



Media Release – Strictly embargoed until 4pm AEST Sunday 15th January 2012

AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY ANNOUNCES FIRST AWARD WINNERS

Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon, Presented by Digital Pictures

The inaugural **Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon, presented by Digital Pictures**, was held today at Sydney's Westin Hotel, marking the first Award winners to be announced by the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA).

Presenters at the event included film and television favourites Rhada Mitchell, Rebecca Gibney and Susie Porter, internationally renowned directors such as Bruce Beresford and Fred Schepisi and entertaining Oscar® winner Adam Elliot, to name a few. The event was hosted by acclaimed actress Sigrid Thornton.

The **Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon, presented by Digital Pictures** recognised the talent and innovation of artists and craftspeople working across the television, documentary, short fiction film, short animation and feature film categories.

The prestigious **AACTA Raymond Longford Award**, the nation's highest screen accolade, was presented to Australian cinematography legend, **Donald M. McAlpine** (ACS/ASC), accompanied by moving and insightful tributes from director Bruce Beresford, and long time friend and colleague Jack Thompson.

McAlpine's career spans more than 50 films made over 40 years, from *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* to *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, and most recently *Mental* (starring Toni Collette). McAlpine's previous honours include two BAFTA nominations (*Moulin Rouge!* and *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*) and an Oscar® nomination for Best Cinematography (*Moulin Rouge!*), as well as three AFI Awards (*My Brilliant Career*, *'Breaker' Morant* and *Moulin Rouge!*).

The **Byron Kennedy Award** was also presented, with the 2002 recipient of the Award - writer, director, producer and executive producer Rachel Perkins - on hand to make the presentation. Celebrating outstanding creative enterprise within the film and television industries, the Byron Kennedy Award is given to an individual or organisation whose work embodies innovation and the relentless pursuit of excellence. This year, filmmaker **Ivan Sen** was awarded for "his unique artistic vision and for showing, by his resourceful multidisciplinary filmmaking, that telling stories on screen is in reach of all who have something consequential to say". Ivan's internationally heralded and award winning credits include *Beneath Clouds*, *Yellow Fella* and the 2011 feature film *Toomelah*, which screened in Un Certain Regard at the Cannes Film Festival.

This event also saw the announcement of the very first nominees for the newly established **AACTA International Awards**. Nominees across five categories – Best Film, Direction, Screenplay, Actor and Actress – were announced by internationally acclaimed actress Jacki Weaver at the glamorous **G'Day USA Black Tie Gala in Los Angeles**, with the segment beamed into the **Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon, presented by Digital Pictures**.

The AACTA International Awards recognise film excellence regardless of geography, as determined by an Australian jury. Nominees include international screen luminaries such as George Clooney and Meryl Streep through to Woody Allen and Lars von Trier. (See separate media release for a list of all AACTA International Award nominees.)

Australian Feature Film Awards announced at the **Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon, presented by Digital Pictures** were evenly dispersed, with *The Eye of the Storm*, *The Hunter* and *Snowtown* each receiving two Awards. Based on the award-winning novel by Patrick White, *The Eye of the Storm* picked up **Best Production Design (Melinda Doring)** and **Best Costume Design (Terry Ryan)**, while the spectacular landscapes of Tasmania captured in *The Hunter* were given the nod for **Best Cinematography (Robert Humphreys ACS)**. *The Hunter* also received **Best Original Music Score (Matteo Zingales, Michael Lira, Andrew Lancaster)**.



Snowtown picked up **Best Editing** (Veronika Jenet ASE) and **Best Sound** (Frank Lipson MPSE, Andrew McGrath, Des Kenneally, Michael Carden, John Simpson, Erin McKimm), while **Legend Of The Guardians: The Owls Of Ga'Hoole** was awarded **Best Visual Effects** (Grant Freckelton) for its beautifully animated fantasy world of talking owls.

Reflecting its immense popularity with audiences this year, **RED DOG** was awarded the **AFI Members' Choice Award** (Nelson Woss, Julie Ryan).

Mrs Carey's Concert led the documentary awards with two Awards, winning **Best Feature Length Documentary** (Bob Connolly, Helen Panckhurst, Sophie Raymond) as well as **Best Direction in a Documentary** (Bob Connolly, Sophie Raymond) for ABC1.

Other documentary awards were presented to **Jandamarra's War** (Andrew Ogilvie, Andrea Quesnelle, Eileen Torres) for **Best Documentary Under One Hour** for ABC1, and **SAS - The Search for Warriors**, which won **Best Documentary Series** (Julia Redwood, Ed Punchard) for SBS. **murundak - songs of freedom** picked up **Best Sound in a Documentary** (Emma Bortignon, Michael Letho, Peter Smith, Christopher O'Young, Simon Walbrook) for SBS, while **Out of the Ashes** received **Best Cinematography in a Documentary** (David Parer ACS) for ABC1 and **Shut Up Little Man! An Audio Misadventure** won **Best Editing in a Documentary** (Bryan Mason).

The Palace, an Australian/Cypriot co-production which portrays a devastating insight into the 1974 Cyprus conflict, scooped the Short Fiction Film categories, winning **Best Short Fiction Film** (Kate Croser, Anthony Maras, Andros Achilleos) and **Best Screenplay in a Short Film** (Anthony Maras), while the vivid and energetic tale of road rage in the Outback, **Nullarbor**, picked up the **Best Short Animation** award (Alister Lockhart, Patrick Sarell, Katrina Mathers, Merrin Jensen, Daryl Munton).

