

# FANTASTIC

Film Festival  
Australia  
2026



Cinema  
Without  
Restraint

23 April — 15 May  
Melbourne & Sydney  
[fantasticfilmfestival.com.au](http://fantasticfilmfestival.com.au)

Festival Venues

LIDO RITZ

Thorbury Brunswick  
PICTURE HOUSE



# WELCOME

For our seventh year, Fantastic Film Festival Australia returns bigger, louder, and more daring than ever. Expect the unexpected.

Our program includes 37 films: six premiere local features, 14 new international features, 17 iconic classics and restorations, plus 22 short films that showcase the next generation of fearless storytellers.

We are thrilled to introduce the inaugural Fantastic Film Prize, a new initiative celebrating the most exciting voices in Australian genre cinema with a \$10,000 cash prize. This award recognises filmmakers pushing boundaries and redefining what local genre storytelling can be.

Our retrospective weekender events are not to be missed. 'Vampire Weekend' is a blood-soaked

marathon of seven iconic vampire films, ranging from arthouse elegance to pure midnight mayhem. We then descend into the depths with 'FLESH//GHOST//MACHINE: Japanese Nightmares', a weekend of seven restored gems celebrating the intensity, atmosphere, and imagination that made the J-horror movement a global phenomenon.

That's just scratching the surface of what we have in store. We can't wait for you to join us for three weeks of cinema at its wildest, strangest and most fantastic.

Stay weird out there.

— **Artistic Director** Hudson Sowada

**Artistic Director** Hudson Sowada

**Programmer** Alexei Toliopoulos

**Content & Production Manager** Bettina Kinski

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## Special Thanks

To Richard Sowada, Emily Milledge, Ari Harrison, Felix Hubble, Flynn Boffo and Parket Constantine (the Collective of Underground Movie Lovers), the Moving Story Programming, Operations, Marketing and Finance Teams and the dedicated teams at Ritz Cinemas, Lido Cinemas, Thornbury Picture House & Brunswick Picture House.

PRODUCED BY

**MOVINGSTORY**

→ [fantasticfilmfestival.com.au](http://fantasticfilmfestival.com.au)

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# CONTENTS

**Opening Night Film:** Hokum .....04

**Closing Night Film:** Penny Lane is Dead .....05

**Festival Highlight:** Obsession .....06

## Fantastic Film Prize

Fantastic Film Prize Info .....07

Cruel Hands .....08

Lenore .....09

Squids .....10

Wolf Cat Fever .....11

## Films

100 Nights of Hero ..... 12

About a Place in the Kinki Region ..... 13

The Astrologer ..... 14

Dead Eyes ..... 15

Dracula ..... 16

Endless Cookie ..... 17

Flush ..... 18

The Girl Who Stole Time ..... 19

Her Will Be Done ..... 20

The Holy Boy ..... 21

I Am Frankelda ..... 22

Jacob's Ladder ..... 23

Love Exposure ..... 23

New Group ..... 24

Rabbit Trap ..... 25

[www.RachelOrmont.com](http://www.RachelOrmont.com) ..... 26

## Shorts

Preshow Shorts ..... 27

Melbourne Shorts ..... 28

Sydney Shorts ..... 29

## Retrospectives

FLESH//GHOST//MACHINE:

Japanese Nightmares ..... 30–31

Dark Water

Demons

Ichi the Killer

Onibaba

Suicide Club

Tetsuo: The Iron Man

Uzumaki

Vampire Weekend ..... 32–33

The Addiction

Let the Right One In

The Lost Boys

Martin

Near Dark

Nosferatu the Vampyre

Twilight

**Session Times** ..... 35

**Festival Events** ..... 37

**Tickets & Venues** ..... 38

## FESTIVAL SPONSORS



## FESTIVAL PARTNERS



## FESTIVAL VENUES

**LIDO RITZ** *Thornbury Brunswick*  
**PICTURE HOUSE**

DIR. DAMIAN MCCARTHY · USA, IRELAND · 2026  
101 MIN · LANGUAGE ENGLISH

OPENING NIGHT

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## HOKUM

**“...a good old-fashioned ghost story, the kind you’d tell over a campfire to scare children. And it’s a hair-raising one at that.”**

— IndieWire

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
THU 23 APRIL ★ 7:30PM  
SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
THU 23 APRIL ★ 7:30PM

★ OPENING NIGHT EVENT INCLUDES  
DRINKS AND DJ ON ARRIVAL FROM  
7PM. FOR MORE DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

SXSW 2026 – WORLD PREMIERE

Damian McCarthy has done it again. The Irish writer-director behind the beloved cult hit *Caveat* (2020) and the SXSW Audience Award-winning *Oddity* (2024) returns with this supernatural slow-burner starring Adam Scott (*Severance*) and shot on location in the wilds of West Cork.

Where McCarthy’s earlier films unsettled using atmosphere and isolation, *Hokum* pushes further, threading grief, psychosis and folk legend into a knot that never quite loosens.

When reclusive novelist Ohm Bauman (Scott) retreats to a remote Irish inn to honour his parents’ final wishes, the staff’s murmured tales of a witch haunting the honeymoon suite begin to feel less like folklore and more like warning. Visions bleed into waking life, a shocking disappearance upends everything, and Bauman is dragged into a confrontation with buried family secrets, and a malevolent force that has been awaiting him.

Following its SXSW world premiere, *Hokum* makes its Australian Premiere at FFFA as our opening night film, trailing serious heat.

DIR. MIA’KATE RUSSELL · AUSTRALIA · 2025  
90 MIN · LANGUAGE ENGLISH

CLOSING NIGHT

VIC & NSW PREMIERE



## PENNY LANE IS DEAD

**“a 90-minute blast of toxic masculinity smashing that will have you hooting and hollering along...Russell’s graduation from shorts revs up the crowd and goes full throttle.”** — ScreenHub

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
FRI 15 MAY ★ 7:00PM  
SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
THU 14 MAY ★ 7:00PM

★ CLOSING NIGHT EVENT INCLUDES  
A POST-FILM Q&A WITH DIRECTOR  
MIA’KATE RUSSELL. FOR MORE  
DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

We close FFFA 2026 with *Penny Lane is Dead*, the rip-roaring debut feature from writer-director Mia’Kate Russell that blends pitch-black ocker humour and blood-splattering horror with a distinctly Australian twist.

It’s 1986, and Penny Lane and her best friends Toni and Amy head to a remote beach house to celebrate Penny’s recent university acceptance with a ‘no dick’ weekend of debauchery, durries and booze in tow. Before the celebration can even begin, Penny’s dodgy cousin Kat arrives uninvited with a stash of spiked cupcakes and is followed by her menacing boyfriend Angus and his crew of fearsome mates. What begins as a weekend of fun soon devolves into a fight for survival.

Pulling from her years of experience in special effects makeup on films like *Nitram* and *Better Man*, Russell delivers a debut feature that manages to pull off a non-stop ride of ferocious horror fun without sacrificing its biting satire, probing the dark underside of Australian culture and its internalised misogyny and toxic masculinity.

Strap in and get ready to discover the punk-horror debut that heralds an exhilarating new voice in Australian cinema.

SPECIAL EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS



# OBSESSION

**“Consistently f\*\*ked up, and I mean that as a compliment.”**

— RogerEbert.com

**“Writer-director Curry Barker follows up \$800 YouTube hit *Milk & Serial* with a frighteningly effective, and head-smashingly gory, cautionary tale.”** — *The Guardian*

Curry Barker's *Milk & Serial* cost \$800 and went viral on YouTube. *Obsession* is a leap forward – a fully realised feature that keeps his internet-native instincts intact, framed in an unsettling style where every shot feels uncomfortably lonely.

Bear (Michael Johnston) is a music store employee and serial romantic daydreamer. When he discovers an antique novelty item called the One Wish Willow, he breaks it and wishes for his childhood friend, Nikki (Inde Navarrette), to love him above all else. Nikki succumbs. With terrifying intensity.

Anchored by what reviewers are calling a career-defining performance, Navarrette takes us from rom-com to possession horror to outright psychosexual nightmare. Executive produced by Jason Blum (*Get Out*, *Whiplash*, *BlackKlansman*) and winner of the People's Choice Award at last year's Sitges Film Festival, *Obsession* is a warning to be careful what you wish for.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**

FRI 8 MAY 7:30PM  
SAT 9 MAY 8:45PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**

FRI 8 MAY 7:00PM  
SAT 9 MAY 8:45PM

**TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WORLD PREMIERE**

**SITGES FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD**

**FANTASTIC FEST 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

**SXSW 2026 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**



# FANTASTIC FILM PRIZE

PRESENTED BY  
**UMBRELLA**

For the first time ever, Fantastic Film Festival Australia and Umbrella Entertainment present the inaugural Fantastic Film Prize, a landmark initiative celebrating the boldest voices in Australian genre cinema.

