

# WA sculptor design to rival Oscar

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Photo. Ian Munro/The West Australian © R.M. Gomboc WA sculptor design to rival Oscar

He may not have the glamour of Cate Blanchett, Nicole Kidman or Hugh Jackman but artist Ron Gomboc will be one of the stars of Australia's inaugural Oscars.

The celebrated Perth sculptor has created the statuette that will be given to winners of the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts awards to be held in Sydney on January 31.

The AACTA was established by the Australian Film Institute to put the nation's peak screen industry body on the same footing as the US Oscars and British BAFTAS.

It is hoped Gomboc's statuette, which he created in his Middle Swan studio, will become as iconic as the Oscars gold man and the BAFTAS mask.

AACTA president Geoffrey Rush said he was pleased with the statuette, which will sit on a base of polished tiger iron created by Swan Valley stone artist Richard Williamson. "He (Rush) loved it, he felt it was uniquely Australian," Gomboc said.

Several nicknames have already been given to the statuette including Ron, Jedda (after an Australian classic movie), Felix (inspired by Henry Handel Richardson's novel Australia Felix) and Billy (in honour of the late actor Bill Hunter).