



For immediate release: 7.30pm, Thursday 12 October

I AM NOT A WITCH, TASTE OF CEMENT **WIN MAJOR AWARDS AT 2017 ADL FILM FEST**

The International Juries of the Adelaide Film Festival (ADL Film Fest) today announced *I Am Not A Witch* (France, United Kingdom) and documentary *Taste of Cement* (Germany, Syria Qatar, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates), as major competition prize winners for 2017, joining the previously announced winner of the inaugural **AFTRS International VR Award**, Michelle and Uri Kranot's **Nothing Happens** (Denmark, France).

I Am Not A Witch, the exciting feature debut of Zambia-born Welsh director Rungano Nyoni, has taken out the prestigious 2017 ADL Film Fest International Feature Award. *Taste of Cement*, Ziad Kalthoum's dreamlike documentary about the Syrian construction workers virtually imprisoned on the site of the Beirut skyscrapers they build, had its Australian Premiere at the festival and has won the **Flinders University International Best Documentary Award**.

The ADL Film Fest **International Best Feature Fiction Award** was awarded by the International Jury made up of the acclaimed taboo-smashing actress and UN Peace Ambassador Leena Alam (Afghanistan), multi-award winning producer Catherine Fitzgerald (New Zealand), Head of EYE International for the promotion of Dutch cinema Martin Rabarts (Netherlands), Locarno 2016 Best Director winner for *The Ornothologist* João Pedro Rodrigues (Portugal), and acclaimed Australian producer Miranda Dear (Blackfella Films).

The Jury said of the selection 'As an International Jury we faced a surprising and compelling selection of films and filmmakers from around the world. The Jury found a unique and bold quality with *I Am Not A Witch*. Based on its originality it was surprising, funny and compelling. It is a bold debut feature from a director with her singular vision. We are excited to celebrate the work of a bright new talent.'

Managing Director of Madman Entertainment, Paul Wiegard said "We are thrilled that the Adelaide Film Festival jury has presented this prestigious award to *I Am Not A Witch*. This prize highlights the exceptional talent of Rungano Nyoni, whose debut feature is a bold and striking satire that places her at the forefront of young female filmmakers working today."

The ten feature films In Competition included 6 Australian Premieres* and features from Cannes, Toronto and Karlovy Vary film festivals. They are Boris Khlebnikov's *Arrythmia** (Russia, Finland, Germany), Mikhail Red's *Birdshot** (Philippines, Qatar), Ofir Raul Graizer's *The Cakemaker** (Germany, Israel), Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me By Your Name* (Italy, France), Rungano Nyoni's *I Am Not A Witch* (France, UK), John Cameron Mitchell's *How To Talk To Girls at Parties** (UK, USA), Mahommad Rasoulof's *A Man Of Integrity* (Iran), Pedro Pinho's *The Nothing Factory** (Portugal), Ruben Östlund's Palme d'Or winner *The Square* (Denmark, Germany, Sweden, France) and Joachim Trier's *Thelma** (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, France).





The 2017 ADL Film Festival **Flinders University International Best Documentary Award** was determined by the internationally renowned and acclaimed documentary practitioners Molly Reynolds (Australia) and Eva Orner (Australia) and film curator and programmer Hania Mroué (Lebanon)

The jury said of their decision ‘Over the past week the documentary jury had the pleasure of viewing an array of diverse and fascinating documentaries. We deliberated long and hard before deciding upon *Taste of Cement*. The film is a poetic unfolding of war refugees rebuilding for other countries while their own is being destroyed. We admire the filmmaker's audacity, ambition and heart. Ziad is a director of talent and is to be encouraged.’

Now in its second edition, the Flinders University International Best Documentary Award recognises the authenticity, curiosity and fearlessness of truth on screen and in 2017 was marked by two world premieres and four Australian premieres amongst the ten films in competition.

Virtual Reality work by Michelle and Uri Kranot, ***Nothing Happens*** (Denmark, France) won the ADL Film Fest’s inaugural **AFTRS International VR Award** with a Special Mention going to Selly Raby Kane’s homage to Senegalese mythology, ***The Other Dakar*** (Senegal). ADL Film Fest is proud to partner with the **Australian Film, Television & Radio School (AFTRS)** in launching this new International Award.

