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MEDIA RELEASE: Wednesday 17 February 2021

RIDING A WAVE OF PRODUCTION

Cameras roll on Werner Film Production's new series for Netflix and ZDFE

Melbourne: Principal photography on **Werner Film Productions'** (WFP) new NETFLIX/ZDFE 10-episode teen surfing drama, ***Surviving Summer***, will commence this month, as production wraps on WFP's six-part premium news drama for the ABC ***The Newsreader***.

The three time Emmy®-nominated, and multi AFI, AACTA and Logie award winning television production company has been in back to back production since the beginning of 2020, and has a rich and diverse advanced development slate.

Surviving Summer was created by **Joanna Werner** and **Josh Mapleston** (*Ready For This, Beat Bugs, Dance Academy*) written by Mapleston, Marieke Hardy, Magda Wozniak, Keir Wilkins, Gemma Crofts and Kirsty Fisher and will be shot on location at some of Australia's most iconic surf beaches in Victoria and is supported by Film Victoria.

Sky Katz (Disney Channel's *Raven's Home*) stars as the titular character Summer, a fierce Brooklyn teen who is sent Down Under to live with family friends in a tiny coastal town on the Great Ocean Road. Katz stars alongside Brazilian rising star **João Gabriel Marinho** (*Malhação*), Australia's **Kai Lewins** (*Wild Boys*) and **Savannah La Rain** (*Content*) and in her first foray into acting, five-time Queensland Junior State Surf Champion **Lilliana Bowrey**.

Set up director is **Ben Chessell** (*The Great, Giri/Haji*), with **Sian Davies** (*Bloom, The Gloaming*) and **Charlotte George** (*Big Smoke*) also directing. DOP is **Katie Milwright** (*Upright, Please Like Me*) with water and surfing cinematography by **Rick Rifici** (*Breath, Dirt Music*). Production design by **Paddy Reardon** (*Glitch, Underbelly*) and costume design by **Shauna Lovisetto** (*Five Bedrooms, Get Krack!n*). Joanna Werner is Producing with Executive Producers Werner and Stuart Menzies. Nathan Lloyd is the casting director.

Joanna Werner said "*Surviving Summer* has been a passion project for a long time and I am thrilled that we will be shooting on the Great Ocean Road very soon. Our supremely talented teen cast come from New York, Rio, Noosa, Brisbane and Sydney and are an exciting mix of acting and surfing talent. They have been training hard and will be ably supported by our brilliant crew, fantastic scripts and fingers crossed, great surf."

Surviving Summer marks a return to WFP's young adult genre roots (*Dance Academy*) after a run of high-end prime time drama which includes *The Newsreader*, a compelling six-episode drama series created by Michael Lucas and starring Anna Torv (*Mindhunter, Fringe*), Sam Reid (*The Hunting, Belle*) and Robert Taylor (*Longmire*), and *Riot*, the multi-award winning story of Australia's first Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras starring Damon Herriman (*Mindhunter*), Kate Box (*Wentworth, Stateless*) and Xavier Samuel (*Seven Types of Ambiguity, The Twilight Saga: Eclipse*).

In 2020 Joanna produced, along with Tom HOFFIE, the eight-episode US-Australia series created by Tony Ayres, *Clickbait*, for Matchbox Pictures, Tony Ayres Productions, Heyday and NETFLIX, shot in Melbourne during the global pandemic.

WFP is internationally celebrated for the global success of three award-winning seasons of *Dance Academy*, created by Samantha Strauss, which screened in over 165 countries. *Dance Academy's* three seasons (65 episodes) culminated in a feature film, *Dance Academy: The Movie*, written by Samantha Strauss and directed by Jeffrey Walker which was shot in Sydney and New York. WFP is also known for the ground-breaking 13-part series in collaboration with Blackfella Films, *Ready For This*.



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Surviving Summer is a Werner Films Production in association with Netflix and ZDF Enterprises and Film Victoria. Developed with the assistance of Screen NSW.

The Newsreader is produced by Werner Film Productions, for the ABC, with major investment from Screen Australia and the ABC, financed with support from Film Victoria and in association with Hats Off Media. International sales by eOne International Distribution.

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Joanna Werner is available for interview.