



PREMIERE FUND COMES BACK OUT AT MIFF 2018

BRINGING AUSTRALIAN STORIES TO THE SCREEN

FIVE PROJECTS TO HAVE THEIR WORLD PREMIERE AT MIFF 2018

Entering its second decade, the **MIFF Premiere Fund** brings five world premieres to the 67th Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF), including Thomas M. Wright's highly anticipated directorial debut *Acute Misfortune*, as well as the joyous *The Coming Back Out Ball Movie* for the festival's Closing Night Gala.

The Premiere Fund, which offers minority co-financing to new Australian quality theatrical (narrative and documentary) feature films that then premiere at MIFF, has invested in more than 60 projects including the MIFF 2018 slate.

Five films will have their red-carpet world premiere screenings at this year's MIFF, as follows:

- Director Sue Thomson's *The Coming Back Out Ball Movie* captures the stories of the glittering October 2017 Coming Back Out Ball, hosted by cabaret legend Robyn Archer with performances by Carlotta, Deborah Cheetham and Gerry Connolly, and those LGBTI+ elders it honoured in this life-affirming love letter to Australia's original fighters for queer equality. Whilst exploring complex realities around ageing in the LGBTI+ community, this is a celebratory and life-affirming film that will leave audience laughing, crying – and ready to dance at the MIFF's glittering Closing Night Gala.
- Daniel Henshall (*Snowtown*) stars as infamous Archibald Prize-winning artist Adam Cullen in *Acute Misfortune*, a lyrical adaptation of *The Saturday Paper* editor Erik Jensen's acclaimed biography, which also stars Toby Wallace, Max Cullen and Genevieve Lemon. In his directorial feature debut, *Top of the Lake* actor Thomas M. Wright deftly weaves a striking tale of the bright young wunderkind writer and the brilliant yet deeply troubled artist.
- Inspired by former Prime Minister Paul Keating's searing eulogy for Geoffrey Tozer, and directed by Janine Hosking (*My Khmer Heart*), *The Eulogy* explores the remarkable and tragic story of Australia's greatest-ever, and perhaps most overlooked, pianist and includes Keating re-staging his famous funeral oration as music educator and conductor Richard Gill AO embarks on a journey to restore Tozer's legacy.
- Mega-mining and pastoral developments in the world-famous Kimberley threaten not just the pristine environment but more than 200 Indigenous communities and their peoples' sacred links to Country in *Undermined: Tales from the Kimberley* in which Traditional Owners, including activist and musician Albert Wiggan and academic Dr Anne Poelina, ask will the Kimberley's custodians, lands and cultures survive these pressures? Director Nicholas Wrathall (*Gore Vidal: The United States of Amnesia*) delivers an urgent film that tells a sadly universal story of the David-and-Goliath battles Indigenous peoples face and the human costs of doing business.
- MIFF Accelerator Lab alumna Miranda Nation makes her feature directorial debut in *Undertow*, a psychological thriller of grief, abuse and obsession set against the backdrop of local footy culture that stars Josh Helman (*Mad Max: Fury Road*, *X-Men: Apocalypse*), Olivia DeJonge (*The Visit*), Laura Gordon (*Joe Cinque's Consolation*) and Rob Collins (*Glitch*). Shot in Geelong and along Victoria's rugged Surf Coast, Bonnie Elliot's evocative cinematography sets the tone for this starkly topical feature debut.

"The Premiere Fund champions stories that need telling and we are so proud of this year's slate of wonderfully diverse and inclusive world premieres," said MIFF Premiere Fund Executive Producer Mark Woods. "As the Premiere Fund enters its second decade, we take our hats off to the talented filmmakers that we have the privilege of working with and we look forward to the Fund continuing to play its part in supporting quality new Australian cinema."

Across its eleven years, the Premiere Fund has a proud history of assisting a wide range of stories that need telling from a diverse range of talent and voices.

Of the 67 films co-financed thus far by the Premiere Fund:

- Some 28% had female directors (versus Screen Australia-reported industry average of 16%)
- 58% had female producers (versus industry average of 32%);
- 42% included youth themes (including **Paper Planes**);
- 28% had elements portraying Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Communities (CALDs), with 6% having CALD creative principals (director and/or producer(s));
- 15% included indigenous themes and/or characters (including **Bran Nue Dae**), with 6% having indigenous creative principals;
- 13% included LGBTI+ characters and/or issues, with 19% involving LGBTI+ creative principals
- 43% involved regional themes and/or regional shoots
- Some 51% of Premiere Fund movies are helmed by first time directors, with 21% of the overall tally being directed by alumnus of the MIFF Accelerator Lab emerging director program and 49% securing part of their financing from MIFF 37th South Market.

Other key milestones include:

- Children's film **Paper Planes** grossed almost \$10 million at the Australia/NZ box office and won the inaugural CineFest \$100,000 film prize in 2014
- Premiere Fund titles have won more than **60 awards** and more than 285 key festival selections including **Berlin** (*Make Hummus Not War, The Turning, Galore, Paper Planes, Bran Nue Dae, Monsieur Mayonnaise, Emo The Musical*); **Cannes** (*These Final Hours*); **Rotterdam** (*Electric Boogaloo, Not Quite Hollywood, Have You Seen The Listers?*); **Toronto** (*Cut Snake, Electric Boogaloo, Paper Planes, Downriver, Balibo, Blessed, Bran Nue Dae, Not Quite Hollywood, Blame, Machete Maidens Unleashed, Mother of Rock, Loved Ones, The Butterfly Tree*)
- Indigenous-themed feature documentary **Putuparri & The Rainmakers** won the 2015 CineFest \$100,000 Film Prize, with Cinefest Jury Chair David Wenham remarking: "A story and characters so compelling and emotionally engaging that it reinforced the power of cinema to entertain, touch us deeply and stay with us forever."

NOTES:

- **The 2017 Melbourne International Film Festival runs 2 – 19 August**
- **Tickets for Closing Night Gala, *The Coming Back Out Ball Movie* are on sale now at miff.com.au.**
- **For detailed information on the MIFF Premiere Fund slate and background, visit www.miff.com.au/premierfund10thanniversary**
- **For information on the Premiere Fund for film practitioners, visit: www.miffpremierfund.com**
- **The full festival program will be launched on 10 July with all general public individual session tickets on sale 13 July 2018.**

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