



# MEDIA RELEASE

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### *My Australian Life* 2009 ANZ Australian Film Festival



On the eve of the Opening of the 2009 ANZ Australian Film Festival in Beijing, two films featured in the Festival have received the highest accolade for filmmaking in the Asia Pacific Region. Acclaimed Australian film *Samson and Delilah* won **Best Feature Film Award** and the innovative new claymation *Mary and Max* won **Best Animated Feature Film Award** at the recent Asia Pacific Screen Awards.



The Awards were presented at a glittering ceremony on the Gold Coast, attended by more than 800 film industry luminaries from the Asia-Pacific and around the world.



Thirty-seven films representing 16 countries and territories were finalists in the Awards, with the winners being determined by an International Jury headed by notable **Chinese director and producer Huang Jianxin**. Other notable winners included China's *Nanjing! Nanjing! (City of Life and Death)* which received two awards: **Lu Chuan** for Achievement in Directing and **Cao Yu** for Achievement in Cinematography.



"That both Australian and Chinese films have featured so prominently in the APSA Awards this year is a real credit to the vibrant filmmaking industries and creative energies coming out of both countries", said Australian Ambassador to China Dr Geoff Raby. "The recent coming into force of our bilateral Film Co-Production Agreement is also going to create some fantastic opportunities for collaboration between our two industries."



*Samson and Delilah* and *Mary and Max* will be screened for the first time ever in China as part of the 2009 ANZ Australian Film Festival opening this Friday, 4 December at the Megabox Cinema (The Village at Sanlitun) in Beijing.



Award winning producer of *Mary and Max*, **Melanie Coombs**, will be in Beijing to attend the Festival events, along with **internationally renowned Australian actor Jack Thompson AM**, Patron of the 2009 ANZ Australian Film Festival. Jack Thompson is one of Australia's most respected actors, and has appeared in numerous Australian and Hollywood films including *Wake In Fright* in 1969, the classic *Sunday Too Far Away* in 1975, *Breaker Morant* in 1980 (for which he won prizes at the AFI awards and Cannes International Film Festival), *"The Sum Of Us"*, *Midnight in The Garden Of Good And Evil*, *Star Wars - Ep. II*, *The Assassination Of Richard Nixon*, *December Boys*, *The Good German*, *Leatherheads*, *Australia*, *Mao's Last Dancer* and *Don't Be Afraid*. He is currently preparing for a major role in the upcoming *Lord of The Rings* sequel.



The 2009 ANZ Film Festival is proudly sponsored by ANZ, as well The Village at Sanlitun and The Opposite House, Telstra, Qingdao Brewery, Tourism Australia, Qantas, Austrade and the Australia-China Council.

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**Further information on *Samson and Delilah* and the APSA awards:**

Acclaimed Australian film *Samson and Delilah* has won the Best Feature Film Award at the third annual Asia Pacific Screen Awards, announced tonight on Australia's Gold Coast.

Produced by Kath Shelper and written and directed by Warwick Thornton, *Samson and Delilah* previously won the Camera d'Or prize at this year's Cannes Film Festival, six major awards at the recent Inside Film Awards in Australia and has been nominated for 13 Australian Film Institute Awards. This award represents the first time an Australian film has been nominated in the Best Feature Film category of the APSAs.

Warwick Thornton was on the Gold Coast to accept the award (see photo above) Jury member Gina Kim (Republic of Korea) said: "*Samson and Delilah* has a very special something- the integrity of the filmmaker, the passion and the sincerity of it is really beyond comparison."

***Samson and Delilah* Director Warwick Thornton with APSA Jury President Huang Jianxin at the 2009 Asia Pacific Screen Awards.**

