer	Gilbert Adler, Jon Peters		Warner Bros				USA - Fox Studios	
2005	Ten Canoes	Rolf De Heer	Rolf De Heer, Julie Ryan		Palace		x			\$3.2M
2005	Tom Yum Goong							Thailand		
2005	West	Daniel Krige	Matt Reeder, Anne	AFC, Palace Films		\$1.2M	x			

			Robinson							
2005	Wil	Jeremy Weinstein	Don Linke			\$1M	x			
Total 2005							31	6	2	

Appendix 3 – Statistics on Feature Film Production in Australia 1989 – 2005

The following statistics are based on production figures quoted by the Australian Film Commission.

Feature Film Production Overview

1989 - 1990

Number of feature films made in Australia – 40

Number Australian Feature Films - 30

Investment in Australian Feature Films - \$115.58M

Average Australian Production Budget \$3.85M

Number Foreign Films - 6

Number Australian/International Co-production - 4

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 3%

1990 - 1991

Number of feature films made in Australia – 28

Number Australian Feature Films – 23

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$97.52M

Average Australian Production Budget \$4.24M

Number Foreign - 1

Number Australian/International Co-production - 4

Total Gross of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$6.7M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 3%

1991 - 1992

Number of feature films made in Australia – 33

Number Australian Feature Films – 27

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$94.70M

Average Australian Production Budget \$3.51M

Number Foreign - 4

Number Australian/International Co-production - 2

Total Gross Of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$19.1M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 6%

1992 - 1993

Number of feature films made in Australia – 24

Number Australian Feature Films – 20

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$67.83M

Average Australian Production Budget \$3.39M

Number Foreign - 2

Number Australian/International Co-production - 2

Total Gross Of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$29.7M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 9%

1993 – 1994

Number of feature films made in Australia – 30

Number Australian Feature Films – 28

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$183.67M

Average Australian Production Budget \$6.56M

Number Foreign - 2

Number Australian/International Co-production - 0

Total Gross of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$24.7M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 6.4%

1994 - 1995

Number of feature films made in Australia – 17

Number Australian Feature Films – 14

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$51.39M

Average Australian Production Budget \$3.67

Number Foreign - 2

Number Australian/International Co-production - 1

Total Gross Of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$46.6M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 9.8%

1995 - 1996

Number of feature films made in Australia – 29

Number Australian Feature Films – 23

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$111.71M

Average Australian Production Budget \$4.86M

Number Foreign - 3

Number Australian/International Co-production - 3

Total Gross of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$19.8M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 3.9%

1996 - 1997

Number of feature films made in Australia – 33

Number Australian Feature Films – 31

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$143.09M

Average Australian Production Budget \$4.93M

Number Foreign - 2

Number Australian/International Co-production - 0

Total Gross Of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$43.7M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 8.3%

1997 - 1998

Number of feature films made in Australia – 38

Number Australian Feature Films – 34

Investment in Australian Feature Films - \$196.79M

Average Australian Production Budget - \$5.79M

Number Foreign - 3

Number Australian/International Co-production - 1

Total Gross Australian Box Office - \$4.9M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – \$28.4M

Percentage of Gross Box Office Takings Of Australian Films – 28.4%

1998 - 1999

Number of feature films made in Australia – 33

Number Australian Feature Films – 29

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$141.93M

Average Australian Production Budget \$4.89M

Number Foreign - 4

Number Australian/International Co-production - 0

Total Gross of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$25.6M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 4%

1999 - 2000

Number of feature films made in Australia – 29

Number Australian Feature Films – 26

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$150.05M

Average Australian Production Budget \$5.77M

Number Foreign - 2

Number Australian/International Co-production - 1

Total Gross Of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$21.1M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 3%

2000 - 2001

Number of feature films made in Australia – 30

Number Australian Feature Films – 22

Investment in Australian Feature Films - \$91.07M

Average Australian Production Budget - \$4.14M

Number Foreign – 5

Number Australian/International Co-production - 3

Total Gross of Australian Films At Australian Box Office - \$54.2%

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 7.9%

2001 - 2002

Number of feature films made in Australia – 33

Number Australian Feature Films – 24

Investment in Australian Feature Films - \$145.58

Average Australian Production Budget - \$6.07M

Number Foreign – 7

Number Australian/International Co-production - 2

Total Gross Australian Films at Box Office - \$63.4M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 7.8%

