

8—25 August

Melbourne International Film Festival

2024

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MIFF

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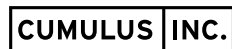


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The Melbourne International Film Festival acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, learn and work, and pays respect to their Elders past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. MIFF celebrates the history and contemporary creativity of the world's oldest living culture.

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miff.com.au/patron

VICSCREEN

PROUDLY SUPPORTING
AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER
FILM FESTIVAL



Memoir of a Snail, made in Melbourne with support
from VicScreen. Photo courtesy of Arenamedia.



Welcome

Welcome to MIFF's 72nd edition. We are so excited to bring you this carefully curated program of the best new cinema and important retrospectives from every corner of the globe. Melbourne's love for cinema runs deep, and I am quickly learning just how hungry our MIFF community is for this annual cavalcade of stimulating cinema.

Congratulations to the thousands of screen professionals who have invested so much in creating the stories we will share across MIFF's 18 magnificent days of cinema. Your imagination, creativity, stamina and tight teamwork are an inspiration.

Largely unseen by audiences, MIFF's Industry programs will again run alongside the festival with our cornerstone activity, the MIFF 37th South Market, being a critical platform particularly for local screen producers and creatives to connect with international screen content financiers and decision-makers. We look forward to the inspiration and connections created through this screen marketplace for showcasing and network development. Meanwhile, the MIFF Premiere Fund is a vital pathway to elevate new local films making their debut. We are excited to present seven Premiere Fund films in the 2024 program – through galas and very special events.

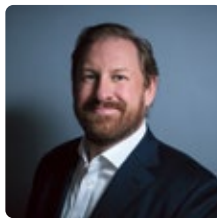
I extend our huge thanks to the MIFF Circle Patrons, MIFF Members and Partners who believe in our purpose and provide invaluable support in delivering MIFF's

mission to bring you the stories of the world through unforgettable screen experiences. It is your support that means MIFF can be presented at a scale that meets our audience's appetite for Australia's biggest screen event. Our thanks to principal government partner the Victorian Government through VicScreen, and major government partners City of Melbourne and Screen Australia.

The MIFF team are legends who work tirelessly every day to strengthen our organisation and ensure each edition of our festival is unique and wonderful – and the best experience possible for our audience. Thank you.

There truly is something in this festival for every cinema-lover. I urge you to be adventurous and gorge yourself on cinema. Stay for a Q&A or meet other cinema-lovers after the screening in the MIFF Festival Hub, presented by Challenger, or the Campari Cinema Lounge. We look forward to welcoming you and can't wait to share these stories with you.

Damien Hodgkinson
Chief Executive
Officer, MIFF



Cinematically synonymous with the bluster of a Melbourne winter, MIFF's return in 2024 heralds a heady voyage and a venturing into films far from our doorstep, and far from the rickety pseudo-imaginings of the entertainment currently clogging up the screens, feeds and brains of Melburnians.

Prepare to have the vanilla-dopamine hits of your non-MIFF-season entertainment shattered, once again, by cinema.

The festival starts with a hometown celebration of one of our finest Melburnian moviemakers: Adam Elliot's long-awaited MIFF Premiere Fund-supported *Memoir of a Snail* – dark, delightful and attuned to the shonkily beloved wavelengths of Australian suburbia (not to mention the joys of a Chiko Roll). Opening Night will be a moment you must be there for – along with so many others this year.

From Justin Kurzel's portrait of Warren Ellis in *Ellis Park*, a film so contemporary in the binds it makes between compassion and creativity, to our world-premiere Family Gala of *Magic Beach*, Robert Connolly's ambitious adaptation of the beloved Australian children's classic (and don't forget the repeat screening at Peninsula Hot Springs for a more aquatically immersive movie-going time!), there are films to be found for everyone among this year's bumper 250+ film crop.

Films that will hone your mind to the urgent matters of the world around you; others that will take you far from any semblance of reality; there are the formally adventurous and the experimentally leaning, the hilarious, the terror-inducing, and those that are warm hugs to reset your heart amid the cold days.

This year, we're particularly thrilled to present a major retrospective program uniquely curated for MIFF from The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) New York's landmark Iranian Cinema before the Revolution, 1925–1979 retrospective. Iranian New Wave: 1962–79 is an expansive collection of underseen and outrightly unseen greats of the Iranian cinema canon from the 60s

and 70s, also including nonfiction and rarely screened work from the golden era of Iranian animation. It's a rare onscreen opportunity not to be missed.

Elsewhere, our Bright Horizons competition is unmissable cinema – returning for its third year, a lightning rod for the most important breakthrough voices in world cinema, as we celebrate the new, the next, the bold and the best. All presented in Australian premiere (and many with IMAX screenings!), and with a number of international filmmakers on the ground in Melbourne, Bright Horizons flips the film-competition model to focus on discovery, on ascent into auteurship – a chance for audiences to meet the most important new filmmakers as they shape cinema before your eyes. I hope you'll check out what has come to be one of the most singular and exciting destinations for film within the program-at-large.

MIFF, again, continues to meet you where you are: within metropolitan Melbourne, alongside weekend expansions to seven country Victorian towns, or all across Australia at your place, with a selection of festival highlights screening via MIFF's online season on ACMI's virtual Cinema 3.

Being part of an audience these days is not a passive pursuit, and that is at the heart of the modern MIFF. Our hometown's own brand of cinematic maximalism, a path forged across hundred of movies – it's a beautiful thing, and it is back to enjoy. Thank you, as ever, for being a part of MIFF, and for your support of and interest in the festival. We at MIFF hope this program catches your curiosity. We'll see you in the cinema this August.

Al Cossar
Artistic Director,
MIFF



MIFF is back with a massive program showcasing the best in local and international cinema.

The Victorian Government is a longstanding partner and supporter of MIFF, which is both a highlight of our cultural calendar and a vital part of our screen industry.

Putting local talent in the spotlight, this year's festival kicks off with the Australian premiere of Adam Elliot's latest Melbourne-made masterpiece *Memoir of a Snail*, which we have been proud to back through VicScreen and the MIFF Premiere Fund.

Beyond the diverse line-up of screenings, the Industry programs make MIFF a place where deals are made, opportunities are forged and projects are taken from script to screen.

The festival draws to a close with the announcement of the Bright Horizons Award, one of the world's biggest film prizes.

Whether you're a film buff, a filmmaker or a first-timer, there is plenty to enjoy at MIFF 2024.

The Hon. Colin Brooks MP
Minister for
Creative Industries



To attend the Melbourne International Film Festival is to experience one of the best film festivals in the world.

As a long-time supporter, the City of Melbourne is proud of its rich history and the ways it lights up our city every August. It's a joy to see Melbourne's streets buzzing with cinema fans, festival guests, volunteers and filmmakers who flock from across the world for 18 intriguing days and nights of programming in our city's iconic theatres.

Congratulations to the festival organisers for presenting such a bold, original and diverse offering of experiences in dozens of languages, including the world's largest showcase of Australian films.

The City of Melbourne is proud to continue to support MIFF through its Creative Investment Partnership Program. I wish all attendees an enjoyable festival ahead.

Nicholas Reece
Lord Mayor
of Melbourne



FESTIVAL GUEST

Selected sessions may feature festival guest introductions or Q&As.

MIFF ONLINE

Available to stream via ACMI Cinema 3.

MIFF REGIONAL

Available to view at one or more of the festival's eight regional cinemas.

MIFF PREMIERE FUND

A title from this year's slate of MIFF co-financed films.

For full program details – including session times, extended film descriptions, accessibility information, viewer advice and the complete festival schedule – visit miff.com.au

Encore Screenings & Late Announcements

Check the website for up-to-date information, including late additions to the MIFF 2024 program.

Your Guide to MIFF

Cinemas 8–25 August

Tickets to MIFF sessions in cinemas are strictly limited. Make sure you book ahead to avoid missing out.

Regional 16–18 and 23–25 August

MIFF returns to select cinemas in Bendigo, Castlemaine, Echuca, Geelong, Morwell, Rosebud and Shepparton.

[MIFF REGIONAL](#)

See page 39 for more information.

Online Australia-wide 9–25 August

MIFF's digital offering has a limited selection of festival highlights, including new films and free short films, with select access services made available. You can book and stream these highlights via ACMI Cinema 3.

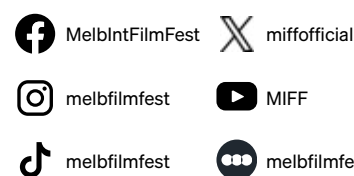
[MIFF ONLINE](#)

See page 37 for more information.

Stay Updated

Follow us to keep up to date with program announcements, late additions, encores and surprise screenings.

#MIFF2024



Sign up to *Widescreen*, the MIFF newsletter
miff.com.au/subscribe

Viewer Advice and Classification

MIFF offers Viewer Advice for films that contain scenes and/or themes that some audiences may find sensitive. Where applicable, Viewer Advice will be prominently displayed on each film's listing on the MIFF website and app. Please refer to the Viewer Advice prior to booking your tickets.

The Classification Board has granted MIFF special customs and censorship clearances. Except where indicated online, no-one under 18 (including infants) can attend sessions. For MIFF Schools films (page 40), no-one under the age of 15 will be admitted unless in the company of an adult guardian.

For more detailed information, visit miff.com.au/classification.

Tickets and Passes



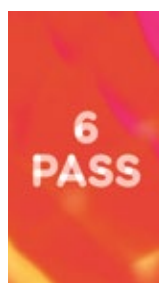
Standard Admission

Peak
(Mon-Fri evening sessions & weekends)

FULL: \$27
CONCESSION: \$22
MEMBERS: \$20.50

Off-peak
(Mon-Fri daytime sessions)

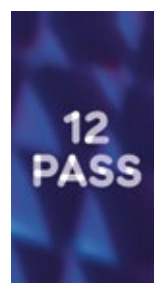
FULL: \$23.50
CONCESSION: \$20.50
MEMBERS: \$18



Multipass-6

Six (6) standard festival admissions, which you can enjoy by yourself or share with friends.

FULL: \$146
CONCESSION: \$119
MEMBERS: \$111



Multipass-12

Twelve (12) standard festival admissions, which you can enjoy by yourself or share with friends.

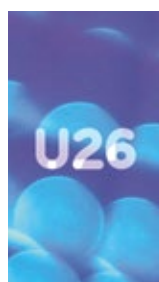
FULL: \$259.50
CONCESSION: \$211.50
MEMBERS: \$197



Bright Horizons 3-Pass

See any three (3) films in the prestigious Bright Horizons competition at a discounted rate.

FULL: \$57
CONCESSION: \$46.50
MEMBERS: \$43



U26 Pass

U26 MIFF Member exclusive. Redeemable for three (3) off-peak sessions during the festival.

U26 MEMBERS: \$30



Festival Passport

Included with a Deluxe MIFF Membership. Admission to every standard session at MIFF 2024.

DELUXE MEMBERSHIP: \$650

Allocated Seating

This year, we're trialling allocated seating at ACMI and Forum Melbourne. This means you can skip the queues and choose your seat in advance.

Standby Queues

For all sessions listed as 'standby', MIFF will operate a standby queue at the venue. The queue commences from one hour prior to session start, and patrons may be admitted up to 15 minutes after the commencement of the film. Please see a Front of House staff member to be added to the queue. Admission to standby sessions is not guaranteed.

Become a Member

Show your love for MIFF and unlock exclusive benefits, including:

- discounted tickets in cinemas and on MIFF Online
- four-day ticket pre-sale access
- year-round Member screenings
- industry concession entry to all of our cinema partners.

FULL: \$78
CONCESSION: \$65

U26 Membership

An exclusive offering for our younger film lovers!

For a special price, everyone under the age of 26 can enjoy the same benefits of a MIFF Membership with a U26 Membership. This allows you to purchase the exclusive U26 Pass.

U26 MEMBERSHIP: \$25

Passes are valid for standard in-cinema sessions only unless otherwise stated. For full terms and conditions, visit miff.com.au/tickets.

Book Tickets

Online – miff.com.au



MIFF 2024 App

Available for iOS and Android
Proudly supported by Ferve Tickets

Phone – 03 8660 4888

Pre-festival Hours:
Daily, 11am–4pm

Festival Hours:
Daily, 10am–9pm

Box Office – Pre-festival

ACMI Box Office:
Daily, 10am–4pm

Box Office – During Festival

ACMI Box Office:
Daily, 10am until 15 minutes after start of the last session.

Box Offices at festival screening venues open one hour prior to the first session and close 15 minutes after start of last session.

Accessibility

MIFF is committed to delivering access for everyone. The festival offers a range of accessible services across our venues, screenings and events in order to facilitate all film lovers' access to quality cinema experiences.

MIFF is proud to offer a selection of films screening with Open Captions, Audio Description tracks, films that are 100% subtitled, Auslan-interpreted events and sensory-friendly sessions. Step-free and wheelchair access is also available across all metropolitan venues, while MIFF Online offers a curated program of films to stream from the comfort of your home.

See page 47 for more information and visit miff.com.au/access.

If you require any access service that MIFF offers, please advise our Ticketing team on boxoffice@miff.com.au, by phone on **03 8660 4888**, or in person at a MIFF Box Office to ensure that MIFF can provide you with the best customer service.

You can also get in touch with MIFF's Access Coordinator by emailing access@miff.com.au to discuss any services that MIFF offers or for more information.

Get the MIFF App

Browse the program, watch film trailers, make a shortlist of your favourites and access all your tickets in one place with the MIFF 2024 App.

Available on iOS and Android.



Schedule Your Festival

Save a shortlist, compare session times and schedule your festival with the online schedule grid at miff.com.au.

The place to see and be seen at MIFF

CAMPARI®

CINEMA LOUNGE

ACMI, FED SQUARE
OPEN 5PM-LATE

APERITIVO HOUR 5PM-6PM

MIFF x acmi



Cocktails by Campari
Drinks by Yering Station and Asahi

DJs by Skylab Radio
Menu by Miss Pearl



MISS PEARL

Metro Venues

- 1 ACMI + MIFF Box Office
Fed Square
- 2 Forum Melbourne
154 Flinders St (cnr Flinders St & Russell St)
- 3 The Capitol
113 Swanston St
- 4 Kino Cinema
Lower Ground Level,
45 Collins St
- 5 Hoyts Melbourne Central
Level 3, cnr Swanston St & La Trobe St
- 6 IMAX
Rathdowne St, Carlton
- 7 The Astor Theatre
1 Chapel St, St Kilda East



Discount Parking

Pre-book your car parking and save.

Discount parking is available at Secure Parking locations throughout the CBD. Discounted prices only available by pre-booking online.

Apply promo code on booking page:
MIFFDAY2024 for \$25 All Day, Early Bird & Hourly Rate

MIFFWKND2024 for \$14 Weekend Rate

MIFFNIGHT2024 for \$14 Night Rate

Visit secureparking.com.au/miff for full terms and conditions.



Galas & Special Events

Roll out the red carpet and celebrate MIFF's 72nd edition in style with these unmissable events.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/special-events

Opening Night Gala Thursday 8 August

MIFF 2024 commences with a celebration befitting the sheer brilliance of the highly anticipated Australian premiere of Adam Elliot's *Memoir of a Snail*, joined by the talented creatives who contributed to its making.

Rub shoulders with the best-dressed and brightest stars on the red carpet with a drink on arrival, to be followed by the film screening with special guest introductions.

MIFF is taking over Hoyts Melbourne Central for the night! Audiences can choose to enjoy the atmosphere of the red carpet and the screening with a film-only ticket – or, following the screening, step across the street for a legendary afterparty 'til late at the gorgeous State Library Victoria with a film-and-party ticket.



Memoir of a Snail

Dir. Adam Elliot Australia

Sarah Snook lends her voice alongside Kodi Smit-McPhee, Magda Szubanski, Eric Bana and Jacki Weaver in the stunning second claymation feature from Oscar winner Adam Elliot, which won Anecy's Cristal Award for Best Feature Film.

Her life may be a mess, but Grace Pudel (Snook, *Succession*) does derive pleasure from three things: her snail collection, romance novels and her guinea pigs. As children, she and twin brother Gilbert (Smit-McPhee, *The Power of the Dog*) eked out a modest existence with their paraplegic father, a has-been performer gripped by alcoholism and grief after their mother's death. When he, too, passes away, the siblings are split up by child services: Grace is sent to Canberra, and Gilbert, to Perth. Isolated, Grace retreats behind a carapace – much like her snails – and fills her emotional void through compulsive hoarding. That is, until she finds a fourth source of joy: a friendship with outrageous octogenarian Pinky (Weaver, *Animal Kingdom*).

This exquisitely hand-crafted stop-motion wonder from the auteur behind the multi-awarded feature *Mary and Max*, Oscar-winning short *Harvie Krumpet* (MIFF 2003) and AFI-lauded short *Ernie Biscuit* (MIFF 2015) is an affecting coming-of-age tale like no other. Supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, *Memoir of a Snail* is an indelible reminder that while the turmoil of life may force us into our shells, all it takes is a little bravery to break free.

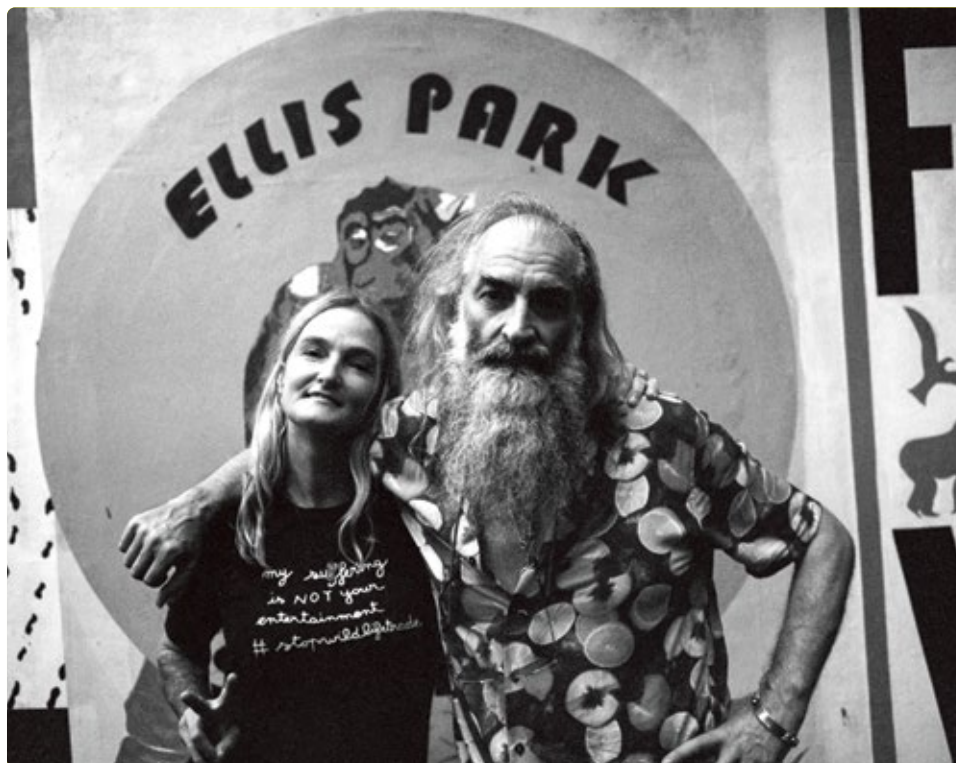
94 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL

Music on Film Gala Saturday 10 August

Be the first on the planet to see Justin Kurzel's moving portrait of famed multi-instrumentalist Warren Ellis, *Ellis Park*.

Join us at the stunning Astor Theatre on the rock 'n' roll red carpet for a drink on arrival, then join special guests at the film screening and stay for the post-film afterparty vibe.

PRESENTED BY



Ellis Park

Dir. Justin Kurzel Australia

Legendary Australian musician Warren Ellis takes us on a guided tour through his world and one very special animal sanctuary.

A key member of iconic bands The Dirty Three and Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds as well as a prolific film score composer (*The Proposition*; *Hell or High Water*, MIFF 2016), multi-instrumentalist Ellis has cut a brilliant and unorthodox figure in Australian music for over three decades. Far from the international concert halls in which he has plied his craft, however, lies a very different passion project: a wildlife sanctuary in the forests of Sumatra. Co-founded by Ellis and spearheaded by Femke den Haas, whose dedicated team of conservationists rescues trafficked and mistreated animals then devotes years to nursing them back to health, Ellis Park is a beacon of kindness in a world that sometimes has precious little of it to spare.

Supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund and directed by Justin Kurzel (*Nitram*, MIFF 2021; *Snowtown*), *Ellis Park* follows its subject from his childhood home in Ballarat – where he encounters formative sites and spends a tender afternoon in the company of his elderly parents – to his first, long-awaited visit to the park that bears his name. Along the way, it delves into Ellis's expansive love of music and artistic history, illuminating the parallel evolutions in his multifaceted creative practice and commitment to the conservation cause.

105 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL

Family Gala Sunday 18 August

The beloved MIFF Family Gala returns – bigger and better than ever – in 2024!

A fun-filled event for adults and kids alike, the event features the world premiere of *Magic Beach* accompanied by an all-ages party, fun activities and delicious treats.



Magic Beach

Dir. Robert Connolly Australia

Ten animators bring Alison Lester's beloved children's book to the screen, crafting a magical mixture of live action and animation that is destined to become a family favourite.

As children hear the enchanting words of Lester's illustrated classic *Magic Beach*, they slip into spellbinding worlds of dream and whimsy. Now translated into animated form – covering traditional 2D, claymation, stop-motion and more – it can captivate a whole new generation of youngsters while evoking wonder in the already-familiar. From a host of undersea adventures, tall tales of salty smugglers and escalating sandcastle wars, to sibling-stealing seaweed monsters, psychedelic coral forests and a dog's dream of shoals of 'sausage fish', everyone will find their own fantastical adventure within.

Lester's 1990 rhyming shrine to imaginative play has found its way into the hearts of countless Australians. To adapt it for the screen, Robert Connolly (*Paper Planes*, MIFF 2014) enlisted 10 of Australia's most talented animators – Susan Danta, Pierce Davison, Jake Duczynski, Emma Kelly, Simon Rippingale, Marieka Walsh, Eddie White, Lee Whitmore, Kathy Sarpi and Oscar nominee Anthony Lucas – to render a host of incredible, wildly diverse environments. Delivering an incandescent take on a revered Aussie work, the MIFF Premiere Fund-supported *Magic Beach* is a film of widescreen delight.

74 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND MIFF REGIONAL



Hear My Eyes Friday 16 August

Wake in Fright + Surprise Chef

Dir. Ted Kotcheff Australia, USA, UK

Hear My Eyes brings its sonic reinterpretation services to MIFF 2024, with local soul-seekers *Surprise Chef* taking the stage to re-score the Australian classic *Wake in Fright*. Thusly heard anew, but also seen anew, this screening doubles as the world premiere of the film's 4K restoration.

Occupying a dark cupboard of the white Australian psyche, this iconic 1971 work hardly needs introduction. Canadian director Ted Kotcheff captured a disquieting version of the interior of this country that is as hard to look away from as it is to watch. The claustrophobia of endless open space and small-town minds serves as backdrop for an outsider's tightrope walk on razor-thin divides: between urban and rural, hypermasculinity and homosexuality, larrikin and brute, human and animal.

Already taking their cues from '70s film scores, Coburg's best-loved five-piece cinematic soul supergroup will cook up hitherto-untraversed soundscapes in response to the surreal swill of Kotcheff's film.

109 MINS



MIFF x Peninsula Hot Springs: Magic Beach Friday 23 August

Luxuriate in soothing geothermic waters while enjoying the dazzling imagery and uplifting themes of Robert Connolly's *Magic Beach*! Treat yourself – don't miss this one-of-a-kind experience.



MIFF x IMAX: Lasting Impressions 10 & 13 August

Dir. Dylan Andrew Pearce USA

PRESENTED BY
IMAX

Plunge between the brushstrokes of impressionist artworks in this illuminating 3D spectacle.

Today, it's easy to be blasé about impressionist paintings. But in the 1870s and 80s, artists including Claude Monet, Edgar Degas and Vincent van Gogh were controversial rebels who worked in the open air and captured the shifting play of natural light. More than 150 years later, this multi-sensory experience recaptures impressionism's full emotional power. Don 3D glasses to enter the world of over 100 impressionist works by household names and forgotten geniuses.

45 MINS



Godzilla 70th Anniversary Marathon Saturday 17 August

Japan

Celebrate the world's favourite kaiju over one glorious night, via seven films marking 70 years.

From the Showa era, futuristic *Destroy All Monsters* and *Godzilla vs Mechagodzilla*, both featuring aliens intent on world destruction; and the first of the Heisei era, *The Return of Godzilla*, which ignores all previous films; to the strongly ecological *Godzilla vs Mothra*; the bonkers mayhem of *Godzilla*, *Mothra* and *King Ghidorah: Giant Monsters All-Out Attack*; and the acclaimed *Shin Godzilla*, the first in the Reiwa era. Plus, kicking off proceedings will be the original 1954 film, restored in *gigantic* 4K.

699 MINS

PRESENTED BY
Asahi

Planetarium Fulldome Showcase 10 & 17 August

Showcase 1

Metaract

Dir. Manami Sakamoto, Yuri Urano Japan

The artist's quest for meaning is revealed through natural environments recontextualised and juxtaposed with digital elements.

20 MINS

Iwakura

Dir. Kazuya Nagaya, Ali Mahmut Demirel, Maurice Jones Japan, Canada

Rooted in Shinto mythology, *Iwakura* invokes the spirits that embody Japan's sacred rock formations.

25 MINS

INNERSTAR 01: Reddening

Dir. Huang Wei, Cheng Dao-Yuan Taiwan

The first entry in a series inspired by astronomical phenomena and the exploration of consciousness.

15 MINS



Showcase 2

Impossible Space

Dir. Rocco Helmchen, Johannes Kraas Germany

A symphonic journey through fascinating real and artificial visual worlds, inspired by the spirit of science and discovery.

50 MINS

Limbotopia

Dir. Hsieh Wen-Yee Taiwan

First-time director Hsieh Wen-Yee presents a surreal trip through a post-apocalyptic Taiwan.

25 MINS

MIFF × acmi × challenger 

OPEN MIDDAY-LATE

CAMEO AT ACMI,
FED SQUARE

MIFF MEMBER
DISCOUNTS
AVAILABLE

PRESENTED BY CHALLENGER

MIFF FESTIVAL HUB

A new home for MIFF audiences to eat, drink and discuss cinema at ACMI

Visit before or after your MIFF session! Activities and events include MIFF Trivia Nights, Food & Film dining experiences, filmmaker conversations and more.

**Film Trivia
6pm, 15 & 16 August**

Rally the gang for Film Trivia presented by Umbrella Entertainment and hosted by film fanatic and comedian Alexei Toliopoulos.

**Book your table now –
miff.com.au**

Coffee by ST ALI

Menu by Miss Pearl

**Drinks by Yering Station,
Asahi and Campari**

Fragrance by Aesop

 **UMBRELLA**
ENTERTAINMENT

ST. ALI
COFFEE

MISS PEARL

YERING
Station

CAMPARI

Asahi
SUPER
"DRY"
辛口

Aēsop

MIFF AWARDS 2024



MIFF 2023 Bright Horizons Award nominees in attendance

Winners announced Saturday 24 August.

Bright Horizons Award presented by VicScreen



The MIFF film competition's flagship prize awards \$140,000 to a filmmaker on the ascent, making it the richest feature film prize in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Uncle Jack Charles Award in collaboration with Kearney Group



Awarded a \$20,000 cash prize and \$25,000 worth of financial services with Kearney Group, the winner will be an outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative within a film playing in the MIFF program.

Blackmagic Design Australian Innovation Award



This \$70,000 cash prize recognises an outstanding Australian creative within a film playing in the MIFF program. The prize can be awarded to a director or a technical or creative lead.

MIFF Schools Youth Jury Award presented by Collarts



This award recognises the best title from the MIFF Schools program, as selected by a jury comprised of the winners of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's Top Screen.

Intrepid Audience Award



Love it? Hate it? Rate it! This award crowns viewers' favourite title from the festival.

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Bright Horizons

MIFF's film competition, Bright Horizons, recognises the new, the next, the breakthrough and the best, with an extraordinary international line-up of first- and second-time filmmakers competing for the Bright Horizons Award presented by VicScreen – one of the richest film prizes in the world.

