

Hon David Pisoni MP Minister for Innovation and Skills

Friday 6 November 2020

South Australia strikes **GOLD**

The South Australian film industry has scored a major coup with Hollywood superstar Zac Efron signing on for Stan feature film *Gold* to be filmed in South Australia starting this month.

Minister for Innovation and Skills David Pisoni said securing the production of *Gold* in South Australia is fantastic news for the local screen sector, which is continuing to deliver jobs and investment for the State through the coronavirus pandemic.

“The exceptional job South Australia has done suppressing coronavirus is why COVID-safe screen production has begun so quickly, reinvigorating the local screen industry and delivering local jobs,” Minister Pisoni said.

“South Australia became one of the first locations in the world to resume film and television production after COVID delays and the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) has done a wonderful job facilitating a consistent pipeline of production for the State.

“The economic benefits of local screen production extend to the construction, hospitality, transportation and retail sectors.

“The injection of economic activity in regional areas hit by the downturn in tourism from travel restrictions is particularly welcome this side of Christmas.”

Zac Efron (*The Greatest Showman, Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*) will star alongside **Anthony Hayes** (*Animal Kingdom, The Light Between Oceans, War Machine*) and award-winning actress **Susie Porter** (*Ladies In Black, The Second*).

Anthony Hayes will also direct the film which is based on a screenplay he co-wrote with Polly Smyth.

CEO of the South Australian Film Corporation Kate Croser said “South Australia’s talented producers, crews and screen service vendors are embracing the boom in our state’s COVID-safe production, enabling productions to get up and running with very short turnaround. *Gold*’s South Australian Co-Producer Julie Byrne of Triptych Pictures has again demonstrated the capacity and agility of our screen industry to deliver high quality, international-calibre projects.

“We are thrilled to welcome Stan back to South Australia after the recent regional shoot of Christmas comedy *A Sunburnt Christmas*, which will also introduce three young and talented South Australian actors to audiences nationally.

“We are fortunate in South Australia that our world-class Adelaide Studios combine effortlessly with a range of stunning, easily accessed locations, and with our state one of the safest places in the world right now, and one of the first places in the world to resume screen production after COVID delays, we are attracting interest from producers all over Australia and internationally as an attractive location for filming and production.”

South Australia – 2020 Production Snapshot

In July 2020 South Australia became one of the first places in the world to resume screen production after COVID delays with Adelaide's **Closer Productions'** episodic TV series **Aftertaste** for the ABC, starring Erik Thomson and Rachel Griffiths. Shot predominantly in the Adelaide Hills, the comedy was the first to use the SAFC-commissioned Deloitte Risk Advisory Tool, specifically developed to help productions get up and running under COVID-safe guidelines.

Since then filming has also wrapped on Stan Original feature film **A Sunburnt Christmas**, which marks the first South Australian production for the acclaimed and prolific **Every Cloud Productions** (*Miss Fisher* series) in association with producer Lisa Scott's SA company **Highview Productions**. The film, starring Daniel Henshall (*Snowtown*) and Sullivan Stapleton (*Ride Like a Girl*) was directed by Christiaan Van Vuuren (*Bondi Hipsters*, *The Other Guy*).

Currently shooting in South Australia is Joel Edgerton produced thriller **The Unknown Man** from powerhouse production companies **See-Saw Films** (*Lion*, *Tracks*, Oscar Best Picture winner *The King's Speech*), **Anonymous Content** (Golden Globe® nominated *Boy Erased*, Oscar Best Picture winner *Spotlight*) and **Blue-Tongue Films** (*Boy Erased*, *The King*). The film stars Edgerton and Sean Harris (*Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation*, *The King*) and is directed by Thomas M. Wright (*Acute Misfortune*).

About **Gold**

Set against the backdrop of a vast, unique and unforgiving landscape, **Gold** is a taut thriller about greed and the lengths people will go to secure themselves a fortune. When two drifters travelling through the outback stumble across the biggest gold nugget ever found, the dream of immense wealth and greed takes hold. They hatch a plan to protect and excavate their bounty with one man leaving to secure the necessary equipment. The other man remains and must endure the harsh desert climate, preying wolves and intruders, whilst battling the creeping doubt that he has been abandoned to his own fate.

John Schwarz and **Michael Schwarz** will produce through their Deeper Water Films banner (*Killerman*, *Danger Close: The Battle of Long Tan*), alongside **Hayes** for Rogue Star Pictures. Executive producers are **Andrew Mann**, **Peter Touche**, **Simon Williams**, **Paul Wiegard**, **Will Clarke**, **Andy Mayson**, **Nick Forward** and **Mike Runagall**, Consultant Producer is **Shana Levine**.

Anthony Hayes, Star, Co-Writer and Director, said: "This is an exciting, gripping and timely tale about greed, humanity, who we are, what we've done to the world and where we are heading if we aren't careful. To have Zac Efron as my main man on this film is an absolute gift and to see what he is creating already is like nothing we've seen from him before. I can't wait to deliver this bold, visceral and cinematic film to audiences all around the world."

Gold was developed and financed with the assistance of the South Australian Film Corporation.

The film will be released in cinemas through Madman Entertainment with Altitude Films handling worldwide sales of the film. The Stan Original Film **Gold** will premiere on Stan and in cinemas in 2021.