

Media Release – Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts

Strictly embargoed until 5:00pm Monday 3 December 2012

Australian Academy announces Award nominees, confirming strong year for Australian screen

Anticipation around the Australian screen awards season stepped up today, with the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) announcing nominees across 40 film and television Award categories, as well as the dates for the Academy's two AACTA Awards events.

2nd AACTA Awards - New Dates, New Venue

The AACTA Awards will be presented at two major events in Sydney in January 2013:

- **2nd AACTA Awards Luncheon presented by Deluxe - Monday 28 January 2013.** This event includes the presentation of Australia's highest screen accolade, the AACTA Raymond Longford Award, which will be awarded to producer Al Clark.
- **2nd AACTA Awards Ceremony & After Party - Wednesday 30 January 2013.**

Following a new major partnership announced yesterday, which sees The Star join AACTA as Destination Partner, both events will be held at Sydney's new **The Star Event Centre**, marking the first public events to be held at the venue.

AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said:

"The Australian Academy is delighted that the AACTA Awards, a celebration by both the public and the industry of Australian screen excellence, will be the first major public events held at The Star Event Centre.

"With stunning views across the Sydney skyline, and with state-of-the-art technology, it's the perfect setting for Australia's most prestigious screen Awards, the AACTA Awards, which are proudly produced and hosted in Sydney.

"With both The Star and AACTA bringing some of Australia's and the world's most celebrated screen icons to Sydney, this partnership is the perfect fit."

Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, said Sydney is proud to host Australia's premier film awards for the 2nd year in succession.

"The AACTAs are the premier awards event for Australia's film industry. Our investment in the 2nd AACTA Awards and the staging of them in Sydney re-affirms the NSW Government's commitment to the State's screen and creative industries, and further strengthens Sydney's position as the creative and major events capital of Australia," Mr Souris said.

2nd AACTA Awards Nominations

Today's 2nd AACTA Awards Nominations Announcement confirms which film and television performers, practitioners and productions are contending for Australia's highest screen accolade, an AACTA Award.

Highlighting the reach and diversity of nominees, the nominations are spread across **13 Feature Films** (out of a possible 23), **16 Documentaries**, **four Short Animations**, **four Short Fiction Films** and **32 Television Productions**.

AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said:

“Complementing quantitative ratings and box office data, our Academy’s rigorous peer assessment process through member voting and through Awards juries aims to develop consensus around industry excellence. Recognising such excellence in each screen craft is critical to understanding how our finest Australian screen content is developed and can be sustained, content for which audiences clearly have a great demand.

“Right across our industry, whether in film, television or documentary, the nominees announced today highlight many inspiring achievements both in front of and behind the camera, and it’s fantastic to see audiences as well as the industry embrace these in what has been a stellar year for Australian film and television.”

FEATURE FILM NOMINEES – 2nd AACTA AWARDS

Based on the outcome of this year’s round one Feature Film voting, four nominees have been revealed for the AACTA Award for Best Film (listed in alphabetical order):

- ***Burning Man***
- ***Lore***
- ***The Sapphires***
- ***Wish You Were Here***

Leading the charge of a stunningly successful year for Indigenous film and television, ***The Sapphires*** has continued to sparkle after its red carpet premiere at Cannes in May, and its outstanding performance at the Australian box office.

The toe-tapping musical drama about four Aboriginal girls who form a singing group in the 1960s continues to shine, leading the competition with a total of **12 nominations** across various categories, including Best Film, Best Direction (**Wayne Blair**), Best Lead Actress (**Deborah Mailman**), Best Lead Actor (**Chris O’Dowd**) and Best Supporting Actress (**Jessica Mauboy**). ***The Sapphires*** has also been nominated for excellence in the craft categories of Best Visual Effects, Best Production Design, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Cinematography (**Warwick Thornton**), Best Costume Design, Best Editing and Best Sound.

