

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP
Minister for Development Victoria
Minister for Precincts
Minister for Creative Industries



Thursday, 21 November 2024

LIGHTS CAMERA ACTION IN BAYSIDE MELBOURNE

A best-selling novel by a local Victorian author is being adapted for TV in yet another major production being filmed in Victoria this year – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Member for Southern Metropolitan Region Ryan Batchelor representing the Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks recently visited the set of *The Family Next Door* at Half Moon Bay in Black Rock, with production underway on the TV adaptation of Sally Hepworth's beloved novel.

The production will inject over \$9.7 million into the Victorian economy and create more than 275 jobs for Victorian screen industry workers including 175 crew, 13 Head of Department roles and 130 cast and extras.

The six-part drama, which will screen on ABC TV, was brought to Victoria through the Labor Government's Victorian Screen Incentive and is filming on location in and around Melbourne's bayside suburbs, as well as in regional locations such as Anglesea.

Produced by Beyond Entertainment and Muse Entertainment, the series follows a stranger as she arrives in a quiet Victorian beachside cul-de-sac, with her drive to solve a mystery casting suspicion on four neighbouring families.

The Family Next Door boasts a stellar Australian cast including AACTA nominated Teresa Palmer (*The Clearing*), Bella Heathcote (*Pieces of Her*), Philippa Northeast (*Territory*), Bob Morley (*The 100*), Catherine McClements (*Return to Paradise*), Jane Harber (*Offspring*) and Ming-Zhu Hii (*Prosper*).

Created for television by Sarah Scheller (*Strife*), *The Family Next Door* is directed by Emma Freeman (*The Newsreader*), produced by Melinda Wearne and Dean O'Toole (*The Great*) with Executive Producers David Ogilvy, Jenny O'Shea, Joel Rice and Meghan Mathes Jacobs, and ABC Executive Producers Rachel Okine and Rebecca Anderson.

The series is written by Sarah Scheller, Pip Karmel (*Total Control*), Julia Moriarty (*Total Control*) and Andrew Anastasios (*Troppo*) and was attracted to Victoria through the Labor Government's Victorian Screen Incentive.

With major investment from Screen Australia and the ABC, and the Labor Government through VicScreen, *The Family Next Door* will be distributed internationally by Sphere Abacus and will screen on ABC TV and ABC iview in 2025.

This production is just one of the major screen projects filming in the state, including *All Her Fault*, *War Machine* and *Beneath the Storm* – which recently wrapped at Docklands Studios Melbourne.

The Labor Government's screen strategy has so far created 29,000 jobs and generated \$1.25 billion in economic activity across the state – backing local jobs, businesses and securing the state's reputation as a global destination for screen and games production.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"The screen adaptation of Sally Hepworth's international bestseller has been secured in its rightful home – Victoria, taking full advantage of our stunning coastal locations and world-class crews."

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"We are proud to back this Australian story which is creating jobs for Victorian screen industry workers, providing a multi-million dollar boost for our economy and is set to delight audiences here and abroad."

Quotes attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Region Ryan Batchelor

"This production highlights the talent and beauty of Bayside Melbourne, bringing Sally Hepworth's story to life right here at Half Moon Bay and across our local community."

"Thanks to the Allan Labor Government's support, we're boosting local jobs in the screen industry and showcasing Bayside on screens nationwide."

Quotes attributable to *The Family Next Door* Showrunner Sarah Scheller

"I am thrilled to be in Sally Hepworth's Melbourne for The Family Next Door. It's a joy to watch our characters come to life under the tender direction of Emma Freeman. Shooting in Melbourne is a dream, from our excellent crew, stunning locations to possibly the best coffee in the world."

Quotes attributable to Beyond Entertainment producer Melinda Warne

"It is an honour to be bringing Sally Hepworth's celebrated novel to the screen, and to be not only filming in the State where it is set but showcasing to the world the spectacular Victorian coastline."

Quotes attributable to ABC Head of Scripted Rachel Okine

"The Family Next Door is a funny and authentic portrayal of suburban life and exploration of motherhood, underpinned by a compelling mystery. We are so excited to be part of bringing Sally Hepworth's propulsive novel to the screen, steered by an incredibly talented team of creatives."

Quotes attributable to Screen Australia Director of Narrative Content Louise Gough

"We are excited to support The Family Next Door, a gripping new drama that expertly intertwines mystery with the complexities of family and motherhood. Under Sarah Scheller's creative vision and Emma Freeman's direction, this series promises to engage audiences with its rich storytelling and intriguing characters. We believe it will resonate not just in Australia, but internationally, showcasing the strength of Australian narratives in the mystery genre."