



BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

8 – 19 October 2014

in partnership with



58TH BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2014 AWARD WINNERS

****embargoed until 22:30 October 18, 2014****

London – 22.30, 18 October 2014: The 58th BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express® announced this year's Festival Awards' winners at its high profile Awards ceremony, at The Banqueting House, Whitehall, this evening. Guests included Ben Miller, Ben Rivers, Christopher Hampton, Sir David Hare, Dexter Fletcher, Ian Hart, James Corden, James McAvoy, Jeremy Thomas, John Hurt, Lynda Myles, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Luc Roeg, Sophie Fiennes and recipient of the BFI Fellowship Stephen Frears.

OFFICIAL COMPETITION WINNER – BEST FILM: LEVIATHAN - Andrey Zvyagintsev

Celebrating the most original, intelligent and distinctive filmmaking, the winner of the *Best Film Award*, went to Zvyagintsev's striking film that tells the tragic tale of conflict between an individual and a corrupt system in a small Russian town. The award was announced by Jeremy Thomas, BFI Fellow and President of the Official Competition jury.

Jeremy Thomas said:

"We were all very engaged by the twelve films selected for Competition and really admired many of them, there were extraordinary stories and impressive images. But there was one film that we were unanimous in wanting to award Best Film, "Leviathan" directed by Andrey Zvyagintsev. Its grandeur and themes moved all of us in the same way."

The jury also commended **Celine Sciamma's** GIRLHOOD about a young woman's search for identity in the underprivileged suburbs of Paris.

Thomas' fellow jurors were **Ahmad Abdalla**, director of last year's *Best Film Award* nominee RAGS & TATTERS, whose film DÉCOR received its World Premiere at this year's Festival, Chief Film Critic of Variety **Scott Foundas**, Malaysian film producer **Lorna Tee**, and BAFTA-winning and Golden Globe-nominated **James McAvoy**, whose film THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ELEANOR RIGBY received its UK Premiere at the Festival.

FIRST FEATURE COMPETITION WINNER – THE SUTHERLAND AWARD: Myroslav Slaboshpytskiy for THE TRIBE

The long-standing *Sutherland Award* is presented to the director of the most original and imaginative first feature in the Festival and this year's victor was the Ukrainian drama THE TRIBE, set in a school for young, deaf people and acted entirely in sign language. This year, the actor **Ian Hart** introduced the nominations and the winner was announced by the BAFTA-nominated producer **Luc Roeg** whose own film WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN won the *Best Film Award* at the Festival in 2011.

Luc Roeg said:

"This year's Sutherland Award presented a varied and interesting line-up of films from around the world but Myroslav Slaboshpytskiy's, THE TRIBE distinguished itself as the most original and powerful of all the contenders. The young non-professional cast were all exceptional, but special mention must go to Yana Novikova. Slaboshpytskiy makes an audacious and highly accomplished debut as writer/director and has marked himself out as a true auteur. It's a pleasure and privilege to commend the work."

The jury also commended **Naja Abu Nowar's** THEEB about orphaned brothers on a treacherous journey across the desert in the far reaches of the Ottoman Empire on the eve of the Arab revolt.

As well as Ian Hart, Roeg's fellow jurors were the actress **Hermione Norris**, producer and president of production at EOne, **Xavier Marchand** and the director, cinematographer and writer, **Ben Rivers**.

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION WINNER – THE GRIERSON AWARD: SILVERED WATER, SYRIA SELF-PORTRAIT - Ossama Mohammed & Wiam Simav Bedirxan

The *Grierson Award* for the best documentary recognises outstanding feature-length documentaries of integrity, originality, technical excellence or cultural significance.

Announcing the winner was jury president, the director, writer and producer **Sophie Fiennes** whose own *THE PERVERT'S GUIDE TO IDEOLOGY* screened at the Festival in 2012.

About this confronting account of life in Syria during the civil war **Sophie Fiennes commented:**

“The jury were deeply affected by this film. Ossama Mohammed and Wiam Simav Bedirxan's portrait of Syria is both unflinching and poetic. It is hard to watch, because the fact of war is and should be unbearable. Bedirxan's passionate and courageous quest to be a reliable witness, while trying to comprehend and survive her desperate situation in Homs, is profoundly moving. Ossama Mohammed's exile in Paris, resonates with our own safe distance from this war, but the miracle of the film is how it engages us.”

