

MEDIA RELEASE: Friday 14 April, 2023

Warwick Thornton's *The New Boy* selected for Cannes

South Australia's screen industry is set to shine on the international stage once again with Warwick Thornton's new feature film *The New Boy* officially selected for the 2023 Cannes Film Festival.

The South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) supported film, which was shot in regional South Australia, was announced last night for the festival's *Un Certain Regard* program.

Written and directed by Warwick Thornton, the film is produced by Kath Shelper for Scarlett Pictures, Cate Blanchett, Andrew Upton and co-producer Georgie Pym for Dirty Films, and Lorenzo De Maio (of De Maio Entertainment), with Coco Francini serving as executive producer for Dirty Films alongside Gretel Packer for Longbridge Nominees.

Set in 1940s Australia, *The New Boy* is the story of a nine-year-old Aboriginal orphan boy (newcomer Aswan Reid) who arrives in the dead of night at a remote monastery, run by a renegade nun (Cate Blanchett), where his presence disturbs the delicately balanced world in this story of spiritual struggle and the cost of survival. The film also stars Deborah Mailman and Wayne Blair, alongside an ensemble of new faces including Shane Brady, Tyrique Brady, Laiken Woolmington, Kailem Miller, Kyle Miller, Tyzailin Roderick and Tyler Spencer.

The selection marks a return to Cannes for Warwick Thornton, who won the Caméra d'Or (Golden Camera) for best first feature in 2009 for his acclaimed debut *Samson & Delilah*, which premiered in *Un Certain Regard*, a program dedicated to celebrating bold and innovative cinematic voices.

The prestigious festival honour continues an impressive year for South Australian made and SAFC supported films at international festivals with *The Survival of Kindness* and *Limbo* premiering in Competition at the Berlinale – Berlin International Film Festival in February as the first Australian films in Competition since 2006, alongside *Talk to Me*, and short film *Marungka Tjalatjunu/Dipped in Black* which won the Teddy Award. *Talk to Me* and *Run Rabbit Run* were selected for the Sundance Film Festival (19-29 January, Utah, US); and *Monolith* and *Talk to Me* were selected for South by Southwest – SXSW (10-19 March, Austin, US).

The New Boy is the second South Australian made film to be selected for Cannes in as many years, after See-Saw Films' *The Stranger* starring Joel Edgerton and Sean Harris received standing ovations in the festival's *Un Certain Regard* program in 2022.

Arts Minister Andrea Michaels said: "Congratulations to Warwick Thornton, Cate Blanchett, Andrew Upton, Kath Shelper and the entire cast and crew on the success of *The New Boy*. It is wonderful to see so many South Australian made films continue to receive such prestigious international recognition, which not only highlights the talent within our local industry but showcases our great state to audiences around the globe."

SAFC CEO Kate Croser said: “We are thrilled to see such significant international recognition for *The New Boy*, the latest South Australian made production to come from our state’s long and fruitful relationship with filmmakers Warwick Thornton, Kath Shelper of Scarlett Pictures and Cate Blanchett and Andrew Upton of Dirty Films. Congratulations to the entire creative team, cast and crew on this prestigious honour.”

The New Boy has major production investment from Screen Australia’s First Nations Department in association with Screen NSW and the SAFC. Roadshow Films is handling distribution in Australia and New Zealand.

Cannes Film Festival runs 16-27 May, 2023.

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