



**MEDIA RELEASE: 37 SOUTH: BRIDGING THE GAP**

## OPEN SESSION DETAILS ANNOUNCED

**MELBOURNE, Wednesday 18 July, 2007** – Top international and Australian film financiers will face off in the 'Open Sessions' at **37 South: Bridging the Gap**, the **Melbourne International Film Festival** (MIFF) announced today.

The **Open Sessions** program of **37 South**, MIFF's Film Financing Forum, will provide the general public and film practitioners alike with the opportunity to witness discussion by key decision makers on the state of Australian cinema in the face of major changes to Australia's film financing presently underway and to understand the issues facing Australian cinema in a world context.

Occurring 26-28 July, the Open Sessions will be moderated by Sue Murray (Executive Producer, *Dr Plonk*, *Ten Canoes*; Co-Producer, *Alexandra's Project*), Greg Sitch (Executive Producer, *Crackerjack*; *Boytown*, *Macbeth*; Partner Hart & Lawyers), Mark Woods (Executive Producer, *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*, *Breakfast on Pluto*; Outgoing Ausfilm CEO, ex Irish Film Board CEO and former Showtime Australia Head of Acquisitions & Investment) and Liz Watts (Producer, *Home Song Stories*, *Little Fish*, *Walking on Water*).

Accessible, and free, to the general public, these sessions are not ticketed events, so it will be important to arrive early as admissions will be on a first come first served basis to see a who's who of the film financing world offer their views on a range of hot-button issues!

Full details of the sessions appear below:

### THURSDAY 26 JULY

Forum Theatre, 4.00 – 5.30pm

#### **"What's what in the global film market – and Australia's place in it"**

How do Australian films, scripts, producers and funding arrangements stack-up against the rest of the world? And what is it that the sales agents want from an Australian film?

Moderator: Sue Murray.

Speakers: Iain Canning, **Becker International**; Kathleen Drumm, **NZ Film**; Beatrice Neumann, **Contentfilm International**; Ashley Luke, **Fortissimo Films**; Richard Guardian, **Lightning Entertainment**, Kirk D'Amico, **Myriad Pictures**.

### FRIDAY 27 JULY

ACMI Cinema 1, 2.30 – 4.00pm

#### **"Mind the Gap. Financing and the new Oz rebates."**

Get the lowdown on how financiers feel about the changes in the Australian industry right now, how to cashflow the new incentives, and what sort of films recoup – and with what talent?

Moderator: Greg Sitch

Speakers: Tait Brady **FFC**; Paul O'Kane, **Pacific Film and Television Commission**; Jennie Hughes, **International Film Group**, Simone Govic, **A3 Crosby Fund**, Matthew Street, **Omnilab Group**; Catherine Waters, **Australian Film Commission**; Ros Tatarka, **Film Victoria**.



Forum Theatre, 4.15 – 5.45pm

**“End Users – What they want and how they want it?”**

What are they looking for? Who is looking for it? What competition does Australia face? Are Australian films good releases overseas? Get the answers to questions you were too afraid to ask!

Moderator: Mark Woods

Speakers: Ellen Pittleman, **Paramount Pictures**; Jane Smith, **Seed**; Joel Pearlman, **Roadshow**; Gail Gendler, **Sundance Channel**; Rachel Connors, **Slingshot Distribution**; Jude Troy, **Hopscotch**; Alan Finney, **Buena Vista International**.

**SATURDAY 28 JULY**

Forum Theatre, 9.00 – 10.30am

**“New Kids on the Block – Australian distributors”**

New Australian independent distributors have mushroomed in the last decade. Does Australian content work for them? What are they looking for? What sort of commitments do they make? When and how should producers approach them?

Moderator: Liz Watts

Speakers: Paul Wiegard, **Madman Entertainment**; Simon P Killen, **Aztec International**; Eric Cherry, **Siren Visual Entertainment**; John Davies, **Arkles Entertainment**; Sherard Kingston, **All Interactive Media**; Annette Smith, **Kojo Pictures**.

Key international guests will be attending **37 South**, including; Paramount Pictures (USA) International Senior Vice-President of International Co-production and Worldwide Acquisitions **Ellen Pittleman**; Sundance Channel (USA) Senior Director of Acquisitions **Gail Gendler**; ContentFilm (Europe) International Acquisitions Manager **Beatrice Neumann**; Lightning Entertainment (USA) Co-President **Richard Guardian**; The Works (Europe) Head of Acquisitions **Tom Strudwick**; Becker International (Europe/Australia) Head of Sales and Acquisitions **Iain Canning** and Highpoint Media Group Head of Development **Piers Nightingale**.

Key local financiers are also represented, including Madman, Roadshow, Accent, Aztec, Hopscotch, International Finance Group (IFG), OmniLab Media Group and Hugh Jackman's Seed, as well as Australian Government sector screen agencies.

An initiative of the Victorian Government, **37 South: Bridging the Gap** takes place **26-28 July 2007** and offers both established and emerging producers the chance to present and advance their projects to key international and local financiers across a range of networking opportunities, alongside Australia's largest film festival, the **Melbourne International Film Festival**.

**For all media enquires or interview requests please contact Limelight PR:**

Louise Heseltine 03 9417 4500 0402 054 143 louise@limelightpr.com.au  
 Asha Holmes 03 9417 4500 0403 274 299 asha@limelightpr.com.au

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