Melbourne International Film Festival 2024 Year in Review MIFF

Introduction

Welcome to 2024 in the world of MIFF!

Moreso even than before, the festival felt this year to be a stake in the ground, a shot in the arm, a clarion call to celebrate the shared experience of cinema, to celebrate the vitality of film in the volatility of these disposable and unknowable times. It was an event that continued to welcome audiences, develop artists, and build community around an unmissable program of over 280 films across 18 unforgettable Melbourne winter days.

The festival's big moments this year were proudly Melbourne-made and Victorian-born. Opening Night was shared with one of our finest Melburnian moviemakers via the international premiere of Adam Elliot's greatly anticipated *Memoir of a Snail* – a film that is dark, delightful and attuned to the shonkily beloved wavelengths of Australian suburbia like few others.

Acclaimed director Justin Kurzel's *Ellis Park*, a thoughtful and deeply felt portrait of Warren Ellis and the intersections of compassion and creativity,

was launched in world premiere as our 2024 Music on Film Gala; Robert Connolly's Magic Beach, an ambitiously kaleidoscopic adaptation of the beloved children's picture book, played as the festival's Family Gala; and Shannon Owen's Left Write Hook, an intimate observational documentary that pulls no punches, screened as the inaugural Premiere with Purpose. All of these films were supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, which, alongside MIFF 37°South Market and MIFF Accelerator Lab, continued the festival's longstanding mission of building and fostering industry connections in order to bring bold new work to the big screen.

Elsewhere, our Bright Horizons competition again presented an extraordinary array of essential new films and filmmakers; returning for its third year, the program is a lightning rod for the most important breakthrough voices in world cinema. Among the 10 presented features, Matthew Rankin's Universal Language was awarded the \$140,000 Bright Horizons Award, a film prize supported by VicScreen that continues to be one of the richest in the world. The award was presented onstage by our internationally attending jury, a stellar lineup led by celebrated Australian auteur Ivan Sen. The MIFF Awards again continued to recognise extraordinary talent from right across the festival through The Uncle Jack Charles Award, presented in collaboration with Kearney Group, and the Blackmagic Design Australian Innovation Award.

Within retrospective programming, MIFF presented a major, expansive special program with our *Iranian New Wave:* 1962–79 retrospective. Curated by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the program profiled a selection of 26 features and shorts – some newly restored after decades of unavailability, others largely never seen before in Australia – bringing a rare and exciting survey of defining Iranian cinema to MIFF audiences.

Elsewhere, the festival presented the special program Yvonne Rainer: Autobiographical Fictions, featuring five restored works by the pioneer of the US avant-garde performance movement; Back From the Ink: Restored Animated Shorts, a collection of newly restored classics from animation's golden age; and the Stephen Cummins Retrospective, spotlighting a crucial chapter in Australia's queer cinematic history courtesy of the National Film and Sound Archive's restorations of the director's beautiful, influential and enduring work. For audiences up to the kaiju-sized commitment, there was also much city-stomping to be had at our all-night Godzilla 70th Anniversary Marathon, presented with The Astor Theatre.

MIFF also continued to welcome audiences far beyond Melbourne's boundaries, screening in 25 cinema spaces across the metropolitan centre and bringing the festival to seven centres in country Victoria via our MIFF Regional program. The latter saw a multi-cinema presentation in Geelong and new screening locations added for 2024 in Morwell and Shepparton, alongside a special 'Bathe in Cinema' presentation at Peninsula Hot Springs in Fingal. Audiences anywhere in Australia could also be part of MIFF this year through a highlights selection of features and shorts presented in our MIFF Online program, streaming via ACMI Cinema 3 and taking in a range of MIFF 2024 films, including new Australian premiere titles and festival highlights from Cannes, Locarno and elsewhere.

It was a program that reminded us of how special it is to see Melbourne come alive with the flows of audience and the imaginations of artists, especially in 2024. Indelible to the results achieved by the festival in 2024 was the extraordinary work of our staff and volunteers, our festival partners, and our contributing filmmakers and artists, to all of whom we offer our deep gratitude.

For those who came to be entertained, moved, challenged and changed by the sheer immensity of 18 days of film, it was a pleasure to share the imagination of cinema – and the experience of cinema-going – at the 72nd edition of the Melbourne International Film Festival.



Damien HodgkinsonChief Executive Officer



Al Cossar Artistic Director



Victoria Pope Commercial Operations Director



Eddie Coupe Acting Head of Industry

MIFF 2024 Year in Review



















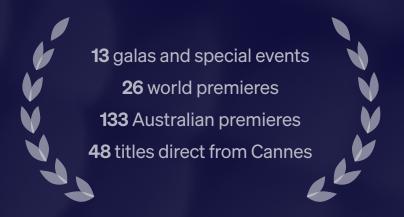


18 days in cinema

17 days online



208 features107 shorts7 XR works





17 metropolitan cinema screens
8 regional cinema screens
Australia-wide streaming
on MIFF Online



16 sessions with audio description15 sessions with open captions89 fully subtitled films



100% step-free and wheelchair-accessible venues7 sensory-friendly sessions2 crybaby sessions

66 countries

55 languages

17.2%Australian content

First Nations-led projects



106 titles with one or more female or non-binary directors



9 MIFF Talks177 festival guests9 MIFF Ambassadors



167,048 total yearly audience 138,452 in-cinema festival attendees 18% new audiences



65% audiences attended screenings with others

4.8 average films per audience member



In 2024, MIFF recognised filmmaking excellence across a suite of six awards.

Presented by VicScreen, the flagship **Bright Horizons Award** celebrated filmmakers on the ascent. The winning film, as chosen from within the Bright Horizons film competition, received a \$140,000 prize – one of the most substantial film prizes in the world – while \$15,000 went to the recipient of the Special Jury Award.

The Blackmagic Design Australian Innovation Award recognised an outstanding Australian creative within a film playing in the MIFF program with a \$70,000 cash prize.