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Flow

Dir. Gints Zilbalodis France, Belgium, Latvia

A menagerie adrift on a boat must work together to survive a catastrophic flood in this animated wonder arriving from Cannes Un Certain Regard.

In the wake of human extinction and a catastrophic worldwide flood, a quick-witted black cat makes a life-saving leap onto a drifting ship that's inhabited by a capybara. They soon pick up a lemur, a stork and a labrador, and encounter a marauding flock of birds. Thrown into an environment in flux, navigating both treacherous floodwaters and dwindling resources, these very different creatures need to find a way to trust one another in order to survive.

To create his feature debut *Away*, Latvian filmmaker Gints Zilbalodis effectively worked as a one-person animation studio: he wrote, directed, animated and composed music for this visually striking wordless film, which saw him garner acclaim the world over. His follow-up – another striking animated allegory without dialogue – sees Zilbalodis set hand-drawn characters in photorealistic landscapes and employ inventive camerawork reminiscent of Terrence Malick. Offering an inspiring corrective to the sickly cute anthropomorphism that pervades mainstream animation and a poignant parable for our climate-catastrophe times, *Flow* showcases an ascendant master hitting his stride.

84 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Gints Zilbalodis

Gints Zilbalodis is a Latvian filmmaker and animator best known for *Away*, which won the Contrechamp Award at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival. He focuses on 3D animation with comprehensive camera movements and sprawling environments. His latest animated feature, *Flow*, has been selected for the Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes Film Festival and the official competition at Annecy.



Good One

Dir. India Donaldson USA

A simple camping trip evolves into a life-changing experience in this sensitively told coming-of-age debut.

Seventeen-year-old Sam is used to being a 'good' child: obedient, clever, unaffected by being largely overlooked. When she's roped along on a trip to the upstate New York wilderness with two divorcees – her father Chris and his old friend Matt – her role turns to mediator as their flawed personalities, microaggressions and competing egos come to the surface. Just as she learns uncomfortable truths about them, so too does she discover where, and how, she'll draw the line.

Told from Sam's perspective, writer/director India Donaldson's feature debut eloquently sums up the realities of being a teenager teetering on the edge of adulthood. Breakout star Lily Collias delivers a stellar performance, capturing through witty dialogue, expressive glances and body language the thrill and sometimes frustrating in-betweenness that mark this stage of life. All wrapped in Wilson Cameron's striking shots of the Catskills (captured in just 12 days) and Celia Hollander's gentle score, *Good One* evokes the films of Joanna Hogg and Kelly Reichardt in its quietly revelatory intimacy.

90 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



India Donaldson

India Donaldson is a filmmaker and screenwriter based in Los Angeles. Her short films include *Medusa*, *Hannahs* and *If Found*. *Good One* is Donaldson's debut feature film.



Hoard

Dir. Luna Carmoon UK

The past comes knocking in this four-time Venice-winning feature debut that blends grief, grime, love and childhood trauma.

Maria adores her mother, even if society may not look on her favourably. With a penchant for hoarding, Cynthia takes her daughter on bin dives for discarded goods under the guise of adding to what she calls their “catalogue of love”. That’s until a domestic incident triggers a visit from – and their separation by – social services. Fast-forward to Maria’s teenage years and she now lives with a foster family; there, a former foster, the much older Michael, returns. In him, she finds a fellow oddball; for her, he feels fascination, arousal and anguish bubbling to the surface.

Stellar performances from newcomer Saura Lightfoot Leon and *Stranger Things*’ Joseph Quinn elevate the simply strange to the truly engrossing in *Hoard*. Inspired by Ken Russell and other British filmmakers of the 1960s and 70s, Luna Carmoon’s intimate, at times confronting coming-of-age film scooped four prizes at Venice Critics’ Week. This is an impressive feat for a debutant director – one made all the more so given she originally wrote the film as a 20-page suicide note, whose creation eventually proved healing.

126 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Luna Carmoon

As a self-taught writer and director with a keen interest in 60s and 70s British cinema, Luna Carmoon is known for her visionary style of filmmaking. Her first short, *Nosebleed* – funded as part of Creative England’s shortFLIX initiative – premiered at the BFI London Film Festival and was selected for the LFF Network program and Sundance Ignite. *Hoard* is Carmoon’s debut feature.



Inside

Dir. Charles Williams Australia

Guy Pearce stars in this prison-set portrait of institutionalisation and salvation – the feature debut from Short Film Palme d’Or winner Charles Williams.

When Mel Blight (Vincent Miller) is transferred from juvenile detention to a maximum-security adult jail, he’s assigned to share a cell with one of Australia’s most infamous inmates, Mark Shepard (Cosmo Jarvis, *Shōgun*). Seizing an opportunity, the hardened Warren Murfett (Pearce) recruits Mel to kill Mark, who has a contract on his head. As Warren nears parole and a reunion on the outside with his son Adrian (Toby Wallace, *Acute Misfortune*, MIFF 2018), the relationship between the three men grows more entangled and intimate. Who can make amends for their crimes? And who is beyond saving?

Executive-produced by Thomas M. Wright (*The Stranger*, MIFF 2022) and supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, *Inside* is the impressive first feature from Williams, whose drama *All These Creatures* (MIFF 2018) won the Cannes Short Film Palme d’Or. Shot in Victoria, the film showcases a trio of powerhouse performances – from Miller in his debut role, to a transformative turn from Jarvis, to Pearce conveying both hope and hopelessness as a prison lifer – and poignantly examines the interplay between incarceration, rehabilitation and remorse.

104 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND MIFF REGIONAL



Charles Williams

Charles Williams is an Australian film director, writer and producer who has won more than 60 international awards, including the Cannes Short Film Palme d’Or. He began making short films at an early age and was picking up major awards while still in his teens. Since then, his films have gone on to screen at more than 200 of the world’s most prestigious festivals, including Cannes, TIFF, Clermont-Ferrand, MIFF, Sydney, Telluride, Hong Kong, Rotterdam, Busan and SXSW.



Janet Planet

Dir. Annie Baker USA

PRESENTED BY

Letterboxd

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Annie Baker’s debut film is a sublime mother-daughter coming-of-age tale that pays extraordinary attention to the ordinary.

It’s 1991 and 11-year-old Lacy is determined to escape camp, where she’s convinced her bunkmates don’t like her, and instead spend as much time with her mother as possible. A charismatic, forthright acupuncturist and single parent living in the woods of Massachusetts, Janet loves her daughter but finds her clinginess increasingly burdensome. Over the course of the summer, as Janet connects and reconnects with other adults – a boyfriend, an old friend, a new friend of sorts – Lacy’s vivid imagination helps her come to terms with her mother’s and her own impending womanhood.

Drawing comparisons to Kelly Reichardt (*First Cow*, MIFF 2020) and Celine Song (*Past Lives*, MIFF 2023), Baker has written an immaculately nuanced script and directs with an equally intimate, restrained touch. Collaborating with DOP Maria von Hausswolff, who shoots on 16mm, the acclaimed playwright turned filmmaker imbues her debut with a warm nostalgia that bathes Julianne Nicholson’s Janet and newcomer Zoe Ziegler’s Lacy in an almost surreal haze. Beautifully poignant and gently hilarious, *Janet Planet* is a certain marvel.

113 MINS MIFF REGIONAL



Annie Baker

Annie Baker is a playwright and filmmaker who grew up in Amherst, Massachusetts. Her multi-award-winning plays include *The Flick*, which won a Pulitzer Prize, an Obie Award and the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize; and an adaptation of Anton Chekhov’s *Uncle Vanya*, for which she also designed the costumes. Baker has been the recipient of numerous scholarships, including a MacArthur Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship. *Janet Planet* is her debut feature.



Julie Keeps Quiet

Dir. Leonardo Van Dijl Belgium, Sweden

When her coach is accused of misconduct, a tennis prodigy decides – for her own complex reasons – not to return serve.

Everyone at an exclusive Belgian tennis academy is shocked when its demanding head coach, Jeremy, is suspended pending a misconduct investigation into the suicide of a former star pupil. Then, like the gaze of a stadium crowd, all eyes turn to Jeremy’s current favourite, Julie. Brimming with athletic promise, she’s been working closely with Jeremy, unsupervised and away from other players, and he’s still texting her every day. But rather than talk to investigators, this tough and focused teenager chooses to process her emotional upheaval on her own. Aware that this moment could make or break her whole career, she’s not about to let anyone else seize the advantage.

Belgian director Leonardo Van Dijl’s debut feature, co-produced by the Dardenne brothers, won the SACD Award at Cannes Critics’ Week. With its mood of roiling tension beneath watchful stillness, this character portrait rallies cinematic form to echo the ruthless self-composure deployed by its protagonist as a survival strategy. Real-life tennis player Tessa Van den Broeck delivers an impressively poised performance in her first acting role, making Julie’s vulnerable interiority powerfully eloquent despite her outward stoicism.

97 MINS



Leonardo Van Dijl

Leonardo Van Dijl is a writer and director based in Belgium. His latest short film, *Stephanie*, was selected for the official competitions of Cannes, San Sebastián and TIFF as well as over 150 other film festivals, where it received various awards. Van Dijl’s feature debut, *Julie Keeps Quiet*, had its world premiere at the prestigious Critics’ Week of Cannes.



On Becoming a Guinea Fowl

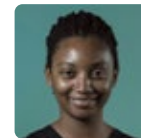
Dir. Rungano Nyoni Zambia, UK, Ireland

With absurdist humour and playfully surrealist imagery, this disarmingly funny Cannes award-winner rages at a middle-class Zambian family's shameful silence.

Shula is driving home from a costume party when she sees a dead body sprawled in the middle of the road. She realises it's her Uncle Fred: the man who sexually abused her and her cousins Nsansa and Bupe as children. And they weren't his only victims. However, in their middle-class family's Bemba culture, nobody speaks ill of the dead. Instead, Shula and her cousins are reluctantly caught up in days of elaborate grieving rites, pressured to eulogise a terrible man and to keep the secret everyone quietly knows.

Rungano Nyoni follows her acclaimed directorial debut *I Am Not a Witch* (MIFF 2017) with another formally adventurous Zambian feminist social critique – this one winning the Best Director prize in Un Certain Regard at Cannes. Here, the dark experimentalism of her first film is focused to devastating effect, building a story around the metaphor of an African bird whose screams warn of a predator. Weaving dreams, apparitions and even children's television programs into the increasingly overwrought funeral rites, Nyoni makes the viewer ride out the woozy tonal shifts to evoke the upside-down experience of trying to process trauma in silence.

95 MINS



Rungano Nyoni

Rungano Nyoni is a Zambian-Welsh director, screenwriter and actress. Prior to *On Becoming a Guinea Fowl*, she was known for the film *I Am Not a Witch*, which she also wrote and directed; the film won Nyoni the BAFTA Award for Outstanding Debut in 2018, and has also garnered accolades from international film festivals. Her 2009 film *The List* won the Welsh BAFTA Award for Best Short Film.



Sweet Dreams

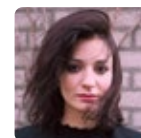
Dir. Ena Sendjarević Netherlands, Sweden, Indonesia

The desperate absurdities of colonisation are laid bare in this acidic satire of a Dutch family's fallout following the death of their wealthy patriarch.

On a sugar plantation in the Dutch East Indies in 1900, wealthy landowner Jan dies suddenly. After making little effort to assist while witnessing his demise, his widow Agathe sends for their son Cornelis to return from Europe and take over amid unrest from the estate's workers. Accompanied by his pregnant wife Josefien, Cornelis soon learns his father has written him out of the will in favour of his half-brother Karel, the product of the oppressor having his way with the oppressed: the family's Indonesian housekeeper Siti.

Sweet Dreams is the restrained yet acerbic second film from Ena Sendjarević, which took home Locarno's Best Performance Award (for lead actor Renée Soutendijk). Subverting the conventional period drama, the Bosnian-Dutch filmmaker confronts the Netherlands' colonial trespasses using dark humour and contemporary film language. This choice manifests in the hyper-stylised world of the family's opulent estate and its lurid colours, the confining Academy aspect ratio, and the evocative sound design (with compositions by Martial Foe), all building to what Sendjarević has dubbed a "horrific fairytale".

102 MINS



Ena Sendjarević

Bosnian-Dutch writer, director and producer Ena Sendjarević's feature debut *Take Me Somewhere Nice* was selected for ACID Cannes and won the Special Jury Prize at Rotterdam. Before that, her short *Import*, which premiered at Cannes Directors' Fortnight, was the Dutch entry for the Oscars. Her second feature, *Sweet Dreams*, premiered in Locarno's main competition (where it won the Pardo for Best Performance) and was the Netherlands' submission to the 2024 Oscars.



Universal Language

Dir. Matthew Rankin Canada

This zany transformation of Canada's beige city into the site of a classic Iranian film won the first ever Audience Award at Cannes Directors' Fortnight.

In a reimagined Winnipeg that looks a lot like 1980s Iran – just with a few more turkeys and Kleenex factories – two young kids find a banknote, leading them on an odyssey that takes them out of childhood and into the unforgiving world of adults. A disillusioned teacher shows up late to a class, only to insult his students. And a filmmaker (director Matthew Rankin, playing himself) arrives back at his family home and discovers that another man has taken his place.

These are indeed homages to Jafar Panahi's *The White Balloon* (MIFF 1996 & 2006) and Abbas Kiarostami's *Where Is the Friend's House?* and *Close-Up* (MIFF 2003). These classics serve as inspirations for Rankin, whose debut *The Twentieth Century* won the Berlinale FIPRESCI Prize and Best Canadian First Feature at Toronto. Calling *Universal Language* an "autobiographical hallucination" drawn from an obsession with Iranian cinema and a love-hate relationship with his hometown, Rankin spins his own *My Winnipeg* by way of the movies of Kiarostami and Mohsen Makhmalbaf – though its still frames and sight gags owe just as much to Jacques Tati, Roy Andersson and Wes Anderson.

89 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Matthew Rankin

Matthew Rankin's feature directorial debut, *The Twentieth Century*, was nominated for Best Picture and Best Director at the Canadian Screen Awards. He is the writer of various short films, among which three have been selected for Sundance. His work is marked by the mixing of genres, the use of documentary and historical elements, and a particular, lyrical aesthetic. His short *The Tesla World Light* was selected for Cannes Critics' Week.



The Village Next to Paradise

Dir. Mo Harawe Austria, France, Germany, Somalia

Hope and familial bonds thrive in dangerous conditions in this groundbreaking feature – the first ever Somali film to screen at Cannes.

Tasked with odd jobs ranging from digging graves to smuggling goods, Mamargade resides in a small but picturesque community by the ocean, located in a region racked by political instability and the ever-present threat of foreign drone strikes. His sister Araweelo seeks to open a tailoring shop but is hampered by her status as a divorcee, while his young son Cigaal must confront the recent closure of his school and the prospect of being sent away to a boarding institution in the city. Living in a cramped one-bedroom house, the trio all long for a better life that might be snatched away at any moment – but, together, they might just make it.

Selected for Cannes Un Certain Regard, the affecting debut feature from Mo Harawe (*Will My Parents Come to See Me*, MIFF 2022) is reminiscent of Hirokazu Kore-eda's *Shoplifters* (MIFF 2018) in its representation of a makeshift family brought together by circumstance. Vividly rendered through Harawe's singular, rich and indelible visual language, *The Village Next to Paradise* is a gently wondrous portrayal of survival in difficult conditions.

133 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Mo Harawe

Mo Harawe is the director of the internationally acclaimed short film *Will My Parents Come to See Me*, winner of Clermont-Ferrand's International Grand Prix – the most prestigious short film prize worldwide. *The Village Next to Paradise* is Harawe's first feature.

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Grand Tour

Dir. Miguel Gomes Portugal, France, Italy, China, Japan

This Cannes Best Director-winning Asian odyssey spectacularly mashes up time and place, genre and form, to transport audiences somewhere sublime.

In 1917, British diplomat Edward is stationed in Burma and travels by train from Rangoon to Mandalay, where Molly, his fiancée of seven years, is finally arriving to

join him. But before her steamship can dock, Edward loses his nerve and flees on the next boat to Singapore. This doesn't deter the exuberant Molly, who promptly sets off after her cowardly bridegroom. He leads Molly on a chase through Bangkok, Saigon, Manila, Osaka, Shanghai, Chongqing, Chengdu and onwards – even through history, transcending storytelling itself. This stunning cinematic essay demands to be experienced moment to moment.

128 MINS



All We Imagine as Light

Dir. Payal Kapadia France, India, Netherlands, Luxembourg

The first Indian film to screen in Cannes competition in 30 years – taking home the 2024 Grand Prix – is a tale of two nurses, their romantic entanglements and a mystical trip to the coast.

Roommates Prabha and Anu, who work at the same hospital, can't seem to catch a break. Prabha's life is

thrown into chaos when she receives an unexpected gift from her husband, who lives in Germany and hasn't spoken to her in over a year. Meanwhile, the younger Anu tries in vain to find somewhere in the bustling city to have a clandestine tryst with her boyfriend, who is Muslim. Frustrated and feeling trapped, they decide to flee their urban environment and travel to a picturesque beach town, where a forest beckons to manifest their dreams and desires.

115 MINS



The Seed of the Sacred Fig

Dir. Mohammad Rasoulof Iran

Modern and traditional values clash in acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof's daring family drama, which won the Prix Spécial and the FIPRESCI Award at Cannes.

In Tehran, the exemplary family of an investigating judge are tested by the dramatic events following a

young woman's death in police custody. Iman has just been appointed to the Revolutionary Court, where he's expected to extract confessions and serve death penalties. As demonstrations against hijab-wearing rock the city, Iman loses his gun and suspects his wife and their two daughters – who've been protecting a protester – have stolen it, later subjecting them to interrogations as though they, too, have transgressed the law. Will Najmeh stand up to her husband, and to the state?

168 MINS



Dying

Dir. Matthias Glasner Germany

This darkly comic portrait of Franzen-esque family dysfunction won multiple awards at the Berlinale and the German Film Awards.

Ailing parents Lissy and Gerd have cancer and dementia, respectively, while son Tom, a well-regarded conductor, is too preoccupied to give them the attention they need.

He's juggling work – overseeing a new composition by his depressed pal Bernard – and an odd relationship with an ex who wants him to father her newborn child (to another man!). Meanwhile, daughter Ellen fumbles through life plagued by alcohol-induced blackouts and an affair with a married colleague. This winner of Best Film at the German Film Awards and the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at the Berlinale is a zippy, affecting portrait of family and an engrossing story about what it means to live.

181 MINS



I Saw the TV Glow

Dir. Jane Schoenbrun USA

Brigitte Lundy-Paine and Justice Smith star as teen outsiders whose obsessive pop-culture fandom causes rifts in their realities.

During the pre-internet days of the 1990s, and amid the mess of puberty, high schoolers Maddy (Lundy-Paine, *Atypical*) and Owen (Smith, *Pokémon: Detective Pikachu*) form an

unlikely bond over *The Pink Opaque*, a supernatural-themed teen TV series. They meet up for slumber parties when possible, and swap VHS tapes when not – the show allowing them to leave their binary realities and instead escape each week into a world of psychic connection, authenticity and a battle against the Midnight Realm. As they become deeply enmeshed in its fandom, consumed by its lore, it's not long before they lose track of what's real and what's not.

100 MINS MIFF REGIONAL



Megalopolis

Dir. Francis Ford Coppola USA

Francis Ford Coppola's star-studded, largely self-funded, 40-years-in-the-making passion project arrives at MIFF in all its loopy, maximalist glory.

In the future metropolis New Rome, the playboy, architect and Nobel Prize-winning scientist Cesar Catilina (Adam Driver) has the power to stop time and wants to build

a glittering utopia out of an indestructible yet pliable substance that he has invented. Standing in his way are a cadre of small-minded men: conservative mayor Cicero (Giancarlo Esposito), mega-banker Crassus (Jon Voight) and Cesar's ambitious cousin Clodio (Shia LaBeouf). When not caught between reporter Wow Platinum (Aubrey Plaza) and Cicero's socialite daughter Julia (Nathalie Emmanuel), Cesar seeks to realise his dreams and save a decadent empire from its own downfall.

138 MINS



The Shrouds

Dir. David Cronenberg Canada, France

Drawing on his response to his wife's death, David Cronenberg fashions a deeply personal meditation on loss, longing and grief, filtered through a necro-techno body-horror lens.

Mourning his dead wife, tech magnate Karsh invents a shroud that lets people live-stream, in 8K resolution,

their deceased loved ones' decaying remains. Keeping watch over his decomposing beloved from the cemetery-adjacent restaurant he owns, Karsh starts noticing strange growths on her bones. Soon after, her grave and several others are desecrated, and he's embroiled in an expanding mystery/conspiracy that may or may not involve Chinese spies, eco-terrorism and medical malpractice. *The Shrouds* is sure to satisfy Cronenberg completists and cinephiles alike.

119 MINS



A Different Man

Dir. Aaron Schimberg USA

Sebastian Stan (*Captain America: The Winter Soldier*) plays a wannabe actor who learns that confidence isn't skin-deep in this deliciously twisted morality tale.

Holed up in his Manhattan flat, aspiring actor Edward (Stan), who lives with neurofibromatosis, is contemplating ending it all – until he finds out his facial

tumours can be removed by way of a nightmarish experimental treatment. Now armed with conventional good looks, he assumes a new identity and auditions with gusto ... only to learn that his neighbour Ingrid (Renate Reinsve, *The Worst Person in the World*, MIFF 2021) has written an off-Broadway play about his old life and that he must compete with the infinitely more charismatic Oswald (Adam Pearson, *Chained for Life*), who also has neurofibromatosis, for centre stage.

112 MINS



Rumours

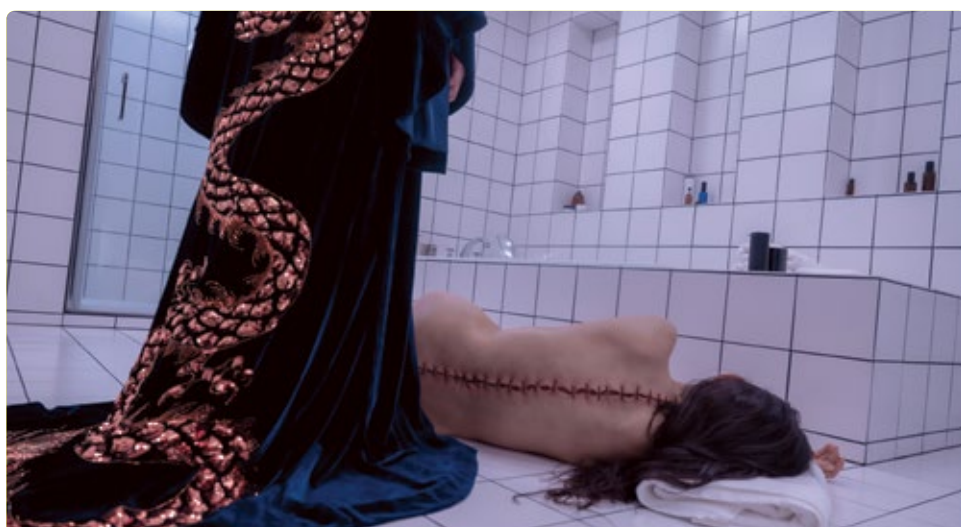
Dir. Guy Maddin, Evan Johnson, Galen Johnson Canada, Germany

A gigantic brain in a forest, masturbating bog zombies, Cate Blanchett, Alicia Vikander and Charles Dance all collide in Guy Maddin's audacious latest film.

The G7, led by German chancellor Hilda Ortmann (Blanchett), have descended on a remote retreat to draft

a do-nothing communiqué that passes the buck on a looming ecological catastrophe. Only it's too late for their inaction: it appears the apocalypse is already here. As strange creatures awaken all around them, Hilda must corral her fellow exasperatingly hopeless world leaders – including the Swedish secretary-general of the European Commission (Vikander) and the presidents of the USA (Dance) and France (Denis Ménochet) – on a wild goose chase into the woods.

109 MINS



The Substance

Dir. Coralie Fargeat UK, USA, France

Demi Moore satirises Hollywood ageism in this audacious and gory feminist body horror that was the talk of this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Elisabeth Sparkle is a faded fiftysomething star who's just been fired from her TV workout show. Then she learns about 'The Substance': a mysterious injection that births

a young, gorgeous version of yourself from your own spine. Of course, there's a catch: every seven days, one body heads out into the world while the other enters recuperative stasis. So when Elisabeth's ambitious younger self refuses to surrender her newfound fame, the elder begins paying the price ... with a gruesome physical disintegration. French director Coralie Fargeat (*Revenge*) ruthlessly marshals Cronenbergian tropes, from 80s-inspired production design to some truly superlative prosthetics.

141 MINS



Caught by the Tides

Dir. Jia Zhang-ke China

Fresh from Cannes competition, Jia Zhang-ke's latest portrait of Chinese society in flux is an epic drawn from over two decades of footage.

In the earliest days of the 21st century, traditionally minded villagers and restless youths are confronted with an inescapable symbol of China's commitment to

progress: the massive Three Gorges Dam project that will submerge 13 entire cities. Bin (longstanding Jia collaborator Li Zhubin) leaves rural Datong to find greater fortune; soon after, his girlfriend Qiaoqiao (Jia's wife and muse Zhao Tao) follows. Their paths diverge and intersect across China over the years as Qiaoqiao searches for her lost lover and greater meaning. When she returns to her hometown in an era of COVID, social media and talking robots, she finds it – and Bin – unrecognisable.

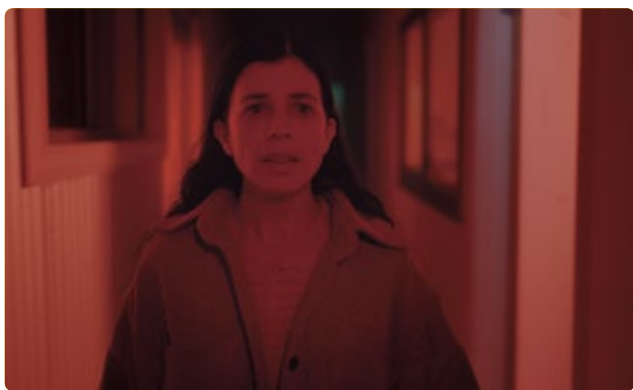
111 MINS

Australian

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In Vitro

Dir. Tom McKeith, Will Howarth Australia

A disturbing secret threatens a couple's relationship in this rural-set sci-fi thriller starring *Succession*'s Ashley Zukerman.

Like many farmers tending to land and livestock around the country, Layla and Jack live an isolated existence. With their son away at boarding school, Jack toils away, experimenting with biotechnology to breed cattle, while Layla quietly laments her child's absence and her strained relationship with her husband. When Jack is injured during a storm-induced blackout – in what he dismisses as an incident with the cattle – Layla begins to probe the true nature of his experiments. As Jack's controlling behaviour intensifies, an upsetting discovery ruptures the monotony of their rural idyll.

89 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Dale Frank – Nobody's Sweetie

Dir. Jenny Hicks Australia

The greatest look yet at a well-known artist very few have seen up close, as the titular visionary recluse invites us into his home.

A prolific force of nature within the realm of abstract art, rule-bending Australian artist Dale Frank has left his wildly untamed mark on canvases, sculptures, film, his body and more. Recognised worldwide as a boundary-pushing practitioner whose oeuvre includes intimate performance pieces and large-scale paintings with structural elements, his multidisciplinary output has exhilarated audiences since the late 1970s. But Frank is neurodivergent has always lived with social phobia, and now must contend with a degenerative illness – all while he works towards his 35th solo exhibition.

107 MINS



Flathead

Dir. Jaydon Martin Australia

Two men in rural Queensland search for solace in spirituality in this cinematic blend of documentary and fiction.

Now in his 70s, country bloke Cass Cumerford returns to his hometown of Bundaberg seeking enlightenment. Having weathered a life of drugs, tragedy and, now, an illness, he follows his intrigue to evangelical Christians. Meanwhile, when Andrew Wong isn't fronting his late father's iconic fish-and-chip shop – the same one that allowed his family to send him and his sisters to school – he's working out and musing on Buddhism in his own pursuit of meaning. Executive-produced by Amiel Courtin-Wilson (*Bastardy*, MIFF 2008), Jaydon Martin's directorial feature debut scooped a Special Jury Award at Rotterdam.

90 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL



He Ain't Heavy

Dir. David Vincent Smith Australia

Animal Kingdom star Leila George rejoins her mother Greta Scacchi (*The Player*, MIFF 1992; *Looking for Alibrandi*) in this devastating Australian drama about a family riven by drug addiction.

