

MEDIA RELEASE**Tuesday 6 June 2023**

SAE and AACTA announce winners of 'Uncovered' filmmaking competition

The leaders in creative media education, SAE Creative Media Institute, in partnership with the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA), are thrilled to announce the winners of the inaugural 'Uncovered' documentary filmmaking competition. This unique competition aimed to nurture and inspire the next generation of outstanding Australian documentary filmmakers among SAE film students.

After a rigorous selection process, the panel of judges, including esteemed professionals from AACTA and the industry, selected 'Dancing on Water' and 'Death Rites' as the winning documentaries.

'Dancing on Water' was directed by Josh Hauser, and dives into the paternal bond between former World Surf League's Felicity Palmateer and her father Warwick, and their relationship with the ocean.

"It's been a real honour to take the 'Uncovered' award, and to have had the opportunity to tell such a unique story between a father and daughter," Josh said. "Trusting our process, and allowing the film to speak for itself was the approach we took. I am really blessed with the overall outcome and I look forward to creating more emotive, impactful and meaningful stories in the near future."

'Death Rites' was directed by Rebeckah Howson, and follows the day-to-day dealings of death with unconventional funeral director Halie, as she leads the way in reviving traditional death care practices for families and loved ones.

"I am honestly blown away to have won - the whole experience with AACTA has been so rich and valuable, everything from the masterclasses, to receiving all the judges' feedback," Rebeckah said. "Death Rites is my first foray into documentary filmmaking, and as a film student, getting the opportunity to have my work shown to such esteemed industry professionals this early on in my career is a dream."

As part of the prize, both winners will receive expert mentoring from the panel of judges, which included Karina Holden, Head of Factual at Northern Pictures; Virginia Whitwell, Partner and Head of Production for GoodThing Productions; Stephen Oliver, Manager of Documentaries for ABC; and Malinda Wink, Executive Director at Minderoo Pictures.

"The judges were impressed by the high quality of the submissions by SAE's students from across the world, and particularly 'Dancing on Water' and 'Death Rites,'" Malinda said. "They were both beautifully crafted productions that tackle impactful subjects in ways that resonated with all of us."



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“I enjoyed meeting the teams and the opportunity to work with emerging filmmakers as they hone their craft. I would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to all the entrants for their exceptional skill, creativity and approach. ‘Uncovered’ has been a pleasure to be a part of.”

SAE General Manager, Dr Luke McMillan expressed his pride in the quality of the films which were submitted by students from SAE’s Brisbane, Byron Bay, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Dubai campuses.

“It’s fantastic to see our students creating a range of insightful documentaries which speak to important themes in society,” Dr McMillan said. “I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at AACTA for their support in providing SAE students with the platform to develop their documentary filmmaking skills, so they can be industry ready upon graduation.

“The invaluable guidance the winners will receive, will further enhance their filmmaking abilities and help propel their careers in the highly competitive screen industry.”

In addition to mentorship, the winners will also enjoy introductions to prominent producers, distributors, and broadcasters, who will provide valuable support in the development of their documentaries. Furthermore, they will be awarded a 12-month AACTA membership, granting them access to exclusive industry events, resources, and networking opportunities. As a highlight of their recognition, the winners will receive tickets to attend the prestigious 2023 AACTA Awards, where they can celebrate their accomplishments alongside leading professionals and industry veterans

Ivan Vukusic, AACTA Awards and Industry Development Manager, reiterated the organisation’s commitment to supporting and nurturing emerging filmmakers.

“I am thrilled to see the immense talent and creativity displayed by the winners of the ‘Uncovered’ competition,” Ivan said. “AACTA remains steadfast in our commitment to supporting and nurturing emerging filmmakers, and this competition is a testament to that dedication.

“Winning the ‘Uncovered’ competition is a remarkable achievement and a significant career stepping stone for our winners. AACTA is proud to be a part of their journey and will continue to provide the necessary resources and opportunities for their growth and success.”

The ‘Uncovered’ competition has proven to be an excellent platform for SAE film students to showcase their talent, receive valuable mentorship, and gain industry recognition. SAE and AACTA congratulate the teams behind ‘Dancing on Water’ and ‘Death Rites’ on their outstanding achievements and look forward to witnessing their continued success in the industry. All the finalists’ films will be made available to AACTA members on AACTA TV, for a limited time.

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About Dancing on Water

Dancing on Water is a 12-minute Short Documentary that dives deep into the paternal bond between Warrick and Felicity Palmateer. Despite all the obstacles and challenges they have come to face in life, the ocean has always kept them grounded, and most importantly a place of healing.

Director, Josh Hausner;
Producers, Jack Vanner and Josh Hausner;
Director of Photography, Lee Jessamine;
Water Cinematography, Scott Bauer
Editor, Josh Hausner;
Executive Producer, Morgan Dyson;
Colourist, Denzil Heeger;
Sound, Brad Watson and Austin Harvey;
Still Photography, Lee Jessamine and Lauren Trickett;
Water Safety, Perry Hatchett.

About Death Rites

Death Rites follows the day to day dealings of death with unconventional funeral director Halie, as she leads the way in reviving traditional death care practices for families and loved ones as they navigate the death portal.

Directed and Producer, Rebeckah Howson;
Director of Photography, Michael Derbyshire;
Editor, Rebeckah Howson;
Sound Recordists, Matilde Rae and Ethan Stafford;
Sound Mixer, Jordan Hill;
Colourist, Alex Balestrieri;
Music, Cave In The Sky.

About SAE

SAE Creative Media Institute is the place for creatives and innovators. Since 1976 we've been the leaders in creative media education across animation, audio, creative industries, creative technologies, design, film, games, and music. Every year, we support students globally to develop the skills and experience needed to carve successful careers. Students enjoy access to the latest technology and are taught by industry-experienced faculty, while putting their skills to the test in small class environments. Our graduates become part of a highly-respected global community of creatives that's been around for almost 50 years. We pride ourselves on being technically explorative, transformative and brave through our range of creative media programs, from short courses and professional training through to bachelor and postgraduate degrees. In Australia, our courses are delivered at campuses in Sydney, Brisbane, Byron Bay, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. SAE is a part of Navitas Pty Ltd. More information about SAE is available at sae.edu.au.

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. The Australian Academy is Australia's only independent, member-based, national screen organisation that represents all differing screen crafts, from directors to producers, actors, writers, musicians, and a vast number of members in below-the-line roles. 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. 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 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.



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