The 2024 recipients were chosen by a distinguished jury of industry figures: jury president Ivan Sen, one of Australia's most revered filmmakers; visionary American writer and director David Lowery; Oscarwinning costume designer Deborah L. Scott; pioneering Indonesian film producer Yulia Evina Bhara; and celebrated Australian actor Jillian Nguyen.



BRIGHT HORIZONS AWARD

Universal Language (Canada)
Director: Matthew Rankin

SPECIAL JURY AWARD

Flow (France/Belgium/Latvia)
Director: Gints Zilbalodis

OTHER NOMINEES

Good One (dir. India Donaldson)

Hoard (dir. Luna Carmoon)

Inside (dir. Charles Williams)

Janet Planet (dir. Annie Baker)

Julie Keeps Quiet (dir. Leonardo Van Dijl)

On Becoming a Guinea Fowl (dir. Rungano Nyoni)

Sweet Dreams (dir. Ena Sendijarević)

The Village Next to Paradise (dir. Mo Harawe)

BLACKMAGIC DESIGN AUSTRALIAN INNOVATION AWARD

Jaydon Martin Director – Flathead

OTHER NOMINEES

Audrey Lam
Director – Us and the Night

Steven Boyle VFX executive producer – The Demon Disorder

Adam Elliot
Director/writer – Memoir of a Snail





The Uncle Jack Charles Award, presented in collaboration with Kearney Group, recognised an outstanding Australian First Nations creative within a film playing in the MIFF program. The recipient was awarded a \$20,000 cash prize and \$25,000 worth of financial services with Kearney Group, and was selected by a jury of celebrated Australian First Nations creatives: Bidjara, Wakka Wakka and Gubbi Gubbi producer, writer, actor and VicScreen executive Davey Thompson; Kamilaroi actor and writer Thomas Weatherall; and Kurnai/Gunai, Gunditjmara, Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta writer, actor and activist Nayuka Gorrie.

The Intrepid Audience Award crowned viewers' favourite works from the festival, as determined through public votes. For the first time ever, the vote resulted in a tie, with two notable recipients jointly winning the award.

The **63rd MIFF Shorts Awards**, presented by Campari, celebrated the best in short-form filmmaking (see page 22 for more information), while the **MIFF Schools Youth Jury Award**, presented by Collarts – which recognised the best title from the MIFF Schools program, as selected by young jury members **Fynn Williams**, **Gabe Hartshorne** and **Jasmine Lui** – was bestowed on María Zanetti's *Alemania*.



THE UNCLE JACK CHARLES AWARD April Phillips

Lead artist – kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)

OTHER NOMINEES

Jon Bell (writer/director – *The Moogai*) Semara Jose (co-director – *Voice*) Danielle MacLean (co-director – *Like My Brother*)

Jake Duczynski (animator/writer/director – 'Gilay Gabinya', *Magic Beach*)



INTREPID AUDIENCE AWARD

Voice (Australia)
Director: Krunal Padhiar;
co-director: Semara Jose
Left Write Hook (Australia)
Director: Shannon Owen

MIFF 2024 Year in Review

IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

\$11.4M economic impact

Independent research established that the festival generated \$11.4M in economic impact. For every \$1 spent by a MIFF audience member while attending a MIFF event, a further \$2.66 was spent in the broader economy on items such as transport, accommodation, shopping, food and beverages.

\$1 = \$2.66





167,048 annual viewership

48% under 25 audience engaged with MIFF for the first time



18% new audiences



88% metropolitan Melbourne **7%** regional Victoria

4% interstate (43% from NSW, 46% engaged with MIFF for the first time)



69% employed

full-time, part-time or casually, or self-employed

15% retired

7% students



35%

earn over \$100K annually



57% female
18% speak a language other than
English at home*

*The most commonly spoken languages are Mandarin, French, Cantonese, Spanish, Greek, German and Italian





Quality of films on offer

97% satisfied

Range of films on offer

98% satisfied

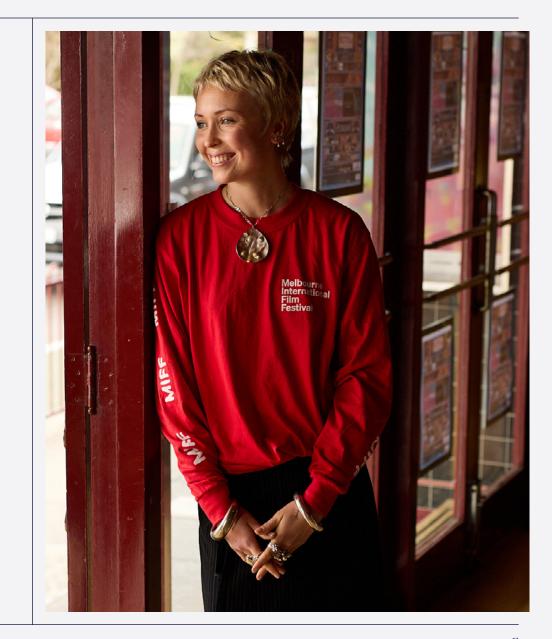
Customer service received

97% satisfied

Digital platform

89% satisfied

95%
likely to
return to MIFF
in future years



IN CINEMA

65%

watched with others

Groups (3+) watched more films than those watching alone or in couples

Audiences watched an average of

4.8 films

Over-65s watched an average of **6.2 films** 25–34s watched an average of **4.9 films**

ONLINE

67%

watched with others

On average, in groups of 2.3 people

Audiences watched an average of

2.6 films

55–64s watched an average of **2.8 films** Over-65s watched an average of **3 films**

