



QUEER SCREEN GOES TO CANNES WITH FIVE FILMS IN THE CAN

Australian non-profit first LGBTQIA+ festival invited to prestigious ‘film market’

8 May 2023: Queer Screen ‘Goes to Cannes’ and will be packing five work-in-progress productions to represent at the acclaimed Marché du Film, occurring in conjunction with the 76th Cannes Film Festival on the French Riviera this month.

Each year the Marché du Film offers renowned festivals the chance to showcase their selection of original work-in-progress feature titles to sales agents, distributors and festival programmers during the prestigious Cannes season. This year sees Queer Screen, producers of Sydney’s Mardi Gras Film Festival and Queer Screen Film Fest, joining the invitation-only line-up as the ‘Goes to Cannes’ programs first ever LGBTQIA+ and Australian partner.

Queer Screen’s festival director, Lisa Rose, said the invitation is an enormous honour and a testament to the organisation’s international standing. “We are thrilled about being chosen,” she said. “To be the first ever Australian and the first ever LGBTQIA+ film festival involved is something we are very proud of and I can’t wait to champion these films.”

Five festivals from across the globe were invited to curate five feature films that were still in post-production to showcase. Marché du Film attendees can view an extract from the films and see pitches from the filmmakers, at an in-person event and online.

Rose has hand-picked four Australian and one international production to showcase, including SUNFLOWER, a gay coming of age drama from Melbourne filmmaker Gabriel Carrubba. “Earlier this year we gave Sunflower \$15,000 from our completion fund,” Rose explained. “It’s the most we have ever awarded for a single project. To give emerging talent like Gabriel this opportunity on the global stage is very exciting.”

CLOSING NIGHT from filmmaker Timother Despina Marshall is a queer psychological horror that received \$8,000 from the Queer Screen Completion Fund in 2021. “Tim is a Mardi Gras Film Festival alumni,” Rose said. “Three of his films have been finalists in our My Queer Career short film competition, with Gorilla winning the 2013 Iris Prize, the largest in the world for LGBTQIA+ shorts.”

Dark comedy-drama TRIPLE OH! is a mid-length film/episodic featuring a superb Brooke Satchwell. “It’s funny and sexy,” Rose said. “I loved it when I saw it, and it’s so great to see director Poppy Stockell seamlessly deliver compelling narrative work after a much awarded factual career.”

Rounding out the Australian selections is ONE PERSON PROTEST from director Christopher Amos. It is the only documentary of the five films selected and is about Australian activist



Peter Tatchell. The filmmaker's previous film, *Hating Peter Tatchell*, screened at the 2022 Mardi Gras Film Festival winning the Audience Award for Best Documentary and is now available on Netflix. "I'm so pleased to continue to support Chris and his showcasing of Peter's vital activism."

The international project *THE QUEEN OF MY DREAMS* comes via Canada and Pakistan from writer/director Fawzia Mirza, who's making her feature directing debut after having many of her shorts screened at Queer Screen's festivals over the years. It tells the story of a Pakistani Muslim woman, and her Canadian-born daughter coming of age in two different eras.

"Fawzia was a guest at our most recent festival in February and I knew she was toiling away in post while she was here, so I jumped at the chance to offer her this opportunity, as we don't see enough queer Muslim stories on screen," Rose said.

Queer Screens selections will be shown on Saturday 20 May 2023 at 4:30pm at Palais K, with filmmakers pitching in person or via recorded video. The film extracts and pitches will also be available online for Marché du Film attendees to view the following day.

- Lisa Rose, festival director, is available for interviews.
- Directors of all five films should be available for interviews on request.
- Images are also available.

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Note to Editors:

2023 is the eleventh edition of the Goes to Cannes program at the Marché du Film. The Marché du Film is held in conjunction with the Cannes Film Festival and this year it will showcase 4,000 films and projects from 121 countries, at more than 100 conferences and events for over 12,500 industry professionals.

Queer Screen will be joined by Festival de Málaga, Hong Kong Industry's Asia Film Financing Forum, Spanish Screenings and the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival in the Goes to Cannes program this year.

Film Details:

SUNFLOWER

A seventeen-year-old boy struggles to understand and embrace his sexuality as he comes of age in the working class suburbs on Melbourne's edge.

Director: Gabriele Carrubba

Producers: Gabriel Carrubba, Zane Borg



Production Company: Pancake Originals

Country: Australia

CLOSING NIGHT

When his life falls apart, a young queer theatre actor, poised to play the lead in *The Glass Menagerie*, must reckon with his demons and fight for survival while trapped in a hotel room with a sinister presence.

Director: Timothy Despina Marshall

Producers: Bec Dakin, Timothy Despina Marshall

Production Companies: B&T Films, Orange Entertainment Co.

Country: Australia

TRIPLE OH!

A dark comedy-drama following the lives of two ambulance paramedics, as they save lives in absurd medical emergencies. Their personalities clash and are tested when street-smart Tayls introduces by-the-book Cate to her unconventional policy of having sex when a patient dies.

Director: Poppy Stockell

Writer: Erica Harrison

Producers: Poppy Stockell, Alexandra Galloway, Tamasin Simpkin

Production Company: Sirius Pictures

Country: Australia

ONE PERSON PROTEST

One Person Protest is an observational undercover documentary following 73-year-old human rights activist Peter Tatchell's daring mission to protest at the 2018 FIFA World Cup to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ injustice in Russia and Chechnya.

Director: Christopher Amos

Producer: Christopher Amos

Production Company: Chrysaor

Countries: Australia, UK, Russia

THE QUEEN OF MY DREAMS

Azra, a queer Pakistani woman living in Toronto, is at odds with her conservative Muslim mother. The sudden death of her father in Pakistan sends Azra on a Bollywood-inspired journey through memories real and imagined, from her mother's youth in Karachi to her own coming-of-age in rural Canada.

Director/Writer: Fawzia Mirza

Producers: Andria Wilson Mirza, Fawzia Mirza, Jason Levangie, Marc Tetreault

Production Companies: Baby Daal Productions & Shut Up & Colour Pictures

Countries: Canada, Pakistan