

# MWIFF

THE 7TH  
MELBOURNE  
WOMEN IN  
FILM FESTIVAL

CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 23-27, 2023 | ACMI & ONLINE

FESTIVAL PROGRAM

# WELCOME MESSAGE

## HELLO & WELCOME

The 7th Melbourne Women in Film Festival returns to ACMI in 2023, showcasing the best Australian, Aotearoa New Zealand and Pasifika women's and gender diverse stories on screen. This year's theme 'CONNECTIONS' explores local and global creativity, collaboration and community through a dynamic program of screenings, special events, panels, workshops, and education programs. MWFF creates a space that connects audiences with established filmmakers and next generation talent ready to be moved by compelling, provocative and entertaining cinema.

## MELBOURNE WOMEN IN FILM FESTIVAL TEAM

**FESTIVAL DIRECTOR:** Sian Mitchell

**DEPUTY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR:** Kirsten Stevens

**FESTIVAL / PANELS COORDINATOR:** Janice Loreck

**FESTIVAL / CRITICS LAB COORDINATOR:** Whitney Monaghan

**PROGRAMMERS:** Aarushi Chowdhury, Anna Debinski, Sonja Hammer  
Monica Ouk, Chloe Wong

**EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR:** Melanie Ashe

**ART DIRECTOR:** Sheri Tantawy

**MWFF BOARD:** Sara Pheasant (Chair), Vyshnavee Wijekumar (Deputy Chair), Emma Jenkin, Alice McShane, Jessica Morris Payne, Meghana Sharma, Leanne Tonkes, Leah Schwartz (Secretary)

# TICKET INFORMATION

## HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS

Tickets to ACMI sessions can be purchased through the ACMI box office or ACMI website at [acmi.net.au](http://acmi.net.au). For all other sessions, head to the festival website at [mwff.org.au](http://mwff.org.au).

For session classification information, please check the program entry. Further classification information and content warnings can be found at [mwff.org.au](http://mwff.org.au).

Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) | Federation Square | Flinders Street, Melbourne, Victoria

	FULL	CONCESSION	ACMI MEMBER
OPENING NIGHT	\$35	\$30	\$28
CLOSING NIGHT	\$25	\$20	\$18
SINGLE FILM	\$18	\$14	\$12
FULL PASS	\$170	\$140	\$120
3-FILM PASS	\$45	\$39	\$33
SCHOOL SCREENING	\$8 STUDENT	TEACHERS FREE	

\*Concession applies to full time students, Healthcare card holders, Seniors and Carers card holders, and aged pensioners.

# OPENING NIGHT

THURSDAY 23rd FEBRUARY, 6:30PM, CINEMA 2

## SWEET AS

2022, 87 mins, English



With problems on the home front, 16 year old Murra is on the verge of lashing out. That is, until her policeman uncle thwarts her self-destructive behaviour with a lifeline: a "photo-safari for at-risk kids". Murra isn't entirely convinced, but she soon joins cantankerous Kylie, uptight Sean, happy-go-lucky Elvis, and camp counsellors Fernando and Michelle on a transformative bus trip to the Pilbara. On the trail, the teens learn about fun, friendship and first crushes, as well as the forces of 'reality' that puncture the bubble of youth.

Winner of the prestigious NETPAC award at Toronto International Film Festival and the Blackmagic Digital Australian Innovation Award at the Melbourne International Film Festival, Sweet As is the inspiring and uplifting first feature by Nyul Nyul/Yawuru director Jub Clerc (Storytime, MWFF 2019). Partially inspired by her own experience, Clerc's film showcases resilience, self-discovery and connection through friendship.

## STARRING

Shantae Barnes-Cowan,  
Mark Coles-Smith,  
Tasma Walton, Carlos  
Sanson Jr.

## DIRECTOR

Jub Clerc

## PRODUCER

Liz Kearney

## SCREENWRITERS

Jub Clerc, Steve  
Rodgers

## CINEMATOGRAPHER

Katie Milwright

## EDITOR

Katie Flaxman

## COSTUME DESIGNER

Lien See Leong

## PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Emma Fletcher

## SISTA

2021, 16 mins, English, Samoan  
with subtitles

A betrayal of trust between two sisters on the cusp of adolescence sets off a chain of events that has the potential to shatter their relationship forever.

Chantelle Burgoyne's Sista is a well crafted depiction of trust between two Samoan sisters and their connection to aiga (family).

## DIRECTOR

Chantelle Burgoyne

## WRITERS

Leilani Tamu, Chantelle  
Burgoyne

## PRODUCER

Marina Alofagia  
McCartney



Celebrate  
the opening  
night of  
MWFF 2023  
with Jub  
Clerc's  
coming of  
age road  
movie,  
SWEET AS.

