



Sydney Australia, Friday 13 March 2015



MARDI GRAS FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The 22nd Mardi Gras Film Festival wrapped on March 5. Presented by Queer Screen, the 15 day festival offered love triangles, role-switching and some amazing Australian talent on the silver screen. With over 15,000 in attendance and 20 sell-out screenings, 2015 marked the festival's most successful year for quite some time.

"Audience demand led to a phenomenal amount of sell-out screenings this year," said Mardi Gras Film Festival Director, Paul Struthers. "We are thrilled to announce that audience numbers have increased 30% since last year, with a 100% increase on 2013, we can't wait to see what 2016 will bring!"

This year the festival sparkled with the best of young Aussie talent. Shot in and around Newtown, *Skin Deep* made its Australian premiere at the Mardi Gras Film Festival on February 21. Both *All About E*, about sexy Sydney DJ E, and *Drown*, which explored the world of Aussie beach culture, enjoyed sell-out cinemas for their world premieres and sold out encore screenings this week.

Queer Screen were pleased to present the winner of the 2015 Mardi Gras Film Festival Audience Award for Best Narrative Film to Eric Schaeffer for *Boy Meets Girl*, a great film about gender starring trans actress, Michelle Hendley. Audience Award for Best Documentary Feature Film went to Mary Dore's *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*, the moving doco that chronicles the early days of the women's liberation movement in America.

Another festival highlight was *My Queer Career*, an awards night which celebrated queer short films and filmmakers working in Australia today, judged by Daniel Ribeiro, director of *The Way He Looks*, Lisa Daniel the Melbourne Queer Film Festival Director, and David Jowsey producer of *Mystery Road*. Best Film was awarded to Tony Radevski for his latest short *Hole*. Tony also collected the prize for Event Cinemas Best Original Screenplay. The Spectrum Film Audience Award went to *Nineteen*, directed by Madeline Kelly, and Liz Cooper picked up the Metro Screen Award NSW Filmmaker Award for *Like Breathing*.

We return to Parramatta's Riverside Theatre, March 27- 29 with the best films of Mardi Gras Film Festival screened as part of Western City Pride. The selected films included the year's stand out crime documentary *Out in the Night* and *Tiger Orange*, with gay pornstar-turned-actor Frankie Valenti (aka Johnny Hazzard).

Queer Screen are offering up audiences the chance to catch up on some of the best films of the festival with a host of [encore screenings](#). The selected films include *BFFs*, arguably the funniest film of the festival featuring our own Sigrid Thornton, *Four Moons*, which tells four compelling stories of love, desire and self-acceptance, and *Lilting*, which received an audience rating of over 4.5 and stars *Skyfall's* Ben Whishaw.

"We are so happy with the outcome of the 22nd Mardi Gras Film Festival presented by Queer Screen," said Festival Director, Paul Struthers. "As always this was a team effort and we must thank all our patrons, volunteers and partners. We look forward to Mardi Gras Film Festival 2016, and welcoming audiences to The Best of Mardi Gras Film Festival at Riverside and many more events throughout the year."

Martine Jager, General Manager of Marketing, Customer Experience and Mortgage Broking at St. George Bank, said: "St. George is thrilled the Queer Screen 2015 festival was such a huge success. It was fantastic to be a part of such a wonderful festival and help make a difference by promoting diversity, equality and creativity within our community."

"Events is thrilled that George St. has been able to support Queer Screens Mardi Gras Film Festival 2015 in providing a platform for the festivals amazing success in presenting Films for LGBTI community," said General Manager Anthony Kierann. "As an award partner in 2015, we certainly acknowledge the importance to support emerging film makers within the My Queer Career Short film category."

Richard Howarth, General Manager of Marketing, Sales and Entertainment at The Star said: "The Star is very



MEDIA RELEASE

proud of its partnership with Queer Screen and the Mardi Gras Film Festival. The partnership presented The Star with a terrific opportunity for us to embrace the LGBTIQ community and to demonstrate our commitment to celebrating diversity along with our keen support of Sydney's creative industries. Our new association with Queer Screen was very well received and we look forward to it continuing throughout 2015."

Lord Mayor Clover Moore said the City of Sydney was proud to encourage the festival's growth and this year gave Queer Screen \$15,000 in cash and support. "I'm pleased to see this annual festival is growing in popularity and the City is proud to be a supporter," the Lord Mayor said. "The festival is a wonderful opportunity for our city to showcase the diversity of the GLBTI community from countries as far apart as the Philippines and the Netherlands. "It also features a number of Australian-made movies that prove our local filmmakers are some of the world's best."

"Screen NSW proudly supports the 2015 Mardi Gras Film Festival. It is one of the biggest festivals for LGBTQI films in Australia and ranks in the top five such festivals globally. Each year the festival continues to grow, having increased its audience by 100% since 2013. The festival offers audiences the best of a selection of LGBTIQ films, featuring both domestic and international talent and reaching an audience of 15,000 over two weeks."

MEDIA CONTACT:

Matt Fraser: matt@cardinalspin.com.au P: 02 8065 7363, M: 0401 326 007
Amy Owen: amy@cardinalspin.com.au P: 02 8065 7363, M: 0404 977 338