

Australian producer Mat Govoni wins top prize at Melbourne's 37^o South Market

BY SANDY GEORGE | 14 AUGUST 2024



SOURCE: TESS FLYNN

MAT GOVONI, HELENA MACKENZIE (FILM LONDON AND PFM) AND TERESA ZOLNIERKIEWICZ (MIFF CHAIR)

Producer Mat Govoni of Australia's Future Pictures has won the top prize of A\$3,000 at Australia's prestigious 37^o South Market, which closed on August 11 and is part of the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF).

Govoni, who runs Future Pictures with Adam White, pitched two projects to potential buyers and financiers: brothers Colin and Cameron Cairnes' horror-comedy *One Summer Dark*, a co-production with Major International Pictures, developed with state film agency VicScreen, and *The Long Ride*. The latter is the story of Bill Conner who cycled 2,600 miles from Wisconsin to Louisiana to listen

to his daughter's heartbeat in the chest of a young man.

Written by Belinda Chakyo, *The Long Ride* will film in the US, with postproduction taking place in Australia. Govoni is working with Michael McMahon of Big and Little Films: The film secured development support from Screen Australia.



SOURCE: KELLY GARDENER

LATE NIGHT WITH THE DEVIL (L-R): INGRID TORELLI, LAURA GORDON, DAVID DASTMALCHIAN.

Govoni's credits include *Late Night With The Devil*, also co-directed by the Cairnes, which has grossed US\$12 million in North America for IFC Films earlier this year.

Chris Hilton from Tilt Media and Entertainment and Sarah Shaw from Carver Films were the other two producers who stood out in Melbourne, each receiving a cash prize of A\$1,000.

Hilton pitched *Ray Of Sunshine*, a family adventure comedy set in Far North Queensland, to be directed by Robert Luketic, best known for directing *Legally Blonde*. The script is written by Karen Jackson and Keith Thompson. The other producer Craig McMahon, is one of the producers on *Better Man* playing at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Shaw attended 37^o South with *Square the Circle*, a female-led heist movie written by Jess Redenbach and to be directed by Ana Kokkinos, and *Out of Bounds*, the debut feature of Emmy award-winning writer/director Julie Kalceff. Shaw's company, Carver Films, is currently in production on Natalie Erika James' latest feature, *Saccharine*. James's credits include *Relic* and *Apartment 7*.

Shaw, Hilton and Govoni will now attend the Production Finance Market (PFM) at the BFI London Film Festival in October.

Now in its 17th year, the market attracted 485 delegates, including 27 international sales agents and financiers, and hosted 3,217 meetings.

- **Venice Competition title 'Harvest' sells to UK-Ireland, Germany, Latin America (exclusive)**