



# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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## AUSSIES WIN AT TROPFEST NEW YORK SHORT FILM FEST

*Tristan Klein and Nick Baker win trip to Los Angeles and film immersion course  
thanks to the Motion Picture Association*

**Singapore/New York:** On June 22, Australian filmmakers Tristan Klein and Nick Baker took home first prize at Tropfest New York, the world's largest short film festival. Their prize included a trip to the U.S. and a five-day film immersion course that aims to introduce emerging filmmakers to the business of making films and television shows in the world's most successful screen business capital, Los Angeles, thanks to the Motion Picture Association (MPA).

Tristan Klein and Nick Baker's short film, *The Unlikely Maestro*, captivated the judging panel and audience with a simple but moving story of a humble rat that dreams of becoming a world-famous conductor.

"Winning Tropfest New York is a strange mix of jet lag, a hangover and humility," said co-director Nick Baker. "It's an honor to place first at this year's festival amongst such amazing short films. We really can't believe it and are so thankful. We're so excited to go to LA for a week of meetings thanks to the MPA."

An all-star panel of judges including Academy Award-winning producer Fisher Stevens (*The Cove*), actress, writer and director Lake Bell (*Childrens Hospital*, upcoming *In A World*), screenwriter and producer Charles Randolph (*Love & Other Drugs*), journalist and author Malcolm Gladwell (*The New Yorker*, *The Tipping Point*, *Blink*), and WNYC host Leonard Lopate chose the winning films from a strong line up of contenders selected from hundreds of entries.

Tropfest founder John Polson said, "Tropfest NY is an amazing platform for talented filmmakers like Tristan and Nick, and it's great to see their extraordinary film reach a huge live, televised and online audience. I'm so pleased to have the Motion Picture Association alongside us supporting short form filmmakers as they develop their craft and try to build a career in the film industry. While we can help kick start their filmmaking career, the MPA is helping to ensure we have a strong and vibrant screen community that helps provide long-term sustainable livelihoods. It's a perfect partnership and I look forward to it continuing for a long time."

Michael O'Leary, Senior Executive Vice President, Global Policy and External Affairs, Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), said, "As Tropfest expands and grows, more and more emerging filmmakers are able to introduce their films and their filmmaking talent to a huge audience. Not only do they enjoy the experience of having an appreciative live audience respond to their story, but they also benefit from having their film play on television networks and online to hundreds of thousands of people on the planet. Tropfest really is one of the best launching pads for a career in film. Once again, we applaud all of the filmmakers to have reached the finals,

and especially the winning filmmakers Tristan and Nick. We do hope they enjoy their time in Los Angeles, and benefit from a comprehensive introduction to what is one of the most sophisticated businesses in the world.”

Tropfest New York, hosted by Liev Schreiber (*X-Men Origins: Wolverine, The Butler, Mental, Salt*), screened 16 finalist films to an audience of over 20,000 festival-goers at Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York. Each of the films screened in the competition was edited to a length of no more than seven minutes and was required to include the Tropfest signature item “bridge”. The festival also featured musical performances by *Chairlift, Neon Indian* (DJ set), *Bear In Heaven, Ghost Beach* and *People Get Ready*.

Enjoy the winning film [here](#).

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### **About Tropfest**

Tropfest is the world's largest short film festival. It began in a Sydney café ('The Tropicana') 20 years ago with a single \$100 short film and an audience of 200 people. Today the Australian free event is attended annually by a live audience of over 150,000 film-lovers and hundreds of thousands more watching via its national, live TV broadcast and other platforms. Tropfest has recently launched in New Zealand, Arabia and South East Asia, with China and others in the planning stages. In 2012, it launched in the USA with Tropfest Las Vegas and Tropfest New York.

In the past two decades, Tropfest has become known as one of the world's most exciting launch-pads for emerging filmmakers. Tropfest is also known for securing the support of some of the biggest names in the international film community. Tropfest USA's Official Ambassadors include Hugh Jackman, Liev Schreiber, Russell Crowe, Nicole Kidman, Geoffrey Rush, Charles Randolph and Anthony Lapaglia. The Tropfest YouTube Channel has had over 11 million video views, with around 40% of those coming from the United States. The Channel provides film enthusiasts the chance to watch the top films from past festivals, [click here](#).

### **About the MPA:**

#### *Promoting & Protecting Screen Communities in Asia Pacific*

The Motion Picture Association (MPA) and the Motion Picture Association International (MPA-I) represent the interests of the six international producers and distributors of filmed entertainment. To do so, they promote and protect the intellectual property rights of these companies and conduct public awareness programs to highlight to movie fans around the world the importance of content protection. These activities have helped to transform entire markets benefiting film and television industries in each country including foreign and local filmmakers alike.

The organizations act on behalf of the members of the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc (MPAA) which include; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLC; Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. The MPA and the MPA-I have worldwide operations which are directed from their head offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. and overseen in the Asia Pacific by a team based in Singapore. For more information about the MPA and the MPA-I, please visit [www.mpa-i.org](http://www.mpa-i.org).

### **For more information, please contact**

Stephen Jenner  
MPA Asia-Pacific  
(65) 6253 1033

*June Tan*  
*MPA Asia-Pacific*  
*(65) 6253 1033*