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66TH MIFF ANNOUNCES FULL PROGRAM

GURRUMUL WORLD PREMIERE AT CLOSING NIGHT

JANE CAMPION, MELISSA GEORGE AND LUCA GUADAGNINO LEAD GUEST LINE-UP SALLY POTTER AND PIONEERING WOMEN RETROSPECTIVES UNVEILED

MELBOURNE, 12 JULY 2017 – Celebrating its 66th year, the **Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF)** unleashes its full program with a mammoth line-up of more than 358 films representing 68 countries, including 251 features, 88 shorts, 17 Virtual Reality experiences, 12 MIFF Talks events, 31 world premieres and 135 Australian premieres. It all happens over 18 days, spanning 13 venues across Melbourne, from 3 to 20 August 2017.

“What a pleasure it is to launch this year’s Melbourne International Film Festival,” said Artistic Director **Michelle Carey**. “This year’s program offers audiences an amazing opportunity to explore new worlds through film – from our Pioneering Women and Sally Potter retrospectives to the return of our Virtual Reality program as well as a particularly strong line-up of special events, we can’t wait to open the doors to MIFF 2017.”

After kicking-off the festival with the Opening Night Gala screening of **Greg McLean’s** MIFF Premiere Fund-supported *JUNGLE*, presented by Grey Goose Vodka, the festival will wind up with the world premiere **CLOSING NIGHT** screening of Paul Williams’ *GURRUMUL*. A profound exploration of the life and music of revered Australian artist Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu, the film uses the tools of the artist’s music – chord, melody, song – and the sounds of the land to craft an audio-first cinematic experience, offering a rare insight into a reclusive master. After the film, the audience will enjoy MIFF’s famous Closing Night party at the Festival Lounge.

Joining the MIFF guest line-up are some of the world’s most exciting film talents. The festival is thrilled to welcome **Jane Campion** with her much-anticipated new television series *TOP OF THE LAKE: CHINA GIRL*, presented by BBC First and Foxtel; Australia’s **Melissa George**, starring in the MIFF Premiere Fund-supported *THE BUTTERFLY TREE*; Italian director **Luca Guadagnino** with his acclaimed new film *CALL ME BY YOUR NAME*, a sensuous story of first love and the end of adolescence; and newcomer **Jennifer Brea** making her way to MIFF with *UNREST*, a feature documentary capturing her darkest moments as she is derailed by Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

Further international guests include **Peter Mackie Burns**, the debut feature director of *DAPHNE*, a refreshing portrait of contemporary womanhood; **Francis Lee**, with his depiction of British rural life in *GOD’S OWN COUNTRY*; **Slavko Martinov**, the force behind the entertaining flockumentary *PECKING ORDER*; **Gabe Klinger** on behalf of *PORTO*, a film presented in Super 8, 16mm and breathtaking 35mm; director **Sami Saif** and cinematographer **Anders Löfstedt** with their music documentary *THE ALLINS*; Thai filmmaker **Anocha Suwichakornpong**, winner of the Top Prize at the 2016 Thai National Film Association Awards for her feature *BY THE TIME IT GETS DARK*; and **Annie Goldson**, director of *KIM DOTCOM: CAUGHT IN THE WEB*, a documentary about the court case surrounding the internet’s most wanted criminal. MIFF guests also include **Daniel Borgman**, director of *LOVING PIA*, a winsome tale blurring documentary and fiction; and **Florian Habicht**, director of *SPOOKERS*, a film focusing on a former psychiatric hospital that is now a haunted attraction.



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Following last year's success, **VIRTUAL REALITY (VR)** returns to MIFF in 2017. Leading the charge is the world premiere of **Lucas Taylor's INSIDE MANUS**, taking the audience behind the razor wire to meet the asylum seekers on the Manus Island detention centre. Other VR world premieres include **Lester Francois' RONE**, a distinctive portrait of the Melbourne street artist; **Khoa Do and Piers Mussared's THE EXTRACTION**, a work imagining a perilous journey through the post apocalypse; and **Christopher Bailey's ACROSS**, set in a world where two beings live in opposite cliffs – where one side is a paradise and the other a wasteland.

