

Melbourne
International
Film Festival

2024 Year in Review

MIFF

Introduction

Welcome to 2024 in the world of MIFF!

Moreso even than before, the festival felt this year to be a stake in the ground, a shot in the arm, a clarion call to celebrate the shared experience of cinema, to celebrate the vitality of film in the volatility of these disposable and unknowable times. It was an event that continued to welcome audiences, develop artists, and build community around an unmissable program of over 280 films across 18 unforgettable Melbourne winter days.

The festival's big moments this year were proudly Melbourne-made and Victorian-born. Opening Night was shared with one of our finest Melburnian moviemakers via the international premiere of Adam Elliot's greatly anticipated *Memoir of a Snail* – a film that is dark, delightful and attuned to the shonkily beloved wavelengths of Australian suburbia like few others.

Acclaimed director Justin Kurzel's *Ellis Park*, a thoughtful and deeply felt portrait of Warren Ellis and the intersections of compassion and creativity,

was launched in world premiere as our 2024 Music on Film Gala; Robert Connolly's *Magic Beach*, an ambitiously kaleidoscopic adaptation of the beloved children's picture book, played as the festival's Family Gala; and Shannon Owen's *Left Write Hook*, an intimate observational documentary that pulls no punches, screened as the inaugural Premiere with Purpose. All of these films were supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, which, alongside MIFF 37°South Market and MIFF Accelerator Lab, continued the festival's longstanding mission of building and fostering industry connections in order to bring bold new work to the big screen.

Elsewhere, our Bright Horizons competition again presented an extraordinary array of essential new films and filmmakers; returning for its third year, the program is a lightning rod for the most important breakthrough voices in world cinema. Among the 10 presented features, Matthew Rankin's *Universal Language* was awarded the \$140,000 Bright Horizons Award, a film prize supported by VicScreen that continues to be one of the richest in the world. The award was presented onstage by our internationally attending jury, a stellar line-up led by celebrated Australian auteur Ivan Sen. The MIFF Awards again continued to recognise extraordinary talent from right across the festival through The Uncle Jack Charles Award, presented in collaboration with Kearney Group, and the Blackmagic Design Australian Innovation Award.

Within retrospective programming, MIFF presented a major, expansive special program with our *Iranian New Wave: 1962–79* retrospective. Curated by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the program profiled a selection of 26 features and shorts – some newly restored after decades of unavailability, others largely never seen before in Australia – bringing a rare and exciting survey of defining Iranian cinema to MIFF audiences.

Elsewhere, the festival presented the special program *Yvonne Rainer: Autobiographical Fictions*, featuring five restored works by the pioneer of the US avant-garde performance movement; *Back From the Ink: Restored Animated Shorts*, a collection of newly restored classics from animation's golden age; and the *Stephen Cummins Retrospective*, spotlighting a crucial chapter in Australia's queer cinematic history courtesy of the National Film and Sound Archive's restorations of the director's beautiful, influential and enduring work. For audiences up to the *kaiju*-sized commitment, there was also much city-stomping to be had at our all-night *Godzilla 70th Anniversary Marathon*, presented with The Astor Theatre.

MIFF also continued to welcome audiences far beyond Melbourne's boundaries, screening in 25 cinema spaces across the metropolitan centre and bringing the festival to seven centres in country Victoria via our MIFF Regional program. The latter

saw a multi-cinema presentation in Geelong and new screening locations added for 2024 in Morwell and Shepparton, alongside a special 'Bathe in Cinema' presentation at Peninsula Hot Springs in Fingal. Audiences anywhere in Australia could also be part of MIFF this year through a highlights selection of features and shorts presented in our MIFF Online program, streaming via ACMI Cinema 3 and taking in a range of MIFF 2024 films, including new Australian premiere titles and festival highlights from Cannes, Locarno and elsewhere.

It was a program that reminded us of how special it is to see Melbourne come alive with the flows of audience and the imaginations of artists, especially in 2024. Indelible to the results achieved by the festival in 2024 was the extraordinary work of our staff and volunteers, our festival partners, and our contributing filmmakers and artists, to all of whom we offer our deep gratitude.

For those who came to be entertained, moved, challenged and changed by the sheer immensity of 18 days of film, it was a pleasure to share the imagination of cinema – and the experience of cinema-going – at the 72nd edition of the Melbourne International Film Festival.



Damien Hodgkinson
Chief Executive Officer



Al Cossar
Artistic Director



Victoria Pope
Commercial Operations
Director



Eddie Coupe
Acting Head of Industry

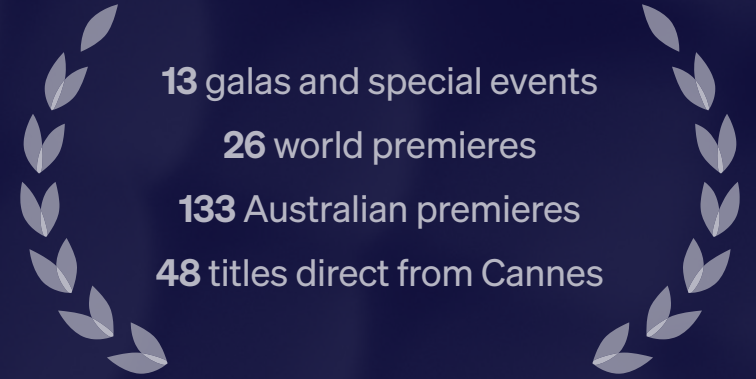


18
days in cinema

17
days online



208 features
107 shorts
7 XR works



13 galas and special events
26 world premieres
133 Australian premieres
48 titles direct from Cannes



17 metropolitan cinema screens
8 regional cinema screens
Australia-wide streaming
on MIFF Online



16 sessions with audio description
15 sessions with open captions
89 fully subtitled films



100% step-free and wheelchair-
accessible venues
7 sensory-friendly sessions
2 crybaby sessions

66

countries

55

languages

17.2%

Australian content

7

First Nations-led projects



106 titles with one or more female or non-binary directors



9 MIFF Talks
177 festival guests
9 MIFF Ambassadors



167,048 total yearly audience
138,452 in-cinema festival attendees
18% new audiences



65% audiences attended screenings with others
4.8 average films per audience member



Ila Firouzabadi and Matthew Rankin

In 2024, MIFF recognised filmmaking excellence across a suite of six awards.

Presented by VicScreen, the flagship **Bright Horizons Award** celebrated filmmakers on the ascent. The winning film, as chosen from within the Bright Horizons film competition, received a \$140,000 prize – one of the most substantial film prizes in the world – while \$15,000 went to the recipient of the Special Jury Award.

