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## TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL AND ICA LAUNCH *MY CINEMA MY FILM FESTIVAL* IN SUPPORT OF INDEPENDENT CINEMAS

Sydney Film Festival's **Travelling Film Festival** (TFF) has partnered with **Independent Cinemas Australia** (ICA) and world-wide content delivery service **Qube Wire** to present **My Cinema My Film Festival**, with two curated programs screening in 19 cinemas across metro and regional NSW, QLD, SA, WA and ACT from November to December 2020. The initiative is supported by Screen Australia.

My Cinema My Film Festival aims to bring audiences back to their local theatres at a time when cinemas are faced with reduced capacity and fewer international releases. TFF's recent Queensland regional festivals were at COVID-19 safe capacity attendance; so this is a chance for more cinemas to present curated weekend international film festivals to local audiences across Australia.

The Festival presents two eclectic programs, showcasing independent and arthouse features from Australia and overseas, and a selection of Australian short films, as well as unique interview footage connecting film creatives to the Australian film-going community.

Program highlights include: **High Ground**, a brand-new Australian drama set in Arnhem Land starring Simon Baker and Jack Thompson (*Mystery Road*: SFF 2013); Cannes Film Festival Un Certain Regard award winning comedy **The Climb**. As well as Oscar nominated director Agnieszka Holland's critically acclaimed drama **Charlatan**; and Sydney Film Festival 2020 Documentary Australia Foundation Award winner **Descent**, a strikingly beautiful documentary focussing on free diver Kiki Bosch.

**Sydney Film Festival CEO Leigh Small** said, "Sydney Film Festival and the Travelling Film Festival are proud to partner with ICA to bring an expertly curated selection of films to metropolitan and regional cinemas across Australia.

"My Cinema My Film Festival, gives independent operators a chance to present a bespoke festival-worthy program of world-class and top Australian cinema to screen to their local audiences.

"Australian cinemas everywhere have been struggling under the weight of COVID-19 factors such as lockdowns, reduced audience capacities, or access to films due to delayed and limited theatrical film releases globally.

"This is one step we can take together to help bring audiences back to the cinemas responsibly, with outstanding films they are unlikely to see anywhere on streaming platforms," she said.

**Scott Seddon, President of Independent Cinemas Australia**, an organisation representing independent cinema operators throughout the country said, "My Cinema My Film Festival, presented in collaboration with Sydney Film Festival and the Travelling Film Festival, is a fantastic

opportunity for ICA member cinemas and the communities they serve to see the very best quality of films on the big screens of cinemas throughout Australia's cities and vast regional areas.

# TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

“The current dysfunction of Hollywood sees Australian cinemas struggling for commercial titles but has opened the door for the ICA team to negotiate this amazing array of filmmaking brilliance to see on the big screen with the big sound where it belongs.

“In the absence of tentpole films more and more of the titles on offer are aimed at the discerning moviegoer and this is a great opportunity for ICA member cinemas to relaunch to this segment of the market.

“This will give this particular segment of patrons the reason they have been looking for to get out off the couch and into their COVID-safe cinemas.

“I am optimistic that this might be the first of many years of the My Cinema My Film Festival,” he said.

**Eloi Mota, Head of Marketing** for national film chain **Dendy Cinemas & Icon Film Distribution** said, “As a major independent cinema chain, we pride ourselves on offering the best in quality cinema and alternative content to our customers.

“We’re providing a COVID safe environment and our customers are eager to return to the cinema experience, but we’re facing ongoing challenges with a lack of content. Studios are pushing their content out to 2021 or taking content direct to streaming platforms, so we’ve had to adapt by offering new forms of content and introducing new ways to experience cinema.

“We’re excited to partner with My Cinema and the Travelling Film Festival in bringing this initiative to Dendy Cinemas in Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra. These types of initiatives are important to help bring audiences back to the big screen,” he said.

