

FAR SOUTH FILM FESTIVAL FINALISTS BY STATE/REGION

NB Numbers refer to alphabetical numbering by title on excel sheet, which includes filmmaker bios.
Please contact media@farsouthfilmfestival.com for filmmaker interviews.

ACT

23. Through the Garden of Eden

Dir David Rowland

Very few average people know the south coast of NSW has underwater reefs just as beautiful, colourful and amazing as the well known Great Barrier Reef in Queensland.

This is a gentle first person story where a woman is guided by two fish, through a very special reef near Eden on the south coast of NSW. It is a unique, peaceful adventure taking time to absorb the colours, landscape and inhabitants of this strange and stunningly beautiful world. 50 to 80 percent of these southern reef gardens have been lost and continue to be lost to sea urchins due to historical overfishing of urchin predators (snapper and lobster). These beautiful gardens become rocky deserts with little life other than urchins.

This film was intended to connect the audience with these wonderful gardens so that they may know about them, care for them and possibly help defend and regenerate them.

There are two short companion pieces to this film which describe the underwater biology and environmental challenges and also how the search and filming for this Garden of Eden was conducted.

Filming was entirely conducted from a surface vessel using a remotely operated robot submarine (ROV) with a camera. The operator of the robot submarine watching the screen above water often feels like they are actually underwater and that they are personally connecting with life below. This feeling was the inspiration for this film.

25. Unidentified

Dir James Scott

Writer Elizabeth Scott

In the drought-ridden, outback town of Roden Hill, something mysterious is happening. Is it an alien visitation? The whole world seems to think so. People flock to the site from miles around and media descend on the scene, keen to talk to Shane and his friends to find out more. But not everyone believes aliens are involved... and a local police investigation begins...

Funnily enough, all the attention means the once-struggling town starts to revive. Were there really aliens invading the farm? Or was it all a hoax?

NSW

SE Region

1. Anactoria - Good Mind

Dir Andrew Robinson, Candelo

What does it feel like to be an artist? To exist within a creative, emotional, interpersonal landscape that sometimes seems more like a dream than real life?

Joy and celebration, hard work and intangible obstacles, searching, despairing, and miraculously sometimes finding the pathway to true expression.

'Good Mind' is a music video that breathes life into these questions and offers a glimpse into how these answers might be found.

3. Bunaan

Producer/Co-Dir Hiromi Matsuoka

Co-Director Warren Ngarrae Foster

Bunaan is the Djirriganj/Dhurga word for corroboree.

On 1 December 2019, the people of the indigenous Yuin nation gathered for a traditional healing ceremony at the foot of Gulaga Mountain near Tilba on the Far South Coast of NSW. This historical gathering, or Bunaan saw the Yuin people celebrate, sing and dance in the traditional way to help heal Mother Earth.

Yuin elder Warren Ngarrae Foster along with his son Warren Foster Jnr and many others organised the day. This film is his account of the meaning behind the Bunaan.

6. E-Waste

Dir Sam Hsiao (Youth)

The E-Waste film looks at the global issue of electronic waste. As the population increases, and tech advances, E-Waste is an issue that won't be coming to an end soon.

Producer/Director/Writer/Crew/Cast: Sam Hsiao: a youth enthusiastic videographer and editor. Learning the world through the lens of his camera.

8. Gone

Dir Jack Wotton, Cobargo

"Everybody's gotta live,
Everybody's gotta die,
Everybody's gotta live
Before they know the reason why"

- Arthur Lee of Love

The good win, the bad lose, and the rest come out even. Whichever hand you're dealt in life you can't help being human. People forget and ignore as much as they need to live and get on with whatever it is that takes their time. I watched the valley I'm from receive a blow so hard there was no telling what its people were in for. Between impact as the decade turned over and the time the fires flared up with the high winds again around late January, I filmed what I saw in Cobargo. Some of the footage of my loved ones and all the other mess made its way into this short and dramatic video. The rest may sit dormant forever, confined within the catacombs of a lost hard drive, safe from me forming another attempt to represent the unrepresentable.

