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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES NEW FILMS, DIRECT FROM CANNES, ON SALE NOW

The 63rd Sydney Film Festival announces eight important new films and one restoration will screen as part of the 2016 Festival 8-19 June.

Festival Director Nashen Moodley said, “The Festival is very pleased to announce another six feature films, two documentaries, and one short film, have been added to the program, which now stands at 254 films presented over the 12-day Festival.”

“All nine films come direct from Cannes to Sydney Film Festival including Korean director Park Chan-wook’s sensual, twist-filled tale *The Handmaiden*; FIPRESCI Prize winner Maren Ade’s clever and original comedy about the complexities of familial relationships, *Toni Erdmann*; Jim Jarmusch’s popular Cannes hit *Paterson*, a gentle, quietly moving portrait of a bus driver poet and his artistic wife and Olivier Assayas’ *Personal Shopper*, a spooky ghost story starring Kristen Stewart.”

“Two true stories will also screen: a critically acclaimed heart-warming tale about India’s travelling picture shows, *The Cinema Travellers*, by Shirley Abraham and Amit Madheshiya; and Mahamat-Saleh Haroun’ *Hissein Habré, A Chadian Tragedy*, a film to honour the victims of Hissein Habré’s brutal dictatorship, tracing their long fight for justice,” he said.

Marlon Brando’s revenge western *One Eyed-Jacks*, in which he also starred, will bring the dusty Mexican countryside and wild Californian coastline to Sydney Film Festival. The only film directed by Brando, this exquisite restoration by Universal Pictures and The Film Foundation, which premiered at Cannes 2016, was overseen by Steven Spielberg and Martin Scorsese, who has named the film his ‘favourite western’.

The Red Turtle, a dialogue-free, animated fable by Japan’s famed Studio Ghibli and London-based artist Michaël Dudok de Wit, is sure to delight and surprise audiences in equal measure.

The final film added to the festival is *The Beast*, a funny and powerful South African short film which played at Cannes Directors’ Fortnight.

Tickets go on sale from 10am on Monday 6 June. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information.

Synopsis for these special screenings:

THE BEAST (SHORT) screens with *Hissein Habré, A Chadian Tragedy*

In this hilarious and powerful short film, Shaka, the star performer at a Zulu cultural village, dreams of finding a more fitting outlet for his acting talents. He expresses his frustrations to his co-workers as he sits on display for tourists. When he reaches the end of his tether, his protest reaches Shakespearean proportions.

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THE CINEMA TRAVELLERS

A critically acclaimed, poignant documentary that celebrates India's travelling picture shows and laments their demise, filled with exquisite visuals and marvellous eccentrics. In the world of the touring cinema, the projectionists coax their rusty 35mm projectors into life, sleeping and eating alongside their ancient machines. It's a far remove from Australia's multiplexes, but the crowd is no less enraptured. Shirley Abraham and Amit Madheshiya's heart-warming documentary, filmed over five years, follows the fortunes of three cinema workers in the western Indian state of Maharashtra. Bapu, the proprietor of Akshay Touring Talkies, gets ready for the season by brushing cobwebs from his broken-down truck, and blessing his ancient projector with incense. Mohamed and his crew haul an enormous tent and weighty projector around small-town fairs, where the audience sits on the stony ground. For 45 years, Prakash has repaired touring projection equipment, abandoned cogs and parts now fill his workshop, alongside the 'oil bath' projector he invented, and for which he once held big dreams. Declining audiences and ever fewer celluloid options force Bapu and Mohamed to shift to a digital format. Cinephiles will be heartbroken when an ancient projector is sold for scrap, but can be reassured that the movies endure, brighter and sharper than ever.

Screens Wednesday 15 June, 6.00pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Saturday 18 June, 3.00pm, Event Cinemas George Street (includes introduction and Q&A).

