



## 33 Postcards wins CRC Award at Sydney film Festival

Sydney film-maker Pauline Chan has won the annual Community Relations Commission Award at the Sydney Film Festival for her feature film 33 Postcards.

Congratulating Ms Chan, the Chair of the Commission, Stepan Kerkyasharian, said: "We have offered this award at the Sydney Festival since the early Nineties to encourage film makers to explore aspects of cultural diversity, the immigration experience and the interaction of immigrants with each other and with the settled community."

"33 Postcards is a real Australian story because it tells a fascinating tale of the interactions of people of very different ethnic backgrounds in authentic Australian settings.

"And, because there are probably as many stories as there are immigrants, there is a never-ending source of inspiration for high quality film scripts.

"33 Postcards has already been described as a model of efficient collaboration between an Australian film and a big Chinese studio.

"Pauline Chan is obviously one Australian film-maker comfortable collaborating with the film industry in Asia but I am sure there will be many more as young people of Asian background hone their creative skills.

"Australians who have lived the migration experience are well placed to tell the stories of fellow Australians and to help create a film genre which is unique to us, because our multicultural society is unique.

"Often, telling migration stories involves going back to the original homeland and that aspect provides excellent opportunities for partnerships, as Pauline Chan has demonstrated.

"The Community Relations Commission is proud of its contribution to this process through the encouragement which our award provides.

"I congratulate Ms Pauline Chan and look forward to seeing more of her work in future festivals", Mr Kerkyasharian said.

Ms Chan's Award was presented tonight by CRC Commissioner, Mr Michael Christodoulou, on behalf of the Commission, at the closing night of the Sydney Film Festival for 2011.

## \$129m boost for medical research

The NSW Government is delivering on its 100 Day Plan by announcing the opening of the state's first Office of Medical Research with \$129 million in funding to support innovative research, treatments and technologies aimed at improving patient care.

The Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research, Jillian Skinner, said the money, to be delivered over four years, represented a \$20 million boost and would give researchers more funding certainty.

"This is a special day. Medical research is no longer the poor cousin of the NSW Government," Mrs Skinner said.

"Medical research is a personal passion of mine because I know that research brings us life-sav-



ing treatments, medicines and equipment which improve patient outcomes," she said.

"NSW is home to

some of the best researchers in the nation - if not the world - so I am absolutely delighted to make these announce-

ments proving just how seriously we take the future of medical research in this state.

"We are delivering on our 100 Day Plan and on our election promises."

The Office, which reports to the Health Minister, will manage and distribute government funding, improve pathways between laboratory research and clinical trials, and provide longer term support to help researchers win competitive grants. The NSW Government will also develop a 10-year Health and Medical Research Strategic Plan for NSW with Mr Peter Wills AC appointed to engage with research institutes, universities, hospitals and industry groups in its development.

Work on the plan is expected to start next month.

## Destination NSW a step closer to reality

The creation of Destination NSW, a stronger, better equipped and better resourced NSW Government tourism and events authority, came a step closer to reality today with the introduction of a Bill in Parliament to establish the new organisation.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, said the Parliamentary process was one of the final steps in the process designed to equip the Government's tourism and events authority to double tourism expenditure in the State by 2020.

"Tourism and events are vital to NSW, generating billions of dollars and supporting tens of thousands of jobs annually," Mr Souris said.

"We have popular attractions and experiences for visitors and we're a renowned location for world-class events, which is why Sydney and NSW are consistently Australia's leading domestic and international destinations.

"It is crucial we ensure the long term viability of this sector and tap into new opportunities to maximise the impact on the State's economy.

"This is why establishing Destination NSW was one of the key commitments of the incoming Government as part of our 100 Day Action Plan.

"The NSW Government will be providing \$400 million for Destination NSW over four years, bringing together the budgets of Events NSW, Tourism NSW, our promised \$40 million boost and the provision of a further \$5

million specifically for regional tourism this year.

"Destination NSW will be empowered to market and promote NSW and secure major events as part of efforts to better sell Sydney and our State to the world and consolidate our position as Australia's premier tourist destination."

Destination NSW will be a statutory authority governed by a Board, chaired by an independent representative and will include the marketing functions of Tourism NSW, Events NSW and the Greater Sydney Partnership Limited.

Destination NSW will be specifically responsible for:

- tourism brand, partnership, event marketing and regional relationships;
- attraction of new major events;
- international operations;
- destination development;
- stakeholder management and communications;
- management of 'Brand Sydney' and a range of other initiatives supporting Sydney's global positioning for tourism and events.

"In addition, we are announcing a new Visitor Economy Taskforce, made up of industry experts, who will work with Destination NSW to deliver a comprehensive strategy to achieve the goal of doubling tourism expenditure in NSW by 2020," Mr Souris said.

## More than \$38 million to enhance Australian Settlement Services

The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Bowen MP, and Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Senator Kate Lundy, announced the Australian Government will spend \$38.5 million next financial year on services to help refugees and migrants settle

into their new communities. From 1 July 2011, a total of 179 new projects delivered through 148 organisations will be funded under the Government's Settlement Grants Program (SGP), which aims to help refugees and migrants become self-reliant, contribute to the national economy, and acquire crucial skills

and knowledge about life in Australia.

"The Government has increased funding for this important grants program because we understand it makes a real difference for new arrivals, assisting them to successfully settle in the community and build rewarding lives in Australia," Mr Bowen said.

