

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FILM INDUSTRY

**429. Mr I.M. BRITZA to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:**

As I have a son who enjoys scripting, producing and directing short films, I was delighted to hear that the Western Australian film industry has been experiencing outstanding success in the last couple of years. I wonder whether the minister could inform the members of the house about any future projects and initiatives.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY replied:**

As implied in the question, and I thank the member for it, the growth and development in the Western Australian screen industry in recent years has been one of the great success stories of this state. By way of background, in 2011 the total amount grossed in Australian cinemas was approximately \$1.09 billion. Of the titles that were shown, 44 were Australian, and together they accounted for about \$43 million, or 3.9 per cent, of box office earnings. Of that amount, almost 50 per cent, or \$21.3 million, was produced by the film *Red Dog*, which was filmed here in Western Australia and is a great success story in itself. It told a story that is uniquely Western Australian. The production was supported by ScreenWest and also the royalties for regions program.

The challenge is to build on this success. I was pleased to attend an advance screening of the recently completed feature film *Drift*, which tells the story of pioneering surfers. It was filmed in the Vasse electorate to a large extent, particularly around Margaret River and off the coast of the capes region and also in Nannup. It tells the story of pioneering surfers in the state's south west in the 1970s. It has some great vision of surfing scenes off the south west coast. It stars Sam Worthington. The film has received support through ScreenWest and also the royalties for regions program.

**Mr J.N. Hyde:** But there's no new money, minister.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** There is a new feature film called *Drift* that has recently been filmed in Western Australia.

**Mr J.N. Hyde:** No new money from your government. You keep singing your praises.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** They do not use money that has been used previously for something else. It is always new money allocated for a particular project out of ScreenWest's budget and out of the royalties for regions budget in this particular case.

To go on and tell a good story about what is happening in the screen industry, another production that is about to occur is *The Children*, which has been selected to receive \$750 000 in production funding through ScreenWest's West Coast Visions initiative. Only one allocation of that magnitude is made each year. It is a program that gives local practitioners experience in the screen industry in Western Australia. It also increases the amount of feature film production. *The Children* is an adaptation of Charlotte Wood's best-selling novel. It follows a successful war correspondent as she is forced to confront her own guilt and post-traumatic stress. I was pleased to join the producers, Claire McCarthy and Melissa Kelly, and cinematographer and producer, Denson Baker, when they visited the Armadale region recently to identify particular locations that will be used for the filming.

Another production that has recently received funding of \$175 000 for production costs is the Tim Winton film project, *The Turning*, which is a feature film based on a collection of 17 short stories by Tim Winton. Six of those 17 short stories will be filmed here in Western Australia. They are a number of the projects in the pipeline in the screen industry in the state. They help to demonstrate the strength of the industry, the increased expertise and capacity and the very strong leadership that is provided by ScreenWest in fostering the industry in this state.