



DRAFT ONLY – TO BE RELEASED: WEDNESDAY JULY 31ST

ABC drama *Fallout* (working title) set to unravel Australia's atomic past

Ewen Leslie, Jessica de Gouw, James Cromwell, Ningali Lawford Wolf and Shaka Cook to star in six-part series from *Rake* creator



L-R: Ewen Leslie, Jessica de Gouw, James Cromwell, Ningali Lawford Wolf, Shaka Cook
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ABC and Screen Australia, with Create NSW and the South Australian Film Corporation are pleased to announce that production will soon commence on the exciting new six-part drama series *Fallout* (working title).

Acclaimed Australian actor **Ewen Leslie** (*The Cry*, *Top of The Lake*) will star alongside **Jessica de Gouw** (*Riot*, *Dracula*, *The Hunting*), Academy Award-nominated international actor **James Cromwell** (*LA Confidential*, *The Green Mile*, *Babe*), AACTA Award-nominated actress **Ningali Lawford Wolf** (*Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *Mystery Road*, *Last Cab to Darwin*) and **Shaka Cook** (*Top End Wedding*, *Black Comedy*, *Cleverman*). Inspired by true events, *Fallout* shines a spotlight on a controversial time in Australia's modern history, the 1950s British nuclear testing in outback South Australia.

Written and directed by renowned Australian filmmaker **Peter Duncan** (*Rake*, *Children of the Revolution*) and produced by Porchlight Films' **Vincent Sheehan** (*The Kettering Incident*, *Animal Kingdom*, *Jasper Jones*) and **Tanya Phegan** who also co-created the series with Duncan. The nuclear bomb tests at Maralinga reflect a scandalous and yet unmined part of Australian history.

There is no more lethal cocktail than a combination of blind faith and paranoia. And it seems in 1956, everyone was drinking it. It's the height of the Cold War. The Menzies Government has welcomed British atomic bomb testing at remote, 'uninhabited' Maralinga, in outback South Australia.



Charged with keeping the base functioning smoothly is Major Leo Carmichael (Leslie), an Australian Army Engineer and WWII hero. But testing the most dangerous weapon in the world is no easy task for Leo with a Commanding Officer (Cromwell) who is not fit for purpose; a new meteorologist, Dr Eva Lloyd-George (De Gouw) who starts asking questions; and the Government and press watching his every move. And as it turns out, the land of Maralinga may not be so uninhabited after all, when Leo's faced with the arrival of a family of Indigenous Australians, curious about the giant clouds that explode occasionally...

This is a story of our infinite capacity for betrayal, and no one is immune, not even the betrayers themselves.

ABC's **Sally Riley** says: "The ABC is excited to bring the unique voice of Peter Duncan back to our audiences. His razor wit and satirical retelling of the Maralinga testing will challenge those who know the history, and be unbelievable for those who have little knowledge of what happened on Australian soil. This is a fictional story about true events."

Head of Content at Screen Australia, **Sally Caplan** said: "Delving into a unique chapter of Australia's history, this is an important and compelling Australian drama with local and international appeal. Peter Duncan, Vincent Sheehan and Tanya Phegan are creatives at the top of their game, and we're thrilled to see this trio combining their talents for the first time. I can't wait to see the team bring this exciting thriller to ABC prime-time audiences."

Create NSW Executive Director, Investment & Engagement **Elizabeth W. Scott**, said: "Blending thriller, political satire and biting black comedy with a star-studded cast *Fallout* is set to be one of the most memorable series we'll see on TV next year. Writer/director Peter Duncan and producers Tanya Phegan and Vincent Sheehan will grip audiences at home and internationally with a story that ignites the unthinkable 1950s British nuclear testing in Maralinga, outback South Australia, in a new take on a disturbing historical event."

Amanda Duthie, South Australian Film Corporation's Acting CEO said: "We thank and acknowledge the Maralinga Tjarutja community for welcoming this production into Country. Their collaboration with the creative team will enable a highly distinctive project."

International distributor About Premium Content is coming on board in their first investment into an Australian series.

Fallout (**working title**) will air on the ABC in 2020.

Production credit: *Fallout* is a Porchlight films production for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Major production investment from Screen Australia in association with the ABC and Create NSW. Financed with support from the South Australian Film Corporation and Head Gear Films. International Distributor About Premium Content. Created by Peter Duncan and Tanya Phegan. Written and Directed by Peter Duncan.



Produced by Vincent Sheehan, Tanya Phegan and Peter Duncan. Executive Producers Anita Sheehan, Liz Watts, Phil Hunt and Compton Ross. ABC Executive Producers Sally Riley and Andrew Gregory.

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