



JOEL EDGERTON, NEW YORK BLOGGER ARI SETH COHEN, DIRECTOR JOE SWANBERG AND GIRLS' DESIREE AKHAVAN TOP GUEST LINEUP

MELBOURNE, 15th July 2014 – The 2014 Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) will host 24 international guests and over 70 local guests with a heady mix of some of the world's hottest filmmakers, directors, actors and homegrown talent.

Currently filming a movie in the US with Johnny Depp, Aussie **Joel Edgerton** will make a lightning trip to Melbourne for the red carpet premiere of *FELONY*, which he wrote and stars in. He will be joined by director **Matthew Saville** at MIFF's Closing Night Gala presentation of *FELONY*.

Actor **Sarah Snook**, and directors and identical twin brothers, **Michael and Peter Spierig**, will head to MIFF for the opening night presentation of their film *Predestination*, which was filmed in Melbourne at the Dockland Studios.

Prolific USA lo-fi auteur Director **Joe Swanberg** will be in town to present *Happy Christmas* - a candid and wry exploration of 'adultescene' and the divide between those who have children and those who don't. Shot on super 16mm it also features a guest turn from *Girls* creator Lena Dunham.

Also heading out from the USA is blogger **Ari Seth Cohen** and director **Lina Plioplyte** with their energetic and charming movie *Advanced Style*, which was born out of Ari's hugely successful blog of the same name where he photographs fashionable senior citizens in their 60s through to their 90s in New York City. In our youth obsessed culture *Advanced Style* goes about proving age is no barrier to being fabulous.

Celebrating MIFF's inaugural Kids' Gala will be *Paper Planes* Director **Robert Connolly** (Tim Winton's *The Turning, Balibo, The Bank*) and its young stars **Ena Imai, Nicholas Bakopoulos-Cooke** and **Ed Oxenbould** (*Puberty Blues*) at a special family-friendly red carpet World Premiere screening at the Forum. *Paper Planes* is the story of twelve-year-old Dylan who lives with his father in the West Australian outback who discovers he is extremely good at making and flying paper planes. While attempting to refine and develop his newly realised ability, Dylan finds himself caught up in the world of competitive paper-plane making, leading to new friendships, new rivalries and new realisations about his own family.

Renowned for being one of the world's most uncompromising directors, France's **Catherine Breillat** will be in Melbourne for *Abuse of Weakness*, the terrifying story of how Breillat herself gave over \$1 million to a convicted conman.

Indie darling **Desiree Akhavan** – director, screenwriter and actor – will accompany her debut feature film, *Appropriate Behavior*, about a bisexual Iranian-American woman trying to find her way in modern-day Brooklyn. Akhavan is in the next series of the global cult TV show *Girls*.

New Zealand director **Florian Habicht** returns to MIFF with his cinematic love letter to Sheffield and its best-known 90's export, the band Pulp, in the joyous *Pulp: A Film about Life, Death and Supermarkets*.

Other international guests in Melbourne for MIFF are:

- **John Pirozzi**, USA, Director, *Don't Think I've Forgotten: Cambodia's Lost Rock and Roll* – a Backbeat presentation about the Khmer Rouge's attempt to destroy everything the West had ever touched and the one thing they couldn't destroy – rock 'n' roll
- **Curtis Vowell**, NZ, Director, and Sophie Henderson, Actress/Screenwriter, *Fantail* – a hilariously deadpan comedy drama about blonde-haired, blue-eyed Tania who looks pakeha but identifies as Maori
- **Dr Toby Haggith**, UK, Restoration Director, *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* – an extraordinary cultural artifact depicting the Holocaust through a 1945 lens with restored pictures, overseen by Dr Haggith
- **Gerard Johnstone**, NZ, Director, *Houseband* – Johnstone's debut feature with a strong plot and genuine frights for the Night Shift aficionados and high gag-rate in a freaky concoction to please horror fans
- **Deepa Dhanraj**, India, *Invoking Justice* – India in Flux: Living Resistance is a program strand in 2013 that goes beyond Bollywood to present an alternate view of contemporary India. *Invoking Justice* is an inspiring picture of Muslim sisterhood and collective action where civil disputes in Southern Indian communities are settled by all male Jamaats (councils)



