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## ABC AND SCREEN AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCE NEW DRAMA SERIES LES NORTON STARRING REBEL WILSON

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Screen Australia have today announced production funding for a new 10-part drama series **Les Norton**, based on the best-selling novels by Robert G. Barrett. The series is a Roadshow Rough Diamond production with Sonar Entertainment handling international distribution.

Set in 1985, the series will follow the exploits of Les Norton, a country bloke from outback Queensland. On the run from a troubled past, he blows into Sydney where he lands a job as a bouncer at a notorious illegal casino in Kings Cross. A classic fish out of water who's desperate to get home, he soon finds himself seduced by the city's illicit charms and dragged into a web of underground criminality.

International comedy star Rebel Wilson (*Isn't It Romantic*, *Pitch Perfect*, *Bridesmaids*) and audience and critic favourite David Wenham (*Romper Stomper*, *Wake in Fright*, *Top of the Lake*) headline an exciting cast who'll bring 1980s Kings Cross to life, with the series' eponymous hero to be played by up-and-coming actor Alexander Bertrand (*Australian Gangster*, *Hyde & Seek*).

**Les Norton** will be directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse (*The Dressmaker*, *Proof*), Fadia Abboud (*Australian Gangster*), David Caesar (*Dead Lucky*, *Underbelly*) and Morgan O'Neill (*Drift*, *Solo*). It has been created for television by Morgan O'Neill, working alongside writers Christopher Lee (*Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo*), Samantha Winston (*Wentworth*), Shanti Gudgeon (*Wolf Creek*), Malcolm Knox (*Romper Stomper*), and Jessica Tuckwell.

It will be produced by Daniel Edwards and John Edwards from production company Roadshow Rough Diamond, who produced 2017 drama series *Romper Stomper* and the upcoming series *Australian Gangster*. ABC Head of Drama, Comedy & Indigenous Sally Riley will work as Executive Producer with Andrew Gregory; Deeper Water Films' John Schwarz and Michael Schwarz; and John Singleton and Jack Singleton.

"Les and his reprobate mates are caught up in a Sydney that was at its most debauched in the '80s, and the show's blackly hilarious as a consequence," John Edwards said.

ABC's Sally Riley says: "We are over the moon that **Les Norton** has lured such a stellar cast and creative team to bring the novels to life. **Les Norton** is shaping up to be an enviable addition to the ABC's 2019 drama slate".



Head of Content at Screen Australia, Sally Caplan said: “Les Norton is an affable character that has proven popular with audiences in the best-selling book series. What excites me about this TV adaptation is that the creative team have included a slew of new female roles to go head on with the male characters established in the books.”

Create NSW Acting Director of Screen Investment, Engagement & Attraction Sally Regan said, “This adaptation of Robert G. Barrett’s classic Aussie larrikin character will undoubtedly bring a smile to a wide audience across the country. Backed by a strong production team, Robert’s popular books are perfect for screen adaptation and we look forward to seeing Les’ ‘fish out of water’ escapades unfold.”

***Les Norton* is a Roadshow Rough Diamond production for the ABC. Major production investment from Screen Australia and the ABC, in association with Create NSW. International sales by Sonar Entertainment Distribution.**

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