

14TH BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL

27 JUL - 8 AUG 2005 WWW.BIFF.COM.AU

film
festival
presented by VISION

6 July 2005

Highlights of BIFF unveiled today

A woman who thinks she may have fallen in love with her reincarnated first love, a partial amnesiac accused of murder, French gangsters and a South African-set *Carmen* are just some of the characters who inhabit the packed 14th Brisbane International Film Festival (BIFF) presented by Vision program, announced today.

Launching the program today at the Southbank Cinemas – the festival's new home - Minister for the Arts Anna Bligh said the program presented a diverse range of features films from around the world, powerful documentaries, films on filmmaking, retrospectives, animation, experimental work, late-night thrillers, children's films and a short film competition.

The festival will this year be staged across three venues – Southbank Cinemas, Suncorp Piazza and the festival's traditional home at the Regent Cinemas – and will also include the expansion of the young people's program into **Cine Sparks – The Australian Film Festival for Young People.**

The festival will be held between 27 July and 8 August.

"Cine Sparks is a unique opportunity for Queensland's young people to participate in an event that brings the best in world cinema for young people together in a contextual environment," Ms Bligh said.

"It will be a place to learn more about the world we live in and its many cultures. Films from Iran, Japan, Holland and Ireland, to name just a few, will make their Australian premieres and position Cine Sparks and BIFF at the forefront of embracing visual culture.

"The Cine Sparks programme looks at all the elements of visual communication with traditional cinema, games, an interactive website and practical workshops."

Ms Bligh said the move to South Bank and Cine Sparks were both initiatives to make the festival more accessible to a wider range of audiences.

"From free films in the Suncorp Piazza to learning how to dance Bollywood-style, there are a range of activities for people of all ages and backgrounds," she said.

"This year's BIFF theme is "Immerse yourself" and with the range and quality of films on show, I have no doubt people will become totally immersed in the festival.

"The festival has films from more than 50 different countries, from Burkina Faso to Kazakhstan, The Philippines, Vanuatu, Indonesia, Peru, Japan, Korea, and of course, the traditional powerhouses of Europe and the United States.

"There will also be new Australian films, including the premiere of locally made films *Mosaic* and *Little Witches*."

Highlights of this year's festival include:

- Opening Night film *U-Carmen ekhayelitsha*, winner of the Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival this year. This South African film is a re-working of the famous opera *Carmen* set in a Cape Town township.
- Closing Night film *The Jacket* starring Oscar winner Adrien Brody (*The Pianist*) as a US soldier who survives being shot in the head on a Gulf War battlefield only to be accused of murder when he returns home. The amnesia that lingers after his injury makes it impossible to defend himself.
- Showcase 1 film *P.S.* – a Woody Allen-esque take on modern life and relationships starring Laura Linney (*Mystic River*) as the admissions director of a top university who throws herself into an affair with a student who eerily resembles a long dead lover.
- Showcase 2 film *36 Quai des Orfèvres* – starring Gérard Depardieu and Daniel Auteuil, a thriller set in the shadowy world of a Parisian police section fighting organised crime.
- A free program of films in the Suncorp Piazza.
- A celebration of 50 years of film from southern India in the Malayalam retrospective.
- Focuses on Chinese underground cinema and Korean independent films
- The Chauvel Award for Outstanding Contribution to Australian Feature Filmmaking will be presented to one of Australia's leading documentary makers, David Bradbury. His documentaries *Front Line* and *Chile: Hasta Cuando?* were both nominated for Academy Awards, and he will bring his latest work, *Blowin' in the Wind*, to the festival.
- Free public screening of the best entries in *The Courier-Mail* Brisbane International Film Festival Fast Film competition where filmmakers had 50 days to write, shoot and edit a short film using the special ingredient: DIVE.

Tickets for this year's festival go on sale today and are available from www.biff.com.au or by phone on (07) 3007 3007 between 9am and 4pm daily from 6 July to 26 July, then from one hour before the first screening of the day until late during the festival.

Tickets are also available from the BIFF ticket box at the Hoyts Regent Cinema (Queen St Mall) or Southbank Cinemas (167 Grey St, South Bank) between 9am and 4pm daily from 6 July to 26 July, then from one hour before the first screening of the day until late during the festival.

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