Pushed to the limit by years of trying to safeguard against the mayhem of her meth-addicted brother Max (Sam Corlett, *The Dry*), Jade (George) snaps one fateful night. Following a car crash that nearly claims the life of their mother Bev (Scacchi), she kidnaps Max and retreats to the empty home owned by their grandparents in the desperate hope that this dramatic intervention will force a circuit-breaking rehabilitation. But when Bev arrives unannounced, bearing terrible news, this already-bubbling-over pressure cooker explodes.

102 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST

MIFF Premiere Fund

Now well into its second decade, MIFF's film fund proudly continues its focus on 'stories that need telling' from diverse voices tackling today's big themes.

This year's slate of Premiere Fund films also includes *Memoir of a Snail* (page 8), *Ellis Park* (page 8), *Magic Beach* (pages 9 and 39), *Inside* (page 13) and *Queens of Concrete* (page 37).

MIFF PREMIERE FUND



Audrey

Dir. Natalie Bailey Australia

In this brutally hilarious black comedy, an Aussie teen's coma is her family's time to shine.

Eighteen years ago, Ronnie Lipsick was poised for acting success ... until her daughter Audrey came along. Ronnie has lavished years on moulding the boisterous teen into the star she almost was, ignoring her sexually frustrated husband Cormack and her younger daughter Norah's interest in wheelchair fencing. When Audrey has the absolute *gall* to fall into a coma, Ronnie decides to impersonate her, stepping in to all of Audrey's auditions and acting classes. Meanwhile, Cormack embraces his tastes for religious-themed kink, and Norah finally gets her sport rolling. It's amazing what the Lipsicks can achieve with their disagreeable golden child out of the way!

96 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL



Voice

Dir. Krunal Padhiar, Semara Jose Australia

An inspirational insider's look at a youth-led cross-country road trip to gather support for the Australian Indigenous Voice referendum.

Cairns in Far North Queensland is the traditional home of the Yidinji and Yirrganydji peoples. From there, a group of volunteers – the Indigenous-run collective Deadly Inspiring Youth Doing Good – decide to mount a grassroots campaign advocating for the 'Yes' vote to parliament. They set out in a minibus to commemorate a historic 1966 civil rights victory and partake in an annual pilgrimage to the Freedom Day festival some 3000 kilometres away; en route, they share yarns about their lives and those of their families with the folks they encounter. But while they seek to inspire a new future, the resulting votes seemingly bring another fight for recognition to a close.

92 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Rewards for the Tribe

Dir. Rhys Graham Australia

An uplifting dance documentary that ponders human connection and perfection, featuring Chunky Move and Restless Dance Theatre.

Chunky Move is an acclaimed contemporary dance company; Restless Dance Theatre is a groundbreaking troupe of disabled dancers. What happens when you bring these two Australian ensembles together? Six dancers are asked to develop a brand-new work that will take them from their Adelaide homes to Melbourne and then the UK. In the process, Jianna Georgiou, Michael Hodyl, Charlie Wilkins, Benjamin Hancock, Darcy Carpenter and Cody Lavery must carve out a collaborative movement language – a task that sees them contemplate group dynamics and society's pursuit of excellence.

90 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF ONLINE



The Organist

Dir. Andy Burkitt Australia

A man discovers he's been feeding a cannibal in this deliciously macabre Melbourne-shot indie black comedy.

"Eating people is wrong!" At least, that's what Graeme Sloane believes upon discovering that the organ-procurement business he works for – which ostensibly sources and delivers organs for rich patients in need – is, in fact, a sort of 'farm'-to-table establishment for a wealthy cannibal. This charismatic Hannibal Lecter type has invited poor Graeme over for dinner, and his surprise at the situation leads to one of those unfortunate meetings with HR where he's forcibly put on a path of ethically questionable compliance. When he meets his next donor target, though, the pair concoct a plan to make things right.

97 MINS



Aquarius

Dir. Wendy Champagne Australia

The age of Aquarius floods into Nimbin in this radical, love-fuelled doco exploring the lasting impact of a 1970s counterculture crucible.

Back in 1973, the Northern Rivers town of Nimbin, New South Wales, was a blip on the map with a population of around 300. Then, in May, 10,000 students, mystics, hippies and counterculture leaders descended on the small dairy town, bringing their hopes for peace, love and a lot of dope (and other substances) to the 10-day Aquarius Festival. In their multitude, the audacious revellers not only faced down the cops but transformed the town forevermore, with many never leaving.

75 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL



Kid Snow

Dir. Paul Goldman Australia

Centring on the titular tent boxer, this is a stunningly shot, epic drama featuring groundbreaking performances from critically acclaimed director Paul Goldman.

Deeply connected to Australian folklore, tent boxers crisscrossed the outback to bring entertainment and excitement for over 70 years. In 1971, Irish tent boxer Kid Snow is struggling – not just to make ends meet, but with the weight of past mistakes. When Kid gets a rare shot at a comeback match, his lifelong goals seem suddenly within reach. But his deepening relationship with Sunny, a single mother and grifter, promises to derail his ambitions.

127 MINS



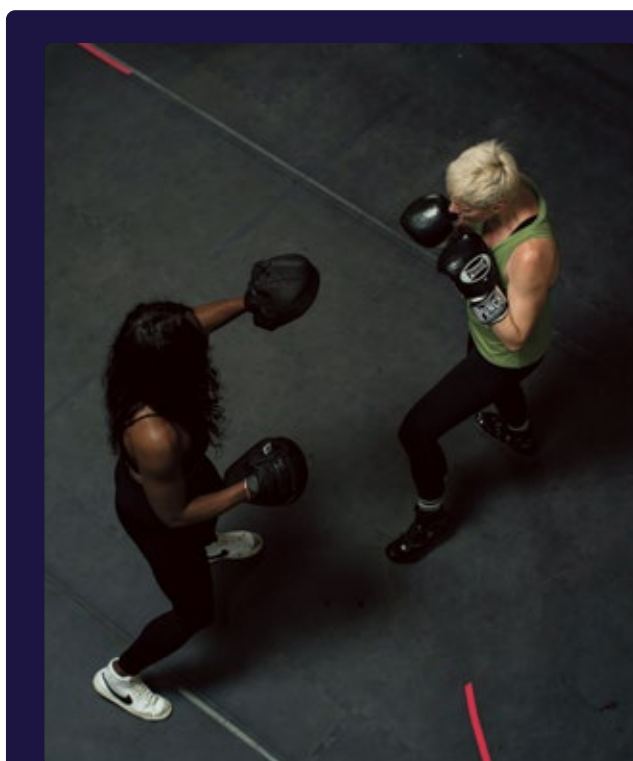
Twilight Time

Dir. John Hughes Australia

A gripping profile of Australian academic, agitator and surveillance expert Des Ball – hailed by former US president Jimmy Carter as "the man who saved the world".

Ball emerged as a key figure in the turbulent landscape of the Cold War. His theories on the fallacy of nuclear action were key to the de-escalation of global conflict in the 1970s, while his investigation of US military base Pine Gap in the 80s enraged ASIO. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Ball offered guidance on signals intelligence in Burma and Thailand, and his work in East Timor gave the public a taste of secrets the government preferred to keep hidden.

89 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL



Premiere With Purpose: Wednesday 14 August

A black-carpet event presented by DECJUBA

"Silence is no longer an option."

Film and fashion collide in MIFF's inaugural Premiere With Purpose. Featuring the world premiere of *Left Write Hook*, the evening includes a pre-screening drinks reception, exclusive preview, and onstage Q&A with the film team and program participants.

Hosted by Jo Stanley, broadcaster and *Left Write Hook* ambassador.

Limited tickets available to purchase.

PRESENTED BY
DECJUBA

Left Write Hook

Dir. Shannon Owen Australia

For eight survivors of childhood sexual abuse, a groundbreaking program that combines boxing and creative writing turns into a journey of recovery, transformation and friendship.

"Feel it, express it, heal it." For the regulars of Mischa's Boxing Central, the weekly pilgrimage to the gym for the experimental *Left Write Hook* program goes beyond simply strengthening the body. Guided by coach and academic Donna Lyon, participants Nikki, Dove, Pixie, Gabrielle, Claire, Julie and Lauren learn not just to box but also to recast the darkest chapters of their pasts into poetry, a powerfully cathartic exercise in reclaiming their life narratives. What begins as an eight-week commitment expands into a relationship of 18 months as the women deepen their bonds and decide to present their work to the wider world – ultimately in hopes of puncturing the shroud of silence and shame, and reassuring others like them that they're not alone.

Supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, Shannon Owen's intimate observational documentary invites viewers to sit among the women and listen to their stories, pulling no punches as they let their guards down in the spirit of radical acceptance and creative vulnerability. Affirming the now-established knowledge that trauma resides in both memory and muscle, *Left Write Hook* is a moving account of wounded individuals overcoming their troubled pasts, as well as of the healing that survivors can derive from solidarity and fearless storytelling.

98 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL

Asia Pacific

Dive into sweeping, splendid and spirit-lifting tales from across the Asia Pacific region, including the latest from festival faves Tsai Ming-liang and Hong Sang-soo; stories from New Zealand, Vietnam and Japan; and award-winners from the Berlinale and Cannes.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/asia-pacific



House of the Seasons

Dir. Oh Jung-min South Korea

This hearty, accomplished debut feature follows the highs and lows of a multi-generational family running a tofu factory in Daegu.

Three generations of a bickering South Korean family gather to commemorate their ancestors on a hot summer's day in rural Daegu. As the women toil away making dishes for the feast, their request for air conditioning is denied by the matriarch, Mal-neyo. It's a decision quickly reversed when Seong-jin – the Kim clan's sole grandson, poised to inherit the factory but instead chasing an acting career in Seoul – arrives. The summer gives way and, as the seasons change, farewells, celebrations, deaths and feasts form the mosaic of the Kims' year; all the while, the spectre of the Korean War casts an inescapable shadow.

121 MINS



Some Rain Must Fall

Dir. Qiu Yang China

Winning a Berlinale Encounters Special Jury Award, this domestic noir is the arresting first feature from Melbourne-trained Short Film Palme d'Or winner Qiu Yang.

Cai, a dissatisfied fortysomething parent, finds her already-fraying life spinning out of control after an accident. The incident drives a wedge between Cai and almost everyone in her family: her rebellious teenage daughter, her soon-to-be ex-husband (if he'll only sign the divorce papers), and her exasperating parents and in-laws. It also sparks more sinister repercussions, forcing Cai to confront her past in order to salvage her present. The anticipated feature-length debut from MIFF Accelerator Lab alumnus Qiu is a compelling and complex masterwork.

98 MINS



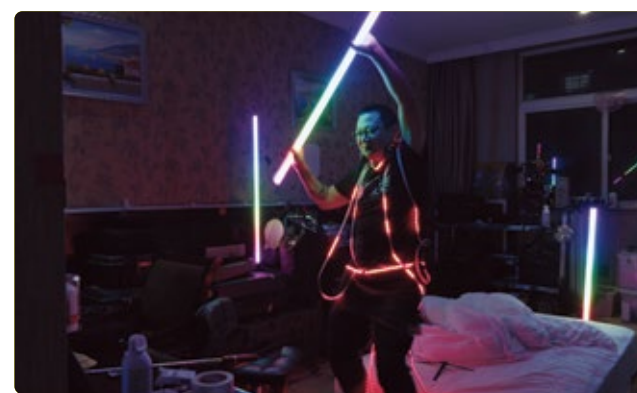
All Shall Be Well

Dir. Ray Yeung Hong Kong

This year's Teddy Award winner is an empathetic study of family bonds fraying in the aftermath of tragedy and of the found families that put us back together again.

Out and embraced by their community and relatives, sixtysomethings Angie and Pat have built a comfortable, beautiful life over several decades together. Pat's family is especially close to the couple, even though her older brother shows signs of envy at his more successful sister's accomplishments. But when Pat dies unexpectedly, Angie stands to lose everything: Pat didn't leave a will, Hong Kong law does not recognise their union and, with cost-of-living pressures pushing everyone to the wall, her once-beloved family's support is fracturing around her.

93 MINS



An Unfinished Film

Dir. Lou Ye Germany, Singapore

When an unfinished film, reborn, is stuck in stasis again, its creators meditate on how their lives have been interrupted and transformed by the pandemic.

In this exhilarating blend of drama and documentary, a fictional crew stumbles upon 10-year-old footage of a (real) aborted queer film and sets about reuniting the cast to complete it with a new act. But this is early 2020, and fate has other ideas – the unexpected comes crashing down on Wuhan, the film is halted again and the project eventually morphs into something else entirely. This fascinating hybrid work ingeniously repurposes old footage from Chinese auteur Lou Ye's filmography, splicing it together with smartphone footage and performed sequences.

105 MINS



We Were Dangerous

Dir. Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu New Zealand

Executive-produced by Taika Waititi, this fiercely feminist Māori-led debut is an emotive subversion of the 'coming-of-age delinquent' narrative.

The oppressive expectations placed on young girls in the 1950s are the catalyst for this thrilling kids-on-the-run drama. Having finished classes extolling the virtues of British colonisation and walking with a stack of books atop their heads, three students at an all-girls school in New Zealand plan a daring escape that falls tantalisingly short. Their cohort from the School for Incurable and Delinquent Girls is then shipped off to a deserted island – a former leper colony – where there is seemingly no way out and obedience is the only answer. Or is it?

82 MINS MIFF REGIONAL



Ghost Cat Anzu

Dir. Yōko Kuno, Nobuhiro Yamashita Japan, France

This unconventional and delightfully wacky anime conjures a rotoscoped dream world as a grief-stricken girl befriends a giant bipedal cat spirit.

Karin's widowed dad Tetsuya has left her at the temple where her monk grandfather lives. Tetsuya owes ¥1 million to some loan sharks and has promised to return by the anniversary of her mother's death. Dejected, Karin finds a sympathetic ear in Anzu: a farting, Hawaiian-shirt-rocking, six-foot-tall ghost cat who walks on his hind legs, uses a flip phone and tootles around town on a moped, working as a masseur. These unlikely buddies set off to find Karin's hapless dad, but instead, the God of Poverty offers to reunite Karin with her mum – if she's willing to flush herself down a toilet to hell.

94 MINS



Head South

Dir. Jonathan Ogilvie New Zealand

A charming autobiographical valentine to coming of age in New Zealand during the height of punk, which opened IFFR 2024.

In Christchurch in 1979, teenager Angus (Ed Oxenbould, *Paper Planes*, MIFF 2014) desperately wants to be cool. He's obsessed with punk music, isn't above selling fake weed to his friends and harbours a crush on the glam blonde Holly. In the absence of his brother, who lives in London, and mother, who's departed in a mid-life crisis, leaving behind a fridge full of prepared meals, Angus is afforded plentiful freedom by his quiet, wry father (Marton Csokas, *Cuckoo*, MIFF 2024). After he bluffs his way into a jam, he's given a week to start a band and play a show. Luckily, he's becoming friends with Kirsten (pop artist Bence), who's far more talented than he is.

98 MINS



Santosh

Dir. Sandhya Suri UK, France, Germany, India

Premiering in Cannes Un Certain Regard, this scathing and subversively feminist take on the police procedural puts modern-day India under scrutiny.

In northern India's rural badlands, newly widowed Santosh takes over her late husband's job as police constable. When a teenage girl from the Dalit caste – considered the 'untouchable ones' within the country – is found murdered in a small town, Santosh teams up with her superior, the older, charismatic female inspector Geeta, in a race against time and community pressure to find the killer. Turning the often male-driven Hollywood police procedural on its head, the narrative debut feature from Sandhya Suri (*The Field*, MIFF 2019) uses the crime thriller to explore ideas around caste, class, gender and religion.

125 MINS



Mongrel

Dir. Chiang Wei Liang, You Qiao Yin Taiwan, Singapore, France

An undocumented Thai caregiver grapples with exploitation in this evocative portrait that received the Caméra d'Or Special Mention at Cannes.

In remote Taiwan, undocumented Thai migrant Oom works as a carer to the elderly and disabled. His calm manner allows him to grow close to the patients he assists, but his boss also enlists him for shadier tasks, such as placating a gangster with whom they've become entangled. Realising that he is being taken advantage of, Oom must make a choice between his survival and his humanity. Executive-produced by legendary Taiwanese New Wave filmmaker Hou Hsiao-hsien, this striking feature takes us inside the lives of immigrant workers as they struggle for worth and respect under oppressive conditions.

128 MINS



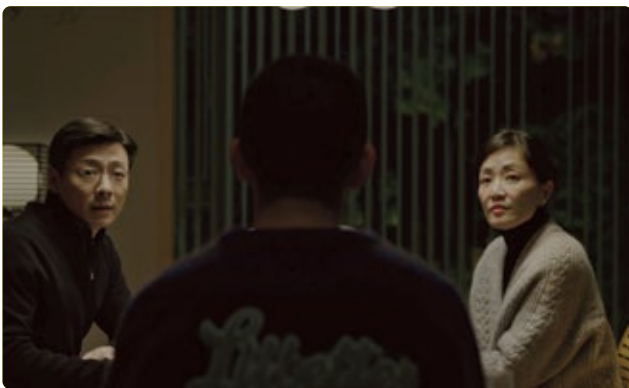
My Sunshine

Dir. Hiroshi Okuyama Japan

A coach trains two young figure skaters in this endearing, snow-blanketed portrait of youthful yearning and adult melancholy.

Shy, stuttering Takuya is ill-suited to the two 'boy' sports – baseball and ice hockey – that rule each half of the year in his Hokkaido hometown. But when he sees the beauty and grace of Sakura as she figure-skates, he's entranced. Recognising something of himself in Takuya, former skating star turned coach Arakawa (Sōsuke Ikematsu, *Shoplifters*, MIFF 2018) throws himself into training these two charges rather than going home, where a failing relationship with his long-term boyfriend awaits. Premiering in Cannes Un Certain Regard, this charming coming-of-age tale set against the changing of the seasons has earned comparisons to Hirokazu Kore-eda.

90 MINS



Brief History of a Family

Dir. Jianjie Lin China, France, Denmark, Qatar

This taut, visually inventive Chinese thriller has drawn comparisons to buzzy social-class parables *Saltburn* and *Parasite*.

Fifteen-year-old Yan Shuo is injured when hit with a stray basketball by Tu Wei. Apologetic about the accident and sympathetic to the former's difficult home situation, Wei absorbs Shuo into his bougie existence. But Shuo's arrival forces everybody to evaluate their lives and reconsider the roles fate has dealt them. What will become of this newly fused family unit? The spectre of the one-child policy looms over this atmospheric debut that lays bare China's widening class divide. While the setup may sound familiar, first-time feature director Jianjie Lin's keen eye and masterful story-spinning skills constantly make the audience question every character's motives – as well as their own suspicions.

99 MINS



Shambhala

Dir. Min Bahadur Bham Nepal, Norway, France, Hong Kong, Türkiye, Taiwan, USA, Qatar

The first Nepalese film to screen in competition at the Berlinale follows the physical and spiritual Himalayan journey of a woman on a mission to see truth prevail.

Pema is excited to be marrying her true love Tashi. But in her polyandrous village, this means also wedding Tashi's brothers Karma, a devoted monk, and Dawa, a schoolboy. When Tashi departs on a months-long trip to Lhasa and Karma returns to the monastery, Pema is left alone with the increasingly unruly Dawa. Seeking guidance from Dawa's schoolteacher, Pema unwittingly finds herself the subject of rumours that threaten to ruin her family. So she sets off through the unforgiving mountains – reluctantly accompanied by Karma – resolved to find her husband and right these wrongs.

150 MINS



Abiding Nowhere

Dir. Tsai Ming-liang Taiwan, USA

Slow-cinema legend Tsai Ming-liang continues his meditative, monastic *Walking* series with another hypnotic shrine to seeking transcendence in a chaotic world.

Abiding Nowhere is the 10th, and possibly final, entry in Tsai's *Walking* series: dialogue-free works in which recurring collaborator Lee Kang-sheng walks so slowly that his movements border on imperceptible. Embodying the Tang Dynasty monk Xuanzang, Lee is set in the middle of often-bustling modern landscapes; here, he moves in and around Washington, DC, weaving through train stations, woods, streets and monuments. Under the gaze of both onlookers and Tsai's patient lens, Lee is positioned as public-art performer and symbol of the Buddhist pursuit of enlightenment, slowly striving for the divine.

79 MINS



A Traveler's Needs

Dir. Hong Sang-soo South Korea

Hong Sang-soo reunites with Isabelle Huppert in this mysteriously tricky comedy that won the Berlinale's Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize.

Wide-eyed Iris (Huppert) is an expat adrift in Seoul. Eking out a strangely dislocated life mooching in the spare bedroom of a younger man, much to his mother's ruffled chagrin, Iris teaches French to the locals using unusual methods that hint at deeper meanings. When she's not working, she carves out time for little indulgences like long walks, lying around and sinking too much rice wine. Few actors are as prolific or prodigiously accomplished as French screen icon Huppert – a skill set she shares with South Korean auteur Hong. A match made in cinematic heaven, they join forces for the third time in the director's hypnotic, wistfully poetic 31st feature.

90 MINS



Viet and Nam

Dir. Minh Quý Trương Vietnam

Two coal miners in love face their country's buried trauma and reckon with their risky futures in this hypnotic queer romance.

Vietnam, September 2001: news breaks of planes hitting skyscrapers in New York. Meanwhile, in a spangled bower carved deep into the earth, young coal miners Viet and Nam are making love. They can't stand their dangerous work much longer, but Viet frets that Nam's plan to emigrate to Europe with the help of a people smuggler is even riskier. Before he leaves, Nam asks Viet to help him find the bones of his father, a soldier who died in the 1970s war. Together with Nam's hopeful mother and his dad's old army comrade, they travel through forests towards the Cambodian border, guided by dreams and memories.

129 MINS



Black Dog

Dir. Guan Hu China

A taciturn loner and a stray dog bond in this beautiful tale of cross-species kindred spirits set against widescreen images of the Gobi Desert.

It's 2008 and, far from the Beijing Olympics, Lang (Eddie Peng, *Are You Lonesome Tonight?*, MIFF 2022) returns from a stint in prison to the decaying hometown he hasn't seen in years. There, he finds no-one is happy to welcome him back, and the arid settlement is about to be demolished to build large-scale factories. Haunted by the past and confronted with an uncertain future, Lang tries to get work as a 'bounty hunter' of stray dogs but ends up falling into an unlikely camaraderie with a rabid dog (played by Palm Dog Grand Jury Prize winner Xiao Xin) he's forced to quarantine with.

106 MINS

Iranian New Wave: 1962–79

Uniquely curated for MIFF from The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York's landmark Iranian Cinema before the Revolution, 1925–1979 retrospective. Discover 'Cinema-ye Motafavet' (Iranian New Wave), featuring new restorations and rare discoveries – some of which were censored or suppressed upon release.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/iranian-new-wave

Iranian New Wave: 1962–79 and the original film program it is based on are curated by Ehsan Khoshbakht, Codirector, Il Cinema Ritrovato, with Joshua Siegel, Curator, and La Frances Hui, Curator, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



The Deer

Dir. Masoud Kimiai Iran 1974

Masoud Kimiai's 1974 film embodies all that is great about Iranian cinema of the 1970s: it is political, provocative, sincere, angry and tragic.

One has the sense of imminent revolution in this story of a former champ turned junkie who reunites with a leftist classmate and is redeemed by revolutionary anger. Premiering at the Tehran International Film Festival in November 1974 but not presented in Tehran cinemas until January 1976, the film suffered severely from censorship. Kimiai's vision was deemed so incendiary that the secret service forced him to shoot an alternate ending – in which the protagonists surrender to the police – that became the only version known to Iranian audiences until the 1979 revolution permitted the original climax to be restored.

126 MINS



Iranian Subversive Documentaries, 1961–67

Three works manifesting the subversive nature of Iranian New Wave documentary cinema as well as their deep roots in poetry.

A Fire, which documents the extinguishing of a torrential fire in an oil well, combines Feroz Farrokhzad's rhythmic editing with director Ebrahim Golestan's symbolism. Kamran Shirdel's *The Night It Rained*, initially banned for seven years, treats the controversial newspaper story of a heroic village boy who prevented a train disaster as an anti-authoritarian, Rashomon-like puzzle. Now considered one of the greatest documentaries ever made, *The House Is Black*, set in a leper colony, is the only film directed by Farrokhzad before her premature death at the age of 32.

85 MINS



Brick and Mirror

Dir. Ebrahim Golestan Iran 1964

Iranian cinema's first true modern masterpiece explores fear and responsibility in the aftermath of the 1953 coup.

A Dostoyevskian tale of a Tehran cab driver's search for the mother of an abandoned baby, *Brick and Mirror* presents a harrowing image of a society of corrupted morals and widespread alienation – a personal response to a particular social context that nonetheless speaks universally. The characters often talk without communicating, their soliloquies falling on the deaf ears of the endless night they inhabit. Divinity and poetry meet in unlikely places: a smoky café, an empty bazaar, an orphanage. With its title alluding to a poem by Attar, the film moves between realism and expressionism.

130 MINS



Golden Age of Iranian Animation, 1965–77

A showcase of Iranian animation in a variety of styles and themes, from the early efforts of Western-educated filmmakers like Nosrat Karimi to award-winning shorts produced by the Iranian government agencies Kanoon and the Ministry of Culture and Arts.

This program reveals two divergent aesthetic tendencies in this period of the 1970s: one inspired by medieval Persian miniature painting and other classic artforms, evident in the work of Karimi (who studied at FAMU in Prague) and Ali Akbar Sadeghi; and the other projecting a more modernist spirit, as seen in the experimental figurative work of Farshid Mesghali.

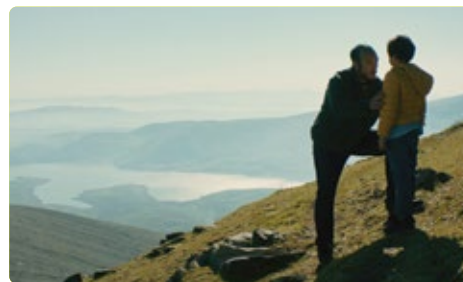
76 MINS

Africa & Middle East

Be swept up by MIFF 2024's stories from Africa and the Middle East, spanning the contemporary experience across the region.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/africa-middle-east



Behind the Mountains

Dir. Mohamed Ben Attia
Tunisia, Belgium, France, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Qatar

A downtrodden father literally takes flight from the strictures of society in this supernaturally tinged, Tunisia-set odyssey.

Fresh from a four-year stint in jail, the troubled Rafik abducts his young son Yassine and flees the city for the Atlas Mountains. With a history of mental illness and destructive outbursts, Rafik also has a more unusual gift at his disposal: he is, inexplicably, able to fly. After a taciturn shepherd witnesses this apparent superpower in action and throws his lot in with the father and child, the motley trio chance upon a remote homestead belonging to an upper-middle-class family – an incident that traps hostages and home invaders alike in an uneasy standoff that carries surprising emotional consequences.

98 MINS MIFF ONLINE



East of Noon

Dir. Hala Elkoussy Netherlands, Egypt, Qatar

Premiering at Cannes Directors' Fortnight, this dreamlike tale of youth and resistance set in a surreal modern-day Egypt is also a stirring beautiful ode to creative expression.

Rebellious 19-year-old Abdo alternately creates percussion music in his room and runs errands for tyrannical showman Shawky, who rules the town via his theatre company. The young man's grandmother Galala manages a story shop, spinning tales for clients, while his teenage girlfriend Nunna is a sex worker who is trapped into her life by the oppressive Commander Borai but has bigger aspirations beyond their village. Stifled by these surroundings and captivated by Galala's fantastical stories, Abdo aspires to take flight with Nunna to a distant land that offers the hope of freedom.

109 MINS



Tall Shadows of the Wind

Dir. Bahman Farmanara Iran 1979

This symbolic tale of villagers terrorised by a scarecrow they themselves have planted is based on a story by co-screenwriter Houshang Golshiri.

Tall Shadows of the Wind was banned for different reasons both before and after the revolution. The Shah's censors, increasingly nervous during the volatile late 1970s, saw the film as an attack on Mohammad Reza Pahlavi himself. The ayatollah's censors, setting down strict regulations after 1979, pulled the film from theatres after just three days because of its purported leftist sympathies, owing to a scene of a popular uprising involving red flags.

