



Media Release

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AUSTRALIAN SCREEN STARS SET TO SHINE AT SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

THE BEST IN HOMEGROWN ENTERTAINMENT WILL TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN DECEMBER FOR THE 2021 AACTA AWARDS PRESENTED BY FOXTEL GROUP.

The Australian Academy of Cinema Television Arts (AACTA) is thrilled to announce the star-studded nominees for the 2021 AACTA Awards presented by Foxtel Group, which will be held at the iconic Sydney Opera House on Wednesday, December 8.

In what's sure to be a memorable day of celebration and glamour, the prestigious 2021 AACTA Awards will honour Australian television, film, and digital entertainment performers and creatives for their remarkable achievements over the past year.

Nine of the year's most popular and talked-about films -- including **Nitram** featuring **Anthony LaPaglia**, **The Dry** starring **Eric Bana**, and **Penguin Bloom** with **Naomi Watts** – and 65 critically acclaimed television productions will compete for coveted AACTA Awards in 2021.

With technical crafts yet to be announced, **The Newsreader** – a six-part ABC drama about a 1980s TV newsroom – is in the running for 10 awards and currently has the most nominations this year including Best Drama Series, with director **Emma Freeman** and actors **Anna Torv**, **Sam Reid**, **William McInnes**, and **Stephen Peacocke** among those up for accolades.

The compelling final seasons of **Wentworth**, **Mr Inbetween**, and **Jack Irish** are also recognised this year.

Actress **Noni Hazlehurst**'s work in both television and film is acknowledged with nominations for Best Actress in the bittersweet movie, **June Again**, and Best Supporting Actress in the compelling Foxtel euthanasia miniseries **The End**.

Some of television's biggest entertainment juggernauts and reality formats – such as **The Block**, **MasterChef Australia**, **The Voice** and **LEGO Masters** – will vie for awards alongside the new kid on the block, **Luxe Listings Sydney** and returning favourite **The Real Housewives of Melbourne**.

Another big year of TV laughs sees newcomers **Preppers**, **Fisk**, **The Moth Effect** and **Aunty Donna's Big Ol' House of Fun** join perennial favourites **Rosehaven**, **Hard Quiz** and **The Weekly** in the comedy categories. Acclaimed sets from **Hannah Gadsby**, **Tom Gleeson** and **Celia Pacquola** feature in the new Best Stand-Up category and the Best Comedy Performer category expands to eight nominees, with **Nakkiah Lui**, **Sarah Kendall** and **Kitty Flanagan** among the hilarious comics in the running.

AACTA CEO Damian Trehwella said: "AACTA is proud to be able to host and honour the work of Australia's established and emerging talent; whose work kept us entertained and connected for the past year. 2021 has been a challenging year for many Australian industries and ours is no exception."

“We are privileged to be able to host an event that brings together some of Australia’s most talented and creative practitioners and allows us to recognise the people who have kept us entertained over the past year. Being able to do this at the iconic Sydney Opera House is icing on the cake.”

Without doubt, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance, ingenuity, and resilience of the Australian entertainment industry. Despite many challenges, the industry has forged ahead with local and international productions, including the AACTA-nominated Netflix series **Clickbait**, which showcased the skills of Australian cast and crew to the rest of the world.

We’ve also seen emerging digital content creators, many of whom have pivoted their careers and found opportunities in the formidable lockdowns experienced across the country. Making their mark and making us laugh were people like [AACTA LMAO](#) judge **Jimmy Rees**, fan favourites **Nat’s What I Reckon** and **Ozzy Man Reviews** and upcoming content creator **Samantha Andrew**, who will also be recognised at the 2021 AACTA Awards presented by Foxtel Group.

The Awards, which incorporates the public voted **AACTA Audience Choice Awards**, will be broadcast on its new home, Channel 10, at 7.30pm, Wednesday, December 8, and encored in the days following on FOX ARENA on FOXTEL, BINGE, and [AACTA TV](#).

FOXTEL Group Executive Director of Television, Brian Walsh said: *“We are delighted the Australian film and television industry can come together to celebrate at the AACTA Awards after the challenging year we have had, and what better location than the iconic Sydney Opera House? This is a great opportunity to acknowledge and applaud our incredible Australian talent – both in front of and behind the camera – and we look forward to sharing the broadcast with our viewers across the Foxtel Group.”*

Senior Vice President, Content and Programming, ViacomCBS, Daniel Monaghan said: *“Network 10 is thrilled to be the broadcast partner of the prestigious AACTA Awards once again. It’s a privilege to showcase the best our local television and film industries have to offer and to celebrate the best of the best in such a special way.”*

NSW Minister for Tourism Stuart Ayres said: *“We are delighted to roll out the red carpet in Sydney for this year’s AACTA Awards. I would like to congratulate all the nominees for their contribution to the ongoing success of Australia’s screen industry. The AACTA Awards honour the many talented people involved in our unique Australian entertainment sector, one that has faced enormous challenges this past two years. It is fantastic to see the tremendous achievements of those working in front and behind the scenes of our world-class film and television productions. The Awards generate significant publicity through extensive media coverage, positioning Sydney as the centre for Australian screen production, generating screen industry revenue and attracting visitors to the city.”*

AACTA members can see all 97 nominated films, TV shows, and short form content on **AACTA TV**. Round 2 voting opens Sunday, October 31 and closes at 5pm AEDT Monday, November 8. These votes will determine the winners of the 2021 AACTA Awards.

