

# A Companion to Australian Cinema

## *Wiley Blackwell Companions to National Cinemas*

*The Wiley Blackwell Companions to National Cinemas* showcase the rich film heritages of various countries across the globe. Each volume sets the agenda for what is now known as world cinema whilst challenging Hollywood's lock on the popular and scholarly imagination. Whether exploring Spanish, German or Chinese film, or the broader traditions of Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, Australia, and Latin America the 20–25 newly commissioned essays comprising each volume include coverage of the dominant themes of canonical, controversial, and contemporary films; stars, directors, and writers; key influences; reception; and historiography and scholarship. Written in a sophisticated and authoritative style by leading experts they will appeal to an international audience of scholars, students, and general readers.

### **Published:**

*A Companion to Australian Cinema*, edited by Felicity Collins, Jane Landman, and Susan Bye

*A Companion to African Cinema*, edited by Kenneth W. Harrow and Carmela Garritano

*A Companion to Italian Cinema*, edited by Frank Burke

*A Companion to Latin American Cinema*, edited by Maria M. Delgado, Stephen M. Hart, and Randal Johnson

*A Companion to Russian Cinema*, edited by Birgit Beumers

*A Companion to Nordic Cinema*, edited by Mette Hjort and Ursula Lindqvist

*A Companion to Hong Kong Cinema*, edited by Esther M. K. Cheung, Gina Marchetti, and Esther C.M. Yau

*A Companion to Contemporary French Cinema*, edited by Alistair Fox, Michel Marie, Raphaëlle Moine, and Hilary Radner

*A Companion to Spanish Cinema*, edited by Jo Labanyi and Tatjana Pavlović

*A Companion to Chinese Cinema*, edited by Yingjin Zhang

*A Companion to East European Cinemas*, edited by Anikó Imre

*A Companion to German Cinema*, edited by Terri Ginsberg & Andrea Mensch

### **Forthcoming:**

*A Companion to British and Irish Cinema*, edited by John Hill

*A Companion to Korean Cinema*, edited by Jihoon Kim and Seung-hoon Jeong

*A Companion to Indian Cinema*, edited by Neepa Majumdar and Ranjani Mazumdar

*A Companion to Japanese Cinema*, edited by David Desser

# A Companion to Australian Cinema

Edited by

Felicity Collins, Jane Landman,  
and Susan Bye

**WILEY** Blackwell

This edition first published 2019

© 2019 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by law. Advice on how to obtain permission to reuse material from this title is available at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

The right of Felicity Collins, Jane Landman, and Susan Bye to be identified as the authors of the editorial material in this work has been asserted in accordance with law.

*Registered Office*

John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, USA

*Editorial Office*

The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, customer services, and more information about Wiley products visit us at [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com).

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some content that appears in standard print versions of this book may not be available in other formats.

*Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty*

While the publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this work, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales representatives, written sales materials or promotional statements for this work. The fact that an organization, website, or product is referred to in this work as a citation and/or potential source of further information does not mean that the publisher and authors endorse the information or services the organization, website, or product may provide or recommendations it may make. This work is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering professional services. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for your situation. You should consult with a specialist where appropriate. Further, readers should be aware that websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read. Neither the publisher nor authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages.

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Collins, Felicity, editor. | Landman, Jane, editor. | Bye, Susan, 1960– editor.

Title: A companion to Australian cinema / edited by Felicity Collins, Jane Landman, Susan Bye.

Description: Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2019. | Series: Wiley Blackwell companions to national cinemas | Includes bibliographical references and index. |

Identifiers: LCCN 2018046967 (print) | LCCN 2018050695 (ebook) | ISBN 9781118942543 (Adobe PDF) |

ISBN 9781118942550 (ePub) | ISBN 9781118942529 (hardcover)

Subjects: LCSH: Motion pictures—Australia—History and criticism.

Classification: LCC PN1993.5.A83 (ebook) | LCC PN1993.5.A83 .C66 2019 (print) | DDC 791.430994—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018046967>

Cover Design: Wiley

Cover Image: © Photograph of world's oldest garden cinema, Sun Pictures in Broome, reproduced here with permission of Felicity Collins and Jane Stadler.

Set in 11/13pt Dante by SPi Global, Pondicherry, India

# Contents

About the Editors	viii
Notes on Contributors	x
Foreword	xvi
<i>Tom O'Regan</i>	
Acknowledgments	xxiii
Introduction: Australian Cinema Now	1
<i>Felicity Collins, Jane Landman, and Susan Bye</i>	
<b>Part I An Indigenous Screen Culture</b>	<b>29</b>
1 You Are Here: Living Maps of Deep Time, Clock Time	31
<i>Felicity Collins</i>	
2 <i>Charlie's Country</i> , Gulpilil's Body	54
<i>Corinn Columpar</i>	
3 Ivan Sen's Cinematic Imaginary: Restraint, Complexity, and a Politics of Place	68
<i>Anne Rutherford</i>	
4 Shadowing and Disruptive Temporality in Bangarra Dance Theatre's <i>Spear</i>	89
<i>Felicity Ford</i>	
5 Beyond the Wonderland of Whiteness: The Blak Wave of Indigenous Women Shaping Race on Screen	107
<i>Odette Kelada and Maddee Clark</i>	
<b>Part II An International Cinema</b>	<b>131</b>
6 Another Green World: The <i>Mad Max</i> Series	133
<i>Constantine Verevis</i>	

