



12-FILM PREMIERE FUND SLATE FOR MIFF

MELBOURNE: Wednesday 30 April 2008 – Just six months after its first funding announcements, the **Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) Premiere Fund** has confirmed a slate of 12 films, with a six-film line-up for MIFF 2008 and a further six for MIFF 2009.

The **MIFF Premiere Fund**, which commenced operations last September with a A\$1.6 million grant over two years from the Victorian State Government, provides strategic minority financial supports to a range of local theatrical documentaries and narrative feature films that will have their premieres at **MIFF**. Following recent meetings of various co-financing organisations, the 12 **MIFF Premiere Fund** films are now fully financed.

"It is pleasing to see timely outcomes from the **MIFF Premiere Fund**, which provides financial support to Victorian films to assist their production and premiere at Australia's most popular film festival and which so far has supported productions with combined budgets of \$41.7 million," said **Victorian Minister for Innovation Gavin Jennings**. "The **Premiere Fund** boosts local production by providing more opportunities for Victorian filmmakers to bring their stories to the big screen and these films also benefit from an international showcase through their association with **MIFF**, which exposes Victoria's filmmaking talent to a large audience of local film-goers and international film co-financiers."

"The premiere of six new local feature documentaries from the **Premiere Fund** at **MIFF 2008** will greatly enrich the **MIFF 2008** line-up for audiences at Australia's largest film festival," said **MIFF Executive Director Richard Moore**. "The debut of these first **Premiere Fund** titles will be a very significant day for **MIFF** as the festival takes its long standing and deep relationship with Victorian filmmakers to a new level and opens an exciting pipeline of new local content for premiering at **MIFF 2008** and **MIFF 2009** and beyond for **MIFF** audiences."

The **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2008**, which runs 25 July – 10 August, comprises six feature-length documentaries premiering at the Festival:

- **CELEBRITY: DOMINIC DUNNE:** (Executive Producers: Sue Maslin & Daryl Dellora; Producers, Directors, Writers: Tim Jolley & Kirsty De Garis). *Set against the backdrop of the Phil Spector trial, Celebrity travels through a world intrigue, showbiz, the American justice system and the all-pervasive cult of celebrity, while giving the inside scoop through Australian eyes on Vanity Fair's Dominick Dunne - one of the world's most famous chroniclers*
- **NOT QUITE HOLLYWOOD:** (Producers: Michael Lynch & Craig Griffin; Executive Producer: Bruno Charlesworth; Director/Writer: Mark Hartley). *A seriously entertaining and informative celebration of 1970s Oz-ploitation cinema featuring Quentin Tarantino, Barry Humphries and Jamie Lee Curtis.*
- **BASTARDY:** (Producer: Philippa Campey; Director/Writer: Amiel Courtin-Wilson (a 2004 attendee of MIFF's Accelerator emerging talent workshop)). *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.*
- **ANGEL OF THE WIND** (Producers: Matt Crosby, Tahir Cambis; Director, Tahir Cambis). *An exploration of the world of acting, spirituality, national identity and ghosts of the past through the prism of a surrealist vaudevillian theatrical production concerning the spirits of dead Kamikaze pilots.*
- **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BRENDA HEAN:** (Producers: Michael McMahon & Scott Millwood; Director/Co-Writer: Scott Millwood; Co-writer: Mira Robertson). *Explores the story of Brenda Hean, one of one of the world's first leaders of an environmental party, and her fight to save Tasmania's Lake Pedder which ends abruptly with her mysterious disappearance in 1972.*
- **ROCK & ROLL NERD:** (Producer/Director/Writer: Rhian Skirving; Consulting Producer: Lizzette Atkins). *A rags to riches observational documentary following Melbourne musician and performance artist's Tim Minchin meteoric rise to international fame.*

Thus far, the **Premiere Fund** slate for **MIFF 2009** comprises five feature films and one feature-length documentary as follows:

- **BRAN NUE DAE:** (Producers: Robyn Kershaw & Graeme Issac; Director: Rachel Perkins; Writers: Rachel Perkins, Reg Cribb, Jimmy Chi. *An 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.*
- **BLESSED:** (Producers: Al Clark and Ana Kokkinos; Executive Producer: Marian Macgown; Director: Ana Kokkinos; Writers: Andrew Bovell, Melissa Reeves, Patricia Cornelius, Christos Tsiolkas). *Based on the acclaimed Melbourne play Who's Afraid of the Working Class?, Blessed, from Head On Director Ana Kokkinos, is an evocative feature film about mothers and children, about love and beauty, about being lost and finding your way home.*
- **THE LOVED ONES:** (Executive Producer: Bryce Menzies; Producer: Mark Lazarus; Director/Writer: Sean Byrne, a 2007 attendee of MIFF's Accelerator emerging talent workshop). *You don't have to die to go to hell! The feature debut of Sean Byrne, whose short film Advantage was selected for Sundance 2008, Loved Ones tells the story of a young man in rural Victoria digging himself out his own grave.*
- **BALIBO:** (Executive Producers: Andrew Myer, Paul Wiegard, Andrew Barlow; Producers: John Maynard, Rebecca Williamson; Director: Robert Connolly; Writers: Robert Connolly and David Williamson). *From the director of The Bank, this political thriller sees war correspondent Roger East and the young Jose Ramos-Horta in East Timor investigating the 1975 murders of the Balibo Five.*
- **THE LAST MAN:** (Producers: Fred Schepisi, Martin Brown, Warwick Young, George Mannix; Director: Fred Schepisi; Writers: Graham Brammer & Fred Schepisi, with Christopher Wheller & Ian Barry). *A group of soldiers trapped on their final Vietnam mission do whatever it takes to survive and, 12 years later, continue to suffer the emotional consequences.*
- **INDONESIA CALLING – JORIS IVENS IN AUSTRALIA** (Producer/Director/Writer: John Hughes). *A signature documentary charting a little-told angle on the birth of the Indonesian Republic and the impact of Australian unions and foreign policy, a rogue Film Commissioner and an emerging film industry at a moment of crisis at the end of the age of Empire.*

