

MIFF PREMIERE FUND SUPPORTS VICTORIAN FILMMAKERS

MELBOURNE: Thursday 24 January 2008 – The **Melbourne International Film Festival's Premiere Fund** has announced the four projects in receipt of offers from its second funding round:

- **BLESSED:** Executive Producers: Al Clark, Marian Macgown; Producers: Andrena Finlay, Ana Kokkinos; 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.*
- **ANGEL OF THE WIND** Producers: Matt Crosby, Tahir Cambis; Director, Tahir Cambis. *An irreverent and magical documentary from the director of Exile in Sarajevo that, through the prism of a surrealist vaudevillian theatrical production concerning the spirits of dead Kamikaze pilots (including chaotic Tokyo rehearsals and mishap-plagued Melbourne performances), explores the world of acting, spirituality, national identity and ghosts of the past.*
- **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.*

Selected from a competitive field of applications, which were seeking a combined A\$1.2 million worth of funding against the A\$380,000 available in this round, the four Round Two projects bring to nine the number of projects receiving Premiere Fund support to date. (See Key Facts on next page for Round One projects).

The Premiere Fund was launched last July at the inaugural edition of MIFF's new film financing market, **37 South: Bridging the Gap**. The **Premiere Fund** enables the **Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF)** to offer financial support to a range of local feature films and documentaries that will premiere at the festival. The Fund, which is distributing A\$1.4 million of production funding across four rounds, accepts applications from market-ready projects in advanced stages of financing stages which meet the eligibility criteria (see Key Facts on next page).

"With nine richly diverse projects now receiving support, the foundation blocks of the Premiere Fund documentary and feature film slate are now well and truly in place," 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."

"The **Premiere Fund** and **37 South** are much appreciated and a very important initiatives of the Victorian State Government to build on Melbourne's position as a centre of the Australian screen production industry," 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."

The **MIFF Premiere Fund's** Round Three opens from 01 February 2008 and closes on 29 February 2008. Woods also announced the dates for **37 South 2008** as being 24-27 July 2008. Applications from producers to secure a slot at **37 South 2008** will open in March.

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MIFF PREMIERE FUND:

- Launched by Victorian Premier John Brumby in July, 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.
- The Fund is distributing \$1.4 million of production funding across four rounds. Premiere Fund supports can include completion/enhancement loans, mini-gap equity investments and matching marketing/distribution advances.
- The Fund accepts applications from 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 Three opens from 01 February 2008 and closes on 29 February 2008 with decisions due on 02 April 2008. Updated Guidelines and Application Forms for Round Three can be found at: http://www.melbournefilmfestival.com.au/miff_premiere_fund
- **MIFF 2008** Festival Dates: Friday 25 July – Sunday 10 August, 2008
- Announced in November, the five projects receiving Premiere Fund support in Round One are:
 - **ROCK & ROLL NERD**: Producer/Director/Writer: Rhian Skirving. *A rags to riches observational documentary following Melbourne musician and performance artist's Tim Minchin meteoric rise to international fame.*
 - **CELEBRITY - TALES OF DOMINIC DUNNE**: Executive Producers: Sue Maslin & Daryl Dellora; Producers/Directors/Writers: Tim Jolley & Kirsty De Garis. *Set against the backdrop of the trial of Phil Spector, 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*
 - **BASTARDY**: (Producer: Philippa Campey; Director/Writer: Amiel Courtin-Wilson (a 2004 attendee of MIFF's Accelerator emerging talent workshop). *Journeying into a little-seen side of Melbourne, Bastardy is an adventurous portrait of Jack Charles, a well-known personality on the streets of Melbourne, colourful fringe-dweller and sometime actor.*
 - **BRAND NEW DAY**: (Producers: Robyn Kershaw & Graeme Issac; Director: Rachel Perkins; Writers: Rachel Perkins, Reg Cribb, Jimmy Chi. *An adaptation of popular Aboriginal musical Bran Nue Dae, the film is an upbeat coming-of-age, romantic musical and 1960s road movie featuring the choreography of Stephen Page.*
 - **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BRENDA HEAN**: (Producers: Michael McMahon & Scott Millwood; Director/Writers: Scott Millwood). *An investigative environmental documentary that seeks to uncover the true 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.*
- The A\$710,000 worth of funding distributed so far in the Premiere Fund's first two rounds is supporting nine projects with combined production budgets of more than A\$15 million – yielding a Premiere Fund leveraging factor of around 21:1

37 SOUTH: Bridging the Gap

- **37 South** is MIFF's new film co-financing market.
- 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.