WA SCREENWRITER WINS NEW JERSEY FILM COMP PRIZE

West Australian screenwriter Burleigh Smith has won the Screenwriting Award at New Jersey’s Garden State Film Competition and will now be read live on-stage during the festival.

Arguably New Jersey’s top independent film festival, three-time Academy Award nominee Diane Ladd will direct the reading of You Can’t Play The Game If You Don’t Know The Rules this Saturday 5 April – local time.

Smith – a Senior Lecturer at Perth’s SAE Institute – will have his film produced and released later this year with Packed To The Rafter’s Zoe Ventoura, Offspring’s John Waters and The Castle’s Tiriel Mora as part of the cast.

“The screenplay only took two months to write. Once I'm started, I write very quickly and never rewrite,” said Smith. “The rather long title is from a self-help book written by Dr Irene Alexander. It looks at managing relationships. I took chapter headings and inserted them into the narrative of my original screenplay.

He added, “The script is a romantic comedy that tells the story of Anders and Andrea, who are perfect for each other but may never meet. The two separate storylines play out, other characters overlap.”
The award is given to a screenplay that has a basis of a “really great film” and Smith’s effort was also a finalist at the Beverly Hills film festival, received an award of excellence at the Canada International Film Festival and was recognised at the Sacramento International Film Festival.