



Australian Government



MEDIA RELEASE

Screen Australia and Sydney Film Festival announce: Filmmaker Masterclass

Screen Australia and Sydney Film Festival are pleased to present **John Michael McDonagh**, the writer and director of *Calvary* and *The Guard* in a special one-off Masterclass at the Festival Hub at Lower Town Hall on Friday 6 June.

John Michael McDonagh is renowned for being both insightful and entertaining on the stage. He will discuss his approach to screenwriting, directing and working with actors.

This event is for writers and directors, and associated industry colleagues only. Entry is free, but you are required to register for the event ([click to register](#)). Once registered you will be able to access a special concession rate for the *Calvary* screening on Thursday 5 June 8:40 pm.

Event commences 1:00pm, talk from 2:00pm. Refreshments provided.

For tickets and info visit <http://www.sff.org.au/public/masterclass-with-john-michael-mcdonagh/> or call 1300 733 733.

The 61st Sydney Film Festival runs 4 –15 June 2014 and brings a packed program of screenings and special events to even more venues across Sydney. For tickets and full up-to-date program information please visit sff.org.au

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

John Michael McDonagh director of *Calvary* (Ireland) made his first foray into writing and directing with *The Second Death*, a short film released in 2000. Next McDonagh adapted Robert Drewe's 1991 novel *Our Sunshine* into the screenplay for the 2003 film *Ned Kelly*, which was directed by Australian filmmaker Gregor Jordan. McDonagh gained considerable attention in 2011, with the theatrical release of his feature-film directorial debut *The Guard* (SFF 2011) starring Brendan Gleeson and Don Cheadle. The film received critical acclaim and went on to become the most financially successful independent Irish film of all time. His brother is the playwright and filmmaker Martin McDonagh (*In Bruges*).

Calvary

Ireland, UK | 2014 | 100 mins | English | Australian Premiere | Director: John Michael McDonagh

Following the international success of *The Guard* (SFF 2011), director John Michael McDonagh and a brilliant Brendan Gleeson reunite in this blackly comic drama about a good priest tormented by his community in a small and picturesque Irish town. Gleeson is Father James who, in the film's gripping first scene, is threatened with death during confession. A man tells of how he was sexually abused by a priest from the age of seven, and has decided that the only way to rectify matters is to kill an innocent clergyman. He calmly gives Father James a week to get his matters in order. Father James

knows the man who made the threat (though he's kept hidden from the viewer), and *Calvary* then takes us on a twisted and humorous journey through a motley crew of villager suspects. A fantastic supporting cast including Chris O'Dowd (*The Sapphires*), Kelly Reilly (*Sherlock Holmes*) and Aidan Gillen (*Game of Thrones*), people the village with a range of richly drawn characters who exasperate Father James as he prepares to face his own personal Calvary.

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animated films across the city at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Opera Quays, the Art Gallery of NSW, Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, the Apple Store, SFFTV at Martin Place, Skyline Drive-In Blacktown, and the Festival Hub at Town Hall.

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

Sydney Film Festival also presents 12 films that vie for the Official Competition, a highly respected international 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 include: *Only God Forgives* (2013), *Alps* (2012), *A Separation* (2011) – which went on to win an Academy Award, *Heartbeats* (2010), *Bronson* (2009) and *Hunger* (2008).

The 61st Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia, and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic partner is the NSW Government through Destination NSW.

What: Sydney Film Festival

When: 4-15 June, 2014

Tickets & Info: 1300 733 733 sff.org.au

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