

WE DON'T NEED A MAP

A film by Warwick Thornton

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Screen NSW
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Present

A Barefoot Communications Film

WE DON'T NEED A MAP

Director Warwick Thornton
Producer Brendan Fletcher
Writers Warwick Thornton
Brendan Fletcher

CUTTING
EDGE /



This is the story of the hijacking of an Australian icon.

The Southern Cross is the most famous constellation in the southern hemisphere. Ever since colonisation it's been claimed, appropriated and hotly-contested for ownership by a radical range of Australian groups. But for Aboriginal people the meaning of this heavenly body is deeply spiritual. And just about completely unknown. For a start, the Southern Cross isn't even a cross - it's a totem that's deeply woven into the spiritual and practical lives of Aboriginal people.

Now one of Australia's leading film-makers, Warwick Thornton, tackles this fiery subject head on in a bold and poetic essay-film. "We Don't Need a Map" challenges us to consider the place of the Southern Cross in the Australian psyche.

Imbued with Warwick's cavalier spirit, this is a fun and thought-provoking ride through Australia's cultural and political landscape.

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www.wedontneedamapmovie.com
#wedontneedamapmovie

SPECIFICATIONS

Completion Date	May 2017
Country of Origin	Australia
Shooting Format	Digital
Screening Format	2k DCP (cinema)/HD (television)
Running Time	85 minutes
Genre	Documentary
Language	English
Ratio	16:9
Sound	5.1 (cinema) / Stereo (television)

BROADCAST & DISTRIBUTION

“We Don’t Need a Map” is part of NITV’s Moment in History initiative, and will be nationally broadcast on NITV and SBS 8:30pm July 23rd 2017.

MOMENT IN HISTORY

This landmark Indigenous documentary initiative was launched by NITV and Screen Australia in the lead up to the proposed referendum on Constitutional Recognition. Moment in History brings together some of Australia’s most experienced and innovative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander filmmakers to create powerful, one-off documentaries that reflect on the place of Indigenous Australians in the country today.

INTERNATIONAL SALES

For sales enquiries contact matisse@barefoot.net.au



BACKGROUND

In 2010 Warwick was named Northern Territorian of The Year after “Samson and Delilah’s” worldwide success peaked with him winning the coveted Camera d’Or at Cannes. Thus, as one of handful of nominees for Australian of the Year, Warwick sat down to a press conference and was asked what his main concern would be if he received Australia’s highest honour?

What Warwick said next made national headlines.

“I’m concerned that the Southern Cross is becoming the new Swastika.”

Warwick’s comment hit a raw nerve. For Indigenous people, these five twinkling lights have been part of sacred life for eons. They’ve guided countless journeys, told of important seasonal changes and been a part of dreaming stories that were danced, sung and painted for generations.

But in recent times the Southern Cross icon has become synonymous with the darker side of Australian nationalism. Nicknamed the “Aussie Swazi” by tattoo artists, it’s a become bullish symbol, a badge of pride for nationalist groups touting hardline agendas. Ordinary Australians are turning away from the icon in droves, even removing the tattoos with painful laser surgery.

What’s going on? What’s the big deal with these five stars? How did they gather such potent power?

Fifty years after Aboriginal people were given the vote in 1967 is a good time to ask these questions.

As Warwick says:

“G’day Australia, how ya going? Where do we stand? Are we standing with our chest all puffed out wrapped in the flag ... afraid that someone’s coming to steal our beers and barbeques? It might be time we have a serious and sober conversation about our national symbol and ask the question - are we becoming dickheads?”



WARWICK AND BRENDAN A MAVERICK TEAM

Warwick's a cavalier no doubt. But on this journey he's had the formidable support of fellow film-maker Brendan Fletcher.

Brendan is a celebrated director himself, known for the Sundance-nominated feature drama "Mad Bastards" and his long history of collaborations with Indigenous Australians. Recently he collaborated with Del Kathryn Barton on the AACTA winning animation "Oscar Wilde's The Nightingale And The Rose" featuring Geoffrey Rush and Mia Wasikowska that premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival

Brendan and Warwick make innovative and challenging films that find audiences and awards locally and internationally. They have written this film together, with Warwick directing and shooting while Brendan produces.

And this is just their latest piece of work. In 2015 they co-directed the first ever International TV advertising campaign for Aboriginal Australia, funded by Tourism Australia, which was seen by over 30 million people.

Warwick and Brendan. Quite a team.





THE SHOOT

The shoot for “We Don’t Need a Map” took place over two blocks in 2016.

From the outset it was Warwick’s intention to capture a diverse and socially relevant collection of voices. We interviewed tattoo artists, academics, rappers, poets, rock stars and ad execs - all with a unique point of view on our national symbol. These interviews took place in the big cities of Australia.

“We Don’t Need a Map” then lived up to its name as we took the shoot off the beaten track and right across Australia. We filmed on the outstations of Yirrkala in North East Arnhem Land under the guidance of Timmy Burrawanga (who also appears in the film). In Wardaman country 150 clicks down the road from Katherine in the Northern Territory, we were guided by Bill Harney, generally acknowledged as the leading Indigenous custodian of astrological knowledge. In Warwick’s homeland , the Central Desert, we sat with tribal elders Robin Japanangka Granites and Harry Jagamarra Nelson from the Warlpiri tribe, who told stories of the Southern Cross as they shared the rare traditional practice of ground painting.