The winners of a number of television categories were also announced today with the ABC taking out multiple awards. **Chris Lilley** was recognised for **Angry Boys** (ABC1), for which he won **Best Performance in a Television Comedy**, **Laid** took the gong for **Best Television Comedy Series** for ABC 1 (Liz Watts), and for ABC3, **My Place, Series 2** was recognised as the **Best Children's Television Series** (Penny Chapman).

This year, **Herbert Pinter** was awarded the **AACTA Award for Outstanding Achievement In Television Screen Craft** for his wonderful **Production Design** work in bringing to life the 1940s and '50s world of Tim Winton's **Cloudstreet** for FOXTEL - Showcase.

The remaining AACTA Awards across film and television, including the **Samsung AACTA Award for Best Film**, the **AACTA Award for Best Television Drama Series**, and the remaining acting, screenplay and direction Awards, will be announced at the glamorous red carpet **Samsung AACTA Awards Ceremony at the Sydney Opera House on January 31**, and broadcast that night on the Nine Network.

Speaking of today's Awards, AFI | AACTA CEO, Damian Trehwella, said:

"The Australian Academy is proud to have made history today by announcing its first ever Award winners. Whilst the AFI has been awarding screen excellence in Australia since 1958, by creating the Australian Academy, we are increasing the profile of, and prospects for, our talented industry.

"Today's Awards are the first of our two Awards events, and highlight the exceptional work of our craftspeople. We encourage all Australians to support our local screen industry by watching the Samsung AACTA Awards Ceremony in two weeks' time to see which films and television productions are awarded our nation's best."

NSW Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts George Souris congratulated winners at the Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon.

"There is no doubt Australia produces some of the world's best film and television talent with 56 per cent of national screen businesses and 39 per cent of all Australian creative industry businesses based here in NSW.

“The NSW Government through Destination NSW is proud to support the Samsung AACTA Awards, a key creative industries event on the NSW Events Calendar, reinforcing Sydney’s position as the creative capital of Australia,” Minister Souris said.

The complete list of winners announced at the Samsung AACTA Awards Luncheon, presented by Digital Pictures is as follows:

AACTA RAYMOND LONGFORD AWARD

- **Don McAlpine**

BYRON KENNEDY AWARD

- **Ivan Sen**

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST VISUAL EFFECTS

- **Legend Of The Guardians: The Owls Of Ga'Hoole.** Grant Freckelton.

TELEVISION

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST TELEVISION COMEDY SERIES

- **Laid.** Liz Watts. *ABC1*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST PERFORMANCE IN A TELEVISION COMEDY

- **Chris Lilley.** Angry Boys. *ABC1*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST CHILDREN'S TELEVISION SERIES

- **My Place, Series 2.** Penny Chapman. *ABC3*

AACTA AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN TELEVISION SCREEN CRAFT

- **Herbert Pinter** - Production Design. Cloudstreet. *FOXTEL - Showcase*

SHORT FILM

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SHORT ANIMATION

- **Nullarbor.** Alister Lockhart, Patrick Sarell, Katrina Mathers, Merrin Jensen, Daryl Munton.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SHORT FICTION FILM

- **The Palace.** Kate Croser, Anthony Maras, Andros Achilleos.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SCREENPLAY IN A SHORT FILM

- **The Palace.** Anthony Maras.

DOCUMENTARY

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE LENGTH DOCUMENTARY

- **Mrs Carey's Concert.** Bob Connolly, Helen Panckhurst, Sophie Raymond. *ABC1*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY UNDER ONE HOUR

- **Jandamarra's War.** Andrew Ogilvie, Andrea Quesnelle, Eileen Torres. *ABC1*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY SERIES

- **SAS - The Search for Warriors.** Julia Redwood, Ed Punchard. *SBS*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTION IN A DOCUMENTARY

- **Mrs Carey's Concert.** Bob Connolly, Sophie Raymond. *ABC1*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY IN A DOCUMENTARY

- **Out Of The Ashes.** David Parer ACS. *ABC1*

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST EDITING IN A DOCUMENTARY

- **Shut Up Little Man! An Audio Misadventure.** Bryan Mason.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SOUND IN A DOCUMENTARY

- **murundak - songs of freedom.** Emma Bortignon, Michael Letho, Peter Smith, Christopher O'Young, Simon Walbrook. *SBS*

FEATURE FILM

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

- **The Hunter.** Robert Humphreys ACS.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST EDITING

- **Snowtown.** Veronika Jenet ASE.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST SOUND

- **Snowtown.** Frank Lipson MPSE, Andrew McGrath, Des Kenneally, Michael Carden, John Simpson, Erin McKimm.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST ORIGINAL MUSIC SCORE

- **The Hunter.** Matteo Zingales, Michael Lira, Andrew Lancaster.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN

- **The Eye Of The Storm.** Melinda Doring.

AACTA AWARD FOR BEST COSTUME DESIGN

- **The Eye Of The Storm.** Terry Ryan.

AFI MEMBERS' CHOICE AWARD

- **RED DOG.** Nelson Woss, Julie Ryan.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

The Lantern Group

Susan Hoerlein T: +61 2 9383 4029
Niki White T: 0403 176 988

E: susan@lanterngroup.com.au
E: niki@lanterngroup.com.au

AFI | AACTA

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

THANKS TO THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR PARTNERS & SPONSORS

NAMING RIGHTS SPONSOR



STRATEGIC PARTNERS



MAJOR GOVERNMENT SPONSOR



BROADCAST PARTNER



MAJOR SPONSORS



OFFICIAL PARTNERS



INTERNATIONAL MEDIA PARTNER



PRINT MEDIA PARTNER