Reaching this verdict with Fiennes were the Emmy®-winner and BAFTA-nominated producer and director **Roy Ackerman**, the Emmy®-winning producer and editor of *Storyville* **Nick Fraser**, Dogwoof's head of distribution **Oli Harbottle**, and the BAFTA-nominated filmmaker and screenwriter **Penny Woolcock**.

BEST BRITISH NEWCOMER: Sameena Jabeen Ahmed – Actor CATCH ME DADDY

The *Best British Newcomer Award*, is presented to the most promising writer, actor, producer or director with no previous track record in feature films or television. Jury president **Finola Dwyer**, the Oscar® and BAFTA-nominated film producer, announced the result.

Finola Dwyer said:

“We were unanimous in our decision to award actress Sameena Jabeen Ahmed the *Best British Newcomer Award* for her breakout performance in *CATCH ME DADDY*. Sameena's performance was very assured, confident and fearless. In the lead role of "Laila", Sameena's range of emotion was breathtaking; she was the heartbeat of the film.”

Dwyers' fellow jurors comprised the celebrated writer and novelist **Monica Ali**, the BAFTA-winning actor and writer **James Corden**, BAFTA-nominated director, actor and writer **Dexter Fletcher**, and the BAFTA-winning screenwriter **Matt Greenhalgh**.

BFI FELLOWSHIP Stephen Frears (as previously announce)

This year's **BFI Fellowship** was presented to the British film director **Stephen Frears** by the celebrated British playwright and screenwriter **Sir David Hare** who said:

“I can't think of anyone who's made a richer, more diverse or more consistently intelligent contribution to British film in my life-time”.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The bronze *Star of London Award* was commissioned especially for the Festival and designed by leading sculptor Almuth Tebbenhoff.

The Fellowship of the BFI (British Film Institute) was created in 1983 to coincide with the BFI's 50th anniversary. On that occasion the British film industry gathered in the Guildhall for a televised event at which the first group of Fellows were created - Marcel Carné, David Lean, Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger, Satyajit Ray and Orson Welles.

Since its creation, the BFI Fellowship has been awarded to key figures in British cinema including Peggy Ashcroft, Dirk Bogarde, Alec Guinness, Maggie Smith, Laurence Olivier, Vanessa Redgrave, Mike Leigh and Helena Bonham Carter. Also recognised have been such film industry luminaries as Jack Cardiff, Sydney Samuelson and Jeremy Thomas, and some of the giants of world cinema, including Michelangelo Antonioni, Abbas Kiarostami, Akira Kurosawa, Jeanne Moreau, Elem Klimov, Bernardo Bertolucci and most recently Al Pacino.

The BFI Fellowship also celebrates achievement in the world of television with such names as Alan Yentob, Jeremy Isaacs, David Rose, Michael Parkinson, Lynda La Plante, Lord Bernstein and Verity Lambert all receiving the award.

Since 1983 a total of 79 Fellowships have been awarded.

For further press info about the 58th BFI London Film Festival:

General Enquiries		lffpress@premiercomms.com	Tel: +44 20 7292 8330
Rupert Goodwin	Senior Account Director	Rupert.goodwin@premiercomms.com	
Caroline Jones	Senior Publicist	Caroline.jones@premiercomms.com	
Sam Ross	Senior Publicist	Sam.ross@premiercomms.com	
Sanam Jehanfard	Senior Publicist Online	Sanam.jehanfard@premiercomms.com	

Film clips/trailers and Festival press releases and written materials please go to the below FTP:

<ftp://ftp.premiercomms.com> | Username: LFF_PRESS | Password: OWL86Y4m

Film images can be found at: www.image.net

BFI Press Office:

pressoffice@bfi.org.uk

Tel: +44 20 7957 4833

www.bfi.org.uk/lff

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class filmmakers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of filmmakers and audiences

About the BFI London Film Festival

BFI London Film Festival is Britain's leading film event and one of the world's best film festivals. It introduces the finest new British and international films to an expanding London and UK-wide audience and attracts significant international film industry participation. LFF is a compelling combination of red carpet glamour, friendly audiences and vibrant exchange. LFF provides an essential profiling opportunity for films seeking global success; promotes the careers of British and international filmmakers through its industry and awards programmes and positions London as the world's leading creative city.

Clare Stewart biography

Clare Stewart's nineteen year programming career has encompassed leadership roles as Festival Director, Sydney Film Festival (2006-2011) and the inaugural Head of Film Programs at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image in Melbourne (2002-2006) as well as various roles at the Australian Film Institute (1996-2001), including Exhibition Manager, and programmer and Committee Member of the Melbourne Cinémathèque (1995-2002).



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