109 MINS



The Carriage Driver

Dir. Nosrat Karimi Iran 1971

Nosrat Karimi's film about 'marriage Iranian style' – a kind of *commedia all'iraniana*.

Complications and hijinks ensue when the marriage of young lovers Morteza and Pouri becomes predicated on Morteza approving the marriage of his recently widowed mother to Pouri's father. *The Carriage Driver* masterfully draws on Italian pink neorealism, Iranian *filmfarsi* and Czechoslovakian cinema – the last of which informs a dream sequence and a surprising use of animation thanks to the director's education in Prague. Karimi offers a sharp, though good-hearted, critique of Iranian society, using its prejudices around *namus* (the virtue of the female members of the family) as a basis for comedy, and poking fun at such commonplace rituals as burials, marriage and circumcision ceremonies.

117 MINS



The Stranger and the Fog

Dir. Bahram Beyzaie Iran 1974

In Bahram Beyzaie's dazzling film, a mysterious stranger arrives in a coastal village on a drifting boat and falls for a local woman.

Impossible to see for decades and presented in a new digital restoration from the original camera negative, *The Stranger and the Fog* is an endlessly symbolic tale in which uncontrollable forces of nature, superstition, ritual and violence disorient the viewer in exhilarating ways. In the film's meticulously structured circular narrative, characters, times and spaces rhyme and mirror one another, turning filmmaking into an act of dreaming. Characters are the products of one another's imaginations, and eventually all become myth. The film cedes the centre of both desire and control to a woman of will, breaking through the strictures of victimised women presented in many Iranian films of the 1970s.

140 MINS



Tranquility in the Presence of Others

Dir. Nasser Taghavi Iran 1969

Nasser Taghavi's poignant, tough-minded adaptation of a story by Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi.

A key work of the Iranian New Wave, *Tranquility in the Presence of Others* attacks the impotence and empty rhetoric of Iranian intellectuals in the face of a stubbornly patriarchal and authoritarian society. Banned after a single screening at the Shiraz Arts Festival of 1969 – a ban that was not removed until 1973 – it tells the story of a retired army colonel who travels to Tehran with his newlywed wife to visit his daughters, only to be dismayed by their unhappiness and casual affairs. As his mental condition deteriorates, the film's tone shifts from sardonic to tragic.

86 MINS



Dead End

Dir. Parviz Sayyad Iran 1977

A devastating portrait of love and longing in a country built on fear and surveillance, based on a story by Anton Chekhov.

Dead End is one of the most prescient films to come out of late-1970s Iran. When a starry-eyed young woman notices a man standing under her window day and night, she becomes convinced he's in love with her. While she fantasises about their happy union, reality has crueler plans in mind. The ensemble cast is memorable, especially real-life mother and daughter Mary Apick and Apick Youssefian, as well as Bahman Zarrinpour.

95 MINS



A Simple Event

Dir. Sohrab Shahid Saless Iran 1973

Made clandestinely with little money and a skeleton crew, Sohrab Shahid Saless's debut feature is a quietly, mysteriously simmering masterpiece.

A Simple Event follows a few days in the life of a young boy living beside the Caspian Sea. Remarkably, Shahid Saless inspires viewers to respond emotionally to characters seemingly devoid of any feeling themselves; the simple event of the film's title refers, perhaps, to a sudden and tragic death, or perhaps instead to the mundane sounds of dogs barking and crickets chirping.

This feature will screen with the short film *Rhythm* (dir. Manouchehr Tayyab, 1964).

80 MINS



The Cow

Dir. Dariush Mehrjui Iran 1969

This heartbreaking film portrays the themes of solitude and obsession in the story of a poor villager whose only source of joy is his cow.

When the cow of a villager is mysteriously killed one night, the metamorphosis begins. Based on short stories by psychiatrist Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi, *The Cow* was smuggled to the Venice Film Festival in defiance of an export ban, where it was almost immediately recognised as a masterpiece. Poignantly wrapped in layers of religion and leftist politics (two major forces of the 1979 revolution), it came under the spotlight more than a decade later, when Ayatollah Khomeini hailed it as an example of "good cinema", as opposed to the many "corrupting films" of the Pahlavi era.

105 MINS



Kanoon: From Didactic to Poetic, 1974–77

A suite of films by Kanoon, the celebrated government agency that brought culture and literacy to Iranian children and young adults.

"Try to imagine Laurel and Hardy directed by Robert Bresson," wrote critic Jonathan Rosenbaum, describing Abbas Kiarostami's *Two Solutions for One Problem*, a charming slapstick about tolerance and civility. Commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Kiarostami's *Tribute to the Teachers* is a series of nuanced, touching interviews with schoolteachers, while in his *Solution No. 1*, a driver has to deal with a flat tyre on top of the Alborz Mountain. Amir Naderi's *Waiting*, about a southern boy who falls for a girl though he's only seen her hands, shows the director at the peak of his purely visual storytelling.

84 MINS



My Favourite Cake

Dir. Maryam Moghadam, Behdash Sanaeaha Iran, France, Sweden, Germany

Tender and funny yet politically daring, this late-life romance – which won the Berlinale's FIPRESCI Prize and Ecumenical Jury Prize – is guaranteed to steal your heart.

At 70, retired nurse Mahin lives alone in Tehran – her husband long dead, her daughter and grandchildren residing abroad. She's of a mind to do as she pleases: sleeping 'til noon, gossiping bawdily with friends and defending a girl whom the morality police have accused of an improperly worn hijab. But she's lonely, too – so she decides it's time to find herself a new man. That's how Mahin ends up inviting Faramarz, an unmarried taxi driver her own age, to her home for an intimate night of orange-blossom sponge cake, illicit wine and company.

97 MINS



Norah

Dir. Tawfik Alzaidi Saudi Arabia

With the odds (and the law) stacked against them, a teenager and a teacher in creatively stunted Saudi Arabia find meaning and friendship through art.

Norah yearns for a life coloured by art. But in Saudi Arabia in 1996, she's facing an arranged marriage and conservative rule that has banned books, cinemas and most forms of artistic expression. She makes do with smuggled magazines and cassettes until a new teacher, Nader, arrives in her remote village. When she learns of his talents with the brush, Norah is desperate to become the subject of his painting; in the young woman's adamant (and dangerous) request, Nader rediscovers his passion for creativity and the power of art to communicate without words.

95 MINS [MIFF ONLINE](#)



Who Do I Belong To

Dir. Meryam Joobeur Tunisia, France, Canada

In this evocative and ethereal mystery, a soothsaying matriarch wrestles with the darkness when her jihadist son returns from Syria.

On a farm in the remote north of Tunisia, Aïcha lives with her husband Brahim and their youngest child Adam. Gifted with dreams that foretell the future, she is racked with anguish after her other sons Mehdi and Amine leave to fight for ISIS in a violent conflict in Syria. When Mehdi returns home with a mysterious and pregnant wife in tow, the village is turned upside down in a series of unsettling events – and Aïcha is torn between her love for her son and her need to face the turmoil gripping the community. This haunting debut weaves together elements of macabre mystery, political provocation and supernatural suspense.

118 MINS



To a Land Unknown

Dir. Mahdi Fleifel UK, Palestine, France, Greece, Netherlands, Germany, Qatar, Saudi Arabia

Acclaimed documentarian Mahdi Fleifel makes his fiction debut with a *Midnight Cowboy*-inspired Palestinian refugee story.

Chatila and Reda have spent their lives in exile. Currently in Athens, the Palestinian cousins hustle to make enough money for passage to Germany, where they plan to open a café and send for Chatila's wife and child, who remain in a refugee camp. When the men meet orphaned 13-year-old Malik, also Palestinian, they set aside their own plans to help get the boy to his aunt in Italy. But Reda's backslide into addiction and Chatila's desperate actions to save them all threaten to dismantle everything they're fighting for. Fleifel's extensive documentary career imbues his first fiction foray with unvarnished authenticity.

105 MINS

Europe & UK

Indulge in European cinema's very best – from the latest by Agnieszka Holland, Víctor Erice and Olivier Assayas; to star turns from Kate Winslet and Saoirse Ronan; to the winners of the Teddy Jury Award, the Cannes *Caméra d'Or* and San Sebastián's Golden Shell.



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Close Your Eyes

Dir. Víctor Erice Spain

Legendary Spanish auteur Víctor Erice's long-awaited return to feature films is a mystery-fuelled meditation on cinema itself.

Spanish movie star Julio Arenas disappears in 1990 while filming *The Farewell Gaze*, a mystery directed by his friend Miguel Garay. Decades later, Miguel is living off-grid when a lurid 'cold case' TV show contacts him. Though he hasn't touched a camera since Julio vanished, Miguel decides to become his own detective. As he interviews old comrades and collaborators to discover Julio's fate, he muses on the irony that, while film can bridge past and present, such a vital connection breaks if nobody's watching. The 83-year-old director's first feature since 1992 is a personal and satisfyingly layered meta-commentary on absence and legacy.

169 MINS



The Outrun

Dir. Nora Fingscheidt UK, Germany

Saoirse Ronan produces and stars in this moving adaptation about a recovering addict who returns to her childhood home on Scotland's Orkney Islands.

To escape temptation after a stint in rehab, Rona (Ronan) leaves her life in London to reconnect with her remote hometown. She drifts between her religious mother and a father with bipolar disorder, searching for a sense of self in the vicissitudes of circumstance. As flashbacks of her alcohol-fuelled downfall, her doomed relationship and her time in the ward all puncture her present, she charts the winding path to sobriety using nature as a guide. As embodied by Ronan, whose transcendent star turn has been widely acclaimed, Rona exhibits a poise and resolve that keep us firmly on her journey.

117 MINS



Ghost Trail

Dir. Jonathan Millet France

From Cannes Critics' Week, this portrait of justice-seeking Syrians in European exile is a deftly calibrated spy thriller with stand-out performances.

In the midst of Syria's civil war, Hamid (Adam Bessa, *Extraction*) loses everything: his wife, his child, his job, his life. Tortured as a political prisoner and dumped in the desert to die, he survives and ends up in Strasbourg on the French-German border. By day, he works at a construction site, but by night, he logs in to a multiplayer videogame that serves as a secret meeting space for a collective seeking out Syrian war criminals in Europe. When he's asked to tail the chemistry student Sami (Tawfeek Barhom, *Boy From Heaven*, MIFF 2022), Hamid thinks he's found his captor. Is Sami who Hamid thinks he is? Or is Hamid confusing justice with personal vengeance?

106 MINS



The Girl With the Needle

Dir. Magnus von Horn Denmark, Poland, Sweden

True crime as a post-WWI Scandi-noir fairytale – in the gruesome original sense of the word – this Danish masterwork of tension and terror stars Trine Dyrholm and Vic Carmen Sonne.

With her husband presumed dead during the war, young seamstress Karoline (Sonne) is unable to pay the rent and evicted from their Copenhagen home. Destitute and soon pregnant to another man, who cannot marry her, she falls under the spell of candy-store owner Dagmar Overbye (Dyrholm), who promises her a home, a job and a solution to her problems. But Karoline's problems are just beginning ... A fictionalised retelling of one of Denmark's most infamous serial-killer cases, this unsettling yet topical film explores the lengths women go to in order to survive a patriarchal society that sees them as disposable.

115 MINS



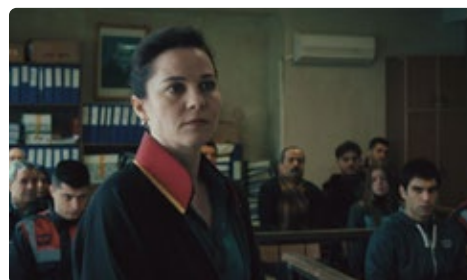
The Story of Souleymane

Dir. Boris Lojkine France

Winner of the Cannes Un Certain Regard Jury Prize, this nerve-shredding portrait follows a Guinean delivery rider zipping across Paris in hopes of attaining legal residency.

To make ends meet, Souleymane darts through the streets of the French capital on his food-delivery rounds – even if it means he must 'rent' his identity from a fellow African with legal working status. But in two days, this undocumented Guinean will face a make-or-break interview for his asylum application. So he's working overtime, and at breakneck speed, to ensure he can pay a broker to get his papers in order and recompense the owner of the lawful identity he assumes. French filmmaker Boris Lojkine (*We, Students!*, MIFF 2022) delivers a social-realist thriller as humanist as it is propulsive.

92 MINS



Hesitation Wound

Dir. Selman Nacar Türkiye

A steely criminal lawyer juggles a murder case and tending to her dying mother in this Turkish drama that unspools over a tense 24 hours.

High-powered attorney Canan is about to experience a single-day rollercoaster that will put her diamond-hard professionalism to the test. Her ailing mother is in hospital on life support while her latest client – a factory worker who allegedly murdered his boss – is on trial for his final day. Just as the case appears to be going in Canan's favour, a last-minute witness throws her defence into chaos; this forces her to make a decision between serving justice and upholding the law. In his second feature film, rising Turkish director Selman Nacar crafts an impossibly taut dramatic thriller that ratchets up the moral dilemmas over its compact, nerve-shredding running time.

84 MINS



Armand

Dir. Halfdan Ullmann Tøndel Norway

In this Cannes *Caméra d'Or* winner, a fraught parent-teacher conference at a Norwegian primary school plunges surreally into a claustrophobic breakdown.

Elisabeth is summoned to a meeting at her son Armand's sprawling primary school, where she's staggered to learn there's been an incident between Armand and six-year-old classmate Jon. This upsets Jon's parents Sarah and Anders, but the children's inexperienced teacher and the school's self-interested, ageing principal are ill-equipped to mediate. There's a history of bad blood between these parents: Sarah and Elisabeth are estranged friends who have known each other since they themselves attended this school, and Sarah is the sister of Elisabeth's late husband Thomas.

113 MINS



Crossing

Dir. Levan Akin Sweden, Denmark, France, Georgia, Türkiye

And Then We Danced (MIFF 2019) director Levan Akin's Teddy Jury Award-winning follow-up is a luminous salute to the various communities of Istanbul.

Retired schoolteacher Lia deeply regrets not being a better ally to her estranged trans niece Tekla. Having promised her late sister that they would reconnect, Lia sets out to track down Tekla in the sprawling, transcontinental Turkish city. Her unlikely companions in this mission are hapless young man Achi and, in time, fearless lawyer and proud trans woman Evrim. As all three converge, what starts out as a road movie becomes more than a mere search for a loved one. *Crossing* is an affecting film about queerness, connection and the importance of intergenerational solidarity.

106 MINS



Tuesday

Dir. Daina O. Pusić UK, USA

Death comes as a giant macaw in this A24 fairytale about letting go, featuring a career-best turn from *Seinfeld*'s Julia Louis-Dreyfus.

Tuesday is living with – and slowly dying from – a terminal degenerative illness. But whereas she has reached the stage of acceptance, her mother Zora (Louis-Dreyfus) is still stuck in denial, deriving comfort from pretending that everything's fine. When Death comes a-knockin' in the form of a lonely, overworked giant macaw in need of a bath and fond of classic hip-hop, Tuesday bonds with the spectre. Zora, meanwhile, bargains for more time with her daughter. Riffing on the age-old notion of stalling Death, this debut feature offers a distinctive, singular vision of mortality, propelled by an affecting performance from the iconic actor and comedian.

111 MINS



The Most Precious of Cargoes

Dir. Michel Hazanavicius France

Best Director Oscar winner Michel Hazanavicius (*The Artist*) delivers a stirring Holocaust fable – the first animated film to screen in Cannes competition since 2008.

In a snow-blanketed rural village during WWII, a poor Polish woodcutter lives with his wife, who is unable to bear children. Their small, insular world drastically changes when a baby is thrown from a passing train heading for the prison camp at Auschwitz. Seeing it as a gift from God, the woman pledges to raise this child – against the initial resistance of her husband, and in the face of the rising antisemitic fervour of the local villagers. This moving film boasts a striking visual palette reminiscent of graphic novels, while its narrative evokes the 'once upon a time' framing of classic picture books and fairytales.

81 MINS



The Rye Horn

Dir. Jaione Camborda Spain, Portugal, Belgium

The 2024 winner of San Sebastián's Golden Shell is an earthy tribute to motherhood and female power against overwhelming odds.

At the tail end of the Franco regime, on a Galician island seemingly far removed from the concerns of the mainland, María goes about her business collecting shellfish and acting as midwife to the local women. She mostly keeps to herself, unbothered by the wary regard the villagers have for her. But when a high school track star seeks María's help to get rid of an unwanted pregnancy, the resulting fallout turns her life upside down and she finds herself on the run. As she flees towards Portugal, María must come to terms with her own unexpected pregnancy – beginning a remarkable journey of reinvention.

105 MINS [MIFF ONLINE](#)



September Says

Dir. Ariane Labeled France, Greece, Ireland, Germany, UK

An unsettling and oneiric tale of sisterhood is French actor Ariane Labeled's Cannes-premiering directorial debut, based on a Gothic novel.

Born less than a year apart, September and July are inseparable. But they're ostracised by their peers, so the older, more brash September sticks up for her timid and impressionable sibling when the need arises. When an incident occurs at school, the pair are forced to relocate with their single mother to an isolated house on the Irish coast. It's here that the sisters' intense closeness begins to give way. As July searches for meaning and their loving mother grows distant, the younger sibling reckons with a disturbing truth. Having acted in Greek 'Weird Wave' films by Athina Rachel Tsangari and Yorgos Lanthimos, Labeled ventures into directing with this haunting adaptation.

100 MINS



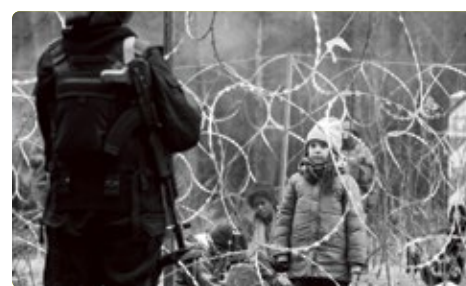
The Sparrow in the Chimney

Dir. Ramon Zürcher, Silvan Zürcher Switzerland

Tensions explode in a family's country home in the Zürcher brothers' follow-up to their acclaimed *The Girl and the Spider* (MIFF 2021).

Middle-aged couple Karen (Maren Eggert, *I Was at Home, But*, MIFF 2019) and Markus (Andreas Döhler, *Winners*, MIFF 2024) live with their kids in Karen's childhood home in the idyllic countryside. Their peaceful life is about to be shattered by the arrival of Karen's combative sister and her family. Soon, the house is bursting with people – and tension – and it's only a matter of time before it all goes up in flames. Rebellious and hopeful, the Zürcher brothers' latest film depicts not just the liberation of a woman from the grip of dysfunctional blood ties, but also the boundaries and possibilities of relationships beyond the toxic, tangled webs we weave.

117 MINS [MIFF ONLINE](#)



Green Border

Dir. Agnieszka Holland Poland

Agnieszka Holland returns with this devastating Venice Special Jury Prize-winning drama that follows Middle Eastern and North African refugees trapped as pawns in a political game.

Lured by propaganda promising passage into the European Union, swathes of Middle Eastern and North African refugees attempt to cross the border from Belarus into Poland. Instead, they're met by border-patrol officers who push them back, stripping them of their belongings and their humanity. Stranded in the forest between nations, the migrants are caught in a geopolitical war, while humanitarian groups struggle to help them in their plight. The film follows one Syrian family, an Afghan teacher, a Polish border guard and a Polish therapist, whose stories intertwine in this escalating crisis.

152 MINS



Sunlight

Dir. Nina Conti UK

Comedian Nina Conti makes her directorial debut with this darkly funny joy ride featuring a monkey, a radio host brought back from the brink and a dead man's watch.

Ready to end his life in a dingy motel room, radio presenter Roy is serendipitously interrupted by Jane, who is on a mission to escape the stronghold of her abusive stepfather, the motel's owner. When Roy wakes to find himself speeding down a highway in his van, driven by Jane – dressed in the garb of her confident alter ego, Monkey, which she refuses to take off – he finds himself going along for the ride. Buoyed by Monkey's bold vision to start a new life, the pair hatch a plan to dig up his father's dead body. An unlikely partnership forms: Monkey finds a path to freedom and Roy discovers a lifeline.

96 MINS



Suspended Time

Dir. Olivier Assayas France

Personal Shopper (MIFF 2016) director Olivier Assayas proves it is possible to make a beautiful lockdown-set film in this bittersweet, intimate comedy.

Assayas, who holed up in his family's rambling country estate with his brother and their partners, wrestles with how the disconnection of COVID has impacted our lives. In this wittily metatextual musing on the fear of the great unknown of that period, he asks Vincent Macaigne to depict an analogue of himself named Paul, who claims to have directed *Irma Vep* (MIFF 1997) but who is not the same character that Macaigne played in the show of the same name (MIFF 2014), itself a mischievous update of Assayas's original film. Meanwhile, highly strung Paul's interactions with his easygoing brother Etienne exhibit their humorously differing responses to the pandemic.

105 MINS



Kneecap

Dir. Rich Peppiatt Ireland

A Belfast hip-hop trio play themselves in this rowdy biopic that tracks their fictionalised origins and their real-life crusade to protect the Gaeilge language.

Adopting the stage names Mo Chara, Mógláí Bap and DJ Próvaí, low-level drug dealers Liam Óg Ó Hannahidh and Naoise Ó Cairealláin team up with schoolteacher J.J. Ó Dochartaigh to form Kneecap, a rap group who find themselves unlikely figureheads for the civil rights movement to save the Irish language. Cops, paramilitary groups and the still-present ripples of The Troubles – none will slow down their frenetic energy for drugs, sex, debauchery and their right to speak their native tongue. Evoking *The Commitments* and *Trainspotting*, *Kneecap* won an Audience Award at Sundance.

105 MINS [MIFF REGIONAL](#)



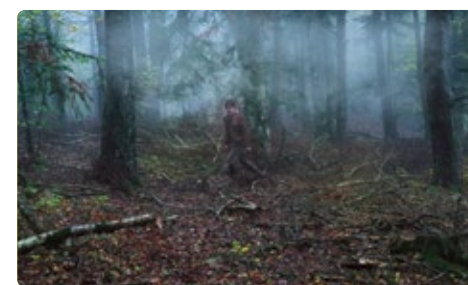
Lee

Dir. Ellen Kuras UK

Kate Winslet delivers a captivating performance alongside a stellar cast in this portrait of legendary WWII war photographer Lee Miller.

In 1977, a young journalist (Josh O'Connor, *La Chimera*, MIFF 2023) sits down to interview Miller (Winslet) in her final years. The straight-shooting subject recounts her unlikely journey from 1930s model to photographer on the frontlines of WWII, where she captured history as it happened: the Blitz, the aftermath of D-Day, the horrors of the Third Reich, the wounds left across Europe. Headlining an incredible international cast – Alexander Skarsgård, Marion Cotillard and Andy Samberg star with Andrea Riseborough (*To Leslie*) and Noémie Merlant (*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, MIFF 2019) – Winslet delivers an impressive, impassioned portrayal of an iconic figure.

117 MINS



Misericordia

Dir. Alain Guiraudie France

If you go into the woods today, you're in for a darkly comedic surprise from French provocateur Alain Guiraudie.

When his friend and former employer Jean-Pierre dies, Jérémie returns to the small town of Saint-Martial to attend the funeral, taking up lodging at the house of Martine, Jean-Pierre's widow. Martine suggests that he take over Jean-Pierre's bakery, much to the chagrin of the couple's son, Vincent. The latter takes aim at the intruder for overstaying his welcome (and apparently trying to woo his mother) as nervy suspicions boil over during a long walk in the forest. Add into the mix a mushroom-foraging priest with his own agenda and a wayward loner who loves pastis, and it's not long before an intoxicating concoction of guilt, sexuality and comedy brews over.

103 MINS

North America

Enjoy North American storytelling, including tales of migration and revenge, coming of age and coming apart, as well as films starring Tilda Swinton, Jessica Chastain, Ilana Glazer and Jesse Eisenberg.



Scan code for booking information
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Thelma

Dir. Josh Margolin USA

A 93-year-old grandma's mission – and, yes, she chooses to accept it – is to reclaim her money from scammers by any means necessary in this delightful crowdpleaser.

Thelma Post lives alone in LA two years after her husband's death. She dotes on her slacker grandson Danny, which is how an anonymous phone scammer dupes her into mailing \$10,000 cash to "pay Danny's bail". When her well-meaning daughter and son-in-law suggest it's time for assisted living, Thelma vows to get her money back – not just because it's right, but to prove she still can. First, she'll need a partner and a getaway vehicle – so Thelma breaks her friend Ben, and his tandem electric scooter, out of his nursing home. Improv-comedy veteran Josh Margolin's revenge fantasy is a long-overdue showcase for the impish talents of Oscar nominee June Squibb (*Nebraska*), who, at 94, does her own stunts alongside Blaxploitation legend Richard Roundtree (*Shaft* himself, in his final role). Parker Posey and Malcolm MacDowell round out the cast of this defiant and raucous ode to lifelong dignity.

97 MINS **MIFF REGIONAL**



Sing Sing

Dir. Greg Kwedar USA

In this SXSW Festival Favorite award-winner, a theatre group finds hope and meaning through self-expression within the confines of a maximum-security prison.

To pass the days while locked up, Divine G spearheads the Rehabilitation Through the Arts program, staging Shakespeare productions with other incarcerated men and their director, Brent Buell. When inmate Divine Eye joins the group, their artistic harmony is at first tested by his inability to fully embrace vulnerability. But Divine Eye's suggestion to turn to comedy sparks ideas and enthusiasm from fellow members, and slowly, the two Divines form a friendship that is as much of a life raft as the program that brought them together. Inspired by a real-life initiative at Sing Sing Correctional Facility in New York, Greg Kwedar's second feature is anchored on a stellar performance from Oscar-nominated actor Colman Domingo as Divine G. An eight-year labour of love, the resulting film's power lies not just in its authenticity but in its warmth that subverts the familiar clinical renditions of life behind bars.

106 MINS



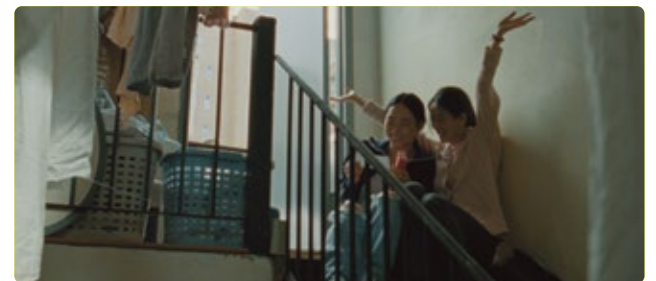
Babes

Dir. Pamela Adlon USA

This raucous 'mom-com', written by its star Ilana Glazer (*Broad City*), delivers a bundle of joy from the slapstick indignities of impending motherhood.

New Yorkers and lifelong gal pals Eden (Glazer) and Dawn (Michelle Buteau, *Survival of the Thickest*) are on their annual Thanksgiving movie date when Dawn goes into labour with her second child. After supporting Dawn through the birth, Eden meets the spunky Claude on the train home. Sparks fly for one night only. A month later, Eden's pregnant, on her own and hoping for support from her bestie ... just as Dawn's struggling with her own newborn and a toddler. Can these two women keep hold of their friendship through maternal tribulations ranging from hormonal horniness to spurting body fluids? As one of the characters in *Babes* observes, life isn't always like a Nora Ephron movie. But this humorous and unexpectedly sweet feature directorial debut from acclaimed comedy actor and writer Pamela Adlon (*Better Things*) has been compared instead to a perinatal *Bridesmaids*.

104 MINS



Blue Sun Palace

Dir. Constance Tsang USA

The complexities of the migrant experience are tenderly depicted in this deeply felt debut feature, which arrives fresh from Cannes Critics' Week.

In New York City, recently arrived Chinese workers Amy and Didi are employed at a massage parlour in Flushing, Queens. As they navigate the demands of family back home and the difficulties of their new circumstances, the film sensitively portrays the need for community that defines the process of putting down roots in a foreign land. But when an unexpected act of violence encroaches on the two women's lives, an unlikely bond is formed. Brooklyn-based Chinese-American filmmaker Constance Tsang summons a strong sense of place and cultural specificity, aided by a stellar cast headlined by Wu Ke-xi (*Nina Wu*, MIFF 2019) and Tsai Ming-liang staple Lee Kang-sheng (*Abiding Nowhere*, MIFF 2024). *Blue Sun Palace* is a warm, empathetic study of a specific expat community and the universality of the human hunger for connection.

