

AUSTRALIA'S POWER 50



Christopher Mapp

IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE *Encore* published its Top 20 Directors and Producers list, and we felt it was time to compile a new, more comprehensive list that included professionals working across all areas - film, television and TVC production - as well as the leaders and decision-makers that determine the direction of the industry.

Instead of having a limited list of panellists, we consulted with the main agencies and organisations, and also asked our readers to nominate their candidates. We ended up with a list of more than 200 screen industry professionals, and deciding the final 50 was indeed a difficult task. Of course, some other very influential and successful people didn't make the final cut, but there were only 50 spots and too many talented men and women!

We hope you'll enjoy - or not, and if so, debate it passionately - the selection of what will become our annual Power 50 list.

1. CHRISTOPHER MAPP

Who: Managing director - Omnilab Media Group
What: Is there any area of the screen industry that Christopher Mapp's empire doesn't reach? Omnilab Media defines itself as "Australia and New Zealand's largest privately owned, vertically integrated media company", and that's almost an understatement: its 16 companies do everything from film and TV production (Dr. D and Ambience Entertainment), production, post-production, sound and VFX (The Lab Sydney, Cornerpost, Digital Pictures, Iloura, Flagstaff Studios, Boffswana, Oktobor), captioning (The Substation), airline content (Pax Entertainment), broadcast and media management (The Playroom, Dubsat) and print distribution services (Websend), with a reported turnover of \$100m per annum.

Mapp's is not a rags-to-riches story, but he has employed the family's existing resources to diversify and vertically integrate a media emporium that has allowed him to work with and for the best. His service companies operate independently but, when necessary, they share resources and expertise, such as the 3D lessons and infrastructure obtained from post-production projects like *Sanctum*.

His creative ambitions have never blurred his desire to reduce risk by understanding the market and clearly identifying bankable projects. He's one of the voices championing for a stronger business sense within the Australian screen industry.

In terms of content creation, Mapp has explored partnerships domestically and internationally, as well as different business models to grow his TV and film slate in terms of investment and/or production. They haven't all been hits like *Bran Nue Dae* or *The Bank Job* - remember *Dying Breed* or *Closed for Winter?* -, and while many of these projects might be low to mid-budget in Hollywood standards, they're reason-

36. EMILE SHERMAN

Who: Producer

What: Sherman set up See-Saw films with Iain Canning, his London-based partner. The company's slate is diverse and based on official and unofficial co-productions; from last year's animated *\$9.99* (Israel) and *Disgrace* (South Africa) to the recent *The Kings of Mykonos: Wag Boy 2* (Greece), and the upcoming *Oranges and Sunshine* and *The King's Speech* (UK).

37. BEN LIEBMAN

Who: VP of licensing, FremantleMedia Enterprises

What: Head of the commercial arm of Fremantle Media, Liebman has coordinated the multi-million expansion of the *MasterChef* brand and will oversee the development of a live events division for stage productions, theatre, consumer and trade shows based on their existing properties, as well as new acquisitions.

38. ANTHOS SIMON

Who: General manager of creative services, Deluxe Australia/General manager for EFilm

What: An expert in digital post-production, Simon oversaw the company's infrastructure upgrades. One of the driving forces behind the successful restoration of the classic 1971 film *Wake in Fright* and oversees Deluxe's film restoration project with Kodak and the National Film and Sound Archive.

39. ANDREW LESNIE

Who: Cinematographer

What: Academy Award winner for *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, Lesnie has been a close Peter Jackson collaborator. He also works extensively shooting high-profile TVCs, and hasn't forgotten Australia, recently returning to shoot *Bran Nue Dae* in WA, giving the film its explosive colour palette.

40. JEREMY SAUNDERS

Who: Graphic artist

What: Film poster designer extraordinaire, Saunders has created some of the most beautiful, provocative, bold film posters in Australia, both for local and international films. Above all, his artwork is always relevant to the film's artistic vision and look – sometimes it's better than the film itself. Currently nominated for a Key Art Award for Lars von Trier's *Antichrist*.

