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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL PREVIEWES 2016 GUEST LINE-UP

The 63rd Sydney Film Festival announces the first list of stars and filmmaker guests to attend the Festival 8-19 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 will be further announcements of Festival guests late May. For the most up-to-date information, visit sff.org.au

Avast array of FREE talks, panel discussions and events, traversing a huge range of topics will once again take place at the Festival Hub. Together with **Vivid Ideas**, part of the world's largest festival of light, music and ideas, Vivid Sydney, Sydney Film Festival presents seven talks and panels. Sydney Film Festival's **Meet the Filmmaker** series at the Apple Store, Sydney will also return.

Highlights include:

Award-winning Indigenous Australian auteur **Ivan Sen** of acclaimed feature films *Beneath Clouds* (Silver Bear; 2002 Berlinale), Cannes selected *Toomelah* (Sydney Film Festival Official Competition; 2011), and *Mystery Road*, which opened the Sydney Film festival in 2013; will attend the Festival for the world premiere of his fourth feature film **Goldstone**. Sen also wrote, shot, edited and scored the film, which has been selected to compete in the Festival's prestigious Sydney Film Prize: for courageous and cutting-edge filmmaking.

The director will introduce his film on opening night alongside the film's producers David Jowsey and Greer Simpkin. Sen and Jowsey will appear at a free Meet the Filmmakers Talk at the Apple Store, Sydney on Saturday 11 June, 5:00pm. They will also appear at the **Vivid Ideas** in partnership with Sydney Film Festival, AFTRS Black Talk, *A Double Bill: Indigeneity And Australian Screen Storytelling* on Sunday 12 June, 4:00pm at the Festival Hub Town Hall. The event will showcase leading creative voices and leading Indigenous auteurs and filmmakers.

Academy Award-winning director-actor **Mel Gibson** (*Braveheart*, *The Passion of the Christ*, *Apocalypto*) will attend the Festival to present his Cannes selected film **Blood Father** from French director Jean-François Richet, which screens in Special Presentations at The State Theatre.

Gibson, will discuss his role in *Blood Father* and his latest directorial offering *Hacksaw Ridge* ("In Conversation With Mel Gibson") at the free Vivid Ideas in partnership with Sydney Film Festival Hub talks, Wednesday 15 June, 5:00pm.

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Oscar-winning Pakistani filmmaker **Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy** will attend the Festival to present her two films, *A Journey of a Thousand Miles: Peacekeepers*, following 160 predominantly Muslim Bangladeshi policewomen on a difficult mission overseas, and *A Girl In The River: The Price Of Forgiveness*, her short film about honour killings in Pakistan. She will also share her experiences as a woman making films in Pakistan at a Vivid Ideas in partnership with Sydney Film Festival Hub free talk on Monday 13 June, 12:00pm.

Young Australian director-actor **Abe Forsythe** will attend the Festival's world premiere of his provocative black comedy *Down Under*, with an all-star Australian cast (Lincoln Younes, Rahel Romahn, Damon Herriman, David Field and Marshall Napier), the film is set during the aftermath of the Cronulla Riots.

Australian theatre veteran Stephen Sewell will attend the Festival for his directorial debut with the erotic political thriller *Embedded*. Sewell's two interactive experimental films: *Deluge*, dealing with devastating Cyclone Yasi (Queensland 2011), and *Nebula*, a dream work exploring relationships between the human and natural worlds, have their world premieres in the Festival's Beyond Cinema program at the University of New South Wales' 360-degree 3D world leading iCinema (8 – 18 June).

The Festival will host five of European Cinema's hottest female filmmakers: acclaimed Serbian actress **Mirjana Karanović**, Swedish visual artist and documentary filmmaker **Sara Jordenö**, Danish filmmaker **Frederikke Aspöck** whose films have screened at Cannes, one of Poland's most talented filmmakers **Agnieszka Smoczynska**, and actress and director **Nicolette Krebitz** from Berlin. The filmmakers will attend the Festival to present their films to audiences as part of the Festival's new initiative **European Cinema: 10 Women Filmmakers to Watch**, in partnership with European Film Promotion and *Variety*. The program showcases 10 new films by 10 of Europe's most promising female storytellers, providing a platform for women's voices.

