



MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.00am WEDNESDAY 10 MAY 2017

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL PREVIEWS 2017 GUEST LINE-UP

The 64TH Sydney Film Festival announces the first list of stars and filmmaker guests to attend the Festival 7-18 June.

These distinguished industry guests will attend the Australian and world premieres of their films, walk the Festival's red carpets, introduce their films and participate in talks, panels and Q&A sessions. Please note: there may be further announcements of Festival guests. For the most up-to-date information, visit sff.org.au.

The Festival together with **Vivid Ideas**, part of the world's largest festival of light, music and ideas, Vivid Sydney, will present five FREE **Meet the Filmmaker** talks at The Hub, Town Hall. All together, the 2017 Sydney Film Festival will present a vast array of free talks, panel discussions and events, traversing a huge range of topics.

Highlights include:

Cannes-winning Indigenous Australian director **Warwick Thornton** will present the world premiere of his Official Competition (Sydney Film Prize) contender ***We Don't Need a Map*** on Opening Night at the Festival. Speaking at The Hub (Sunday 11 June, 3.45pm), Thornton will explore the themes of his film, which investigates Australia's relationship with the Southern Cross, from astronomy to Indigenous spirituality, and colonial history to the present day.

Celebrated Korean director **Bong Joon-ho** will also attend the Festival to present his Cannes Competition contender, the SFF Closing Night film ***Okja***, starring Tilda Swinton, Jake Gyllenhaal and An Seo-hyun.

David Wenham will present the world premiere of his feature film directorial debut ***Ellipsis***, and will be the subject of this year's Ian McPherson Memorial Lecture (Public Holiday Monday 12 June, 4:00pm) at the Art Gallery of NSW; in conversation with film critic, author, and former director of the Sydney Film Festival (1966–1983) **David Stratton**.

Hollywood based Emmy-winning Australian actor **Ben Mendelsohn** will attend the premiere of his film ***Una***, directed by celebrated Australian theatre director Benedict Andrews. The film is also in Competition for the Sydney Film Prize. Mendelsohn will discuss his extraordinary career at a free public talk at The Hub (Saturday 10 June, 2:00pm).

Guests associated with Official Competition titles are: Hungarian director **Ildikó Enyedi** (***On Body and Soul***), French director **Alain Gomis** (***Félicité***), actor Sherwan Haji (***The Other Side of Hope***), Mexican director **Amat Escalante** (***The Untamed***), Afghan director **Shahrbanoo Sadat** (***Wolf and Sheep***), and Haitian American producer **Hébert Peck** (***I Am Not Your Negro***).

Oscar-winning actor and political activist **Vanessa Redgrave** will present her Cannes selected documentary ***Sea Sorrow*** – the 80 year-old's directorial debut about the global refugee crisis. She will join Margaret Pomeranz on Saturday 17 June at 2pm for a free public talk about her film at The



Hub.

Red Dog director Kriv Stenders will present the world premieres of two of his films at the Festival this year. **Australia Day** is a hard look at the frayed edges of Australian society, with an all-star Australian cast (Bryan Brown, Shari Sebbens, Isabella Cornish, Matthew Le Nevez, and Sean Keenan). His new documentary **The Go-Betweens: Right Here** takes an intimate look at '70s Aussie rock-band The Go-Betweens.

Australian actor **Danielle Macdonald** will attend the Festival to present the premiere of her breakthrough US role **Patti Cake\$**, the story of an underdog New Jersey rapper from US director Jeremy Jasper.

Acclaimed Indigenous director **Wayne Blair** and other members of the film team will present the first two episodes from their highly anticipated second series of *Cleverman*.

Dutch director **Arash Kamali Sarvestani**, will present his extraordinary project: **Chauka Please Tell Us the Time**, which documents the day to day life of detainees on Manus Island. The film is made from footage captured secretly on a mobile phone by his co-creator, Iranian-Kurdish journalist and detainee Behrouz Boochani. **Sarvestani** will discuss his film at the Hub (Sunday 11 June, 2:00pm) after the premiere.

Haitian American producer **Hébert Peck** will attend the Festival for his Oscar-nominated cine-essay on race in America *I Am Not Your Negro*, narrated by Samuel L Jackson, and will discuss the film at the Hub (Tuesday 13 June, 2:30pm), after the screening.

New Zealand filmmaker **Gaylene Preston** will attend to present her film *My Year with Helen* and discuss her year-long project about former NZ Prime Minister and UN Secretary-General candidate Helen Clarke.

French **Amanda Sther**, director of French romantic comedy **Madame**, starring Toni Collette and Harvey Keitel, will have its world premiere at the Festival.

