

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

6-17 JUNE 2018

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Department of Family & Community Services
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MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES RETURN OF SCREENABILITY PROGRAM

The 65th Sydney Film Festival today announced the return of Screenability, an exciting platform for screen practitioners with disability, in partnership with Create NSW and the NSW Department of Family and Community Services.

Screenability will showcase six cutting edge works at this year's 6-17 June event – documentary films *The Sign for Love* and *Stuttering – My Constant Companion* and short films *Broken*, *Intimate Encounters 20 Years On*, *Tip of My Tongue*, and *To Know Him* – all made by filmmakers with disability.

Attending the Festival to introduce their films will be: Australian filmmakers with disability Stevie Cruz-Martin (*Broken*), Dieter Knierim (*Intimate Encounters 20 Years On*), and Samia Halabi (*Tip Of My Tongue*), and Israeli filmmakers with disability Elad Cohen and Iris Ben Moshe (*The Sign for Love*), and Austria's Birgit Gohlke and Petra Nickel (*Stuttering – My Constant Companion*).

These guests will also discuss opportunities for filmmakers with disability at a Meet the Filmmakers session at AFTRS (Saturday, 16 June, 4:15pm). All Screenability filmmaker introductions and Q&As will be Auslan interpreted.

"The Festival's Screenability strand will showcase works by filmmakers with disability from Australia, Israel, the UK and Sweden. The diversity of the disability story is beautifully presented in these films, leading us inside another world with authentic storytelling. Programming these films has been an exciting process, revealing a depth of talent creating startling and provocative cinema," said **Sydney Film Festival's Screenability Programmer Sofya Gollan**.

"From an exploration of voices as the most distinct representation of who we are; to a deaf woman fighting for her lover's body to say goodbye; to a deaf man's fight to win the respect of his loved ones, these films, made by those with lived experience of disability, are boldly breathe new life into storytelling," she said.

"The Festival will also feature the World Premiere of the three Screenability Film Fund films. With stories of a young Muslim teenager rekindling a childhood friendship; a relationship's breakdown; and a short documentary about the consequences of a provocative exhibition, 20 years later, these films are incredibly diverse," she said.

For the second year, the Festival maintains its inclusion policy, with audio described and open captioned screenings, and a relaxed screening (*Maya the Bee: The Honey Games*, 1:00pm on 17 June) to complement the Festival's program, which includes over 80 English-subtitled films.

Screenability at the Sydney Film Festival is part of a suite of initiatives by Create NSW designed to



boost the participation of underrepresented groups in the screen industry. The focus of Screenability is to grow participation with a wide range of industry professionals, showcasing films by filmmakers with disability in a festival context.

Grainne Brunsdon, Acting Executive Director for Create NSW said, “Last year’s inaugural Screenability series was a sell-out success and this year we are delighted to premiere three new captivating films from some incredibly talented filmmakers across the State.”

“Creating more opportunities for Australians with disabilities in the screen industry is what our Screenability commitment is all about and along with finding paid-for placements for creatives across the sector, we are immensely proud of the achievements to date. We can’t wait for audiences to see this year’s line-up of films,” she said.

“People with disability will see themselves and their experiences reflected in a purposeful way at one of the world’s longest running film festivals for the second year running,” said **Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Raymond Williams**.

“Screening great films by Australian and international film makers with disability teaches us to see the people and their abilities beyond their conditions, increasing visibility and awareness, while also promoting career opportunities in filmmaking for people with disability,” he said.

The full Sydney Film Festival 2018 program can be found online at 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.

