

Screen Australia celebrates Australian projects bound for Cannes Film Festival 2024

Wednesday 24 April 2024: Three Australian titles have been selected for the 77th Festival de Cannes in France, which runs from 14 - 25 May 2024. Making their respective world premieres are [Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga](#), [The Surfer](#) and [Withered Blossoms](#).

Screen Australia's CEO **Deirdre Brennan** said, "We are thrilled by the selection of such a diverse range of films for Cannes 2024. From the highly-anticipated feature *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga* by George Miller – one of Australia's most successful filmmakers; Robert Connolly's *The Surfer* an Irish/Australian co-production filmed in Western Australia; and *Withered Blossoms*, a compelling short film crafted from our emerging filmmakers. This is a remarkable achievement and a testament to the strength of our world-class screen industry. Our sincere congratulations to the creative teams involved, we can't wait for global audiences to engage with these brilliant films."

Academy Award-winning writer/director George Miller will unveil his next action adventure, *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga* with an Out of Competition gala screening at the Grand Théâtre Lumière on 15 May. The film stars Anya Taylor-Joy, Chris Hemsworth and Tom Burke, with much of the filming taking place in regional NSW.

The NSW Government's Made in NSW fund and PDV Rebate and the Federal Government's Producer Offset helped to secure the production, and to date, is the biggest film ever to be made in Australia.

Director **George Miller** said "The idea of this prequel has been with me for over a decade. I couldn't be more thrilled to return to the Festival de Cannes - along with Anya, Chris and Tom - to share *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*."

Irish/Australian Co-production *The Surfer* will screen in the Festival's Midnights section, and is a gritty and intensely unnerving psychological thriller about community, tribalism, ownership and masculinity-in-crisis. Directed by Lorcan Finnegan (*Vivarium*), written by Thomas Martin and starring Nicolas Cage, the film was shot in a single location in Yallingup in Western Australia.

Producer **Robert Connolly** said "It is wonderful to receive such prestigious recognition for the work of so many talented creatives, cast and crew. I'm thrilled for director Lorcan Finnegan who has made an incredible work of cinema."

Australian talent in front of and behind the camera is further represented across the Cannes Film Festival this year, with the selection of *Withered Blossoms* in the La Cinéf strand. From the creative talents of AFTRS (Australian Film Television and Radio School) students, the short film is a poignant drama directed and written by Lionel Seah, and produced by Miki Clarke. Featuring Rachel Young and Stella Ye, the narrative follows a young woman confronting her grandmother's struggle with ageing after hiding her own separation from her long-term partner. Spoken in English and Cantonese, this self-financed project showcases the burgeoning diverse and multilingual talent emerging from Australia's film industry.

Producer **Miki Clarke** and Director **Lionel Seah** said, "We're thrilled that *Withered Blossoms* has been selected in competition for the Cannes Film Festival. As a summer holiday film, fuelled with nothing but passion, this achievement underscores the power of our close-knit team and grassroots filmmaking. We extend a special thank you to Screen Australia, DCP Australia, Trackdown Studios and AFTRS for their support in bringing this deeply personal yet universally resonant film to life."

The Cannes Film Festival is one of the world's most prestigious and competitive international film festivals, and is an invaluable platform for filmmakers and artists to launch their film to the international market. Australian films that have screened in the Cannes Film Festival across its programmes in the past include *The New Boy* (2023), *The Stranger* (2022) and *Elvis* (2022).

A full history of Australian titles at Cannes is available [here](#).

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MEDIA RELEASE

ENDS

Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga

Screening Section: Out of Competition Gala

Production company: Kennedy Miller Mitchell

Director: George Miller

Writers: George Miller and Nick Lathouris

Producers: George Miller, Doug Mitchell

Executive Producer: Dean Hood

Cast: Anya Taylor-Joy, Chris Hemsworth, Tom Burke, Lachy Hulme, Charlee Fraser, Alyla Browne, Angus Sampson

Australian Distributor: Universal Pictures

Production credit: Miller's behind-the-scenes creative team includes first assistant director PJ Voeten and second unit director and stunt coordinator Guy Norris, director of photography Simon Duggan, composer Tom Holkenborg, sound designer Robert Mackenzie, editor Eliot Knapman, visual effects supervisor Andrew Jackson and colorist Eric Whipp. The team also includes other longtime collaborators: production designer Colin Gibson, editor Margaret Sixel, sound mixer Ben Osmo, costume designer Jenny Beavan and makeup designer Lesley Vanderwalt, each of whom won an Oscar for their work on Mad Max: Fury Road.

Synopsis: As the world fell, young Furiosa is snatched from the Green Place of Many Mothers and falls into the hands of a great Biker Horde led by the Warlord Dementus. Sweeping through the Wasteland they come across the Citadel presided over by The Immortan Joe. While the two Tyrants war for dominance, Furiosa must survive many trials as she puts together her the means to find her way home.

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The Surfer

Screening Section: Midnight Screenings

Production companies: Arenamedia, Lovely Productions, Tea Shop Productions, Gramercy Park Media

Director: Lorcan Finnegan

Writer: Thomas Martin

Producers: Robert Connolly, James Grandison, Brunella Cocchiglia, Leonora Darby, James Harris, Nicolas Cage, Nathan Klingher

Executive Producers: Robert Patterson, Lorcan Finnegan, Apur Parikh, Mark Lane

Cast: Nicolas Cage, Julian McMahon, Nic Cassim, Miranda Tapsell, Alexander Bertrand, Justin Rosniak, Rahel Romahn, Finn Little, Charlotte Maggi.

Australian Distributor: CinemaPlus and Madman Entertainment (Theatrical), Stan (Streaming)

International Sales: North.Five.Six (previously Mossbank)

Production credit: *The Surfer*, an Australian/Irish Co-Production, is produced by Arenamedia, Lovely Productions, Tea Shop Productions, Gramercy Park Media with support from Screenwest through the Western Australian Production Incentive. North.Five.Six (formerly Mossbank) is handling international sales. In Australia, *The Surfer* will release as a Stan Original Film, in partnership with CinemaPlus and Madman Entertainment, who will be releasing the film theatrically in Australia and New Zealand.

Synopsis: When a man returns to Australia to buy back his family home after many years in the US, he is humiliated in front of his teenage son by a group of local surfers who claim ownership over the secluded beach of his childhood. Wounded, he defies them and remains at the beach, demanding acceptance. As the conflict escalates, he is brought right to the edge of his sanity and his entire identity is thrown into question.

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Withered Blossoms

Screening Section: Cannes 2024 La Cinef

Production companies: The Australian Film, Television and Radio School.

Director: Lionel Seah

Writer: Lionel Seah

Producer: Miki Clarke

Cast: Rachel Young & Stella Ye

Australian Distributor: AFTRS

International Sales: AFTRS

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Production credit: Self-financed with generous technical support from Trackdown Studios, DCP Australia and the Staff and Students of AFTRS. Marketing support from Screen Australia and AFTRS

Synopsis: After evading and attempting to conceal her separation from a long-term partner for two weeks, a young woman finally visits her Grandma who is grappling with age.

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