41. ROGER SAVAGE

Who: Chief executive, Soundfirm

What: An Oscar nominee for *Moulin Rouge* and multiple AFI winner, the re-recording mixer and head of Soundfirm is a legend in the sound post sector. Originally from the UK, he worked with many recording stars when he migrated to Australia in the 60s, before entering the screen business with *Mad Max II* – using synchronised video picture and multi-track sound for the first time on a feature. He founded one of the most successful sound post houses in the country.

Soundfirm, now operating in Sydney, Melbourne and, in a visionary move, Beijing since 2004.

What the industry says: "[...] Award-winning soundtracks, an innovative approach to recording equipment, and support and fostering young sound engineers."

42. ALEX PROYAS

Who: Director, producer, writer

What: One of Australia's most successful filmmakers working in Hollywood. The decision to grant his film *Knowing* the Producer Offset after an initial rejection is a positive sign for international projects developed and driven by Australians regardless of their funding, storyline and cast, to access the offset.

What comes next: The \$100m Universal Pictures epic *Dracula Year Zero*, which he hopes to shoot in Sydney. Sam Worthington has been attached.

43. KATH SHELPER

Who: Producer

What: Warwick Thornton's long-time collaborator.

What comes next: At Scarlett Pictures, Shelper is now working with Alice Springs director Beck Cole on *The Place Between*, about a South Australian Indigenous woman who is released from gaol and has to rebuild her life. It's set to shoot in Adelaide this year.

What the industry says: "Her commitment to Indigenous filmmaking over many years is tenacious, and her support for the production of *Samson & Delilah* and its consequent success, unwavering."

44. SHAUN FARRINGTON

Who: Managing Director, Zealot

What: With offices in Sydney, London, New York and Los Angeles, Farrington's marketing company Zealot is growing, delivering trailers and sales reels for Australian and international film and TV projects and corporate clients. Their trailer for *Animal Kingdom* was one of the highlights of the campaign, and their work is up for the Key Arts Awards in the US (the trailer for the doco *Food Inc.*, and the TV spot for the Cohen brothers' *A Single Man*).

45. GREIG FRASER

Who: Cinematographer

What: A rising star, who has photographed *Bright Star* for Jane Campion, *The Boys Are Back* for Scott Hicks and *Last Ride* for Glendyn Ivin. Fraser recently asked *Let Me In* to Hollywood, having completed work on the remake of Swedish teen vampire hit.

46. CHRIS BROWN

Who: Producer, Pictures in Paradise

What: A master of genre and co-productions, with recent credits that go from *The Proposition* to the hit vampire film *Daybreakers*. Brown has traditionally worked with partners in the US, the UK and Canada, but is now expanding his horizons in Europe and Asia. He is currently in production of the first official co-

production with Singapore, the 3D shark film *Bait*.

What comes next: Brown and his wife Diana are developing Italian/Australian co-productions – the first ever since the treaty was signed in 1993 – and planning for an Australian shoot.

47. CHRISTOPHER GORDON

Who: Composer

What: A successful concert and events music composer, UK-born Gordon is quickly becoming one of Australia's options for orchestral scores – as different as *Mao's Last Dancer* and *Daybreakers* – and as conductor of screen orchestrations for film and TV. He's won the AFI Award (*Mao's Last Dancer*), Australian Screen Music Awards, among others.



48. JULES O'LOUGHLIN

Who: Cinematographer

What: The DOP of *Kokoda*, *September* and *Lucky Country* was also in charge of the country's first big scale stereoscopic 3D film, the US\$30m *Sanctum*, executive-produced by James Cameron. With his exposure to the rigorous 3D techniques employed in *Avatar*, combined with his previous award-winning work, O'Loughlin has an edge over other cinematographers who are just catching up with the 3D trend.

49. SEAN MEEHAN

Who: Director – represented by Soma Films

What: One of the most successful TVC directors, winning the Australian Directors Guild Award in 2008 for *The Race* (McDonald's) and nominated again in 2009 for *Separation* (Quit Victoria). Meehan's work has also been recognised internationally, including the Cannes Bronze Lion in 2007.

50. GUY GROSS

Who: Composer, director Guy Gross Music

What: One of Australia's most prolific and eclectic screen composers, combining genres and styles across film and TV with a clear understanding of the balance between music as an art and as a business. Currently the vice-president of the AGSC, and recipient of the APRA / AGSC International Achievement Award.