



MEDIA RELEASE

BIOGRAPHY: NASHEN MOODLEY SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

2016 marks Nashen Moodley's fifth year as Festival Director of Sydney Film Festival.

During his first four years at the helm, the Festival has grown significantly. In 2015, the event's 62nd year, attendances increased by 13% to 176,000, marking the seventh consecutive year of growth in Festival attendance.

Other highlights in Moodley's five years as Festival Director include the introduction and development of the popular free public space the **Festival Hub at Town Hall**; a new partnership with Screen Australia's Indigenous Department entitled **Screen: Black**; and a new partnership with European Film Promotion and *Variety* entitled: **European Cinema: 10 Women Filmmakers to Watch**. **Moodley** has also, in partnership with Lexus Australia created the **Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship**, the largest cash fellowship (AU\$200,000 annually) for short film in Australia.

Under Moodley's directorship, the Festival has undergone a sizable geographical expansion, to the **Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace Cremorne**, **Dendy Newtown**, **Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre** and the **Skyline Drive-In Blacktown**. He has also introduced a free public program of immersive experiences entitled **Beyond Cinema**, exploring cutting edge screen culture and new technology.

As well as adding two new screening venues in Newtown and Liverpool, the numbers of titles to be screened at the Festival have jumped from 183 in 2014 to 244 in 2016. They come from 60 countries, with 25 World Premieres included in the program.

Moodley's impressive career in film programming has encompassed leadership roles as Manager and Head of Programming at the **Durban International Film Festival** (2001–2011) and as a programming consultant for **Dubai International Film Festival** (2005–present).

During Moodley's 11 years at Durban International Film Festival – South Africa's longest-running film festival – he was responsible for expanding the content and reach of the Festival. He also raised the profile of the African film industry by establishing the **Durban FilmMart**, a program that provides African filmmakers with the opportunity to pitch film projects to leading financiers.

In addition to programming, Moodley has advised **India's International Film Festival of Kerala**, South Korea's **Busan International Film Festival** and **Africala** in Mexico City. Moodley has also worked as an Industry Consultant at the **International Film Festival Rotterdam** and as an expert at the **Berlinale Talent Campus**.

Born in South Africa in 1978, Moodley studied English and philosophy at the University of Natal and worked as a journalist before turning to film. His film writing and criticism has appeared in newspapers and magazines including *The Guardian*, *GQ*, the *Sunday Tribune* (South Africa), the *Sunday Independent* (South Africa), and *Mail & Guardian* (South Africa).

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The 63rd Sydney Film Festival runs 8 – 19 June 2016 and brings a packed program of screenings and special events to even more venues across Sydney.

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

Amber Forrest-Bisley, Publicity Manager, Sydney Film Festival

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

Amy Owen, Communications Advisor

E: amy@cardinalspin.com.au M: 0404 977 338

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

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: *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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