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SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE PRESENTS

# GRAPHIC

A FESTIVAL OF GRAPHIC STORYTELLING, ANIMATION &amp; MUSIC

28 SEP, 10&amp;11 OCT

A festival celebrating the art of graphic storytelling, illustration, comics, animation and music  
MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER, SATURDAY 10 & SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

A festival of graphic storytelling, animation and music featuring:

***Mad Max: Fury Road - Creating the Apocalypse* - George Miller, Brendan McCarthy and Nico Lathouris in conversation;**

**Kevin Smith's *Superhero Multiverse* with special guest Jason Mewes;**

**Sarah Blasko - *Eternal Return* Album Preview with Commissioned Visuals by Mike Daly;**

**Ólafur Arnalds + visuals by Máni Sigfússon with 13-piece chamber orchestra and new arrangements by Viktor Orri Árnason;**

**The Walking Dead: Season 6 Premiere – FREE SCREENING**

**FREE TALKS from Brendan McCarthy, Nicola Scott, Animal Logic,**

**Brendan Fletcher, Simon Rippingale and Erica Harrison;**

**FREE SCREENINGS of Warren Ellis' *Captured Ghosts*, *The Mindscape of Alan Moore*,**

***She Makes Comics* and *Future Shock! 2000 AD*; *A Cautionary Tail***

**and Oscar Wilde's *The Nightingale & The Rose***

*"The smartest, wisest, most cutting edge festival and celebration of narrative literature and its intersection with culture in the world."*

NEIL GAIMAN

The Sydney Opera House today announced the program for the fifth GRAPHIC festival, taking place on Monday 28 September and Saturday 10 – Sunday 11 October.

Featuring the exclusive commissions, world and Australian premieres that the festival has become synonymous with, this year GRAPHIC will also host ten free film screenings and talks from the most exciting storytellers in print, pixel and pop, on the stages and foyers of the Sydney Opera House.

GRAPHIC co-curator and Sydney Opera House Head of Contemporary Music Ben Marshall said, "Sydney Opera House presents Graphic in order to celebrate the high artistic beats in forms of modern storytelling that are often ignored in traditional arts conversations and yet are capable of greatness. The resonance of this idea is demonstrated by the Opera House's regularly commissioned unique debut Graphic performances going on to appear on the stages of our international peers such as the Barbican, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Carnegie Hall."

GRAPHIC co-curator Jordan Verzar said, "Graphic is a festival unlike any other taking place in the world today. Almost all of the work we present is prepared specifically for Graphic, is a debut, a premiere, or even a one-off which may never happen again. The festival grew from a love of comics, animation, music, narrative, illustration and a desire to showcase the world's leading practitioners of these arts. We have helped to produce and/or commission these shows which have toured the world, become best-selling books and grown to lead lives of their own. I love the fact that we are able to give artists the ability to do what they do best, create art and it's the end results of these acts of creation which become our festival."



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## **HEADLINE ACTS**

In a world premiere event, leading GRAPHIC in 2015 is Academy Award-winning writer-director **George Miller** who will make his only Australian stage appearance this year exclusively at GRAPHIC – with an ‘In Conversation’, taking us through *Fury Road*'s 12-year journey from the storyboard to screen, joined by co-writer and illustrator, **Brendan McCarthy** and co-writer and dramaturge **Nico Lathouris**, in the Concert Hall.

**Kevin Smith** - the cult creator of *Clerks*, *Mallrats* and *Comic Book Men* - will dive deep into the comic rabbit hole for a keynote address on the superhero blockbuster frenzy, Marvel vs. DC, and how a childhood obsession evolved into his beloved *View Askewverse*, for a special Concert Hall appearance on Monday 28 September. Following this keynote, the *Red State* director will be joined onstage for a Q&A with his Silent Bob sidekick, **Jason Mewes**.

In a world-exclusive and specially commissioned GRAPHIC performance, two-time ARIA Award winner **Sarah Blasko** will debut her long-awaited fifth album, *Eternal Return*, accompanied by visuals from award-winning filmmaker **Mike Daly** in the Concert Hall. An artist consistently pushing creative boundaries, the singer-songwriter will unveil another signature sonic shift ahead of the release of *Eternal Return* in November.

In another specially-commissioned performance two years in the making, Iceland's BAFTA Award-winning pianist-composer **Ólafur Arnalds** will lead a 13-piece chamber orchestra arranged by **Viktor Orri Árnason** on an exclusive journey through new songs, fan favourites and rarities with live visuals by **Máni M. Sigfússon** (Ásgeir), in this Concert Hall engagement.

Global cult phenomenon television series **The Walking Dead** makes its Australian debut exclusively at GRAPHIC, with a free screening of Season 6's first episode in the Concert Hall. Based on **Robert Kirkman**'s ground-breaking series of comic books set in a post-apocalyptic zombie wasteland, the acclaimed drama examines the human condition, exploring a group of strangers' very real struggle for survival in the surreal context of the living dead. Season 6 of *The Walking Dead* will begin Express from the U.S. on FX, FOXTEL, on Monday October 12.

