



Australian Government



## **Berlin International Film Festival and Market 7–17 February 2013**

**Report by Dale Fairbairn, Marketing Manager Industry Support**

### **Festival**

The festival has reported that a record 303,077 film tickets were sold this year.

The Australian film presence was also higher than in previous years, with two features and four shorts in Generation; two feature documentaries in Culinary Cinema; the entire six episodes of TV series, *Top of the Lake*, in Berlinale Special; and three features and four shorts screening in NATIVE, a new program featuring indigenous films and filmmakers.

The number of Australian film professionals attending the festival and the accompanying European Film Market was up too. There were 105 Australian professionals recorded as attending. (There were 64 names on our register for 2012).

### **EFM**

The Screen Australia stand was once again located in the Martin Gropius Bau building, 1<sup>st</sup> floor corner position overlooking the internal balcony and offering good visibility to the passing market traffic and convenience for the Australian filmmakers using it as their business base. It provided meeting facilities, wifi access and publication display.

The EFM has announced that this year there were over 8,000 participants from 95 countries, higher numbers than last year.

### **Australia Function**

Held in conjunction with the Australian embassy in Berlin, the Australian function took place on Saturday 9 February in Potsdamer Platz near the festival and the market.

There were approximately 250 guests including Maryanne Redpath, director of Berlinale Generation; Jane Campion, director of *Top of the Lake* with US actress, Holly Hunter and Peter Tesch, Australian Ambassador to Germany. Also present were many of the sales agents of upcoming Australian films, representatives from film agencies and selectors for international festivals. The function was immediately after the warmly received European premiere of *Satellite Boy*, with cast, director and producer in attendance.

The Australian Embassy also hosted a welcome function for NATIVE on Friday 8 February. In what was a first for Berlin, it was attended by the ambassadors of the four participating countries – Canada, New Zealand, the US - and Australia as well as the visiting filmmakers from those countries, about 150 people.

The 2013 Berlinale NATIVE program was all that we had hoped for. If the press, discussions and attendance was anything to go by, then the seriously cinema literate Berlin audiences had their eyes opened to excellent Indigenous cinema heritage and its relevance in the world today.

The event also provided an opportunity to network at length with other Indigenous peoples.

### **German – Australia Networking Event**

Prior to the festival, on 25 January 2013, Australia's Foreign Minister Bob Carr was in Germany to sign the Berlin-Canberra Declaration of Intent on a Strategic Partnerships. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany declared their desire to pursue a "Strategic Partnership" aimed at strengthening and deepening Australian-German bilateral cooperation and their multilateral partnerships.

It declared that Australia and Germany will realise jointly approved projects and identify further projects in common areas of interest including culture, media and people-to-people links.

The official press release also stated that both countries welcome initiatives which support greater engagement under the German-Australian Films Co-production Agreement.

As a result the German Federal Film Board held a German- Australian producers' networking event on February 10 at their offices in Berlin. Chairman Eberhard Junkersdorf and CEO Peter Dinges hosted 20 producers from each country where funding conditions were discussed, introductions made and possible collaborations discussed over refreshments.

### **Festival Wrap**

*The Rocket* screened twice to enthusiastic audiences in a 1,000 seat cinema, plus one press screening. It was awarded the prestigious Best First Feature Award, including a Euro 50,000 cash prize, the largest the festival awards. As well the film won the Crystal Bear for the Best Film by the Children's Jury Generation Kplus, and also the Amnesty International Film Prize with a Euro 5,000 cash.

*Satellite Boy* enjoyed very warm audience responses in its four festival and one press screening. It received a Special Mention from the Children's Jury Generation Kplus and also a Special Mention from the International Jury Generation Kplus.

Short film, *The Amber Amulet*, screened four times to enthusiastic audiences. It won the Crystal Bear for the Best Short Film awarded by the Children's Jury Generation Kplus. It was the second year running that writer/director/producer Matthew Moore's films have been awarded this prize.

*Shopping*, a New Zealand feature film won the Grand Prix of the Generation 14 Plus International section. It was produced by Australian producers Anna McLeish & Sarah Shaw of Warp Films, one of SA's Enterprise companies and producers of the award winning *Snowtown*.

This was a very positive festival and market for Australia.

# TRAVEL REPORT