



MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 8:45PM SUNDAY 15 JUNE

61st SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES WINNER OF THE OFFICIAL COMPETITION

The winner of the **61st Sydney Film Festival's** prestigious **Sydney Film Prize**, now in its seventh year, was announced at the Closing Night Gala in Sydney's State Theatre tonight.

Out of a selection of 12 films in **Official Competition**, the Sydney Film Prize was awarded to ***Two Days, One Night*** directed by **Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne**.

The Dardenne brothers have won the Palme d'Or twice: for *Rosetta* (1999) and *The Child* (2005). *Two Days, One Night* stars Oscar-winner **Marion Cotillard** (*La Vie en Rose*, *The Dark Knight Rises*) as a woman who has one weekend to convince her colleagues to sacrifice their bonuses so she can keep her job.

"For its masterfully elegant storytelling, its dedication to a fiercely humanistic, super-realist worldview, its brave, essential commitment to community solidarity, and its celebration of a woman's power and vitality, we are delighted to present the Sydney Film Prize to Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardennes' *Two Days, One Night*," said **Jury President Rachel Perkins**.

Sydney Film Festival's 2014 Official Competition Jury comprised **Rachel Perkins** as Jury President, filmmakers **Khalo Matabane** (South Africa) and **Oh Jung-wan** (South Korea), film critic and curator **Shelly Kraicer** (Canada) and Australian actress **Rachael Blake**.

"In Amsterdam, where we are for the release of *Two Days, One Night*, we have just learned that our film has been awarded the Official Competition prize at Sydney Film Festival. We are delighted and very honoured to receive this award, and would like to thank the jury, as well as our lead actress Marion Cotillard for her wonderful Sandra. In Australia, as everywhere else, solidarity is a value worth fighting for. Thank you," said **Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne**.

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne were born and raised in Belgium. They started their filmmaking career by making social-activist documentaries, then later switching to fiction. Their 1999 feature *Rosetta* won the Palme d'Or and many other awards and helped change Belgian labour laws. Their other films include *The Son* (2002), the Palme d'Or-winning *The Child* (2005) and *The Kid with a Bike* (2011).

This year the internationally recognised SFF Official Competition awards a \$61,000 cash prize in recognition of the most courageous, audacious and cutting-edge film from the 12 features selected.

The SFF Official Competition was established in 2008 and is endorsed by Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films (the regulating organisation for international film festivals). 12 feature films are selected for Official Competition on the basis that they demonstrate 'emotional

power and resonance; are audacious, cutting-edge, courageous; and go beyond the usual treatment of the subject matter’.

Previous Sydney Film Festival Official Competition winners include: *Only God Forgives* (2013), *Alps* (2012), *A Separation* (2011), *Heartbeats* (2010), *Bronson* (2009) and *Hunger* (2008).

The selection of films in Competition for the SFF 2014 Sydney Film Prize were:

20,000 Days on Earth

(UK) | Directors: Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard | Screenwriters: Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard, Nick Cave | Producers: James Wilson, Dan Bowen | Distributor: Madman Entertainment

The Festival’s Opening Night feature, this is an innovative film about international cultural icon Nick Cave that recently won the Directing Award: World Cinema Documentary and the Editing Award: World Cinema Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival from directors Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard.

Black Coal, Thin Ice

(China, Hong Kong) | Director, Screenwriter: Diao Yinan | Producers: Qu Vivian, Wan Juan, Shen Yang, Zhang Dajun | Cast: Liao Fan, Gwei Lun Mei, Wang Xuebing | World Sales: Fortissimo Films

Winner of the Golden Bear for best film at the 2014 Berlinale, a stylish film noir set in industrial northern China from director Diao Yinan. It follows a former policeman’s investigation into a series of killings, leading him to a mysterious femme-fatale suspect.

Boyhood

(USA) | Director, Screenwriter: Richard Linklater | Producers: Cathleen Sutherland, Richard Linklater | Cast: Ethan Hawke, Patricia Arquette, Ellar Coltrane, Lorelei Linklater | Distributor: Universal Pictures International Australasia

Directed by Richard Linklater and winner of the Silver Bear for best director at the 2014 Berlinale, it is an emotional family drama shot using the same actors, Ethan Hawke, Patricia Arquette, Ellar Coltrane and Lorelei Linklater, over a 12-year period.

Fell

(Australia) | Director: Kasimir Burgess | Screenwriter: Natasha Pincus | Producers: John Maynard, Mary Minas | Cast: Matt Nable, Dan Henshall | Production Company: Felix Media

The debut feature from Australian director Kasimir Burgess, a World Premiere shot in the Victorian Alps. It chronicles a story of redemption, as a father seeks to avenge his daughter’s death, and stars Matthew Nable and Daniel Henshall.

Fish & Cat

(Iran) | Director, Screenwriter: Shahram Mokri | Producer: Sepehr Seyfi | Cast: Babak Karimi, Saeed Ebrahimi, Abed Abest | World Sales: Iranian Independents

From Iranian director Shahram Mokri, it was shot in a single take and is based on a real news report about a roadside diner where human flesh was served.

