

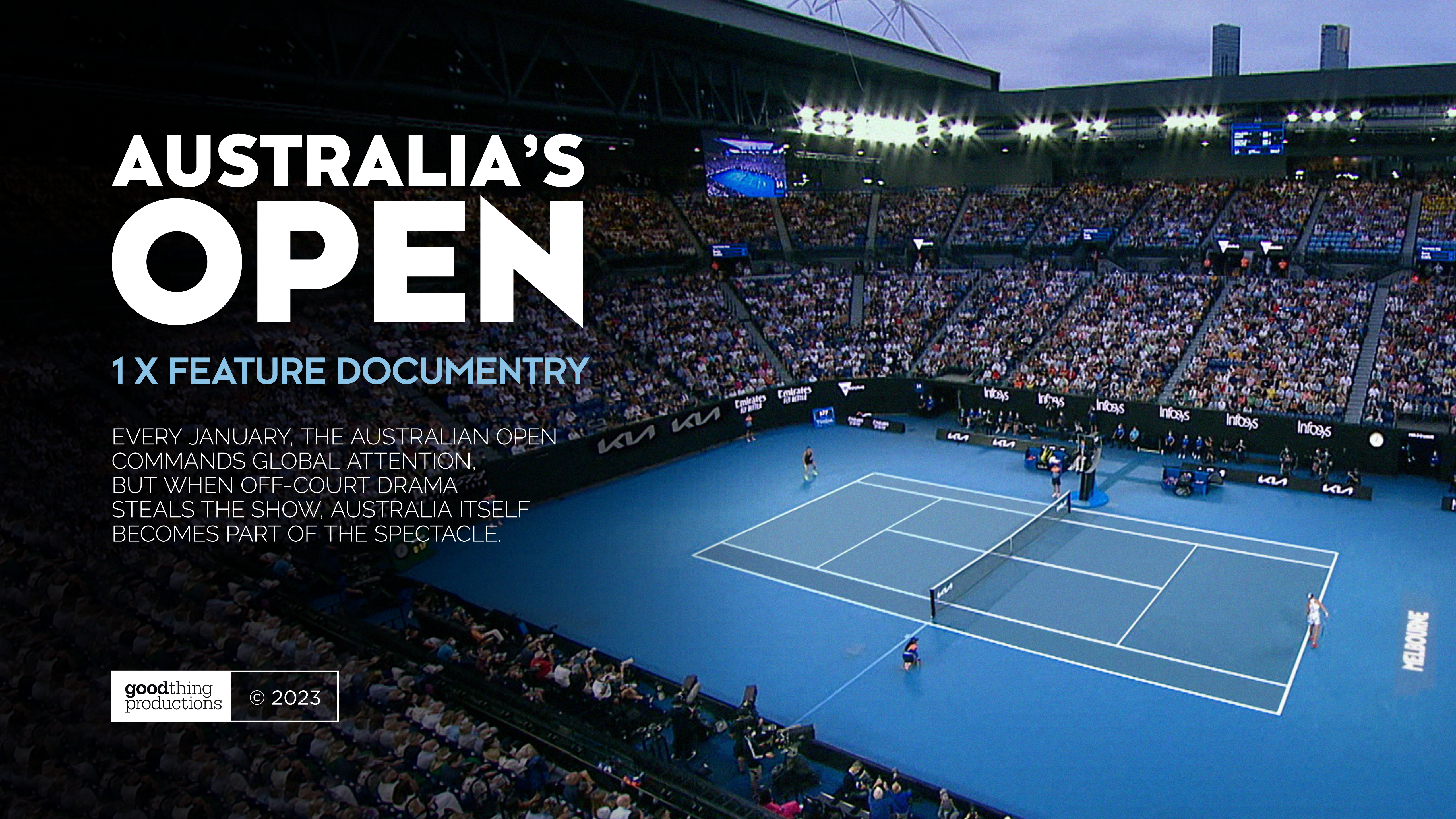
AUSTRALIA'S OPEN

1 X FEATURE DOCUMENTRY

EVERY JANUARY, THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN COMMANDS GLOBAL ATTENTION, BUT WHEN OFF-COURT DRAMA STEALS THE SHOW, AUSTRALIA ITSELF BECOMES PART OF THE SPECTACLE.

