



65TH MIFF LAUNCHES FULL PROGRAM

OPENING NIGHT: THE DEATH AND LIFE OF OTTO BLOOM

CLOSING NIGHT: HELL OR HIGH WATER

NEW PROGRAMS: HEADLINERS, SEEKING REFUGE, DOCU-DRAMA + MORE

JERRY LEWIS RETROSPECTIVE + VIRTUAL REALITY SHOWCASE

MELBOURNE, 5 JULY 2016 – Celebrating its 65th edition, the **Melbourne International Film Festival** (MIFF) is thrilled to reveal its full program with a blockbuster lineup of over 345 films including 244 features, 92 shorts, 9 Virtual Reality experiences, 22 Talking Picture events, 24 world premieres and 157 Australian premieres. It all takes place over 18-days, spanning 22 venues across the Melbourne CBD, from **28 July to 14 August 2016**.

“We’re so excited to launch this year’s MIFF program, which offers abundant opportunities for festival goers to get out of their comfort zones,” said MIFF Artistic Director **Michelle Carey**. “In 2016, we’ve cast our nets wider than ever with a huge program ranging from an eight-hour Filipino opus to Poland’s first horror-mermaid-musical. And in a very special program, MIFF audiences can also enjoy technologically advanced filmmaking during our not-to-be-missed Virtual Reality experiences.”

The festival will open with the world premiere of ***The Death and Life of Otto Bloom***, the debut feature from Melbourne filmmaker, Cris Jones. A time-bending love story supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, the film stars Xavier Samuel, Matilda Brown and Rachel Ward, who are all set to walk the blue carpet when MIFF partners with Grey Goose Vodka for its glittering **Opening Night** celebrations.

Marking the festival’s halfway point is Abe Forsythe’s ***Down Under***, a rip-roaring black comedy set during the aftermath of the Cronulla riots, which screens as the festival’s **Centrepiece Gala**. Key cast members are set to join the director on the red carpet at The Comedy Theatre and the after party takes place at **The Blackhearts Club**, an exclusive pop-up drinking, dining and piano bar, conjuring the old world charm of the Golden Age of Hollywood, located at The Forum during MIFF.

The festival will go out with a bang on **Closing Night** when it screens the Cannes hit ***Hell or High Water***, an entertaining neo-Western directed by David Mackenzie. With a screenplay by *Sicario* scribe Taylor Sheridan, the film boasts a first-class ensemble cast featuring Chris Pine, Ben Foster and Jeff Bridges. After the film, festival goers can enjoy MIFF’s famous Closing Night party at The Blackhearts Club.

In 2016, the **Kids Gala**, presented by Cobs Popcorn, returns as part of the all-ages **Next Gen** program with the red-carpet Australian premiere of the 3D film, ***Kubo and the Two Strings***. An animated film featuring the voices of Charlize Theron, Matthew McConaughey, Ralph Fiennes, Rooney Mara, Art Parkinson (*Game of Thrones*’ Rickon Stark), and George Takei, it was directed by Travis Knight, the Oscar-nominated lead animator of *Coraline* (MIFF 2009). There will be a fun pre-screening event with kid-friendly snacks, drinks, games and entertainment galore.

MIFF is also proud to present the world premiere of ***Joe Cinque’s Consolation***, based on Helen Garner’s award-winning book. Directed by MIFF Accelerator alumnus, Sotiris Dounoukos, the film is an emotionally complex and chilling true-crime drama. It joins a strong line-up of world premieres at



this year's festival, including six MIFF Premiere Fund supported titles: *The Death and Life of Otto Bloom*, *The Family*, *Ella*, *Monsieur Mayonnaise*, *Emo the Musical* and *Bad Girl*. MIFF is thrilled to welcome directors and cast members from these films as festival guests.

As part of **Backbeat** presented by RRR, MIFF will welcome director **Mat De Koning** for the world-premiere of his film, *Meal Tickets*, painting a cautionary insider's tale about the realities of the new musical landscape; and US director **Matthew Jones** will also be in town on behalf of *The Man from Mo'Wax*, a no-holds-barred insight into the extraordinary James Lavelle and the record label he founded.

