



MEDIA RELEASE

Strictly embargoed until 12:01am Thursday 11 August 2016

Anticipation grows as AACTA reveals Feature Films in Competition for the 6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto

The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) today announced the Feature Films in Competition for this year's AACTA Awards - Australia's highest screen acknowledgement. AACTA also today launched the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Official Screenings Program**, a four-week program that brings Australia's leading screen professionals together with screen fans to watch, discuss and judge the Feature Films in Competition, and the nominees in the Short Film and Feature Length Documentary categories.

A total of 24 Feature Films will compete for the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto: A FEW LESS MEN, A MONTH OF SUNDAYS, BEAST, BOYS IN THE TREES, DOWN UNDER, EARLY WINTER, EMBEDDED, GIRL ASLEEP, GODS OF EGYPT, GOLDSTONE, HACKSAW RIDGE, JOE CINQUE'S CONSOLATION, LOOKING FOR GRACE, PAWNO, RED BILLABONG, SCARE CAMPAIGN, SPEAR, SPIN OUT, SPIRIT OF THE GAME, SUCKER, TANNA, THE DAUGHTER, THE MENKOFF METHOD, and WYRMWOOD: ROAD OF THE DEAD.**

The screenings offer AFI and AACTA members the opportunity to see the finest Australian films of the last 12 months, including films which have not yet been released – **A FEW LESS MEN, BEAST, BOYS IN THE TREES, JOE CINQUE'S CONSOLATION** and **HACKSAW RIDGE.**

The Official Screenings Program, running throughout August and September, will open with a preview screening of **A FEW LESS MEN**, in Sydney on Monday 29 August at Event Cinemas, Bondi Junction, and in Melbourne on Tuesday 30 August, at Cinema Nova.

This year will also see the Feature Length Documentaries and Short Film nominees screened in Perth for the first time in AACTA history, from 12 – 19 September, via an extended partnership with Event Cinemas. AFI | AACTA members in Perth will this year be able to see this collection of nominees in cinema at Event Cinemas Innaloo in addition to AACTA TV.

"I thank Event Cinemas for their ongoing partnership. The extended activity into Perth is something we are confident will be welcomed by members and is something we hope to build upon in years to come," said **AFI | AACTA CEO Damian Trehwella.**

In addition to the cinema screenings, the majority of Feature Films in Competition, plus all the nominated Feature Length Documentaries and Short Films will be available as part of an online film festival via AACTA TV from 9am Monday 29 August – accessible anytime, anywhere and on any device.

The Official Screenings Program and AACTA TV are exclusive and complimentary to members of AFI (open to all) and AACTA (accredited screen professionals). To join AFI | AACTA and attend the Official Screenings Program and our year round program of events, visit www.aacta.org or call 1300 139 697.

A LOOK AT THE FEATURE FILMS IN COMPETITION

This year's mix of Feature Films in Competition reflects a strong year in Australian filmmaking, particularly for women in film with 19 female producers vying for an Award, up from nine last year. These include past AFI and AACTA Award winners **Jan Chapman (THE DAUGHTER)** and **Julie Ryan (SCARE CAMPAIGN)**. There are also two female composers, a field that is generally dominated by men, in competition this year: **Amy Bastow (EARLY WINTER)** and AFI Award winner **Elizabeth Drake (LOOKING FOR GRACE)**.

It is also exciting to see some of our top home-grown film actors returning to Australian screens, including **Sam Neill, Geoffrey Rush, Miranda Otto** and **Anna Torv (THE DAUGHTER)**, **Aaron Pedersen, David Wenham** and **Jacki Weaver (GOLDSTONE)**, **Radha Mitchell** and **Richard Roxburgh (LOOKING FOR GRACE)** and Oscar winner **Mel Gibson's HACKSAW RIDGE**, with **Sam Worthington, Teresa Palmer, Hugo Weaving** and **Rachael Griffiths**.

"A highlight of each AACTA Awards season is the wide-ranging showcase of the latest Australian filmmakers and performers competing alongside industry luminaries," said **AFI | AACTA CEO Damian Trehella**.

