



Media Release – Strictly embargoed until 2pm Wednesday 30 November

Anticipation around Australian Academy's first Awards rises as nominees announced

The newly established Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) today announced all nominees for the inaugural Samsung AACTA Awards, which will be held in January 2012.

The announcement confirms which film and television performers, practitioners and productions are contending for Australia's highest screen accolade, an AACTA Award, increasing anticipation around who will become the Australian Academy's first Award recipients.

Internationally awarded animator, writer and director **Adam Elliot** joined actors **Alexandra Schepisi**, **Daniel Henshall** and **Claudia Karvan** at Sydney's National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) to announce the nominees, which confirmed the strength of Australian film and television in 2011.

Highlighting the reach and diversity of nominees, the nominations are spread across **14 Feature Films** (out of a possible 21), **14 Documentaries**, **four Short Animations**, **six Short Fiction Films** and **23 Television Productions**.

Speaking of the nominations, AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said:

"The Australian Academy is proud to celebrate Australia's best film and television productions and the talented people who create them. The strength of the Award nominees announced in this, our inaugural year, confirms the creativity, passion and vitality of Australia's film and television industry.

"AACTA congratulates all nominees, and we look forward to inducting our first Award recipients in January 2012."

FEATURE FILM NOMINEES – INAUGURAL SAMSUNG AACTA AWARDS

The six Feature Films nominated for the prestigious **Samsung AACTA Award for Best Film** (in alphabetical order) are:

- ***The Eye Of The Storm***
- ***The Hunter***
- ***Mad Bastards***
- ***Oranges And Sunshine***
- ***RED DOG***
- ***Snowtown***.

The Hunter, the debut feature from Director **Daniel Nettheim**, has had a standout response, with 14 nominations across various categories, including Direction, Adapted Screenplay, Cinematography, Sound, Original Music Score, Production Design, Costume Design and Visual Effects. Across its talented cast, actors **Willem Dafoe**, **Frances O'Connor**, **Sam Neill** and **Morgana Davies** have all received nods for their performances.

Dominating the Acting categories, **Fred Schepisi's** adaptation of Patrick White's ***The Eye Of The Storm*** receives six of the film's total 12 nominations for outstanding performances. These are by **Geoffrey Rush**, **Judy Davis**, **Charlotte Rampling**, **John Gaden**, **Helen Morse** and **Alexandra Schepisi**.



Justin Kurzel's tough South Australian crime story, ***Snowtown***, has also received an impressive number of nominations, with 10 in all, including for Direction, Cinematography, Editing, Sound and Original Music Score.

Actor **Daniel Henshall's** chilling portrayal of serial killer John Bunting earns him a Best Actor nod, while newcomer and untrained actor **Louise Harris** has received a Best Supporting Actress nomination for her astonishingly convincing performance of a mother under duress.

Kriv Stenders' RED DOG, a favourite with cinema-goers this year, has also proven popular with voters, with a total of eight nominations, including in the categories of Direction, Adapted Screenplay, Cinematography, Editing, Original Music Score and Production Design.

The moving true story, ***Oranges And Sunshine***, has been recognised in seven categories, with nominations for three stunning performances: **David Wenham**, **Emily Watson** and **Hugo Weaving**. The film has also been nominated for Editing and Costume Design.

The Western Australian Indigenous musical journey, ***Mad Bastards*** has five nominations, including for Best Original Screenplay (for Director **Brendan Fletcher**, who wrote the script along with lead actor **Dean Daley-Jones**, **Greg Tait** and **John Watson**), as well as for Sound and for Young Actor, **Lucas Yeeda**.

Completing the slate of Feature Films competing for the country's most esteemed screen awards are ***Sleeping Beauty***, ***Legend Of The Guardians: The Owls Of Ga'Hoole***, ***Face To Face***, ***Griff The Invisible***, ***The Loved Ones***, ***Red Hill***, ***Sanctum*** and ***Wasted On The Young***.

With the exception of Best Young Actor and Best Visual Effects, which were determined by juries of industry professionals, all Feature Film nominees were determined by votes cast by the different AACTA chapters during round one voting, which saw AACTA members vote according to their area of specialisation. The announcement of the Feature Film nominees sees the opening of round two voting, during which all AACTA members are invited to vote on these selected nominees to determine the Award winners. **Round two voting** opens today, and runs until Wednesday 14 December.

In the inaugural year of the Samsung AACTA Awards, AFI members voted on the best Feature Film of the year for the **AFI Members' Choice Award**. In a result suggesting that AFI members and AACTA members are in close concert, AFI members voted for the same six Feature Films as AACTA members (voting for the Samsung AACTA Award for Best Film).

TELEVISION NOMINEES – INAUGURAL SAMSUNG AACTA AWARDS

Audiences have been spoilt for choice this year with an incredible output of high quality and entertaining **Television Drama**. This is reflected in the nominations, which are spread over a number of superbly written, produced and acted dramas, and across many networks, both free to air and Pay TV.

