



MEDIA RELEASE
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Sydney Film Festival, 5- 16 June, presents the Dendy Awards for Australian Short Films Finalists

The Sydney Film Festival is produce to announce the 10 finalists in the 2013 **Dendy Awards for Australian Short Films**. Sponsored by Dendy Cinemas for 25 years, these awards have launched and aided the careers of many great Australian filmmakers. The finalists in this year's awards will screen together on Saturday 15 June at 4pm and again on Sunday 16 June at 11am at Event Cinemas George Street.

"We're really proud to have been able to support the short-film award for the past 25 years. For us, it's a way to make sure that we're doing our best to encourage our talented filmmakers and ensure we're creating a healthy feature film industry in Australia for the future," said Dendy Cinemas Marketing Communications Manager Hadi Tieu-Vinh.

The **Dendy Awards** acknowledge the way in which short films help aspiring filmmakers springboard into feature-film production, while also recognising the vibrancy of the short genre. This year's stellar line-up is a testament to the world-class quality of Australian filmmaking.

The Awards for Australian Short Films were originally established by SFF in 1970. Winners of the Best Live Action Short Film award and the Yoram Gross Animation award (sponsored by Yoram Gross Films) are Academy Award®-eligible, opening new pathways for many Australian filmmakers.

Previous winners include *The Lost Thing*, directed by Shaun Tan and Andrew Ruhemann, which went on to win an Academy Award in 2011; *Miracle Fish*, directed by Luke Doolan, which was a 2009® Oscar nominee; and *The Palace*, directed by Anthony Maras, which also won Best Short Fiction and Best Screenplay in a Short Film at the 2012 Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards (AACTA).

The Dendy Live Action Short Award, sponsored by Dendy Cinemas, provides a \$5,000 cash prize. **The Yoram Gross Animation Award**, sponsored by Yoram Gross Films, carries a \$4,000 cash prize. Both awards are Academy Award-eligible. **The Ruben Mamoulian Award**, named after the Hollywood director who presented the first award at Sydney Film Festival in 1974, offers a \$5,000 cash prize and will be presented to the best director from the 10 Dendy finalists.

The winners will be announced at the festival's Closing Night, Sunday, 16 June. Shortlisted films, along with Australian feature-length films with a multicultural perspective, are in line for the CRC Award, sponsored by the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW, which carries a \$5,000 cash prize.

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And now for the Dendy Award for Australian Short Film Finalists in the Sydney Film Festival 2013:

All God's Creatures (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Brendon McDonall** | Cast: Ed Oxenbould, Nicholas Bakopoulous-Cooke, Di Adams

Brothers Asher and Charlie are very different: Asher likes fishing, swearing, and other boyish pursuits; Charlie likes tea parties and crafts.

Director **Brendon McDonall** is a graduate of UWS Theatre Nepean (Acting) and a double graduate of AFTRS with Graduate Diplomas in Directing and Screenwriting.

Butterflies | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Isabel Peppard** | Cast: Rachel Griffiths, Nicolas Hope, Henry Nixon, Honey Spence

Feed your dreams or they may feed on you.

Director **Isabel Peppard** began her career as a prosthetics makeup artist. She uses skills associated with SFX makeup to explore a wide range of creative practices from sculpture to performance art to stop-motion animation. *Butterflies* is her second stop-motion animated short.

A Cautionary Tail | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Simon Rippingale** | Cast: Cate Blanchett, David Wenham, Barry Otto

A girl is born with a tail that expresses her emotions. When she grows up, the young woman must choose between conformity and self-expression.

Simon Rippingale is a film and television director specialising in animation. He received an AFI nomination for Best Visual Effects on *Unfolding Florence* (directed by Gillian Armstrong).

Heaven (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Maziar Lahooti** | Cast: Don Reid, Wayne Davis, Jill Mackay

A desperate old man invades a heroin dealer's home, making some very unusual demands.

