

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

5-16 JUNE 2024

WORLD PREMIERE OF *MIDNIGHT OIL: THE HARDEST LINE TO OPEN SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2024.*

The 71st Sydney Film Festival announces it will present the World Premiere of *Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line* for its Opening Night Gala on Wednesday June 5, at the State Theatre followed by a post-screening celebration in the Sydney Town Hall.

The Hardest Line tells Midnight Oil's trailblazing story for the first time ever on film. Contrary. Passionate. Outspoken. Across their 45-year career, 'The Oils' helped shape modern Australia with anthems like *US Forces*, *Beds Are Burning*, *Blue Sky Mine* and *Redneck Wonderland*. Featuring unheard interviews with every band member, unseen live and studio footage, alongside signature moments like the outback tour with Warumpi Band, their Exxon protest gig in New York and those famous "Sorry" suits at the Sydney Olympics, this film traces the singular journey of Australia's quintessential rock band.

"We are thrilled to present *Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line* as the opening film for this year's Sydney Film Festival," said Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley. "This documentary not only chronicles the formidable journey of one of Australia's most influential bands but also captures the spirit of an era that reshaped our cultural and political landscapes. It's a fitting tribute to their legacy and a profound reflection on their impact that continues to inspire audiences around the world."

Writer, director, and executive producer Paul Clarke said "There is no other rock band in the world like Midnight Oil. For half a century they were fearless, contrary, and totally original. When Australia was creaking under the weight of its own myths, they told us the truth. Their songs pinpoint the fault-lines in our culture, they rage against the strange and dangerous times we've lived through, and they offer hope. After following them for seven years, we thank 'The Oils' and we feel we have an important film to share. We are all excited to unleash *Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line* as the Opening Night of the Sydney Film Festival."

Beyond's Mikael Borglund, Executive Producer, said, "*Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line* is a film for our time. Observant of Australian politics and culture, and fearless in calling out environmental and racial issues, 'The Oils' maintained their relevance for over 40 years by writing and performing music with global resonance. Featuring timeless anthems, we cannot wait for audiences to witness the power and the passion behind the legend that is Midnight Oil."

Midnight Oil's drummer Rob Hirst said, "With strong management, a tough crew and a sabre-tooth lawyer, bands can often dwell in a kind of mobile Faraday cage - the lightning striking all around, while the musicians remain high and dry in a studio, on a stage or wedged inside a Tarago. Thus it was for Midnight Oil: rarely were we able to focus on the horizon and see the 'Big Picture', if there was such a thing. So a film such as *The Hardest Line* is as much a revelation as a chronicle. Perhaps at last we can frame the last 50 years, make some collective sense of it, wrap it in a box marked 'the Luckiest Band Ever.'"

Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line is a Blink TV and Beyond Entertainment feature documentary. Principal production funding from Screen Australia and Australian Broadcasting Corporation in



association with Screen NSW. Financed with support from Sony Music Entertainment and Sony Music Publishing. Australian theatrical distribution by Roadshow Films. *Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line* is written and directed by Paul Clarke, produced by Carolina Sorensen, and executive produced by Mikael Borglund, Paul Clarke and Martin Fabinyi.

The full 71st Sydney Film Festival program will be announced on Wednesday 8 May 2024.

Flexipasses and subscriptions to Sydney Film Festival 2024 are on sale now.
Call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information.

Sydney Film Festival Opening Night

Follow Sydney Film Festival: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [X](#) | [Youtube](#)

5 June 2024, 7pm

Venue: State Theatre | Post-screening gala in the Sydney Town Hall

Tickets:

Adult (Film Only) - \$55

Concession (Film Only) - \$50

Film + Party - \$160

Book at sff.org.au

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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

EDITOR'S NOTES

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From Wednesday 5 to Sunday 16 June 2024, the 71st Sydney Film Festival offers Sydneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth discussions, film guests and more.

Sydney Film 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 71st Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney.

ABOUT BEYOND ENTERTAINMENT & BLINK TV

Beyond Entertainment and Blink TV are long term collaborators producing music focussed films including the award winning docu-features **John Farnham: Finding The Voice** (Sony 2023) and **Blood + Thunder: The Sound Of Alberts** (ABC + BBC4). A division of Beyond International, Beyond Entertainment is the leading producer of music focussed features and documentaries, including jointly producing the Scott Hicks directed features **The Musical Mind** (*Bonsai Films*), and **Ben Folds: I Play Piano** through Beyond May30, and **The Angels: Kickin' Down The Door** (Universal) produced by Beyond LNBF which was the opening night film at the 2022 Adelaide Film Festival. Beyond also co-produced the Emmy Award-winning animated series **Beat Bugs** incorporating music made famous by *The Beatles*, and **Motown Magic** featuring the music of *Motown* - both for Netflix. Beyond TNC, the Group's JV with UK based TNC Media, has had a prolific



few years of production including the documentary **They All Came Out To Montreux**, which will premiere at the 2024 Tribeca Film Festival, and the *Birthday Party* documentary **Mutiny In Heaven** which opened theatrically in 60 US cities in 2023. *The Fatboy Slim* documentary **Right Here, Right Now** was produced for Sky in 2023. Additionally, the company is on #5 of its iconic series **Memory Lane**, which applies a journalistic lens to the live concerts of some of the world's biggest artists at a particular point in their career. Beyond Entertainment is currently producing the 13-part documentary series **Great Australian Concerts**, to screen on SBS-TV, and developing further documentaries on iconic Australian and international artists.