



PRINCESS PICTURES LAUNCHES ONLINE COMEDY SERIES 'FLATS' SET IN FITZROY COMMUNITY HOUSING

Princess Pictures today launched a new short-form comedy series called FLATS, which was supported by Screen Australia through the Online Production Fund.

The six-part series stars real residents of inner-city Melbourne's community housing in their first acting roles.

Episode one premieres at 7pm on Thursday 10th November on the popular 'Slap Bang' YouTube Channel, with other episodes to follow.

The fictional story follows 27-year-old Joey as he is released from prison and returns home to the Fitzroy flats in the hopes of reuniting with his girlfriend, Rachol, and the young son he's never met. But life in the community didn't stay paused whilst Joey served time, and Rachol isn't thrilled to see him, especially as he seems to be straight back to his old ways, under the bad influence of his best friend Troy.

FLATS was written and directed by Darren L. Downs and Will Weatheritt. Weatheritt, who also stars as Joey, worked in the housing commission's local supermarket, lives close by, and has been filmmaking with the housing community for seven years. This series is the culmination of those relationships and all that work.

The series was produced by Mike Cowap of Princess Pictures (SUPERWOG, YOLO: CRYSTAL FANTASY, SMILING FRIENDS) with Executive Producers Emma Fitzsimons (WRONG KIND OF BLACK, HOW TO STAY MARRIED) and Laura Waters (SUMMER HEIGHTS HIGH, LAST DAYS OF THE SPACE AGE).

The production was given a huge lift with the casting of Ciaran Griffiths in an important supporting role. Ciaran became a familiar face to UK and international audiences for playing the fan-favourite character of 'Mickey Maguire' in the acclaimed British series SHAMELESS, created by Paul Abbott, a show which already provided a useful reference for FLATS.

“I’m incredibly proud of my good friends in the community who thrived on set and whose performances have given the show it’s heart,” said Will. “Their improv and comic timing would rival any professional actor.”

“We aimed to make a series that would deliver big laughs, no matter how dark the subject matter got,” said Darren. “There are serious themes here, but first and foremost we just wanted to entertain, and I’m confident the series delivers that in spades.”

“I was passionate about bringing this under-represented community to the screen, to give audiences a window into a world they wouldn’t normally see,” said Mike Cowap, Producer, Princess Pictures. “Some of our cast faced real challenges but everyone enjoyed being on set and embraced the opportunity to perform.”

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MohOtVLg3gU>

Episode 1 (** note this is a private link – the episode will go live at 7pm on Thursday 10th November on the ‘Slap Bang’ YouTube Channel.)

<https://youtu.be/pcvgP-SFz4o>

Press kit and stills available to download at: <https://www.dropbox.com/work/Projects/Flats>

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

DARREN L. DOWNS – Writer/Director/Producer

Darren has made several short films and web series that have screened in film festivals and events locally and internationally. Highlights include short film THE TORMENTORS, which has earned 250,000 views on YouTube, and BLACK AND WHITE LINES (2012) which won many awards including Best First Film and Best Foreign Film at the Long Island International Film Festival, and Best Director, Best Screenwriter, and Best Film at The Glasgow Monthly Film Festival 2013. He has received nominations and awards at festivals in Los Angeles, San Diego, New York, Long Island, San Francisco, Pennsylvania, Texas, Cancun, London, Barcelona, and Melbourne.

WILL WEATHERITT – Writer/Director/Actor/Producer

Will has appeared in productions including a lead role in Perth feature film BROKEN CONTRACT, NEIGHBOURS, OFFSPRING, UTOPIA and the short film PROSTASIA, selected to screen at Festival De Cannes short corner in 2015. He has spent seven years working on Smith St -- the border between intellectual Fitzroy and working-class Collingwood -- exposing him to what Chopper Read (a frequent customer at the store) called “the cultural heartland of Australia”.

MIKE COWAP – Producer, Princess Pictures

Mike is a TV and film producer whose recent credits include animated comedies YOLO: CRYSTAL FANTASY and SMILING FRIENDS for Adult Swim and HBO Max, SUPERWOG (season 2) for ABC, forthcoming series KOALA MAN for Disney's Hulu which stars Hugh Jackman, and THE ORCHARD audio drama for Amazon Audible starring Eric Bana.

ABOUT PRINCESS PICTURES:

Princess Pictures is an established film and television production company with an international reputation for producing projects with intensely creative talent. They gravitate toward new ideas, stories that haven't been told or ways of telling stories that make audiences look at the world differently, especially with comedy. Perhaps best known for Chris Lilley's SUMMER HEIGHTS HIGH and also SUPERWOG (most watched comedy series of 2019), 8MMM (Australia's first indigenous sitcom), OUTLAND (Australia's first all-gay sitcom), forthcoming Disney+ drama series LAST DAYS OF THE SPACE AGE and the Emmy nominated indigenous drama WRONG KIND OF BLACK.

SLAP/BANG is an emerging YouTube channel that hosts independent Australian comedy. Birthed from the online sensation ROSTERED ON, SLAP/BANG is now focused on supporting hard working filmmakers by attempting to alleviate the arduous task of building an audience from scratch by providing a platform of over 100,000 engaged subscribers.

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