Released in late 2011, the bold style and powerful emotional impact of ***Burning Man*** has seen the film honored with **ten AACTA Award nominations**. The third feature from director Jonathan Teplitzky (***Better Than Sex, Gettin’ Square***), ***Burning Man*** is inspired by Teplitzky’s own experiences of bereavement, telling the story of a reckless Bondi chef (**Matthew Goode**) and his relationships with his young son and the many passionate women in his life. Teplitzky has been nominated for Best Direction and Best Original Screenplay, and the film’s other nominations include Best Lead Actor (**Matthew Goode**), Best Supporting Actress (**Essie Davis**), Best Production Design, Best Cinematography, Best Costume Design, Best Editing and Best Sound.

Lore, the stunning German language feature from director Cate Shortland (***Somersault***), has already garnered much national and international acclaim, having been entered into the Academy Awards as Australia’s official foreign language entry. The film tells the story of a strong and sensual teenage girl who leads her brothers and sisters on a dangerous journey across Germany after their Nazi parents are interred. Produced by Liz Watts (amongst others), ***Lore*** has been nominated for a total of **eight AACTA Awards**, including Best Film, Best Direction, Best Production Design, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Costume Design and Best Sound. The film’s German lead actress, **Saskia Rosendahl**, who was just 17 years of age during filming, has been nominated for the Best Young Actor Award.

The dramatic thriller ***Wish You Were Here*** has also received **eight AACTA Award nominations**. The film is the feature debut from actor and award-winning short filmmaker **Kieran Darcy-Smith**, who co-wrote the script with his wife **Felicity Price**. **Price** also stars in the film and has received a nomination for Best Lead Actress. Partly set and shot in Cambodia, where four Australian friends experience a holiday that goes horribly wrong,

Wish You Were Here has also been nominated for Best Original Screenplay, Best Direction, Best Lead Actor (**Joel Edgerton**), Best Supporting Actor (**Antony Starr**), Best Cinematography and Best Editing.

PJ Hogan's bold comic drama *Mental* has also been nominated for **eight AACTA Awards**, with an emphasis on the film's many outstanding performances, including Best Lead Actress (**Toni Collette**), Best Supporting Actor (**Liev Schreiber**) Best Young Actor (**Lily Sullivan**) and two nods for Best Supporting Actress - for **Rebecca Gibney** and **Deborah Mailman**. The colourful Gold Coast-set film has also been nominated for Best Original Music Score, Best Original Screenplay (**PJ Hogan**) and Best Costume Design.

Not Suitable for Children, the biological clock comedy-drama from Oscar® nominated short filmmaker Peter Templeman has earned **four AACTA Award nominations**. Lead Actress Sarah Snook (who won an AACTA Award last year for her performance in ABC telemovie *Sisters of War*) has been nominated for her performance as the spunky but sensible housemate of a party boy (**Ryan Kwanten**) who discovers that due to testicular cancer, he has one last chance to become a father. Ryan Corr has also been nominated for Best Supporting Actor for his role as the crazy best friend. AWGIE Award-winning writer **Michael Lucas** (*Offspring*) has earned an AACTA Award nomination for his screenplay for *Not Suitable for Children*, and composers **Matteo Zingales** and **Jono Ma** have been nominated for Best Original Music Score.

An official Australia/China co-production, Pauline Chan's **33 POSTCARDS** has been nominated for **two AACTA Awards**, for Best Lead Actor (**Guy Pearce**) and Best Original Music Score (**Antony Partos**).

The international action thriller *Killer Elite* has also been nominated for **two AACTA Awards**, for Best Visual Effects and Best Production Design.

Other Feature Film nominations go to: *A Few Best Men* (Best Original Music Score); *Iron Sky* (Best Visual Effects); *Swerve* (Best Sound); *The King is Dead!* (Best Supporting Actor – Gary Waddell); and *X* (Best Editing).

