

# NEWSREEL

4 FEBRUARY – 11 APRIL 2019



WILD BOYS  
AND THE DOGS  
THAT TAME THEM



A FILM BY  
CATHERINE SCOTT

## BACKTRACK BOYS

SCREEN AUSTRALIA PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CREATE NSW AN INEVITY PRODUCTION BACKTRACK BOYS  
FILM PRODUCED BY CATHERINE SCOTT EDITED BY ANGELO LANG ASE COMPOSER PRODUCED ANGELENE HEYERSON  
DIRECTED BY KRISTIN RILEY JONATHAN ZWARTZ EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MITZI SOULIMAN KATIE BARRY  
DOCUMENTARY AUSTRALIA FOUNDATION MARKET PRODUCER KATE HODGES WRITTEN, DIRECTED & PRODUCED BY CATHERINE SCOTT

INEVITY PRODUCTIONS CREATE NSW SCREEN AUSTRALIA NSW CREATORS NSW UMBRELLA

Check the Classification

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launceston film society

Volume 40 Number 1



# launceston film society

[www.lfs.org.au](http://www.lfs.org.au)

PO Box 60, Launceston, 7250

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW



Visit our website [www.lfs.org.au](http://www.lfs.org.au) for:

- ✓ **Film voting results** and our film discussion page, please add your comments.
- ✓ Replacement cards (\$10 fee). Your new card will be posted to you.
- ✓ Changing address? Please notify us to receive your NEWSREEL.
- ✓ Member's film requests: if there is a current film you would like to see.



The Village Cinema offers a concession to LFS members for most of their screenings.



For those unable to see the bottom of the screen, booster cushions are available.



LFS screenings are usually in Cinema 3.



A lift is available to avoid the stairs between the foyer and Cinema 3.



In the interest of everyone's enjoyment, please:

- ✓ Be seated before the film starts and turn off your mobile phone.
- ✓ Minimise noise including eating, drinking or talking once the film commences.
- ✓ Do not sit or stand at the back wall as this is a fire safety issue.
- ✓ Village rules for food and beverages apply.



The LFS committee assist the cinema with the queue and process members' admission: we cannot be admitted to the theatre if another film is still screening.

## CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

- **The LFS is a "Members Only" society.** Our screening agreement requires that your membership card cannot be loaned to another, even if you will not be attending the film.
- **Membership cards will be scanned** before admission and is valid for one screening per week. Scanning of the cards provides the committee with information about attendance. If you do not have your card please provide an alternative form of identification to the committee member at the door. Membership cards remain the property of the LFS.
- **Seating is not guaranteed at LFS screenings.** The Launceston Film Society proudly boasts about 1620 members. The largest cinema at the Village holds around 300 people.
- **Reserved seats** at the rear of the theatre are available for people with special needs. Please make your need known to a committee member *before* admission.

- **Censorship classifications.** Films classified as R and MA 15+ and MA are often selected, and persons under the appropriate age limit will not be admitted.

## **LFS LIFE MEMBERS**

Barbara Murphy, Edward Broomhall, Caroline Ball, David Heath, Michèle McGill, Peter Gillard, Stan Gottschalk and Rodney O'Keefe.

# President's Report 2018

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## launceston film society

The LFS has had another successful year. Our financial position continues to be strong and we have not needed to increase the subscription for a second year. Membership has remained stable at about 1650. There is a consistent turnover of members of about 12.5%. Compared with the difficulties that the Film Society experienced in the early days when there was a constant struggle to recruit members and budget short falls, the Society is currently in a very fortunate position despite the advent of film available via online streaming on the internet.

Indeed the LFS is one of the largest and most successful film societies in Australia. This is largely because the Village has only four screens and, until the recent opening of the Star Theatre, there was no other competition for the type of films we select. Our policy is never to screen a film that has been chosen by the Village, but we cannot extend this policy to the Star else it would cut too deeply into our program.

Our program for the last number of years has been for four screenings each school week amounting to 40 films for the year. This arrangement is because the Village requires all of its theatres during the busy school holidays. As our business is away from the busy periods, the Village gives the LFS a "special rate" for the hire of the theatre. In addition the Village Programming Department secures the booking of our program (selected by the committee) from the film distributors at a competitive price. We lean towards foreign language films where suitable and in 2018 screened 18 with subtitles.

The process of scanning membership cards at the screenings has given us valuable information about the attendance at screenings. Monday evenings are the most well attended and Wednesday evenings the least. The average attendance at screenings is about 800 over the week, and the most well attended film was just over 1000.

