

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01AM WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2022

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FULL PROGRAM FOR THE 8-19 JUNE FESTIVAL

The 69th Sydney Film Festival program was officially launched today by Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley.

“What a joy it is to return to the Festival’s traditional June dates, bringing with it the return of international filmmakers to present their films, in person parties, talks, the Festival Hub and a range of activities in and outside of the cinema” said **Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley**. “As ever, our 2022 program brings together films from all over the world, engaging with the most pertinent issues in challenging and entertaining ways.”

“And how have filmmakers responded to these past years of the pandemic, war and rising authoritarianism? With films confronting these challenges head-on but frequently suggesting a better way forward. And with love stories! From Del Kathryn Barton’s provocative feature debut blending live action and animation *Blaze*, to Cooper Raiff’s moving comedic drama *Cha Cha Real Smooth*, starring Dakota Johnson, to the extraordinary documentary *Fire of Love*, so many films in this year’s Festival hone in on intensely personal stories, of people taking comfort in each other through difficult times.”

“There are films that will elicit big emotions, that have us laughing and crying in the cinema; films that will bring the intensity of feeling that comes from seeing something on the big screen, in a room filled with people...the big feelings experienced only in cinema,” Moodley said.

Minister for the Arts the Hon Ben Franklin MLC said, “The NSW Government proudly supports the long-running festival which has launched countless careers.”

“Funding through the Sydney Film Festival has helped connect audiences with a diverse range of filmmakers from across the state,” Mr Franklin said.

“The popular Screenability program continues to showcase the immense talents of filmmakers identifying with disability, and the Travelling Film Festival ensures regional NSW can experience the same global stories as those in the city.”

“I encourage everyone to attend and show their support for both our home-grown and international filmmakers, and to support the Festival following two years of disruptions,” he said.

In 2022, the Festival will present **over 200** films from over **64** countries including **27** World Premieres, bringing together hundreds of international and local stories. There are **101 feature films**, including



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

prestigious international festival prize-winners and **53 documentaries** tackling crucial contemporary issues, from established and upcoming documentarians.

The program also includes two retrospectives, one co-presented with ACMI and NFSA is focused on influential American documentarian **Frederick Wiseman** (*It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman*); and the other on the revered Indian director **Satyajit Ray** (*Essential Satyajit Ray: Selected by David Stratton*).

OPENING AND CLOSING NIGHTS

The 2022 Festival opens with the World Premiere of *We Are Still Here*, a multi-genre First Nations collaboration interweaving eight stories by 10 directors from Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the South Pacific.

We Are Still Here is told through the eyes of eight heroic protagonists, traversing over 1000 years, showing the strength of love and hope required to overcome shared traumas that Indigenous people from these regions continue to face.

Filmmakers behind the eight stories include Australian directors **Beck Cole, Danielle MacLean, Tracey Rigney, Dena Curtis**; New Zealand directors: **Tim Worrall, Richard Curtis, Renae Maihi, Miki Magasiva, Chantelle Burgoyne** and **Mario Gaoa**.

The film features talented First Nations actors such as **Clarence Ryan, Tioreore Ngatai-Melbourne, Leonie Whyman** and **Calvin Tuteao**; and producers **Mitchell Stanley, Toni Stowers**, and **Mia Henry-Teirney**.

The Closing Night Gala will host the awards ceremony at the State Theatre, honouring the winners of the **Sydney Film Prize**, the **Documentary Australia Award**, the **Dendy Awards for Australian Short Films**, the **Sustainable Future Award**, the **Deutsche Bank Fellowship for First Nations Film Creatives**, the **Sydney UNESCO City of Film Award** and the inaugural **AFTRS Craft Award**.

Closing the Festival will be the Australian Premiere of a buzzy new title - soon to be announced!

OFFICIAL COMPETITION

For the 14th year, the Official Competition will award the \$60,000 cash Sydney Film Prize for audacious, cutting-edge and courageous cinema.

Among the 12 competing films are two Australian debut features: Archibald Prize-winning artist Del Kathryn Barton's feature directorial debut *Blaze* is a rousing ode to female courage, starring Julia Savage, Simon Baker and Yael Stone; and Goran Stolevski's visually spectacular supernatural tale *You Won't Be Alone* starring BAFTA-nominee Noomi Rapace alongside Alice Englert (*The Power of the Dog*, SFF 2021) and Carloto Cotta (*Arabian Nights*, SFF 2015).

Direct from the prestigious Un Certain Regard competition at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival will be: Davy Chou's (*Diamond Island*, SFF 2017) *All The People I'll Never Be*, the story of a French women's quest to



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

discover her Korean roots; ***Burning Days***, a riveting political thriller by Turkish filmmaker Emin Alper (*A Tale of Three Sisters*, SFF 2019); and Hlynur Pálmason's ***Godland***, which tells of a Danish priest's perilous journey into the wilds of Iceland.

Also screening straight from the Cannes Competition is ***Close***, Belgian filmmaker Lukas Dhont's (*Girl*, SFF 2018) stunningly beautiful examination of an intense teen friendship torn asunder.

