

THE AUSTRALIAN

Star Miranda Tapsell recognises it's her time for change

JUSTIN BURKE THE AUSTRALIAN AUGUST 26, 2014 12:00AM



Actress Miranda Tapsell, in Sydney yesterday, says she tried to see the 1967 referendum through the eyes of her mother and grandmother. Picture: James Croucher Source: News Corp Australia

MIRANDA Tapsell didn't need to look far for inspiration for her character in *Vote Yes*, a short film about the 1967 referendum on including Aborigines in the census.

"I tried to see that event through my grandmother's and mother's eyes," The Sapphires actress said.

"The referendum in 67 meant a lot to them, and the sort of opportunities that then became available to my generation."

And like her character — a young Aboriginal woman determined to get to the polling station — Tapsell sees the campaign for constitutional recognition of indigenous people as her generation's chance to be counted.

"I hope that constitutional recognition will change the way that Aboriginal people are viewed and how they are valued," she said. "I really feel it's the beginning of something wonderful."

Vote Yes is being screened by the Recognise campaign at a sold-out Chauvel Theatre in Sydney tomorrow night. Recognise helped promote a crowdfunding campaign that raised more than \$20,000 to get the film made.

The program also includes a filmed message of support from Yothu Yindi's songwriter and lead singer, Dr Yunupingu, re-released with the blessing of his family after his death last year.

Nick Waterman, the film's writer and director who is working on a feature-length version, comes close to tears when explaining the motivation. "It may be a bad analogy, but for me it's like an adopted child learning who their real parents are," said the 27-year-old, who moved from his hometown of Brisbane to London aged 18. "We grew up not really knowing about our 40,000 years of history — just the last 200 — and I felt robbed of knowing what it really means to be an Australian. I get quite upset."

The film, which premiered earlier in the year at Flickerfest, has been shown at schools during Reconciliation Week, and has been picked up for limited distribution in Japan.

Waterman and Tapsell hope other artists will engage with the campaign. "I just hope other actors and artists look into it and ask themselves what it really means for them," Tapsell said.

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