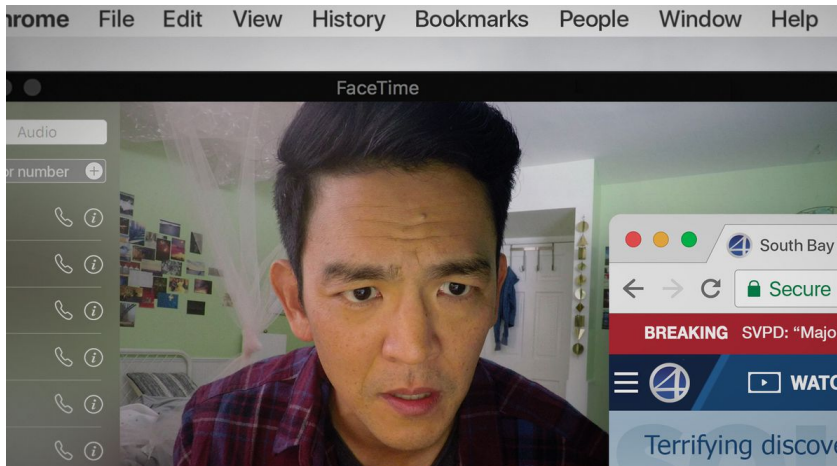
Our relations with Village Cinemas remains positive and they have provided two special Sunday screenings for members as a token of their regard of our ongoing relationship. For this I would like to record our thanks to them on your behalf.

Also I want to record my special thanks to your committee, hard working and professional, who have volunteered to make the LFS what it is.

Peter Gillard, President

# SEARCHING

4, 6, 7 February



**Director:** Aneesh Chaganty

**Featuring:** John Cho, Debra Messing, Joseph Lee

**Origin:** USA 2018



Coarse language

**Running time:** 102 minutes

*Searching* follows a panicked father's online moves as he tries to track down his missing teenage daughter. David Kim is a widower raising his 16-year-old daughter, Margot, in suburban San Jose, California. David and Margot live busy lives between work and school, and they mostly communicate through text messages and FaceTime calls. But one night, the usually conscientious Margot fails to come home after a study group session, something David doesn't realise until well into the next day. The time stamp of the last phone call Margot made to him is in the middle of the night.

David contacts police and a full-blown effort begins to find Margot. The determined Detective Rosemary Vick arrives to investigate Margot's disappearance and she advises David to take part in the search. He does so by rummaging through the contacts on his daughter's laptop, questioning people she knows, and uncovering aspects of her life that she had kept hidden from him and that may have played a role in her disappearance. The more they uncover together, the more David realises he didn't really know his only child.

It's the sad paradox of technology, a tool that's meant to bring people closer together, that it also can foster such a divide. But what's dismayingly fascinating about "Searching" is that, for all its reflection of secrets and traits both contained and dispersed in a person's digital identity, it offers almost nothing of its characters' identities. It renders them virtually faceless and lacking in inclinations, interests, and idiosyncrasies. When Margot's secrets emerge, they're gears of the plot, not aspects of her character. "Searching" explores this in smart, slickly paced ways. Until the end, we're deeply invested in these well-drawn characters, and whether they'll find their happy ending both online and IRL.

**Original review:** Christy Lemire, Roger Ebert and Richard Brody, *The New Yorker*

**Extracted by:** Ian Meikle



# CUSTODY

## JUSQU'À LA GARDE

**Director:** Xavier Legrand

**Featuring:** Léa Drucker, Denis Ménochet, Thomas Gioria, Mathilde Auneveux, Mathieu Saikaly, Florence Janas

**Language:** French

**Origin:** France 2017



**Running time:** 94 minutes

Mature themes, violence and coarse language



11, 13, 14 February

*Custody* opens with a legal hearing in a small meeting room. Miriam and Antoine are a separated couple who, with the help of their respective lawyers, are arguing in front of a judge about who should be granted custody of their 11-year-old son, Julien. Each puts forward a persuasive argument but given inconsistencies in their stories, it's clear that at least one side (if not both) is not being truthful. The judge wraps things up by stating she will review their claims and make a decision at a future date.

The film is structured in a way that we, as the audience, become the jury. This is the first time we've met these characters and we have no idea about their history and time together. Rather than provide superfluous flashback sequences, the director wants us to form our own opinion as we observe Miriam, Antoine and Julien in the days following the custody hearing. There's a widely-held belief that it takes just seven seconds to make a first impression but you're likely to need a lot more time than that to size up these individuals and their motives.

