

MEDIA RELEASE

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DIRECT FROM CANNES

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES NEW FILMS, ON SALE NOW

The 64TH Sydney Film Festival (7-18 June) which opens this Wednesday, announces that seven important new feature films will come to Sydney after screening at Cannes, including *The Square*: winner of this year's Palme d'Or, the biggest prize in world cinema.

"Seven works of cinema from some of the most talked about directors and stars of our time have been added to the Festival line-up," said **Festival Director Nashen Moodley**. "All are Australian premieres and essential viewing for film buffs.

"Sydney Film Festival audiences will be the first in the country to see 2017 Palme d'Or winner, surrealist satire *The Square*, starring **Elizabeth Moss** and **Dominic West**, 2017 Cannes Prix Un Certain Regard winner, *A Man of Integrity*, from Mohammad Rasoulof – one of Iran's most outspoken directors – and Cannes-selected gritty heist drama *Good Time*, starring **Robert Pattinson**, who gives a career defining performance."

"Also from Cannes, *Jupiter's Moon*, a film that tackles some of today's biggest issues though sci-fi and a Syrian refugee with superpowers, and prolific Japanese director **Takashi Miike's** 100th film, the samurai bloodbath *Blade of the Immortal*.

"There are also two Cannes-selected debut films: **Ali Soozandeh's** animation *Tehran Taboo*, looking at the secret life of young people in Iran and their struggle for personal and sexual freedom, and *I Am Not a Witch*, a straight-faced satire involving "witches", from Zambian-born Welsh director **Rungano Nyoni**," he said.

Synopsis for these special screenings:

A MAN OF INTEGRITY (LERD)

Winner of the Cannes Un Certain Regard Prize, Mohammad Rasoulof's searing drama is about a goldfish farmer who finds himself pitted against a mysterious, corrupt network. Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof (*Iron Island*, *The White Meadows*) is formally banned from making films in his homeland. Like Jafar Panahi (together the subjects of an SFF tribute in 2011), he continues to make films in secret, and his new work is a moving and powerful indictment of authoritarian societies. Reza has left the city to live a simple life in a remote village, where he breeds goldfish. When a local monopoly tries to buy his farm, Reza resists and finds himself battling The Company, a secretive network that appears to control every aspect of the village. As matters escalate, everyone tells Reza to pay a few bribes to ease his troubles but he stubbornly refuses. Building to a thrilling climax, *A Man of Integrity* is an intelligent, provocative film by a brave, uncompromising and extremely skilful filmmaker.

BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL (MUGEN NO JŪNIN)

The 100th film by Japanese master Takashi Miike (*Audition*, *Hara-kiri: Death of a Samurai*, SFF 2012) is an irreverent and gory samurai film about a skilled warrior who attains immortality. Based on a

popular manga and selected to screen at Cannes 2017, *Blade of the Immortal* is the story of Manji (Japanese heartthrob Takuya Kimura), a warrior who is cursed with immortality after a legendary battle. When his sister is killed, Manji takes brutal revenge on her killers. His own injuries are tended to by an 800-year-old nun, who also bestows upon Manji the power to self-heal. He finds himself unable to die until he has killed a very large number of evil men, and the scene is set for the bloody mayhem for which Miike is known and loved. As Manji says, “death is merciless, but never dying is far worse.” With brilliantly choreographed action scenes, swordfights of the highest order, and a wry sense of humour, *Blade of the Immortal* finds Miike to be as vital and mischievous as ever.

GOOD TIME

Robert Pattinson gives a career-best performance in this atmospheric crime thriller about a heist gone wrong and a man’s increasingly desperate attempts to free his jailed brother. Straight from Competition in Cannes and set over one adrenaline-filled day and night in New York, *Good Time* is a gritty, action-packed film that has been compared to seminal American films of the 70s like *Dog Day Afternoon* and *Taxi Driver*. Pattinson plays Constantine Nikas, who attempts a bank robbery with his intellectually disabled brother Nick (Benny Safdie). Not the most competent criminals, the brothers make some fateful mistakes and in the ensuing mayhem, Nick is arrested. Increasingly desperate, Constantine dives into the city’s underworld on a dangerous mission to free his vulnerable brother. With a great score by Oneohtrix Point Never, a relentless pace and Pattinson’s incredible performance, *Good Time* is an exhilarating genre film with great emotional impact.

