



MEDIA RELEASE
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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL SUBMISSIONS CLOSING

Entries close Thursday February 27, 2014

Filmmakers across Australia and around the world have just over two weeks to finalise their submissions for the 61st annual **Sydney Film Festival**, which is set to offer up the best in world cinema from **Wednesday June 4** until **Sunday June 15, 2014**.

Entries across all submission categories will close at **Close Of Business** on **Thursday February 27, 2014**, and will need to be submitted through **FilmFestivalLife**.

Festival Director Nashen Moodley said, "We are thrilled with the number of submissions that have come in so far and are looking forward to selecting the best of the best entries to screen at the 61st edition of the Festival."

"Entries have come from far and wide, with strong submission numbers being seen across all categories including features, short films and documentaries. We encourage all interested filmmakers to wrap-up their projects over the coming week and submit their films for consideration."

Last year, out of the total entries submitted, 192 films were invited to the Festival, screening to more than 140,000 attendees over 12 jam-packed days and nights.

A highlight of the 2014 program will be the Australian short film competition which, in its 45th year, is the oldest short film competition in Australia. Since 1970, the competition has served as a unique spring board for acclaimed Australian film talent, launching the careers of multiple international award-winners including Chris Noonan (*Babe*), Don McAlphine (*Moulin Rouge*), Jack Thompson (*Sunday Too Far Away*) and Phil Noyce (*Rabbit-Proof Fence*), among others.

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Entries are open to features, documentaries and short films (under 40 minutes) in all categories of the Festival program, including:

- The Australian Documentary Competition – which awards a cash prize of \$10,000;
- The Dendy Awards for Australian Short Films Live Action Award and Best Director – both winners receive cash prizes of \$5,000 sponsored by Dendy Cinemas;
- The Yoram Gross Animation Award (cash prize \$4,000).

Dendy Cinemas have been proud to sponsor the Awards for 26 years, and the winner of their Live Action Award is now eligible for Academy Award consideration. Also eligible is the winner of the Yoram Gross Animation Award. Yoram and Sandra Gross have sponsored the Yoram Gross Animation Award since 1987.

Both the Dendy Awards for Australian Short films and the Australian Documentary Competition are open exclusively to Australian films.

A small fee applies with the submission. Before entering, Festival organisers encourage all entrants to read the submission requirements closely to ensure that all entries meet premiere status and broader eligibility requirements. Head to: <http://www.sff.org.au/public/about/2014-film-submissions/> for full eligibility criteria and submission details.

The 2014 Sydney Film Festival will screen more than 190 films from over 50 countries across Sydney in both CBD and city-fringe locations. More than 280 screenings will take place at the State Theatre, Dendy Opera Quays, Art Gallery of NSW, Event Cinemas George Street, Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall and Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, as well as at a number of soon-to-be-announced boutique screening locations.

A sneak preview of the 2014 program will be announced in April and the full Festival program will be revealed in May.

What: Sydney Film Festival

When: 4-15 June, 2014

Submissions: <http://www.filmfestivallife.com/Sydney-Film-Festival>

Images available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cardinalspin/sets/72157637792076374/>

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EDITORS NOTES

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animations across the city at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, and the Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne. 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. The 61st Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia, and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic partner is the NSW Government through Destination NSW.

ABOUT THE DENDY AWARDS FOR AUSTRALIAN SHORT FILMS

First debuting in 1970 with sponsorship from Benson and Hedges, Dendy have been sponsoring the Australian Short Film competition since 1989. The awards in this category are: Best Live Action Short Film (\$5000 sponsored by Dendy Cinemas); Yoram Gross Award for Best Animated Short Film (\$4000); Rouben Mamoulian Award for Best Director Overall (\$5000 sponsored by Dendy Cinemas) and the winners of the first two sections are Academy Award eligible.

Throughout the 44 years of the competition, young directors have started on the road to fame and fortune with a screening at the Festival's short film awards. To name a few: producers/directors Byron Kennedy and George Miller (1973, *Frieze, An Underground Film*); Phil Noyce (1974, *Castor and Pollux*); Gillian Armstrong (1976, *The Singer and the Dancer*); Paul Cox (1977, *We Are All Alone My Dear*); Jane Campion (1984, *A Girl's Own Story*); Bill Bennett (1984, *Shipwrecked*); Rolf de Heer (1984, *Tread Softly...*); Sue Brooks (1985, *The Drover's Wife*); Alex Proyas (1985, *After Hours*); David Caesar (1987, *Shoppingtown*); Rowan Woods (1987, *Kenny's Love*); Samantha Lang (1995, *Audacious*); Ivan Sen (2000, *Wind*).

QUOTES FROM FORMER WINNERS

Jane Campion – Director, 1984, for *Girl's Own Story*: "When I won the Rouben Mamoulian Award for *Girl's Own Story* (1984), that was the first award I'd ever won and it is still the best award. I knew that it could be a career-changer."

Sarah Drogenik – Producer 2002, for *Dad's Clock*: "The publicity and recognition we have gained from the Award has been invaluable especially as the Award is highly regarded within Australia. Already SBS Independent has recognised the Award and placed a listing of it on its website, which is great for our future relationship with them. The prize money is also appreciated and will be enjoyed by Dik Jarman (the Director) and myself. We are also returning a percentage of the prize money back into marketing the film, as the film is only nine months old and therefore monies over the next 18 months is much needed. It is always an honour to receive an Award, but the honour is more greatly felt when the recognition is local, and as the Sydney Film Festival is the premier festival in Australia we are delighted with the recognition."

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Gillian Armstrong – Director, 1976, for *The Singer and the Dancer*: "I remember how important these awards were to struggling film-makers. In 1976 when I won the Fiction category for *The Singer and the Dancer*, I think I was \$2,000 in debt from finishing the film. I think the prize money was \$1,000 or \$1,200 and it was gone the next week. It went on paying the bills."

Sarah Watt – Director, 2002, for *Happiness*: "I have long thought that animation is a technique not a genre, and that I make fiction films primarily, so it was fantastic to have that recognised in such a high profile and prestigious way as winning a Dendy award. I am really thankful to the Dendy organisation for sponsoring these awards and would like you to please pass on to them how much I appreciate their support of Australian short films and film makers. I know the Dendys have some very high profile and successful alumni, and that many consider the Dendy's a great way to move on to bigger things. But I am a serial short film maker, and therefore they are even more important. Without events like the Dendy's, my films don't get shown in theatres, and perhaps that means not at all. The Dendys in particular attract a great audience and is held in a fantastic cinema. For me, crafting my films on 35mm over a long period of time, it is the best end result I could wish for as well as being inspirational to start a new film, which I will be able to do with the generous prize money that the Dendy organisation awarded me."

ABOUT FILM FESTIVAL LIFE



FilmFestivalLife makes everything you have seen so far in online submissions look like it was conceived in the '90s. HD secure screeners, festival and film rating tools, social features and the fastest growing community of film professionals online to share with. Be in the place where festivals are now discovering the next generation. For more information, head to <http://www.filmfestivallife.com/>

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