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Commencing operations in September 2007, the **MIFF Premiere Fund** offers strategic minority co-financing to new Australian quality theatrical films (narrative-drama and documentaries) and, in exchange for the Fund's support, those films premiere at MIFF. The **MIFF Premiere Fund** deepens the festival's relationship with filmmaking talent and builds a pipeline of quality Australian content for MIFF. Launched at **MIFF 2007**, the **MIFF Premiere Fund** has committed finance to 45 projects. Under the charge of MIFF Chair Claire Dobbin, the **MIFF Premiere Fund** Executive Producer is Mark Woods, former CEO of the Irish Film Board and Ausfilm and previously Head of Content Investment and International Acquisitions for Showtime Australia. Woods has co-invested in and Executive Produced many quality cinema titles, including *Rabbit Proof Fence*, *Japanese Story*, *Somersault*, *Breakfast on Pluto*, Cannes Palme d'Or winner *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*, and the Oscar-winning *Six Shooter*.

The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2015** comprises the following films.

DOWN RIVER: A mystery drama, from director/writer **Grant Scicluna** and producer **Jannine Barnes**, in which a teenage killer returns to uncover dark truths in his quest to find a missing body. Stars Kerry Fox (*Intimacy*), Reef Ireland (*Blessed*). (Distributor: **Rialto**; Sales Agent: **Level K**).

LOOKING FOR GRACE: A wry drama about lies, secrets and various forms of grief, from director **Sue Brooks** (*Japanese Story*) and **Lizette Atkins** (*Aim High In Creation*), in which a girl runs away from home and everyone's life unravels faster than they can put it back together. Stars Radha Mitchell (*The Waiting City*), Richard Roxburgh (*Rake*, *The Turning*), Terry Norris (*Paper Planes*), Julia Blake (*Innocence*). (Distributor: **Palace**; Sales Agent: **Fortissimo**).

ECCO HOMO: A feature documentary, from **Ghost Pictures** (*AutoLuminescent*, *In Bob We Trust*), about growing-up in a world of incest, prostitution, gender transformation, HIV, art, secrets and lies. Features **Peter Troy Davies**, **Michael Hutchence** and **Bono**. (Distributor: **Apparition**; Sales Agent: **Yellow Affair**).

NEON: A feature documentary from director/writer **Lawrence Johnston** (*Night*, *Eternity*) and producer **Veronica Fury** (*Curse of the Gothic Symphony*), celebrating the invention, design and heritage of neon signage. (Distributor: **Ronin**).

PUTUPARRI: A feature documentary from director/writer **Nicole Ma** and producer **John Moore** exploring an Aboriginal man's quest to reconcile his life in the modern world with his destiny as a cultural leader of his Great Sandy Desert people. (Dist: **Ronin/NITV**)

REST HOME: Can a cross-cultural inter-generational marriage survive infidelity? The English-language debut of Cannes Camera d'Or-winning writer/director Michael Rowe (*Leap Year*) stars **Suzanne Clement** (*Mommy*) and **Paul Doucet** (*Exil*) and is produced by **Trish Lake**, **Dan Lake** and **Serge Noel**. (Distributors: **Rialto**, **Mongrel**, **FilmOption**; Sales Agent: **Pyramide**).

MIFF PREMIERE FUND TITLES AT PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF MIFF:

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2014** comprised the following world premieres.

CUT SNAKE: A crime thriller, from director **Tony Ayres** (*Home Song Stories*) and producers **Michael McMahon** (*Home Song Stories*) and **Trevor Blainey** (*Noise*), in which a young man's engagement to a beautiful woman is threatened when a menacing ex-con from his past reappears. Stars **Sullivan Stapleton** (*Animal Kingdom*, *300*), **Alex Russell** (*Bait*) and **Jessica De Gouw** (*Dracula*, *These Final Hours*). (Distributor: **HopScotch**; Sales: **eOne**).

