

## MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.00am WEDNESDAY 10 MAY 2017**

## BEST OF THE FEST SCREENS IN THE SOUTH WEST

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The 64<sup>th</sup> Sydney Film Festival has announced South Western Sydney audiences will have a curated program of five films and a Gourmet Cinema event at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre during the Sydney Film Festival, 8-19 June.

“The Festival will screen a strong line-up of films: home-grown Muslim comedy *Ali’s Wedding*, delightful Indian comedy *Hotel Salvation*, family friendly Oscar-nominated stop-motion French film *My Life as a Zucchini*, and *One Thousand Ropes* from the director of and of the first-ever Samoan feature (The Orator, 2011) Tusi Tamasese,” said **Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley**.

“**Gourmet Cinema** fans can also take a culinary and cultural exploration of the barbecue traditions across the globe in *Barbecue*, by Adelaide filmmaking duo Matthew Salleh and Rose Tucker,” said **Casula Powerhouse Acting Director Craig Donarski**. “Paired with an exotic South American BBQ on-site at **Bellbird**, foodies will be in heaven. Film-only options are also available.”

Casula Powerhouse, Liverpool City Council and Sydney Film Festival have partnered for more than two years to bring world class Festival films to screen locally at the Powerhouse in Liverpool, both through a monthly program of cinema and during the Sydney Film Festival.

**Sydney Film Festival at Casula Powerhouse films, guests and events include:**

### Films:

- ***Ali’s Wedding***  
Saturday 10 June, 7:30pm, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
- ***Barbecue (Gourmet Cinema)***  
Saturday 17 June, 3:00pm, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
- ***Hotel Salvation***  
Sunday 11 June, 1:30pm, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
- ***My Life As A Zucchini***  
Monday 12 June, 11:00am, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
- ***One Thousand Ropes***  
Sunday 18 June, 1:30pm, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre

### Events:

- **Gourmet Cinema (paired with the screening of *Barbecue*)**  
Saturday 17 June, 3.00pm, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre

**Sydney Film Festival runs 7 – 18 June 2017.**

**Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2017 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 7 June** to **Sunday 18 June 2017**, the 64<sup>th</sup> 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: *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 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, Randwick Ritz, Casula Powerhouse, the Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall and SFF Outdoor Screen in Pitt Street Mall.

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 64<sup>th</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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## ABOUT CASULA POWERHOUSE ARTS CENTRE

Located on the banks of the Georges River, the Casula Powerhouse is a multi-disciplinary arts centre. Showcasing six galleries and featuring a range of permanent and temporary exhibitions, the Casula Powerhouse is a premier art space in South West Sydney. Boasting a 321-seat theatre, Casula Powerhouse plays host to a range of theatre and cinematic productions each year.

## BELLBIRD

Catering for every screening of the program will be the outstanding Cordon Bleu-trained Chef, Federico Rekowski: the new Head Chef at Bellbird. Raising the bar on what to expect from arts centre dining, the food will only become more interesting over time as his recently planted kitchen garden comes to fruition, supplying more and more of what guests will eat on-site, with most of the elements sourced from Sydney's Western Suburbs wherever possible.

## LIVERPOOL CITY COUICL

Located in South West Sydney, Liverpool City Council governs 42 suburbs with residents from a range of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds. The Council is dedicated to supporting the community by providing high levels of facilities and resources and to establish Liverpool as "the vibrant regional city of opportunity, prosperity and diversity."



## **DOCUMENTARIES**

### **BARBECUE**

Director: Matthew Salleh | Australia | 101mins | In Swedish, Visayan, Mongolian, Afrikaans, Zulu, Armenian, Arabic, Japanese, Maori, English, Spanish and Zapotec with English Subtitles | Australian Premiere

Australian filmmakers Matthew Saleh and Rose Tucker (*Central Texas Barbecue* SFF 2014) travelled the globe to document barbecues in a diverse range of communities. There's the Afrikaans tradition that encompasses good conversation first and good meat second; and the Mongolian ancestral approach, *boodog*, which involves goats and hot stones. From the Swedish *engangsgrill* (ideal after a long winter), to refugees opening a *sharwarma* shop in a camp on the Syrian-Jordan border. It's obvious that barbecuing isn't just about the food: it's an event, it's community.

## **FEATURES**

### **ALI'S WEDDING**

Director: Jeffrey Walker | Australia | 110mins | In Farsi, Arabic and English with English Subtitles  
Truth is stranger than fiction. *Ali's Wedding* is based on the real-life experience of lead actor Osamah Sami, whose arranged marriage lasted less than two hours. The smart screenplay by Sami and Andrew Knight (*Hacksaw Ridge*, *Rake*, *Jack Irish*) tells a humorous, authentic and poignant tale about family life in multicultural Australia. Stylishly directed by Jeffrey Walker (*Modern Family*, *Angry Boys*), the film boasts a terrific cast including Don Hany as Ali's father and delightful newcomer Helana Sawires as Dianne, the Lebanese-Australian medical student who sends Ali's heartbeat racing. The time is right for a feelgood winner like *Ali's Wedding*.

### **HOTEL SALVATION**

Director: Shubhashish Bhutiani | India | 99mins | In Hindi with English Subtitles | Australian Premiere

Daya Kumar tells his family that he wishes to die in the holy city of Varanasi, on the banks of the Ganges. The stubborn old man drags along his reluctant adult son Rajiv and they check into the Hotel Salvation, where people come to die. But once there, Daya gets his lust for life back, making new friends with the other 'dying' residents. Daya and Rajiv are forced to reconnect – both to each other and to the world around them. Described as an "arthouse take on the *Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*", *Hotel Salvation* is a wonderfully accomplished film that captures the vibrancy and strangeness of Varanasi with gentle humour.

### **MY LIFE AS A ZUCCHINI**

Director: Claude Barras | Switzerland, France | 66mins | In French with English Subtitles

When nine-year old Zucchini's alcoholic mother dies, he is taken to an orphanage of misfits who, like himself, have been dealt a rough hand by life. Little does he know, they will soon become his de facto family, from his crush Camille to the gentle father-figure policeman Raymond. Based on a best-selling young adult novel and adapted by Céline Sciamma (*Tomboy* SFF 2011), *My Life as a Zucchini* is an unusual, affirming but honest film that calls on its young audience's ability to empathise with lives far tougher than their own. They'll come out heartened, strengthened and more resilient from the experience – and so will the adults who take them.

### **ONE THOUSAND ROPES**

Director, Screenwriter: Tusi Tamasese | New Zealand | 98mins | In Samoan with English Subtitles | Australian Premiere

Middle-aged Maea is a gentle Samoan man in Wellington who helps bring babies into the world. It's a far cry from the past when he was a tough fighter known as 'The Lion'. Maea lost his family long ago and now lives with painful memories and a volatile spirit that lingers in his house and won't let him forget. When his estranged daughter shows up pregnant and distressed Maea is presented with an opportunity to begin the healing process. The second film by Samoan New Zealander Tusi



Tamasese (*The Orator*) is both tender and tough. The immediate and illuminating perspective is Samoan, but the broad and richly rewarding emotional terrain is universal.

## **EVENTS**

### **GOURMET CINEMA**

A Gourmet Cinema experience is available at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre for \$47. The new Head Chef at Casula's Bellbird is Federico Rekowski, an award-winning chef whose career began in Venezuela, where barbecued meat is an integral part of the culture – and after being teased and tempted by this extraordinary documentary you'll be glad you reserved your place at the table!

