CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2015
5 - 15 NOVEMBER
at the NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE, McCoy Circuit, Acton

BOOK NOW! ALL TICKETS - ALL SESSIONS $15 adult $12 concessions (children, pensioners, students)

Book online at www.ciff.com.au or tickets across the counter during office hours at the National Film and Sound Archive.
Enquiries: 02 6248 0851 or info@ciff.com.au

Classification: All films are classified MA15+ unless otherwise indicated.

The Festival is presented in association with the National Film and Sound Archive

The Canberra International Film Festival is a community-run not-for-profit organisation and relies on public support and the generosity of its sponsors. The Festival is grateful for financial support from the ACT Government (through artsACT and EventsACT), the University of Canberra, and Screen Australia.

We are also grateful for the support of our commercial and in-kind sponsors: QT Hotel, Eden Road Wines, The Canberra Times, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office.
INTRODUCING CIFF 2015: this year the Festival takes a new direction, with a program hand-picked by a team of local film specialists, and specifically designed for Canberra’s audience. CIFF celebrates the work of Canberra’s own film-makers, alongside a superb array of films from Australia, Asia and the Middle East that offer a rich diversity of ideas and cinematic experiences. The Festival’s new link to the National Film and Sound Archive enables a showcase of archival films to enrich the program and a dedicated space to engage with festival-goers and filmmakers at the CIFF Festival Hub.

Fri Nov 6 6pm
CHOICE LIFESTYLES

From the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) in Alice Springs comes a selection of films that act as a window into life and culture on remote Aboriginal communities. Rarely do audiences have access to the specialised cultural knowledge and practices being passed on through these treasured films. CAAMA has long been the training ground for new Indigenous filmmakers, and some of their remarkable work will be presented in this program.

Sat Nov 7 1pm
WE ARE MANY

Director: Amir Amirani
110 mins Australia

On 15 February 2003, 30 million people across the globe took to the streets in the single largest organised protest of all time against the impending war on Iraq. Told by activists involved and a star-studded line-up of contributors including Susan Sarandon, Danny Glover, Richard Branson, Noam Chomsky and many more, We Are Many explores the struggle to stop the war, the political fallout and the resulting disillusionment of a generation of pacifists.

Sat Nov 7 5.30pm
THE TRIBE

Director Myroslav Slaboshpytskiy
132 mins Ukraine

Note: Classified R18+ You know those beautiful, well-intentioned “disability” films about the overcoming of adversity? This movie takes films like that behind the bike shed and beats them up for their lunch money. When Sergey enters a school for the deaf, he falls in with the student mafia that really runs the show. Acted entirely in sign language by a largely amateur but entirely brilliant all-deaf cast. A caustic piece of filmmaking, classified R18+ for explicit sex and violence.

Sat Nov 8 1pm
TRIBUTE TO PETER FINCH #1

also Monday Nov 9 at 11am

One of Peter Finch’s most popular films, THE SHIRALEE (1957) made for Ealing Studios by director Leslie Norman: the story of a fiercely independent itinerant labourer in the Australian bush and his turbulent relationship with his 5-year old daughter. Plus a rare 35mm print of THE DAY (1960), a charming but seldom seen short film directed by Finch on the Spanish island of Ibiza.

Sun Nov 8 3.30pm
CORN ISLAND

Director George Ovashvili
100 mins Georgia

An understated, perfectly crafted epic, winner of multiple festival awards. With minimal dialogue and gorgeous imagery, Corn Island tells a moving story of perseverance and survival. On a small island in the middle of a river, an old man and his granddaughter farm corn to survive. But their island lies in the middle of territory contested by forces on both sides, and when a soldier washes ashore, their neutrality is tested.

Sun Nov 8 6pm
TIMBUKTU

Director Abderrahmane Sissako
97 mins France/Mauritania

In this cry from the heart, an African community is torn apart by religious fundamentalism. Music, laughter, even soccer, are banned, women harrassed, and improvised courts issue absurd sentences. Based on a news story from Mali, the film offers a complex response to outrage and horror, even trying to get inside the minds of the aggressors. Timbuktu is no longer the magical place of legend, but a grim, unforgiving place, where lives teeter between hope and despair.

