

MEDIA RELEASE

Best of Mardi Gras Film Festival Returning to Parramatta!

Screening at Riverside Theatres 1 – 3 April 2016

11 March 2016: Riverside Theatres will host five of the best films of the 23rd Mardi Gras Film Festival presented by Queer Screen, as well as the winner of the prestigious *My Queer Career* awards, and a masterclass for local filmmakers, from 1 – 3 April 2016. Tickets are on sale now at queerscreen.org.au and riversideparramatta.com.au or through the Mardi Gras Film Festival app.

This year's Best of the Festival screenings include a range of moving documentaries and engaging feature films that will make audiences think, laugh, cry and swoon! Screenings include:

REMEMBERING THE MAN – a bittersweet documentary further exploring the relationship between Australians Timothy Conigrave and John Caleo as detailed in *Holding the Man*. This film was the winner of Most Popular Documentary at the Adelaide Film Festival. *Friday 1 April, 7pm.*

The winner of My Queer Career, Australia's largest LGBTIQ film prize, will be shown on Friday 1 April along with REMEMBERING THE MAN. This year the eight finalists are: Kate Halpin (*A PRIVATE MATTER*), Brian Fairbairn and Karl Eccleston (*DON'T CRY THOSE TEARS*), Tim Marshall (*FOLLOWERS*), Nathan Keene (*LITTLE BOY BLUE*), Stevie Cruz-Martin (*MARROW*), Joshua Longhurst (*OASIS*), Ben Southwell (*ON STAGE*), and Dannika Horvat (*THE SUMMER OF ABC BURNS*).

THE FIREFLY - Shocked by the sudden passing of her estranged brother, Lucia finds herself drawn to Mariana, her late brother's fiancée. As the two women bond over their shared grief, their connection grows deeper and feelings neither expected spring to the surface. This Colombian film is one of the most engaging films of this year's festival. *Saturday 2 April, 6pm.*

CHEMSEX - A fascinating and honest insight into the lives of modern gay men in the UK who engage in weekend-long, drug fueled orgies, a.k.a 'chemsex' or 'wired fun'. Participants hold nothing back and the documentary offers untouched, gritty and sometimes confronting point of view from a variety of lives within the London chemsex scene. *Saturday 2 April, 8pm.*

BARASH – Naama escapes her monotonous teenage life in small town Israel when self-assured Dana introduces her to Tel Aviv's lesbian clubs, but what will come of their turbulent fling? One of the best lesbian coming of age dramas in recent years. *Sunday 3 April 5pm.*

FRONT COVER - Ray a gay Chinese-American stylist who has distanced himself from his heritage finds himself clashing with his new client Ning a closeted actor. Their rocky start leads to a heated attraction with both of them forced to question why they hide their true selves in this light-hearted dramedy. *Sunday 3 April 7pm.*

In association with Screen NSW, the Australian award-winning Director of *DOWNRIVER*, Grant Scicluna, will host an industry forum for local filmmakers on



how to produce successful short films and develop a strategy for the film festival circuit.

“Mardi Gras Film Festival is a significant feature on the cinematic and cultural calendar of Sydney,” said Elizabeth L Kleinberg, cinema programmer for Riverside Theatres in Parramatta. *“Riverside is proud to have the festival returning to us in 2016 for its 8th year in a row. Western Sydney has a population that is as diverse and nuanced as that of any sophisticated major city in the world. Mardi Gras Film Festival joins a great line up of film festivals at Riverside such as Alliance Francaise French Film Festival, the Football Film Festival and the Sci-Fi Film Festival, allowing residents in Western Sydney to access a diverse array of cinematic experiences in their own back yard.”*

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