



ACCELERATOR LAB WELCOMES MOST DIVERSE INTAKE EVER MIFF GUESTS MELISSA GEORGE & ED OXENBOULD TO CONDUCT ACTING CLASS

Helping tomorrow's hottest filmmaking talent today, the Melbourne International Film Festival's **MIFF Accelerator Lab** this year welcomes its most diverse intake ever with 27 emerging film directors confirmed to attend the workshop, while 13 alumni directors have new films screening in the MIFF 2017 program and the Accelerator Lab Master-class program includes ticketed sessions on Acting with *The Butterfly Tree*'s Melissa George and Ed Oxenbould and Editing with *Jungle*'s Sean Lahiff.

Part of the **MIFF 37°South Market** suite of industry programs, **Accelerator Lab** is an intensive workshop that helps selected short filmmakers hone their skills, craft and contacts in preparation for their transition to feature-length film directing with a four-day program of talks, screenings, seminars, networking and discussions on the creative and business aspects of the film industry. Over its 14 years, **Accelerator Lab** has fostered some extraordinary talent including: **David Michod** (*Animal Kingdom*); **Matthew Bate** (*Shut Up Little Man*, *An Audio Misadventure*); **Sophie Hyde** (*52 Tuesdays*); **Justin Kurzel** (*Snowtown*); **Ben Young** (*Hounds of Love*); and **Taika Waititi** (*What We Do In The Shadows* and *Thor: Ragnarok*).

Occurring during the MIFF Shorts & Centre-Piece Weekend, the mid-point of the Southern Hemisphere's oldest and largest film festival, this year's **Accelerator Lab** has 14 participants who have short films in the MIFF 2017 program: **W.A.M (Bill) Bleakley**; **Nina Buxton**; **Kate Lefoe**; **Frank Magree**; **Zoe McIntosh**; **Victoria McIntyre**; **Greta Nash**; **Tin Pang**; **Simon Portus**; **Nikki Richardson**; **Rachel Ross**; **John Sheedy**; **Nick Waterman**; **Dave Whitehead**. Audiences can see the films from these up-and-coming filmmakers in two programs of shorts, **Accelerator 1** on Saturday 12 August at 4pm and **Accelerator 2** on Sunday 13 August at 4pm, which go on sale at www.miff.com.au from Friday 14 July.

Express admission is also offered for a further number of directors in **Accelerator Lab** partnership programs. This year, six directors will participate via the South Australian Film Corporation's *Pirru Kuu Writers Room & Aboriginal Production Initiative*: **Kiara Milera**; **Edoardo Crismani**; **Michael Crismani**; **Isaac Lindsay**; **Dylan Coleman**; and **Thibul Nettle**; while four directors participate via the New Zealand Film Commission's *Ramahi Hayward Wahine Maori Director's Scholarship*: **Rachel House**; **Briar Grace Smith**; **Jessica Sanderson**; and **Kath Akuhata Brown**. **Sophie Hexter**, **Lisa Matthews** and **Kelly Schilling** will participate thanks to the Australian Directors' Guild *Gender Matters initiative*, while **Maziar Lahooti** participates via ScreenWest's *West Coast Visions*. For more information on the 2017 participants visit: <http://miffindustry.com/2017-participants>.

With some 55% of this year's 27 participants being female and 33% indigenous, this year's **Accelerator Lab** intake is the most diverse ever. Following this year's intake, some 267 directors will have passed through **Accelerator Lab** (for full alumni details see http://miffindustry.com/alumni_update) and **Accelerator Lab** is proud that some 13 of its alumni have films in the MIFF 2017 program, including **Eddie Martin** (*Accelerator 2010*) with the **MIFF Premiere Fund**-supported *Have You Seen the Listers*, as well as new features from **Amiel Courtin-Wilson** (2004) and **Alethea Jones** (2010) while **Tony Krawtitz** (2005) and **Ariel Kleiman** (2010) return with TV productions. **Matthew Bate** (2010) returns with a Virtual Reality (VR) piece, while **Alice Englert** (2016), **Audrey Lam** (2014), **Nora Niasari** (2015), **Julietta Boscolo** (2016), **Billie Pfeffer** (2014), **Dylan River** (2015), **Alena Lodkina** (2014) return with new short films.

A select number of **Accelerator Lab** sessions, ideal for students and those seeking to "look behind the curtain" of filmmaking, are open to the public with strictly limited seating. Featuring key creative talent from this year's **MIFF Premiere Fund**-supported titles *Jungle*, *Butterfly Tree* and *Rabbit*, including actors Melissa George (*The Good Wife*) and Ed Oxenbould (*Paper Planes*), the sessions, which are now on sale at <http://miff.com.au/industry-public-access-events>, are:

ACTING: MELISSA GEORGE & ED OXENBOULD

PRODUCTION DESIGN: MATT PUTLAND

CINEMATOGRAPHY: ANNA HOWARD

COMPOSING: CAITLIN YEO

EDITING: SEAN LAHIFF

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For more information, visit www.miffaccelerator.com



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