Fri Nov 6 8.15pm
PRISON SONGS

Director Kelrick Martin
56 mins Australia

Stories from inside Darwin’s maximum security Berrimah Prison are told through song in Australia’s first documentary musical. Winner of the Australian Directors Guild award for best direction of a documentary, the heart and soul of the inmates is raw, moving and musical. Plus BLUEY, the latest short film by Darlene Johnson, the story of a young woman fresh out of prison who finds her emotional outlet when she puts on a pair of boxing gloves.

Sat Nov 7 3.30pm
FROM LITTLE THINGS...

Welcome to the new wave of short films to explore Indigenous Australia. This collection of recent short films showcases the talents of both emerging and established filmmakers, which will delight and surprise audiences. Films include KARROYUL by Kelrick Martin, NULLA NULLA by Dylan River and UNDER SKIN, IN BLOOD by Larissa Behrendt. Each of the film’s creators are destined to become prominent players in the future of Australia’s film landscape.

Sat Nov 7 8.15pm
TEHRAN TAXI

also Tuesday Nov 10 at 11am
Director Jafar Panahi
82 mins Iran

Banned by the Iranian government from making films since 2010, Panahi continues to defy the censors to pursue his art in secrecy. In Tehran Taxi, with a camera perched on the dashboard, he drives around picking up passengers who share their observations on their lives and their city. Winner of the Golden Bear at Berlin, the result is a masterful balance of sensitive direction and joyously unscripted humanity, at once hopeful and frequently very funny.

Thu Nov 5 7.30pm
OPENING NIGHT

NEON

also Fri Nov 6 at 11am
Director Lawrence Johnston
83 mins Australia

Science begets art begets commerce in Lawrence Johnston’s fond and fascinating portrait of the fadastic practice of creating neon. As the world moves on to brighter (and less environmentally friendly) ways to light its used car yards, casinos and car park signs, Johnston chronicles a simpler time and the artisans who helped light it up and sell it. Produced by Canberra’s own WildBear Entertainment. Screens with local Canberra short GIRL + GHOST.
**Sun Nov 8 8.15pm**

**TRIBUTE TO PETER FINCH**

*NETWORK* (1975, 121 mins) was the film for which Peter Finch won a posthumous Oscar for his bravura performance as the TV news host who breaks down live-to-air and becomes a New Age prophet. Paddy Chayefsky’s Oscar-winning screenplay is flawlessly directed by Sidney Lumet, delivering a savage satire on corporate America and appalling media behaviour that is as relevant today as when it was made. Finch is brilliantly counterpointed by Faye Dunaway and William Holden.

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**Mon Nov 9 8.15pm**

**A TIME TO LIVE, A TIME TO DIE**

Director Hou Hsiao-Hsien
138 mins Taiwan
One of the great masterworks of Asian cinema, this auto-biographical epic made in 1983, confirmed Hou Hsiao-Hsien’s international status. The film explores a family’s life when they settle in Taiwan after the Chinese civil war. Grandma still wants to visit the ancestors ‘back home’, but her grandson finds security in a local gang. Hau’s mastery of understatement and pathos are evident in this rare screening of a 35mm print from the NFFA’s collection. Hou also directed *The Assassin*.

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**Tues Nov 10 8.15pm**

**WITH YOU, WITHOUT YOU**

Director Prasanna Vithanage
90 mins Sri Lanka
With the Sri Lankan highlands as an imposing physical backdrop, Prasanna Vithanage and his cinematographer MD Mahindapala construct a blue-tinted beauty of a film, exquisitely tracing the growing love between a lonely man and woman. But with the decades-long civil war as its emotional backdrop, their film is a devastating portrait of a marriage complicated by time and politics in a brave reimagining of Dostoevsky’s novella *A Gentle Creature*.

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**Wed Nov 11 8.15pm**

**THE TENTMAKERS OF CAIRO**

Director Kim Breamish
93 mins Australia
Filmed over three years, spanning the turbulent years from Egypt’s 25 January 2011 revolution through to the June 2014 election of Abdel Fatah Al Sissi as President, this intimate documentary observes current events through the eyes of artisan tentmakers in a back alley of Cairo. This remarkable film by Kim Breamish, a Canberra filmmaker and University of Canberra lecturer, won a major award at this year’s Visions du Rêve in Switzerland. *Australian Premiere*!