There's a lot to think about here. It's a movie that delves into the complexities of a relationship breakdown when children get caught in the middle. The 11-year-old Julien, beautifully played by newcomer Thomas Gioria, finds himself the unwilling participant in a game of emotional tug-of-war. He's old enough to understand the situation and form a view about which parent he prefers. However, he's still too young to appreciate the way he is being manipulated in pursuit of other goals.

*Custody* took home the prize for best director at the 2017 Venice Film Festival and is one of 5 movies short-listed by the French National Film Board as the country's entry into next year's Oscar's race for Best Foreign Language Film. The unrelenting narrative and flawless performances make this a powerful piece of cinema.

**Original review:** Mathew Toomey, *ABC Radio Brisbane*

**Extracted by:** Peter Gillard

18, 20, 21 February

# THE CLEANERS



## IM SCHATTEN DER NETZWELT

**Directors:** Hans Block & Moritz Riesewieck

**Featuring:** Illma Gore

**Language:** English & Tagalog

**Origin:** Germany 2018



Strong themes

**Running time:** 89 minutes

A thoroughly unnerving picture of our times, this gripping doco immerses us in the surreal world of the content moderators who decide what we see (or don't see) on social media. Ever wondered who polices Facebook? This rattling documentary should make for illuminating viewing. *The Cleaners* introduces us to five content moderators, all based in the Philippines, whose services are contracted to social media giants like Facebook, Twitter and Google.

Every day, these 'cleaners' scan through thousands of images and videos that have been flagged as 'objectionable'. There's an obvious toll to sweeping our feeds for sinister material. As the subjects present us with their harrowing testimony, it quickly becomes clear how psychologically ill-equipped anyone would be for the violence and pornography they wade through daily.

That's not even taking into account the cultural disparities that complicate their decisions, an issue which artist Illma Gore's banned portrait of Trump (with his iconic micro-penis) deftly illustrates. There are myriad implications for free speech and democracy here, but crucially the filmmakers follow through on them, broadening their portrait into an urgent exploration of the perils of the digital age.

*The Cleaners* packs a devastating wallop... [It covers] what the directors clearly see as a real-time global catastrophe – a situation where tech companies are so eager to grow, expand, and monetize that they fail to recognize the ways their platforms are fomenting hate, discord, and violence. The film paints such a bleak picture that it's hard to not walk away with the feeling that we should all immediately delete our Twitter and Facebook accounts – not out of protest, but out of sheer self-preservation.

**Original review:** NZIFF

**Extracted by:** Janez Zagoda

# THE INSULT

## L'INSULTE

**Director:** Ziad Doueiri

**Featuring:** Adel Karam, Kamel El Basha, Camille Salameh

**Language:** Arabic

**Origin:** Lebanon 2017



**Running time:** 113 minutes

Mature Themes and Coarse  
Language



*The Insult* is the story of the Lebanese civil war, stripped down to domestic dimensions. Tony Hanna (Adel Karam) is a householder, Yasser Salameh is a builder and one day, in a Beirut street, they have an argument about a drainpipe.

Insults are exchanged and a stalemate is reached until Yasser's boss, a practical man of moderate temperament, persuades him to apologise. But Tony, a Phalangist Christian, rejects the apology. His hot-tempered response contains such an inflammatory infusion of political venom that Yasser, a Palestinian refugee, punches him, breaking two of his ribs. Legal proceedings follow and things accelerate to the point where the case becomes a cause celebre – an intimate replay of the scenario which kept the Lebanese civil war on the boil for 15 years.

The movie's fulcrum is in the ferocity of Tony and Yasser's feud followed by their gradual realisation that they have more in common with one another than with any one else in the courtroom. While the reasons for this take you back decades, their potency doesn't depend on knowledge of Lebanon's history or its politics. They reside in the same tribal grudges that have fuelled the wars in the Middle East for the past century.

What matters is the film's success in distilling them into the characters and personalities of these two men. Yasser comes across as the most rational. He's older with a reticence and a watchfulness which hint at a lifetime of sobering experiences. Tony, in contrast, has a hair-trigger temper which doesn't admit compromise. His instinct is to object first and consider the consequences much, much later – something that his loyal but exasperated wife knows only too well. But he, too, has his excuses, which are spelt out at the story's climax. You can see them coming, but any sense of predictability is dispelled by the film's ending which triumphantly unites the political and the personal by crystallising their connection in two great performances.