2002 - 2003

Number of feature films made in Australia – 24

Number Australian Feature Films – 16

Investment in Australian Feature Films - \$52.76M

Average Australian Production Budget - \$3.30M

Number Foreign – 5

Number Australian/International Co-production - 2

Total Gross Australian Films At Australian Box Office – \$41.8M

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 4.9%

2003 - 2004

Number of feature films made in Australia – 24

Number Australian Feature Films – 16

Investment in Australian Feature Films \$139.75M

Average Australian Production Budget \$8.73M

Number Foreign – 7

Number Australian/International Co-production - 1

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 1%

2004 - 2005

Number of feature films made in Australia – 31

Number Australian Feature Films – 19

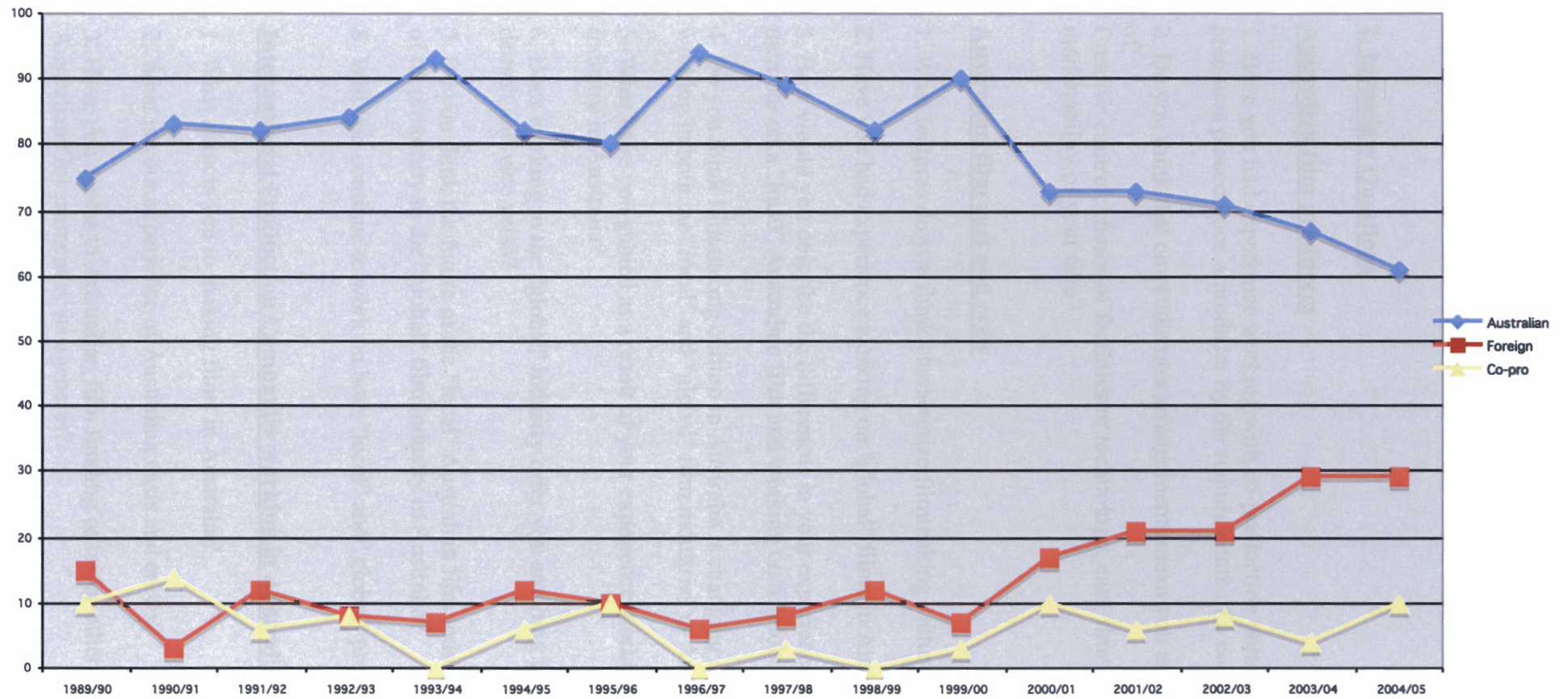
Investment in Australian Feature Films \$61.48M

