

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

NOV 03–21 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sydney Film Festival unveils new SFF On Demand Program, online 12-21 November

SFF On Demand launches a selection of titles from the 68th Sydney Film Festival program to become available to stream online nationally from 12-21 November.

Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley said, “We are thrilled to invite cinephiles from across the country to enjoy SFF’s offering online this year: 56 feature-length films and 13 shorts from the Festival’s film strands.”

SFF ON DEMAND PROGRAM

Films in **Official Competition** for the Festival’s **Sydney Film Prize** are Jasmila Žbanić’s (*For Those Who Can Tell No Tales*, SFF 2013) Oscar-nominated thriller ***Quo Vadis, Aida?***, a gripping look at a UN translator in Srebrenica attempting to save her family as conflict rages around them; and ***There Is No Evil***, banned Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof’s powerful take on the death penalty and its impact on Iranian society.

Documentary Australia Foundation Award for Australian Documentary nominees include: Justin Krook’s ***A Fire Inside***, about the selfless acts of everyday Aussies during Australia’s 2019-20 bushfires; ***Unseen Skies***, by Yaara Bou Melhem, documenting visionary American artist Trevor Paglen as he attempts his most audacious project yet; ***I'm Wanita***, a no-holds-barred crowd-pleasing debut feature from Matthew Walker about Tamworth’s renegade ‘Queen of Honky Tonk’; Jane Castle’s, eight years in the making, poignant documentary, ***When the Camera Stopped Rolling***, about her filmmaker mother, and more.

Features from the international festival circuit include Sundance Grand Jury nominee ***El Planeta***, a darkly funny directorial debut from acclaimed multidisciplinary artist Amalia Ulman; and the SXSW favourite ***Swan Song***, starring screen legend **Udo Kier** (*Bacurau*, SFF 2019) as a former drag queen and snippy hairdresser who escapes his nursing home and treks across small-town Ohio to fulfil the dying wish of a former client.

International documentaries exploring politics from around the globe are ***When A City Rises***, an urgent and illuminating documentary that tells the story of the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests; and ***The First 54 Years – An Abbreviated Manual for Military Occupation***, a step-by-step guide to colonial occupation from director Avi Mograbi, using Israel’s 54-year occupation of the Palestinian territories as a case study.

Impactful documentaries selected for the inaugural **Sustainable Future Award** include: ***A Fire Inside***, exploring Australia’s 2019-20 bushfires, and two titles from Scandinavia - Berlinale-selected ***From the Wild Sea*** and CPH:DOX-selected ***How to Kill a Cloud***.



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Explore stories from the Festival's **First Nations** program: Australian filmmaker Larissa Behrendt's (*Under Skin, In Blood*, SFF 2015) *Araatika: Rise Up!*, about a group of NRL stars led by Dean Widders as they create a pre-game performance to meet the famous haka; and Sundance Grand Jury Prize nominee *Wild Indian*, a slow-burn thriller exploring the haunting consequences of a decades old murder committed by two cousins.

From **Europe! Voices of Women in Film** comes impactful debut features from talented European women filmmakers include Cannes selections: *Slalom*, an unflinching portrait of the abuse experienced by a teenage competitive skier at the hands of her domineering coach; and *Last Days of Spring*, a poignant blend of fiction and documentary exploring the plight of a family facing eviction from a Madrid shantytown.

Inspiring musical stories from **Sounds On Screen** include: *Shoplifters of the World*, a moving tribute to the music and lyrics of The Smiths starring Joe Manganiello (*True Blood*) and Ellar Coltrane (*Boyhood*, SFF 2014); and *The Rumba Kings*, a deep dive into the stirring history of Congolese rumba.

Horror fans will enjoy **Freak Me Out** favourites, *Gaia*, a visually stunning apocalyptic eco-horror from South Africa; and riveting social horror *The Beta Test* by Jim Cummings (*Thunder Road*, SFF 2016) and PJ McCabe chronicling how a secret sexual encounter turns into an existential nightmare for a Hollywood agent.

From the **Flux: Art + Film** program, experimental films from Australian filmmakers include *Shapaapaa* about the 2020 lockdown experience in London, made entirely remotely by Australian Molly Reynolds (*My Name is Gulpilil*) and UK-based creative Shekhar Bassi; and *Drifting Petals*, a free-spirited "alternate cinema" offering from award-winner Clara Law (*Floating Life*, SFF 1996), spanning Australia, Macau and Hong Kong.

The SFF On Demand program includes one feature and three short films from the Festival's **Screenability** program, an exciting platform for screen practitioners with disability in partnership with Create NSW. This includes feel-good feature, *Best Summer Ever*, a fresh take on the classic teen musical genre featuring a talented cast of which more than half are people with disability.

Kids, tweens and teens alike will adore films from SFF's **Family Films** program, including French comedy-mystery *The Fantastic Journey of Margot and Marguerite*, a time-travelling odyssey following two 12-year-old girls transported to different eras via a mysterious chest hidden in an attic; and action-packed animation from Quebec, *Felix and the Hidden Treasure*, which follows a fantastic quest to find a missing father and priceless treasure.

Audiences will also be able to stream all 10 finalists from the **Dendy Awards**, Australia's longest running short film competition.

TICKETS

Single rentals start from \$15, with a variety of packages available from \$14-\$130. SFF Demand program and tickets available at ondemand.sff.org.au.



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Sydney Film Festival runs in cinema 3–14 November 2021. SFF On Demand's online program runs 12–21 November. Tickets to Sydney Film Festival 2021 are on sale now. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information.

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

EDITOR'S NOTES

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From Wednesday 3 November to Sunday 14 November 2021, the 68th Sydney Film Festival offers Syneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, in-depth discussions with film guests, and now a virtual offering with SFF On Demand streaming nationally from 12–21 November.

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.

The 68th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney.