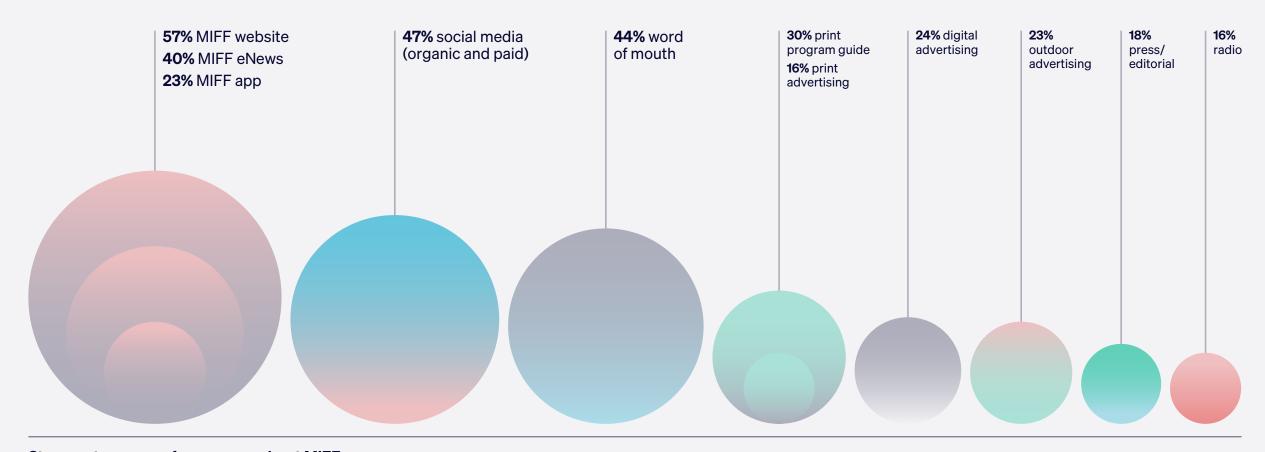
KEY MOTIVATIONS FOR ATTENDING MIFF

to experience something new

to watch a **specific film**

to experience **culture**

to be **entertained**



Strongest sources of awareness about MIFF

- Audiences aged 18–44: social media, digital advertising, outdoor advertising and word of mouth
- Audiences aged 45 and over: eNews, the print program guide, press/editorial and radio
- Audiences engaging with MIFF for the first time: word of mouth (48%), MIFF website (47%), MIFF social media (39%), digital advertising (23%) and outdoor advertising (18%)

NOTE: Total response percentages exceed 100% as respondents were permitted to select multiple sources of awareness.



83K Widescreen eNews subscribers

36.4% open rate 11.7% click rate (CTOR)



1.8M website* page views

585K engaged sessions

*miff.com.au only



77.7K Facebook followers

130.2K peak daily reach



40.3K Instagram followers

148.2K peak daily reach



1.8K TikTok followers

390.9K reach



1.4K Letterboxd followers



34.2K YouTube subscribers

34.9M YouTube views total 1.3M YouTube views in 2024



51.5K X (Twitter) followers



7.9K LinkedIn followers

Broadcast Channel (new)

600+ subscribers

Impact Publicity

"This year's line-up is nothing short of spectacular."

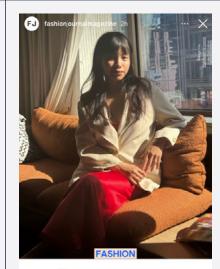
AHAPPY

"The 72nd Melbourne International Film Festival begins next month, and it's a death-defying display from cinema legends ... The future is bright, too, with strong emerging voices in the Australian screen industry and the best international exports from the world's most prestigious festivals."

The Sydney Morning Herald

"I've admired countless films in my life, and fallen in love with many of them, but I never fall for a film quite like the way I do the ones I've seen at this festival, when ... something hits me out of nowhere, invading my psyche and taking up residence forever."

Senses of Cinema



@ FASHIONJOURNAL.COM.AU

A week in work outfits with Australian actress Jillian Nguyen

















McGUANE'S VERDICT: HOW DESPERATE PIES CAN SWOOP IN ON SWANS' DIVE ST





IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

In 2024, MIFF screened film	S
from 66 places of origin.	

Argentina Australia Austria Belgium Brazil Bulgaria Canada Chile China Colombia Croatia

Cyprus

Republic

Denmark

Czech

Dominican

Republic

Egypt

Ethiopia

Finland

France French

Polynesia

Georgia

Germany

Greece

Hong Kong

India

Indonesia

Iran

Iraq

Ireland

Italy

Japan

Kenya

Latvia

Luxembourg

Mexico

Namibia

Nepal

Netherlands

New Zealand

Norway

Palestine

Peru

Philippines

Poland

Portugal

Qatar

Russia

Saudi Arabia

Scotland

Senegal

Singapore

Slovenia

Somalia

South Korea

Spain

Sweden

Switzerland

Taiwan

Tunisia

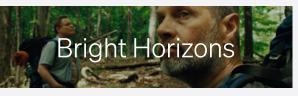
Türkiye

UK

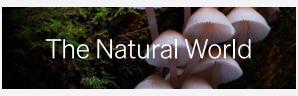
Ukraine

Uruguay

USA Vietnam Zambia Spanning continents, genres and forms, MIFF's 21 program strands enabled viewers to find their niches, discover more and curate their own selections.

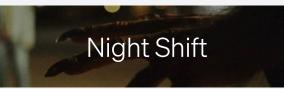














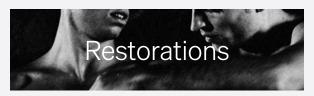
























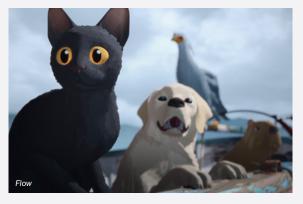




Recognising the new, the next, the breakthrough and the best, MIFF's film competition, Bright Horizons, once again brought an extraordinary international line-up of first- and second-time filmmakers together in 2024 to compete for the Bright Horizons Award, presented by VicScreen.

