



Australian Government



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## Six Australian digital projects nominated for prestigious SXSW Interactive Awards

**Tuesday 31 January 2012 (updated Thursday 2 February 2012):** In a significant international acknowledgment for Australia's digital sector, six Australian projects have been selected as finalists for the SXSW Interactive Awards 2012. Founded in 1997, the SXSW Interactive Awards identify the best new digital works from around the world, from mobile and tablet apps to websites, kiosks and installations, while celebrating those who are building tomorrow's online trends.

Two Australian projects are finalists in the Film/TV category including **Goa Hippy Tribe**, a social media documentary about a hippy reunion in Goa from filmmaker **Darius Devas** and production company **Freehand**. The project was supported by SBS and was selected for INPUT 2011. In the same category is **The Gradual Demise of Phillipa Finch**, an interactive experience, animated series and iPhone game for anyone who has ever suffered a broken heart. The project features the voice of **Toni Collette**, was produced by **Rachel Okine of Hopscotch**, based on the works of creator **Emma Magenta** and was supported by ABC TV.

Producer and creative director **Martin Potter** and producer **Anna Grieve's Big Stories, Small Towns** is an Australian finalist in the Community category. The project is an evolving multi-platform documentary featuring collaborations between small-town communities and filmmakers in residence who have created stories full of love, humour, family and belonging.

In the Art category is **Curious Creatures**, an interactive installation exposing users to strange encounters with inquisitive and beautiful creatures from the surrounding woods at a festival site. A large-scale augmented reality projection project combining animation, sound design, gaming, installation art and electronic music, the work has been installed to date at locations such as the Lismore Lantern Parade and Splendour in the Grass festival. The project is a collaboration between creative director **Jimmy McGilchrist**, executive producer **Craig Walsh** and producer **Carli Leimbach**.

**The Dragon Children** from **SBS Online** has been nominated in the Educational Resource category. The project is an interactive multimedia website exploring the success of Chinese-Australian students within Australia's education system, as part of SBS's continuing commitment to Chinese-Australian audiences and the SBS Chinese Virtual Community centre project. The key creative team includes news reporter and producer **Johnny Lu**, online creator **Matt Smith**, online developer **Ken Macleod** and online producer **Nicole Redenbach**.

Production company **Soap Creative's** online game **The World's Biggest PAC-MAN** has been nominated in the Amusement category. The game allows PAC-MAN fans across the globe to create and play their own maze, adding it to an endlessly growing map of interconnected levels. The site was built to promote the power of Internet Explorer 9 and uses HTML5 technology to do so. It has received over 2.3 million visitors from 194 countries to date. The project involves clients **Microsoft Australia** and **Namco Bandai**.

The winners in each category will be revealed at the 15th Annual SXSW Interactive Awards Ceremony presented by HP on the evening of Tuesday 13 March at the Hilton Austin Downtown.

For more information on the SXSW Interactive Awards visit:  
<http://sxsw.com/interactive/awards>

MEDIA RELEASE

**BIG STORIES, SMALL TOWNS**

[www.bigstories.com.au](http://www.bigstories.com.au)

**Creative Director** Martin Potter

**Producers** Anna Grieve, Martin Potter

**Interactive Producer** Nick Crowther

**Synopsis** *Big Stories Small Towns* is a unique web documentary project created by filmmakers living in remote and regional communities, working with local people to bring their personal stories to the screen. The result is a series of inspiring short films, digital stories and slide shows – full of humour and hope – released to the world via a specially created website: [www.bigstories.com.au](http://www.bigstories.com.au). The heartwarming project showcases stories of people living in the regional communities of Murray Bridge, Raukkan and Port Augusta in South Australia as well as Banlung in Cambodia.

**CURIOUS CREATURES**

<http://vimeo.com/29233934>

**Creative Director** Jimmy McGilchrist

**Executive Producer** Craig Walsh

**Producer** Carli Leimbach

**Production** Splendid

**Software Development** rezon8

**Animation Production** Monkeystack

**Games Development** Matt Ditton

**Sound Design** SAE Byron Bay

**Synopsis** Strange encounters are reported as inquisitive and beautiful creatures venture in from the surrounding woods at the festival site. *Curious Creatures* is a large-scale augmented reality projection project combining animation, sound design, gaming, installation art and electronic music. The work has been designed to reach new audiences in the festival environment. In 2011 it was installed at the Lismore Lantern Parade in Lismore NSW and Splendour in the Grass festival in Woodfordia QLD, Australia. Next stop in 2012 is Vryfees in Bloemfontein, South Africa, to a local audience of 250,000.

**THE DRAGON CHILDREN**

[www.sbs.com.au/dragonchildren](http://www.sbs.com.au/dragonchildren)

**News Reporter and Producer** Johnny Lu

**Web Developer** SBS Online

**Online Creative** Matt Smith

**Online Developer** Ken Macleod

**Online Producer** Nicole Redenbach

**Synopsis** *The Dragon Children* is an interactive multimedia website exploring the success of Chinese-Australian students within Australia's education system, as part of its continuing commitment to Chinese-Australian audiences and the SBS Chinese Virtual Community centre project.

**GOA HIPPY TRIBE**

[www.sbs.com.au/goahippytribe](http://www.sbs.com.au/goahippytribe)

**Production Company** Freehand TV

**Director/Camera/Editor** Darius Devas

**Executive Producer** Paul Rudd

**Web Developer** SBS Online

**Synopsis** *Goa Hippy Tribe* is an online social media documentary about a hippy reunion in Goa, made by filmmaker Darius Devas and a vibrant community of online contributors.

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**THE GRADUAL DEMISE OF PHILLIPA FINCH**

[www.abc.net.au/tv/philipafinch](http://www.abc.net.au/tv/philipafinch)

**Production Company** Hopscotch

**Writer/Director/Creator** Emma Magenta

**Producer** Rachel Okine

**Web Developer** Based on Birds

**Animation Director** Aaron Powell

**Game Developer** The Project Factory

**Cast** Toni Collette

**Synopsis** *The Gradual Demise of Phillipa Finch* is a cross-platform 2D animated project incorporating interactive web components, which brings acclaimed Australian artist Emma Magenta's character, Phillipa Finch, to life. The project incorporates a 17-part animated series, an iPhone game and an interactive web experience called *The Heartworks Project*: a visual representation of a user's current emotional state, told through the language and imagery of the animated series. Through this immersive, multi-platform experience, *Phillipa Finch* builds an interactive community based on a network of shared experience, within the framework of a story of love, beauty and hope.

**THE WORLD'S BIGGEST PAC-MAN**

<http://worldsbiggestpacman.com>

**Production Company** Soap Creative

**Clients** Microsoft Australia, Namco Bandai

**Synopsis** *The World's Biggest PAC-MAN* is a online game that allows PAC-MAN fans across the globe to create and play their own maze, adding it to an endlessly growing map of interconnected levels. The site was built to promote the power of Internet Explorer 9 and uses HTML5 technology to do so. To create a maze users sign-up through Facebook, which makes sharing their creations simple and easy. The maze created so far is the actual size of 37 real-life football fields. The site has received over 2.3 million visitors from 194 countries to date.