

Off the air

Screenrights' Newsletter

screenrights

Screenrights is a non-profit company which administers copyright licences in Australia and New Zealand and collects similar royalties from Europe and North America for its 2,500 members from 52 countries.

July 2007

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July 2007

Feature: "Nothing but praise" for EnhanceTV ATOM Awards

Rarely will you find film and television industry professionals rubbing shoulders with school students, but come October 19 they'll all be competing for a prestigious EnhanceTV Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) award. EnhanceTV Customer Relations Manager **Tarryn Cooper** speaks to past winners and lets us know what's in store for the 2007 Awards.

Established in 1982, the ATOM Awards began as a way of promoting good filmmaking. Now 25 years old, the awards' reach has spread and the event has grown into an integral part of the media industry calendar. Designed to promote, encourage and reward the work of industry professionals and up-and-coming media creators, the ATOM Awards are open to production companies, independent filmmakers, educational producers and students, in both Australia and New Zealand.

By entering, producers have the chance of gaining high profile exposure for their projects. An award may become a selling point for a program, and an inroad into the educational market, as many entered titles for the awards end up in educational media catalogues.

Darcy Prendergast, a clay animator and two-time finalist at the ATOM Awards, has "nothing but praise" for the annual event. He says, "It's really a testament to the work you've created, as the ATOM Awards recognises the hard work you have put in and rewards it".

Prendergast was a finalist in the Best Animation category in 2005 for his clay animation, **Off the Rails**. The following year, he entered his live action music video, **Busy Living**, into the Best Tertiary Music Video category, and was again named a finalist.

He believes the commendation his work has received from the ATOM Awards has "absolutely" helped his career in filmmaking. "If nothing else, it's another feather in the filmmaking cap. But the contacts I've made networking after the awards night have lead to many opportunities, some of which continue to this day, so nothing but praise!"



John Evagora

This year Prendergast has entered with his new clay animated film, **Ron the Zookeeper**. His fingers are crossed.

ATOM Awards manager, Amber Nelson, says the awards now cover more categories, attracting more entries than ever before. Last year 725 entries were received, an increase of almost 200 entries from 2006. This year there were 615 entrants, which will be culled to about 150 nominees. The announcement of the nominees will be in the first week of August.

The ATOM Awards recognise excellence in over thirty categories of film, television, animation and multimedia. Short films, documentary and fiction, educational media, music videos, and more, are eligible for the awards.

Nelson says the multimedia categories have grown over the last 10 years as "numerous educational products and learning tools are created in multimedia format". She identifies an increasing trend for media producers to create a website that compliments the content in their documentary or television program respectively. As a result, a new category, Best Multi-modal production, has been introduced. A multi-modal production is one that crosses two or more media forms but is viewed by the judges as a unified product.

According to Nelson, advancements in technology, such as consumer friendly cameras, and improved access to film and technology are factors behind the increasing number of entries from schools and sole operators who would previously have been locked out.

Students who enter have nothing to lose and everything to gain, as the event builds bridges between filmmakers,

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Darcy Prendergast

teachers, students and the media industry. Nelson states, "Students have the chance to rub shoulders with industry professionals and have their work seen by them in a really positive environment".

John Evagora, a student at Footscray City College in 2002, was influenced by his teachers to enter his film, **Remote**, into the tertiary category for Best Short fiction film. As the school has had previous success at ATOM, Evagora says students are always encouraged to enter.

His success at the awards has brought him closer to his dream of pursuing a career in filmmaking. Evagora believes being a finalist brought him "recognition" and helped him get into the Victorian College of Arts where he is completing the final year of his Bachelor of Film and Television.

The ATOM Awards provide a range of opportunities for nominees to promote their work nationally. Since the awards, another of Evagora's films, **True Blue Hero**, has screened in Australia, at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and the St Kilda Film Festival, and overseas, at Interfilm Berlin.

For the first time, EnhanceTV has joined forces with ATOM in celebrating the very best of Australian and New Zealand content. Entries have now closed and judging will begin in July. Finalists will be notified by email in August.

Nelson has no doubt the ATOM Awards are highly regarded among professionals in the media industry. "We have received such high quality entries over numerous years that people look to the ATOM Awards and see the best", she says.

The awards will be presented at a ceremony in Melbourne on October 19. To find out how to attend the awards go to www.atomawards.org



Darcy Prendergast

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Screenrights royalties boost self funding

A self-funded documentary about a country amateur theatre group received a welcome cheque during Screenrights' May/June distribution round.

All The World's A Stage was funded by production company Mediacraft and assisted by professional filmmakers who work in corporate videos and commercials.

Producer David West said: "The acquisition fee paid by the broadcaster barely paid for the travel, meals and accommodation. The Screenrights royalties means that some of the expenses can be recovered. They've also encouraged us to develop further documentary ideas."

During May/June the Member Services team paid out \$1.88 million in royalties. This included the last of the 2001 royalties, which had a distribution deadline of June 30. This is because Screenrights' Articles of Association allow six years to distribute royalties, with any remaining royalties rolled over into the following year's distribution pool. With only 1.45% of the 2001 money remaining at the end of June, the teams distributed a total of \$10.3 million collected from the 2001 period.

Sea Patrol rolls along with ISAN

Channel Nine's flagship drama **Sea Patrol** is one of the first television productions to screen with an ISAN.

The International Standard Audiovisual Number is an identifying number for audiovisual works that remains constant regardless of the territory, language or form in which the work is distributed. This makes it one of the most effective ways to identify works, improving efficiencies in rights management and in combating piracy.

The FFC requires all financed projects to obtain an ISAN. To find out more about ISAN and how it can work for you, visit: www.australasia-isan.org

First online TAFE surveys

The first online surveys of television and radio copying in the TAFE sector will take place in August, allowing staff to complete electronic copying records and email these to a central survey coordinator.

Screenrights Licensing Executive James Dickinson said the move from paper based surveys would ease the administrative burden on TAFE staff.

"Making the process a simpler one for staff should result in more accurate records of copying and communication in TAFEs," Dickinson said. "And this improves our distribution process, which is all about getting the right royalties into the right hands."

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International update

Are you attending MIPCOM at Cannes in October? Want to find out more about collecting copying and retransmission royalties from around the world?

Screenrights International Rights Manager Maha Ismail will be available to meet with rightsholders in film and television from Monday 8 to Friday 12 October 2007.

Rightsholders can discuss their individual needs and also find out more about the upcoming distribution of the first Australian retransmission royalties in December.

To make an appointment, email maha@screenrights.org with your preferred meeting date and time.