



MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:45PM TUESDAY 13 JUNE

2017 LEXUS AUSTRALIA SHORT FILM FELLOWS ANNOUNCED AT 2016 LEXUS AUSTRALIA SHORT FILM FESTIVAL GALA SCREENING

Lexus Australia and Sydney Film Festival have announced Emily Avila, Lara Kose, Goran Stolevski and Thomas Baricevic as the four recipients of the Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship.

The filmmakers will each receive a \$50,000 grant, the largest cash fellowship for short film in Australia, to make a film which will premiere at the 2018 Sydney Film Festival. The fellows were selected by Sydney Film Festival from a shortlist of 20 emerging filmmakers.

The announcement was made at the world premiere of the inaugural 2016 Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship films last night. Anya Beyersdorf, Brooke Goldfinch, Alex Ryan and Alex Murawski had their films *How the Light Gets In*, *Outbreak Generation*, *Red Ink* and *Snow* screened for the first time to a packed cinema at the Dendy Opera Quays as part of the Sydney Film Festival.

Renowned Australian actor **David Wenham** presided over the 2017 selection process as Jury Chair, alongside Sydney Film Festival Director **Nashen Moodley**, Lexus Australia corporate manager of marketing operations and sales **Vin Naidoo**, and Australian producers **Kath Shelper** and **Sandra Levy AO**.

“These four young filmmakers have shown considerable tenacity and drive in the early years of their careers, persuading our jury they will do something really special with the incredible opportunity this fellowship provides,” said **Jury Chair David Wenham**.

“What is really exciting is each filmmaker’s strong commitment to telling diverse stories. I’m thrilled we have four young talented Australian filmmakers with such unique perspectives and a passion to create meaningful works that will connect and resonate with Australian and global audiences,” he said.

“The Festival is proud to announce four more Lexus Australia Short Film fellows,” said **Nashen Moodley, Sydney Film Festival Director**. “The fellows have had some exceptional filmmaking experience already, and have shown a commitment to the industry and community.”

“The jury believes these filmmakers are ready to take the next step in their careers as they navigate a \$50,000 filmmaking project, bring together their chosen team, and work with industry mentors. The Festival is equally proud to be the platform for the films they create in 2018,” he said.

“Lexus is committed to discovering and supporting emerging creative Australian talent,” said **Vin Naidoo**, Lexus Australia **corporate manager of marketing operations and sales**. “The Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship, developed in partnership with Sydney Film Festival, symbolises our



investment in innovation and dedication to the Australian arts, alongside the Lexus Design Award and international award, the Lexus Short Film series.”

“We are extremely proud of the four films created by the 2016 fellows, which premiered tonight. We encourage the 2017 fellows to unleash their inspiration, craftsmanship, and innovation as they develop their film projects over the next year ready for Sydney Film Festival audiences in 2018.”

Meet the Inaugural Lexus Australia Short Film Fellows:

- **Emily Avila** has worked extensively for Australian production companies and film festivals including as assistant to Oscar-winning producer Emile Sherman at See-Saw Films. The Brisbane-based filmmaker aims to make work that is bold, thoughtful and inspired by emotional truth. Her directorial debut *In a Cane Field* premiered at the Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival, and has gone on to win two short film awards.

“Funding and being selected for a significant film festival are two of the biggest hurdles for short filmmakers. The fellowship removes both of these obstacles from the outset. I am delighted to be chosen for such a rare opportunity, not only as it enables me to focus on creating the film, but also to build deeper connections with the Sydney Film Festival and to ignite industry interest in my work.”

- **Lara Kose** is a filmmaker drawn to telling stories about women, culture and identity that question and create understanding. The Melbourne-based writer-director-editor’s most recent short film *Crush* has screened at film festivals internationally, and she has a passion for music videos and the independent music scene.

“My career goal is to tell exciting and meaningful stories. I am thrilled about the Fellowship because it will allow me to tell my story with a strong level of financial, industry and mentor support. Community is so important to filmmaking and I see the fellowship as a huge opportunity to meet others who are also passionate about storytelling, keep my career moving, and to offer new opportunities to strengthen my filmmaking community.”