With many of the program's international filmmakers in attendance, and all its screenings premiering in Australia, Bright Horizons continues to flip the film-competition model to focus on discovery and ascent into auteurship - a chance for audiences to meet the most important new filmmakers shaping cinema before them.

- 10 films
- 15 places of origin
- 13 international guests





















MIFF rolled out the red carpet for formidable directors, creatives and actors from near and afar. In total, MIFF welcomed 177 festival guests.

Among this year's international guest contingent were directors Luna Carmoon (UK), India Donaldson (USA), Mo Harawe (Somalia/Austria), Raven Jackson (USA), David Lowery (USA), Matthew Rankin (Canada), Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu (New Zealand), Ondi Timoner (USA), Ant Timpson (New Zealand), Leonardo Van Dijl (Belgium) and Gints Zilbalodis (Latvia); screenwriter Ila Firouzabadi (Iran); producers Yulia Evina Bhara (Indonesia) and Matīss Kaža (Latvia); and costume designer Deborah L. Scott (USA).

Australian creatives present at the festival included filmmakers Sally Aitken, Wendy Champagne, Robert Connolly, Adam Elliot, Damon Gameau, John Hughes, Justin Kurzel, Audrey Lam, Jaydon Martin, Ivan Sen and Charles Williams; composer Warren Ellis; and actor Jillian Nguyen.













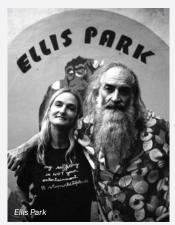
Program MIFF Premiere Fund

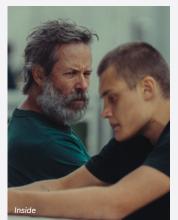
Supported by VicScreen, the MIFF Premiere Fund co-finances new quality Australian theatrical (feature-length narrative and documentary) films that premiere at MIFF. The fund is a strategic minority supporter of a range of films, and seeks diversity of filmmaking teams and film genres on the slate. The Premiere Fund's 16th annual slate of 'stories that need telling' were:

- Oscar-winning director Adam Elliot's Memoir of a Snail, featuring the voice of Sarah Snook, was MIFF 2024's Opening Night Gala title. It took home the award for best feature at the 2024 Annecy International Animation Film Festival and the prize for Best Film at the 68th BFI London Film Festival
- Shannon Owen's Left Write Hook, which was MIFF's inaugural Premiere with Purpose title, and which was a co-winner of the 2024 Intrepid Audience Award
- Justin Kurzel's Ellis Park, which was MIFF 2024's Music on Film Gala title

- Charles Williams's *Inside*, starring Guy Pearce and Cosmo Jarvis, which was selected for MIFF's Bright Horizons competition
- Robert Connolly's Magic Beach, which was MIFF 2024's Family Gala title
- Eliza Cox's Queens of Concrete, a documentary following three young skateboarders as they seek to qualify to represent Australia at the Olympic Games
- Natalie Bailey's Audrey, which was also selected at SXSW (Austin)





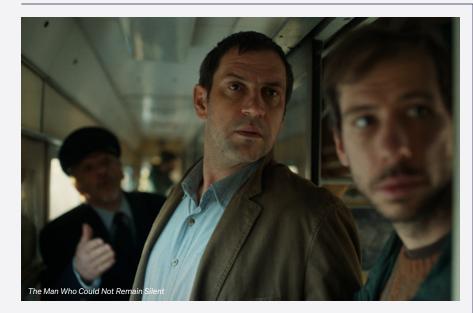


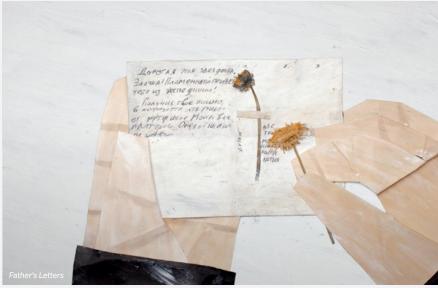












Spanning 59 films, the 2024 MIFF Shorts program was presented across nine packages.

Films competed for the MIFF Shorts Awards, one of the most highly regarded and longstanding short-film competitions in both the Asia-Pacific region and the Southern Hemisphere. The competition is Academy Awards®, BAFTA and AACTA accredited.

The 63rd MIFF Shorts Awards had a total prize pool of \$50,000. In 2024, the jury consisted of award-winning screenwriter, director and former TV journalist **Beck Cole**; COO at Mushroom Studios, entertainment lawyer and producer **Bethany Jones**; and artist, film director, performance-maker, writer and Artistic Director of Back to Back Theatre **Bruce Gladwin**.

City of Melbourne Grand Prix for Best Short Film

The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent (France/Croatia/Bulgaria/Slovenia) Director: Nebojša Slijepčević

VicScreen Erwin Rado Award for Best Australian Short Film

The Meaningless Daydreams of Augie & Celeste Director: Pernell Marsden

Award for Emerging Australian Filmmaker

Dylan Ferenc Nyerges Film: *Bőr (Skin)*

Award for Best Fiction Short Film

The Masterpiece (Spain)
Director: Àlex Lora Cercós

Award for Best Documentary Short Film

Ever Since, I Have Been Flying (Switzerland)
Director: Aylin Gökmen

Award for Best Animation Short Film

Father's Letters (France/Russia) Director: Alexey Evstigneev

Award for Best Experimental Short Film

Light, Noise, Smoke, and Light, Noise, Smoke (Japan) Director: Tomonari Nishikawa

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MIFF 2024 Year in Review

Sitting at the intersection of film, visual art and gaming, MIFF's XR program has established itself as fertile ground for exploration and innovation – for audiences and artists alike – and expands our notions of filmmaking and storytelling.

