



## MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY 14 JUNE 2016

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS BY POPULAR DEMAND AT PALACE CINEMA

Sydney Film Festival announces popular festival films will be screened at Palace Cinemas in Leichhardt and Paddington, for an additional three evenings from Monday 20 to Wednesday 22 June.

“By Popular Demand, at Palace Verona and Norton Street cinemas will show twelve additional screenings of Festival films, where Festival screenings have proved extremely popular,” said **Festival Director Nashen Moodley**.

“This is the second year we will extend our run for top-selling films beyond the end of the Festival. These screenings are a wonderful way for audiences, if they missed out on Festival tickets, to see some of the most talked-about films of the year,” he said.

“We are thrilled to be working with Sydney Film Festival to give audiences the chance to see these exceptional films at our cinemas” said Palace Verona and Norton Street Cinemas’ CEO, Benjamin Zeccola. “At Palace Cinemas we are focussed on delivering the best quality films with a first-rate cinema-going experience and this partnership perfectly aligns with that focus”.

Eight features and three documentaries will screen again at **By Popular Demand** at Palace Cinemas. Features such as John Carney’s latest beguiling portrait of ’80s Dublin, complete with stone-washed denim, wild haircuts and a nostalgic soundtrack ***Sing Street***; divisive Sundance debut film ***Swiss Army Man*** starring Paul Dano and Daniel Radcliffe, by music video directors Daniel Scheinert and Daniel Kwan; Polish romance-horror-mermaid-musical ***The Lure***; and Kristen Stewart in a spooky ghost story by Olivier Assayas ***Personal Shopper***.

Other important features include Cannes selected ***Aquarius*** by Kleber Mendonça Filho, an extraordinary examination of race, class and fear in Recife, Brazil; ***Wednesday 9 May***, an Iranian drama about a mysterious donation that sparks a series of murky moral dilemmas which was a hit at Venice; Jarmusch’s popular Cannes hit ***Paterson***, a gentle, quietly moving portrait of a bus driver poet and his artistic wife; and a beautiful restoration of ***Tokyo Story***, Japanese master Yasujiro Ozu’s graceful masterpiece, widely regarded as one of the greatest films ever made.

Documentaries **By Popular Demand** include ***Weiner***, the enthralling exposé of Anthony ‘sexting scandal’ Weiner’s 2013 New York mayoral campaign, which won the Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival; ***Tickled***, a jaw-dropping documentary on the surprisingly sinister world of competitive endurance tickling, from New Zealand co-directors Dylan Reeve and journalist David Farrier; and ***Janis: Little Girl Blue***, an eye-opening documentary on uncompromising rocker Janis Joplin, as you’ve never known her before, featuring unseen footage, private letters and interviews with band members.

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Tickets go on sale from 10am on Tuesday 14 June. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit [sff.org.au](http://sff.org.au) for more information.

### Synopsis for these special screenings:

#### **AQUARIUS**

Neighbouring Sounds, Kleber Mendonça Filho's extraordinary examination of race, class and fear in Recife, Brazil appeared in the SFF Official Competition in 2012. In Aquarius, selected for the Competition in Cannes, Mendonça returns to his native Recife, again telling a story of great ambition and scope. This time he hones in on an unforgettable protagonist Clara, played brilliantly by the incomparable Sonia Braga (Kiss of the Spider Woman). 65-year-old Clara is a fiercely independent and intelligent retired music critic and the last resident of the seaside Aquarius building. Every other apartment has been acquired by a development company with plans for the site. Clara politely refuses to sell, but the requests from the company become increasingly aggressive. What follows is an escalating battle between Clara and the firm. In Clara, Mendonça has created a remarkable character for whom we feel great concern and affection. The film's strength is in the way her life is conveyed in its fullness – her intellectual, family and sex lives are all explored. Through Clara, Mendonça masterfully reflects on an entire society in this powerful and complex film.

Screens Monday 20 June, 8.30pm at Palace Verona, Paddington and Wednesday 22 June, 6.00pm at Palace Norton Street Cinema.

#### **JANIS: LITTLE GIRL BLUE**

Uncompromising rocker Janis Joplin, as you've never known her before: an eye-opening documentary featuring unseen footage, private letters and interviews with band members. Joplin died at age 27 from a heroin overdose, within a few short years of Jimi Hendrix, Brian Jones and Jim Morrison – the quartet later tagged the '27 Club'. Her tragic early death turned her into an icon, and in the process the woman and her talent were diminished. Oscar-nominated director, Amy Berg, with access to Joplin's personal letters (read by singer Cat Power) and previously unseen footage and interviews, looks behind the myth. She charts the evolution of Joplin from her 1950s Texan hometown, to San Francisco in the era of hippie-dom and psychedelia, to her breakout performance at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival. Most importantly, the film celebrates Joplin's raw, brazen talent, and the clout of her unmistakable gravelly voice.

Screens Tuesday 21 June, 6.30pm at Palace Verona, Paddington.

