



FOUR-YEAR CONTINUATION OF MIFF PREMIERE FUND

MELBOURNE: The State Government of Victoria has promised a \$3.8 million four-year renewal of the Melbourne International Film Festival **MIFF Premiere Fund**, which provides strategic minority co-financing to new Australian films that then go on to premiere at MIFF.

"The MIFF Premiere Fund's continuation is important for MIFF, audiences, local filmmakers, and the State's creative economy," said MIFF Chair Claire Dobbin. "Generating a pipeline of world premieres for MIFF, and screenings for the MIFF Premiere Regional Showcase, the Premiere Fund helps MIFF remain the Southern Hemisphere's leading film event."

"Together with MIFF 37°South Market & Accelerator, the MIFF Premiere Fund reinforces Melbourne's position as a screen business hub," said MIFF Industry Director and Premiere Fund Executive Producer Mark Woods. "Securing finance for independent Australian films is always a challenge and the contribution of the Premiere Fund has helped close the financing gap on some 45 films."

The MIFF Premiere Fund is one of a suite of MIFF Industry Programs, which also include MIFF 37°South Market, Australia's only festival-based movie financing market, and the MIFF Accelerator emerging director workshop.

The MIFF Premiere Fund's 45 films include the likes of *BRAN NUE DAE* starring Geoffrey Rush, *BALIBO* starring Anthony LaPaglia, *THE TURNING* featuring Cate Blanchett, Rose Byrne and Hugo Weaving, feature documentaries *ELECTRIC BOOGALOO* and *IN BOB WE TRUST* and the upcoming children's film *PAPER PLANES* starring Sam Worthington and David Wenham, with combined budgets of more than \$100 million. Following their world premieres at MIFF, the MIFF Premiere-supported films have been selected for numerous overseas festivals including Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and Sundance. The Premiere Fund films also tour regionally in Victoria with the MIFF Premiere Showcase.

"I strongly believe our industry in Victoria and MIFF is elevated by the significant opportunities the MIFF Premiere Fund provides," said **Seph McKenna**, Head of Australian Production at Roadshow Films, the distributor of MIFF Premiere Fund-supported *Bran Nue Dae*, *These Final Hours* and the upcoming *Paper Planes*. "The MIFF Premiere Fund is an investment by the Government that guarantees Melbourne remains Australia's premier film festival for all its constituencies from punter to filmmaker."

"It is imperative for the state of filmmaking in Victoria that both the MIFF Premiere Fund and MIFF 37°South Market continue to thrive," said producer **Lizzette Atkins** who made *Rock N Roll Nerd*, *The Triangle Wars*, *Aim High In Creation* and the upcoming *Looking for Grace* (starring Richard Roxburgh and Radha Mitchell) with MIFF Premiere Fund assistance. "Speaking from experience, the MIFF Premiere Fund can play a critical role in a project reaching its final budget."

"The MIFF Premiere Fund is a very important part of the local film industry," said director/producer **Mark Hartley** who made *Not Quite Hollywood*, *Machete Maidens Unleashed*, *Patrick* and *Electric Boogaloo* with MIFF Premiere Fund assistance. "Financing a feature film is a complicated process and the Premiere Fund's investment is invaluable in filling the hard-to-finance gaps."

"The MIFF Premiere Fund has punched above its weight," said producer **Antony I Ginnane**, who produced *Last Dance* and *Patrick* with MIFF Premiere Fund support. "Each individual contribution it has made to fiction and documentary features has helped expand the quantum of Victorian production and provide vital employment to keep talented local entrepreneurs and creatives gainfully employed."

"I fully support the MIFF Premiere Fund – one of the most amazing film funds in Australia – if not the world!" said producer **Veronica Fury** who produced *Machete Maidens Unleashed*, *Curse of the Gothic Symphony*, *First Fagin*, *Electric Boogloo* and the upcoming *Neon* with MIFF Premiere Fund assistance. "I believe it is a valuable and critical asset to Victoria and to Melbourne."

"I wholeheartedly applaud the continuation of the MIFF Premiere Fund and its work in keeping Victorian independent film on the national and international landscape," said producer/director **Richard Lowenstein**

who, with Lynn-Maree Milburn, has made feature documentaries *AutoLuminescent*, *In Bob We Trust* and the upcoming *Ecco Homo* with MIFF Premiere Fund support.

"Film Finances is a proud and long term collaborator with the MIFF Premiere Fund," said Film Finances Australasia Managing Director **Anni Browning**. "Equity financing for quality independent films is never easy and festival funds are an important and welcome source of extra financing. We recognise that the Fund has a strong track record of supporting emerging talent, female directors and producers, along with indigenous stories."

"Finding financial support for films by new directors with unique creative visions is increasingly difficult and the Government's continuation of the MIFF Premiere Fund is important for Victorian filmmakers," said producer **Philippa Campey** who has produced *Bastardy* and *Galore* with MIFF Premiere Fund assistance. "I wholeheartedly support the continuation of this important Fund which has become a fundamental part of our local sector and will be increasingly crucial in the future in its support of quality feature-length projects."

MIFF 2015 is shaping up as another exciting year of world premieres from the MIFF Premiere Fund. In post-production is *Looking for Grace* starring Richard Roxburgh (*Rake*) and Radha Mitchell (*Melinda and Melinda*) with Terry Norris (*Paper Planes*) and Julia Blake (*Last Dance*) from director Sue Brooks (*Japanese Story*).

Shooting now is *Downriver* starring Kerry Fox (*An Angel at My Table*) and Reef Ireland (*Blessed*) from feature debut director Grant Scicluna, an alumnus of the MIFF Accelerator emerging director workshop, and *Rest Home* starring Suzanne Clement (*Mommy*) from director Michael Rowe (Cannes Camera d'Or winner *Leap Year*). Also on the slate are feature documentaries *Neon* from Laurence Johnson and *Putuparri* from Nicole Ma and *Ecco Homo* from Richard Lowenstein and Lynn-Maree Milburn.

