

## MEDIA RELEASE

12 April 2021

# Flickerfest masterclass set to inspire film students with award-winning duo

On Thursday 15 April, Melbourne students will be treated to a [free Flickerfest masterclass](#) from award-winning short film directors, Michael Leonard and Jamie Helmer. Hosted by [Flickerfest](#) festival Director, Bronwyn Kidd the session will offer students first hand insights on creating a Flickerfest award-winning short-film that qualifies for the Academy Awards and BAFTAs. Prior to the masterclass we caught up with Jamie and Michael at [SAE Creative Media Institute's Melbourne campus](#), to discuss the upcoming event, their different approaches to filmmaking and what advice they'd give to year 12 students looking to make their mark in the industry.

Hi Michael and Jamie, what will you be covering at your upcoming Flickerfest masterclass at SAE?

Michael: We'll be talking about the creative process of making our short films, and how short films have developed our filmmaking careers.

Jamie: We'll also be discussing the formation of our production company, [Golden Moss Films](#), and the three short films we've produced under its banner: Late October; The Knife Salesman, and The Diver. The latter was previously awarded Best Australian short at Flickerfest.

What's it like to make films together?

M: We both have similar tastes, whilst not being exactly the same. What is great is we'll often get excited by the same films, music and art, and have similar adverse reactions to work we think is terrible - so it's fun and pretty easy for us to talk through a project and figure out how we'd like to execute ideas.

Do you feel your skills compliment one another?

J: I think so. We tend to approach concepts from opposite ends, in a good way! Michael from the wider ideas inwards and myself from the smaller details outwards. It results in us meeting in the middle, where our ideas intertwine into a richer whole.



ANIMATION



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FILM



GAMES



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MOBILE

Your most recent film, *The Diver*, won Best Australian short film at Flickerfest and has gone on to be selected at the Venice and Melbourne film festivals. Can you explain the inspiration for the film?

M: In terms of the film's themes, it was a long process beginning with us wanting to interrogate systemic misogyny in our society. This required a lot of self reflection, which took us back to our own upbringing.

J: The natural landscapes we grew up with were a deep inspiration for us. We both spent our younger years near the ocean and rugged coastlines, which had a deep influence on our creativity.

Do you think it is easier or more competitive than ever to make it in the film industry?

M: I think it's always been a difficult industry to crack, especially if you want to make your own work. I find it's best to make what you're interested in and hopefully someone recognises your unique voice and wants to support you with further films.

J: It definitely seems more competitive than ever, as advances in technology have made filmmaking more accessible to people wanting to express themselves. In the time we're living in, we all carry around movie cameras on our phones now! At the same time, there are more platforms for films of all types to be seen - which I think allows more opportunity for filmmaking outside the mainstream industry.

What advice would you give a year 12 student who was thinking about getting into the film industry?

M: Just grab a camera and some mates and make something. Don't think about festivals or be too precious - just have fun!

J: Also, watch, read, listen and expose yourself to lots of interesting and challenging things. You never know what might spark inspiration for new ideas or help existing ones grow in fruitful and unique ways.

***The free Flickerfest Masterclass at SAE Creative Media Institute's Melbourne campus takes place on Thursday 15 April 2021 at 2.30pm (AEST). Reserve your seat at: [sae.edu.au/events](https://sae.edu.au/events)***



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**Imagery** (L to R: Bronwyn Kidd, Jamie Helmer and Michael Leonard)



## About SAE

*SAE Creative Media Institute is the place for creatives and innovators. Since 1976 we've been the leaders in creative media education across animation, audio, creative industries, design, film, games, web and mobile. Every year, we support more than 10,000 students globally to develop the skills and experience needed to carve successful careers. Students enjoy access to the latest technology and are taught by industry-experienced faculty, while putting their skills to the test in small class environments. Our graduates become part of a highly-respected global community of creatives that's been around for over 40 years. We pride ourselves on being technically explorative, transformative and brave through our range of creative media programs, from short courses and professional training through to bachelor and postgraduate degrees. In Australia, our programs are delivered at campuses in Sydney, Brisbane, Byron Bay, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. SAE is a part of Navitas Pty Ltd. More information about SAE is available at [sae.edu.au](http://sae.edu.au).*

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