NSW (Cont'd)

11. La Laguna

Producer Dir Marna Smith, Merimbula

Co-Director Jasper Delahunty ACT

Sisters Misha and Kaitlin live alone with their father Garry. We don't know what happened to their mother. When they embark upon a day out in their kayak they discover something that disturbs them and they make a momentous decision. Misha is protective of her father but Kaitlin is pretty cynical about him, especially as he hangs out at the pub a lot, bringing home new girlfriends who then seem to disappear. Following the girls' day out on the lagoon Misha is having bad dreams but Kaitlin reassures her there's nothing to worry about. She's proven wrong when Garry brings home yet another girlfriend and the consequences of the girls' actions come back to haunt them.

15. Saving T.p. (Dragon Vs. Zombies) - A Modern Tale

Dir Graham Lewis, Tura Beach

One man's battle against zombies with his pet dragon to save toilet paper.

18. The Ambassador

Dir David Gallan, Tanja

Veteran actor, Wynn Roberts features in a cast of one as he addresses key environmental issues of our time.

21. The Oudmaker of Narooma

Producer/Co-Dir Hiromi Matsuoka, Murrah

Co-Director Lee Grant, Congo

A regional multicultural love story.

When Moroccan Faouzi Saouli lands with his wife in the regional town of Narooma on the south coast of NSW he is a stranger in a strange land, as far away from the noisy and chaotic souks of Casablanca as he could be.

But soon his desire to create a new oud (a middle eastern lute) from Australian wood leads to new connections and a new found understanding of his adopted homeland.

Central West Region

12. Mirror Spider

Dir Cadance Bell, Bathurst

A man is driven insane by a spider living in the wing mirror of his car.

16. Seeing

Dir Patrick Smart, Dubbo

Seeing is a supernatural suspense drama about a young woman forced to choose between saving the lives of innocent children and saving her own life.

Izzi, 26, has become a recluse as her 'gift' meant she started losing herself to darkness. A former colleague begs her to help the police find who has responsible for a spate of missing children. Will Izzi agree and risk herself? Or will she walk away with children still disappearing?

Mid & North Coast

9. Happy Place

Dir Gethin Coles, Urunga

A handful of Bellingen Shire folk talk about their "Happy Place" in the shire, and what it means to them

17. Steps in the Portal

Dir Karena Ebejer, Lismore

This time of lockdown has been an opportunity for reflection, a slowing down and retreat from our busy lives. In this unique "in-between" time we can assess our past and think about what we really want in our future.

This film explores the act of walking as a tool for contemplation. 5 participants from a rural community, ranging in age, are asked to reflect on how isolation has affected them and how walking has helped in this challenging time.

The visuals of footsteps walking will be a metaphor for the theme of "stepping into a portal." A way of experiencing how our walks have brought us into connecting again with what's real, important and valuable in life.

24. Undermining a Community

Dir Anne Keen, Gloucester

When a new open cut coal mine is proposed within a kilometre of a residential estate in a regional community, the residents find themselves in a tug of war between employment and environment. Undermining a community explores the social impact of the Rocky Hill Coal Mine Project proposal in the Gloucester, NSW, Australia. When a new open cut coal mine is proposed within a kilometre of a residential estate in a regional community, the residents find themselves in a tug of war between employment and environment. Undermining a community explores the social impact of the Rocky Hill Coal Mine Project proposal in the Gloucester, NSW, Australia.

QUEENSLAND

2. Behind the Scenes

Dir : Alle Segretti, Mackay

In 2020 the Coronavirus stopped the world. Shutting down life, as we knew it. Film productions came to a stop, and so did, dating. This is the story of one girls dating crisis, during a fairy tale telling of a film crew, of just one.

5. Chasing Gold

Dir Luke Graham, Gladstone

Up and coming workaholic, Olympic Committee officer Donna Burke is demoted after embarrassingly making world news at a press event and moved to the Australian Senior Olympic Committee.