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**Thurs Nov 12 8.15pm**

**THE ASSASSIN**

*also Fri Nov 13 11am*

Director Hou Hsiao-Hsien
105 mins Taiwan
In this long-awaited martial arts (wuxia) movie, Hou’s signature understatement is uncompromising, overthrowing all expectations of the genre. The result has a sublime beauty that won Hou the Best Director Award at Cannes. In the 9th century Tang dynasty, a young girl is kidnapped and trained as an assassin, meeting out justice on corrupt officials. When she fails one mission, she is sent to kill her cousin to whom she was betrothed as a child. Hou also directed *A Time to Live, A Time to Die*.

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**Fri Nov 13 8.15pm**

**THE LOOK OF SILENCE**

Director Joshua Oppenheimer
103 mins Denmark
Far from the circus of horrors of the earlier *Act of Killing*, this film is both reflective and subtle and gives voice to the victims of the 1965 Indonesian genocide rather than the perpetrators. In Aceh, a young local eye specialist uncovers the details of his innocent brother’s brutal murder, then attempts to confront his murderers - who consider themselves national heroes. Winner of many awards including the Grand Jury Prize, Cannes Film Festival.

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**Mon Nov 9 6pm**

**SUNNY AND THE DARK HORSE**

Directors David and Judith MacDougall
86 mins Australia
A delightful documentary from 1987 – the story of Aboriginal stockman, Sunny Banjo, who’s chosen to train for “picnic races” on bush tracks in NSW. The film is a foray into “ethno-fiction” in which the filmmakers facilitate the charismatic Sunny in spinning his own yarn. Made by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (now AIATSIS) in Canberra, this film is rich in pleasures, and like all of the Institute’s films from this period was at the cutting edge of documentary practice world-wide.

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**Tues Nov 10 6pm**

**THE HORSES OF FUKUSHIMA**

Director Matsubayashiyaya Yoji
74 mins Japan
This insight into the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster tells the story of a stable of horses trapped inside the 20km exclusion zone around the doomed power-plant. Matsubayashiyaya Yoji is one of Japan’s leading documentary filmmakers and has crafted a film rich in unexpected humour and breathtaking imagery, which has won many major awards. Critic Tony Rayns calls it “the most original and moving of the many documentaries” made after Fukushima.

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**Wed Nov 11 6pm**

**25 APRIL**

Directed by Leanne Pooley
85 mins New Zealand
Inspired by graphic novels, this remarkable re-telling of the Anzac story through animation, is the collaboration of producer Mathew Metcalfe, a former Canberkan, and Leanne Pooley, a New Zealand documentary director. Liberated from the constraints of archival imagery, the film’s innovative approach allows scope for imaginative reconstruction, grounded in a soundtrack of excerpts from actual letters and diaries. The result brings the past to life for a new generation of viewers. *Australian Premiere*!

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**Thurs Nov 12 6pm**

**NO BURQAS BEHIND BARS**

Directors Nima Sarvestani and Maryam Ebrahimi
77 mins Iran/Sweden
This award-winning documentary explores life in an Afghan women’s prison where, ironically, the women enjoy more freedom and security than they would outside. Having fled abusive households or arranged marriages, or being jailed for “moral crimes”, the women live safely in prison with their children. Made by two Iranian filmmakers now resident in Sweden, this intimate film was shot under difficult conditions with the full cooperation of the women and the prison authorities.

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**Fri Nov 13 6pm**

**BEAST**

Directors Tom and Sam McKeith
100 mins Australia/Philippines
A gritty first-feature filmed entirely on location in the heart of Manila, that recalcs the raw power of the Dardenne brothers. A young Filipino-American boxer is talked into cheating by his trainer father. In one roller-coaster night, he must choose between the bonds of family and his sense of justice. From producer Rob Cee of acclaimed documentary *Red Obsession*.