Notes regarding voting: 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 AACTA's 15 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 Feature Film voting, during which all AACTA members are invited to vote on these selected nominees to determine the Award winners. **Round two Feature Film voting** opens at 6pm EDST Monday 3 December, and runs until 11:59pm EDST Thursday 13 December, 2012.

TELEVISION NOMINEES – 2nd AACTA AWARDS

Television Drama

Building on the rich output of local television in 2011, including the standout multi-AACTA Award winning dramas *Cloudstreet* and *The Slap*, 2012 has continued to see superb local television dramas, comedies, light entertainment programs, reality television series and children's programming.

The nominees for Best Television Drama Series reflect this quality, with Network Ten's nostalgic but surprisingly contemporary *Puberty Blues* up against ABC1's groundbreaking Indigenous drama series *Redfern Now* and the witty and outrageous *Rake - Season 2* (which also receives a nomination for Richard Roxburgh's performance in the lead role), and Showtime Australia's superbly written, directed and acted drama about two generations of a complicated family, *Tangle - Season 3*.

Puberty Blues and *Redfern Now* also dominate the television acting and screenplay nominations.

Puberty Blues is nominated for Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama (**Ashleigh Cummings**), Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama (**Dan Wyllie**), Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama (**Susan Prior**), Best Young Actor (**Brenna Harding**) and Best Screenplay in Television (**Alice Bell & Tony McNamara**), bringing its total number of nominations to six.

Redfern Now is nominated for Best Lead Actress in a Television Drama (**Leah Purcell**), Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama (**Luke Carroll**), Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama (**Shareena Clanton**) and Best Screenplay in Television (**Steven McGregor**), bringing its total number of nominations to five.

All four nominees for **Best Telefeature or Mini Series** are based on true Australian stories with elements of courage and daring.

Beaconsfield (Nine Network) traces the ordeal of the two miners trapped in the Beaconsfield mine collapse in Tasmania in 2006. Glendyn Ivin is also nominated for Best Direction in Television for his work on **Beaconsfield**.

Devil's Dust (ABC1) dramatises the courageous campaign against mining giant James Hardie, which had been ignoring the dangers of asbestos for years. Lead actor **Anthony Hayes** is nominated for his role as asbestosis sufferer and campaigner Bernie Banton.

Howzat! Kerry Packer's War (Nine Network) traces the period in the late 1970s when Kerry Packer went up against international cricket authorities to establish World Series Cricket. Actor **Lachy Hulme** is nominated for Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama for his uncanny depiction of the big billionaire, and **Mandy McElhinney** is nominated for her performance as Packer's longsuffering secretary, Rose. **Abe Forsyth** is nominated for Best Guest or Supporting Actor in a Television Drama for his performance as the ideas man, John 'Strop' Cornell. Director **Daina Reid** is also nominated for Best Direction in Television for her work on **Howzat!**, bringing the production's total nominations to five.

Giving insight into the early life and formative influences of internationally renowned hacker and WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange, **Underground** (Network Ten) is also nominated for Best Telefeature or Mini Series. **Laura Wheelwright** is also nominated for an AACTA Award for Best Guest or Supporting Actress in a Television Drama for her performance as Assange's teenage girlfriend, Electra.

Rounding out the acting nominations for television drama, **Jimi Bani** has been nominated for Best Lead Actor in a Television Drama for his career-defining performance as Eddie Mabo in the ABC1 telemovie **Mabo**, and **Aaron Jeffrey** has been nominated for his role as bikie-turned-police-informant Frank O'Rourke in **Underbelly Badness**. **Essie Davis** receives her second nomination this year for her leading role as the stylish and fearless lady detective Phryne Fisher in the ABC's **Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries**. **Susie Porter** has also been nominated in this category for her performance as the bravely glamorous Peggy Berman, who helped to expose the 1960s abortion racket in the ABC1 telemovie **Dangerous Remedy**.