Down in Central Victoria Reg Abrahams of the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative showed us an ancient stone arrangement “Wurdi Youang” that could rival the world famous Stonehenge as the oldest physical lunar calendar in the world.

On a film like this, we needed a small versatile crew. Although Warwick shot most of the film himself he was ably assisted by his star film-maker son Dylan River and regular camera collaborator Drew English.

A couple of cameras, backpacks and some dusty swags and the adventure began ...



KEY CHARACTERS

BILL HARNEY

This Wardaman senior elder, born in Menngen near Katherine in the Northern Territory, is one of the richest living fonts of Aboriginal night sky cosmology.

PHIL DENNIS

Phil got his Southern Cross tattoo in honour of his ANZAC heritage. Now over twelve years later Phil is getting it removed, as he feels that it represents a nationalist movement that pushes an agenda he does not feel comfortable with.

KEN WEST

The larger than life founder of the Big Day Out made national headlines in 2007 when he banned the Australian flag from the festival. Ken reflects on the reaction and how he feels now.

ADAM BRIGGS

In 2016 Adam Briggs and his group A.B. Original released their song January 26 – which looks at the contentious topic of Australia Day. It includes the lyric “You can come and wave your flag, but it don’t mean a thing to me.” Needless to say Briggs has an opinion on our national constellation.

REV DR DJINIYINI GONDARRA

Rev Dr Djiniyini is a senior member of the Golumala clan in North East Anrhem Land and a custodian of the “Djulpan” tribal story ... a sacred story about what we call the Southern Cross.

Other luminous contributors include Gareth Liddiard from The Drones, writer Bruce Pascoe, and academic/artist Dr. Romaine Moreton.



BUSH TOYS

Bush Toys are a unique form of desert art from the Ltyentye Apurte and Titjikala communities from central Australia. What these artists do is nothing short of magic. Trawling through the local tips of the central Australia, they turn refuse into beauty, rubbish into hope. The practice of creating these tiny sculptures speaks volumes about Aboriginal people making the most of all available resources, even today.

Born in the desert and a cowboy himself, Warwick has always been taken by the art of the Bush Toys. For our film, we collaborated with key Bush Toys artists David Wallace and Johnny Young to create figurines that Warwick animates as part of the unique story-telling of the film.

MUSIC

True to Warwick's cutting edge style the film features tracks by A.B. Original's Adam Briggs as well some of Australia's best know Aussie punk acts, including Frenzal Rhomb, The Saints, The Drones and Rowland S Howard.

WARWICK THORNTON

Director / Writer

Warwick Thornton is an internationally renowned director, screenwriter and cinematographer. Born and raised in remote Alice Springs, Warwick perfected his trade at Australia's prestigious film school AFTRS. Both of his short films "Nana" and "Greenbush" premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival – "Nana" winning the Crystal Bear for Best Short Film.

Following the success of these films Warwick began work on his first feature "Samson and Delilah" - a confronting look at the relationship between two young Aboriginal teenagers in Alice Springs. The film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2009, winning the Caméra d'Or. "Samson and Delilah" collected many other awards including best film at the Asia-Pacific Screen Awards, the AFI awards, and the Film Critics Circle awards.

Next, Warwick completed his feature "The Darkside", a film which presents well know Australian actors retelling Indigenous ghost stories. This became Warwick's third film invited to premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. Following this he directed the opening segment of Tim Winton's "The Turning", and the opening segment of Guillermo Arriaga's "Words With Gods" – which was invited to premiere at Venice in 2014.

Warwick is also widely regarded for his work as a cinematographer. His work as DOP on the 2012 hit musical "The Sapphires" once again highlighted Warwick's ability to present diverse and exciting Indigenous stories. He worked again with director Wayne Blair on "Septembers of Shiraz" – starring Adrian Brody and Salma Hayek.

Warwick was named Northern Territory Australian of the Year in 2010, and was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award at Imaginative, Canada in 2015.

BRENDAN FLETCHER

Writer / Producer

Brendan is one of Australia's most versatile and dynamic film-makers. Well-known as a writer /director himself, this is the first film Brendan has produced for another director. If you're going to start producing someone else, you may as well start with a Cannes award-winner.

SCREEN INTERNATIONAL listed Brendan as one of 25 "Rising Stars" from around the globe following the release of his debut feature "Mad Bastards". The film was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. It won the Independent Spirit Award at the 2011 IF Awards; received 5 x AACTA Award nominations including Best Film and Best Original Screenplay; won Best Film at the Deadly Awards and garnered Film Critics and Director's Guild nominations for Best Director.

Brendan's recent work "Oscar Wilde's The Nightingale and The Rose" is a short animation made in collaboration with two-time Archibald-winning artist Del Kathryn Barton. Starring Mia Wasikowska and Geoffrey Rush it premiered at Berlin International Film Festival and won the AACTA Award for Best Short Animation, Best Australian Short Film at Melbourne International Film Festival and Best Director at the ADG Awards 2015.