"The feature films in competition showcase an extensive rostrum of exciting new talent, with directorial debuts for almost half of the competing directors. These include **Rosemary Myers** who arrives at this year's Awards with international festival hit **Girl Asleep** (Winner Grand Jury Prize Seattle Film Festival), and **Nicholas Verso**, who just two years ago received the AACTA Award for Best Short Fiction Film, with his feature film debut **Boys in the Trees** – a career path we're delighted to see and help support.

"These emerging directors are competing alongside past AFI and AACTA Best Director nominees and winners including **Sue Brooks (Looking For Grace)**, **Ivan Sen (Goldstone)**, **Matthew Saville (A Month Of Sundays)** and **Mel Gibson (Hacksaw Ridge)**.

"There's also been a reemergence of world class Australian feature documentaries in the last 18 months that are finding an audience in local cinemas as well as gaining international attention. We are presenting the four finalists in the Feature Length Documentary category as part of the Official Screenings Program, including Sydney Film Festival winner **In the Shadow of the Hill**, Adelaide Film Festival winner **Remembering the Man**, **George Gittoes'** critically acclaimed **Snow Monkey** and Australian Oscar-winning documentarian **Eva Orner's Chasing Asylum**. It's the most competitive line up of nominees that we've had in many years, and is a very encouraging sign for our local documentary industry.

"It's an exciting time for Australian film, with several highly anticipated releases scheduled for later this year, including **Mel Gibson's Hacksaw Ridge**," Trehella said. "I encourage everyone to join AFI | AACTA in time to attend this fantastic showcase of new Australian films that we present each year to our members".

Voting will take place following the Official Screenings Program, with the remaining nominees for the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto** scheduled to be announced in October 2016.

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

– ENDS –

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Nikstar | Niki White, P: +61 (0) 403 176 988, E: niki@nikstar.com.au

AFI | AACTA | Michelle Berg, P: +61 (03) 9695 7222, E: mberg@afi.org.au

For further information about AFI | AACTA visit: www.aacta.org

NOTES TO EDITORS REGARDING FEATURE FILMS

The Feature Films in Competition mark the long list of eligible Feature Films to be narrowed down to a list of nominees via voting. These are the Feature Films deemed eligible to compete, either automatically (having achieved a minimum four capital city cinema release), or through jury pre-selection (two to three capital city release or alternative distribution pathway). AACTA notes an amendment to theatrical release dates for Feature Films in Competition applicable to the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto** as follows. Following consultation with the industry, to be eligible for competition, Feature Films will need to have had a theatrical release in Australia for the first time between 5 November 2015 and 10 November 2016, as opposed to 5 November and 13 October 2015, as was previously announced.

VOTING

For the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto**, AFI members (members of the public) have the opportunity to vote within the categories of Best Short Animation and Best Short Fiction Film, and AACTA members (accredited screen professionals) can vote across all Award categories.

Feature Film nominees will continue to be determined by preferential voting in Round One, with the nominees in the Best Film category being limited to five. In Round Two, the Feature Film winners will be determined by a simple majority vote, in line with BAFTA and AMPAS methodology. This is also how the Feature Length Documentary and Short Film winners will be determined. Further voting details will be published on the AACTA website ahead of Round One voting opening in early October.

NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCEMENT

Feature Film nominees, Television nominees and remaining Documentary nominees will be announced in October 2016. Short Film nominees and Feature Length Documentary nominees for the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto** were announced in July 2016.

COUNTDOWN TO THE AACTA AWARDS | SYDNEY 2016

Winners will be announced in Sydney, home of the AACTA Awards, at the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Industry Luncheon presented by Blue Post** on Monday 5 December 2016 and at the **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Ceremony & After Party** on Wednesday 7 December 2016.

The **6th AACTA Awards presented by Presto** follow five highly successful Awards seasons since the launch of AACTA by the Australian Film Institute (AFI) in 2011. The AACTA Awards are a continuum of the AFI Awards which have celebrated Australian screen excellence and achievement since 1958.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Official hashtag: #AACTAs

Facebook: /AACTAawards

Twitter: @aacta

Instagram: @aacta

Thanks to the generous support of our partners and sponsors:

