

Press Release – Strictly Embargoed until Thursday 16 May 2013

Australian Academy Calls for AACTA Awards Entrants, Announces New Television Awards

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 (AACTA) today calling for entries and jurors for the 3rd AACTA Awards.

The 3rd AACTA Awards will be held in January 2014 in Sydney.

REVIEW OF THE AACTA AWARDS

In February 2013, AACTA announced a review of its current Awards based on: a mandate to work with Guild representatives to identify industry needs; the findings of AACTA's recent Additional Awards Campaign Survey; and AACTA's current financial and resource challenges (resulting from the loss of its naming rights sponsor, and the need for greater industry support).

Subsequently, AACTA and Guild representatives formed a group to discuss and agree which Awards could and should be presented at the 3rd AACTA Awards in Sydney in January 2014.

AACTA today announces that a total of 40 AACTA Awards will be bestowed, just one less than at the 2nd AACTA Awards.

Feature film Awards remain unchanged (14 AACTA Awards), six new television screen craft Awards have been introduced (with a total of 20 television awards), three dedicated documentary Awards will be bestowed (with many documentary entries able to enter into the slate of new television craft Awards), and two short film categories will be awarded. The AACTA Raymond Longford Award, and the Byron Kennedy Award will be presented as usual, and an Audience Choice Award will be announced later in the year.

In addition to assisting with determining the slate of Awards for the 3rd AACTA Awards, AACTA is also working closely with Guild representatives on the long term direction and development of the AACTA Awards for 2015 and beyond, and will announce the details of a working group towards this.

As part of this ongoing review, the following AACTA Awards have been placed on hold for the 3rd AACTA Awards, but will be revisited for 2015, pending the necessary financial and screen sector support required to deliver them: AACTA Award for Best Screenplay in a Short Film; Best Visual Effects; and, Best Young Actor. The following documentary-specific craft Awards - Best Direction, Best Cinematography, Best Editing and Best Sound in a Documentary - will also be placed on hold.

NEW TELEVISION AWARDS

As part of the review, six new AACTA Awards have been introduced to recognise television screen craft excellence; Best Cinematography in Television; Best Editing in Television; Best Sound in Television; Best Original Music Score in Television; Best Production Design in Television; and Best Costume Design in Television.

These Awards were introduced following a proposal submitted by a consortium of more than 40 screen practitioners and performers, numerous production companies and industry Guilds in 2012. Adding weight to this proposal was the overwhelming support identified by the AACTA Additional Awards Campaign Survey; 94% of 404 screen professionals surveyed supported the six television screen craft Awards which will now be implemented for the 3rd AACTA Awards.

AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said:

“Reviewing the AACTA Awards will be a continual process in order to reflect industry trends, ensuring the relevancy and therefore worth of the Awards within Australia and abroad. We are very pleased with the input and collaboration of the Guilds in working with AACTA to determine the slate of 3rd AACTA Awards, and plan to continue this into the future. Together we have created Awards which achieve greater inclusivity for more screen crafts than before, particularly within the television sector.

“The new slate of television Awards provides an excellent example of what is possible when the industry rallies together to support the AACTA Awards, and it is this level of support and engagement which is necessary to expand the AACTA Awards into the future.

“We also reviewed the AACTA Awards in light of AACTA’s economic challenges, and whilst a small number of AACTA Awards will need to be put on hold for the moment largely due to the considerable administrative process they require, the fact that we are presenting just one less AACTA Award next year compared with this year is a good result.”

Kingston Anderson, Executive Director of the Australian Directors Guild, who was part of the Guild representatives group consulting on the AACTA Awards review said:

“By working together, AACTA and the Guilds have created new AACTA Awards which are inclusive of more screen crafts than before. We have also created a positive, collaborative path for the future. We know that the industry wants to extend the slate of AACTA Awards to further represent Australian screen craft excellence, and garnering the industry support necessary to achieve this will be one of our main aims.”

The proposal for new television screen craft Awards was submitted by multiple AFI Award winning **Director/Producer Peter Andrikidis**, whose work includes *Underbelly* and *East West 101*, and **Editor Deborah Peart**, whose recent work includes *Puberty Blues* and *The Straits*. Andrikidis and Peart said:

“We are very pleased with the inclusion of the new television craft categories and congratulate AACTA for taking such positive steps. We would also like to thank all the individuals, production companies and screen Guilds who assisted us in making the original submission to AACTA in 2012. These new Awards will see Australia’s television industry rightfully recognised for their craft alongside our film industry, and alongside our international peers. We hope AACTA will continue to take steps forward in celebrating all manner of screen craft in years to come by further expansion of the Awards and we urge all screen practitioners to throw their support behind this endeavour.”