Cloudstreet and ***The Slap***, adaptations of two beloved Australian novels, lead the way with eight nominations each. Among ***Cloudstreet's*** ensemble cast, **Essie Davis**, **Kerry Fox** and **Todd Lasance** have been singled out for nods, with the young **Lara Robinson** (who plays the very sweet Young Rose Pickles) nominated in two categories, for both Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama, as well as Best Young Actor.

The Slap, another well-knit ensemble cast, sees **Alex Dimitriades**, **Jonathan LaPaglia** and **Diana Glenn** recognised for their performances. ***The Slap's*** other nominations include Best Screenplay in Television (a category in which the Writer of Episode 1, **Kris Mrksa**, is competing against the Writer of Episode 3, **Brendan Cowell**) and Best Direction in Television (in which **Jessica Hobbs**, Director of Episode 1, is competing against **Matthew Saville**, Director of Episode 3).

Paper Giants: The Birth Of Cleo was a huge hit for ABC1, and has received four nominations, including for Best Telefeature, Mini Series or Short Run Series and Best Direction in Television. **Asher Keddie**, who gave a spot-on performance as a young Ita Buttrose, and **Rob Carlton**, who portrayed an uncanny depiction of media magnate Kerry Packer, have also been nominated.

Sisters Of War, the ABC1 telefeature inspired by the courageous true story of a group of Australian nurses and nuns captured by the Japanese military in World War II, has also received three nominations - including those for performances by **Sarah Snook** and **Susie Porter**.

In the category of **Best Television Drama Series**, the third season of the acclaimed, AFI Award winning SBS series **East West 101** is competing against Channel Ten's **Offspring, Season 2**, ABC1's **Rake** and Foxtel's **Spirited, Season 2**.

East West 101 actors **Don Hany** and **Aaron Fa'aoso** are also both nominated for their work on the show. **Jacek Koman** is also nominated for Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama for his appearance in **Spirited**, while **Richard Cawthorne** is nominated in this category for TV1's **Killing Time**, based on the true story of notorious criminal defence lawyer Andrew Fraser.

The ABC is certainly the home of television comedy if this year's AACTA nominations are any indication. ABC1's political satire **At Home With Julia** is nominated for Best Television Comedy Series, up against ABC1's **Laid** (which has four nominations, including those for Best Performance in a Television Comedy for **Alison Bell** and **Celia Pacquola**) and ABC2's **twentysomething** (nominated for Best Television Comedy Series, and Best Performance in a Television Comedy for **Jess Harris**). Meanwhile, the multi-AFI Award winning chameleon Chris Lilley receives yet another nod, this time for his plethora of comic performances in **Angry Boys** – again, for ABC1.

Light Entertainment is particularly strong in the inaugural year of the Samsung AACTA Awards, with five nominations. Three ABC1 productions - **The Gruen Transfer, Series 4**, **Hungry Beast, Series 3**, and **Judith Lucy's Spiritual Journey** – are competing for Best Light Entertainment Television Series alongside Network Ten's **Junior MasterChef, Series 1** and SBS's **RockWiz**.

In **Children's Television**, previous winners Network Ten's **H2O: Just Add Water, Series 3** and ABC3's **My Place, Series 2** are again nominated. **Emma Jefferson** is also nominated for Best Young Actor for her work in **My Place**. These children's television programs are up against the teen drama **a gURL's wURLd** and the animated series about a naughty goldfish, **Gasp!** (both from Network Nine).

DOCUMENTARY NOMINEES – INAUGURAL SAMSUNG AACTA AWARDS

While the nominees for the **Best Feature Length Documentary** have already been announced (**Life In Movement**, **Mrs Carey's Concert**, **Shut Up Little Man! An Audio Misadventure** and **The Tall Man**), today saw the announcement of all remaining documentary nominees.

The nominees for **Best Documentary Under One Hour** span the personal and the political: **The Ball** follows four students with special needs as they prepare for a debutante ball, while **Orchids: My Intersex Adventure** is filmmaker Phoebe Hart's own story of being born both male and female. Working on a national canvas, **Jandamarra's War** and **Leaky Boat** each explore different but equally disturbing aspects of Australia's history – from the colonial treatment of Aboriginal people in the Kimberley, to the 2001 Tampa crisis.

The four nominees for **Best Documentary Series** were also announced today, with a common theme of exposing secret worlds. **Immigration Nation**, **The Secret History of Us** is the untold story of how modern multicultural Australia was built against the odds. **Outback Fight Club** and **Outback Kids** both lift the curtain on hidden arenas – the rough and raw tent-boxing scene, and the controversial Outback camp where a white man employs ancient Indigenous methods to heal damaged youth.