The **Blackmagic Design Australian Innovation Award** recognised an outstanding Australian creative within a film playing in the MIFF program with a \$70,000 cash prize.

The 2024 recipients were chosen by a distinguished jury of industry figures: jury president **Ivan Sen**, one of Australia’s most revered filmmakers; visionary American writer and director **David Lowery**; Oscar-winning costume designer **Deborah L. Scott**; pioneering Indonesian film producer **Yulia Evina Bhara**; and celebrated Australian actor **Jillian Nguyen**.



BRIGHT HORIZONS AWARD

Universal Language (Canada)

Director: Matthew Rankin

SPECIAL JURY AWARD

Flow (France/Belgium/Latvia)

Director: Gints Zilbalodis

OTHER NOMINEES

Good One (dir. India Donaldson)

Hoard (dir. Luna Carmoon)

Inside (dir. Charles Williams)

Janet Planet (dir. Annie Baker)

Julie Keeps Quiet

(dir. Leonardo Van Dijn)

On Becoming a Guinea Fowl

(dir. Rungano Nyoni)

Sweet Dreams (dir. Ena Sendijarević)

The Village Next to Paradise

(dir. Mo Harawe)



BLACKMAGIC DESIGN AUSTRALIAN INNOVATION AWARD

Jaydon Martin

Director – *Flathead*

OTHER NOMINEES

Audrey Lam

Director – *Us and the Night*

Steven Boyle

VFX executive producer –

The Demon Disorder

Adam Elliot

Director/writer – *Memoir of a Snail*



April Phillips

The **Uncle Jack Charles Award**, presented in collaboration with Kearney Group, recognised an outstanding Australian First Nations creative within a film playing in the MIFF program. The recipient was awarded a \$20,000 cash prize and \$25,000 worth of financial services with Kearney Group, and was selected by a jury of celebrated Australian First Nations creatives: Bidjara, Wakka Wakka and Gubbi Gubbi producer, writer, actor and VicScreen executive **Davey Thompson**; Kamilaroi actor and writer **Thomas Weatherall**; and Kurnai/Gunai, Gunditjmara, Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta writer, actor and activist **Nayuka Gorrie**.



THE UNCLE JACK CHARLES AWARD

April Phillips
Lead artist – *kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)*

OTHER NOMINEES

- Jon Bell (writer/director – *The Moogai*)
- Semara Jose (co-director – *Voice*)
- Danielle MacLean (co-director – *Like My Brother*)
- Jake Duczynski (animator/writer/director – *'Gilay Gabinya', Magic Beach*)



INTREPID AUDIENCE AWARD

Voice (Australia)
Director: Krunal Padhiar;
co-director: Semara Jose
Left Write Hook (Australia)
Director: Shannon Owen

The **Intrepid Audience Award** crowned viewers' favourite works from the festival, as determined through public votes. For the first time ever, the vote resulted in a tie, with two notable recipients jointly winning the award.



Semara Jose (left) and Shannon Owen (right) accepting the Intrepid Audience Award

The **63rd MIFF Shorts Awards**, presented by Campari, celebrated the best in short-form filmmaking (see page 22 for more information), while the **MIFF Schools Youth Jury Award**, presented by Collarts – which recognised the best title from the MIFF Schools program, as selected by young jury members **Fynn Williams**, **Gabe Hartshorne** and **Jasmine Lui** – was bestowed on Maria Zanetti's *Alemania*.



IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

\$11.4M

economic impact

Independent research established that the festival generated \$11.4M in economic impact. For every \$1 spent by a MIFF audience member while attending a MIFF event, a further \$2.66 was spent in the broader economy on items such as transport, accommodation, shopping, food and beverages.

\$1 = \$2.66

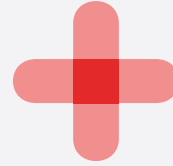




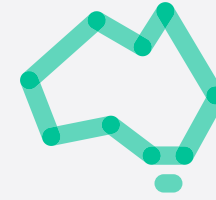
167,048
total yearly viewership*

48% under 25 audience engaged
with MIFF for the first time

*Includes out-of-season events, member events and industry events



18%
new audiences



88% metropolitan Melbourne
7% regional Victoria
4% interstate (43% from NSW,
46% engaged with MIFF for the first time)



69% employed
full-time, part-time or casually, or self-employed
15% retired
7% students



35%
earn over \$100K annually



57% female
18% speak a language other than
English at home*

*The most commonly spoken languages are Mandarin, French,
Cantonese, Spanish, Greek, German and Italian



95%
likely to
return to MIFF
in future years



Quality of films on offer

97% satisfied

Range of films on offer

98% satisfied

Customer service received

97% satisfied

Digital platform

89% satisfied



IN CINEMA

65%

watched with others

Groups (3+) watched more films than those watching alone or in couples

Audiences watched an average of

4.8 films

Over-65s watched an average of **6.2 films**
25-34s watched an average of **4.9 films**

ONLINE

67%

watched with others

On average, in groups of 2.3 people

Audiences watched an average of

2.6 films

55-64s watched an average of **2.8 films**
Over-65s watched an average of **3 films**