WINNER AND NOMINEES RESEARCH

AACTA Award nominations and wins create new career opportunities for Australia's best performers and practitioners, and new PR, marketing and sales opportunities for our best film and television productions.

A new survey of inaugural (2012) AACTA Award winners and nominees has found that:

- 93% of nominees and 82% of winners found value in promoting their nomination/win to add weight to Australian and international sales and job opportunities and pitches for new projects
- 88% of those awarded for a television production said that winning an AACTA Award benefited their network
- 75% said an AACTA Award win benefited their film/television production
- More than a third (35%) of AACTA Award winners said that their win directly attracted funding for future projects.

Speaking of their win at the 2nd AACTA Awards earlier this year, **Producers of *The Sapphires*, Rosemary Blight and Kylie du Fresne**, said winning an AACTA Award assists with marketing and sales.

"Being nominated and awarded by AACTA does assist with our marketing and sales activities both in Australia and internationally. As Australia's highest measure of success, receiving 11 AACTA Awards adds gravitas to our US release, particularly in a competitive market where Awards can drive media coverage and assist with driving box office success."

Amanda Brotchie of High Wire Films, Producers of the AACTA Award winning series *Lowdown* and *Agony Aunts*, said:

"We have had a very positive response to our company and projects after winning the AACTA Awards, both in Australia and internationally. Studio and network executives in the US market especially hold the Australian Academy Awards in high regard, and it has helped us secure meetings and opportunities that may well have otherwise eluded us."

CALL FOR JURORS

Each year approximately 100 practitioners are selected to represent a cross-section of screen crafts and professions to determine AACTA Award nominees and winners across feature film, television, documentary and short film.

Producer Anita Jacoby, whose AFI and AACTA Award-winning work includes *Enough Rope with Andrew Denton* and *The Gruen Transfer*, said being an AACTA Awards juror is a good opportunity to enhance professional skills.

"If you love our film and TV industry, then being an AACTA Awards juror is a real privilege. Not only do you get to view plenty of impressive home-grown content, but being a part of the judging process challenges and enhances your own production skills. On a personal level, it's a great opportunity to contribute something worthwhile to an industry we all want to see flourish and continue to grow."

3RD AACTA AWARDS - SYDNEY 2014

The 3rd AACTA Awards will be held in Sydney in January 2014.

NSW Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, said the NSW Government, through its tourism and major events agency Destination NSW, is pleased to support the AACTA Awards, Australia's pre-eminent screen industry Awards.

"The AACTA Awards is a key creative industries event on the NSW Events Calendar, proudly produced and hosted in Sydney, Australia's screen capital and home of the creative industries," Minister Souris said.

AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trewhella, said: "We thank the NSW Government for its critical support, and look forward to working with Destination NSW to build on the record success of the Australian Academy and the AACTA Awards achieved since launching in Sydney in 2011."

FUTURE AACTA AWARDS

The Academy is aware of the desire by various Guilds as well as the industry (as indicated by AACTA's recent Additional Awards Campaign Survey) to create additional AACTA Awards to further recognise excellence across all screen crafts in Australia. The ability to create these Awards will depend on increased screen sector support. AACTA and Guild representatives will form an ongoing working group to campaign for this support, and to determine the future direction of the AACTA Awards.

All Guilds were involved in the AACTA Awards review. Guild representatives' statements of support for the 3rd AACTA Awards will be available on the AACTA website from 9:00am Thursday 16 May 2013.

Notes to Editors

3rd AACTA Awards Cycle Launch

Call for Entries: Entries across all AACTA Awards categories - feature film, television, documentary, short animation and short fiction film – open at 9am Thursday 16 May. Closing dates vary per category; the first entry deadline is for Feature Film Pre-selection on 7 June 2013.

Call for Jurors: AACTA Awards jurors determine the nominees and winners for a number of AACTA Awards categories across film, television, documentary and short film. Jury applications close 11 June 2013.

To enter the 3rd AACTA Awards or to apply to become a juror, visit the AACTA website from 9am Thursday 16 May 2013: www.aacta.org.

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About AFI | AACTA

The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) was established by the Australian Film Institute (AFI) in August 2011 following a year-long review and industry consultation. The inaugural AACTA Awards were held in Sydney in January 2012 and the 2nd AACTA Awards were held in Sydney in January 2013. The AACTA Awards are a continuum of the AFI Awards which have recognised screen excellence in Australia since 1958.

The AACTA Awards are proudly supported by the NSW Government through its tourism and major events agency, Destination New South Wales.

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