

Friday, November 9, 2007

FIRST FILMS FUNDED UNDER MIFF PREMIERE FUND

The Minister for Innovation, Gavin Jennings, today announced the first five films to receive funding from the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) Premiere Fund.

Mr Jennings said the Brumby Government had provided \$1.6 million for the MIFF Premiere Fund to act as a strategic investor in Victorian feature films and feature documentaries.

“The Premiere Fund aims to bring Victorian films to the screen in time to premiere at MIFF, Australia’s most popular festival,” Mr Jennings said.

“It boosts local production by providing more opportunities for Victorian filmmakers to bring their stories to the big screen.

“These films also benefit from an international showcase through their association with MIFF which helps take Victoria’s filmmaking talent to the world.

Mr Jennings said the successful applicants were:

- **ROCK & ROLL NERD:** Executive Producer: Lizzette Atkins; Producer/Director/Writer: Rhian Skirving.
- **CELEBRITY - TALES OF DOMINIC DUNNE:** Executive Producers: Sue Maslin & Daryl Dellora; Producers/Directors/Writers: Tim Jolley & Kirsty De Garis.
- **BASTARDY:** Producer: Philippa Campey; Director/Writer: Amiel Courtin-Wilson
- **BRAND NEW DAY:** Producers: Robyn Kershaw & Graeme Issac; Director: Rachel Perkins; Writers: Rachel Perkins, Reg Cribb, Jimmy Chi.
- **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BRENDA HEAN:** Producers: Michael McMahon & Scott Millwood; Director/Writers: Scott Millwood.

“A total of 18 eligible projects applied for funding, ranging from musical comedies and feature length bio-pics to low-budget thrillers and conspiracy documentaries,” Mr Jennings said.

“There is still \$1 million left in the Fund for films to premiere at MIFF in 2009, which will be distributed across three further funding rounds. Applications for this second round of funding opens on Tuesday November 20.”

Mr Jennings also launched a report on the success of the first edition of MIFF’s new film co-financing market, *37 South -Bridging the Gap*.

“The Brumby Government provided \$800,000 for two editions of *37 South* to provide Victorian producers the opportunity to meet with potential co-financiers on their home turf, far away from the competition from the rest of the world’s producers,” Jennings said.

“At this year’s market, producers brought more than 70 projects to meetings and events with potential backers. More than 250 private meetings were held to advance projects and 55 people attended the roundtable discussions to discuss other works.

“Filmmakers know the importance of meeting with potential backers and financiers, and these meetings and events will be instrumental in helping more Victorian films come to life.”

Mr Jennings said the film industry made a very important contribution in enhancing and promoting an innovation and creativity-driven economy for Victoria.

“The industry also delivers many direct economic benefits. For example, screen production activity was worth \$145 million in Victoria in 2006-07,” Mr Jennings said.

“The Victorian Government has invested over \$80 million in screen industry support over the past seven years.

“These latest Brumby Government backed screen industry initiatives - *MIFF Premiere Fund* and *37 South: Bridging the Gap* – are designed to help more local film makers access the funding and relationships need to put their work on screen.”