Academy Award-winning American filmmaker **Morgan Neville** (*20 Feet from Stardom*, SFF 2013) will attend the Festival to present his music documentary *The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble* about the legendary cellist and a diverse group of dedicated musicians. He will also attend a free public Meet the Filmmaker talk at the Apple Store, Sydney Saturday 18 June, 11:45am.

Acclaimed *Once Were Warriors* director **Lee Tamahori** reunites with **Temuera Morrison** in *Mahana*, his first New Zealand film in two decades. Together with **Akuhata Keefe** all three will attend the Festival as well as a free Meet the Filmmaker Apple Store Sydney talk Sunday 12 June at 4:30pm.

The Festival will host directors from seven of the films selected for Sydney Film Festival's Official Competition, The Sydney Film Prize: Australian **Ivan Sen** (*Goldstone*), Singaporean **Boo Junfeng** (*Apprentice*), Brazilian director **Kleber Mendonça Filho** (*Aquarius*), South African director **Oliver Hermanus** (*The Endless River*), British filmmakers **Peter Middleton** and **James Spinney** (*Notes on Blindness*), prolific contemporary Indian director **Anurag Kashyap** (*Psycho Raman*), and Irish filmmaker **Paddy Breathnach** (*Viva*), will attend the Festival and present their films to audiences.

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Sydney Film Festival runs 8 – 19 June 2016.

Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2016 are on sale now. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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

Official Competition:

Boo Junfeng, director of Singaporean psychological drama *Apprentice*, included in the Cannes Official Selection. Junfeng trained in film schools in Singapore and Spain and made a series of celebrated short films before graduating to feature directing. His feature length debut *Sandcastle* premiered at the International Critics' Week at Cannes in 2010. *Apprentice* producer **Raymond Phathanavirangoon** will also attend and introduce the film.

Oliver Hermanus, director of South African feature *The Endless River*, will attend the Festival. His graduation film *Shirley Adams* (SFF 2010), played at the Locarno International Film Festival and collected numerous prizes around the world. His second feature, *Beauty* (SFF 2012), was the first Afrikaans film to compete at Cannes. It won the Queer Palm and was South Africa's official entry to the Academy Awards in 2012.

Ivan Sen, director of Australian outback noir *Goldstone*, will introduce the World Premiere of his film on Opening Night. His debut feature *Beneath Clouds* won a Silver Bear at the 2002 Berlinale and Best Director at the 2002 AFI Awards. *Toomelah* (SFF 2011) screened in Un Certain Regard at Cannes, Official Competition at SFF and won the UNESCO award at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards. *Mystery Road* opened Sydney Film Festival in 2013. *Goldstone* producers David Jowsey and Greer Simpkin will also attend and introduce the film. Sen and Jowsey will appear at a free Meet the Filmmakers Talk at the Apple Store on Saturday 11 June, 5-6pm.

Ivo M. Ferreira, director of Portuguese wartime love story *Letters From War*, will introduce the Australian Premiere of his film. Born in Lisbon, he turned from documentaries to feature films, directing *Em Volta* in 2002, and *April Showers*, which premiered at Rotterdam, in 2009.

Peter Middleton, British director of *Notes on Blindness*, is known for his adaptation of Australian John Hull's diary materials, first in his short film *Rainfall*, and secondly in his Emmy award-winning short film, *Notes on Blindness* (SFF 2013), which screened at Sundance. Middleton will appear at a free Meet the Filmmakers Talk at the Apple Store on Sunday 19 June, 11:30am-12:30pm.

Anurag Kashyap, director of Indian thriller *Psycho Raman*, selected for the Cannes Directors'

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Fortnight is a leading figure of independent Indian cinema. Kashyap has directed landmark films such as *Dev D*, *Black Friday* and *Gangs of Wasseypur* (SFF 2012 Official Competition) and produced *Monsoon Shootout* (SFF 2013) and *The Lunchbox* (SFF 2014). You are missing Kleber Filho Mendonca - Aquarius who is also in OC and Paddy Breathnach for Viva

Special Presentations at the State:

Blood Father star Mel Gibson; ***Down Under*** director **Abe Forsythe** and members of the film team; ***A Journey of a Thousand Miles: Peacekeepers*** directors-producers **Geeta Gandbhir** and **Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy**; ***Mahana*** director **Lee Tamahori**, stars **Temuera Morrison** and **Akuhata Keefe**; and ***Sing Street*** stars **Ferdia Walsh-Peelo** and **Mark McKenna**.

