

## MEDIA RELEASE

### MIFF ANNOUNCES CANNES LINE-UP

#### MAJOR AWARD WINNERS AND CINEMATIC GEMS FROM THE FRENCH RIVIERA SET FOR MIFF SCREENS THIS AUGUST

MELBOURNE, 28 June 2017 – The Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) is thrilled to announce its line-up from this year's Cannes Film Festival – featuring 35 feature titles set to sweep audiences into worlds of imagination, wonder and varying realities through high-stake thrillers, darkly witty comedies, compelling documentaries and the latest cinematic discoveries. Together they comprise some of the most anticipated and talked about films, performances and collaborations to light up the French Riviera this year.

The festival will present big award winners from this year's Cannes, including the 2017 Palme d'Or winning *The Square*, a deliriously strange detonation of art and imagination from Swedish director Ruben Öslund (*Force Majeure*, MIFF 14), featuring a riveting performance from Danish actor Claes Bang and scene stealing performances from Elizabeth Moss (also appearing in *Top of the Lake: China Girl*, MIFF 17) and Dominic West; *Loveless*, the must-see winner of the Jury Prize at this year's Cannes – a razor-sharp portrayal of a marriage in the state of collapse from one of the greatest Russian filmmakers working today, Andrey Zvyagintsev (*Leviathan*, *Elena*, MIFF 11); and *BPM*, from French director Robin Campillo, (*Eastern Boys*, MIFF 14; *They Came Back*, MIFF 05) winner of this year's Cannes Grand Jury Prize and Queer Palm winner, which dives headfirst into the passions, protests and politics of '90s AIDS activism.

International purveyor of the bizarre and MIFF favourite Yorgos Lanthimos is back with regular co-writer Efthymis Filippou (*The Lobster*, MIFF 15; *Alps* MIFF 12) for *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* – bringing Colin Farrell and Nicole Kidman together in a darkly comic modern rendering of an ancient Greek morality play; And Julianne Moore reunites with Todd Haynes for the enchanting *Wonderstruck*, an intoxicating, visually ravishing adaptation of Brian Selznick's (writer of *Hugo*) illustrated tale of two deaf runaways and the glimmering, redemptive magic of cinema.

Thrillers that packed a punch include *Good Time*, where Robert Pattinson electrifies in the pulse-quickening heist thriller from American indie stars Josh and Benny Safdie who were subjects of a MIFF focus in 2015, with a electronic score by Oneohtrix Point End; and *In the Fade*, from Germany's Faith Akin where Diane Kruger delivers her Best Actress-winning performance as a mother dealing with the aftermath of her Kurdish husband and young son's death in a neo-Nazi hate crime.

Films from European directors that set Cannes ablaze include master auteur Michael Haneke's (*Amour*, MIFF 12, *The White Ribbon*, MIFF 09) *Happy End*, which sees the director reunite with the great Isabelle Huppert and Jean-Louis Trintignant in a cutting portrait of bourgeois European Life; *Let the Sunshine In*, the Directors' Fortnight award-winning new film from iconic French director Claire Denis (*Bastards*, MIFF 13), with Juliette Binoche delivering a shining performance in the starring role; and veteran French director Philippe Garrel's (*In the Shadow of Women*, MIFF 15) *Lover for a Day*, shot in lyrical monochrome and starring his daughter Esther in her first major role, which once again brings a poetic touch to his perennial themes of fidelity and sexual freedom.



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Also from France, the grande dame of the French New Wave Agnès Varda revives the spirit of *The Gleaners and I* (MIFF 01) with ***Faces Places***, a picaresque romp through rural France, where she is joined in her travel by the artist JR; and ***The Venerable W***, which sees Barbet Schroeder complete his “trilogy of evil” with a stunning portrayal of xenophobic demagoguery in an unexpected quarter: Buddhist monks in the Republic of Myanmar.

Films exploring corruption and injustice include the winner of the prestigious Un Certain Regard prize ***A Man of Integrity***, from acclaimed Iranian writer/director Mohammed Rasoulof (*Manuscripts Don't Burn*, MIFF 13; *Iron Island*, MIFF 05), which is a potent thriller that captures one man's desperate battle to stand up to a corrupt system; and ***Tehran Taboo***, the boundary-pushing new animation from Iranian-born first-time feature director Ali Soozandeh, which tackles the sexual taboos of Islamic society and reveals a world of hypocrisy and political corruption.

