

Five films to see at this year's Documentary Edge Film Festival

JAMES CROOT

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The five movies you must see at this year's Doc Edge Film Fest.

New Zealand's annual celebration of documentary films screens next month in Wellington and Auckland.

Now in its 13th year, the Doc Edge International Film Festival brings together a selection of the finest examples of real-life storytelling from both here and abroad.

The 2018 edition includes more than 70 feature-length and short documentaries. Stuff has had the opportunity to view a selection and we've come up with the quintet of must-see titles.

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SPIELBERG

Spielberg was the result of 15, two-hour interviews between the famed director and Susan Lacy.

Susan Lacy's 147-minute looks at the films and fears of the world's most-successful movie director is a fascinating trawl through his back-catalogue.

Culled from near 30 hours of interviews, it provides viewers with the opportunity to hear how he used to terrorise his sisters, why he deliberately shot *E.T.* in continuity and fought to retain *Duel's* sombre ending. Also features a stellar cast of supporting characters, including Brian de Palma, Martin Scorsese, Tom Hanks and Ralph Fiennes.

BIG IN JAPAN

Big in Japan details young Australian David Elliot-Jones' quest for fame.

Keen to investigate the idea of fame in contemporary society, three Aussie film-makers embark on a mad scheme to turn one of them into an online celebrity.

David Elliot-Jones is an ordinary 26-year-old Melburnian, whose only talent is his lankiness and willingness to do whatever it takes. In the case that includes moving to Japan, where he aims to emulate the likes of US boxer Bob Sapp, 19-year-old Canadian Idol Kelsey Parnigoni and countrymate

"Ladybird" in making it big in the Land of the Rising Sun. Much hilarity ensues.

GEORGE MICHAEL: FREEDOM (DIRECTOR'S CUT)

George Michael: Freedom recalls the highs and lows of the singer's life and career.

An extended version of the documentary that aired on Prime last October.

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Made by the man himself (along with his friend and manager David Austin) before his death on Christmas Day 2016, offers fascinating insight into the life and loves of the man who made it big with Wham, became one of the world's biggest-selling artists in the late 1980s and then, thanks to contractual disputes, tragedy and tabloid headlines virtually disappeared. Filled with revelations and regrets, its best line goes to Stevie Wonder, who remarks, "You mean George is white?".

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ANDRE

The Gospel According to Andre shines the spotlight on US fashion maven Andre Leon Talley.

He was Diana Vreeland's protege, Anna Wintour's right-hand-man and is still the fashion guru to many stars.

More than four decades after he was Andy Warhol's receptionist at *Interview* magazine, Andre Leon Talley is still pretty much unrivaled when it comes to his beauty and style knowledge. Kate Novack's documentary sees the self-described, kaftan and cape-loving "manatee" hold court on everything from his church-influenced childhood to the *Jaws* sequels, with all action playing out with a background of the 2016 US Presidential race.

HOT TO TROT

Emily Coles and Kiwi Kieren Jameson are one of the couples who have the floor in Hot to Trot.

While New Zealand focuses on the latest installment of *Dancing with the Stars*, Gail Freedman's tale notes that the competitive side of the pastime will be "one of the last homophobic bastions to fall" – "because it's a vertical expression of a horizontal desire".

As a result of that, same-sex dancing has become a separate "sport" all together, with the quadrennial Gay Games the pinnacle. This follows some eclectic couplings, including Type 1-diabetic Emily Coles and Kiwi Kieren Jameson, as they strive to take home the spoils.

The 13th Doc Edge International Film Festival will be held at Wellington's Roxy Cinema (May 9 to 20) and Auckland's Q Theatre (May 23 to June 4). For more information, see docedge.nz



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