THE HANDMAIDEN

Visually sumptuous and very sexy, *The Handmaiden* is a stunning and suspenseful period drama by acclaimed Korean director Park Chan-wook (*Old Boy*; *Stoker*, 2013). Inspired by Sarah Water's novel 'Fingersmith', Park cleverly transposes the story to 1930s colonial Korea and Japan to tell a sensual, twist-filled tale. Sookee (Kim Tae-ri) is hired as a handmaiden to the repressed and isolated Japanese heiress Hideko (Kim Min-hee), who lives with her domineering uncle. Though servile and charming on the surface, Sookee has been planted in the household by a swindler posing as a Japanese Count (Ha Jung-woo). His plan is to seduce and elope with Hideko and take possession of her considerable fortune. But all is not what it seems, and when the intense attraction between Sookee and Hideko explodes, all bets are off. Visually arresting, unashamedly erotic and romantic, *The Handmaiden* finds Park at his stylish best.

Screens Saturday 18 June, 9.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Sunday 19 June, 8.50pm, Event Cinemas George Street.

HISSEIN HABRÉ, A CHADIAN TRAGEDY

In his Cannes-selected documentary, the multi-award winning director of *A Screaming Man* and *Grigris* (SFF 2013) honours the victims of a brutal African dictatorship and their long fight for justice. In June 1982, rebel commander Hisssein Habré forcefully took control of the Central African Republic of Chad. Director Mahamat-Saleh Haroun was one of the many exiles from Habré's punishing regime, which lasted until 1992. The ruthless political police – supported by the USA, France, Egypt and Iraq – were expected to keep the population in line. Haroun meets the men and women, often bearing mental and physical scars, who survived the regime's brutal campaign of harassment and imprisonment. The resulting interviews are disturbing but ultimately inspiring. Through their courage and determination, the victims accomplished an unprecedented feat in the history of Africa:

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that of bringing a Head of State to trial. In 2013, the former dictator was arrested in Senegal. The outcome of Habré's landmark trial was announced on 30 May 2016, where he was sentenced to life in prison for crimes against humanity, summary execution, torture and rape.

Screens Thursday 16 June, 6.30pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Sunday 19 June, 2.00pm, Event Cinemas George Street.

ONE EYED-JACKS

The magnificent and magnetic Marlon Brando directed and starred in this newly restored, brooding revenge western, largely set on California's rocky coast. This 1961 film is loosely based on the legend of Pat Garrett and Billy The Kid. Brando plays a charming rogue, Rio (nicknamed 'The Kid'), who is betrayed by his bank-robber accomplice and mentor Dad Longworth (Karl Malden, who appeared with Brando in 1951's *A Streetcar Named Desire* and 1954's *On the Waterfront*), and left to rot in a Mexican jail. When Rio escapes, after five long years, his only goal is revenge. Discovering that Longworth is now the sheriff of Monterey, he heads across the border to California. His old outlaw buddy is outwardly a reformed man, with a wife (the terrific Katy Jurado, best known for *High Noon*), and a doe-eyed stepdaughter Louisa (Pina Pellicer, who won Best Actress at the San Sebastian Film Festival for her performance). Rio sets out to seduce the naïve Louise and rob the local bank, but passion and the double-crossing Sheriff Longworth thwart his malicious plans.

Sam Peckinpah wrote the original script, but Brando wasn't happy with it, so Stanley Kubrick and Calder Willingham (*Paths of Glory*, *The Graduate*) became involved. When that fell through, Brando decided to direct the film himself. He shot six times more film than planned, took six months instead of twelve weeks, and went four million dollars over budget. Despite being nominated by the Directors Guild of America and winning the overall prize at San Sebastian, Brando never directed again.

Cinematographer Charles Lang, Oscar-nominated for his work, uses the dusty Mexican countryside and wild Californian coastline to stunning effect. Brando is equally mesmerising in this exquisite restoration from Universal Pictures and The Film Foundation, overseen by Steven Spielberg and Martin Scorsese, who has named *One-Eyed Jacks* his 'favourite western'.

Screens Saturday 18 June, 9.45am, Event Cinemas George Street, and Sunday 19 June, 6.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street.

PATERSON

Paterson, Jarmusch's popular Cannes hit, is a gentle, quietly moving portrait of a bus driver poet (Adam Driver, *Girls*) and his artistic wife (Golshifteh Farahani, *About Elly*). Paterson (Driver) drives his daily bus route in the city of Paterson, New Jersey, carefully observing the city and people around him. He follows the same routine each day: waking up, going to work, walking the dog, eating dinner at home with his wife Laura (Farahani) and ending the night with a single beer at the local bar. But Paterson is also a poet, and each day he writes a poem in his notebook, finding contentment in its very existence. Meanwhile, Laura finds outlets for her artistic ambitions and harbours dreams of

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becoming a country musician. Patiently paced, and revealing the beauty in the details of everyday life, *Paterson* further confirms Jarmusch as a master chronicler of small but profound moments.