Ticket  
includes  
entry to the  
MWFF  
afterparty!

Unclassified 15+

**THE GODDESS OF 1967**  
2000, 118 mins, English

Revisit the unsettling and saturated world of Clara Law's *The Goddess of 1967*.

J.M, an avid Japanese car collector (played by Rikiya Kurokawa), travels to rural Australia in response to an advertisement for his dream vehicle — a Citroën DS, nicknamed "The Goddess". J.M. gets more than he bargained for when a blind girl, B.G. (portrayed by a young Rose Byrne), answers the door and hitches a ride with him to the outback opal mining town where she grew up. Travelling together in the liminal space of the Citroën, the two outsiders experience flashbacks, and begin to confront past traumas.

"Outstandingly original in both conception and realization... the direction and acting are excellent, and Byrne's mesmerizing performance as B.G brilliantly inflected and unpredictable" — Roderick Conway Morris, International Herald Tribune.

Co-presented with ACMI as part of the 'Focus on Clara Law' retrospective season.

**MA15+, Adult Themes,  
Strong Violence,  
Strong Sex Scene**



**FRIDAY 24th FEBRUARY, 6:30PM, CINEMA 2**

**SATURDAY 25th FEBRUARY, 7PM, CINEMA 2**

**SHIT**  
2022, 75 mins, English



*Shit* is a psychological drama which unfolds over one long night of incarceration in a bleak holding cell. Caged for hours on end, Billy, Bobby and Sam reveal their stories. Stories of a life time of violence, of abuse, of institutionalisation, told with unsentimental, sometimes comical, often gut-wrenching insight. They've done something terrible but all they've got to do is keep it together, to keep their mouths zipped. Sam has fallen apart and become a liability, the weak link. Billy and Bobby spend the night trying to hold tight, keeping them solid, a complete three, but life has finally caught up with them.

**Unclassified 15+,  
Adult Themes,  
Frequent strong language,  
Themes of violence against  
women**

**PLUS WHEN WE WERE KIDS**  
2021, 12 mins, English

Thirteen-year-old Jade's sexual awakening gets interrupted during a day at the public pools with her best friend.

**STARRING**  
Nicci Wilks, Sarah Ward,  
Peta Brady

**DIRECTORS**  
Susie Dee, Trudy Hellier

**PRODUCERS**  
Evyonne Carfora, Jannine Barnes

**WRITER**  
Patricia Cornelius

**CINEMATOGRAPHER**  
Sky Davies

**COMPOSER**  
Anna Liebszeit

**EDITOR**  
Meri Blazewski

**DIRECTOR**  
Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu

**WRITER**  
Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu

**PRODUCER**  
Sarah Cook

**IMAGINED TOUCH:  
DISABILITY  
PERFORMANCE  
CONNECTION**  
2021, 90mins, English  
Unrestricted



Imagined Touch...When touch becomes your vision to the world.

When two deafblind women Heather Lawson and Michelle Stevens approached director Jodee Mundy, a coda, to make a show, they pulled off the impossible. They turned their small community performance into Imagined Touch, a theatre production that became a sell-out success at the Sydney Festival, going on to win at the Victorian Green Room Awards.

In this special event screening and conversation, Imagined Touch filmmakers Jodee Mundy OAM and Sofya Gollan, alongside artists Heather Lawson and Michelle Stevens, discuss the film, creating and performing the show, and connecting their experience with audiences.



**DIRECTORS**  
Jodee Mundy OAM,  
Sofya Gollan  
**WRITER**  
Jodee Mundy OAM  
**PRODUCER**  
Jodee Mundy OAM

**SUNDAY 26th FEBRUARY, 1PM, CINEMA 2**

**SUNDAY 26th FEBRUARY, 7:15PM, CINEMA 2**

**FEMME FONTERA  
INTERNATIONAL  
SHORTS SHOWCASE**

2022, 93 mins, English, Spanish  
and Persian with subtitles  
Unclassified 15+

**MWFF X  
FEMME FRONTERA  
FILMMAKER SHOWCASE**



In collaboration with USA-based Femme Frontera, MWFF presents the Femme Frontera International Short Showcase. Featuring films from across the USA, Central America and Iran, immerse yourself in stories exploring the struggles faced and bonds created between people, communities and families. Not to missed!

