



MEDIA RELEASE

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## BOX OFFICE SUCCESS BOLSTERED BY AACTA AWARD NOMINATIONS FOR AUSTRALIA'S TOP FILMS OF 2015

Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) announces Feature Film, Television, Visual Effects or Animation and remaining Documentary nominations for the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto.

**SYDNEY** - In a year of record box office success for Australian films, taking more than \$65 million locally to date, speculation about which films would be nominated for Australia's top screen Awards has been buzzing.

Today the wait is over, with AACTA announcing that a total of 11 Australian feature films have received nominations.

The five vying for the coveted AACTA Award for Best Film Presented by Presto are: **THE DRESSMAKER**, a comedic drama celebrating revenge and setting wrongs right in 1950s Australia; **HOLDING THE MAN**, a funny yet heart-breaking story of two men in love despite the height of 1980s prejudice; **LAST CAB TO DARWIN**, an uplifting drama about a dying man which shows it's never too late to start living; **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD**, seeing the **MAD MAX** juggernaut continue with an explosive post-apocalyptic Road War; and **PAPER PLANES**, the story of a young boy's quest to compete in the World Paper Plane Championships.

AACTA today also announced that a total of 31 television productions have received nominations for the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto, with **PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR** (Seven Network), **DEADLINE GALLIPOLI** (FOXTEL - Showcase), **THE SECRET RIVER** (ABC), **REDFERN NOW – PROMISE ME** (ABC) and **BANISHED** (FOXTEL - BBC First) making the top-five most nominated productions.

Feature length documentary nominees were announced in July, with all remaining documentary nominations announced today. A total of 11 documentaries are competing for Awards, with the following today announced as nominees for the AACTA Award for Best Documentary Television Program Presented By FOXTEL Movies: **BETWEEN A FROCK AND A HARD PLACE** (ABC); **THE CAMBODIAN SPACE PROJECT – NOT EASY ROCK'N'ROLL** (ABC); **THE KILLING SEASON** (ABC) and **PRISON SONGS** (SBS).

Also announced today were nominations for the AACTA Award for Best Visual Effects or Animation: **AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON**; **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD**; **PAN**; and **TED2**.

The AACTA Awards will be presented over two major events at The Star Event Centre in Sydney, home of the AACTA Awards: the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Industry Dinner presented by Blue Post (30 November); and the 5th AACTA Awards Ceremony & Official After Party presented by Presto (9 December), which will also be telecast on Channel 7. General public and industry tickets are now on sale via the AACTA website: [www.aacta.org](http://www.aacta.org)

## FEATURE FILM NOMINEES

Competition across the feature film categories for the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto is fierce. The top six most nominated feature films are: **THE DRESSMAKER**, which releases nationally today, leading with 12 nominations; **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD** with 11 nominations; **LAST CAB TO DARWIN** with eight nominations; **HOLDING THE MAN** with six nominations; and **CUT SNAKE** and **PAPER PLANES**, each receiving five nominations.

The five films vying for the coveted AACTA Award for Best Film Presented by Presto are: **THE DRESSMAKER**; **HOLDING THE MAN**; **LAST CAB TO DARWIN**; **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD**; and **PAPER PLANES**.

Four of these five films also see nominations for Best Direction Presented by Hyundai Genesis going to: **Jocelyn Moorhouse (THE DRESSMAKER)**; **Neil Armfield (HOLDING THE MAN)**; **Jeremy Sims (LAST CAB TO DARWIN)**; and **George Miller (MAD MAX: FURY ROAD)**.

The directors behind the films nominated for Best Film Presented by Presto are no strangers to Australia's top screen Awards, making for robust competition. **Joceyln Moorhouse** holds AFI Awards for **MURIEL'S WEDDING** and **PROOF**. **HOLDING THE MAN** director **Neil Armfield** won an AFI Award for Best Screenplay – Adapted for **CANDY**. **Robert Connolly** holds four AFI Awards, including Best Film for **ROMULUS, MY FATHER**. AFI Award-winning director **George Miller**, who won an Oscar and BAFTA Award for **HAPPY FEET** and was nominated by both for **BABE**, returns with **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD**, three decades after receiving his very first AFI Award for **MAD MAX 2: THE ROAD WARRIOR**. **LAST CAB TO DARWIN** director **Jeremy Sims** has a past AFI nomination for direction for **BENEATH HILL 60**, whilst his acting career earned him an AFI Award in 1999 for **AFTERSHOCKS**.

