

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

6–17 JUNE 2018

BIOGRAPHY: NASHEN MOODLEY SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

2018 marks Nashen Moodley's seventh year as Festival Director of Sydney Film Festival.

During his first six years at the helm, Sydney Film Festival has grown vastly. 2017, the event's 64th year, marked the ninth consecutive year of growth in attendance, with final figures exceeding 185,000 and 2018 is set to continue this trend.

Moodley's seven years as Festival Director have been filled with highlights, including the introduction and development of the popular free public space the **Festival Hub at Town Hall**; a new partnership with Screen Australia's Indigenous Department entitled **Screen: Black**; and another new partnership with European Film Promotion called **European Cinema: 10 Women Filmmakers to Watch**. In partnership with Lexus Australia, Moodley has created the **Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship**, the largest cash fellowship (AU\$200,000 annually) for short film in Australia in order to sponsor new and upcoming talent in the industry.

Nashen Moodley sees an important social power in film and film festival culture, and this is a vision he has brought to Sydney Film Festival. "I think the impact of festivals, wherever they are, is to influence the individuals who see those films to experience a situation so different from their own, in a country so distant from their own, and understand how all people have the same concerns, the same desires in many ways."

Under Moodley's directorship, the Festival has expanded geographically to the **Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, Dendy Newtown, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Skyline Drive-In Blacktown, Randwick's Ritz Cinema**, and HOYTS Entertainment Quarter. He introduced a free public program of immersive experiences entitled **Beyond Cinema**, combining cinema with other art forms and exploring the cutting edge of screen culture and new technology.

In his programming decisions, Moodley has always shown a passion for wide ranging and inclusive cinema, and this year is no exception, with the theme '65 Years of Stories'. "We're trying to reflect what the festival is," Moodley said, "in that the festival is a space for many different voices." This commitment has been clear over the years as the numbers of titles screened at the Festival jumped from 183 in 2014 to 288 in 2017, from 59 countries, with 37 World Premieres included in the program.

Moodley is keen to foster Sydney's taste for international cinema from as many countries as possible. "We see so many films from so many countries and I think what's exciting to me is we're seeing lots of new, young filmmakers emerge, often with first feature films that are really striking and daring."

Moodley's career in film programming has encompassed many leadership roles, including Manager and Head of Programming at South Africa's longest-running film festival, the **Durban International Film Festival** (2001–2011) and as a Programming Consultant for **Dubai International Film Festival** (2005–present). During Moodley's 11 years at Durban International Film Festival he dramatically increased the content and reach of the festival. He also raised the profile of the African film industry by establishing the **Durban FilmMart**, a program that provides African filmmakers with the opportunity to pitch film projects to leading financiers.



In addition to his programming work, Moodley has advised India's **International Film Festival of Kerala**, South Korea's **Busan International Film Festival** and **Africala** in Mexico City. Moodley has also worked as an Industry Consultant at the **International Film Festival Rotterdam** and as an expert at the **Berlinale Talent Campus**. He served on the 2012-13 and 2013-14 Film Nominating Panels of the **Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative**.

Born in South Africa in 1978, Moodley studied English and philosophy at the University of Natal and worked as a journalist before turning to film programming. His film writing and criticism has appeared in newspapers and magazines including *The Guardian*, *GQ*, the *Sunday Tribune* (South Africa), the *Sunday Independent* (South Africa), and *Mail & Guardian* (South Africa).

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

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.

