

Media Release – Strictly Embargoed until 8pm Thursday 29 January 2015

AACTA AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT STAR-STUDED CEREMONY IN SYDNEY

Watch the show hosted by Cate Blanchett & Deborah Mailman 8:30pm on Network Ten

Hosts **Cate Blanchett** and **Deborah Mailman** were today joined on stage by a star-studded line up of presenters including **Geoffrey Rush (AACTA president)**, **Lachy Hulme**, **Stephen Curry** and cricketer **Brett Lee** to honour Australia's best achievements in Australian film and television at the 4th AACTA Awards Ceremony, held at The Star Event Centre in Sydney.

FILM & DOCUMENTARY AWARDS

In an unusual though not unprecedented twist, two feature films were awarded the **AACTA Award for Best Film**; **THE BABADOOK** (by first-time feature film director, Jennifer Kent) and **THE WATER DIVINER** (also marking a directorial debut for Russell Crowe).

THE BABADOOK also took home the AACTA Award for Best Direction presented by Hyundai Genesis, and Best Original Screenplay.

Despite a duel for Best Film, Feature Film acting awards were evenly distributed.

David Gulpilil's performance in **CHARLIE'S COUNTRY** saw him awarded **Best Lead Actor**, **PREDESTINATION** star **Sarah Snook** was awarded **Best Lead Actress**, **Susan Prior's** performance in **THE ROVER** earned her **Best Supporting Actress** and **Yilmaz Erdogan** was awarded **Best Supporting Actor** for his role in **THE WATER DIVINER**.

THE RAILWAY MAN was awarded for **Best Adapted Screenplay**, whilst **THE LEGO MOVIE** took home the **AACTA Award for Best Visual Effects or Animation**.

The AACTA Award for **Best Feature Length Documentary** went to **UKRAINE IS NOT A BROTHEL**.

OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Highlight presentations during the show were for three outstanding individual awards.

AACTA Award winning performer, **Rose Byrne**, whose career spans Australian and US film and television across drama and comedy, was honoured with the inaugural **AACTA Trailblazer Award**. Byrne, whose performance in US television series **DAMAGES** saw her nominated for Golden Globe and Prime Time Emmy Awards, received a tribute from **DAMAGES** co-star Glenn Close and **BRIDESMAIDS** co-star Kristen Wiig.

Director, producer, writer **Amiel Courtin-Wilson** was announced as the recipient of the **Byron Kennedy Award**, which includes a \$10,000 prize, for outstanding creative enterprise within the film and television

industries. The Byron Kennedy Award is determined by a jury annually and is given to an individual or organisation whose work embodies innovation and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

Courtin-Wilson's body of work includes critically acclaimed documentaries **CHASING BHUDDA** (which received an AFI Award nomination in 2000) and **BASTARDY** (which he shot over seven years, following the life of Aboriginal elder Jack Charles), and feature films **HAIL** (which became the first Australian feature film in ten years selected for the Venice International Film Festival) and **RUIN** (which won Courtin-Wilson and co-director/co-producer Michael Cody a Special Jury Prize at Venice in 2013).

The Byron Kennedy Award jury said: "We have chosen Amiel Courtin-Wilson for his risk taking and evocative storytelling. Amiel has been patiently searching for truth and beauty at the margins of society, making films which have captured the attention of international audiences."

The highest honour that the Australian Academy can bestow upon an individual is the AACTA Longford Lyell Award (this award was recently renamed from the AACTA Raymond Longford Award in recognition of Lottie Lyell's contribution to the work of her partner in filmmaking and in life, Raymond Longford).

The AACTA Longford Lyell Award went to one of Australia's most loved and respected writers and producers, **Andrew Knight**. The Award was presented by Adam Zwar and Dave O'Neil, with special tributes from Eric Bana and Shaun Micallef.

Andrew Knight has written and produced vast oceans of television and several films, across several genres, including comedy series **Fast Forward**, **Full Frontal** and **The D-Generation** (executive producer and head writer); television dramas **SeaChange** (co-writer and executive producer), **After The Deluge** (writer and co-producer) and **Tripping Over** (writer, co-writer and executive producer); and feature films **The Water Diviner**, **Siam Sunset** and **Spotswood** (co-writer).

Andrew was co-owner of Artist Services – one of the top production houses in Australia - subsequently purchased by Granada. He and his shows have won over forty industry awards, including AFI Awards, Logies, AWGIES, and SPA Awards for both his writing and producing. Andrew is widely admired in the screen industry as an excellent collaborator and mentor, whose talent is unique in its diversity.

TELEVISION AWARDS

Marking another strong year for Australian television, the 4th AACTA Awards Ceremony saw a total of eight television programs recognised across 12 television awards.

