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The Search for Australia's Best TV of 2016 is on as AACTA Calls for Entries, Announces Five New Awards

The search is on for Australia's most outstanding television performers, practitioners and productions of 2016, with the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) today calling for television entries for the 6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto.

This year's AACTA Awards will see more television awards bestowed than ever before, with five new awards announced today, bringing the total to 25.

The new AACTA Award for Best Lifestyle Program will be open to free-to-air and subscription television entries, while four new subscription-only television awards have been created as a result of AACTA's recently announced partnership with the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA), recognising Best New Talent, Best Male Presenter, Best Female Presenter and Best Live Event Production. The nominees and winners of these additional awards will be determined by juries of AACTA accredited members.

More than 50 AACTA Awards will be presented across feature film, television, documentary and short film at two major events at The Star in Sydney in December: the 6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Industry Luncheon presented by Blue Post on Monday 5 December; and the 6th AACTA Awards Ceremony & Official After Party presented by Presto on Wednesday 7 December, telecast on Channel Seven.

AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said that creating new AACTA Awards will create new opportunities for nominees and winners.

"Australian television resonates deeply with audiences at home and abroad, with a number of our popular dramas exported to 80 countries around the world. The AACTA Awards put an internationally-recognised 'stamp of success' on our best productions, helping to increase sales and grow these audiences.

"We know that AACTA Award wins and nominations generate huge exposure and sales for our television productions. More than 80% of last year's AACTA Award winners said their win directly benefited their television network, and 75% said their win benefited their career either through new job offers, their series being renewed, or by receiving funding for new projects. These findings are consistent with our research over the last five years since the Academy launched, and we look forward to creating more opportunities for this year's nominees and winners."

Trehwella said that the Australian television landscape is again looking healthy for 2016, with a number of new dramas likely to add to strong competition alongside returning dramas.

"This year is looking like another bumper year for Australian television. The year started with Channel Seven's miniseries **MOLLY** drawing exceptional audiences hot off the success of Seven's AACTA Award-winning **PETER ALLEN: NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR**, while the reality television juggernaut continues to resonate, with the hotbed of past AACTA Award competitors **MY KITCHEN RULES**, **MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA** and **THE VOICE AUSTRALIA** again blizzing ratings.

“ABC TV continues its commitment to home-grown comedy, with **COMEDY SHOWROOM** among its new productions. This impressive series pilots episodes from Australia’s top comedic talents for audiences to have their say on who is commissioned for a full series.

“We’ve been delighted to screen a number of TV exclusives on the big screen for our members thanks to our friends at ABC TV and Foxtel, with the new season of **RAKE** praised by our viewing members for its return to form, and screenings of **CLEVERMAN** and **SECRET CITY** to come.

“Fans are eagerly awaiting returns from **LOVE CHILD** and AACTA Award winning drama **OFFSPRING**, while **WENTWORTH** returned with a fierce first episode this week. We’re also looking forward to new dramas, including SBS’s upcoming **DEEP WATER** by Blackfella Films which features an all-star cast including **William McInnes**, **Danielle Cormack**, **Noah Taylor** and **Yael Stone**. We look forward to seeing which productions are nominated later in the year,” Trehella said.

Louise Fox, writer and co-creator of **GLITCH**, which won the AACTA Award for Best Television Drama Series last year, said winning added significant gravitas to the production.

“Winning the AACTA Award for Best Television Drama Series last year gave **GLITCH** greater visibility, respect and kudos from within and outside of the Australian industry. It also allowed us to promote the title as having won a national award that has equivalents that could be understood internationally.”

Speaking of AACTA’s new subscription-only television awards, Trehella said he hoped the move would equally propel the careers of those nominated and awarded.

“AACTA has worked with the industry to create a number of new television awards since the launch of the Academy in 2011, including introducing 10 new television craft awards in 2013, and we will continue to assess industry need and feedback in relation to any future additions to ensure relevancy and best-practice.

“We’re very pleased to extend the reach of our footprint into dedicated subscription television awards, and our partnership with ASTRA marks an exciting new pathway for recognising new Australian talent and adding a new level of recognition to live events broadcast on subscription television.”

Andrew Maiden, ASTRA CEO, said:

“ASTRA is delighted to be partnering with AACTA to promote subscription television. Our members invest \$800 million in local content each year, producing bold and distinctive programs that often set us apart from free-to-air television. We look forward to recognising the high quality content produced for subscription television which stands up amongst the best Australian television has to offer.”

AACTA also today announced two new juries – a subscription television live event production jury, and a subscription television presenters and new talent jury – in addition to its 14 existing juries. AACTA is currently seeking jurors across all feature film, television, documentary and short film juries. Applications close Friday 20 May 2016.

All television entries for the 6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto open at 9am Thursday 12 May 2016, with varying eligibility and closing dates. See the [AACTA website](#) from 9am Thursday 12 May for more information.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

AFI | AACTA 2016 EVENTS

The **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Industry Luncheon presented by Blue Post** will be held at The Star Event Centre in Sydney on Monday 5 December 2016.

The **6th AACTA Awards Ceremony & Official After Party presented by Presto** will be held at The Star Event Centre in Sydney on Wednesday 7 December 2016.

The **AFI | AACTA 'Meet the Nominees' presented by AFTRS** event series, held with the support of the guilds, will again be held in Sydney to coincide with the awards events, with more information to come later in the year.

AACTA's awards events are complemented by AFI | AACTA's robust and expanding year-round **Screen Culture & Industry Development Member Events Program**, with more than 80 screen culture and industry development events held each year in Sydney and Melbourne. Open to the public and industry, the membership program includes exclusive and complimentary screenings and masterclasses with cast and crew panel discussions and Q&As.

About AFI | AACTA

This year marks the sixth Awards of the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA), which was established by the Australian Film Institute (AFI) in 2011. The AACTA Awards are a continuum of the AFI Awards, which commenced in Australia in 1958, and have seen some of Australia's biggest names in film awarded, including Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, Dr. George Miller (AFI | AACTA Patron), Cate Blanchett (AFI | AACTA Ambassador) and Geoffrey Rush (AACTA President). AACTA Award recipients have included Hugo Weaving, Judy Davis, Jacki Weaver, Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin, and AACTA International Award recipients have included Meryl Streep, Quentin Tarantino, Leonardo DiCaprio and Julianne Moore, to name a few. The AACTA Awards are determined by accredited members and juries, whom vote to determine more than 50 awards across film and television. Feature film voting is via a two-step preferential voting system, as is standard across internationally recognised screen academies.

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

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