ELECTRIC BOOGALOO: From director/producer **Mark Hartley** (*Not Quite Hollywood*) and producer **Veronica Fury** (*Machete Maidens Unleashed!*) comes the wild untold story of 1980s Hollywood company Canon Films that involved talent ranging from Jean-Claude VanDamme to Meryl Streep. (Distributor: **Umbrella**; Sales Agent: **RatPac**).

MY MISTRESS: A love story in which a strangely innocent affair between a teenage romantic and a French S&M mistress becomes something more. The film, from debut feature director **Stephen Lance**, writer **Gerard Lee** (*Sweetie*), producer **Leanne Tonkes** and executive producer **Robyn Kershaw** (*Bran Nue Dae*), stars **Emmanuelle Beart** (*A Heart in Winter*), **Harrison Gilbertson** (*Blessed*), **Rachel Blake** (*Sleeping Beauty*), **Socratis Otto** (*I Frankenstein*) and **Leah Purcell** (*Lantana*). (Distributor: **Transmission**; Sales: **Level K**).

PAPER PLANES: A children's film about an Australian boy's passion for flight and competing in paper plane championships from writer/director/producer **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*) and co-producers **Maggie Miles** and **Liz Kearney**. Stars **Sam Worthington** (*Avatar*), **David Wenham** (*300*), **Terry Norris** (*Innocence*) & **Deborah Mailman** (*Sapphires*). (Distributor **Footprint**; Sales **Maze/Arclight**).

THE LEGEND MAKER: A dramatic thriller in which an aging forger needs all his guile and cunning to survive from director/producer **Ian Pringle** and producer **Glenda Hambly** and starring Tony Nikolakopoulos, Jeremy Kewley, Steve Mouzakis and Sachin Joab.

○ The 2014 **Premiere Fund** slate also comprised the following Australian premiere at the **MIFF Premiere Regional Showcase**:

KILL ME THREE TIMES: A thriller, from director **Kriv Stenders** (*Red Dog*) and producers **Tania Chambers** & **Death at a Funeral's Laurence Malkin** & **Share Stallings**, in which a young woman is the thread that binds tales of murder, blackmail and revenge. Stars **Simon Pegg** (*Star Trek: Into Darkness*; *Shaun of the Dead*), **Sullivan Stapleton** (*Animal Kingdom*, *300*), **Alice Braga** (*On the Road*), **Teresa Palmer** (*Warm Bodies*, *Wish You Were Here*), **Bryan Brown** (*Beautiful Kate*), **Callan Mulvey** (*The Turning*, *300*) and **Luke Hemsworth**. (Distributor: **Hopscotch**; Sales Agent: **Cargo**).

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2013** comprised the following world premieres.

AIM HIGH IN CREATION! From director/producer **Anna Broinowski** (*Forbidden Lie\$*) and producer **Lizette Atkins** (*X*, *Lionel*); a revolutionary comedic documentary about greed, gas and the cinematic genius of late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. (Distributor: **Antidote**; Sales Agent: **HighPoint**)

GALORE: From director/writer **Rhys Graham** (*Murundak: Songs of Freedom*) and producer **Philippa Campey** (*Bastardy*) comes the story of Bille and Laura – two reckless teenage best friends who share everything except for Bille's big secret that she's crazy in love with Laura's boyfriend. Stars **Ashleigh Cummings** (*Tomorrow When the War Began*), **Toby Wallace** (*Nim's Island 2*), **Lily Sullivan** (*Mental*), **Maya Stange** (*Garage Days*). Han (Distributor: **HopScotch**; Sales Agent: **eOne**).

IN BOB WE TRUST: From *AutoLuminescent's* team (writer/director/producer **Lynn-Maree Milburn** and producers **Richard Lowenstein**, **Andrew de Groot** and **Maya Gnyp**) comes a feature documentary story of the controversial forced-retirement of Melbourne identity Father Bob Maguire and his struggles to live without the Church. (Distributor: **Apparition**; Sales Agent: **Odin's Eye**).

