

## MEDIA RELEASE

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[www.screenaustralia.gov.au](http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au)

### Thirteen Australian documentaries selected for IDFA

**Monday 19 October 2009:** Thirteen Australian documentaries will screen at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) when the festival kicks off on 19 November.

A record seven Australian films have been selected to screen in the Competition section of the festival.

*Contact* (w/d/p: **Bentley Dean, Martin Butler**) and *The Miscreants of Taliwood* (d: **George Gittoes**, p: **Gabrielle Dalton**) have been selected to screen in the prestigious Feature-Length Documentary Competition with *The Snowman* (w/d: **Juliet Lamont**, p: **Dylan Blowen, Rachel Landers**) and *Stolen* (w/d: **Violeta Ayala, Dan Fallshaw**, p: **Tom Zubrycki**) selected in Competition for First Appearance. *The Matilda Candidate* (w/d/p: **Curtis Levy**, p: **Helen Panckhurst**) will screen in Competition in the Mid-Length Documentary section. Screening in the Short Documentary Competition section are *My Uncle Bluey* (w/d: **Britt Arthur**, p: **James Grandison**) and *Salt* (d/p: **Michael Angus**, d: **Murray Fredericks**).

This is the first time that seven Australian films have been selected to screen in Competition since IDFA began in 1988.

Four Australian films will screen in the Non-Competitive programs of IDFA. *A Good Man* (w/d/p: **Safina Uberoi**, p: **Himman Dhamija, Jenny Day**) will be presented in the Reflecting Images – Best of Fests section. The Reflecting Images – Panorama program will feature *Indonesia Calling: Joris Ivens in Australia* (w/d/p: **John Hughes**, p: **Andrea Foxworthy**), *I, Psychopath* (w/d: **Ian Walker**, p: **Sally Regan**) and *Strange Birds in Paradise – A West Papuan Story* (d: **Charlie Hill-Smith**, p: **Jamie Nicolai, John Cherry**).

Two Australian projects, *Big Stories, Small Towns* (d: **Jeni Lee, Sieh Mchawala**, p: **Martin Potter**) and *Trendsmap.com* (p: **John Barratt**), will feature as part of DOCLAB – a new program section investigating the relationship between new media, web culture and documentary.

“IDFA’s selection of these 13 projects reflects the diversity of Australia’s documentary filmmaking,” said **Kathleen Drumm**, Head of Marketing at Screen Australia. “It is deeply pleasing to see the non-fiction work of Australian practitioners continue to strike a chord with local and international audiences.”

IDFA was founded to stimulate the national and international documentary culture. Over the last 21 years, IDFA has developed into the largest documentary film festival in the world.

The International Documentary Festival Amsterdam runs 19–29 November 2009.

### **A Good Man**

(79 mins)

European Premiere

Writer/Director: Safina Uberoi

Producers: Safina Uberoi, Himman Dhamija, Jenny Day

Production Company: Divana Films

International Sales: Films Transit

Synopsis: *A Good Man* tells the story of a struggling Australian farmer, his incurably quadriplegic wife, their newborn baby and their plans to open a brothel in a small country town.

### **Big Stories, Small Towns**

(90 mins)

International Premiere

[www.bigstories.com.au](http://www.bigstories.com.au)

Directors: Jeni Lee, Sieh Mchawala

Producer: Martin Potter

Production Companies: Media Resource Centre, Screen Australia National Interest Program

Synopsis: A multi-platform online project that tells the story of the country town of Port Augusta, South Australia, through the eyes of its long-term residents.

### **Contact**

(78 mins)

International Premiere

[www.contactfilms.com.au](http://www.contactfilms.com.au)

Writers/Directors: Bentley Dean, Martin Butler

Producers: Bentley Dean, Martin Butler

Production Company: Contact Films

International Sales: ABC Commercial

Synopsis: Yuwali was just 17 when her fully traditional lifestyle ended with the arrival of patrol officers from Woomera. A space rocket, the Blue Streak, was to be fired at her home. Her group of 20 had never seen or heard of white people, and the chase and contact were all filmed and photographed. Survivors on both sides of the clash of cultures tell the intimate story of *Contact*.

### **I, Psychopath**

(83 mins)

European Premiere

[www.i-psychopath.com](http://www.i-psychopath.com)

Writer/Director: Ian Walker

Producer: Sally Regan

Production Company: Fibro Majestic

International Sales: Off The Fence BV

Synopsis: Psychopaths ... they'll charm you, manipulate you, then ruin your life. But not all of them with a gun or a knife. In this extraordinary documentary, suspected psychopath Sam Vaknin goes in search of a diagnosis ... was he born without a conscience?