**Todd Stiles, Operations Manager of Grand Cinemas**, a Western Australian cinema chain with six sites said, “My Cinema My Film Festival is a wonderful initiative presented by ICA and the Travelling Film Festival that enables independent cinemas to showcase films in theatres where they are meant to be watched.

“With the film industry struggling to obtain great content, this gives cinema operators and our patrons the opportunity to watch some brilliant titles on the big screen,” he said.

**Paul Besanko, Marketing Manager of Wallis Cinemas**, a South Australian Chain with five sites across SA and VIC said, “This month Wallis Cinemas celebrates 70 years of business in South Australia. With emerging challenges including the push back of US-based studio releases, there has been an increasing focus on helping local cinemas through initiatives like My Cinema My Film Festival.”

“We are excited to partner with the Travelling Film Festival and ICA to bring this exciting program to two of our locations. This will give the public the opportunity to see boundary pushing titles that they may not have been able to access previously on the big screen,” he said.

Screenings will take place in independent metro cinemas (**27 Nov – 10 Dec**) and regional cinemas across Australia (**19– 30 Nov**).



# TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Tickets on sale from Friday 30 October at participating cinemas. More information at: [sff.org.au/tff/program/my-cinema-my-film-festival/](http://sff.org.au/tff/program/my-cinema-my-film-festival/).

Participating theatres:

## NSW

- Forum Cinema Wagga
- Scotty's Cinema Raymond Terrace
- Picture Showman Merimbula
- Forum 6 Cinema Tamworth
- Odeon 5 Cinema Orange
- Gala Cinema Warrawong
- Dendy Newtown

## QLD

- Big Screen Cinemas Hervey Bay
- Gympie Cinema
- Gladstone Cinema
- Dendy Coorparoo
- Dendy Portside

## WA

- Bunbury Grand Cinemas
- Grand Cinemas Armadale
- Grand Cinemas Joondalup

## SA

- Oatmill Cinema Mt Gambier
- Wallis Mt Barker
- Wallis Mitcham

## ACT

- Dendy Canberra

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\*\*\*My Cinema My Film Festival Press Pack and Images Available [HERE](#)

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## EDITORS NOTES

The My Cinema My Film Festival program varies between each location. Check local cinema listings for film availabilities. High Ground is the opening night film in each regional centre.

## FEATURE FILMS

**High Ground** | Australia | Directed by Stephen Maxwell Johnson - A brand-new unmissable Australian drama set in Arnhem Land, selected for the 2020 Berlin Film Festival, starring newcomer Jacob Junior Nayinggul, Simon Baker (*Breath*) and Jack Thompson (*Mystery Road: SFF 2013*), and directed by Stephen Maxwell Johnson (*Yolgnu Boy*).

# TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL

***The Climb*** | USA | Directed by Michael Angelo Covino - A totally charming, and bittersweet comedy directed, written by, and starring Michael Angelo Covino, that follows two friends through different rocky times in their lives. A prize winner at Cannes 2019 and a favourite with critics around the globe.

***Charlatan*** | Czech Republic | Directed by Agnieszka Holland - Multi-award-winning director Agnieszka Holland's latest drama focuses on the real-life story of an obsessive herbalist - a conman for some, a saviour for others - during the Nazi Occupation of Czechoslovakia and the subsequent lowering of the Iron Curtain.

***Journey to Utopia*** | Denmark, Norway | Directed by Erlend E. Mo - A forward-thinking family leading a picture-perfect life on their farm in Norway make the dramatic decision to move to a brand new self-sufficient, eco-village in Denmark, but the path to environmentally ethical living is less than easy in this heart-warming documentary.

***Kuessipan*** | Canada | Directed by Myriam Verreault - A multiple award-winning feature, adapted from an acclaimed Canadian novel by Naomi Fontaine, Kuessipan is a poignant coming-of-age story told through an Indigenous lens of two First Nation girls from a rural Quebec Innu community.

