

TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL



NEWCASTLE

TOWER CINEMAS
23-25 JUNE 2017

SHORT FILMS



THE WALL

Directed by Nick Baker and Tristan Klein | Australia
In English | 6 mins | UC

Life as they knew it was all soon to end, when the darkness arrived and began to descend...

Fleeing their city, a grandmother and her grandson reach a tall, endless wall.

FINDING MAWIRANGA

Directed by Dylan River | Australia | In English | 15 mins
UC

Indigenous actor Tom E Lewis, once uprooted from his Arnhem Land home, returns after 40 years, re-connecting through the Murrungun songline.



SCHEDULE

FRIDAY 23 JUNE

7PM **ALI'S WEDDING** (UC)
9PM **COMPLIMENTARY OPENING NIGHT DRINKS**

SATURDAY 24 JUNE

1.30PM **MY LIFE AS A ZUCCHINI** (PG)
screens with short film **The Wall**
3.30PM **POP AYE** (UC)
6.30PM **INGRID GOES WEST** (UC)
8.30PM **WIND RIVER** (UC)

SUNDAY 25 JUNE

12.00PM **THE TEACHER** (M)
2.00PM **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO** (M)
5.00PM **HOLY AIR** (UC)
7.00PM **WE DON'T NEED A MAP** (UC)
screens with short film **Finding Mawiranga**

OPENING NIGHT ALI'S WEDDING



FRIDAY 23 JUNE 7PM

Directed by Jeffrey Walker | Australia | In English, Arabic and Farsi with English subtitles | 100 mins | UC

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

Ali's arranged marriage is looming, but he loves someone else. What's a Muslim cleric's son to do? This Australian comedy won an AWGIE for Best Original Screenplay.

Truth is stranger than fiction. *Ali's Wedding* is based on the real-life experience of lead actor Osamah Sami, whose arranged marriage lasted less than two hours. The smart screenplay by Sami and Andrew Knight (*Hacksaw Ridge*, *Rake*, *Jack Irish*) tells a humorous, authentic and poignant tale about family life in multicultural Australia. Stylishly directed by Jeffrey Walker (*Modern Family*, *Angry Boys*), the film boasts a terrific cast including Don Hany as Ali's father and delightful newcomer Helana Sawires as Dianne, the Lebanese-Australian medical student who sends Ali's heartbeat racing. The time is right for a feel-good winner like *Ali's Wedding*.

Please join us after the film for complimentary Opening Night drinks.

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE

Save 30% on regular ticket prices with a subscription - all nine films for only \$9 per film (\$8 concession), including Opening Night. Or dip into the festival with a 5-film Flexipass for just \$10.60 per film (\$9.60 concession)

9-FILM FULL SUBSCRIPTION
\$81 Adult \$72 Concession

5-FILM FLEXIPASS
\$53 Adult \$48 Concession

SINGLE TICKETS
\$14 Adult \$12 Concession
\$10 Student/Kids/Under 26

PRESENTED BY
SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL
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W sff.org.au

Front image: Pop Aye

HOW TO BOOK

Book tickets online in advance at sff.org.au/newcastle
For ticket enquiries please contact Sydney Film Festival on 02 8220 6600 or contact the cinema box office.

Tower Cinemas
183 - 185 King St
Newcastle NSW 2300
Phone: (02) 4926 2233

Opening Night includes complimentary drinks.
Subscriptions are transferable but admit only one person per film.

Concessions: unemployed, pensioners, seniors, members of Sydney Film Festival and members of the Newcastle Film Society - upon presentation of ID.

All films start at the advertised time - we do not screen ads.

UC = Unclassified 15+

All details correct at time of printing but subject to change without notice.

TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVAL VISITS...

NT Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine QLD Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Townsville NSW Huskisson, Nambucca Heads, Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Sawtell, Tamworth, Ulladulla, Wagga Wagga, Wollongong TFF AT SEA Sydney to Tasmania



Distinguished Partner



Travelling Film Festival acknowledges the financial assistance of Screen Australia and the New South Wales Government through Screen NSW and is supported by media partner ABC Newcastle and distinguished partner Princess Cruises.

MY LIFE AS A ZUCCHINI



SATURDAY 24 JUNE 1.30PM

Directed by Claude Barras | Switzerland, France
In English | 88 mins | PG

NOMINATED: BEST ANIMATED FEATURE FILM, ACADEMY AWARDS & GOLDEN GLOBES 2017

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

An Oscar-nominated Swiss-French stop-motion family animation that's realistic and life affirming, dealing with real issues in a way that doesn't patronise or traumatise its audience.