Berlinale 2022 gems include Golden Bear winner ***Alcarràs***, Carla Simón's beautifully observed story about the land and livelihood of a farming family in Catalonia; alongside Kamila Andini's (*Yuni*, SFF 2022, *The Seen and Unseen*, SFF 2018) beguiling period drama ***Before, Now and Then***, set against the backdrop of tumultuous political times in Indonesia; and ***The Quiet Girl***, the first Irish language feature to compete in Berlin.

Utama (winner of the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Dramatic, at Sundance 2022) is an astonishing love story about an elderly couple in the Bolivian Highlands fighting to preserve their way of life. Also in Competition are Sara Dosa's ***Fire of Love***, the incredible story of volcanologists Katia and Maurice Kraft, and Lorenzo Vigas' ***The Box***, the tense drama of a Mexican teen's search for his long lost father.

The winner of the Sydney Film Prize is announced at the Festival's Closing Night Gala on Sunday 19 June. Previous winners include *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).

The competition is endorsed by FIAPF, the regulating body for international film festivals, and is judged by a jury of five international and Australian filmmakers and industry professionals.

Attending the Festival to present the premiere of their films in competition will be: renowned Australian artist and director **Kathryn Del Barton** (*Blaze*); Bolivian filmmaker **Alejandro Loayza Grisi** (*Utama*); Venezuelan filmmaker **Lorenzo Vigas** (*The Box*, *From Afar*, SFF 2016); Indonesian filmmaker **Kamila Andini** (*Before, Now and Then*) and Irish filmmaking duo **Colm Bairéad** and **Cleona Ní Chrualaí** (*The Quiet Girl*).

WORLD PREMIERES

World premieres at the Festival include several Australian documentaries: award winning filmmaker Penny McDonald's (*Buckskin*, SFF 2013) intimate documentary ***Audrey Napanangka***, about a Warlpiri woman and her Sicilian partner, filmed over 10 years in Mparntwe (Alice Springs); Jason van Genderen's documentary (*My Town is Broken*, 2008) ***Everybody's Oma***, which follows his NSW Central Coast family as they manage the failing health of their family's matriarch, known to Aussies after going viral on social media; ***Keep Stepping***, Luke Cornish's documentary about two remarkable female performers training for Australia's biggest street dance competition, and ***General Hercules***, Brodie Poole's portrait of a Kalgoorlie-Boulder man, a town and a country sent mad by the timeless cycles of exploitation, racism and greed.

Australian features having their world premiere at the Festival include: ***6 Festivals***, Macario De Souza's (*Bra Boys*) emotional tale of friendship and a celebration of Australia's iconic festival scene; ***Evicted! A***



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Modern Romance, an irreverent Aussie comedy about four spuriously employed housemates on the verge of eviction as they trawl Sydney's fraught rental market; and **The Longest Weekend**, a true indie from Sydney's Inner West in which three siblings reunite, feud and reunite again, featuring an ensemble cast including screen veterans Tammy MacIntosh (*Wentworth*, *The Drover's Wife*, SFF 2021) and John Batchelor (*Red Dog*).

Two series debuting in the Festival include all six episodes of prequel series **Mystery Road: Origin**, depicting the brutal reality of a young police officer in 1999 in a small town, with an impressive cast including Mark Coles Smith (*Goldstone*, SFF 2016) and Steve Bisley (*The Stranger*, SFF 2020) and directed by Dylan River (*Buckskin*, 2013); and **True Colours**, shot in the spectacular country around Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and Yeperenye (East Macdonnell Ranges), starring Rarriwuy Hick (*Redfern Now*), Mirando Otto (*The Daughter*, SFF 2016) and Trisha Morton-Thomas (*Radiance*, SFF 2021).

International tales making their world premiere include hilarious Kiwi comedy **Nude Tuesday**, spoken entirely in gibberish, separately subtitled in English by comedian Julia Davis and telling the story of a bored couple trying to save their marriage at a New Age retreat; and Indian magical realist drama **Fairy Folk**, in which a genderless woodland creature crashes into the lives of a jaded couple.

Many of the World Premiere films will have guests attending to introduce their screenings, including Jackie van Beek (*The Breaker Upperers*, SFF 2018), and the filmmaking teams behind **We Are Still Here**, **Mystery Road: Origin** and **True Colours**.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AT THE STATE

Turning 93 years old this June, the iconic State Theatre provides the ultimate Sydney Film Festival experience, screening everything from hard-hitting documentaries to indie hits.

Australian stories screened here include: SXSW 2022 hit **Seriously Red** an Australian comedy following a vivacious, misguided redhead trading her 9-5 to become a Dolly Parton impersonator from Gracie Otto (*Under The Volcano*, SFF 2021, *The Last Impresario*, SFF 2013), starring Krew Boylan (also co-writer), Rose Byrne and Bobby Cannavale; and **Lonesome**, Craig Boreham's (*Teenage Kicks*, SFF 2016) moving queer tale of desire, sexuality and isolation.

Global stars will light up the theatre's silver screen including Jessica Chastain and Ralph Fiennes in **The Forgiveness**, a black comic study of clashing cultures, by the inimitable John Michael McDonagh (*The Guard*, SFF 2011, *Calvary*, SFF 2014); and Sundance favourite **Cha Cha Real Smooth** starring Dakota Johnson and the film's writer-director Cooper Raiff.

