

## MEDIA RELEASE



11 OCTOBER 2018

## BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OPENS TONIGHT WITH *CELESTE*

This evening, the Brisbane International Film Festival 2018 (BIFF 2018) opens at the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) with the Queensland premiere of Brisbane-born director Ben Hackworth's new feature film *Celeste*.

Set in the lush tropical splendour of Paronella Park in Far North Queensland, *Celeste* is a story of complex relationships and intrigue starring Australian actors Radha Mitchell, Nadine Garner and Thomas Cocquerel.

Queensland Premier and Minister for Trade Anastacia Palaszczuk said her government was committed to strengthening Queensland's position as a leading screen destination.

'That's why we're investing \$12 million in new studios for screen and stream productions in Brisbane and \$50 million over four years to attract major productions and create jobs for Queenslanders,' the Premier said.

'Our screen industry now provides a constant stream of work for thousands of people, generating billions of dollars.

'We're also investing in film festivals such as BIFF to support the art of filmmaking, deliver a sustainable film industry in the state and provide unique cinematic experiences to Queenslanders.'

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said it was exciting to see BIFF — a Queensland institution in itself — find a new home at the Gallery, further building the collaborative potential of the state's cultural sector.

Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) Director Chris Saines said the Festival would welcome audiences on GOMA's red carpet to celebrate opening night, and a program offering more than 100 Australian and international feature, documentary and short films, as well as special events, panels and workshops.

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Artistic Director for BIFF 2018 Amanda Slack-Smith said highlights of the first weekend of the Festival included:

- 6.30pm, Friday 12 October: *Teiji Ito: Music for Film*, a world premiere live performance of film soundtracks composed by the late Teiji Ito (1935–1982) for legendary experimental filmmakers Maya Deren and Marie Menken, transcribed by musician Michiko Ogawa and performed with screenings of Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* 1943 and *The Very Eye of Night* 1958, and Menken's *Dwightiana* 1959.
- 12.30pm, Saturday 13 October: *Jirga* 2018, the story of an Australian soldier haunted by experiences in Afghanistan, screening with a panel discussion between director Benjamin Gilmour, actor Sam Smith and producer John Maynard.
- 1.00pm, Saturday 13 October: A screening of the feel-good Australian musical comedy *The Sapphires* 2012, with actress Miranda Tapsell and producer Rosemary Blight discussing that film and their latest in-production project, *Top End Wedding* 2018.
- 4.00pm, Saturday 13 October: Internationally acclaimed dancer and Queensland Ballet Artistic Director Li Cunxin in conversation with BIFF 2018 patron Bruce Beresford about the director's film adaptation of Li's autobiography *Mao's Last Dancer*. Chaired by Beresford's fellow BIFF 2018 Patron, Chauvel Award-winning producer Sue Milliken AO.
- 10.45am, Sunday 14 October: A conversation between BIFF 2018 Patrons director Bruce Beresford and producer Sue Milliken AO, discussing their latest collaboration, the just-released *Ladies in Black* 2018, alongside a screening of the film.
- 10.00am, Sunday 14 October: *Wik vs Queensland* 2018, a film about the High Court's landmark 1996 decision to grant native title to the Wik people of Far North Queensland is accompanied by a panel discussion featuring lawyer and land rights activist Noel Pearson and filmmaker Dean Gibson, chaired by journalist Kerry O'Brien.

For full program details and to purchase tickets online visit [biff.com.au](http://biff.com.au)

BIFF 2018 is presented at QAGOMA's purpose built Cinémathèque, the only facility of its kind in an Australian art museum, and city wide at partner venues including Event Cinemas at Brisbane City Myer Centre; Five Star Cinemas (New Farm Cinemas and Elizabeth Picture Theatre); Reading Cinemas at Newmarket; Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre; State Library of Queensland and the Brisbane Powerhouse.

BIFF 2018 is supported by the Queensland Government through Screen Queensland and the Australian Federal Government through Screen Australia.

Follow BIFF on social media @bneintlfilmfest and via the hashtag #BIFF2018.

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