



Media Release

For immediate release

7th AACTA Award winners announced in Sydney

Watch the Ceremony tonight at 8:30pm on Channel 7

Stars of the big and small screen came together tonight to celebrate Australia's top screen achievements at the 7th AACTA Awards Ceremony presented by Foxtel, held at The Star Event Centre in Sydney.

Continuing an impressive awards season, **LION** won all five of its nominated categories, including Best Film presented by Foxtel, Best Direction for **Garth Davis** and Best Supporting Actor for BAFTA Award winner **Dev Patel**, who received the AACTA International Award for his role earlier this year. It marks a clean sweep for the Oscar®-nominated film, which won all twelve of the categories it was nominated for.

The film's nine-year-old star, **Sunny Pawar**, received the AACTA Award for Best Lead Actor, becoming the youngest winner in the category. The title had previously been held for 41 years by **THE DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND** star **Simon Burke**, who was 15 when he received the Award.

Oscar®, Golden Globe and Emmy Award winner **Nicole Kidman** continued her stellar year by winning both of her nominated categories – Best Supporting Actress for **LION**, which she won the AACTA International Award for earlier this year; and Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama for **Jane Campion's TOP OF THE LAKE: CHINA GIRL**.

Ten years after receiving her first AACTA Award, **Emma Booth** tonight took home the remaining feature film Award for Best Lead Actress for her gripping turn as serial killer Evelyn White in **HOUNDS OF LOVE**.

Hugo Weaving received his first AACTA Award in a television category, winning Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama for **SEVEN TYPES OF AMBIGUITY**. The Award marks Hugo's third consecutive AACTA Award, having received Best Supporting Actor at both the 5th and 6th AACTA Awards.

Also receiving her third consecutive AACTA Award was **Celia Pacquola**, whose performance in **ROSEHAVEN** saw her take home the Award for Best Performance in a Television Comedy.

TOP OF THE LAKE: CHINA GIRL swept the television categories this evening, receiving four Awards including Best Television Drama Series. Joining their Award winning co-star **Nicole Kidman**, Emmy and Golden Globe winner **Elisabeth Moss** and **Ewen Leslie** took home the AACTA Awards for Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama and Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama, respectively.

Other television awards went to: **SUNSHINE** for Best Telefeature or Mini Series, **AUSTRALIAN NINJA WARRIOR** for Best Light Entertainment Series, **SELLING HOUSES AUSTRALIA** for Best Lifestyle Television Series, **SEVEN TYPES OF AMBIGUITY** for Best Screenplay in Television and **MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA**, which won Best Reality Television Series for the third consecutive year.

The inaugural AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by PR Asia was awarded to Indian sports drama **DANGAL**, presented on stage by Best Asian Film Grand Jury President and Oscar® winner **Russell Crowe** and Golden Globe winner **Rachel Griffiths**.

Australia's highest screen accolade, the Longford Lyell Award, was presented to Australian film director **Phillip Noyce** by **Sam Neill** and **Tianna Sainsbury**, with touching tributes from **Harrison Ford**, **Michael Caine**, **Jeff Bridges**, **Gillian Armstrong**, **David Stratton**, **Liev Schrieber**, **Thora Birch** and **Chris Haywood** among others.

Simon Baker accepted the AACTA Trailblazer Award, which recognises the achievements of an Australian screen practitioner whose body of work has served as an inspiration to others. Among those who paid tribute to the Golden Globe and Emmy-nominated actor were **Bryan Brown, Ben Mendelsohn, Rachael Blake, Marcus Graham** and **THE GUARDIAN** co-stars **Dabney Coleman** and **Alan Rosenberg**.

Other highlights of the Ceremony included the presentation of the Byron Kennedy Award to filmmakers **Martin Butler** and **Bentley Dean**, **Guy Sebastian's** opening performance of *Bloodstone*, a medley of hits from Aussie-rock legends **The Angels** and a touching In Memoriam tribute from **Anthony Callea**.

Some of Australia's top film and television stars took to the stage to present Awards, including **Gillian Armstrong, Shane Jacobson, Paul Hogan, Pamela Rabe, Danielle Cormack, Stephen Curry, Noni Hazlehurst, Marta Dusseldorp, Tom Gleeson, Melina Vidler, Angourie Rice, Nicholas Hamilton** and Best Asian Film Grand Juror **Anupam Kher**.

Guests and nominees attending included: **Margaret Pomeranz, Radha Mitchell**, Best Asian Film Grand Jurors **Shabana Azmi** and **Ye Liu**, **David Berry, Jessica McNamee, Samara Weaving, Debra Lawrance, Jack Thompson, Jacqueline McKenzie, Lincoln Lewis, Shayna Blaze, Abby Earl** and **Adam Liaw**.

Congratulating this year's Award recipients, **AFI | AACTA CEO Damian Trehella** said, "In a year that saw our industry deliver some of the strongest and most diverse stories we've ever seen, we are delighted to see such a varied slate of productions, people and performances recognised.

"Tonight's recipients serve as an inspiration to the industry and audiences alike. In particular, I'd like to congratulate our inaugural Best Asian Film Award winner, *Dangal*, and our individual Award recipients: **Phillip Noyce, Simon Baker, Martin Butler** and **Bentley Dean**."

NSW Minister for the Arts Don Harwin said the AACTA Awards are supported by the NSW Government via its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW. "Film and television are part of our national culture and identity, and the AACTAs take this to the world by promoting our best screen productions and creative talent. The depth of our screen talent is extraordinary, as this year's winners have shown, with our creative individuals rightly taking their place alongside the very best in the world."

– ENDS –

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A full list of winners by Award and production images can be accessed via Dropbox:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/683rtz4wlmx6pb4/AAC4rZf3WQdlcQSCmVfy-6Dla?dl=0>

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