



# A feast for cinema lovers

Gina McKenzie

**CINEPHILES** will be enthralled by the lavish films screening during the 36th New Zealand International Film Festival, which kicks off in Christchurch on August 9.

Festival director Bill Gosden said he hoped the 17-day festival showing at Hoyts Northlands and Riccarton would boost the spirits of Christchurch filmgoers.

"It hasn't been easy for those who enjoy independent cinema with a lot of screens out of action after the earthquakes.

"We're very happy to be able to offer an outstanding selection of beautiful, unique and sometimes strange films which will delight and challenge audiences."

Mr Gosden described the selection of films as "triumphantly cinematic expressions of such utter vitality they'd make any filmgoer happy to be alive in 2012".

"We try to see as many films as possible in each category and then narrow it down but there are some films that just jump out at you."

Festival publicist Nick Paris said it was incredibly difficult to select festival highlights as there were so

many outstanding films in various genres.

"There's something for everyone, from action films to animation and documentaries.

"For those new to film festivals I would recommend viewing one of the short film selections to get a taste of what is out there."

Mr Paris predicted that filmgoers would enjoy Victor Kossakovsky's documentary *Vivan las Antipodas!*, French historical drama *Farewell, My Queen*, Richard Linklater's comedy *Bernie* and Kevin Macdonald's documentary *Marley*.

*Vivan las Antipodas!* explores the wonders of the planet and humanity in a feel-good documentary which takes viewers to four sets of locations connected by digging a hole through the earth's core.

Most of *Farewell, My Queen* was shot at Versailles and traces France's 18th century aristocracy from the point of view of the servants during the final days of Marie Antoinette.

American comedy *Bernie* stars Jack Black as a small-

town Texan undertaker in a film based on the true story of man so gentle no one believed he was capable of murder.

*Marley* explores the life of Bob Marley with insider tales adding colour to the biography, which was produced in cooperation with his son Ziggy.

Advanced tickets for the festival are available online at [www.hoyts.co.nz](http://www.hoyts.co.nz) or at Hoyts Northlands and Riccarton. Internet bookings include a \$1 service fee. Tickets can also be bought from 15 minutes before the first session of the day at the box office. Visit [www.nzff.co.nz](http://www.nzff.co.nz) for more information.



**Pristine ecosystem:** Christchurch filmmaker Peter Young's documentary *The Last Ocean* explores the call to end fishing in the Ross Sea the last untouched ecosystem in the world.



**Spectacular royal drama:** The final days of Marie Antoinette and the royal court at Versailles are viewed from the perspective of a servant in Benoit Jacquot's rich historical epic.



**Spoilt for choice:** New Zealand International Film Festival publicist Nick Paris and director Bill Gosden say cinemagoers will revel in the rich variety of films on offer during this year's festival.