This year MIFF introduces **Headliners**, a brand new section celebrating the most-anticipated A-list festival hits and award-winners – all to be screened in the grandeur of The Comedy Theatre. MIFF will welcome director **Terence Davies** with his long awaited passion project, *Sunset Song*, featuring a career-making performance from former model Agyness Deyn. Also screening in Headliners is Ben Wheatley's *High Rise*, a thriller starring Tom Hiddleston, Jeremy Irons, Sienna Miller, Luke Evans, and Elisabeth Moss; Bruno Dumont's (*Li'l Quinquin*, MIFF 2014) *Slack Bay*, a whimsical farce starring Fabrice Luchini, Juliette Binoche and Valeria Bruni Tedeschi; Kelly Reichardt's (*Night Moves*, MIFF 14) *Certain Women*, starring Laura Dern, Michelle Williams and Kristen Stewart as three women trying to sustain love and find connection; and the Cannes hit *Paterson*, a tender portrait of a bus driver poet, played by Adam Driver (*Hungry Hearts*, MIFF 14).

MIFF's always thought provoking **Documentaries** program, which is presented by BBC Knowledge, returns with films including *Tickled*, which starts as an investigation into the world of 'competitive endurance tickling' and soon takes a darker turn. The film's director **David Farrier** will be a guest of MIFF. Other documentary highlights include *Cameraperson*, taking viewers inside the global career of cinematographer, Kirsten Johnson, who lensed *The Oath* (MIFF 10) as well as the Oscar-winning *Citizenfour*; and *The Eagle Huntress* set in the mountains of Mongolia where a teenage heroine learns the ancient – and previously male-only – art of falconry.

Continuing to show the explorative power of film, MIFF will welcome **Roger Ross Williams**, the winner of the Award for Best Directing (US Documentary) at this year's Sundance Film Festival. His film *Life, Animated* is a powerful emotional experience about a young boy with autism, who is able to open up through animated Disney films.

From **International Panorama** comes a selection of the most thought-provoking, interesting and diverse global cinema. Standouts include *Toni Erdmann*, a dysfunctional father-daughter comedy, which won the FIPRESCI Prize at Cannes this year; the sun-drenched neo-noir *Frank & Lola*, starring Michael Shannon and Imogen Poots; *Elle*, one of Cannes' most talked-about and psychologically complex films, featuring a standout performance from Isabelle Huppert; *Julieta*, the 20th film from Spanish auteur Pedro Almodóvar, a moving melodrama about motherhood, memory and loss; *Aquarius*, Brazilian director Kleber Mendonça Filho's subtle character study charting the changes creeping through Brazil's vibrant middle class; and *Christine*, starring Rebecca Hall in her career-best portrayal of Christine Chubbuck, the real-life television journalist who committed suicide on air.

The new program section **Documentary/Drama** showcases films that blur the lines between documentary and fiction with *Kate Plays Christine*, the Special Jury Award-winner at this year's Sundance Film Festival, which follows actor Kate Lyn Sheil as she prepares to play journalist Christine Chubbuck. MIFF is thrilled to welcome the film's director **Robert Greene** as a festival guest. The Documentary/Drama selection continues with this year's winner of the Sundance Special Grand Jury



Award for Best Cinematography (World Cinema Documentary), *The Land of the Enlightened*, which follows a group of Afghan kids while US forces prepare to leave Afghanistan.

In another first, MIFF will also celebrate dance, visual artistry and movement with an exhilarating program of films in the new program strand **Dance on Film**. Director Celia Rowson-Hall, no stranger to working with filmmakers Lena Dunham and Gasper Noe, will be a guest of MIFF with her debut feature, *Ma* – a contemporary, choreographic road movie re-imagining the Virgin Mary's story. Also joining the Dance on Film line-up is *Reset*, a portrait of Benjamin Millepied – the choreographer for *Black Swan* – as he undertakes his first year as the Paris Opera Ballet director; and *Kiki*, a film about marginalised and often brutalised LGBTQI youth-of-colour, who competitively dance the 21st century offspring of ballroom.

This year MIFF offers a compassionate voice to some of the world's most dispossessed people in the program strand, **Seeking Refuge**. Films include the survey on the European refugee crisis, *Fire at Sea*, which won the Golden Bear for Best Film, the Amnesty International Film Prize, and the Prize for the Ecumenical Jury at the Berlinale; and *Sonita*, the winner of the Sundance Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award (World Cinema Documentary), which tells the inspiring story of a gutsy and defiant 14-year-old Afghan refugee who dreams of becoming the next Rihanna. This screening is presented by Oxfam.

