

MIFF REGIONAL RETURNS: MUST-SEE FESTIVAL TITLES AND CURATED TALKS TOUR VICTORIA ACROSS TWO CINEMATIC WEEKENDS, AND MIFF ONLINE STREAMING ACROSS AUSTRALIA



But Also John Clarke

Press Release
Tuesday 22 July

Dates
7 August to 24 August

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Media Centre
[MIFF 2025](#)

Media Contact
Caitlyn Miles
caitlyn@commonstate.co
+61 4 3373 2850

Leigh-Anne Ramirez
leigh-anne@commonstate.co
+61 4 3935 3407

Returning in August for its 73rd edition, the Melbourne International Film Festival is once again hitting the road with the MIFF Regional showcase, bringing a curated selection of titles from its expansive 2025 program to screens throughout regional Victoria across the festival weekends of 15–17 and 22–24 August.

From local titles to international standouts, the **MIFF Regional** program will feature some of the most anticipated titles from the 2025 slate. Audiences will also have the chance to meet the filmmakers behind some of this year's standout new works fresh from their world premieres at MIFF.

Continuing to reach film-lovers far and wide and meeting audiences where they are, the festival will take to cinemas across nine locations, with festival venues in **Ballarat** (Showbiz Cinema), **Bendigo** (Star Cinema – Eaglehawk), **Castlemaine** (Theatre Royal), **Geelong** (Village Cinemas and The Pivotonian), **Morwell** (Village Cinemas), **Rosebud** (Peninsula Cinemas), **Sale** (Sale Cinema) and **Shepparton** (Village Cinemas). Proudly supported by VicScreen and Screen Australia, MIFF Regional brings the spirit of the festival to film-lovers beyond the city – celebrating storytelling, community, and the shared experience of cinema.

Meanwhile, **MIFF Online** will offer digital access to a limited suite of festival films and free shorts, available Australia-wide via the ACMI Cinema 3 streaming platform – extending the MIFF experience past festival dates and into homes across the country from **15-31 August**.

Artistic Director, Al Cossar says: "It's with great pleasure that we unveil the MIFF Regional program for 2025, set to bring the buzz of this year's festival essentials through nine cinemas regionally. Spanning an in-cinema highlights program of

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international festival blockbusters and new Australian cinema alongside special visits by attending filmmakers, as well as at-home streaming titles available across the country, MIFF Regional and MIFF Online takes this year's must-see cinema far beyond Melbourne, in a festival for all Victorians."

MIFF PREMIERE FUND AND OTHER LOCAL TITLES

Following their festival premieres in Melbourne, select filmmakers from this year's MIFF Premiere Fund films will travel to the regions, bringing their powerful stories to film-lovers across Victoria.

This year's local slate includes the intimate portrait of the iconic **John Clarke** as told by his daughter, **Lorin Clarke**. Screening as the MIFF Regional opening night film across various communities, the film weaves together personal anecdotes, a rich television archive, tales from international comedy greats and riches from more than 200 boxes of Clarke's work and letters, **But Also John Clarke** presents a deeply personal insight into a legend of the antipodean screen and beloved family man.

After its debut in competition at Visions du Réel, **Iron Winter** delivers a mesmerising documentary from **Kasimir Burgess** (*Franklin*, MIFF 2022). Capturing the fading tradition of horse herding in Mongolia and the intersection of rural life and modern technology, this real-life story of camaraderie and survival is a remarkable window into the breathtaking and forbidding Tsakhir Valley, as well as the immediate threats posed by catastrophic climate change.



First Light

From celebrated Filipino-Australian photographer **James J. Robinson** comes his feature debut and **Bright Horizons Competition** selected film, **First Light** – a slow-burn crime drama that pairs masterfully composed imagery and a piercing interrogation of faith.

Elsewhere, **Careless**, the latest project from award-winning filmmaker **Sue Thomson** is a funny and moving documentary that follows elderly people's fight to grow old their way. The film offers a warm, insightful and energetic exploration of a problem that touches us all.

Other MIFF Premiere Fund titles include **Kalu Oji's** feature debut, **Pasa Faho**, starring beloved Nigerian stand-up comedian **Okey Bakassi**, and the heart-warming **Spreadsheet Champions** by **Kristina Kraskov**, an observational documentary following six young people as they channel their dreams into a competition with a difference: a test of their elite mastery of Microsoft Excel.