Works of distinct individuality from exciting new voices in the cinematic landscape include the satirical and witty ***I Am Not a Witch***, inspired by real-life rural witch camps in Africa and directed by first-time feature director Ryngano Nyoni, with cinematography by David Gallego (*Embrace of the Serpent*); ***Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts***, a “feminist Indonesian Spaghetti Western” (*The Irish Times*) directed by a shining star of the blossoming Indonesian film industry, Mouly Surya; and Michael Franco's (*Chronic*, MIFF 15) Un Certain Regard Jury Prize winner ***April's Daughter***, a gripping depiction of maternal devotion gone wrong, with Emma Suárez (Pedro Almodóvar's *Julieta*, MIFF 16) mesmerising as the ruthlessly calculating mother.

Continuing to uncover and capture the bizarre and bold, the festival is proud to present ***Nothingwood***, first-time documentarian Sonia Krunlund's rousing portrait of Afghani writer/actor/director Salim Shaheen that captures the auteur using the resources available to him to make cheap, fast, out-of-nothing films starring himself, his friends and his family, which bring hope to his adoring fans in Afghanistan's climate of violence; co-produced by *Toni's Erdmann's* Maren Ade, ***Western*** is the acclaimed Cannes hit from German writer/director Valeska Grisebach (*Longing*, MIFF 05) that uses non-actors in a European standoff to evoke the spirit of the titular American genre; starring and co-written by *Saturday Night Live's* Kyle Mooney, helmed by frequent collaborator Dave McCary and produced by Andy Samberg, ***Brigsby Bear*** is the latest thigh-slapping comedic effort to double as an SNL “Where Are They Now?” reunion special; and hope springs from Josh Hartnett, a blonde wig and a Tokyo-to-California jaunt in ***Oh Lucy!***, Atsuko Hirayangi's affectionate expansion of her MIFF 2014 short of the same name.

Already announced, the festival will feature the Australian premiere of the entire second season of ***Top of the Lake: China Girl***, directed by Jane Campion and MIFF Accelerator alumnus Ariel Kleiman, and offering a unique opportunity to see the series before its television premiere on BBC First on Foxtel; and ***Patti Cake\$***, music video director Jeremy Gasper's feature debut about an aspiring rapper, starring Australian actress Danielle McDonald in her sensational breakout performance.

Slower, more meditative works centered around image, exploration and self-reflexivity include ***Claire's Camera***, in which Isabelle Huppert reunites with director Hong Sang-soo to present an uncomplicated and refreshing meditation on the joy of chance encounters and the power of art; ***24 Frames***, a minimalist hymn to the capturing of images and the final work by the late Iranian master Abbas Kiarostami; and Naomi Kawase's (*Still the Water*, MIFF 14) ***Radiance***, which explores the



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complexity of cinematic images through description alone, as protagonist Misako writes voiceovers for vision impaired film viewers.

Scoring an award at the Cannes Directors' Fortnight, Jonas Carpignano's (*Mediterranea*, MIFF 15) latest, ***A Ciambra***, explores the European refugee crisis in a heart-wrenching, ultra-realist tour of the outcast and refugee communities of Italy's south; and in Hungarian phenomenon Kornél Mundruczó's (*White God*, MIFF 14) ***Jupiter's Moon***, the superhero genre collides with the rolling tragedy of that same crisis in an action-packed assault on tribalism, human indecency of the basic laws of gravity.

Set to screen at MIFF as part of Night Shift, ***A Prayer Before Dawn*** is a claustrophobic, face-pulping mash of growling sound, kinetic editing and so-real-you-have-to-flinch fight scenes from French provocateur Jean-Stéphane Sauvaire (*Johnny Mad Dog*, MIFF 08); and ***Blade of the Immortal*** is samurai, swords and Takashi Miike – celebrating his 100th feature with the tale of an immortal swordsman looking to reclaim his soul.

Hot from the Un Certain Regard section, ***Closeness*** explores family relations intermingled with ethnic tensions in a stunning, disturbing debut from young Russian filmmaker Kantemir Balagov; shot in nine parts, each in sweeping unbroken takes, ***Beauty and the Dogs*** is based on a real incident of a young Tunisian student plunged into an infuriating and intimidating bureaucratic nightmare; and ***Until the Birds Return***, a film of three stunningly rendered dispatches from the still-scarred people and landscapes of modern Algeria, by young gun of North African cinema Karim Moussaoui.

And finally, Chilean filmmaker Marcela Said's sophomore feature ***Los Perros*** explodes class privilege when a wealthy woman – the dynamite Antonia Zeger – falls for her older riding instructor, a man accused of war crimes; and ***A Gentle Creature***, the latest film by Sergei Loznitsa (*The Event* MIFF 16; *In the Fog*, MIFF 12) that shifts from rusted realism to dreamy fantasy as it follows a woman (Vasilina Makovtseva) on a voyage through multiple layers of violence, indignity and human cruelty.

**The full program will be announced on Tuesday 11 July with public tickets on sale Friday 14 July.**

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**The 2017 Melbourne International Film Festival runs 3 – 20 August.**

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