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## BRISBANE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SET TO RETURN IN 2017

The Brisbane International Film Festival is set to return in 2017 with an invigorated screening program, the support of the Queensland Government through Screen Queensland and the expertise of industry partner Palace Cinemas.

The Brisbane International Film Festival, to be held from August 17 – September 3, will be co-directed by experienced film curator Richard Sowada and Brisbane's Maxine Williamson, previously Film Director of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards and the Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival.

Palace Cinemas will host BIFF at its two Brisbane locations and will also provide infrastructure support to the organisation.

"I haven't seen a period of more change, excitement and challenge in the film industry than in the last 18 months" says BIFF Co-Director Richard Sowada. "A breaking down of creative and business territoriality and a real sense of political and artistic immediacy has changed the face of what a festival needs to be and what audiences expect from cinema. Being part of the new BIFF team and bringing that freshness, excitement and creative propulsion to Brisbane in a reinvigorated event is thrilling for me - and I hope for audiences."

Co-director Maxine Williamson said: "I am so happy we are 'rebooting the BIFF!' - Brisbane's iconic and popular world film festival with an international reputation for showcasing new and emergent talent, award-winners from the circuit and crowd-pleasers from across the globe. We will continue BIFF's long legacy of presenting films that expand our hearts and minds, that educate us about our region and closest neighbours, that comment on what cinema is and can be. The 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of BIFF provides an important platform for filmmakers to present their artistic responses to what is happening in their worlds. I look forward to engaging with industry in a meaningful way and to contribute to the growth of this vibrant creative arts sector. As a Brissie girl I am happy to play a part in this celebratory reboot."

Screen Queensland CEO Tracey Vieira welcomed the new iteration of BIFF to the state's 2017 calendar of film festivals.

"It is wonderful to see a flagship international film festival once again taking place in Brisbane," Ms Vieira said.

"It is envisioned that the new BIFF will be an annual event. Screen Queensland's investment, along with the festival's solid partnership with Palace Cinemas, will help to ensure the 2017 event is a success, and will pave the way for future BIFFS," she said.

Palace Cinemas founder Antonio Zeccola said: "It's a great honour for Palace Cinemas to be associated with such an important and highly regarded event as BIFF and play host to their screening

program as a principle partner. For a city the size and sophistication of Brisbane an international film festival is an essential element in the cultural mix and we're keen to do what we can to facilitate and explore these great cinematic possibilities".

Mr Sowada and Ms Williamson said that the 2017 Festival will be the forerunner of an event that continues to build in the years to come. The 2017 program will screen around 60 international and Australian films and will include collaborations with existing Queensland screen culture organisations including the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA), a Queensland Short Film Competition, a free family event, national and international guests, talks, panels and seminars.

[www.biff.net.au](http://www.biff.net.au)

#BIFF2017

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**Media enquiries:**

Tracey Mair or Jillian Heggie

TM Publicity

Ph: 02 8333 9066 or 0419 221 493

