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Fabulous Flag Sisters fly high in Rome with 'Best Doco' win

Jurors at the 2008 **Roma Fiction Fest**, Italy's premier international television festival, tonight named Australia's **The Fabulous Flag Sisters** and Italy's **Citta Criminali** the joint winners for Best Documentary.

Directed by Franco di Chiera, **The Fabulous Flag Sisters** explores the phenomenal popularity of drag trio Le Sorelle Bandiera ('The Flag Sisters') during Italy's turbulent 1970s. Revealed from the perspective of Perth's Neil Hansen, the Australian member of the legendary trio, it first screened on Fox Italy's CULT channel in May. Produced by Marian Bartsch of Mago Films, in association with SBS Independent, Fox Italy and ScreenWest, it had its Australian free-to-air premiere on SBS last Friday evening.

Festival jurors found they couldn't separate the vibrant 'feel good' celebration of The Fabulous Flag Sisters from the chilling urban reality of Citta Criminali and decided to award a joint prize.

"As an Australian with Italian heritage, it was a real privilege to tell this story," director Franco di Chiera said. "It's a fun, heart-warming doco but also one with strong contemporary resonance, with its issues of sexual mores, religion and terrorism."

"It's just great to have this recognition," Perth-based producer Marian Bartsch said. "We've told a story that's quintessentially Italian, yet with an intriguing Australian dimension, and audiences have loved it."

Italian 'Flag Sister', Mauro Bronchi, was at the ceremony to accept the award on behalf of Mago Films. With festival attendees including the likes of Helen Mirren, Kim Cattrall and Natalie Zea, there was much 'sisterly' glamour on the 'orange carpet'.



Marian Bartsch, Producer

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Roma Fiction Fest website: <http://www.romafictionfest.it/romafictionfest/>