The category of Best Lead Actor sees **Michael Caton** nominated for his performance in **LAST CAB TO DARWIN**, 18 years after his popular portrayal of Darryl Kerrigan in **THE CASTLE**, for which he received his last AFI nomination. Fellow past nominees receiving a nomination for Best Lead Actor today are **Ryan Corr (HOLDING THE MAN)** and **Sullivan Stapleton (CUT SNAKE)**, along with past AACTA Award winner **Patrick Brammall (RUBEN GUTHRIE)**.

Anticipation around who will win the AACTA Award for Best Lead Actress is high, with local talent pitted against international performers. **Kate Winslet**, whose accolades include Oscar, BAFTA, EMMY and Golden Globe wins, today received a nomination for her performance in **THE DRESSMAKER**, alongside fellow Oscar winner **Charlize Theron**, for her performance as Imperator Furiosa in **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD**. Also nominated are **Robyn Butler (NOW ADD HONEY)**, whose past AFI and AACTA Award nominations include two for performance, and **Ningali Lawford-Wolf (LAST CAB TO DARWIN)**, today receiving her first nomination.

The AACTA Award for Best Supporting Actor also sees a first-time nomination for **Mark Coles Smith (LAST CAB TO DARWIN)**, competing alongside seasoned and awarded performers **Alex Dimitriadis (RUBEN GUTHRIE)**, **Anthony LaPaglia (HOLDING THE MAN)** and **Hugo Weaving (THE DRESSMAKER)**, whose first AFI Award was for **PROOF**, also under the direction of **Jocelyn Moorhouse**, in 1991.

**THE DRESSMAKER** also sees two nominations in the category of Best Supporting Actress, with a nomination for **Judy Davis**, whose illustrious career includes AACTA, BAFTA, EMMY and Golden Globe Awards as well as two Oscar nominations, and **Sarah Snook**, who won Best Lead Actress for **PREDESTINATION** last year. They compete alongside first-time nominee **Emma Hamilton (LAST CAB TO DARWIN)**, the only film to receive a nomination in every acting category) and past AACTA winner **Deborah Mailman (PAPER PLANES)**. Both Mailman and Snook also compete for Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama (for **REDFERN NOW – PROMISE ME** and **THE SECRET RIVER** respectively, both ABC).

A number of Australia's most highly acclaimed practitioners are also nominated for their work off-screen, including the following, to name just a few: Oscar and BAFTA Award winning cinematographer **John Seale ASC ACS (MAD MAX: FURY ROAD)**, best known for his work on **THE ENGLISH PATIENT** and **COLD MOUNTAIN**, and fellow cinematographer Oscar and BAFTA nominated **Donald M. McAlpine ACS ASC (THE DRESSMAKER)**, also a past recipient of the AACTA Raymond Longford Award; Oscar, BAFTA and EMMY Award winning costume designer **Jenny Beavan (MAD MAX: FURY ROAD)**, whose award-winning work includes **A ROOM WITH A VIEW** and **GOSFORD PARK**; Oscar nominee editor **Jill Bilcock ACE ASE (THE DRESSMAKER)**; and BAFTA winning, Oscar nominated composer **David Hirschfelder (THE DRESSMAKER)** who is best known for his work on **SHINE**, **ELIZABETH** and **STRICTLY BALLROOM**.

## TELEVISION NOMINEES

A total of 31 television productions received nominations for the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto.

Overall, competition across the television categories is marked by a healthy mix of new and returning productions, shared across all networks.