Four feature-length films have been selected to screen in competition at Fantastic Film Festival Australia and will vie for a \$10,000 cash prize awarded to a film which pushes the boundaries of horror, sci-fi, fantasy, action, cult, and the downright unclassifiable.

The winner of the Fantastic Film Prize will be chosen by a jury of esteemed industry leaders, and presented at an awards ceremony at Lido Cinemas on Saturday 2 May, 9:30pm (see page 37).

Congratulations to this year's selected films:



**Cruel Hands**



**Lenore**



**Squids**



**Wolf Cat Fever**

More information about the films can be found on pages 8-11.

## JURY

**Jack Sargeant**

Jack Sargeant is a writer specialising in film, subculture, and the unusual. His books include *Deathtripping: The Cinema of Transgression*, *Naked Lens: Beat Cinema, Flesh and Excess: On Underground Film*, and *Against Control*. As a curator he has produced numerous exhibitions, events and festival programs in Europe, Australia and the US. He is program director for the Revelation Perth International Film Festival and a home media producer for Umbrella Entertainment.

**Lauren Simpson**

Lauren Simpson is an Australian producer and founder of Iris Arc Pictures. Her debut feature, *Godless: The Eastfield Exorcism*, won the Audience Award at the Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival. Upcoming projects include the supernatural comedy series *The Witchy Girls* and drag horror *Skin Side Up*. Lauren serves as President of Women in Film & Television Victoria and as a board member of Women in Film & Television International.

**Joe Yanick**

Joe Yanick is a producer and co-founder of Yellow Veil Pictures, which launched in 2018 to focus on bold, internationally minded genre cinema. With film sales and international festivals, he has represented a wide range of genre cinema at major markets including Cannes, EFM, and AFM. With Yellow Veil he has specialized in shaping projects for the global marketplace while preserving the edge and individuality that define standout independent cinema.

DIR. AL KALYK • AUSTRALIA • 2025  
76 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## CRUEL HANDS

**“I left the theater shaken but in awe. A raw, compelling film that shows both the terror and the resilience of survival. *Cruel Hands* isn’t easy to watch, but it’s unforgettable.”**

— True View Reviews

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
THU 30 APRIL ★ 8:45PM  
THU 14 MAY 8:30PM  
SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 25 APRIL ★ 6:00PM  
WED 13 MAY 6:30PM

★ Q&A WITH DIRECTOR AL KALYK.  
FOR MORE DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL 2025 –  
WINNER, DARK MATTERS BEST  
NARRATIVE FEATURE AWARD

Croatian-Australian director Al Kalyk bolts out of the gates with this striking debut feature that replicates the sensation of being permanently surveilled.

Through doorways and smeared glass, we watch Maria and her young son Dai flee from their violent and abusive husband and father, Jason, taking shelter in an abandoned farmhouse deep in bushfire country. Isolated from emergency services, and with Jason mercilessly hunting them through the smoke-choked forest, Maria is pushed to her extremes and transforms into a person she never expected to become.

Part psychological thriller and part survival drama, *Cruel Hands* is structured through flashbacks and parallel storylines that transform the physical landscape of fire and flight into something interior and inescapable. Impressively, the catastrophic 2019 Black Summer bushfires function as both backdrop and metaphor.

Austere, urgent, unsettling, *Cruel Hands* will have you sitting on the edge of your seat.

Screens with *The Way of the Wind* (p.27)

DIR. DAVID WARD • AUSTRALIA • 2026  
88 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## LENORE

**“Small but smart and never boring – transgressive psychological cyber-horror...perfect for the Netflix Age.”**

— The Black List

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
THU 30 APRIL ★ 6:15PM  
MON 11 MAY 8:20PM  
MELB (BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE)  
TUE 12 MAY ★ 6:15PM  
SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
FRI 24 APRIL ★ 6:30PM  
MON 11 MAY 8:20PM

★ Q&A WITH DIRECTOR DAVID WARD.  
FOR MORE DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

FANTASPORTO INTERNATIONAL FILM  
FESTIVAL 2026 – AUDIENCE CHOICE  
AWARD

Shot in a raw, dizzying array of formats (Alexa Mini, iPhone, DV, Hi-8), David Ward’s debut feature is a distinctly Australian Gothic cyber-horror that feels ripped from the darkest corners of the internet.

In the squalid basement of an empty suburban home, unemployed filmmaker Max Wren spends his days and nights obsessively cataloguing the work of controversial online performer, Lenore, piecing together a warped tribute in the wake of her sudden disappearance. But, as the night progresses, Max must contend with unwanted visitors from his past, two suspicious police officers, and a malevolent presence that seems to inhabit his grotesque editing suite.

As desperation curdles into madness, the truth about Lenore’s life and disappearance surfaces, and Max’s own buried sins refuse to stay hidden. This lonely, broken man unravels during his long, dark night of the soul.

Super-fandom. Disassociation. The internet. It doesn’t get much darker than this.

Screens with *Instagram Auto Surgery* (p.27)

DIR. RYAN ZORZUT • AUSTRALIA • 2026  
77 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

WORLD PREMIERE



## SQUIDS

With a cast led by Tiana Hogben (*Thank God You're Here*), writer-director-star Ryan Zorzut creates an absurdist and heartfelt lark in his debut feature, *Squids*, built entirely around the non-existent sport of competitive scooter racing.

When Norah's scooter crew loses their beloved coach in a freak accident just days before the national Crashblade Cup, she tracks down her washed-up hero Dayton to take his place. Though his methods are unorthodox, and his motivations somewhat murky, Norah is soon faster than ever. But when opponents start vanishing and a maniacally wealthy nemesis called Skull tightens his grip on the competition, Norah's quest for victory becomes a race for survival.

Deadpan in tone, anarchic in spirit and shot with the candy-coloured aesthetic of the forgotten '90s extreme-sports film, *Squids* is a riotous pastiche of much-loved cult classics like *BMX Bandits* (1983) and *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* (1985), infused with a distinct Melbourne underground comedy pedigree behind every frame.

Screens with *Road at the End of the World* (p.27)

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
SAT 2 MAY ★ 4:30PM  
WED 13 MAY 8:30PM

SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 25 APRIL ★ 8:30PM  
WED 13 MAY 8:30PM

★ Q&A WITH DIRECTOR RYAN ZORZUT.  
FOR MORE DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

DIR. JOSH 'SINBAD' COLLINS • AUSTRALIA • 2026  
94 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## WOLF CAT FEVER

### "The Lobotomised Tim Burton."

— Screen Edge on director Josh 'Sinbad' Collins

*Wolf Cat Fever* is an undeniable Australian original: a hyper-real, hand-built rock 'n' roll spectacular. Music video DP Alexander Orlando Smith (Kylie, Iggy Pop, The Darkness) uses a retrofitted Alexa with vintage lenses to draw aesthetic inspiration from early musical comedy and Mario Bava's lurid Italian genre cinema.

Furr Fever is the wild, fuzzed-up guitar-slinger of The Sextortions, a rockabilly band as deranged as they are irresistible. When Furr crosses paths with the howling, leather-clad Wolfy Howl, the two lost souls collide in a blaze of glitter and guitars in overdrive. But scheming music moguls, a corrupt Trump-ish mayor and a backstabbing bandmate are all gunning to tame them. Fortunately, the ghost of The King lives in Furr's gold guitar, and rock and roll cannot be caged.

With Josh 'Sinbad' Collins and renowned costume designer Babzotica crafting every set, costume and prop from recycled and salvaged materials, *Wolf Cat Fever* is a must-see for aficionados of schlock and devotees of distorted guitars.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
SAT 2 MAY ★ 7:00PM

MELB (THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE)  
THU 7 MAY ★ 6:15PM

SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
FRI 24 APRIL ★ 9:00PM  
TUE 12 MAY 8:20PM

★ Q&A WITH DIRECTOR JOSH  
'SINBAD' COLLINS. FOR MORE  
DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

DIR. JULIA JACKMAN • UNITED KINGDOM, USA • 2025  
91 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## 100 NIGHTS OF HERO

**“This is a film of rare joy and spirit, and one that deserves to be celebrated as both a feminist fairytale and a manifesto that will inspire a myriad of future stories.”** — *IndieWire*

**“Filmmaker Julia Jackman’s droll fantasy feminist fable is a true original.”** — *Screen Daily*

Shot for a lean £4 million on a baronial estate, *100 Nights of Hero* deploys a painterly visual wit and pulsating synth score. Critics have likened it to Derek Jarman and Peter Greenaway, making this one of the most visually arresting British films in years.