116 MINS



Bob Trevino Likes It

Dir. Tracie Laymon USA

This uplifting SXSW Grand Jury Award winner will have you hitting 'like' with its tale of a pining daughter and the man who is *not* her father connecting online and IRL.

Lily Trevino, now 25, has had a lifetime of shouldering the blame for her mother abandoning her when she was four. The aspersions are largely heaped on her by her no-good father Bob, who himself deserted her after insisting she was cramping his bachelor style. After she then breaks up with her also-no-good boyfriend, who accidentally reveals by SMS that he's been cheating, a floundering Lily decides to try to reconnect with her dad. But when she Facebook-friends another Bob altogether, he might just prove to be the better father figure, anyway. Anchored on an irrepressible chemistry between rising star Barbie Ferreira (*Lope; Euphoria*) and an ever-charismatic John Leguizamo – who portray, in turn, an irrepressible but guarded desire to love and be loved, and a quiet wariness that betrays being let down by life – *Bob Trevino Likes It* is a bittersweet story of lost souls forming a lasting bond.

102 MINS



All Dirt Roads Taste of Salt

Dir. Raven Jackson USA

Like a visual poem of a half-forgotten memory, this ode to a Black woman's joys and tragedies in the Deep South is rendered exquisitely tactile on the big screen.

Mack's life unfurls like a dream. As a child in 1960s Mississippi, she learns to fish with her father and sister, while her mother teaches her to cook. Meanwhile, her grandmother inducts her into ancestral and cultural lore. Her connections – to her family, her community and the natural world that surrounds and sustains her – are deeply felt and beautifully depicted across the decades and layers of her coming of age. Named one of the top 10 independent films of 2024 by the National Board of Review, *All Dirt Roads Taste of Salt* is award-winning poet and photographer Raven Jackson's mesmerising debut feature. Shot in gorgeous 35mm, the film ebbs and flows through the currents of Mack's life, propelled by a visceral soundscape and a sparse but revealing script. Fans of Barry Jenkins or Terrence Malick will revel in the languid rhythms of this impressionistic, kaleidoscopic masterpiece.

92 MINS **FESTIVAL GUEST**



Didi

Dir. Sean Wang USA

This double-Sundance-winning semi-autobiographical film surveys a coming of age marked by Myspace and Motorola flip phones during the heady days of the 2000s.

It's the late noughties in Fremont, California. Impressionable young Chris attempts to find his place in the world as he enters the lion's den of high school – just as social media is exploding in popularity. His big sister Vivian is headed for college, while his mum Chungsing (*Twin Peaks* luminary Joan Chen, who also starred in *The Home Song Stories*, MIFF 2007) is a frustrated painter who wants to be seen as more than a caregiver to her ungrateful kids and even less impressed mother-in-law (played by director Sean Wang's actual grandmother Chang Li Hua). Sharing thematic DNA with *Eighth Grade* and *Mid90s*, Wang's debut dramatic feature – whose title means 'little brother' in Mandarin – is an evocative account of growth, the affection and tensions of family, and the immigrant experience, picking up both a Special Jury Award and an Audience Award at Sundance.

93 MINS



Vulcanizadora

Dir. Joel Potrykus USA

Underground auteur Joel Potrykus returns with a mind-bending and hilariously shocking trip into the existential terror of middle age.

Estranged from family, veritably directionless and in trouble with the law, middle-aged pals Derek (Potrykus) and Marty (Joshua Burge, *The Revenant*) find themselves wandering deep into the Michigan forest – less as true adult men, more as overgrown adolescents lost in an identity crisis. They've made an unsettling choice, but not everything will go to plan. Soon, one of them will return home to face the consequences. Fans of Potrykus's singularly skuzzy universe will recognise these characters from his breakout hit *Buzzard* (MIFF 2014), though his latest film also functions as a standalone piece. Shot on evocatively low-budget 16mm and featuring perhaps the first ever soundtrack to combine opera singer Maria Callas and heavy metal band Sepultura, *Vulcanizadora* plunges Potrykus's familiar misfits into mid-life terror, mixing his dark, absurdist humour with a bleak but unforgettable contemplation of time's passage.

85 MINS



Problemista

Dir. Julio Torres USA

PRESENTED BY
TSU LANGE YOR

Tilda Swinton plays the boss from hell in this absurdist satire of US immigration policy and the New York art scene from A24 and breakout multi-hyphenate Julio Torres.

Childlike dreamer Alejandro (Torres) arrives in the Big Apple from El Salvador with one goal: to make toys for Hasbro. Instead – when not battling demeaning immigration dictates or calling back home to his mother (Catalina Saavedra, *The Maid*, MIFF 2019) – he ends up in the employ of the chaotic, irrational Elizabeth (Swinton), an erstwhile art critic obsessed with boosting the creative legacy of her cryogenically frozen husband (RZA). Narrated by Isabella Rossellini, *Problemista* explodes onto the screen with a dizzying array of quirks. With unabashedly Kaufman-esque wit, the debut feature from rising cult star Torres (a former SNL writer and co-creator of HBO's *Los Espookys*) marries magic-realist whimsy and genuine silliness with sardonic yet scathing critiques of the gig economy, the treatment of migrants and the perversion of the American Dream.

104 MINS MIFF REGIONAL



Memory

Dir. Michel Franco USA, Mexico

Jessica Chastain and Venice Best Actor winner Peter Sarsgaard are exceptional in this dark and difficult love story – the warmest, most optimistic film of director Michel Franco's career.

Overprotective single mother and recovering alcoholic Sylvia is startled when former classmate Saul follows her home from their school reunion. When she finds him still outside her building the next morning, confused and disoriented, her professional instincts kick in: Sylvia is a social worker and Saul, it turns out, has early-onset dementia. He's also connected to Sylvia's past wounds – still fresh in her mind; absent from his – and when the professional becomes personal, both find themselves caught out by the slipperiness of memory. Mexican formalist Franco's latest film is buoyant and redemptive – arguably his most hopeful and compassionate yet. In its exploration of trauma, recovery and identity, *Memory* finds a genuinely sweet spot that is elevated by the exquisite performances of Chastain and Sarsgaard.

103 MINS



My First Film

Dir. Zia Anger USA

Instead of writing off her abandoned first feature as a failure, US filmmaker Zia Anger (*My Last Film*, MIFF 2016) devised this wildly imaginative, self-reflexive piece of autofiction.

Anger's first longform work *Always All Ways, Anne Marie* – which was shot between 2010 and 2012 on a micro budget and used friends as cast members – was never shown. In 2019, she made a live cinematic performance about the experience that toured for four years. Now, more than a decade later, she's made a film based on the whole journey. Colliding a range of styles, tones and forms, the playfully meta result follows a young woman, Vita (Odessa Young, *Shirley*, MIFF 2020), as she recounts the process of making a semi-autobiographical film about a young pregnant woman who decides to leave home. *My First Film* inventively combines scenes from the original feature with cinematography by Ashley Connor (*Madeline's Madeline*, MIFF 2018), Apple's TextEdit word processor as a means of narration, archival footage and Instagram stories into a disarmingly sincere meditation blending truth and fiction, life and art.

100 MINS



My Old Ass

Dir. Megan Park USA

If you were a queer Canadian teenager and Aubrey Plaza appeared to you as your future self, would you heed her ominous warning?

Elliott (Maisy Stella, *Nashville*) is queer, about to turn 18 and can't wait to leave her Canadian cranberry-farming family for college in Toronto. Camping beside a lake with her besties Ruthie and Ro, she sips some magic-mushroom tea that somehow summons her jaded 39-year-old self (Plaza, *Megalopolis*, MIFF 2024). Elliott can't resist asking for some tips on what's ahead. Her future self is cagey, not wanting to alter Elliott's path, but she insists on one thing: "Stay away from Chad." What? Elliott's not even into guys! But then she meets the family's goofy new summer farmhand, and guess what his name is? Everyone's toyed with this time-travelling scenario, but Megan Park's endearing coming-of-age comedy-fantasy – which was produced by Margot Robbie – hits the perfect bittersweet spot of hope and nostalgia. With the magnetic chemistry between Stella and a dependably wry Plaza, this tender Sundance gem holds more surprises than you might expect.

88 MINS



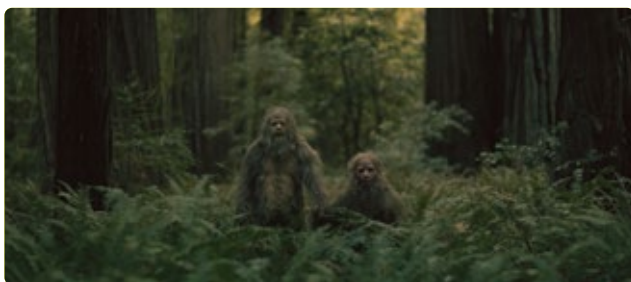
The Damned

Dir. Roberto Minervini Belgium, Italy, USA

With this thoughtful twist on the jingoistic, action-packed war movie, Cannes Un Certain Regard Best Director winner Roberto Minervini asks: what's it all for?

Faith, hope and purpose are tested to the extreme as a platoon of unnamed Union soldiers patrol the unclaimed western line in 1862, at the height of the US Civil War. Hailing from various backgrounds and communities, the men are united by their belief in God, country and one another – even as their supplies deplete and the winter sets in. But this trust slowly wavers as they face a dispiriting conflict that seemingly has no end nor resolution. With echoes of Kelly Reichardt's *Meek's Cutoff* and Alex Garland's *Civil War*, the latest feature from Minervini (*What You Gonna Do When the World's on Fire?*, MIFF 2019) builds on his earlier ingenious observations of American life and the tensions between duty and agency, present and past. Blurring dramatic and documentary modes, this gripping wartime saga has all-too-real echoes of the bitterly divided USA of today.

88 MINS



Sasquatch Sunset

Dir. David Zellner, Nathan Zellner USA

PRESENTED BY
BROADSHEET

Riley Keough and Jesse Eisenberg star in undoubtedly the greatest wordless, scatological, horny and tragicomic Bigfoot movie in the history of cinema.

In the forests of Northern California, four sasquatches try to survive four seasons in a habitat increasingly encroached on by *Homo sapiens*. They communicate entirely in grunts and whoops. They forage for food, fornicate, defecate and masturbate. They display curiosity for other creatures and mind-altering plants. And, in moments of abject terror, they come face to face with the hallmarks of human society – and the incomparable horrors of Erasure's exuberant 1991 synth-pop banger 'Love to Hate You'. Helmed by the Zellner brothers (*Damsel*, MIFF 2018), executive-produced by Ari Aster (*Hereditary*), and starring an unrecognisable Keough (*War Pony*, MIFF 2022) and Eisenberg (*Vivarium*, MIFF 2019) as hairy apes, *Sasquatch Sunset* is a marriage of gross-out comedy and nature doc that offers an unexpectedly poignant rumination on environmental degradation and the pitfalls of our species' apparent dominion over nature.

88 MINS



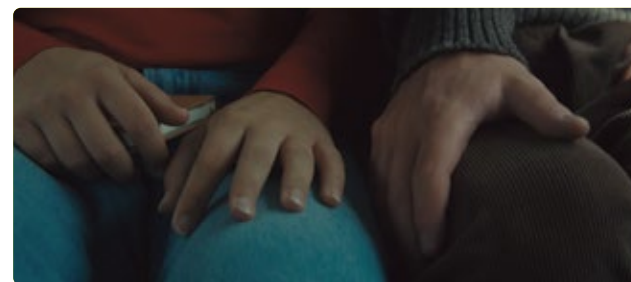
Matt and Mara

Dir. Kazik Radwanski Canada

Accelerator Lab alum Kazik Radwanski (*Anne at 13,000 Feet*, MIFF 2020) re-teams with Deragh Campbell and Matt Johnson in this ennui-filled character-driven charmer.

Mara (Campbell) leads a happy-enough life as a literature professor at a Toronto college, raising a child with experimental musician Samir. So why is it that this cruise control hits turbulence when Matt (Johnson, *BlackBerry*, MIFF 2023), an old college friend from her past, shows up out of the blue? A hedonistic writer with a 'bad boy of the lit-world' reputation, he shares an undefinable frisson with Mara – one that only intensifies as their prodding escalates into an 'it's complicated' road trip that will force them to reassess what they want from their futures. Shot in an intimate cinema vérité style that betrays the true feelings darting across the faces of Radwanski's prickly protagonists, *Matt and Mara* is a veritable indie gem that, with humour and gently discombobulating wit, asks: how did 'back then' get us to 'here and now', and where forward from there?

80 MINS MIFF ONLINE



Who by Fire

Dir. Philippe Lesage Canada, France

Egos clash in this tense coming-of-age tale set in an isolated cabin in the Canadian wilderness, which won the Berlinale Generation 14plus Grand Prix.

Seventeen-year-old aspiring filmmaker Jeff accompanies his friend Max, Max's sister Aliocha and their father Albert on a wilderness getaway at the lodge of Albert's old 'friend'. The owner is acclaimed director Blake, whose passive-aggressive exchanges with Albert reveal the pair's reciprocal resentment. For Jeff, the possibilities of the holiday are twofold: he wants to impress the host almost as much as he does Aliocha, on whom he has a crush. But a simple weeklong trip turns sizzling as hot-headed male egos clash and the illusions masked by youth are slowly chipped away. In Quebecois director Philippe Lesage's third narrative feature, an ensemble cast who convincingly portray overlapping paths and agendas drive the drama, while long, unbroken takes during moments of tension – whether at the dining table or in the woods – build to a taut and potent piece of slow-burning, sustained arthouse cinema.

161 MINS MIFF ONLINE

Latin America

Travel to Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Mexico and beyond with MIFF's selection of Latin American films, including a sex-hotel-set erotic thriller, poignant filial portraits and a reimagining of Sappho.



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Cidade; Campo

Dir. Juliana Rojas Brazil

Two stories – one involving a country-to-city move, the other in reverse – explore the place of women in Bolsonaro's Brazil.

Displaced by severe flooding in her rural hometown, Joana relocates to São Paulo to reconnect with her sister and grandson, and ends up finding work – and collectivist struggle – with a cleaning company. In a second, distinct narrative, Flavia and Mara relocate to the far-flung farmland that once belonged to Flavia's estranged, recently departed father, and are soon haunted by old memories, both personal and historical. This cinematic diptych explores narratives of migration and interrogates ingrained stereotypes of city and country living. Juliana Rojas's self-described "existentialist supernatural film" uses elements of parable, fairytale and genre to critique the oppression of women and the spectre of class in contemporary Brazilian society.

119 MINS



La Cocina

Dir. Alonso Ruizpalacios Mexico, USA

Rooney Mara stars in this gorgeously shot, righteously angry portrait of kitchen workers stewing in the pressure-cooker conditions of a New York City bistro.

At popular Times Square establishment The Grill, Estela meets the many characters who will soon define her working life in this new country, including waitress Julia (Mara); her boyfriend Pedro (Raúl Briones, *A Cop Movie*, MIFF 2021), a chef; and his rival Max. As the cooks battle it out for culinary supremacy, Julia clashes with Pedro over whether to terminate her pregnancy, while Estela and the other undocumented migrants weigh up their fates in the US. This Berlinale competition standout interrogates the sad realities of the restaurant industry, the exploitation of immigrant workers and the cultural disconnect between North and Latin America.

139 MINS MIFF REGIONAL



Malu

Dir. Pedro Freire Brazil

A middle-aged actress begins to unravel in this dynamite Brazilian debut, featuring an explosive, emotionally wrenching lead performance from Yara de Novaes.

Clinging to memories of her former glory, 50-year-old actress Malu (de Novaes) finds herself sharing a run-down home in the slums of Rio de Janeiro with her conservative mother while trying to reconnect with her estranged daughter (Carol Duarte, *La Chimera*, MIFF 2023). Malu dreams of converting her home into an arts centre for underprivileged kids, but her erratic emotional state and hostile relationship with her religious mother keep her existence in a state of turmoil and inertia. Drawing inspiration from his own mother, the legendary Brazilian actress Malu Rocha, director Pedro Freire delivers a tender, sometimes terrifying portrait of love in all its messy contradiction.

101 MINS MIFF ONLINE

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Motel Destino

Dir. Karim Ainouz Brazil, France, Germany

From Cannes competition lands a colourful, queered and beachside-set erotic thriller in which desire and destiny clash in a seedy sex hotel.

To free himself of debt to a local drug dealer, petty criminal Heraldo is ordered to murder a Frenchman. But it's game over when Heraldo is swindled by a woman he wakes up with at Motel Destino. With his mission bungled, Heraldo shacks up at the sex hotel with its beautiful co-owner, Dayana, on the proviso that he pays his way with odd jobs. While he's drawn into an affair with Dayana, her ageing lothario husband soon catches on. Soaked in neon and bolstered by the stylish 16mm cinematography of H el ene Louvart (*Disco Boy*, MIFF 2023), *Motel Destino* is a consummate, sensual film noir.

112 MINS



Reinas

Dir. Klaudia Reynicke Switzerland, Spain, Peru

In this charming and bittersweet winner of the Berlinale's Generation Kplus Grand Prix, a man fights his worst impulses to be a better father to his two emigrating daughters.

Against the backdrop of an early 90s Peru in economic and societal freefall, *Reinas* introduces us to the loving family of middle-class Elena and her daughters, adolescent Aurora and tween Luc a. Estranged from the girls' charismatic but unreliable father Carlos, Elena has an escape plan via a job in the US, but she needs Carlos's signature for Aurora and Luc a's departure permits. He agrees to sign – but with the looming prospect of losing his titular queens, Carlos tries his best to make amends. *Reinas* is an intimate story of familial love and hope in the face of overwhelming outside forces.

104 MINS



Simon of the Mountain

Dir. Federico Luis Argentina, Chile, Uruguay

In this Cannes Critics' Week Grand Prize winner, an enigmatic young man yearns to belong with his disabled besties – but he's not quite like them.

Simon, aged 21, falls in with a group of disabled youngsters whose mountain excursion is disrupted by bad weather. He quickly befriends the wily Pehuen and catches the flirtatious eye of Colo. When they get back on the bus, so does Simon; he's found his people. But when his exasperated mother shows up at the institution, she insists Simon doesn't have an intellectual disability. Is she right? And if so, why does he seem to thrive there, but not with his family or in the wider world? Lorenzo Ferro gives an extraordinary lead performance, while the story as a whole resists the usual coming-of-age clich es.

97 MINS



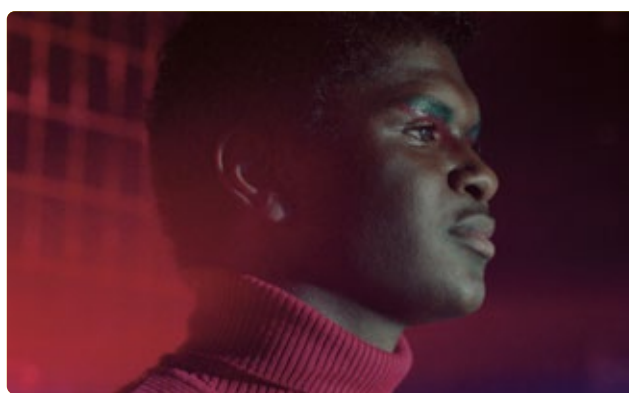
Sujo

Dir. Astrid Rondero, Fernanda Valadez USA, Mexico, France

A young boy orphaned by the cartel is up against inheriting a life of crime in this powerful coming-of-age story.

In many ways, Sujo's path was set out for him before he was born. The son of a sicario, he's dragged along on hit jobs until his father is branded a traitor and murdered. The four-year-old then becomes the cartel's next target – lest he later set out to avenge his dad's death – so his aunt Nemesia agrees to raise him in a remote shack far from their town in Michoac n, alongside the sons of her friend Rosalia. The world of the outlaw threatens to encroach as the boys age, until Sujo is sent off to Mexico City in a bid to break the cycle. In their second collaboration following *Identifying Features* (MIFF 2020), Astrid Rondero and Fernanda Valadez track not the war on drugs but its ripple effects on those unwillingly caught up in the maelstrom.

126 MINS



Toll

Dir. Carolina Markowicz Brazil, Portugal

To pay for the conversion therapy she believes her gay son needs, a well-intentioned tollbooth operator turns to crime in this crafty and unpredictable drama.

Suellen is a tollbooth attendant in the Brazilian city of Cubat o. Despite her poverty, she considers herself a moral gatekeeper, kicking out her boyfriend Arauto after she learns he's been hiding stolen goods in her home. She also feels compelled to stop her gay 17-year-old son Tiquinho from facing a lifetime of persecution. Although Suellen lights a 'virility candle' for him each dawn, Tiquinho keeps trying on make-up and filming elaborate drag performance videos in his pink bedroom full of rainbow lights. So when Suellen's co-worker Telma recommends an expensive gay conversion camp led by a foreign priest, she decides to pay for Tiquinho's salvation by joining Arauto's gang of thieves.

101 MINS



You Burn Me

Dir. Mat as Pi eiro Argentina, Spain

This phantasmagoric experimental drama puts Ancient Greek poet Sappho in conversation with the nymph Britomartis.

Inspired by the work of Sappho, the latest film from Argentinian director Mat as Pi eiro (*Hermia & Helena*, MIFF 2017; *The Princess of France*, MIFF 2014) is adapted from a chapter of Cesare Pavese's 1947 *Dialoghi con Leuc * that imagines an encounter between Sappho and Britomartis. Both are destined to meet a watery demise and, while rapt in discussion, they reflect on life, love and the bittersweet nature of desire. Meanwhile, the frame is punctuated with images of buildings, books, streets, skies, hands and handwritten pages, sometimes blurring and recurring to almost morph into a palimpsest of the work itself. Lyrical and hypnotic, *You Burn Me* is a dance of yearning and death that unfolds with the logic of a dream.

64 MINS



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Romulus, My Father

Dir. Richard Roxburgh Australia 2007

Eric Bana and Kodi Smit-McPhee star as father and son in this emotionally textured, AFI Award-winning drama based on the acclaimed memoir – now lavishly restored.

In a rundown farmhouse in 1960s country Victoria, Raimond (Smit-McPhee) lives with his father Romulus (Bana), an immigrant from Yugoslavia. His mother (Franka Potente, *Run Lola Run*, MIFF 1999) is weighed down by depression and mostly absent, save for the occasional visit, and she eventually leaves them for a family friend despite Romulus holding onto hope with every return. The toll of battling for daily survival amid fractured relationships, trauma and mental illness affects most of the adults around Raimond, who must learn what it takes to wade through adversity and find a way forward.

104 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Un rêve plus long que la nuit

Dir. Niki de Saint Phalle France 1976

A debauched, exuberant French art fairytale stuns all over again in a luscious new 4K restoration funded by the House of Dior.

Sweet little Camélia drifts off to sleep wondering what it would be like to be grown-up. She awakens in a colourful dream-world run by a dragon, where a sorceress transforms her into a gorgeous woman. Now, she must open the Seven Doors of Mystery to find love ... except behind some of these doors are a man selling death, a scary king who demands her as his bride and a mistress offering her sex work. By the time giant phalluses are exploding at the orgy in spurts of glitter and feathers, Camélia is learning the lesson of all fairytales: be careful what you wish for. A poetic and carnivalesque, yet hopeful, exploration of female coming of age.

82 MINS



The Small Back Room

Dir. Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger UK 1949

Returning in a stunning 4K restoration, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's WWII thriller remains a classic of aching romance and high-wire suspense.

Bomb-disposal expert Sammy Rice (David Farrar) drowns himself in both alcohol and self-pity, owing in large part to his pain-causing prosthetic foot. His only source of solace is his relationship with Susan (Kathleen Byron) – who works in the same ministry – but even she is at her wit's end with him. One day, Sammy is enlisted into a secret high-risk mission involving German landmines on the beaches of England. Will this finally make of him the heroic man he wishes he could be? Restored by Martin Scorsese's The Film Foundation.

106 MINS



Lake Mungo 4K

Dir. Joel Anderson Australia 2008

One of Australia's greatest cult classics – a mockumentary that is equal parts ghost story and family drama – screens in a previously unseen, glorious new 4K restoration.

Alice Palmer was like most 16-year-olds, living in quiet suburbia with her parents and brother. But she had a dark side, and it's only after her mysterious death that the secrets she held inside could be released. Told through the format of a television documentary, Alice's story threatens to haunt her family for all time – figuratively and literally. Is it really her ghost that her loved ones see in photos and videos? Or just the memories of a desperate young girl? It isn't until a terrifying discovery at Lake Mungo that all is clarified ... or so they believe.

87 MINS



Back From the Ink: Restored Animated Shorts

USA

Undertaken in collaboration with the Seth MacFarlane Foundation and Martin Scorsese's Film Foundation, this restoration unearths lost classics from animation's Golden Age.

Back From the Ink is the first ever curated restoration of historically significant animated shorts from the 1920s to 1940s. It includes a 1944 stop-motion 'Puppetoon' from George Pál, a 1939 Terrytoon directed by Mannie Davis, and seven short films, drawn from 1928 to 1939, by the Fleischer Brothers (creators of *Betty Boop* and *Koko the Clown*), which feature jazz-age collaborations with Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway. Restored by UCLA Film & Television Archive and The Film Foundation.

82 MINS



Histoires d'Amérique: Food, Family and Philosophy

Dir. Chantal Akerman Belgium, France 1989

Chantal Akerman's newly restored portrait embraces Jewish New York, from trauma and resilience to large helpings of Borscht Belt jokes.

Everyone from a diaspora has a story. On vacant Brooklyn lots overlooking the Williamsburg Bridge, a cross-section of Jewish New Yorkers tell migrant tales of joy and pain in mesmerising monologues, interspersed with corny Borscht Belt comedy routines filmed on a DIY deli set. Among those who capture the camera's gaze are avant-garde theatre legends Judith Malina and George Bartenieff; Stephan Balint, who co-founded the Hungarian experimental troupe Squat Theatre; and his indie actor and violinist daughter Eszter.

92 MINS



Stephen Cummins Retrospective

Dir. Stephen Cummins Australia

A crucial chapter in Australia's queer cinematic history is brought to light in this National Film and Sound Archive collection of Stephen Cummins's haunting, sublime filmography.

Directing nine short films across a decade before his death from HIV-related lymphoma in 1994, Cummins was an openly gay filmmaker whose oft-provocative works were produced during the cultural upheaval of the 80s – against the backdrop of the queer rights movement, the AIDS pandemic and the decriminalisation of male homosexual acts across Australia. His initial experimental works utilised the body as both landscape and canvas, but his growing political consciousness shifted his interest to the place of gay bodies in public spaces.

59 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST

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The Cars That Ate Paris

Dir. Peter Weir Australia 1974

Peter Weir's classic comedy of the macabre – one of the most influential movies of the 70s Australian New Wave – returns in an immaculate, all-new 4K restoration presented by the National Film and Sound Archive.

"148 people live in the township of Paris, and every one of them is a murderer." So went the tagline to master Australian filmmaker Weir's 1974 cult classic, in which the oddball residents of an outback town subsist by luring unsuspecting passers-by into grisly car crashes. When they're not salvaging the wreckage for profit, the townsfolk are harvesting the body parts of accident survivors for medical experiments. But when one hapless outsider is invited into the community, he soon notices something is very, very amiss.

91 MINS

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Expand your understanding of narrative filmmaking with these works that foreground their formal qualities and challenge with bold approaches to sound, sight and storytelling.



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Yvonne Rainer: Autobiographical Fictions

Pioneering avant-garde choreographer Yvonne Rainer brought her boundary-pushing approach to movement to the screen between the 1970s and 90s – inspired by critical theory, power, politics, feminism and her own developing lesbian identity. Newly restored in 4K.



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Lives of Performers

Dir. Yvonne Rainer USA 1972

The genre-defying debut feature of legendary choreographer Yvonne Rainer, which heralded an experimental new cinematic voice.

Shot by cinematographer Babette Mangolte – who would also begin a long collaboration with Chantal Akerman that year, starting with *La chambre* – Rainer's first foray into feature filmmaking traverses the worlds of dance and cinema. The film opens with a scene of performers rehearsing the director's performance piece *Walk, She Said*, introducing the audience to the four credited 'protagonists', including dancer Valda Setterfield, known for her work as a soloist with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. *Lives of Performers* plays with the convention of romance stories and blurs documentary and dance, fact and fiction.

90 MINS



Film About a Woman Who...

Dir. Yvonne Rainer USA 1974

Hailed as her masterpiece, Yvonne Rainer's second feature explores the nature of artifice via a coolly simmering woman in an unsatisfying relationship.

