



Commencing operations in September 2007 at the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF), the **MIFF Premiere Fund** offers strategic minority co-financing to new Australian quality theatrical films (narrative-drama and documentaries) and, in exchange for the Fund's support, those films premiere at MIFF. The **MIFF Premiere Fund** deepens the festival's relationship with filmmaking talent and builds a pipeline of new quality Australian content for MIFF. Launched at **MIFF 2007** by Victorian State Premier John Brumby, the **MIFF Premiere Fund** has committed finance to 21 projects. Under the charge of MIFF Chair Claire Dobbin, the **MIFF Premiere Fund** Manager/Executive Producer is Mark Woods, former CEO of the Irish Film Board and Ausfilm and previously Head of Content Investment and International Acquisitions for Showtime Australia. Woods has co-invested in and Executive Produced many quality cinema titles, including *Rabbit Proof Fence*, *Japanese Story*, *Somersault*, *Breakfast on Pluto*, Palme d'Or winner *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*, and the Oscar-winning *Six Shooter*.

So far, the **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2012** comprises the following.

- **100 BLOODY ACRES:** A comedy horror showing the lengths small business operators will go to from debut feature directors **Colin & Cameron Cairns** and producers **Julie Ryan** (*Red Dog*) and **Kate Crosser** (*My Tehran For Sale*), with Executive Producers **Bryce Menzies** and **Jonathan Page** with cast including **Angus Sampson** (*Where the Wild Things Are*) and **John Jarratt** (*Wolf Creek*). (Distributor **HopScotch**; Sales Agent: **The Works**)
- **FIRST FAGIN:** A feature documentary from Director **Alan Rosenthal** and Producer **Veronica Fury** (*Curse of the Gothic Symphony*) exploring the adventures of one of Australia's most infamous convicts, Ikey Soloman, who inspired Charles Dickens character Fagin from *Oliver Twist*. (Sales Agent: **Naked Flame**).
- **MAKE HUMMUS NOT WAR:** A new war rages in the Middle East between the usual suspects – but chick peas, not bullets, are in the front line. From director/producer **Trevor Graham**, with producer **Ned Lander** and Executive Producer **Andrew Myer**, this is a deadly serious humorous feature documentary exploring age-old issues of rivalry, land, identity and heritage. (Sales Agent: **Off the Fence**).
- **SAVE YOUR LEGS:** an Australian-Indian cricket comedy inspired by true events that were portrayed in a popular documentary from debut feature director **Boyd Hicklin** and producers **Robyn Kershaw** (*Bran Nue Dae*) and **Nick Batzias**. Cast includes **Brendan Cowell** (TV's *The Slap*), **Stephen Curry** (*The Cup*) and **Damon Gameau** (*Balibo*). (Distributor: **Madman**; Sales Agent: **Protagonist**)
- **THE SAPPHIRES:** a screen adaptation of an acclaimed musical play, from Director **Wayne Blair** and *Clubland* Producers **Rosemary Blight** and **Kylie duFresne** with Associate Producer **Tony Briggs**, which tells the true story of an all-girl Aboriginal band who were hailed as Australia's answer to The Supremes as they found fame, fortune and themselves entertaining American troops in Vietnam. Starring **Chris O'Dowd** (*Bridesmaids*), **Deborah Mailman** (*Bran Nue Dae*) and **Jessica Mauboy**. (Distributor: **HopScotch**; Sales Agent: **GoalPost**)
- **THE LAST DANCE:** is a story of the past and present colliding when a holocaust survivor is held hostage by young suicide bomber in Melbourne, starring **Julia Blake** (*Innocence*) and **Firass Dirani** (TV's *Underbelly*), from director **David Pulbrook** and producer **Tony Ginnane**. (Distributor: **Becker**; Sales Agent: **HighPoint**)

So far, the **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2013** comprises the following.

- **ELECTRIC BOOGALOO:** From director/producer **Mark Hartley** (*Not Quite Hollywood*) and producer **Veronica Fury** (*Machete Maidens Unleashed!*) comes the wild untold story of 1980s Hollywood company Canon Films that involved talent ranging from Jean-Claude VanDamme to Meryl Streep. (Sales Agent: **XYZ/Celluloid**).
- **PAPER PLANES:** An imaginative children's film about a young Australian boy's passion for flight and his challenge to compete in the world paper plane championships in China from writer, director, producer **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*), co-producer **Maggie Miles** and Executive Producers **Andrew Myer** and **Jonathan Chissick**. (Distributor: **Footprint**; Sales Agent: **Maze**).
- **PATRICK:** A re-imaging of the classic 1970s Australian telekinetic thriller will be the narrative feature debut of *Not Quite Hollywood* and *Machete Maidens Unleashed!* director **Mark Hartley**. Producer **Tony Ginnane**. (Distributor: **Umbrella**; Sales Agent: **BankSide**)
- **THE TURNING:** Twelve directors (including the helming debuts of actors Cate Blanchett, David Wenham and Mia Wasikowska) respond to Tim Winton's haunting Western Australian short stories. Producer **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*), co-producer **Maggie Miles** (Distributor: **Footprint**; Sales Agent: **Maze**).
- **THESE FINAL HOURS:** An exploration of a young man's redemption during the Earth's very last hours from director Zac Hilditch, producer **Liz Kearney** and Executive Producer **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*). (Distributor: **Footprint**; Sales Agent: **XYZ/Celluloid**).
- **SKYLAB:** A sci-fi horror from director **Rupert Glasson** (*Coffin Rock*) and producers **David Lightfoot** (*Wolf Creek*) and **Ayisha Davies**, re-imagining the 1979 SkyLab crash in outback Australia against the backdrop of the Cold War. (Sales Agent: **Salt**).