Jerome abandons his new bride, Cherry, on a wager, entrusting his libidinous friend Manfred to test her fidelity. But Cherry’s sharp-witted maid, Hero, intervenes, spinning nightly tales of rebel women to outmanoeuvre the intruder and keep her mistress safe. Within its nested stories, female solidarity blossoms into something more intimate and defiant.

Adapted from Isabel Greenberg’s 2016 graphic novel, itself rooted in the classic *One Thousand and One Nights*, writer-director Julia Jackman builds a high-fantasy alternative to a world ruled by patriarchal decree. Featuring Emma Corrin, Charli XCX, Nicholas Galitzine, Maika Monroe, Richard E. Grant and Felicity Jones, *100 Nights of Hero* is a joyful act of cinematic resistance that imagines a world remade by women who refuse to be silent.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
SAT 25 APRIL 6:45PM  
TUE 12 MAY 6:15PM  
**MELB (BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE)**  
THU 7 MAY 8:30PM  
**MELB (THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE)**  
FRI 24 APRIL 6:15PM  
**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
FRI 1 MAY 9:00PM  
TUE 12 MAY 6:20PM

**VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WORLD PREMIERE, CRITICS WEEK**

**BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – CLOSING NIGHT FILM**

**INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM 2026 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

DIR. KŌJI SHIRAIISHI • JAPAN • 2025  
104 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## ABOUT A PLACE IN THE KINKI REGION

近畿地方のある場所について

**“Dense with cosmic and emotional horrors lurking at the edges of the frame.”**

— *Cinapse*

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
FRI 1 MAY 8:20PM  
**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SAT 9 MAY 6:30PM

Born from a viral online novel that had Japanese readers genuinely unsure whether they were reading fiction or reality, *About a Place in the Kinki Region* is the most ambitious film yet from Kōji Shiraishi (director of the cult classic *Noroi: The Curse*). Drawing on his unique J-horror mockumentary style of cinema, Shiraishi layers found footage with polished narrative filmmaking to craft something that’s daringly different.

When the editor of an occult magazine abruptly vanishes, his colleague Yusei (Eiji Akaso) and freelance writer Chihiro (Miho Kanno) sift through the files he left behind: decades of unverifiable ghost stories, mass-hysteria incidents, unsolved disappearances and eerie urban legends. Scattered and strange at first, the pieces begin to cohere around a single, forbidden location somewhere in Japan’s Kinki region.

What begins as journalism becomes obsession, and what lurks at the end of the trail is something neither journalism nor reason can contain.

DIR. CRAIG DENNEY • USA • 1975  
79 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

RETRO



## THE ASTROLOGER

**“[*The Astrologer*] pushes ‘auteurism’ to a whole other level.”**

— Nicolas Winding Refn

**“A balls-to-the-wall distillation of everything Denney is and wishes to be, with all the talent of a first-time filmmaker with a penchant for shameless self-mythology.”** — *The Spool*

This especially rare not-quite-cult-classic was considered lost media for nearly four decades until a 35mm print was unearthed in 2013 amidst a stack of over 1,000 pornographic film prints. Since restored by the American Genre Film Archive, *The Astrologer* has been reclaimed by underground cinephiles, heralded as a prime example of ‘outsider cinema’.

Directed, produced by and starring self-proclaimed celebrity astrologer Craig Denney, this baffling semi-autobiographical feat of ambition and ego follows a conman (Denney) posing as a carnival psychic who soon realises he truly does possess psychic powers, choosing to use them for his own selfish ends.

What ensues is a batshit *Citizen Kane*-esque rags-to-riches tale from a true amateur auteur, the ultimate cinematic face-melter that demands to be seen with an audience.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
SAT 9 MAY 6:30PM  
**MELB (BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE)**  
SAT 25 APRIL 8:30PM  
**MELB (THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE)**  
TUE 12 MAY 8:30PM  
**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SAT 2 MAY 9:00PM

DIR. RICHARD E. WILLIAMS • AUSTRALIA • 2025  
81 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## DEAD EYES

A relentless first-person POV supernatural thriller, *Dead Eyes* drags the viewer into the horror rather than letting us watch from a safe distance. Writer-director Richard E. Williams has built a creature feature centring on grief’s capacity to warp not only the mind, but the world itself.

When Sean and his fiancée Grace follow a trail of clues into remote bushland to locate his father Paul, they expect to find a broken man. But what they encounter is something more terrifying than they could have imagined: Paul has been playing God in the undergrowth, cloning his youngest daughter Lilly in an obsessive attempt to bring her back from the dead. The forest is now crawling with the results of his experiment: feral, cannibalistic iterations of Lilly, each convinced they alone are the real thing.

With echoes of the classics *Frankenstein* and *Eyes Without a Face*, *Dead Eyes* probes something raw and uncomfortable: the line between devotion and destruction.

Screens with *Parasomnia* (p.27)

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
FRI 1 MAY ★ 8:10PM  
SUN 10 MAY 8:20PM  
**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SAT 2 MAY ★ 6:20PM  
WED 6 MAY 8:40PM

★ Q&A WITH DIRECTOR RICHARD E. WILLIAMS. FOR MORE DETAILS SEE PAGE 37.

SXSW 2026 – WORLD PREMIERE

FILMS

FILMS

DIR. RADU JUDE • ROMANIA, AUSTRIA, LUXEMBOURG • 2025  
170 MIN • LANGUAGE ROMANIAN, ENGLISH, GERMAN (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

VIC & NSW PREMIERE



## DRACULA

**“An outrageous celebration of visual storytelling in all its forms...gleefully tacky...wildly unpredictable.”** – *Variety*

**“The first good movie to meaningfully incorporate AI into its aesthetic – about an undead bloodsucker that feeds on humanity in order to seem alive.”** – *IndieWire*

Radu Jude, whose *Bad Luck Banging* won the Golden Bear at Berlin in 2021, takes on his most anarchic project yet: a Dracula anthology conceived by a fake AI, shot in 29 days on phones after the production lost its financing, and bearing every scar proudly.

Across a dozen lurching episodes, striking workers face down a vampire count, a dandy solicitor hunts the undead through medieval Transylvania, a beaded crown-clad Vlad the Impaler crashes a sci-fi future, and F.W. Murnau’s *Nosferatu* gets buried under pop-up ads. The historical Vlad, seized upon by Romanian far-right politicians during filming, haunts the frame throughout.

Jude’s thesis is blunt: AI feeds on what already exists without asking permission. So does the Dracula myth, so does nationalism, so does capitalism. Like the undead, all of them drain life from others and call it culture.

*Dracula* is ferociously funny, deliberately cheap, and impossible to shake.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
MON 27 APRIL 7:00PM  
SUN 3 MAY 5:00PM

**MELB (THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE)**  
SUN 26 APRIL 3:00PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
MON 27 APRIL 7:00PM  
SUN 10 MAY 4:00PM

**NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**  
**LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – IN COMPETITION**  
**FANTASTIC FEST USA 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**  
**TALLINN BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**  
**SITGES FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – NOMINEE, BEST MOTION PICTURE**

DIR. SETH SCRIVER, PETER SCRIVER • CANADA • 2025  
97 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

VIC & NSW PREMIERE



## ENDLESS COOKIE

**“A raucous, deeply personal film that defies conventional documentary form...Scriver and Scriver turn chaos into art.”**

– *Variety*

Seth Scriver travels to Shamattawa First Nation in northern Manitoba with a tape recorder, hoping to capture his half-brother Peter’s stories. What follows is eight years of audio chaos: kids bursting in, neighbours stopping by, toilets flushing mid-sentence, and a house full of dogs providing constant commentary. Rather than edit out the mayhem, the brothers decide to transform the bedlam into a film.

A freewheeling animated documentary that plays like a fever dream rendered in a style reminiscent of underground comics and Adult Swim, *Endless Cookie* swings from the hilarious (beaver trap disasters, RCMP harassment, Sasquatch sightings and the daily absurdities of reserve life) to the heartening: a meditation on family, home, friendship and life as a mixed-race person in modern-day Canada.

A current Northern Ranger and health clinic maintenance worker, Peter narrates with wry humour and hard-earned wisdom, while Seth animates with an anarchic energy that refuses to sanitise or sentimentalise.