Television Comedy & Light Entertainment, Reality Television and Children's Television

In 2012, the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts introduced a new AACTA Award for **Best Reality Television Series**. The first nominees in this category represent some of the most popular competition-based reality formats – from the cooking extravaganzas of **My Kitchen Rules - Series 3** (Seven Network) and **Masterchef Australia - Series 4** (Network Ten), to the vocal thrills of **The Voice** (Nine Network) and the travel challenges of **The Amazing Race Australia** (Seven Network). Director Michael McKay has also been nominated for Best Direction in Television for his work on **The Amazing Race Australia**.

The ABC showed yet again that it is the home of local television comedy, with three of the four nominees for Best Television Comedy Series coming from Auntie – **A Moody Christmas**, **Lowdown - Season 2** and **Shaun Micallef's Mad as Hell**. Also competing in this category is SBS's retro spy comic spoof, **Danger 5**.

Mad men (or at the very least, eccentric ones), constitute the nominees for Best Performance in a Television Comedy – also all from the ABC. **Barry Crocker** (**The Strange Calls**) is up against **Damon Herriman** (**Laid - Series 2**), **Frank Woodley** (**Woodley**) and **Patrick Brammall** (**A Moody Christmas**). **A Moody Christmas** has also been nominated for Best Screenplay in Television (**Trent O'Donnell and Phil Lloyd**), as has the tabloid newspaper-set comedy series **Lowdown - Season 2** (**Amanda Brotchie, Adam Zwar and Trudy Hellier**).

Also from the ABC are the four nominees for **Best Light Entertainment Series**, ranging from the variety format of *Adam Hills in Gordon Street Tonight - Series 2*, to the survey of Australian funny women and what they think about love and relationships in *Agony Aunts*, through to the satire and pop culture analysis of *Gruen Sweat* and *The Hamster Wheel - Series 1*.

The nominees for **Best Children's Television Series** have also been announced, with the second series of the International Emmy Award nominated live action drama *Dance Academy - Series 2* (ABC3) competing against three animated series: *The Adventures of Figaro Pho* (ABC3), *Flea-Bitten!* (Nine Network) and *Guess How Much I Love You – The Adventures of Little Nutbrown Hare* (Foxtel - Disney Junior, ABC2).

DOCUMENTARY NOMINEES – 2nd AACTA AWARDS

While the nominees for the **Best Feature Length Documentary** have already been announced (*A Common Purpose*, *The Curse Of The Gothic Symphony*, *Dr Sarmast's Music School* and *Storm Surfers 3D*), today saw the announcement of all remaining documentary nominees.

Dr Sarmast's Music School now has a total of **five AACTA Award nominations**, having picked up four additional nominations in the categories of Best Direction in a Documentary, Best Cinematography in a Documentary, Best Editing in a Documentary and Best Sound in a Documentary. The film follows a Melbourne-based musicologist back to his homeland in Afghanistan where he attempts to reopen a Kabul music school shut down by the Taliban.

Best Feature Length Documentary nominee *Storm Surfers 3D* has also been nominated for Best Cinematography in a Documentary and Best Editing in a Documentary, bringing it to a total of **three AACTA Award nominations**.

Director and producer Macario De Souza made a name for himself in 2007 with the successful surf culture documentary *Bra Boys*, and now De Souza's follow-up documentary *Fighting Fear*, about the friendship between big wave Pro-surfer Mark Mathews and MMA fighter Richie 'Vas' Vaculik, has earned **two AACTA Award nominations** – for Best Direction in a Documentary and Best Cinematography in a Documentary.