Leading the television nominations count is **PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR** (Seven Network) with 10 nominations, followed by **DEADLINE GALLIPOLI** (FOXTEL - Showcase) and **THE SECRET RIVER** (ABC) each receiving eight nominations, closely followed by **REDFERN NOW – PROMISE ME** (ABC) with seven nominations. **BANISHED** (FOXTEL - BBC First) rounds out the top five most nominated productions – it received five nominations.

Despite just one new drama competing for Best Television Drama Series, **GLITCH** (ABC), this year's AACTA Awards see a first-time nomination in this category for returning series of both **MISS FISHER'S MURDER MYSTERIES SERIES 3** (ABC) and **LOVE CHILD SERIES 2** (Nine Network). A past nominee, **WENTWORTH SERIES 3** (FOXTEL - SoHo) is again nominated for this coveted Award (following a nomination for the 3rd AACTA Awards).

First-time nominee for the AACTA Award for Best Reality Television Series **REAL HOUSEWIVES OF MELBOURNE SEASON 2** (FOXTEL - Arena) marks an exciting new addition in the race for this hotly contested Award, with strong competition from the Nine Network's **THE VOICE AUSTRALIA** (4th AACTA Awards winner), Network Seven's **MY KITCHEN RULES 6** and **THE X FACTOR** (both past nominees), and Network Ten's **MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA** (which won at the 3rd AACTA Awards).

Competition within the performance categories is tightly contested between the Seven Network's **PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR**, and the ABC's **REDFERN NOW - PROMISE ME** and **THE SECRET RIVER**, with each receiving three performance nominations.

The AACTA Award for Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama sees first-time nominations for performance for all four nominees. Newcomer **Joel Jackson** - who holds just three on-screen acting credits at this, the beginning of his career - received two nominations; one for **PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR** (Seven Network), and the other for **DEADLINE GALLIPOLI** (FOXTEL - Showcase). Fellow nominees are **Wayne Blair** for the ABC's **REDFERN NOW – PROMISE ME** (who holds an AACTA Award for Best Direction for **THE SAPPHIRES**) and **Oliver Jackson-Cohen** for **THE SECRET RIVER** (ABC).

Three of the nominees competing for Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama are former AFI or AACTA Award winners; **Deborah Mailman** (**REDFERN NOW - PROMISE ME**), **Sarah Snook** (**THE SECRET RIVER**), both ABC, and **Pamela Rabe** (**WENTWORTH SERIES 3 – FOXTEL - SoHo**), whose first and only AFI Award was 18 years ago for **THE WELL**. First-time nominee **Peta Sergeant** was nominated today for her performance as Rose Hancock in the Nine Network's **HOUSE OF HANCOCK**.

**Lachy Hulme** is the only past AACTA Award winner competing in the category of Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama, with a nomination for his performance as Thomas Blackwood in **THE SECRET RIVER Part 1** (ABC). Hulme competes with **Rahel Romahn** (**THE PRINCIPAL Episode 2 - SBS**) and 14-year-old **Ky Baldwin** (**PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR Episode 1 - Seven Network**), along with veteran actor **John Bach** (**GALLIPOLI Episode 6: If Only ... – Nine Network**).

**Sigrid Thornton's** portrayal of Judy Garland in **PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR Episode 1** (Seven Network) captivated fans and jurors alike, earning Thornton her fourth AFI or AACTA Award nomination in a career spanning more than three decades, competing for Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama. Also nominated are: **Rarriwuy Hick**, reprising her hard-hitting role as Robyn Davis in **REDFERN NOW – PROMISE ME** (ABC); **Harriet Dyer** for her emotionally-charged role as Patricia Saunders in **LOVE CHILD SERIES 2 Episode 3** (Nine Network); and newcomer **Hannah Monson** (**GLITCH Episode 4 - ABC**), whose on-screen acting career began just last year.

The ABC consolidated its standing as the home of Australian comedy, taking every nomination in the Best Performance in a Television Comedy category, including a third nomination in this category for **Celia Pacquola** (**UTOPIA**), and every nomination in the Best Light Entertainment Television Series category, including a nod for new series **THE WEEKLY WITH CHARLIE PICKERING**.

