



MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED UNTIL MIDDAY 8 MAY 2013

Sydney Film Festival, 5-16 June, reveals its weird and wonderful Freak Me Out program

The 60th Sydney Film Festival announces six films in the popular and strange 'Freak Me Out' program.

This selection includes: *Cheap Thrills*, the winner of the audience award at the 2013 South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW); *Comrade Kim Goes Flying*, the first North Korean movie ever to screen at SFF; *Frankenstein's Army*, a gruesomely comic found-footage mockumentary about a crazed Nazi scientist and his half-human killing machines; *You're Next*, one of the most terrifying films of the year and winner of the SCI-FI Jury Award at the Gérardmer Film Festival 2012; the bizarre American road movie *The Rambler*; and *We Are What We Are*, selected for the Cannes Directors' Fortnight this year, a slow-burn study of a strange backwoods family directed by acclaimed genre filmmaker Jim Mickle (*Mulberry Street* and *Stake Land*, SFF 2011) reviewed by Indiewire as "poetic, creepy and satisfyingly gross."

"Freak Me Out is for everyone from hard-core gorehounds and students to cinephiles and mainstream audiences curious about what lies way, way beyond the boundaries of mainstream cinema," says **SFF Freak Me Out Curator, Richard Kuipers**. "Freak Me Out embraces material that until recently was largely restricted to genre-specific film festivals. Thanks to many factors including the constant critical and audience reappraisal of weird cinema and its greater availability via the Internet, Freak Me Out has been able to capture a substantial audience in a prestigious event such as Sydney Film Festival."

Note: Richard Kuipers will also present the *Freak Me Out Disco* at the Sydney Film Festival Hub @ Lower Town Hall on Friday 8 June, 10pm – 12am. Expect quirky soundtrack selections, 60s garage-punk killers, spaghetti-western smashers, Italian Giallo and Euro-sleaze atmospheric and insane rockabilly obscurities – and that's just for starters.

2013 Freak Me Out Films:

Cheap Thrills (Australian Premiere) | USA | Director: **E.L. Katz** | Cast: Pat Healy, Ethan Embry, Sara Paxton
The expression 'singing for your supper' reaches gruesomely funny new extremes in this nerve-jangling urban thriller by debut feature director E.L. Katz. At the centre of the twisted tale is Craig, a broke family man who's drowning his sorrows in a bar when he bumps into Vince, an old school buddy working as a low-rent debt collector. Enter cashed-up Colin and glamour puss Violet, a couple celebrating their anniversary by throwing money around and buying drinks for strangers. That's when the nightmarish fun starts. The

Principal State Government partner



Strategic partner



Government partners



duo invite their new best friends home and offer large sums of legal tender in return for certain 'tasks' performed. Daring you not to shut your eyes as this sadistic parlour game from hell reaches unbearable intensity, this is a night on the town you won't soon forget. *Cheap Thrills* won the Midnight Movie audience award at SXSW.

Comrade Kim Goes Flying (Australian Premiere) | Belgium, UK, North Korea | Directors: **Kim Gwang-hun, Nicholas Bonner, Anja Daelemans** | Cast: Han Jong-sim, Pak Chung-guk, Ri Yong-ho

What in the wide, wide world of sports do we have here? A romantic comedy about a North Korean coal miner who dreams of becoming a trapeze artist with the Pyongyang Circus, that's what! In this fabulous flick, communist propaganda imperatives and Western cravings for solid-gold kitsch coalesce in perfect triple-somersault harmony as plucky young heroine Kim Yong-mi leaps and twirls her way into everyone's hearts. The first North Korean film ever at SFF, and the first co-production with capitalist countries in 30 years sparkles with knockabout humour, chaste romance, well-fed cast members and stirring socialist drama. This is a delightfully bizarre *Freak Me Out* attraction precisely because it's a mainstream North Korean movie. It's our 60th festival and the 60th anniversary of hostilities officially ceasing between the two Koreas, so hang onto your 38th parallel and let the girl with the million-won smile entertain you.

Frankenstein's Army (Australian Premiere) | Netherlands, USA | Director: **Richard Raaphorst** | Cast: Karel Roden, Joshua Sasse, Robert Gwilym

Frankenstein's Army is a wonderfully gruesome and darkly comic entry in the long and distinguished line of movies about crazed Nazi scientists dedicated to giving the Third Reich a competitive edge on the battlefield. In this cleverly assembled mock documentary, the man in the blood-spattered white coat is none other than a descendant of a certain Victor Frankenstein. His work-in-progress: an unstoppable army stitched together from body parts of dead soldiers and bits and pieces of machinery and household appliances. Enter a Russian combat cameraman and his squad into the doctor's isolated lab and it's not long before all gory hell breaks loose. With barely a hint of computer-generated imagery, and featuring a platoon's worth of the most imaginatively designed and vicious man-monsters you're ever likely to see, this auspicious feature debut by Dutch filmmaker Richard Raaphorst is a top-notch old-school gore shocker that knows what you came for and gives it to you with interest.

