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MEDIA RELEASE: Monday 1 June 2026
Sydney, Australia

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

3 – 14 JUNE 2026

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL ADDS EIGHT NEW FILMS DIRECT FROM CANNES TO 2026 PROGRAM, TOTALLING 28



The 73rd Sydney Film Festival (3-14 June) today announces the addition of eight striking new films to the 2026 program, all direct from Cannes — including *La Bola Negra (The Black Ball)*, Cannes joint Best Director winner; *Coward*, Cannes dual Best Actor winner; *All of a Sudden*, Cannes' first dual winner of the Best Actress Award; and the thrilling football documentary *The Match*, about the legendary 1986 FIFA World Cup game between Argentina and England – featuring Maradona's infamous 'Hand of God' goal.

These new titles will have their Australian Premiere screenings across the Festival, which kicks off this Wednesday 3 June — joining an already stacked lineup of more than 250 films from Cannes, Sundance, returning Sydney Film Prize winners, and acclaimed Australian filmmakers.

"With 28 films now direct from Cannes, this is one of the strongest international lineups we've ever presented," said **SFF Festival Director Nashen Moodley**. "These eight new additions bring some of the most talked-about titles from Cannes straight to Sydney audiences, and we can't wait to share them."

Cannes dual Best Actor Award winner *Coward* is the new film by Sydney Film Prize winner Lukas Dhont (*Close*, SFF Sydney Film Prize 2022), an ambitious, moving queer romance following two soldiers during World War I. Alongside is *La Bola Negra (The Black Ball)*, winner of Best Director at Cannes, a stirring, decades-spanning exploration of queer desire in Spain that proves to be one of the most dazzling films of the year, featuring Penélope Cruz, Glenn Close and Julio Torres.

Tangles features the voices of Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Abbi Jacobson and Bryan Cranston, in a beautifully animated adaptation of Sarah Leavitt's tender graphic memoir, exploring the lived realities of Alzheimer's disease. From the Cannes Directors' Fortnight, *Red Rocks* is inventive auteur Bruno

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Dumont's (*Camille Claudel 1915*, SFF 2013) return, a strikingly stripped-back, seaside tale of kinder-aged rivalry running wild in the French Riviera.

Jim Queen is a hilariously camp animated musical romp in which Parisian gay gym-queen-supreme Jim contracts a virus that will turn him and others straight. And *All of a Sudden*, the first dual winner of the Best Actress Award at Cannes, is a sprawling, emotional epic by Ryusuke Hamaguchi (*Drive My Car*, SFF 2021) starring Virginie Efira and Tao Okamoto as two women who form a life-altering friendship.

The legendary 1986 FIFA World Cup game between Argentina and England – featuring Maradona's infamous 'Hand of God' goal – is the centre of *The Match*, a thrilling, joyous documentary.

Meanwhile, *Congo Boy*, winner of the Best Actor Award, Cannes Un Certain Regard, is an enthralling, autobiographical drama following a Congolese teen chasing his music dreams while juggling family pressure, exams and political unrest.

The full Sydney Film Festival 2026 program can be found online at sff.org.au.

Sydney Film Festival runs from 3-14 June 2026. Tickets and Flexipasses to Sydney Film Festival 2026 are on sale now. Please call 1300 733 733 or visit sff.org.au for more information or to book.

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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.



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FILM INFORMATION

ALL OF A SUDDEN

The first dual winner of the Best Actress Award at Cannes, this sprawling, emotional epic by Ryusuke Hamaguchi (*Drive My Car*, SFF 2021) stars Virginie Efira and Tao Okamoto as two women who form a life-altering friendship. Marie-Lou (Efira) is the director of a Paris aged care home and a proponent of Humanitude – a care philosophy that treats the elderly with a great deal of dignity. This notion is met with resistance by the profit-driven owners of the home, and by some of Marie-Lou’s colleagues who feel overworked as it is and disinclined to take on more complex duties. When Marie-Lou encounters Japanese theatre director Mari (Okamoto), they gradually form a strong friendship, heightened by the fact that Mari is terminally ill. This friendship, and the long conversation it initiates, serves as an entrancing expression of kindness and curiosity. Though the film places an intimate friendship under the microscope, its interests expand broadly into philosophy, capitalism, art, care and mortality. Brilliantly written, with devastatingly heartfelt performances by Efira and Okamoto, *All of a Sudden* is as transformative as the beautiful friendship it so perfectly depicts.

THE BLACK BALL

Winner, Best Director, Cannes. This stirring, decades-spanning exploration of queer desire in Spain is one of the most exuberant, sensual and dazzling films of the year, featuring Penelope Cruz, Glenn Close and Julio Torres. Set across three time periods (1932, 1937, and 2017), *The Black Ball* opens in 1937 during the rise of fascism in Spain. We follow Sebastián, whose village is destroyed before he is conscripted into the fascist army, where he forms a bond with an enemy prisoner. In the second story, set five years earlier, a young scion is black-balled and denied entry into his father’s social club because of rumours about his sexuality. And in the third instalment, set 85 years later, gay historian Alberto is informed he has inherited something from a grandfather he never knew. These three separate stories connect in unexpected ways in this extremely clever and well-constructed film. The images, meticulous and inventively composed, are unforgettable. With extraordinary performances by the ensemble – featuring Penelope Cruz, Glenn Close and Julio Torres in supporting roles – this sensual drama brings its multiple storylines together to deliver a deeply moving emotional climax. Directors Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi, known by their directing moniker Los Javis and for their hit series *Veneno*, arrive instantly to the world stage as directors of great repute with this magnificent, daring and romantic work.

