

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

## MEDIA RELEASE

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## 2022 SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS

The 69<sup>th</sup> Sydney Film Festival has announced the return of accolades to be awarded at the 2022 Festival, and the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the Festival's Official Competition awarding the Sydney Film Prize.

### OFFICIAL COMPETITION

This year, the Official Competition celebrates 14 years of awarding the prestigious Sydney Film Prize to the most "audacious, cutting-edge and courageous film".

"Innovative, provocative or controversial, these films widen our perspective and imbue meaning in their stories with originality and flair," said **Festival Director Nashen Moodley**.

Among the 12 films selected to compete are two debut features from Australia. The two-time Archibald Prize-winning artist Del Kathryn Barton's directorial debut **Blaze** is a rousing ode to female courage and stars Simon Baker, Julia Savage and Yael Stone.

Goran Stolevski's visually spectacular supernatural tale **You Won't Be Alone**, features BAFTA-nominee Noomi Rapace, and Australian actor Alice Englert (*The Power of the Dog*, SFF 2021).

Direct from the prestigious Un Certain Regard competition at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival Official Competition, the SFF's selected films include: **All The People I'll Never Be** (directed by Davy Chou, *Diamond Island*, SFF 2017), the story of a French women's quest to discover her Korean roots, and **Burning Days** ("a riveting political thriller," said Moodley) set in a small Turkish town from director Emin Alper (*A Tale of Three Sisters*, SFF 2019).

Selected also are Hlynur Pálmason's **Godland**, depicting a Danish priest's perilous journey into remote Iceland; and Belgian filmmaker Lukas Dhont's **Close**, (*Girl*, SFF 2018), "a stunningly beautiful examination of an intense teen friendship torn asunder," Moodley said.

Also in Competition are the Berlinale 2022 Golden Bear winner **Alcarràs**, Carla Simón's beautifully observed story about a farming family in Catalonia; **Before, Now and Then**, a beguiling period drama set written and directed by Indonesian filmmaker Kamila Andini (*Yuni*, SFF 2022, *The Seen and Unseen*, SFF 2018), and Colm Bairéad's Irish-language feature **The Quiet Girl**, a portrait of an innocent child oblivious to the adult grief around her.

This year's in-Competition selection is completed by **Utama**, the astonishing story of an elderly couple fighting to preserve their way of life in the Bolivian Highlands; the documentary **Fire of Love**, which tells



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of the incredible and ultimately tragic love triangle of two earth scientists and the volcanoes that obsess them, and the tense drama ***The Box***, the story of a Mexican teen’s search for his long lost father, by Venezuelan director, Lorenzo Vigas.

The winner of the Sydney Film Prize, and the cash award of \$60 000, is announced at the Festival’s Closing Night Gala on Sunday 19 June, and will join the ranks of celebrated prior winners: *There Is No Evil* (2021), *Parasite* (2019), *The Heiresses* (2018), *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).

Among those attending the Festival to present the premieres of their films in Competition will be: Australian artist **Del Kathryn Barton** (*Blaze*); Bolivian filmmaker **Alejandro Loayza Grisi** (*Utama*); Venezuelan filmmaker **Lorenzo Vigas** (*The Box*); Indonesian filmmaker **Kamila Andini** (*Before, Now and Then*), and Irish filmmaking duo **Colm Bairéad** and **Cleona Ní Chrualaóí** (*The Quiet Girl*).

## DOCUMENTARY AUSTRALIA AWARD

Nine documentaries have been announced for the **Documentary Australia Award**. Documentary Australia awards a \$10,000 cash prize to the winning film.

In the competition are: ***Audrey Napanangka, Delikado, The Dreamlife of Georgie Stone, Everybody’s Oma, Keep Stepping, General Hercules, Polenta, The Sweetness*** and ***Warrawong... the windy place on the hill***.

“Documentary Australia is proud to continue our support of the Sydney Film Festival for a ninth year. The documentaries nominated in the Australian competition are a great range of style, length and content and continue to showcase the high standard of documentary filmmaking in this country,” said **Documentary Australia CEO Dr Mitzi Goldman**.

