

MEDIA RELEASE

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OPENS ITS CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO 2017 CRITICS CAMPUS

MELBOURNE, 5 April 2016 — After three successful editions, the **Melbourne International Film Festival** (MIFF) is proud to open the call for applications to the 2017 **Critics Campus**, an intensive five-day lab that enables emerging Australian film critics to develop their skills in a live Festival setting. Critics Campus will take place during the Festival's 66th edition, 3-20 August 2017.

Underlying the Campus's ethos is a belief that in a swiftly changing media environment, informed writing on cinema is vital to a strong film culture and industry. Digital media allows for a diversity of voices yet poses challenges for writers seeking employment in the field. The Campus will address these issues and better prepare participants for a successful career in film writing. It also offers them a platform to be heard in the competitive Festival environment.

"The experience was transformative. My mentor made me feel valued, challenged, positive and proud - especially when she offered me work on the third day. The hot-house environment made me a faster, stronger, more ruthless writer. I wouldn't have achieved such progress without the support of our mentors, the guest speakers and generous MIFF staff", said 2016 Critics Campus alumnus Aimee Knight.

Since participating in the lab, alumni have gone on to write for publications including *The Age*, *Senses of Cinema*, *The Monthly*, *4:3*, *The Saturday Paper*, *Junkee*, *Little White Lies*, *IF Magazine* and *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Eight participants will take part in mentoring sessions and panels with key Australian industry and media players, as well as producing their own daily coverage for a variety of outlets. They will have access to Festival films, publicity materials, guests and networking opportunities. In return, meals and accommodation will be provided, as well as the invaluable experience of producing a range of pieces daily for publication across a variety of outlets.

Three prominent international critics will visit the Festival to participate in the Campus, variously assisting with mentoring, sitting on panels, and as a resource for the participants.

Applications are sought from Australian writers in the beginning stages of their career, with no more than two years experience in film writing. They should prepare to be available in Melbourne 6-12 August inclusive.

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Applicants will be asked to provide:

- A one-page resume covering relevant studies and/or professional experience and a list of published writing and criticism with links where relevant.
- Three film writing samples including:
 - i. a 500 word review of a film currently in theatrical release
 - ii. a 800 word feature/essay/interview
 - iii. a piece of the applicant's choice that they feel best demonstrates their capabilities. This may take the form of a video essay, podcast (5-10 min excerpt), feature, experimental writing piece, etc.

University essays are allowed but not encouraged. Previously unsuccessful applicants are welcome to re-apply in 2017.

The online application form is accessible from the Critics Campus page: www.miff.com.au/criticscampus. Deadline for applications is 9am Tuesday 2nd May 2017. Successful applicants will be notified by Friday 5th May.

All Critics Campus enquiries should be directed to criticscampus@miff.com.au.

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