- **Goran Stolevski** migrated from Macedonia to Australia in his teens, and is committed to telling diverse stories, with a focus on female, multicultural and LGBT protagonists. This year he was selected for the Berlinale Talent Campus. The Melbourne-based filmmaker has made more than 20 short films which have screened at more than 60 festivals around the world. He previously received Screen Australia support through the Talent Escalator initiative, with four months spent observing Alister Grierson (director of James Cameron-produced *Sanctum*) on international Emmy Award-winning series *Nowhere Boys*.

“I connect so viscerally with material that lets women and minority characters be the [anti]heroes for a change. The Lexus Short Film Fellowship allows me to explore my commitment to diversity and gender parity both on and off the screen. This is a phenomenal opportunity that will allow me to work with a professional crew and up-skill by working with inspiring collaborators. The Lexus Fellowship is a wonderful launching pad for my next film project, which I hope will take my skills as a director to the next level.”

- **Thomas Baricevic** is a screenwriter-director-producer who has worked extensively in the film industry creating films, documentaries and music videos. The Melbourne-based filmmaker is passionate about telling stories to a global audience that will entertain, provoke and encourage. Baricevic’s migrant background informs and influences his work.

“My previous works have focused on the idiosyncrasies of migrant communities and their struggles. I am excited to be able to take the next step in my career with the Fellowship. The

opportunity to premiere at the Sydney Film festival is in itself priceless.”

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 for more information.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Amber Forrest-Bisley, Publicity Manager, Sydney Film Festival

E: amber@cardinalspin.com.au M: 0405 363 817

Amy Owen, Communications Advisor

E: amy@cardinalspin.com.au M: 0404 977 3378

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

ABOUT THE LEXUS AUSTRALIA SHORT FILM FELLOWSHIP

The Lexus Australia Short Films Fellowship is a \$200,000 investment by Lexus Australia, presented by Sydney Film Festival, to support future generations of emerging filmmakers. The fellowship is the largest cash fellowship for short film in Australia. Up to four fellowship winners will receive \$50,000 each to produce their next short film in 2017, to premiere at the 65th Sydney Film Festival in 2018.

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animation across greater Sydney. 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.

EDITORS' NOTES

Name: Emily Avila

Filmmaker From: Newmarket, Brisbane, QLD

About the fellow:

- Avila's directing debut *In a Cane Field*, a meditative murder mystery premiered at the Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival and has since won two short film awards.
- She has worked extensively for various Australian production companies and film festivals including as assistant to Oscar-winning producer Emile Sherman at See-Saw Films.

Name: Lara Kose

Filmmaker From: Carlton North, VIC

About the fellow:

- Lara Kose is a writer/director/editor and Masters Graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts.
- Her most recent short film *Crush* has screened internationally and was nominated for an Australian Screen Editors award.
- Lara is closely linked to Melbourne's independent music scene and often collaborates with artists to create music videos.

Name: Goran Stolevski

Filmmaker From: Macleod, VIC

About the fellow:

- Goran Stolevski was born and grew up in Macedonia before migrating to Australia.
- In 2014, he was selected by Screen Australia for the Talent Escalator initiative, and spent four months observing Alister Grierson (director of James Cameron-produced *Sanctum*) on International Emmy Award winning series *Nowhere Boys*.
- Goran has made more than 20 shorts screening at more than 20 different festivals and has



just been awarded 30,000 Euros from the Macedonian Film Agency to direct his next short film, *Would You Look at Her*.

Name: Thomas Baricevic

Filmmaker From: North Warrandyte, VIC

About the fellow:

- Thomas began working life as an engineer, then went on to study sculpture and filmmaking at the Victorian College of the Arts.
- He has been a jury member for the Australian (AFI) Awards and the AACTAs on numerous occasions.
- Thomas is the founder of monthly film festivals Short Trips and Fitzroy Shorts, these festivals screen international and Academy Award-winning short films.
- He owns Australian production company Jackson Black Films.