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Cliff Curtis & Sofie Formica to host 12th Asia Pacific Screen Awards First guests announced – media accreditation open

New Zealand movie star Cliff Curtis and popular Australian TV presenter Sofie Formica will host the 12th Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) in Brisbane on 29 November.

The duo will share the night with the region's top filmmakers, including nominees and guests from more than 18 countries.

Cliff Curtis is internationally-renowned for his roles in *Fear the Walking Dead*, Niki Caro's Oscar®-nominated *Whale Rider* (2003), Danny Boyle's *Sunshine* (2007), Martin Scorsese's *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999) and John Turteltaub's recent blockbuster *The Meg*.

Soon to be seen in James Cameron's four sequels to *Avatar* (2009), the highest grossing movie of all time, Curtis was also awarded the APSA for Best Performance by an Actor in 2014 for his stand-out lead role in New Zealand feature *The Dark Horse* by James Napier Robertson.

He was previously APSA-nominated as Producer of *Boy* for Best Children's Feature Film in 2010 and in 2015 was the recipient of an MPA APSA Academy Film Fund grant for script development.

Sofie Formica is one of Australia's most popular lifestyle presenters and has made her name on television, both in Australia and the US, best known most recently for her long-running role hosting Channel 7's *The Great Day Out* (formerly *The Great South East*). As an actress, she has appeared on Australian and US television and in feature films including *San Andreas* (2015).

2018 marks Formica's third time hosting APSA, with previous co-hosts including multi-award winning Singaporean director Anthony Chen (2015) and leading presenter of China's International Channel Shanghai, Lei Chen (2013).

Brisbane Lord Mayor Graham Quirk said Curtis and Formica would be perfect hosts.

"Curtis and Formica are great industry representatives for an event that continues to shine a spotlight on powerful Asia Pacific stories, fosters cross-cultural dialogue and celebrates filmmakers whose accomplishments too often go unrecognised," Cr Quirk said.

"The Asia Pacific Screen Awards are important to the city of Brisbane because they strengthen our significant business and cultural ties with the region."

The 12th Asia Pacific Screen Awards will bring together guests and nominees from across the Asia Pacific and beyond, including:

- Multi-award Indian director, star of more than 40 films, and APSA 2018 FIAPF Award recipient **Nandita Das** whose most recent directorial outing *Manto* has received an acting nomination for **Nawazuddin Siddiqui**.

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In alliance with:

