

MIFF 2016 Opening Night

PRESENTED BY



65TH MIFF TO OPEN WITH WORLD PREMIERE OF THE DEATH AND LIFE OF OTTO BLOOM

NEW OPENING NIGHT PARTNER GREY GOOSE WILL ROLL OUT THE BLUE CARPET

Melbourne, Monday 16 May 2016 - Starring Xavier Samuel, Matilda Brown and Rachel Ward, *The Death and Life of Otto Bloom* chronicles the life and great love of Bloom (Samuel), an extraordinary man who experiences time in reverse – passing backwards through the years while remembering the future.

This year the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) celebrates its 65th edition and with a blockbuster program to be revealed on 5 July, the festival is delighted to be opening on Thursday 28 July with the world premiere of the MIFF Premiere Fund supported debut feature by Melbourne filmmaker Cris Jones.

“We knew as soon as we saw *The Death and Life of Otto Bloom* that it was the perfect way to launch our 65th edition of MIFF. Not only does it signal the arrival of an exciting new filmmaking talent in Cris Jones, it speaks to so many of the themes that will run throughout the entire program this year”, said MIFF Artistic Director Michelle Carey. “Congratulations to Cris, Melanie, Alicia, Mish and the rest of the Melbourne filmmaking team.”

Writer and director Cris Jones has long been on MIFF's radar. He is a 2004 alumnus of the MIFF Accelerator emerging director workshop which he participated in with his VCA graduate film *Excursion* for which he won the MIFF Shorts Award for Best Emerging Australian Filmmaker.

Cris said of the announcement: “To have *Otto Bloom* premiering on MIFF's Opening Night is such an honour and a joy. For me, MIFF is more than a celebration of film. It is a family and a home. The festival has played an enormous role in my journey as a filmmaker, and without the support of the Premiere Fund, this film would not exist. I'm so grateful to Michelle Carey and the festival team for giving our film the best possible

start in life, and look forward to celebrating the work of our wonderful cast and crew at such an amazing event.”

The Death and Life of Otto Bloom is produced by Melanie Coombs (producer of the Oscar winner *Harvie Krumpet*, MIFF '03), Alicia Brown and Mish Armstrong for the production company Optimism.

“Optimism is a rather ambitious thing to aspire to, but Alicia Brown, Mish Armstrong and I are ambitious, as is our writer/director Cris Jones and this film about Life, Death, Time and Love. We are so delighted that Artistic Director Michelle Carey and the whole MIFF team have recognised the magic of *Otto Bloom*. To have the world premiere at MIFF on the Opening Night is a dream come true for all of us”, said producer Melanie Coombs.

For the first time MIFF has partnered with Grey Goose to curate a luxury experience for the glittering opening night celebration at Hamer Hall.

A blue carpet will welcome MIFF guests, as they sip the iconic Grey Goose Le Fizz. The Grey Goose Le Fizz is served at the top award season parties, enjoyed by red carpet celebrities at the Oscars, Toronto Film Festival and now the Melbourne International Film Festival.

“Crafted by our master mixologists, the elegant Grey Goose Le Fizz cocktail is made with our signature Grey Goose Vodka; shaken over ice with St-Germain elderflower liqueur, a squeeze of fresh lime and topped with soda. Like the finest films, Grey Goose Vodka is crafted from extraordinary passion and an unparalleled commitment to the highest possible quality.

“We look forward to welcoming guests to MIFF 2016, to toast the films of the festival on our blue carpet, with a beautifully crafted Grey Goose Le Fizz cocktail in hand,” says Joe McCanta, Grey Goose Global Ambassador.

OPENING NIGHT IS PRESENTED BY GREY GOOSE VODKA

Tickets to Opening Night film and party are now on sale.

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

The full program will be announced on Tuesday 5 July with public tickets on sale Friday 8 July.

For more information visit miff.com.au

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