7	Is Everything Awesome?: <i>The LEGO Movie</i> and the Australian Film Industry <i>Ben Goldsmith</i>	149
8	Jane Campion: Girlshine and the International Auteur <i>Lisa French</i>	165
9	Constructing Persona: Mediatisation, Performativity, Quality, and Branding in Australian Film Actors' Migration to Hollywood <i>P. David Marshall</i>	184
<b>Part III A Minor Transnational Imaginary</b>		<b>205</b>
10	Interpreting Anzac and Gallipoli through a Century of Anglophone Screen Representations <i>James Bennett</i>	207
11	Unsettling the Suburban: Space, Sentiment, and Migration in National Cinematic Imaginaries <i>Helen Grace</i>	228
12	<i>The Rocket</i> : Small, Foreign-Language Cinema <i>Olivia Khoo</i>	248
13	<i>Serangoon Road</i> : The Convergent Culture of Minor Transnationalism <i>Audrey Yue</i>	262
<b>Part IV An Auteur-Genre-Landscape Cinema</b>		<b>285</b>
14	An Independent Spirit: Robert Connolly as Auteur-Producer <i>Susan Bye</i>	287
15	Disruptive Daughters: The Heroine's Journey in Four Films <i>Diana Sandars</i>	313
16	<i>Atopian</i> Landscapes: Gothic Tropes in Australian Cinema <i>Jane Stadler</i>	336
17	Spirits Do Come Back: Bunyips and the European Gothic in <i>The Babadook</i> <i>Stephen Gaunson</i>	355
<b>Part V A Televisual Industry</b>		<b>371</b>
18	Between Public and Private: How Screen Australia, the ABC and SBS have shaped Film and Television Convergence <i>Amanda Malel Trevisanut</i>	373
19	Quality vs Value: The Case of <i>The Kettering Incident</i> <i>Sue Turnbull and Marion McCutcheon</i>	391

20	The Evolution of Matchbox Pictures: A New Business Model <i>Helen Goritsas and Ana Tiwary</i>	416
21	Schapellevision: Screen Aesthetics and Asian Drug Stories <i>Anthony Lambert</i>	442
	<b>Part VI A Multiplatform Ecology</b>	<b>461</b>
22	CHURN: Cinema Made Sometime Last Night <i>Ross Gibson</i>	463
23	Over the Horizon: YouTube Culture Meets Australian Screen Culture <i>Stuart Cunningham and Adam Swift</i>	472
24	Digital Transmedia Forms and Transnational Documentary Networks <i>Deane Williams</i>	493
25	Ecological Relations: <i>FalconCam</i> in Conversation with <i>The Back of Beyond</i> <i>Belinda Smail</i>	508
26	Where Am I?: The Terror of Terra Nullius <i>Norie Neumark</i>	525
	Index	537

# About the Editors

**Felicity Collins** has a PhD and is a Reader/ Associate Professor in the Department of Creative Arts and English, La Trobe University. In the 1980s she was commissioned by *Filmnews* to research articles on the origin, history and impact of the Australian Film Institute and the Australian Film and Television School. Her doctoral research in the 1990s drew on the archives of the Women's Film Fund at the Australian Film Commission, and oral history interviews with members of the Sydney Women's Film Group and Feminist Film Workers. This early work gave rise to an abiding interest in how screen cultures mediate identity, memory and history. She has written on women, cinema and modernity in *The Films of Gillian Armstrong* (ATOM/ AFI, 1999), and on settler-colonial memory and historical backtracking in *Australian Cinema After Mabo* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). She has co-edited themed journal issues, including 'Decolonizing Screens', *Studies in Australasian Cinema* 7(2–3), and 'Rethinking Witnessing Across History, Culture and Time', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 31(5). She has published a series of articles and chapters on the films of the Blak Wave and the politics of reconciliation, most recently in *Critical Arts* 31(5), *The Routledge Companion to Cinema and Politics* (Tzoumakis and Molloy, eds, 2016) and *Contemporary Publics* (Marshall, et al, eds, 2016). She was Chief Investigator on the ARC Discovery Project 'Screen Comedy and the National' with Sue Turnbull and Susan Bye. Current collaborations include a recognition app, *Where Do You Think You Are?* and *Looking Again*, with Hester Joyce and La Trobe's Centre for the Study of the Inland.

**Jane Landman** has a PhD and was a Senior Lecturer at Victoria University, Melbourne, teaching and coordinating programs in media and communication. She took retirement during the early stages of preparation of this book and now focuses on her garden in Victoria's goldfields district. She is the author of *The Tread of a White Man's Foot: Australian Pacific Colonialism and the Cinema 1925–1962* (Pandanus Books, ANU, 2006), an historical reception and textual study of 'resource adventures' set in Australian colonial territories. She has published in various



journals and edited books including *Studies in Australasian Cinema* (also guest editor), *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, and the *Journal of Pacific History* (also guest editor). She served on the Editorial Board of *The Moving Image*. The principal thread in Landman's research is Australian film history, and the role of the cinema in the process and cultures of colonialism and decolonisation, with focus on intersections between political change and historical practices of public relations. This includes the filmic reporting and promotion of late colonial policy on Papua and New Guinea in productions made by the Commonwealth Film Unit. Landman's other research thread concerns contemporary television formats, such as daytime chat shows, feminist comedy, serial SF television, and quality TV series set in the Torres Strait.

