

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

05–16 JUNE 2019

MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES RETURN OF SCREENABILITY PROGRAM

The 66th Sydney Film Festival today announced the return of Screenability, an exciting platform for screen practitioners with disability, in partnership with Create NSW.

Curated by Guest Programmer Sofya Gollan, Create NSW Screen Investment Manager, seven cutting edge works by filmmakers with disability will be showcased: documentaries *Vision Portraits*, *My Name is Daniel*, and *Sandgirl*, and New Zealand short film *A Matter of Time*, as well as three Australian short films selected as part of the Screenability Filmmakers Fund from Create NSW: *Deluge*, *Magnetic*, and *Prone to the Drone*.

Filmmakers from the Screenability program will be joined by *Breaking Bad*'s **RJ Mitte** (*Standing Up for Sunny*, screening as part of Special Presentations in the State), for a **Meet the Filmmakers** talk along Guest Programmer Sofya Gollan at HOYTS Entertainment Quarter (Saturday 15 June, 4:00pm), discussing the importance of authentic representation in film.

“The Festival’s Screenability strand will showcase works by filmmakers with disability from Australia, Brazil, Canada, USA, Germany and New Zealand. The disability story is multi-faceted and always surprising, leading us to other worlds with its deeply 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 Guest Programmer, Sofya Gollan**.

“These films have been created as the most distinct representation of who we are; a filmmaker exploring how becoming blind has reshaped his life’s work, a young woman who defies an assessment of zero IQ to become a published poet, and how a man’s obvious physical disability doesn’t stop him making an omelette or crashing his car. These films are boldly breathing new life into the disability genre” she said.

“The Festival will also feature the World Premiere of the three Screenability Film Fund films. With stories set in a dystopian religious commune; a young woman walking the fine line between mental illness and creativity; and a lonely introvert emerging from the darkness to deal with two young boys and drone in his backyard, these films showcase an incredibly diverse society,” she said.

For the third year, the Festival maintains its inclusion policy, with audio described and open captioned screenings, and over 90 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.



“Filmmakers with disability are underrepresented in the industry, especially in key creative roles. The Screenability program is designed to put the spotlight on their stories. I anticipate that the Festival’s audiences will find a lot of strength and joy in these authentic representations from our supported filmmakers, who are challenging the status quo,” said **Create NSW Executive Director for Investment and Engagement, Elizabeth W. Scott.**

The full Sydney Film Festival 2019 program can be found online at sff.org.au.
Sydney Film Festival runs 5 – 16 June 2019. Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2019 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 5 June to Sunday 16 June 2019, the 66th 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: *The Heiresses* (2018), *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 66th 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.

