



**Media Release – Strictly Embargoed until Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

## **Awards launch sees new reality for Australian Academy**

The search is on for Australia's most outstanding film and television performers, practitioners and productions, with the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts today calling for entries for the 2013 AACTA Awards.

Entries across all AACTA Awards categories - feature film, short animation, short fiction film, television and documentary - are now open. The Academy is also calling for AACTA Awards jurors.

### **New Award Category for 2013**

In a move reflective of the reality television juggernaut, AACTA has announced a new Award for 2013 – the AACTA Award for Best Reality Television Series.

Whilst reality TV productions could previously enter the AACTA Awards under the light entertainment category, the new stand-alone reality TV Award was created to reflect growth, industry talent and innovation in this genre.

Says AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, "The Australian Academy has created a new Award category dedicated to reality TV in response to the ongoing success and evolution of the genre. Primetime programming is frequently dominated by a plethora of Australian reality TV shows engaging extensive and often enormous audience shares.

"Reality TV now takes out six of the top 10 most watched broadcasts in the last 11 years since OzTam began recording ratings in Australia, bumping sports broadcasts to the second most watched genre.

"The inclusion of a reality TV Award is just one example of AACTA's commitment to being a modern, adaptive Academy which strives to reflect the changing face of local screen production through the AACTA Awards."

More than 50 Awards will be bestowed at the 2013 AACTA Awards, which will recognise excellence across a multitude of screen crafts including screenwriting, producing and acting, through to cinematography, composition and costume design.

### **Increased international opportunities for AACTA award winners**

The AACTA Awards, which are industry-assessed and therefore mark the pinnacle of screen achievement in Australia, aim to increase national and international recognition for Australia's screen industry.

According to Helen Bowden, one of the producers of the multi-AACTA Award winning TV series, *The Slap*, being awarded with Australia's highest screen accolade leads to new opportunities in Australia and abroad.

"We were incredibly proud to win five AACTA Awards for *The Slap*. As well as bringing more attention to the series in Australia, the AACTA Awards have great impact internationally. Our UK based sales agent for *The Slap* was literally waiting for a text from us from the Awards Ceremony, so they could pass the news straight on to buyers. They say that peer recognition of excellence is gold in the international market," Bowden said.

Nelson Woss, producer of *RED DOG*, which won the Samsung AACTA Award for Best Film, said winning had been a tremendous boost to the film's DVD release, whilst Daniel Henshall, who took out the AACTA Award for Best Lead Actor for his performance in *Snowtown*, said winning had already benefited his career.

"Not only is it an amazing honour to get that kind of recognition from my peers, it has also introduced me to many in the industry who had not known me beforehand, creating more opportunities both here and overseas. It has been a great experience thus far," Henshall said.



### **Call out for Jurors for 2013 Awards**

In addition to calling for 2013 AACTA Award entries, the Academy is also calling for jurors. Jurors, who must be AACTA members, are screen professionals chosen from a cross-section of crafts, who come together to determine the nominees and winners for various Awards in the following categories: Feature Film Pre-Selection; Documentary; Television; Visual Effects; Young Actor; and Short Fiction Film & Short Animation.

AFI-Award winning actor, writer and director, Nadine Garner, said being an AACTA Awards juror is both rewarding and educational.

"It was a pleasure and a privilege to be a juror for the inaugural AACTA Awards, and a rare opportunity to sit down and view content across many genres and demographics. Being afforded the opportunity to look at all the content we are currently producing was a great education. I am heartened and inspired by the number of popular and well crafted productions that Australia has to offer and hope that I am able to continue to contribute to our ever expanding industry," Garner said.

### **2013 AACTA Awards – Building on inaugural Samsung AACTA Awards success in Sydney**

The 2013 AACTA Awards Ceremony will be held in Sydney in early 2013, building on the success of the inaugural Samsung AACTA Awards, which were held at the Sydney Opera House.

NSW Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris said the NSW Government, through Destination NSW, is proud to support the AACTA Awards, Australia's pre-eminent screen industry awards.

"The AACTA Awards are a key creative industries event on the NSW Events Calendar, playing a leading role in reinforcing Sydney's position as the creative services capital of Australia," Minister Souris said.

AFI | AACTA Chairman, Alan Finney, said he looks forward to capitalising on greater awareness and interest in the Academy.

"The launch of the 2013 AACTA Awards Cycle comes just four months after the Academy's first ever Samsung AACTA Awards honoured Australian and international screen excellence at events held in Sydney and Los Angeles, marking the biggest and most successful screen Awards season ever held in Australia, and a marking a new era for the Australian screen industry.

"We aim to raise the bar further again with the 2013 AACTA Awards, with more activity within Australia and abroad, creating new ways to engage audiences in Australia and around the world with the great content our talented people are creating," Finney said.

### **Notes to Editors:**

AACTA is calling for entries across all AACTA Award categories: Feature Film; Documentary; Short Fiction Film; Short Animation; Television Drama; Television Comedy, Light Entertainment and Reality; Children's Television; and, Visual Effects.

Further information about the 2013 AACTA Awards, including an overview of the 2013 AACTA Awards entry deadlines and eligibility criteria, will be available on the [AACTA website](#) from 9:30am Wednesday 9 May 2012.

### **MEDIA ENQUIRIES:**

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