PATRICK: A re-imaging of classic 1970s telekinetic thriller is the narrative feature debut of *Not Quite Hollywood* and *Machete Maidens Unleashed!* director **Mark Hartley**. From producer **Tony Ginnane**, the film stars **Rachel Griffiths** (*Muriel's Wedding*), **Charles Dance** (*Gosford Park*), **Sharni Vinson** (*Bait 3D*) and **Damon Gameau** (*Balibo*). (Distributor: **Umbrella**; Sales Agent: **BankSide**)

THE TURNING: A diverse range of directors (including established film directors **Justin Kurzel** (*Snowtown*), **Jonathan auf der Heide** (*Van Diemen's Land*), **Tony Ayres** (*Home Song Stories*) **Claire McCarthy** (*The Waiting City*), **Warwick Thornton** (*Samson & Delilah*) and **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*); emerging film directors **Rhys Graham** (*Galore*) and **Ashlee Page**; visual artist **Shaun Gladwell**; the premiere film helming efforts of theatre directors **Yaron Lifschitz** and **Stephen Page**; plus the film directing debuts of actors **David Wenham**, **Ian Meadows** and **Mia Wasikowska**) respond to Tim Winton's haunting Western Australian short stories. From producer **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*), co-producer **Maggie Miles**, the film also stars **Cate Blanchett**, **Rose Byrne**, **Harrison Gilbertson**, **Richard Roxburgh**, **Robyn Nevin**, **Hugo Weaving**, **Miranda Otto**, **Wayne Blair**, **Dan Wyllie** and **Susie Porter**. (Distributor: **Footprint/Madman**; Sales Agent: **Maze/LevelK**).

THESE FINAL HOURS: An exploration of a young man's redemption during the Earth's very last hours from director **Zac Hilditch**, producer **Liz Kearney** and Executive Producer **Robert Connolly** (*Balibo*). The film stars **Nathan Phillips** (*Wolf Creek*), **Dan Hanshall** (*Snowtown*) and **Lynette Curran** (*The Boys*). (Distributor: **Footprint**; Sales Agent: **XYZ/Celluloid**).

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2012** comprised the following world premieres:

100 BLOODY ACRES: A comedy horror showing the lengths small business operators go to from debut feature directors **Colin & Cameron Cairns** and producers **Julie Ryan** (*Red Dog*) and **Kate Crosser** (*My Tehran For Sale*), with Executive Producers **Bryce Menzies** and **Jonathan Page** and starring **Damon Herriman** (*J. Edgar*), **Angus Sampson** (*Where the Wild Things Are*) and **John Jarratt** (*Wolf Creek*). (Distributor: **HopScotch**; Sales: **The Works**)

FIRST FAGIN: A feature documentary from Director **Alan Rosenthal** and Producer **Veronica Fury** (*Curse of the Gothic Symphony*) portraying infamous convict Ikey Soloman, who inspired Charles Dickens character Fagin from *Oliver Twist*. (Sales Agent: **Naked Flame**).

MAKE HUMMUS NOT WAR: A new war rages in the Middle East between the usual suspects – but chick peas, not bullets, are in the front line. From director/producer **Trevor Graham**, with producer **Ned Lander** and Executive Producer **Andrew Myer**, this is a deadly serious humorous feature documentary exploring age-old issues of rivalry, land, identity and heritage. (Sales Agent: **Off the Fence**).

SAVE YOUR LEGS: an Australian-Indian cricket comedy inspired by true events that were portrayed in a popular documentary from debut feature director **Boyd Hicklin** and producers **Robyn Kershaw** (*Bran Nue Dae*) and **Nick Batzias**. Cast includes **David Lyons** (*Eat, Pray, Love*), **Brendan Cowell** (*TV's The Slap*), **Stephen Curry** (*The Cup*) and **Damon Gameau** (*Balibo*). (Distributor: **Madman**; Sales Agent: **Protagonist**)

THE LAST DANCE: past and present collide when a holocaust survivor is held hostage by young suicide bomber. Starring **Julia Blake** (*Innocence*) and **Firass Dirani** (*TV's Underbelly*), from director **David Pulbrook** and producer **Tony Ginnane**. (Distributor: **Becker**; Sales Agent: **HighPoint**)

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2011** comprised the following world premieres.