New drama **THE CODE** (ABC) led the tally, receiving an impressive four awards: **Best Television Drama Series**; **Best Direction in a Television Drama or Comedy** (Episode 1); **Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama (Ashley Zukerman)**; and **Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama (Chelsie Preston Crayford – Episode 1)**.

Josh Thomas's internationally acclaimed **PLEASE LIKE ME** (ABC2) followed with two wins: **Best Screenplay in Television** (Episode 2/07: Scroggin), and **Best Performance in a Television Comedy (Debra Lawrance)**.

Working Dog Productions continued its long-time legacy of making Award-winning comedy, beating stiff competition from other ABC favourites including **THE MOODYS** and **SHAUN MICALLEF'S MAD AS HELL, SERIES 3** to take out the **AACTA Award for Best Television Comedy Series** with new comedy, **UTOPIA**.

The television acting categories saw first-time AACTA Awards for all winners: **Marta Dusseldorp** for **Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama (JANET KING, ABC)**; **Ashley Zukerman** for **Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama (THE CODE, ABC)**; **Eamon Farron** for **Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama (CARLOTTA, ABC)**; **Chelsie Preston Crayford** for **Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama (THE CODE, ABC)**; and **Debra Lawrance** for **Best Performance in a Television Comedy (PLEASE LIKE ME, ABC2)**.

The AACTA Award for Best Telefeature or Mini Series went to **DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND** (Foxtel - Showcase).

HAMISH & ANDY'S GAP YEAR ASIA won last year's **AACTA Award for Best Direction in a Television Light Entertainment or Reality Series**. Today, the team won the **AACTA Award for Best Light Entertainment Television Series** with **HAMISH & ANDY'S GAP YEAR SOUTH AMERICA** (Nine Network).

THE VOICE AUSTRALIA (Nine Network) was announced as the winner of the **AACTA Award for Best Reality Television Series**, overcoming tough competition from **MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA – SERIES 6** (Network Ten), **THE X FACTOR** (Seven Network) and **THE VOICE KIDS** (Nine Network) in this category.

SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to the presentation of the AACTA Awards, show highlights included an Australia's Favourite Film and Television Moments segment, which was supported by audiences tweeting their favourite moments using the hashtag #LoveAusScreen. This segment included a stand-out performance by **WONDERLAND's Ben Mingay and Kirby Burgess**, who is currently starring in the stage production of **DIRTY DANCING – THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE**.

A moving performance by ARIA Award winning Sony Music Recording Artist, **Samantha Jade** accompanied the In Memoriam segment of the show.

You can also catch all the star power, sophistication and style of the red carpet and Ceremony tonight on Network Ten at 8:30, with an encore on Foxtel's ARENA channel on Saturday 31 January.

Damian Trehwella said:

"Tonight's Awards recognise the outstanding achievements of the hundreds of people whose skill, passion and commitment continues to put Australia on the world map for film and television excellence.

"Australians are celebrated for our talents in front of and behind the camera, and the AACTA Awards play an important role in promoting this talent to both our international industry peers and audiences here and at home. Our stories are best captured on the big and small screens, and this year our industry produced a diverse slate of Australian stories across all genres including reality TV and documentaries through to dramas, comedies and feature films.

"Whilst we had the extraordinary advent of seeing two Feature Films honoured with the AACTA Award for Best Film, this is not unprecedented, with AFI voting resulting in ties in the past, and international Awards also having seen this result, including just last year when the Producers Guild of America (PGA) saw a tie in voting for **GRAVITY** and **12 YEARS A SLAVE**. I take this result as a mark of considered voting by our Academy members, and I'm pleased that two outstanding films can share the honour of winning this Award in a year of strong competition.

"The Academy in particular takes this opportunity to congratulate our three outstanding individual recipients awarded tonight; Rose Byrne, Andrew Knight and Amiel Courtin-Wilson. Between these exceptional people, their talents serve as in inspiration to the screen industry and to fans like."

Deputy Premier and Minister for Tourism and Major Events Troy Grant said, "Congratulations to the winners at tonight's AACTA Awards who have been recognised for their innovation and excellence in screencraft.

“Sydney is the cultural hub of Asia Pacific and the capital of film and television production in Australia, and the NSW Government is proud to have secured this prestigious event through the support of our tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.”

FULL WINNERS LIST

A full winners list from the 4th AACTA Awards Ceremony can be found overleaf.

PRESS KIT

Winners' lists, media releases and select production stills and clips can be found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/izemqbe32s27bln/AACFBi9AZ3YxHKf7JIH5xmra?dl=0>

NOTES

This year marks the fourth 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. Former AFI Award recipients include Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, Eric Bana, Toni Collette, Dr. George Miller (AFI | AACTA Patron), Cate Blanchett (AFI | AACTA Ambassador) and Geoffrey Rush (AACTA President).