The ABC also took three of the four nominations for Best Television Comedy Series, with new comedy **SAMMY J & RANDY IN RICKETTS LANE** competing with returning series of **SHAUN MICALLEF'S MAD AS HELL** and **UTOPIA** (chasing its win at the 4th AACTA Awards), alongside SBS's **DANGER 5 SERIES 2**.

An astounding range of talent behind the camera is also evident in the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto Television nominees, including a number of practitioners who have already received accolades at home and abroad. EMMY Award winning costume designer **Marion Boyce** is nominated for her dazzling work on **MISS FISHER'S MURDER MYSTERIES SERIES 3 Episode 1 - Death Defying Feats** (ABC), following a win in this category for her work on Series 2 at the 3rd AACTA Awards. Boyce is also nominated this year alongside **Margot Wilson** for the beautiful costumes in **THE DRESSMAKER**.

BAFTA Award winning production designer **Claire Kenny** is nominated for **BANISHED Episode 6** (FOXTEL - BBC First), Golden Globe winning composer **Burkhard Dallwitz** is nominated for the memorable score in **THE SECRET RIVER Part 1** (ABC), and BAFTA Award winning sound mixer **Ian McLoughlin CAS** is among the nominees for **REDFERN NOW – PROMISE ME** (ABC).

## DOCUMENTARY NOMINEES

AACTA today announced a total of 11 documentaries competing for the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto. Competition is intense, with **ONLY THE DEAD** and **PRISON SONGS** (SBS) both receiving five nominations, followed closely by **THE KILLING SEASON** (ABC) and **SHERPA** with four nominations each, and **THE CAMBODIAN SPACE PROJECT – NOT EASY ROCK’N’ROLL** (ABC) making it into the top five most nominated documentaries, receiving three nominations.

Nominees announced today for the AACTA Award for Best Documentary Television Program Presented by FOXTEL Movies are: **BETWEEN A FROCK AND A HARD PLACE** (ABC); **THE CAMBODIAN SPACE PROJECT – NOT EASY ROCK’N’ROLL** (ABC); **THE KILLING SEASON** (ABC) and **PRISON SONGS** (SBS).

Of the previously announced Best Feature Length Documentary nominees – **GAYBY BABY**, **ONLY THE DEAD**, **SHERPA**, **THAT SUGAR FILM**, and **WOMEN HE’S UNDRESSED** – two received additional craft nominations today; **ONLY THE DEAD** (Best Direction in a Documentary, Best Editing in a Documentary, Best Sound in a Documentary, and Best Original Music Score in a Documentary) and **SHERPA** (Best Cinematography in a Documentary, Best Editing in a Documentary, and Best Original Music Score in a Documentary).

Other documentaries receiving nominations today are **LIFE ON THE REEF** (ABC) and **URANIUM – TWISTING THE DRAGON’S TAIL** (SBS); each has received two nominations.

The Australian Academy congratulates all nominees for the 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto.

**AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella**, said:

“In a record year of Box Office results for Australian films, we are thrilled to see Australian audiences engaging with these fantastic productions, including through our membership program. This year our member program saw a record attendance of 4,800 members, comprising fans and industry professionals, come along to more than 80 screenings and events to watch great Australian screen productions, buoyed by the strength of the films on offer, and to hear from more than 100 performers and practitioners who came along to discuss their work.

“Following outstanding audience success, the measure of technical excellence for the industry is receiving an AACTA Award nomination. A whopping 12 nominations for **THE DRESSMAKER** on this, its first day of theatrical release, will spur even greater 2015 audience numbers for Australian films, and we wish Jocelyn Moorhouse and all involved and nominated every success.

“Of course, one of the best things about the AACTA Awards is that nominations are determined by those best qualified to recognise excellence via industry voting, and therefore productions of any scale stand to be recognised. From **MAD MAX: FURY ROAD** through to **CUT SNAKE** and **PARTISAN**, it’s great to see a total of 14 films, including those competing in the visual effects or animation category, in the race to an Award, with a mix of award-winning and emerging directors.

