



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Adelaide

THE MERCURY CELEBRATES THE 2025 SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SCREEN AWARDS

The Mercury is proud to announce the recipients of the highly-anticipated **South Australian Screen Awards (SASAs)** held on **Saturday 22 November 2025**.

A combination of cash and in-kind awards worth over \$30,000 was presented at the event, **spanning a wide range of format, genre, and craft categories, with 27 award categories.**

Leading the SASA recipients was *I'm The Most Racist Person I Know* taking home three awards for Best Directing (Leela Varghese) sponsored by CrewHQ, Best Music Composition (Leigh Marsh) sponsored by Australian Guild of Screen Composers, and the coveted Grand Jury Prize sponsored by South Australian Film Corporation and The Mercury, and decided by a Grand Jury of Kerry Heysen AM, ABC Radio Adelaide's Deb Tribe and Beth Neate (CEO Guildhouse, Chair of Tutti Arts).

The Mercury Legend Award sponsored by Adelaide Film Festival and The Mercury was presented to esteemed creative Tania Nehme for her contribution to the screen sector and work as a world-class editor whose artistry and generosity have shaped countless films and filmmakers.

The Mercury Rising Award sponsored by Adelaide Film Festival, The Mercury and ProAV Solutions was presented to director/producer Jack Langford who is making waves as a First Nations filmmaker completing his first feature, and in production on a feature documentary and television pilot.

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Best Emerging First Nations Screen Practitioner sponsored by South Australian Film Corporation and The Mercury was awarded to proud Yankunytjatjara woman Pearl Berry (*Black Comedy*, *Blak Empire*, and co-writer of SAFC's Film Lab feature *The Debt*.) Best Emerging Producer sponsored by Channel 44 and The Mercury was presented to Jasmine J Leech whose Quicksilver Production Fund supported short film *Liability* was nominated for Grand Jury Prize (Best Short), Best Editing, Best Screenplay and Best Production Design.

The Audience Award by Loophole Brewing Co and The Mercury was tallied from votes across four nominee screenings and presented to the documentary *Unsung: Beyond The Board*. Festival favourite and acclaimed local animated feature film, *Lesbian Space Princess* took out Best Feature sponsored by KOJO.

Unsung: Beyond The Board also took out Best Documentary sponsored by Academy of Interactive Entertainment and was one of several films scooping up two awards. *With Love, Lottie* was awarded Best Hair & Make-up (Alex Jevons) sponsored by LUSH and Best Costume (Victoria Arvanitakis) sponsored by Adelaide Arcade. Two SASAs also went to *The Hitcher* for Best Sound Design (Anthony Cavaliere) sponsored by Australian Screen Sound Guild and Best Cinematography (Emerson Hoskin) sponsored by Urban Cine & Australian Cinematographers Society and *The Knight* nabbed two awards taking home the Best Screenplay award (Lotte Sweeney and Maiah Stewardson) sponsored by Australian Writers Guild SA and Best Performance sponsored by Heesom Casting, State Theatre Company of South Australia was presented to Isadora Sweeney.

Sarah Lancaster, CEO of The Mercury said: "*The Mercury was a buzz on Saturday night with the energy and enthusiasm of the next generation of South Australian screenmakers. We congratulate all recipients and nominees, and thank our sponsors, judges, and Grand Jury for their generous support. The South Australian Screen Awards (SASAs) are about more than awards, they connect emerging creatives with the broader industry, spark opportunities, and showcase the extraordinary local talent both on and off screen. I'm proud of the role The Mercury and SASAs play in shaping careers and helping to shine a light on the bright future of the local screen industry.*"



In addition to awards and accolades, the 2025 South Australian Screen Awards delivered more than \$30,000 in cash prizes, in-kind support and mentoring opportunities for local emerging filmmakers with generous support from the South Australian Film Corporation, KOJO, ProAV Solutions, Flinders University, Peter Hanlon and the Hanlon Larsen Screen Fellowship, Greenhills Animation, UrbanCine, Heesom Casting, Buckland and Gun, CrewHQ, State Theatre Company South Australia, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Australian Writers' Guild SA, Australian Screen Editors, Australian Guild of Screen Composers, Academy of Interactive Entertainment, Australian Cinematographers Society, Australian Screen Sound Guild, Adelaide University, Picture Hire, Adelaide Film Festival, Channel 44, UNESCO Adelaide City of Music, Lush, Rising Sun Pictures, JamFactory Contemporary Craft and Desing Inc, Reconciliation SA, Adelaide Arcade and Loophole Brewing.