The four nominees for **Best Documentary Under One Hour** each tackle tough material, with an emphasis on important political subjects. *All The Way* (ABC1) posits the theory that Australia's biggest battle in the Vietnam War was in its relationship with its closest ally, the USA. *I Can Change Your Mind About Climate* (ABC1) sees two Australians from two different generations and points of view, trying to convince each other about the divisive issue of climate change. *The Man Who Jumped* (SBS) explores the distressing case of the protesting asylum seeker who jumped into coiled razor wire at the height of the unrest at the Woomera Detention Centre in 2002. *Then The Wind Changed* (ABC1) is a personal story by Strathewen resident and filmmaker Celeste Greer, about the community's struggle to rebuild in the years following the devastating 2009 Victorian bushfires.

SBS dominates the category of **Best Documentary Series**, with the Special Broadcasting Service boasting three of the four nominees - *Go Back To Where You Came From*, *Once Upon A Time In Cabramatta*, and *Singapore 1942 – End Of An Empire*. Also competing in this category is the humorous and informative *Sporting Nation* (ABC1), narrated and produced by John Clarke.

Go Back To Where You Came From has also garnered two additional nominations - for Best Direction in a Documentary and Best Cinematography in a Documentary. *Once Upon A Time In Cabramatta* is additionally nominated for Best Direction a Documentary, Best Editing in a Documentary and Best Sound in a Documentary. *Singapore 1942 – End Of An Empire* is also nominated for Best Sound in a Documentary.

In additional documentary nominations, the musically rich feature documentary about Australia's living bard, *Paul Kelly – Stories Of Me*, has been nominated for the AACTA Award for Best Sound in a Documentary. *Chateau Chunder – A Wine Revolution* about the Australian wine industry's growth from international joke to worldwide darling has been nominated for Best Editing in a Documentary, and *Utopia Girls – How Women Won the Vote* (ABC1) has been nominated for Best Visual Effects.

SHORT FICTION FILM & SHORT ANIMATION NOMINEES – 2nd AACTA AWARDS

The nominees for **Best Short Fiction Film** (*B I N O*, *Dumpy Goes To The Big Smoke*, *Julian* and *Transmission*) and **Best Short Animation** (*The Hunter*, *LEGO® Star Wars®: The Padawan Menace™*, *The Maker* and *Sleight Of Hand*) were previously announced.

Today saw the announcement of the nominees for **Best Screenplay in a Short Film**. This year, each of the writer-directors of the nominated short fiction films have picked up an additional nomination for their screenplays: **Billie Pleffer** (*B I N O*); **Mirrah Foulkes** (*Dumpy Goes To The Big Smoke*); **Matthew Moore** (*Julian*); and **Zak Hilditch** (*Transmission*).

The very young lead actor in *Julian*, **Ed Oxenbould**, has also been nominated for the Best Young Actor Award.

The Australian Academy congratulates all nominees for the 2nd AACTA Awards.

MEDIA RESOURCES: LISTS OF NOMINEES, IMAGES & VIDEO CLIPS

A full list of all 2nd AACTA Awards nominees, as well as breakdowns of nominees by production and by network, images of nominees, and select clips of nominated film and television productions can be accessed now via dropbox by [clicking here](#).

Direct URL is: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/bysy5mki3vzyzxb/bC6rD8dwol>

Lists of nominees will also be available in the [media room](#) on the AACTA website from 5:15pm Monday 3 December.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2nd AACTA AWARD WINNERS

All winners will be revealed during the 2nd AACTA Awards season in January 2013, comprising the **2nd AACTA Awards Luncheon presented by Deluxe** on Monday 28 January; and the **2nd AACTA Awards Ceremony** on Wednesday 30 January.

For more information about both Awards events, see the AFI | AACTA website: www.aacta.org

Tickets for both Awards events can be purchased via the [AFI | AACTA website](#) from **Tuesday 4 December 2012**.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About AACTA

AACTA (Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts) was established in August 2011. With Geoffrey Rush as President, AACTA is a membership body comprising accredited screen professionals. The AACTA Awards recognise Australia's best performers, practitioners and productions.

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 to determine the winners 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 2013.

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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 (each representing 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. Round two of Feature Film voting commences at 6pm on Monday 3 December.

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.

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