



*'Freedom is more than  
a resolution- he is not  
free who is free alone'*

John Boyle O'Reilly  
Irish radical, 1868

# Death or Liberty

**Australian democracy was shaped by the rebels, radicals and patriots  
from Britain and North America who arrived in convict chains.**

**Documentary series 3 x TV hour**

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SCREEN  
AUSTRALIA

Roar Film acknowledges the support of Screen Australia's Enterprise Program

# DEATH OR LIBERTY

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**DOCUMENTARY SERIES 3 x TV hour**

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- **Dramatic accounts of tragic loss and daring escapes**
  - **Extraordinary tales of rebellion and betrayal**
  - **Convict voices speak from the grave**
  - **Unexpected relevance - 19th Century radical influence the creation of Australian democracy in 1901**
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Less than 200 years ago the British Government banished its political enemies - viewed with the same alarm as today's terrorists – to a penal colony at the 'end of the earth' called Van Dieman's Land. The prisoners included liberals, democrats and republicans; machine breakers, luddites, trade unionists and Chartists; Irish revolutionaries, Scottish Jacobins, Canadian and even American insurgents. Through vivid first-hand accounts of these passionate and literate individuals, this documentary series tells how Australia's much lauded democracy and egalitarianism arrived on the fatal shore in shackles and chains. While some of the rebels are revered in their homelands as heroes and martyrs, their lives as convicts are an untold story. Written by **Tony Moore** and based on his acclaimed book, the series features dramatic first eyewitness tales from the convicted rebels along with interviews with Tony Moore, celebrated writers and historians. **Hamish Maxwell-Stuart, Janet McCalman, Cassandra Pybus** and **Richard Flanagan**. Roots music composed and performed by singers and songwriters like **Billy Bragg** (UK), **Mick Thomas** and **Liz Stringer** (Australia) and, hopefully **Martha Wainwright** (Canada). Shot in Australia, UK, Ireland, USA and Canada.

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Producers: Steve Thomas, Anna Grieve and Kath Symmons

Director: Steve Thomas

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Seeking UK, Canadian and US partners

Development supported by Screen Tasmania, Film Australia and Screen Australia's Enterprise Program.

Budget: \$1.5 million

Seeking: Full budget