The VR program continues with Jeff Goldblum making a cameo appearance in **MIYUBI**, a feature length film about a family's relationship with its Japanese toy robot, from co-directors **Félix Lajeunesse and Paul Raphaël**; **George Gittoes** expands upon his MIFF 2015 feature *Snow Monkey*, taking audiences on a VR tour to Afghanistan in the world premiere of **FUN FAIR JALALABAD**; and **Ben Smith's THE HUNT FOR THE YIDAKI**, the companion piece to the MIFF 2017 Premiere Fund-supported feature **WESTWIND: DJALU'S LEGACY**, will also receive its world premiere. Meanwhile **UNREST VR**, a film about Chronic Fatigue Syndrome – made by **Amaury La Burthe** and other key collaborators on *Notes on Blindness: Into Darkness* (MIFF 2016) – screens as an expansion piece to Jennifer Brea's feature documentary, also showing at MIFF 2017.

In addition to **UNREST**, MIFF's much-loved **DOCUMENTARIES** program delivers an array of gripping real-life character studies. Catch **WINNIE**, **Pascale Lamche's** Sundance Directing Award-winning portrait of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, variously viewed as the wife of South Africa's most revered leader, the mother and/or enemy of her nation and a revolutionary force in her own right; **Andres Veiel's BEUYS: ART AS A WEAPON**, an extensive look at the felt-clad, hat-wearing German performance artist Joseph Beuys; and **DINA**, the Sundance Grand Jury Prize-winner from **Dan Sickles** and **Antonio Santini** that offers a heartfelt and heart-melting portrait of love in all its strangeness and wonder.

The Documentaries program also takes audiences behind the closed doors of wildly diverse environments. In the remarkable debut film **THE WORK**, America's most hardened criminals share their demons with the everyday public during the world's most intense group therapy session in **Jairus McLeary** and **Gethin Aldous' SXSW Grand Jury Prize-winner**; **Jean-Stéphane Bron's THE PARIS OPERA** is a film candidly charting the day-to-day drama during a season of upheaval for the revered company; and **ROLLER DREAMS** finds Australian director **Kate Hickey** tracking down the original stars of the Venice Beach 80s roller dancing movement to build a funky portrait of the rise and fall of the craze.

MIFF's toe-tapping **MUSIC ON FILM** program dances to its own beat with **THE ALLINS** where award-winning Danish documentarian **Sami Saif** turn his lens on the most outrageous musician to ever live – GG Allin – revealing the man behind the maniac behind the music; and in **Kyoko Miyake's TOKYO IDOLS**, teenage girl pop stars grapple with finding fame and the creeping fixation of their male fan bases in an eye-opening look at Japanese idol culture.

Musical influencers take centre stage in the Sundance Special Jury Prize-winning **RUMBLE: THE INDIANS WHO ROCKED THE WORLD**, where **Catherine Bainbridge** sets out to reinstate Native American trailblazers to their rightful place in the pop music pantheon; and **Lucy Walker**, director of the MIFF 2013 Best Documentary Audience Award-winner *The Crash Reel*, returns with **BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB: ADIOS**, a touching farewell to the beloved *son cubano* musicians as they

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complete their final tour.

A stellar line-up of homegrown talent will be showcased in **AUSTRALIAN FILMS**. Marking the halfway point of the festival will be the **CENTREPIECE GALA** world premiere screening of **THREE SUMMERS**, the first Australian film from comedian **Ben Elton**. Romantic leads Robert Sheehan and Rebecca Breeds are joined by a glittering ensemble featuring Michael Caton, Magda Szubanski, Deborah Mailman, Jacqueline McKenzie and John Waters for an of-the-moment, multi-story comedy set over three years at a fictional folk-music festival.

Continuing the Australian Films showcase, **David Wenham** makes his feature directorial debut with a *Before Sunrise*-style romance set to the distinctive sounds of Megan Washington with **ELLIPSIS**, starring Emily Barclay and Benedict Samuel; MIFF offers an exclusive preview of the second series of **GLITCH**, a Matchbox Pictures production commissioned by ABC TV and co-produced by Netflix, set in a fictional Victorian town where deceased former residents have crawled out of their graves in the local cemetery; and in a special screening presented by the National Film and Sound Archive's digital restoration program – **NFSA RESTORES**, MIFF will also present the classic rip-roaring homegrown action flick, **SHAME**, where an award-winning **Deborra-Lee Furness** – also a guest of MIFF 2017 – turns the tables on a country town's entrenched male violence.