### **Indonesia Calling: Joris Ivens in Australia**

(90 mins)

International Premiere

[www.earlyworks.com.au/films/project/indonesia-calling-joris-ivens-in-australia](http://www.earlyworks.com.au/films/project/indonesia-calling-joris-ivens-in-australia)

Writer/Director: John Hughes

Producers: John Hughes, Andrea Foxworthy

Production Company: Early Works

International Sales: Early Works

Synopsis: In 1946, celebrated Dutch documentarian Joris Ivens defied his government and released a radical film supporting Indonesian independence. This feature documentary revisits Australia's early relationship to its northern neighbour, and the impact of this small film on Australian filmmaking.

**The Matilda Candidate**

(57 mins)

International Premiere

Writer/Director: Curtis Levy

Producers: Curtis Levy, Helen Panckhurst

Production Company: Olsen Levy Productions

International Sales: Olsen Levy Productions

Synopsis: *The Matilda Candidate* follows filmmaker Curtis Levy's comedic personal journey to prove that Waltzing Matilda should become the national anthem. Levy stands for parliament on the platform that Waltzing Matilda should become the Australian anthem when we become a republic. During his campaign Levy uncovers the surprising history behind the song, and looks at whether the Australian peoples' passion for the song means that they are capable of embracing the true values of a republic.

**The Miscreants of Taliwood**

(92 mins)

European Premiere

[www.gittoes-dalton-films.com](http://www.gittoes-dalton-films.com)

Director: George Gittoes

Producer: Gabrielle Dalton

Production Company: Gittoes & Dalton Productions

International Sales: SBS Content Sales

Synopsis: Maverick director George Gittoes' 'Extreme Tour of Terror Central' – a totally surprising, sometimes funny, sometimes terrifying journey into the forbidden zones of Pakistan's North-West Frontier.

**My Uncle Bluey**

(17 mins)

International Premiere

[www.myunclebluey.com](http://www.myunclebluey.com)

Writer/Director: Britt Arthur

Producer: James Grandison

International Sales: James Grandison

Synopsis: A filmmaker's personal story about her estranged Uncle Bluey – a white man who found his home in a remote Aboriginal community.

**Salt**

(28 mins)

[www.saltdoco.com](http://www.saltdoco.com)

Directors: Michael Angus, Murray Fredericks

Producer: Michael Angus

Production Company: Jerrycan Films

International Sales: Jerrycan Films

Synopsis: *Salt* is the short documentary of photographer Murray Fredericks' extreme journeys to capture the heart of the world's most desolate landscape on Lake Eyre, in the remote north of South Australia.

**The Snowman**

(79 mins)

World Premiere

Writer/Director: Juliet Lamont

Producers: Dylan Blowen, Rachel Landers

Production Company: Pony Films

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International Sales: Pony Films Pty Ltd

Synopsis: In 1978, Jimmy Graham went to Antarctica with Operation Deep Freeze to train scientists in survival skills on the ice. He left in December of that year. Three months later he arrived back agitated and paranoid. He said that he had stumbled onto an illegal American nuclear site and that the CIA had given him a chemical lobotomy. He descended into madness. Unable to cope with his frightening behaviour, his wife fled with their two children. Now, 30 years later, his daughter Juliet will try to uncover the truth and reconnect with what's left of the man she called her father.

**Stolen**

(77 mins)

European Premiere

Writers/Directors/Co-producers: Violeta Ayala, Dan Fallshaw

Producer: Tom Zubrycki

Production Companies: BIC Productions, United Notions Film

International Sales: The Film Sales Company

Synopsis: Australian filmmakers Violeta Ayala and Dan Fallshaw go to the Polisario-governed refugee camps in the Algerian desert to make a film about a family reunion. Everything changes when the black Saharawis start to talk about a different subject ... their freedom.

**Strange Birds in Paradise – A West Papuan Story**

(75 mins)

World Premiere

[www.strangebirds.com.au](http://www.strangebirds.com.au)

Director: Charlie Hill-Smith

Producers: Jamie Nicolai, John Cherry

Production Company: The House of Red Monkey

International Sales: The House of Red Monkey

Synopsis: An expedition of imagination and discovery to the hidden Indonesian province of West Papua that exposes its sad history and desperate hopes, but culminates in a joyful and defiant musical celebration.

**Trendsmap.com**

[www.trendsmap.com](http://www.trendsmap.com)

Producer: John Barratt

Production Company: Stateless Systems

Synopsis: *Trendsmap.com* is a real-time mapping of Twitter trends across the world. See what the global, collective mass of humanity are discussing right now.