Features:

Barakah Meets Barakah director-writer-producer **Mahmoud Sabbagh**, and stars **Hisham Fageeh** and **Fatima Al Banawi**; ***Beast*** directors-writers **Sam McKeith** and **Tom McKeith**, and members from the film team; ***A Copy of My Mind*** director-writer **Joko Anwar**; ***Cuckold*** director-writer-producer **Charlie Vundla**; ***Dark in the White Light*** director-writer-producer **Vimukthi Jayasundara**; ***Embedded*** director **Stephen Sewell** and members of the film team; ***Free In Deed*** director **Jake Mahaffy**; ***Magallanes*** director-writer-producer **Salvador del Solar**; ***Mekko*** director **Sterlin Harjo**; ***Teenage Kicks*** director **Craig Boreham** and members of the film team; and ***What's In The Darkness*** director-writer **Wang Yichun**

European Cinema: 10 Women Filmmakers to Watch:

A Good Wife director-star **Mirjana Karanović**; ***Kiki*** director-writer **Sara Jordanö**; ***The Lure*** director **Agnieszka Smoczyńska**; ***Rosita*** director **Frederikke Aspöck**; ***Wild*** director **Nicolette Krebitz**; and ***Chevalier*** star **Vangelis Mourikis**.

International Documentaries:

Europe, She Loves director **Jan Gassmann**; ***A Flickering Truth*** director **Pietra Brettkelly**; ***A Journey of a Thousand Miles: Peacekeepers*** director **Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy**; ***Mr. Gaga*** director **Tomer Heymann**; ***The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble*** director **Morgan Neville**; ***Oyster Factory*** director **Kazuhiro Soda**; ***Sonita*** director **Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami**; ***Suzy & The Simple Man*** directors **Ian Darling** and **Mary Macrae**; ***Tickled*** directors **Dylan Reeve** and **David Ferrier**; and ***Winter at Westbeth*** director-writer **Rohan Spong** and producer **Adam Farrington-Williams**.

Family Films:

Girl Asleep director **Rosemary Myers** and producer **Jo Dyer**.

The Box Set:

American Epic director **Bernard Macmahon**.

Restorations:

Bliss director **Ray Lawrence**, producer **Anthony Buckley** and members of the film team; and ***The Boys*** director **Rowan Woods**, producers **Robert Connolly** and **John Maynard**, and members of the film team.

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Focus on Ireland:

Atlantic director Risteard Ó Domhnaill; *The Queen of Ireland* director **Conor Horgan** and subject **Rory O'Neill** (a.k.a. **Panti Bliss**); *Sing Street* stars **Ferdia Walsh-Peelo** and **Mark McKenna**; and *Viva* director **Paddy Breathnach**.

Screen: Black:

Goldstone director **Ivan Sen**, producer **David Jowsey** and star **Aaron Pedersen**; and *Black Chook* director **Dylan River**.

Freak Me Out:

The Devil's Candy director-writer **Sean Byrne**; and *Red Christmas* director-producer **Craig Anderson**.

Documentary Australia Foundation for Australian Documentary:

The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe director-writer-producer **Ros Horin**; *Baxter and Me* director-writer **Gillian Leahy**; *Constance on the Edge* director-writer **Belinda Mason**; *Destination Arnold* director-writer **Sascha Ettinger**, subjects **Natasha Lawrence** and **Kylene Anderson**; *Embrace* director-writer **Taryn Brumfitt**; *Hotel Coolgardie* director **Pete Gleeson**, producers **Melissa Hayward** and **Kate Neylon**; *In The Shadow Of The Hill* director-writer-producer **Dan Jackson**; *The Opposition* director **Hollie Fifer** and producers **Rebecca Barry** and **Madeleine Hetherton**; *On Richard's Side* director-writer-producer **Andrew Wiseman**; and *Zach's Ceremony* director **Aaron Petersen** THE

Ian Mcpherson Memorial Lecture 2016:

As Time Goes By: The Changing Face of Film Festivals, Film Watching, and Film Itself
David Stratton in conversation with producer **Al Clark**

Meet The Filmmakers: SFF Talks at the Apple Store:

To celebrate the 2016 Sydney Film Festival and the spirit of fine filmmaking, the Apple Store Sydney once again hosts its free Meet the Filmmakers series, where you can learn from esteemed writers, directors, producers and actors and hear them discuss their latest projects and creative practice. All talks immediately after screenings.