Director **Maziar Lahooti** studied cinematography and directing at TAFE in Perth, and in 2009 graduated from the directing course at AFTRS, returning in 2012 to study for his Master of Screen Arts degree.

I Have Your Heart (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director, Producer: **Jim Batt**

This is the story of a good girl with a bad heart, and the boy whose death will save her life.

Jim Batt is both a live-action director and stop-motion animator. He has directed several award-winning shorts, the feature-length silent film *Dreamtangle*, and numerous music videos.

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The Last Time I Saw Richard (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Nicholas Verso** | Cast: Toby Wallace, Cody Fern

Two boys form a bond to protect themselves from the darklings that hide in the night shadows.

Director **Nicholas Verso** won the AWGIE for Best Short Film and Grand Prize for Fantasy at the Rhode Island International Film Festival for *Hugo*; and was a Tropfest finalist with *Flight*.

Ngurrumbang (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Alex Ryan** | Cast: Amanda Woodhams, Cameron Stewart, Jesse Guivarra

The fiery daughter of a colonial farmer discovers the truth behind her family's new land after she reluctantly saves a wounded Aboriginal boy from drowning.

Director **Alex Ryan**, a graduate of the University of Technology Sydney and AFTRS, has directed award-winning shorts, promos and music clips for major music labels.

Perception (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Miranda Nation** | Cast: Maia Thomas, Nyah Shahab, Corey Hannan, Amanda Ma

Confronting death, Crystal – a mother, daughter, lover, stripper and survivor – grasps at life and finally faces herself, without deception.

Director **Miranda Nation**, an award-winning short film writer and director, was selected for the Screen Australia Springboard program for debut feature directors and has her first feature in development.

Ravage (World Premiere) | Australia | Short Film | Director: **Jaime Lewis** | Cast: Ashley Ricardo, Joshua Longhurst, Michael Yore

Annabelle, a high-school teacher, is having a secret relationship with one of her students; but what seemed a harmless and exciting affair is becoming a very dangerous game.

Director **Jaime Lewis** studied at AFTRS in 2009 and has since worked on music videos, documentaries, television and features.

Record | Australia | Short Film | Director: **David Lyons** | Cast: Damon Herriman, Darrien Skylar, Claire van der Boom

A father in mourning struggles to connect with his blind daughter.

This marks the directorial debut for **David Lyons**, an Australian actor best known for his role in the Emmy Award-winning drama *ER*, who is currently starring in NBC's *Revolution* and has a role in Lasse Hallström's latest feature, *Safe Haven*.

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SFF 2013 Dendy Short Film Guests: Director **Simon Rippingale**, screenwriter **Erica Harrison** and producer **Pauline Piper** (*A Cautionary Tail*); director **Brendon McDonall**, producer **Taylor Litton-Strain** and screenwriter **Jess Paine** (*All God's Creatures*); director **Maziar Lahooti** and producer **Andrew Brismead** (*Heaven*); director **Alex Ryan**, producer **Jiao Chen** and screenwriter **Jonathan Shaw** (*Ngurrumbang*); director: **Jaime Lewis**, producer **Leonie Rothwell** and screenwriter **Joshua Longhurst** (*Ravage*); director **Miranda Nation** and producer **Lyn Norfor** (*Perception*); and director **Nicholas Verso** and producer **John Molloy** (*The Last Time I Saw Richard*).

Sydney Film Festival celebrates its 60th anniversary this 5-16 June bringing a packed program of screenings and special events to even more venues across Sydney. The full program will be announced on **Wednesday 8 May 2013**. For tickets and full up-to-date program information please visit www.sff.org.au.

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animations across the city at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Opera Quays, the Art Gallery of NSW and the Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace. 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 twelve 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 Festival Official Competition winners include: *Alps* (2012), *A Separation* (2011) – which went on to win an Academy Award®, *Heartbeats* (2010), *Bronson* (2009) and *Hunger* (2008).

The 60th 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: 5-16 June, 2013

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

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