**Original review:** Sandra Hall, *Sydney Morning Herald*

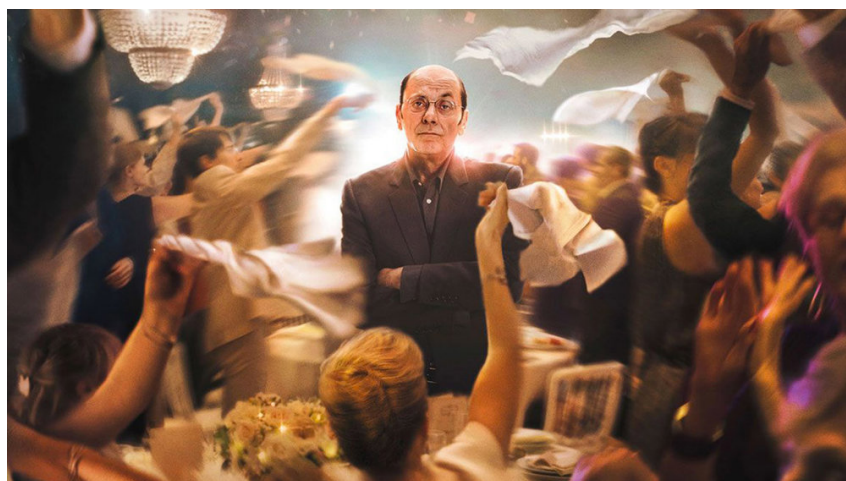
**Extracted by:** Gail Bendall

25, 27, 28 February



# C'EST LA VIE

4, 6, 7 March



## LE SENS DE LA FÊTE

**Directors:** Olivier Nakache, Éric Toledano

**Featuring:** Jean-Pierre Bacri, Jean-Paul Rouve

**Language:** French

**Origin:** France 2017



Coarse language

**Running time:** 116 minutes

The latest collaboration between Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano is like a good wedding champagne - bubbly, frothy fun with an excellent structure and a hint of complexity that leaves you on a high. Not that wedding planner Max (Jean-Pierre Bacri) has any time to stop and have a glass, he's far too busy trying to ensure that the only hitch on a big day is between the bride and groom.

Set over the course of one event, Nakache and Toledano prove adept at planning and crowd management, plunging us into the workings of the backstage staff and some of the wedding party without losing us in the melee. Max just wants a quiet life, but there's little chance of that considering his right-hand woman Adele (Eye Haidara) is in almost constant foul-mouthed conflict with egocentric replacement wedding singer (Gilles Lellouche), his photographer (Jean-Paul Rouve) is on the romantic prowl, with the help of his young work shadow (Gabriel Naccache), and the groom (Benjamin Lavernhe) takes over-inflation to an entirely new level.

This is just the top tier of the wedding confection created by Nakache and Toledo, who ensure that just about everything that could go wrong does while never letting things become too absurd. There's enough predictability about some of the relationships to give a frisson of anticipation for how they might make the romantic elements play out but there are also plenty of surprises. Cinematographer David Chizallet takes us weaving with characters through the party, dropping in on incidents as they happen but the main arc is never left dangling too long.

The cast have a blast. Bacri deadpans his way to success, while Lellouche offers a hint of silliness to the singer without over-playing it - you can still see why he gets hired - and H el ene Vincent makes the most of a cameo as the mother of the groom.

By the end, you're left with nothing to do but laugh and raise a glass to their talents.

**Original review:** Amber Wilkinson, Eyeforfilm@yahoo.com

**Extracted by:** Gill Ireland

# SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL



Recalling the last years' programmes, do you remember *Frantz*, *Captain Fantastic*, *Manchester by the Sea*, *Call Me By Your Name* or *Lady Macbeth*? Do you remember documentaries such as *School Life*, *Tickled*, *The Eagle Huntress*? All of these films have been screened at the Sundance Film Festival.

While many have heard of the festival few know its beginnings in 1978 as the Utah/US Film Festival. Despite popular myth, it was not founded by Robert Redford, although his role has been vital from early days. It was born from Utah's arts community and the state's commercial needs by Sterling van Wagenen, a Brigham Young University film school graduate, Utah State Film Commissioner John Earle and several associates. The aims of the festival were three fold:

to attract more film makers to Utah; to present a retrospective of highly regarded American films and to launch a competition to showcase films outside of the Hollywood system. Robert Redford became involved as the festival's initial chairman. The first festival in 1978 lost \$40,000 however the loss became the incentive to keep going! Two years later, the festival declared its first profit.

The story of the Sundance Institute is also central to the Festival. Formed by Robert Redford in 1981 'to foster independence, risk-taking, and new voices in American film', he initially invited ten emerging film makers to Utah to work with leading members of the industry to develop their projects. Today the Institute has 180 employees that support approximately 900 artists annually.

