

For immediate release



THE 61ST BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS® ANNOUNCES FULL 2017 PROGRAMME

London, Thursday 31st August, 2017 (11:15) - The 61st BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express® today announces its full programme, featuring a diverse selection of 242 feature films from both established and emerging talent. This 12 day celebration of cinema illustrates the richness of international filmmaking, with films to delight and entertain audiences, and also films that probe and interrogate issues of significance.

The Festival is the UK's leading and most prestigious film festival, representing one of the first opportunities for audiences – both the UK public and film industry professionals - to see the very best new films from across the globe, alongside an events programme with some of the world's most inspiring creative talents. This year, the Festival will host 28 World Premieres, 9 International Premieres and 34 European Premieres and will welcome a stellar line up of cast and crew for many of the films.

The 242 feature programmes screening at the Festival include: 46 documentaries, 6 animations, 14 archive restorations and 16 artists' moving image features. The programme also includes 128 short films, and 67 countries are represented across short film and features.

Each evening of the Festival sees a Headline Gala presentation at Odeon Leicester Square. Films in Official Competition and Strand Galas are once again presented at the 820-seat **Embankment Garden Cinema** following a successful inaugural year in 2016, with audiences and filmmakers alike praising its quality of cinema experience. This temporary venue, constructed to the highest technical specifications, brings the festival to even more people and connects screenings in the West End with the BFI's home cinema at BFI Southbank.

Alongside the Galas, Special Presentations and films in Competitions, the Festival will show a thrilling range of new cinema in sections **Love, Debate, Laugh, Dare, Thrill, Cult, Journey, Experimenta** and **Family** – which provide pathways for audiences to navigate the programme. In 2017, the LFF presents a new strand, **Create**, featuring films that celebrate artistic practice in all its channels and forms the electricity of the creative process, reflecting London's position as one of the world's leading creative cities.

Audiences have the opportunity to hear some of the world's creative leaders through the Festival's acclaimed talks' series **LFF Connects**, which features artists working at the intersection of film and other creative industries, and **Screen Talks**, a series of in-depth interviews with leaders in contemporary cinema. Participants this year include **Julian Rosefeldt & Cate Blanchett, David Fincher, Demis Hassabis, Nitin Sawhney, Johan Knattrup Jensen, Ian McEwan** and **Takashi Miike**.

As one of the few film festivals in the world to be staged in a production capital, the Festival takes its place as a jewel in the crown of London's cultural calendar, channelling the excellence of one of the world's most vibrant cultural cities, and highlighting the enormous wealth of talent working in film today, both behind and in front of the camera. Alongside the industry programme and Awards, the Festival proudly acts as a launch

pad for new as well as established voices, and supports filmmakers throughout their career aiming to interrogate how film and filmmaking reflects – and reflects on – our society.

The BFI London Film Festival each year provides a vibrant forum for the exchange of ideas, with films stimulating debate and shining a light on pressing social and political issues. This year a number of ‘talking points’ ripple through the Festival programme, including:

- **LBGT** – In the year of the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality in England and Wales, the Festival presents a powerful LGBT line-up.
- **Immigration and Social Division** – Two of the defining themes of our times are explored by filmmakers who are committed to telling powerful and complex stories about borders – both real and psychological.
- **Black Star** – Following the BFI’s landmark season celebrating the range, versatility and power of black actors in film, recent world events give new urgency to questions of opportunity, and basic human rights.
- **Visionaries** – Cinema remains one of the most exhilaratingly kinetic and visually potent storytelling forms, and many filmmakers this year impress with the singularity and power of their vision, with keen imagination and dazzling style.
- **Thrill** – It’s a very strong year for global thrill seekers at the Festival, with a particularly strong showing from East Asia, which comes as the BFI embarks on the UK-wide season BFI Thriller, exploring how the genre reflects societal upheavals, fears and anxieties.
- **Strong Women** – The Festival continues to shine a light on strong women behind and in front of the camera. At this year’s Festival, 61 women directors are represented in the feature film selection, approximately 25% of the programme.
- **Deafness and disability** – Both feature with marked prominence in this year’s Festival programme, though the film industry still has a long way to go in terms of representation for disabled people. The Festival’s industry programme will include a partnership event on equality of opportunity and expression for deaf and disabled people working in film & television.

The Festival takes over screens at fifteen venues across the capital, from the West End cinemas – Vue Leicester Square and the iconic Odeon Leicester Square; central London venues – BFI Southbank, BFI IMAX, Picturehouse Central, the ICA, Curzon Mayfair, Curzon Soho, Empire Haymarket, Prince Charles Cinema and Ciné Lumière; and local cinemas – Hackney Picturehouse, Rich Mix in Shoreditch and Curzon Chelsea. Special screenings will also be held at the National Gallery and the Barbican, and several key events will also be cinecasted to cinema venues around the UK.

“It is a delight to welcome some of the most thrilling storytellers from across the world to the Festival – we love to watch and engage with the extraordinary conversations that the Festival brings to our doorstep with every edition,” comments **Amanda Nevill, Chief Executive, BFI**. *“London has a big heart and this year we are again reminded of the generosity and freedom of this awesome capital city of ours which so readily embraces this multiplicity of cultures and new voices. This creativity is reflected across the UK and the engine that is enabling filmmaking to thrive, supported by a favourable fiscal environment, outstanding skills and talent and ever expanding infrastructure and facilities.”*

“In these globally tumultuous times, filmmakers around the world have increasingly urgent stories to tell and more reasons than ever to reimagine our reality,” comments **Clare Stewart, Festival Director**. *“This year’s BFI London Film Festival programme is rich with opportunity – to stay informed, be challenged, feel the pleasure of escape and see the world differently.”*

Whether it’s short films or documentaries, live action or animation, audiences should find a film to suit their passions - and with a range of ticket options, including family ticket prices and £5 rush tickets for under-25s, the Festival will bring the vibrancy of the world’s film industry to as many people as possible, offering an unparalleled experience to see the films that everyone will be talking for months.

