

August 2000

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

At the 49<sup>th</sup> 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.