In 1984, the Institute, headed by Sterling van Wagenen, assumed management of the Utah/US Film Festival with its first festival in 1985 showing 86 films in two theatres with thirteen staff over ten days. It included films such as William Duke's *The Killing Floor*, John Sayle's *Brother from Another Planet*, Roland Joffé's *The Killing Fields* and the Coen brothers' debut film *Blood Simple*. In 1991 the festival was officially renamed the Sundance Film Festival.

Gradually the number of awards has grown with the U.S. Grand Jury Prize being the most coveted for American dramatic film. Other awards recognise documentary film, excellence in film making, world cinema and short film.

## 2018 Festival facts:

- 13 468 film submissions; 192 films screened in 10 theatres; 246 staff
- \$191.6 million is the value to the Utah economy
- Attendees: women 66.9%, men 31.7%, and 1.4% identifying as "other."
- 11.8% of attendees work in the entertainment industry
- 24.7% of festivalgoers intended to ski or snowboard during the festival!

Source:

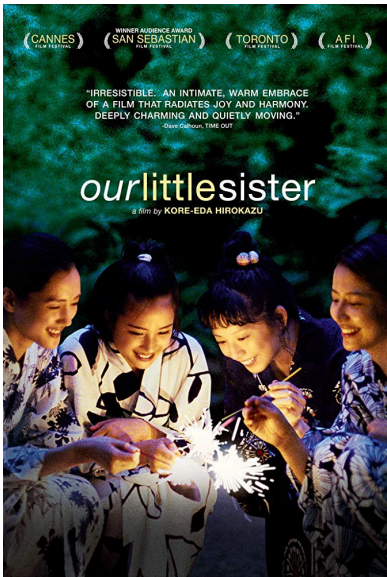
<https://www.sundanceguide.net/sundance-festival-guide/history-of-the-sundance-film-festival/part-1.php>

<https://www.sundance.org>

<https://www.sltrib.com/news/business/2018/07/17/with-nearly-attending/>



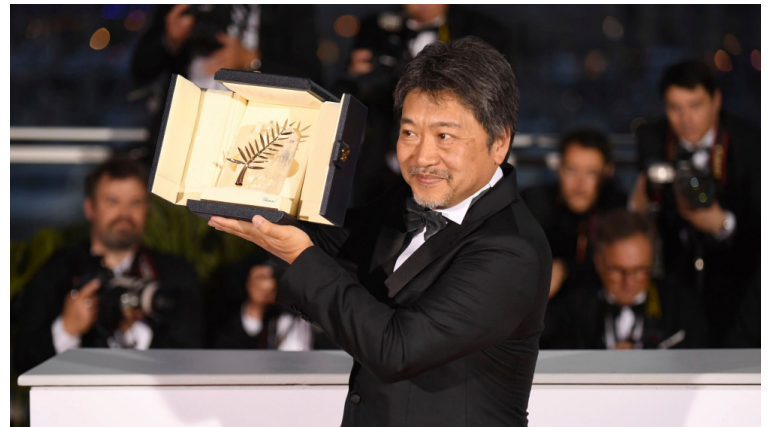
# HIROKAZU KORE-EDA



Despite a critically acclaimed, award-laden career stretching over 20 years, Japan's Hirokazu Kore-eda probably remains a household name only to more hardcore cinephiles. Most of his work regularly graces major international film festivals. His debut feature *Maborosi* won a prize at Venice (1995) and five films have been selected at Cannes where he has won the 2013's Jury prize for *Like Father, like Son* and most recently the 2018 Palme d'Or for *Shoplifters*.

A film director, producer, screenwriter, and editor, Kore-eda began his career in television and has since directed more than a dozen feature films. Initially Kore-eda worked as an assistant director on documentaries for television.

If, on the one hand, it's a shame that such an accomplished filmmaker hasn't found greater widespread recognition, on the other it almost goes against the very essence of Kore-eda's habitual work. His films are intimate domestic dramas, languid in pace and muted in overt sentiment, but rich in quotidian detail and imbued with unexpectedly deep emotional resonance. They are mellow drama, not melodrama, even when dealing with *Like Father, like Son's* tear-jerking high-concept of mistakenly-swapped-at-birth boys.



