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SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

3 – 14 JUNE 2026

SARTORIAL: FASHION ON FILM SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL PROGRAM EXPLORES THE INTERSECTION OF FASHION AND CINEMA



Sydney Film Festival will present **SARTORIAL: FASHION ON FILM**, a program featuring new premieres alongside restored classics that explore the relationship between fashion and cinema, screening as part of the 73rd Sydney Film Festival from 3–14 June 2026.

The program strand features seven films spanning decades of cinema, bringing together a striking body of work in which some of the world's most distinctive filmmakers turn fashion into a lens on identity, culture and power.

From the ateliers of Paris to the factory floors of China, these films trace how clothing reflects and shapes the societies that produce it, moving between documentary and fiction, and between candid portraits and global perspectives.

A centrepiece will be the Australian premiere of *Marc by Sofia*, **Sofia Coppola's** first documentary, offering a personal picture of longtime friend, designer Marc Jacobs, and his creative world. Also featured is the world premiere of Australian film *French Girls*, directed by **Hyun Lee**, following a young woman drawn into Sydney's modelling industry after being scouted, as she begins to navigate its shifting expectations and pressures.

Acclaimed filmmakers have long turned their attention to the fashion industry from multiple perspectives. From the recently deceased master, **Frederick Wiseman's** *Model* offers a landmark depiction of a New York modelling agency, observing castings, shoots and the relentless demands of image-making, while **Jia Zhangke's** *Useless* traces the human cost of industrial production across China's garment industry, from factory floors to haute couture runways.

Chronicles of influential figures in fashion and culture also feature. **Agnès Varda's** *Jane B. par Agnès V.* offers a playful and unconventional portrait of Jane Birkin, while **Wim Wenders' Notebook on**



Cities and Clothes follows designer Yohji Yamamoto, reflecting on creativity, authorship and the parallels between filmmaking and fashion.

Fictional takes on the fashion world bring satire and spectacle. **Robert Altman's *Prêt-à-Porter***, filmed during Paris Fashion Week, presents a sprawling ensemble comedy set amid the industry's backstage dramas and personalities.

Sydney Film Festival **Senior Programmer Jessica Moraza** said, "The relationship between fashion and film extends far beyond the traditional fashion documentaries we know and love. In this special series, we wanted to highlight instances where some of cinema's most distinctive directors have brought their singular perspective to the fashion world."

The films in the strand include:

- ***French Girls*** (2026) Dir. Hyun Lee
- ***Marc by Sofia*** (2025) Dir. Sofia Coppola
- ***Useless*** (2007) Dir. Jia Zhangke
- ***Prêt-à-Porter*** (1994) Dir. Robert Altman
- ***Notebook on Cities and Clothes*** (1989) Dir. Wim Wenders
- ***Jane B. par Agnès V.*** (1988) Dir. Agnès Varda
- ***Model*** (1980) Dir. Frederick Wiseman

Tickets to **SARTORIAL: FASHION ON FILM**, as well as Flexipasses and subscriptions to Sydney Film Festival 2026 are on sale now. Call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information. The full Sydney Film Festival program is announced on Wednesday 6 May 2026, when tickets to all films will be on sale.

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Sydney Film Festival Press Pack and Images Available [HERE](#)

EDITOR'S NOTES

ABOUT SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

The Sydney Film Festival is one of the world's longest running and most prestigious film festivals. The 73rd edition, taking place from 3 to 14 June 2026, will showcase the very best in contemporary cinema and offer audiences the chance to experience premieres, red carpet events, and exciting special programs across Sydney.

The Festival is supported by the NSW Government through Screen NSW and Destination NSW, the Federal Government through Screen Australia, and the City of Sydney.

Stay up to date with Sydney Film Festival: [eNews](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

For more information, visit sff.org.au.

FILM INFORMATION



French Girls

Australia | 2026 | 83 mins | In English

A young woman enters the uniquely absurd world of modelling in this Sydney microbudget marvel. The impressive debut feature of Hyun Lee (*Asian Girls*, SFF Dendy Awards 2018).

Mia (Mia Kidis) is happily drifting through her twenties working on construction sites when she's scouted by a Sydney model agent. Suddenly, she's making more money than ever while working less – something her boyfriend loves to point out. Mia quietly observes this strange new world of modelling with deep uncertainty. Is this really the life she wants? With one curious turn after another, she finds herself in trouble with the law. Full of insouciance, familiar local talent and gorgeously shot by cinematographer Dimitri Zaunders (*The Golden Spurtle*, SFF 2025), *French Girls* is an irresistibly charming, refreshingly perceptive take on societal representations of femininity and the disappointing realities of labour.

Jane B. par Agnès V.

France | 1988 | 97 mins | In French with English subtitles

Agnès Varda's portrait of Jane Birkin offers a playful and kaleidoscopic view of the pop icon, the ultimate It Girl whose influence traversed music, fashion and film.

