

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

# 5-16 JUNE 2024

## DARREN DALE APPOINTED BOARD CHAIR OF SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

**Sydney Film Festival today announced the ground-breaking appointment of acclaimed First Nations Producer Darren Dale as Board Chair of Sydney Film Festival.**

Recognised as a pivotal figure in Australia's film and television industry, Darren Dale will step into the role of Chair following the retirement of media entrepreneur, producer and philanthropist Deanne Weir after eight years on the Board.

A director of Blackfella Films since 2000, Darren's portfolio boasts landmark productions including *The Dark Emu Story* (SFF 2023), *Mabo* (SFF 2012), *First Contact*, *Filthy Rich and Homeless*, and *Redfern Now*. Not just an industry veteran, Darren is a leading advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content whose work has achieved local and global acclaim.

Beyond his role at Blackfella Films, Darren Dale is a recognised figure in global cinema as a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. His board roles at ACMI, Sydney Film Festival, and Sydney Festival, coupled with leadership positions at Screen NSW and the Australian Film Television and Radio School, underscore his industry influence and commitment.

**Minister for Arts John Graham** said, "As the first Indigenous and industry practitioner to chair the Sydney Film Festival, Darren Dale's appointment marks a significant and positive shift for the festival. With an impressive track record in storytelling spanning two decades, he brings valuable experience to lead this cultural organization and is poised to continue the festival's legacy by delivering captivating film and cinema experiences in Sydney, ensuring a new era of excellence. Sydney Film Festival will benefit from Darren's extensive board experience across the screen sector and broader creative industries."

**Darren Dale** said, "It is both an honour and a privilege to assume the role of Board Chair for the Sydney Film Festival, a venerable cultural institution that I have drawn great inspiration from throughout my career. Under Nashen Moodley's exemplary artistic leadership, SFF not only showcases the very best of global cinema but also has an essential and unwavering commitment to platforming the works of emerging filmmakers from diverse backgrounds including a commitment to First Nations filmmaking that is truly unique in the world. I am excited to get to work alongside Nashen and CEO Frances Wallace on the continuing evolution of this remarkable festival."

"Deanne Weir has set a very high benchmark in her time as Chair, a passionate and dedicated leader as well as an indefatigable advocate for the festival and the wider industry and I want to thank her for her exceptional stewardship and look forward to continuing and expanding on her legacy," said Dale.



**Sydney Film Festival Director Nashen Moodley** and **CEO Frances Wallace** jointly stated, "Darren's calibre and visionary leadership as the SFF Board Chair fills us with immense excitement. His unwavering commitment to storytelling, particularly from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, assures us of a transformative era for the Festival."

"As we anticipate this new chapter, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to Deanne for her outstanding leadership. Under her guidance, the Festival successfully navigated unprecedented challenges and achieved remarkable milestones. Her dedication and determination have left an enduring imprint on our organisation," Moodley and Wallace continued.

**Deanne Weir** said, "It has been an incredible honour to lead the SFF Board, but I am so delighted that Darren agreed to return to the Board and serve as our next Chair, I know I leave the organisation in inspirational hands. I have loved working with the Board, Nashen, Frances and the whole SFF team, and I am very grateful for their support. Their passion for film, their respect for our filmmakers, and their joy in delivering a wonderful festival experience for our audiences has ensured that our Festival is loved around the world, and is an important part of both Sydney's cultural calendar, and the fabric of Australia's screen industry. I will look forward to attending the Festival as an audience member for many years to come, and I want to thank all of our supporters for their commitment over the last 8 years."

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animation across greater Sydney. The Festival is a major event on the New South Wales cultural calendar and is one of the world's longest-running film festivals. For more information visit [www.sff.org.au](http://www.sff.org.au).

#### **MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

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#### **EDITOR'S NOTES**

#### **ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL**

From Wednesday 5 to Sunday 16 June 2024, the 71<sup>st</sup> Sydney Film Festival offers Sydneysiders another exciting season of cinema amidst a whirlwind of premieres, red-carpet openings, in-depth discussions, film guests and more.

Sydney Film Festival is a major event on the New South Wales cultural calendar and is one of the world's longest-running film festivals. For more information, visit [sff.org.au](http://sff.org.au).

The 71<sup>st</sup> Sydney Film Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia and the City of Sydney.

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