The Rambler (Australian Premiere) | USA | Director/Screenwriter: **Calvin Lee Reeder** | Cast: Dermot Mulroney, Lindsay Pulsipher, James Cady

Road movie, horror flick, UFO fantasy, thriller and neo-Western musical rom-com: these are just a few of the terms you might try and apply to this disturbing and utterly enthralling piece of cinematic magic by young director Calvin Lee Reeder (*The Oregonian*, 2011). In an inspired piece of casting, Dermot Mulroney sheds his nice-guy persona as an unnamed and possibly insane ex-con travelling to his brother's farm in Oregon. The weird path he takes brings forth a sideshow scientist who believes he can record dreams on VHS, an old geezer obsessed with Frankenstein and a fetching young blonde who shows up just about everywhere. Then there are the flashing lights in the New Mexico sky and the voices in his head. Beautifully filmed in widescreen and packed with provocative ideas and mind-blowing images, *The Rambler* is a ride on the very, very strange side.

Principal State Government partner

Strategic partner

Government partners



We Are What We Are (Australian Premiere) | USA | Director: **Jim Mickle** | Cast: Bill Sage, Ambyr Childers, Julia Garner

Proving that richly drawn characters, elegantly composed images and carefully mounted suspense still have their place in contemporary horror, *We Are What We Are* is a slow-burn slice of American Gothic to relish. Set in a rain-drenched corner of the Catskills in upstate New York, this classy story revolves around Frank Parker, a deeply religious patriarch grieving over the sudden death of his wife during preparations for the sacred family ritual of Lamb's Day. But Frank's teenage daughters have begun to question this tradition, and a local medico has uncovered disturbing evidence that points suspicion in the direction of the Parker house. Following the outstanding vampire pic *Stake Land* (from SFF's 2011 Freak Me Out selection), director Jim Mickle and writing partner Nick Damici emerge as American genre cinema's most exciting team with this creepy tale of bizarre family relations and unholy faith.

You're Next (Australian Premiere) | USA | Director: **Adam Wingard** | Cast: Sharni Vinson, Nicholas Tucci, Wendy Glenn

Aussie actress Sharni Vinson is dynamite in this crackerjack cavalcade of carnage. The Davison family's rich and neurotic members gather at their country mansion; their squabbling has barely started when a much more pressing problem presents itself. A masked gang of killers have axes and other nasty implements to grind against the Davisons and it's not long before the corridors of the creaky old pile are crowded with corpses. But the gate-crashers haven't counted on Erin, the extraordinarily fearless Australian girlfriend of scaredy-cat son Crispian Davison. Cult favourite Barbara Crampton (*Re-Animator*) is terrific as the Davison's medication-reliant matriarch and the screenplay sprinkles just the right amount of black humour into the river of red stuff that flows once the party poopers get down to business. This pulse-pounder came runner-up in the Midnight Movie audience award at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Sydney Film Festival celebrates its 60th anniversary this 5-16 June bringing a packed program of screenings and special events to even more venues across Sydney. The full program will be announced on **Wednesday 8 May 2013. Flexi passes are now on sale.** For tickets and full up-to-date program information please visit www.sff.org.au.

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animations across the city at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Opera Quays, the Art Gallery of NSW and the Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne. 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

Sydney Film Festival also presents twelve films that vie for the 'Official Competition'; a highly respected international 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 Festival Official Competition winners include: *Alps* (2012), *A Separation* (2011) – which went on to win an Academy Award®, *Heartbeats* (2010), *Bronson* (2009) and *Hunger* (2008).

The 60th Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia, and the City of Sydney. The Festival's Strategic partner is the NSW Government through Destination NSW.

What: Sydney Film Festival

When: 5-16 June, 2013

Tickets & Info: 1300 733 733 www.sff.org.au

Principal State Government partner

Strategic partner

Government partners



MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Charlotte Greig Publicity Manager **Sydney Film Festival**

E: charlotte@sff.org.au P: 02 9690 5314 M: 0404 111 919

Amber Forrest-Bisley Director **Cardinal Spin**

E: amber@cardinalspin.com.au P: 02 8065 7363 M: 0405 363 817

Matt Fraser Communications Advisor **Cardinal Spin**

E: matt@cardinalspin.com.au M: 0401 326 007

Principal State Government partner

Strategic partner

Government partners