The AACTA Awards are determined by member and jury voting. Feature Film voting is via a two-step preferential voting system, as is standard across internationally recognised screen academies.

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CONNECT

Official hashtag: #AACTAs Facebook: /AACTAawards Twitter: @aacta Instagram: @aacta

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

4TH AACTA AWARDS NOMINEES & WINNERS

CEREMONY

AACTA LONGFORD LYELL AWARD

- Andrew Knight

BYRON KENNEDY AWARD

- Amiel Courtin-Wilson

AACTA TRAILBLAZER AWARD

- Rose Byrne

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST VISUAL EFFECTS OR ANIMATION

- **THE LEGO MOVIE** Chris McKay, Amber Naismith, Aidan Sarsfield and Grant Freckelton
- **WALKING WITH DINOSAURS 3D** Will Reichelt, Luke Hetherington and Emmanuel Blasset
- **THE WATER DIVINER** David Booth, Prue Fletcher, Marc Varisco and Adam Paschke
- **X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST** Richard Stammers, Blondel Aidoo, Cameron Waldbauer, Tim Crosbie and Adam Paschke

TELEVISION

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST TELEVISION COMEDY SERIES

- **IT'S A DATE SERIES 2** Laura Waters, Andrea Denholm, Paul Walton and Peter Helliar – ABC
- **THE MOODYS** Phil Lloyd, Trent O'Donnell, Chloe Rickard and Jason Burrows – ABC
- **PLEASE LIKE ME** Todd Abbott, Josh Thomas and Kevin Whyte – ABC2
- **SHAUN MICALLEF'S MAD AS HELL, SERIES 3** Peter Beck and Shaun Micallef – ABC
- **UTOPIA** Santo Cilauro, Tom Gleisner, Michael Hirsh and Rob Sitch – ABC

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION SERIES

- **THE CHECKOUT** Julian Morrow, Nick Murray and Martin Robertson – ABC
- **HAMISH & ANDY'S GAP YEAR SOUTH AMERICA** Tim Bartley, Sophia Mogford, Frank Bruzzese and Ryan Shelton – Nine Network
- **PADDOCK TO PLATE, SERIES 1** Rod Parker – Foxtel - Lifestyle
- **THE PROJECT** Craig Campbell – Network Ten

TELEVISION (cont.)

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST REALITY TELEVISION SERIES

- **MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA - SERIES 6** Margaret Bashfield, Dave Forrester, David McDonald and Keely Sonntag – Network Ten
- **THE VOICE AUSTRALIA** Julie Ward – Nine Network
- **THE VOICE KIDS** Julie Ward – Nine Network
- **THE X FACTOR** Jonathon Summerhayes – Seven Network

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES

- **THE CODE** Shelley Birse, David Maher and David Taylor – ABC
- **JANET KING** Karl Zwicky and Lisa Scott – ABC
- **PUBERTY BLUES SEASON 2** John Edwards and Imogen Banks – Network Ten
- **RAKE SERIES 3** Ian Collie, Peter Duncan and Richard Roxburgh – ABC

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST TELEFEATURE OR MINI SERIES

- **CARLOTTA** Riccardo Pellizzeri and Lara Radulovich – ABC
- **DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND** Helen Bowden, Penny Chapman, Blake Ayshford and Simon Burke – Foxtel – Showcase
- **INXS - NEVER TEAR US APART** Mark Fennessy, Rory Callaghan, Kerrie Mainwaring and Andrew Prowse – Seven Network
- **SECRETS & LIES** Tracey Robertson, Leigh McGrath and Nathan Mayfield – Network Ten

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTION IN A TELEVISION DRAMA OR COMEDY

- **THE CODE** *Episode 1* Shawn Seet – ABC
- **DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND** *Episode 1.4: The Forgiveness of Sins* Tony Krawitz – Foxtel - Showcase
- **INXS - NEVER TEAR US APART** *Part 1* Daina Reid – Seven Network
- **PLEASE LIKE ME** *Episode 2/07: Scroggin* Matthew Saville – ABC2

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SCREENPLAY IN TELEVISION

- **THE CODE** *Episode 1* Shelley Birse – ABC
- **THE MOODYS** *Episode 1: Australia Day* Trent O'Donnell and Phil Lloyd – ABC
- **PLEASE LIKE ME** *Episode 2/07: Scroggin* Josh Thomas – ABC2
- **RAKE SERIES 3** *Episode 1* Peter Duncan – ABC

TELEVISION (cont.)