goodthing
productions

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Every January, the Australian Open commands global attention, but when off-court drama steals the show, Australia itself becomes part of the spectacle. AUSTRALIA'S OPEN charts the tournament's rise as it inadvertently reveals Australia's divisions to the world. Through telling archive, compelling play and heavy-hitting interviews, AUSTRALIA'S OPEN captures the poetry and power of the tournament... because at the Australian Open, there is always more than a game at stake.



to the beginning of December, and the

to all the

world's leading players have by-passed

Melbourne.

SLAMMED

McEnroe blamed the weather for the disappointing crowds, and has been...
McEnroe said the tournament could be switched to January...
The Australian Open was held in Melbourne...

SLAMMED

Yesterday, this 1980 Wimbledon champion John McEnroe said the Australian Open is not in the same league as the French and US Open...
Facilities are poor, in my opinion...
It should be more important than that, so things have got to be changed or else...
However, he hoped the tournament could retrieve its previous status... otherwise you're just going to have to pick somewhere else in order to make another Grand Slam event because you can't pretend.

Australian Open was under fire again



MELBOURNE status of the Australian Open was under fire again yesterday... Wimbledon champion McEnroe...



LONGER SYNOPSIS

Every January, the Australian Open commands global attention, but when off-court drama steals the show, Australia itself becomes part of the spectacle. As the world's attention strays beyond the court, national insecurities and divisions are laid bare.

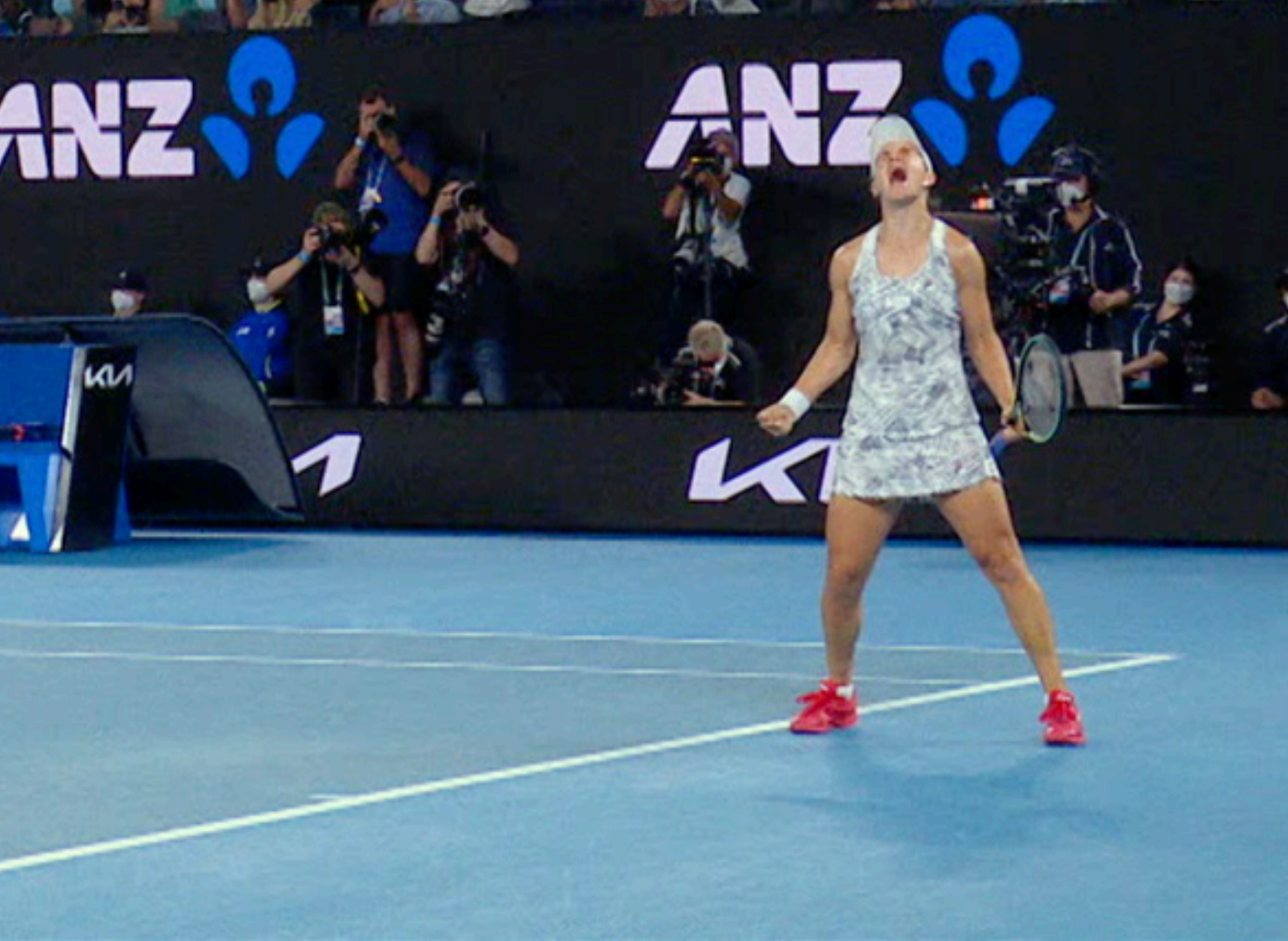
AUSTRALIA'S OPEN charts the Australian Open's trajectory from a suburban tennis club to the biggest annual sporting event in the southern hemisphere. After almost losing Grand Slam status in the 1980s, the tournament works hard to project a free and breezy image of Australia to the world in a process organisers dub 'Australianisation'. Stock horses on court, 'beachside' bars and kangaroos aplenty dovetail with Paul Hogan's legendary tourism campaigns as the tournament attracts more international visitors and star players.

Eye-watering broadcast deals eventually follow, and the tournament becomes known as 'The Happy Slam.' By 2017, it hosts historic finals that well and truly grab the world's attention. But while organisers, government and business celebrate the international spotlight, the world's attention inevitably strays beyond the court. And what is revealed is a country far more complex than the Happy Slam image suggests.

AUSTRALIA'S OPEN counterpoints irresistible on-court drama with the nation's off-court divisions as they are unintentionally revealed to the world. In recent years the Australian Open becomes a stage for the nation's same-sex marriage debate; confronting treatment of refugees; and a complex relationship to its colonial past.

The film's heavy-hitting cast includes former Wimbledon champion Pat Cash whose story reveals the double-edged sword of a nation's hunger for victory and CEO Craig Tiley who relives the controversial deportation of Novak Djokovic in 2022. Other contributors include former Chair of the US Open Katrina Adams; New York Times correspondent Damien Cave; broadcasters Shelley Ware and Bruce McAvaney and veteran journalist Tracey Holmes. AUSTRALIA'S OPEN goes inside some of the tournament's most memorable finals, including Serena and Venus Williams' last Grand Slam final and unexpected comebacks from Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Through compelling archive and lyrical tennis, AUSTRALIA'S OPEN captures the poetry of the tournament as well as its power...because at the Australian Open, there is always more than a game at stake.



DIRECTOR STATEMENT

As soon as Good Thing mentioned their idea for this film to me, I jumped at the opportunity. Not only because I am addicted to sports documentaries, but because the Australian Open was part of my childhood - I remember the hot, hard seats at Kooyong; and our family cat was even christened Steffi after Steffi Graf's 1988 win.

Despite this, and years of childhood coaching, I have never actually been able to play the game myself. Even so, I was entered into country tournaments alongside every other member of my family. So my appreciation of the game, matched with my inability to participate in it, made this film a serendipitous fit - I grew up around the game, but outside it.

This outside lens on the tournament was always part of the film, but it grew sharper as we moved deeper into production. It's a lens which enabled us to trade on the athletic drama that draws millions to watch the Australian Open around the world every year; while at the same time chart the cultural currents that have shaped it. Combining elements of the sports documentary genre with more traditional historical documentary storytelling has been

hugely enjoyable. In addition to fabulous archive, we were also blessed with generous and insightful interviewees who were happy to collaborate with humour and honesty.

All of these elements combined as the film found its voice in the edit. By counterpointing off-court and on-court drama, editor Alex Archer's understated approach lent itself beautifully to the film. He steered the action from the athleticism on court, to the big wide world back again.

Throughout, we have been all too aware that it is impossible to offer a definitive portrait of a tennis tournament, or a country, let alone do so in 90 minutes. So instead our aim was to unpack specific moments - like the complex euphoria when Ash Barty won in 2022; or the impact of Australia's desire for a winner in Pat Cash's 1988 final. The result allows us to bask in sporting moments and tell the story of the tournament's trajectory. It also reveals the ways in which Australia, intentionally and unintentionally, has presented itself to the world.



ILI BARÉ DIRECTOR

Ili is an award-winning documentary writer and director. Her feature documentary, *THE LEADERSHIP* was reviewed as 'faultless documentary making' and had a theatrical release in 2020, picking up *ATOM* and Australian Screen Editors Awards. Ili has also worked on over 100 hours of documentary and factual programming in the US, the UK and Australia. Her work has previously been reviewed as 'extraordinary ... powerful and potent, a real emotional revelation'; 'brave and essential viewing' and 'unforgettable'. Ili is also a recipient of the Eureka Prize for Science Communication and Journalism (2017) and the US Golden Cine Award for Environment and Science (2015). She is currently based in Sydney, Australia.



CHARLOTTE WHEATON PRODUCER

Charlotte started her career in the UK and over fifteen years worked with BBC, History, Discovery, National Geographic and PBS producing both series and features. Since relocating to Australia she has worked as a Producer and Production Executive and in 2022 was appointed Head of Factual for GoodThing Productions. Her credits include AACTA nominated feature *CLEAN* (SXSW/ SBS/ MIFF), *BODYLINE: THE ULTIMATE TEST* (ABC), *COLLINGWOOD: FROM THE INSIDE OUT* (MIFF/ABC), *OFF COUNTRY* (MIFF/ NITV) and 2022 MIFF audience award winning *GREENHOUSE BY JOOST* (MIFF)



NICK BATZIAS PRODUCER

Award-winning producer Nick Batzias has 20 years' experience in the film industry having worked across acquisition, distribution and production. In 2018 he founded Good Thing Productions after over 15 years at Madman Entertainment as Head of Madman Production Company. GoodThing focuses on the production of Narrative and Factual projects for screens big and small. Most recently through GoodThing, Nick has produced the award-winning feature documentaries, *2040* with director Damon Gameau and *THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM*, (winner best feature documentary AACTA Award). Recent narrative releases include the Cannes and AACTA Award winning *NITRAM* and Aust/NZ Co production, *NUDE TUESDAY*.



ALEX ARCHER EDITOR

Alex has worked on award-winning films, those films receiving two Emmys, a Peabody, an AIB, a du-Pont Columbia Silver Baton and several Royal Television Society awards and *ATOM* awards. He has worked extensively with both English, Australian and US broadcasters, including BBC1, 2, 3 and 4, Channel 4 and 5 and ITV, SBS, ABC, Foxtel and Channels 7 and 10, National Geographic, Discovery, PBS and History, as well as Chinese (CCTV), and Japanese (NHK) broadcasters. His feature length credits include *THE CHILDREN IN THE PICTURES*; SBS, *MAKING THEIR MARK*; Amazon, *COLLINGWOOD: FROM THE INSIDE OUT*; MIFF/ ABC, *INSIDE JAPAN'S NUCLEAR MELTDOWN*; PBS, *THE WOUNDED PLATOON*; PBS Frontline



