

The **FAR SOUTH FILM** Story So Far...



Far South Film Inc is an incorporated association formed in 2019 of filmmakers and other screen content creatives based in **regional South East NSW**.

We are a grassroots industry organisation creating networking and learning opportunities for our screen community. We foster, promote and advocate for regional screen projects through skill- and resource sharing in a region that is sparsely populated and a long way from city film schools and resources. The **Far South Film Festival** is our major annual project.



In August 2019 Far South Film held its first **Networking and Expert Q&A** session in Batemans Bay with award winning filmmakers **Jess Milne** and **Nick Bolton** from Wollongong.

The event was kindly supported with funding from *Eurobodalla Shire Council*.



Leading up to the Festival was a **screening of Australian-made feature *Ride Like A Girl*** with **three short films made in the South East NSW region** - *Dairy Queen*, *Mirror and Me* and *The Shallows* - in December 2019 at The **Picture Show Man Cinema** in Merimbula.



It clearly demonstrated the appetite of audiences for **Australian and regional content**. Cr Cathy Griff from Bega Valley Shire Council spoke in support of regional film making and a Q&A was held with youth participants from the locally made films.



In Seniors Week 2020, Far South Film held a free two-day **Film making workshop for Seniors** in Merimbula. Recent bushfires clearly influenced much of the work created and we encouraged participants to enter their films into the Festival. The group are keen to continue learning the film making process. Another workshop is scheduled in 2021.

These workshops are made possible by the *Bega Valley Shire Council Community Grants Program*.

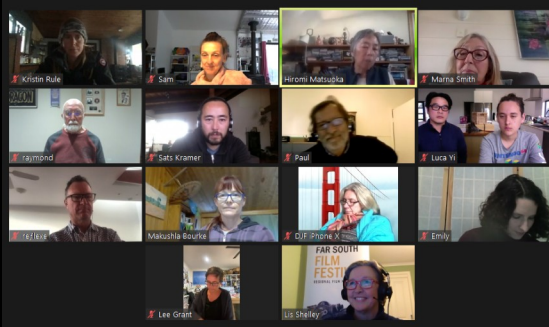
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Thanks to the *Regional Arts Country Area Support Program*, Far South Film were able to offer two online **Screen Acting** courses in April 2020. Youth participants aged from 8 to 19 Zoomed in from the **Bega Valley**, **Eurobodalla** and **Snowy Monaro** shires.



Two **filmmaking** workshops were held in Bega in November 2020 with young participants from the **Bega Valley** and **Eurobodalla** shires. More are planned for 2021. These workshops continue the tradition of South East Arts' *YoofTube* Youth Film Festival and Footprint Theatre's annual Film Schools of the past.



Further **networking events** were held online in April 2020 via Zoom, connecting filmmakers, composers, writers and actors across **southeast NSW** and **northeastern Victoria**.

The feedback collated via such events as well as surveys will assist Far South Film to develop a **4 year Screen Industry Strategy** for the South East region, thanks to an agreement signed with South East Arts (NSW) Inc.



As part of our ongoing mission of **developing professional and emerging filmmakers** in the South East region, funding from the *Regional Arts Fund* is supporting **public and professional development workshops** in advanced film making techniques. The first of these in June 2020 was an online **colour grading** workshop with Brisbane's Warren Eagles.



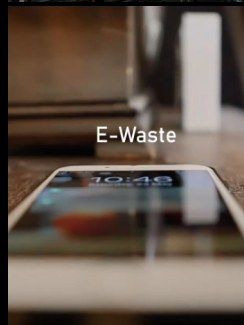
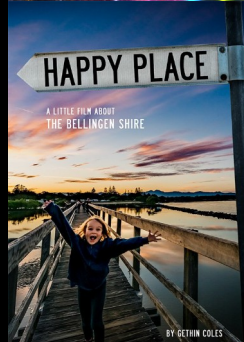
Creative roundtables are a great way for filmmakers to **test ideas**, get **feedback** and **find potential crew** or collaborators for their projects. A group of filmmakers including writers, producers, directors, cinematographers and editors met in **Bermagui** in October 2019, with some joining via Zoom.

The **South East region** covers 24,869 square kilometres (ten times the area of the ACT or twice the area of Greater Sydney) with a population of only 93,400.

Maintaining connections between filmmakers, either in person or online, is vital to the success of filmmaking in our region.



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When COVID hit, the screen industry ground to a halt. Sets and studios closed, travel stopped and most projects cancelled or postponed.

Far South Film's first **film festival** was due to take place in **Merimbula** in August 2020. Thanks to the Internet and a lot of perseverance, Far South Film followed the Sydney, Melbourne and other major film festivals around the globe **online**. Our 2021 Festival was also screened online.

Our festival is exclusively open to regional filmmakers - **at least two key creatives must live and work in regional Australia**. By going online, we instantly shifted our festival from regional to national.

Our 2020 festival attracted short films from NSW, ACT, VIC, QLD, SA and WA. **25 finalists** were selected, including **9 from South East NSW**. Our 2021 festival screened 15 films from around Australia.

\$9000 in prize money has gone to regional filmmakers so far, thanks to sponsorships from Screenworks, StageFlight ArtsHub/ScreenHub, Bega Valley Shire Council, South East Arts, Nullarbor Consulting, Author JD Shaw, Cathy Griff on behalf of Philip Hearnshaw, Torchlight Media and Funhouse Studio.

Festival **films** were made available as videos on demand to audiences around Australia in 2021 thanks to Shift72.

Filmmaker Q&A sessions and the **festival awards ceremony** were **streamed online** to audiences around Australia and the awards were announced by **Frankie J Holden OAM** and **Michelle Pettigrove**.

The event has led to **new collaborations** and **networks of filmmakers** across Australia.

Far South Film is planning to hold a hybrid physical and online festival on the 3rd weekend of **August** each year.

We welcome enthusiastic can-do people to be part of organising this event each year! Entries open in March & close in May - for details see: farsouthfilmfestival.com

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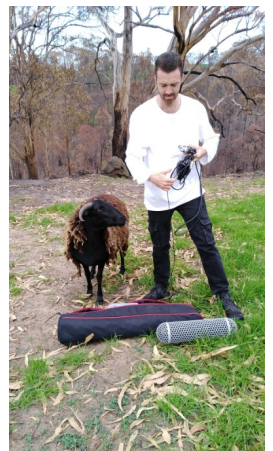
Far South Film continues to raise the profile of our region with major industry players, encouraging them to **employ local filmmakers** on incoming feature film projects, projects for tourism and other regional businesses as well as collaborations with community and arts organisations.

Members of Far South Film filmed *The Oudmaker of Narooma* in collaboration with **One Book One Community** and screened a preview at the Tathra Hotel in February 2020. It won Best Documentary, Diversity and People's Choice awards at the Far South Film Festival.

Far South Film was commissioned by South East Arts to develop the **2021-2024 SE region screen strategy**.

Far South Film was local champion for the 2020 **My Cinema, My Film Festival** in Merimbula.

Other projects include a post-bushfire tourism project, a Fearless Film focusing on people living with disability, completion of several documentaries, short dramas, commercial and presentation videos.



**FAR
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farsouthfilm.org.au farsouthfilmfestival.com

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