“It is a joy to celebrate their work after such a tough couple of years. We have great respect for our documentary filmmakers, and it is an honour to celebrate their excellence in a small way with this award,” she said.

Previous winners of the Documentary Australia Award at Sydney Film Festival are: *I’m Wanita* (2021); *Descent* (2020); *She Who Must Be Loved* (2019); *Ghosthunter* (2018); *The Pink House* (2017); *Shadow of the Hill* (2016); *Only the Dead* (2015); *35 Letters* (2014); *Buckskin* (2013); *Killing Anna* (2012); *Life in Movement* (2011); *The Snowman* (2010). In 2009 the inaugural prize was shared between *Contact* and *A Good Man* (each film received a \$10,000 cash prize).

## THE DENDY AWARDS FOR AUSTRALIAN SHORT FILMS

Ten finalists in the **Dendy Awards**, Australia’s longest running short film competition, now in its 53<sup>rd</sup> year, will screen over two sessions on 18 and 19 June. Four short film prizes will be awarded on the Festival’s



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Closing Night: **The Dendy Live Action Short Award, The Rouben Mamoulian Award for Best Director, Yoram Gross Animation Award** and the inaugural **AFTRS Craft Award**.

“Dendy Cinemas is proud to continue our long-standing partnership with the Sydney Film Festival. Each year the Dendy Awards showcase some of the best filmmaking talent in Australia and we look forward to seeing this year’s finalists” said **Nick Hayes, Head of Theatrical Sales and Acquisitions, Dendy / Icon**.

“As AFTRS approaches its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023, it's a great honour to be working with Sydney Film Festival to offer a prize that celebrates the enduring power of cinematic craft. The AFTRS Craft Award recognises the artistry of a filmmaker from any area of production – including pre and post – and the collaborative spirit and excellence of Australian screen storytelling,” said **Nell Greenwood, AFTRS CEO**.

These ground-breaking awards have kick-started the careers of many prominent filmmakers, with talent including Warwick Thornton, Ariel Kleiman, Cate Shortland, Jane Campion, Phillip Noyce and Ivan Sen among the Dendy Awards alumni. This year, the 2016 Rouben Mamoulian Award winner Goran Stolevski, returns to SFF with his acclaimed feature debut *You Won't Be Alone* in the official competition.

The competition for the Australian Short Films was established by the Festival in 1970. Winners of the **Best Live Action Short Film Award** and the **Yoram Gross Animation Award** (sponsored by Sandra and Guy Gross in memory of the late Yoram Gross) are **Academy Award-eligible**, opening new pathways for many Australian filmmakers.

The shorts films competing include: **2166, Donkey, Farmers, Ghosted, The Moths Will Eat Them Up, Right There, Sisyphus, Speech, Stonefish**, and **Yao Yao Goes To Little Bay**.

## SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AWARD

Nine films have been shortlisted for the **Sustainable Future Award**, a \$10,000 cash prize presented to a narrative or documentary film of any length that deepens our knowledge and awareness of the impact of the global climate emergency.

Five documentaries, three features and one short from around the world have been shortlisted. The documentaries include Sundance 2022 Grand Jury Prize winner **All That Breathes**, following two brothers who devote their lives to rescuing New Delhi’s black kites; winner of the World Cinema Documentary Audience Award at Sundance 2022, **The Territory**, showing the fight of the First Peoples of Brazil as they defend their Amazon rainforest against land grabs and illegal logging; **Fashion Reimagined**, selected for Tribeca 2022, which documents fashion designer Amy Powney of cult label Mother of Pearl on her global journey to craft a sustainable collection; **Delikado**, about the tensions between illegal loggers and land defenders on the island of Palawan in the Philippines; and the visually stunning **Into the Ice**, exploring the Greenland ice sheet as three intrepid scientists search for clues to our climate future.