When nine-year old Zucchini's alcoholic mother dies, he is taken to an orphanage filled with misfits who, like himself, have been dealt a rough hand by life. Little does he know, they will soon become his de facto family, from his crush Camille to the gentle father-figure policeman Raymond. Based on a best-selling young adult novel and adapted for the screen by Céline Sciamma (*Tomboy*, SFF 2011), *My Life as a Zucchini* is an unusual, affirming but honest film that calls on its young audience's ability to empathise with lives far tougher than their own. They'll come out heartened, strengthened and more resilient from the experience – and so will the adults who take them.

"A movie that conveys deep feelings with the tiniest movements of the puppets' eyes or mouths; that portrays young love with a candid intensity[...]"

– WALL STREET JOURNAL

Screens with short film *The Wall*

This session is recommended for ages 10 and over.

POP AYE



SATURDAY 24 JUNE 3.30PM

Directed by Kirsten Tan | Singapore, Thailand
Thai with English subtitles | 102 mins | UC

WINNER: SPECIAL JURY AWARD, SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2017

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

A downtrodden architect and his long-lost elephant take a road trip across Thailand to find their childhood home in this offbeat and very funny Sundance screenwriting award-winner.

Once a cutting edge architect renowned for his progressive buildings, Thana is having a hard time at work and with his wife. Wandering the streets of Bangkok he comes across Pop Aye, the elephant he grew up with in rural Thailand. Thana promptly buys the elephant and the unusual pair set off on a road trip back towards the idyll of their home village. Along the way they meet fascinating characters, from a wild-haired man who seems to foretell the future to a transgender roadside bar singer. In her debut feature Kirsten Tan has total control, taking advantage of the beautiful scenery, wonderful actors and a charismatic elephant to tell a story that is unsentimental but genuinely moving.

"Like the journey it depicts, the first feature by writer-director Kirsten Tan is unhurried and unforgettable." – THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"Warm yet unsentimental, graced with the lightest touch of surrealism, this opening-night offering from Sundance's world cinema dramatic competition is a joy." – VARIETY

INGRID GOES WEST



SATURDAY 24 JUNE 6.30PM

Directed by Matt Spicer | USA | In English | 98 mins | UC

WINNER: SCREENWRITING AWARD, SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2017

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

Aubrey Plaza is hilarious as awkward loner Ingrid, a social media addict who heads to LA to meet her Instagram idol.

Ingrid (Plaza, *Parks and Recreation*; *Safety Not Guaranteed*, SFF 2012) is a troubled young woman who's found herself in strife because of her dangerous obsession with social media. Let loose upon the world again with an inheritance, she travels to Los Angeles to befriend Instagram influencer Taylor (Elizabeth Olsen, *Avengers: Age of Ultron*; *Wind River*). As seen through the sunny filter of Instagram, Taylor's life is perfect. The determined Ingrid soon stalks her way into her online idol's life with both funny and disastrous consequences. A biting, dark satire about the impact of social media on real human connection.

"Sharply amusing, crisply assembled and features game, broad-brushstroke performances from leads Aubrey Plaza and Elizabeth Olsen, vaguely recreating Single White Female for the smartphone generation." – THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"Spicer's squirm-inducing directorial debut understands both the pleasures and frustrations of judging one's worth via virtual connections." – VARIETY

WIND RIVER



SATURDAY 24 JUNE 8.30PM

Directed by Taylor Sheridan | UK, Canada, USA
In English | 110 mins | UC

NOMINATED: UN CERTAIN REGARD, CANNES FILM FESTIVAL 2017

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

Straight from Cannes, this intelligent crime drama with Jeremy Renner and Elizabeth Olsen is the directorial debut of screenwriter Taylor Sheridan (*Hell or High Water*, *Sicario*).

Renner (*The Hurt Locker*) plays Cory Lambert, a wildlife officer in Wyoming. When he discovers the body of a young Native American woman while hunting, the FBI come knocking. Rookie agent Jane Banner (Olsen, *Avengers: Age of Ultron*; *Ingrid Goes West*) is assigned to the case and requires Lambert's aid in the inhospitable, frozen terrain. As the puzzle pieces come together, we build a picture of both the present and past of this unforgiving and violent land. Superbly directing his own screenplay, Sheridan brings his trademark sense of place, fully drawn characters and real emotion to bear. This stylish, potent mystery also features the music of Nick Cave and Warren Ellis.

"After stirring legitimate excitement with his dynamic scripts for Sicario and Hell or High Water, Taylor Sheridan makes his directorial debut with Wind River, which similarly delivers shrewd insights into troubling American social issues in a punchy, action-and-violence-filled package." – THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

THE TEACHER



SUNDAY 25 JUNE 12PM

Directed by Jan Hřebejk | Slovakia | In Slovak with English subtitles | 102 mins | UC

WINNER: BEST FILM, BEST ACTRESS, BEST SCREENPLAY and AUDIENCE AWARD, CZECH ACADEMY AWARDS 2017

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

Zuzana Maurery gives an award-winning performance as an unscrupulous school teacher in this crowd-pleasing dark comedy set in Communist era Czechoslovakia.