“Australian television production has again been prolific and outstanding this year, with nominations spread across 31 productions, representing healthy competition. It’s great to see **PETER ALLEN – NOT THE BOY NEXT DOOR** resonating with audiences as well as jurors, receiving an impressive 10 nominations, and new dramas, such as **GLITCH**, competing with returning series of other great dramas, including **WENTWORTH SERIES 3**.

“Australian documentaries have also captivated audiences, critics and juries at home and abroad, including Damon Gameau's **THAT SUGAR FILM**, which set a new box office record for an Australian documentary (excluding IMAX films), through to **ONLY THE DEAD**, which takes us to the brutal and confronting Iraq frontline, reminding us of the risks journalists and filmmakers take to share stories via the screen.

“Our visual effects and animation houses and practitioners are truly world-renowned for their creativity, skill and dedication to excellence, and I congratulate today’s nominees, which are counted as some of the world’s biggest films of 2015, including **AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON** and **TED2**.

“The 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto in Sydney are set to be our biggest and best yet. We will again partner with the screen guilds to hold ‘Meet the Nominees’ events, this year presented with new partner AFTRS. Held in Sydney, and timed with our two major AACTA Awards events, these events provide our members, guild members and AFTRS students a chance to hear first-hand from nominees across all screen crafts. Anyone can become a member to attend Meet the Nominees events, and the general public and industry are also invited to join us at the 5th AACTA Awards Ceremony & Official After Party presented by Presto in Sydney. I encourage everyone to come along. Audiences can also watch our exciting new broadcast on Channel Seven,” Trehwella said.

**NSW Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres**, said, “It’s been another impressive year for Australian film and television and I congratulate this year’s AACTA Awards nominees and look forward to welcoming the industry to Sydney, the home of the AACTA Awards, to celebrate their achievements.”

**The 5th AACTA Awards Ceremony presented by Presto will be held on Wednesday 9 December 2015, and broadcast on Channel 7. General public and industry tickets are available now: [www.aacta.org](http://www.aacta.org)**

**The AACTAs are proudly supported by the NSW Government through its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.**

#### **MEDIA RESOURCES: LISTS OF NOMINEES, IMAGES & VIDEO CLIPS**

A full list of all 5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto nominees, as well as breakdowns of nominees by production and by network, images of nominees, and select clips of nominated film and television productions can be accessed now via Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/isx8rqk81k8n07b/AABvrTCJsOZgCCuitzMnZg2ua?dl=0>

#### **NOTES ON VOTING**

AACTA Award nominations announced today were determined by AACTA members - accredited industry practitioners, performers and professionals - via voting, and via juries comprising industry professionals. For notes on voting, see the AACTA website: <http://aacta.org/the-awards/voting.aspx>

**Round two feature film voting** for AACTA members opens today at 12.00pm and closes at 5pm Thursday 12 November, 2015.

#### **5TH AACTA AWARDS | SYDNEY**

All winners will be revealed at two major events in Sydney later this year: the **5th AACTA Awards presented by Presto | Industry Dinner presented by Blue Post on Monday 30 November 2015**; and the **5th AACTA Awards Ceremony & Official After Party presented by Presto on Wednesday 9 December 2015**. Tickets for both events can be purchased [here](#) on the AFI | AACTA website.

For more information about both Awards events, see the AFI | AACTA website: [www.aacta.org](http://www.aacta.org)

**'Meet the Nominees presented by AFTRS'** events will be held at AFTRS over three days; Sunday 29 November and Monday 30 November prior to the Industry Dinner, and Tuesday 8 December 2015 prior to the Ceremony. The program will be announced on Wednesday 4 November 2015 – this event series is complimentary for AFI | AACTA members and members of partnering screen craft Guilds.

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION & STAY CONNECTED**

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For further information about AFI | AACTA visit: [www.aacta.org](http://www.aacta.org)

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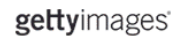
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