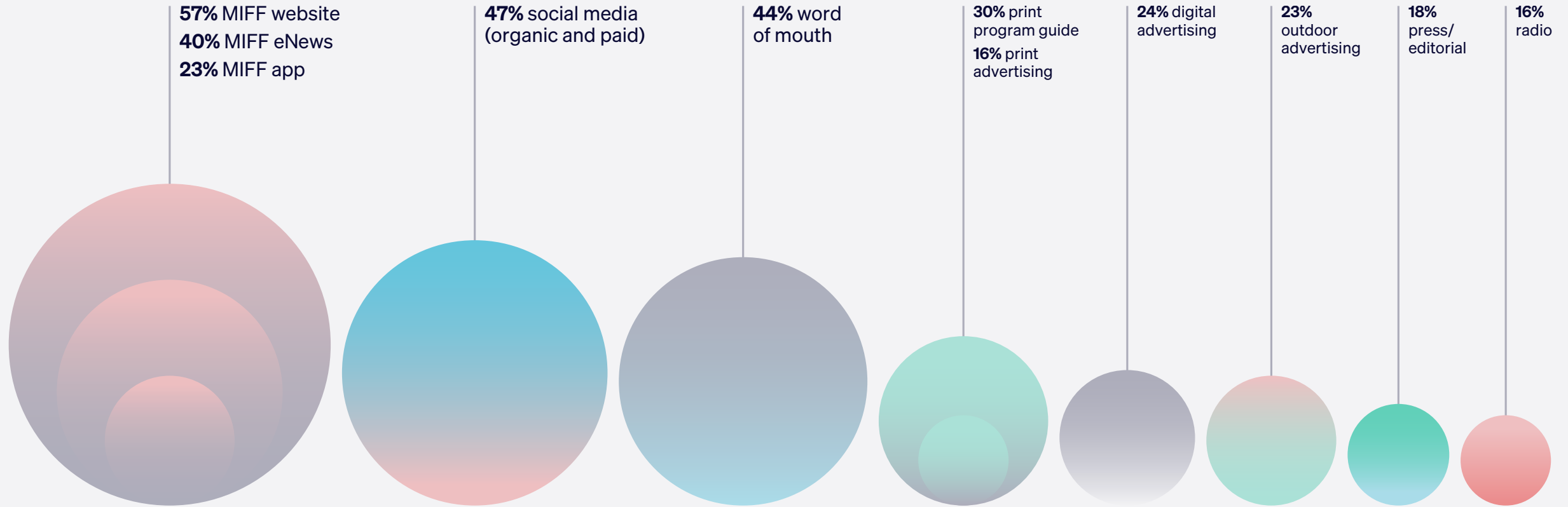
KEY MOTIVATIONS FOR ATTENDING MIFF

to experience
something new

to watch a
specific film

to experience
culture

to be
entertained



Strongest sources of awareness about MIFF

- **Audiences aged 18–44:** social media, digital advertising, outdoor advertising and word of mouth
- **Audiences aged 45 and over:** eNews, the print program guide, press/editorial and radio
- **Audiences engaging with MIFF for the first time:** word of mouth (48%), MIFF website (47%), MIFF social media (39%), digital advertising (23%) and outdoor advertising (18%)

NOTE: Total response percentages exceed 100% as respondents were permitted to select multiple sources of awareness.



83K Widescreen eNews subscribers

36.4% open rate
11.7% click rate (CTOR)



1.8M website* page views

585K engaged sessions

*miff.com.au only



77.7K Facebook followers

130.2K peak daily reach



40.3K Instagram followers

148.2K peak daily reach



1.8K TikTok followers

390.9K reach



1.4K Letterboxd followers



34.2K YouTube subscribers

34.9M YouTube views total
1.3M YouTube views in 2024



51.5K X (Twitter) followers



7.9K LinkedIn followers

Broadcast Channel (new)

600+ subscribers

“This year’s line-up is nothing short of spectacular.”

▲ HAPPY

“The 72nd Melbourne International Film Festival begins next month, and it’s a death-defying display from cinema legends ... The future is bright, too, with strong emerging voices in the Australian screen industry and the best international exports from the world’s most prestigious festivals.”

The Sydney Morning Herald

“I’ve admired countless films in my life, and fallen in love with many of them, but I never fall for a film quite like the way I do the ones I’ve seen at this festival, when ... something hits me out of nowhere, invading my psyche and taking up residence forever.”

Senses of Cinema



FASHIONJOURNAL.COM.AU

A week in work outfits with Australian actress Jillian Nguyen



Peaches reflects on her legacy of queerness, feminism and fitth





IMPACT
PROGRAM
INCLUSION
INDUSTRY
SUPPORT

In 2024, MIFF screened films
from 66 places of origin.

Argentina
Australia
Austria
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech
 Republic
Denmark

Dominican
 Republic
Egypt
Ethiopia
Finland
France
French
 Polynesia
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Hong Kong
India
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Ireland

Italy
Japan
Kenya
Latvia
Luxembourg
Mexico
Namibia
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Palestine
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar

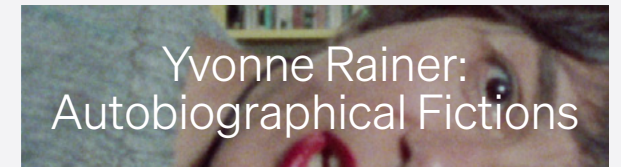
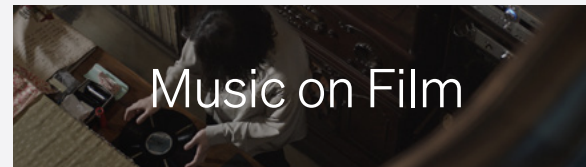
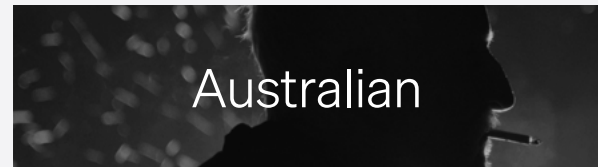
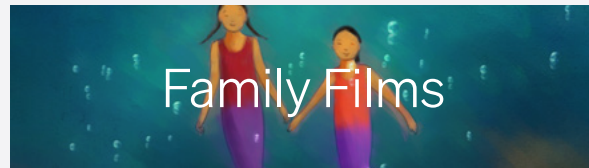
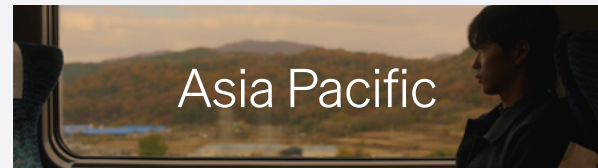
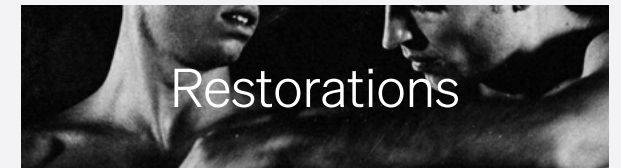
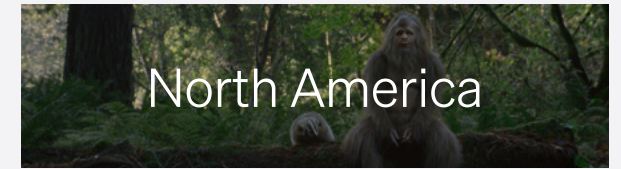
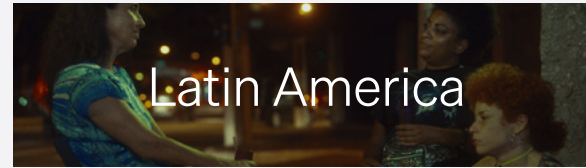
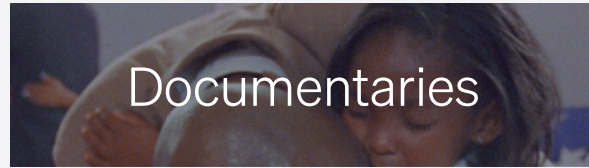
Russia
Saudi Arabia
Scotland
Senegal
Singapore
Slovenia
Somalia
South Korea
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Taiwan
Tunisia
Türkiye
UK
Ukraine
Uruguay

USA
Vietnam
Zambia

Program

Strands

Spanning continents, genres and forms, MIFF's 21 program strands enabled viewers to find their niches, discover more and curate their own selections.



