



## MEDIA RELEASE

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES SOUNDS ON SCREEN

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The 63<sup>rd</sup> Sydney Film Festival announces six new films about music and musicians screening at the Festival in 2016.

“The films selected for **Sounds on Screen** promise to tell many illuminating stories from around the world about the creators and creation of music,” said **Jenny Neighbour**, **Sydney Film Festival Programs Manager and Documentary Programmer**.

“From films about some of the world’s most famous musicians, such as Chet Baker, Janis Joplin, Sharon Jones, country music superstar Hank Williams and British underground DJ icon James Lavelle; to Talking Heads’ lead singer **David Byrne**’s celebration of color guard (the American tradition of synchronised performance complete with flag swirling and rifle tossing), Sounds on Screen will open eyes and ears,” she said.

The Festival will screen two biopic feature films about celebrated musicians: ***Born to be Blue*** starring **Ethan Hawk** as Chet Baker - "the James Dean of jazz" - using fact and fiction to reimagine the life of the legendary jazz trumpeter, his addictions, and unlikely comeback; and ***I Saw the Light*** starring **Tom Hiddleston** (*Thor*; *High-Rise*, SFF 2016) as America’s first country music superstar Hank Williams, alongside award-winning actress **Elizabeth Olsen** (*The Avengers*; *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, SFF 2011).

Four documentaries explore music history both past and present. Two revealing and very personal films include: ***Janis: Little Girl Blue***, from award-winning director **Amy Berg** (*Deliver Us from Evil*), looking behind the myth of legendary Sixties blues singer Janis Joplin complete with personal letters read by American singer-songwriter **Cat Power**, and previously unseen footage and interviews; and ***Miss Sharon Jones!*** by two-time Oscar-winning filmmaker **Barbara Kopple** (*American Dream*; *Hot Type: 150 Years Of The Nation*, SFF 2016), filmed at a time when Jones was undergoing treatment for cancer.

***The Man From Mo’wax***, a film about the life and career of British underground icon **James Lavelle**, documenting the excesses of the ’90s music scene and the long term effects of a DJ lifestyle on the teenage prodigy turned Mo’Wax label owner, tastemaker and UNKLE founder.

Talking Heads’ lead singer **David Byrnes** celebrates the unlikely art of color guard, the American tradition of synchronised performance complete with flag swirling and rifle tossing, in ***Contemporary Color***; a meeting of high-school color guards and pop musicians including **St. Vincent**, **Nelly Furtado**, and **Devonté Hynes**.

Extending the musical theme, **The Box Set** will take audiences on an epic journey to the roots of American pop music to reveal the untold story of how it was originally recorded. A four-part documentary screened over three sessions, ***American Epic*** was produced by **Jack White** (The White Stripes), **Robert Redford**, and **T Bone Burnett**. Director, screenwriter and producer of the film **Bernard MacMahon** will attend the Festival to introduce each screening.

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Screening in the **SFF International Documentary** strand is the latest film from **Morgan Neville**, the Oscar-winning director of **20 Feet from Stardom**. Neville will be at the Festival to introduce the screenings of his latest documentary, **The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble**, and take part in a free SFF Talk at the Apple Store on 18 June. Other music-related films in the festival include: *Presenting Princess Shaw*; *Sing Street*; *Sonita*, and; *Strike a Pose*.

### 2016 Sounds on Screen films:

- **BORN TO BE BLUE** USA | 2015 | 97 mins | In English | Australian Premiere  
*Director, Screenwriter: Robert Budreau | Producers: Jennifer Jonas, Leonard Farlinger, Robert Budreau, Jake Seal | Cast: Ethan Hawke, Carmen Ejogo, Callum Keith Rennie | World Sales: K5 International*
- **CONTEMPORARY COLOR** USA | 2016 | 96 mins | In English | Australian Premiere  
*Director: Bill and Turner Ross | Producers: David Byrne, Michael Gottwald, Dan Janvey, Josh Penn, Aaron Rosenblum | Production Company: The Department of Motion Pictures*
- **I SAW THE LIGHT** USA | 2015 | 124 mins | In English | Australian Premiere  
*Director, Screenwriter: Marc Abraham | Producers: Marc Abraham, Brett Ratner, Aaron L. Gilbert, G. Marq Roswell | Cast: Tom Hiddleston, Elizabeth Olsen, Bradley Whitford | Distributor: Sony Pictures*
- **JANIS: LITTLE GIRL BLUE** USA | 2015 | 106 mins | In English | Australian Premiere  
*Director, Screenwriter: Amy J. Berg | Producer: Alex Gibney | Distributor: Transmission Films*
- **THE MAN FROM MO'WAX** UK | 2016 | 109 mins | In English and Japanese with English subtitles | Australian Premiere  
*Director: Matthew Jones | Producers: MJ McMahon, Brian A. Hoffman, Matthew Jones | Production Company: Capture*
- **MISS SHARON JONES!** USA | 2015 | 94 mins | In English | Australian Premiere  
*Director: Barbara Kopple | Producer: David Cassidy | World Sales: Submarine Entertainment*

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](http://sff.org.au) for more information.

### MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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

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### ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

From **Wednesday 8 June to Sunday 19 June 2016**, the 63<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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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](http://www.sff.org.au).

The 63<sup>rd</sup> 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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