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South Australian games shine at PAX Australia 2022

South Australian made video games created with the support of the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) have been named among the best in the nation at Australia's biggest gaming expo event, PAX Australia, kicking off today in Melbourne.

SAFC supported games *Box Knight* from Adelaide Studios based company **We Made A Thing Studios** and *Rooftop Renegade* from **Melonhead Games** have been selected among six winners of the PAX Indie Showcase, which highlights the best upcoming independent games across Australia and New Zealand.

Box Knight is an irreverent action RPG roguelike described as "a mix of *The Office* and *Lord of the Rings* with an animated cartoon like aesthetic", while *Rooftop Renegade* is a fast-paced action platformer driven by character Svetlana, a hoverblading outlaw with the ability to portal through time. Development of both games was funded through the SAFC's inaugural Games Innovation Fund in 2019.

Chosen by industry vets from hundreds of entries, the games will be on display to thousands of attendees on the Pax Rising show floor, a space dedicated to independent games from small studios, throughout the conference which runs 7-9 October.

Along with the Indie Showcase winners, more than 10 other SA studios are presenting games at PAX Australia, the majority of which are supported by the SAFC, Department for Trade and Investment (DTI) and Adelaide Economic Development Agency. The list includes **Stellar Advent**, a two-person studio currently working on their second title *Lucie's Portager* for Nintendo Switch and PC, and **Pond Games**, developer of the multi award-winning *RITE*.

This week SAFC also supported four South Australian game developers to attend Games Connect Asia Pacific (GCAP), the largest developer conference in Australia, on 3-5 October in Melbourne. **Tamara Lynch** of **Mini Mammoth Games**, **Katie Abela** of **Stellar Advent**, **Adam Klappers** of **Ortum Games** and early-stage developer **Jamie Appleby** all received all-access tickets to GCAP, along with direct networking assistance.

Minister for The Arts The Hon. Andrea Michaels said "Congratulations to South Australian PAX Indie Showcase winners We Made A Thing Studios and Melonhead Games. SAFC is to be applauded for its continued commitment to supporting this fast-growing industry. To see South Australia represent one third of the winners at the nation's largest gaming expo event is testament to the creativity and ingenuity of our South Australian game developers."

SAFC CEO Kate Croser said "The SAFC is committed to supporting South Australia's thriving game development sector as a part of our overall support for the state's screen industry – from our Games Innovation Fund launched in 2019, to our nation-leading SA Video Game Development (VGD) Rebate launched in 2020.

"It is so exciting to see two video games developed with support from the very first round of the SAFC's inaugural Games Innovation Fund - *Box Knight* and *Rooftop Renegade* - go on to

achieve such national success, with other SAFC supported games and studios also receiving national attention.

“The SAFC’s commitment to growing and supporting the games sector has seen the creation of a new specialist role and we are thrilled to have this year appointed Patrick Webb as Game Development Executive. Patrick brings his experience in the industry to help the SAFC shape how we can support the sector.”

SAFC Game Development Executive Patrick Webb said: “The SAFC is proud to have supported these world-class games studios through the Games Innovation Fund and the Export Market Travel Fund, and it’s great to see the local industry thriving both in Australia and on the world stage as we recently saw at GamesCom in Germany. We now look forward to seeing all the South Australian studios show their amazing games at PAX this year.”

Melonhead Games co-founder George Martin said: “Funding provided from the SAFC created so many opportunities for us. Along with assisting in our development budget, receiving this funding enabled us to have conversations with Epic Games, Xbox, Playstation and Nintendo.”

Other South Australian video game successes that have been supported by the SAFC include:

- *Exo One* from developer **Jay Weston**, which received development funding through the SAFC’s Games Innovation Fund in 2019 and has since been released to critical acclaim on PC and Xbox One/X/S and is soon to release on Playstation 4/5;
- *Horse Riding Tales*, *Wolf Tales* and *Virtual Sim Story* from **Foxie Games**, all supported through the SA VGD Rebate, which have been downloaded by more than 30 million players worldwide;
- Mystery crime-solving game *TimeSavers* (formerly titled *Pre-Crime*) from **Monomyth Games** which was developed through the SAFC’s Games Innovation Fund in 2020 and this year was selected for further funding by Screen Australia.

Box Knight is created by We Made a Thing studios, which has a long history of working with the SAFC across various screen projects, including their 2019 web series *Lucy & DiC*. Earlier this year WeMat producer Tom Phillips was selected to participate in the SAFC and Adelaide Film Festival’s 2022 Film Lab: New Voices program.

Melonhead Games’ *Rooftop Renegade* has seen success through Epic Games’ prestigious global Megagrants program, as well as through the SAFC’s Games Innovation Fund. The team’s producer and game designer Patrick Webb joined the SAFC in July as Game Development Executive.

Find out more about how the SAFC supports South Australia’s games industry at safilm.com.au/games

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