

12 June 2020

Department of Infrastructure, Transport
Regional Development and Communications

To Whom It May Concern,

Submission: Supporting Australian stories on our screens—options paper

I am writing this submission as an individual and as a professional actor in support of model 3 presented in the Screen Australia and the Australian Communications and Media Authority options paper.

As a stage actor in the Australian industry I am at the very end of the screen industry food-chain. Most stage actors have few screen acting opportunities and those I have participated in were all Australian producers creating Australian content. My career to date has benefited and will benefit further with the opportunities provided by home grown productions. Page 8 of the options paper notes the increased appetite for screen content consumed via streaming services and I support Australian content obligations on subscription video-on-demand services in addition to free-to-air television broadcasters.

I note consultation questions 11 to 17 and feel my experience equips me to respond to question 11 only:

Should scripted Australian content be limited to Australian drama, documentary and children's content, and are revisions to those terms necessary? Should it be limited to 'new' content, however defined?

I do not believe revision of those terms is necessary but strongly believe an over promotion of 'new' work leads to a misguided view of the industry. Story theory as created by the Royal Court Theatre in London reveals there really is nothing new under the sun. The production of immature screen work has damaged Australian script development. Adaptation and appropriation are essential to the creativity process and work and artists who have emerged need more support in order to mature our output especially for Australian stories on screen.

Finally and in summary, I support significant content obligations in order to:

1. Support, develop and mature the telling of Australian stories. Many scripts for screen are poorly written so **more** work and support is required
2. Fight the residue of cultural cringe and the idea of imported work being better or more worthy (noting of course the cost implications do make imports far more financially attractive)
3. Benefit every part of the industry right down to the humble stage actor vying for a simple 50-worder part.

Should you wish me to expand on any of the points I have made I can be contacted via lexi@sekulesconsulting.com. I am happy for this submission to be made public.

Yours Sincerely,



Lexi Sekules

Lexi graduated from London's Royal Central School of Speech and Drama from their Bachelor of Acting program with first class honours. During her three years training she learnt acting craft and technique from some of the UK's top tutors. Her career highlight was performing at the Globe as 'Lady Anne' in Richard III for the 2013 Wanamaker Festival.

Lexi also performed in Appetite with Miriam Margoyles, Tamsin Greig, Jemma Redgrave and Jason Isaacs. Her Shakespeare credits include 'Julia' in Two Gentlemen of Verona, 'Imogen' in Cymbeline, 'Titania' in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and 'Kent' in King Lear. In London Lexi also performed as 'Clytemnestra' in the Oresteia, 'Florina' in Mad Forest, 'Imogen' in The Lightning Play, 'Darlene' in Balm in Gilead and in her own show about Marilyn Monroe, a version of which returned to Canberra.

Her Australian performances include 'Press Gallery Journalist' in episode 6 of the ABC series Total Control, narrator for Kerry McGinnis' novel The Roadhouse, 'Viola' in Twelfth Night, Prime Minister's Chief of Staff in Secret City: Under the Eagle, 'Marianne' in Constellations, 'Beatrice' in Much Ado About Nothing, 'Miss Cannon' in series 5 of Rake and as Dame Enid Lyons in the re-enactment of her maiden speech.

Most recently Lexi joined the Sport for Jove company to appear as 'Lady Capulet' in Romeo and Juliet directed by Damien Ryan and 'Malvolia' in Twelfth Night directed by Christopher Stollery.

Lexi is Co-Producer and Co-Artistic Director of the free Shakespeare by the Lakes season. Lexi also submitted a proposal for an Australian National Theatre to the Federal Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories' inquiry into Canberra's national institutions and is a keen lobbyist for arts policy.