*Endless Cookie* honours Indigenous storytelling on Indigenous terms.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
SUN 26 APRIL 6:00PM  
FRI 1 MAY 6:00PM  
MON 11 MAY 6:20PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SAT 25 APRIL 6:45PM  
THU 7 MAY 8:40PM

**SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WORLD CINEMA DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION**  
**IDFA 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**  
**HOT DOCS CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL 2025 – WINNER, ROGERS AUDIENCE AWARD**  
**ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WINNER, CONTRECHAMP JURY AWARD**

FILMS

FILMS

DIR. GRÉGORIE MORIN • FRANCE • 2025  
70 MIN • LANGUAGE FRENCH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## FLUSH

**"Tight, imaginative and quite frankly miraculous...a singular huis clos thriller ride on the wings of drain pipes and degeneracy."** — *Fantasia International Film Festival*

**"A 70-minute whirlwind of absurdist, minimalistic genius...a raw, uncompromising burst of dark comedic intensity that lingers long after the credits roll."** — *moviehooker.com*

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
SAT 25 APRIL 9:00PM  
THU 7 MAY 8:45PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
TUE 5 MAY 6:10PM  
FRI 8 MAY 9:20PM

**FANTASIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WINNER, GOLD AUDIENCE AWARD FOR BEST INTERNATIONAL FEATURE**

**SITGES INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WINNER, MIDNIGHT X-TREME AUDIENCE AWARD**

**TERRORMOLINS (MOLINS HORROR FILM FESTIVAL) 2025 – WINNER, BEST FEATURE FILM, BEST PERFORMANCE & AUDIENCE AWARD**

What do you get when you confine a feature film almost entirely to a nightclub bathroom, then dare to go deeper (literally) than any thriller has gone before? You get *Flush*. This furiously inventive French dark comedy draws from the claustrophobic cinema of *Buried* (2010) and *127 Hours* (2010) but takes on its own personality by cranking the absurdity (and heart) up to eleven.

Luke, a drifting junkie, turns up at the club where his ex-partner Val works, desperate to reunite their fractured family before their eight-year-old daughter is placed in foster care. When Val refuses a reconciliation, a cascade of bad luck leads Luke to discover a hidden drug stash in the club's bathroom. Busted trying to steal the goods by an enraged drug dealer and the bar's boss, Luke gets his head smashed into, and irretrievably stuck in, a squat toilet.

*Flush* is a darkly comic tale of survival, escape and redemption.

Screens with *Glory Hole* (p.27)

DIR. YU AO AND ZHOU TIENAN • CHINA • 2025  
107 MIN • LANGUAGE MANDARIN (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## THE GIRL WHO STOLE TIME

时间之子

**"An absolute knock-out of a film."** — *Fiction Machine*

**"Joyous and heartbreaking."** — *Screen Anarchy*

Rendered in lush CG animation, *The Girl Who Stole Time* is at once a chase film, a love story and a meditation on resilience.

Qian Xiao is a young girl from a fishing village whose life fractures the moment she encounters the Time Dial, a mysterious pendant whose power is intoxicating and exquisite in its cruelty.

Pursued by the criminal organisation determined to reclaim the Dial, she finds an unlikely protector in Seventeen, one of their own operatives. What begins in distrust becomes something neither of them can name. It all leads to Qian Xiao being faced with a question that cuts to the heart of everything the film has been asking: what would you do with stolen time, if you only had a little left?

At its core, *The Girl Who Stole Time* is a powerful, transcendent story about a young woman who refuses to be defined by what she has lost, choosing instead to be shaped by what she dares to reach for.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
FRI 24 APRIL 6:45PM  
WED 29 APRIL 6:30PM  
TUE 12 MAY 8:20PM

**MELB (BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE)**  
TUE 28 APRIL 8:20PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SUN 3 MAY 6:00PM  
TUE 5 MAY 8:30PM

**ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

**FANTASIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION, ANIMATION PLUS**

DIR. JULIA KOWALSKI • FRANCE, POLAND • 2025  
99 MIN • LANGUAGE FRENCH, POLISH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## HER WILL BE DONE

QUE MA VOLONTÉ SOIT FAITE

"An intriguing mix of heady and earthy, in which folk-horror eeriness fuses with provincial narrow-mindedness."

— *Variety*

"Julia Kowalski plays a wicked game in a highly stylised feminist film, maliciously blending documentary realism and fantastic derangement." — *FilmAffinity*

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
FRI 24 APRIL 8:50PM  
TUE 5 MAY 8:30PM

SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
WED 29 APRIL 7:00PM  
MON 11 MAY 6:15PM

CANNES FILM FESTIVAL 2025 –  
OFFICIAL SELECTION, DIRECTOR'S  
FORTNIGHT

SITGES FILM FESTIVAL 2025 –  
OFFICIAL SELECTION

NEW HORIZONS FILM FESTIVAL 2025  
– OFFICIAL SELECTION

Trapped within the confines of her Polish immigrant family's cattle farm in the French countryside, 20-year-old Nawojka's life is defined by her overbearing father and loutish brothers. But Nawojka is hiding a dangerous and terrifying secret from them: a feminine power she believes she inherited from her dead mother that surges whenever desire takes hold.

Nawojka's longing ignites when the free-spirited Sandra returns to the nearby village. What unfolds is a visceral reckoning with faith, female sexuality and the violence men reach for when they can't understand what they fear.

César-nominated cinematographer Simon Beaufiles (*Anatomy of a Fall*) uses 16mm film to imbue the iconic Vendée countryside with documentary realism. Director Julia Kowalski (born in France to Polish parents) brings a distinctly dual-cultural lens to this atmospheric horror, drawing on anthropological studies of rural witchcraft.

*Her Will Be Done* tells a raw, earthy and genuinely unsettling tale.

DIR. PAOLO STRIPPOLI • ITALY, SLOVENIA • 2025  
122 MIN • LANGUAGE ITALIAN (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## THE HOLY BOY

LA VALLE DEI SORRISI

"This creepy, bone-chilling, yet clever and incisive film disturbed the crap out of me but also left me with this oddly giddy feeling — probably because it is one of the best, most assuredly crafted, horror films I've seen in quite a while."

— *The Contending*

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)  
MON 4 MAY 6:45PM  
THU 14 MAY 6:00PM

MELB (BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE)  
FRI 24 APRIL 9:00PM

SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 26 APRIL 6:00PM  
WED 6 MAY 6:10PM

VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM  
FESTIVAL 2025 – WORLD PREMIERE

BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL 2025 –  
OFFICIAL SELECTION

SLASH FILM FESTIVAL VIENNA 2025 –  
OFFICIAL SELECTION

Paolo Strippoli's follow-up to his acclaimed debut *A Classic Horror Story* (2021) arrives carrying serious festival fanfare: a Venice Midnight world premiere, a BFI London Film Festival berth, and a Shudder acquisition for North America. But *The Holy Boy* is no conventional genre exercise.

Behind its folk horror scaffolding, Strippoli excavates something rawer: a queer coming-of-age story wrapped in religious dread, interrogating how communities weaponise vulnerability and call it love.

Grief-stricken teacher Sergio (Michele Riondino) transfers to Remis, a remote Alpine village bafflingly known as Italy's happiest town. The secret behind those relentless smiles soon reveals itself. Each week, the villagers queue to embrace Matteo (Giulio Feltri, extraordinary in his screen debut), a 15-year-old who the village has crowned its living saint, capable of absorbing strangers' suffering with a single embrace.

Where others see a miracle, Sergio sees a dehumanised child, controlled by his father and the local clergy. His attempt to liberate Matteo fractures the village's enforced serenity and awakens something far darker beneath it.

FILMS

FILMS

DIR. ARTURO AMBRIZ & ROY AMBRIZ • MEXICO • 2025  
113 MIN • LANGUAGE SPANISH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## I AM FRANKELDA

SOY FRANKELDA

**“Gothic sets with baroque architecture serve as the backdrop to the similarly ornate puppets...every space looks lovingly handcrafted.”** — *Variety*

**“Cinema Fantasma is an exemplary group. Creative, free and full of vitality.”** — *Guillermo del Toro*

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
FRI 24 APRIL 6:20PM  
WED 13 MAY 6:00PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
FRI 1 MAY 6:45PM  
THU 7 MAY 6:20PM

**ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION  
FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL  
SELECTION**

**FANTASIA INTERNATIONAL FILM  
FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

**SITGES FILM FESTIVAL 2025 –  
OFFICIAL SELECTION**

With their studio Cinema Fantasma, Roy and Arturo Ambriz have built a phantasmagorical world in *I Am Frankelda*, soaked in Mexican tradition, tropes of gothic horror and operatic musical theatre. Every set and puppet is strikingly handcrafted – ornate, textured and visually intoxicating – a frame-by-frame labour of obsession by the sibling filmmakers.

Set in 19th-century Mexico, Francisca Imelda is a young woman whose dark stories are dismissed and ridiculed in a world that refuses to take female writers seriously. She reinvents herself as Frankelda and is transported into a subconscious realm which she conjures from her own imagination. How will she restore the balance between fiction and reality before both worlds collapse forever?

