

# Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Energy  
Minister for Mineral Resources  
Minister for State Development



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August 21, 2009

## NSW FILMS SHINE ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Minister for State Development Ian Macdonald announced today that five NSW films have been selected to screen at the prestigious Toronto International Film Festival.

Mr Macdonald said that acclaim at the Toronto International Film Festival greatly enhances a film's chance of success in international markets.

Films to receive financial support from the NSW Government through the NSW Film and Television Office or the Department of State and Regional Development's Film Investment Attraction Fund and selected to screen at Toronto are *Mao's Last Dancer*, *Beautiful Kate*, *Bright Star*, *The Waiting City* and *Samson and Delilah*.

*Mao's Last Dancer*, *Bright Star* and *The Waiting City* will screen as Special Presentations, a series of prestigious screenings of high-profile films featuring major stars and directors from around the world.

"This is an impressive line-up of films showcasing the talent of two of our most celebrated directors – Bruce Beresford and Jane Campion – as well as the works of up and coming directors Warwick Thornton, Claire McCarthy and Rachel Ward," the Minister said.

*Mao's Last Dancer* was directed by Academy Award winner Bruce Beresford (*Driving Miss Daisy*, *Double Jeopardy*, *Breaker Morant*), produced by Jane Scott (*Shine*, *Head On*, *Love's Brother*), and written by Jane's *Shine* collaborator, the Academy Award nominated screenwriter Jan Sardi (*Shine*, *Love's Brother*). Based on the international best-selling memoir by Li Cunxin, *Mao's Last Dancer* is the inspirational story of his extraordinary journey from poverty in rural China to international stardom as one of the world's great classic dancers.

*Bright Star*, the new film by one of Australia's most internationally acclaimed filmmaking teams, writer/director Jane Campion (*The Piano*, *The Cut*, *Holy Smoke*) and producer Jan Chapman (*The Piano*, *Love Serenade*, *Lantana*) had its World Premiere at the Cannes International Film Festival earlier this year. The film stars Abbie Cornish and tells of the love story between John Keats, the romantic poet, and his 18 year-old next door neighbour Fanny Brawne.

Radha Mitchell, Joel Edgerton and Isabel Lucas star in *The Waiting City*, the feature from new filmmaking team director Clare McCarthy and producer Jamie Hilton. Set in India, *The Waiting City* tells the story of an outwardly happy Australian couple who journey to Calcutta to collect their adopted baby.

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*Beautiful Kate*, which has just been released in cinemas across Australia, was written and directed by Rachel Ward, produced by Bryan Brown, and stars Ben Mendelsohn, Bryan Brown, Rachel Griffiths and Sophie Loewe. Set on a homestead in the mythical Australian outback, *Beautiful Kate* is the story of Ned Kendall, his relationship as a teenager with his twin sister Kate, and the emotional aftermath of her death in a car accident at the age of 16.

*Samson and Delilah*, directed by Warwick Thornton and produced by Kath Shelper, premiered internationally at the 2009 Cannes International Film Festival where it won the Camera d'Or Award, the prize for best first feature film. It stars Rowan McNamara and Marissa Gibson as Samson and Delilah, who live in an isolated community in the Central Australian desert.

"*Samson and Delilah* has already earned close to \$3 million at the Australian box office, which is a considerable achievement, and is still playing at cinemas across the country almost 3 months after its release," Mr Macdonald said .

Mr Macdonald said an impressive number of other Australian films selected to screen at Toronto were made with the involvement of NSW filmmakers.

"I'd like to congratulate all NSW filmmakers involved with films at Toronto and wish them every success," he said.

The Toronto International Film Festival will be held from September 10 – 19.

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