Samoan New Zealand **Tusi Tamasese**, director of the first-ever Samoan feature (*The Orator*, 2011), will discuss his new feature, Berlinale-selected *One Thousand Ropes*, and talk about his approach to storytelling at the Hub (Monday 12 June 4:15pm).

Emerging women directors and industry trailblazers from Europe join **Europe! Voices of Women in Film**. Industry guests from across the Continent will come to Sydney to introduce their films and take part in a public talk: In conversation with European Women Filmmakers (Sunday 11 June, 12:00pm).

In attendance to present their films to Festival audiences are: Award winning Georgian filmmaker Rusudan Glurjidze (**House of Others**), acclaimed Irish filmmaker Neasa Ní Chianáin (**School Life**), Swiss actress Rachel Braunschweig (**The Divine Order**), promising UK filmmaker Hope Dickson Leach (**The Levelling**) who was last year awarded a £50 000 IWC Filmmaker Bursary Award, Macedonian filmmaker Teona Strugar Mitevska (**When the Day Had No Name**), and Afghan filmmaker Shahrbanoo Sadat (**Wolf and Sheep**), at 20 years old the youngest director ever selected for a Cannes Cinéfondation Residency.

The Festival's new Screenability program will bring two filmmakers with disability, Australia's **Daniel Monks** and Switzerland's **Manuël von Stürler**, to the Festival to present their films *Pulse* and *Lust for Sight*.

And virtual reality pioneers **Shaun Gladwell** and **Leo Faber** of ground-breaking VR collective BADFAITH will be at the festival to discuss creativity, experimental experiences and their program of 13 immersive VR works at The Hub (Tuesday 13 June, 5:00pm).



Sydney Film Festival runs 7 – 18 June 2017.

Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2017 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](#)

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From **Wednesday 7 June to Sunday 18 June 2017**, the 64th 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: *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 takes place across Greater Sydney: at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Opera Quays, Dendy Newtown, Skyline Drive-In Blacktown, Art Gallery of NSW, Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, Randwick Ritz, Casula Powerhouse, the Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall and SFF Outdoor Screen in Pitt Street Mall.

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: www.sff.org.au.

The 64th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW and Destination NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic Partner is the NSW Government through Destination NSW.

GUESTS

Opening & Closing Night:

We Don't Need a Map director-writer **Warwick Thornton**, producer **Brendan Fletcher** and film team, and *Okja* director **Bong Joon-ho**.

Official Competition:

Félicité director-writer **Alain Gomis**, *I Am Not Your Negro* producer **Hébert Peck**, *On Body and Soul* director **Ildikó Enyedi**, *The Other Side of Hope* actor **Sherwan Haji**, *Una* star **Ben Mendelsohn**, *The Untamed* director-writer **Amat Escalante**, *We Don't Need a Map* director-writer **Warwick Thornton**, producer **Brendan Fletcher** and film team, and *Wolf and Sheep* director **Shahrbanoo Sadat**.

Special Presentations at the State:

Ali's Wedding director **Jeffrey Walker** and **Osamah Sami** and members of the film team, *Australia Day* director **Kriv Stenders**, *Blue* director-producer **Karina Holden**, *Hotel Salvation* director-writer **Shubhashish Bhutiani**, *Mountain* director-writer **Jennifer Peedom**, *Madame* director-writer



Amanda Sthers, *My Year With Helen* director-producer Gaylene Preston, *One Thousand Ropes* director Tusi Tamasese, and *Patti Cake\$* star Danielle Macdonald.

Screenability:

Lust For Sight director-writer Manuel von Stürler, and *Pulse* director-writer Stevie Cruz-Martin and writer-producer-star Daniel Monks, *Drumming is Like Thunder* director Alyx Duncan and screenwriter Duncan Armstrong, *Struck* director Aurora Fearnley, and *The Milky Pop Kid* director Johanna Garvin.

Features:

By The Time It Gets Dark director-writer Anocha Suwichakornpong, *Ellipsis* director-writer-producer David Wenham, *Holy Air* director-writer Shady Srour, *Mrs K* director-writer Ho Yuhang, *Ordinary People* director-writer Eduardo Roy Jr. and producer Ferdinand Lapuz, *OtherLife* director Ben C. Lucas and the film team; *That's Not Me* director-writer-producer Gregory Erdstein, writer-producer-star Alice Foulcher and film team, *Vaya* director Akin Omotoso, and *White Sun* writer-director-producer Deepak Rauniyar.