Sophie Hyde's (*Animals*, SFF 2019) sparkling comedy **Good Luck To You, Leo Grande**, starring Emma Thompson as an older woman who hires a sex worker; Joel Kim Booster and Bowen Yang (*SNL*) star in hilarious queer comedy **Fire Island**, about a group of best friends on a debauched summer holiday; and **The Phantom of the Open** stars Oscar-winner Mark Rylance and Sally Hawkins in the laugh-out-loud true story of the worst golfer to ever play the British Open.



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Direct from Cannes is ***One Fine Morning***, starring Léa Seydoux (*The Story of My Wife*, SFF 2021) as a single mother trying to balance the emotional needs of her parents (the latest from writer/director Mia Hansen-Løve (*Bergman Island*, SFF 2021)); and ***Tchaikovsky's Wife***, Kirill Serebrennikov's historical drama focusing on an obsessive, one-sided love affair between the revered composer and his devoted wife.

Also coming straight off the international film festival circuit are ***Navalny***, winner of the Audience Award, Sundance 2022, a revealing and suspenseful documentary filmed in secret on Alexei Navalny, the Russian opposition leader poisoned with nerve agent; and from the Berlinale 2022 Competition, comes ***The Passengers of the Night***, a warm family drama set in 1980s Paris starring Charlotte Gainsbourg.

Special Presentations also include ***Huda's Salon*** from two-time international Oscar nominee Hany Abu-Assad (*Omar*, SFF 2014); the animated feature ***Where is Anne Frank?***, Ari Folman's vivid, visionary retelling of the Anne Frank story; and Armaghan Ballantyne's hilarious ***Nude Tuesday***.

Festival guests include: *Seriously Red's* director **Gracie Otto** and cast member/screenwriter **Krew Boylan**; *Lonesome's* writer-director **Craig Boreham** and *Nude Tuesday's* director **Armaghan Ballantyne** and screenwriter **Jackie van Beek**.

DOCUMENTARY AUSTRALIA AWARD

Nine documentaries (including five World Premieres) will contest the 2022 **Documentary Australia Award**.

World Premieres: ***Keep Stepping***, Luke Cornish's documentary about two female street dancers in Sydney; Jason van Genderen's heartfelt ***Everybody's Oma***; ***Audrey Napanangka***, Penelope McDonald's study of a Warlpiri woman and her Sicilian partner; a David and Goliath political battle set in a Western Australian mining town, ***General Hercules and; Polenta***, the culmination of three months of experimentation by Adrian Di Salle, during which five cameras were set up around the director's family table to record every dinner served.

Also in the running: Maya Newell's film ***The Dreamlife of Georgie Stone*** spans 19 years and reveals the memories of an Australian transgender teen as she helps change laws, affirm her gender and find her voice; Australian director Karl Malakunas' documentary ***Delikado*** set on the island of Palawan, home to one of the world's most diverse rainforests in the Philippines and under threat from illegal logging; ***The Sweetness***, a portrait of Bonnie, a widow living off-the-grid in her Queensland home in the wake of Cyclone Yasi; and ***Warrawong... the windy place on the hill*** which follows an elderly couple determined to stay on their remote property New South Wales.

FEATURES

From award-winning hits across the international festival circuit, to exciting new works by emerging filmmaking talent, the Festival will present captivating stories showcasing great cinematic storytellers from both Australia and around the world.



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Australian story *The Plains* is David Easteal's portrait of a middle-aged lawyer driving back to his Melbourne home from work over the course of a year which appeared in competition in Rotterdam 2022.

From our neighbours in New Zealand comes a darkly-comic caper and SXSW favourite *Millie Lies Low*, exploring the ways impostor syndrome can distort decision making, starring Ana Scotney (*Cousins, The Breaker Upperers*, SFF 2018).

Exciting features with big names include: Tony-award winning Stephen Karam's film *The Humans*, which strikes an uncanny balance between family dramedy, and subtle psychological horror, featuring Richard Jenkins, Amy Schumer and Steven Yuen; the Aubrey Plaza-led heist film *Emily the Criminal*, following the star as she becomes entangled in the criminal underworld of Los Angeles; *Alice*, a riveting thriller about an enslaved woman who escapes from a Georgia plantation - only to discover that it's actually 1973, starring Keke Palmer (*Hustlers*), Johnny Lee Miller and Common; and Andrea Riseborough leads the leather-clad, gender-bending *Please Baby Please*, a treatise on lust, marriage, and camp, which opened Rotterdam 2022.

Oscar-winning director Graham Moore's crime-thriller *The Outfit* stars Mark Rylance as a British suit maker caught up in the post-WWII Chicago mob wars. Stefan (*The Counterfeiters*) Ruzowitzky's visually stunning thriller *Hinterland* sees a returned POW track a serial killer in the underbelly of post-WWI Vienna. In Palestine's international Oscar entry *The Stranger*, filmmaker Adnan Fagher Eldin focuses on a Syrian med-school dropout who finds a new purpose when he decides to help a wounded civil war fighter.

Stories of love direct from the 2022 Berlinale include *A E I O U - A Quick Alphabet Of Love* by German filmmaker Nicolette Brebitz (*Wild*, SFF 2016) about an aging actor Anna (Sophie Rois, *3*, SFF 2011), who is mugged by a young man who serendipitously becomes her new acting pupil; Max Walker-Silverman's achingly beautiful drama *A Long Song*, centred on a widow waiting for her old flame to visit her lakeside campsite in Colorado; and Li Ruijun's rural Chinese love story *Return to Dust*, told against the backdrop of China's rapidly changing social landscape.

