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- 3 July

Castlemaine Documentary Festival 2022

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which our Festival takes place, the Dja Dja Wurrung, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Realise the Possible

In 2022, we again celebrate the connection between filmmakers, films and audiences and the lure of documentary storytelling.

Through COVID our lives turned inward. At CDoc, we lifted our game, and expanded our way to reach you by combining online and in-cinema options. As we emerge from isolation documentary helps to satisfy our deep need to connect, to belong, to share our feelings and celebrate our differences.

With a renewed sense of purpose we will make the Theatre Royal sing with true stories and bring them to audiences across Australia. Having sharpened our online skills to create wonderful conversations, we are able to share our absorbing panel discussions and Q&A's following the screenings.

We went on an intense, wonderful hunt for films which turn the lens of human experience on to the themes and issues at the heart of what we do and why we do it. We were determined to make each program offering distinct in order to create a broad gathering together of creative and invigorating storytelling — and finally bring to fruition the additional screen-based surprises we've been planning.

Many of this years films tackle the big, hefty ideas that consume us and are told through the distinctive and intimate lens of each film makers vision. True stories about people who create change, who are driven to rebel. They help us to see what is possible, telling us real stories with all the drama and complexity that we humans face. We are calling this 2022 edition of the Castlemaine Documentary Festival, *Realise the Possible*.

On opening night, we're launching our inaugural LOCALS session, taking advantage of what our region has on offer — an abundance of local regional talent working in cross-disciplinary ways. A night of imaginative, authentic, short films which help us to remember the visions and feelings that inspired and occupied us through Covid. It will be presented by local legend, musician and auteur Lifon Henderson. This is a night for all of us.

Bridging our past and present are two superb and absorbing films, *Television Event* and *Letters from Baghdad*. Using never-seen-before archive footage, they take us to times and places that feel distant and yet, both eerily prescient in their concerns, confront this very moment.

Writing with Fire, Rebellion and I Am Samuel speak to humanity's acts of steadfast defiance as their characters challenge and redefine traditional notions of power, love, freedom and the fulfilment of self, from our domestic lives to our biggest issues. They may be loud, wild and excessive or quiet and meditative – but all reflect our own emotions and struggle to connect.

Saturday night's musical experience, *The Rumba Kings*, is a powerful tale of music's entanglement with politics, and the freedom of nations. There's no better way to take us into dancing with the rhythms of rumba after the screening. Sunday 3rd July coincides with NAIDOC Week and we are proud to have *The Lake Of Scars*, a groundbreaking Australian documentary dealing with the challenges of reconciliation. As special Festival guests, we have Uncle Jack Charles and Ngarra Murray, together with the film's director Bill Code.

Lastly, immerse yourselves in the closing night film, *River*, an audacious work of mind-bending beauty by Jennifer Peedom, the director of *Mountain* and *Sherpa*.

In 2021, we were the Festival to go to when you couldn't go anywhere else. We said, "if you can't come to us, let us come to you".

This year.

Realise the Possible. Come to us.

Claire Jager Director

Castlemaine Documentary Festival

Castlemaine Documentary Festival



From the Festival Chair

Welcome to the Castlemaine Documentary Festival's eighth season.

The last two years of COVID required us at CDoc to pivot and move our beloved Festival online, or "in the clouds" as we called it. So, this year, it's just wonderful to be back and able to bring everyone together once again "in real life".

Our 2022 Festival runs over a single weekend in mid-winter at the iconic Theatre Royal Castlemaine, mainland Australia's oldest continuously operating cinema, in the heart of regional Victoria on Dja Dja Wurrung country. In this intimate setting, we delight in offering you a unique festival experience, celebrating diversity and profiling the important issues of our time, from the local to the global.

This year, we get to bring you all the new and different viewing experiences we've been planning since 2020. There is, once again, an outstanding selection of eight Australian and international feature-length films, each to be followed by stimulating panel discussions and conversations, and your chance to engage with filmmakers, panellists and other festival-goers.

Alongside our festival planning, we have been busy developing CDoc beyond an annual weekend event into an arts organisation with a year-round calendar. This includes the establishment of Club CDoc, a focal place for local filmmakers and film enthusiasts to come together, chat about great storytelling through film, share the skills needed to make them, and discuss how film can contribute the impact to bring about positive and tangible change. Club CDoc is the first of its kind in regional Victoria and will be launched at this year's Festival.