I AM NOT A WITCH

When a young orphan is sent to a witch camp, she struggles to find a way to freedom. This dark comedy about the clash between superstition and modernity is a rare film from Zambia. Nine-year-old orphan Shula (Maggie Mulubwa) lives in a Zambian village. When a woman trips and spills some water, she insists that the cause is Shula’s witchcraft. Another villager insists that the child has severed his arm with an axe – a claim he insists on despite having all his limbs attached. These clearly bogus accusations result in Shula being exiled from the community and sent to a camp for witches – a strange tourist attraction made of mostly older women who have been ostracized from society. A corrupt public servant also sees the opportunity to use Shula’s supposed powers to wield influence and make some money. Director Rungano Nyoni deftly combines satire and tragedy, aided by a brilliant performance from the young Mulubwa who, saying little, conveys both the ludicrousness and the harshness of the situation. This assured debut screened in the Director’s Fortnight sidebar at Cannes.

JUPITER’S MOON

Brilliantly shot and with a propulsive energy, Cannes Competition contender *Jupiter’s Moon* is about a young refugee who gets the power to fly after being shot crossing a border. Entering into Hungary illegally, young Aryan is separated from his father and shot. Wounded, terrified and shocked, he discovers that he can levitate at will. In a refugee camp filled with desperation, his strange powers are noticed by Dr Stern. Aryan is spirited away from the camp, and Dr Stern is determined to exploit his new charge’s abilities to make as much money as possible, promising him refuge, riches and a reunion with his father. But the duo is being pursued by the relentless camp director, Laszlo, who’s determined to find Aryan. In a year in which so many of the world’s filmmakers are interrogating the international refugee crisis, director Kornél Mundruczó’s radical take on the issue is unique, provocative and thrilling.

TEHRAN TABOO

A dazzling animation that looks at the sex lives of young Iranians in a society of strict religious laws and prohibitions, straight from screening at Cannes Critics’ Week. Daring both in subject and technique, *Tehran Taboo* looks at the lives of Iranians who must negotiate a perilous path in order to express their individuality and their sexuality. Pari, a sex worker who frequently takes her young son on the job, finds an apartment through an arrangement with a judge at the religious court. There she meets Sara, a pregnant wife who wishes to pursue a career. There’s also the musician Babak, who finds himself in a predicament when, after a one night stand, the woman demands that he pay for an operation to restore her virginity in time for her impending wedding. Using the rotoscoping technique,



director Soozandeh shot actors live, and then created extensive, impressive animated backgrounds. Uncompromising in its determination to highlight hypocrisy, *Tehran Taboo* creates a compelling and vivid portrait of a city of contradictions.

THE SQUARE

Fresh from winning the Cannes Palme d'Or the new film by Ruben Östlund (*Play; Force Majeure*) is a hilarious, outrageous satire of the art world. Christian (Claes Bang) is the urbane curator of a contemporary art museum, a sophisticated and eloquent defender of artistic expression. As he prepares for his next show "The Square" – an installation promoting altruism – his mobile phone and wallet are stolen in an elaborate pickpocketing scheme. Christian decides on a course of revenge, leading him into a downward spiral of personal and professional mayhem. Östlund is a genius at magnifying the little cracks in social interactions, brilliantly showing how these awkward moments signify larger chasms in society. *The Square*, also starring Elisabeth Moss (*Mad Men, Top of the Lake*) and Dominic West (*The Wire, The Affair*), is intelligent and biting funny and a most deserving winner of the biggest prize in world cinema.

Sydney Film Festival runs 7 – 18 June 2017.

Tickets for Sydney Film Festival 2017 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 7 June to Sunday 18 June 2017**, the 64th 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.

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: *Aquarius* (2016); *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, Randwick Ritz, Casula Powerhouse, the Festival Hub at Sydney Town Hall and SFF Outdoor Screen in Pitt Street Mall.

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 64th 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.

