

SPOTLIGHT ON LAUREN BRUNSWICK

FILM PRODUCER, PERTH



Since 2010, Lauren has been injecting the heart into stories on screen by finding that common connection that draws the audience in. Best known for AACTA Award nominee, *Koko: A Red Dog Story* (2019), and *Top Knot Detective* (2017), Lauren gets a lot of her ideas from music – making playlists, going for a jog and letting her mind go wherever the music takes her.

“ Seeing local artists putting the stories and places from your own backyard up on the screen or on stage is inspiring. It’s what made me realise I could get out there and do it myself. ”

Give us your bbq pitch. What do you do?

As a film producer my work begins with an idea for a story – whether that’s adapting a book, a play or writing an original from scratch. I act as the caretaker of that idea, from first concept and script writing to producing, editing and distribution. So my role is a combination of creative development and recruitment of cast and crew. Every project starts with me (as head of department) and a writer (and sometimes director) at the development stage, then expands to a team of up to 100 people working on the production. And at the tail end with editing and distribution, it’s me working with a director, a small editing team and, finally, marketing, sales and distribution.

Did you always plan to work in this industry?

I was more interested in literature and writing as a kid – film wasn’t on my radar. So with the intention of studying journalism, I took a six-month Cert III introduction to film and television at TAFE. That got me completely hooked on the power of music and moving images to connect with an audience emotionally.

So, how did you get into film producing?

I ditched journalism and continued with the Cert IV and Advanced Diploma in Producing at TAFE. Once I’d graduated, I badgered my lecturers for assistant roles working on some of their film sets. I also started volunteering on longer-form film sets, picking up a bit of paid work while moonlighting with a group of my TAFE friends, writing, directing and producing our own short films. It was a few years later that my career as an independent producer took flight and I landed my first major feature-length project in 2015.

How would you describe yourself?

I’m a big-picture and fine-details thinker who loves creative and logistical problem-solving equally. Being a big people person also helps me connect and collaborate with individuals from all professions. And bringing a lot of energy and determination to the role has helped me persevere through the many challenges that come with filmmaking.

What do you love most about the industry?

There are inspiring stories to be found in every corner of WA, and curious creatives out there bringing them to life. From documentaries on opal hunting in regional WA, to kids’ detective series in Albany, to interactive projection installations on the streets of Perth, to movies celebrating the life of Aboriginal sporting heroes. And the technology is changing constantly. My most recent collaboration took me into a whole new world of filmmaking, utilising virtual reality technology and collaborating with composers and dancers to create a short immersive experience at the State Theatre Centre, produced by the Revelation Perth International Film Festival.

What’s the best part of your job?

It’s not about the end result, or the promise of awards. It’s about the process of finding common ground and connections with a diverse range of stories, getting inside the heads of the characters, understanding them on a human level and drawing the audience in to feel that same connection and emotion we’re feeling. I also love sharing the creative journey with highly-skilled innovators working in niche areas, from puppet-makers to grips, to the editors who really bring the story to life.

What’s your best advice for anyone starting out?

Go immerse yourself in as many different kinds of art as you can – plays, films, museums and galleries. Seeing local artists putting the stories and places from your own backyard up on the screen or on stage is inspiring. It’s what made me realise I could get out there and do it myself. Going to TAFE or uni will also help you find your tribe, the people who love doing the same things you do.

And what’s next for you?

Since having a baby, I’ve been taking a bit of a moment to reflect and consider what my next step in storytelling is going to be, and I’m very excited to have recently been appointed as General Manager of The Last Great Hunt – an innovative, artist-lead theatre company based in Perth.

Find Lauren online

thelastgreathunt.com

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