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST LEAD ACTOR IN A TELEVISION DRAMA

- **Luke Arnold** INXS - NEVER TEAR US APART – Seven Network
- **Richard Roxburgh** RAKE SERIES 3 – ABC
- **Dan Spielman** THE CODE – ABC
- **Ashley Zukerman** THE CODE – ABC

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST LEAD ACTRESS IN A TELEVISION DRAMA

- **Danielle Cormack** WENTWORTH SERIES 2 *Episode 11: Into The Night* – Foxtel - SoHo
- **Ashleigh Cummings** PUBERTY BLUES SEASON 2 – Network Ten
- **Marta Dusseldorp** JANET KING – ABC
- **Kat Stewart** OFFSPRING SEASON 5 – Network Ten

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST GUEST OR SUPPORTING ACTOR IN A TELEVISION DRAMA

- **Eamon Farren** CARLOTTA – ABC
- **Andrew McFarlane** DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND *Episode 1.5: The Whirlwind and The Storm* – Foxtel - Showcase
- **Andy Ryan** INXS - NEVER TEAR US APART *Part 1* – Seven Network
- **Dan Wyllie** RAKE SERIES 3 *Episode 1* – ABC

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST GUEST OR SUPPORTING ACTRESS IN A TELEVISION DRAMA

- **Charlotte Best** PUBERTY BLUES SEASON 2 *Episode 8* – Network Ten
- **Piper Morrissey** SECRETS & LIES *Episode 6* – Network Ten
- **Chelsie Preston Crayford** THE CODE *Episode 1* – ABC
- **Denise Roberts** SCHAPELLE – Nine Network

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST PERFORMANCE IN A TELEVISION COMEDY

- **Patrick Brammall** THE MOODYS – ABC
- **Debra Lawrance** PLEASE LIKE ME – ABC2
- **Celia Pacquola** UTOPIA – ABC
- **Josh Thomas** PLEASE LIKE ME – ABC2

DOCUMENTARY

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE LENGTH DOCUMENTARY

- **ALL THIS MAYHEM** George Pank, Eddie Martin and James Gay-Rees
- **DEEPSEA CHALLENGE 3D** Andrew Wight and Brett Popplewell
- **THE LAST IMPRESARIO** Nicole O'Donohue
- **UKRAINE IS NOT A BROTHEL** Kitty Green, Jonathan auf der Heide and Michael Latham

FEATURE FILM

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST FILM

- **THE BABADOOK** Kristina Ceyton and Kristian Moliere
- **CHARLIE'S COUNTRY** Nils Erik Nielsen, Peter Djigirr and Rolf de Heer
- **PREDESTINATION** Paddy McDonald, Tim McGahan, Peter Spierig and Michael Spierig
- **THE RAILWAY MAN** Chris Brown, Andy Paterson and Bill Curbishley
- **TRACKS** Emile Sherman and Iain Canning
- **THE WATER DIVINER** Andrew Mason, Keith Rodger and Troy Lum

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTION PRESENTED BY HYUNDAI GENESIS

- **THE BABADOOK** Jennifer Kent
- **CHARLIE'S COUNTRY** Rolf de Heer
- **PREDESTINATION** Peter Spierig and Michael Spierig
- **THE ROVER** David Michôd

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

- **52 TUESDAYS** Matthew Cormack and Sophie Hyde
- **THE BABADOOK** Jennifer Kent
- **CHARLIE'S COUNTRY** Rolf de Heer and David Gulpilil
- **THE WATER DIVINER** Andrew Knight and Andrew Anastasios

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY

- **PREDESTINATION** Michael Spierig and Peter Spierig
- **THE RAILWAY MAN** Frank Cottrell Boyce and Andy Paterson

FEATURE FILM (cont.)

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST LEAD ACTOR

- **Russell Crowe** THE WATER DIVINER
- **David Gulpilil** CHARLIE'S COUNTRY
- **Damon Herriman** THE LITTLE DEATH
- **Guy Pearce** THE ROVER

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST LEAD ACTRESS

- **Kate Box** THE LITTLE DEATH
- **Essie Davis** THE BABADOOK
- **Sarah Snook** PREDESTINATION
- **Mia Wasikowska** TRACKS

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

- **Patrick Brammall** THE LITTLE DEATH
- **Yilmaz Erdogan** THE WATER DIVINER
- **Robert Pattinson** THE ROVER
- **TJ Power** THE LITTLE DEATH

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

- **Erin James** THE LITTLE DEATH
- **Jacqueline McKenzie** THE WATER DIVINER
- **Kate Mulvany** THE LITTLE DEATH
- **Susan Prior** THE ROVER

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