Recognising the new, the next, the breakthrough and the best, MIFF's film competition, Bright Horizons, once again brought an extraordinary international line-up of first- and second-time filmmakers together in 2024 to compete for the Bright Horizons Award, presented by VicScreen.

With many of the program's international filmmakers in attendance, and all its screenings premiering in Australia, Bright Horizons continues to flip the film-competition model to focus on discovery and ascent into auteurship – a chance for audiences to meet the most important new filmmakers shaping cinema before them.

- 10 films
- 15 places of origin
- 13 international guests



MIFF rolled out the red carpet for formidable directors, creatives and actors from near and afar. In total, MIFF welcomed 177 festival guests.

Among this year's international guest contingent were directors **Luna Carmoon** (UK), **India Donaldson** (USA), **Mo Harawe** (Somalia/Austria), **Raven Jackson** (USA), **David Lowery** (USA), **Matthew Rankin** (Canada), **Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu** (New Zealand), **Ondi Timoner** (USA), **Ant Timpson** (New Zealand), **Leonardo Van Diji** (Belgium) and **Gints Zilbalodis** (Latvia); screenwriter **Ila Firouzabadi** (Iran); producers **Yulia Evina Bhara** (Indonesia) and **Matiss Kaža** (Latvia); and costume designer **Deborah L. Scott** (USA).

Australian creatives present at the festival included filmmakers **Sally Aitken**, **Wendy Champagne**, **Robert Connolly**, **Adam Elliot**, **Damon Gameau**, **John Hughes**, **Justin Kurzel**, **Audrey Lam**, **Jaydon Martin**, **Ivan Sen** and **Charles Williams**; composer **Warren Ellis**; and actor **Jillian Nguyen**.



Left to right: Liz Kearney, Sarah Snook, Adam Elliot, Robert Connolly



Mo Harawe



Warren Ellis and Justin Kurzel



David Lowery



Left to right: David Lowery, Deborah L. Scott, Yulia Evina Bhara, Ivan Sen, Jillian Nguyen



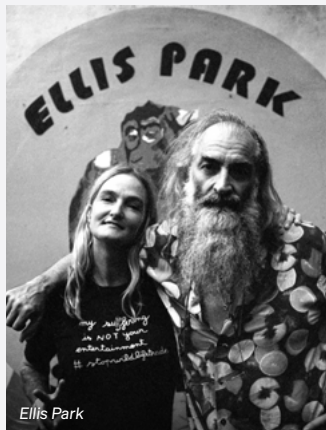
Luna Carmoon

Supported by VicScreen, the MIFF Premiere Fund co-finances new quality Australian theatrical (feature-length narrative and documentary) films that premiere at MIFF. The fund is a strategic minority supporter of a range of films, and seeks diversity of filmmaking teams and film genres on the slate. The Premiere Fund's 16th annual slate of 'stories that need telling' were:

- Oscar-winning director Adam Elliot's ***Memoir of a Snail***, featuring the voice of Sarah Snook, was MIFF 2024's Opening Night Gala title. It took home the award for best feature at the 2024 Annecy International Animation Film Festival and the prize for Best Film at the 68th BFI London Film Festival
- Shannon Owen's ***Left Write Hook***, which was MIFF's inaugural Premiere with Purpose title, and which was a co-winner of the 2024 Intrepid Audience Award
- Justin Kurzel's ***Ellis Park***, which was MIFF 2024's Music on Film Gala title
- Charles Williams's ***Inside***, starring Guy Pearce and Cosmo Jarvis, which was selected for MIFF's Bright Horizons competition
- Robert Connolly's ***Magic Beach***, which was MIFF 2024's Family Gala title
- Eliza Cox's ***Queens of Concrete***, a documentary following three young skateboarders as they seek to qualify to represent Australia at the Olympic Games
- Natalie Bailey's ***Audrey***, which was also selected at SXSW (Austin)



Audrey



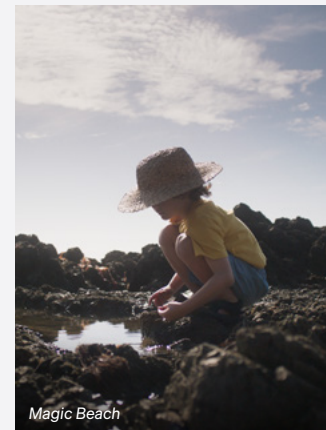
Ellis Park



Inside



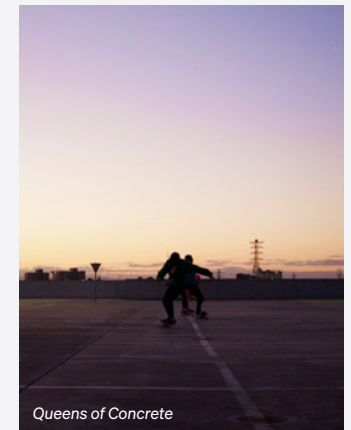
Left Write Hook



Magic Beach



Memoir of a Snail



Queens of Concrete



The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent



Father's Letters

Spanning 59 films, the 2024 MIFF Shorts program was presented across nine packages.

Films competed for the MIFF Shorts Awards, one of the most highly regarded and longstanding short-film competitions in both the Asia-Pacific region and the Southern Hemisphere. The competition is Academy Awards®, BAFTA and AACTA accredited.

The 63rd MIFF Shorts Awards had a total prize pool of \$50,000. In 2024, the jury consisted of award-winning screenwriter, director and former TV journalist **Beck Cole**; COO at Mushroom Studios, entertainment lawyer and producer **Bethany Jones**; and artist, film director, performance-maker, writer and Artistic Director of Back to Back Theatre **Bruce Gladwin**.

