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Fresh from the Film Lab, South Australian sci-fi *Monolith* starts up in Adelaide with star Lily Sullivan

Filming is now underway in Adelaide on *Monolith*, the first feature film to go into production as part of the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) and Adelaide Film Festival's (AFF) Film Lab: New Voices initiative.

Now shooting in the Adelaide Hills, the high-concept science fiction thriller from the South Australian creative team of writer **Lucy Campbell**, director **Matt Vesely** and producer **Bettina Hamilton** is set to have its world premiere at the Adelaide Film Festival in October.

Australian rising talent **Lily Sullivan** (*Mental*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *I Met A Girl*) stars in the thrilling one-hander as a headstrong journalist whose click-baiting investigative podcast uncovers a strange artifact, an alien conspiracy, and the lies at the heart of her own story.

Director Matt Vesely said: "The opportunity to make striking science fiction is one I've worked towards my entire life. I'm so grateful for this opportunity from the SAFC and the Adelaide Film Festival, and am stoked with the team we've put together. There's a real feeling of ownership from the entire cast and crew, and that's a really supportive place to make a first feature.

"Lily Sullivan has an impressive body of work behind her already, and it was obvious to us after our first meeting that she had a lot of passion for the project. We can't wait to work with her at bringing this film to life. The role she plays – the only on-screen role in the whole film – is integral to the film's success and we know that she's going to deliver."

Launched in 2020 by the SAFC and AFF with additional support from Mercury CX and Screen Australia, [Film Lab: New Voices](#) is a low-budget feature film skills development program designed to elevate the next generation of diverse, South Australian filmmaking talent.

As one of three projects selected for the inaugural Film Lab: New Voices program in 2021, *Monolith* was developed from an initial concept through to polished script with experienced industry mentors over an 11-month intensive program, before being greenlit for production in February this year with \$400,000 in funding from the SAFC and AFF.

Arts Minister The Hon. Andrea Michaels MP said: "It is truly exciting to call lights, camera, action on the very first feature film to come out of the SAFC and AFF's innovative Film Lab: New Voices initiative. Not only will *Monolith* secure all-important feature film credits for its talented creative team, it will also have great flow-on benefits by providing local jobs and skilling opportunities for crew and talent. I congratulate the entire creative team and look forward to seeing the premiere at Adelaide Film Festival in October."

SAFC CEO Kate Croser said: “In this year of the SAFC’s 50th anniversary, we are thrilled to continue creating opportunities for a talented new generation of South Australian filmmakers to build on our state’s half-century legacy of incredible screen productions. As the first extraordinary feature film project to come out of the Film Lab: New Voices program, *Monolith* heralds the start of an exciting new wave of diverse South Australian ‘Greenlighters’ - writers, directors and producers with the credits to attract finance – which will elevate South Australian voices and stories on screen, and strengthen the foundations of our sector overall. I congratulate writer Lucy Campbell, director Matt Vesely and producer Bettina Hamilton on their achievement and look forward to seeing the final product on the big screen at the 2022 Adelaide Film Festival.”

Adelaide Film Festival CEO and Creative Director Mat Kesting said: “The Adelaide Film Festival is the home of courageous storytelling and Film Lab: New Voices is emblematic of both that and the Festival’s commitment to supporting bold new filmmaking. We cannot wait to unveil *Monolith* at the Adelaide Film Festival in October and showcase the remarkable talents of director Matt Vesely, writer Lucy Campbell and producer Bettina Hamilton at the film’s Festival premiere. Central to the Adelaide Film Festival program is the enhancement of culture through investment in and providing platform for Australian stories such as *Monolith*.”

Bonsai Films has also come on board as Australian and New Zealand distributor, **with Bonsai Films director Jonathan Page** saying: “*Monolith* is one of the most original scripts I’ve read in ages and I think has the potential to blow people away. I am really excited to see the film on screen, and of course to bring it to audiences.”

Producer Bettina Hamilton said: “The fact we have had such strong market interest already is testament to the strength of the screenplay Lucy Campbell delivered in the Film Lab program and we now hope we do it justice as we head into production. The timeline for Film Lab has always been challenging, but the momentum it provides to keep pushing forward is incredibly motivating and focus-inducing. We thank Bonsai Films for their support of the project – they have recognised from the start what we are trying to achieve and have been thoroughly supportive of our bold approach to genre filmmaking – we couldn’t have asked for a better outcome.”

Monolith is shooting now in the Adelaide Hills and will premiere at the 2022 Adelaide Film Festival (19-30 October, 2022).

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