## **FREE TALKS**

GRAPHIC 2015 also sees the inclusion of a suite of free events on Sunday 11 October featuring a series of free talks by **Brendan McCarthy**, **Nicola Scott** and **Animal Logic**. McCarthy, the cult British comic illustrator and co-writer/designer for *Mad Max: Fury Road* with its 3500-storyboard panel as script, will offer a rare insight into his visionary, surreal and psychedelic 30-year career – covering graphic classics such as *2000 AD*, *Judge Dredd*, and his seminal Dark Horse-collected collaborations with writer Peter Milligan.

Australian comic book artist, **Nicola Scott** – who began working for Dark Horse, Image and IDW, then exclusively for DC Entertainment on monthly titles ‘Birds Of Prey’, ‘Secret Six’, ‘Wonder Woman’, ‘Teen Titans’, ‘Superman’ and New York Times Bestseller ‘Earth 2’, will also share her story with GRAPHIC audiences this year. Having recently decided to start a creator owned title, *Black Magick* – the Sydney artist will discuss her work and how she began working for the world's biggest comics publishing companies while being based in Australia, and most interestingly how she has come to leave these behind to focus on creator owned work.

The BAFTA-Award winning film *The Lego® Movie* was one of the most innovative and entertaining animated feature films of recent years. Working closely with directing and writing duo Phil Lord and Christopher Miller, it was up to Australian studio **Animal Logic** (*Happy Feet*, *300*, *The Great Gatsby*) to bring the LEGO universe to life. In this enlightening presentation, **Grant Freckelton**, Art Director at Animal Logic and Production Designer for *The Lego® Movie*, takes audiences behind the bricks and talks about some of the creative and technical challenges involved in the making of this hit film.



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## **FREE FILMS**

This year's program also sees the inclusion of a series of free documentary screenings in the Concert Hall Northern Foyer including the Australian premieres of some of the most celebrated graphic documentaries in recent years: **Warren Ellis: Captured Ghosts**, **The Mindscape of Alan Moore**, **She Makes Comics** and **Future Shock! 2000 AD**. Featuring the most extensive interview ever granted by the cyberpunk icon, Warren Ellis, the documentary on the British author covers his 30-year career from *Red* through to his warped entries on every major character in the Marvel and DC Vertigo canon.

*The Mindscape of Alan Moore* is a documentary exploring the life of **Alan Moore**, the mythical and reclusive genius who penned *Watchmen*, *V For Vendetta* and *From Hell*, while the uplifting and inspiring documentary, *She Makes Comics*, will reveal the hidden history of women in the world of comics – from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to now – debunking myths with vital figures including Ramona Fradon, Trina Roberts, Joyce Farmer and Karen Berger. Featuring interviews with the creators, writers, artists and fans, *Future Shock! 2000 AD* delves into the story of this cult title over the last 35 years, exploring its influence on pop culture, film, art and literature.

Following these documentary premieres, there will be screenings of two animated shorts, followed by a talk with each of the films' creatives. Fresh from its world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival and winning Best Australian Short Film at the Melbourne International Film Festival, Oscar Wilde's hauntingly beautiful ***The Nightingale & The Rose*** sees two-time Archibald winner **Del Kathryn Barton** collaborate with acclaimed director **Brendan Fletcher** on Wilde's savage fairytale of ecstatic first love. Featuring the singular voices of Mia Wasikowska, Geoffrey Rush and David Wenham, with a soundtrack composed by GRAPHIC's very own Sarah Blasko – the screening will be followed by an intimate Q&A with filmmaker Brendan Fletcher.

A kids hit and film festival favourite featuring Cate Blanchett, David Wenham and Barry Otto, ***A Cautionary Tail***'s refreshing collage of 3D animated characters and hand-made sets bring this darkly funny fable to life. The story of a girl born with an emotion-wielding tail is an imaginative parable about embracing uniqueness. Narrated with a playful Roald Dahl-like rhyme, the film's writer **Erica Harrison** and animator-director **Simon Rippingale** will detail their heart-rending journey to bring the story to life, following the film's screening.

Since its inception in 2010, GRAPHIC has evolved into a festival unlike any other, commissioning and presenting new works from some of the world's most respected artists including, but not limited to, **Neil Gaiman** (2010), **Shaun Tan** (2010), **Gotye** (2011), Pixar's **Lee Unkrich** (2012) and **Art Spiegelman** (2013).

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## **SEASON DETAILS**

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| <b>WHAT:</b>     | GRAPHIC FESTIVAL 2015   |
| <b>WHEN:</b>     | Monday 28 September, Saturday 10 – Sunday 11 October, 2015                          |
| <b>WHERE:</b>    | Sydney Opera House, various venues  |
| <b>TICKETS:</b>  | Tickets on sale from 9am, Friday 14 August<br>Multi-pack discounts available        |
| <b>BOOKINGS:</b> | <a href="http://sydneyoperahouse.com/graphic">sydneyoperahouse.com/graphic</a>      |
| <b>WEB:</b>      | <a href="http://sydneyoperahouse.com/graphic">sydneyoperahouse.com/graphic</a>      |
| <b>FACEBOOK:</b> | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/graphicfestival">facebook.com/graphicfestival</a> |
| <b>TWITTER:</b>  | <a href="https://twitter.com/SydOperaHouse">@SydOperaHouse</a>                      |

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