Politically connected Maria Drazdechova's (Maurery) arrival at a school quickly leads to competitive sucking up. By carefully noting the professions of her students' parents, the unscrupulous teacher has a directory of services available to her: household repairs, free haircuts, grocery shopping and even the international smuggling of baked goods are all services required by Maria in exchange for favouritism. But some parents are unable, or unwilling, to give, setting the scene for a conflict between those who have acquiesced and those who resist. Hřebejk (*Cosy Dens*, SFF 2000; *Divided We Fall*, SFF 2001) is in top satirical form and uses this microcosm to make cutting points about society at large.

"A surefire crowd pleaser... Maurery handles her character, a nasty piece of work to be sure, with such natural aplomb that she makes Mrs Drazdechova not only perfectly credible but pretty scary too." – SCREENDAILY

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO



SUNDAY 25 JUNE 2PM

Directed by Raoul Peck | France, USA, Belgium, Switzerland | In English | 93 mins | UC

NOMINATED: BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE, ACADEMY AWARDS 2017

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

Narrated by Samuel L Jackson, this mesmerising Oscar-nominated film channels the impassioned words of writer James Baldwin, one of the most incisive commentators on race in America.

People's Choice Documentary Award-Winner at Toronto and a box office success in the US, *I Am Not Your Negro* takes as its starting point notes for a book Baldwin intended to write about the lives and assassinations of his friends Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Medgar Evers. That unwritten book finds life in this remarkable film which melds Baldwin's unpublished writing (powerfully narrated by Jackson), archival footage of his eloquent analysis of the times, and contemporary Black Lives Matter protests. Haitian Peck (*Lumumba*; *Moloch Tropical*, SFF 2010) is a stridently political filmmaker and here his profound and poetic cine-essay is, as The New York Times describes it, "life-altering".

"It is a striking work of storytelling. By assembling the scattered images and historical clips suggested by Baldwin's writing, I Am Not Your Negro is a cinematic séance, and one of the best movies about the civil rights era ever made." – THE GUARDIAN

HOLY AIR



SUNDAY 25 JUNE 5PM

Directed by Shady Srour | Israel | In Arabic, English, French, Hebrew and Italian with English subtitles | 81 mins | UC

SELECTED: SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017, TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL 2017

In this clever comedy, a Nazareth businessman must negotiate with the holy city's rulers, gangsters and his own family when he tries one last idea to get rich, selling 'holy air'.

Adam (writer and director Shady Srour) is a Christian Arab with an ailing father and pregnant wife. With a string of failed business ideas behind him and in urgent need for cash, Adam comes upon one last brilliant idea: Holy Air. Taking to the streets and selling to tourists the very air that the Virgin Mary breathed is a sure-fire winner. But a venture like this will require the cooperation of the three powerful religious cultures ruling Nazareth, and the accompanying politicians, officials and gangsters. Skillfully conveying the political and religious tensions of the region, Srour has a wonderful ability to use single images to great effect in this very funny and witty film.

"Adult growing pains, regional politics and the business of religion all figure in Holy Air, a winningly satiric comedy that's as tender hearted as it is sly... Srour's subtly crafted film unfolds as a memorable and confidently imagined human comedy." – THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

WE DON'T NEED A MAP



SUNDAY 25 JUNE 7PM

Directed by Warwick Thornton | Australia | In English and Warlpiri, Wardaman, Dhuwala and Dhuwaya with English subtitles | 85 mins | UC

SELECTED: OPENING NIGHT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL 2017

In 2010, Warwick Thornton's *Samson and Delilah* won the Camera d'Or at Cannes and he was nominated for Australian of the Year. When asked at a press conference what his main concern would be if he received Australia's highest honour, he replied, "that the Southern Cross is becoming the new Swastika". Seven years later, Thornton takes us on a journey through this five-star constellation's astronomical, colonial and Indigenous history to the present day. For Aboriginal people the meaning of this heavenly body is deeply spiritual, a connection vividly expressed in stories from North East Arnhem Land, Katherine and the Central Desert. By contrast, the star-adorned Eureka Flag was emblematic of protest and defiance from its first appearance, a quality that caused it to be adopted by activists, and lately, the darker side of Australian nationalism. *We Don't Need a Map* doesn't shy away from the tough questions about the place of the Southern Cross in the Australian psyche, but Thornton's cavalier spirit and inventive filmmaking skillfully balances the provocative and the pleasurable.

Screens with short film *Finding Mawiranga*