Screens Tuesday 14 June, 9.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Thursday 16 June, 8.30pm, Event Cinemas George Street.

PERSONAL SHOPPER

Kristen Stewart shines in this spooky ghost story by Olivier Assayas (*Clouds of Sils Maria*, *Clean*), which earned him the Best Director prize at Cannes 2016. Stewart (who also stars in *Certain Women*, which screens in Official Competition at SFF this year) plays Maureen, a young American woman living in Paris and working as a personal shopper for a celebrity. She spends her days perusing the city's luxury designer stores, collecting fabulous pieces that she is forbidden from wearing and could never hope to own. Alongside her isolating job, Maureen pursues her psychic ability to communicate with spirits. All the while, she longs for a sign from her recently deceased twin, Lewis, who promised to send her a message from the other side. Stewart gives a commanding performance, subtly shifting between certainty and fragility. Things become stranger and stranger as it becomes apparent that an unfriendly spirit is pursuing Maureen. Following their successful collaboration on *Clouds of Sils Maria*, Assayas and Stewart reunite to create a daring, provocative and creepy existential drama.

Screens Wednesday 15 June, 9.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Friday 17 June, 8.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street. Screens with short *The Beast*.

THE RED TURTLE

The revered Studio Ghibli (*Spirited Away*) joined forces with London-based artist Michaël Dudok de Wit to create this stunning, dialogue-free, animated fable set on a desert island. A shipwrecked sailor washes ashore and explores his new home. He finds a sandy beach fringed by palm trees, a swaying bamboo forest, limpid freshwater pools and a rocky incline. It's an earthly paradise that our lanky castaway is desperate to leave, but his escape plans are mysteriously thwarted. It's a simple story, akin to fairy tales or myths, illustrated in exquisite line and colour, with spectacular dream sequences.

Dudok de Wit has won prizes the world over for his lyrical short films and commercials, including an Oscar for his 2001 short film *Father and Daughter*. The outstanding creative team for *The Red Turtle* also includes Isao Takahata (*The Tale of Princess Kaguya*, SFF 2014) as creative producer, Jean-Christophe Lie (*The Triplets of Belleville*) as supervising animator, French director Pascale Ferran (*Bird People*) as co-screenwriter, and Studio Ghibli's revered Toshio Suzuki (*Howl's Moving Castle*, SFF 2015) as producer.

The visuals are mesmerising, symbolic, and charming – look out for the cute sand crabs – and invite the audience to interpret this timeless cycle of life story at their own pace. This unique feature, which premiered in *Un Certain Regard* at Cannes last month, demands to be seen on the big screen.

Screens Friday 17 June, 6.30pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Saturday 18 June, 5.30pm, Event Cinemas George Street.

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TONI ERDMANN

Winner of the FIPRESCI Prize at Cannes, Maren Ade's *Toni Erdmann* is a clever and original comedy about family bonds, modern business tactics and the value of just letting go. Practical joker Winfried (Peter Simonischek) has retired, and regrets that he doesn't get to see enough of his busy daughter Ines (Sandra Hüller). Working as a management consultant in Romania, Ines is advising a company how they can increase profits by laying off workers. It's not the most opportune time for a visit, but Winfried descends on Bucharest and is soon donning a terrible suit, strange wig and outrageous fake teeth. As his alter ego "Toni Erdmann", a life coach, his intrusion into Ines' life becomes bolder and more provocative, pushing his daughter to question her life, and the place her father should occupy in it. With fantastic, fearless performances from its leads, a bizarre sense of humour, and a real honesty in its treatment of the complexities of familial relationships, *Toni Erdmann* is a truly unforgettable cinematic experience.

Screens Wednesday 15 June, 8.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street, and Sunday 19 June, 8.15pm, Event Cinemas George Street.

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.

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*****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 audiences 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

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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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