- **Ivan Sen and David Jowsey (*Goldstone*)** Saturday 11 June, 5-6pm (free)
Multi-hyphenate filmmaker Ivan Sen and producer David Jowsey return to the Meet the Filmmaker seat to discuss their latest collaboration, *Goldstone*, and what in particular made Jay Swan (played by Aaron Pedersen) a worthy character to revisit.
- **Lee Tamahori, Temuera Morrison and Akuhata Keefe (*Mahana*)** Sunday 12 June, 4:30-5:30pm (free)
Lee Tamahori's welcome return to New Zealand cinema, *Mahana*, focuses on the enduring rivalry between two Maori sheep-shearing families. Joined by stars Temuera Morrison and Akuhata Keefe, Tamahori (*Once Were Warriors*) will discuss his return to New Zealand, after 20 years in Hollywood, to realise this moving 1960s-set family drama.
- **Morgan Neville (*The Music Of Strangers*)** Saturday 4 June, 11:45am-12:45pm (free)

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Morgan Neville won the Academy Award for Best Documentary for *20 Feet From Stardom*, about the overlooked world of back-up singers, in 2013. He shifted his focus to a diverse group of dedicated performers for *The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble*, and here he talks in depth about making movies about music and musicians throughout his career.

- **Peter Middleton (*Notes On Blindness*)** Sunday 19 June, 11:30am-12:30pm (free)

Director Peter Middleton collected recordings made by the late writer and theologian, John Hull, then filmed actors lip-syncing his reflections on gradually going blind. His talk will focus on this innovative process of re-creating the late author's thoughts and observations.

Visit apple.com/au/sydney to register for events and filmmaking workshops.

Hub Talks and Panels at Town Hall:

Vivid Ideas and Sydney Film Festival present a series of talks upstairs at the SFF Hub @ Town Hall.

- ***Not So Black And White*** Saturday 11 June, 1:30pm
Sydney Film Festival's animation programmer, Malcolm Turner, will present an overview of the indie and alternative black and white animation scene, drawn from his most recent global travels.
- ***AFTRS Black Talk - A Double Bill: Indigeneity And Australian Screen*** Sunday 12 June, 4:00pm
The first panel will showcase leading creative voices: producers David Jowsey, Kylie Du Fresne and Ned Lander. The second panel features leading Indigenous auteurs & filmmakers discussing their craft and storytelling approach: filmmakers Ivan Sen, Sterlin Harjo and Dylan River.
- ***The Boys Reunion*** Monday 13 June, 6:30pm
Join us after the screening of the newly restored film to hear how this celebrated production informed the careers of the creative team behind it.
- ***Meet The Film MakeSharmeen Obaid-Chinoy*** Monday 13 June, 12pm
Academy Award winning director Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy will discuss her personal experiences as a woman making films in Pakistan. Hosted by Macquarie University's Kathryn Millard.
- ***Are Films Really Worth Keeping?*** Wednesday 15 June, 4:30pm
Following the screening of *A Flickering Truth*, join director Pietra Brett Kelly, NFSA's Gayle Lake and Golden Age's Kate Jinx as they examine the cultural value of film as part of our heritage.
- ***Korea On The Verge: Social Faultlines In Korean Cinema - Tony Rayns*** Wednesday 15 June, 8pm
Renowned film critic and programmer Tony Rayns, who curated SFF's **Korea on the Verge: Social Faultlines in Korean Cinema** program takes us on a journey through provocative Korean indie cinema where filmmakers have stepped up to scratch the itches in Korean society: political scandals, social injustices, sexual deviances, re-examined traditions.
- ***In Conversation With Mel Gibson*** Wednesday 15 June, 5pm
Actor and director Mel Gibson discusses his role in the Cannes selected film *Blood Father* and his latest directorial offering *Hacksaw Ridge*.

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ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From **Wednesday 8 June to Sunday 19 June 2016**, the 63rd 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. Each year the Festival's programming team curates 12 days of cinema sourced from world-famous film festivals, including Cannes, Sundance, Toronto and the Berlinale; as well as Australia's finest productions.

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 are: *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, Casula Powerhouse, the Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall and SFF Outdoor Screen.

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 63rd 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.

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