Based on the beloved Max series *Frankelda's Book of Spooks*, the Ambriz brothers' rendering of *I Am Frankelda* is simultaneously a prequel and sequel, making it fully accessible to newcomers.

DIR. ADRIAN LYNE • USA • 1990  
114 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

RETRO

4K RESTORATION

AUS PREMIERE



## JACOB'S LADDER

**“Lyne's giddy, unsettling direction conjures up moments of horrifying hallucinogenic power from the bad-trip hell of his protagonist.”** — *Time Out*

**“A slick, riveting, viscerally scary film about what in other hands would be a decidedly unsalable subject, namely death.”**

— Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

In this hallucinogenic psychological thriller starring Tim Robbins and directed by Adrian Lyne (*Fatal Attraction*), a Vietnam veteran struggles to maintain his sanity as he descends into a hell of existential terror and madness.

This unsettling, nerve-shattering film has proved itself a lasting cult classic, and its expression of existential terror and madness has continued to serve as a pop culture inspiration for the likes of *Silent Hill*, *Black Swan*, and even *Twin Peaks: The Return*.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
SAT 25 APRIL 8:30PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SAT 25 APRIL 9:00PM

DIR. SION SONO • JAPAN • 2008  
237 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RETRO



## LOVE EXPOSURE

愛のむきだし

**“Love Exposure is, in a sense, Sion Sono's equivalent of the Great Russian novel!”**

— Simon Abrams, *Slant Magazine*

A Japanese 'eroto-theosophical' answer to the films of Alejandro Jodorowsky, this captivating four-hour cult epic follows Yu, a teenage master of upskirt photography who, disguised as a woman, kisses his crush, Yoko, leading them both into a world of crime and Catholic guilt.

Director Sion Sono's wacky masterpiece converges themes of religion, love and perversion and defies genre classification, blending romance, comedy, kung-fu action and gore, while remaining completely captivating for its entire runtime.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
SUN 26 APRIL 5:00PM

**MELB (THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE)**  
SUN 10 MAY 1:00PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
SUN 26 APRIL 5:00PM

DIR. YUTA SHIMOTSU • JAPAN • 2025  
82 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



## NEW GROUP

ニューグループ

**“Yūta Shimotsu creates an incredible, unpredictable body horror masterpiece that doubles as an indicting satire of Japan’s society...It’s a modern J-horror masterpiece.”**

— *Bloody Disgusting*

**“With *New Group*, Yuta Shimotsu delivers a narrative that will be called the first true J-horror classic of the current decade.”**

— *Asian Movie Pulse*

Director Yuta Shimotsu, whose debut *Best Wishes to All* (2023) announced a filmmaker with something urgent to say, doubles down on his satirical instincts and horror craft in *New Group*.

Quietly anxious Ai (Anna Yamada) begins to notice something wrong at her ultra-conservative, soul-crushing high school. One day, a student crouches motionless on the soccer field for no reason. The next day, two more join him. Within days, the school administration is forcing every student to join the growing, grotesque formation – and violently punishing those who refuse. Ai and new transfer student Yu, who has lived abroad, scramble to resist being swallowed by the new order.

An audacious commentary on fascism and conformity, *New Group* takes audiences on a journey from darkly comic to sheer, unadulterated horror.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**

SAT 25 APRIL 7:00PM  
THU 7 MAY 6:15PM  
SUN 10 MAY 6:20PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**

THU 30 APRIL 7:00PM  
SUN 10 MAY 7:30PM

**BUCHEON INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – WORLD PREMIERE**

**FANTASIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – SPECIAL JURY MENTION**

**CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

DIR. BRYN CHAINEY • UNITED KINGDOM, USA • 2025  
104 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH, WELSH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)



## RABBIT TRAP

**“A wholly immersive horror story, using its soundscape to send viewers through time and space, this world and the next.”**

— *The Film Stage*

**“*Rabbit Trap* creates an insidious imagistic poetry of its own.”**

— Jonathan Romney, *Financial Times*

Sound is the driving force of Bryn Chainey’s debut feature, *Rabbit Trap*, a profoundly sensory folk horror starring Dev Patel, scored by avant-garde composer Lucrecia Dalt, and shaped by sound designer Graham Reznick into cinema that’s more experienced than watched.

In 1976, boundary-pushing electronic musician Daphne Davenport and her husband Darcy have retreated to a remote farmhouse where they fill the rooms with analogue synths and tape decks, hoping to heal after a difficult period and to finish Daphne’s new record.

While gathering field recordings in the surrounding woodland, Darcy inadvertently captures a sound not meant for human ears, and something ancient stirs. A feral, unsettling child arrives at their door. As she worms her way into the makeshift family unit, jealousy, paranoia and long-buried grief rise to the surface, and the line between folk myth and living nightmare begins to dissolve.

Shot on Kodak film stock, *Rabbit Trap* is a terrifying collision of Celtic folklore and personal trauma.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**

TUE 28 APRIL 7:00PM  
TUE 5 MAY 6:30PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**

TUE 28 APRIL 7:00PM  
SUN 3 MAY 8:20PM

**SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

**SITGES FILM FESTIVAL 2025 – OFFICIAL SELECTION**

FILMS

FILMS

DIR. PETER VACK • USA • 2024  
84 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

VIC PREMIERE



WWW.RACHELORMONT.COM

**“This fictional tale collapses the internet, theater, the movie screen into a dystopian world where, with the creation of a world blurring online and offline, the three merge into a secret fourth thing.”** — *Forbes*

Shot on luminous 16mm with meme-font subtitles hardcoded throughout, director Peter Vack (*Assholes*, FFFA 2022; *PVT Chat*, FFFA 2021) reteams with Betsey Brown (*Actors*, FFFA 2022) for a film whose very form mirrors its subject: relentless, overstimulated and operating several layers deeper than its lurid surface suggests.

The titular Rachel Ormont has been raised in captivity inside an advertising agency, her entire sense of self shaped by commodity and perception. Her consuming obsession is Mommy 6.0 – a synthetic pop idol who may, or may not, be her actual mother. As Rachel’s parasocial fixation mutates and devours itself, the film careens through satirical psychodelia, body horror and dark comedy into genuinely uncharted territory.

Few films have the sheer audacity to turn the schizoid chaos of terminally online existence into a fully committed cinematic experience, but *www.RachelOrmont.com* does exactly that and more.

Not for the faint-hearted. Essential for everyone else. Guaranteed to split the room.

**MELB (LIDO CINEMAS)**  
FRI 24 APRIL ★ 9:00PM  
WED 6 MAY 7:00PM

**MELB (BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE)**  
FRI 8 MAY 9:00PM

**MELB (THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE)**  
TUE 28 APRIL 8:15PM

**SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)**  
FRI 24 APRIL ★ 9:00PM  
MON 4 MAY 6:30PM

★ VIRTUAL Q&A WITH DIRECTOR  
**PETER VACK. FOR MORE DETAILS SEE  
PAGE 37.**

**SAN FRANCISCO JEWISH FILM  
FESTIVAL 2024 – WORLD PREMIERE**

PRESENTED WITH

STATIC  
VISION

## PRESHOW SHORTS



We have prepared a tantalising menu of bite-sized stories from around the world to help set the mood for your feature film feast. These bold, brilliant stories are the perfect entrée, bound to get your palate tingling. Bon appétit!



DIR. ANDONI FERNANDEZ • SPAIN  
15 MIN • LANGUAGE SPANISH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

### Glory Hole – Screens with *Flush* (p.16)

Borja finds a glory hole in the bathroom of a nightclub and eventually decides to try it. When he realizes that he cannot pull his penis out of the hole, Borja has to face his fate in the most unusual of places.



DIR. IAN HAIG • AUSTRALIA  
2 MIN • LANGUAGE NO DIALOGUE

### Instagram Auto Surgery – Screens with *Lenore* (p.9)

The idealised, cosmetically augmented bodies and selfies of Instagram are depicted in all their visceral surgical reality.



DIR. CHARLTON LANSLEY • AUSTRALIA  
7 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

### Parasomnia - Screens with *Dead Eyes* (p.15)

Through POV storytelling, *Parasomnia* follows a data analyst in the 90s whose solitary lifestyle has been derailed by sleep paralysis and constant nightmares. As the nightmares escalate it becomes clear that something is watching – and it’s getting closer.



DIR. TOM LAWRENCE-DOYLE • AUSTRALIA  
10 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

### Road at the End of the World – Screens with *Squids* (p.10)

A manic driver rockets across the Eyre Highway, the longest stretch of road in the Southern Hemisphere, battling fatigue, the heat and strange streamers flying across the road.



