

Media Release

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Australian Academy announces Best Asian Film nominees and Grand Jury members for 2019



The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) has today revealed the films nominated for this year's AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by Eureka International Group (EIG).

Over the past year, the global reach of Asian film continues to grow with an increasing number of high-quality, creative productions being recognised at international film festivals and embraced by local and international audiences. The AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by EIG recognises the increasingly high standard of films from the Asian region – from box-office hits and international film festival favourites to a Palme d'Or winner and multiple Best International Feature Film Oscar® entries.

The nominees for 2019 include:

- **ANDHADHUN** (Dir. Sriram Raghavan, INDIA)
- **GULLY BOY** (Dir. Zoya Akhtar, INDIA)
- **HELLO LOVE GOODBYE** (Dir. Cathy Garcia-Molina, PHILLIPENES)
- **NE ZHA** (Dir. Jiao Zi, CHINA)
- **PARASITE** (Dir. Bong Joon-Ho, SOUTH KOREA)
- **SHADOW** (Dir. Zhang Yimou, CHINA)
- **SUPER DELUXE** (Dir. Thiagarajan Kumararaja, INDIA)
- **THE WANDERING EARTH** (Dir. Frant Gwo, CHINA)
- **WE ARE LITTLE ZOMBIES** (Dir. Makoto Nagahisa, JAPAN)

The winner of the Best Asian Film Award will be determined by the 2019 Best Asian Film Grand Jury, led by Oscar® and multiple AFI and AACTA Award-winning actor **Russell Crowe**, who returns as Jury President.

Also returning as jurors are: AACTA Award-winning Australian director and producer **Paul Currie** (**HACKSAW RIDGE, BLEEDING STEEL, THE LONGEST SHOT**); Director, producer and screenwriter **Renny Harlin** (**DIE HARD 2, THE LONG KISS GOODNIGHT, SKIPTRACE**); and Japanese producer **Adam Torel** (**GESU NO AI, TEZUKA'S BARBARA**).

They will be joined by new Grand Jury members: Indian actress **Tannishtha Chatterjee** (**LION, BRICK LANE, SHADOWS OF TIME, BIBAR**); Indian director, producer and writer **Anurag Kashyap** (**DABBA, GANGS OF WASSEYPUR, UDAAN**); Chinese producer **Virginia Lok** (**LINE WALKER, FLYING TIGER**); and Award-winning Chinese actress **Chloe Maayan** (**SAM FOO, THREE HUSBANDS, BITTER FLOWERS**).

ABOUT THE NOMINEES

Bong Joon-Ho's PARASITE made waves globally earlier this year as the first South Korean film to ever win the prestigious Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. The genre-blending film has been widely celebrated and with a box office of \$100 million and counting, audiences are loving it too. The film was also recently announced as South Korea's entry for Best International Feature Film at the 92nd upcoming Oscars®.

Due to the win of the Best Film Award at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne earlier this year, **GULLY BOY** received an automatic AACTA Best Asian Film Award nomination. The coming-of-age drama from **Zoya Akhtar** is also India's entry for Best International Feature Film at the upcoming Oscars®.

Additional nominations from India include **SUPER DELUXE** which saw lead actor **Vijay Sethupathi** win Best Actor at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne this year for his role as a transgender woman who returns to her wife and son and award-winning director **Sriram Raghavan's ANDHADHUN**, which recently won four Indian Screen Awards and five Filmfare Awards. The film has also had commercial success grossing almost ten times its budget since its release.

Chinese fantasy animation **NE ZHA's** nomination follows incredible commercial success as the highest-grossing animated film ever in China. Although NE ZHA is the debut feature of its director **Yu Yang** and first credited production for lead voice actress **Yanting Lu**, the film was selected as China's official entry for Best International film at the Oscars® in 2020.

Marking China's first foray into big-budget sci-fi films, **THE WANDERING EARTH** is produced by **Ge Song** who is behind some of China's most lucrative films including **WOLF WARRIOR 2, YOUTH** and **RAILROAD TIGERS**. Praised for its stunning visual effects, THE WANDERING EARTH was acquired by Netflix to stream outside of China earlier this year.

Inspired by Chinese ink brush painting and the tai chi symbol, the almost entirely black-and-white period film **SHADOW** is the latest film from one of China's most celebrated directors, **Zhang Yimou** (**HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS, HERO**). SHADOW has won 17 international awards to date including best director at the prestigious Golden Horse Film Festival.

