



Dr JAMES McNAMARA
Writer / Showrunner / Film professor

James McNamara is an Australian television writer, creator, and operational showrunner who has twice been named an “international rising star” by BAFTA LA. James is the currently co-creator and showrunner of *The Artful Dodger*, an international television adaptation of Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* for Sony Pictures Television and Curio Pictures for Disney+. He is also the creator and head writer of *Detective Cooper*, an international television adaptation of Malla Nunn’s award-winning novels for Goalpost Pictures, Quizzical Pictures, and M-Net which was selected for Series Mania 2023 in Europe. Recently, James wrote, produced, and directed an audio series with Princess Pictures for Audible. Other work includes television writers’ rooms for the Academy Award-winning See Saw Films, Matchbox Pictures / NBC Universal, Foxtel, ABC, and Endemol Shine, working alongside Oscar, BAFTA, Emmy, and AACTA Award-winning writers and producers. McNamara has consulted on feature films for Porchlight Films, Icon Film Distribution, and Fox Searchlight Pictures.

James specialises in literary adaptations, elevated genre, period drama with a dark comic edge but is equally drawn to character driven commercial thrillers. His creative work is bolstered by his teaching at the University of California, Santa Barbara, a tier-one US research university. James is honored his creative skills have been recognized by a visiting appointment to one of America’s preeminent film faculties, whose members include the recipients of two MacArthur Genius Grants, four Emmys, two Golden Globes, and a BAFTA. James regularly teaches television writing and adaptations alongside some of the USA’s most decorated showrunners and creators.

James’s university research in screen adaptations gives him a market-leading creative expertise in adapting complex, high-value literary IP for television. An emerging thought-leader in this space, James recently delivered a keynote address on television adaptations of Shakespeare at a major academic conference and hosted one of France’s leading philosophers of film from the Sorbonne, who flew to UCSB to guest lecture in James’s groundbreaking advanced television narrative class. James has been invited to write about literature and television for the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Times Literary Supplement* and *Australian Book Review*, among others, and the late Clive James described James’s work on the HBO era of US television drama as having made a “global contribution to cultural analysis” (*Play All*, Yale UP, 2016).

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James's expertise in screen adaptations is backed by his PhD in English literature from Oxford University, where he held a Clarendon Scholarship, the university's award for "the elite academic candidates of their generation". James's doctoral work was supervised by the Truman Capote Award-winning literary critic Helen Small, who holds Oxford's Merton Professorship of English, the distinguished chair previously held by J.R.R. Tolkien.

Alongside James's creative experience and research expertise, James brings substantial corporate experience to his work as a showrunner and executive producer. Recognising early that showrunning requires corporate management experience, James spent the first years of his career as a corporate litigation lawyer at McDermott Will & Emery, one of the world's largest law firms. When James's team left the firm during the global financial crisis, he elected to remain as the only corporate litigation lawyer in the London office for over a year. Reporting directly to the Global Head of International Arbitration in New York, James experienced an exceptional level and tempo work. Highlights include providing emergency advice on a US\$250,000,000 international dispute, obtaining a High Court injunction in under 4 hours to prevent a £1,000,000 eighteenth-century 'cello from leaving the United Kingdom, and closing a market-sensitive US\$12,000,000 settlement negotiation after being responsible for the day-to-day management of a case with proceedings in five countries.

In addition to his PhD from Oxford University, James holds degrees in English and Law from the University of Western Australia and in Screenwriting from AFTRS. James's long-term career goal is to unite his creative abilities as a screenwriter with his research and corporate experience to helm prestige adaptations of major literary IP franchises for the global film and television markets.

James is based in LA but works regularly in Australia. He holds Australian, UK and US passports.

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