The full list of South Australian Screen Awards recipients 2025:

Grand Jury Prize (Best Short) sponsored by South Australian Film Corporation: *I'm The Most Racist Person I Know* directed by **Leela Varghese** and produced by **Suriyna Sivashanker**

Best Feature sponsored by KOJO: *Lesbian Space Princess* directed by **Leela Varghese & Emma Hough Hobbs** and produced by **Tom Phillips & Emma Hough Hobbs**

Best Directing sponsored by CrewHQ: *I'm The Most Racist Person I Know* directed by **Leela Varghese**

Best Music Composition sponsored by Australian Guild of Screen Composers, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra: *I'm The Most Racist Person I Know* composition by **Leigh Marsh**

Best Documentary sponsored by Academy of Interactive Entertainment: *Unsung: Beyond the Board* directed by **Thomas Liddell** and produced by **Thomas Liddell, Jack Bennet & Joseph Clarke**

Best Hair & Makeup sponsored by LUSH: *With Love, Lottie* hair and makeup design by **Alex Jevons**

Best Costume sponsored by Adelaide Arcade: *With Love, Lottie* costume design by **Victoria Arvanitakis**



Best Sound Design sponsored by Australian Screen Sound Guild: *The Hitcher* sound design by Anthony Cavalieri

Best Cinematography sponsored by Urban Cine & Australian Cinematographers Society: *The Hitcher* cinematography by Emerson Hoskin

Best Screenplay sponsored by Australian Writers Guild SA: *The Knight* script by Lotte Sweeney & Maiah Stewardson

Best Performance sponsored by Heesom Casting & State Theatre Company of South Australia: Isadora Sweeney in *The Knight*

Best First Nations Work sponsored by Reconciliation SA: *The Secret* directed by Lilla Berry and produced by Piri Eddy

Best Animation Sponsored by Greenhills Animation: *Wishes: Windows & Nests* directed by Ana María Méndez Salgado and produced by Carlos Manrique Clavijo

Best Experimental Film sponsored by Peter Hanlon: *Guttercat* directed and produced by Aubrey Winslow

Best Ensemble sponsored by Buckland & Gun: Rhys Griffins and Luke Wiltshire for *Boyish* film directed by Scarlett Scherer and produced by Scarlett Scherer & Luke Wiltshire

Best Narrative Film sponsored by Picture Hire: *Boy on Fire* directed by Alies Sluiter and produced by William Littleton

Best Editing sponsored by Australian Screen Editors: *Edith* edited by Nicholas Koulianos, directed by Benjamin Raschella, produced by Alessia Lunetta

Best Student Work sponsored by Flinders University: *Fruit* directed by Sofie Rodda and produced by Drew Olsen

Best VFX sponsored by Rising Sun Pictures: *Dragging the Chain* VFX by Ken Mai

Best Music Video sponsored by UNESCO Adelaide City of Music: Avalon Kane - *The Only One Who Knows Me Is Me* directed by Conor Mercury and produced by Bryce Kraehenbuehl

Best Web Series sponsored by Adelaide University: *Bloom* directed by Stephen de Villiers & Alice Yang and produced by Chloe Gardner

Best Production Design sponsored by JamFactory Contemporary Craft and Design Inc: *Tunnel Vision* production design by Catherine Frances



Best Emerging First Nations Screen Practitioner sponsored by South Australian Film Corporation: Pearl Berry

Best Emerging Producer Award sponsored by C44: Jasmine J Leech

The Mercury Rising Award sponsored by Adelaide Film Festival, The Mercury & ProAV Solutions: Jack Langford

The Mercury Legend Award sponsored by Adelaide Film Festival & The Mercury: Tania Nehme

Audience Award sponsored by Loophole: *Unsung: Beyond The Board*, directed by **Thomas Liddell** and produced by **Thomas Liddell, Jack Bennet & Joseph Clarke**

Celebrating the best screen works from South Australia's film industry, the SASAs have run for over 20 years. The SASAs provide a vital platform for South Australian screen practitioners to showcase their work, recognising emerging talent and celebrating the people and projects created by the local screen industry.

ABOUT THE MERCURY

The Mercury has a legacy spanning 50 years as a member-based centre for screen culture in the heart of Adelaide's West End.

Proudly South Australian, The Mercury is a not-for-profit organisation that operates the independent Mercury Cinema and, utilising funding from the South Australian Film Corporation, provides pathways for emerging filmmakers starting their professional screen industry career.

The Mercury's subscription model at \$25/month or \$300/year offers unlimited screenings to Silverscreen and Adelaide Cinematheque programs, free entry to the Script Club, Launch Lab, all industry programs, complimentary use of all production facilities and equipment, one-on-one script consultations, industry mentoring, ability to apply to the Quicksilver Production Fund and Hamilton Health and Safety Fund plus a discounted venue hire and South Australian Screen Award submission fees.

With alumni including Emmy award winners, Oscar nominees, a Cannes Special Jury Prize winner and the Best Director winner at Sundance Film Festival, our passion for quality is undeniable.

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The Mercury also boasts two cinemas – a 186 seat Mercury cinema, and the 36 seat Iris - both of which offer a comprehensive film program of contemporary, classic and cult favourites films.

Centrally located, The Mercury neighbours the Jam Factory, Nexus Arts, The Lion Arts Factory, ILA, UniSA West Campus, TAFE SA, AC Arts & the Flinders University Festival Plaza

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