**Susan Bye** has a PhD and is an Education Programmer at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) in Melbourne. She is involved in building education programs for schools and teachers that foster creative and critical engagement with the moving image. In her role as programmer she has sustained a focus on extending student knowledge of Australian films and animation as well as supporting senior students studying English and Media. In consultation with ACMI curators, she has offered Education and Public Programs in relation to a wide range of exhibitions including *Hollywood Costume*, *David Bowie is* and *Scorsese*. At ACMI she has participated in the Melbourne Writers Festival (2012–2017), Screen Futures (2016) and the Arts Learning Festival (2017). An associate of La Trobe University, she completed a PhD (2004) focusing on the introduction of television into Australia and received a post-doctoral fellowship (2006–2009) to work with Felicity Collins and Sue Turnbull on an Australian Research Council Discovery Project on Australian Screen Comedy. As part of this project she convened an international conference and symposium, and published a number of articles focusing on Australian television comedy. She was the Reviews Editor for *Media International Australia* (2008–2014) and is now an editorial adviser. She has published widely in the field of film, television, media history and screen education and has co-edited special theme issues of *Media International Australia* (on Light Entertainment) and *Continuum* (on Television and the National). She has co-convened international conferences in the area of Screen Studies and was a keynote speaker at the Australian Association for Teaching English Conference in 2017.

# Notes on Contributors

**James Bennett** is Senior Lecturer in History at University of Newcastle, Australia. He is co-editor of *Making Film and Television Histories: Australia and New Zealand* (2011) and co-editor of the anthology *Radical Newcastle* (2015). His research interests include history through film and television, gender and sexuality, the labour movement, Australian and New Zealand history, transnational histories, and the First World War. He has had several articles published on screen representations of war in the *Journal of New Zealand Studies* (2012), *Continuum* (2014), and the *Journal of Australian Studies* (2014).

**Susan Bye** is a member of the Education Team at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image and an Associate of La Trobe University. She has published extensively in the area of Australian Screen Comedy and Australian Media History.

**Maddee Clark** is a Yugambah PhD student at the University of Melbourne, and a curator and freelance writer. She is one of the 2018 editors of *Un Magazine*, and writes on Indigenous Futurism and queer politics.

**Felicity Collins** is Reader/Associate Professor in Screen Studies in the Department of Creative Arts at La Trobe University. She is the author of *Australian Cinema after Mabo* with Therese Davis, and *The Films of Gillian Armstrong*. She has published widely on Australian screen culture, its institutions, feminist interventions, and popular genres. Her research on the Blak Wave of film and television production is informed by memory and trauma studies, and contributes to debates on decolonising ethics and aesthetics, as well as agonistic and transitional modes of reconciliation.

**Corinn Columpar** is Director of the Cinema Studies Institute and Associate Professor of Cinema Studies at University of Toronto. She is author of *Unsettling Sights: The Fourth World on Film* (2010), a monograph about the construction

of Aboriginality in contemporary cinema, and co-editor, with Sophie Mayer, of *There She Goes: Feminist Filmmaking and Beyond* (2009), an anthology dedicated to the flows and exchanges that characterise feminist cultural production. She has published in numerous anthologies and journals, including *Camera Obscura*, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, *Women Studies Quarterly*, and *Refractory*.

**Stuart Cunningham** AM is Distinguished Professor of Media and Communications, Queensland University of Technology. Publications include *Digital Disruption: Cinema Moves Online* (with Dina Iordanova, 2012), *Key Concepts in Creative Industries* (with John Hartley, Jason Potts, Terry Flew, John Banks and Michael Keane, 2013), *Hidden Innovation: Policy, Industry and the Creative Sector* (2013), *Screen Distribution and the New King Kongs of the Online World* (with Jon Silver, 2013), *The Media and Communications in Australia* (with Sue Turnbull, 2014) and *Media Economics* (with Terry Flew and Adam Swift, 2015).

**Felicity Ford** is a PhD candidate in Screen and Cultural Studies in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne where she tutors in gender, media and film studies. Her research is primarily concerned with disruptions to cinematic form in relation to sound, movement, vision and time. She is interested in how contemporary film intersects with narratives of guilt, consent, trauma, criminality and sexuality. Her work has been published in *Film Philosophy*, *Screen Education*, *Metro* and *Senses of Cinema*. She is the Secretary for the Melbourne Cinematheque and a Project Co-ordinator for the Graduate Researcher Network at the Graduate Student Association.

**Lisa French** is Dean, Media and Communication and Professor in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University. She is the co-author of *Shining a Light: 50 Years of the Australian Film Institute* (2009), and editor of the anthology *Womenvision: Women and the Moving Image in Australia* (2003). Her professional history includes directing the St Kilda Film Festival, and nine years as a non-executive director of the Australian Film Institute. Recently, she has worked with six industry partners on the status and representation of women in Victoria's film and television industries, including digital media and games.

**Stephen Gaunson** is Head of Cinema Studies in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University. His research explores the subject of adaptation on the screen. He is the author of *The Ned Kelly Films: A Cultural History of Kelly History* (Intellect, 2013) and is working on his next book, which will examine the distribution and exhibition of adaptation films in the global market.

