



Media Release

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2018 AACTA Award Winners Announced in Sydney

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

The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) celebrated its 60th year tonight at the 2018 AACTA Awards Ceremony presented by Foxtel in Sydney at The Star Event Centre. In a big year for Australian screen stories, **SWEET COUNTRY**, **MYSTERY ROAD**, **RIOT**, **LADIES IN BLACK**, **Nicole Kidman**, **Warwick Thornton**, **Deborah Mailman** and **Simon Baker** were among the winners announced at the star-studded Ceremony.

Leading the 2018 AACTA Awards season with a total of six Awards, **SWEET COUNTRY** scooped three Awards at tonight's Ceremony, including Best Film presented by Foxtel and Best Direction for **Warwick Thornton**, who also won Best Cinematography at Monday's Industry Luncheon.

Receiving their first AACTA Awards, **SWEET COUNTRY's** **Hamilton Morris** and **LADIES IN BLACK's** **Angourie Rice** took home the Best Lead Actor and Best Lead Actress awards respectively, while **Simon Baker** received the AACTA Award for Best Supporting Actor for **BREATH**.

Making AFI | AACTA history, Oscar®, BAFTA and Emmy Award winner **Nicole Kidman** won the AACTA Award for Best Supporting Actress for **BOY ERASED**, becoming the first actress to win two consecutive Best Supporting Actress Awards (winning last year for **LION**).

BOY ERASED also received the AACTA Award for Best Adapted Screenplay, marking three-time AFI and AACTA Award winner **Joel Edgerton's** first non-performance award.

MYSTERY ROAD and **RIOT** swept the television categories, receiving three awards each including Best Drama Series and Best Telefeature or Mini Series, respectively.

RIOT took home the AACTA Awards for Best Lead Actor and Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama for **Damon Herriman** and first-time AACTA Award-winner **Kate Box**.

Also winning her first AACTA Award was first-time nominee **Hannah Gadsby**, who received the AACTA Award for Best Performance in a Television Comedy for her critically acclaimed stand-up special, **NANETTE**.

Twenty years after receiving her first AFI Award for her acting debut in **RADIANCE** (1998), **Deborah Mailman** took home her fifth Award – Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama for **MYSTERY ROAD** – while co-star **Wayne Blair** won the AACTA Award for Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama.

The remaining television awards went to **AUSTRALIAN SURVIVOR: CHAMPIONS VS CONTENDERS** for Best Reality Series, **THE WEEKLY WITH CHARLIE PICKERING** for Best Entertainment Program and **SELLING HOUSES AUSTRALIA**, which won Best Lifestyle Program for the second consecutive year.

Marking first-time AACTA Award wins for both director **Paul Damien Williams** and producer **Shannon Swan**, **GURRUMUL** won the AACTA Award for Best Feature Documentary.

Bryan Brown accepted the AACTA Longford Lyell Award, Australia's highest screen accolade. The Award was presented to Brown by **Simon Baker**, with touching tributes from **Warwick Thornton**, **Sam Neill**, **Sigourney Weaver**, **Tom Cruise**, **Baz Luhrmann**, **Ben Mendelsohn** and **Rose Byrne**, among others.

Chinese box office hit **DYING TO SURVIVE** received the AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by Eureka International Group (EIG). The Award was presented to the film's director **Muye Wen** on stage by Golden Globe winner **Rachel Griffiths** and Best Asian Film Grand Juror **Renny Harlin**. In addition to being the third highest-grossing film at the Chinese box office in 2018, the black comedy is one of only a handful of films to have triggered a change in laws, with the Chinese Government lifting tariffs on many cancer treatments earlier this year and adding dozens of previously banned imported drugs to national medical insurance.

AACTA Best Asian Film Grand Jury President, Oscar® and AACTA Award-winning actor **Russell Crowe** said, "Although thousands of films are produced worldwide each year, only a small group manage to spark political debate, receive critical acclaim and become a commercial success – **DYING TO SURVIVE** is one of these rare films. On behalf of AACTA and the Best Asian Film Grand Jury, I congratulate **Muye Wen**, **Xu Zheng** and the cast and crew on their incredible success."

The Byron Kennedy Award, which celebrates outstanding creative enterprise within the screen industry, was presented to award-winning filmmaker, photographer and philanthropist **Ian Darling AO** for his brave, innovative and wide-ranging pursuit of excellence. Darling's credits include **PAUL KELLY – STORIES OF ME** (2012), **ALONE ACROSS AUSTRALIA** (2004), **IN THE COMPANY OF ACTORS** (2007) and the AFI Award-winning **THE OASIS** (2008). He is also the founder of Shark Island Institute, Good Pitch Australia and the Documentary Australia Foundation, with all of whom he shares this award.

"All of Ian's endeavours are about social impact," said **Dr. George Miller**. "His approach is global and synergistic – uniquely effective in forging strong and productive coalitions of storytellers, filmmakers, funders, distributors, and strategic thinkers."

Celebrating AFI | AACTA's 60th Anniversary, as Australia's longest standing national screen culture and industry development organisation, the Ceremony paid homage to the past six decades, including a memorable moment which saw **KATH AND KIM's Gina Riley** and **Jane Turner** reuniting on stage to present the AACTA Award for Best Performance in a Comedy.

Other highlights of the Ceremony included **Vance Joy's** performance of his certified gold hit *We're Coming Home* and a touching In Memoriam tribute from **Katie Noonan** covering **Nick Cave's** *The Ship Song*.

Some of Australia's top film and television stars joined host **Stephen Curry** to present Awards, including **Rebecca Gibney**, **Jack Thompson**, **Marta Dusseldorp**, **Sigrid Thornton**, **Shane Jacobson**, **Fred Schepisi**, **Rodger Corser**, **Erik Thomson**, **Nazeem Hussain**, **Kat Stewart** and **Julia Zemiro**.

Guests and nominees in attendance included: **Bruce Beresford**, **David Stratton**, **Celia Pacquola**, **Phoebe Tonkin**, **Nash Edgerton**, **Aaron Pedersen**, **David Berry**, **Susie Porter**, **Hazem Shammas**, **Leah Purcell**, **Melina Vidler**, and **Sara Wiseman**.

"This year's AACTA Awards are an all-inclusive look at the Australian screen industry, featuring winners and nominees from all industry sectors and at all stages of their careers, as well as productions which span a remarkable range of genres and tell diverse stories with truly unique voices," said **AFI | AACTA CEO Damian Trehwella**. "On behalf of the Australian Academy, I congratulate all of this year's winners and nominees, whose skill, passion and commitment to their craft highlights the world-class talent we have here in Australia."

"I congratulate all of tonight's winners and am delighted that Australia's leading state for film and television production, NSW, is home to the industry's most prestigious awards, the AACTAs," said **NSW Minister for the Arts Don Harwin**. "Having supported the AACTAs since 2011, the NSW Government recognises the importance of creativity and remains committed to growing this vital industry."

– ENDS –

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

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