

Chancellor, the University of South Australia awards the honorary degree of Doctor of the University to a person of eminence who has made a distinguished contribution to public service, or a field of academic endeavour or artistic pursuit.

It is my pleasure to present Dr George Miller AO for the honorary degree of Doctor of the University in recognition of his distinguished service to the Australian and international film industries.

Dr George Miller AO is an internationally acclaimed producer, director and writer, widely regarded as the statesman of Australian film. His filmmaking career began while studying medicine at the University of New South Wales, where he created his first prizewinning short film. After completing his medical residency in 1972, he worked as a doctor while pursuing experimental filmmaking — a passion that soon led him to write and direct his first feature film, Mad Max, released in 1979.

Mad Max became a global success and one of Australia's highest grossing films, launching a franchise that has shaped the action genre for more than four decades. In 2016, the fourth instalment, Mad Max: Fury Road, won six Academy Awards out of 10 nominations. The most recent chapter, Furiosa, released in 2024, was met with strong critical acclaim.

Through his production company, Kennedy Miller Mitchell, Dr Miller has created an extraordinary range of award-winning films and television series, including Happy Feet, Babe, Dead Calm, Lorenzo's Oil, and The Year My Voice Broke. His ability to move between high intensity action films and family friendly animated features reflects his remarkable versatility and creative vision.

Dr Miller's influence extends beyond his own creative works. Since 2001, he has served as the inaugural Patron of the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA), helping to shape policy and champion excellence within the Australian screen industry. He has also contributed to the broader arts sector through his service on the board of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney.

His contributions have been recognised through numerous honours. In 1996, he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia. In 2010, he received France's highest artistic honour, the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He has also received honorary awards from several Australian universities, and in 2016 served as President of the Jury at the 69th Cannes Film Festival — an honour reserved for artists of exceptional international standing.

Dr Miller's films have garnered Oscars, BAFTAs, Golden Globes and more than 25 AACTA Awards. His work has launched the careers of internationally renowned Australian actors and has placed Australian cinema firmly on the global stage.

A visionary storyteller, a champion of the arts, and a global ambassador for Australian creativity, his influence continues to inspire filmmakers around the world and elevate Australia's reputation on the global stage.

Chancellor, I am pleased to present George Miller for the honorary degree of Doctor of the University.