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JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL REVEALS 2017 PROGRAM

The *Japanese Film Festival (JFF)* returns in 2017 with a line-up of the very best of fresh and classic Japanese cinema, for a huge national tour of Canberra, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Sydney and Melbourne, from October 13th to December 3rd.

With each city's program carefully curated by *The Japan Foundation, Sydney*, the 2017 Festival will present the most exciting new films direct from Japan, including comedies, samurai and yakuza action, manga adaptations, romances, drama and much more.

The Festival will open in true Japanese style with **MUMON: THE LAND OF STEALTH**, an action-packed film about a deadly ninja with unmatched strength who accidentally triggers a deadly battle between a warlord's army and the ninjas in his province. Directed by Yoshihiro Nakamura (*Fish Story*) and starring Satoshi Ohno (*The Locked Room*), this film will have audiences on the edge of their seats.

Other program highlights of the 2017 Festival include **BIRDS WITHOUT NAMES**, a visceral tale of lust, devotion and redemption from Kazuya Shiraishi (*The Devil's Path*) fresh from the Toronto International Film Festival; **MY UNCLE**, a heartfelt comedy about a young boy who embarks on an transpacific adventure with his eccentric, free-loading uncle; and **A DOUBLE LIFE**, a poignant drama from first-time feature film director Yoshiyuki Kishi, which was nominated for *Best Director* and *Best Actress* at London's Raindance Film Festival in 2016.

For the first time the Festival will also include a short film program with screenings of **WE'RE SHOOTING A MOVIE**, **DAD'S WEDDING** and **HIGH HEELS – A FAIRY TALE BORN OF OBSESSION**, and the popular JFF Classics program will pay tribute to the late director **Seijun Suzuki** who earned a cult following for his avant-garde films and who has been called an inspiration by many contemporary directors, including Quentin Tarantino and Jim Jarmusch.

"Every film in this year's program was handpicked to present fresh perspectives and showcase the next generation of Japanese cinema," said JFF Program Coordinator, Margaret Cortez. "Among this selection are genre-benders such as **BEFORE WE VANISH** by veteran Kiyoshi Kurosawa, stunning arthouse comeback film **SNOW WOMAN** by Asia's indie darling Kiki Sugino, and international

collaborations such as **GUKOROKU - TRACES OF SIN** by filmmaker Kei Ishikawa and Polish cinematographer Piotr Niemyjski. We're also excited to introduce new blood in the Japanese cinema industry through a short film special supported by 'New Directions in Japanese Cinema', a Japanese government program supporting emerging filmmakers."

The Festival will also host a number of special event screenings and special guest Q&A screenings in select cities.

The program is available via www.japanesefilmfestival.net

- **CANBERRA** - 13 to 22 October 2017 at Dendy, Canberra Centre
- **ADELAIDE** - 19 to 22 October 2017 at GU Filmhouse Adelaide
- **BRISBANE** - 25 to 29 October 2017 at Event Cinemas Brisbane City Myer Centre
- **PERTH** - 1 to 5 November 2017 at Hoyts Carousel, Cannington
- **SYDNEY** - 16 to 26 November 2017 at Event Cinemas George Street
- **MELBOURNE & CLASSICS** - 23 November to 3 December 2017 at Hoyts Melbourne Central & ACMI Cinemas
- **CANBERRA CLASSICS** - 6 to 7 October 2017 at National Film and Sound Archive
- **SYDNEY CLASSICS** – 1 to 25 October 2017 at Art Gallery of NSW

Please note, the Classics programs is free admission. See japanesefilmfestival.net for ticketing details.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

ABOUT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION, SYDNEY

The Japan Foundation, Sydney is the Australian arm of the Japan Foundation, which was established by the Japanese government to promote cultural and intellectual exchange between Japan and other nations. It runs a diverse range of programs and events, including exhibitions, talk events, grant programs and Japanese language courses for all levels from beginner to advanced. The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 with a global network of 24 offices in 23 countries. The Australian office was founded in 1978.