Also screening from the Berlinale are Peter Strickland's (*In Fabric*, SFF 2019) *Flux Gourmet*, an outrageous tale of food, music and arts funding, starring Gwendoline Christie (*Games of Thrones*) and Asa Butterfield (*Sex Education*); cult favourite Quentin Dupieux's wickedly funny and absurd time-travel romp *Incredible But True; One Year, One Night, featuring* bright French stars Noémie Merlant (*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, SFF 2019; *Paris, 13th District*, SFF 2021) and Nahuel Pérez Biscayart (*BPM*) as a couple coming to terms with surviving a terror attack; and Ulrich Seidl's (*In the Basement*, SFF 2015) darkly comic drama *Rimini*, about a washed up pop star.

From Sundance comes the 2022 Winner of the World Cinema Dramatic Competition for directing, *Klondike*, Maryna Er Gorbach's urgent film that tracks the lives of a dysfunctional couple in 2014 Ukraine; and *Gentle*, in which real-life competitive bodybuilder Eszter Csonka stars as an athlete and sex worker willing to sacrifice everything for perfection and success.

Winner of the Cannes Jury Prize is *Ahed's Knee*, Nadav Lapid's provocative follow up to *Synonyms* (SFF 2019) has an Israeli filmmaker railing against threats to artistic freedom in his country; and from Un



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Certain Regard is ***Commitment Hasan*** by Semih Kaplanoğlu (*Honey*, SFF 2010) about a farmer in Turkey who sets about clearing his slate before he and his wife take their pilgrimage to Mecca.

Films touching on social issues include ***The Blind Man Who Did Not Want To See Titanic***, Finnish director Teemu Nikki's bold and sensitive portrait of a man with disability who seeks out his long-distance lover by making a risky train journey; ***Father's Day*** which explores Rwanda's patriarchy, feminism and history of violence; and ***Private Desert***, winner of the Audience Award at Venice, which explores masculinity and loneliness in the story of a burned out Brazilian cop (Antonio Saboia, *Bacurau*, SFF 2019).

Tales from an Asian perspective include tantalising South Korean mystery ***Hommage***, starring Lee Jeong-eun (*Parasite*, SFF 2019); ***Inu-Oh***, a Japanese folklore-glam-rock-musical anime; and ***No Land's Man***, about a South Asian man fleeing persecution from his homeland whose life changes after meeting an Australian woman in New York, directed by Bangladeshi filmmaker Mostafa Sarwar Farooki (*Saturday Afternoon*, SFF 2019).

Yuni, which won Toronto's Platform Award, is Kamila Andini's (*The Seen and Unseen*, SFF 2018) exploration of a teenage girl's ambition in an austere Indonesian community; and Thai filmmaker Jakrawal Nilthamrong's ***Anatomy of Time*** serves a touching story that is also a powerful metaphor for the political and social upheavals that have affected life in Thailand.

Seasoned and emerging European auteurs in the program include: renowned Dutch filmmaker Alex van Warmdam's (*Borgman*, SFF 2013) sinister mystery ***NR. 10***, in which theatre actors are covertly watched by shadowy Catholic Church figures; French writer-director Ivan Calbérac's ***The Tasting***, a charming rom-com about love, desire and wine; Emre Kayış' Toronto FIPRESCI winning debut ***Anatolian Leopard***, a quirky drama depicting a lonely zoo director who conceals the death of his prize exhibit; and ***Unrest***, Cyril Schäublin's delicately comic portrait of a watchmaking town caught between industry and political anarchy in 1870s Switzerland.

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARIES

True stories diving into contemporary topics: ***And Still I Sing***, selected in Hot Docs 2022, follows three courageous performers in Kabul 2019 fighting for women's rights as American troops withdraw and the Taliban are poised to take over; and ***We Met in Virtual Reality***, selected at CPH:DOX and Sundance, which focuses on relationships formed on the virtual reality platform VRChat.

Womanhood is a strong theme in the program with Sundance and CPH:DOX 2022-celebrated ***Calendar Girls***, an uplifting and joyous look at a 60+ Florida dance troupe; Emelie Mahdavian's 2022 Vision du Réel winner ***Bitterbrush***, a magnificent portrait of two resourceful young women working as range riders in the American West, and Sundance winning ***Midwives***, which follows a Buddhist midwife and her Rohingya trainee in the remote province of Rakhine in Myanmar.

Profiles of strong women direct from IDFA include: ***Beirut: Eye Of The Storm***, tracking the powerful intersecting stories of four female activists involved in the 2019 uprising in Lebanon's capital; and ***Children of the Mist*** which allows audiences a rare window into Vietnam's Hmong community, where the ancient 'bride kidnapping' custom is still practised.



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Stories from Africa include winner of the F:ACT Award at CPH:DOX 2022 – **Black Mambas**, an astute study of South Africa’s first all-female anti-poaching unit; Shameela Seedat’s (*Whispering Truth to Power*, SFF 2018) Hot Docs-selected **African Moot**, following the largest law student mock court competition in Africa; and Berlinale-selected **No Simple Way Home**, the story of a family returning home to South Sudan to help forge the young nation’s future.