The family is the heart of almost every Kore-eda film, usually formulated around some central lack or absence: a husband's inexplicable suicide in *Maborosi* (1995); the mother who abandons her four young children in *Nobody Knows* (2004); or the annual clan gathering in *Still Walking* (2008) to remember the son who died young. At Film Society we have already enjoyed Kore-eda's films *Wish* (Term 1 2013) and *Our Little Sister* (Term 4 2016)

Kore-eda's social realist underpinnings, diversity and understated artistry mark him out as a great humanist filmmaker in his own right.

Sources:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hirokazu\\_Kore-eda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hirokazu_Kore-eda)

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/fast-track-fandom-where-begin-hirokazu-koreeda>





# SHOPLIFTERS

**MANBIKI KAZUKO**

**Director:** Hirokazu Kore-Eda

**Featuring:** Kirin Kiki,  
Lily Franky, Sosuke Ikematsu,  
Yoko Moriguchi

**Language:** Japanese

**Origin:** Japan 2018



**Running time:** 121 minutes

Sexual References and nudity



11, 13, 14 March

*Shoplifters* won the 2018 Palme d'Or at Cannes- The film is utterly transporting – but Kore-Eda never telegraphs where the transport is going.

It's set in a traditional Japanese house, but this one is stuffed to the gunnels with junk, much of it stolen. It's all petty crime but everyone in the family does their bit. The father Osamu has a method for robbing grocery stores with his son Shota, who's about 10. His wife Nobuyo works in a commercial laundry, nicking stuff as she finds it. Her sister Aki dresses up as a schoolgirl for men who like to watch in sex shops. Grandmother diddles the social security department.

The home scenes are raucous, full of laughter and slurping of food. These people are poor, but they seem to get on. When Osamu and Shota find a small child hiding outside her house in winter, they bring her home. Yuri has been beaten and neglected, so they keep her.

Slowly, Kore-Eda takes this far from where we might have expected to go. Blood does not bind them so much as kindness and care, and a fair bit of larceny. It's a beautifully strange melodrama that rattles the mythologies of what a Japanese family is supposed to be.

But it is not just a question of Osamu finding redemption in doing good, nor is it a simple irony in Osamu's crook-family fulfilling the function of the social services and the caring state – the state that would disapprove of and indeed prosecute Osamu, if it knew what he was up to. The point is that Osamu has, in his amoral way, stolen Juri in just the same way as he steals everything else. And it isn't the first time he's done it. His ambiguously benevolent abduction of Juri is part of a larger pattern of concealment in which the whole family unit is involved. Nothing is what it seems.

It is a movie made up of delicate brushstrokes. A rich, satisfying, simple and spellbinding film, complex and accessible, specific and universal.

**Original review:** Paul Barnes, *Sydney Morning Herald*

**Extracted by:** Janez Zagoda

# BACKTRACK BOYS

18, 20, 21 March



**Director:** Catherine Scott

**Featuring:** Bernie Shakeshaft, Rusty, Zac, Tyson

**Origin:** Australia 2018



Strong coarse language

**Running time:** 100 minutes

Filmed over two years by director Catherine Scott, *Backtrack Boys* was voted the top feature documentary at the Melbourne International Film Festival. *Backtrack Boys* follows jackaroo Bernie Shakeshaft as he oversees a youth program (Backtrack) from his farm in Armidale in rural NSW. Backtrack is run out of Shakeshaft's shed, a place for troubled kids to safely continue their education while learning trust and support for one another and how to have faith in a world that has forgotten them.

When Shakeshaft recruits Zac, Alfie and Rusty to join him on a cross-country journey with his famed dog-jumping team, it's the last chance for the three boys to halt a quick journey to gaol and prove to the world that they are more than just delinquents with no future. Scott follows the group as they engage with the Backtrack program, with each story being as heartbreaking as the last. Take Rusty for example who has had a tough start in life with his mum dying not long after he was born, leaving his dad to raise him by himself. Rusty swears as a way of letting off steam, alongside occasionally throwing things and the odd bout of aggression – all things that the Backtrack program aims to curb.

Scott's camera manages to capture some beautiful, intimate moments of the boys with their dogs and the challenges and triumphs they face as they try to find their place in the world. One boy sleeps in a swag with a dog right by his side. Another boy, almost dwarfed by the Great Dane he is paired with, works hard to teach the dog some fantastic tricks.

Ultimately *Backtrack Boys* is a bittersweet story of growth and setbacks as these boys are at times, their own worst enemies. It is difficult not to become invested in the journey the boys take, both literally and metaphorically. The audience is left hoping whatever happens next continues to enrich their lives on their way to adulthood.