For the foodies, **Culinary Cinema** returns with a spread of film delicacies including *Ants on a Shrimp: Noma in Toyko*, showcasing Rene Redzepi and the team behind the 'World's Best Restaurant' as he temporarily shuts down his Copenhagen operation and transports his team to Tokyo for a five week culinary challenge; *Bugs*, in which Nordic Food Lab chef Ben Reade takes an entertaining journey through one of the last culinary taboos in the west; *Sour Grapes*, featuring the good humour of co-directors Jerry Rothwell (*How to Change the World*, MIFF 15) and Reuben Atlas as they pop the cork on one of the most impressive wine frauds in modern history; and *Barista*, providing an enlightening glimpse into the art of producing a flawless cup of coffee, a subject very dear to the hearts of many Melburnians. Genovese will present a live Latte Art Smackdown in the Blackhearts Club prior to the 11th August screening.

The MIFF **Shorts** program delivers an impressive range of international award-winners across 10 short film packages and pre-feature screenings. The smash-hit program of **WTF Shorts** returns for another year with the roaring comedy *Roast Battle*, Jason Reitman's documentary about a night at LA's Comedy Store; *Dolfun*, featuring MIFF 2015 guest and writer/director Sebastian Silva (*Nasty Baby*, MIFF 15) having an existential crisis while fulfilling a lifelong dream; and Zia Anger's *My Last Film*, two vignettes taking a savage and satirical look at the American Independent film scene, featuring Lola Kirke (*Mistress America*, MIFF 15) and Rosanna Arquette (*Lovesong*, MIFF 16).

MIFF's **Night Shift** will keep horror fans and night owls on their toes with a line-up including *The Lure*, winner of the Sundance Special Jury Prize for World Cinema, and Poland's first vampire mermaid musical featuring dance, sex, violence, fantasy and high comedy; *The Eyes of My Mother*, directed by music-video prodigy Nicolas Pesce, who carves his name indelibly into the psyche with one of the most memorable horror films in recent memory; and *Under the Shadow*, a film following in the tradition of the acclaimed Farsi-language hit *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*, from first-time feature film director and MIFF guest, **Babak Anvari**.

Via **Australian Showcase** MIFF will welcome director **Rosemary Myers** and actor/writer **Matt Whittet** alongside the feature *Girl Asleep*, a wonderfully eccentric modern day fairytale about female



adolescence; director **Rowan Woods** and actor **David Wenham** will be guests of the festival on behalf of *The Boys*, screening via a newly restored print and coinciding with a national conversation around violence against women; and, presented in association with the National Film and Sound Archive, the 25th anniversary restoration-screening of MIFF guest **Jocelyn Moorhouse**'s debut feature, *Proof*, in which our special guest **Hugo Weaving** stars alongside Russell Crowe.

In celebration of his 90th birthday, **Jerry Lewis** is the subject of a MIFF retrospective presenting all 12 films made by the Hollywood star – a 'total filmmaker' who found success as an actor, comedian, writer, producer, and director. The Jerry Lewis program includes *The Patsy*, a film capturing the director/star at the peak of his early form playing a bellhop bearing an uncanny resemblance to a recently deceased comedian; *The Nutty Professor*, Lewis' much-loved take on Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde which is widely considered one of his greatest works; the 1965 classic *The Family Jewels*, in which Lewis ingeniously plays seven versions of himself; and the rarely-seen *The Big Mouth*, starring Lewis as a mild-mannered bank clerk experiencing a state of mistaken identity, featuring early uncredited appearance by Rob Reiner and George Takei.

One of postwar Japan's most beloved yet mysterious stars, Yasujirō Ozu muse **Setsuko Hara** was an actor extraordinaire. In the wake of her passing last year, MIFF will present a retrospective including some of her greatest works. The retrospective will include the screenings of *Tokyo Story*, an enduring classic distinguished by its strong performances – none more so than the melancholy, luminous Setsuko Hara; and in one of Hara's first of many iconic collaborations with Yasujirō Ozu, *Late Spring*, an exploration of familial bonds and the tyranny of social conventions where Ozu characteristic subtlety finds its greatest outlet in Hara's facial expressions.

