**David Stratton’s Stories of Australian Cinema: Worksheet 2**

**Strictly Ballroom, 1992**

1. Name the 3 films of Baz Luhrman’s and Catherine Martin’s ‘red curtain trilogy’.
2. What is meant by ‘the Australian battler’s dream’? Why was Strictly Ballroom so different to other films that represented the ‘Aussie battler’?
3. What was so “audacious” about the film-making?
4. Identify the film-making elements ‘production design’ includes.
5. A ‘cartoonish’ style is noted as a way of describing Baz Luhrman’s cinematography. Make notes on the way the Strictly Ballroom segments screened appear ‘cartoonish’.
6. The film debuted to an overwhelming reception at Canne in 1992. Use the Screen Australia website and download https://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/ getmedia/15548d10-7636-43c0-bc18-8cd0bd940aa4/Cannes-Guide.pdf?ext=.pdf
7. What is ‘Canne’? Explain the importance of the success there for both the film and the film-makers.
8. Name Baz Luhrman’s and Catherine Martin’s production company and the films they have made since 1992. Which ones are Australian? What do you think determines whether a film is Australian or not?
9. “Baz Luhrmann reinvented the musical” with Moulin Rouge in 2001. Just viewing these segments and listening to Nicole Kidman, what seemed to make it an “incredible piece of work”?

**Picnic at Hanging Rock, 1975**

1. What distinguished Picnic at Hanging Rock from the other films of the 1970s?
2. The film was considered to be Australia’s first real ‘art-house’ film. Explain what is meant by the term ‘art-house’.
3. Why is the film considered to be such an important one?
4. The attention to detail in the production design, especially costume design is noted. Explain the effect of the white costumes of the girls.
5. Several interviewees say they were influenced by the film. Identify those Stratton says became pivotal in the industry after they saw Picnic at Hanging Rock.
6. Jacki Weaver and John Jarrett acted as secondary characters in the film. They have become internationally famous for their roles as villains in more recent Australian films. Name each of those films.
7. Based on the segments screened, what production elements created the ‘mysterious atmosphere’ that Stratton says helped imbed the film into the nation’s consciousness.
8. Director, Peter Weir’s career “took off” after the release of the film. Find out what films he has made since then. Which ones were made in Hollywood? Which ones were made in Australia?
9. Use the National Film and Sound Archive online exhibition to discover more about the making of the film. Listen to those involved and find 5 facts about the making of the film https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/ online-exhibition/picnic-at-hanging-rock
10. Use the following link to summarise the contribution of Peter Weir to cinema.
11. http://sensesofcinema.com/2005/great-directors/ weir/
12. He became a key part of what was known as the “new wave” of Australian cinema in the 1970s and 1980s. List those represented in this section of episode 1 as ‘new wave’ films. Identify 1 you plan to watch.

**Breaker Morant, 1980**

1. Breaker Morant is another film from the ‘new wave’ period. Explain why this “creative explosion in filmmaking” was important for the industry and Australian audiences.
2. Explain an instance of ‘resourcefulness’ in the making of Breaker Morant.
3. Director, Bruce Beresford, researched the film in Britain. Explain the way he included material found in his research into the film and how it creates a powerful final message to Australian audiences.
4. Do you support Beresford’s strong refusal to have Breaker Morant “dubbed” or “re-voiced” with American accents for its release in the United States? Give reasons why.

**Crocodile Dundee, 1986**

1. What did Crocodile Dundee “prove”?
2. Russell Crowe uses the term “cultural cringe”. What does that mean in terms of how some Australians regard Australian films?
3. Crocodile Dundee featured beautiful Australian landscapes. Explain the impact of the success and popularity of the film in the USA and identify the film’s greatest achievement in the context of world cinema.

**Jedda, 1955**

1. There are several reasons why David Stratton describes the Charles Chauvel film Jedda as a landmark, controversial and remarkable film. Explain his reasons:

* Landmark
* Controversial
* Remarkable

**Samson & Delilah, 2009**

1. David Stratton thought Samson and Delilah was a very confronting film. Why did director and writer Warwick Thornton write such an “incredibly dark film”?
2. The images largely tell the sad love story of the protagonists. Identify the disturbing things depicted in the screened sequences that “white” audiences in particular may find “confronting”. Why might these be considered confronting?
3. Explain the importance of Samson and Delilah as a “game-changer”.
4. Leah Purcell says, “Warwick Thornton’s Samson and Delilah was a catalyst for indigenous filmmaking and absolutely opened the flood gates for people to go “wow look at this, another way of storytelling”. Name as many Indigenous Australian filmmakers as you can.

**Turkey Shoot, 1982**

1. Explain David Stratton’s objections to Turkey Shoot, despite his campaign against censorship in the 1960s.
2. Turkey Shoot is considered an ‘Ozploitation’ film. Identify others.
3. What does the term ‘Ozploitation’ mean?
4. Explain why these films were important for the industry at the time.
5. Explore more ‘Ozploitation’ films in Mark Hartley’s documentary Not Quite Hollywood.

**Mad Max, 1979**

1. Why is the film the first Mad Max film famous?
2. Stratton appreciated the ‘implied’ rather than explicit violence of films like Turkey Shoot. In the sequences shown, what techniques did George Miller use to imply rather than obviously depict violence.
3. Identify the various reasons Mad Max is considered an important film.
4. The fourth instalment in the series, Fury Road, is a remarkable Australian film for at least 2 reasons. Explain.

**My Brilliant Career, 1979**

1. Explain why My Brilliant Career is considered a “game-changer”.
2. On the surface they are very different films, so explain what Fury Road and My Brilliant Career have in common and why both are important.
3. Judy Davis and Sam Neill would become an international screen stars. How many films have each made since? Name those you have seen.
4. Explain the social change that was happening in Australia in the ‘70’s that the film reflected.
5. List the films made by women directors since My Brilliant Career as represented by the extracts screened. Which ones have you seen?
6. “She wants to be an independent woman and choose her own career, just like the film’s producer, Margaret Fink.”
7. The film was a “game-changer” for the story it represented both on screen and “behind” the scenes. Explain why the film was important, especially for so many women.

**Shine, 1996**

1. Producer Margaret Fink and writer/director, Scott Hicks have persistence in common. Explain.
2. “Sometimes success against the odds is life changing. Shine… is one of those movies.” Stratton’s statement applies to both the international and Australian success of the film as well as the true story it tells about pianist, David Helfgott.
3. Summarise the story of the first-time director Scott Hick’s experience of making Shine in the form of a promotional blurb for a film of that story.
4. Scott Hicks says that Geoffrey Rush’s Academy Award for acting “represented everything about the struggle to make the film.” Explain what he means by that.