**Ross Gibson** is Centenary Professor in Creative and Cultural Research at the University of Canberra. Recent works include the books *The Summer Exercises* and *26 Views of the Starburst World*, both published by UWAP.

**Ben Goldsmith** is an Independent Scholar with expertise in film, television, media policy, creative labour and creative industries. He has held academic positions at University of the Sunshine Coast, University of Technology, Queensland and Swinburne University of Technology. His publications include the co-edited *Directory of World Cinema: Australia and New Zealand* (2015), *Creative Work Beyond the Creative Industries* (2014), and the co-authored book, *Rating the Audience: The Business of Media* (2011).

**Helen Goritsas** is Senior Lecturer in Film Studies and Coordinator of Bachelor of Interactive Media at Academy of Information Technology in Sydney. She served as President of Women in Film and Television NSW, and Director of the Greek Film Festival. She has judged the 16th–20th WOW Film Festival and Tour, the 48 Hour Film Project, Dendy Awards, Sydney Film Festival, the Kidz Flicks International Film Festival, and the IPAF ATOM awards. She contributed an installation to VIVID, Sydney, <http://www.vividsydney.com/event/light/lightwell> and co-produced the feature film *Alex & Eve* (2015).

**Helen Grace** is a new media artist, filmmaker, writer and academic. She is the author of *Culture, Aesthetics and Affect in Ubiquitous Media: The Prosaic Image*, and Founding Director of the MA in Visual Culture Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is associate in Gender and Cultural Studies and research affiliate of Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney; a co-investigator on public space transformation in Hong Kong, and a member of the Film Advisory Board of Sydney International Film Festival, focusing on Asian and independent cinema.

**Odette Kelada** teaches in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne. She publishes in the area of race, whiteness and gender studies. Key interests include the constructions of nation, body and identity in creative representations and the teaching of racial literacy. Publications include *Drawing Sybylla: The Real and Imagined Lives of Australia's Women Writers*, 'The Stolen River: Possession and Race Representation in Grenville's Colonial Narrative' (*JASAL*), 'Is the Personal Still Political?' (*Australian Cultural History Journal*) and 'White Blindness: A National Emergency?' (*ACRAWSA Journal*).

**Olivia Khoo** is a Associate Professor in Film and Screen Studies at Monash University. She is the author of *The Chinese Exotic: Modern Diasporic Femininity* (Hong Kong University Press, 2007) and co-author (with Belinda Smaill and Audrey Yue) of *Transnational Australian Cinema: Ethics in the Asian Diasporas* (Lexington, 2013). She is co-editor (with Sean Metzger) of *Futures of Chinese Cinema: Technologies and Temporalities in Chinese Screen Cultures* (Intellect, 2009) and (with Audrey Yue) of *Sinophone Cinemas* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

**Anthony Lambert** teaches in the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University. He researches and has published widely in the areas of Australian film and Australian culture. He is co-editor and author of *Diasporas of Australian Cinema* (Intellect, 2009), and editor-in-chief of the internationally refereed journal *Studies in Australasian Cinema*.

**Jane Landman** is an adjunct fellow at Victoria University. Her research in film history explores Australia and the Pacific. She is author of *'The Tread of a White Man's Foot': Australian Pacific Colonialism and the Cinema* (Pandanus Books, ANU, 2006). Recent work includes co-editing a double issue of *Studies in Australasian Cinema* 7 (2–3) on 'Decolonising Screens', and publication of 'Renewing Imperial Ties: The Queen in Australia', in Mandy Merck (ed), *The British Monarchy on Screen* (2016).

**Amanda Malel Trevisanut** is an early career researcher and teaches in the School of Culture and Communications, University of Melbourne. Her doctoral thesis, *SBS Independent: Productive Diversity and Counter-memory* analyses SBS Independent as a cultural institution in relation to policy developments, elucidating how the commissioning house shaped new practices of production, distribution and counter-memorial representation in the independent film and public broadcasting sectors between 1994 and 2007. She is a research assistant for the Digital Humanities Research Incubator (DHI) at University of Melbourne.

**P. David Marshall** holds a research professorship and personal chair in new media, communication and cultural studies at Deakin University. He has published many books that have studied the public personality and celebrity including *Celebrity and Power* (2nd edition 2014), *Companion to Celebrity* (2015), *Celebrity Culture Reader* (2006), *Fame Games* (2000) and *New Media Cultures* (2004). His current work explores the area of Persona Studies and investigates the online construction and presentation of identity as well the proliferation of public personas throughout contemporary culture.

**Marion McCutcheon** is a Research Associate with the Queensland University of Technology and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Wollongong. A communications economist with a background in telecommunications and broadcasting policy, her research interests include evaluating the benefits derived from cultural and creative goods and services, and the role of creative skills in economic systems.

**Norie Neumark** is a theorist and sound/media artist. Collaborating with Maria Miranda as out-of-sync ([www.out-of-sync.com](http://www.out-of-sync.com)) their work has been exhibited widely nationally and internationally. Her 2017 monograph, *Voicetracks: Attuning to Voice in Media and the Arts* (MIT Press) explores voice and new materialism.

Neumark co-edited *Voice: Vocal Aesthetics in Digital Arts and Media* (2010) and *At a Distance: Precursors to Internet Art and Activism* (2005). She is Honorary Professorial Fellow at VCA, Melbourne University and Emeritus Professor, La Trobe University. She is founding editor, *Unlikely: Journal for Creative Arts* <http://unlikely.net.au>.