CONGO BOY

Winner, Best Actor Award, Cannes Un Certain Regard. This stirring, autobiographical drama follows a Congolese teen chasing his music dreams while juggling family pressure, exams and political unrest. Seventeen-year-old Robert (Bradley Fiomona Dembeasset) has serious stage-commanding talent, but life in the Central African Republic city of Bangui gives him little room to dream. Displaced from the Congo by war, he is suddenly left in charge of his four younger siblings when both parents are sent to prison. With the competing pressures of caring for his family and studying for exams, Robert finds escapism and solace in poetry and rap. Based on director Rafiki Fariala’s own life story, *Congo Boy* captures the bustle of Bangui with warmth and urgency, skilfully placing Robert’s musical ambition against the daily realities of survival. Un Certain Regard Best Actor winner Fiomona Dembeasset brings tremendous authenticity to this tale of resilience, responsibility and restless youth.

COWARD

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Winner of the Cannes Best Actor Award, the new film by Sydney Film Prize winner Lukas Dhont (*Close*, SFF 2022) is an ambitious, moving queer romance about two soldiers during World War I. Both lead actors, Valentin Campagne and Emmanuel Macchia deservedly shared the Cannes Best Actor prize for their complex, heartfelt performances. On the Belgian frontlines, the warfare is brutal and the conditions extremely harsh. To entertain the men and boost morale, a group of soldiers excused from combat and referred to as the ‘band of rejects’ perform theatrical musical pieces of increasing innovation and emotion. The leader of the troupe is Francis (Campagne), a born performer who soon draws the attention of Pierre (Macchia), an industrious soldier who becomes increasingly traumatised by the violence around him. As the two draw closer together, the realisation that it is in these horrific circumstances that they can be most themselves and most free, leads to dreams of a different kind of future. Though strikingly intimate in its depiction of a furtive relationship, *Coward* finds Dhont working on a grander scale than in *Girl* (SFF 2018) and *Close* – and the result is a resplendent and romantic love story.

JIM QUEEN

When Parisian gay gym-queen-supreme Jim contracts a virus that will turn him and others straight, his only hope for a cure is a shy fanboy twink. A hilariously camp, animated, musical romp direct from Cannes. Jim Parfait, with his sculpted 24-pack abs and legion of gym junkie followers, is the hottest influencer and king (or queen) of the Paris gay scene. But when Jim contracts Heterosis, the symptoms are quick to set in – he starts losing his abs, develops an attraction to the opposite sex, and has a sudden desire to settle in the suburbs. As Jim’s queer status and identity vanishes, the community turn their backs on him. But his salvation can be found through Lucien, a closeted, soft-spoken twink (and Jim’s number one fan), who is committed to saving him from his fate by finding the mysterious Chloroqueer remedy. Bombastic and irreverent, *Jim Queen* is a riotous satire and instant cult classic.

THE MATCH

The legendary 1986 FIFA World Cup game between Argentina and England – featuring Maradona’s infamous ‘Hand of God’ goal – is the centre of this thrilling, joyous Cannes-selected documentary. The Match features two of the most famous goals of all time – the first, Maradona’s illicit ‘Hand of God’ goal; the second, his miraculous, weaving, tremendously skilled strike to seal the win. It also explores the febrile geopolitical context of the match. Only a few years before, a territorial dispute over the Falkland Islands led to war between the United Kingdom and Argentina, leading to hundreds of casualties on both sides. While the players and team management both insisted that politics was to have no role in this sporting fixture, the reality proved more complex. Inventively going off on revealing, humorous, moving diversions – and featuring interviews with players from the game like Gary Lineker, John Barnes and Jorge Valdano – The Match is joyous and poignant. It makes clear the immense impact and complexity of ‘the beautiful game’ and is essential viewing amid 2026 FIFA World Cup fever.

RED ROCKS

Inventive auteur Bruno Dumont returns with this strikingly stripped-back, seaside tale of rival kinder-aged posses running wild in the French Riviera. Directors’ Fortnight, Cannes. The red cliffs and sparkling waters of the Côte d’Azur provide the perfect playground for precocious, blond-haired Géo (Kaylon Lancel) and his loyal posse of pals. With zero adult supervision, they spend their summer cliff-jumping and tooling about town in mini motorised vehicles, testing their pint-sized limits. An opposing gang of youths emerges, and Géo takes an immediate liking to Eve (Kelsie Verdeilles) – but she’s already spoken for. A small-scale, freewheeling, *Romeo and Juliet*-esque tale,

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Red Rocks is another singular, playful entry in the wide-ranging filmography of French auteur Bruno Dumont (*France*, 2021; *Camille Claudel 1915*, SFF 2013). Both documentary-like and hyperreal, it captures the innocence, vulnerability and chaos of childhood with thrilling immediacy.

TANGLES

Direct from Cannes, Sarah Leavitt's tender graphic memoir is beautifully adapted in this moving animation exploring the lived realities of Alzheimer's disease. Voiced by Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Abbi Jacobson and Bryan Cranston. San Francisco, 1999. Sarah Leavitt (Jacobson, *Broad City*) is living life to the fullest, having recently fallen in love with her girlfriend Donimo (Samira Wiley, *Orange Is the New Black*) while working her dream job as an illustrator at a cool, queer magazine. But Sarah is soon forced to leave her exciting life behind to return to her eccentric family in Maine to care for her increasingly ailing mother, Midge (Louis-Dreyfus), who's once vibrant spirit is fading due to Alzheimer's disease. Torn between two worlds, Sarah must confront the heartbreaking realities of this devastating condition, while reconciling her complicated feelings for her family and her new-found relationship. With incredible warmth and humour, expressive animation, and an all-star supporting cast featuring Seth Rogen, Sarah Silverman, and Bowen Yang, this deeply affecting film from director Leah Nelson is guaranteed not to leave a dry eye in the house.