"The 12 **Premiere Fund** supported titles encompass a wonderful range of filmmaking teams, including emerging talent and experienced practitioners, and a rich diversity of subject matter, ranging from signature social, historical, arts and performance documentaries to thrillers, social dramas, Aboriginal musicals, horror and historical pieces," said **MIFF Premiere Fund & 37 South Manager Mark Woods**. "MIFF has stretched its available funds across as many projects as possible. If **37 South** can help bridge the gap, the **Premiere Fund** can help close the film financing gap."

With the **MIFF 2008 Premiere Fund** slate now complete, the **Premiere Fund** will next accept applications for new projects in August after **MIFF 2008**.

Each of the producers of a **Premiere Fund** project will automatically be eligible for registration to: **37South2008**, MIFF's film co-financing market, to represent their **Premiere Fund** project, as well as any of their new projects, to the market's invited international and local film financiers, sales agents and distributors at **37South: Bridging the Gap**, the market's forum for face-to-face meetings between producers and financiers. Completed **Premiere Fund** projects seeking a distributor and/or sales agent will also be automatically selected for **37South: Breakthrough Screenings**, the market's new screenings strand for invited buyers.

"The **Premiere Fund** and **37 South** are much appreciated and very important initiatives of the Victorian State Government to build on Melbourne's position as a centre of the Australian screen production industry and MIFF will continue to generate more links between each of the programs of **37South**, **Accelerator** and the **Premiere Fund**," said **MIFF Chair Claire Dobbin**. "These industry initiatives mirror the development of other international film festivals which, like **MIFF**, have extended their remit to become important creative and financing hubs."

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KEY FACTS/BACKGROUND NOTES:

MIFF PREMIERE FUND:

- Unveiled by Victorian Premier John Brumby at MIFF 2007, the **Premiere Fund** is an initiative of the Victorian State Government, which enables **MIFF** to offer strategic minority supports to a range of quality theatrical narrative feature films and documentaries that will premiere at MIFF.
- Premiere Fund production financing supports can include completion/enhancement loans, mini-gap equity investments and matching marketing/distribution advances. The Fund accepts applications from Victorian producers with market-ready projects in advanced stages of financing which demonstrate that they: have strength of connection to Victoria; can premiere at **MIFF**; have viable co-financing to enable them to go into production in time for a **MIFF** premiere; and will benefit in creative, industrial and/or distribution terms from MIFF's financial backing.
- The call for submissions for MIFF **Premiere Fund**'s Round Four opens from August 2008 with decisions due in mid-October 2008. Updated Guidelines and Application Forms for Round Four will be available in July at: http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/miff_premiere_fund

37South2008:

- **37South2008** is MIFF's film co-financing market comprising **37South: Bridging the Gap** (scheduled meetings between financiers and registered producers, open panel discussions roundtables and networking events); **37South: Breakthrough Screenings** (screenings of films seeking distribution and/or sales agents for invited buyers), **37South: Accelerator Express** (screenings of short films for 37South producers from the MIFF Accelerator program for short film directors, and selection of one Accelerator producer to participate in 37South: Bridging the Gap) and **37South's Books at MIFF** (bringing the publishing and film industries together to encourage book to screen adaptations through case studies, public book to screen pitching, networking event and scheduled publisher/producer meetings). More new strands of **37South** will be announced before the event, which runs **24-27 July 2008**.
- In its first year, during MIFF 2007, **37 South** brought key international film financiers (including Paramount(USA), Sundance Channel (USA), ContentFilm (Europe), Lightning (USA), The Works (Europe), Fortissimo (Europe/Asia), Slingshot (Europe), Rezo (Europe), A3/Crosby Fund (Asia), Highpoint (Europe), Myriad (USA), Wide (Europe), Becker (Europe/Australia)) and local funding organisations (including Madman, Roadshow, Accent, Aztec, Hopscotch, OmniLab and Australian Government screen agencies) face-to-face with Australian film producers (including Jan Chapman (*The Piano*), Melanie Coombs (*Harvie Krumpet*), Robert Connolly and John Maynard (*Romulus My Father*), Bridget Ikin (*Look Both Ways*), Michael McMahon (*Home Song Stories*), David Redman (*Strange Bedfellows*), Liz Watts (*Little Fish*) and many more.
- For more information, and updates on **37South2008**, go to: http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/2007/special_events/37south