

Media release – for immediate release, Saturday 28 January 2012

### AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY ANNOUNCES INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNERS IN LOS ANGELES

Images from the AACTA International Awards Ceremony are available for media use here.

The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) today announced the winners of its inaugural **AACTA International Awards**, recognising international excellence across five categories: Best Film, Best Direction, Best Screenplay, Best Actor and Best Actress.

Winners were announced at the **AACTA International Awards Ceremony** in Los Angeles, with **Geoffrey Rush**, AACTA President and recently announced Australian of the Year, leading a line-up of outstanding Australians presenting Awards at the Ceremony: **Nicole Kidman**, **Russell Crowe**, **Phillip Noyce**, **Liam Hemsworth** and **Bella Heathcote**.

Elegant and nostalgic, the black and white, almost completely silent film *The Artist,* was the big winner at the AACTA International Awards, being awarded Best Film for producer **Thomas Langmann**, and Best Direction for French director **Michel Hazanavicius**. The film's lead actor, **Jean Dujardin**, was awarded Best Actor for his powerful performance as George Valentin, a star of the silent film era, struggling to adjust to the arrival of the 'talkies'. Dujardin was in attendance at the Ceremony, with Russell Crowe presenting the Best Actor Award.

The multi-award winning **Meryl Streep** also attended the Ceremony, and was awarded the AACTA International Award for Best Actress for her role in **The Iron Lady**; the Award was presented by Nicole Kidman. The Award saw Streep trump five other nominees in this highly contested category with her impressive portrayal of formidable former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher.

The award for Best Screenplay proved fiercely competitive, with two joint winners announced after jury voting was tied in this category. The two winners were the adapted screenplay from *The Ides of March* for **George Clooney**, **Grant Heslov** and **Beau Willimon**, and the original screenplay from *Margin Call* for first time writer and director **J.C. Chandor**.

In addition to Award recipients and presenters, the inaugural AACTA International Awards Ceremony attracted a star-studded line up of guests, including **Harvey Weinstein**, **Kathy Bates**, **Francis O'Connor**, **Joel Edgerton** and **Keith Urban**.

The AACTA International Awards recognise film excellence regardless of geography, as determined by a jury of eminent Australian screen practitioners from a cross-section of crafts, and with a wealth of local and international experience.

Speaking of the AACTA International Awards, AACTA President Geoffrey Rush said:

"The Australian Academy's newly launched International Awards are dedicated to identifying and awarding the pinnacle of screen excellence and success regardless of geography.

"Some 70 years since our American friends first awarded Australians with an Oscar, and with Australians since awarded more than 60 Oscars and BAFTAs, it's great that the Australian industry now has the opportunity to formally recognise the outstanding work of our international colleagues through the AACTA International Awards.

"As our industry becomes a truly global entity, with screen performers and practitioners crossing borders to bring us the best of the big and small screens, it is fitting that the new Australian Academy recognises the industry's best, both at home and abroad."

# AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trewhella, said:

"Australia has produced some of the best screen professionals and productions in the world, and an important part of the Australian Academy's role is to recognise and promote this. One of the key vehicles for



this is the annual AACTA Awards – Australia's highest screen accolades, and the Australian equivalent of the BAFTAs and Oscars.

"By announcing and presenting our first ever AACTA International Awards in Los Angeles in January, we have established the AACTA Awards as part of the global screen awards conversation, drawing greater recognition for our Awards, our talented award recipients, and the Australian screen industry.

"On behalf of AFI | AACTA, I congratulate all inaugural AACTA International Award winners, and acknowledge the role they have played in this proud moment in Australian screen history," Trewhella said.

Clips from the **AACTA International Awards Ceremony** will be shown at the inaugural **Samsung AACTA Awards Ceremony** at the Sydney Opera House on 31 January 2012, broadcast throughout Australia on the Nine Network at 9:30pm AEST.

# AACTA INTERNATIONAL AWARDS NOMINEES AND WINNERS

### **AACTA INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST SCREENPLAY**

- The Artist. Michel Hazanavicius
- The Descendants. Alexander Payne, Nat Faxon, Jim Rash
- The Ides Of March. George Clooney, Grant Heslov, Beau Willimon JOINT WINNER
- Margin Call J.C. Chandor JOINT WINNER
- Melancholia. Lars von Trier
- Midnight In Paris. Woody Allen
- Moneyball. Steven Zaillian, Aaron Sorkin, Stan Chervin
- We Need To Talk About Kevin. Lynne Ramsay, Rory Kinnear

## **AACTA INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTION**

- The Artist. Michel Hazanavicius WINNER
- Drive. Nicolas Winding Refn
- Hugo. Martin Scorsese
- Margin Call. J.C. Chandor
- Melancholia. Lars von Trier
- Midnight In Paris. Woody Allen
- The Tree Of Life. Terrence Malick
- We Need To Talk About Kevin. Lynne Ramsay

### **AACTA INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST ACTOR**

- George Clooney. The Descendants
- Leonardo DiCaprio. J. Edgar
- Jean Dujardin. The Artist WINNER
- Michael Fassbender. Shame
- Ryan Gosling. The Ides Of March
- Brad Pitt. Moneyball



# **AACTA INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST ACTRESS**

- Glenn Close. Albert Nobbs
- Kirsten Dunst. Melancholia
- Meryl Streep. The Iron Lady WINNER
- Tilda Swinton. We Need To Talk About Kevin
- Mia Wasikowska. Jane Eyre
- Michelle Williams. My Week With Marilyn

### **AACTA INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST FILM**

- The Artist WINNER
- The Descendants
- Hugo
- The Ides Of March
- Margin Call
- Melancholia
- Midnight In Paris
- Moneyball
- The Tree Of Life
- We Need To Talk About Kevin

For more information about the Australian Academy, visit: www.aacta.org

Contacts: Chet Mehta (USA) SUNSHINE | SACHS T:323.822.9300

E:mehta@sunshinesachs.com

Susan Hoerlein (Australia)

The Lantern Group T:+61 2 9383 4029

E: susan@lanterngroup.com.au

**Brooke Daly (Australia)** 

AFI | AACTA T: +61 449900466 E: bdaly@afi.org.au



### THANKS TO THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR PARTNERS & SPONSORS

NAMING RIGHTS SPONSOR



STRATEGIC PARTNERS





MAJOR GOVERNMENT SPONSOR





BROADCAST PARTNER



MAJOR SPONSORS









OFFICIAL PARTNERS





















Houston.



INTERNATIONAL MEDIA PARTNER



PRINT MEDIA PARTNER