We have also continued our pop-up screening program at the Theatre Royal, the Northern Arts Hotel and the Village Square in Castlemaine, as well as developed a number of partnerships with key organisations such as Monash University's School of Media, Film & Journalism.

But back to the 2022 Festival program we have put together for you!

First, to showcase non-fiction work drawn from our Castlemaine community, our Opening Night event celebrates short films made by our LOCALS. Our region has an increasing number of practitioners and budding filmmakers and this is CDoc's way

to elevate their voices and visions. We've also partnered with the COscars and will screen the winner of this year's 8-13 year old category, Georgie Newton's animation, *Dogs*!

Letters From Baghdad, is a beautiful film bringing a little-known story to a wider audience; Rebellion, an eye-opening account of the inner workings and challenges facing the Extinction Rebellion movement; and *I Am Samuel*, a universal story that crosses dangerous boundaries in pursuing the freedom to love.

This year, two of our Festival guests are Australian directors, Jeff Daniels (Television Event) and Bill Code (The Lake of Scars) will be part of the discussions following their screenings.

So, plot out your weekend. You'll be spoilt for choice! We are sure this year's 2022 Festival will meet your expectations and perhaps beyond.

Marylou Verberne Chair CDoc Ltd



Tickets

In-cinema viewing tickets can be purchased online.

Digital viewing-at-home packages are also available.

For the most up-to-date details about the Festival, information about each documentary (and to view their trailers) please join our mailing list.

cdocff.com.au

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Theatre Royal

Established in 1854, Theatre Royal began its life providing live entertainment for the thousands of diggers who migrated to central Victoria in search of gold.

It was one of the first picture palaces to screen silent movies in 1919, and then the talkies followed. The Theatre Royal is firmly cemented in the evolution of Australian cinema.

Proudly one of the oldest continuously operating theatres in the Southern Hemisphere, this historical business also holds an important place in the hearts of the Castlemaine community, coming to represent the beating heart of our vibrant, artistic town.

A cinema, a live music venue, a bar, a bottle shop and a cultural institution all housed within a heritage listed building, Theatre Royal is a truly unique place.

theatreroyalcastlemaine.com.au



All films wil be shown at Theatre Royal **30 Hargraves Street** Castlemaine **Central Victoria**

Please purchase tickets online cdocff.com.au



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Friday 1st July OPENING NIGHT PARTY

An evening of locals voices, emotions and visions that inspired and occupied us through Covid.

 A collection of non-fiction shorts made by locals, presented by local legend, musician, and auteur Lifon Henderson — including his own self-referential lockdown creations.

A family-friendly and jovial event for everyone — not just locals.

AT THE THEATRE ROYAL

PRESENTED BY







Saturday 2nd July

Festival Rumba Party with Melbourne's acclaimed La Rumba







AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Letters from Baghdad

The true story of Gertrude Bell and Iraq. Spy, explorer, political powerhouse — Gertrude Bell was as controversial as the history she made. With Tilda Swinton as the voice of Gertrude Bell.

Letters from Baghdad tells the extraordinary and dramatic story of Gertrude Bell, the most powerful woman in the British Empire in her day. Bell shaped the destiny of Iraq after World War I in ways that still reverberate today.

As the film's directors say, "Gertrude Bell championed tolerance and diversity of this region. She is an inspiration not only for her trailblazing journeys and accomplishments, but because she was even more daring in her respect for a culture so very different to her own."

More influential than her friend and colleague TE Lawrence (a.k.a. Lawrence of Arabia), yet virtually written out of the history that she helped make.

With unique access to the vaults of Iraq's National Library and Archive and Bell's own 1600 letters, the story is told entirely in the words of the players of the day, excerpted verbatim from intimate letters, private diaries and secret communiqués transporting us into her daily life. Much of the extraordinary footage had been shot more a century ago — the era of the birth of cinema — and been buried in storage. It depicts a truly vanished world; a vibrant mosaic where peoples of different ethnicities and religions mingled energetically on the streets. It is a unique look at both a remarkable woman and the tangled history of Iraq. Tilda Swinton as the voice of Gertrude Bell.



AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE Directors Zeva Oelbaum Sabine Krayenbühl Producer Zeva Oelbaum USA UK France 2017 95 minutes English & Arabic English & Arabic English subtitles "Mesmerizingly immersive plunge into a time, place and cultural zeitgeist" POST SCREENING

Deane Williams, Sari Braithwaite & Kacey Sinclair







Writing with Fire

A rousing documentary about tenacious grassroots reporting and galvanising resistance.