Brendan's reputation as a collaborator with heavyweight Australian creative talent began with Brendan co-directing a series of documentaries with Russell Crowe ("Texas" and "The Men Who Couldn't Finish Things") followed by the award-winning documentary "Black Chicks Talking" with Leah Purcell (Tribeca Film Festival), In 2011 he made "Judith Lucy's Spiritual Journey" for ABC TV and more recently "Kev Carmody: Songman". Coming up later in 2017, the ABC will premiere two new documentaries of Brendan's – a music film about Sarah Blasko and an Arts film series made with Hannah Gadsby.

Brendan's film "900 Neighbours" about the Northcott Housing Estate screened at the Sydney Film Festival in 2006. It garnered a Best Documentary Nomination at the Film Critics Circle Award and won Best Social/Political documentary at the 2006 ATOM Awards.

ANDREA LANG A.S.E.
Editor

Andrea Lang ASE has been editing documentaries for over twenty years. Her internationally awarded feature documentary credits include “Cunnamulla”, “Wedding in Ramallah”, “Landmines a Love Story”, “End of the Rainbow”. She won an AFI for Best Editing in 2000 for a documentary “Thomson of Arnhem Land” and was nominated for AACTA Best Editing in a Documentary 2015 for “Cambodian Space Project” in 2015 .

In 1997 she co-produced a 4 part series for ABC “Our Boys” then co-directed an episode of the AFI winning series “Liberal Rule” in 2009. Recent editing credits include “Three Boys Dreaming” and “Scarlet Road”, both finalists in the SFF Foxtel Documentary Awards. In 2012 she was awarded Best Documentary Editing by the ASEG for her work on “A Law Unto Himself”. Her most recent editing credits include “Surgery Ship” which won the Audience Award at Sarasota Film Festival, and was a finalist in the Milan Film Festival.

In 2016 she edited and co-wrote “Ka-ching! Pokie Nation”.

KEY QUOTES

“When I look at that constellation ... it can't be touched. Nobody can touch it. And nobody can own it. What they can own is it in its symbolic form. And that's the illusion”.

- Dr. Romaine Moreton.

“As the years passed we saw the Southern Cross became sharp around the edges. Like a ninja star. This is a type of nationalism where you have to choose a side and you have to choose a team. So the Southern Cross becomes a narrow symbol of identity for something that I am not”.

- Omar Musa

“This is our dreaming. Southern Cross here. Sacred power”.

- Robin Japanangka Granites

“So what is Djulpan? It is a canoe. It is a sacred canoe. My mother's people are on that canoe”.

- Rev Dr. Djinyini Gondarra

“It's like a singing map. The song's a map that guides you into that place.”

- Bill Harney

“It resonates deep, especially the cross-ness of it all”

- Gareth Liddiard

“The Southern Cross is an emu footprint. When he lift his feet up, put his feet down there, it became the Southern Cross”.

- Bill Harney

“Everything that has been told is up there. It's a map for us”

- Djerrk'na Marika

“There was this symbol on my back that doesn't represent me ... it's just been hijacked”.

- Phil Dennis

CREDITS

Writer / Director
Warwick Thornton

Writer/Producer
Brendan Fletcher

Cinematography
Warwick Thornton
Dylan River
Drew English

Location Sound
David Tranter
Nick Emond

Editor
Andrea Lang ASE

Sound Designer
Simon “Slash” Hicks

Bush Toy Artists
David Wallace
Johnny Young

Executive Producer
Marcus Bolton
Cutting Edge

Line Producer
Belinda Mravacic

Researcher
Sari Braithwaite

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Drew English

**Additional 1st
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Drone Operator
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Flying Dragon Aerial

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Directors Attachment
Matisse Ruby

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Yirrkala Cultural Consultant
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Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Centre
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Feet n Frames

Foley Artist
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Foley Recorder
Lisa Simpson

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Adam Briggs

Baluka Maymuru

Bill Harney

Bruce Pascoe

Dee Madigan

Djerrk’na Marika

Dr. Duane Hamacher

Gareth Liddiard

Professor Ghassan Hage

Grantlee Kieza

Harry Jagamarra Nelson

Ken West

Les Rice

Dr. Nick Lomb

Omar Musa

Phil Dennis

Rev. Dr. Djiniyini Gondarra

Robert Gunybi Ganambarr

Robin Japanangka Granites

Dr. Romaine Moreton

Roz Ward

Sally Scrivenor

Timmy Burrawanga

Trevor “Reg” Abrahams

“We Don’t Need A Map” is an epic telling of Australia’s history, told through our collective relationship to one famous constellation.

It is a challenging, poetic essay about who we are as a nation.

**The film proudly defines Aboriginal people’s lore and spiritual relationship with the land as fundamental to this nation. And yet under the one night sky, we are all connected now ... all people of this land, all Australians.
So how do we want to move forward?**

When we are lost we don’t need a map, we just need a clear view.



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