

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Queer Screen Promises Salty, Sweet & Sexy in Festival Teaser

#### **7 Australian Premieres at Mardi Gras Film Festival: 18 February – 3 March 2016**

**17 November 2015:** The 23<sup>rd</sup> Mardi Gras Film Festival (Festival) from Queer Screen promises to set hearts beating and pulses racing with a raft of exciting Australian premieres, award winners and an Oscar contender announced in its teaser program today; tickets now on sale at [queerscreen.org.au](http://queerscreen.org.au).

The Festival will open on Thursday 18 February with the Australian premiere of the sensual French film ***Summertime***. Other Australian premieres to be screened include the hauntingly beautiful Thai Oscar entry for 2016 ***How to Win at Checkers (Every Time)***, ***Addicted to Fresno*** starring Natasha Lyonne, the captivating Venezuelan lesbian film ***Liz in September***, and ***Coming In***, a comedy from the director and star of gay classic *Summer Storm*. ***Remembering the Man***, a new documentary of the tragic tale of Australian lovers Timothy Conigrave and John Caleo, will make its Sydney debut at the Festival.

Running from 18 February to 3 March 2016 at Event Cinemas George Street and other venues, this year's festival promises to deliver something for everyone.

"2016 is a universal festival and caters for everyone under the rainbow," explains Festival Director Paul Struthers. "Film subjects range from athletes and dancers to local heroes and features straight, gay, lesbian, trans, and bi-sexual characters from across the world. Whatever genre you are into from lighthearted comedies to surreal horror we have it covered. It's definitely our most wide-ranging and exciting festival yet".

The Opening Night film *Summertime*, follows farm girl Delphine as she heads to the bright lights of Paris to create her own life during the dawn of 1970s activism in France. Screened recently at the highly esteemed Toronto International Film Festival, and winner of the Variety Piazza Grande Award at the Locarno International Film Festival, this sensual film will move everyone who sees it.

Further exploring the relationship between Australians Timothy Conigrave and John Caleo as detailed in *Holding the Man*, *Remembering the Man* is a bittersweet documentary featuring previously unseen footage of John Caleo and looks at Timothy's life after John. This film was the winner of Most Popular Documentary at the Adelaide Film Festival.

Genre fans won't want to miss multi award winning *Everlasting Love*, Spain's answer to *Stranger in the Lake* but even weirder. A winner at LA's Outfest, this film is set in the woods in the wake of a grizzly murder, so why can't the cruisers keep away?

The Thai entry for the 2016 Oscars, *How to Win at Checkers (Every Time)*, is a stunning drama about a young boy who worries about losing his openly gay brother to the army draft. A compelling and beautiful film, which recently played at the Berlin International Film Festival, it's easy to see why this was chosen to represent the country on the international stage.

*Game Face* is a must-see documentary exploring the lives of LGBT athletes. Featuring transgender lesbian MMA fighter Fallon Fox who competes in a less-than-trans-friendly environment and Terrence Clemens coming out as a college basketballer, this documentary brings us up close and personal with the athletes during their most challenging times.

*Orange is the New Black's* Natasha Lyonne and Jamie Babbit re-join forces to bring us the comedy *Addicted to Fresno* that premiered at Sundance. Featuring sex and murder, the movie looks at how far you will go for sisterhood.

*Coming In*, a new comedy from the director and star of gay classic *Summer Storm* explores what happens when a hip gay hairdresser at the top of his game falls in love with a woman.

Documentarian Jack Walsh brings us a funny and frank look at the life of revolutionary choreographer, artist, filmmaker and feminist Yvonne Rainer as she goes through political, professional and personal struggles in *Feeling are Facts: the Life of Yvonne Rainer*.

The striking supermodel and actor Patricia Velásquez comes to the screen in the Venezuelan lesbian film *Liz in September*. Winner of the audience award at Miami's queer film festival, this film is captivating and touchingly real.

Featuring some of the hottest sex scenes from any LGBTIQ film this year, *Beautiful Something* is a sexy and tender glimpse into life for the contemporary gay man as the stories of Brian a poet and Jim, an actor intertwine.

The 2016 Mardi Gras Film Festival presented by Queer Screen is supported by St George bank, The Star Sydney, Event Cinemas George Street, Screen NSW, ACON, Ovolo Hotels, Franck Provost and the Star Observer.

The full Festival program will be launched on Thursday 14 January.

**Tickets for the first 10 films are on sale now including flexi passes to 5 or 10 films. Please visit [queerscreen.org.au](http://queerscreen.org.au) to book or call (02) 9332 4938 or to become a Queer Screen member for discounted tickets and priority entry.**

**-ENDS-**

***Note to Editors:***

- An exciting addition to the program will be announced by Mardi Gras on Thursday 19 Nov
- Directors and actors from most films are available for interview
- Screeners of most films are available for review and imagery is available for publication

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