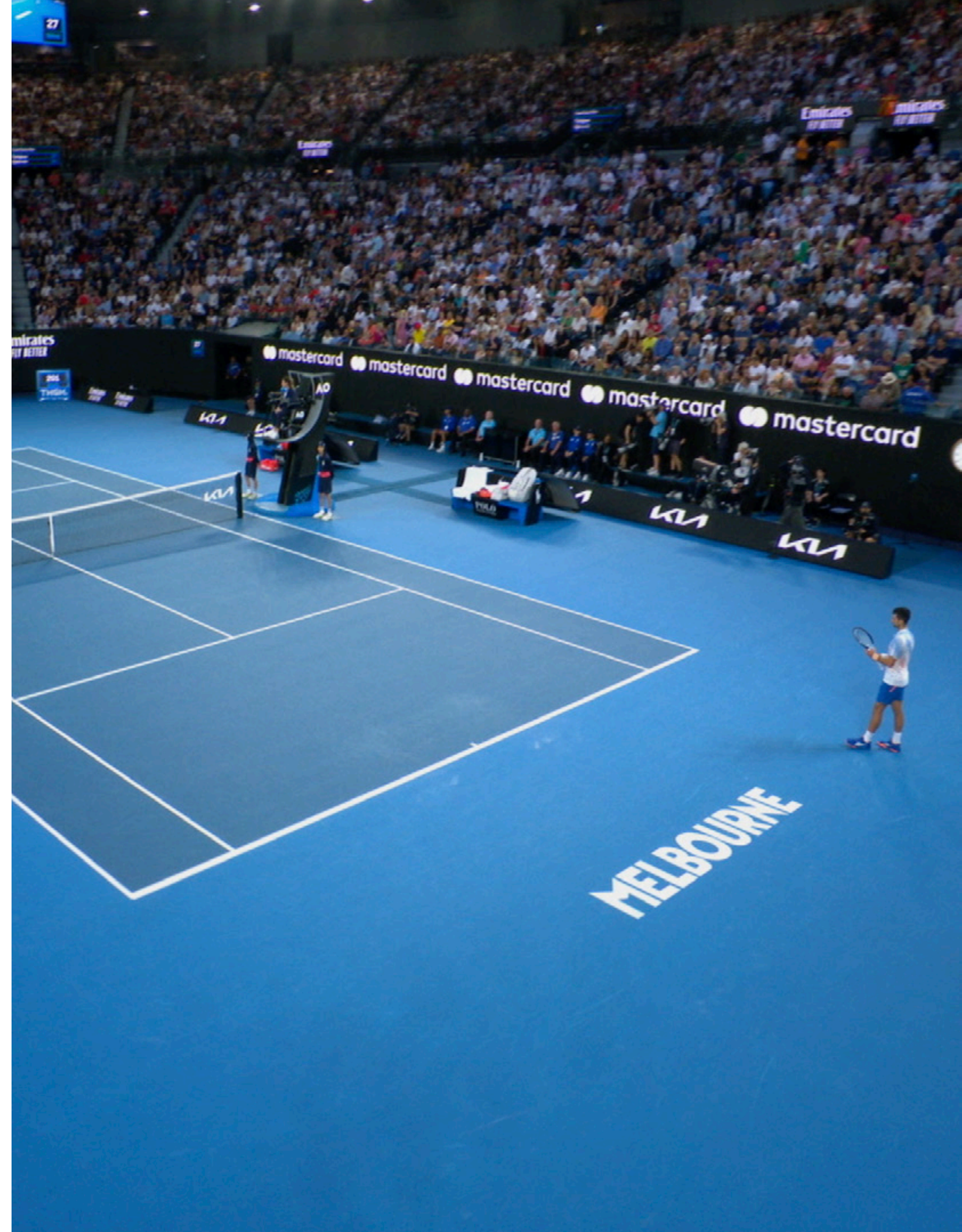
CHIARA COSTANZA COMPOSER

Chiara is a music composer and producer from Torino, Italy and now based in Australia. Chiara has recently composed the original soundtrack for Georgian feature film PANOPTICON (Look at Me), original series TOTALLY COMPLETELY FINE for STAN and HEARTBREAK HIGH for Netflix's series. She has also composed the original score for ALL THESE CREATURES, winner of the Palme D'Or at the Cannes in 2018. Chiara's work ranges across composing and producing music and sound design for film and TV, creating electronic music for live performance, composing soundscapes for immersive environments and art installations, and the experimental use of field recordings with analogue and digital synthesis. In 2020, Chiara was the recipient of the APRA Mentorship program for Women in Screen Composition with composer Bryony Marks.