City of Melbourne Grand Prix for Best Short Film

The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent (France/Croatia/Bulgaria/Slovenia)
 Director: Nebojša Slijepčević

VicScreen Erwin Rado Award for Best Australian Short Film

The Meaningless Daydreams of Augie & Celeste
 Director: Pernel Marsden

Award for Emerging Australian Filmmaker

Dylan Ferenc Nyerges
 Film: *Bőr* (Skin)

Award for Best Fiction Short Film

The Masterpiece (Spain)
 Director: Àlex Lora Cercós

Award for Best Documentary Short Film

Ever Since, I Have Been Flying (Switzerland)
 Director: Aylin Gökmen

Award for Best Animation Short Film

Father's Letters (France/Russia)
 Director: Alexey Evstigneev

Award for Best Experimental Short Film

Light, Noise, Smoke, and Light, Noise, Smoke (Japan)
 Director: Tomonari Nishikawa

Sitting at the intersection of film, visual art and gaming, MIFF's XR program has established itself as fertile ground for exploration and innovation – for audiences and artists alike – and expands our notions of filmmaking and storytelling.

In 2024, the MIFF XR program returned to ACMI's Swinburne Studio, where audiences encountered seven boundary-pushing works from across the globe, including Marion Burger and Ilan J. Cohen's **Emperor**; April Phillips's MIFF Award winner **kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)**, which was co-presented with Now or Never and ACMI; Mike Robbins and Harmke Heezen's **The Memphis Chronicles: Water's Edge**; Lui Avallos's **Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising**; Sister Sylvester and Deniz Tortum's **Shadowtime**; and two titles presented in a double bill of radical new Taiwanese immersive works: Craig Quintero's **Over the Rainbow** and Hsiao-mei Ho's **Nâ Tâu Tsí á (The Lost Limbo) | Sister Lin-Tou**.



MIFF XR Launch



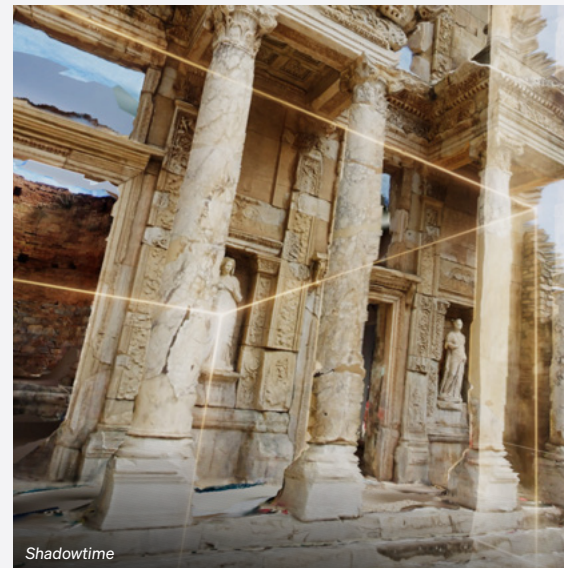
kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)



kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)



Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising



Shadowtime



Nâ Tâu Tsí á (The Lost Limbo)

MIFF Talks events complement and expand on the themes, ideas and talent attached to various films in each year's program. These discussion-based offerings feature a range of local and international guests, from filmmakers and academics to critics and commentators. The 2024 slate was presented by MIFF learning partner The University of Melbourne.

Consuming Culture

Co-presented by The Wheeler Centre
Speakers: Hannah Diviney, Jared Richards and Alison Willmore
MODERATOR: Brodie Lancaster

Costume Design Masterclass With Hollywood's Deborah L. Scott

Speaker: Deborah L. Scott
MODERATOR: Kate Jinx

Documenting Fact & Fiction: Trust Issues

Speakers: Rhys Graham, Jaydon Martin, Shannon Owen and Donna Lyon
MODERATOR: Lauren Valmadre

In Conversation: David Lowery

Speaker: David Lowery
MODERATOR: Alexei Toliopoulos

In Conversation: Ondi Timoner

Speaker: Ondi Timoner
MODERATOR: Zak Hepburn

In Conversation: Warren Ellis & Justin Kurzel

Speakers: Warren Ellis and Justin Kurzel
MODERATOR: Zan Rowe

Stories of the Spirit Realm: kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)

Speakers: April Phillips, Warren Ngarrae Foster Snr, Warren Foster Jnr aka Prodikal-1, Pat Younis, Mark Leahy and Jordan East

Universal Language & Iranian Cinema

Speakers: Matthew Rankin and Ila Firouzabadi
MODERATOR: Armin Miladi

Very Animated: Life in Clay, Ink & CGI

Speakers: Adam Elliot, Kathy Sarpi and Gints Zilbalodis
MODERATOR: Michael Lim



In Conversation: David Lowery

A highlight of this year's festival was MIFF's first ever Premiere with Purpose: the world premiere of *Left Write Hook*, a special black-carpet event presented by DECJUBA.

Elsewhere, MIFF collaborated with Hear My Eyes for a special screening of the 4K restoration of classic Australian film *Wake in Fright*, accompanied by a live soundtrack performed by local soul-seekers Surprise Chef.

Audiences were also treated to a special screening of *Magic Beach* at Peninsula Hot Springs, a one-of-a-kind 'Bathe in Cinema' experience in which audiences were encouraged to enjoy this MIFF Premiere Fund feature while luxuriating in soothing geothermic waters.



Director Shannon Owen and producer Donna Lyon with the cast of *Left Write Hook*



Hear My Eyes: *Wake in Fright*



Peninsula Hot Springs



Gill Whelan and Brad Macdonald



Surprise Chef guitarist Lachlan Stuckey



Magic Beach screening at Peninsula Hot Springs

Established in 2014, Critics Campus is MIFF's intensive week-long lab of panels, workshops, mentoring and writing, designed to provide emerging Australian screen critics with a unique professional development platform to nurture their talents in a live festival setting.

In 2024, MIFF once again welcomed a selection of eight emerging critics to the Critics Campus program, who received mentorship from a roster of local and international speakers and writers over the course of the festival.

As part of the program, each mentee was paired up with an established mentor: international critics Beatrice Loayza (*The New York Times* / *Criterion*), Jonathan Romney (*Sight & Sound* / *The Observer*),

Alison Willmore (*Vulture* / *New York* magazine), and esteemed local critics Philippa Hawker, Stephen A. Russell, Michael Sun, Cher Tan and Isabella Trimboli.

The prestigious program also included panel discussions and workshops featuring respected international film critics, scholars and programmers from outlets including *Film Comment*, *Screen Daily*, *The Guardian* and *The Saturday Paper*.