WE ARE LITTLE ZOMBIES, has become a festival favourite, being recognised with numerous awards including the World Dramatic Special Jury Award for Originality at Sundance this year and the Special Mention award in the Youth Jury Generation 14plus at Berlin International Film Festival. The film marks the feature debut of award-winning short filmmaker **Makoto Nagahisa**, who became the first Japanese director to win the Short Film Grand Jury Prize at Sundance in 2017 with **AND SO WE PUT THE GOLDFISH IN THE POOL**.

The highly relatable romantic-comedy **HELLO LOVE GOODBYE** broke box office records, becoming the highest-grossing film ever produced in the Philippines. Director **Cathy Garcia-Molina** and lead actress **Kathryn Bernardo** also worked together in 2018 on **THE HOWS OF US**, which had previously held the record for the highest grossing Philippine film.

“It is exciting to see such exceedingly high standard of quality filmmaking from the nominees for the Best Asian Film Award,” said **AFI | AACTA CEO Damian Trehella**. “There is a fast-growing interest in Asian film, both here in Australia and abroad. It is wonderful to see how responsive Australian audiences are to the films crafted by our neighbouring Asian film industries, which continue to inspire us in our own work.” “Asia now represents more than 50% of the world's population, so we are very excited to see such a high calibre of films showcasing stories from the region,” said **EIG Chairman Kelvin Dong**. “As the presenting partner for the Best Asian Film Award, we are proud to join AACTA in celebrating film excellence in Asia and we congratulate all of the nominated films.”

The winner of the Award will be announced in Sydney at the 2019 AACTA Awards Ceremony presented by Foxtel on Wednesday 4 December 2019.

– ENDS –

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

MEDIA KIT

A media kit including publicity stills and synopses of the nominated films can be downloaded [here](#).

NOTES ON BEST ASIAN FILM NOMINATIONS

The long list of films in competition was reviewed and judged by three Pre-Selection Committees of esteemed industry figures. Each of the committees assessed a specific region – Chinese speaking territories, India and another committee that encompassed South Korea, Japan and other Asian territories. In accordance with their knowledge and experience, each of the committees determined three clear nominees from their allocated regions.

2019 AACTA AWARDS PRESENTED BY FOXTEL

Winners will be announced during the two major 2019 AACTA Awards events in Sydney, home of the AACTA Awards: The **Industry Luncheon** on Monday 2 December, followed by the **AACTA Awards Ceremony & Official After Party** on Wednesday 4 December, televised on Channel Seven with encore screenings on Foxtel. **Tickets for both events are on sale now at www.afi.org.**

EUREKA INTERNATIONAL GROUP (EIG)

Eureka International Group (E.I.G.) is a global company with over 20 years' experience in international business and relationships. Its headquarters is strategically located on Collins Street Melbourne, with global offices located in the UK, Spain, Ireland, Philippines, Beijing & Shanghai.

E.I.G.'s multifaceted business provides international services and products including Property Development and Project Management, Project Financing, Funds Management, Immigration and Education Services, Tourism, Agribusiness, Food & Beverage, International Trade & Investment, Retail Franchising and Technology.

E.I.G.'s companies are constantly growing and evolving, allowing them to be innovate, strengthen their international business relationships and help guide other companies to successfully expose their products and services globally.

MATRIX UNITED TECHNOLOGY

Matrix United Holding Pty Ltd is based in Australia, Canada and China. Matrix has rich cultural and recreational resources, including: media exposure of various Chinese communities; strong overseas business and media resources; professional Event Planning & Execution with experience in both China and Australia; and a strong ticketing platform. It has gathered the best content resources of China and successfully landed in Australia and Canada, opening a new chapter in the history of cultural entertainment for Chinese people overseas. It has completed many significant events like “The Rap of China 2019”; the 2017 and 2018 Huayi Brothers Icon & Model Search, “Happless Avengers”, and “Goodbye Mr. Loser” of Mahua FunAge in both Australia and Canada.

HARVEST PICTURES GROUP

Harvest Pictures Group is a media company based in Australia and China that develops, finances and produces Film, Television and online content for a global market as well as culturally significant events. It has just completed the Australian film, MEASURE FOR MEASURE, which is screening at the Melbourne International Film Festival, and is currently in production on the Chinese animated film, GIRL OF ASHIMA. Its upcoming production, MISSION NOW, an official Chinese-Australian co-production, has recently been approved and is planned to go into production in late 2019. It currently has a slate of Chinese facing productions in development as well as a range of educational and cultural programs.

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