- **Anne-Dominique Toussaint**, Belgium, Producer, *Jacky in the Kingdom of Women* – a twisted take on the Cinderella story that skewers sexism and fundamentalism to hilarious effect
- **Anand Patwardhan**, India, Director, *Jai Bhim Comrade* – this doco explores the aftermath of a statue of Dr BR Ambedkar, champion of Indian's Dalit, being defaced, subsequent riots and centuries-old caste lines conflict
- **Albert Serra**, Spain, Director, *The Story of My Death* – following his audacious treatments of Don Quixote Serra turns his hand to the legends of Casanova and Dracula, presenting an ostentatious re-imagination of the 18th century transition from rationalism to romanticism
- **Ryan White**, USA, Director, *The Case Against 8* – a riveting documentary that follows the historic case to overturn California's ban on same-sex marriage; a journey that took five years of setbacks and victories and ended up in the Washington Supreme Court
- **Maxim Pozdorovkin**, Russia, Director, *The Notorious Mr Bout* – Pozdorovkin directed and produced *Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer* and turns his hand to Viktor Bout, a Russian entrepreneur in the import/export trade with no distinction between legal and illegal cargo, played by Nicholas Cage
- **John Atkinson**, USA, Composer, *L is for Leisure* - In the early 1990s, a group of students spend a sunny vacation mostly talking. They talk about everything from race wars to the skills of Michael Jordan as they hedonistically while away their youth. Steeped in early '90s nostalgia, *L is for Leisure* takes its inspiration from the oeuvre of Hal Hartley, Whit Stillman and Eric Rohmer, while also drawing heavily on the TV of the era, from *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files* to *Melrose Place* and *Baywatch*

Other local guests at MIFF are:

- **Justin Olstein**, Director, *Curtain Call* – the Tivoli Theatre in Melbourne's Southeast was once Australia's most beloved pantomime theatre and was run by UK expats and irrepressible oddballs Terry and Carole Ann Gill. *Curtain Call* is their story to save their life's work and love from a commercial property developer
- **Tony Ayres**, Director, *Cut Snake* – revered for his work on *The Slap* and *Tim Winton's The Turning*, *Cut Snake* is his first feature film since 2007. A psychologically powered crime thriller loosely based around Brisbane's Whiskey Au Go Go nightclub blaze
- **Mike Brook** and **Stephen Cummings**, Director and Artist, *Don't Throw Stones* – based on Cummings' scathing memoirs of the Australian music scene, which hark back to his days as the singer of 70s rock band *The Sports*. With a reputation as one of Australian rock's greatest lyrical storytellers, Cummings is also one of the industry's most incendiary critics
- **Mark Hartley**, Director, *Electric Boogaloo: The Wild Untold Story of Cannon Films* - when film-obsessed cousins Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus came to America, their dream was to create a production house that would rival the big Hollywood studios. The result was Cannon Films, an outfit that soon became the stuff of legend, both on and off screen
- **Kasimir Burgess**, Director, *Fell* – a father waits for his daughter's hit-and-run killer to be released from jail, tracks him down in a remote mountain town where he's begun working as a tree-feller and moves in next door. But revenge and redemption aren't always the same thing, and in the forest new life often comes to replace the old. Psychological thriller-turned deep character study set in Victoria breathtaking Southern Alps
- **Stephen Lance**, Director and **Harrison Gilbertson**, Actor, *My Mistress* - an unconventional and provocative love story in which an infatuation between the vulnerable teenage romantic Charlie and S&M mistress Maggie soon becomes something more dangerous
- **Molly Reynolds**, Director and **Rolf de Heer**, Director, *Still Our Country - Reflections on a Culture* - an evocative companion piece to de Heer's Cannes-winning *Charlie's Country*, this film documents the swiftly morphing lives of the Yolngu people of Ramingining in the Northern Territory. The film makes for a bold declaration of identity and a hopeful promise of a future
- **Dirk de Bruyn**, Subject/Producer and **Steven McIntyre**, Director, *The House That Eye Live In* - the first retrospective examination of filmmaker Dirk de Bruyn's prolific and prodigious career. Migrating by sea from Holland as an eight-year-old, de Bruyn went on to be a doyen of Australian experimental cinema. But as this intimate film reveals, his work is suffused with the trauma of migration, and the struggle to recognise himself as a 'new Australian'
- **Alex Dimitriades**, Actor, **Josh McConville**, Actor, **Hugh Sullivan**, Director, *The Infinite Man* - one of the big hits at SXSW Film Festival, where it sold out multiple screenings and collected much acclaim, *The Infinite Man* is an engagingly sweet, smart piece of storytelling and a time travel rom-com done right
- **Ian Pringle**, Director, *The Legend Maker* – a film about professional forger Alan Figg who operates in a world of duplicity where little is what it seems. He provides people with new identities and often the chance of a new life. But with age beginning to take its toll on his craft, and a thug threatening his life, Alan Figg's world is about to spin out of control