AACTA are also excited to announce the return of the **AACTA Audience Choice Awards**, which once again puts voting in the hands of the audience.

Voting for the AACTA Audience Choice Awards opens today via [news.com.au](#) and will close Sunday, November 7. Voting will run online, with the top five nominees in each category announced in early December ahead of the 2021 AACTA Awards Presented by Foxtel Group broadcast on Channel 10, on Wednesday, December 8.

The 2021 AACTA Audience Choice Awards are:

- Favourite Australian Actor
- Favourite Australian TV Drama
- Favourite Australian Film
- Favourite Australian Competition Reality Show
- Favourite Australian Entertainment Show
- Favourite Australian Digital Comedy Creator
- Favourite Australian TV Host

Nominees for **Best Documentary** were announced earlier this year. [Click here](#) for more information.

AACTA recently announced a renewed presenting partnership with the Foxtel Group for a further three years. This will allow both AACTA and Foxtel to continue their support for the Australian screen industry.

More information on the AACTA Industry Awards, including Technical Craft Nominees, will be announced soon.

– ENDS –

About AACTA

The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) is a not-for-profit organisation, aimed at promoting, encouraging, and celebrating screen excellence in Australia. For over 60 years, the AACTA Awards (formerly the AFI Awards) have recognised and celebrated Australia's highest achievements in film, television, short form, and digital content. Held annually in Sydney, the AACTA Awards are Australia's most prestigious screen ceremony, embracing a diverse range of screen productions and recognising some of the biggest and brightest names in the industry. AACTA also remains committed to supporting and encouraging the next generation of industry talent through a variety of development initiatives aimed at providing opportunities and support for up-and-coming creatives.

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

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Official hashtag: #ScreenFest #AACTAs | Instagram: [@aacta](#) | YouTube: [/AFIAACTA](#) | AACTA Connect: [aacta.org/connect](#) | Twitter: [@aacta](#) | Facebook: [/AACTAawards](#) | Web: [aacta.org](#)

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AND THE 2021 AACTA AWARDS NOMINEES ARE....



TELEVISION

In television, 65 productions compete for 19 awards, with seven nominees competing for the AACTA Award for Best Drama Series.

Best Drama Series

- Clickbait
- Jack Irish
- Mr Inbetween
- The Newsreader
- Total Control
- Wakefield
- Wentworth

Best Children's Program

- 100% Wolf: Legend of the Moonstone
- Bluey
- The Bureau of Magical Things
- Dive Club
- Hardball
- Kangaroo Beach

Best Comedy Entertainment Program

- Dom and Adrian 2020
- Hard Quiz
- The Moth Effect
- Spicks And Specks
- The Weekly

Best Comedy Performer

- Mark Samuel Bonanno – Aunty Donna's Big Ol' House of Fun
- Kitty Flanagan – Fisk
- Tom Gleeson – Hard Quiz
- Broden Kelly – Aunty Donna's Big Ol' House of Fun
- Sarah Kendall – Frayed
- Nakkiah Lui – Preppers
- Luke McGregor – Rosehaven
- Celia Pacquola – Rosehaven

Best Direction in Drama or Comedy

- Fires (Episode 2) – Ana Kokkinos
- Mr Inbetween (Episode 6) – Nash Edgerton
- The Newsreader (Episode 1) – Emma Freeman
- Wakefield (Episode 5) – Kim Mordaunt
- Wakefield (Episode 8) – Jocelyn Moorhouse

Best Direction in Nonfiction Television

- Brazen Hussies – Catherine Dwyer
- Hannah Gadsby – Douglas – Madeleine Parry
- Love on the Spectrum (Episode 4) – Cian O'Clery
- Ms Represented with Annabel Crabb (Episode 1) – Stamatia Maroupas
- You Can't Ask That (Episode 1) – Kirk Docker

Best Documentary or Factual Program

- Brazen Hussies
- EXPOSED: The Ghost Train Fire
- Life in Colour with David Attenborough
- Ms Represented with Annabel Crabb
- Old People's Home For 4 Year Olds
- The School That Tried to End Racism

Best Entertainment Program

- Australian Ninja Warrior
- LEGO® Masters Australia
- The Masked Singer
- Mastermind
- Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras 2021
- The Voice

Best Factual Entertainment Program

- Australia Talks
- Courtney Act's One Plus One
- Gogglebox Australia
- Love on the Spectrum
- The Project
- You Can't Ask That

Best Lead Actor in a Drama Presented by Foxtel

- Rudi Dharmaligam – Wakefield
- Guy Pearce – Jack Irish
- Sam Reid – The Newsreader
- Richard Roxburgh – Fires
- Scott Ryan – Mr Inbetween

