



**SYDNEY
FILM
FESTIVAL**
JUNE 08–19 2022

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SFF, ACMI & NFSA ANNOUNCE IT TAKES TIME: TEN FILMS BY FREDERICK WISEMAN RETROSPECTIVE

FREDERICK WISEMAN RETROSPECTIVE WITH 10 ICONIC WORKS DELIVERING A PANORAMIC VISION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY TO BE PRESENTED BY ACMI, SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL AND NATIONAL FILM & SOUND ARCHIVE

“I’m making movies about common human experiences, which differ from place to place because traditions, customs and habits differ ... I attempt to create a dramatic structure drawn from ordinary experience and un-staged, everyday events.” – **Frederick Wiseman**

American documentary filmmaker Frederick Wiseman has offered a revealing perspective on humanity – and human endeavour – across the late 20th and 21st centuries. Recognising his immense contribution to cinema, ACMI - in association with the Sydney Film Festival (SFF) and the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA) - will present **It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman**. This retrospective of Wiseman’s work will screen at **ACMI** in Melbourne from **22 May to 25 September**, at **Sydney Film Festival** in Sydney from **11 June to 31 July**, and at **NSFA** in Canberra from **12 June to 23 October**.

The retrospective will spotlight Wiseman’s multi award-winning career over seven decades, where he has expertly invited audiences into worlds they may have never known or previously cared about to discover what makes communities tick. Ten iconic films draw from a peerless body of work, spanning Wiseman’s work from the ’60s right through to his latest 2020 release.

It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman will include the Melbourne premiere of **City Hall** (2020), where Wiseman continues his lifelong project to observe the inner workings of American institutions - this time in his hometown of Boston, Massachusetts. With his trademark observational style, Wiseman captures democracy in action and documents an organisation striving to do the right thing against difficult odds.

The remaining program includes: **Titicut Follies** (1967), Wiseman’s harrowing and now legendary debut, shot in 1966 in a Massachusetts prison for the criminally insane and kept out of circulation by court order for nearly a quarter of a century; **Welfare** (1975), a film exploring the staggering complexity of the American welfare system and the countless personal dramas it seeks to accommodate; and **Central Park** (1989), focusing on the 340-hectare idyll in the heart of Manhattan’s hectic metropolis, capturing New Yorkers - and others - enjoying the park’s enviable habitat and tensions (including irate vendors at a peace rally featuring Midnight Oil performing ‘Beds are Burning’).

Twenty-five years after focusing on a lower-middle class school in Philadelphia, Wiseman travelled uptown to Spanish Harlem, New York, to capture the workings of Central Park East Secondary School for





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his second take on the American education system in *High School II* (1994); in *Belfast, Maine* (1999) all walks of life are painstakingly chronicled and honoured in an unvarnished portrait of a small American town on the cusp of the 21st century; a Florida-based domestic violence shelter comes under Wiseman's curious and unflinching eye as he records the extraordinary transformations it enables in *Domestic Violence* (2001); and the on and off-stage drama of one of the world's great dance companies is featured in *La Danse: The Paris Opera Ballet* (2009), where Wiseman captures - in thrillingly sustained takes - the tireless perfecting of technique and astounding talent.

Back in the city Wiseman has returned to so many times during his career, the filmmaker celebrates the vibrant streets and bustling community life of one of New York's most ethnically and culturally diverse neighbourhoods in *In Jackson Heights* (2015), featuring stores selling all manner of wares with offerings including baby goats, saris, HIV testing, Tibetan food and classes for aspiring cabbies. And one of the world's greatest knowledge institutions opens its many doors for a riveting behind-the-scenes exploration in *Ex Libris: New York Public Library* (2017), where Wiseman encounters passionate readers, archivists and educators, budget-focused administrators and inspiring speakers including Patti Smith and Elvis Costello.

Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley said: "Sydney Film Festival has long celebrated the works of Frederick Wiseman and has screened, over the years, 18 of his films beginning with *Welfare* in 1976. We're delighted to be highlighting the works of this living legend at our next festival in June, and to once again be collaborating with ACMI and the National Film and Sound Archive."

ACMI Film Curator Roberta Ciabarra said: "ACMI is delighted to be partnering once more with the Sydney Film Festival and National Film and Sound Archive to present a season of documentary films by one of the most prolific and essential chroniclers of our age."

National Film & Sound Archive of Australia Public Programs Manager Karina Libbey said: "We are thrilled to be presenting the important work of Frederick Wiseman to our audiences here in Canberra. Partnering once again with our friends at Sydney Film Festival and ACMI, the NFSA is committed to showcasing filmmaking that is informed by our past and offers unique perspectives of the world we live in today."

As part of the 2022 SFF running 8-19 June, a pre-recorded masterclass with Wiseman, created by SFF and ACMI, will be available for a limited time to stream on ACMI's online film platform Cinema 3. Stay tuned for further details.

It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman at SFF

Follow Sydney Film Festival: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Youtube](#)

Tickets for the SFF season are now on sale

11 June to 31 July 2022

Venue: Art Gallery of NSW (8 – 19 June) | Dendy Cinemas Newtown (3 – 31 July)

Single ticket – \$14, Ten Pack – \$140

Book at sff.org.au/wiseman-retrospective





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It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman at ACMI

Tickets for the [ACMI season](#) are now on sale

22 May to 25 September 2022

ACMI Cinemas, Fed Square

Members \$12, Full \$18, Concession \$14

3-session pass \$33–45 6-session pass \$66–94 10-session pass \$100–120

Book at acmi.net.au

It Takes Time: Ten Films by Frederick Wiseman at NSFA

Tickets for the [NSFA season](#) are now on sale

12 June to 23 October 2022

Arc Cinema, NSFA, Acton, Canberra

Adult \$12, Concession \$10, Full season pass \$80–\$100

Book at nfsa.gov.au/wiseman

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Images, including film stills are available to download [here](#).

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From Wednesday 8 June to Sunday 19 June 2022, the 69th Sydney Film Festival offers Sydneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth discussions, film guests, and more.

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 69th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the RISE fund, and the City of Sydney.

ABOUT ACMI

ACMI is Australia's national museum of screen culture. The museum reopened in February 2021 after a two-year, \$40 million redevelopment – an architectural, programmatic and technological transformation. Navigate the universe of film, TV, videogames and art with us. ACMI celebrates the wonder and power of the world's most democratic artform – fostering the next generation of makers, players and watchers. ACMI's vibrant calendar of exhibitions, screenings, commissions, festivals, and industry and education programs explore the stories, technologies and artists that create our shared screen culture. More at acmi.net.au

ABOUT NATIONAL FILM & SOUND ARCHIVE

The mission of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NSFA) is to collect, preserve and share Australia's vibrant and diverse audiovisual culture as embodied by our evolving collection – reflecting who we were, who we are, and who we want to be. Audiovisual technologies enable us to capture moments in time: moving image and sounds in their most vivid forms. At over 3 million items, the NSFA collection transforms these records into 'living memories' – the many facets of Australia's peoples, cultures, ideas and beliefs, both over time and across the land. More info at nfsa.gov.au