Average Australian Production Budget - \$3.24M

Number Foreign – 9

Number Australian/International Co-production - 3

Share of total Australian box office of Australian films – 3%



Appendix 4 – Graphical Representation of Statistics on Feature Film Production in Australia 1989 – 2005

Appendix 5 – Participant Questionnaires and Interview Questions.

1. Interview Questions

Australian film producers

1. Have you had experience working with co-production partners. What are the pressures placed upon a producer by the requirements of a co-production partner?
2. Do you think that co-production arrangements mean you are compromised in terms of;
Creative control, choice of facilities or technology, cast, time constraints, the marketability of your film?

Australian film cast and crew

1. What features do you think characterise filmmaking culture in Australia?
2. Have you had experience working on "global" films in Australia?
3. How would you describe the differences in your experience working as a cast/crew member on a "local" Australian film and working on a "global" film in Australia?
4. Do you think filmmaking culture in Australia is changing as a result of cast/crew working in both the "local" and "global" film industries in Australia?
5. What have you gained as a result of your experience working in the "global" film industry in Australia?
6. Does working in the "global" industry offer you anything that the local industry doesn't and vice versa?
7. Do you think the future of the "local" Australian film industry has changed as a result of its proximity to the "global" film industry in Australia?
8. Will you continue to work on both "local" and "global" productions in Australia?

International Production Companies working in Australia

1. What attracts you to making films in Australia?
2. What is your experience of Australian casts and crews?
3. Have you access to Australian film funding or tax or other concessions from the Australian Government or its agencies?
4. Do you intend to continue to make films in Australia?

5. Who do you think are the main rivals to Australia in terms of filming locations?
6. Where have you made films apart from Australia?
7. What do you think that international production companies offer to the Australian film industry?
8. Have you undertaken co-productions with Australian production companies?
9. If so, what elements of the production have been Australian?

Representatives of American Studios operating in Australia

1. What factors have led to your studio commencing operations in Australia?
2. Do you have any commitments to the "local" Australian film industry or local production companies?
3. Have your operations in Australia been successful? From what perspective? Box-office etc. What do you attribute this success/lack of success to?
4. Have your studio operations expanded or scaled down since opening in Australia? If so in what ways.
5. How does your studio production in Australia compare/contrast to that in the United States?
6. What do you see as the future of your studio's production in Australia?
7. Would you classify the productions made in your studios in Australia as "Australian" in any way? If so, why?
8. Under union regulations in Australia, what are your obligations in terms of hiring local cast and crew? Do you think this is adequate? Fair?
9. Does the employment of Australians in your studio have an impact on the film product that is produced in the studio?
10. Do you think it is important for Australia to have a Government funded local film industry as well as a global industry? Why?
11. What do you perceive to be the most notable differences between "local" Australian films and "global" films made in American studios in Australia?
12. Do you think "global" film production in Australia has benefited the Australian film industry? If so, how?

Questionnaire for Australian filmmakers

1. When did you make your last film?

2. What format/genre was the last film you made?

Feature Short Feature Short Film Documentary Experimental

3. Was the film classified as an "Australian" film by the Office of Classifications under 10BA?

Yes No

4. If so, were there any elements that were not Australian?

Yes No

If not, do you think the film would be classified as Australian?

Yes No

Why?

5. Who funded your last film?

AFC FFC State Funding Body Film Australia Broadcaster Other

If other please give detail

6. What was your production budget?

7. Was the film released in Australia theatrically?

Yes No

If so, who was the distributor?

What were the box-office takings?

8. Was the film released theatrically overseas?

Yes No

If so, who was the distributor?

What were the box-office takings?

9. Did you consider the international marketplace when writing the film?

Yes No

Why?

