



Jackson Gallagher, David Arquette and Kendal Rae at Docklands. Picture: JOSIE HAYDEN

Stars light up our city

Docklands Studios in the spotlight

VICTORIA'S film industry is experiencing one of its busiest periods ever.

Legendary British actor Helen Mirren is in Melbourne this week, filming the Hollywood supernatural thriller *Winchester*.

And David Arquette, who starred in the 1990s slasher film *Scream*, is also in town at the city's Docklands Studios, filming Australian science-fiction film *The Wheel*.

All five sound stages at the studio are fully booked, bringing \$17 million to Victoria.

Other projects at Docklands include local production *Choir Girl* and the documentary *Guilty*, which details the final 72 hours in the life of executed Bali Nine drug smuggler Myuran Sukumaran.

Last month, Creative Industries Minister Martin Foley went to Los Angeles to meet

ANTHONY GALLOWAY

executives from HBO, NBC Universal, Warner Brothers, Universal and Village Roadshow, in a bid to lure more productions to Docklands.

Arquette said it wasn't difficult to convince him to come to the "incredible facility".

And his fondness for Australians didn't hurt either.

He said the script for *The Wheel*, set in a prison in the near future at which scientific experiments are performed on inmates, was a major drawcard, as was the opportunity to work with Australian director Dee McLachlan.

"It was just a wonderful script, really entertaining, kind of creepy and wonderful twists in it," he said.

"This (studio) is an incredible facility, it's really wonderful — everyone has a great

attitude. I just love Aussies in general. They're just great people," Arquette said.

He said he hadn't seen much of Melbourne because of the hectic schedule, but enjoyed walking along the Yarra.

Former *Home and Away* star Jackson Gallagher said it had been a "pretty intense shoot" but he had enjoyed getting in shape for action scenes.

Mr Foley said the Docklands studio's mix of blockbusters and smaller productions helped pour tens of millions into the state's economy every year.

"What it does show is that the whole pipeline of the film, television and digital economy here in Melbourne and Victoria is going gangbusters. What we're seeing is just how vibrant our screen, television and film economy is," Mr Foley said.

anthony.galloway@news.com.au