



MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL SHOWCASES FINEST NSW SCREEN TALENT

The talent and skill of the New South Wales screen industry will be on show at this year's 66th Sydney Film Festival with 18 NSW Government-supported projects selected including 17 features, documentaries, short films and one television drama series.

Create NSW Executive Director Investment & Engagement, Elizabeth W. Scott said, "Create NSW takes great pride in supporting the screen sector with initiatives that reflect the real-life diversity found across the State. It is hugely rewarding to see so many of our supported projects included in this year's Festival, including the Opening Night film *Palm Beach*."

"Directed by Rachel Ward with co-producers Deb Balderstone and Bryan Brown, *Palm Beach*, with its crew of more than 50% of women in senior positions both in front of and behind the camera, is a great example of Create NSW's commitment to screen gender parity (50:50 by 2020).

2019 also marks the third year of the successful *Screenability* program at the festival, the platform for screen practitioners with disability that is produced in partnership between the Sydney Film Festival and Create NSW.

Ms Scott said, "I'm proud that three short films supported by Create NSW have been selected for the *Screenability* program opening night on Wednesday 12 June: *Deluge* directed by Cloudy Rhodes and starring Sophie Lowe, *Magnetic* from director Nicole Delprado and Daisy Montalvo's *Prone to the Drone*."

US actor RJ Mitte (*Breaking Bad*) will speak at a *Screenability* event on Saturday 15 June held at Hoyts Entertainment Quarter and attend the world premiere of NSW-shot rom-com *Standing Up for Sunny*.

Festival audiences will also have a chance to see all four episodes of *Lambs of God* from director Jeffrey Walker (*Ali's Wedding*) on the big screen. The dark, gothic and twisted Foxtel mini-series about three eclectic nuns living on a secluded island saw investment through Create NSW's *Made in NSW TV Drama* funding.

"And celebrating over 50 years of the inspirational artworks created for Kaldor Public Art Projects, *It All Started With a Stale Sandwich*, directed by Samantha Lang, is the third film funded under the Create NSW and ABC TV Arts Documentary Film Fund. With major production funding also from Screen Australia, it will have its world-premiere at the festival ahead of an ABC broadcast on 24 September 2019," said Ms Scott.

On the festival's Closing Night, the fourth recipient of the \$10,000 Sydney-UNESCO City of Film Award will be announced. The award is presented by Create NSW to an outstanding NSW-based screen practitioner, with previous winners to date Lynette Wallworth, Leah Purcell and Warwick Thornton.

ENDS

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Create NSW-supported projects showing at the 66th Sydney Film Festival

Feature Films

HEARTS AND BONES

Director: Ben Lawrence

In Ben Lawrence's beautifully acted debut feature, a war photographer (Hugo Weaving) and a refugee (Andrew Luri) discover a photograph that threatens to destroy them both.

I AM MOTHER

Director: Grant Sputore

Hilary Swank and Clara Rugaard star in a compelling Australian sci-fi about a human child raised by a robot mother in a post-apocalyptic future. Official selection, Sundance.

JUDY & PUNCH

Director: Mirrah Foulkes

Mirrah Foulkes's astonishing, indefinable feature debut reimagines the Judy & Punch puppet show as a blackly comic feminist revenge tale starring Mia Wasikowska and Damon Herriman.

PALM BEACH

Director: Rachel Ward

In Rachel Ward's funny, uplifting comedy/drama, a group of lifelong friends reunite for a party at Sydney's Palm Beach; but tension mounts when deep secrets emerge.

SLAM

Director: Partho Sen-Gupta

A young Muslim activist and slam poet goes missing in this tense Sydney-set mystery with a sharp perspective on Islamophobia by Partho Sen-Gupta (Sunrise, SFF 2015).

STANDING UP FOR SUNNY

Director: Steve Vidler

Breaking Bad's RJ Mitte stars in this charming Australian rom-com about a loner with cerebral palsy who is roped into helping a comedian (Philippa Northeast) overcome her shyness.

SUBURBAN WILDLIFE

Director: Imogen McCluskey

The highly anticipated hometown debut – after its premiere at Cinequest Film Fest – of this authentic depiction of suburban angst and the struggles of young, post-Uni Australians.

Feature Documentaries

IT ALL STARTED WITH A STALE SANDWICH

Director: Samantha Lang

A savvy celebration of the inspirational artworks created for Kaldor Public Art Projects over 50 years, with artists including Christo, Abramovic, Jeff Koons, and Gilbert & George.

MARTHA: A PICTURE STORY

Director: Selina Miles

Three decades after publishing her book, *Subway Art*, photographer Martha Cooper discovers she's become an unexpected icon of one of the biggest art movements in history.

SANCTUARY

Director: Kaye Harrison

The intimate story of Khaled, a young man struggling to hold onto his humanity as he searches 10 years, across continents, for peace and freedom.

WHITE LIGHT

Director: George Gittoes

George Gittoes's (*Love City Jalalabad*, SFF 2013) latest film focuses on South Side Chicago, a suburb with worse gun violence statistics than any active war zone of the last two decades.

Screenability Series (Shorts)

DELUGE

Director: Cloudy Rhodes

Three spirited women (played by Sophie Lowe, Kayla Donaldson and Sky Wansey) usurp a religious commune.

MAGNETIC

Director: Nicole Delprado

Bella walks the fine line between mental illness, creativity and identity, as her road to diagnosis jumps from cured to complicated.

PRONE TO THE DRONE

Director: Daisy Montalvo

Sam, a lonely introvert stuck in the darkness of his home, is confronted with a problem when two young boys drop a drone in his backyard.

Short Films

ALL THESE CREATURES

Director: Charles Williams

An adolescent boy attempts to untangle his memories of a mysterious infestation, the unravelling of his father and the little creatures inside us all.

BETWEEN TWO LINES

Director: Jack Steele

When two First World War enemy soldiers become stranded in no man's land, an unlikely bond is formed. Will they still be able to pull the trigger if the time comes?

SNARE

Director: Madeleine Gottlieb

In a schmaltzy late-90s Chinese restaurant, a father and his punk-rock son struggle with their familial roles as they realise they each desperately need something from the other.

Drama series

LAMBS OF GOD

Director: Jeffrey Walker

See all four episodes of Jeffrey Walker's (Ali's Wedding, SFF 2017) dark, gothic and twistedly-erotic Foxtel mini-series, about a secluded nunnery threatened by the arrival of a handsome young priest.