The program section **Gaining Ground** will present a rare opportunity to watch films made by trail-blazing female directors in 1970s and 80s New York – from *Girlfriends*, Claudia Weill's 1978 narrative feature debut – a critically acclaimed but criminally overlooked gem of second-wave feminism – to Kathleen Collins' 1982 work, *Losing Ground*, one of the first films directed by an African-American woman, which only received its first theatrical run in 2015, following a digital restoration by the filmmaker's daughter.

The little known 1960s avant-garde movement the **Escuela de Barcelona**, inspired by the decade's chic radicalism, the Nouvelle Vague and pop culture, comes under the spotlight with screenings of seven notable films. These include Vicente Aranda's strange masterwork *Fata Morgana*, a film also influenced by early *giallo* cinema; and *Dante no es únicamente severo*, the 1967 explosive pop manifesto, which to this day remains a surrealist maize of allusions and a truly unique experience.

In a specially curated program supported by Major Partners City of Melbourne and Victoria Harbour, and Supporting Partners including Screen Australia, MIFF presents a series of nine **Virtual Reality (VR)** experiences by Australian and international filmmakers, exploring this exciting new filmmaking medium. MIFF is delighted to welcome **Jessica Brillhart**, the principal filmmaker for VR at Google as a guest of the festival. In 2009, Jessica joined Google's Creative Lab where she spearheaded numerous award-winning shorts and documentaries before joining their VR team in 2015. Jessica will be speaking at a special presentation **We Are Here: Jessica Brillhart on Virtual Reality**.

MIFF is also thrilled to welcome to the festival **Eric Darnell**, the writer and director of the *Madagascar* films and immersive cinema pioneer, with his VR experience *Invasion!* – a computer-animated interactive movie about cute but potentially menacing aliens who try to take over the Earth. Eric will



also headline a **Talking Pictures** keynote session on **Virtual Reality and Storytelling** to be presented in partnership with the Wheeler Centre.

Also part of the VR showcase is Melbourne filmmaker **Oscar Raby** and his surreal fairytale ***The Turning Forest***, inspired by *Where the Wild Things Are*, *The Neverending Story*, and the intricate visual art of Gustav Klimt, which Raby worked on with writer Shelly Silas, and BBC Research & Development. Raby will also present ***Easter Rising: Voice of A Rebel***, marking the 100th anniversary year of the watershed moment that changed Irish history forever: the Easter Rising of 1916. Both of Raby's VR experiences will be presented using Oculus Rift headsets, while all remaining VR sessions will be presented using Samsung Gear VR headsets.

Made in cooperation with NASA and narrated by Academy Award-winning Jennifer Lawrence, ***A Beautiful Planet*** will screen as a **Special Event** at MIFF in jaw-dropping IMAX 3D. The film features breathtaking footage of Earth, filmed by the astronauts aboard the International Space Station.

MIFF's immensely popular annual program of jaw dropping **Fulldome Screenings** at the Melbourne Planetarium returns for 2016. A truly unique cinematic experience, these screening enable festival goers to lie back and immerse themselves in surround sound and super high-resolution images projected onto a 180-degree hemispherical dome screen. These special events will be presented as two separate sessions: **Fulldome Showcase 1** and **Fulldome Showcase 2**.

Capping off a huge program is MIFF's **Talking Pictures**, presented by AFTRS, designed to have festival goers discussing all things cinematic with festival guests – and diving deep into the themes and ideas featured in this year's program. The Festival's Industry Programs Unit will also present talks and masterclasses open to the public via the **MIFF 37° South & Accelerator: Public Access Events**.

Metro Trains Melbourne is the Principal Partner of the 2016 Melbourne International Film Festival.

The 2016 Melbourne International Film Festival runs 28 July - 14 August.

The full program will be available online Wednesday 6 July and in *The Age* on Friday 8 July.

Opening Night and Centrepiece Gala tickets are now on sale.

All other MIFF tickets go on sale to the public Friday 8 July 2016.

For all media enquiries contact Asha Holmes Publicity:

Asha Holmes | 0403 274 299 | asha@ashaholmespublicity.com.au

Sarah Finney | 0400 197 558 | sarah@ashaholmespublicity.com.au

Frances Mariani | 0416 069 778 | frances@ashaholmespublicity.com.au

Stephanie Payne | 0409 010 441 | stephanie@ashaholmespublicity.com.au