



Australian Government

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MEDIA ALERT

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Australian success in Toronto

Tuesday 22 September 2009: Congratulations to the Australian films that have won awards at the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival.

Mao's Last Dancer (d: **Bruce Beresford**, w: **Jan Sardi**, p: **Jane Scott**) was first runner-up in the Cadillac People's Choice Award as voted by festival audiences.

The Cadillac People's Choice Award – Midnight Madness was won by ***The Loved Ones*** (w/d: **Sean Byrne**, p: **Mark Lazarus, Michael Boughen**). Runner-up for this award was another Australian film, ***Daybreakers*** (w/d: **Michael Spierig, Peter Spierig**, p: **Chris Brown, Sean Furst, Bryan Furst**), which premiered at the festival. The Midnight Madness program highlights the weird and the wonderful from directors who prefer to work in genres not usually seen in a festival context.

The 34th Toronto International Film Festival ran 10–19 September 2009. Find more festival winners [here](#).

Mao's Last Dancer

www.maoslastdancermovie.com

Production Company: A Great Scott production for Last Dancer Pty Ltd

Director: Bruce Beresford

Screenwriter: Jan Sardi

Producer: Jane Scott

Australian Distributors: Hopscotch Films, Roadshow Films Australia

International Sales: Celluloid Dreams International

Cast: Bruce Greenwood, Kyle MacLachlan, Joan Chen, Chi Cao, Amanda Schull, Aden Young and Jack Thompson

Synopsis: The inspirational true story of a young boy's extraordinary journey from poverty to international stardom. From gruelling apprenticeship to classical dancer in communist China, to the glory of creative freedom in America. But, there is a painful price to be paid for his quest for self-expression. *Mao's Last Dancer* captures the intoxicating effects of first love and celebrity, the pain of exile, and ultimately the triumph of individual endeavour over ideology. "*Before you can fly, you have to be free*".

The Loved Ones

Production Company: Ambience Entertainment

Writer/Director: Sean Byrne

Producers: Mark Lazarus, Michael Boughen

Australian Distributor: Madman Entertainment

International Sales: Arclight Films

Cast: Xavier Samuel, Robin McLeavy, John Brumpton, Victoria Thaine, Jess McNamee, Richard Wilson

Synopsis: Brent, a student still grieving for his father, declines an invitation to the end of year dance from Lola, the quietest girl in school. She and her father kidnap him and Brent must fight to survive the macabre celebration they have in store for him.

Daybreakers

www.daybreakersmovie.com

Production Company: Paradise Production Pty Ltd

Directors/Writers: Michael Spierig, Peter Spierig

Producers: Chris Brown, Sean Furst, Bryan Furst

Australian Distributor: Hoyts Distribution Pty Ltd

International Sales: Mandate International

Cast: Ethan Hawke, Willem Dafoe, Claudia Karvan, Michael Dorman and Sam Neill

Synopsis: The year is 2019. A mysterious plague has swept over the earth, transforming the majority of the world's population into vampires. Humans are now an endangered, second-class species – forced into hiding as they are hunted and farmed for vampire consumption to the brink of extinction. It's all up to Edward Dalton, a vampire researcher who refuses to feed on human blood, to perfect a blood substitute that might sustain vampires and spare the few remaining humans.