The **AFTRS International VR Award** Jury was comprised of Head of Documentary at AFTRS Rachel Landers, Google Creative Technologist Mathew Tizard and ADL Film Fest Artistic Director Amanda Duthie.

In 2017 ADL Film Fest introduced the AFTRS ADL Film Fest International VR Award, the first competition of its kind in Australia, adding to the festival’s reputation as a leader in screen culture, having been the first Australian festival to introduce an international competition, and the first to invest directly in film production with the ADL Film Fest Fund.

Documentary winner *Taste of Cement* screens again

Saturday 14 Oct, 2pm at Mercury Cinema

<https://adelaidefilmfestival.org/titles/106229/taste-of-cement>

VR winner *Nothing Happens* screens every day until Sunday 15 Oct in the VR Lounge

<https://adelaidefilmfestival.org/titles/106224/nothing-happens>

ABOUT ADL FILM FEST

Launched 14 years ago, the ADL Film Fest has secured a major reputation as an essential screen culture event and has been named in *Variety Film* magazine’s 50 Unmissable Film Festival lists and continues to be regarded as a destination for new and exciting Australian screen projects from the industry and national audiences. Adelaide Film Festival is, once again, thrilled to work with long-standing Principal Partner Channel 9 since 2013, sharing our love of all screen storytelling.

The first Australian festival to invest directly in film production, **ADL Film Fest Fund** first premiered in 2005. Over eight festivals the Fund has invested in 86 projects – from feature fiction to moving image, TV





series to shorts. One of the most renowned and successful festival funding initiatives, AFFFund projects have now received over 175 national awards and over 90 international awards. The Fund has seen the launch of award-winning Australian screen creatives, with their films being selected for all of the world's leading festivals including Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Telluride, Toronto and Sundance.

In 2017, ADL Film Festival Fund has premiered three feature films, the World Premieres of Yolande Ramke and Ben Howling's **CARGO** starring Martin Freeman, Susie Porter, Anthony Hayes, Natasha Wanganeen and David Gupilil, Sophie Hyde's **F*!#ING ADELAIDE** starring Pamela Rabe, Kate Box, Tilda Cobham-Hervey and Brendan Maclean and the Australian Premiere, direct from Official Competition at the Venice Film Festival, of Warwick Thornton's **SWEET COUNTRY** starring Bryan Brown, Sam Neill and Hamilton Morris.

I AM NOT A WITCH (France, United Kingdom)

Dir. Rungano Nyoni

An innocent young Zambian girl is accused of witchcraft in the exciting feature debut of Zambia-born Welsh female director Rungano Nyoni. Impressive newcomer Maggie Mulubwa leads a splendid non-professional cast as Shula, an orphan banished from her village to a "witch camp" with mostly elderly women. Combining magic realism, potent social commentary and a wonderfully deadpan sense of humour, Nyoni's film defies easy categorisation – and that's precisely what makes it such a special treat. Official Selection – Cannes Directors' Fortnight

"It's rare and exhilarating that a new filmmaker arrives on the scene so sure of herself and so willing to take bold, counter-intuitive chances". (*Variety*)

TASTE OF CEMENT (Germany, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Qatar)

Dir. Ziad Kalthoum

Each morning at sunrise, Syrian workers in Lebanon climb construction sites, their hammer strokes waking the country – a country they only know from distance, as they are banned from moving through it, or swimming in its sea. While these Beirut Roosters rebuild Lebanese houses, the war in Syria destroys their own homes. That war brought together director Ziad Kalthoum, who left the Syrian Army to find refuge in Lebanon, and his fellow compatriots who work in Beirut. In this city, they share feelings of being alienated, unwanted and negated by Lebanese society. At night, they move into a hole underneath the construction site: their new home. Down here, the memories of home, war and what they have left behind plague them. Together, they share the pain and fear of losing their home country while finding themselves unable to construct a life for themselves.

ADLFF AWARD WINNERS - IMAGES

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jbkh2rxtq0rcpu0/AABDGPdVU7TY_P9NIJKDkmh4a?dl=0

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