

Australia, Country of Honour 2024

Held annually on the remote island of Kastellorizo, Greece, the Beyond Borders Kastellorizo International Documentary Festival was established in 2016 by the Hellenic History Foundation (ID-ISME), in collaboration with the French Ecrans des Mondes. Its overarching vision is to showcase documentary films of exceptional quality to audiences across the Mediterranean, Europe, and globally. Utilising the art of cinematic storytelling, the Festival encourages a convergence of diverse ideas and perspectives from around the world. Central to its mission are themes of reflection, inspiration, and creative engagement with the past, present, and future.

Boasting three open-air screening venues on the island, each year the Festival presents numerous world, international, and Greek premieres over one week. These documentaries delve into historical events, personalities, socio-political issues and advocate for the promotion of human rights, democracy and solidarity, consistently prioritising quality over quantity.

Beyond Borders collaborates annually with a Country of Honour. This year, the selected country of honour is Australia. The purpose of this collaboration is for Beyond Borders to serve as a bridge for the promotion of Australian documentary to the Greek and international audience. Documentary Australia is honoured to be supporting the festival this year by sharing promotions and calling for film submissions. Additionally, Documentary Australia's CEO, Dr Mitzi Goldman has been invited to be President of the Jury at this year's Festival.

With Australia's large Greek population and with many Greek filmmakers amongst our documentary community, this collaboration offers a link back to the home country for many Australians as well as providing insight into Australian storytellers for the Greek community of Kastellorizo. Through this "spotlight," the Festival aims to shed light on the contemporary documentary films of the Country of Honour.

Panorama of Australian films chosen

Three films have been selected and invited to screen in the Australian panorama. These include:

The Australian Wars

Directed and Written by Rachel Perkins



The Australian Wars powerfully examines the battles fought on home soil as the British colonial front pushed forward, and First Nations peoples resisted. The Australian Wars got the nation talking, has been acquired by the BBC for broadcast in the United Kingdom, and has been recognised with a string of awards including for Best Direction in Non-Fiction Television, Best Documentary or Factual Program and Best Editing in a Documentary Program at the 2024 Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts awards. As a result of the series, the Australian War Memorial announced an intention to expand its recognition of the Frontier Wars, with a "much broader, a much deeper depiction and presentation of the violence committed against Indigenous people" as part of the institution's redevelopment.

The Defenders

Directed by Matthew Bate, Written by Matthew Bate and Craig Foster



The gripping true story of how a former Australian football captain and a ragtag team of social media warriors challenged two monarchies, a military junta and the world's richest and most influential sporting body FIFA, to rescue the life of a fellow player and save the soul of football. The Defenders, winner of the audience award at the Sydney Film Festival 2023, will enthral anyone with even a passing interest in how human rights and international institutions collide. The Defenders takes viewers behind the scenes of the intense international campaign to help save al-Araibi from extradition to Bahrain. Nearly five years after refugee footballer Hakeem al-Araibi was freed from a Thai jail and returned to Australia comes the story of the chain of events that would end up shaking the world of sport and politics.

Delikado

Directed by Karl Malakunas



Three environmental crusaders confront betrayal and murder as they battle to save an island paradise famed as the Philippines 'last ecological frontier'. Palawan appears to be an idyllic tropical island but for a tiny network of environmental crusaders and vigilantes trying to protect its spectacular natural resources, it is more akin to a battlefield. It is a timely film emblematic of the struggles globally for land defenders as they are being killed in record numbers trying to save natural resources from being plundered by corporations and governments. As the world faces its sixth mass extinction and the climate emergency worsens, it has never been a more dangerous time to be a land defender. Delikado offers a story of courage and resilience to inspire others into action.

In addition, the Festival will offer:

- A micro-docs competition featuring short documentaries from Australian film school students and others;
- The selection of an Australian produced film to be the Opening or Closing Film of the Festival;
- Participation of significant producers, distributors, directors, and professionals in the film industry from Australia in the co-production forum of the Festival, using the forum as a platform for initiating international collaborations;
- Participation of significant figures from the Australian film industry in the festival's jury committees.

Beyond Borders is covering the airfare and accommodation for the Australian Jury President and is offering accommodation to selected Australian filmmakers.

Documentary Australia

Documentary Australia is a unique not-for-profit that supports powerful stories for social change. Since 2008, we have supported hundreds of filmmakers to tell important stories through documentary. This year, Documentary Australia is seeking donations from Australians keen to support this high profile, international, cross cultural collaboration with Beyond Borders. [We are seeking philanthropic donations to cover the airfares and other expenses to support selected filmmakers to attend the festival. All donations to Documentary Australia are 100% tax deductible.](#)

Please contact Dr Mitzi Goldman on mitzi@documentaryaustralia.com.au for further information.

documentaryaustralia.com.au/beyond-borders/

