

## Screen Australia and VICE announce Pitch Australiana winner for 2020

**Wednesday 1 April 2020:** Screen Australia and youth media company VICE have today announced *Searching for the Tassie Tiger* as the winner of the annual pitching competition *Pitch Australiana* held at the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) in Melbourne in March.

The creators will receive \$50,000 in production funding for a short form documentary commission to be released through VICE's global digital network, and broadcast on local TV channel SBS VICELAND.

The winning project *Searching for the Tassie Tiger* will be directed by Naomi Ball and produced by David Elliot-Jones and Louis Dai. It will explore new evidence and a growing civilian movement that are challenging the long-held belief that Tasmanian tigers are extinct. The documentary will follow Neil Waters, a middle-aged gardener in remote north-east Tasmania, as he quits his day job and commits his life's savings to search for the ancient beast. Waters is the impassioned creator of the 'Thylacine Awareness Group of Australia' Facebook page which is leading an Australia-wide grassroots effort to rediscover the tiger.

Director **Naomi Ball** said, "We're thrilled that VICE and Screen Australia have made it possible for this story to become part of the [Australiana](#) canon. *Searching for the Tassie Tiger* will be an absorbing adventure through remote and rugged landscapes led by Australia's most dedicated tiger believers. Within the trail cam footage and beneath the scat samples, we'll be looking not only for this ancient marsupial beast, but also for the hope we all need, as we face up to our destruction of the environment."

Pitch Australiana is an annual competition that provides early career Australian filmmakers an opportunity to collaborate with VICE in telling a story that has been overlooked by mainstream media.

Head of Documentary at Screen Australia **Bernadine Lim** said, "Naomi Ball and David Elliot-Jones' pitch at this year's competition really stood out to us. Whilst the mystery around the Tassie tiger knows no bounds, their promise of a special insight into the grassroots community of Tassie tiger believers with great characters was very compelling. I look forward to seeing this project on VICE."

**Jess Langley**, Executive Producer at VICE, said "We're thrilled to work with Naomi and David to bring *Searching for the Tassie Tiger* to VICE's audiences. It's sure to be met with enthusiasm both locally and internationally."

### ABOUT PITCH AUSTRALIANA

*Searching for the Tassie Tiger* was one of the four projects that pitched at AIDC held in Melbourne on Wednesday 4 March 2020.

Last year's winner of Pitch Australiana, [Burllesque Boys](#), was directed by Isaac Elliott and produced by Lucy Knox. The observational documentary follows a group of male erotic entertainers as they go on tour and explores both the gruelling schedules and how the performers navigate consent in-the-moment with female participants.

[Shooting Cats](#) was the inaugural winner of Pitch Australiana and was directed by Inday Ford and produced by Dylan Blowsen. The documentary started an important conversation and explores the catastrophic impact feral cats have on Australian wildlife and the complexities environmentalists face in their attempt to find solutions to this epidemic.

### ABOUT VICE

VICE Australia is part of VICE Media Group, the world's largest independent youth media company. Launched in 1994, with Australia the third country to launch globally, VICE has offices in 35 cities across the globe. VICE Australia includes; VICE.com, an award-winning international network of digital content; VICE STUDIOS, a feature film and television production studio; SBS VICELAND in partnership with television network SBS; and VIRTUE, a global, full-service creative agency with 25 offices around the world.



Australian Government



AUSTRALIAN  
INTERNATIONAL  
DOCUMENTARY  
CONFERENCE

MEDIA RELEASE

VICE Australia has won a number of brand defining awards, including Media Brand of the Year (B&T 2017), Brand of the Year and Branded Content Studio of the Year (Publish 2017) and Content Company of the Year (BEFEST 2017) and more - alongside nominations at the Young Walkley's. VICE's award-winning programming has been recognised by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Peabody Awards, Sundance Film Festival, Cannes Lions, Webby Awards, among others.

**ABOUT AIDC**

Established in 1987, the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) is Australia's premier event for the documentary, factual and non-fiction screen media industry. Held annually in Melbourne and featuring a four-day international marketplace, forum and screening program, AIDC provides storytellers, broadcasters and entrepreneurs with the opportunity to learn, make connections, and participate in a range of project pitching and marketplace initiatives. A not-for-profit organisation, AIDC is committed to connecting creators, purveyors and viewers of nonfiction screen media in ways that promote industry sustainability, inspire creativity and ignite social change. [www.aidc.com.au](http://www.aidc.com.au)

Media enquiries: Jessica Parry  
+61 2 8113 5833 | +61 428 767 836 | [jessica.parry@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:jessica.parry@screenaustralia.gov.au)  
[www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au)



Twitter



LinkedIn



Facebook



Instagram