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SPADA INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS Announced

SPADA/Onfilm Industry Champion
SPADA Independent Producer of the Year
SPADA New Filmmaker Of the Year

Winners of three prestigious SPADA (Screen Production & Development Association) Industry Awards were announced at the SPADA conference in Wellington at the TVNZ sponsored dinner hosted by the Minister for Broadcasting, Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman on Friday 13 November.

The **SPADA/Onfilm Industry Champion 2009** went to Michael Stedman.

Michael has been an integral part of the New Zealand television industry for over 30 years. His outstanding contribution has been as the Head of Natural History New Zealand (NHNZ). Michael has built a world brand, established a world class company, and provided opportunities for hundreds in the industry.

NHNZ is now the second largest natural history producer in the world. It is the largest documentary production company in the Southern Hemisphere, producing around 60 hours a year. NHNZ's brand is instantly recognisable in world markets, and is seen round the world on the National Geographic and Discovery channels.

Formerly TVNZ's Natural History Unit (NHU), NHNZ was established in Dunedin in 1977 and Michael first began his association with NHU in 1979 as an executive producer. In 1981 Michael transferred to the Australian Film and Television Academy as Training Director. He then joined ABC Australia as Head of the Features Department. Michael returned to Dunedin in 1987 to manage the NHU as well as being Director of Production for TVNZ. Within 18 months he had tripled NHU's output and began international co- production. In 1997 Fox Television Group bought 80% of NHNZ, and in 1999 it became a wholly owned Fox TV (News) Ltd company.

Michael has an ONZM and an Honorary Doctorate from Otago University.

Richard Fletcher, producer of *Under the Mountain*, won the **SPADA Independent Producer of the Year 2009**, *Sponsored by Crombie Lockwood/MTJ*.

Richard is the founder and principal of Liberty Films, an independent film production company and consulting firm based in Wellington.

Currently Richard is an executive producer of the NZ/UK co-production *Tracker*. The producing team includes UK executive producer Gareth Wiley (*Vicki Christina Barcelona*), New Zealand producer Trevor Haysom (*In My Father's Den*) and UK producer David Burns. *Tracker* directed by the UK's Ian Sharp, stars Ray Winstone (*Sexy Beast*) and Temuera Morrison (*Once Were Warriors*).

Richard produced *Under the Mountain* with Jonathan King and Matthew Grainger, directed by Jonathan King (*Black Sheep*) and based on the Maurice Gee novel. He was Associate Producer on *The Volcano* and Executive Producer on the NZ/German co-production *The Strength of Water* and the financing Producer on the NZ/UK co-production *The Ferryman*. Prior to founding Liberty Films Richard was Head of Production for Silverscreen Films for whom he was Co-Producer on the NZ/UK co-production *River Queen*, directed by Vincent Ward, and Production Executive on Geoff Murphy's *Spooked*.

Richard spent over three years as Head of Business Affairs at the New Zealand Film Commission. He has worked in distribution for Australian sales agent and distributor Beyond Films, and for the UK indie-distributor Feature Film Company.

SPADA New Filmmaker of the Year was awarded to **Zia Mandviwalla**.

One of her first films, *Pieces Together* won the Kodak Prize at the Wellington Fringe Film. Zia went on to make *Eating Sausage* (2004), funded by The Screen Innovation Production Fund and the New Zealand Film Commission. *Eating Sausage* was selected for a number of international film festivals including London and Pusan. The film won a host of awards including Best Short Film Script at the 2005 NZ Screen Director's Guild Awards, Best Director and Best Short Film at Fitzroy Shorts in Melbourne. Her short film *Clean Linen* premiered at the Melbourne International Film Festival in 2007.

In 2005, Zia was a runner up for SPADA New Filmmaker of the Year and in 2007 she was selected to represent New Zealand at the Berlinale Talent Campus. Last year, Zia made her television directorial debut, on TV3s acclaimed *A Thousand Apologies*. She was a part of the core collective of writers, directors and actors who developed the show.

Zia currently has many projects in development including another short film and several feature film scripts.

This Award honours emerging New Zealand filmmakers who have displayed excellence, special talent and creativity in their filmmaking to date and has over \$40,000 worth of prizes attached. The SPADA New Filmmaker of the Year Award is made possible with the generous support of: Principal Sponsor: Park Road; and Sponsors: Panavision, FACB, Kodak, SKYCITY Cinemas, Stage and Screen Travel Services.

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