DIR. NICHOLAS BURT • AUSTRALIA  
8 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

### The Way of the Wind – Screens with *Cruel Hands* (p.8)

Set in the early 20th century, we follow The Ragged Man as he runs across the vast and abandoned Australian Outback. His past catches up to him as he has to come to terms with his violent connection to a deadly sniper.

PRESHOW SHORTS



# SHORTS

We're thrilled to present a panoramic program of shorts from emerging filmmakers in Melbourne and Sydney. These visionary new voices capture the pulse of genre filmmaking today, and provide a glimpse into the bright future of Australian filmmaking. We are delighted to be joined by the filmmakers at our shorts showcase screenings.

## Melbourne — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn • Monday 4 May, 7:00pm



DIR. MARIO HANNAH • 11 MIN • ENGLISH

### Are You Coming to My Birthday?

Determined to have the perfect birthday, May's party plans are complicated by kitchen mishaps, family drama, and the arrival of a serial killer.



DIR. KYLIE AOIBHEANN • 13 MIN ENGLISH

### The Dysphoria

A trans woman performs a Satanic ritual to get a vagina, but unwittingly invites a demonic presence into her home which demands a terrible sacrifice.



DIR. REILLY ARCHER-WHELAN, MICHAEL WHYNTIE • 10 MIN • ENGLISH

### Stranded

When Kelly (Michelle Brasier) dumps Brian (Ben Russell), he faces his biggest dilemma yet: sail solo or stay marooned for a second shot at love.



DIR. THOMAS IRVING • 5 MIN • ENGLISH

### Baby Teeth

A cunning young girl attempts to rob the tooth fairy to help her struggling single mum, but the tooth fairy turns out to be a twisted nightmare version of the fabled sprite, and she won't be so easily fooled.



DIR. JOSH STAFIELD, JOSEPHINE WAGSTAFF • 12 MIN • ENGLISH

### Freestyle

When an incomplete artwork opens up a gateway into an alternate reality, an artist is forced to confront her own artistic process and life choices.



DIR. MATTHEW KEISOGLU • 14 MIN ENGLISH, GREEK

### When Dogs Bark

After his father's lambs are slaughtered, a son returns to his widowed father's remote shack, where his father fears that the past is repeating itself.



DIR. LILY LUNDER • 12 MIN • ENGLISH

### Blood & Bone

Facing eviction from her home by a corporation she suspects is responsible for the death of her husband, gardener Amira hatches a plan for vengeance.



DIR. KOKO CROZIER • 12 MIN • ENGLISH

### Mother

Tasked with the spiritual salvation of a couple struggling to conceive, a devout nun faces a profound crisis of faith when she herself falls pregnant.



## Sydney — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick • Monday 4 May, 7:15pm



DIR. THOMAS VAN GOOL, PROSPERA 7 MIN • ENGLISH

### Dance to Soothe Nothing

A couple fighting over curtains decide to stop arguing and start dancing instead.



DIR. LISIANNE CHAN • 8 MIN • ENGLISH, MANDARIN CHINESE, YUE CHINESE (CANTONESE)

### Free Money

Asian-Australian Wen is in for a surprise when she tags along to lunch with Auntie Poh and her friends. The Aunties take the honour of paying the bill very seriously. When limbs start flying, Wen and Auntie Poh come to terms with the importance of friendship and family.



DIR. NICOLA SERCOMBE • 7 MIN ENGLISH

### The Bad Room

Set amongst the Sydney housing crisis, a young couple's hopes of buying their dream home are put to the test when they learn the house they're inspecting is haunted. Well, not the whole house. It's just this one room... A very bad room.



DIR. NIKOLA JOKANOVIC • 5 MIN ENGLISH

### The Impossible Dream

After being made fun of at the pub, Quaid attempts to set a Guinness World Record – no matter the price.



DIR. LINDSAY MCDONALD • 8 MIN ENGLISH

### follow

Alone in a new city, a young man finds solace in keeping in touch with old friends via social media where as his friends start posting photos of their new-born children.



DIR. MASON MASSIMO HUBBARD 5 MIN • ENGLISH

### In Vain

A psychological portrait that delves into the inner disintegration of a woman forced to carry the weight of impossible ideals of self-image, motherhood, and faith.



DIR. SEAN BURNS • 9 MIN • ENGLISH

### Lay Down and Rot

Behind the kind eyes of a gentle, unassuming fellow lies the depraved, loathsome delusions of a lunatic. Based on a real story from the now banned subreddit r/ince1, this film follows a detestable chap as reality collides with his own puzzling fantasy in the search for love.



DIR. SAMUEL LUCAS ALLEN • 10 MIN ENGLISH

### Misery and Other Choices

The world sizzles with climate change. A politician lets it burn. A young couple finds out they are pregnant. What should they do if they find the politician alone and barely breathing? A darkly comic drama that asks what will you do when the world is on fire?



DIR. ADAM MARKS • 12 MIN • ENGLISH

### Showtime Baby

A dysfunctional band loses their frontman 10 minutes before showtime, leaving a teenager to navigate egos, hard drugs and a little death to wrangle them back together. A loud and fast fever dream that interrogates our assumptions on identity and awakens the inner child in us all.



# FLESH//GHOST//MACHINE: JAPANESE NIGHTMARES

Through cyberpunk fantasies, samurai fables and serial killer nightmares that mine the folkloric and phantasmagorical myths of Japan, Japanese cinema has proven fecund territory for surveying the limits of genre filmmaking. Our retrospective delves into J-horror's distinctive legacy and impact through its finest moments from the 1960s to the new millennium. Tickets to each film sold separately.

PRESENTED BY **UMBRELLA**



DIR. HIDEO NAKATA • JAPAN • 2002  
101 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUS PREMIERE

## Dark Water — 4K Restoration

Director Hideo Nakata follows up his supernatural horror classic *Ringu* with this gothic ghost story of a recent divorcee and her six-year-old daughter who move into a rundown apartment haunted by the spectre of neglect and tragedy.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 10 MAY, 6PM SUN 10 MAY, 5:45PM



DIR. TOSHIO MATSUMOTO • JAPAN • 1971  
135 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

## Demons — 4K Restoration

Based on an Edo-era kabuki play, Toshio Matsumoto's monochromatic horror-noir-samurai drama tells the inky black tale of a wronged ronin's hellish descent into bloodshed and tragedy.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 10 MAY, 3:15PM SUN 10 MAY, 3PM



DIR. TAKASHI MIIKE • JAPAN • 2001  
129 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

## Ichi the Killer — 4K Restoration

Takashi Miike's blood-stained commentary on hypermasculinity follows a sadomasochistic yakuza enforcer and a repressed psychotic killer's ultra-violent cat-and-mouse chase through Tokyo's red-light district.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
FRI 8 MAY, 8:30PM FRI 8 MAY, 9:15PM

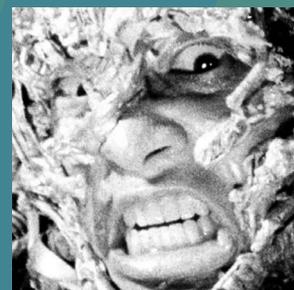


DIR. KANETO SHINDŌ • JAPAN • 1964  
102 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

## Onibaba

Kaneto Shindō's *Onibaba* is a chilling folktale driven by primal emotions and dark eroticism, set against the eerily menacing landscape of a vast susuki field, where anyone—or anything—could be hiding.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 10 MAY, 8:15PM SUN 10 MAY, 8PM



DIR. SHIN'YA TSUKAMOTO • JAPAN • 1989  
67 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

## Tetsuo: The Iron Man

Shot on grainy monochromatic 16mm film, Shin'ya Tsukamoto's chaotic 1989 body horror remains a trailblazer of the emerging cyberpunk subgenre, inspiring the likes of Cronenberg's *Crash* and Ducourmau's *Titane*.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 9 MAY, 9PM SAT 9 MAY, 9PM



DIR. SION SONO • JAPAN • 2001  
99 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUS PREMIERE

## Suicide Club — 4K Restoration

From infamous J-horror director Sion Sono, *Suicide Club* is an outrageous social satire told through the lens of a detective mystery unravelling a bizarre wave of unexplainable suicides sweeping across Tokyo.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 9 MAY, 6:45PM SAT 9 MAY, 6:45PM



DIR. HIGUCHINSKY • JAPAN • 1998  
90 MIN • LANGUAGE JAPANESE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUS PREMIERE

## Uzumaki — 4K Restoration

Based on the work of legendary horror mangaka Junji Itō, *Uzumaki* tells the grotesque, nightmarish story of a small town whose inhabitants become increasingly obsessed with and tormented by spirals.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 9 MAY, 4:30PM SAT 9 MAY, 4:30PM

# VAMPIRE WEEKEND

Stake out at the cinema and sink your teeth into our selection of cinema's best blood-sucking vampire tales, screening over one weekend from Friday 1 May to Sunday 3 May. Tickets to each film sold separately.