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Further local highlights include **Journey Home**, **David Gulpilil**, a deeply moving tribute to an icon of Australian cinema by **Trisha Morton-Thomas** and **Maggie Miles** and **Deeper**, the latest feature by Australian documentarian **Jennifer Peedom**, featuring Thai cave rescue hero and 2019 Australian of the Year, Richard "Harry" Harris.



Footy Shorts: A House Divided

MIFF Regional will also play host to **Footy Shorts**, a special screening event presented by MIFF and the AFL – with support from VicScreen – that unites two of Melbourne's great loves: film and football. Spotlighting the experiences and voices that continue to shape Australian culture, the collection shines a light on five compelling stories often sidelined in mainstream sports narratives. The selected titles include **Bush Boots** by producers/writers/directors **Kynan Clarke** and **Isabel Dilena**, a heartwarming celebration of Indigenous footy kids and the community role models guiding them; **House Divided**, inspired by filmmaker siblings **Danielle** and **Lachlan Baynes's** own story of intra-family AFL rivalry; writer/director **Ramas McRae's** **Eye of the Game: The Deaf Ruckman**, the inspiring story of **Ryan Emerson**, a deaf ruckman who defies expectations in a sport where communication is key; **Breaking the Line: The Peta Searle Story** by director/editor **Grace Anna Cardona**, which traces a trailblazing coach's rise and **No Prior Opportunity** by writer/director **Alexandra Walton**, which delivers a funny, heartfelt and powerful tribute to AFL umpires.

Each selected project received \$20,000 in production funding from VicScreen along with mentorship from industry leaders across MIFF, VicScreen and the AFL.

INTERNATIONAL TITLES

A suite of international films will round out the program, delivering standout titles directly from the global festival circuit.

Highlights include **DJ Ahmet** by **Georgi Unkovski**, a charming coming-of-age story about finding your place in a world where tradition and modernity collide. Thoughtful and timely, the film explores the tension between cultural expectations and the digital age – a resonant story for anyone who's ever questioned where they belong.

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From MIFF's Headliners strand comes one of Sundance's most talked about debuts, ***Sorry, Baby*** – a funny, gentle and nuanced look at what it means to survive. The A24-backed dramedy offers a funny, tender and nuanced portrait of survival and self-discovery, with writer/director/star **Eva Victor** delivering a breakout performance as Agnes.

From comedy veterans **Tim Key** and **Tom Basden**, alongside director **James Griffiths**, ***The Ballad of Wallis Island*** revisits the premise of their 2007 short film. Now expanded into a wry and charming feature and starring Carey Mulligan, the film resists romantic clichés and delivers full comic charm.



The Ballad of Wallis Island

Nine years in the making, ***Seeds*** by **Brittany Shyne** is the Sundance-winning portrait of Black generational farmers that captures the weight of history, the fragility of legacy and the flux of contemporary America. Affecting and deeply humanistic, the film brings a distinctive meditation on the decline of generational farming and the shifts of American history.

For music and film fans alike, the MIFF Regional program also delivers a selection of the latest music documentaries. ***The Extraordinary Miss Flower*** blends film, performance and fever dream as it unearths the tale of Australia's **Geraldine Flower**, whose 60s-era letters inspired a new album by **Emiliana Torrini**, with moving and hilarious readings by **Nick Cave**, **Richard Ayoade** and **Angus Sampson**. ***Pavements*** sees **Alex Ross Perry** dive deep into the offbeat legacy of cult indie-rock band Pavement through a genre-bending, tongue-in-cheek homage. Meanwhile, ***Marlon Williams: Two Worlds – Ngā Ao E Rua*** charts the beloved Aotearoa artist's most personal creative evolution yet – recording an album entirely in te reo Māori across four transformative years.

MIFF FILMMAKER Q&A's

Bringing the festival flare to the regions, MIFF will also take the much-loved cinema Q&A's on tour with a curated line-up of filmmakers, offering regional audiences the chance to hear from the creatives first-hand.

Among them is ***First Light***, the masterfully shot debut from acclaimed Filipino-Australian photographer **James J. Robinson**. The film will screen in **Geelong** at **The Pivotonian** on **Friday 15 August**, with both Robinson and producer **Gabrielle Pearson** in attendance for a special in-conversation event. Robinson will also appear at **Ballarat's Showbiz Cinemas** on **Sunday 17 August**, while Pearson will meet audiences at **Geelong's Village Cinemas** on **Saturday 23 August**.