Beatrice Loayza



Jonathan Romney



Alison Willmore



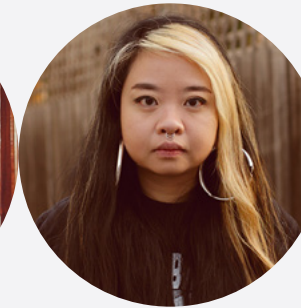
Philippa Hawker



Stephen A. Russell



Michael Sun



Cher Tan



Isabella Trimboli



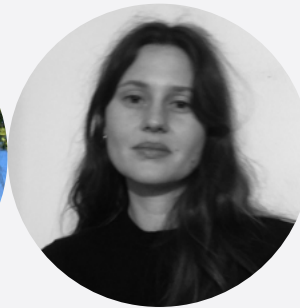
Alice Bellette



Grace Boschetti



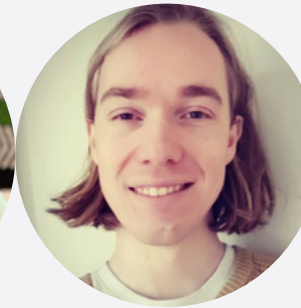
Nicole Cadelina



Isabella Gullifer-Laurie



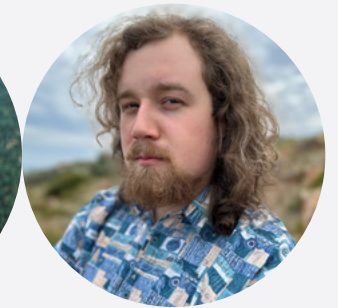
Tara Kenny



Austin Lancaster



Dylan Rowen



Daniel Tune

MIFF Schools is an initiative that aims to enrich the cinema experience for younger viewers.

The 2024 slate was curated with a view to presenting high-quality, diverse films in some of the languages commonly taught in Victorian schools – French, German, Mandarin, Japanese and Spanish. The films were also selected for how well they addressed the Victorian Curriculum’s Arts, Humanities, Science and Languages learning areas, as well as themes and issues relevant to the Critical and Creative Thinking, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding, and Personal and Social capabilities.

Each film was complemented with a free curriculum-aligned webinar by visual-analysis expert Dr Josh Nelson, giving teachers additional resources, strategies and ideas for how best to incorporate that film into their students’ classroom-based learning.

8 films

40 schools

1568 students



Program MIFF Regional

MIFF Regional screens a selection of festival films in regional centres across Victoria. In 2024, there were eight partner venues: Paramount Cinemas (Echuca), Peninsula Cinemas (Rosebud), The Pivotonian (Geelong), Village Cinemas (Geelong), Village Cinemas (Morwell), Village Cinemas (Shepparton), Star Cinema (Bendigo) and Theatre Royal (Castlemaine).

The 2024 MIFF Regional slate included features such as *Janet Planet*, *I Saw the TV Glow*, *Flathead*, *Kneecap* and *We Were Dangerous*; MIFF Premiere Fund titles *Memoir of a Snail*, *Left Write Hook*, *Magic Beach*, *Ellis Park*, *Audrey*, *Queens of Concrete* and *Inside*; and the *Australian Shorts* package.

3.9K total regional viewership

8 regional venues

87 sessions

6 sessions with guests in attendance

20 features

6 shorts



Theatre Royal, Castlemaine

While MIFF is best known for its activities during the festival period, it also hosts and co-presents a number of events and initiatives across the year.

Each event has its own flavour and take on filmic festivity, but all of them further MIFF's mission of delivering unforgettable screen experiences, nurturing audiences, and strengthening relationships with partners, filmmakers, local communities and the screen sector.

MIFF Summer Screenings

3 × feature films, 1 × shorts program
Bunjil Place
1–4 February

MIFF Encore Screenings

4 × feature films
ACMI
11–20 October

VCA Film and Television Graduate Season

42 × titles
ACMI Cinema 3
26 November – 10 December

MIFF Summer Residency at Melbourne Quarter

2 × screenings
28 November & 5 December

2 × MIFF Circle events

10 × MIFF Member preview screenings

Various titles
Various venues
Year-round (monthly)



MIFF Circle screening of *The Teachers' Lounge*



MIFF Summer Residency at Melbourne Quarter



MIFF Summer Screenings at Bunjil Place



LOOK ▷ SEE

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MIFF honours the 60,000-plus-year legacy of First Nations culture and storytelling through proudly showcasing the best screen stories by and about Indigenous Australian and other First Nations peoples.

One of 2024's standout titles was April Phillips's *kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)*. At once a cinematic story, an immersive two-channel projection and a gamified journey guided by First Nations knowledges, this innovative XR work was the recipient of The Uncle Jack Charles Award.

Other highlights included *Like My Brother* (co-directed by Luritja and Warumungu filmmaker Danielle MacLean), which focused on four young women from the Tiwi Islands seeking to make it as elite AFLW players; *Voice* (co-directed by Gudjula, Eastern-Kuku Yalanji and Darnley Island non-profit chair Semara Jose), which follows an Indigenous grassroots collective travelling around the country to advocate for a 'Yes' vote in the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum; *The Moogai* (from Wiradjuri, Bundjalung and Yaegl director Jon Bell), a harrowing supernatural story steeped in the horror of the Stolen Generations;

and concluding *Magic Beach* segment 'Gilay Gabinya' (directed by Gomeroi and Mandandanji animator Jake Duczynski), in which a young boy journeys to the Dreamtime. Elsewhere in the program, *Kid Show* featured key performances from Indigenous actors Mark Coles Smith and Hunter Page-Lochard, while Garth Edwards and Shawana Brown-Edwards played key supporting roles in *The Organist*.

Meanwhile, First Nations stories from beyond local shores were told in several other programmed films, including *We Were Dangerous* (New Zealand), *First Horse* (New Zealand), *Honey Kaha* (New Zealand) and *The Falling Sky* (Italy/Brazil), .



kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)



Like My Brother



Voice



The Moogai



The Organist



We Were Dangerous

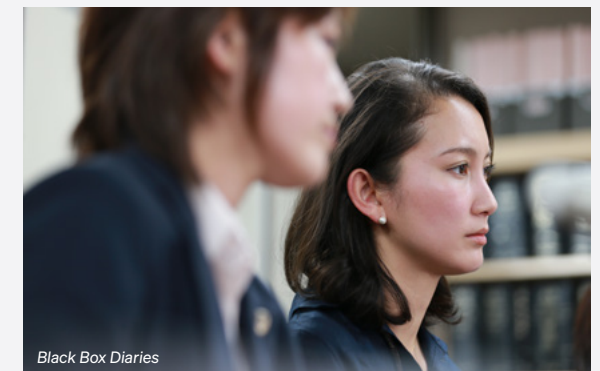
MIFF 2024 continued the festival's long-time commitment to championing gender-diverse filmmaking, with 106 titles featuring at least one female or non-binary director.