RETROSPECTIVES



DIR. ABEL FERRARA • USA • 1995  
82 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

VIC & NSW PREMIERE

## The Addiction — 4K Restoration

When a New York philosophy grad student is bitten by a vampire, she tries to come to terms with her new lifestyle and frequent craving for human blood in this macabre and provocative musing on addiction and human nature from Abel Ferrara.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
FRI 1 MAY, 6:15PM FRI 1 MAY, 7PM

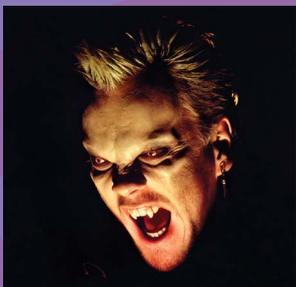


DIR. TOMAS ALFREDSON • SWEDEN • 2008  
114 MIN • LANGUAGE SWEDISH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

## Let the Right One In

This tender coming-of-age vampire tale follows a shy, outcast 12-year-old boy and his blossoming romance with a new neighbour who soon reveals to him her dark, macabre secret.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 2 MAY, 4PM SAT 2 MAY, 4PM



DIR. JOEL SCHUMACHER • USA • 1987  
97 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

## The Lost Boys

Joel Schumacher's beloved cult classic vampire comedy is a quintessentially 80s exploration of teenage alienation, blending kid-heroism with outsider gang dynamics, draped in leather and topped with a mullet.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 3 MAY, 5:30PM SUN 3 MAY, 5:30PM



DIR. GEORGE A. ROMERO • USA • 1977  
95 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

## Martin — 4K Restoration

In this underrated masterpiece from cult horror director George A. Romero (*Night of the Living Dead* trilogy), a young man, convinced he's a vampire, tries to suppress his bloodlust after moving to small town Pennsylvania to live with his elderly cousin.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 2 MAY, 6:30PM SAT 2 MAY, 6:30PM



DIR. KATHRYN BIGELOW • USA • 1987  
95 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH SUBTITLES

## Near Dark

Academy Award-winner Kathryn Bigelow's genre-bending neo-noir vampire western follows Caleb, a cowboy who falls prey to the mysterious and beautiful Mae and unwillingly becomes part of an outlaw band of vampires.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SAT 2 MAY, 8:45PM SAT 2 MAY, 8:45PM



DIR. WERNER HERZOG • GERMANY, FRANCE • 1979  
107 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH, GERMAN, ROMANY  
(WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

AUS PREMIERE

## Nosferatu the Vampyre — 4K Restoration

Werner Herzog's iconic homage to F.W. Murnau's silent film classic stars Klaus Kinski (*Aguirre, the Wrath of God*) and Isabelle Adjani (*Possession*) as the monstrous parasite Count Dracula and his beautiful, wide-eyed victim.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 3 MAY, 3:15PM SUN 3 MAY, 3:15PM



DIR. CATHERINE HARDWICKE • USA • 2008  
121 MIN • LANGUAGE ENGLISH

## Twilight

Catherine Hardwicke's evergreen, iridescent teen love story follows Bella Swan, a schoolgirl who relocates to a rainy Washington town and falls for Edward Cullen, a mysterious classmate who reveals himself to be a 108-year-old vampire.

MELB (LIDO CINEMAS) SYD (RITZ CINEMAS)  
SUN 3 MAY, 7:45PM SUN 3 MAY, 7:45PM

RETROSPECTIVES

A FILM BY  
PARK CHAN-WOOK

**3** GOLDEN GLOBE® AWARDS  
NOMINATIONS INCLUDING  
BEST PICTURE BEST ACTOR  
LEE BYUNG-HUN

82  
MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE  
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA  
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2015  
Official Selection

# N O T H E R C H O I C E

★★★★★  
"A DELIRIOUSLY  
ENTERTAINING  
MASTERPIECE"  
BBC

★★★★★  
"A MASTERFUL  
WORK  
OF CINEMA"  
TIME OUT

★★★★★  
"A SENSATIONAL  
STATE-OF-THE-  
NATION SATIRE"  
THE GUARDIAN

MUBI  NOW  
STREAMING

## SESSION TIMES

### LIDO CINEMAS, HAWTHORN

#### Thu 23 April

7:00pm *Opening Night party  
for a 7:30pm  
screening of  
Hokum* ★

#### Fri 24 April

6:20pm I am Frankelda  
6:45pm The Girl Who Stole  
Time  
8:50pm Her Will Be Done  
9:00pm www.Rachel  
Ormont.com ★

#### Sat 25 April

6:45pm 100 Nights of Hero  
7:00pm New Group  
8:30pm Jacob's Ladder  
9:00pm Flush

#### Sun 26 April

5:00pm Love Exposure  
6:00pm Endless Cookie

#### Mon 27 April

7:00pm Dracula

#### Tue 28 April

7:00pm Rabbit Trap

#### Wed 29 April

6:30pm The Girl Who Stole  
Time

#### Thu 30 April

6:15pm Lenore ★  
8:45pm Cruel Hands ★

#### Fri 1 May

6:00pm Endless Cookie  
6:15pm The Addiction  
8:10pm Dead Eyes ★  
8:20pm About a Place in the  
Kinki Region

#### Sat 2 May

4:00pm Let the Right One In  
4:30pm Squids ★  
6:30pm Martin  
7:00pm Wolf Cat Fever ★  
8:45pm Near Dark  
9:30pm Fantastic Film Prize  
Awards ★

#### Sun 3 May

3:15pm Nosferatu the  
Vampyre  
5:00pm Dracula  
5:30pm The Lost Boys  
7:45pm Twilight

#### Mon 4 May

6:45pm The Holy Boy  
7:00pm Melbourne Shorts ★

#### Tue 5 May

6:30pm Rabbit Trap

8:30pm Her Will Be Done

#### Wed 6 May

7:00pm www.Rachel  
Ormont.com

#### Thu 7 May

6:15pm New Group  
8:45pm Flush

#### Fri 8 May

7:30pm Obsession  
8:30pm Ichi the Killer

#### Sat 9 May

4:30pm Uzumaki  
6:30pm The Astrologer  
6:45pm Suicide Club  
8:45pm Obsession  
9:00pm Tetsuo: The Iron Man

#### Sun 10 May

3:15pm Demons  
6:00pm Dark Water  
6:20pm New Group  
8:15pm Onibaba  
8:20pm Dead Eyes

#### Mon 11 May

6:20pm Endless Cookie  
8:20pm Lenore

#### Tue 12 May

6:15pm 100 Nights of Hero  
8:20pm The Girl Who Stole  
Time

#### Wed 13 May

6:00pm I am Frankelda  
8:30pm Squids

#### Thu 14 May

6:00pm The Holy Boy  
8:30pm Cruel Hands

#### Fri 15 May

7:00pm Penny Lane Is Dead ★

### THORNBURY PICTURE HOUSE, THORNBURY

#### Fri 24 April

6:15pm 100 Nights of Hero

#### Sun 26 April

3:00pm Dracula

#### Tue 28 April

8:15pm www.Rachel  
Ormont.com

#### Thu 7 May

6:15pm Wolf Cat Fever ★

#### Sun 10 May

1:00pm Love Exposure

#### Tue 12 May

8:30pm The Astrologer

### BRUNSWICK PICTURE HOUSE, BRUNSWICK

#### Fri 24 April

9:00pm The Holy Boy

#### Sat 25 April

8:30pm The Astrologer

#### Tue 28 April

8:20pm The Girl Who Stole  
Time

#### Thu 7 May

8:30pm 100 Nights of Hero

#### Fri 8 May

9:00pm www.Rachel  
Ormont.com

#### Tue 12 May

6:15pm Lenore ★

### RITZ CINEMAS, RANDWICK

#### Thu 23 April

7:00pm *Opening Night party  
for a 7:30pm  
screening of  
Hokum* ★

#### Fri 24 April

6:30pm Lenore ★  
9:00pm Wolf Cat Fever ★  
9:00pm www.Rachel  
Ormont.com ★

#### Sat 25 April

6:00pm Cruel Hands ★  
6:45pm Endless Cookie  
8:30pm Squids ★  
9:00pm Jacob's Ladder

#### Sun 26 April

5:00pm Love Exposure  
6:00pm The Holy Boy

#### Mon 27 April

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#### Tue 28 April

7:00pm Rabbit Trap

#### Wed 29 April

7:00pm Her Will Be Done

#### Thu 30 April

7:00pm New Group

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9:00pm 100 Nights of Hero

#### Sat 2 May

4:00pm Let the Right One In  
6:20pm Dead Eyes ★  
6:30pm Martin  
8:45pm Near Dark  
9:00pm The Astrologer