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Additionally, lauded Australian director **Sue Thomson** (*Under Cover*, MIFF 2022) will be in attendance following Castlemaine's Theatre Royal screening of *Careless* on Saturday 23 August to take part in a timely Q&A about the film discussing Australia's developing aged care crisis.



The full MIFF Regional program can be explored via the MIFF website or on each of the local cinema sites. Tickets are now on sale and available to purchase directly from local cinemas.

NOTES TO EDITOR

- MIFF 2025 runs 7–24 August in metro Naarm/Melbourne cinemas
- MIFF Regional runs 15-17 and 22-24 August with screenings in Ballarat (Showbiz Cinemas), Bendigo (Star Cinema, Eaglehawk), Castlemaine (Theatre Royal), Geelong (Village and Pivotonian), Rosebud (Peninsula Cinemas), Morwell (Village), Sale (Sale Cinema) and Shepparton (Village)
- A limited selection of festival highlights and short film packages will be available digitally across Australia from August 15-31 through MIFF Online – streaming via ACMI and on sale from Tuesday 15 July. Book and watch via ACMI's dedicated streaming platform Cinema 3. Short films screen for free and feature films are paid for on-demand.
- Tickets are on sale now on sale via participating local cinemas.
- Visit miff.com.au to explore the full program

MIFF REGIONAL VENUES

Ballarat – Showbiz Cinemas
Bendigo – Star Cinema, Eaglehawk
Castlemaine – Theatre Royal
Geelong – The Pivotonian & Village Cinemas
Morwell – Village Cinemas
Rosebud – Peninsula Cinemas
Sale – Sale Cinema
Shepparton – Village Cinemas

More information at miff.com.au/regional-venues

MIFF REGIONAL PROGRAM

Ballarat – Showbiz Cinema

- *Birthright*
- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Careless*
- *Deeper*
- *DJ Ahmet*
- *First Light*
- *Journey Home, David Gulpilil*
- *One More Shot*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*

Bendigo – Star Cinema

- *Birthright*
- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Careless*
- *Deeper*
- *DJ Ahmet*
- *Iron Winter*
- *Journey Home, David Gulpilil*
- *Looking for Alibrandi*
- *Marlon Williams: Two Worlds - Ngā Ao E Rua*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Pavements*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*
- *The Extraordinary Miss Flower*
- *The Golden Spurtle*

Castlemaine – Theatre Royal

- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Careless*
- *Deeper*
- *DJ Ahmet*
- *Dreams (Sex Love)*
- *First Light*
- *Greetings from Mars*
- *Iron Winter*
- *Journey Home, David Gulpilil*
- *One More Shot*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Pavements*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*

Geelong – The Pivotonian Cinema

- *DJ Ahmet*
- *First Light*
- *Footy Shorts*
- *Iron Winter*
- *Journey Home: David Gulpilil*
- *Marlon Williams: Two Worlds - Ngā Ao E Rua*
- *Mistress Dispeller*
- *One More Shot*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Pavements*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*

- *The Extraordinary Miss Flower*
- *The Golden Spurtle*
- *Workmates*

Geelong – Village Cinemas

- *But Also John Clarke*
- *First Light*
- *Marlon Williams: Two Worlds - Ngā Ao E Rua*
- *One More Shot*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Pavements*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*
- *The Golden Spurtle*

Morwell – Village Cinemas

- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Careless*
- *One More Shot*
- *Pavements*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*

Rosebud – Peninsula Cinemas

- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Careless*
- *Deeper*
- *DJ Ahmet*
- *Iron Winter*
- *Journey Home, David Gulpilil*
- *One More Shot*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Pavements*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*
- *The Golden Spurtle*

Sale – Sale Cinema

- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Deeper*
- *DJ Ahmet*
- *Journey Home: David Gulpilil*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Seeds*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*
- *The Golden Spurtle*

Shepparton – Village Cinemas

- *But Also John Clarke*
- *Chain Reactions*
- *First Light*
- *Marlon Williams: Two Worlds - Ngā Ao E Rua*
- *One More Shot*
- *Pasa Faho*
- *Pavements*
- *Sorry, Baby*
- *Spreadsheet Champions*
- *The Ballad of Wallis Island*