SAS – *The Search for Warriors* also lifts a veil of secrecy, revealing for the first time in 25 years what it takes to pass the toughest military selection course in the world, the Australian Special Air Service Regiment.

The nominations for **Best Direction, Cinematography, Editing** and **Sound in a Documentary** were also announced today, with extra nods for previously nominated films, and two new titles introduced to the mix: ***Out Of The Ashes*** (veteran nature cinematographer **David Parer ACS** is nominated for his stunning capture of the Victorian forest's regeneration after the Black Saturday bushfires), and ***murundak - songs of freedom*** is nominated for Best Sound in a Documentary (the multi-AFI Award winning Sound Designer **Emma Bortignon** is also nominated in this category for ***Shut Up Little Man! An Audio Misadventure***).

SHORT FICTION FILM & SHORT ANIMATION NOMINEES – INAUGURAL SAMSUNG AACTA AWARDS

The nominees for **Best Short Fiction Film** (***Adam's Tallit, Cropped, The Palace*** and ***The Telegram Man***) and **Best Short Animation** (***Forget Me Not, The Missing Key, The Moment*** and ***Nullarbor***) were previously announced. Today saw the announcement of the **Best Screenplay in a Short Film**, with ***Cropped*** and ***The Palace*** receiving extra nods for screenplay, and Nadine Garner's 1940s-set short film ***Afterglow*** and David Evan Giles' ***Waiting For The Turning Of The Earth***, starring **Barry Otto**, picking up nominations.

FULL LISTS OF NOMINEES

A full list of nominees for all Feature Film, Television, Documentary and Short Film categories can be viewed on the newly developed "Winners and Nominees" section of the AACTA website, being launched at 2pm Wednesday 30 November 2011: www.aacta.org.

A breakdown of nominees (by Award Category; by Television Network; by Production) can be found on the "Media Room" section of the AACTA website from 2pm Wednesday 30 November 2011.

Trailers featuring nominees can be found on the AACTA homepage from 3pm Wednesday 30 November 2011.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INAUGURAL SAMSUNG AACTA AWARD WINNERS

All winners will be revealed during the Samsung AACTA Awards season in January 2012, comprising the **Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon presented by Digital Pictures** on Sunday 15 January; and the **Samsung AACTA Awards Ceremony**, which will broadcast on the Nine Network on Tuesday 31 January.

For more information about both Awards events, [click here](#).

Tickets for both Awards events can be purchased via the AACTA website from 1 December 2011.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About AACTA

AACTA (Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts) was established in August 2011, announcing Geoffrey Rush as founding President, creating a dedicated peak peer assembly for the Australian screen industry, and delivering a new style of Awards programs in line with international models. It has adopted a two-step voting model for Australian Feature Film, which sees AACTA members short list nominees based on their area of specialisation, with the short list then voted on by the wider AACTA membership.



The Academy is made up of 15 Chapters, drawing from key industry sectors and practitioners including actors, screenwriters, distributors, exhibitors, television networks and screen culture organisations among others. These Chapters are then overseen by the President and an appointed Honorary Council, a group of individuals recognised as leaders and luminaries within their fields, drawn from each Chapter.

The AACTA Awards program includes many new elements that have been specifically designed to raise the profile of Australia's screen performers, practitioners and productions both within Australia and throughout the world. This is an historic moment for the Australian film and television industries, with all eyes focused on Sydney in January 2012 to see who will take home the new golden statuettes of the inaugural **Samsung AACTA Awards**.

About Voting

Non Feature Film Voting

The nominees for the Best Short Fiction Film, Best Short Animation and Best Feature Length Documentary Awards were determined by juries of industry professionals.

During round one voting, AACTA members voted for the Best Short Fiction Film, Best Short Animation and Best Feature Length Documentary, and AFI members voted for the Best Short Fiction Film and Best Short Animation.

The winners in these categories will be announced in January 2012.

Feature Film Voting

AACTA has instituted a two round voting model for Feature Film voting.

In **round one** of Feature Film voting, each of AACTA's 15 chapters (which represent areas of professional specialisation within the Australian screen industry) voted to determine the nominees in the categories specific to their specialisation. For example, the Cinematographers Chapter voted for the nominees for the AACTA Award for Best Cinematography. Candidates who received the most votes in round one formed a shortlist of nominees, which will now be voted on in **round two** by all AACTA members to determine the winner.

Television and remaining Non Feature Film Voting

Juries of industry professionals determine the nominees and winners for the other non-feature film AACTA Awards (i.e. the Television Awards and the remaining Documentary and Short Film Awards).

For further information, please see the [voting section](#) of the AACTA website.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

The Lantern Group

Susan Hoerlein T: +61 2 9383 4029 E: susan@lanterngroup.com.au
Victoria Buchan T: +61 2 9383 4033 E: victoria@lanterngroup.com.au

AFI | AACTA

Brooke Daly T: +61 (0) 4499 00466 E: bdaly@afi.org.au



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