



Media Release:

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## ***Samson & Delilah* Goes To Cannes**

Warwick Thornton's home-grown Territory film that won the Audience Award for Best Feature Film at the 2009 BigPond Adelaide Film Festival is destined to make a big splash at its international debut in France in May.

Northern Territory Film Office (NTFO) director Penelope McDonald said that it had been announced today in Paris that *Samson & Delilah* has been selected to screen in the Un Certain Regard category, the main showcase section of the 2009 Festival de Cannes.

"For a Territory film that was made in Alice Springs to be selected for the Cannes Festival is a remarkable achievement," Ms McDonald said.

"*Samson & Delilah* was supported with investments from the Indigenous Department of Screen Australia, the New South Wales Film and Television Office, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Adelaide Film Festival as well as the Northern Territory Film Office.

"The screen industry and public in the Northern Territory are proud of the accomplishment of Director Warwick Thornton, Producer Kath Shelper, the teenage actors Melissa Gibson and Rowan McNamara who play Samson and Delilah, and the entire team behind the film.

"Alice Springs has been buzzing with excitement and interest in *Samson & Delilah* following its premiere screening at the Old Telegraph Station last Friday, 17 April 2009 where a crowd of 2 000 locals turned out on the banks of the Todd River with picnic hampers and blankets to watch the film under the stars with a few drops of rain only adding to the wonderful atmosphere."

Ms McDonald said everybody loves a good yarn, and particularly when they can see places, people and stories that they are familiar with on a big screen.

"The Northern Territory Film Office was the major sponsor of the Alice Springs premiere, along with the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation, ensuring the premiere was free and open to all," she said.

*Samson & Delilah* was filmed in and around Alice Springs in 2008 and received \$20 000 in funding from the NTFO Screen Grants Program for post production costs.

"From Alice Springs, Australia to Cannes, France, *Samson & Delilah* is attracting a lot of interest and while it tells the raw story of two Aboriginal teenagers from a remote Central Australian community, it is a love story that transcends race politics and the film has proved to resonate with audiences worldwide," Ms McDonald said.

Warwick Thornton grew up in Alice Springs and has been working in the screen industry for more than 20 years.

While Cannes is a first for Warwick Thornton he has twice won the prize for best short film in competition at the prestigious Berlin Film Festival with films shot in the Northern Territory, *Greenbush* and *Nana* and his short drama *Payback* featured at the Telluride Film Festival, Colorado, USA.

For more information on films selected to screen at the Festival de Cannes go to [www.festival-cannes.com](http://www.festival-cannes.com)

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**Media Note – for more information contact Penelope McDonald on 8952 5222**

**Image – Credit images to photographer Mark Rogers, *Samson & Delilah* director Warwick Thornton with Marissa Gibson ‘Delilah’ and Rowan McNamara ‘Samson’.**

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