#### **THE LURE**

This unique Polish romance-horror-mermaid-musical defies classification and deservedly won the Special Jury Award for Unique Vision and Design at Sundance 2016. The mermaids of The Lure are far from the friendly kind found in Splash or Disney's The Little Mermaid. Silver (Marta Mazurek) and Gold (Michalina Olszanska) are first seen in human form as they surface off the coast of Warsaw, summoned by the bass-playing of Mietek (Jakub Gierszal). They follow him back to the nightclub he plays at, where they are hired as strippers/back-up singers for a cover band. Offstage, Silver pines for Mietek, but Gold can only keep her bloodsucking urges suppressed for so long. With its blend of

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elaborate musical numbers, romance, and vampiric-mermaid mayhem, *The Lure* combines familiar ingredients into a delightfully wild final product.

Screens Wednesday 22 June, 8.30pm at Palace Verona, Paddington.

### **PATERSON**

*Paterson*, Jarmusch's popular Cannes hit, is a gentle, quietly moving portrait of a bus driver poet (Adam Driver, *Girls*) and his artistic wife (Golshifteh Farahani, *About Elly*). Paterson (Driver) drives his daily bus route in the city of Paterson, New Jersey, carefully observing the city and people around him. He follows the same routine each day: waking up, going to work, walking the dog, eating dinner at home with his wife Laura (Farahani) and ending the night with a single beer at the local bar. But Paterson is also a poet, and each day he writes a poem in his notebook, finding contentment in its very existence. Meanwhile, Laura finds outlets for her artistic ambitions and harbours dreams of becoming a country musician. Patiently paced, and revealing the beauty in the details of everyday life, *Paterson* further confirms Jarmusch as a master chronicler of small but profound moments.

Screens Wednesday 22 June, 8.35pm at Palace Norton Street Cinema.

### **PERSONAL SHOPPER**

Kristen Stewart shines in this spooky ghost story by Olivier Assayas (*Clouds of Sils Maria*, *Clean*), which earned him the Best Director prize at Cannes 2016. Stewart (who also stars in *Certain Women*, which screens in Official Competition at SFF this year) plays Maureen, a young American woman living in Paris and working as a personal shopper for a celebrity. She spends her days perusing the city's luxury designer stores, collecting fabulous pieces that she is forbidden from wearing and could never hope to own. Alongside her isolating job, Maureen pursues her psychic ability to communicate with spirits. All the while, she longs for a sign from her recently deceased twin, Lewis, who promised to send her a message from the other side. Stewart gives a commanding performance, subtly shifting between certainty and fragility. Things become stranger and stranger as it becomes apparent that an unfriendly spirit is pursuing Maureen. Following their successful collaboration on *Clouds of Sils Maria*, Assayas and Stewart reunite to create a daring, provocative and creepy existential drama.

Screens Monday 20 June, 8.30pm at Palace Norton Street Cinema.

### **SING STREET**

John Carney's latest is a beguiling portrait of '80s Dublin, complete with stone-washed denim, wild haircuts and a nostalgic soundtrack of The Cure, Duran Duran and The Police. Forced to downsize amid Ireland's crippling recession, middle child Conor (Ferdia Walsh Peelo) must leave the comfort of his private school for its counterpart, a tough inner city public school. Bullied there and ignored at home, Conor forms a band in an attempt to woo a mysterious girl he spots across the schoolyard. *Sing Street* is a wonderfully authentic, sweet-natured tale of music's life saving abilities. Carney (*Begin Again*, SFF 2014; *Once*, SFF 2007) has mined his own teenage years, to deliver a fresh take on the teen musical genre, while giving a knowing wink to the decade that style forgot. And in true Carney fashion, he has composed some superb new songs that will stay in your head for weeks.

Screens Tuesday 21 June, 8.30pm at Palace Norton Street Cinema.

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### ***SWISS ARMY MAN***

The most divisive film at Sundance – an entirely unique comedy starring Paul Dano and Daniel Radcliffe – triggered walkouts, but went on to win the Directing Prize. In their feature film debut, music video directors Daniel Scheinert and Daniel Kwan (collectively known as DANIELS) create a tremendously inventive, subversively funny and unexpectedly moving film. Hank (Dano) is stranded on a desert island and has given up all hope of rescue or survival. The arrival of a corpse named Manny (Radcliffe) offers Hank both company and a means to escape his desert-island hell and return to the woman he loves (Mary Elizabeth Winstead). Hank discovers that Manny isn't quite as dead as he seems, and finds a number of uses for his new friend. Dubbed the 'flatulent corpse movie', *Swiss Army Man* is an absurdist blast that, alongside fart jokes and erection gags, finds real emotion and compassion.

Screens Tuesday 21 June, 8.30pm at Palace Verona, Paddington.