AUTOLUMINESCENT: ROWLAND S HOWARD: Portrait of the turbulent life of influential Australian rock-guitarist and songwriter Rowland S. Howard with directors Richard Lowenstein & Lynn-Maree Milburn, who produce with Andrew de Groot. (Sales agent: **RIGHTS AVAILABLE**).

BEN LEE: CATCH MY DISEASE: From Director **Amiel Courtin-Wilson** (*Bastardy*) and Producer **Richard Lowenstein** (*Dogs in Space*), this feature documentary about pop music, spirituality, fame, family and celebrity, profiles the Australian star, who recorded his first album at age 14. Features **Ben Lee**, **Winona Ryder**, **Claire Danes**, **Jason Schwartzman**, **Michelle Williams** and others. (Distributor: **Madman**; Sales Agent: **Visit Films**).

THE CURSE OF THE GOTHIC SYMPHONY: feature documentary charting struggles to overcome an 80-year curse and stage Havergal Brian's never-fully-performed "Gothic Symphony", from Director **Randall Wood** and Producer **Veronica Fury** (*Machete Maidens Unleashed!*). (Sales: **Film Transit**).

FALLING FOR SAHARA: Former Young Australian of the Year **Khoa Do** directs a story of new lives – and love – in Australia for African refugees in Melbourne's Flemington flats. (Sales Agent: **RIGHTS AVAILABLE**). Voted in MIFF 2011's top 20 most popular films.

SWERVE: A rural neo-noir thriller starring from Director **Craig Lahiff**, Producer **Helen Leake** and Executive Producer Bryce Menzies. Starring **Jason Clarke**, **Emma Booth**, **David Lyons**, **Travis McMahon**, **Vince Colosimo** and **Roy Billing**. (Distributor: **Jump Street**; Sales Agent: **MovieHouse**).

THE TRIANGLE WARS: a feature documentary from director Rosie Jones and producers Lizzette Atkins and Peter George exploring the battle over a massive redevelopment in one of Melbourne's most iconic inner-suburbs between powerful big business and an outraged local community – with the intractable local government caught in the middle. (Sales Agent: **MeliMedia**)

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2010** comprised the following world premieres.

BLAME: Psychological thriller from director **Michael Henry** and producers **Michael Robinson**, **Ryan Hodgson** and **Melissa Kelly**, with Executive Producer **David Lightfoot** (*Wolf Creek*). Starring **Kestie Morassi** (*Wolf Creek, Kin*), **Sophie Lowe** (*Beautiful Kate, Blessed*), **Damian de Montemas** (*Somersault*), **Simon Stone** (*Balibo*) and **Mark Leonard Winter** (*Balibo*). (Distributor: **Pack**; Sales Agent: **Highpoint**). Selected for Toronto 2010.

MACHETE MAIDENS UNLEASHED: From director **Mark Hartley** (*Not Quite Hollywood*) and producer **Veronica Fury**, a fast-moving feature documentary odyssey into the little-explored province of Filipino genre filmmaking – complete with miniature James Bonds, karate kicking soul sisters, anorexic Rambos and gun-toting nuns - especially during the oppressive Marcos regime. (Sales Agent: **ABC**). Selected for Toronto 2010.

MATCHING JACK: Family drama from Director **Nadia Tass** and Producer **David Parker**, starring **James Nesbitt**, **Jacinda Barrett**, **Richard Roxburgh** and **Kodi Smit-McPhee** (Australian/NZ distributor: 20th Century Fox; World Sales Agent: **Content**). Selected for Toronto 2010.

MOTHER OF ROCK: From director **Paul Clarke** and producer **Robert deYoung**, this feature documentary, narrated by **Judy Davis** with voice acting by **Sasha Horler**, is a lively profile into 1960s New York-based Australian rock journalist Lillian Roxon, who authored the *Rock Encyclopedia*, featuring **Germaine Greer**, **Helen Reddy**, **Alice Cooper**, **Iggy Pop**, **Derryn Hinch**, **Molly Meldrum** and **David Malouf**. (Sales: **SBS**). Selected for Toronto 2010.

