



29 October 2019

REAL FILM FESTIVAL 2019

OPENING NIGHT EVENT

The Real Film Festival 2019 launches at the Customs House, Newcastle on Friday 15 November from 6pm with film screenings, Q&A's and a full program launch party not to be missed!

To kick off the festival, two short films about local stories; a *Westpac Rescue Story* and *Star Hotel Riot* will preface the Advance Screening of *In My Blood It Runs* by Australian Director Maya Newell.

Star Hotel Riot, directed by musician/filmmaker Chit Chat von Loopin Stab of the infamous 1990's Australian alternative rock band Machine Gun Fellatio and produced by Carnivore Film's Tony Whittaker, is the first in a series entitled *Stories of Our Town*, putting Newcastle under the microscope with 12 uniquely Novacastrian stories.

The documentary reaches into the annals of the 1979 Newcastle Star Hotel riot, and draws out the stories from those who were there that night; the musos, the coppers, the rockstars, the drinkers, the media and journos who captured the passion; pushing Newcastle onto the world stage, for better or worse. The film will be presented on the night by Chit Chat von Loopin Stab aka Glenn Dormand.

The remarkable film *In My Blood It Runs* is a rare insight into the world of 10-year old Djujan, an Arrernte/Garrwa boy living in Alice Springs who is a child-healer, speaks three languages yet is 'failing' in school. In stark contrast to his school behaviour, on his ancestral homeland surrounded by his family, Djujan is focused, engaged and learning.

Through the film, we begin to see Country as a classroom – a place where resilience can grow and revolution is alive. We walk with Djujan as he grapples with these pressures, shares his truths and somewhere in-between finds space to dream, imagine and hope for his future self.

Maya Newell's first feature film *Gayby Baby* sparked a national debate in Australia when it was banned in schools. Told through the lens of four children in same-sex families during the fight for Marriage Equality, the film offered the voice of those being ignored.

Made in collaboration with Djujan and his family, *In My Blood It Runs* tackles another heated topic, First Nations education and juvenile justice. This powerful film "is an emotional journey through the

fight to mend an education schism between traditional culture and colonial ideas...” says Heather Haynes, Hot Docs Film Festival.

Recently, Djujan was the youngest person ever to address the United Nations Human Rights Council calling on the Australian Government for systems changes in education and youth justice.

After the Advanced Screening of *In My Blood It Runs* at the festival launch, a panel will respond to Djujan's support of a First Nations led education system and his statement to the UN Human Rights Council “I want my school to be run by Aboriginal people.”

This year, the Real Film Festival will tour across Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Port Stephens with workshops, panel discussions and showings of some of the most moving and informative documentary films made this year.

Be part of the 2019 Real Film Festival! Celebrate the art of storytelling through film, enjoy the company of Hunter region’s screen industry professionals and emerging talent and rub shoulders with some of Australia’s leading screen practitioners.

For Opening Night tickets and more information go to realfilmfestival.com.au

For media information and further exclusives via approval please contact:

Ray Owen PA for Annette Hubber, Real Film Festival Director

E: ray@screenhunter.com.au

T: 02 4978 4015

FB: facebook.com/RealFilmFestival

Insta: [@real_film_festival](https://instagram.com/@real_film_festival)

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