Festival winners include: Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner, **All That Breathes**, featuring 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** shows the fight of the First Peoples of Brazil as they defend their Amazon rainforest against land grabs and illegal logging; Directing Award (World Cinema – Documentary) winner at Sundance 2022, **A House Made of Splinters** by Simon Lereng Wilmont (*The Distant Barking of Dogs*, SFF 2018), a heart-tugging documentary filmed in pre-invasion Ukraine chronicling a small group of indefatigable social workers; and Grierson Award recipient at London Film Festival, **Hide and Seek**, an exhilarating and heart-breaking portrait of a wayward boy whose family have links to organised crime in Naples.

Day After... is acclaimed Bangladeshi documentarian Kamar Ahmad Simon’s seductive journey on a century-old river steamer from Bangladesh’s capital Dhaka to the southern city of Khulna, capturing conversations from passengers from all walks of life.

Evocative flicks include **Dreaming Walls: Inside the Chelsea Hotel**, from the 2022 Berlinale, which examines the legacy of New York’s iconic Chelsea Hotel and introduces us to its last remaining residents; and **Fashion Babylon**, which grants audiences front row seats with fashionistas, Michelle Elie, Casey Spooner and Season 7 winner of *RuPaul’s Drag Race* Violet Chachki.

Hidden Letters, from Hot Docs 2022, unveils the centuries-old secret language *Nüshu* – created by women and undecipherable to men; whilst Violet Du Feng delivers a heart-rending and revealing story of a Christian choir from a rural community in China turned into a national commodity in **Singing in the Wilderness**.

Holidays is a cinematic and comedic documentary that introduces us to four ordinary St. Petersburg residents, resulting in a kaleidoscopic portrait of a city and its people, exposing divisions and differences, at a time when the Kremlin’s authoritarian stranglehold tightens.

Exploring American greats are **Kurt Vonnegut: Unstuck in Time** examining the life and work of the great American author and commentator; and **Lynch / Oz**, a deep dive into the relationship between the 1939 classic and the cinema of David Lynch.

Documentaries from the UK include: stranger-than-fiction **My Old School** which features Alan Cumming lip synching to audio recordings of Scottish con-artist Brandon Lee; **Tramps!** a celebration of the New Romantic scene in 1970s London; **Fashion Reimagined**, featuring fashion designer Amy Powney of cult label Mother of Pearl, and; **Young Plato**, where a Belfast headteacher inspires his pupils through the great philosophers of Ancient Greece.

SUSTAINABLE FUTURE AWARD



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Established last year (2021), the **Sustainable Future Award**, is a \$10,000 cash prize to a narrative or documentary film of any length that deepens our knowledge and awareness of the impact of the global climate emergency. The Award is philanthropically motivated and funded by a syndicate of climate activists, led by Award Sponsor Amanda Maple-Brown, who believe deeply in the power of film to heighten community awareness of the need for action.

Five documentaries, three features and one short from around the world have been shortlisted. The documentaries include: *All That Breathes*; *The Territory*; *Fashion Reimagined*; *Delikado*; and the visually stunning *Into the Ice* which explores 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 a scarily believable scenario in which 50 years of drilling create a fissure in the ocean floor that trigger environmental collapse; Mounia Akil's London Audience Award-winning debut *Costa Brava, Lebanon* 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*, in which a young Navajo woman returns to her ancestral lands to grow produce for her community.

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 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.

FIRST NATIONS Supported by Screen Australia's First Nations Department and Deutsche Bank

The Festival together with Screen Australia's First Nations Department and in partnership with Deutsche Bank, continues its support of First Nations storytelling, showcasing important films by First Nations filmmakers across Australia and around the world.



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

Sydney Film Festival's 2022 program comprises twelve titles directed or written by First Nations creatives. Whether tackling the past, present or future, these films reverberate with diverse ideas and unique perspectives.

Conceived as a cinematic response to the 250th anniversary of James Cook's maiden voyage to the Pacific region, SFF's Opening Night film, ***We Are Still Here*** is a poetic and powerful statement about the resistance and survival of First Nation peoples.

Winner of Best Dramatic Film at ImagineNATIVE, filmmaker-artist Caroline Monnet's ***Bootlegger*** depicts law student Mani returning to her childhood, northern Quebec reservation, where she proceeds to go head-to-head with town leaders over a referendum to legalise the sale of alcohol.

Whina is a stirring biopic of trailblazing Māori leader Dame Whina Cooper, who broke gender boundaries, championed Māori rights and became one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most formidable leaders.

Also screening in the program are the series ***Mystery Road: Origin*** and ***True Colours***; alongside short films ***Long Line of Ladies***, ***Kicking the Clouds***, ***Big Water Summer: A Creation Story***, ***The Headhunter's Daughter*** and ***Donkey***.

EUROPE! VOICES OF WOMEN IN FILM Supported by European Film Promotion

In partnership with European Film Promotion, Sydney Film Festival presents the seventh annual **Europe! Voices in Women in Film**; a program of 10 new films from vital European women filmmakers.

From Slovenia to Romania, and Finland to Germany, the program casts a spotlight on outstanding, talented female filmmakers.

Finnish director-writer Alli Haapasalo's third feature ***Girl Picture*** is told over three Fridays, following whip-smart best friends Mimmi and Rönkkö - two teens mystified by the pitfalls of love and desire.

