



DUNGOG FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES THE MAGIC OF AUSTRALIAN FILMS

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The who's who of the Australian film industry came out in full force last night to celebrate the official program announcements for the 2009 Dungog Film Festival at a cocktail party held at Dendy Opera Quays.

Guests including Axle Whitehead, Nic Bishop, Veronica Sywak, Charlotte Greg, Clare Bowen Paul Capsis and acclaimed directors Bruce Beresford, Peter Duncan and John Duigan, enjoyed an exclusive sneak peak at some of the films being shown at this year's Dungog Film Festival as well as exclusive presentations by Richard Frankland, director of the hilarious road comedy *Stone Bros.* and Kriv Stender, director of the historic drama *Lucky Country*. Guests were also treated to a captivating performance by Leone Carmen, lead actress of the 1987 coming of age cult flick 'The Year My Voice Broke' which will be screened at this year's festival.

Now in its third year, the Dungog Film Festival is the biggest showcase of Australian films in the world. Staged over four glorious autumn days from Thursday 28 May to Sunday 31 May in the Hunter Valley town of Dungog, the Dungog Film Festival delivers to its audiences the most comprehensive overview of Australian feature, documentary and short film production over the past year, from all over the country.

Festival director Allannah Zitserman said "The Dungog Film Festival is a non competitive event that celebrates Aussie cinema, past, present and future, in a little town with a very unusual name. Celebrating stories through film was the driving force and the motivation behind the birth of the Dungog Film Festival. With such a rich and diverse line-up of Australian film, The Dungog Film Festival is the complete experience of cinematic immersion and undoubtedly one of the most memorable social events on the NSW calendar. Heading into our third year we are the biggest festival of Australian film in the country"

Chief Executive Office for NSW Mining, the principal sponsor of 2009 Dungog Film Festival praised the festival for its commitment to the Australian film industry: "For myself and the team at NSW Mining, we literally live and breathe the fantastic spirit of the partnership between our respective organisations and our two great industries. We've all pitched in to bring Dungog together and we're delighted to be part of the amazing creativity and momentum that is catapulting this Festival onto the national and international stage.

Events NSW Chief Executive Officer Geoff Parmenter said "we are proud to have Dungog Film Festival on the NSW Master Events Calendar. Our investment in this event will allow it to prosper and establish a foundation for ongoing growth, driving economic, marketing and community benefits."

As a true nurturer of the Australian film industry, the Dungog Film Festival prides itself on exhibiting the very best of the current crop of films. This year, festival patrons will be treated to the world premiere of Richard Frankland's hilarious road comedy *Stone Bros.*, the Australian premiere of Paul Murphy's bittersweet dramatic comedy, *Second Hand Wedding* and the NSW Premiere of Kriv Stender's historic drama *Lucky Country*. These special gala films will be supported by a selection of over 100 short films and a range of classic Australian films in conjunction with the National Film and Sound Archive.

The Dungog Film Festival also offers the "In the Raw" script reading where three unproduced screenplays are performed live by professional actors. Held at the old Masonic Hall, "In the Raw" is another Dungog initiative which provides audiences access to the creative processes behind filmmaking. This year, the 'In The Raw' scripts will include Fiona Series' *Strangerland*, Jonathan Worsley's *Coming of Age* and Dave Warner's *Sister Sister*.

Last night, Allannah Zitserman was also proud to announce that renowned cinematographer Geoff Burton will conduct a master class at Dungog this year. Burton shot Australian classics including *The Year My Voice Broke*, *Storm Boy* and *Sunday Too Far Away*.

Join thousands from around the country to celebrate Australian films in a ripper Australian town.

Tickets can be purchased online at <http://www.dungogfilmfestival.org/>.

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