Celebrating its 10th birthday in 2017, the **MIFF PREMIERE FUND** stages six world premieres (each with its director in attendance) comprising: **Greg McLean's** MIFF Opening Night Film **JUNGLE**, starring Daniel Radcliffe; **Luke Shanahan's** uniquely stylish psychological thriller **RABBIT**, featuring *The Great Gatsby's* Adelaide Clemens playing identical twins linked by more than just DNA; MIFF guests **Melissa George** and **Ed Oxenbould** starring alongside Ewen Leslie and Sophie Lowe in **Priscilla Cameron's THE BUTTERFLY TREE**, a coming-of-age tale of love and loss tinged with magical realism; **Eddie Martin's HAVE YOU SEEN THE LISTERS?**, an intimate account of the cost of success of Australia's most renowned street artist, **Anthony Lister** (also a guest of the festival); **Naina Sen's THE SONG KEEPERS**, telling the incredible story of a hidden musical legacy of ancient Aboriginal languages and German baroque songs that are being preserved by the **Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir** (who will also attend the festival); and **Ben Strunin's WESTWIND: DJALU'S LEGACY**, portraying the quest of Yolngu elder **Djalu Gurruwiwi** (who will attend the festival) to preserve his songlines with a little help from global pop star Gotye.

Marking the MIFF Premiere Fund's 10-year milestone, the festival will also screen three retrospective highlights from the Fund's early years: the 2009 MIFF Opening Night film **BALIBO**, written and directed by **Robert Connolly** and starring Oscar Isaac, Anthony LaPaglia and MIFF Ambassador Gyton Grantley; **Amiel Courtin-Wilson's BASTARDY**, a poetic and impressionistic portrait of the life of indigenous arts personality Jack Charles; and **Ana Kokkinos'** all-star ensemble **BLESSED**, which features Frances O'Connor in an AFI Award-winning performance.

PIONEERING WOMEN, a program of 80s and early 90s Australian films directed by women, will pay tribute to some of the country's finest cinematic trailblazers, including director **Ann Turner** with the world premiere of her digitally restored horror meets coming-of-age drama **CELIA**; **Gillian Armstrong** with a digital restoration screening of **STARSTRUCK**, the iconic and colourful musical comedy about two Sydney teenagers who try to break into the music biz to save the family pub (which also features an appearance by MIFF Ambassador Geoffrey Rush). Both films are proudly presented by the National Film and Sound Archive's restoration program – **NFSA RESTORES**. Don't miss this opportunity to revisit other classics such as **BEDEVIL** (directed by **Tracey Moffatt**), **THE BIG STEAL**



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(directed by **Nadia Tass**) and **FLOATING LIFE** (directed by **Clara Law**), with guest Q&As and a Conversation panel in store among other events.

MIFF's ever popular **NIGHT SHIFT** program returns with innovative horror and genre films including **A PRAYER BEFORE DAWN**, in which French provocateur **Jean-Stéphane Sauvaire** (*Johnny Mad Dog*, MIFF 2008) returns to the brutal underworlds of masculine violence, in an adaptation of Billy Moore's memoir of his time in Bangkok's notorious Klong Prem prison; **MY FRIEND DAHMER**, **Marc Meyers'** disturbing vision of America's most notorious serial killer during his adolescence, featuring a breathtaking performance by Disney star Ross Lynch; and **BLOODLANDS**, a brutal mix of family blood feud and supernatural horror marking the first ever co-production between Australia and Albania, directed by **Steven Kastrissios** (*The Horseman*, MIFF 2008).

For the first time in its history MIFF will also present a **SCI-FI** program, showcasing a selection of the genre's best films including **IKARIE XB-1**, **Jindřich Polák's** little-known pioneering masterpiece that influenced everything from *Star Trek* to *2001: A Space Odyssey...* and beyond; **INVENTION FOR DESTRUCTION**, from inventive animator **Karel Zeman**, the first steampunk film, bringing the stories and visuals of Jules Verne to life; **LE DERNIER COMBAT**, a work taking audiences back to where it all began for renowned sci-fi director **Luc Besson**, with his striking 1983 film starring Jean Reno in his feature debut; and **STRANGE DAYS**, featuring Ralph Fiennes, Angela Bassett and Juliette Lewis, **Kathryn Bigelow's** 20-year-old, James Cameron-scripted, VR tech-noir. And for the night owls, running all night at the Astor Theatre is MIFF's inaugural **SCI-FI MARATHON**, presenting a collection of the genre's most venerated, controversial and enduring or under-appreciated fan favourites. For full details visit miff.com.au/marathon.