Loving Highsmith by Swiss screenwriter and director Eva Vitija is an intimate character study of Patricia Highsmith, the visionary female writer, who famously penned *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and the sexually daring *Carol* during a time of intense heteronormativity.

In Dutch filmmaker Bianca Stigter's (associate producer, *12 Years a Slave*) ***Three Minutes - A Lengthening*** a recently discovered three-minute film of a Polish town in 1984 is transformed into an expansive meditation on memory, erasure and the Holocaust – narrated by Helena Bonham-Carter.

Seven directorial debuts are included in the program: Golden Shell winner at San Sebastián 2021, ***Blue Moon***, showing a young woman rebelling against her dangerously dysfunctional family by Romanian writer-director **Alina Grigore**; ***As In Heaven***, by Danish director Tea Lindenburg, a dark feminist fable of a life that is suspended between present and the future; and ***Bitch, A Derogatory Term For A Woman*** is Slovenian filmmaker Tijana Zinajić's fun film about flat-mates who love indie rock and druggy adventures, with a scorching truth about young people caught in the throes of late-stage capitalism.



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

It Is In Us All is Northern Irish actor, filmmaker and former fashion designer Antonia Campbell-Hughes' moody capsule of hyper-masculinity, grounded by the palpable, bottled-up agony of lead actor Cosmo Jarvis (*Lady Macbeth*); *Maya Nilo (Laura)* from Stockholm director Lovisa Sirén, tells of feminist writer Nilo's calm life disrupted by the arrival of her wayward sister Maya – who then runs off with Nilo's Volvo and 13-year-old daughter. *Small Body* is Italian filmmaker Laura Samani's odyssey film featuring grieving mother Agata who after birthing a stillborn child, is tortured by her Catholic faith; and *Talking About The Weather*, German filmmaker Annika Pinske's absorbing drama which unpacks the neurosis of a complicated philosophy teacher caught between milieus.

Filmmakers from the EFP program attending will be: **Antonia Campbell-Hughes** (*It Is In Us All*), **Alina Grigore** (*Blue Moon*), **Tea Lindeburg** (*As In Heaven*) and **Eva Vitija** (*Loving Highsmith*).

SOUNDS ON SCREEN, supported by Mountain Goat

Sounds on Screen highlights four inspiring musical stories ranging from an all-female thrash metal band from Lebanon, to a celebration of the iconic New Orleans Jazz Fest featuring archival footage of greats including Wynton and Branford Marsalis, Earth, Wine & Fire and Bruce Springsteen.

6 Festivals is a feature film about a group of friends celebrating the vibrant Australian festival circuit and includes footage from hot acts like Dune Rats, G Flip and Bliss n Eso.

International documentaries include: rousing rock-doc *Sirens* following Shery Bechara and Lilas Mayassi of women metal band *Slave to Sirens* in Lebanon, where pro LGBTQIA+ lyrics and heavy metal are frowned upon; the pulse-pounding love letter to '00s New York postpunk scene, *Meet Me in the Bathroom*, which is packed with interviews and live footage of The Strokes, The Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Interpol and LCD Soundsystem; and the feel-good doco *Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story*, celebrating the 50 year anniversary of New Orleans's most iconic jazz, rock 'n' roll, R&B and soul music festival.

FREAK ME OUT

Sydney Film Festival's weird, wonderful and nerve-shredding **Freak Me Out** Program, curated by **Richard Kuipers**, returns with six films from the wild side of contemporary cinema.

Hannah Barlow and Kane Senes show audiences that revenge is a dish best shared on Instagram with *Sissy*. A SXSW success, this clever Australian horror sees an influencer played by Aisha Dee (*The Bold Type*) encounter her childhood tormentor on a hen's weekend. *Sissy* is also featured in the new **Brix Rum Independent in Spirit** film selection, showcasing a selection of four bold new Australian voices in film.

Freak Me Out will host its first-ever 3D film: the hypnotic *Leda*, a retelling of a Greek Myth in which a young newlywed is haunted by strange visions. *Saloum* is an exciting Senegalese production dreamt up by Congolese writer-director Jean Luc Herbulot in which three mystical mercenaries take on other-worldly enemies.

Euro-horror gems include: German filmmaker Kevin Kopacka's time-tripping psychedelic *Dawn Breaks Behind The Eyes*; Carlota Pereda's Sundance hit *Piggy*, a horror film about the consequences of teen



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

bullying led by the magnificent Laura Galán; and fresh from premiering at Tribeca 2022 is the diabolical family-folk-thriller *Family Dinner*, by Austrian writer-director Peter Hengl, which follows insecure teen Simi who arrives at her aunts' country house, hoping she can help her with her weight issues.

SCREENABILITY

Returning to the Festival is **Screenability**, curated by **Rebecca McCormack**, an exciting platform for screen practitioners with disability. The program features the World Premiere of three Australian short films selected as part of the Screenability Filmmakers Fund for Screen NSW: *Inspire Me*, *Voice Activated* and *All Silent Dogs*.

Screening in the program is Australian feature and SXSW Audience Award winning drama *Shadow* in which a group of activists hold a public meeting, only to discover the greatest threat to their future is already in the room; Slamdance Grand Jury Prize winner *Straighten Up and Fly Right*, an intimate study of a woman with disability staring down a brutal New York winter; and Directing Award-winning documentary at Sundance *I Didn't See You There*.

