

INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL OF MELBOURNE ANNOUNCES DATES AND EMBRACES 'INCLUSION' AS ITS 2018 THEME

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) – the southern hemisphere's greatest annual celebration of Indian cinema – today announces details for their much anticipated 2018 program.

Taking place from **10 - 22 August** under the unifying theme of **'Inclusion'**, this year's Festival offers all Australians the opportunity to explore the richness and diversity of contemporary Indian cinema, from Bollywood box-office hits, documentaries and art-house premieres, to a Bollywood dance competition and master classes with key figures from the Indian film industry.

Minister for Creative Industries, **Martin Foley** said *"The Victorian Government is proud to support the return of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne - this year with the powerful theme of inclusion. More than just a celebration of cinema, the festival continues to build on the strong ties between Australia and India through its dynamic screen program and its outreach to Melbourne's diverse communities."*



IFFM Director **Mitu Bhowmick Lange** is thrilled to announce BMW as the sponsor of the **2018 BMW Short Film Competition**, providing an invaluable platform for aspiring and emerging filmmakers to showcase their work. The winning entry will be shown at screenings throughout the festival, and the winning filmmakers will be flown across the globe: the Australian winner to India, and the Indian winner to Australia.

IFFM Director **Mitu Bhowmick-Lange** commented: *"It's a delight to have BMW come on board as sponsor of this important competition that offers a real gateway to Indian and Australia filmmakers to stellar careers."*



BMW Group Australia CEO, **Marc Werner**, commented: *"BMW Australia is proud to partner with The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne and to showcase emerging local and international filmmakers through the 2018 BMW Short Film Competition."*

Judging the award will be IFFM Special Guest, and acclaimed actor **Ali Fazal**, named by Variety as one of '10 actors to watch in 2017'. Faizal's recent credits include the lead role of Abdul opposite Judi Dench's Queen Victoria in *Victoria and Abdul*, and the Bollywood blockbuster *3 Idiots*.

"I am thrilled to be a part of IFFM 2018. This will be my first time at the festival and I am honoured to be on the jury for the short film competition. It's great to know that we will get to see some wonderful work by talent from across India and filmmakers down under." Ali Faizal

Past winners of the IFFM Short Film Competition have gone on to stellar careers, including 2013 winner Jehan Ratnatunga, currently working at YouTube in Los Angeles, and 2011 winner Varun Sharma, who has taken up a role at leading Indian production company Yash Raj Films.

The Festival is seeking short film submissions of 10 minutes or less that reflect the theme of *'Inclusion'*. Entry is free and the winners will be announced by July 31. Closing date for entries is June 30, 2018. IFFM 2018 is accepting entries via FilmFreeway.

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne was established in 2012 as an initiative of the Victorian Government and has established itself as an important part of State's cultural calendar. In 2016, the festival was honoured . with the much respected Melbourne Award for contribution in Multiculturalism.

2018 Indian Film Festival of Melbourne dates: 10 August – 22 August

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