Femme Frontera is a Latinx-led film organisation made up of, and founded by women and non-binary filmmakers from the U.S.-Mexico border regions of El Paso, Texas, Las Cruces, New Mexico, and Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua, México. Their mission is to amplify films made by women and non-binary filmmakers from border regions around the world and to celebrate these unique voices through showcasing work, funding projects, and providing film education.

# FRESHLY SQUEEZED SHORTS

SUNDAY 26th FEBRUARY, 4PM. CINEMA 2



Dystopian futures, hopeful romantics and unlikely friendships, Freshly Squeezed Shorts showcases the latest and best short films and web series exploring our region's diverse stories of human connection.

113mins

Unclassified 18+

This session contains films with extreme blood and gore, and themes of abortion.

## **SPARKLES**

2020, 13 mins

## **HASH BROWNS**

2022, 6 mins

## **VIOLET DAZE**

2021, 15 mins

## **LOOK THE PART**

2022, 7 mins

## **EVERYTHING GONE**

2020, 6 mins

## **dating JEN**

2022, 10 mins

## **POOLS**

2020, 16 mins

## **HOPEFUL ROMANTIC**

2022, 11mins

## **TOOLY**

2021, 11 mins

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are advised that this film may contain images, voices and videos of deceased persons.

## **THE MEEK**

2020, 19 mins

# NEXT GEN SHORTS

SATURDAY 25th FEBRUARY, 4PM. CINEMA 2



Next Gen Shorts showcases the creativity and talent of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand's next generation of filmmakers. From how to grow prize winning onions to rekindling connections with family, these diverse films show that the future of women's and gender diverse filmmaking looks bright!

110mins

Unclassified 15+

This session contains films with themes of abortion, homophobia, mental illness, and suicide.

**PEANUT**  
2021, 13 mins

**BEFORE WE'RE GONE**  
2021, 16 mins

**ONIONS**  
2021, 11 mins

**THROUGH FAULT**  
2022, 15 mins

**CRAVE**  
2021, 5 mins

**BUBBLE**  
2019, 12 mins

**THE HOLY WHORE**  
2022, 11 mins

**BUSTARD HEAD**  
2022, 10 mins

**QUEERNATION**  
2021, 6 mins

**FINDING  
THE LIGHTHOUSE**  
2021, 10 mins

# REEL SHORTS

SATURDAY 25th FEBRUARY 12:30PM. CINEMA 2



Reel Shorts presents a collection of captivating and uplifting documentaries delving into the true and human stories from Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the wider Moana. From intimate portraits of artists and sports icons to intercultural and intergenerational connections, these films offer diverse perspectives of the world around us.

110mins

Unclassified 15+

This film session contains films with visual suggestions of blood.

**TAONGA  
AN ARTIST ACTIVIST**  
2022, 15 mins

**MORE THAN CUTE**  
2022, 15 mins

**OUR MOB**  
2022, 5 mins  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander viewers are advised  
that this film may contain  
images, voices and videos of  
deceased persons.

**SCRATCHED:  
ERIN BAKER**  
2022, 15 mins

**ALOHA SOUL FOOD**  
2019, 12 mins

**WE'LL ALWAYS  
HAVE DANCE**  
2021, 13 mins

**MY UTERUS IS  
TRYING TO KILL ME**  
2022, 20 mins

**THE GOLDEN ROLLERS**  
2021, 7 mins



**SATURDAY 25TH FEBRUARY**  
**11:30AM**  
**MAKING AN IMPACT:  
STORYTELLING,  
ACTIVISM & CHANGE**  
Free, 60 mins

Storytelling is a great way to make a difference, from inspiring documentaries to thought-provoking dramas. But how do screen creators inspire real-world change? Join MWFF's panel of experts as they share tips for storytelling with impact: how to reach an audience, share a message, and make change through your film and screen project.

**SATURDAY 25TH FEBRUARY**  
**2:30PM**  
**GLOBAL  
CONNECTIONS:  
COLLABORATING,  
STORYTELLING AND  
NETWORKING  
OVERSEAS**

Full \$10, Concession \$8, 60 mins

Film festivals, distributors, critics campuses and mentors—there are heaps of ways to develop your screen career overseas. International co-productions and remote collaborations also offer exciting pathways for global storytelling. In this special MWFF event, our panel of experts share their advice on working and networking outside of Australia, whether it be touring the international festival circuit, attending talent incubators, or telling transnational stories. We discuss how to make the most of opportunities outside of Australia, and what to expect when going global.

**SATURDAY 25TH FEBRUARY**  
**3:30PM**  
**THE LIFECYCLE  
OF FILM**  
Full \$40, Concession \$30, 120 mins

The Melbourne Women in Film Festival and Women in Film and Television Victoria (WIFT Vic) present an exciting new career development event - 'The Life Cycle of Film'. Attendees are invited to participate in two intimate round table conversations led by industry experts and focused on a particular area in the screen industries - from development to distribution.