**Anne Rutherford** is Associate Professor in Cinema Studies, School of Humanities and Communication Arts, University of Western Sydney, and is the author of ‘*What Makes a Film Tick?*’: *Cinematic Affect, Materiality and Mimetic Innervation*. She has published widely on cinematic affect, embodiment and materiality, mise en scène, film sound and Indigenous cinema. Recent research explores affective dimensions of film sound in the work of Kobayashi Masaki and Takemitsu Toru; ‘animate thought’ in the ethnographic photographs of Donald Thomson and their heritage in *Ten Canoes*; and montage and performativity in the work of William Kentridge.

**Diana Sandars** is a lecturer in Screen, Gender, New Media and Cultural studies in the School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne. Her research focus is on the child in screen media. She has published widely, including book chapters on *Ally McBeal* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Forthcoming publications include: ‘Aliens and Monstrous Girls in *Lilo and Stitch*’ in *The Grimm Mouse: Violence in Post-9/11 Animated Disney Films*, and a chapter on *SheZow* in *Superheroes and Me*.

**Belinda Smail** is Associate Professor of Film and Screen Studies at Monash University in Melbourne. She is the author of *The Documentary: Politics, Emotion, Culture* (2010), co-author of *Transnational Australian Cinema: Ethics in the Asian Diasporas* (2013) and *Regarding Life: Animals and the Documentary Moving Image* (2016). Her essays have appeared in international journals including *Camera Obscura*, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, *Film Criticism* and *Feminist Media Studies*.

**Jane Stadler** is Professor of Film and Media Studies in the Department of Media and Communication at Swinburne University, Australia. She led a collaborative Australian Research Council project on landscape and location in Australian narratives (2011–2014) and co-authored a book on this topic (*Imagined Landscapes*, 2016). She is author of *Pulling Focus* (2008), co-author of *Screen Media* (2009) and *Media and Society* (2016), and co-editor of an anthology on adaptation, *Pockets of Change* (2011). Her research is informed by phenomenological and philosophical approaches to spectatorship.

**Adam Swift** has a PhD and is a Research Fellow at Queensland University of Technology’s Digital Media Research Centre. He is currently part of a team researching the disruptive and innovative forms of production and distribution in

the new global screen ecology. Publications include *Media Economics* (with Stuart Cunningham and Terry Flew) and *Politics, Media and Democracy in Australia* (with Brian McNair, Terry Flew and Stephen Harrington).

**Ana Tiwary** is a director/producer based in Sydney, Australia. She runs a production company called 'indiVisual films' that specialises in making diverse content for Australian and international audiences. She began her career working as an Assistant Director on big budget feature films in the 'Bollywood' industry in India. She went on to work at National Geographic Channel and has directed several documentaries, including over 20 films for ABC TV. She is a full member of the Australian Directors Guild and was selected by Screen Australia for the 2018 Developing the Developer program.

**Sue Turnbull** is Professor of Communication and Media Studies, University of Wollongong. Publications include *The Media and Communications in Australia* (2014 edited with Stuart Cunningham) and *The Television Crime Drama* (Edinburgh University Press 2014). She is editor of the journal *Media International Australia* and joint editor of *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies*. She is also a media commentator on television and radio in Australia and writes on crime fiction for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*.

**Constantine Verevis** is Associate Professor in Film and Screen Studies, Monash University. He is author of *Film Remakes* (2006), co-author of *Australian Film Theory and Criticism, Vol 1: Critical Positions* (2013) and co-editor of *Second Takes: Critical Approaches to the Film Sequel* (2010); *After Taste: Cultural Value and the Moving Image* (2011); *Film Trilogies: New Critical Approaches* (2012), *Film Remakes, Adaptations and Fan Productions: Remake/Remodel* (2012), *B Is For Bad Cinema: Aesthetics, Politics and Cultural Value* (2014) and *US Independent Film After 1989: Possible Films* (2015).

**Deane Williams** is Associate Professor in Film and Screen Studies, Monash University. His recent books include the three-volume *Australian Film Theory and Criticism* (with Noel King and Con Verevis) 2013–2015, *The Grierson Effect: Tracing Documentary's International Movement* (with Zoë Druick) 2014, and *The Cinema of Sean Penn: In and Out of Place* (2015).

**Audrey Yue** is Professor in Communications and New Media, University of Singapore. Her books include *Promoting Sustainable Living* (with Karakiewicz & Paladino), *Sinophone Cinemas* (with Khoo), *Transnational Australian Cinema* (with Khoo and Smaill), *Queer Singapore* (with Pow), *Ann Hui's Song of the Exile, AsiaPacifiQueer* (with Martin, Jackson and McLelland) and *Mobile Cultures: New Media in Queer Asia* (with Berry and Martin). She is on the board of *Sexualities, Feminist Media Studies, International Journal of Chinese Cinemas, Cultural Studies Review* and *Hong Kong Studies*.

# Foreword

## **A Companion to Australian Cinema**

Australian cinema has always provided a vantage point for making sense of the cinema more generally and its evolving character. In their own particular way national cinemas refract global trends in film production processes, screen practice, and cinema movements. Included in this are elements of genre and style, film funding, distribution, and the circumstances of film screening and relations with adjacent screen media – first theatre, then television and video, and then online. Australian cinema ceaselessly adjusts itself to this larger, insistent cinematic world, selectively taking up and adapting itself as a component, and inevitably subsidiary part. So, too, audiences, reviewers, commentators and scholars similarly refract global trends in their localised uptake of cinema in general and Australian cinema in particular.