- **Andrew Leavold**, Director, *The Search for Weng Weng* - Andrew Leavold owned and managed Trash Video, the largest cult video rental store in Australia, from 1995 to 2010. He has turned his film obsession and nous to Filipino film star Weng Weng who struck a cord at the 1982 Manila International Film Festival in *For Y'ur Height Only* – a schlocky James Bond rip-off with a pint-sized protagonist. Filmed over seven years and taking in everything from Golden Age Filipino filmmaking and culture to a rare encounter with Imelda Marcos, *The Search for Weng Weng* is unexpected, funny and full of heart
- **Anne Tsoulis**, Director, *These Heathen Dreams* - once described by the press as “one of the most controversial figures on the Australian art scene”, avant-garde poet and playwright Christopher Barnett achieved a level of notoriety in the Melbourne underground theatre scene during the 70s and 80s, before self-exiling to France. An intimate portrait of Barnett’s life and revolutionary philosophy and a poignant and inspiring study of the power of both art and political activism
- **Kitty Green**, Director, *Ukraine is Not a Brothel* – Melbourne filmmaker Green embedded herself in with the Ukrainian feminist group Femen, who alongside their sisters in protest, Pussy Riot, have been whipping up media and political frenzies ever since they burst, blonde and topless, onto the streets of Ukraine in 2008, fighting the image of their nation as the sex tourism and prostitution hub of Europe
- **Amin Palangi**, Director, *Love Marriage in Kabul* - after her son died tragically, Mahboda Rawi left behind her life in Sydney to set up a foundation for orphaned children in Afghanistan. Abdul was one of the first children she saved. Now heading into adulthood, he has fallen in love with the girl next door, Fatemeh, but Fatemeh's father disapproves and is determined to keep her under lock and key until he can find a dowry worth his while
- **Marlene Cummins**, Subject, *Black Panther Woman* - In 1972 Aboriginal activists founded Australia's first and only Black Panther chapter in Brisbane. One of its members was Australia’s foremost Indigenous female blues writer and performer, Marlene Cummins, an idealistic teen attracted both to the group's revolutionary politics and to its founder, the charismatic, callous Dennis Walker. After ending her relationship with Dennis and leaving the party, Marlene disappeared into a crushing cycle of addiction. But an invitation to a convention of ex-Panthers in New York 40 years later finally gives her the chance to tell the world what happened to the women of her generation. This doco is directed by acclaimed Indigenous director Rachel Perkins (*Bran Nue Dae*)

The MIFF program is online and tickets are available at www.miff.com.au

Melbourne International Film Festival runs 31 July – 17 August 2014

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