Half of the titles selected for MIFF's Bright Horizons competition were directed by women: India Donaldson's sensitively told coming-of-age story *Good One*; Luna Carmoon's intimate and confronting Venice Critics' Week multiple prize-winner *Hoard*; Annie Baker's sublime mother-daughter drama *Janet Planet*; Rungano Nyoni's disarmingly funny Zambian-set Cannes award-winner *On Becoming a Guinea Fowl*; and Ena Sendijarević's acidic colonial satire *Sweet Dreams*.

These major works joined headliners *All We Imagine as Light*, directed by Payal Kapadia; *I Saw the TV Glow*, directed by acclaimed non-binary filmmaker Jane Schoenbrun; and *The Substance*, directed by Coralie Fargeat. Meanwhile, new Australian works directed by women included three MIFF Premiere Fund titles – Natalie Bailey's *Audrey*, Shannon Owen's *Left Write Hook* and Eliza Cox's *Queens of Concrete* – and notable features and documentaries directed by Sally Aitken (*Every Little Thing*), Sal Balharrie and Danielle MacLean (*Like My Brother*), Wendy Champagne (*Aquarius*), Jenny

Hicks (*Dale Frank – Nobody's Sweetie*), Semara Jose (co-director of *Voice*) and Audrey Lam (*Us and the Night*).

A major highlight of the 2024 program was the retrospective *Yvonne Rainer: Autobiographical Fictions*, a presentation of five restored films by the celebrated US director. Other key restorations screening at MIFF this year included Chantal Akerman's 1989 celebration of Jewish New York identity *Histoires d'Amérique: Food, Family and Philosophy* and Niki de Saint Phalle's 1976 exuberant French art fairytale *Un rêve plus long que la nuit*.



Stories by and about the LGBTQIA+ community are always a key focus of MIFF's programming, and the 2024 edition of the festival featured a strong selection of titles by queer filmmakers from Australia and around the world.

This year's program featured a full suite of 2024 Berlinale Teddy Award recipients: *All Shall Be Well* (Best Feature Film); *Teaches of Peaches* (Best Documentary Film); *Crossing* (Jury Award); and *Grandmamauntsistercat* (Best Short Film). These joined the winner of the 1997 Teddy Award for Best Documentary/Essay, *MURDER and murder*, which screened as part of a broader retrospective on US lesbian filmmaker Yvonne Rainer. A further retrospective was devoted to the short works of Australian director Stephen Cummins, whose beautiful, oft-provocative films from the mid 1980s until his death from HIV-related lymphoma in 1994 constitute a crucial chapter in the country's queer cinematic history.

Other key titles selected included *I Saw the TV Glow*, a stylish and unpredictable exploration of gender, queerness and identity; homoerotic dark comedy *Misericordia*; erotic thriller *Motel Destino*; queer COVID-set comedy *Stress Positions*; *Toll*, a character study about a mother in an industrial Brazilian city seeking to subject her son to gay conversion therapy; *Viet and Nam*, a Cannes Un Certain Regard–selected tale of two Vietnamese coal miners in love; and XR experience *Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising*, a powerful intergenerational essay on the fight for LGBTQIA+ rights that examines past and future alike.



All Shall Be Well



Teaches of Peaches



MURDER and murder



Stephen Cummins Retrospective



Toll



Viet and Nam

16 sessions with audio description

15 sessions with open captions

89 fully subtitled films

7 sensory-friendly sessions

2 crybaby sessions

100% of venues with step-free and wheelchair access

60% of venues with assistive listening devices available

60% of venues with hearing loop devices available

Accessibility, equity and inclusivity are at the heart of MIFF, and we are committed to delivering a festival that everyone can enjoy. The festival offers several accessible services.

In 2024, MIFF presented a range of films with open captions and audio description, Auslan-interpreted talks and events, and hearing loop and assistive listening devices. All metropolitan venues and several regional venues accommodated step-free and wheelchair access, along with guide dogs, assistance dogs and companion cards. To fulfil MIFF's ongoing objective to 'meet audiences where they are', MIFF Online once more presented a selection of films available to stream Australia-wide.

In 2024, open-captioned screenings increased by 88 per cent, bringing more films than ever before to d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing festival attendees. Sensory-friendly screenings also returned, allowing audiences to choose from seven film options, while the festival featured two crybaby sessions, catering for parents and carers who wish to enjoy the festival in a baby- and toddler-friendly environment. MIFF 2024 programmed several films that focused on the lives of disabled people who have had a deep

impact on the community, including *The Ride Ahead* and *The Remarkable Life of Ibelin*.

New access-related initiatives introduced in 2024 included Deaf Cinema Buffs, a program developed in partnership with community organisation Break a Finger. As part of this initiative, four d/Deaf film lovers were selected to attend several open-captioned sessions of key Premiere Fund titles and create bespoke promotional video content in Auslan on social media. Elsewhere, a screening of *The Stimming Pool* was followed by a panel discussion facilitated by Bus Stop Films, in which neurodivergent filmmakers provided insight into the film and how cinematography, editing and form are informed by neurodivergent living.



The Stimming Pool



The Remarkable Life of Ibelin



The Ride Ahead



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Held during the opening days of the festival, MIFF 37°South Market is a screen content development and financing event. It facilitates creative and commercial connections by enabling invited buyers and financiers to source, acquire, develop and finance screen content slates via individually tailored diaries of bespoke meeting and networking opportunities with producers.

There were also screenings of completed film projects seeking sales and/or distribution from streamers, distributors and sales agents, while producers were additionally able to source new content to develop via meetings with book publishers, other rights holders, and writers, directors or creatives.

In 2024, 37°South welcomed 57 financiers and buyers, including sales agents, distributors, streamers, networks and gap funders, with attending execs from the likes of AGC Studios, AMP, Archstone, Bankside, Black Label Media, Charades, Disney+, Memento, Miramax, N9ne Studio, Neon, Protagonist, Red Sea Media, Roadshow, Stan, StudioCanal, Tubi, Universal Pictures, Visit Films and WME.

