

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
April 1995

FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION **STRICTLY OZ: A HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN FILM**

DATES October 27, 1995 - January 16, 1996

ORGANIZATION Organized by Laurence Kardish, Curator, Department of Film and Video, The Museum of Modern Art

SPONSORSHIP Presented in conjunction with the Australian Film Commission, Sydney, and with the help of the National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra. This exhibition is also made possible by a grant from the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art.

CONTENT In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Australian film industry quickly developed into a substantial homegrown entity, with little influence from abroad. From that time to the present, many talented Australian filmmakers have emerged, laying a foundation for a national film culture.

STRICTLY OZ: A HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN FILM is the first comprehensive history of Australian film to be presented in the United States. It traces nine decades of a native cinema, from the remaining fragment of what may be the world's earliest feature, *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906), to such recent films as *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994). This major exhibition of approximately one hundred films directed by Australian filmmakers focuses on feature-length fiction films that use the physical landscape and social topography of the continent. The "Oz" in the title of the exhibition is an affectionate colloquialism for (Oz)tralia as a distant and special place.

Highlights of the exhibition include Charles Chauvel's *Jedda* (1955), Raymond Longford's *The Sentimental Bloke* (1919), and Paulette McDonagh's *The Cheaters* (1930). Also included are early films by such notable filmmakers as Peter Weir (*The Plumber*, 1979), Bruce Beresford (*Money Movers*, 1979), Phillip Noyce (*Backroads*, 1977), and Fred Schepisi (*The Devil's Playground*, 1976); such contemporary films as Gillian Armstrong's *My Brilliant Career* (1979) and George Miller's *Mad Max* (1979); and first features by Jane Campion

- more -

(*Sweetie*, 1989) and Jocelyn Moorhouse (*Proof*, 1991). Also shown are several Australian films yet to be introduced in the United States, such as Glenda Hambly's *Fran* (1985) and Jacki McKimmie's *Australian Dream* (1987).

TRAVEL

After the exhibition's New York showing, some of the films will travel to the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C.; the UCLA Film and Television Archive, Los Angeles; and the Fox Theatre, Atlanta, Georgia, during the 1996 Olympic Games.

PUBLICATION

An accompanying brochure includes an essay by Laurence Kardish on the history of Australian cinema and notes on the individual films in the series.

* * *

No. 21

For further information or film stills, contact Samantha Graham, Film Press Representative, Department of Public Information 212/708-9752.