Expanding on the intricate minimalism of *Lives of Performers*, Rainer's next film (again working with cinematographer Babette Mangolte) features a meticulous script narrated by the director. It probes the depths of a relationship by centring on the inner life of a woman whose sexual dissatisfaction belies a barely concealed fury, as she recalls memories that don't match up with her current experiences of disconnection and the reveal of an affair. Here, Rainer uses the medium of film to interrogate the tropes of melodrama and the clichéd storylines of soap operas.

105 MINS



The Man Who Envied Women

Dir. Yvonne Rainer USA 1985

An acerbic, whip-smart account of a womanising professor at the breaking point of his marriage to a fed-up artist.

"You can ask me about the peculiarities of my shit; just don't ask me how much money I have in the bank," starts Jack Deller, an academic in a well-worn suit who seemingly has a piece of critical theory to draw on for everything. The kind of man who theoretically *leans* feminist, he's a conceited philanderer who lives to pontificate. The voice of his artist wife Trisha challenges him, though she's not usually onscreen; aside from an enigmatic appearance by French filmmaker Jackie Raynal, women are largely seen only in passing, their conversations hovering just outside of Deller's purview.

125 MINS



Privilege

Dir. Yvonne Rainer USA 1990

In her idiosyncratically anarchic style, Yvonne Rainer tackles menopause, race and class with memoir, humour and the voices of many women.

In her sixth feature, Rainer further pushes against the confines of narrative filmmaking with this radical account of entering the menopausal stage of life. What starts as a simple interview format soon spins out into a multi-character metafiction: the fictitious African American director Yvonne Washington takes over from Rainer as a kind of alter ego who engages in a conversation with old friend Jenny about her current bodily experiences and "hot flashbacks" of her life as a young dancer in 60s Manhattan, amid the racial tensions of a gentrifying Lower East Side.

103 MINS



MURDER and murder

Dir. Yvonne Rainer USA 1996

Winner of the Berlinale's 1997 Teddy Award for Best Documentary/Essay, Yvonne Rainer's final feature is also her most personal and playful.

Closely echoing Rainer's own situation at the time of filming, Doris is a crunchy single mother in her early 60s who works in the arts and has recently come out as a lesbian, shacking up with Mildred – a younger, tenured academic who is introduced by her partner as "a WASPy, high-minded, stubborn, professional dyke". Occasionally interrupting is another couple who can't be seen or heard by the two women: Doris's dead mother and an 18-year-old version of Mildred, first seen together goofing around at Coney Island before offering their observations on the lives around them, as well as their own.

113 MINS



Dream Team

Dir. Lev Kelman, Whitney Horn USA

If you think you've seen enough crime dramas that you can predict every twist, think again. This trippy investigation will have you second-guessing at every step.

Faced with a spate of coral-related killings, Interpol calls in its two sexiest agents: No St. Aubergine (Esther Garrel, *Call Me by Your Name*, MIFF 2017) and Chase National (Alex Zhang Hungtai aka Dirty Beaches). The pair traverse the North American west coast, soaking up tropical sun and crossing paths with everyone from a salacious scientist to fitness junkies to basketball players doing wine-tasting to a spiteful colleague who is, inexplicably, invisible. All the while, No and Chase pursue every lead they can as they try to figure out just what on Earth is going on.

91 MINS



Pepe

Dir. Nelson Carlos de los Santos Arias
Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Namibia

The strange and tragic tale of Pepe, the late 'cocaine hippo' once owned by Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar – as narrated by the ghost of the beast himself.

After Escobar's death in 1993, many of his menagerie of exotic animals were left to wander. In 2009, one such escapee, a hippopotamus nicknamed 'Pepe', was gunned down by German hunters; as the first and only hippo to have been killed in the Americas, he fast became a local media sensation. That was the last anyone heard of (or from) Pepe – until now. This amusingly existential, wondrously off-kilter odyssey, which lets the late hippo recount his story in his own disembodied words, is quite unlike any film you'll see this year.

122 MINS



The Hyperboreans

Dir. Cristóbal León, Joaquín Cociña Chile

Showcased in Cannes Directors' Fortnight, *Beau Is Afraid's* breakout animators turn Chile's Neo-Nazi history into a nightmarish stop-motion meta-movie.

Actress and psychologist Antonia Giesen, playing herself, recruits real-life filmmakers Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña to stage a one-woman show based on her experiences starring in a 'lost' movie and the writings of her patient named Metalhead. The production is haunted by the spectre of Miguel Serrano, a fascist diplomat who believed that a living Hitler had fled to a paradise beneath Antarctica. Through Antonia's memories, Metalhead's dreams, outright homage to Georges Méliès and fourth-wall-breaking interludes, personal accounts collide with Serrano's life story and Chile's troubling history.

71 MINS



Us and the Night

Dir. Audrey Lam Australia

Ten years in the making and shot on transcendent 16mm, this is an unconventional love story for every book-loving introvert.

Umi and Xiao work in their university's library. Their paths cross night after night through the stacks of books – the perfect setting for this film's own tale of curiosity and adventure. Interacting entirely within the one location, these two characters share wordplay, tour the globe and make music. But where will all of this take them, and why is it so hard to say the things that the books do so easily? Much like the novels and fictions that occupy every frame of *Us and the Night*, which premiered at New York's experimental documentary and avant-garde film festival Prismatic Ground, director Audrey Lam plays with language, soundscapes and imagery.

67 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST

Documentaries

Truth is definitely stranger than fiction in the Documentaries strand, which presents – and probes – the many facets of real life. From famous and not-so-famous faces to spectacular and far-flung places, these films are inspiring, blood-boiling, entertaining, educational, emotional and true.



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Black Box Diaries

Dir. Shiori Itō Japan, UK

This daring work of first-person investigative journalism charts the extraordinary case that not only launched #MeToo in Japan but changed the country's legal system for good.

In 2015, as a 25-year-old intern, Shiori Itō was raped by Noriyuki Yamaguchi, the Washington bureau chief of the Tokyo Broadcasting System and a friend of then-prime minister Shinzo Abe. In a country where the legal age of consent was 13 and sex-crime legislation dated back to the Meiji era, prosecuting – let alone winning – such a case was almost unthinkable. But Itō didn't let that stop her. *Black Box Diaries* recounts the entire saga, which was first documented in her 2017 memoir and ultimately resulted in an overhaul of Japan's century-old laws.

104 MINS



Dahomey

Dir. Mati Diop France, Senegal

As the restitution conversation gains momentum worldwide, this striking Berlinale Golden Bear-winning documentary follows a stolen statue home.

In 2021, the Musée du Quai Branly announced it would return a fraction of the antiquities held in its collection to the Republic of Benin (formerly the West African kingdom of Dahomey). After hearing the news, Mati Diop (*A Thousand Suns*, MIFF 2014) was hot on their trail. The resulting film captures not just the packing and transporting of these 26 artefacts, but also Beninese people interrogating the items' cultural significance, the country's vestigial ties to France and the very purpose of museums – all woven together with narration by a Beninese king's statue, long forgotten in a warehouse, that yearns for home.

68 MINS



Daughters

Dir. Angela Patton, Natalie Rae USA

Executive-produced by Kerry Washington and Joel Edgerton, this double Sundance winner follows four young girls as they reunite with their incarcerated fathers for the Daddy Daughter Dance.

Over a decade ago, activist Angela Patton launched Date With Dad, a program designed to connect young girls with their fathers serving terms in prison. These meet-ups, which culminate in an event called the Daddy Daughter Dance, are often the only chance they will have to physically interact with their fathers, many of whom have been sentenced for up to 20 years. In *Daughters*, Patton and filmmaker Natalie Rae follow four girls – five-year-old Aubrey, 10-year-old Santana, 11-year-old Ja'Ana and 15-year-old Raziah – as they prepare to meet their dads in a Washington, DC jail for a day of celebration.

107 MINS SPECIAL FREE SCREENING



Direct Action

Dir. Guillaume Cailleau, Ben Russell Germany, France

Winner of the Berlinale's Encounters Award for Best Film, this bold and vital documentary explores the militant activist community in France.

A stirring portrait of the radical protest movement in France, *Direct Action* takes us inside the ZAD de Notre-Dame-des-Landes, a 1650-hectare, 150-person rural commune of militant activists, squatters, anarchists and farmers. Deemed 'eco-terrorists' by the government, the group is at the forefront of high-profile campaigning and lobbying in the country, staging successful interventions against major construction projects, battling violent police crackdowns and giving rise to a new ecological revolution.

216 MINS



Ernest Cole: Lost and Found

Dir. Raoul Peck France, USA

Raoul Peck (*I Am Not Your Negro*, MIFF 2017) profiles the man who exposed apartheid in South Africa in this co-winner of the Cannes L'Œil d'Or for Best Documentary.

At 27, Ernest Cole was exiled from South Africa after the publication of his 1967 book *House of Bondage*. The photographer was shunned for showing the world the racist horrors faced by his Black countrymen under the apartheid regime. It would take decades for the world to catch up to the facts of what was then a daily struggle, in which time Cole had put down his camera for good. In 2017, more than 60,000 previously unseen negatives were discovered in a Swedish bank, lending a new and provocative lens to Cole's life.

106 MINS



Gaucho Gaucho

Dir. Michael Dweck, Gregory Kershaw Argentina

A Sundance-awarded film about a real-life Argentine cowboy community, elevated by sublime monochrome cinematography and sweeping western-inspired imagery.

In the Calchaquí Valleys of north-west Argentina, an isolated community is built on the rituals of the gaucho. From five-year-old Jony and 83-year-old Lelo to 17-year-old Guada, the young woman bucking the macho tradition of the rodeo, everyone in town is tied to these customs, which are manifestations not just of cultural heritage but of the profound connection between humans and their environment. As the world continues to modernise, however, will the gaucho become a mere relic of a bygone era?

84 MINS



Grand Theft Hamlet

Dir. Pinny Grylls, Sam Crane UK

The show really must go on as two locked-down actors take Shakespeare to the least likely stage imaginable: the streets of *Grand Theft Auto*.

With nowhere to work during the 2021 COVID lockdown, actor buddies Sam Crane and Mark Oosterveen hang out in the multiplayer videogame *Grand Theft Auto Online*, hooning around in stolen cars and killing everyone onscreen. Sam's wife Pinny Grylls, similarly unemployed, busies herself filming them. When Mark and Sam stumble across the 'Vinewood Bowl', what starts as a joke – could someone actually perform Shakespeare there? – escalates into a playful collision between simulated thuggery, the violent mayhem of Shakespeare's Denmark and the real-world camaraderie of theatre dorks.

90 MINS



I Shall Not Hate

Dir. Tal Barda Canada, France

This vital documentary from the streets of Israel and Palestine charts a five-time Nobel-nominated doctor's mission to turn personal tragedy into worldwide hope.

Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish was born and raised in the Jabalia refugee camp in Gaza before studying in Cairo, London and Toronto. He returned home to become an advocate for regional harmony as well as the first Palestinian doctor to work in an Israeli hospital. But while his expertise has centred on caring for children and infants, his own three children were killed in a shelling attack in 2009 – the aftermath of which was broadcast live in one of the most devastating moments in the history of Israeli television. Winner of the Audience Award at The Hague Movies That Matter Festival.

95 MINS



Immortals

Dir. Maja Tschumi Switzerland, Iraq

Two activist-survivors navigate the aftermath of Iraq's October 2019 protests in this collaborative portrait of contemporary Iraq.

Milo's participation in the protests that saw hundreds killed by Iraqi security forces and state-backed armed groups incurred the wrath of her conservative family, who burned her clothes, possessions and passport. But she has found a freedom of sorts by dressing as her brother to walk Baghdad's streets, helping other women and dreaming of a bigger life. Meanwhile, photographer Mohammed spent six months living in the tent city in Tahrir Square during the uprising, putting his life on the line to document everything he saw. The experience physically and mentally traumatised him, but with a marriage on the cards and new protests calling him, he picks up his camera again.

94 MINS [MIFF ONLINE](#)



Intercepted

Dir. Oksana Karpovych Canada, France, Ukraine

A haunting psychological portrait of invasion, this Berlinale-awarded documentary covertly listens in as Russian troops call home.

Intercepted takes its name from a cache of audio recordings played throughout: phone calls from invading Russian fighters, as captured by Ukrainian security forces. In this documentary, which received Special Mentions for the Ecumenical Jury Prize and the Amnesty International Film Award at Berlin, audiences hear soldiers speaking candidly – unaware of being recorded – to loved ones about life on the ground, and about the horrors of and justifications for war. As their voices continue, images of desolate landscapes and Ukrainians trying to survive are set against ambient compositions in unsettling tableaux.

93 MINS



Look Into My Eyes

Dir. Lana Wilson USA

Supporter and sceptic alike will be touched as seven psychics connect their clients with the supernatural – or simply with the dreams and fears buried in their psyches.

In New York City, shopfront fortune tellers and spirit mediums trade in their dozens between the Starbucks and bodegas. But what actually happens in their sessions? This film takes viewers past the beaded curtain to meet seven psychics and their clients. You won't find many crystal balls; rather, you'll get to know true masters of ceremonies – hosts for the most intimate and interior theatre. Through deft and fluent disquisitions on curiosity, memory, loss and loneliness, they give their clients permission to feel the truths they sense are out there.

108 MINS



Made in England: The Films of Powell and Pressburger

Dir. David Hinton UK

Hear Martin Scorsese wax lyrical about how the mesmerising films of two of Britain's finest inspired his own adventures in cinema.

British filmmaker David Hinton (*Nora*, MIFF 2009) has carved an esteemed career capturing sublime choreography on the big screen. He brings that deft touch for kinetic storytelling to bear on this beautifully drawn documentary exploring the remarkable oeuvre of *The Red Shoes* co-directors Michael Powell (the late husband of editor supreme Thelma Schoonmaker) and Emeric Pressburger. With unbridled admiration, super-fan Scorsese narrates an exhaustive, but never exhausting, path through the soaring highs and crashing lows of their careers – or, as Powell puckishly puts it, "When did the British ever appreciate their great men?"

131 MINS



Menus-Plaisirs – Les Troisgros

Dir. Frederick Wiseman USA

Frederick Wiseman's 44th feature documentary turns the lens on the kitchens of a Michelin three-star French restaurant and the family that runs it.

Established in 1930 by Marie and Jean-Baptiste Troisgros, La Maison Troisgros earned its first Michelin star in 1956. Twelve years later, it had attained three-star status – a coveted position it has retained ever since. Now run by the couple's grandson Michel Troisgros, the restaurant, which in 2017 relocated to the town of Ouches with the new name Le Bois sans Feuilles, is a perfect institution for the venerated filmmaker (and MIFF favourite!) to immortalise on camera.

240 MINS



A New Kind of Wilderness

Dir. Silje Evensmo Jacobsen Norway

PRESENTED BY
#SBS ONDEMAND

Winner of Sundance's World Cinema Grand Jury Prize for Documentary, this poignant film follows a family living off-grid and learning to face change in the wake of the unexpected.

On a picturesque farm in the Norwegian forest, the Payne family – British father Nik, Norwegian mother Maria and their four children – have thrived for years in isolation from the modern world, determined to maintain their sustainable-living independence in harmony with nature. But when Maria is diagnosed with cancer, the family faces a devastating loss, along with the daunting prospect of integrating themselves into contemporary society. An affecting, eye-opening portrait of grief and perseverance.

84 MINS



No Other Land

Dir. Basel Adra, Hamdan Ballal, Yuval Abraham, Rachel Szor Palestine, Norway

An impassioned piece of documentary activism by an Israeli–Palestinian film collective, named Best Documentary at the Berlinale.

Basel Adra has faced threats for recording his life in the Masafer Yatta villages in the occupied West Bank. While military law casts a shadow over the Palestinian lawyer's daily existence, Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham, with whom he has struck an unlikely friendship, enjoys a starkly more comfortable civilian life. Directing alongside Israeli journalist Rachel Szor and Palestinian activist Hamdan Ballal, the pair use handheld cameras and archival footage to capture the resilience of Palestinians slowly banished from their homes as well as the interplay of despair and determination seen in this context.

96 MINS



Occupied City

Dir. Steve McQueen UK, Netherlands, USA

This immersive, epic work of memorialisation from Oscar winner Steve McQueen uncovers WWII histories hidden in plain sight.

McQueen is known for tackling important themes in ambitious projects; in his latest film, he shifts his gaze to his adopted home of Amsterdam. Shooting throughout the COVID-19 pandemic as the city lumbered through all-too-familiar lockdowns, protests and reopenings, he reveals the traumatising events from WWII that continue to haunt every corner of the city to this day. Alongside footage of schools, parks, homes, museums, businesses and the red-light district, he interweaves revelatory, sometimes harrowing testimonies from locals, who reflect on the inter-bleeding of history and memory, trauma and healing.

266 MINS [MIFF ONLINE](#)



The Remarkable Life of Ibelin

Dir. Benjamin Ree Norway

Winner of two Sundance awards, this deeply moving documentary traces a young man's exploits in a virtual world amid the restrictions of his physical life.

When Mats Steen dies at just 25, his parents grieve the loss of their son as much as the full life they believe he was denied. But when they post a death notice on the web, they are inundated with heartfelt condolence messages and stories from people all around the world who had befriended Mats through the online role-playing videogame *World of Warcraft*. Duchenne muscular dystrophy may have confined Mats's body, but the degenerative disease couldn't confine his mind, his soul, his generosity and kindness, or his imagination.

104 MINS



The Ride Ahead

Dir. Samuel Habib, Dan Habib USA

Samuel Habib expands on his Emmy-nominated short *My Disability Roadmap* with this documentary road trip seeking guidance on how to live a "bad-ass" life.

Samuel is a typical 21-year-old: he wants to leave home, go to university, make friends and find love. But having to rely on a communication device and 160-kilogram wheelchair while living with the rare genetic condition GNAO1 Neurodevelopmental Disorder makes finding his place in the world anything but easy. So he sets out to "talk to more disabled people who have navigated this stuff, and are living bad-ass adult lives", traversing the US to interview a range of disability pioneers, rebels, activists and artists on their stories, struggles and sexcapades.

97 MINS



Scala!!!

Dir. Ali Catterall, Jane Giles UK

Delirious and debaucherous – the Scala played home to sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll (and John Waters) in Thatcher-era London.

Every city has a Scala, but only London has *the* Scala. Nestled in the city's infamous King's Cross district, the building is, on the outside, an example of stunning Art Deco architecture. But within, from 1978 to 1993, it hosted perverse pink flamingos, enigmatic eraserheads, kinky king kong of the jungle and other titillating cinematic thrills – including many too scandalous to mention. It was a palace for the freaks and weirdos of the town – or, in the words of Waters himself, "a country club for criminals and lunatics and people that were high".

96 MINS



Secret Mall Apartment

Dir. Jeremy Workman USA

Executive-produced by Jesse Eisenberg, this stranger-than-fiction doc recounts how a 2000s artist collective spent four years living inside a shopping mall.

In 2003, eight Rhode Island artists set out to create a domestic dwelling in a hidden alcove of Providence Place Mall. Though it's initially something of a lark, they end up living there until 2007, taking the project – and their lives within it – further than they ever thought they'd go. Seeing the complex as a symbol of failed gentrification and economic inequality, their gonzo act was a virtuous occupation of a building that blighted the local landscape. A winning portrait of live-in activism and out-there artistic ambition.

92 MINS [MIFF ONLINE](#)



The Stimming Pool

Dir. The Neurocultures Collective, Steven Eastwood UK

Immerse yourself in a wildly imaginative, proudly neurodivergent world informed by autistic perspectives and perception.

A man who runs a B-movie fan club introduces a screening of an animated zombie horror movie. A woman in a medical office fills out questionnaires and submits to an eye-tracking test. An office worker dons blue earphones to mask out the chaos at work, the gym and the pub – but, at home, she's free to take pleasure in her own space. And an enigmatic but benevolent dog-spirit watches over all disabled people. How are their experiences connected? Blurring the observational and the fantastical, this is a gorgeous film of autistic actors and non-actors revelling in their own sensory subjectivities.

70 MINS



Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story

Dir. Ian Bonhôte, Peter Ettedgui USA

A nuanced and inspirational account of the life-changing legacy of leading man turned disability activist Christopher Reeve.

Reeve found fame as Hollywood's original Superman in the 1970s, but his life was forever altered when he was paralysed from the neck down following a 1995 spinal injury. From his beginnings as a theatre actor to his global superstardom to his life of post-accident advocacy, this beautiful, open-hearted portrait weaves together a warming cinematic blanket of archival footage, home movies, interviews with friends and family, the recurring presence of long-time pal Robin Williams, and Reeve himself narrating from his 1999 autobiography *Still Me*. Inspiring a standing ovation at its Sundance premiere, this emotional cine-portrait is as complex, and at times conflicted, as Reeve himself.

106 MINS



Two Strangers Trying Not to Kill Each Other

Dir. Manon Ouimet, Jacob Perlmutter UK, Denmark, USA

The complex relationship between two married artists is laid bare in this searing and joyful portrait of love and creativity in autumn.

Joel Meyerowitz is a globally feted street and landscape photographer; his wife Maggie Barrett is a novelist and painter who has struggled to achieve recognition for her work. At 84 and 75, and having been together for a quarter of a century, the pair look forward to settling into old age in comfort in Tuscany. But when Barrett injures herself in a fall, the couple's dynamic and living arrangements alter significantly, and long-buried resentments soon come bubbling to the surface. Receiving CPH:DOX's Dox:Award Special Mention, this is a tender, at times funny, other times painfully candid study of the realities behind the romantic ideal of growing old together.

100 MINS



Welcome Space Brothers

Dir. Jodi Wille USA

Hop aboard as this engrossing film takes you to the world of the Unarians: cosmic visionaries who believe in higher planes, therapy and movie-making.

Founded in 1954 by Ernest and Ruth Norman, the Unarius Academy of Science uses 'fourth-dimensional physics' to contact extraterrestrials dwelling on higher dimensional planes. After Ernest died in 1971, the beings told Ruth – aka "Archangel Uriel" – that her followers could heal their psyches by making films based on the past lives they'd uncovered in group therapy. Sparing no expense, Uriel set up an art studio, set-design workshop, video and audio labs, and music recording studio, and the Unarians' metaphysical society quickly became a prolific grassroots filmmaking collective in the late 1970s and 80s.

100 MINS

The Natural World

A special collection of nonfiction films that observe and dissect the intersections of humankind and nature.



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Architecton

Dir. Victor Kossakovskiy Germany, French Polynesia, USA

Rock your world with this mesmerising documentary about the increasingly impermanent building blocks of civilisation.

Humans construct 'landmarks' of civilisation using soil and stone plundered from the Earth, believing we've improved on the natural world. But for whom, and for how long? Even as they crumble, ancient monuments shout their craving for eternity. Meanwhile, today's architecture has lost sight of deep time – cheap construction methods endanger ecosystems, bombs flatten cityscapes and engineering surrenders to environmental disasters – so Italian architect Michele de Lucchi argues that we "need a new idea of beauty". A poetic documentary from the director of *iVivan las Antipodas!* (MIFF 2012) and *Aquarela* (MIFF 2019).

98 MINS



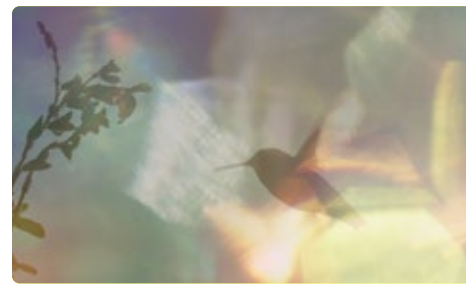
As the Tide Comes In

Dir. Juan Palacios Denmark

In the face of the climate crisis, an eight-square-kilometre island off the Danish coast is a microcosm of the rest of the world in this transportative, witty portrait.

While used to flooding and storms, the 27 residents of Mandø – an isolated island in the Wadden Sea accessible only at low tide – now face a threat to their very existence: rising sea levels, which have only continued to worsen. But it's not just the global environmental threat putting their future at risk. Their last remaining farmer, Gregers (who is also Mandø's youngest inhabitant), is looking beyond home and to the reality show *Farmer Wants a Wife* and online dating to find love. A sensitively handled, at times humorous account of life in remote conditions, capturing sky meeting sea, ebbing tides and flat plains.

88 MINS MIFF ONLINE



Every Little Thing

Dir. Sally Aitken Australia

In this big-hearted, visually dazzling documentary, a Los Angeles teacher takes time off to nurture injured hummingbirds and finds herself on an uplifting journey.

Since 2008, English teacher Terry Masear has dedicated herself to rehabilitating wounded hummingbirds – impossibly delicate and fragile creatures brought to her by residents all over Los Angeles. Inspired by Masear's 2015 book *Fastest Things on Wings*, Australian filmmaker Sally Aitken decided in 2022 to set up her cameras in Masear's homespun hospital, watching with fascination as the Hollywood bird whisperer nursed her charges back to life. This wondrous, bird's-eye-view account of Masear's diminutive patients also charts her personal growth as she marvels at the resilience of nature.

93 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Fungi: Web of Life

Dir. Joseph Nizeti, Gisela Kaufmann Australia

Lose yourself in this immersive trip into the fascinating world of fungi, as narrated by Björk.

It's difficult to summarise the far-reaching properties of fungi, despite under 10 per cent of the millions of species that exist being described. For one, life on Earth would not be possible without them. They help plants and trees survive, and their great potential is being harnessed to help break down plastic and produce medicine. As UK biologist Dr Merlin Sheldrake traverses Tasmania's Tarkine rainforest, he guides us through the usually unseen network that keeps more than just this forest alive in a world facing climate threat and unsustainable destruction. This awe-inspiring film follows Sheldrake on his mission to give this kingdom of life "a kingdom's worth of attention".

45 MINS ALL SESSIONS SCREENING IN IMAX 3D FESTIVAL GUEST



Future Council

Dir. Damon Gameau Netherlands

Damon Gameau (*That Sugar Film*; 2040) takes eight kids on the ultimate school excursion: a road trip across Europe to seek solutions to the climate crisis.

Inviting eight schoolchildren from around the globe to take a ride on his vegetable-oil-powered, bright-yellow school bus, Gameau sets out to make a movie that plays as "School of Rock meets *An Inconvenient Truth*". Travelling across Europe, this colourful touring party confront multinational uber-polluters, talk to politicians, discover cutting-edge work at eco-minded organisations and marvel at the natural splendour of some of the continent's most beautiful forests and lakes – a coming-of-age journey that dares to imagine a brighter future. Continuing the socially driven work of his previous films, Gameau delivers a rousing tribute to youthful spirit.

80 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



The Cats of Gokogu Shrine

Dir. Kazuhiro Soda Japan, USA

A Wiseman-esque study of a Japanese village's Shinto shrine whose feline residents bring the local humans joy, solace and sometimes consternation.

The seaside village of Ushimado in Okayama is the home of filmmaker Kazuhiro Soda and his wife and producer Kiyoko Kashiwagi – as well as dozens of street cats. Having found a haven in the ancient Shinto shrine of Gokogu, the animals live in harmony with their human neighbours (for the most part), but there is disagreement on how best to manage them. Some people feed them; some volunteer to catch them for a desexing program; others are indifferent, preferring instead to tend the temple's gardens. Meanwhile, some forward-thinking locals see their potential as a tourism draw for the town.

119 MINS



The Falling Sky

Dir. Eryk Rocha, Gabriela Carneiro da Cunha Brazil, Italy

A visually stunning documentary that follows the Yanomami people of the Amazon as they perform a sacred rite and defend their homeland from the incursion of mining.

Narrated by Yanomami shaman and leader Davi Kopenawa, this breathtaking documentary traces his Indigenous Amazonian community's preparations for a time-worn funeral rite said to hold up the sky – a ceremony that also galvanises them in the battle to defend their homeland from illegal gold mining. The Yanomami had lived in relative isolation until the 1970s, when a highway built under Brazil's dictatorship exposed them to the ravages of those they call the "merchandise people": outsiders exploiting nature for financial gain.

110 MINS



Wilding

Dir. David Allen UK

Letting it all go to seed is the answer to revitalising the land and its visitors, suggests this soul-nourishing film about innovative farming.

Adapted from the bestselling memoir of the same name by Isabella Tree, this visually stunning documentary captures the author (who narrates) and her husband Charlie Burrell's determination to revive the land after he inherits a 400-year-old, 3500-acre English farm. The property has seen better days – its soil now turned to dust from overproduction – so the couple set about handing it back to Mother Nature, introducing longhorn cattle, wild pigs and ponies, and allowing the trees, weeds and bushes to take root. What happens next is sure to amaze. *Wilding* is a breath of fresh air bearing the promise of a brighter future.

