



MIFF PREMIERE FUND – RENEWED!

MELBOURNE: The State Government of Victoria has delivered a \$900,000 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 clear evidence of the Victorian Government’s commitment to supporting Victorian screen culture,” said MIFF Chair Claire Dobbin. “The Fund’s continuation is important for MIFF, audiences, local filmmakers, and the State’s creative economy. It generates a pipeline of world premieres for MIFF, and screenings for the MIFF Premiere Regional Showcase, and the Premiere Fund helps MIFF remain the Southern Hemisphere’s leading film event.”

“Together with MIFF 37th South Market & Accelerator, the MIFF Premiere Fund reinforces Melbourne's position as a creative industries capital,” said MIFF Industry Director & 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 Fund is also proud of its part in fostering diversity and equality with nearly 50% of the Premiere Fund titles having feature debut directors, 31% having female directors and 53% female producers, while 13% had indigenous elements, 29% CALD community elements and 9% LGBTI engagement.”

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

With combined budgets of more than \$100 million, 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 recent hit children’s film *PAPER PLANES*, starring Sam Worthington and David Wenham, that grossed nearly \$10 million at the local box office. Following their world premieres at MIFF, the MIFF Premiere Fund-supported films also tour regionally with the MIFF Premiere Regional Showcase and have been selected for numerous overseas festivals including Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and Sundance.

“I strongly believe our industry in Victoria and MIFF is elevated by the significant opportunities the MIFF Premiere Fund provides and so it is wonderful that the Government is continuing the MIFF Premiere Fund,” said **Seph McKenna**, Head of Australian Production at Roadshow Films, the distributor of MIFF Premiere Fund-supported *Bran Nue Dae*, *These Final Hours* and this year’s family hit, Victorian Director Rob Connolly’s *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 37th South Market continue to thrive and so I am thrilled that the Government is renewing the MIFF Premiere Fund,” said **Lizzette Atkins** who produced *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.”

“I am delighted the State Government will continue to support the MIFF Premiere Fund,” said **Antony I Ginnane**, who produced *Last Dance* and *Patrick* with MIFF Premiere Fund support. “The MIFF Premiere Fund has punched above its weight and each individual contribution it has made to fiction and documentary features has helped expand the quantum of Victorian production and provide vital employment.”

Continues...

“I fully support the MIFF Premiere Fund – one of the most amazing film funds in Australia – if not the world!” said **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. “It is a valuable and critical asset to Victoria and to Melbourne and so I am thrilled that the Government will allow this valuable and vital Fund to continue.”

“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 *Auto Luminescent*, *In Bob We Trust* and the upcoming *Ecco Homo* with MIFF Premiere Fund support.

“Finding financial support for films by new directors is increasingly difficult and the Government’s continuation of the MIFF Premiere Fund is very 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 pivotal Fund which has become a fundamental part of our local sector and will be increasingly critical in the future with its support of quality, independent feature-length projects.”

“The wonderful thing about the MIFF Premiere Fund is it invigorates the 37th South Market at MIFF and connects Victorian filmmakers into the international film financing system opening up opportunities for networking and co-production that would otherwise not be there,” said producer **John Moore** who is producing the upcoming *Putuparri & The Rainmakers* with MIFF Premiere Fund support.

MIFF 2015 is shaping up as another exciting year from the MIFF Premiere Fund with world premieres comprising the following feature dramas:

- *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*);
- *Downriver*, starring Kerry Fox (*An Angel at My Table*) and Reef Ireland (*Blessed*) from feature debut director, and MIFF Accelerator alumnus, Grant Scicluna;
- *Early Winter* starring Suzanne Clement (*Mommy*) from director Michael Rowe (Cannes Camera d’Or winner *Leap Year*).

Also on the slate are feature documentaries

- *Neon* from director Laurence Johnson;
- *Ecco Homo* from directors Richard Lowenstein and Lynn-Marie Milburn;
- *Putuparri & The Rainmakers* from director Nicole Ma.