Best Lead Actress in a Drama Presented by Foxtel

- Deborah Mailman – Total Control
- Mandy McElhinney – Wakefield
- Miranda Otto – Fires
- Pamela Rabe – Wentworth
- Anna Torv – The Newsreader

Best Lifestyle Program

- Adam and Poh's Malaysia in Australia
- The Cook Up with Adam Liaw
- Gardening Australia
- Grand Designs Australia
- The Living Room
- Love it or List it Australia

Best Miniseries or Telefeature

- A Sunburnt Christmas
- The End
- Fires
- New Gold Mountain
- The Unusual Suspects

Best Narrative Comedy Series

- Aftertaste
- Aunty Donna's Big Ol' House of Fun
- Fisk
- Frayed
- Preppers
- Rosehaven

Best Reality Program

- The Amazing Race Australia
- Australian Survivor: Brains v Brawn
- The Block
- Luxe Listings Sydney
- MasterChef Australia
- The Real Housewives of Melbourne

Best Screenplay in Television

- Mr Inbetween (Episode 6) – Scott Ryan
- The Newsreader (Episode 1) – Michael Lucas

- The Newsreader (Episode 5) – Kim Ho & Michael Lucas
- Wakefield (Episode 5) – Kristen Dunphy & Sam Meikle
- Total Control (Episode 1) – Stuart Page

Best Stand-Up Special

- Anne Edmonds and Lloyd Langford – Business with Pleasure
- Celia Pacquola – Let Me Know How It All Works Out
- Hannah Gadsby – Douglas
- Lano and Woodley in Lano and Woodley
- Rhys Nicholson Live at the Athenaeum
- Tom Gleeson – Lighten Up

Best Supporting Actor in a Drama

- Harry Greenwood – Wakefield
- William McInnes – The Newsreader
- Matt Nable – Mr Inbetween
- Stephen Peacocke – The Newsreader
- Justin Rosniak – Mr Inbetween

Best Supporting Actress in a Drama

- Michelle Lim Davidson – The Newsreader
- Marg Downey – The Newsreader
- Harriet Dyer – Wakefield
- Rachel Griffiths – Total Control
- Noni Hazlehurst – The End

FILM

In film, 14 productions compete for nine awards, with six nominees competing for the AACTA Award for Best Film.

Best Film

- The Dry
- The Furnace
- High Ground
- Nitram
- Penguin Bloom
- Rams

Best Adapted Screenplay in Film

- The Dry – Rob Connolly & Harry Cripps
- Penguin Bloom – Shaun Grant & Harry Cripps
- Peter Rabbit 2 – Will Gluck & Patrick Burleigh
- Rams – Jules Duncan

Best Direction in Film

- The Dry - Rob Connolly
- The Furnace - Roderick MacKay
- High Ground - Stephen Maxwell Johnson
- Nitram - Justin Kurzel
- Penguin Bloom - Glendyn Ivin

Best Indie Film

- Disclosure
- Ellie and Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt)
- Lone Wolf
- Moon Rock for Monday
- My First Summer
- Under My Skin

Best Lead Actor in Film

- Simon Baker – High Ground
- Eric Bana – The Dry
- Caleb Landry Jones – Nitram
- Ahmed Malek – The Furnace
- Jacob Junior Nayinggul – High Ground

Best Lead Actress in Film

- Rose Byrne – Peter Rabbit 2
- Judy Davis – Nitram
- Noni Hazlehurst – June Again
- Genevieve O'Reilly – The Dry
- Naomi Watts – Penguin Bloom

Best Original Screenplay in Film

- Ellie and Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt) – Monica Zanetti
- The Furnace – Roderick MacKay
- High Ground – Chris Anastasiades
- June Again – JJ Winlove
- Nitram – Shaun Grant

Best Supporting Actor in Film

- Michael Caton – Rams
- Baykali Ganambarr – The Furnace
- Anthony LaPaglia – Nitram
- Sean Mununggurr – High Ground
- Jack Thompson – High Ground

Best Supporting Actress in Film

- Essie Davis – Nitram
- Claudia Karvan – June Again
- Esmerelda Marimowa – High Ground
- Miranda Tapsell – The Dry
- Jacki Weaver – Penguin Bloom

SHORT FORM NOMINEES

Best Short Form Comedy Presented by Facebook

- A Life in Questions: Wisdom School with Aaron Chen
- All My Friends Are Racist
- Celebration Nation
- Hug the Sun
- Jimmy Rees
- Samantha Andrew

Best Short Form Drama

- Beautiful They
- The Bends
- Dwarf Planet
- Grace
- The Tailings
- You and Me, Before and After

Best Short Form Entertainment

- Chopsticks or Fork?
- Gourmet Lazy
- Nat's What I Reckon
- Ozzy Man Reviews
- Strong Women
- Woven Threads - Stories from Within

For a full list of nominees, production synopses, publicity stills and further information, [click here](#).