THE WEDDING PARTY: Romantic comedy from Director **Amanda Jane** and Producer **Nicole Minchin**. Starring **Isabel Lucas** (*Transformers*), **Kestie Morassi** (*Wolf Creek*), **Essie Davis** (*Australia*), **Steve Bisley**, **Adam Zwar**, **Geoff Paine** and **Rhonda Burchmore**. (Sales: **ArLight**). MIFF 2010 Opening.

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2009** comprised the following world premieres:

BALIBO: Political thriller from Director **Robert Connolly** (*The Bank*) and Producer John Maynard (*The Boys*), starring **Anthony La Paglia** and **Oscar Isaac**, investigating the 1975 murders of Australian journalists during the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. (Distributor: **Footprint**; Sales: **Content**).

BLESSED: from Director: Ana Kokkinos (*Head On*) and Producer Al Clark (*Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*), *Blessed*, which stars **Frances O'Connor**, **Miranda Otto**, **Deborra-Lee Furness** and **William McInnes**, is an evocative feature film about mothers and children, love and beauty, being lost and finding your way home. (Australian Distributor: **Icon**; Sales Agent: **Bankside**). Winner of best screenplay at 2009 San Sebastian Film Festival.

BRAN NUE DAE: from Director Rachel Perkins (*First Australians, Radiance*) & Producer Robyn Kershaw (*Kath & Kim, Looking for Alibrandi*) and starring **Geoffrey Rush**, **Ernie Dingo**, **Magda Szubanski**, **Missy Higgins**, **Deb Mailman**, **Nigali Lawford**, **Tom Budge**, **San Sultan** and **Jessica Mauboy**, *Bran Nue Dae* is adaptation of a popular Aboriginal musical, the film is an upbeat coming-of-age, romantic musical and 1960s road movie featuring the choreography of Stephen Page. (World Sales Agent: **Bankside**). MIFF 2009 Closing Night; Selected Toronto 2009 & 2010's Sundance & Berlin.

INDONESIA CALLING – JORIS IVENS IN AUSTRALIA: A signature documentary, from Producer, Director, Writer John Hughes (*What I Have Written, After Mabo*), charting a little-told angle on the birth of the Indonesian Republic and the impact of Australian unions and a rogue Film Commissioner and an emerging film industry at a moment of crisis at the end of the age of Empire. (World Sales Agent: **RIGHTS AVAILABLE**).

THE LOVED ONES: from Producer Mark Lazarus (*Australian Rules*) and Director/Writer Sean Byrne and starring **Xavier Samuel** and **Victoria Thaine**, tells the story of a young man digging himself out his own grave. You don't have to die to go to hell! (Distributor: **Madman**; Sales Agent: **ArLight**).

➤ The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2008** included the following world premieres.

BASTARDY: Producer: Philippa Campey; Director/Writer: Amiel Courtin-Wilson. An adventurous portrait of Jack Charles, a well-known personality on the streets of Melbourne, colourful fringe-dweller and sometime actor, that journeys into a little-seen side of Melbourne.

CELEBRITY: DOMINIC DUNNE: Executive Producers: Sue Maslin (*Japanese Story*) & Daryl Dellora; producers/directors/writers: Tim Jolley & Kirsty De Garis. Set against the backdrop of the Phil Spector trial, *Celebrity* traverses a world of intrigue, showbiz, the US justice system and the cult of celebrity to give the inside scoop on Vanity Fair's celebrated chronicler Dominick Dunne. (Sales: **Mercury Media**).

NOT QUITE HOLLYWOOD: Director/Writer: Mark Hartley, Producers: Michael Lynch & Craig Griffin. A seriously entertaining celebration of 1970s Ozploitation cinema featuring **Quentin Tarantino**, **Barry Humphries** and **Jamie Lee Curtis**. (Distributor: **Madman**, Sales: **Magnolia**).

ROCK & ROLL NERD: Producer/Director/Writer: Rhian Skirving). A rags to riches observational documentary following Melbourne musician and performance artist's Tim Minchin meteoric rise to international fame. (Australian Distributor: **Madman**).