



Independent Cinemas  
Australia

## **2018 INDEPENDENT CINEMA AWARDS GRANTED TO CHRIS MITCHELL, DEAKIN CINEMAS AND NICK HAYES, ICON FILMS AND DENDY CINEMAS**

**Sydney: 23 March 2018**

Independent Cinemas Australia (ICA) announced the 2018 winners of the Lifetime Achievement Award and the Mark Sarfaty CEO Award for Outstanding Service to Independent Cinema at the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual conference this week.

Mike Bosworth from Christie, Gold Sponsor of the ICA Conference and Gala dinner presented **the *Lifetime Achievement Award to Chris Mitchell***, with a detailed homage of Chris's almost 50 years in the cinema industry, part of which is detailed below.

“When Chris was 15 years old he became an assistant projectionist working at both Hoyts 16<sup>th</sup> Street Drive-in and the Ozone Theatre in Langtree Avenue Mildura. When the Ozone closed in 1969 Chris found himself out of a job and headed to Melbourne for a job interview at Melbourne University teaching students about cinema projection and operations. Chris was successful and got the job but decided the city wasn't for him and turned the job offer down and headed home to Mildura. In 1973 Chris married his lovely wife Carol who has worked alongside Chris in the cinema for 33 years.

In 1985 the local brothers teamed up with the late Alec and Robert Cassidy to build the Deakin Cinema Complex in Deakin Avenue, in 1991 Deakin Cinema became a twin and five years later was made into a quad. Deakin Cinema was the first cinema to have digital projection and 3D installed and Chris has done extensive renovations over the years.

Chris continually sought to improve the business and was always on the lookout for new ideas to provide patrons with the best possible cinema experience. Chris was part owner and manager of the Deakin Cinema [now part of [Wallis Cinemas](#)] until he retired last year.”

**Mike stated “Chris's dedication to providing excellence in independent cinema, and tackling the joys and challenges of doing business in the country over a lifetime of achievement well qualifies him for tonight's award.”**

Chris accepted the award with brevity and humility: “Very surprised with this award, when Scott rang me I didn't believe him but here it is a dream come true. Thank you.”

On the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Virtual Print Fee (VPF) spearheaded by Mark Sarfaty, **the *Mark Sarfaty CEO Award for Outstanding Service to Independent Cinema* was awarded to Nick Hayes, Head of Sales and Acquisition, Dendy Icon**. ICA CEO Adrienne Pecotic acknowledged Nick's dedication, and valuable contribution to the independent sector and ICA in particular saying “Nick's generosity, perception, inclusiveness and statistical genius has been invaluable support to me and to independent cinemas.”

Nick has been serving on the ICA board for over 7 years and is also currently serving on the board of the Australian Independent Distributors Association.

Nick thanked Adrienne and Pauline Negline who “make it a joy to be part of the board”.

Nick has spent his entire working life in the cinema industry; starting at the candy bar on George St Sydney. Nick commenced with Dendy Icon in 2008, and has had several roles within the organisation including Head of Cinemas and now Head of Sales & Acquisition. He has also been the Operation Manager of the Sydney Film Festival and worked for Hoyts Cinemas for a decade.

This year’s Independent Cinemas Australia Conference held at Dendy Cinema Opera Quays and the Intercontinental Hotel explored *The Point of Difference*, bringing together a host of fellow exhibitors and industry experts and celebrating all aspects of the personalised experience that sets independent cinemas apart.

At the Gala Dinner ICA President Scott Seddon also gave special thanks to life member Denis Parkes from [The Picture Show Man](#) Twin Cinema in Merimbula who is retiring having sold the cinema to local cinema manager Jesse Tankard. Our thoughts are with Jesse who was unable to attend the conference due to the fires in his hometown of Tathra, NSW. ICA is delighted that Denis Parkes, will be continuing his service on the ICA Board.

**Exhibitor member anniversaries** over the last year were acknowledged at the Gala Dinner:

- Majestic Cinemas turned 15 this year
- Oatmill Cinema Mount Gambier celebrated their 20 year anniversary, and
- Heddon Greta Drive-in – celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Official Opening in December 2017

### **ICA Lifetime Achievement Award and Mark Sarfaty CEO Award for Outstanding Service to Indie Cinemas Previous recipients**

<b>Year</b>	<b>ICA Lifetime Achievement Award</b>	<b>Mark Sarfaty CEO Award for Outstanding Service to Indie Cinemas</b>
2017	Andrew Ward	Benjamin Zeccola
2016	Allan Stiles	Denis Parkes
2015	Russell Anderson	Bob Parr
2014	Leo Catalano	Robert Reeve
2013	Antonio Zeccola	Kieren Dell
2012	Robert Ward	Ross Entwistle & Barry Peak – Inaugural Award
2011	Lorna Wallis	
2010	Natalie Miller	
2009	Andrew Pike	
2008	Denis Parkes	

**The 2019 ICA Conference will be held in Melbourne from Monday 29 April to Thursday 2 May 2019.**

For more information or images contact:

Lucy Robson, ICA Marketing and Communications Manager on 0419 290 666

### **About ICA**

Independent Cinemas Australia (ICA) [previously known as Independent Cinemas Association of Australia] represents independent cinema exhibitors and has [members in every state and territory in Australia](#) including large and small businesses such as Palace, Grand, Wallis, Dendy and iconic cinema sites such as the Hayden Orpheum and Cinema Nova. ICA represents around 80% of regional cinemas – mostly small family businesses.

Independent cinemas comprise 26% of the 2084 cinema screens in Australia– with ICA representing a wide range of cinema locations from rural areas right through to metropolitan multiplex circuits.

For more information contact:

Adrienne Pecotic, CEO of ICA on 0414 66 45 66

### **About Dendy Icon**

[Dendy Cinemas](#) was founded over 70 years ago and operates 43 screens across Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra and the recently opened Cooparoo site, exhibiting the best in quality cinema and alternative content.

Dendy Cinemas proudly supports the local filmmaking and arts community through sponsorship of NIDA, Sydney Film Festival awards, Tropfest and Flickerfest.

Launched in Australia in 2002, [Icon Film Distribution](#) releases 10-15 hand-picked theatrical titles per annum. Drawing on its expertise in script analysis and development, Icon sources content from the world's most prestigious film festivals, international film-markets and directly from producers.