

August 2000

**MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR,
SANDRA SDRAULIG, SIGNALS HER LAST FILM FESTIVAL**

At the 49th Melbourne International Film Festival launch, Executive Director, Sandra Sdraulig, announced that this would be her last year as Festival Director.

Says Sdraulig *"After four years at the helm, and at a time when the Festival is flourishing, I couldn't think of a better moment for someone new to take the organisation to its next stage, especially as we enter the ensuing 50 years of the Festival"*.

During her years leading the Festival, Sdraulig has achieved extraordinary success, establishing the Festival as Melbourne's premier winter arts festival.

Specific achievements include:

- Reversing past cash reserve from deficit to surplus in her first year, followed by four years of solid and continuous growth
- Increasing box office by 165% to the highest figure in the history of the Festival
- Increasing admissions from approximately 55,000 to over 140,000
- Expanding the Festival output from a single 17-day event to an organisation which delivers programs twelve months of the year. Activities include a Melbourne Touring Film Festival, which currently covers regional Victoria (and will soon be expanded to other states) and a successful tour of an Australian film program to India. As a result, the Festival is highly regarded for its project management and curatorial expertise, and new projects beckon.

Says Andrew Myer, newly-elected Festival Chair *"Although I have only worked with Sandra in my professional capacity as Chair for three months, as a Board member and filmmaker I have known her for several years."*

Sandra is a consummate film professional with great passion, commitment and integrity. It cannot be underestimated that the success of the Festival has largely been driven by Sandra's great skills as a curator, and her incisive, forthright business acumen.

She has made an enormous contribution, not only to the Melbourne International Film Festival, but film culture in Australia. As an outstanding executive, Sandra Sdraulig will be a difficult act to follow.

As she leaves the Festival in such great shape – in terms of audience, national and international profile and key relationships – this presents a great opportunity for another candidate to build on that success. The Board wish Sandra well in her future career path."

Sdraulig is very excited by new opportunities which have presented in the entertainment and ecommerce industries, and looks forward to firming up those plans in the new year.