Armed with smartphones and tenacity, a fearless group of trailblazing journalists from India's only women-led news outlet risk it all, including their own safety, to confront social injustice while fighting for marginalised voices in the world's largest democracy.

Reporting from a social environment built to divide based on caste and gender, and in a cluttered news landscape dominated by men, emerges India's only newspaper run by Dalit women — the 'untouchable' caste. Chief reporter Meera and her journalists battle personal and political challenges to break traditions and hold those responsible for injustice to account, redefining what it means to be powerful.

Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary + 2022 Sundance Audience Award and Special Jury Award: Impact for Change.



Directors **Rintu Thomas** Sushmit Ghosh India 2021 93 minutes Hindi & English subtitles "A masterclass for aspiring journalists, a refresher course for the seniors and a much-needed shot of inspiration for the weary and cynical brigade."

POST SCREENING

The Conversation presents a discussion with guests.







Television Event

With irreverent humour and sobering apocalyptic vision *Television Event* views the dramatic climax of the Cold War through the lens of a commercial television network, as it narrowly succeeds in producing the most watched, most controversial made-for-TV movie, *The Day After* (1983).

A treasure trove of archive and behind-the-scenes 'making-of' footage create atmosphere, context and an impressively comprehensive portrait of what happened and its impact when a commercial broadcaster made an emotional connection with an audience of over 100 million and forced an urgent conversation with the US President on how to collectively confront and resolve the most pressing issue of the time — nuclear proliferation.

Television Event gives appropriate reverence to The Day After's place in history and offers today's audiences a reminder of what mass-culture is capable of. It's a crisply made reminder of an incredible feat of dramatic power and programming bravery that managed to shift public opinion.

Did you watch The Day After in 1983?



VICTORIAN PREMIERE	
Director Jeff Daniels	
Producers Jeff Daniels Amanda Spain	
Australia/USA 2020	
91 minutes	
English	
"As entertaining as it is profound an historical document."	gem o
POST SCREENING Jeff Daniels, in conversation with J and Dave Sweeney (co-founder Inte Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Wea Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2	ernatio pons —

PRESENTED BY





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The Rumba Kings

A powerful musical experience showing us why Congo is one of the motherlands of music.

The Rumba Kings celebrates the epic quest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an African nation that fought colonial oppression, found freedom, and forged a new identity through music and created the electrifying beat of Congolese rumba. A beat that would carry Congo through its independence and conquer the entire African continent with its infectious groove, captivating guitar licks, and smooth vocals.

Followed by a Rumba Party with Melbourne's acclaimed La Rumba — at the Theatre Royal.

Congo's real treasure does not lie underground.



Director
Alan Brain
Producer
Monica Carlson
USA/Peru 2021
94 minutes
English
"Refreshingly uplifting, upbeat story of th vibrant country and the power of music to entertain & unite."
POST SCREENING PARTY!









Saturday 2nd July — Festival Rumba Party with Melbourne's acclaimed La Rumba







Rebellion

The compelling story of a group of ordinary people who form the Extinction Rebellion and stop playing by the rules, embrace civil disobedience and sound the alarm to climate breakdown.

From Extinction Rebellion's launch in 2018, we follow those at the centre as they navigate the highs and lows of crashing into the status quo — and each other. Unlikely allies, from an international climate lawyer to an organic vegetable farmer, strive to work together.

Both rebellious and flawed, they reveal the human drama at the heart of social change. Change that cuts to the heart of who we really want to be.

A nuanced and complicated film which will encourage audiences to leave behind preconceived notions of activism and recognise the challenges we all face. Rebellion crucially tells a story about the health of democracy.

Rebellion crucially tells a story about the health of democracy.



AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Directors Maia Kenworthy Elena Sanchez Bellot Producer Kat Mansoor UK 2021 122 minutes English "This thoughtful look behind the scenes of the environmental movement doesn't shy away from internal strife ... more than just glossy marketing for the movement." The Guardian

POST SCREENING

Suzanne Donisthorpe in conversation with Jacinta Walsh and Rilka Laycock-Walsh







I am Samuel

An intimate and tender portrait of a Kenyan man torn between balancing duty to his family and their traditions — and wanting to live his truth – of openness about his sexuality along with his dreams for his future with Alex, the man he loves.

Witnessing the tender connection between the couple in a society where people in such relationships can undergo physical harm as well as legal punishment affirms the courageous, moving joy of queer love and the bravery of the men who participate in the documentary. Filmed verite style over five years.