The three features shortlisted include: eco-disaster thriller **The Burning Sea**, depicting the scarily believable scenario that 50 years of drilling have created a fissure in the ocean floor that could trigger



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environmental collapse; Mounia Akl's London audience award-winning debut *Costa Brava, Lebanon*, which sees a couple abandon polluted Beirut for an idyllic existence in the mountains until men arrive to build a garbage landfill next door; and winner of the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Dramatic at Sundance 2022, *Utama*, a love story about an elderly Indigenous Quechea couple in the Bolivian highlands fighting to preserve their way of life.

The short film selected is *Big Water Summer: A Creation Story* showing a young Navajo woman returning to her ancestral land to grow produce for her community.

Australian Filmmaker **Eva Orner's** *Burning* was announced as the inaugural recipient of the Award last year. The Award is philanthropically funded by a syndicate of climate activists, led by Award Sponsor Amanda Maple-Brown; and is motivated by their belief in the power of film to heighten community awareness of the urgent need for action on climate change.

All films will screen in-cinema at the 69th Sydney Film Festival, with the winner of the Sustainable Future Award to be revealed at the Festival's Closing Night Gala, on Sunday June 19, 2022.

## DEUTSCHE BANK FELLOWSHIP FOR FIRST NATIONS FILM CREATIVES

2022 marks the second year of the **Deutsche Bank Fellowship for First Nations Film Creatives**, providing a \$20,000 grant to an Australian First Nations film creative to further develop their skills through international placement or other professional development.

Filmmaker **Darlene Johnson** (*Bluey*, SFF 2015) was announced as the 2021 recipient and the winner of this year's Fellowship will be announced at the Closing Night Gala of the Festival, on Sunday June 19, 2022. In addition to the Fellowship, Deutsche Bank will support SFF, through a partnership alignment with the Festival's First Nations Program Strand.

Deutsche Bank's partnership with SFF brings together the bank's commitment to Indigenous people through its longstanding global focus on excellence in the arts, and its partnership with the Clontarf Foundation.

## THE SYDNEY-UNESCO CITY OF FILM AWARD

Presented by Screen NSW, this annual award recognizes a trailblazing NSW-based screen practitioner whose work stands for innovation, imagination and high impact. A filmmaker will be awarded a \$10,000 cash prize at the Closing Night Gala. Previous winners include **Karina Holden**, **Warwick Thornton**, **Leah Purcell**, and **Lynette Wallworth**.

## THE AUDIENCE AWARDS

**The Audience Awards** are the Festival's people's choice awards, where Festival fans get to vote for the most popular films at the Festival. Using the SFF 2022 app and website, Festival goers are invited to rate



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films after each screening and the winning films are announced in the week following the festival. Two awards are presented: one for best narrative feature and one for best documentary. Previous winners have included: *Beautiful Minds* and *Blind Ambition* (2021), *Sequin in a Blue Room* and *Martha: A Picture Story* (2019), *The Insult* and *Backtrack Boys* (2018), *Ali's Wedding* and *Roller Dreams* (2017); *Mustang* and *Zach's Ceremony* (2016); *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* and *Wide Open Sky* (2015); *Winter Sleep* and *Love Marriage in Kabul* (2014); and *Mystery Road* and *Big Name No Blanket* (2013).

## **SIGNATURE DINOSAUR DESIGNS AWARDS**

The winners of all Sydney Film Festival awards are presented with the Festival's signature mesmeric swirl award, designed and handmade in Sydney by our partners **Dinosaur Designs**.

The full Sydney Film Festival 2022 program can be found online at [sff.org.au](http://sff.org.au).

Sydney Film Festival runs in cinemas 8-19 June 2022. Tickets and flexipasses to Sydney Film Festival 2022 are on sale now. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit [sff.org.au](http://sff.org.au) for more information or to book.

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

## **EDITOR'S NOTES**

### **ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL**

From Wednesday 8 June to Sunday 19 June 2022, the 69th Sydney Film Festival offers Sydneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth discussions, film guests and more.

Sydney Film 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](http://sff.org.au).

The 69th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the RISE fund and the City of Sydney.