The Festival maintains its inclusion policy with audio described and open captioned screenings, and over 90 English-subtitled films in the program.

FLUX: ART + FILM

Flux: Art+Film returns for the fourth year, with films from artists who explore the fertile ground between art and cinema, selected by Guest Curator **Ruby Arrowsmith-Todd**.

Queer oil pirates hijack a pipeline at the margins of President Bolsonaro's Brazil in the high-octane sci-fi heist in documentary hybrid *Dry Ground Burning*, awarded the Cinéma du Réel Grand Prize 2022.

Winner of the Tiger Award, Rotterdam 2022, *EAMI* is an exquisitely shot lament for an Indigenous forest community under threat, resplendent with magical realism. Screening alongside *EAMI* is *Kicking the Clouds*, a reflection on descendants of ancestors, guided by a 50-year-old audio recording.

Queens of the Qing Dynasty is a story of magnetic attraction and an unlikely kinship between a neurodivergent teen and a queer student from Shanghai assigned to watch her after a suicide attempt.

Legendary avant-gardist James Benning (SFF retrospective, 2014) returns with an encyclopaedic tapestry of contemporary America as spectacle and simulacra with *The United States of America*.

In Sunlight or In Shadow is the new immersive work by Gregory Ferris (SFF 2004, 2017, 2019) and presented in stereoscopic 360-degrees at the UTS Data Arena, the audience is enveloped in interconnected narratives set across a series of hotel rooms.

THE DENDY AWARDS FOR AUSTRALIAN SHORT FILMS



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

10 finalists have been selected for the Dendy Awards, Australia's longest running short film competition, celebrating its 53rd year in 2022, screening over 2 sessions on 18 and 19 June. Four Short Film Prizes will be awarded at the Festival's 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**.

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**.

FAMILY

The **Family Films** program returns with three feature films and a special short program, curated by Guest Curator **Katharine Rogers**, screening in daytime sessions at the Festival.

Films include the highly entertaining superhero tale **Super Furball Saves the Future**, about a young girl who must save the world from a future without bees; and **Ride the Wave**, an exhilarating documentary following Scottish surf champion Ben Larg who at just 12-years-old, has a dream to ride the biggest, most dangerous cold-water waves in the world.

Sundance crowd-pleaser Vietnamese sci-fi charmer **Maika** is about a lonely eight-year-old who befriends an alien visitor. It screens alongside the short film **Laika & Nemo**, a touching story about feeling like an outsider.

This year will also feature a special short film program for younger children, with films that delve into themes of nature and identity. Australian short films include **Apart**, about two artists finding a connection through their work, and **By Lucas Wilson**, following a young boy who makes a mistake. These films are presented alongside international shorts from Borneo (**Footprints in the Forest**), Latvia (**Hush, Hush Little Bear**), Lithuania (**The Perfect Fit**) and the United States (**I'm Gonna Get You**, **The Social Chameleon**).

CLASSICS RESTORED

Three restored films will give audiences the opportunity to see cinema classics the way they were intended like NFSA's newly restored 4K version of Baz Luhrmann's iconic Australian hit **Strictly Ballroom**, where SFF audiences will be able to revisit the glittering Pan-Pacific Grand Prix Championship.

Also screening are **Daughters of the Dust** by Julie Dash, the first widely distributed film directed by an African American woman, and **Oldboy**, Park Chan-wook's masterful psychosexual thriller following a family man seeking revenge after being locked in a room for 15 years.

ESSENTIAL SATYAJIT RAY: SELECTED BY DAVID STRATTON

One of the world's most revered filmmakers, **Satyajit Ray** revolutionised India's cinema, beginning with his 1955 debut **Pather Panchali**. The retrospective will include 10 of Ray's most beloved works, including 35mm and digital restorations of: **The Big City**, **Devi**, **The Hero**, **Company Limited** and **The Chess Players**; alongside **Pather Panjali**, **Aparajito**, **The Music Room**, **The World of Apu** and **Charulata**.



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

IT TAKES TIME: TEN FILMS BY FREDERICK WISEMAN

American documentary filmmaker **Frederick Wiseman** has offered a revealing perspective on humanity – and human endeavour – across the late 20th and 21st centuries. Recognising his immense contribution to cinema, ACMI - in association with the Sydney Film Festival (SFF) and the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NSFA) - will present **It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman**. This retrospective of Wiseman’s work will screen at ACMI in Melbourne from 22 May to 25 September, at Sydney Film Festival in Sydney from 11 June to 31 July, and at NSFA in Canberra from 12 June to 23 October.

The retrospective includes: **City Hall**, **Titicut Follies**, **Welfare**, **Central Park**, **High School II**, **Belfast, Maine**, **Domestic Violence**, **La Danse: The Paris Opera Ballet**, **In Jackson Heights** and **Ex Libris: New York Public Library**.

THE HUB

The Sydney Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall is the heart of the Festival and will be an immersive experience, with FREE filmmaker talks, panels, and themed parties.

Open to the public all nights, and select days from 8-19 June, The Hub will feature a Happy Hour special at its pop-up bar between 4:30pm and 6:00pm on weekdays, with drinks from Brix Distillers, Brix Distillers, Château Tanunda & Mountain Goat Beer. Discount tickets to Festival films (\$10) can also be snapped up for selected screenings at the Hub Box Office daily.