VIRGINIA WHITWELL EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Virginia is a highly experienced producer of factual and scripted content. From the UK, she has worked on productions all over the world. Her extensive experience includes projects for Warner Bros, HBO, Lucasfilm, EON, 20th Century Fox and Universal. As Head of Production and partner at GoodThing Productions she has produced many projects including multi award winning feature film NITRAM directed by Justin Kurzel (Best Actor, Cannes 2021, 8 AACTA 2021 awards including Best Director, Best Film, Best Screenplay), New Zealand co-production feature comedy NUDE TUESDAY directed by Armagan Ballantyne starring Jackie van Beek, Damon Herriman and Jemaine Clement. Her feature documentary credits include AACTA winning THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM directed by Daniel Gordon, 2040 and AACTA awarding winning THAT SUGAR FILM.



CAST



RLA CAMERA 4



RLA CAMERA 5



RLA CAMERA 6



RLA CAMERA 8



RLA CAMERA 9



RLA CAMERA 10



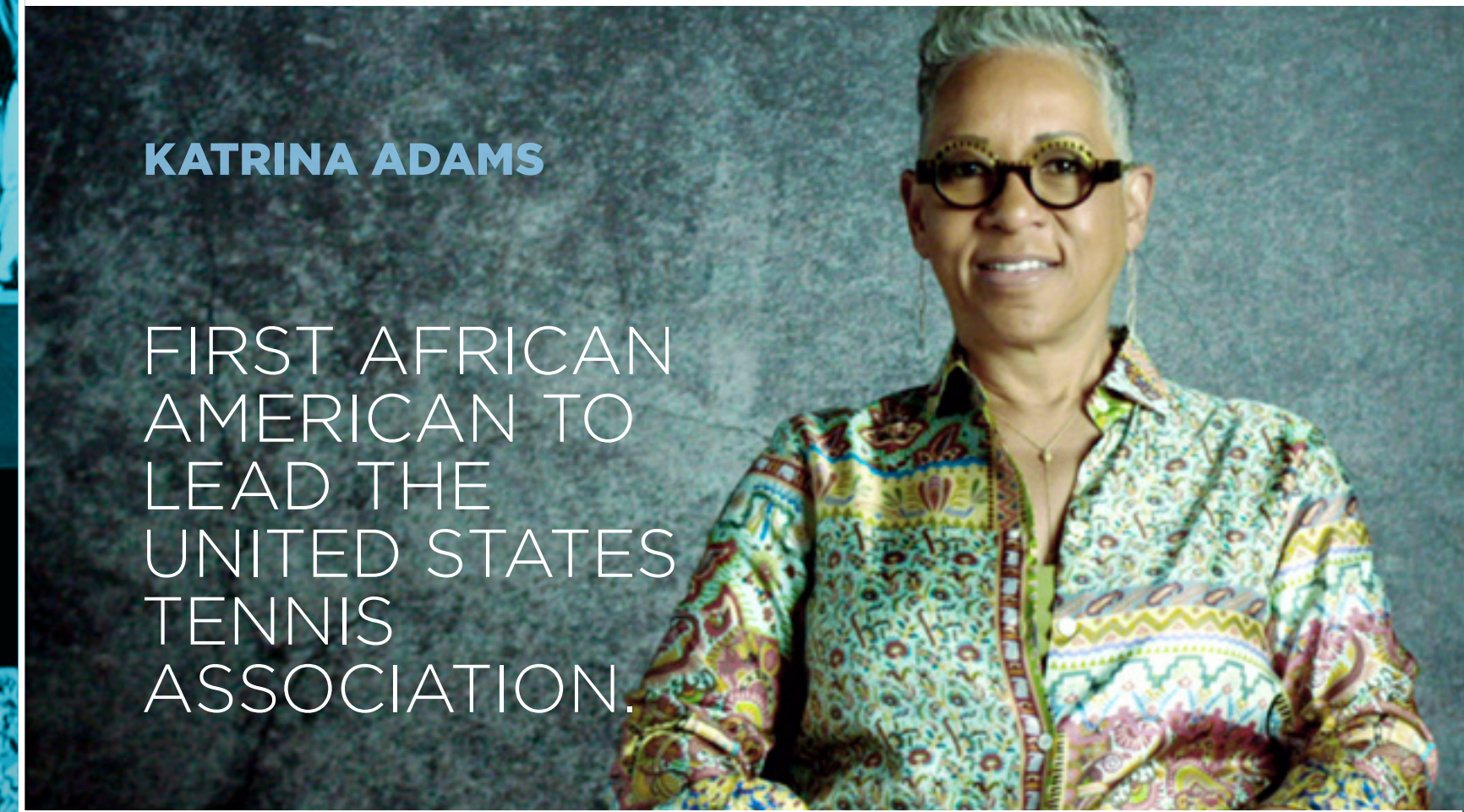
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RLA CAMERA 12