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**Fri Nov 13 11pm (Late)**

**YAKUZA APOCALYPSE**

Director Tadashi Mikie
125 mins Japan
*Note: Classified R18+
Vampire yakuzas? The collapse of underworld genres are crisscrossed into what cult director Mike calls his “rampage back to the basics.” A tough vampire joins the yakuzas, fighting his way to the top. But when a mysterious gang hunts him down, he barely manages to transmit his powers to his loyal protégé. Will this Red Zone vampire have what it takes to avenge his boss? A delicious mix of action, horror and underworld rivalries make for high-energy mayhem.*
Sat Nov 14  1pm
SIMPLE BEING
Director Marco Ferrari 92 mins  USA
When he was tearing tickets at Deady Canberra while saving his pennies for NIDA, Canberra-raised and now Los Angeles-based actor Sal Mason dreamed of headlining a Hollywood movie, and his honest and strong performance here does that dream proud. Mason plays an actor immersing himself in a three-week experiment to deprive himself of sight, sound and speech. His findings and the reactions of those around him are by turns moving and funny.

Sat Nov 14  3pm
FREEDOM STORIES
Director Steve Thomas 99 mins  Australia
An exploration of the achievements and struggles of former ‘boat people’: new Australian citizens, they arrived seeking asylum from the Middle-East around 2001 - a watershed year in Australian politics sparked by the Tampa affair and John Howard’s declaration: “We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come”. It has taken astonishing resilience and over a decade for them to build secure lives in their new homeland.

Sat Nov 14  5.30pm
MEMORIES ON STONE
Director Showkat Amin Korki 97 mins  Iraqi Kurdistan
A comedy (albeit very dark) from one of the world’s most troubled countries: problems escalate when two friends decide to make a film about the mass slaughter of Kurds in Iraq in 1982. Some of their troubles resonate for filmmakers anywhere: inadequate budget, temperamental stars, censorship, weather. But others are specific: smuggling an actress by donkey across a border, a husband insanely jealous of his wife’s scenes with another man, and more. A work of great visual and comedic flair.

Sat Nov 14  8.15pm
VICTORIA
Director Sebastian Schipper 140 mins  Germany
German actor-turned-director Sebastian Schipper appeared in Run Lola Run, and the influence of Tom Tykwer’s film can be felt in this visionary nightmare-com-bank-heist movie, remarkably shot in a single take. One night in Berlin, a Spanish waitress Victoria gets roped into unexpected high-stakes crime. Relying entirely on performance and an outstanding cinematographer, Schipper’s film deserved every single one of its dozens of awards, including the Silver Bear at Berlin.

Sun Nov 15  3.30pm
THE SILENCES
also Thurs Nov 12  11am
Director Margot Nash 73 mins  Australia
Margot Nash’s exploration of her family’s secrets and her relationship with her mother, is an exemplary personal diary film. It speaks volumes about living with mental illness in the family, and emerges as a work that is both lyrical and emotionally intense. Rich with images of extraordinary beauty and poignancy, the film is exquisitely crafted, and engages us deeply in the gradual unfolding of an unspoken drama that lie behind suburban facades.

Sun Nov 15  1pm
ENTER THE FAUN
also Wed Nov 11  11am
Directors Tamar Rogoff & Daisy Wright 71 mins  USA
Cystic Fibrosis had left Gregg Mozgola with a distinct walk, toes curled downwards. His unique physically led choreographer Tamar Rogoff to cast him in a dance performance. In the process of training Mozgola to move like a dancer and withstand the rigours of performance, art trumps medicine as the pair make surprising advances in the man’s physical abilities.

Extra Voices at CIFF 2015
What sets a film festival apart from just a bunch of films being screened together are the intimate and first-hand experiences on offer to the audience, and CIFF 2015 is bursting at the seams with those opportunities.

Under the moniker Extra Voices, we offer a free series of talks, every morning over brunch, from both our visiting Festival guests and local film practitioners.
Everybody has a screenplay in them, and we will help you to channel your inner writer with two great sessions on Sunday 8 November with Writing for the Screen at 12pm and 4pm featuring table-reads of unproduced local works, performed by the NFSA Players.
Extra Voices takes place (mostly) in the Festival Hub - the exquisitely renovated (and only mildly haunted) Federation-era gallery off the NFSA courtyard, where you can find lounges to put your feet up, dark corners for deep and meaningful conversations, and great food from NFSA’s award-winning Bench Room Cafe - and wine from our sponsor Eden Road Wines.

For the full complement of discussions, panels, workshops and activities, keep an eye on www.ciff.com.au

BONUS: The sound curators from NFSA will present a special movie soundtrack-themed VINYL LOUNGE, free, on Friday 6 November at 5.30pm in the NFSA Theatrette.