

RELEASED: Wednesday May 3, 2017

Short form drama series *DEADLOCK* to bring Northern Rivers into the spotlight

ABC and Screen Australia are excited to announce that production of **DEADLOCK**, a high-octane web series set in and around Byron Bay, will begin on the north coast of NSW in July.

DEADLOCK crashes through the incredible highs, heartbreak, camaraderie, laughs and bittersweet sorrow of what it is to be a teenager. When a mysterious car crash exposes the dark underbelly of an idyllic paradise, it dramatically changes the lives of the teens it touches.

An original concept by Deb Cox for Every Cloud Productions, and developed with Billie Pleffer, the series is produced by Belinda Mravicic, Fiona Eagger and Deb Cox for Every Cloud Productions (*Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Newton's Law*, *The Gods of Wheat Street*). *DEADLOCK* will be directed by Billie Pleffer, mentored by Tony Tilse (*Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Underbelly*).

Development of the series involved local youth sharing their experiences with the series writers and producers in a workshop hosted by Northern Rivers Screenworks, and held in collaboration with Bryan Elsley (co-creator and co-writer of the edgy UK youth drama series *Skins*, and, more recently, *Dates* and *Kiss Me First*). The workshop was funded by Screen Australia through their Enterprise Stories program and their Story Development programs.

DEADLOCK will use local cast and crew from the Northern Rivers region wherever possible. Further casting announcements to come.

Sally Riley, ABC Head of Scripted Production, said: "*DEADLOCK* will reflect the candour and vibrancy of youth culture and the complex issues faced by teenagers in Australia with humour, courage and energy. While unique in its regional Australian setting, *DEADLOCK* is also about the universal experience of youth struggling for identity and self-discovery."

"We have been confident *DEADLOCK* would be a teen drama that captured an authentic, youthful voice ever since its early development - when we supported *Skins* creator Bryan Elsley to lead a story workshop. This ABC commission only reinforces writer/director Billie Pleffer's reputation as a hugely promising talent and provides Every Cloud Productions - who have a reputation for premium drama - the chance to produce a short-form, digital content series in regional NSW," said Sally Caplan, Head of Production at Screen Australia.

Every Cloud's Deb Cox and Fiona Eagger said: "*DEADLOCK* has been a passion project of ours for a while now - helped along by Story Enterprise funding from Screen Australia which enabled us to bring out Bryan Elsley to Australia. We're so thrilled to be producing this youth focused project with young creatives, including the talented writer/director Billie Pleffer, in the regional area that gave rise to the concept."

An Every Cloud Production, *DEADLOCK* is presented by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Screen Australia, in association with Film Victoria and Screen NSW. Developed with the assistance of the Screen Australia, Film Victoria and Northern Rivers Screenworks. All3Media International will handle international sales.

DEADLOCK is a 5 x 12-minute web series which will screen on ABC iview later this year. A one-hour format of the show will also be produced.

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