



MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
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MEDIA RELEASE

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL TO CAPTURE THE IMAGINATION OF YOUNG MINDS WITH NEXT GEN PROGRAM

2014 PROGRAM TO INCLUDE NEW ANIME *PATEMA INVERTED* FROM JAPANESE YOUNG GUN YASUHIRO YOSHIURA

MELBOURNE, 19 May 2014 – The **Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF)** is pleased to announce the program for the 2014 edition of **Next Gen**, the Festival's 'all-ages' program that is aimed at inspiring our next generation of film lovers.

Next Gen serves as an introduction into the imaginative, educational and explorative qualities of film for young people. "The films this year were selected for their diversity, innovation and high quality, as well as being relevant and accessible to audiences of all ages. The program has been put together with young people in mind, but adults will also find much to love about these films," says Next Gen Programmer Thomas Caldwell.

This year's diverse program will include the Japanese anime *Patema Inverted*, the richly inventive new film from the young gun of the anime scene, Yasuhiro Yoshiura. Set in a distant future, *Patema Inverted* follows a rebellious teenager living underground in a grim industrial complex. An exhilarating tale of star-crossed love, Yoshiura's much-anticipated feature introduces us to the next generation in anime science-fiction.

For younger audiences, the stunning Uruguayan animation *Anina* is a warm, whip-smart film that speaks to both children and adults about bullying, discipline and personal responsibility. The film follows the schoolgirl Anina who is teased at school for having a palindrome for a name. Beautifully animated and filled to the brim with humour and empathy, *Anina* is the debut feature from Uruguayan animator Alfredo Soderguit and was Uruguay's submission for the 2014 Best Foreign Film Oscar.

The final animation in this part of the program is *Aunt Hilda!* a French hand-drawn animation from the studio behind the Academy Award-nominated *A Cat in Paris*. This new feature is a rollicking and timely new adventure about an eco-warrior who fights to protect our environment and stand up to corporate greed. Daringly animated and filled with surprising flourishes, *Aunt Hilda!* is bold, funny and endlessly defiant.

Animal rights are brought to the fore in the Swiss-German live-action feature *Clara and the Secret of the Bears*, which follows a 13-year-old who lives in the Swiss Alps and discovers her affinity with the wild bears. Part ghost story that stretches across two centuries and part ecological tale about learning to co-exist with nature, *Clara and the Secret of the Bears* is a magical family drama with a profound message about animal welfare.

Directed by filmmaker Julie Bertuccelli (*The Tree*, MIFF 10), the French documentary *School of Babel* introduces us to a multicultural group of students from over the world who are put in a 'reception class' to learn French language and culture so that they can better integrate into their new lifestyle. It's a moving and lucidly revealing capture of the students' struggles and breakthroughs.

Also from France is the dramatic feature *The Good Life*, about sixteen-year-old Sylvain and his older brother Pierre, who live a nomadic, somewhat idyllic life off the grid with their father. Evoking Jeff Nichols' *Mud* and Sidney Lumet's *Running on Empty*, this nuanced coming-of-age story offers a tender insight into masculinity,

identity and growing up.

Perfect for our iPad generation, *The Nightingale* is a Chinese/French production about the joys of going offline. It follows the 10-year-old tech-addict Renxing who is forced to accompany her grandfather on a trip through the Chinese countryside to his tiny hometown. Ravishingly shot, French filmmaker Philippe Muyl's film reminds us that even in the age of Wikipedia there is plenty that the oldest can teach the youngest – and vice versa.

Finally for punk-rock fans the Mexican feature *We Are Mari Pepa* follows a young Mexican punk band with grandiose plans that compete with the reality of their lives. This assured drama captures all the crude energy and frequent humiliations of male adolescence – set to a punk/Mexican soundtrack that adds extra oomph.

Since 2007 the **Next Gen** program has endeavoured to provide upper level primary and secondary school students with the opportunity to enjoy a diverse range of entertaining and challenging cinema. The spotlight also provides an opportunity for families to enjoy films in the Festival environment. Through the exploration of cultural and social issues, **Next Gen** encourages students and teachers to intellectually engage with these films using the help of free study guides provided by **ATOM (Australian Teachers of Media Inc.)** This resource provides a greater context for students to engage with the themes raised in the films in relation to their curriculum.

Suitable for Upper Primary students and above:

Anina

Suitable for Junior Secondary students and above:

The Nightingale

Aunt Hilda!

School of Babel

Suitable for Middle Secondary students and above:

Clara and the Secret of the Bears

Patema Inverted

Suitable for Senior Secondary students and above:

The Good Life

We are Mari Pepa

Next Gen is proudly supported by the **ATOM**.

Teacher and school group bookings are available from metromagazine.com.au/nextgen from **19 May 2014**. Individual sales to the general public are available from **11 July 2014**.

For further information visit miff.com.au/nextgen.

The 2014 Melbourne International Film Festival runs 31 July -17 August 2014. MIFFs First Glance will be announced on 27 May 2014 and the full program will be launched 8 July 2014 with public tickets on sale 11 July 2014.

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