Europe! Voices of Women in Film:

House of Others director-writer Rusudan Glurjidze, *School Life* director Neasa Ní Chianáin and producer David Rane, *The Divine Order* star Rachel Braunschweig, *The Levelling* director Hope Dickson Leach, *When the Day Had No Name* director-writer Teona Strugar Mitevska, and *Wolf and Sheep* director Shahrbanoo Sadat.

International Documentaries:

Chauka Please Tell Us The Time director-producer Arash Kamali Sarvestani, *An Insignificant Man* co-directors Khushboo Ranka and Vinay Shukla, *Motherland* director-writer-producer Ramona S. Diaz, *The Opposition* director-writer Hollie Fifer and producer Rebecca Barry, and *Sea Sorrow* director Vanessa Redgrave.

Family:

Rip Tide director Rhiannon Bannenberg, and *The Sun at Midnight* director-writer Kirsten Carthew.

Sounds on Screen:

The Go-Betweens: Right Here director-writer-producer Kriv Stenders, *RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked The World* producer Christian Fon and executive producer Stevie Salas, and *Whitney 'Can I Be Me'* director-writer-producer Nick Broomfield.

The Box Set:

Cleverman 2 director and film team in attendance.

Restorations:

Rocking The Foundations director-producer Pat Fiske, *The Well* director Samantha Lang and producer Sandra Levy, and *The Year My Voice Broke* director-writer John Duigan.

Feminism & Film: Sydney Women Filmmakers, 1970s & '80s

Behind Closed Doors co-directors Susan Lambert and Sarah Gibson, *Film for Discussion* filmmakers Martha Ansara and Jeni Thornley, *For Love or Money: A History of Women and Work in Australia* co-directors Megan McMurchy, Margot Nash, Margot Oliver and Jeni Thornley, *My Survival as an Aboriginal* producer Martha Ansara, *Serious Undertakings* co-directors Helen Grace and Erika Addis, *A Song of Ceylon* director Laleen Jayamanne, *Two Laws* filmmaker Carolyn Strachan, *This Woman is Not a Car* director Margaret Dodd, and *We Aim to Please* co-directors Robin Laurie and Margot Nash.

Focus on Canada:

RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked The World producer Christian Fon and executive producer Stevie



Salas, *The Sun at Midnight* director-writer Kirsten Carthew, *Those Who Make The Revolution Only Halfway Dig Their Own Graves* director-writer Simon Lavoie, and *Window Horses – The Poetic Persian Epiphany Of Rosie Ming* director-writer-producer Ann Marie Fleming.

Freak Me Out:

Spookers director Florian Habicht.

First Nations:

Cleverman 2 filmmakers in attendance, *Connection to Country* director-producer Tyson Mowarin, *In My Own Words* director-writer Erica Glynn, *Two Laws* filmmaker Carolyn Strachan, and *We Don't Need a Map* director-writer Warwick Thornton.

Documentary Australia Foundation for Australian Documentary:

Barbecue director Matthew Salleh, *Blue* director-writer Karina Holden, *Connection to Country* director-writer-producer Tyson Mowarin, *Defiant Lives* director-writer Sarah Barton, *Hope Road* director-writer-producer Tom Zubrycki, *In My Own Words* director-writer Erica Glynn, *The Last Goldfish* director-writer-subject Su Goldfish, *PACmen* director-writer-producer Luke Walker, *The Pink House* director Sascha Ettinger Epstein, and *Roller Dreams* director-producer Kate Hickey.

Ian McPherson Memorial Lecture 2017:

David Stratton in conversation with actor and director David Wenham.

Meet The Filmmakers at Town Hall:

In Conversation at the Festival Hub:

- In Conversation With Ben Mendelsohn (*Una*)
- In Conversation With European Women Filmmakers
- In Conversation With Warwick Thornton (*We Don't Need A Map*)
- In Conversation With Vanessa Redgrave (*Sea Sorrow*)

After the Movie Discussions in the Treasury Room:

- Extended Q&A: *My Year With Helen* with director Gaylene Preston
- Extended Q&A: *Chauka Please Tell Us The Time* with co-director Arash Kamali Sarvestani
- Extended Q&A: *One Thousand Ropes* with director Tusi Tamasese
- Extended Q&A: *I Am Not Your Negro* with producer Hébert Peck

Talking Movies in the Treasury Room:

- Low Budget? No Worries with *That's Not Me* and *OtherLife* filmmakers
- Diversity on Australian Screens with *Australia Day* and *Ali's Wedding* filmmakers
- An Animated Conversation with Ann Marie Fleming (*Window Horses*)