So, in being profoundly and continuously shaped by an insistent internationalism and cinema's preternatural interconnectedness, Australian cinema is a place to observe the evolving encounter between these wider story-telling institutions and traditions and those of Australia. Australian filmmakers and film writers alike use these larger trends, norms, and insistent global political economies of production, funding, and circulation to mediate, connect with, comment upon, represent, select, and intervene in a story-telling from Australia. Their resulting story-telling is thus influenced by both the larger cinema conversation and the practical circumstances of their encounter with more specific nationally-based and centred institutions, traditions, and movements.

The cinematic world-making that is Australian cinema joins together broader trends in cinema with more nativist cinematic traditions. Not created in isolation these nativist traditions have also been shaped by previous conjunctions of the global, by local histories and traditions of story-telling, by available visual repertoires rendering landscape, the built environment, and peoples, and by collections of both new stories and the familiar told and retold on screen. Australian cinema



is here a vantage point for taking the “temperature” – aesthetic, cultural, social, political – of a national film culture that is both internationally connected and nationally-based. This glocal – global and local – condition of the Australian cinema is also, of course, the condition of Australian film writing, whether on the cinema in general or Australian cinema. Cinema’s uptake in Australian discussion and review, public commentary, and scholarly criticism talks to these same encounters, global trends, made over through nation-based – sometimes national, sometimes international – lenses.

In these ways Australian cinema is simultaneously a national cinema, a transnational cinema, a contributor to an international cinema and a cinema in conversation with Australia and the world. The cinema – and Australian cinema in particular – is always re-inventing itself rather like the *Mad Max* cycle of films, in the light of its new circumstances. This combination of the global and the local is, arguably, what makes the cinema so important as a cultural form. It powerfully informs filmmakers’ practices, just as it shapes the very terms of audience and critic appreciation or opprobrium. Both sets of actors make sense of, variously domesticate, and pick and choose; and in doing so they inevitably extend the Australian national and transnational cinematic world in relations of contingency, dependency, and partial autonomy. In this double fashion Australian cinema becomes a vantage point from which to see both the general and particular in operation through cultural, social, political, and aesthetic lenses that are simultaneously international and local.

As a collection charting, grappling, and contending with Australian cinema in the 2000s *A Companion to Australian Cinema* provides a window on our contemporary cinema. It shows a cinema that is adjusting and mutating cinema’s cultural forms in the wake of changing intermedial relations with television, photography and online media. It shows the developing multiplatform ecologies in an era of screen media being anywhere, anytime and on any device. New sorts of international association, and new turns in globally dispersed international production are in evidence, whether through the bodies of actors, post-production services, or international branding. It is a national cinema that has become a central participant through its Blak Wave in a now global movement for a Fourth Indigenous Cinema so passionately advocated by Aotearoa New Zealand Maori filmmaker Barry Barclay (2003, 1990) and provided with its Australian critical vocabulary by Aboriginal intellectual Marcia Langton’s (1993) careful parsing of filmmaking as an intercultural encounter. Australian cinema is also a cinema contributing its own minor internationalisms as a foreign-language, non-Anglophone cinema (here Laotian cinema) contributing, as essays in this collection claim, to a minor transnational imaginary straddling Australian and Asian cinemas.

Australian cinema of the 2000s also emerges in this collection as a cinema which variously contributes to, comments upon and negotiates ways of making and being Australian, being Indigenous, and being a foreign-body in Australia. It discloses itself as a cinema responding and contributing in equal measure to Australia’s fractious social and political divisions. In taking up the rise of an Indigenous Fourth Cinema the *Companion* explores that cinema’s bracing challenge to Australia, its

politics, its cultural formations and foundations, and its peoples. It is a cinema that simultaneously celebrates the imperial legacies of its national story in ANZAC while facing and not facing, the challenges that its increasingly multicultural character presents to it and that of its natural environment marked by an ever more insistent, though at times vigorously denied, logic of the Anthropocene. It is a cinema that is marked by unease, contention and anxiety. In this collection Helen Grace usefully calls it an 'unsettled' cinematic imaginary. It is a cinema less about staging unity as about staging the terms of division, disconnection and disagreement. It is a cinema produced, just as this *Companion* to that cinema is written, in the shadow of a national story with its own contemporary dynamics and versions of longstanding logics – part political, part cultural, part social and economic – of contention, of contrasting national imaginaries, of competing and uncertain national futures and national settlements.

While such a mixed condition of filmmaking and critical writing has been with us since the re-emergence of a multi-faceted cinema from the diverse strands of filmmaking and film aspiration that governed cultural and political contention in the late 1960s, Australian cinema's messy assemblage has taken its own distinctive shape in the 2000s and 2010s. This *Companion* locates this as a cinema shaped by the various slipstreams of the cinema of the period. It is one also marked by the changing political economies of screen media production, circulation and exhibition as longstanding settlements associated with traditional media of the cinema, commercial television and pay-TV, and public service broadcasters are being reconfigured and partially replaced by online alternatives such as YouTube and Netflix.

