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REAL FILM FESTIVAL TO OPEN WITH RED CARPET GALA EVENT

Newcastle actor Ben Mingay, star on the Network Ten TV Series *Wonderland* and actress Shannon Ashlyn will walk the red carpet on **Friday evening, November 7** at Tower Cinemas Newcastle as part of the Real Film Festival Opening Night Gala.

The Real Film Festival held in Newcastle is a three-day community, arts and Industry event showcasing documentaries, independent short and feature films *based on true stories*. The Festival's prestigious event is the Opening Night Gala.

Festival Director Annette Hubber said, "It's very exciting to have Ben and Shannon attend this year's Opening Night, we certainly appreciate their support."

Wonderland cast member **Ben Mingay** who plays Rob on the series, has television and theatre credits including Network Seven TV series *Packed to the Rafters* and theatre productions including *Jersey Boys* and *Officer and a Gentleman*.

Actress **Shannon Ashlyn** is best known for her starring role in *Wolf Creek 2*, and her appearances on Nine Network Hit TV Series *Love Child* and Seven Network TV Series *Packed to the Rafters*.

Maureen Barron, CEO of Screen NSW will officially open the Festival. Other esteemed guests speaking on the night include Deputy Lord Mayor, Cr Brad Luke and Jeff Julian, internationally renowned Concept Designer.

Annette said, "The Opening Night feature film ***Kill The Messenger*** is set to be a hit with our audience."

Kill The Messenger starring Hollywood actors Jeremy Renner and Michael Sheen is a dramatic thriller based on the remarkable true story of Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Gary Webb.

Webb stumbles onto a story which leads to the shady origins of the men who started the crack epidemic on the nation's streets and further alleges that the CIA was aware of major dealers who were smuggling cocaine into the US, and using the profits to arm rebels fighting in Nicaragua. His journey takes him from the prisons of California to the villages of Nicaragua to the highest corridors of power in Washington, DC.

Following the film screening, guests will head to one of Newcastle's unique cultural venues *The Lock-up* to party the night away. The party will include drinks, canapés and entertainment.

Tickets to the Opening Night Gala are now on sale to the general public.

Opening Night Gala

\$50 per ticket

Includes film screening at Tower Cinemas 6:00pm & party at The Lock-up 8:45pm

Bookings www.realfilmfestival.com.au

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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Interviews and photos with guests can be arranged by contacting Annette.