The Kidnapping of Michel Houellebecq

(France) | Director, Screenwriter: Guillaume Nicloux | Producers: Sylvie Pialat, Marco Cherqui | Cast: Michel Houellebecq, Luc Schwarz, Mathieu Nicourt

Directed and written by Guillaume Nicloux, and starring controversial French author Michel Houellebecq as himself in a fictional scenario based on media speculations around his real-life disappearance in 2011.

Kumiko, the Treasure Hunter

(USA) | Director: David Zellner | Screenwriters: David Zellner, Nathan Zellner | Producers: Nathan Zellner, Cameron Lamb, Chris Ohlson, Andrew Banks, Jim Burke | Cast: Rinko Kikuchi, Nobuyuki Katsube, Kanako Higashi | Distributor: Palace Films

Directed by David Zellner and inspired by true events, starring Oscar nominee Rinko Kikuchi (*Babel*; *Norwegian Wood*, SFF 2011) as a lonely Japanese woman who journeys to Minnesota in search of the mythical fortune featured in the film *Fargo*.

Locke

(UK) | Director, Screenwriter: Steven Knight | Producers: Paul Webster, Guy Heeley | Cast: Tom Hardy, Ruth Wilson, Olivia Colman | Distributor: Madman Entertainment

Director Steven Knight's daring cinematic experiment shot in real time and starring Tom Hardy as a businessman who attempts to deal with a series of crises via speakerphone while driving. It was described by *Variety* as an "ingeniously executed study in cinematic minimalism."

The Rover

(Australia) | Director, Screenwriter: David Michôd | Producers: Liz Watts, David Linde, David Michôd | Cast: Guy Pearce, Robert Pattinson, Scoot McNairy | Distributor: Roadshow Films

Australian director David Michôd's dystopian crime drama starring Guy Pearce and Robert Pattinson, following his critically acclaimed 2010 breakout feature *Animal Kingdom*.

Ruin

(Australia) | Director, Screenwriter, Producer: Amiel Courtin-Wilson, Michael Cody | Cast: Sang Malen, Ros Mony | Distributor: Madman Entertainment

From Australian directing duo Amiel Courtin-Wilson (*Hail*, SFF 2011) and Michael Cody, winner of the Orizzonti Special Jury Prize at the 2014 Venice Film Festival, it was shot in Cambodia on a shoestring budget.

Snowpiercer

(South Korea) | Director: Bong Joon-ho | Screenwriters: Bong Joon-ho, Kelly Masterson | Producers: Park Chan-wook, Lee Tae-hun, Park Tae-jun, Robert Bernacchi, David Minkowski, Matthew Stillman | Cast: Chris Evans, Song Kang-ho, Ed Harris, John Hurt, Tilda Swinton | Distributor: Roadshow Films

From South Korean director Bong Joon-ho, comes this apocalyptic science-fiction thriller that follows the last survivors of humanity as they perpetually circumnavigate the globe on a class-divided train; it features stars Chris Evans, Song Kang-ho, Ed Harris, John Hurt and Tilda Swinton.

Two Days, One Night

(Belgium, France, Italy) | Directors, Screenwriters: Jean-Pierre Dardenne, Luc Dardenne | Producers: Jean-Pierre Dardenne, Luc Dardenne, Denis Freyd | Cast: Marion Cotillard, Olivier Gourmet, Catherine Salée, Fabrizio Rongione | Distributor: Madman Entertainment

From two-time Cannes Palme d'Or winners the Dardenne Brothers (*Rosetta*, *The Child*, *The Kid with a Bike*) and starring Oscar-winning actress Marion Cotillard (*La Vie en rose*, *The Dark Knight Rises*) *Two Days, One Night* is gentle in tone but provocative in spirit. Cotillard is wonderful as Sandra, a woman in a precarious position. Her employer at a factory has given her colleagues a stark choice – to either receive a bonus or have Sandra return to work after a leave of absence. An initial ballot is not promising. The employer agrees to another vote, leaving Sandra one weekend to convince her colleagues to let her keep her job. Sandra visits them one by one to make her case. With this intriguing premise, the Dardennes fashion a very special film. Without resorting to sentiment, the film is filled with emotion. Every interaction is so rich with possibility you can imagine each of these working-class characters inspiring a film of their own.

Each Jury Member and winner of the Sydney Film Prize for 2014 will receive an exquisite timepiece from our watch partner Philip Stein.

The 61st Sydney Film Festival ran from 4-15 June and brought a packed program of screenings and special events to even more venues across Sydney. For more information please visit sff.org.au

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animated films across the city at the State Theatre, Event Cinemas George Street, Dendy Opera Quays, the Art Gallery of NSW, Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne, the Apple Store, SFFTV at Martin Place, Skyline Drive-In Blacktown, and the Festival Hub at Town Hall.

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 12 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 Prize winners include: *Only God Forgives* (2013), *Alps* (2012), *A Separation* (2011) – which went on to win an Academy Award, *Heartbeats* (2010), *Bronson* (2009) and *Hunger* (2008).

The 61st 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: 4-15 June, 2014

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

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Amber Forrest-Bisley Director **Cardinal Spin**

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

Katie Eastment Communications Advisor **Cardinal Spin**

E: katie@cardinalspin.com.au P: (02) 8065 7363 M: 0435 918 466

Sophie Hodges Publicity Manager **Sydney Film Festival**

E: sophie@sff.org.au P: 02 8220 6619 M: 0403 959 528

Principal State Government partner



Strategic partner



Government partners