Her new role is overseeing the regional qualifiers for the first unisex 100 metre National Seniors speed walking race where week in, week out she must venture to new towns around Australia finding its best senior athletes. This week it's the Central Queensland town of Gladstone.

With Donna in tow to select one person for the national race, optimistic twenty-year-old Mayor Sandy Mathers sees this as a chance to put Gladstone on the map for something positive, though she going to have competition from fame hungry Fish & Chips owner, Don Lacey and devoted son David Flanders who have their own agendas.

As these three schemes away, local favourite Ron Pearlman and newly bereaved Betty Flanders compete for love and glory.

13. Murder Your Memory

Dir Nadine Jones (Youth), Darling Downs region

One morning just like any other, Hannah, a homeless teenager, awakes on the side of a 7/11 facing an overwhelming grogginess. After spotting an abandoned Slurpee, she shamefully takes it in desperation. Slipping this Slurpee suddenly reveals a traumatic flashback to her past, where she appears to be physically abused by a mysterious figure. Triggered by this initial flashback, more begin to flood her mind as she aimlessly walks to try and escape them. It slowly becomes clear that Hannah was a disturbed individual that overpowered her parents, yet was too mentally unstable to blame herself in the moment. Hannah becomes extremely distressed by the revelation that it her who blamed her parents for nothing, and that her own mental instability led her to miserable homelessness.

VICTORIA

10. Kin

Dir Timothy Walker, Portland

Kin is a modern day retelling of the biblical fable Kane and Able, set in a zombie apocalyptic world. When Kane is attacked by a Zombie, Adam jumps to his defense, and is bitten in the process. Kane locks his brother up in an abandoned warehouse where they nervously wait to see if the infection will take hold, transforming Adam into a zombie. But Adam has a plan of his own which ultimately asks the question: if you had to, could you kill your own brother?

14. Puppy A Short Film Made in Lockdown

Dir Luke Jacobson, Torquay

A young girl tries to leave her partner by distracting him, unfortunately she may not be able to bring herself to leave every part of their their life together.

19. The Cupboard Under the Stairs

Dir Luke Jacobson, Torquay

This film is a very simple, but deeply personal film that explores the psychological trauma that can impact on a person whilst having their home disrupted by divorce. I was excited to return to the roots of cinematic storytelling, focusing on moving images to tell the story (with very minimal dialogue) - relying on the hidden meanings of the surrounding location to say more than just what the characters are going through. Charlise Gower - a 6 yr old actress, went above and beyond in her performance. In order to protect her young mind from what was really happening - we had her react to things that are different to what you see on screen. She was amazing, and we were all very proud of what she was able to bring to the character. The supporting actors (Hester and Kevin) that helped bring out this performance must also be commended. Only true actors are willing to let their story hide in the shadows in order for the star to shine.

WA

4.Bunbury Street Pole Vault

Dir Ciaran Foster (Youth), Bunbury

In January 2020, the regional Western Australian town of Bunbury hosted a unique street pole-vaulting event. The event was modelled on the European style of hosting athletics events in town centres. The event attracted some of the best pole-vaulters in the world and thousands of onlookers.

7.Going Going Gone

Dir Henry Baker (Youth), Albany

Going Going Gone is a film about a regular person doing regular things day after day and how all those regular activities can contribute to our world being damaged. Do we want to change the way we do life before it's too late?

20.The Double Cross

Producer Bruce Culverwell , Moora

Dir Shane van Listenborgh

A whirlwind adventure erupts when two con-men friends rob a bank and their theatrical performance goes woefully wrong. Face to face with a detective's badge, a smoking gun, and a left-for-dead best friend, Patrick has to make some smart plays to stick to the plan and save the money.

22.The Quiet

Dir Radheya Jegatheva (Youth), Jindalooop

When an astronaut ponders on the quietude of space, he comes upon a startling self-realisation.