



MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 20 FINALISTS

AND DISTINGUISHED JURY FOR LEXUS AUSTRALIAN SHORT FILM FELLOWSHIP

The Sydney Film Festival and Lexus Australia today announced that 20 filmmakers have been shortlisted to compete for the largest cash fellowship for short film in Australia.

Presiding over the selection process as Jury Chair is leading Australian actor **David Wenham**. Wenham recently starred in the internationally acclaimed Australian film *Lion*, and will be seen on screens as lead villain in the anticipated Netflix series *Marvel's Iron Fist*. The other jury members are Sydney Film Festival Director **Nashen Moodley**, Lexus Australia's **Vin Naidoo**, and Australian producers **Kath Shelper** and **Sandra Levy AO**.

The industry luminaries will assess each finalist's proposed short film project to select up to four filmmakers, each of whom will receive a \$50,000 Fellowship grant. The four successful candidates will be announced at the Sydney Film Festival (7-18 June 2017).

The shortlisted filmmakers are:

Alexander Giblin (NSW)
Beth Armstrong (NSW)
Dane McCusker (NSW)
Sam Gosper (NSW)
Rueben Field (NSW)
Sunday Emerson Gullifer (NSW)
Arthur Angel (VIC)
David Hansen (VIC)
Ellen Richardson (VIC)
Frank Margee (VIC)

Goran Stolevski (VIC)
Isaac Elliott (VIC)
Lara Kose (VIC)
Oran Franco (VIC)
Thomas Baricevic (VIC)
Victoria Thaine (VIC)
Dane Hansen (QLD)
Emily Avila (QLD)
Josh Tanner (QLD)
Sean Meehan (WA)

Finalists are of the highest calibre. Two filmmakers have come from incredible experiences on set: one working with Mel Gibson on the two time Oscar-winning *Hacksaw Ridge*; and another with Alister Grierson (director of James Cameron-produced *Sanctum*) on the Emmy-winning series *Nowhere Boys*.

Other filmmakers have come from mixed disciplines and experiences. One directed Grammy-nominated music DVD *Liberacion*, and another started making films after a motorcycle accident left him confined to a wheelchair.

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Celebrated Australian playwright **Stephen Sewell**, producer **Nicole O'Donohue**, and producer and consultant **Gillian Moody** chose the 20 shortlisted filmmakers from over 280 Australians who entered the **2017 Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship**.

"The Fellowship is a significant investment in filmmakers looking to bring their next ground-breaking project to life," **Jury Chair David Wenham** said.

"The Fellowship is delighted with the wealth of talent entering the competition this year, hailing from across the spectrum of creative industries," **Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley** said.

"These unique perspectives and disciplines are sure to make for compelling films."

"The Fellowship is about discovering new voices and ideas that keep art forms moving forward at the local level, and just one example of how we invest in fostering creativity and emerging talent," **Vin Naidoo, Corporate Manager of Lexus Australia** said.

Once announced at the Sydney Film Festival in June, the four Fellows will commence production of their films, to premiere at the 65th Sydney Film Festival in 2018.

For more information on the Lexus Australia Short Film Fellowship, visit www.sff.org.au/fellowship

ABOUT THE LEXUS AUSTRALIA SHORT FILM FELLOWSHIP

The Lexus Australia Short Films Fellowship is a \$200,000 investment by Lexus Australia, presented by Sydney Film Festival, to support future generations of emerging filmmakers. The Fellowship is the largest cash fellowship for short film in Australia. Up to four Fellowship winners will receive \$50,000 each to produce their next short film in 2017, to premiere at the 65th Sydney Film Festival in 2018.

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animation across greater Sydney. 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.

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

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