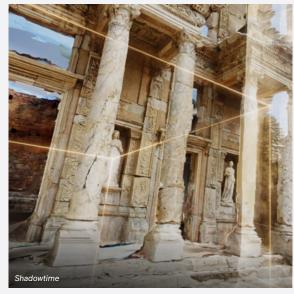
In 2024, the MIFF XR program returned to ACMI's Swinburne Studio, where audiences encountered seven boundary-pushing works from across the globe, including Marion Burger and Ilan J. Cohen's *Emperor*; April Phillips's MIFF Award winner *kajoo yannaga* (come on let's walk together), which was co-presented with Now or Never and ACMI; Mike Robbins and Harmke Heezen's *The Memphis Chronicles: Water's Edge*; Lui Avallos's *Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising*; Sister Sylvester and Deniz Tortum's *Shadowtime*; and two titles presented in a double bill of radical new Taiwanese immersive works: Craig Quintero's *Over the Rainbow* and Hsiao-mei Ho's *Nâ Tâu Tsí á* (*The Lost Limbo*) | *Sister Lin-Tou*.













MIFF Talks events complement and expand on the themes, ideas and talent attached to various films in each year's program. These discussion-based offerings feature a range of local and international guests, from filmmakers and academics to critics and commentators. The 2024 slate was presented by MIFF learning partner The University of Melbourne.

Consuming Culture

Co-presented by The Wheeler Centre Speakers: Hannah Diviney, Jared Richards and Alison Willmore

MODERATOR: Brodie Lancaster

Costume Design Masterclass With Hollywood's Deborah L. Scott

Speaker: Deborah L. Scott MODERATOR: Kate Jinx

Documenting Fact & Fiction: Trust Issues

Speakers: Rhys Graham, Jaydon Martin, Shannon Owen and Donna Lyon MODERATOR: Lauren Valmadre

In Conversation: David Lowery

Speaker: David Lowery

MODERATOR: Alexei Toliopoulos

In Conversation: Ondi Timoner

Speaker: Ondi Timoner MODERATOR: Zak Hepburn

In Conversation: Warren Ellis & Justin Kurzel

Speakers: Warren Ellis and Justin Kurzel MODERATOR: Zan Rowe

Stories of the Spirit Realm: kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together)

Speakers: April Phillips, Warren Ngarrae Foster Snr, Warren Foster Jnr aka Prodikal-1, Pat Younis, Mark Leahy and Jordan East

Universal Language & Iranian Cinema

Speakers: Matthew Rankin and Ila Firouzabadi MODERATOR: Armin Miladi

Very Animated: Life in Clay, Ink & CGI

Speakers: Adam Elliot, Kathy Sarpi and Gints Zilbalodis

MODERATOR: Michael Lim



A highlight of this year's festival was MIFF's first ever Premiere with Purpose: the world premiere of *Left Write Hook*, a special black-carpet event presented by DECJUBA.

Elsewhere, MIFF collaborated with Hear My Eyes for a special screening of the 4K restoration of classic Australian film *Wake in Fright*, accompanied by a live soundtrack performed by local soul-seekers Surprise Chef.

Audiences were also treated to a special screening of *Magic Beach* at Peninsula Hot Springs, a one-of-a-kind 'Bathe in Cinema' experience in which audiences were encouraged to enjoy this MIFF Premiere Fund feature while luxuriating in soothing geothermic waters.



Gill Whelan and Brad Macdonald









Program Critics Campus

Established in 2014, Critics Campus is MIFF's intensive week-long lab of panels, workshops, mentoring and writing, designed to provide emerging Australian screen critics with a unique professional development platform to nurture their talents in a live festival setting.

In 2024, MIFF once again welcomed a selection of eight emerging critics to the Critics Campus program, who received mentorship from a roster of local and international speakers and writers over the course of the festival.

As part of the program, each mentee was paired up with an established mentor: international critics Beatrice Loayza (*The New York Times / Criterion*), Jonathan Romney (*Sight & Sound / The Observer*),

Alison Willmore (*Vulture / New York* magazine), and esteemed local critics Philippa Hawker, Stephen A. Russell, Michael Sun, Cher Tan and Isabella Trimboli.

The prestigious program also included panel discussions and workshops featuring respected international film critics, scholars and programmers from outlets including *Film Comment*, *Screen Daily*, *The Guardian* and *The Saturday Paper*.

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MIFF 2024 Year in Review

MIFF Schools is an initiative that aims to enrich the cinema experience for younger viewers.

The 2024 slate was curated with a view to presenting high-quality, diverse films in some of the languages commonly taught in Victorian schools – French, German, Mandarin, Japanese and Spanish. The films were also selected for how well they addressed the Victorian Curriculum's Arts, Humanities, Science and Languages learning areas, as well as themes and issues relevant to the Critical and Creative Thinking, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding, and Personal and Social capabilities.

Each film was complemented with a free curriculum-aligned webinar by visual-analysis expert Dr Josh Nelson, giving teachers additional resources, strategies and ideas for how best to incorporate that film into their students' classroombased learning.

8 films 40 schools 1568 students



Program MIFF Regional

MIFF Regional screens a selection of festival films in regional centres across Victoria. In 2024, there were eight partner venues: Paramount Cinemas (Echuca), Peninsula Cinemas (Rosebud), The Pivotonian (Geelong), Village Cinemas (Geelong), Village Cinemas (Geelong), Village Cinemas (Shepparton), Star Cinema (Bendigo) and Theatre Royal (Castlemaine).

The 2024 MIFF Regional slate included features such as Janet Planet, I Saw the TV Glow, Flathead, Kneecap and We Were Dangerous; MIFF Premiere Fund titles Memoir of a Snail, Left Write Hook, Magic Beach, Ellis Park, Audrey, Queens of Concrete and Inside; and the Australian Shorts package.

3.9K total regional viewership

8 regional venues

87 sessions

6 sessions with guests in attendance

20 features

6 shorts



While MIFF is best known for its activities during the festival period, it also hosts and co-presents a number of events and initiatives across the year.