MIFF PREMIERE FUND TITLES AT PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF MIFF:

The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2011** comprised the following world premieres.

- **AUTOLUMINESCENT: ROWLAND S HOWARD:** Portrait of the turbulent life of influential Australian rock-guitarist and songwriter Rowland S. Howard with directors Richard Lowenstein & Lynn-Maree Milburn, who produce with Andrew de Groot. (Sales agent: **RIGHTS AVAILABLE**). Voted MIFF 2011's second most popular documentary.
- **BEN LEE: CATCH MY DISEASE:** From Director **Amiel Courtin-Wilson** (*Bastardy*) and Producer **Richard Lowenstein** (*Dogs in Space*), this feature documentary, seven years in the making, about pop music, spirituality, fame, family and celebrity, profiles the 30 year-old Australian star, who recorded his first album at age 14, through archival, performance and interview footage with **Ben Lee**, **Winona Ryder**, **Claire Danes**, **Jason Schwartzman**, **Michelle Williams** and others. (Distributor: **Madman**; Sales Agent: **Visit Films**).
- **THE CURSE OF THE GOTHIC SYMPHONY:** a feature documentary, charting the struggle to overcome an 80-year curse and stage Havergal Brian's never-fully-performed "Gothic Symphony", from Director Randall Wood and Producer Veronica Fury (*Machete Maidens Unleashed!*). (Sales Agent: **ABC/Films Transit**).

- **FALLING FOR SAHARA:** Former Young Australian of the Year Khoa directs a story of new lives – and love – in Australia for African refugees in Melbourne's Flemington flats. (Sales Agent: **RIGHTS AVAILABLE**). Voted in MIFF 2011's top 20 most popular films.
- **SWERVE:** A rural neo-noir thriller starring from Director Craig Lahiff, Producer Helen Leake and Executive Producer Bryce Menzies. Starring Jason Clarke, Emma Booth, David Lyons, Travis McMahon, Vince Colosimo and Roy Billing. (Sales Agent: **MovieHouse**).
- **THE TRIANGLE WARS:** a feature documentary from director Rosie Jones and producers Lizzette Atkins and Peter George exploring the battle over a massive redevelopment in one of Melbourne's most iconic inner-suburbs between powerful big business and an outraged local community – with the intractable local government caught in the middle. (Sales Agent: **MeliMedia**)

The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2010** comprised the following world premieres:

- **BLAME:** Psychological thriller from director **Michael Henry** and producers **Michael Robinson, Ryan Hodgson** and **Melissa Kelly**, with Executive Producer **David Lightfoot** (*Wolf Creek*). Starring **Kestie Morassi** (*Wolf Creek, Kin*), **Sophie Lowe** (*Beautiful Kate, Blessed*), **Damian de Montemas** (*Somersault*), **Simon Stone** (*Balibo*) and **Mark Leonard Winter** (*Balibo*). (Distributor: Pack; Sales Agent: **Highpoint**). Selected for Toronto 2010.
- **MACHETE MAIDENS UNLEASHED:** From director **Mark Hartley** (*Not Quite Hollywood*) and producer **Veronica Fury**, a fast-moving feature documentary odyssey into the little-explored province of Filipino genre filmmaking – complete with miniature James Bonds, karate kicking soul sisters, anorexic Rambos and gun-toting nuns - especially during the oppressive Marcos regime. (Sales Agent: **ABC**). Selected for Toronto 2010.
- **MATCHING JACK:** Family drama from Director **Nadia Tass** and Producer **David Parker**, starring **James Nesbitt, Jacinda Barrett, Richard Roxburgh** and Kodi Smit-McPhee (Australian/NZ distributor: 20th Century Fox; World Sales Agent: Content). Selected for Toronto 2010.
- **MOTHER OF ROCK:** From director **Paul Clarke** and producer **Robert deYoung**, this feature documentary – narrated by **Judy Davis** with voice acting by **Sasha Horler**, is a lively profile into 1960s New York-based Australian rock journalist Lillian Roxon, who authored the acclaimed Rock Encyclopedia, featuring **Germaine Greer, Helen Reddy, Alice Cooper, Iggy Pop, Derryn Hinch, Molly Meldrum** and **David Malouf**. (Sales: SBS Commercial). Selected for Toronto 2010.
- **THE WEDDING PARTY:** Romantic comedy from Director **Amanda Jane** and Producer **Nicole Minchin**. Starring **Isabel Lucas** (*Transformers, Daybreakers*), **Kestie Morassi** (*Wolf Creek, Blame*), **Essie Davis** (*Australia*), **Steve Bisley, Adam Zwar, Geoff Paine** and **Rhonda Burchmore**. (Sales Agent: **ArLight**). MIFF 2010 Opening Night Film.