75 MINS

Music on Film

Always one of MIFF's most popular programs, Music on Film presents a cine-sonic smorgasbord that thrusts the aural onto the big screen.



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DEVO

Dir. Chris Smith USA, UK

This effusive film explodes onto the screen as it chronicles the remarkable rise and staying power of the 80s new-wave band behind 'Whip It'.

Artpop-punk electronic adventurers DEVO – iconic for their upturned flowerpot hats and kooky space-age smocks – formed in the late 70s as a response to an America that seemed to be spiralling out of control. The pushback against the Vietnam War had led to the infamous Kent State University massacre by the National Guard, shaking up then-students Gerald Casale, Bob Lewis and Mark Mothersbaugh. The performance-art pep of their 'de-evolution' music was their response to these helter-skelter days, eventually drawing in Mothersbaugh's brothers Bob and Jim to an out-there band beloved by Brian Eno and David Bowie.

94 MINS



Omar and Cedric: If This Ever Gets Weird

Dir. Nicolas Jack Davies Germany

The untold 40-year story of the crowning moments, creative turmoils and deep friendship of the pair behind *At the Drive-In* and *The Mars Volta*.

Before Omar Rodríguez-López ever picked up a guitar, he had a video camera. As a teenager in El Paso, he dreamed of becoming a director after he was done fooling around in hardcore bands. But after meeting Cedric Bixler-Zavala, the vocalist was always in Omar's viewfinder. It was Cedric who lured Omar back to Texas to form a soon-to-be iconic act: *At the Drive-In*. Together, they've lived and created, fought and filmed through drug addictions, the deaths of friends, the implosion of *At the Drive-In* and the birth of prog-rockers *The Mars Volta*, and even Cedric's fraught stint in the Church of Scientology.

127 MINS



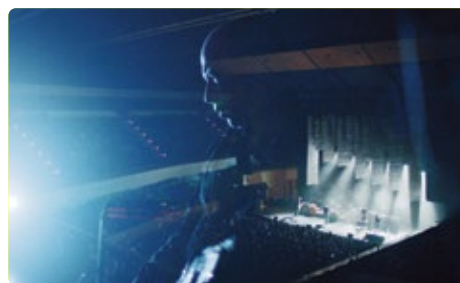
Dory Previn: On My Way to Where

Dir. Julia Greenberg, Dianna Dilworth USA

Her uniquely emotional songwriting fuelled the best revenge on her cheating husband: a brilliant second solo career.

Dory Previn was pivotal to the Hollywood movie musical's 1950s heyday and the 1970s singer/songwriter boom. But her life was eventful even before she met composer André Previn, her future husband. Diagnosed with schizophrenia, she'd been a model, actor, and chorus-line singer and dancer. Her songs earned three Oscar nominations and were recorded by stars like Judy Garland. When she learned that Mia Farrow was having her husband's baby, Dory spiralled. But in 1970, her transcendent album *On My Way to Where* kicked off her second career as herself: a musician of startling emotional authenticity.

80 MINS



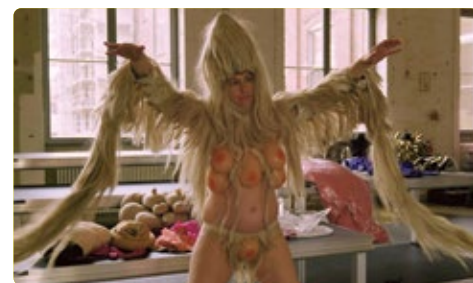
Mogwai: If the Stars Had a Sound

Dir. Antony Crook Scotland

A voyage through the singular career of Scottish post-rock legends Mogwai, from their beginnings in the 90s to the creation of their latest studio album.

Since their formation in 1995, Scottish musicians Mogwai have amassed a devoted following with their distinctive brand of soaring, dynamic post-rock. In early 2020, director and long-time Mogwai collaborator Antony Crook set out to make a short film about the recording of the band's 2021 album *As the Love Continues*, but the pandemic struck – forcing a retreat to their hometown of Glasgow. There, Crook and the band poured themselves into this feature-length journey through Mogwai's storied trajectory, tracing their humble origins and their current place as enduring musical icons.

90 MINS



Teaches of Peaches

Dir. Philipp Fussenegger, Judy Landkammer Germany

Class is in session! Celebrate the world of gender-punk icon Peaches in this audacious Teddy Award-winning documentary.

Shooting during one of the wildest tours of the decade, directors Philipp Fussenegger and Judy Landkammer turn their camera on the inimitable icon with the songwriting skills of an expletive-laden poet and the raucous showmanship of a true queer punk legend. In this explosive documentary, audiences get front-row access as Peaches marks 20 years of her album of the same name, accompanied by her genderqueer coterie of dancers and roadies. *Teaches of Peaches* takes viewers to the heart of why the singer's raunchy, feminist flamboyance has endured and influenced culture.

102 MINS

Sports

A selection of films that capture the significance and adrenaline rush of athletic success.



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Copa 71

Dir. Rachel Ramsay, James Erskine UK

Think the global surge in interest in women's football is a relatively recent occurrence? This eye-opening documentary asks you to think again.

Millions of Australians cheered on the Matildas during the 2023 Women's World Cup, with two billion people worldwide tuning in to the FIFA-run contest that ultimately saw Spain victorious. For many, the proof that there's a huge audience and widespread respect for the game, regardless of players' gender, is a recent triumph over ingrained sexism. But did you know that there was an unofficial Women's World Cup tournament held in Mexico way back in 1971? An equally mammoth success, it captured hearts and minds worldwide, introducing fans to new heroes. And then FIFA swung in to shut it down, erasing their glory from the record.

89 MINS MIFF ONLINE MIFF REGIONAL



Like My Brother

Dir. Sal Balharrie, Danielle MacLean Australia

From the Tiwi Islands to Melbourne and back again, four young women who seek to make it in elite sport must face uncertain futures.

Although Rina, Freda, Juliana and Jess hail from the Tiwi Islands – at the opposite end of Australia's sporting capital, Melbourne – they all dream of playing professional footy in the AFLW. But while dreaming is one thing, achieving it is another. They soon discover that nothing about this pursuit will be easy as they navigate the barriers of urban modernity faced by many First Nations young people – most significantly, the hardship of leaving loved ones and the strain of homesickness, especially on the isolated and vulnerable. An inspiring look at the realities of life in the Tiwi Islands and the resilience required to find success as an outsider.

87 MINS



This Is a Film About The Black Keys

Dir. Jeff Dupre USA

Ohio-born bluesy rockers The Black Keys get candid and introspective in this warts-and-all documentary direct from SXSW.

It's surprisingly prescient that Dan Auerbach and Patrick Carney titled The Black Keys' commercial breakthrough record *Brothers* – as this documentary reveals, the two are more like siblings than many blood relatives. Traversing the bickering, a distinctly brotherly inability to communicate, the Justin Bieber incident (if you know you know) and more, Jeff Dupre's film takes viewers on an all-access tour of the band's trajectory, from their humble beginnings in Akron, Ohio, to the Grammy-winning rockstars who have remained independent in spirit and beloved by masses. Fans and newcomers alike will enjoy front-row seats to this iconic duo's ups and downs.

89 MINS



The World According to Allee Willis

Dir. Alexis Spraic USA

A kaleidoscopic ride through the 50-year career of the larger-than-life mega-hit songwriter behind the *Friends* theme song, Earth Wind & Fire's 'September' and many more.

Growing up in Detroit as an outrageous tomboy in thrall to Motown's majestic glory days, Allee Willis was an idiosyncratic kid with over-the-top style and an ear for a tune. In adulthood, she served behind the scenes as a songwriter's songwriter, penning The Rembrandts' 'I'll Be There for You', the Pet Shop Boys' 'What Have I Done to Deserve This?', The Pointer Sisters' 'Neutron Dance' and songs from the musical *The Color Purple*. Over her half-century-long career, her compositions sold over 60 million records. A sincere and affecting tribute to a singular subject.

97 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF ONLINE



Dig! XX

Dir. Ondi Timoner USA

A classic tale of fame and destruction is revisited in this reconstructed rock doc about The Dandy Warhols and The Brian Jonestown Massacre.

In 2004, Ondi Timoner's *Dig!* won the Sundance Grand Jury Prize for Documentary and became a definitive examination of the 90s indie rock scene; the Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl has even described it as "the greatest rock 'n' roll documentary of all time". Charting the mainstream success of The Dandy Warhols and the spiralling implosion of The Brian Jonestown Massacre (especially volatile frontman Anton Newcombe), the film was like nothing before it. Twenty years later, *Dig! XX* adds over 40 minutes of new material and brings fans up to date on the bands' tug-of-war between art and commerce.

145 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Community to Commercial – Restored Australian Music Videos

Australia

Take a trip down memory lane with a newly restored 1987 documentary about community radio stations in Melbourne followed by a mix of independent film clips from bands championed by those stations and others with a more commercial edge.

Lovingly restored by Ray Argall at Piccolo Films from his personal archive (Argall shot many of the originals), this collection will have you tapping your feet and perhaps gasping at familiar – if somewhat fresher – faces! The screening will be followed by a discussion reflecting on the musical landscape of then vs now, and on radio's position within.

70 MINS



A Century in Sound

Dir. Tu Neill, Nick Dwyer Japan

Slip into the serene surrounds of Japanese 'listening cafés', where music lovers, audiophiles and locals come together to hear records.

Kissa are some of Japan's greatest cultural hubs; within these settings, people from differing walks of life congregate to relax, indulge and take in music in a collective setting. They are often institutions, like the Meikyoku Kissa Lion, a 100-year-old classical music café in Shibuya. As its title suggests, the limited series *A Century in Sound* chronicles the history of music in the country through the prism of these spaces, from their social importance as gathering places in postwar times to how they heralded the arrival and influence of Western culture during the second half of the 20th century.

101 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Soundtrack to a Coup d'Etat

Dir. Johan Grimonprez Belgium, France

US jazz collides with Cold War colonial crimes in this electrifying film examining the CIA's complicity in state-sanctioned murder – and its use of popular music to cover its tracks.

It's 1960. As the US civil rights movement swings into gear, in Africa another movement is taking place: decolonisation. Among the 17 nations to achieve independence that year is the Congo, but only months after becoming the former Belgian colony's first elected prime minister, Patrice Lumumba is assassinated. In an effort to deflect attention from the CIA's apparent involvement in the coup, the US sends Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington and more to the Congo as unwitting 'ambassadors'. It does not go as planned.

150 MINS



Queens of Concrete

Dir. Eliza Cox Australia

PRESENTED BY RYDGES

Three Australian girls seek the ultimate success in the world of competitive skateboarding while sliding into an adolescence without handrails.

It's 2016, and talented young skateboarders Hayley, Ava and Charlotte – aged 14, 13 and nine – have their sights set on one goal: to represent Australia at the Olympic Games. But this is no mere half-pipedream. Already nationally recognised as being among the best competitors in their age groups, they're buoyed by the news that the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo will be the first ever to feature competitive skateboarding. Supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, this coming-of-age documentary provides a gripping and at times devastating look into the challenges these girls must endure while navigating the complexities of growing up.

87 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL



You Should Have Been Here Yesterday

Dir. Jolyon Hoff Australia

Be swept up in this stunning homage to the birth of Aussie surf culture, compiled from over 200 hours of home movies, iconic documentaries and restored 16mm footage.

In the 60s and 70s, when Australian films were beginning to make waves worldwide, a band of filmmakers turned their cameras to the burgeoning counterculture set among the country's beaches. Whether they were hippies with hair turned bleach-blond or rat-racers seeking to connect with nature, surfing became an integral part of their lives. In turn, the chroniclers were there every step of the way, shooting the sun, surf, sand and the scene that grew around them. This totally radical film shares the bold artistic vision of *Moonage Daydream* (MIFF 2022) in its melding of archive, commentary and music.

79 MINS MIFF REGIONAL

MIFF Online streaming via ACMI

Available Australia-wide from 9 to 25 August, MIFF's digital offering has a limited selection of festival highlights, including new films and free short films, with select access services made available.

In 2024, audiences can book and stream these highlights via ACMI Cinema 3 – a dedicated streaming platform for films on demand with no joining fees. It's free to create an account and browse, and you simply pay for the films or programs you want to watch.

Scan code to go to cinema3.acmi.net.au

MIFF ONLINE



Night Shift

MIFF rolls out the dark carpet for those tempted by the provocative and the unusual, and for lovers of the outlandish, creepy and weird things that go bump in the night.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/night-shift



She Loved Blossoms More

Dir. Yannis Veslemes Greece

Three brothers attempt to lure their mum back from the dead in this bizarre and strangely beautiful nightmare tale.

Using a time machine concocted from a wardrobe, a trio of siblings venture to bring their long-gone mother back to the world of the living. As they deal with their delusional father and a girlfriend who plies them with drugs, their wayward experiments catapult them into a time-warped journey of grief and longing that is as visually arresting as it is comedic and disturbing. Yannis Veslemes's outlandish and otherworldly genre trip – which he describes as “a ballad for the defeated, a comedy for the accursed, a moral tale for us all and our beloved families” – is delivered as a grainy-textured dreamscape and asks: how far would you go for the ones you hold dear?

88 MINS



Cuckoo

Dir. Tilman Singer USA, Germany

Euphoria's Hunter Schafer goes head-to-head with *Downton Abbey* alum Dan Stevens in this frightfully weird horror.

Pining for her mother in a throng of bass-strumming and queer angst, teenager Gretchen (Schafer) wishes her mute stepsister Alma (Mila Lieu, *Dodger*) would just get lost. But when her estranged dad (Marton Csokas, *Head South*, MIFF 2024) and his new wife (Jessica Henwick, *Glass Onion*) accept creepy Mr König's (Stevens) job offer to overhaul the architecture of a suspiciously Overlook-like hotel in the Bavarian Alps, Gretchen quickly regrets her sniping. There's something stalking the woods in a pale mackintosh, hotel guests can't keep their dinner down and a perverse experiment is proceeding unchecked – with dire consequences.

102 MINS



Wake Up

Dir. RKSS Canada, France

In this gleefully deranged slasher, six Gen Z activists get more than they bargained for when they break into a furniture store and face a disgruntled – and bloodthirsty – security guard.

It was meant to be an emphatic if non-violent act: a group of Gen Z activists have hidden out in an IKEA-esque superstore, waiting until closing time so that they can deface the property to protest the chain's deforestation practices. Everything is going according to plan until they draw the attention of a pair of nightwatchmen – one drunk, the other deeply, psychologically disturbed and in the mood to terrorise. With gruesome nods to 80s cult gems like *Chopping Mall*, this neon-tinted riff on the survival classic *The Most Dangerous Game* crackles with unhinged energy and inspired mayhem.

83 MINS



Animale

Dir. Emma Benestan France

In this visually striking genre-bender from Cannes Critics' Week, a young woman wants to rise the ranks of bull-running – but a rogue animal is on the loose.

Nejma is a rare woman working on a cattle ranch who has ambitions of competing in local bull races alongside the men of her village in Camargue, France. While everybody else either mocks or worries about her, Nejma's rough-around-the-edges boss believes she has the goods. After a successful debut, Nejma joins the men on a late-night ride that ends in mysterious and tragic violence. There are gored bodies, and the community fears a feral bull is charging across the terrain. As efforts are made to find it, Nejma grapples with change as she gets deeper into this masculine world.

99 MINS



The Moogai

Dir. Jon Bell Australia

Jon Bell expands his MIFF 2020 Best Australian Short Film winner into a feature-length horror steeped in the trauma of the Stolen Generations.

Ensnared in a comfortable life with her husband Fergus (Meyne Wyatt, *We Are Still Here*, MIFF 2022) and young daughter Chloe, successful city lawyer Sarah (Shari Sebbens, *The Sapphires*, MIFF 2012) is initially sceptical of her Indigenous birth mother's cultural practices and shuns her heritage. After a difficult delivery with her second kid, however, Sarah is swamped with terrifying hallucinations and eerie visions of a storied child-stealing creature lurking in the shadows. Driven by robust and resonant central performances from Sebbens and Wyatt, who reprise their roles from the short, *The Moogai* is an unshakeable cry of rage contained in genre form.

86 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST



Oddity

Dir. Damian McCarthy Ireland

This award-winning spine-chiller from *Caveat* director Damian McCarthy unleashes horror from every corner of a haunted house.

Dani is startled by a desperate knocking on the door of the country home she shares with her husband Ted, a doctor at a psychiatric hospital. It's his ex-patient Olin, who frantically warns Dani that she's in mortal danger. A year later, Dani's blind and psychic twin sister Darcy intrudes on Ted and new partner Yana's domestic bliss, seeking answers for the horrific tragedy that occurred that night. Strangely, she gifts them with a life-size wooden mannequin with a perpetually open mouth, as if screaming from a curse. What are the true intentions of this unwelcome guest, and what will become of the new lovebirds?

98 MINS



Blackout

Dir. Larry Fessenden USA

A self-loathing, alcoholic artist realises that social justice is one thing – and widespread town carnage is quite another.

In blue-collar Talbot Falls, abstract painter Charley is close to rock bottom after his father's death. He gets blackout drunk, pushes away his fiancée Sharon and obsesses about taking down her father: a corrupt property developer who blames a Mexican migrant construction worker for a string of recent local murders. Trouble is, Charley slowly suspects the real monster is himself. As the moon gets full and the cops close in, Charley knows someone's got to put him down before he can kill again ... but not before he sets things right. This shaggy tale isn't a straight-up slash-fest: its elegiac dread is as slow-burning as Charley's social conscience.

104 MINS



Timestalker

Dir. Alice Lowe UK

In cult UK comedy treasure Alice Lowe's second feature, a woman's misguided fatal attraction to the same pretty bad-boy has lasted six centuries ... so far.

Agnes is wildly in love with Alex. She won't listen to her sensible advisor Scipio, hasn't even noticed that her best friend Meg is equally in love with her, and doesn't clock that the thuggish George wants her for himself. Agnes simply *must* have the brooding, edgy outsider, even at the cost of her own life. And, indeed, that's the violent price Agnes pays – in 1688, 1793, 1847, 1940, 1980 and 2117. Will a prison of passion entrap all these poor souls forever? *Timestalker* dismantles the glamour of romantic obsession, revealing it as grimy, exploitative and tedious.

97 MINS



The Demon Disorder

Dir. Steve Boyle Australia

Australian make-up and VFX veteran Steve Boyle (*Star Wars: Episode II*; *Daybreakers*; *Jungle*, MIFF 2017) makes his directorial debut with this grisly body-horror creature feature.

Isolating himself from the world in his garage workshop and estranged from his brothers, Graham Reilly receives an unshakeable wake-up call upon discovering that his youngest sibling is showing signs of being possessed by their deceased father George (John Noble, *The Lord of the Rings*). When all three Reilly boys come together for the first time after their dad's death, they must confront a restless night of dread and revenge. Melding early Cronenberg craft with contemporary horror themes, *The Demon Disorder* is a visceral journey into a hellish vision that will leave audiences a little bedevilled.

85 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST

Family Films

Uplifting stories for the young and young-at-heart.



Scan code for booking information miff.com.au/family



Runt

Dir. John Sheedy Australia

Jai Courtney, Celeste Barber and Deborah Mailman star in the heartwarming and hilarious adaptation of Craig Silvey's bestselling novel about a girl and her dog who set out to save the family farm.

They say a dog is man's best friend, but it also happens to be Annie Shearer's. The 11-year-old lives in the country town of Upson Downs with her canine companion, a stray dog called Runt. When the Shearers' farm comes under threat from drought and a local landowner, Annie concocts a plan to salvage it: by putting Runt's herding talents to good use in the Agility Course Grand Championships at the Krumpets Dog Show in London. Directed by John Sheedy (*It Is for Happiness*, MIFF 2019), *Runt* is an upbeat underdog tale for the whole family.

90 MINS



Bookworm

Dir. Ant Timpson New Zealand

Elijah Wood stars as a wayward but well-meaning dad in this magical father-daughter quest set in the New Zealand wilderness.

Following the hospitalisation of her mother, 11-year-old bibliophile Mildred is left under the care of her estranged father, a now-washed-up illusionist. Worried by her despondent state, he decides to distract her – and gratify her very active imagination – by taking her camping in the New Zealand forest. There, they can seek out the Canterbury Panther, a mythical beast that may prove essential to healing their family. But it seems other, unexpected forces are determined to get to them first. Director Ant Timpson reunites with his *Come to Daddy* (MIFF 2019) star Wood for this vibrant coming-of-age odyssey about a special bond that can't ever be broken.

103 MINS FESTIVAL GUEST MIFF REGIONAL



Magic Beach

Dir. Robert Connolly Australia

Ten animators bring Alison Lester's beloved children's book to the screen, crafting a magical mixture of live action and animation that is destined to become a family favourite.

As children hear the enchanting words of Lester's illustrated classic *Magic Beach*, they slip into spellbinding worlds of dream and whimsy. Now translated into animated form – covering traditional 2D, claymation, stop-motion and more – it can captivate a whole new generation of youngsters while evoking wonder in the already-familiar. From a host of undersea adventures, tall tales of salty smugglers and escalating sandcastle wars, to sibling-stealing seaweed monsters, psychedelic coral forests and a dog's dream of shoals of 'sausage fish', everyone will find their own fantastical adventure within.

74 MINS MIFF PREMIERE FUND MIFF REGIONAL

MIFF Industry

Operating with Victorian Government funding since commencing in 2007, **MIFF Industry** reinforces Melbourne's standing as a creative city and supports the Antipodean screen sector with selective-entry programs to foster creative connections and collaborations.



For more info, head to miff.com.au/industry

MIFF 37th South Market facilitates sourcing, acquisition, development and production-financing of local screen content and talent via pitches/meetings, talks, screenings and networking events.

MIFF Accelerator Lab nurtures tomorrow's top directors on the journey towards their first feature-film/longform works. Alumni include the directors of *52 Tuesdays*, *Animal Kingdom*, *Babyteeth*, *Buoyancy*, *It Is for Happiness*, *Hounds of Love*, *Jojo Rabbit*, *Of an Age*, *Snowtown*, *Shayda* and *Sweet As*.

While both programs are invite-only, MIFF Industry also offers a select number of Behind the Scenes ticketed sessions to the film-loving public – be they media students, screen practitioners or the curious! Discover this year's **Behind the Scenes** line-up at miffindustry.com.

The **MIFF Premiere Fund** provides co-financing support for co-commissioning Australian 'stories that need telling' into films that then premiere at MIFF.

Managed by MIFF Industry with Victorian Government funding, the Premiere Fund has, since 2007, supported more than 100 films that have won almost 200 awards from nearly 500 nominations and secured more than 700 festival selections globally.

MIFF 2024 debuts the Premiere Fund's 16th slate, which comprises Adam Elliot's *Anney Cristal* Award-winning *Memoir of a Snail* (page 8), the eighth Premiere Fund film to open MIFF; Accelerator Lab alumnus Justin Kurzel's *Ellis Park* (page 8); *Inside* (page 13); *Audrey* (page 18); *Magic Beach* (pages 9 and 39); *Left Write Hook* (page 19); and *Queens of Concrete* (page 37).



MIFF Regional

In 2024, MIFF continues its commitment to meeting audiences where they are. The MIFF Regional program, supported by VicScreen, presents a selection of this year's most anticipated titles across eight cinemas in regional Victoria.

Head on down to the Star Cinema in Bendigo, the Theatre Royal in Castlemaine, Village Cinemas in Shepparton, Paramount Cinemas in Echuca, Peninsula Cinemas in Rosebud, Village Cinemas in Morwell, and The Pivotonian and Village Cinemas in Geelong.

For session times and other details, head to miff.com.au/regional-venues



MIFF REGIONAL

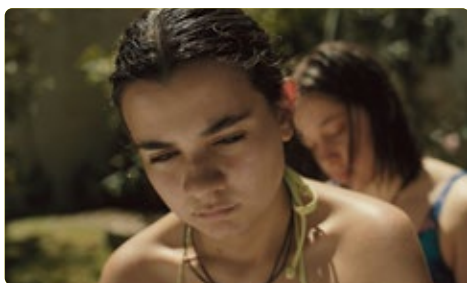


MIFF Schools

A program to enhance students' cinema and language learning, intercultural understanding, and media-analysis skills – but also open to all learners, regardless of age, beyond the classroom.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/schools



Alemania

Dir. Maria Zanetti Argentina, Spain

A teenager must choose between family and a life-changing adventure abroad in this tender coming-of-age story.

Sixteen-year-old Lola sneaks out to nightclubs, is learning to drive and is experiencing the stirrings of first love. Most of all, what she longs for is to cross the Atlantic and spend a semester on exchange in Germany. Sadly, her parents' financial pressures, her own so-so academic record and her close but troubled bond with her older sister Julieta all stand in her way. When Julieta experiences a mental health crisis, further plunging their family into upheaval, Lola must face a choice: whether to live out her dream or sacrifice it to support the people she loves. An aching and sensitive portrayal of the turbulence of adolescence and the stability found in blood ties.

87 MINS **MIFF ONLINE**



Future Council

Dir. Damon Gameau Netherlands

Damon Gameau (*That Sugar Film; 2040*) takes eight kids on the ultimate school excursion: a road trip across Europe to seek solutions to the climate crisis.

Inviting eight schoolchildren from around the globe to take a ride on his vegetable-oil-powered, bright-yellow school bus, Gameau sets out to make a movie that plays as "School of Rock meets *An Inconvenient Truth*". Travelling across Europe, this colourful touring party confront multinational uber-polluters, talk to politicians, discover cutting-edge work at eco-minded organisations and marvel at the natural splendour of some of the continent's most beautiful forests and lakes – a coming-of-age journey that dares to imagine a brighter future. Continuing the socially driven work of his previous films, Gameau delivers a rousing tribute to youthful spirit.

80 MINS **FESTIVAL GUEST**



Moving

Dir. Shinji Sōmai Japan

Caught between her divorcing parents, a little girl is forced to come to terms with her new reality in this touching family drama.

Renko's parents are splitting up. Her dad moves out of the family home, leaving her behind with her mother. But Renko refuses to accept these strange new circumstances; her precocious demeanour turns to mischievousness and rebellion as she wades through the stages of grief towards a path of self-discovery and acceptance. Based on a novel by Hiko Tanaka, *Moving* is Shinji Sōmai's 10th feature in an impressive oeuvre truncated by his untimely death at 53. In recent years, the director has earned overdue recognition outside Japan; this 1993 coming-of-age drama has since been restored in 4K and won Best Restored Film at Venice Classics.

124 MINS



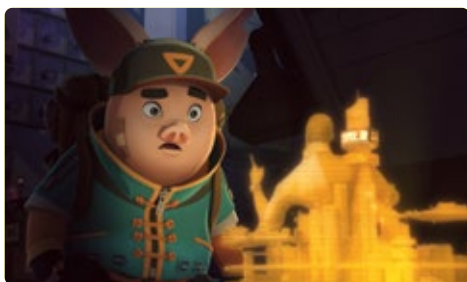
Normal

Dir. Olivier Babinet France

A father-daughter dramedy with a distinctive flavour, this tale of dispiriting social services and living with disability is a true crowdpleaser.

Fourteen-year-old Lucie has a vivid imagination and a huge amount of responsibility. Following the death of her mother, she's tasked with taking care of the household and her oddball father William (Benoît Poelvoorde, *Man Bites Dog; Coco Before Chanel*), who has multiple sclerosis – all while also going to school, working a part-time job and trying to write a novel. But when a social worker is scheduled to visit them, Lucie and William have to combine their creativity for a grand, ambitious performance: portraying a 'normal', functional household. *Normal* is an offbeat story of family and finding strength through faith in one another.

87 MINS



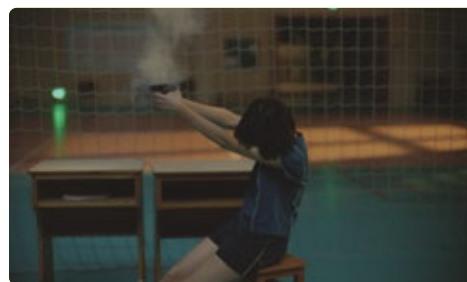
Pigsy

Dir. Li-Wei Chiu Taiwan

A lazy, self-absorbed porker becomes an unlikely hero in this wild and wondrous sci-fi riff on the Chinese classic *Journey to the West*.