The **TRUE CRIME** program returns in 2017 with some of the most intriguing and sinister stories of our time. Oscar-nominated documentarian **David France** (*How to Survive a Plague*, MIFF 2012) delivers a piercing survey of the origins of transgender activism and a search for justice in **THE DEATH AND LIFE OF MARTHA P JOHNSON**; **Erik Nelson's** **A GRAY STATE** is a riveting murder mystery, political thriller and unparalleled psychological profile about rising alt-right filmmaker and Iraq veteran David Crowley and his family; and **Pete Nicks' THE FORCE** is an award-winning look at the day-to-day operations of the Oakland Police Department as it grapples with endemic corruption, sexism and racial violence.

ANIMAL DOCUMENTARIES, a new program strand for 2017, puts the spotlight on some of the world's most intriguing creatures. **TROPHY** sees **Shaul Schwarz** (*Narco Cultura*, MIFF 2013) and **Christina Clusiau** take on a charged debate in a controversial film that will upend everything audiences thought they knew about animal conservation; **PECKING ORDER**, the year's best feel-good flockumentary from **Slavko Martinov**, introduces us to people taking the world of chicken fancying as seriously as life and death; and **A RIVER BELOW**, **Mark Grieco's** provocative and murky morality tale about a TV conservationist's battle to save the Amazon's disappearing pink river dolphin, will leave audiences shocked and awed.

MIFF's **HEADLINERS** program will bring audiences the most-buzzed about films from the festival circuit. Highlights include **Ruben Östlund's** Palme d'Or winning **THE SQUARE**, a film marking the director as modern cinema's most savage and inventive satirist; **Claire Denis'** Cannes Director's Fortnight award-winning romantic comedy **LET THE SUNSHINE IN**, starring Juliette Binoche; **Jeremy Jasper's** fabulous Sundance triumph **PATTI CAKE\$**, featuring Australian acting discovery **Danielle Macdonald** in the role of a New Jersey battler and aspiring rapper; **SONG TO SONG**, a love story



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from **Terrence Malick** set against the backdrop of the Austin music scene, featuring Ryan Gosling, Rooney Mara, Michael Fassbender and Natalie Portman; and **THE PARTY**, **Sally Potter**'s caustic comic satire of a broken England, with a stellar ensemble headed by Kristin Scott Thomas, Patricia Clarkson and Timothy Spall.

Showcasing MIFF's admiration for the inimitable British director, this year the festival also proudly presents a **SALLY POTTER RETROSPECTIVE**. Screening the complete oeuvre of Potter's feature films, along with a selection of her early shorts from 1969 to 1986, the retrospective includes: **THE TANGO LESSON**, where Potter plays opposite Argentine tango performer Pablo Verón for a seductive dance of reality and fiction; **ORLANDO**, the director's stunning second film featuring a triumphant lead performance by Tilda Swinton as the androgynous titular character living across four centuries; **THE GOLD DIGGERS**, Potter's seminal work that came to influence and define feminist cinema of the 1980s; and **GINGER AND ROSA**, starring Alice Englert and Elle Fanning as two friends threatened by a belief-shattering betrayal.

The festival's **INTERNATIONAL** program is packed with innovative cinema from countries near and afar. MIFF Patron Geoffrey Rush shines as Alberto Giacometti in **Stanley Tucci's FINAL PORTRAIT**, a snapshot of several weeks the artist spent trying to paint author James Lord; **Fatih Akin** (*Head-On*, MIFF 2004) delivers the morally charged thriller **IN THE FADE**, featuring Diane Kruger in the performance that won her Best Actress at Cannes; and from **Aisling Walsh** comes **MAUDIE**, starring Oscar nominees Sally Hawkins and Ethan Hawke exploring the sensitive but rousing true tale of Maud Lewis, one of Canada's most inspiring folk artists.