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3:15pm Nosferatu the  
Vampyre  
5:30pm The Lost Boys  
6:00pm The Girl Who Stole  
Time  
7:45pm Twilight  
8:20pm Rabbit Trap

#### Mon 4 May

6:30pm www.Rachel  
Ormont.com  
7:15pm Sydney Shorts ★

#### Tue 5 May

6:10pm Flush  
8:30pm The Girl Who Stole  
Time

#### Wed 6 May

6:10pm The Holy Boy  
8:40pm Dead Eyes

#### Thu 7 May

6:20pm I am Frankelda  
8:40pm Endless Cookie

#### Fri 8 May

7:00pm Obsession  
9:15pm Ichi the Killer  
9:20pm Flush

#### Sat 9 May

4:30pm Uzumaki  
6:30pm About a Place in the  
Kinki Region  
6:45pm Suicide Club  
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8:00pm Onibaba

#### Mon 11 May

6:15pm Her Will Be Done  
8:20pm Lenore

#### Tue 12 May

6:20pm 100 Nights of Hero  
8:20pm Wolf Cat Fever

#### Wed 13 May

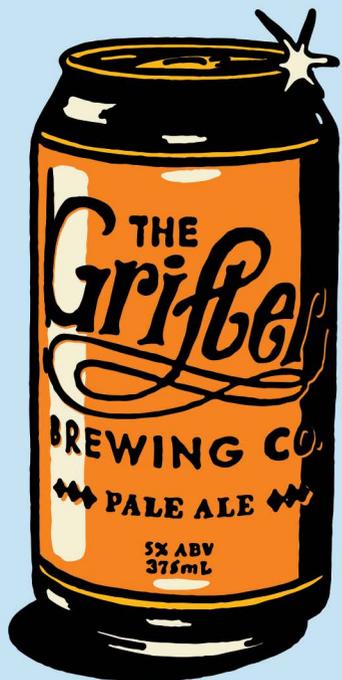
6:30pm Cruel Hands  
8:30pm Squids

#### Thu 14 May

7:00pm Penny Lane Is Dead ★

★ Special Event

SESSION TIMES



OFFICIAL BEER

Of

FANTASTIC  
FILM FESTIVAL  
AUSTRALIA

Brewed in Marrickville, NSW

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## EVENT INFORMATION

### Opening Night – *Hokum*

FFFA opens with the Australian Premiere of the new supernatural horror *Hokum*. Includes a pre-film party with drinks and a DJ on arrival.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Thursday 23 April, 7pm arrivals for 7:30pm film

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Thursday 23 April, 7pm arrivals for 7:30pm film

TICKETS: ADULT \$30 / MEMBERS & CONCESSION \$25

### Q&A Sessions

Join us at the below sessions for post-film conversations with these talented filmmakers.

### [www.RachelOrmont.com](http://www.RachelOrmont.com) – Virtual Q&A with Peter Vack

Director Peter Vack joins us for a virtual Q&A moderated by Static Vision.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Friday 24 April, 9pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Friday 24 April, 9pm

### *Dead Eyes* – Q&A Screenings

With director Richard E. Williams.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Friday 1 May, 8:10pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Saturday 2 May, 6:20pm

### *Squids* – Q&A Screenings

With director Ryan Zorzut.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Saturday 2 May, 4:30pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Saturday 25 April, 8:30pm

### *Wolf Cat Fever* – Q&A Screenings

With director Josh 'Sinbad' Collins.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Saturday 2 May, 7pm

**Melbourne** — Thornbury Picture House

Thursday 7 May, 6:15pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Friday 24 April, 9pm

### *Cruel Hands* – Q&A Screenings

With director Al Kalyk.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Thursday 30 April, 8:45pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Saturday 25 April, 6pm

### *Lenore* – Q&A Screenings

With director David Ward.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Thursday 30 April, 6:15pm

**Melbourne** — Brunswick Picture House

Tuesday 12 May, 6:15pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Friday 24 April, 6:30pm

TICKETS AT GENERAL ADMISSION PRICES

### Short Film Sessions

Meet local voices on the cutting edge presenting short films that capture the essence of genre cinema now.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Monday 4 May, 7pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Monday 4 May, 7:15pm

TICKETS AT GENERAL ADMISSION PRICES

### Fantastic Film Prize Awards

We crown the 2026 Fantastic Film Prize winner at a special awards presentation at Lido Cinemas.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Saturday 2 May, 9:30pm

THIS EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE FOYER AT LIDO CINEMAS AND IS NOT TICKETED.

### Closing Night – *Penny Lane Is Dead*

We close FFFA with *Penny Lane Is Dead*, followed by a Q&A with director Mia/Kate Russell.

**Melbourne** — Lido Cinemas, Hawthorn

Friday 15 May, 7pm

**Sydney** — Ritz Cinemas, Randwick

Thursday 14 May, 7pm

TICKETS AT GENERAL ADMISSION PRICES

# TICKETS & VENUES



Book now at

→ [fantasticfilmfestival.com.au](http://fantasticfilmfestival.com.au)

## MELBOURNE

### Lido Cinemas

675 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn  
(03) 8658 0000  
lidocinemas.com.au

### Thornbury Picture House

802 High St, Thornbury  
(03) 9995 0040  
thornburypicturehouse.com.au

### Brunswick Picture House

510-512 Sydney Road, Brunswick  
brunswickpicturehouse.com.au

## SYDNEY

### Ritz Cinemas

45 St Pauls Street, Randwick  
(02) 8324 2500  
ritzcinemas.com.au

## TICKET PRICING

### Single Tickets

Adult \$25  
Concession and Members \$19.50

### Special Event Pricing

Opening Night – Adult \$30 / Concession & Members \$25  
Closing Night, Q&A and retro screenings at general admission pricing.

### Festival Passes\*

**5 Film Pass** \$90  
**10 Film Pass** \$165  
**VIP Pass\*\*** \$315

\*Festival Passes are valid for separate sessions for one person and can be used for Closing Night, Q&A and retro screenings. 5-Film Passes and 10-Film Passes cannot be used for Opening & Live Commentary events. Festival passes can only be purchased at Lido Cinemas and Ritz Cinemas and are only valid at the venues they are purchased at.

\*\*VIP Passes are valid for 1 redemption for every film in the festival program including Opening Night & Live Commentary events.

### Terms & Conditions

Concession rates apply to students, healthcare cardholders, pension cardholders and seniors. Member prices apply to Lido Cinemas, Ritz Cinemas, Thornbury Picture House & Brunswick Picture House members. All tickets are non-refundable. Tickets can be exchanged for a film at the same venue for a fee of \$2.50 per ticket at least 24 hours prior to screenings. All information is correct at the time of print. Visit [fantasticfilmfestival.com.au](http://fantasticfilmfestival.com.au) for the most up-to-date information.

### Code of Conduct

Fantastic Film Festival does not tolerate inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour, nor any off-screen activities that cause anyone to feel uncomfortable or unsafe. If you experience any of this behaviour, we encourage you to approach festival or venue staff.

FFA has received a classification exemption from the classification board. Unless stated otherwise on the website, all screenings are restricted to patrons aged 18 and over.

# UMBRELLA CROSSWORD



## UMBRELLA INVITES YOU TO TEST YOUR CULT CINEMA KNOWLEDGE!

HINT: WE DISTRIBUTE BIZARRE AND BELOVED CULT FILMS FROM OZPLOITATION TO JAPANESE HORROR & LOST CINEMATIC TREASURES. WE HAVE A FEW IN THIS PROGRAM, WHICH COULD BE A CLUE IF YOU GET STUCK.



SCAN FOR ANSWERS

## ACROSS

- Director of 80s cult horror starring Isabelle Adjani
- "You're not an astrologer, you're an \_\_\_\_\_!"
- Cult Japanese horror where town becomes obsessed with spirals
- Call that ends a take
- Joining two strips of film together
- Track where people discuss a film
- Post-apocalyptic cyberpunk horror
- Best film materials to restore, 'Camera ...'
- Setting of one of the most shocking openings in modern cult cinema

## DOWN

- Surrealist filmmaker behind El Topo
- Wild era of Australian genre cinema in the 70s/80s
- Terrifying object in Onibaba
- Australian faux-documentary ghost story "Lake \_\_\_\_"
- Australia-based film distributor
- Spool of film
- Post-screening discussion with filmmakers
- Director whose personal style defines their films

**MELBOURNE**

**Lido Cinemas**  
23 April—15 May

**Thornbury Picture House**  
24 April—12 May

**Brunswick Picture House**  
24 April—12 May

**SYDNEY**

**Ritz Cinemas**  
23 April—14 May

**FFFA**