

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

6-17 JUNE 2018

MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES NEW FILMS, ON SALE NOW

The 65th Sydney Film Festival (6-17 June), which opens next Wednesday, announces that eight important new feature films will come to Sydney directly from screening at Cannes, including *Shoplifters*: winner of this year's Palme d'Or, the biggest prize in world cinema.

"We have secured eight films direct from Cannes - essential viewing for film buffs, from both contemporary cinematic masters and exciting new voices," said **Festival Director Nashen Moodley**.

"Sydney Film Festival audiences will be the first in the country to see the Palme d'Or winner, family drama *Shoplifters* from award-winning filmmaker Kore-eda Hirokazu; Lee Chang-dong's FIPRESCI Prize — Competition winner *Burning*, the highest-scoring film in the history of Screen's jury grid; and prominent French filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard's *The Image Book*, which won the Special Palme d'Or."

"Also screening will be the winner of Cannes' Best Director prize, visually-stunning love story *Cold War* from Oscar-winning filmmaker Paweł Pawlikowski; the winner of the Directors' Fortnight *Climax*, from notorious French provocateur Gaspar Noé; and Lukas Dhont's multiple award-winning debut *Girl*, which won the Camera d'Or and Queer Palm, and both Best Performance and FIPRESCI prize, Un Certain Regard."

"We also have Cannes Closing Night film *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote*, from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *12 Monkeys* director Terry Gilliam, starring Jonathan Pryce and Adam Driver, who audiences can also see in *BlackKkKlansman*; and winner of the Society of Dramatic Author and Composers Prize at Critics' Week, *Woman At War* by *Of Horses and Men* director Benedikt Erlingsson," he said.

Synopsis for these special screenings:

SHOPLIFTERS

Winner of the 2018 Cannes Palme d'Or, Kore-eda Hirokazu's (*After Life*, SFF 1999; *Nobody Knows*) new masterpiece is about a poor Japanese family committing petty crimes to survive. Following one of their regular, carefully choreographed shoplifting sessions, Osamu and his young son come across a little girl freezing in the cold. They take her to their ramshackle house and feed her. Though the family is initially reluctant, they take the girl in when they discover the neglect she's suffered. This unusual family struggles to get by, relying on low-paid menial work and petty crime to survive. Still, in each other and in their simple life they find comfort and happiness. When a shoplifting caper goes wrong, hidden secrets emerge and the mysterious bonds linking the family begin to unravel. A film built on beautifully observed and richly resonant moments, *Shoplifters* is at once delightful, funny and heartbreaking, and the deserving winner of the biggest prize in world cinema.

BURNING

A love triangle mystery based on a Haruki Murakami short story, Korean great Lee Chang-dong's (*Secret Sunshine*, *Poetry*) latest was hailed as the best-reviewed film at Cannes. While on a delivery, Jongsu (Yoo Ah-in) encounters Haemi (Jong-seo Jun) who reminds him that they were neighbours as children. Later that day, the two become lovers, and when Haemi asks Jongsu to feed her cat while she's away on a trip to Africa, Jongsu believes that they are to embark on a relationship. But when Haemi returns from the trip with a handsome, rich companion, Ben (Steven Yeun, *The Walking Dead*, *Okja* SFF 2017), Jongsu is left confused and heartbroken. A strange confession, and Haemi's sudden disappearance, thrusts Jongsu's world into further disarray and he begins an increasingly desperate investigation. Anchored by superb performances, *Burning* is a meticulously constructed mystery reflecting on love, class, memory and rage. Winner of the FIPRESCI critics' prize at Cannes, it became the highest-scoring film in the history of Screen International's jury grid.

THE IMAGE BOOK

Winner of the Cannes Special Palme d'Or for "an artist who takes cinema forward", Jean-Luc Godard's powerful essay film reflects on the state of the world. French New Wave pioneer, Godard revolutionised cinema and set the tone for much of what followed. Now 87, Godard (whose *Bande à Part* played at SFF 1965) exposes today's world of discord with his charismatic narration and an explosion of images, news clips, acts of violence and sounds. Referencing hundreds of films, as disparate as *Jaws* and *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*, Godard appropriates all to his own ends. Concerned with global politics, a large segment of the film focuses on the Arab world: the way it is perceived by the West, its depiction in the cinema, and the current challenges facing its citizens. Entrancing, bemusing and heated, *The Image Book* shows that Godard, nearly six decades after his debut, still has something to say, and new ways in which to say it.