Like the filmmaking to which it refers *A Companion to Australian Cinema* is being written at a time when the architectonic plates of the world are shifting and with them, Australia's place in that world. By 2007 China had overtaken Japan as Australia's largest trading partner (DFAT, 2007). Chinese investment from a low base has now become significant across the economy including in the cinema, where leading cinema chain, Hoyts was acquired by the Chinese leisure and real estate conglomerate Wanda in 2015. Coupled with the renewed role played by American corporations in Australia's media, including screen media courtesy of the CBS take-over of the Ten Network and the formidable power of the FAANGs (Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Netflix and Google) these new circumstances are generating new screen partnerships and patterns of infrastructure ownership, creating in the process new priorities and anxieties for the place of Australia not only in the world but how Australian contributions to film worlds are organized and the kinds of control Australian actors can exercise.

If, as I contended in *Australian National Cinema* (O'Regan 1996), Australian cinema as a national cinema is best seen as a messy assemblage of filmmaking projects, institutional and policy configurations, critical moves, and a container of diverse energies, then to do justice to Australian cinema of the last twenty years would require a multifaceted and generous approach capable of recognising this diversity and accommodating its several characteristics. *A Companion to Australian*

*Cinema* is well suited to this task. The diverse angles of incidence of its different sections and the varied concerns of its authors promote recognition of Australian cinema's mosaic form. A *Companion* provides a vehicle in which participation through post-production and visual effects in *The Lego Movie* can sit alongside the work of auteur producer Robert Connolly, Aboriginal filmmaker Ivan Sen's cinematic imaginary of place and landscape can abut the business models for Matchbox Pictures, YouTube's Australian contributors can intersect with the strategies of Screen Australia, the ABC and SBS, the heroine journeys on the Australian screen can join Gothic tropes in Australian cinema, and Jane Campion's feminist sensibilities as an international auteur can connect to television serial, *Serangoon Road's*, minor transnationalism, and the multi-media spectacles generated in response to Australians arrested on drug-related offences in Asia can jostle with digital trans-media documentary forms. The sheer detail and the extent of the coverage undertaken here serves to remind us of the many pathways Australian cinema takes and what these pathways require in terms of an engaged exploration.

Australian cinema, courtesy of its size, is also manageable enough to be able to allow us to see in the one place how these very diverse projects and entrepreneurial energies, live together, knock against each other, contend, and simply slide by each other. As a medium-sized cinema, Australian cinema is neither small as is New Zealand's, or large as is that of the UK, Korea or France, or very large as is that of the USA, Japan and China. As an English language cinema, Australian cinema is simultaneously an insider producing in the dominant screen language of English and marginal as a minor English language cinema. This structural character might mean that it can do more than can a smaller cinema, and its films can travel at times unimpeded through cinema networks courtesy of being produced in the English language. But, at the same time, there are definite limits to what it can do. Such cinemas do more of some things than others at different times. Sometimes they have to choose what they do, and sometimes they have what they do chosen for them by dominant international players. While it only can do and only choose to do some things at different times, its smaller size has its advantages. In Australia various strands of screen production that are more distant from each other in a larger filmmaking milieu are more contiguous. Filmmakers have scope to contribute across a variety of film and television production, working over their careers across genres and forging intermedial screen careers. This makes Australian cinema valuable for thinking *in the one place* about various faultlines of film and television production.

Australian cinema also provides a useful viewpoint from which to gauge the consequences for filmmaking of screen media transformations. With less firmly established and more precarious screen production industries compared to their larger media counterparts, Australia's medium-sized cinema is affected in different ways than are its counterparts in larger countries. From the mid-2000s, technological change has been altering both producer operating conditions and the circumstances under which viewers access films. Cinema began the 2000s with the settled

screening combination of cinema, DVD/video, pay-TV and free-to-air broadcast TV; but by the late 2010s it was as much a cinema on laptops, tablets, and smart TVs accessing asynchronous, on-demand content online (in its various varieties of advertiser-supported, pay-per-view, and subscription video-on-demand), eclipsing the more traditional venues for screen media. Australian cinema provides a related but distinct position from which to view these changes as they impact upon the ecologies of film production in a medium-sized English language market.

*A Companion to Australian Cinema* starts with the basic question that confronts filmmakers and critics alike: how are we to make sense of Australian Cinema in the twenty-first century? The answer they give here is partly synoptic. After all, this collection does comprehensively cover diverse strands of Australian film making and film writing of the new millennium. But its underlying priority is not to be summative or to condense a by now large volume of writing on Australian cinema and its history into more bite-sized bits. Its aim is rather to contribute fresh perspectives and to serve as a new point of departure for thinking about contemporary Australian cinema. *A Companion to Australian Cinema's* is mostly concerned with adding to the literature on Australian cinema by variously challenging, redirecting, rechanneling, and retuning our attention to it. While it certainly conveys a strong sense of a continuity with previous writing, outlining as its authors do an improvising cinema and screen culture simultaneously connected with its past and negotiating its future, it does so by extending and opening up the conversation on Australian cinema and screen culture in new ways. Here, past filmmaking and critical work alike is not simply acknowledged but used in the best sense – entering as an active dialogue partner – to enable these contributions to be variously remade, repurposed, extended, and criticised through the critical encounter with contemporary cinema and television. With purposes of intervening in, as much as representing, Australian cinema *A Companion's* authors seek to reinvent Australian cinema and Australian cinema writing for this time and this place.