TALKS

The **FREE Festival Talks** at the Festival Hub create a space for audiences, filmmakers and industry professionals to progress a dialogue about the important topics and issues of the year, addressed in Festival films.

Join round table discussion **Streaming Australian**, around more content on streaming platforms with screen industry producers, actors, writers, directors and crew as a new “Make it Australian” campaign is launched (Thursday 9 June, 5:00pm).

First Nation Next Wave will feature the team of First Nation filmmakers from SFF’s Opening Night Film **We Are Still Here** as they discuss how they went about creating a film with 10 directors in two countries during a pandemic (Friday 10 June, 5:00pm).

Director/producer **Ana Tiwary** (*Rhapsody of Love*) joins a panel of savvy Australian women filmmakers in **Women’s Cinema in Colour**, a discussion about their experiences in the world of independent movie making (Saturday 11 June, 12:00pm).

AFTRS CEO **Dr Nell Greenwood** will moderate conversation in **Craft in Focus**, in celebration of the newly announced AFTRS Craft Award, between the screen guilds supporting writers, cinematographers, editors, screen composers and production designers as they talk Australian Cinema - the good, bad and ugly (Sunday 12 June, 4:30pm).



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

SFF Program Consultant and Tribeca Associate Programmer **Paul Struthers** will lead discussion in **Australian Queer Screen Today**, on Australian Queer Cinema today with filmmakers from the festival (Monday 13 June, 5:00pm).

After the screening of **Shadow**, in partnership with Accessible Arts, writer-director **Johanna Garvin** and some of the film team from the International Ibsen Award winning **Back to Back Theatre Company** will discuss their experiences (Wednesday 15 June, 5:15pm).

European Women In Film will be an opportunity to meet the filmmakers from the **Europe! Voices of Women in Film** strand with Screen International's **Sandy George**, who will discuss why a focus on women is still needed in 2022 (Sunday 12 June, 12:00pm).

Join Sandy George in conversation with **Blaze** director and Archibald prize-winning artist Del Kathryn Barton as they talk about her debut directorial feature (Saturday 18 June, 1:45pm).

EVENTS

Keep that post-film buzz going with special events paired with screenings to celebrate cinema. Visit sff.org.au for more info and updates.

All Pride, No Prejudice (Thursday 9 June, 10:00pm) is the after-screening dance party for **Fire Island**, inspired by Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

Watch the explosive dance action featured in the World Premiere of film **Keep Stepping** with **Break Out** (Friday 10 June, 8:00pm) featuring a street dance showcase, MC and DJ set.

Acoustic Sessions (Friday 10 June, 10:30pm) will showcase emerging Aussie music talent delivering acoustic delights after the **6 Festivals** screening.

The **Seriously Red After Party**, will include a Dolly Parton Tribute show and DJ set (Saturday 11 June, 8:30pm, \$10 entry).

Meet Me At The Hub (Sunday 12 June, 8:00pm) will be the perfect place for people in a musical mood after the screening of **Meet Me in the Bathroom**, celebrating NYC's early 2000s underground music scene - The Strokes, Interpol, Karen O and more!

Know your Satyajit Ray from your Michael Bay? Gather a team and win some prizes at **SFF Film Trivia Night** (Wednesday 15 June, 8:00pm).

CASULA POWERHOUSE ARTS CENTRE (CPAC)

Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Liverpool City Council and Sydney Film Festival have partnered for over five years to bring world class Festival films to South Western Sydney audiences.

Sydney Film Festival Screenings at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (10-19 June):



SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

JUNE 08–19 2022

- *A Love Song* | Friday 10 June, 7:45 PM
- *Calendar Girls* | Saturday 11 June, 11:00 AM
- *Beirut: Eye of the Storm* plus short *Displaced* | Sunday 12 June, 2:00 PM
- *Huda's Salon* | Friday 17 June, 7:45 PM
- *Keep Stepping* | Saturday 18 June. 2:00 PM
- *And Still I Sing* | Saturday 18 June, 7:45 PM
- *Shadow* plus short *Voice Activated* | Sunday 19 June, 2:00 PM

FESTIVAL VENUES

The State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Newtown, Palace Central, Palace Norton Street, Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, Ritz Cinemas Randwick, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and Art Gallery of NSW return as official Festival screening venues.

The Festival's outdoor screen SFFTV, will be in Martin Place (2-18 June) and the Pitt Street Mall (15-19 June) between 8am to 10pm. Audiences can catch trailers for must-see Festival films and red carpet footage on the giant double-sided screen.

The full Sydney Film Festival 2022 program can be found online at 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 for more information or to book.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Dylan Foley, Communications Assistant

E: dylan@originalspin.com.au M: 0423 771 138

Isabelle Brown, Communications Assistant

E: isabelle@originalspin.com.au M: 0401 576 024

Anna Dvorak, Communications Assistant

E: anna@originalspin.com.au M: 0420 630 266

Amber Forrest-Bisley, Publicity Manager, Sydney Film Festival

E: amber@originalspin.com.au P: 8065 7363 M: 0405 363 817

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

***Sizzle Reel 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

JUNE 08–19 2022

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.

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.