151 producers

57 financiers/buyers

74 writers/directors/creatives

27 publishers

28 other rights holders

15 events

9 panels

Over 3.2K individual meetings



Kirby Brierty and Perun Bonser from Screenwest



Panel featuring representatives from WME, Miramax, Neon and Visit Films

Accelerator Lab is an annual MIFF initiative that supports promising emerging filmmakers in their transition to feature/longform filmmaking and showcases new Australian and New Zealand shorts. Through participation in a five-day intensive program of workshops, panels and more with international and Australian industry heavyweights, filmmakers gain a greater understanding of the dynamics and possibilities of longform filmmaking.

The overarching theme of Accelerator Lab is to encourage participants to go out and make their next film, focusing on collaboration so that they may be committed and strategic – and consider every avenue available to achieve their goals.

The program's 20th iteration was comprised of 22 panel discussions and presentations by Australian and international industry heavyweights such as: Sally Caplan (former Screen Australia Head of Content); international financier Yellow Veil Pictures; talent

agency Nathan Culliver Management; ANZ distributors Madman, Sharmill, Roadshow and Umbrella; executives from screen agencies Screen Australia and VicScreen; production companies Typecast and Good Thing; and Accelerator Lab alumnus directors Justin Kurzel, Noora Niasari, Audrey Lam and Jackie van Beek, who delivered a session on acting alongside Jeremy Lindsay Taylor, Josephine Blazier and Hannah Diviney. Also speaking were directors Adam Elliot, Robert Connolly, Charles Williams, Mo Harawe, Kalu Oji, David Vincent Smith, Mathew Rankin and Jaydon Martin.



Aarushi Chowdhury, Anna Lindner, Awanui Simich-Pene, David Tse, Debbie Carmody, Dylan Nyerges, Elena Carapetis, Grace Tan, Hannah Moore, Hugo Kohler, Jasper Caverly, Jessica Sofarnos, Johanis Lyons-Reid, Karla Hart, Kelli Cross, Kynan Clarke, Mark Wills, Merryn Trescott, Ngaire Pigram, Nick Allen, Pernel Marsden, Richard Vilensky, Ryan Svirac, Te Waiarangi Ratana, Tim Barretto, Tyeli Hannah, Vea Mafile'o, Vic Singh-Thompson, Vonne Patiag

IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT



1.7K MIFF Members

Membership increased by 29%

Community is the essence of MIFF, and we are proud to have cultivated one of the most vocal, informed and passionate audiences of any festival, anywhere. MIFF Members once again demonstrated their support for the festival while also enjoying their membership privileges: discounted passes and tickets for all festival sessions, year-round parking discounts through Secure Parking, complimentary year-round Member preview screenings, and concession entry to MIFF's range of cinema partners. Those in the Deluxe Membership tier also accessed the exclusive Festival Passport.

The popular U26 Membership program also returned for younger cinema-goers, conferring all the benefits of a standard membership as well as the opportunity to purchase the exclusive U26 Pass (three off-peak sessions at a discounted price).

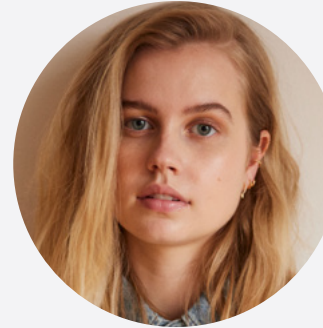


MIFF Program Launch

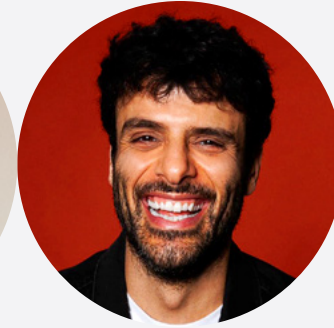
MIFF has welcomed a number of filmmakers, actors and creatives to join the festival as Ambassadors. Hailing from all over Australia, MIFF Ambassadors ensure the festival is a truly national celebration of film and the moving image, and are united by their passion for MIFF and all that it does.

“I am so thrilled to be an Ambassador for the Melbourne International Film Festival. It was such an honour to be asked to be an Ambassador for so many reasons, but I think what makes this particularly special for me is that 11 years ago, the very first film I was ever in, an Australian film called *These Final Hours*, premiered at MIFF. MIFF was really where it all began for me. The first red carpet I’d ever done, and my first film. It was just so exciting for me.”

– **Angourie Rice**



Angourie Rice



Fayssal Bazzi



Julia Busuttill Nishimura



Justin Kurzel



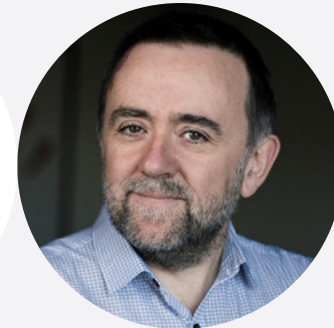
Leah Purcell AM



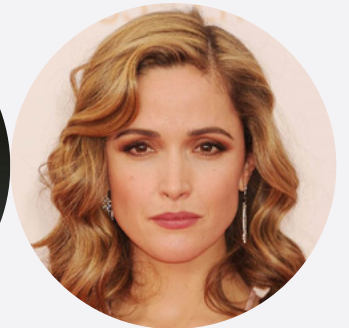
Mark Coles Smith



Rachel Griffiths AM



Robert Connolly



Rose Byrne

The MIFF Circle is the festival's philanthropic giving group. Since its inception in 2020, MIFF's donors have been the festival's lifeline, especially through a period of unprecedented challenges. Their astounding support remains integral to MIFF's success and growth as one of the biggest and best film events in Australia, for which MIFF is immensely grateful.



Left to right: Donna Lyon, Tania Austin and Damien Hodgkinson



MIFF Circle screening of *The Teachers' Lounge*

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And those who choose to remain anonymous

Our partners' commitment to celebrating our city, creativity and cinema is what continues to set MIFF apart. This year, MIFF worked with 53 partners across government, media, hospitality, corporate, venues, industry, suppliers and more.

Audiences in 2024 were once again treated to a lively selection of Partner collaborations, offerings and experiences, including film presentations, activations, custom content, top-notch food and beverage, and generous competitions, promos and giveaways. Highlights included a new Festival Hub and the hugely popular Intrepid Audience Award.

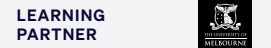
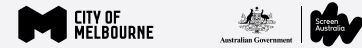


Campari Cinema Lounge

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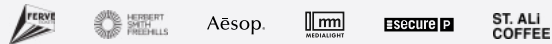
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And thank you to our hundreds of volunteers

See you in **2025**

MIFF

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Film Festival

7—24
August
2025

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