**Original review:** Andrew Peirce, *The Curb*

**Extracted by:** Ed Beswick



# WAJIB

**Director:** Annemarie Jacir

**Featuring:** Mohammad Bakri, Saleh Bakri, Tarik Kopty

**Language:** Palestinian Arabic

**Origin:** Palestine 2017



25, 27, 28 March

**Running time:** 93 minutes

Coarse language



*Wajib* is an intimate, well-played disquisition on what it means to be a Palestinian abroad versus a Palestinian at home. Real father-and-son duo Mohammad and Saleh Bakri handle the leads with their distinctive charismas intact — the older gentleman representing the realist negotiating the compromises necessary when you're an Arab in Nazareth, the younger actor embodying the diasporic community who remain politically engaged yet naïve in their blinkered view of life back home.

Architect Shadi returns to Nazareth from Rome to help with preparations for the upcoming wedding of his sister Amal. Together with his divorced father Abu Shadi, a teacher, the two men drive around the city in an old Volvo, delivering invitations to all the people who must be invited. The film's title translated as "duty," and part of the tension between father and son comes from what this term really means. For the older man, the rituals of community are a duty to be performed in order to maintain cohesion and not lose traditions. His son finds the whole process meaningless, and gets especially angry when his father insists on inviting an Israeli whose job clearly is to act as a spy for the government. The son quickly tires of the whole invitation delivery ceremony, in which he's shown off as a prize catch for families with eligible daughters, even though he lives with his Palestinian girlfriend back in Rome. This too becomes a source of contention: her father's position within the PLO makes her suspect.

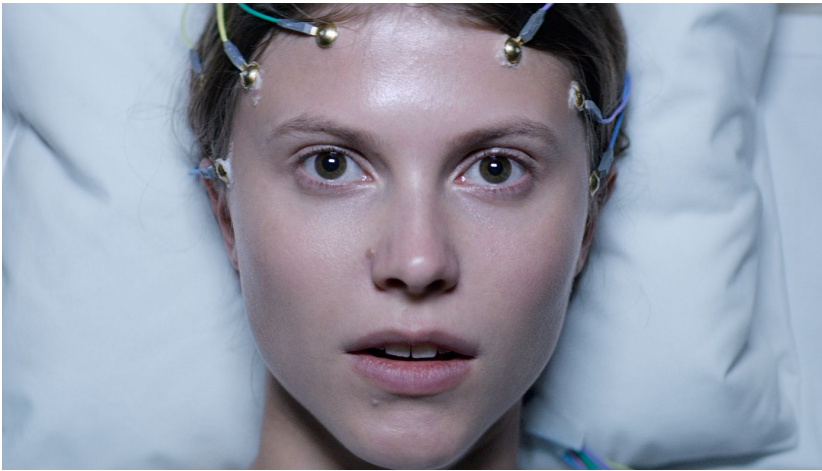
The Bakris, father and son, easily convey familial warmth but also exasperation: Abu Shadi's genial yet sly demeanor rubs against his son's annoyed righteousness. Their interplay gives depth to the intergenerational conflict, though the film really gets its bite towards the end, when a well-written argument finally strips away the respectful niceties and excuses to reveal the fundamental difference in point-of-view between Palestinians living in Israel and those émigrés whose political stances don't always jive with the reality on the ground.

**Original review:** Jay Weissberg, *Variety*

**Extracted by:** Anne Green

# THELMA

1, 3, 4 April



**Director:** Joachim Trier

**Featuring:** Eili Harboe, Kaya Wilkins, Henrik Rafaelsen, Ellen Dorrit Petersen, Vanessa Borgli

**Language:** Norwegian & Swedish

**Origin:** Norway, France, Denmark, Sweden 2017



Strong themes and coarse language

**Running time:** 116 minutes

Joachim Trier's uncanny psychological thriller follows a young woman whose burgeoning sexuality is linked to intense episodes and cosmic disturbances. *Thelma* creates an uncanny accumulation of mood, an ecstasy of disquiet, like the film's hostile and telekinetically induced starling-murmurations. It also interestingly suggests that horror doesn't need to have a nihilistic or unhappy ending.

*Thelma* (Eili Harboe) is a shy young woman who has just arrived at university in Oslo, leaving behind her two over-protective and very religious parents: Trond (Henrik Rafaelsen) and Unni (Ellen Dorrit Petersen), who have an exasperating habit of checking up on her online, monitoring her lecture timetables and Facebook friend-acceptances.