When Varda met Birkin their lives were in a similar orbit, as artists and mothers of teenage children. Birkin expressed trepidation about her upcoming 40th birthday and Varda responded by proposing to film her portrait as a gift. Uninterested in crafting the usual biopic full of famous faces and historical pictures, Varda opted to view Birkin through her various roles, from Jeanne d'Arc to Calamity Jane, and even a nod to the namesake Hermès bag she inspired. By exploring Birkin's life through a sideways glance at her filmography, Varda also illuminates her own life. The resulting film is unlike any other biography – unpredictable, insightful and personal; a charming exploration of femininity and identity.

Marc by Sofia

USA | 2025 | 87 mins | In English

In her first ever documentary, Sofia Coppola crafts a personal portrait of her longtime friend, fashion designer Marc Jacobs, laden with candid insights. Venice 2025.

Sofia Coppola and Marc Jacobs first met in 1993, when Jacobs was still designing for Perry Ellis. Their mutual appreciation has held fast ever since, with Coppola serving as a longtime muse and collaborator for Jacobs. Now, Coppola turns her perceptive eye on the designer, delivering illuminating insight into his success story, creative process and rich range of influences across art, film and fashion. Charting a line from the early '90s grunge days, to Jacobs's influential stint at Louis Vuitton, all the way to a behind-the-scenes peek into his recent collections, *Marc by Sofia* offers a pleasurable pop culture odyssey spanning three decades. An intimate delight for fans of both the designer and the director.

Model

USA | 1980 | 129 mins | In English

The late, great master Frederick Wiseman observes all the runways, shoots, blunt feedback and goings-on at a top 1980's New York modelling agency in this recently restored doc.

Wiseman discovers the ins and outs of the modelling industry, casting his camera on leading New York City modelling agency Zoli. A mesmerising survey of the many casting calls, client negotiations, advertising shoots and runway shows that make up a regular day's work in this bustling business, *Model* is another characteristically illuminating entry in Wiseman's venerable filmography. Nothing is held back as prospective models at the agency are evaluated to their face: too short, not the right look, try again later. Revealing America at its most hypercommercial and image obsessed, the film brilliantly captures the unique energy of New York on the cusp of the 1980s, with Andy Warhol even making a cameo.



Notebook on Cities and Clothes

Germany | 1989 | 81 mins | In English, French and Japanese with English subtitles

Director Wim Wenders befriends designer Yohji Yamamoto and reflects on the parallels between filmmaking and fashion in this intimate diary film, shot between Tokyo and Paris.

Tasked by the Centre Pompidou in Paris to make a film about fashion, Wim Wenders chooses revolutionary Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto as his subject. Wenders knew little about the fashion world but had once bought a few Yohji pieces that made him feel “more me than before”. From that personal connection, he creates a thoughtful, free-flowing portrait of an artist whose avant-garde silhouettes and signature aesthetics revolutionised fashion in the 1980s and beyond. Moving between Paris and Tokyo, ateliers and city streets, *Notebook on Cities and Clothes* is more than just a profile – it’s a moving reflection on creativity, self-expression and the way clothes can shape how we see ourselves.

Prêt-à-Porter

USA | 1994 | 133 mins | In English and French with English subtitles

Sophia Loren, Marcello Mastroianni, Julia Roberts and more light up this riotous, star-studded '90s fashion farce from Robert Altman, shot during Paris Fashion Week.

Altman’s *Prêt-à-Porter* is a fashion-world frenzy – a sprawling satire filmed amid the real-life theatrics of Paris Fashion Week. With glitzy runway shows, bitchy backstage antics and an all-star ensemble cast featuring Julia Roberts, Tim Robbins, Kim Basinger and Lauren Bacall, the film favours atmosphere, spectacle and delicious deviance over conventional plot. Folding in a who’s who of '90s fashion figures – among them Jean-Paul Gaultier, Issey Miyake, Helena Christensen and Claudia Schiffer – it approaches this world with bemusement and curiosity. Arriving after Altman’s critical triumphs *The Player* and *Short Cuts*, *Prêt-à-Porter* was unkindly maligned on release and is now ripe for rediscovery.

Useless (Wu yong)

China | 2007 | 81 mins | In Mandarin and Chinese regional dialects with English subtitles

Acclaimed auteur Jia Zhangke (*Caught by the Tides*, SFF 2024) documents China’s clothing industry from three perspectives: factory workers, a fashion designer, and a tailor.

In *Useless*, Jia Zhangke traces the human cost of China’s industrial transformation through the world of clothing. He begins in the garment factories of Guangdong, where workers toil over sewing machines for little pay, before shifting to Paris, where haute couture designer Ma Ke presents her handmade collection Wu Yong (‘useless’), conceived in defiance of mass production. The documentary’s final movement returns to Jia’s native Shanxi, where a tailor reflects on abandoning his fading trade for the coal mines. Moving with quiet precision between workshop, runway and rural town, Jia creates a subtle and humanistic portrait of labour, class and the widening distance between tradition and modernity.