COLD WAR

Paweł Pawlikowski (Oscar-winner *Ida*) won the Best Director prize at Cannes for this passionate, music-filled love story set in Cold War-era Europe and based on the relationship of his own parents. Told over 15 years in stunning black and white, *Cold War* is the love story of musicians Wiktor (Tomasz Kot) and Zula (Joanna Kulig) who meet in the ruins of post-war Poland. With different backgrounds and temperaments, they are fatally mismatched and yet fatefully drawn to each other. Set against the background of the *Cold War* in the 1950s in Poland, Berlin, Yugoslavia and Paris, the couple are separated by politics, character flaws and twists of fate – an impossible love story in impossible times. With a terrific soundtrack comprising folk, jazz, classical and more, *Cold War* uses music to signify the passage of time and the changing relationship between the lovers. Brilliantly acted and visually stunning, *Cold War* is one of the films of the year.

CLIMAX

Gaspar Noé's (*Irréversible*, *Enter the Void*) street-dance-horror-hybrid, liberally laced with sex, drugs and music, won the Directors Fortnight Prize at Cannes. Noé outraged audiences with his 1998 debut, *I Stand Alone* (SFF 1999), and he's been keeping our jaws agape ever since with his pungent celluloid mix of excessive violence and sex. The reviews out of Cannes this year, where Noé's fifth feature debuted, are packed with adjectives such as "satanic", "gobsmacking", "depraved" and "unflinching" (to quote just a few!). *Climax* is reportedly based on the true story of a 1990s dance group whose post-rehearsal party descended into hell, helped by liberal serves of LSD-laced alcohol (it also features an astonishing choreographed sequence set to '90s electro dance music). Noé was allegedly disappointed with the loving response of critics and audiences to his Cannes screenings: "Six people walked out of *Climax*? No! I usually have 25%."

GIRL

The Cannes Camera d'Or winner is a striking debut about a teenage transgender girl training to be a ballerina whilst undergoing a taxing physical transformation. 15-year-old Lara was born in a boy's body and wants nothing more than to be a ballerina. Her family, and particularly her father, is very supportive of her aspirations. As Lara goes through the physical endurance required of a ballerina, she also faces the psychological and physical challenges of the transition. At the same time, Lara is developing her first attractions, and the burdens of adolescence seem all the heavier. A deeply humane and realistic film, *Girl* refreshingly posits a fundamentally supportive environment for the protagonist, but makes clear the challenges all the same. With a brilliant central performance and clear, empathetic direction, *Girl* deservedly won a number of prizes at Cannes.

THE MAN WHO KILLED DON QUIXOTE

Terry Gilliam's long-awaited movie version of Cervantes' legendary 'Don Quixote' is hilarious, original, and a total joy to watch. Fresh from Closing Night at Cannes 2018. The characters and Spanish setting are familiar, but this film is directed by the man who brought us *Time Bandits*, *Brazil* and *The Fisher King* – not to mention being a former Monty Python member – so it's not surprising that it deviates from the novel. Toby (Adam Driver) is a big-headed, jaded ad director, who's being backed by a loathsome businessman (Stellan Skarsgård) to make a movie. He stumbles upon a bootleg DVD of his first low-budget film, an adaptation of Cervantes' novel, and remembers with fondness his passion for filmmaking. In a blaze of nostalgia, he sets out to find the star of his movie debut, an old cobbler (Jonathan Pryce). Astonishingly, the shoemaker, ancient but still alive, is now wholly convinced that he's Don Quixote, the chivalrous knight he played so many years before. Before you know it, Toby is riding a donkey and wearing a poncho! Gilliam went through hell and high water to make this movie (flooded sets, collapsed funding, you name it...) and it's exhilarating to finally see the film on the big screen, but more than that it's a delight to watch!

WOMAN AT WAR

Gloriously funny, this year's Cannes Critics' Week award-winner from Benedikt Erlingsson (*Of Horses and Men*, SFF 2014) is about a DIY Icelandic eco-warrior taking on heavy industry. 50 year-old Halla lives in the beautiful Icelandic Highlands. The warm-hearted choir leader also leads a secret life as a passionate hardcore environmental activist. Armed with her bow and arrow, deftly wielded, Halla sabotages the industry that she feels threatens her beloved landscape. As she embarks on her boldest sabotage plan yet, the stakes are raised when she finds out that she is on the verge of realising a long-cherished dream to adopt a child. Erlingsson takes a wildly daring approach, bringing musical, comedic and social justice elements together in a visually lush film. It is sure to be one the year's most memorable.

The full line-up of Sydney Film Festival 2018 guests can be found on sff.org.au.

Sydney Film Festival runs 6 – 17 June 2018.

Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2018 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 6 June to Sunday 17 June 2018, the 65th Sydney Film Festival offers Sydneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth discussions, international guests and more.

Sydney Film Festival also presents an Official Competition of 12 films that vie for the Sydney Film Prize, a highly respected 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: *On Body and Soul* (2017); *Aquarius* (2016); *Arabian Nights* (2015); *Two Days, One Night* (2014); *Only God Forgives* (2013); *Alps* (2012); *A Separation* (2011); *Heartbeats* (2010); *Bronson* (2009); and *Hunger* (2008).

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: sff.org.au.

The 65th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and Destination NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic Partner is the NSW Government via its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.

