

# BIFF - IT'S A WRAP!

Cinephiles who haven't seen sunshine in almost two weeks can breathe a sigh of relief as the credits roll on the 13th Brisbane International Film Festival (BIFF).

Acting Minister for the Arts Rod Welford said BIFF's Closing Night film was a sell-out, with the Australian premiere screening of the Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy romance, *Before Sunset*, winding down the festival last night.

Mr Welford congratulated the Pacific Film and Television Commission's Anne Dèmy-Geroe, Gary Ellis and their team for delivering another outstanding event.

"In its 13 year history, the Brisbane International Film Festival has never failed to stun. The amazing program of local, national and international films and guests in 2004 is testament to the passion for film-making and respect for filmmakers."

Mr Welford said 200 films were screened over 13 days in the Greater Union Hoyts Regent Cinemas in the Queen Street Mall, and one of Australia's greatest films – silent classic *The Sentimental Bloke* – featured music with composer Jen Anderson and her Larrakins accompanying the free public screening at City Hall.

With a line-up of guests featuring winners of prestigious awards from Cannes, the Australian Film Institute and the Academy Awards, BIFF was flush with plenty of red-carpet moments.

This year's Chauvel Award recipient and BIFF special guest, Geoffrey Rush, shared the spotlight with Paul McDermott, director of *The Scree*, on Opening Night. Other special guests included critically acclaimed Iranian director Jafar Pahahi and experimental film-maker James Benning, who was on hand to introduce and discuss his body of work.

*Somersault* director Cate Shortland, one of Australia's new generation of filmmakers, was a special guest along with acting stalwart Colin Friels, the star of *Tom White*.

BIFF Executive Manager Gary Ellis is extremely pleased to report that this year's audience attendance and ticket revenue showed an increase of 4% from the previous year.

"BIFF attracted an additional 3 500 audience members on top of the 4% increase through ticket sales with the incredibly popular free events this year. The free events included the screening of Fast Film competition finalists, *The Sentimental Bloke* at City Hall and our ever-popular seminar program," said Ellis.

A seminar highlight was "Mainstreaming: Will there be indigenous communities left to film?" Speakers included Festival guests Jeanette Paulson-Hereniko (Hawaii), Sekhar Das (India) and Kevin Lucas (Australia) were joined by Robbie Williams, Queensland Chair of ATSIIC.

In 2004, Brisbane International Film Festival again exceeded its reputation as a world-class festival of incredible quality and diversity, and will return in 2005.

## **Media contacts**

Scrabble PR

Gabe Cramb or Lisa Wickbold  
Shari Armistead

07 3216 0733 / 07 3216 0722  
Senior Media Advisor

[gabe@scrabble.net.au](mailto:gabe@scrabble.net.au) <<mailto:gabe@scrabble.net.au>>

[lisa@scrabble.net.au](mailto:lisa@scrabble.net.au) <<mailto:lisa@scrabble.net.au>>

Minister for the Arts 07 3235 4593