



MOVIE EXTRA
TROPFEST
AUSTRALIA TWENTY YEARS OF SHORT FILM

PRESS RELEASE - December 2011

4 WEEKS TO SHINE A LIGHT ON FILMMAKING SKILLS!

-MOVIE EXTRA TROPFEST AUSTRALIA DEADLINE APPROACHING-

Movie Extra Tropfest Australia announces that filmmakers from around the globe have just four weeks to enter the world's largest short film festival.

The deadline for entries is **Thursday 5th January 2012 at 6pm (AEDT)**, and Tropfest is urging film buffs to grab their camera or mobile phone and start shooting now for a chance to shine.

Tropfest is again offering to fly lucky international finalist filmmakers to Sydney to attend the three-day festival in Sydney from **Friday 17 - Sunday 19 February 2012**. Finalist's films are screened to a massive live audience at events across Australia on Sunday 19 February 2012, and broadcast live to homes across the nation on Subscription TV channel MOVIE EXTRA.

Finalists walk the star-studded red carpet in Sydney and have their work judged by industry heavyweights, with past judges including Nicole Kidman, Toni Collette, Geoffrey Rush, Russell Crowe, Samuel L Jackson, Baz Luhrmann, Ewan McGregor and Elijah Wood.

Tropfest's 20th Birthday competition will be hotly contested, with organisers predicting the biggest year ever. More than 700 entries are expected from Australia and overseas. Organisers have three days of filmmaking celebrations planned, taking the Festival from the traditional one-day event to a full Tropfest weekend. There will be parties, screenings of Tropfest gems from the past and special film industry events.

South African filmmaker **Ari Kruger** made the finals last year and was flown from his hometown of Cape Town for the 2011 festival where he joined 15 other finalists. His film "Focus" screened to a massive live audience across Australia as well as hundreds of thousands of viewers live exclusively on MOVIE EXTRA.

Kruger encourages filmmakers from any location to get involved, *"I never imagined I'd be flown to Australia to see my film up on the big screen, it was such an unreal experience. It just goes to show that no matter where you're from, if you've got a film idea,*

Films must be no longer than seven minutes and, in Tropfest tradition, must contain the Signature Item - **LIGHT BULB**. The 20th year signature item was chosen because Tropfest is all about the importance of the central idea in film.

Tropfest is a phenomenal launch pad for young and emerging filmmakers from around the globe, and there will be some great prizes up for grabs, aside from the kudos of winning the world's largest short film festival. Finalists compete for a massive prize pool of cash, equipment and international travel valued at approximately **\$100,000**, along with an unprecedented level of industry interest and attention.

Movie Extra Tropfest's mobile category, Telstra Mobile Masterpieces, is back for the third year giving filmmakers an opportunity to unleash their creativity on their mobile phones. The same rules apply as the main competition, with the winner able to enter for both the Tropfest main competition prize and for the mobile prize as well.

For the second year running, entries will be received online in partnership with YouTube making the submission process a breeze for international filmmakers by eliminating the need to submit a hard copy on DVD. Just register your details and pay the entry fee at www.tropfest.com/au and then upload your film at Tropfests YouTube channel – www.youtube.com/tropfest.

Film buffs are encouraged to stay a while on the Trop site and peruse the newly launched **20 Years of Tropfest interactive timeline**. The timeline showcases never before seen photos and event footage, including famous faces such as Nicole Kidman, Will Smith, Keanu Reeves and Toni Collette, as well as media articles, Tropfest films and other interesting content drawn from the 20 year history of Tropfest, right back to its humble beginnings at Tropicana Cafe in 1993.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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Visit www.tropfest.com/au for festival details, screening venues and regular updates on all things Trop!

EDITORS NOTES

Entering Movie Extra Tropfest 2012

- Join in the fun and tradition of Tropfest by submitting a film into the world's largest short film festival.
- Beginners, student filmmakers or already have a few films under the belt, Tropfest is open to anyone eager to tell a story through film. For the second time, any filmmaker from outside Australia who's film is chosen to screen as a finalist at the festival will be flown to Australia for the event.
- The 2012 Movie Extra Tropfest Signature Item (TSI) is 'LIGHT BULB', to be eligible for competition, the TSI must be somewhere in the film. It can be featured in anyway – big or small.
- Entries close Thursday 5 January 2012 at 6pm (Australian Eastern Daylight Time).
- 2012 Entry Guidelines available at www.tropfest.com/au
- Guidelines basics to enter the 2012 competition:
 - Film must be made specifically for Movie Extra Tropfest Australia 2012
 - The festival must be the film's first public screening, including online
 - Film must be no longer than seven minutes (including title and end credits)
 - Film must contain the TSI – 'LIGHT BULB'
- Telstra Mobile Masterpieces – Tropfest's mobile category is back for the third year, and there are some great prizes up for grabs.
- Tropfest partnership with YouTube means all entries will be received online via our Tropfest YouTube Channel_(No DVDs).
- 16 Finalist films will screen at the festival on Sunday 19 February 2012, seen by hundreds of thousands of people either at one of the live, outdoor festival events around Australia or at home on TV on Movie Extra.

Check out some of the past finalist films on www.youtube.com/tropfest

Movie Extra Tropfest

Tropfest is Australia's most prestigious short film festival and one of its most iconic cultural events. It is also the largest short film festival in the world. Founded in 1993 by film director John Polson as a small screening for family and friends at Sydney's Tropicana Café, the festival now attracts a live national audience of more than 150,000 people. The event is hosted in Sydney with live satellite links to outdoor locations around the country. In addition, Movie Extra broadcasts the event reaching a live television audience in excess of 235,000. The short film competition is unique in that every film must be made specifically for Tropfest, will premiere at Tropfest and include the Tropfest Signature Item (TSI), which changes each year. 16 Finalists are selected from an average 650 entries. Tropfest has expanded internationally to now include new competitions and festivals in North America, (New York and Las Vegas) as well as Tropfest Arabia, which will be held in Abu Dhabi in November 2011 and be open to filmmakers across the Middle East and North Africa. Other discussions are underway in territories around the world including China, Singapore, Paris, London and more.

JOHN POLSON – Founder/Director, Tropfest

John Polson is an award-winning actor and director, as well as the founder and director of the World's Largest Short Film Festival, Tropfest. John is the creative force behind Tropfest's success and global expansion, from its humble beginnings as a screening of one of his own short films at Sydney's Tropicana Cafe in 1993. Tropfest in Australia attracts a live audience of over 150,000 people on a single night, as well as hundreds of thousands more via a simultaneous television broadcast. Tropfest has been held in New York, Berlin, London, Bangkok, Beijing, Aspen with plans to enter many other countries. First and foremost, though, John's passion lies behind the camera as a film director. Creating his first short film AN EVENING WITH HERMAN in the early 1980s, John has since garnered worldwide attention with feature films such as SIAM SUNSET (starring Linus Roache), which won awards at numerous film festivals around the world (including the Cannes International Film Festival). He also directed the US feature films SWIMFAN (starring Jesse Bradford, Erica Christensen) and HIDE AND SEEK (starring Robert De Niro, Dakota Fanning), both of which opened at Number 1 at the US box office. John's latest feature film TENDERNESS, in which he directed Russell Crowe and Laura Dern, was released in 2009. Today, in addition to his feature film work, John flexes his creative muscle on the small screen as a producer and director on shows such as FRINGE, THE MENTALIST, THE GOOD WIFE and FLASH FORWARD. John is currently developing a number of feature projects as both director and producer in the US and Australia.