Producing the film?

Yes No

Why?

Distributing the film?

Yes No

Why?

10. Did your investors ask you to justify the film in terms of possible international sales/marketability?

Yes No

If so, at what stage?

Development Production Post-production

11. Do you think international marketability was a factor in your film securing funding?

Yes No

Please elaborate

12. Have you made any alterations to a film treatment/script in order to make it more marketable internationally?

If so, what alteration did you make? Why?

13. Have you been involved in a production with an international co-production partner?

Yes No

If no, go to question 17.

14. Did this relationship alter the creative choices you made? How?

15. Would you have ended up with the same film with only Australian investors?

Yes No

If yes, go to Question 17.

16. What elements of the final product can you attribute to your co-production partners needs?

17. Any other comments on whether or not your filmmaking has changed as a result of pressure by Australian funding bodies/broadcasters to be internationally marketable or an increase in international funding opportunities?

Questionnaire for “Last Train to Freo” Crew

1. How long was the shooting period?
2. Were you required for the whole shooting period?
3. What size was the crew?
4. What was your role?
5. How many people were in your department?
6. Was your work supervised and if so what role did that person take?
7. Was your supervisor Australian?
8. Was the Head of your Department Australian?
9. Were you invited to full production meetings?
10. Were you privy to production information about the production as a whole?
11. Did you have creative input into your work?
12. Did you socialise with crew outside work hours?
13. How many people on the crew were you already familiar with?
14. How many people are you now friends with as a result of working with them on the production?
15. What do you think is unique to Australian film making culture?
16. If you have worked on any international productions or co-productions, how did this experience differ to working on an Australian film?

Questionnaire for Superman Returns Crew

1. How long was the shooting period?
2. Were you required for the whole shooting period?
3. What size was the crew?
4. What was your role?
5. How many people were in your department?
6. Was your work supervised and if so what role did that person take?
7. Was your supervisor Australian?
8. Was the Head of your Department Australian?
9. Were you invited to full production meetings?
10. Were you privy to production information about the production as a whole?
11. Did you have creative input into your work?
12. Did you socialise with crew outside work hours?
13. How many people on the crew were you already familiar with?
14. How many people are you now friends with as a result of working with them on the production?

Appendix 6 – Australian Filmmaker Survey Responses

Respondents (May take more than 1 role)

Producers – 17

Directors – 8

Other Crew – 24

Cast – 5

Post-production houses - 7

Question						
1. When did you make your last film?	2000-2002	2002-2004	2004 -			
			50			
2. What format/genre was the last film you made?	Feature	Doco	Short Drama			
	39	9	2			
3. Was the film classified as Aust?	Yes	No				
	44	6				
4. If so, were there any elements that were not Australian?	Yes	No				
	29 - cast, locations, content, investment	21				
5. Who funded your last film?	AFC	FFC	State Funding Body	Film Australia	Broadcaster	Other
	11	31	32			Private – 12 Off-shore - 8

6. What was your production budget?	>A\$1M	A\$1 M - \$2M	A\$2M - \$5M	<A\$5M		
	9	30		11		
7. Was the film released in Australia theatrically?	Yes	No				
	41	9				
8. Was the film released theatrically overseas	Yes	No				
	29	21				
9. Did you consider the international marketplace when writing the film	Yes	No	N/A (no role in writing process)			
	7	7	36			
10. Did your investors ask you to justify the film in terms of possible international sales/ marketability?	Yes	No	N/A - no role with investors			
	15	0	35			
11. Do you think international marketability was a factor in your film securing funding?	Yes	No				
	49	1				
12. Have you made any alterations to a film treatment/ script in order to make it more	Yes	No				

marketable internationally?						
	23	2	25			
13. Have you been involved in a production with an international co-production partner?	Yes	No	N/A (Not in a producing / directing role)			
	11	6	33			
14. Did this relationship alter the creative choices you made?	Yes	No				
	11	0	39			
15. Would you have ended up with the same film with only Australian investors?	Yes	No				
	0	11	39			
16. What elements of the final product can you attribute to your co-production partners needs?						
	Cast, crew, characters, locations, program length, content.					