Each event has its own flavour and take on filmic festivity, but all of them further MIFF's mission of delivering unforgettable screen experiences, nurturing audiences, and strengthening relationships with partners, filmmakers, local communities and the screen sector.

MIFF Summer Screenings

3 × feature films, 1 × shorts program Bunjil Place 1–4 February

MIFF Encore Screenings

4 × feature films ACMI 11–20 October

VCA Film and Television Graduate Season

42 × titles ACMI Cinema 3 26 November – 10 December

MIFF Summer Residency at Melbourne Quarter

2 × screenings 28 November & 5 December

2 × MIFF Circle events

10 × MIFF Member preview screenings

Various titles Various venues Year-round (monthly)









IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

MIFF honours the 60,000-plus-year legacy of First Nations culture and storytelling through proudly showcasing the best screen stories by and about Indigenous Australian and other First Nations peoples.

One of 2024's standout titles was April Phillips's kajoo yannaga (come on let's walk together). At once a cinematic story, an immersive two-channel projection and a gamified journey guided by First Nations knowledges, this innovative XR work was the recipient of The Uncle Jack Charles Award.

Other highlights included *Like My Brother* (codirected by Luritja and Warumungu filmmaker Danielle MacLean), which focused on four young women from the Tiwi Islands seeking to make it as elite AFLW players; *Voice* (co-directed by Gudjula, Eastern-Kuku Yalanji and Darnley Island non-profit chair Semara Jose), which follows an Indigenous grassroots collective travelling around the country to advocate for a 'Yes' vote in the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum; *The Moogai* (from Wiradjuri, Bundjalung and Yaegl director Jon Bell), a harrowing supernatural story steeped in the horror of the Stolen Generations;

and concluding *Magic Beach* segment 'Gilay Gabinya' (directed by Gomeroi and Mandandanji animator Jake Duczynski), in which a young boy journeys to the Dreamtime. Elsewhere in the program, *Kid Snow* featured key performances from Indigenous actors Mark Coles Smith and Hunter Page-Lochard, while Garth Edwards and Shawana Brown-Edwards played key supporting roles in *The Organist*.

Meanwhile, First Nations stories from beyond local shores were told in several other programmed films, including We Were Dangerous (New Zealand), First Horse (New Zealand), Honey Kaha (New Zealand) and The Falling Sky (Italy/Brazil), .













Inclusion Gender Diversity

MIFF 2024 continued the festival's long-time commitment to championing gender-diverse filmmaking, with 106 titles featuring at least one female or non-binary director.

Half of the titles selected for MIFF's Bright
Horizons competition were directed by women:
India Donaldson's sensitively told coming-of-age
story Good One; Luna Carmoon's intimate and
confronting Venice Critics' Week multiple prizewinner Hoard; Annie Baker's sublime motherdaughter drama Janet Planet; Rungano Nyoni's
disarmingly funny Zambian-set Cannes
award-winner On Becoming a Guinea Fowl;
and Ena Sendijarević's acidic colonial satire
Sweet Dreams.

These major works joined headliners All We Imagine as Light, directed by Payal Kapadia; I Saw the TV Glow, directed by acclaimed non-binary filmmaker Jane Schoenbrun; and The Substance, directed by Coralie Fargeat. Meanwhile, new Australian works directed by women included three MIFF Premiere Fund titles – Natalie Bailey's Audrey, Shannon Owen's Left Write Hook and Eliza Cox's Queens of Concrete – and notable features and documentaries directed by Sally Aitken (Every Little Thing), Sal Balharrie and Danielle MacLean (Like My Brother), Wendy Champagne (Aquarius), Jenny

Hicks (Dale Frank – Nobody's Sweetie), Semara Jose (co-director of Voice) and Audrey Lam (Us and the Night).

A major highlight of the 2024 program was the retrospective Yvonne Rainer: Autobiographical Fictions, a presentation of five restored films by the celebrated US director. Other key restorations screening at MIFF this year included Chantal Akerman's 1989 celebration of Jewish New York identity Histoires d'Amérique: Food, Family and Philosophy and Niki de Saint Phalle's 1976 exuberant French art fairytale Un rêve plus long que la nuit.













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MIFF 2024 Year in Review

Stories by and about the LGBTQIA+ community are always a key focus of MIFF's programming, and the 2024 edition of the festival featured a strong selection of titles by queer filmmakers from Australia and around the world.

This year's program featured a full suite of 2024 Berlinale Teddy Award recipients: All Shall Be Well (Best Feature Film); Teaches of Peaches (Best Documentary Film); Crossing (Jury Award); and Grandmamauntsistercat (Best Short Film). These joined the winner of the 1997 Teddy Award for Best Documentary/Essay, MURDER and murder, which screened as part of a broader retrospective on US lesbian filmmaker Yvonne Rainer. A further retrospective was devoted to the short works of Australian director Stephen Cummins, whose beautiful, oft-provocative films from the mid 1980s until his death from HIV-related lymphoma in 1994 constitute a crucial chapter in the country's queer cinematic history.

Other key titles selected included I Saw the TV Glow, a stylish and unpredictable exploration of gender, queerness and identity; homoerotic dark comedy Misericordia; erotic thriller Motel Destino; queer COVID-set comedy Stress Positions; Toll, a character study about a mother in an industrial Brazilian city seeking to subject her son to gay conversion therapy; Viet and Nam, a Cannes Un Certain Regard-selected tale of two Vietnamese coal miners in love; and XR experience Queer Utopia: Act I Cruising, a powerful intergenerational essay on the fight for LGBTQIA+ rights that examines past and future alike.













16 sessions with audio description

15 sessions with open captions 89 fully subtitled films

7 sensory-friendly sessions 2 crybaby sessions

100% of venues with step-free and wheelchair access

60% of venues with assistive listening devices available

60% of venues with hearing loop devices available

Accessibility, equity and inclusivity are at the heart of MIFF, and we are committed to delivering a festival that everyone can enjoy. The festival offers several accessible services.