***Max Richter's Sleep*** | UK | Directed by Natalie Johns - A unique, captivating documentary that follows acclaimed composer and musician Max Richter and the presentation of an ambitious open-air performance of his celebrated eight-hour ambient opus 'Sleep'.

***Adam*** | Morocco, France, Belgium | Directed by Maryam Touzani - A poignant story set in Casablanca's old city, selected for Cannes' Un Certain Regard, featuring superb performances, an evocative setting, classic Arabic music and unforgettable characters.

***It Must Be Heaven*** | Palestine | Directed by Ella Suleiman - A comic saga from acclaimed Palestinian director Elia Uleiman, that asks the fundamental question – as he journeys across the globe - where is the place we can truly call home? Selected for the Cannes and Toronto Film Festivals.

***Descent*** (SFF 2020) | Australia | Directed by Nays Baghai - Winner of the Sydney Film Festival's 2020 Documentary Australia Foundation Award, Nays Baghai's strikingly beautiful film focusses on Kiki

Bosch, a free diver in freezing water - not a pastime for the faint of heart, but for Kiki, it was a life saver.

***The Painter and the Thief*** | Norway | Directed by Benjamin Ree - A Sundance prize-winning documentary that exposes the curious friendship between an artist and the thief who stole her paintings, that offers a profound look at the art of healing — and the healing power of art.

***The Perfect Candidate*** | Saudi Arabia, Germany | Directed by Haifaa Al-Mansour - Oscar nominee and Saudi Arabia's first woman director Haifaa Al-Mansour (*Wadja*: SFF 2013), delivers an entertaining and revealing look at the changing roles of women in Saudi Arabia.

***Only The Animals*** | France, Germany | Directed by Dominik Moll - French director Dominik (Harry, He's Here to Help!) Moll's engrossing, witty and slippery mystery thriller follows five characters over two continents who seemingly play a role in the disappearance of a sixth.

## AUSTRALIAN SHORT FILMS



# TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL

**Safety Net** (SFF 2020) | Australia | Directed by Anthea Williams - Thirteen-year-old Terry is in emergency care with guardians after his mother's arrest. Cheeky and living with a disability, he's able to outwit one guardian while finding exactly the connection he needs from the other.

**Groundhog Night** (SFF 2020) | Australia | Directed by Genevieve Clay-Smith - For carer Gary, moving on and keeping his family together isn't always easy. Tensions run high when his late wife's parents arrive unannounced after he brings home a date. A charming insightful comedy written.

**Diving In** (SFF 2020) | Australia | Directed by Adam Bowes, Nina Oyama - Will romance blossom for Alex? The competitive swimmer is madly in love with Jen, who works at the local pool. First, he needs to make a date, but his mischievous friends aren't helping.

**Obscura** (SFF 2020) | Australia | Directed by Emily Jordan, Hannah Jordan - An imaginative stop-motion animation that looks inside our cameras at the creatures within, who are living lives defined by what they see through the lens.

## ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

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](http://sff.org.au).

Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney.

## ABOUT INDEPENDENT CINEMAS AUSTRALIA

Independent Cinemas Australia (ICA) is the not-for-profit industry association representing independent exhibitors in Australia and New Zealand. For more than 25 years, ICA has been on a

mission to represent and advance the interests of independent exhibitors in an increasingly competitive and complex industry.

Independent cinemas comprise 28% of the 2,310 cinema screens in Australia and 33% of cinema sites – with ICA representing the owners and operators of 649 cinema screens across 171 cinema locations ranging from rural areas through to metropolitan multiplex circuits.

## ABOUT QUBE WIRE

Qube Wire is a self-service, single-window system for global theatrical distribution. With a simple yet comprehensive user interface, distributors can manage their digital cinema assets, assign territorial rights for their content and have their Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) and keys (aka Key Delivery Messages or KDMs) delivered to movie theatres across the world. Theatres can manage their own digital cinema device details and access their Universal Inbox on the Qube Wire service as well.