

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

6–17 JUNE 2018

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THE 65th SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL BEGINS

The 65th Sydney Film Festival (6 – 17 June) opened tonight at the State Theatre with the Australian premiere of New Zealand film *The Breaker Upperers*.

Festival Director **Nashen Moodley** was pleased to open his seventh Festival to a packed auditorium including the film's writers-directors-stars **Jackie van Beek** and **Madeleine Sami**, alongside Australian actress **Celia Pacquola** and New Zealand actress **Ana Scotney**, who feature in the film.

NSW Minister for the Arts Don Harwin said at the **Opening Night Gala**, "With some of the very best in visual storytelling from Australia and around the world, the 65th Sydney Film Festival promises to deliver something for every screen enthusiast this winter. Attending the cinema and taking in a film that captures your imagination is an enriching experience and judging by this year's line-up, festival-goers have a lot to be excited about. I look forward to seeing Sydney's cinemas buzzing this month as we enjoy another year of this brilliant festival in our city. All you have to do is sit back, relax, and enjoy the show."

Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore also spoke, welcoming audiences to come and experience all the Festival has to offer. "The City of Sydney is proud to continue our support for the Sydney Film Festival – one of the world's oldest, continuous celebrations of film. As a global city, it's essential that our residents and visitors have the opportunity to engage with stories and cultures from around the world – as well as promoting the work of our talented home-grown filmmakers."

"We are also proud to once again offer the Sydney Film Festival a home for The Hub in Lower Town Hall – where you can meet friends (and strangers!) to discuss the films you've seen, attend one of the brilliant talks or panels with filmmakers, or experience the best new Virtual Reality projects on offer," she said.

Vin Naidoo, Senior Manager Sales & Marketing, Lexus Australia, said, "Lexus is delighted to partner with Sydney Film Festival as we witness amazing young filmmakers bring their creative vision to life."

"We are looking forward to seeing the premiere of the films produced by the four winning fellows from the 2017 Lexus Short Film Fellowship and then announcing the new fellows to feature in the 2019 festival program. This process is inspiring to watch and we would like to wish all filmmakers every success while acknowledging the input and support of Sydney Film Festival," he said.

Executive Produced by Taika Waititi (*What We Do in the Shadows*, SFF 2014 Closing Night Film), *The Breaker Upperers* follows two cynical misfits earning a living breaking up unhappy couples for cash, by faking deaths, impersonating cops and strippers, and feigning pregnancies.

Also in attendance: SFF Festival Patrons **Hugo Weaving** and **Gillian Armstrong**; 2018 SFF Official Competition jury members, Jury President **Lynette Wallworth**, **Chris Letcher**, **Ewen Leslie** and **Yoshi Yatabe**; as well as Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship Jury Chair **Marta Dusseldorp**.



A long list of SFF 2018 filmmakers and cast also attended, including: *Upgrade* director **Leigh Whannell**, *1%* director **Stephen McCallum**, producers **Jamie Hilton** and **Michael Pontin**, and actor **Simone Kessell**; *Jirga* director **Benjamin Gilmour**, producer **John Maynard**, and lead actor **Sam Smith**; *TERROR NULLIUS* directors Danielle and Dominique Angeloro (**Soda_Jerk**); *I Used to Be Normal: A Boyband Fangirl Story* producer **Rita Walsh**; *China Love* director **Olivia Martin-McGuire**, and producers **Rebecca Barry** and **Madeleine Hetherton**; *Ghosthunter* director **Ben Lawrence** and producer **Rebecca Bennett**; *Holiday* director **Isabella Eklöf**; *The Heart* director and lead actress **Fanni Metelius**; *L'Animale* director **Katharina Mückstein**; *Scary Mother* director **Ana Urushadze**; *Entrepreneur* director **Virpi Suutari**; *Teach a Man to Fish* director **Grant Leigh Saunders** and producer **Tom Zubrycki**; *Chocolate Oyster* director **Steve Jaggi** and producer **Christine Luby**; *RockKabul* producer **Brooke Silcox**; *Dying to Live* director **Richard Todd** and producer **Ben McNeill**; and **Emily Avila**, recipient of the 2017 Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship.

Other guests included: *A Place to Call Home* actor **Matt Levett**; *Home and Away* actor **Tai Hara**; *The Bachelorette's* **Sam Frost**; *Cleverman* director **Wayne Blair** and actor **Tysan Towney**; *Alien: Covenant* actress **Tess Haubrich**; *Crownies* actress **Andrea Demetriades**; Australian artist **Reg Mombassa**; *The Last Impresario* actress **Gracie Otto**; *Rake* actor **Matt Day**; *The Chaser's* **Julian Morrow**; *Chandon Pictures* actor Rob Carlton; radio presenter **Yumi Stynes**; *The Sapphires* actresses **Shari Sebbens** and **Miranda Tapsell**; comedian **Dan Ilic**; Australian actor **Rhys Muldoon**; *Mystery Road* actor **Damian Walshe-Howling**; *Once Upon A Time* actress **Georgina Haig**; *The Water Diviner* actor **Daniel Wyllie**; and *Troy: Fall of a City* actors **Louis Hunter** and **Bella Dayne**.

Sydney Film Festival runs 6 – 17 June 2018.

Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2018 are on sale now. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information.

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

EDITOR'S NOTES

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From Wednesday 6 June to Sunday 17 June 2018, the 65th Sydney Film Festival offers Sydneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth discussions, international guests and more.

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: *On Body and Soul* (2017); *Aquarius* (2016); *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 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: sff.org.au.

The 65th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and Destination NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic Partner is the NSW Government via its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.

