

# Media Release

**The Hon Danny Pearson MP**

Assistant Treasurer

Minister for Regulatory Reform

Minister for Government Services

Minister for Creative Industries

Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services



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## NEW STUDIO AND SOUND STAGE SKETCH OUT SCREEN GROWTH

Victoria's screen industry is poised for growth in jobs and projects as we safely recover from the pandemic with a new, globally focused animation studio to call Melbourne home and the expansion of Docklands Studios Melbourne reaching the next stage.

Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson today announced Melbourne has been selected as the home of Princess Bento Studio – a major new animation house created through a partnership between Emmy Award-winning US animation studio Bento Box Entertainment and Victorian production powerhouse Princess Pictures.

Founded by animation leaders Scott Greenberg and Joel Kuwahara, producers of landmark shows including *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*, Bento Box is responsible for hugely popular series such as *Bob's Burgers*. Owned by FOX Entertainment and with studios in LA and Atlanta, Melbourne is the studio's first international outpost.

Princess Pictures is the Victorian company behind much-loved television and online productions including *How to Stay Married*, *Wrong King of Black* and *Superwog*. Recent animation projects include the *Yolo Crystal Fantasy* and AACTA-nominated short, *Koala Man*.

Princess Bento Studio will create 150 full time technical and creative jobs for Victoria's animation sector. As well as generating new ideas, the team will work on a pipeline of animation projects bound for local and international audiences.

In a further boost, foundations have now been laid for the sixth sound stage at Docklands Studios Melbourne and work has begun on the main structure – backed by \$46 million from the Andrews Labor Government. The 40,000sqft stage will expand the capacity of the studios by 60 percent, so it can cater for more local and international screen projects.

The sound stage will feature a massive 900,000-litre water tank giving it flexibility to attract a greater range of productions. The sound stage project is on track for completion later this year.

In 2018-19 Victoria's screen industry generated \$2.2 billion and created 17,000 full time jobs. Following the global COVID-19 hiatus, the local industry is powering back, with work on COVIDSafe films, television series, commercials and more now underway in Melbourne and regional Victoria.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

*"With new screen players and a new super sound stage, Melbourne is stepping up to compete on the world arena."*

*"We're proud to welcome Princess Bento Studio to our state and screen community, and the 150 new jobs it creates. We look forward to seeing more Victorian-made animation projects hitting the screen."*

### Quotes attributable to Bento Box Co-Founder Scott Greenberg

*"We are proud to partner with our close friends at Princess Pictures to set up this new animation studio in Victoria."*

*Melbourne is home to a vibrant creative community, one of the best in the world, and we are excited to start working with the many talented animators, production and support staff in the region on a slate of exciting animation projects."*

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