In 2024, MIFF presented a range of films with open captions and audio description, Auslaninterpreted talks and events, and hearing loop and assistive listening devices. All metropolitan venues and several regional venues accommodated step-free and wheelchair access, along with guide dogs, assistance dogs and companion cards. To fulfil MIFF's ongoing objective to 'meet audiences where they are', MIFF Online once more presented a selection of films available to stream Australia-wide.

In 2024, open-captioned screenings increased by 88 per cent, bringing more films than ever before to d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing festival attendees. Sensory-friendly screenings also returned, allowing audiences to choose from seven film options, while the festival featured two crybaby sessions, catering for parents and carers who wish to enjoy the festival in a babyand toddler-friendly environment. MIFF 2024 programmed several films that focused on the lives of disabled people who have had a deep

impact on the community, including *The Ride*Ahead and *The Remarkable Life* of *Ibelin*.

New access-related initiatives introduced in 2024 included Deaf Cinema Buffs, a program developed in partnership with community organisation Break a Finger. As part of this initiative, four d/Deaf film lovers were selected to attend several open-captioned sessions of key Premiere Fund titles and create bespoke promotional video content in Auslan on social media. Elsewhere, a screening of *The Stimming Pool* was followed by a panel discussion facilitated by Bus Stop Films, in which neurodivergent filmmakers provided insight into the film and how cinematography, editing and form are informed by neurodivergent living.







IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Held during the opening days of the festival, MIFF 37°South Market is a screen content development and financing event. It facilitates creative and commercial connections by enabling invited buyers and financiers to source, acquire, develop and finance screen content slates via individually tailored diaries of bespoke meeting and networking opportunities with producers.

There were also screenings of completed film projects seeking sales and/or distribution from streamers, distributors and sales agents, while producers were additionally able to source new content to develop via meetings with book publishers, other rights holders, and writers, directors or creatives.

In 2024, 37°South welcomed 57 financiers and buyers, including sales agents, distributors, streamers, networks and gap funders, with attending execs from the likes of AGC Studios, AMP, Archstone, Bankside, Black Label Media, Charades, Disney+, Memento, Miramax, N9ne Studio, Neon, Protagonist, Red Sea Media, Roadshow, Stan, StudioCanal, Tubi, Universal Pictures, Visit Films and WME.

151 producers

57 financiers/buyers

74 writers/directors/creatives

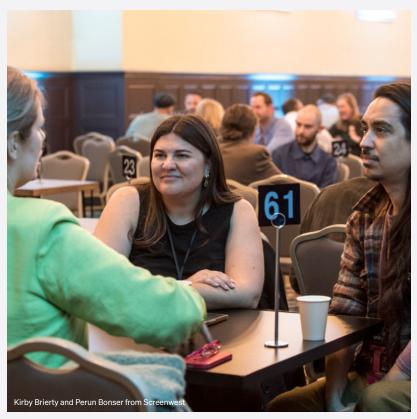
27 publishers

28 other rights holders

15 events

9 panels

Over 3.2K individual meetings





Industry MIFF Accelerator Lab

Accelerator Lab is an annual MIFF initiative that supports promising emerging filmmakers in their transition to feature/ longform filmmaking and showcases new Australian and New Zealand shorts. Through participation in a five-day intensive program of workshops, panels and more with international and Australian industry heavyweights, filmmakers gain a greater understanding of the dynamics and possibilities of longform filmmaking.

The overarching theme of Accelerator Lab is to encourage participants to go out and make their next film, focusing on collaboration so that they may be committed and strategic – and consider every avenue available to achieve their goals.

The program's 20th iteration was comprised of 22 panel discussions and presentations by Australian and international industry heavyweights such as: Sally Caplan (former Screen Australia Head of Content); international financier Yellow Veil Pictures; talent

agency Nathan Culliver Management; ANZ distributors Madman, Sharmill, Roadshow and Umbrella; executives from screen agencies Screen Australia and VicScreen; production companies Typecast and Good Thing; and Accelerator Lab alumnus directors Justin Kurzel, Noora Niasari, Audrey Lam and Jackie van Beek, who delivered a session on acting alongside Jeremy Lindsay Taylor, Josephine Blazier and Hannah Diviney. Also speaking were directors Adam Elliot, Robert Connolly, Charles Williams, Mo Harawe, Kalu Oji, David Vincent Smith, Mathew Rankin and Jaydon Martin.

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Aarushi Chowdhury, Anna Lindner, Awanui Simich-Pene, David Tse, Debbie Carmody, Dylan Nyerges, Elena Carapetis, Grace Tan, Hannah Moore, Hugo Kohler, Jasper Caverly, Jessica Sofarnos, Johanis Lyons-Reid, Karla Hart, Kelli Cross, Kynan Clarke, Mark Wills, Merryn Trescott, Ngaire Pigram, Nick Allen, Pernell Marsden, Richard Vilensky, Ryan Svirac, Te Waiarangi Ratana, Tim Barretto, Tyeli Hannah, Vea Mafile'o, Vic Singh-Thompson, Vonne Patiag

MIFF 2024 Year in Review

IMPACT PROGRAM INCLUSION INDUSTRY SUPPORT





2,180 MIFF Members Membership increased by 29%

Community is the essence of MIFF, and we are proud to have cultivated one of the most vocal, informed and passionate audiences of any festival, anywhere. MIFF Members once again demonstrated their support for the festival while also enjoying their membership privileges: discounted passes and tickets for all festival sessions, year-round parking discounts through Secure Parking, complimentary year-round Member preview screenings, and concession entry to MIFF's range of cinema partners. Those in the Deluxe Membership tier also accessed the exclusive Festival Passport.

The popular U26 Membership program also returned for younger cinema-goers, conferring all the benefits of a standard membership as well as the opportunity to purchase the exclusive U26 Pass (three off-peak sessions at a discounted price).