**FRIDAY 24TH FEBRUARY**  
**12PM**  
**SHINING A LIGHT:  
SHOWCASING  
DISABILITY ON  
SCREEN**  
Free, 45 mins

Disability has been underrepresented on Australian screens. Join us for a special screening and panel discussion that showcases the diversity of human experience but also speaks to the importance of authentic representation when telling stories about disability.

Students have the opportunity to watch two short films that centre disability both on screen and behind the camera, and then join an online panel with the filmmakers to talk about narrative, the filmmaking process, and why we should value seeing different perspectives on screen.

Suitable for years 9-12.

**MONDAY 27TH FEBRUARY, 10AM**  
**SCHOOL SCREENING:  
SWEET AS**

2022, 87 mins, Unrestricted  
Suitable for years 10-12

Sweet As is a coming of age road movie following Murra, a 16 year old Indigenous girl in Port Hedland, Western Australia. Always on the edge of trouble, Murra is signed up to a photography camp for at-risk youth. Dubious at first, she ends up having a transformative time, learning about friends, family, and first love.

The film offers opportunities to explore themes about growing up, family, and the teen genre through a First Nations Australian lens.

**JARLI**  
2021, 8 mins

Jarli Jones, a young First Nations girl in outback Australia, dreams of flying to the stars and sets out on an adventure to do just that.

# CLOSING NIGHT

MONDAY 27th FEBRUARY, 6:30PM, CINEMA 1

## KĀINGA

2022, 85 Minutes  
Cantonese, English, Farsi,  
Japanese, Korean, Mandarin,  
Marathi, Māori, Tagalog with  
English subtitles  
Unclassified 15+



Following the success of *Waru* (2017) and *Vai* (MWFF, 2020), *Kāinga* is the third anthology film in the trilogy produced by Kerry Warkia and Kiel McNaughton. Bringing together underrepresented Asian filmmakers to craft eight unique stories exploring the diverse, evolving, but familiar experiences of Asians trying to make a home in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Taking place over five decades in a single house, 11 Rua Road, the walls bear witness to a visiting Chinese daughter hoping to see her father; a young Japanese mother's loneliness and isolation; a Filipino nurse trying to support both her adopted Aotearoa family and her real one in the Philippines; a young Korean girl's confusion with strangers nosing through her house; an Indian daughter trying to connect with her elderly father through technology, an Iranian wife growing restless with the lack of opportunities as an immigrant; a Tamil Eelam sister looking for old memories and a young Chinese-Kiwi mother's confrontation with her neighbour.

## KEY CAST

Dharshi Ponnampalam,  
Eliana Hwang, Izumi  
Sugihara, Katlyn  
Wong, Masoumeh  
Hesam  
Mahmoudinezhad,  
Mya Williamson,  
Patricia Senocbit,  
Rena Owen, Sneha  
Shetty, Vicki Lu

## DIRECTORS

Angeline Loo, Asuka  
Sylvie, Ghazaleh  
Golbakhsh, HASH,  
Julie Zhu, Michelle  
Ang, Nahyeon Lee,  
Yamin Tun

## PRODUCERS

Kerry Warkia, Kiel  
McNaughton, Shuchi  
Kothari

## SCREENWRITERS

Angeline Loo, Asuka  
Sylvie, Ghazaleh  
Golbakhsh, HASH,  
Mei-Lin Te Puea  
Hansen, Mia  
Maramara, Nahyeon  
Lee, Shreya Gejji

## FIRE IN THE WATER, FIRE IN THE SKY

2021, 13 mins  
English, Māori

To live is to dance.

Tia has always survived – but in turn she has forgotten how to dance.

Sisters Tia and Ina are far from home. Tia is steadfast and protective of free-spirited Ina. Tia is focused on each labouring job ahead of them. Phone calls home to their family are a reminder of why they must continue. Ina is wild, carefree, her spirit only slightly dampened by the push and focus of Tia.

A story of migration, 'fire in the water, fire in the sky' is a statement inspired by climate change.

From Te Moana-nui-a-kiva – the South Pacific Ocean – and told in Cook Islands Māori & English. Winner of the Special Mention award for Cinematography at the New Zealand International Film Festival.

## DIRECTOR

Miria George  
WRITER  
Miria George  
PRODUCER  
Hone Kouka

# MWIFF

THE 7TH  
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IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

PRESENTING PARTNER

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Blackmagicedesign



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