Lowly computer operator Pigsy, who lives in the crowded and run-down district of Old Town, dreams of making it to New World, a high-tech utopia for rich elites run by Nirvana Enterprise. Aspiring to get himself and his grandmother there, he brokers a shady deal with the Bull Demon King and soon finds himself on an epic quest with a gang of misfits that will lead him to New World's sinister secret. Bursting with strange creatures, stunning cityscapes and a surreal sense of play, this dazzling animation transports an ancient tale to a vividly imagined sci-fi metropolis. Audiences of all ages will squeal for this fast, funny and furiously inventive adventure.

95 MINS **MIFF ONLINE**



She Sat There Like All Ordinary Ones

Dir. Qu Youjia China

Receiving the Berlinale's Generation 14plus Special Mention, this playful and poetic coming-of-age story follows the intertwined lives of two Chinese students.

Laid-back, late-blooming high schooler Zhuang is eager to impress his classmate Meng, a talented long-distance runner who has caught his attention. Hoping to win her affection, he spontaneously takes the blame for her theft of a starter pistol, only to get the cold shoulder. Undeterred, Zhuang joins Meng's track team, biding his time to surprise his crush with a gesture he hopes will win her over. This delightfully charming debut feature evokes the blush of young romance against the pressures of preparing for university within a rigid education system.

107 MINS



The Concierge

Dir. Yoshimi Itazu Japan

In this sparkling anime comedy set in a vibrant alternate world, the customer is always right – but they're never human.

Hokkyoku Department Store isn't your average upscale emporium. While its staff are human, all the customers are stylishly dressed talking animals: from cats, bears and horses to demanding walruses, amorous peacocks and woolly mammoths! On her first week, trainee concierge Akino scrambles to solve the shopping-related dilemmas of her 'Very Important Animal' customers. Eager but klutzy, she often over-promises or misreads situations – and her scary manager Mr Todo is always popping out of the most unexpected places to note down all her mistakes. Can Akino keep everyone happy, and keep her dream job?

70 MINS



Winners

Dir. Soleen Yusef Germany

Using football as her vehicle, director Soleen Yusef references her own refugee tale through the poignant journey of an 11-year-old's new life in Germany.

Having fled Syria with her Kurdish relatives, Mona feels like a fish out of water at her school in Berlin: a rough-and-ready institution where teachers struggle to rein in an unruly cohort. Picked on by her classmates, Mona eventually finds her feet ... with a soccer ball. It's not long before her talents are recognised by Mr Chepovsky (or "Mr Che" for short), who recruits her as goalkeeper to try and turn the girls' team's fortunes around. Nominated for Best Children's Film at the German Film Awards, *Winners* is an energetic reminder that, in the game of life, everything begins with taking a shot.

119 MINS

MIFF XR

MIFF's program of extended reality (XR) experiences – spanning virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR) – rewrite the frontiers of storytelling through total audiovisual immersion.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/xr

VENUE PARTNER



CO-PRESENTED WITH
NOW OR NEVER acmi

kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)

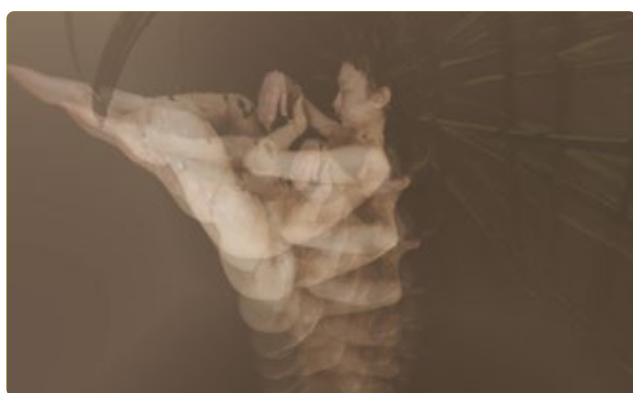
Dir. April Phillips Australia

Follow the Companion Sky Spirit through a virtual walk on Country – emerging from the depths of subterranean soils to a ground-level play space, ascending to meet the celestial clouds.

kajoo yannaga is at once a cinematic story, an immersive two-channel projection and a gamified journey guided by First Nations knowledges. Through real-time motion tracking mapping body movement, connect to place and be transported to a vivid Spirit realm sprinkled with signs and signals for those who look to see. With self-determination and generosity in mind, the completion of each circular story cycle pulls you back to start again. Leave *kajoo yannaga* with a newfound understanding of our shared responsibilities for united, intergenerational healing.

Team: April Phillips, Pat Younis, Jordan East, Warren Foster Jnr aka Prodikal-1, Warren Ngarrae Foster Snr, Jarra Karalinar Steel, Mark Leahy, Jack Prest and Alvin Zhong.

10 MINS FREE SCREENING



Taiwan With a Twist

Taiwan

Two Taiwanese XR works – one portraying the trap of greener pastures, the other framing the body as landscape – present novel takes on the here-and-now.

Craig Quintero's *Over the Rainbow* depicts the precarious balance between desire and happiness. Tapping into the universal human tendency to aspire for circumstances beyond one's own, it dramatises the pull of a thirst that can oftentimes be unquenchable. Hsiao-mei Ho's *Ná Tâu Tsí á (The Lost Limbo) / Sister Lin-Tou* is premised on the body's ability to preserve trauma – even after wounds have healed. Users enter the liminal space between existence and life, where Sister Lin-Tou's body is now a universe unto itself.

20 MINS



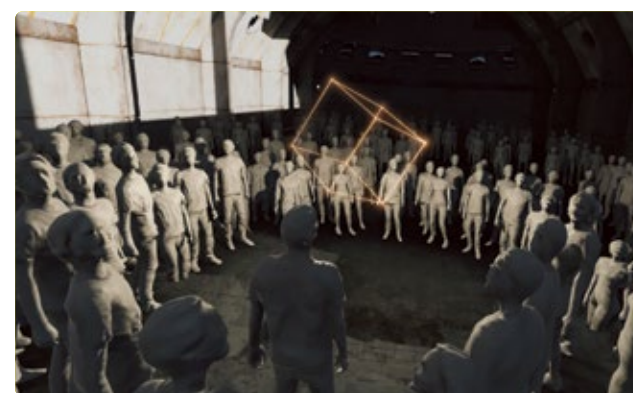
Emperor

Dir. Marion Burger, Ilan J Cohen France, Germany

An interactive and surrealist voyage into the mind of a father experiencing aphasia.

A man has lost his ability to speak, and his daughter is desperate to communicate with him – and to get to know the person behind this figure now obscured by illness. Alongside her, users piece together clue after clue within the inner world of this man, attempting to weave together a lifetime's worth of memories. Through monochrome animation, this empathetic, poetic and deeply personal interactive work renders a journey exploring the passage of time and the preservation of a bond born of love.

40 MINS



Shadowtime

Dir. Sister Sylvester, Deniz Tortum Netherlands, USA, Türkiye

Join a mysterious guide through a double world that straddles time periods, realities and scales of matter.

'Shadowtime' refers to the experience of occupying two irreconcilable times simultaneously; it can manifest when stuck in traffic while envisaging the mass of prehistoric creatures compressed into the petrol of the car engine, or scrolling through the social-media feed while comprehending that the Earth is on the verge of environmental collapse. Raising questions about the climate crisis, history and existence, *Shadowtime* is a playfully critical and self-reflexive work of true provocation.

20 MINS



Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising

Dir. Lui Avallos Brazil, Portugal

Bear witness to an ageing queer man's recollections as he reconstructs his life from memories that are slowly fading away.

A retired playwright invites the user into his living room, where he regales them with nostalgic and intimate stories of his youth. Inspired by real-life accounts from queer elders, this profoundly affecting exercise in biographical testimony utilises the language of theatre as it traverses spaces inhabited by ephemeral bodies represented as particles. *Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising* is a powerful intergenerational essay on the fight for LGBTQIA+ rights that delves into the past to conjure a renewed vision of the future.

25 MINS



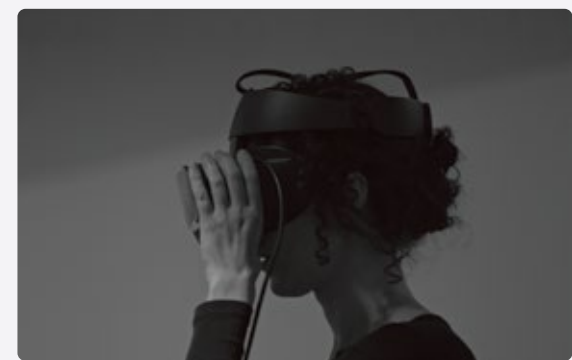
The Memphis Chronicles: Water's Edge

Dir. Mike Robbins, Harmke Heezen Australia, Germany

Step into an otherworldly cityscape representing the subconscious and the space between dying and the afterlife.

Amid dilapidated buildings and seemingly deserted dwellings, users set out to discover hidden stories and secrets, solve puzzles to piece together fragments of memory, and evade the mysterious entities known as the Keepers. What is the psychological block hindering the protagonist from coming to grips with their death? Melding hyperrealist design with dreamlike magic realism, *The Memphis Chronicles: Water's Edge* is an imaginative study in mortality and acceptance.

20 MINS



Frame Documentary Showcase

A special preview of four of Australia's newest interactive documentary works-in-the-making, proudly co-presented by Frame Documentary, MIFF and ACMI X.

Meet a robotic vacuum cleaner on a journey of self-discovery, consult a cuttlefish oracle, become a whimbrel shorebird on its epic migratory journey or experience the ghostly chorus of sentient radios. In this showcase, four teams of creators bring their newest prototypes developed through the 2024 Frame Documentary Lab to audiences to test, play and provide feedback on their work. Through a variety of technologies, the projects draw on urgent themes to explore the relationship between humanity, identity and technology today.

FREE EVENT

MIFF Shorts

The much-loved MIFF Shorts program highlights the art of saying more with less. This year's selection includes animation, documentary, experimental, and Australian and international fiction shorts.



Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/shorts

PRESENTED BY

CAMPARI



Australian Shorts

Impassioned narratives from this continent's best.

Including a provocative study of female adolescence evoking *Puberty Blues*, a Chinese-Australian two-hander about a young woman and her grandmother, and Accelerator Lab alumnus Tom Campbell's captivating mood piece starring Sean Keenan (*Ultram*, MIFF 2021).

Films in this package: *Analog Medium* (dir. Tom Campbell), *Oi* (dir. Sophie Serisier), *A Thousand Odd Days* (dir. Riley Blakeway), *Withered Blossoms* (dir. Lionel Seah), *Yakka* (dir. Jack Shepherd) and *You Are My Tomorrow* (dir. Lara Köse).

88 MINS MIFF ONLINE



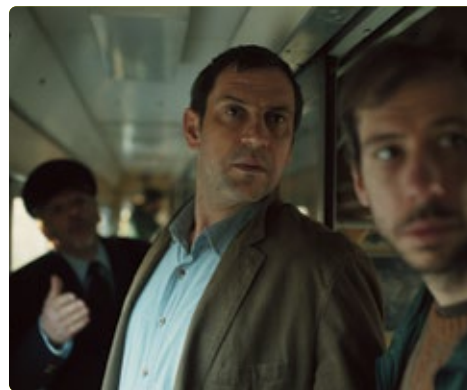
International Shorts 1

An awarded and acclaimed cornucopia from directors known and new.

Including a father-daughter drama set against the 1980s Iran-Iraq war, two trans women on a road trip across Greece, and a gripping study of race and class that won Sundance's Short Film Grand Jury Prize.

Films in this package: *Binti* (dir. Sophie-Anne Njeri Ndagu), *Blood Like Water* (dir. Dima Hamdan), *Honeymoon* (dir. Alkis Papastathopoulos), *In the Garden of Tulips* (dir. Julia Elihu), *The Masterpiece* (dir. Alex Lora Cercós) and *Nothing but Shadows* (dir. Kathy Mitrani).

103 MINS



International Shorts 2

Remarkable short-form favourites from Cannes, Berlin, Tribeca and more.

Including a Cannes Short Film Palme d'Or-winning historical recreation of a 1993 Bosnian massacre, a Filipino portrait of a same-sex crush and an arresting depiction of the stresses of a construction site.

Films in this package: *Alarms* (dir. Nicolas Panay), *Alazar* (dir. Beza Hailu Lemma), *A Catholic Schoolgirl* (dir. Myra Angeline Soriaso), *The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent* (dir. Nebojša Slijepčević) and *Remains of the Hot Day* (dir. Wenqian Zhang).

107 MINS



Accelerator Shorts 1

Bold works from emerging Australian and New Zealand filmmakers.

Including a distinctively Māori spin on the mockumentary, a poignant Tongan story of cultural dislocation and language, and a vaporwave/shoegaze-scored shrine to solitude evoking Wong Kar-wai and Hou Hsiao-hsien.

Films in this package: *Clown* (dir. Aarushi Chowdhury), *Honey Kaha* (dir. Te Waiarangi Ratana), *Kar* (dir. Nick Allen), *Lea Tupu'anga / Mother Tongue* (dir. Ve'a Mafile'o), *Me & Mazzy Melancholy* (dir. David Tse), *The Meaningless Daydreams of Augie & Celeste* (dir. Pernell Marsden) and *Punctum* (dir. Jessica Sofarnos).

88 MINS



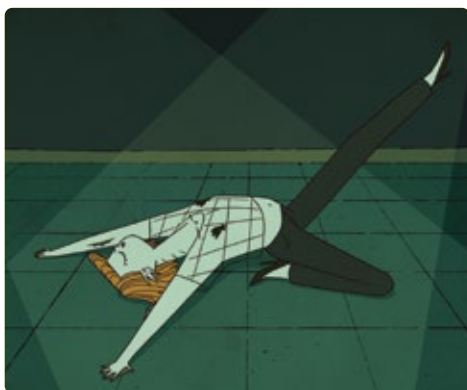
Accelerator Shorts 2

Preview the next generation of homegrown directors.

Including a portrait of the postwar Hungarian migrant experience, an Earth-shattering, out-of-this-world decision to move to Mars, and a western-tinged account of first contact featuring Aotearoa's first ever horse.

Films in this package: *Bőr (Skin)* (dir. Dylan Ferenc Nyerges), *A Daydream With Fini* (dir. Grace Tan), *First Horse* (dir. Awanui Simich-Pene), *Flide* (dir. Hugo Kohler), *The Horn* (dir. Mark Wills), *Mars Futures* (dir. Hannah Moore) and *Pleasure* (dir. Jasper Caverly).

83 MINS



Animation Shorts

Forms collide in this assortment of visual stories.

Including a satirical comedy about Victorian-era high society, a story of gender transition by way of aquatic and amphibious imagery, and an Ancey award-winning comedy about an errand turned Sisyphean ordeal.

Films in this package: *A Crab in the Pool* (dir. Alexandra Myotte, Jean-Sébastien Hamel), *Every Morning* (dir. Amy Djakovic, Lilliahna Wiles, Emiko Seita, Eumene Kim), *Father's Letters* (dir. Alexey Evstigneev), *Flower Show* (dir. Elli Vuorinen), *Gigi* (dir. Cynthia Calvi), *Hurikán* (dir. Jan Saska), *In the Shadow of the Cypress* (dir. Hossein Molayemi, Shirin Sohani) and *The Tree's Home* (dir. Hyemi Kim).

92 MINS



Documentary Shorts

Far-reaching, resonating subjects pulled from various corners of the world.

Including a portrait of survival set among the mountains of Türkiye, filmic testimony from a mother who lived through Ethiopia's 'Red Terror' genocide and a sweeping chronicle of Manhattan sites where anarchists staged bombings of 'violent righteousness'.

Films in this package: *Crushed* (dir. Camille Vigny), *Ever Since, I Have Been Flying* (dir. Aylin Gökmen), *The Medallion* (dir. Ruth Hunduma), *On Plains of Larger River & Woodlands* (dir. Miguel de Jesus) and *Very Gentle Work* (dir. Nate Lavey).

87 MINS



Experimental Shorts

Films that test the boundaries of form and function.

Including a Teddy Award-winning reflection on kinship; transmissions from Taiwan, Japan and Gaza; and the latest from Richard Tuohy and Dianna Barrie (*Valpi (Tectonics)*, MIFF 2021) and Simon Liu (*Happy Valley*, MIFF 2021).

Films in this package: *Break No.1 & Break No.2* (dir. Lei Lei), *Grandmamauntsistercat* (dir. Zuza Banasińska), *It follows It passes on* (dir. Erica Sheu), *The Land at Night* (dir. Richard Tuohy, Dianna Barrie), *Light, Noise, Smoke, and Light, Noise, Smoke* (dir. Tomonari Nishikawa), *Man number 4* (dir. Miranda Pennell), *Single File* (dir. Simon Liu) and *Slow Shift* (dir. Shambhavi Kaul).

95 MINS



WTF Shorts

Unfiltered and unapologetic. Not for the faint of heart.

Including an Irish-farm-set tale of catharsis, a catfish turned sentient bioweapon, a hotel where machines emulate human touch and a provocative Locarno-selected oddity about infertility starring ducks.

Films in this package: *Calf* (dir. Jamie O'Rourke), *Canard* (dir. Elie Chapuis), *Cookies* (dir. Alessandro Stigliano), *Hito* (dir. Stephen Niels Lopez), *Matta and Matto* (dir. Bianca Caderas, Kerstin Zemp), *Shameless!* (dir. Raghav Rampal) and *Shé (Snake)* (dir. Renee Zhan).

90 MINS

MIFF SHORTS AWARDS 2024

One of the most highly regarded short-film competitions in both the Asia Pacific region and the Southern Hemisphere, now in its 63rd year.

The MIFF Shorts Awards are Academy Awards accredited. The 2024 winners of the Best Short Film, Best Australian Short Film, Best Documentary Short Film and Best Animation Short Film awards are eligible to submit their films for the 97th Academy Awards in 2025.



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Best MIFF Shorts

A collection of the best short films from the festival, as chosen by the MIFF Shorts Awards jury and the MIFF Shorts programmers.

Films will be announced during the festival.

[MIFF ONLINE](#) [MIFF REGIONAL](#)

MIFF Talks



Scan code for more information
miff.com.au/talks

PRESENTED BY



Go beyond the screen and get closer to the themes, ideas and talent of the 2024 festival through MIFF's engaging panel and conversation events.

MIFF Talks events are fantastic opportunities to spend time with our brilliant international and local festival guests, ranging from filmmakers and academics to critics and commentators. Taking place across The Edge at Fed Square, the Wheeler Centre and ACMI throughout the festival dates, these intimate and often boisterous panels take a deeper look at some of MIFF's featured films, strands and genres – as well as industry concerns pertinent to these times. This year also sees the next instalment of our audience-beloved Consuming Culture talk: a roundtable dedicated to what we're up to and how we're up to when it comes to watching, reading and otherwise consuming film and media, co-presented by The Wheeler Centre.

Head to miff.com.au/talks to find out more!



Food & Film

Melbourne's best restaurants and bars are walking distance from MIFF. Fire up the group chat, book your cinema tickets and reserve a table for a fabulous meal and conversation. For a unique night out to delight the senses, we've collaborated

with our favourite restaurants and hospitality partners to curate bespoke film-and-dining experiences. Tickets for each experience are limited, so book early!

Scan code for booking information
miff.com.au/food-film



Bar Lourinhã
La Cocina
9 August

Capturing the modern energy of Bar Lourinhã's Mediterranean- and Iberian-focused menu, this New York bistro-set film fizzes with the chatter and clatter of its kitchen, led by largely Spanish-speaking chefs who imbue their working environment with idiosyncratic liveliness.



BAR
Lourinhã

BAR LOURINHÃ
37 Little Collins Street,
Melbourne



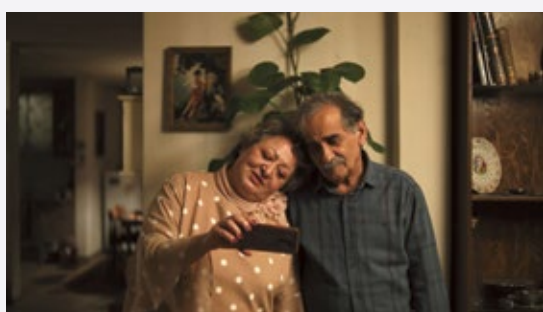
Victoria by Farmer's Daughters
Malu
12 August

Presenting a culinary experience like no other, the menu at Victoria by Farmer's Daughters tells the seasonal stories of fresh, local produce and its growers. This Brazilian film delivers a stunning family drama, revolving around an ageing actress's fiery relationships with her own mother and daughter.



VICTORIA
BY FARMER'S DAUGHTERS

VICTORIA BY FARMER'S DAUGHTERS
Fed Square,
Melbourne



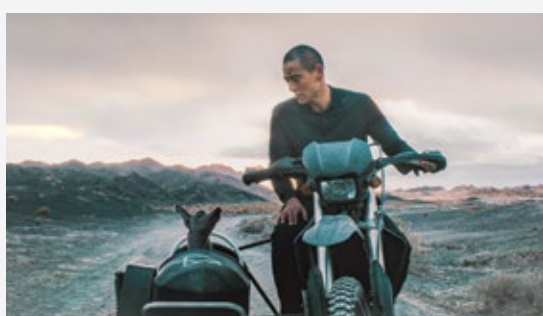
Cumulus Inc.
My Favourite Cake
13 August

Known for its seasonal menu and thoughtful approach to hospitality, Cumulus Inc. brings a modern edge to sophisticated favourites, and it's always wise to leave room for dessert. This heartwarming, bittersweet film pushes up against tradition, with charm, joie de vivre and a bit of spice.



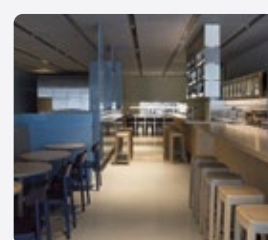
CUMULUS INC.

CUMULUS INC.
45 Flinders Lane,
Melbourne



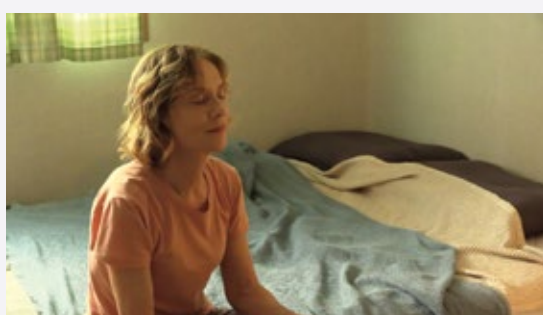
Miss Pearl at the Festival Hub
Black Dog
17 August

Located at Fed Square, Miss Pearl boasts an Asian-fusion-focused menu that is perfect for sharing between friends. This Cannes-winning Chinese film set on the edge of the Gobi Desert is about a special relationship that forms between two charismatic loners. One's straight out of prison, and the other would need to wait outside the restaurant on a leash.



MISS PEARL

MISS PEARL AT THE FESTIVAL HUB
ACMI, Flinders Street,
Melbourne



Supernormal
A Traveler's Needs
18 August

Creativity and bold flavours inspired by the cuisines of Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong abound at Supernormal, a quintessential spot to gather for celebration and conversation – all themes that shore up nicely with this film that trails a freewheeling Frenchwoman in Korea, on a journey of self-exploration.



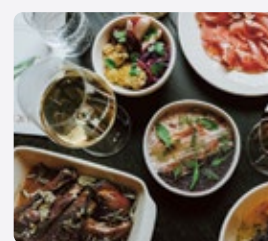
SUPERNORMAL

SUPERNORMAL
180 Flinders Lane,
Melbourne



Victoria by Farmer's Daughters
Universal Language
22 August

Just as Victoria by Farmer's Daughters' menu focuses on the regional produce of our nearby surroundings, this film has a similar hyper-local focus but with a twist: it transposes the food and culture of Tehran, Iran, onto Winnipeg, Canada. Both exude charm and authenticity.



VICTORIA
BY FARMER'S DAUGHTERS

VICTORIA BY FARMER'S DAUGHTERS
Fed Square,
Melbourne



Sunda
All We Imagine as Light
23 August

Celebrated for its sophisticated modern South-East Asian menu within a contemporary industrial city space, Sunda – led by Mumbai-born chef Nabil Ansari – is all about atmosphere. So, too, is this Mumbai-set romantic drama, the first Indian film to screen in competition at Cannes in 30 years, which follows three women on winding paths to love and fulfilment.



SUNDA
18 Punch Lane,
Melbourne

SUNDA



Miss Pearl at the Festival Hub
Didi
24 August

Aligning with the Asian-fusion focus of Miss Pearl's menu and the liveliness of its arts-adjacent locations, this semi-autobiographical film follows the misfit adventures of a 13-year-old Taiwanese-American boy navigating some big teenage experiences at the start of high school.



MISS PEARL AT THE FESTIVAL HUB
ACMI, Flinders Street,
Melbourne

MISS PEARL



Bossley Bar and Restaurant
Menus-Plaisirs – Les Troisgros
25 August

Immerse yourself in the engrossing world of the Troisgros gastronomic dynasty in France's Rhône-Alpes region on screen – a foodie's fantasy – and then celebrate with top-tier drinks and elevated bites at Bossley Bar and Restaurant, a city oasis in which to savour exquisite execution.



BOSSLEY BAR AND RESTAURANT
186 Exhibition Street,
Melbourne

BOSSLEY

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Encore Screenings & Late Announcements

Check the website for up-to-date information, including late additions to the MIFF 2024 program.

Schedule your festival

The complete MIFF 2024 program schedule grid is available online.

Save a shortlist, compare session times and schedule your festival at miff.com.au

INTREPID AUDIENCE AWARD

*Entrants must be over 18 to win. Your vote must be narrative or documentary features. Competition T&Cs apply.



Vote for your favourite MIFF film for a chance to win an Intrepid trip for two to Vietnam*

MIFF's much-loved Audience Award returns with even more of a reason to vote for your favourite film from the 2024 festival program.

Find out more – miff.com.au/audience-award

 **Intrepid**

Accessibility

Access at MIFF is delivered across three categories – Physical, Communication and Sensory. All other equity-focused offerings are presented under the category Inclusion.

Physical Access

Venue Information

Detailed venue information for each screening venue at MIFF this year is available on the MIFF website.



Step-Free and Wheelchair Accessibility

All metropolitan venues at MIFF 2024 have step-free access, are wheelchair-accessible and have accessible seating. Options such as aisle seats or seats close to an exit are also available.



Guide Dogs and Assistance Dogs

Guide dogs and assistance animals are welcome in all venues at MIFF.



To view all in-cinema and online sessions with accessible services and to filter the program by specific services, visit the MIFF website or use the MIFF 2024 App.

For more detailed information about Access at MIFF 2024, visit miff.com.au/access.

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 Madison Murphy
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Sensory Access



Sensory Friendly Screenings

MIFF will run Sensory Friendly Screenings at select sessions this year. Sensory Friendly Screenings are designed to make the cinema experience accessible and are for anyone who would benefit from a more relaxed environment. This can include but is not limited to neurodivergent people who experience sensory processing differences (autistic people, ADHD people), people with learning disabilities, people with dementia as well as those living with anxiety or who have experienced trauma.

Inclusion



Crybaby Sessions

MIFF is offering select Crybaby Sessions this year, catering for parents and carers with babies and toddlers who wish to enjoy the festival in a bub-friendly environment.



MIFF Online – streaming via ACMI

MIFF's digital offering, available via the dedicated streaming platform ACMI Cinema 3, has a limited selection of festival highlights with select access services made available. Bookings via ACMI Cinema 3.

Feature Film

Brian Brown
 Michael Campi
 Joshua Castillo
 Kerrie Chapman
 Sean Collins
 William Dishon
 Bridget Geraghty
 Alexandra Heller-Nicholas
 Digby Houghton
 Matthew Jordan
 Malachy Lewis
 Eriquer Mai
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MIFF 2024 Campaign Identity

Elwyn Murray

Robert Connolly directs Rylee Chuck in *Magic Beach*



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Bank Australia and MIFF share important values of a fair and inclusive society.

Together they're cultivating passionate and informed communities driving creativity, impact and inspiration across Melbourne and beyond. As a customer of Bank Australia, I'm proud to support their wonderful work and many initiatives to use their funds and profits to have a positive impact on our planet and community.

Welcome to MIFF 2024!

PRESENTED BY



Robert Connolly

DIRECTOR, MIFF AMBASSADOR AND
BANK AUSTRALIA CUSTOMER

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