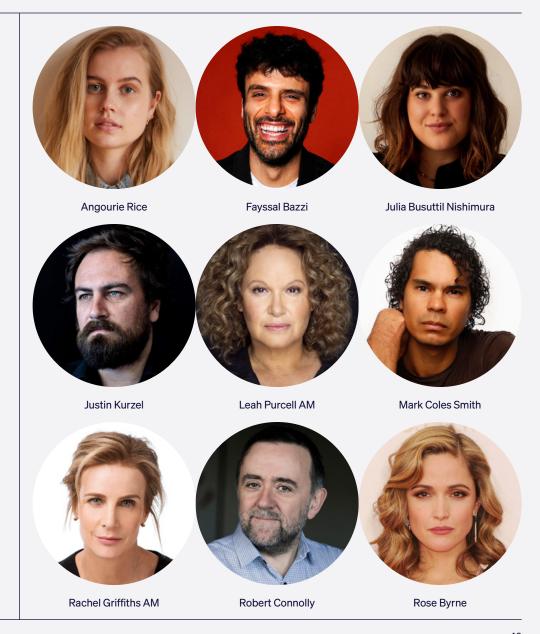


Support MIFF Ambassadors

MIFF has welcomed a number of filmmakers, actors and creatives to join the festival as Ambassadors. Hailing from all over Australia, MIFF Ambassadors ensure the festival is a truly national celebration of film and the moving image, and are united by their passion for MIFF and all that it does.

"I am so thrilled to be an Ambassador for the Melbourne International Film Festival. It was such an honour to be asked to be an Ambassador for so many reasons, but I think what makes this particularly special for me is that 11 years ago, the very first film I was ever in, an Australian film called These Final Hours, premiered at MIFF. MIFF was really where it all began for me. The first red carpet I'd ever done, and my first film. It was just so exciting for me."

- Angourie Rice



Support MIFF Circle

The MIFF Circle is the festival's philanthropic giving group. Since its inception in 2020, MIFF's donors have been the festival's lifeline, especially through a period of unprecedented challenges. Their astounding support remains integral to MIFF's success and growth as one of the biggest and best film events in Australia, for which MIFF is immensely grateful.





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Jo Plank

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Sage Foundation

Martina Schaerf

Anne & Michael Smith Suzanne Steinbruckner

Suzanne Steinbruckr Drake Storm

Sandra Velik

Pinky Watson

Teresa Zolnierkiewicz

And those who choose to remain anonymous

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MIFF 2024 Year in Review

Partnerships Support

Our partners' commitment to celebrating our city, creativity and cinema is what continues to set MIFF apart. This year, MIFF worked with 53 partners across government, media, hospitality, corporate, venues, industry, suppliers and more.

Audiences in 2024 were once again treated to a lively selection of Partner collaborations, offerings and experiences, including film presentations, activations, custom content, top-notch food and beverage, and generous competitions, promos and giveaways. Highlights included a new Festival Hub and the hugely popular Intrepid Audience Award.

"Our partnership with MIFF has been hugely successful and we are thrilled to have been a part of an iconic Melbourne event. MIFF provided a new and vibrant platform for Intrepid to increase brand awareness and connect with a highly engaged and culturally curious audience.

The MIFF team were fantastic to work with. From start to finish, they were proactive and collaborative, ensuring that every aspect of our partnership was executed flawlessly. They were enthusiastic and committed to integrating Intrepid authentically into the festival ecosystem to achieve cut through, and we are thrilled with the results.

Brett Mitchell

Managing Director, Intrepid Travel



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MIFF Staff

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Kate Fitzpatrick – Programmer
Kate Jinx – Programmer
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Liam Carter – Program Coordinator
Mark Jakowenko – Head of Guest Services & Special Projects
Roan Johnson – Guest Services Manager
Lucy Andrews – Guest Coordinator
Luke Goodsell – Critics Campus Producer
Jessa Shields – Programming Assistant

Marketing & Communications

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Adolfo Aranjuez – Publications & Audience
Development Manager (outgoing)
David Heslin – Publications Manager
Jasmine Penman – Digital Content Coordinator
Anne Ueki – Marketing Campaign Coordinator
Elwyn Murray – Graphic Designer (outgoing)
Sasha Taylor – Graphic Designer
Mitch Boessen – Marketing Intern

Partnerships

Georgina Wills – Head of Partnerships Mitchell McKay – Partnerships Specialist Eliza May Hinds – Partnerships Producer Tahlia Dimattina – Partnerships Coordinator Tobiah Elliot – Partnerships Intern

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Festival Development
Sophie Scott – Philanthropy & Membership Manager
Emma Creasey – Guest List Coordinator

Finance & Administration

Claire Fievez - Finance Coordinator

Systems & Ticketing

Jaymie Bandrowski – Head of Systems & Ticketing Bonnie Perry – Box Office Manager Nick Turner – Data & Ticketing Manager David Heslin – Data Coordinator Chelsea Large – Box Office Coordinator Chris Wale – Ticketing Coordinator

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Georgia Byres – Operations Manager
Iva Kingston – Events Manager
Grace Packer – Volunteers Manager
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Chris Elliott – Technical Manager
Sarah Alkemade – Technical Coordinator
Otto McKinnon – Technical Coordinator
John Hewison – Technical Production Coordinator
Tom Middleditch – Access Coordinator
Sara Cowdell – Events Coordinator
Alex Carpi – Events Coordinator
Jenna Butcher – Operations Coordinator
Keir Aitken – Operations Coordinator
Abbey Hastings – Events Intern

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Anthoula Ververis – Industry Programs Senior Coordinator
Natalie May – Industry Programs Coordinator
Andrew Goode – Industry Programs Coordinator
Jacinta Palmer – Industry Marketing Coordinator
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Gina Cameron – Industry Programs Assistant Administrator

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Tess Flynn

And thank you to our hundreds of volunteers

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See you in **2025**