To aid this task of reinvention *A Companion to Australian Cinema* is thematically, not chronologically, organised. This allows Australian cinema to be grasped as a cinema of a number of tendencies – its editors call these tendencies a set of 'propositions' about Australian cinema. These are that: Australian cinema has an indigenous screen culture; it is an international cinema; a minor transnational cinema; an auteur, genre, and landscape cinema; a televisual cinema; and a cinema shaped by new media platforms. Recognising and filling out these several tendencies allow Australian cinema's messy assemblages to not only be established but negotiated and recognised in their positivity. What is especially good about this orientation is that while it calls for a new beginning this is not a shallow new beginning borne of ignorance of Australian films and filming and Australian film writing. Rather it is one borne of a sense of possession of and passion for a rich, diverse, sometimes distinct and occasionally distinguished filmmaking and film writing history. This gives depth to its authors' investigation of diverse strands of contemporary filmmaking, their interrogation of intermedial and transnational dimensions, their

understanding of strategies for viability concurrently pursued by filmmakers and film businesses, their charting of the changing policy and political environments of film support, and their interrogation of Australian cinema's relation to broader national cultural formations and histories.

*A Companion to Australian Cinema* conveys then the protean character of Australian cinema. It discloses a cinema of the new millenium engaged in perpetually forming and reforming its filmmaking practices, its screen economy, and cultural and critical apparatuses. It also opens up a new chapter in our understanding of and writing about Australian cinema, serving to both set an agenda for future scholarship and show to an Australian and international readership why contemporary configurations of Australian cinema matter to any understanding of national cinemas in these the first two decades of the new millennium. In doing so *A Companion to Australian Cinema* also makes a contribution to film writing and scholarship generally. Like their filmmaking counterpart, the writer on cinema operating from an Australian base has long connected with global conversations about the cinema, critically engaging with the cinema of the day, negotiating aesthetic movements within film making and screen culture, contributing to contemporary screen theory, film maker projections and critical understandings alike (see King, Verevis and Williams 2013). For those writing on Australian cinema in this collection this cinema is always refracted through the lens of their experience of and writing on the cinema more generally. To be interested in the cinema in Australia is to be interested in this larger international cinematic world of which Australian cinema is but a part. This means that the writers in this collection not only write on Australian cinema but have also contributed to the exploration of a cinema that extends well beyond it. *A Companion to Australian Cinema* operates in a critical screen culture that mimes in a different register the very work of Australian cinema itself over this same period: its writers are also in the business of glocal refraction, adaptation and negotiation. If this brings those who write on Australian cinema closer to their filmmaking counterparts it also ensures that those writing for this collection are writers on and contributors to the dialogue on the cinema more generally. In this they are well suited to the task before them.

## References

- Barclay, Barry. 1990. *Our Own Image*. Auckland: Longman Paul.
- Barclay, Barry. 2003. 'Celebrating Fourth Cinema.' *Illusions* 35: 7–11.
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). 2008. 'Australia's Composition of Trade'. Media Release. 19 May. Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. <https://dfat.gov.au/news/media/Pages/australia-s-composition-of-trade-2007.aspx>. Accessed 13 November 2018.

- King, Noel, Con Verevis, Con and Deane Williams. 2013. *Australian Film Theory and Criticism vol 1., Critical Positions*. Bristol: Intellect.
- Langton, Marcia. 1993. *'Well, I Heard it on the Radio and I saw it on the Television...': An Essay for the Australian Film Commission on the Politics and Aesthetics of Filmmaking by and about Aboriginal People and Things*. North Sydney: Australian Film Commission.
- O'Regan, Tom. 1996. *Australian National Cinema*. London and New York: Routledge.

# Acknowledgments

The editors would like to acknowledge Jayne Fagnoli whose powers of persuasion overcame our initial resistance to signing up for the challenge of editing the Australian volume of Wiley Blackwell's Companions to National Cinemas. We are indebted to the steady hand of Elisha Benjamin who became our project editor at Wiley in August 2017 and has worked tirelessly with us to finalise the manuscript. We thank Helen Krionas for invaluable editorial assistance in the final stages of compiling the manuscript, and particularly for wrangling image permissions and capturing frame grabs over her summer break, as well as organising chapter and image folders. Together, Elisha and Helen made it possible for us to get over the final hurdles and we are very grateful to them. Many thanks also to our copy editor Mary Malin and the production team at Wiley who saw this project through to publication. We would like to thank Marion McCutcheon for bringing her sharp eye and industry expertise to the editing of material included in Part V. Our personal thanks go to Susannah Radstone and Paul Salzman who supported and encouraged our efforts in many different ways, over many late nights and lost weekends. We thank them in particular for their astute comments on our own chapters and the Introduction. We are grateful to ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image) and La Trobe University's Department of Creative Arts and English for ongoing support and access to resources over the life of this project. The editors thank Madeleine Davis (Member of The Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI) for her sterling work compiling the index to this Collection. More than anything this *Companion* owes its final form to our authors, some of whom have been with us since the beginning of the project, while others came on board as the volume took shape: we thank you for your generosity and patience with our many editorial queries and interventions, and for the transformative way that each of you engaged with our propositions on Australian cinema in the twenty-first century. It has been our pleasure and privilege to work with everyone who has contributed to the publication of this *Companion to Australian Cinema*.