



South Australian **Film Corporation**



Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FILM CORPORATION ANNOUNCES GENDER AGENDA**  
**Applications open today for *Placement LA* and *Match Me* programs**

The South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) today announced the SAFC Gender Agenda, a comprehensive new suite of initiatives designed to address the gender imbalance in the industry and drive established and emerging South Australian female practitioners forward into the next phase of their career.

The initiatives, which focus on a number of areas including leadership, mentorship, attachments and workshops, are in response to the data demonstrating that women in the screen industries globally and in Australia are still significantly underrepresented in key creative roles.

SAFC CEO Annabelle Sheehan said “Every state has unique structural issues that it faces in relation to bringing gender equality to the screen industry. We have given a lot of thought to what is relevant to our state and look forward to rolling out these initiatives and welcoming the positive changes that they will make both to the individuals directly involved and the industry as a whole.”

SAFC’s Gender Agenda includes the following programs:

**1. LEADERSHIP AND MENTOR PROGRAM** – Two key initiatives PLACEMENT L.A and MATCH-ME Mentorship Program, open for applications as of today, form the centre of this program which will also include other networking events and seminars ongoing.

**Placement L.A**

An annual professional placement in Los Angeles for established women producers. This year’s placement has been secured with one of the most respected, dynamic and important Producers in the industry, Cassian Elwes (*Dallas Buyer’s Club*, *The Butler*), with the successful applicant to receive \$15,000 from SAFC to support their four-week placement working at his Los Angeles office. The first Placement L.A program will take place starting this November with attendance at The American Film Market Conference (November 2<sup>nd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>) in Santa Monica and candidate must be available to spend all of November in Los Angeles. Applications are due by 14 September 2016 and the successful applicant will be announced on 21 September. More information can be found on SAFC’S website under [Career Accelerator](#).

**MATCH-ME Mentorship Program**

A mentorship program for emerging women filmmakers across all roles in the industry.

The *MATCH-ME* Mentorship Program will provide emerging South Australian women screen practitioners the opportunity to be mentored by some of Australia’s established screen content makers. Over a one year period, practitioners will be connected with an agreed film and television executive or relevant mentor for support as they move through the next phase of their career. The *MATCH-ME* Mentorship Program can be either project or career plan specific.

Deadline for applications is [30th November 2016](#) More information can be found on SAFC’S website under Career Accelerator.

**2. SCREEN SIRENS** - A two day workshop for South Australian women to develop their projects for the Market. (Scheduled for March 2017)

**3. 50% TARGET** - While SAFC data shows 50:50 gender balance for successful applications to its

existing professional development programs, SAFC commits to maintain those levels for all existing and new professional and project development initiatives. This includes Career Accelerator, Travel Grants, SA Writers and Industry Attachments.

**4. FOCUS ON DIRECTING** - In addition to its existing industry attachment scheme SAFC will financially support one dedicated Directing Attachment for women per annum on a South Australian project.

#### **Background to the SAFC's Gender Agenda**

In preparing its approach to supporting gender balance SAFC conducted research across the period 2011 to 2016 regarding the % of women working in key roles on SAFC productions and found it to be similar to the national average or in some cases slightly higher. Female producers are reasonably well represented with 43% of all producers across drama and documentary being female and of Seed Company Development recipient companies having women principals. Drama statistics showed similar levels to the national average with 38% of all Producers, 15% of all directors and 28% of writers being female as compared to 32%, 16% and 23% respectively as per the figures supplied by Screen Australia with regard to the national average.

#### **Cassian Elwes: Biography**

Cassian Elwes began his producing career with 1983's *Oxford Blues* and quickly went on to make another 29 films. In 1994, Elwes joined William Morris and headed William Morris Independent for 15 years. He financed such indie hits as *Slingblade* and *The Apostle*, both of which were nominated for multiple Oscars® and *Monster's Ball*, for which Halle Berry won the Best Actress Oscar®, the first African American woman to do so. He was their expert on independent films having arranged financing and distribution for almost 300 films during his tenure. Since leaving William Morris Independent, Elwes has either produced or executive produced over 50 films including John Hillcoat's *Lawless*, Lee Daniels' *The Paperboy*, David Lowery's *Ain't Them Bodies Saints*, which was nominated for a Gotham Independent Film Award™ for Best Feature, and Lee Daniels' *The Butler*, which featured an all-star cast headed by Forest Whitaker and Oprah Winfrey. He also executive produced J.C. Chandor's *All Is Lost* starring Robert Redford and executive produced and arranged financing for the Oscar®-winning hit *Dallas Buyers Club* directed by Jean-Marc Vallée, starring Matthew McConaughey, Jared Leto, and Jennifer Garner. He produced *Elvis & Nixon* starring Kevin Spacey and Michael Shannon and most recently *Mudbound*, *The Brits are Coming* and *Billionaire Boys Club*.

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