### ***TICKLED***

A jaw-dropping documentary on the surprisingly sinister world of competitive endurance tickling, from New Zealand co-directors Dylan Reeve and journalist David Farrier. While surfing the web, offbeat TV personality Farrier (*Short Poppies*) stumbles on a competitive tickling competition. The clip of young men squirming under a tickling onslaught is the kind of bizarre subculture his TV column celebrates, so he contacts the event organiser for an interview. The response is a slew of homophobic vitriol (Farrier is openly gay) and a threatened lawsuit. Rattled but undeterred, the journalist and his co-director head to the USA to investigate. They criss-cross the country, uncovering a tangled web of cyber-bullying and litigiousness, before honing on the shadowy figure behind the scenes. This stranger-than-fiction story, championed by Stephen Fry, premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival.

Screens Wednesday 22 June, 6.30pm at Palace Verona, Paddington.

### ***TOKYO STORY***

This beautiful restoration will draw you deeper than ever into Japanese master Yasujiro Ozu's graceful masterpiece, widely regarded as one of the greatest films ever made. An elderly couple travel to Tokyo to visit family. They find their children and grandchildren are too busy to host them, with the exception of their lonely, widowed daughter-in-law (played by the great actress Setsuko Hara, who passed away last year). From this simple anecdote unfolds one of the greatest of all Japanese motion pictures, poetic and powerful in its telling. Ozu's style, completely refined, utterly economical – every gesture and act of speech deployed with great meaning – creates a film that is unforgettable. While it provides a rich window onto Japanese family life in the 1950s, Ozu's masterpiece is also timeless and universal – a wrenching treatise on ageing in a fast-paced modern world.

Screens Tuesday 21 June, 6.00pm at Palace Norton Street Cinema.

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### **WEDNESDAY 9 MAY**

A mysterious donation sparks a series of murky moral dilemmas in this tense Iranian drama, which was a hit at Venice and stars the great actress Niki Karimi. When an advertisement for a 30 million toman (AUD 13,000) giveaway appears in a Tehran newspaper, the lure of much-needed cash draws crowds of the afflicted. Leila (Karimi) would use the money to fund her paraplegic husband's corrective surgery while Setareh (Sahar Ahmadpour) needs the cash to bail out her husband from prison. Gradually, we learn of the touching backstories and more about the mysterious donor and his motives. Director Vahid Jalilvand is empathetic in his telling of these stories, using domestic settings and a naturalistic style to illuminate social injustices. Creating tension at every turn, Wednesday, May 9 draws its audience deep into the tangled web of the predicaments it raises.

Screens Monday 20 June, 6.30pm at Palace Norton Street Cinema.

### **WEINER**

This absorbing exposé of Anthony 'sexting scandal' Weiner's 2013 New York mayoral campaign won the Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. In 2011, Weiner resigned from Congress after being shamed for sending a sexually explicit photograph of himself via Twitter. His wife Huma Abedin, who happens to be Hillary Clinton's top aide, stood by him throughout. When news breaks of Weiner's return to Twitter, using the moniker 'Carlos Danger', the mayoral bid falls apart. The frustration of his supporters and cool-headed wife (the Clinton parallel is unmistakable), along with the media's outraged and often comical response, pales beside the jaw-dropping reaction of Weiner himself. Filmmakers Kriegman (a former Weiner aide) and Steinberg enjoyed unconstrained access to the charismatic, erudite politician and the result is fascinating viewing.

Screens Monday 20 June, 6.30pm at Palace Verona, Paddington.

**Sydney Film Festival runs 8 – 19 June 2016.**

**Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2016 are on sale now. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit [sff.org.au](http://sff.org.au) for more information.**

### **MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

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**\*\*\*Sydney Film Festival Press Pack and Images Available [HERE](#)**

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## **ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL**

From **Wednesday 8 June to Sunday 19 June 2016**, the 63<sup>rd</sup> Sydney Film Festival offers audiences another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth

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discussions, international guests and more. Each year the Festival's programming team curates 12 days of cinema sourced from world-famous film festivals, including Cannes, Sundance, Toronto and the Berlinale; as well as Australia's finest productions.

Sydney Film Festival also presents an Official Competition of 12 films that vie for the Sydney Film Prize, a highly respected honour that awards a \$60,000 cash prize based on the decision of a jury of international and Australian filmmakers and industry professionals. Previous Sydney Film Prize winners are: *Arabian Nights* (2015); *Two Days, One Night* (2014); *Only God Forgives* (2013); *Alps* (2012); *A Separation* (2011); *Heartbeats* (2010); *Bronson* (2009); and *Hunger* (2008).

The Festival takes place across greater Sydney: at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Opera Quays, Dendy Newtown, Skyline Drive-In Blacktown, Art Gallery of NSW, Hayden

Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, Casula Powerhouse, the Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall and SFF Outdoor Screen.

The Festival is a major event on the New South Wales cultural calendar and is one of the world's longest-running film festivals. For more information visit: [www.sff.org.au](http://www.sff.org.au).

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW and Destination NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic Partner is the NSW Government through Destination NSW.

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