Samuel grew up in the Kenyan countryside, where tradition is valued above all else. He is close to his mother but his father, a local pastor, doesn't understand why he isn't married yet. After moving to Kenya's capital in search of work and a new life, Samuel falls in love with Alex and finds community and belonging. Their love thrives despite the fact that Kenyan laws criminalize anyone who identifies as LGBTQ+. Despite threats of violence and rejection, Samuel and Alex move between their coexisting worlds, hoping to win acceptance in both.

Restricted to persons aged 15 and over unless accompanied by an adult.

Filmed verite style over five years.



AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE
Director Peter Murimi
Producer Toni Kamau
Kenya 2020
69 minutes
English subtitles
"A film that depicts the individual acts of I that can result in incredibly important cha it is a film of conflicting identities, hop determination & first and foremost: love"

POST SCREENING

Hollie Fifer, Max Primmer and guests











The Lake of Scars

An ancient site, a ticking clock and the unlikely allies calling for change.

In a corner of regional Victoria is Lake Boort, a place of astounding natural beauty and rare archaeological and environmental significance — and it's being degraded on an annual basis. As the clock ticks, an unlikely partnership could see it saved for future generations.

'Hosted' by beloved Dja Dja Wurrung actor Uncle Jack Charles in a unique 'in-cinema' role, and including Jida Gulpilil — son of legendary actor, David – who brings his own flavour to his mother's country, *The Lake of Scars* details the relationship between an ageing white farmer and members of Victoria's Yung Balug clan of the Dja Dja Wurrung as they seek to protect Australia's largest collection of scarred trees.

Amidst a backdrop of treaty talks and the fight for water rights, can the relationship between characters of different backgrounds and generations survive the stresses of fighting for country, and overturn 200 years of protocol? Or does the road to reconciliation contain more bumps than we might imagine?

While exploring the beautiful, mysterious scarred trees, middens and stone scatters along the Lake Boort wetlands, we meet the people, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who are working against the clock to preserve what they can. With organic relics at its heart, the film examines the preservation of culture and environment as our protagonists fight for scarred trees to be preserved, for middens and stone scatters to be protected and recognised, for environmental flows of water to be allowed into the seasonal lake, and for a 'keeping place' to be built.

In recognition of NAIDOC week: 3-10 July 2022

'Hosted' by Dja Dja Wurrung actor Uncle Jack Charles.



VICTORIAN PREMIERE
Director Bill Code
Producer Christian Pazzaglia
Australia 2022
96 minutes
POST SCREENING Uncle Jack Charles

Murray and Bill Code in conversation









River

A breathtaking musical odyssey that explores the intrinsic relationship between humans and rivers.

From mountain high to river deep, director Jennifer Peedom follows her 2017 hit *Mountain* with a stunning new cine-sonic journey along the world's waterways — the arteries of our planet.

Alongside co-director Joseph Nizeti, and working again with her *Mountain* collaborators — narrator William Dafoe, writer Robert Macfarlane and the Australian Chamber Orchestra's Richard Tognetti — Peedom has crafted another breathtaking visual and musical odyssey, this time spanning six continents. Featuring sublime on-the-ground, aerial and satellite cinematography, this rousing, propulsive film is set to a soundtrack that includes the music of Bach, Vivaldi, Ravel and Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, Tognetti's original compositions, and vocals by award-winning Kalkadunga musician William Barton.

River journeys through time and space, spanning six continents and drawing on extraordinary contemporary photography, showing rivers on scales and from perspectives never seen before honoring the wildness of rivers but also recognising their vulnerability.

Throughout history, rivers have shaped our landscapes and our journeys; flowed through our cultures and dreams. Its union of image, music and sparse, poetic script will create a film that is both dream-like and powerful, honouring the wildness of rivers but also recognises their vulnerability.

River is a profound cinematic and musical reflection on how rivers have shaped both the planets elaborate landscapes and all human existence.

From the Director of Mountain.



Director, Writer & Producer Jennifer Peedom Narrator Wiliam Dafoe Writer **Robert Macfarlane** Co-Director, Co-Writer Joseph Nizeti **Producers** Jo-Anne McGowan **Jennifer Peedom** John Smithson Music **Richard Tognetti** Australia / UK 2021 75 mins "Staggering ... every bit as pleasing to the ear as it is the eye."





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Castlemaine **Documentary Festival**

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