The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2009** comprised the following world premieres:

- **BALIBO:** Political thriller from Director **Robert Connolly** (*The Bank*) and Producer John Maynard (*The Boys*), starring (**Anthony La Paglia**) and **Oscar Isaac** (*Body of Lies*), investigating the 1975 murders of the Balibo Five Australian journalists during the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. (Australian Distributor: **Footprint**; Sales Agent: **Content**).
- **BLESSED:** from Director: Ana Kokkinos (*Head On*) and Producer Al Clark (*Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*), *Blessed*, which stars **Frances O'Connor, Miranda Otto, Debora-Lee Furness** and **William McInnes**, is an evocative feature film about mothers and children, love and beauty, being lost and finding your way home. (Australian Distributor: **Icon**; Sales Agent: **Bankside**). Winner of best screenplay at 2009 San Sebastian Film Festival.
- **BRAN NUE DAE:** from Director Rachel Perkins (*The First Australians, Radiance*) and Producer Robyn Kershaw (*Kath & Kim, Looking for Alibrandi*) and starring **Geoffrey Rush, Ernie Dingo, Magda Szubanski, Missy Higgins, Deb Mailman, Nigali Lawford, Tom Budge, San Sultan** and **Jessica Mauboy**, *Bran Nue Dae* is adaptation of a popular Aboriginal musical, the film is an upbeat coming-of-age, romantic musical and 1960s road movie featuring the choreography of Stephen Page. (World Sales Agent: **Bankside**). Selected for 2009 Toronto and 2010 Sundance and Berlin.
- **INDONESIA CALLING – JORIS IVENS IN AUSTRALIA:** A signature documentary, from Producer, Director, Writer John Hughes (*What I Have Written, After Mabo*), charting a little-told angle on the birth of the Indonesian Republic and the impact of Australian unions and a rogue Film Commissioner and an emerging film industry at a moment of crisis at the end of the age of Empire. (World Sales Agent: **RIGHTS AVAILABLE**).
- **THE LOVED ONES:** from Producer Mark Lazarus (*Australian Rules*) and Director/Writer Sean Byrne, whose short film *Advantage* was selected for Sundance 2008, *Loved Ones*, which stars **Xavier Samuel** and **Victoria Thaine**, tells the story of a young man digging himself out his own grave. You don't have to die to go to hell! (Australian Distributor: **Madman**; Sales Agent: **ArLight**). Winner of 2009 Toronto Midnite Madness audience award.

The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2008** included the following world premieres.

- **BASTARDY:** Producer: Philippa Campey; Director/Writer: Amiel Courtin-Wilson. An adventurous portrait of Jack Charles, a well-known personality on the streets of Melbourne, colourful fringe-dweller and sometime actor, that journeys into a little-seen side of Melbourne. *Bastardy* was voted by **MIFF 2008** audiences as the 8th most popular film overall and the 5th most popular documentary.
- **CELEBRITY: DOMINIC DUNNE:** Executive Producers: Sue Maslin (*Japanese Story*) & Daryl Dellora; Producers, Directors, Writers: Tim Jolley & Kirsty De Garis. Set against the backdrop of the Phil Spector trial, *Celebrity* traverses a world of intrigue, showbiz, the US justice system and the all-pervasive cult of celebrity to give the inside scoop on Vanity Fair's celebrated chronicler Dominick Dunne. Voted 9th most popular documentary during its sell-out run at **MIFF 2008**, *Celebrity* went on to the Sheffield and Hamptons Film Festivals. (Sales: **Mercury Media**).
- **NOT QUITE HOLLYWOOD:** Director/Writer: Mark Hartley, Producers: Michael Lynch & Craig Griffin. A seriously entertaining and informative celebration of 1970s Oz-ploitation cinema featuring **Quentin Tarantino, Barry Humphries** and **Jamie Lee Curtis**. After its sell-out premieres at **MIFF 2008**, the film went on to 2008's Toronto, London, Sitges, & 2009's Rotterdam. (Australian Distributor: **Madman**, US distrib/ Sales Agent: **Magnolia**).
- **ROCK & ROLL NERD:** Producer/Director/Writer: Rhian Skirving). A rags to riches observational documentary following Melbourne musician and performance artist's Tim Minchin meteoric rise to international fame. (Australian Distributor: **Madman**).