One of the things *Thelma* is anxious about at college is the suspicion that she is gay. She has met a beautiful fellow student called Anja (Kaya Wilkins) at the swimming pool; she follows Anja's Instagram feed and soon they are hanging out. *Thelma* succumbs to what look like epileptic episodes. Then stranger things happen. She realises that she has the power to summon or coerce people or objects by going into erotic trance-like states that look like psychic self-harm.

The keynote scene arrives when Anja's mother Vilde (Vanessa Borgli) takes the girls out to the ballet. There is a real grandeur to the occasion and Trier cleverly conveys how exciting and overwhelming *Thelma* finds it – especially as the dance piece is challengingly physical and sensual, and as Anja is holding her hand and beginning to caress her intimately in the darkness. It is the trigger for everything that is to happen. There is the same conflation of female sexuality with supernatural phenomenon, and the same way of almost normalising supernatural events within a realist narrative. *Thelma* tries to become a much more conventional scary movie, while keeping intact its more studied calm and detachment.

**Original review:** Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian*

**Extracted by:** Mark Horner

# JIRGA

**Director:** Benjamin Gilmour

**Featuring:** Sam Smith,  
Mohammad Mosam,  
Kefayat Lag Humani

**Language:** English and Pushto

**Origin:** Australia 2018



**Running time:** 78 minutes

Mature themes



8, 10, 11 April

When thinking about Afghanistan, serenity does not come to mind. But its Pashtun warriors who repelled two British invasions in the 19th Century and a Soviet invasion in the twentieth, are also poets, singers and have a fondness for the fragrance of roses. They have a capacity for forgiveness and compassion despite their country's cycle of conflict and revenge.

Forgiveness is the strongest theme running through the film. Sam Smith plays a soldier who has returned to Afghanistan to look for a family of a civilian who he mistook for a militant and killed. Unable to live with the guilt of what he has done, he sets out to return to the village to find the family and offer to make a monetary recompense to his widow. His fate, if he survives through the perilous country controlled by the Taliban, will be in the hands of a council of village elders, a "Jirga" who will decide.

This is the third low budget film for the 43 year old Gilmour who also works as a paramedic in Sydney. He had intended to shoot in Pakistan's North West Frontier, but when he arrived permission to enter the region had been withdrawn and he had a \$100,000 hole in his budget. So he became both director and camera man using a digital camera bought in a Pakistani shopping mall.

During two months the filmmakers spent in Afghanistan in mid-2016 - taking advice to stay inside when the so-called fighting season made conditions too dangerous - Gilmour and Smith thus had to make changes to the script to fit in with several changes in venue. The film was shot in just 20 days using local people to act the Afghani parts.

Gilmour, an outsider in the film industry, is learning his craft by doing. Thus when he and his producer, John Maynard won the \$100,000 best film prize, Australia's richest, at CinfestOZ, it surprised the writer-director.

**Original review:** John Zubrzycki, *Weekend Australian*; Garry Maddox, *Sydney Morning Herald*

**Extracted by:** Peter Gillard

# PROGRAMME: 4 FEBRUARY – 11 APRIL 2019

SESSION TIMES		MOVIE	LENGTH
4, 6, 7	FEBRUARY	Searching (M)	102 Minutes
11, 13, 14	FEBRUARY	Custody (M) (Jusqu'à la Garde)	94 Minutes
18, 20, 21	FEBRUARY	The Cleaners (MA15+) (Im Schatten der Netzwelt)	89 Minutes
25, 27, 28	FEBRUARY	The Insult (M) (L'insulte)	113 Minutes
<b>25</b>	<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	
4, 6, 7	MARCH	C'est la Vie (M) (Le Sens de la Fête)	116 Minutes
11, 13, 14	MARCH	Shoplifters (M) (Manbiki Kazuko)	121 Minutes
18, 20, 21	MARCH	Backtrack Boys (MA 15+)	100 Minutes
25, 27, 28	MARCH	Wajib (M)	93 Minutes
1, 3, 4	APRIL	Thelma (MA 15+)	116 Minutes
8, 10, 11	APRIL	Jirga (M)	78 Minutes
Film voting: The Plough Inn			
<b>29</b>	<b>APRIL</b>	<b>Next screening</b>	

## Screening times:

**Monday 6 pm**

**Wednesday 4 pm & 6.30 pm**

**Thursday 6 pm**

## Committee:

**President** Peter Gillard  
**Secretary** Gail Bendall  
**Membership secretary** Gill Ireland

**Vice-President** Mark Horner  
**Treasurer** Ed Beswick  
**Committee** Janez Zagoda  
 Anne Green  
 Ian Meikle

The Village Cinemas in Launceston have been supporting the Launceston Film Society since 1983.



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