- Writer **Oh Jung-mi**, nominated together with **Lee Chang-dong** for **Best Screenplay** for multi-award winning **Burning**. Also nominated for **Best Feature Film** and South Korea's official submission for the Oscars®, **Burning** was the recipient of an **MPA APSA Academy Film Fund** grant.
- Hirokazu Kore-eda's 2018 Cannes Palme d'Or winner and Japan's official submission for the Oscars® **Shoplifters**, nominated for Best Feature Film, Best Screenplay and Achievement in Cinematography, represented by producer **Hijiri Taguchi**.
- Filipino music legend **Ryan Cayabyab**, nominated for the inaugural Best Original Score Award for **The Portrait (Ang Larawan)**, along with producers **Girlie Rodis** and **Celeste Legaspi-Gallardo**. Cayabyab's prolific work ranges from commissioned full-length ballets, theatre musicals, choral and orchestral pieces to commercial recordings of popular music, film scores and television specials.
- Turkish actress **Damla Sönmez** who stars in **Sibel** as a mute woman who communicates only through the whistled language of her ancestors, using the actual language of the remote northeastern village of Turkey where the story is set.
- Kazakh actress **Laura Koroleva**, nominated for **Sveta** who will be joined by the film's director and producer, and Inaugural APSA Directing nominee from 2007, **Zhanna Issabayeva**
- Thai filmmaker **Phutti Phong Aroonpheng**, director of Best Feature Film nominee **Manta Ray (Kraben Rahu)**, which recently won Best Film in both Venice Horizons and Toronto's Discovery programs joined by nominated cinematographer **Nawarophaat Rungphiboonsophit**
- Locarno Festival Golden Leopard (Best Film) and 2018 APSA Young Cinema Award winner for **A Land Imagined**, Singaporean director **Yeo Siew Hua**, and nominated cinematographer **Hideo Urata**.
- Indian producer **Manas Malhotra** of nominated documentary **Up Down & Sideways (kho ki pa lü)**, which explores the oral folk music tradition called *Li* that are sung in harmony by voices up, down and sideways across the fields and mountains of the Phek district of India's Nagaland state near the country's border with Myanmar, as the 5000 local villagers plant and grow rice in vast terraces.
- Composer and video game music designer **Omar Fadel**, nominated for his score for **Yomeddine** (Egypt), which won two awards at Cannes Film Festival this year
- India's official submission for the Oscars® and nominated for Best Youth Feature Film, **Village Rockstars** director, producer, writer and cinematographer **Rima Das**.
- Japanese producer **Yuichiro Saito** of nominated animation **Mirai (Mirai no Mirai)**, which world premiered in Directors' Fortnight at Cannes this year.
- Chinese director **Pengfei**, nominated for the prestigious **Cultural Diversity Award under the Patronage of UNESCO** for **The Taste of Rice Flower (Mi Hua Zhi Wei)** which premiered in Venice Days.
- Director, producer, writer, editor and nominated cinematographer **Zhang Miaoyan** for **Silent Mist**.
- Nominated director **Ivan Ayr** for **Soni**, which premiered in Venice Horizons program and won the Best Film on Gender Equality at Mumbai Film Festival, joined by the film's producer **Kimsi Singh**.
- First-ever APSA nominee from Uzbekistan, actor **Karim Mirkhadiyev** for his role in **Fortitude (Sabot)**, shot in exhausting 50-degree heat, and for which Mirkhadiyev was awarded Best Actor at the 14th Eurasia Film Festival.
- Chairman of the Committee on State Awards in the field of culture, art and architecture of the Kyrgyz Republic, and actor nominee **Akylbek Abdykalykov** for his award-winning role in **Night Accident (Tunku Kyrsyk)**
- **Paul Williams**, director/producer of nominated documentary **Gurumul**, the 7th highest-grossing documentary of all time in Australia.
- From the only film nominated for both **Best Feature Film** and the **Cultural Diversity Award under the patronage of UNESCO**, **Balangiga: Howling Wilderness** director/producer **Khavn** and producers

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Achinette Villamor and Edong Canlas.

- Australian producer of *Ladies in Black*, **Sue Milliken**, representing Bruce Beresford's Achievement in Directing nomination.
- Cinematography nominee **Saumyananda Sahi** for multi-award winning Indian film *Balekempa* which won the FIPRESCI Prize at International Film Festival Rotterdam
- Thai cinematographer **Chaiyapruerk Chalernpornpanit**, nominated for Thailand's Oscar® submission *Malila: The Farewell Flower*, which has already collected awards at Busan, Singapore, Kerala and Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival.
- Executive Producer **Ronald Arguelles** of Best Youth Feature Film nominee and festival favourite *Nervous Translation* which won the NETPAC Award at International Film Festival Rotterdam

They will be joined in 2018 by some of the biggest names in factual television programming and development with delegates from the APSA-aligned **World Congress of Science and Factual Producers**.

These guests join previously-announced members of the International juries, **Alexander Rodnyansky** (Russian Federation), **Nia Dinata** (Indonesia), **Deepak Rauniyar** (Nepal), **Vladimer Katcharava** (Georgia), **Antonia Zegers** (Chile), **Sneha Khanwalkar** (India), **Mitzi Goldman** (Australia), **Rubaiyat Hossain** (Bangladesh) and **Luke Hetherington** (Singapore) gathering in Brisbane ahead of the 12th APSA Ceremony on 29 November at Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Media accreditation is now open and interviews are available with APSA guests.

<https://www.asiapacificscreenawards.com/awards/media-accreditation>

Media materials: <https://www.dropbox.com/work/2018%20APSA%20Ceremony>

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