BRUCE MCAVANEY

SPORTS BROADCASTER ON TELEVISION & RADIO FOR NEAR-ON FOUR DECADES.



KATRINA ADAMS

FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN TO LEAD THE UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION.



CRAIG TILEY

AUSTRALIAN OPEN TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR & TENNIS AUSTRALIA CEO.

A portrait of Geoff Dyer, a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a plaid shirt, sitting in a chair.

GEOFF DYER

AUTHOR &
LITERARY
AWARD
WINNER.

A portrait of Rennae Stubbs, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a bright yellow sweater, sitting in a chair.

RENNAE STUBBS

6 X GRAND SLAM
CHAMPION,
4 X OLYMPIAN,
TV PERSONALITY
& PUBLIC
SPEAKER.

A portrait of Damien Cave, a man with a shaved head, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt, standing.

DAMIEN CAVE

FOREIGN
CORRESPONDENT
& THE NEW YORK
TIMES' BUREAU
CHIEF IN SYDNEY.

A portrait of Pat Cash, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue polo shirt, sitting in a chair.

PAT CASH

FORMER
AUSTRALIAN
PROFESSIONAL
TENNIS PLAYER
& WIMBLEDON
CHAMPION 1987.

A portrait of Jeff Kennett, an older man with short grey hair, wearing a green blazer over a checkered shirt, sitting in a chair.

JEFF KENNETT

PREMIER OF
VICTORIA FROM
1992 - 1999 &
FORMER LEADER
OF THE OPPOSITION.

A portrait of Tracey Holmes, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, standing.

TRACEY HOLMES

AWARD-WINNING
JOURNALIST
& PRESENTER
OF THE TICKET
PODCAST.

A portrait of George Megalogenis, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a blue shirt, sitting in a chair.

GEORGE MEGALOGENIS

AUSTRALIAN
JOURNALIST,
POLITICAL
COMMENTATOR
& AUTHOR.

A portrait of Shelley Ware, a woman with dark hair, wearing a purple button-down shirt, sitting in a chair.

SHELLEY WARE

PROUD
YANKUNYTJATJARA
& WIRANGU WOMAN,
TELEVISION &
RADIO PRESENTER
& EDUCATOR.

A portrait of Paul McNamee, a man with white hair, wearing a light brown blazer over a pink shirt, sitting in a chair.

PAUL MCNAMEE

DOUBLES
WORLD NO. 1
PLAYER & FORMER
AUSTRALIAN OPEN
CEO.

SCREEN AUSTRALIA PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION,
VICSCREEN, MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL PREMIERE FUND AND TENNIS AUSTRALIA

A GOODTHING PRODUCTIONS FILM

“AUSTRALIA’S OPEN”

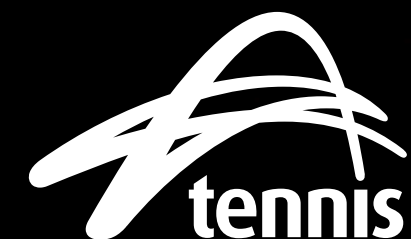
DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY KATIE MILWRIGHT ACS, SKY DAVIES, KRIS DENTON

EDITOR ALEX ARCHER ORIGINAL MUSIC CHIARA COSTANZA

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS PAUL WIEGARD VIRGINIA WHITWELL

PRODUCERS CHARLOTTE WHEATON NICK BATZIAS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ILI BARÉ



PRODUCTION CONTACT DETAILS

goodthing
productions

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