

A History of the Sydney and
Melbourne Film Festivals,
1945-1972

Negotiating Between Culture and
Industry

By
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This one's for 'the Don' – Win Hinds.

*Moses
Supposes
His toeses
Are roses
But Moses
Supposes
Erroneously
Boop-be-doop-be-doobie!*

—Gene Kelly and Donald Stanley,
Singin' In The Rain

Certificate of Authorship of Thesis

Except where indicated in footnotes, quotations and the bibliography, I certify that I am the sole author of the thesis submitted today entitled —“A History of the Sydney and Melbourne Film Festivals, 1945-1972: Negotiating Between Culture and Industry”, in terms of the Statement of Requirements for a Thesis issued by the University Higher Degrees Committee.

Signature: _____

31st August, 2004

Abstract

This thesis is a history of the Sydney and Melbourne International Film Festivals, and covers the years from 1945 to 1972. Based primarily on archival material, it is an organisational history dealing with the attempts by the two Film Festivals to negotiate between the demands of ‘culture’ and ‘industry’ throughout this period. The thesis begins with a consideration of the origins of the Festivals in the post-war period —with the attempts by non-Hollywood producers to break into the cinema market, the collapse of the ‘mass audience’, and the growth of the film society movement in Australia. The thesis then examines the establishment in the early 1950s of the Sydney and Melbourne Festivals as small, amateur events, run by and for film enthusiasts. It then traces the Festivals’ historical development until 1972, by which time both Festivals had achieved an important status as social and cultural organisations within Australia. The main themes dealt with throughout this period of development include the Festivals’ difficult negotiations with both the international and domestic film trade, their ongoing internal debates over their role and purpose as cultural organisations, their responses to the appearance of other international film festivals in Australia, their relation to the Australian film industry, and their fight to liberalise Australia’s film censorship regulations.

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* * * * *

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Glossary of Abbreviations

Abbreviations for Organisations

ACOFS	Australian Council of Film Societies
AFDC	Australian Film Development Corporation
AFI	Australian Film Institute
ANFB	Australian National Film Board
CFU	Commonwealth Film Unit
DOI	Department of Interior
FIAPF	Federation International des Association de Producteurs de Films
FVFS	Federation of Victorian Film Societies
MFF	Melbourne Film Festival
MPPA	Motion Picture Association of America (from 1945)
MPPDA	Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America
MUFS	Melbourne University Film Society
SFF	Sydney Film Festival
SUFG	Sydney University Film Group
SUFS	Sydney University Film Society

Abbreviations for Primary Source Materials

MFF – Min.	Melbourne Film Festival, Minutes of Meetings
MFF – Arch.	Other material (press clippings, etc.) from the MFF archives
SFF – Min.	Sydney Film Festival, Minutes of Meetings
SFF – Oral Hist. Arch.	Sydney Film Festival, Oral History Archives
SFF – Arch.	Other material (press clippings, etc.) from the SFF archives