

INTRODUCING MIFF 68½ — A DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL FOR 2020

Discovering new possibilities in the face of dramatic disruptions in the global film industry, the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) has announced a new online showcase for 2020 to deliver a fresh program of new-release films from around the world.

Following the cancellation of MIFF 2020, MIFF Artistic Director Al Cossar and his team have developed an innovative detour: MIFF 68½ – a reimagined celebration of film online, featuring a suite of special events. Made possible by the adoption of streaming technology, the iconic film festival will this winter deliver new worlds of cinematic escape to audiences across Australia for the first time.

“MIFF is a Melbourne icon that offers an important point of togetherness for our city and creative communities each year,” said Cossar. “MIFF 68½ is our response to these difficult times - the result of our desire to sustain MIFF’s outstanding film programming, stay connected with our audience, and foster new audience connections during this truly unparalleled time.”

Available for audiences to stream across the festival’s original 2020 dates (6–23 August), MIFF 68½ will feature a fully-curated program, made available to audiences via ticketed access, with Cossar promising that “while it will not have the scale of a regular festival, it will certainly have all of the heart.”

The state-of-the-art streaming platform for MIFF 68½ comes via Shift 72 - whose client list includes American festival SXSW and Europe’s CPH:DOX.

Enabling this foray is the most significant philanthropic gift from a private donor in the festival's 68-year history: a generous donation from Melbourne-based film producer, businesswoman and philanthropist Susie Montague, which sets the scene for a broader fundraising campaign, now underway. Other confirmed supporters include screen director, actor and longtime MIFF attendee Rachel Griffiths, who will serve as a MIFF 2020 Ambassador.

“I’m supporting MIFF so that the festival can tackle the challenges of this difficult year and going digital is a no-brainer,” said Montague. “I want to see MIFF continue to grow its audience and cement its reputation as one of the world’s leading film festivals.”

"MIFF applauds the philanthropic leadership of Susie Montague, as well as the generosity of Rachel Griffiths, which will assist MIFF to innovate and connect with audiences in these challenging times," said MIFF Chair Teresa Zolnierkiewicz.

MEDIA RELEASE



With the full line-up to be announced on 14 July, the MIFF 68½ program will feature a lineup including a number of films planned for the festival's intended 2020 program, as well as foregrounding 'discovery' highlights by emerging filmmakers. The program will also include a presentation of shorts across the Australian, International, Animation and Documentary program packages, while MIFF's traditional Shorts Awards will adapt and run in 2020 alongside these packages, to recognise, showcase and support artists in this space.

"Nothing quite matches the power of cinema to transport, inspire and uplift, and we are thrilled to be able to bring the spirit of the festival into the homes of MIFF audiences at a time when working to keep connection to the arts has never been more vital," said Cossar.

NOTES TO EDITORS

MIFF 68½

Program Launch: 14 July

Festival Dates: 6– 23 August

Images: [MIFF Media Centre](#)

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