Some 14 of Australia and New Zealand's hottest emerging directors will have their short films premiere in the festival's **ACCELERATOR** program and also participate in Accelerator Lab, MIFF's prestigious development workshop assisting directors to transition to feature filmmaking. They are **W.A.M (Bill) Bleakley; Nina Buxton; Kate Lefoe; Frank Magree; Zoe McIntosh; Victoria McIntyre; Greta Nash; Tin Pang; Simon Portus; Nikki Richardson; Rachel Ross; John Sheedy; Nick Waterman;** and **Dave Whitehead**.

The MIFF **SHORTS** program will screen local and international films spanning animation, documentary, experimental works and more, with highlights including the riveting **INDONESIAN SHORTS**, a program screening works from some of Australia's closest neighbours, and Cannes Short Film Palme d'Or winner **A GENTLE NIGHT**, from MIFF Accelerator alumnus **Qiu Yang**, while other Accelerator alumni directors returning with new short films are **Alice Englert, Audrey Lam, Nora Niasari, Julietta Boscolo, Billie Pleffer, Dylan River** and **Alena Lodkina**.

As always, a plethora of special events will be staged during the 2017 festival. **MIFF TALKS** will have audiences discussing, questioning and arguing all things cinematic with the festival's guest filmmakers and personalities. Highlights include **Jane Campion, Gerard Lee** and Accelerator alumnus **Ariel Kleiman** discussing season two of their new television series during **TOP OF THE LAKE: CHINA GIRL - IN CONVERSATION**, co-presented with the Wheeler Centre, BBC First and Foxtel; acclaimed comedian and director **Ben Elton**, alongside cast from MIFF's Centrepiece Gala film, speaking with **Natalie Bailey** (*The Thick of It*) during **THREE SUMMERS: IN CONVERSATION**; and one of Australia's favourite actors discussing his directorial debut **ELLIPSIS** during **DAVID WENHAM: IN CONVERSATION**.



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Presented by Liquid Architecture, MIFF and ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image), world renowned composer, filmmaker and theorist **Michel Chion** will visit Australia for the first time with an historic and unlikely-to-be repeated concert **THE AUDIO-SPECTATOR** and performative lecture **THE VOICE IN CINEMA**, with both events taking place at ACMI Cinemas. And in a special presentation at Hamer Hall, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will perform the live score for **Paul Thomas Anderson's** Academy Award®-winning epic, **THERE WILL BE BLOOD** (2007), scored by Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, with British conductor (and Radiohead collaborator) **Hugh Brunt** at the helm.

Joining forces with IMAX the festival will present screenings of **Terrence Malick's VOYAGE OF TIME** – a film more than 40 years in the making – tracking the journey of life from the Big Bang to the present moment, narrated by Brad Pitt. MIFF's popular annual screenings of jaw-dropping **PLANETARIUM FULLDOME SHOWCASES** also return to the Melbourne Planetarium in two huge programs. For further details visit miff.com.au/fulldome.

Talks and masterclasses will also be offered via the **MIFF 37°SOUTH & ACCELERATOR LAB PUBLIC EVENTS** program of ticketed sessions. Celebrated LA-based developer, writer and lecturer **Wendall Thomas** returns exclusively to Melbourne with her popular series of four stand alone all-day seminars on screenwriting in **WENDALL THOMAS TALKS SCRIPTS**, including a full-day spotlight on the Oscar-winning *Moonlight's* creative and business model, while former London Film Festival director and enduring film-culture tsar **Adrian Wootton** returns to Melbourne for **ADRIAN WOOTTON TALKS FILM FEMMES**, focusing on Hollywood's Golden Age and four of its legendary actresses in Lauren Bacall, Gloria Grahaeme, Ingrid Bergman and Judy Garland. Accelerator Lab's ticketed sessions include: **ACTING** with *THE BUTTERFLY TREE's* **Melissa George** and **Ed Oxenbould**; **CINEMATOGRAPHY** with *RABBIT's* **Anna Howard**; and **EDITING** with *JUNGLE's* **Sean Lahiff**.

There's still plenty more on offer at MIFF 2017 – visit miff.com.au for the full program.

Public tickets on sale Friday 14 July.

Pick up *The Saturday Paper* or *The Age* on Saturday 15 July for a copy of the print program.

The 2017 Melbourne International Film Festival runs 3 – 20 August.

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