

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP
Minister for Housing
Minister for Water
Minister for Equality



Thursday, 9 November 2023

FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES REMARKABLE LGBTIQA+ STORIES

Australia's oldest, largest and longest running queer film festival kicks off in Melbourne today, proudly supported by the Allan Labor Government.

The Melbourne Queer Film Festival plays a vital role in providing a forum for celebration, visibility and advocacy - and recognises the immense talent, dedication and passion of our LGBTIQA+ communities.

The festival is in one of the most important platforms for Queer cinema in the world with a diverse program of captivating stories, events and discussions that educate and reflect the remarkable experiences, achievements and strength of LGBTIQA+ people across Victoria, Australia and the world.

Supported by the Labor Government's *Pride Events and Festivals Fund*, with an investment of \$250,000 since 2019/20, the film festival has also received funding from Victoria's creative and economic screen development agency, VicScreen through their Audience Engagement Program.

Running from 9 November until 19 November, this year's program features a diverse array of LGBTIQA+ stories, including 50 feature films and 17 documentaries, 11 short film packages, three world premieres, 26 Australian premieres and 19 Victorian premieres.

The festival kicks off with the Australian Premiere of Filipino coming-out story *I Love You, Beksman (2022)* at the Astor – with all tickets including access to MQFF's Opening Night Party.

Other films include the Victorian premiere of *Centrepiece – Marinette (2023)*, a biopic exploring the life of iconic French lesbian soccer player Marinette Pichon, and the Victorian premiere of *All of Us Strangers (2023)*, a London-based queer love story starring Andrew Scott and Paul Mescal.

The festival's venue partners include the Astor, Village Cinemas Jam Factory, KINO, Cinema Nova, and the Victorian Pride Centre Rooftop - where MQFF will host an outdoor cinema.

To find the full program or purchase tickets visit mqff.com.au/.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"For more than 33 years the Melbourne Queer Film Festival has provided a platform for LGBTIQA+ people to share their remarkable stories and experiences - and I encourage Victorians everywhere to get involved in this year's festival."

Quote attributable to Commissioner for LGBTIQA+ Communities Dr Todd Fernando

"This festival is a vibrant, affirming and powerful celebration of our diverse rainbow communities, and creates fantastic opportunities for all Victorians and visitors to learn about LGBTIQA+ experiences."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Queer Film Festival CEO David Martin Harris

"Audiences can again enjoy a range of narratives and cutting-edge documentaries from Australia and around the globe, right here in Melbourne. All are welcome – we're serving everything from campy comedy to moving drama, but overall, you can expect an abundance of joy from this year's MQFF."

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