

NEW RELEASE

LITTLE BIG SHOTS

At ACMI & ArtPlay on Birrarung Marr
from Wednesday to June 14

Inaugurated six years ago in Melbourne, the not-for-profit Little Big Shots film festival features an extensive international program of short films made about, for and sometimes by kids from the age of five upwards. Having spread its wings beyond the annual event at ACMI, the festival can now be found in Victorian country areas — Warrnambool (June 27-July 4), Geelong (September 4) and Kyneton (October 27) — as well as interstate (Sydney in August, Adelaide in October). The program includes free filmmaking workshops at ArtPlay, but it's mostly about watching short movies gathered from around the world. Choice highlights include Philip Hunt's *Lost and Found* (UK, 2008), an animated *Ponyo*-like tale set in a seaside township and dealing with a life-affirming encounter between a little boy and a penguin. Essentially a bedtime story, it's based on the book by Oliver Jeffers and narrated by Jim Broadbent. Directed by Kai Raisbeck and Matty Braid for the Yakanarra Community School in Western Australia, *Parriwanti* (Australia, 2009) watches unobtrusively as boys from the



community introduce us to their world and share the voice-overs. VCA graduate Anna McGrath's award-winning *Small Change* (Australia, 2007) tells a simple but affecting story about a little girl hoping for a visit from the tooth fairy, her hassled older brother and their stressed father who's struggling to make ends meet. Six-year-old Ollie Ivin-Poole's delightful backyard comedy *The Brunswick Browns* (Australia, 2009) introduces us to his sister, Rose, and the family chooks, Ruby, Sally and Bianca, and boasts a very funny chase sequence. Equally good is eight-year-old Ella Upter's *The Wolf's Surprise* (Australia, 2009), a live-action, stop-motion film starring her soft toys and superbly narrated by the young writer-director, who vocalises not only the sound effects but also the music (as in "dunh, dunh, daaaa"). Wonderful stuff.