GALAS

OPENING & CLOSING NIGHT GALAS

As previously announced, the Festival opens with the European Premiere of *BREATHE*, the directorial debut of Andy Serkis, on Wednesday 4 October. Adventurous and charismatic, Robin Cavendish (Andrew Garfield) has his whole life ahead of him when he is paralysed by polio whilst in Africa and given just months to live. Against all advice, Robin's wife Diana (Claire Foy) brings him home from hospital where her devotion and witty determination inspire him to lead along and fulfilled life. Together they refuse to be limited by expectations, dazzling others with their humour, courage and lust for life. A live cinecast brings all of the excitement from Leicester Square to simultaneous screenings taking place at cinemas across the UK.

The Festival closes with Martin McDonagh's *THREE BILLBOARDS OUTSIDE EBBING, MISSOURI* on Sunday 15 October, marking McDonagh's return to the Festival following the presentation of *Seven Psychopaths* (2012). *THREE BILLBOARDS OUTSIDE EBBING, MISSOURI* is a darkly comic drama, which sees Mildred Hayes (Academy Award® winner Frances McDormand) take a stand against the town's revered chief of police, William Willoughby (Academy Award® nominee Woody Harrelson) after months have passed without a culprit in her daughter's murder case.

HEADLINE GALAS

The American Express Gala is the rousing *BATTLE OF THE SEXES*. Receiving its European Premiere, Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton's film dramatises the build up to the 1973 tennis match between women's world champion Billie Jean King (Emma Stone) and ex-men's-champ and serial hustler Bobby Riggs (Steve Carell). Billed 'Battle of the Sexes' in the wake of the sexual revolution and the rise of the women's movement, the match became one of the most watched televised sports events of all time, reaching 90 million viewers around the world.

CALL ME BY YOUR NAME features as the Mayor of London's Gala. Luca Guadagnino (*I Am Love*, *A Bigger Splash* LFF 2015) returns to the Festival with this adaptation of André Aciman's coming-of-age novel – a sun-kissed, cinematic ode to the ecstasy and exquisite pain of first love, starring Timothée Chalamet as Elio, a musically gifted 17-year-old whose idyllic summer break takes a tumultuous turn when Oliver (Armie Hammer) arrives to stay at the family palazzo.

The BFI Patrons' Gala, *DOWNSIZING*, is a wildly inventive and satirical film from Alexander Payne (*Nebraska*, LFF 2014) which puts climate change, mobility and immigration under the microscope. After Norwegian scientists discover a method for shrinking people to pocket-size as part of a grand design to limit humanity's footprint, a thriving parallel 'small' society emerges. Ordinary, work-a-day Paul Safranek (Matt Damon) wants to scale-up his options by sizing-down, but things begin to go awry when his wife Audrey (Kristen Wiig) gets cold feet.

The May Fair Hotel Gala is the European Premiere of *FILM STARS DON'T DIE IN LIVERPOOL*, in which Annette Bening and Jamie Bell vividly bring to the screen the intense romance between Academy Award®-winning star of *The Big Heat* and *In a Lonely Place*, Gloria Grahame and her much younger lover. The film is directed by Paul McGuigan and produced by Colin Vaines and Barbara Broccoli.

Director Saul Dibb brings R C Sheriff's classic play *JOURNEY'S END* to the big screen with shattering potency. When C Company, led by Captain Stanhope (Sam Claflin) is about to take its posting on the front line during the First World War, with munitions and morale depleted each man's character is laid bare. The film receives its European Premiere at the LFF.

Yorgos Lanthimos follow-ups *The Lobster* (LFF 2015), with Headline Gala *THE KILLING OF A SACRED DEER*. Colin Farrell and Nicole Kidman star in a deliciously twisted and slyly macabre morality tale which interlaces elements of Greek tragedy, surrealism and absurdist horror.

Richard Linklater returns to the Festival with the International Premiere of LAST FLAG FLYING, a tribute and sequel to Hal Ashby's *The Last Detail*. Both droll road movie and a meditation on the futility of war, the film stars Steve Carell, Bryan Cranston and Laurence Fishburne as an endearingly shambolic threesome of veterans reunited by one man's tragedy.

MUDBOUND is Dees Rees' triumphant return to the Festival after *Pariah* (LFF 2011). Receiving its European Premiere as the Royal Bank of Canada Gala, her majestic epic examines the histories of two families in the Deep South, charting how the unlikely friendship of two Second World War veterans ignites racial tension.

Exuberantly drawing on classic 1950s sci-fi B-movies and the on-going fascination with Area 51 conspiracy theories, the American Airlines Gala THE SHAPE OF WATER, is an old-school tale of the inexplicable and pure cinematic joy from Guillermo del Toro, featuring a wonderful central performance from Sally Hawkins.

Former Best Film and Sutherland Winner, Lynne Ramsay returns to the Festival with Headline Gala YOU WERE NEVER REALLY HERE, a stark inversion of the noir thriller. This devastatingly brutal portrayal of one man's battle with repression and abuse is anchored by a rage-fuelled, Cannes-winning performance from Joaquin Phoenix.

STRAND AND FESTIVAL GALAS

The Festival Gala, in association with Time Out, features Sean Baker's magical, magnificent and madcap follow up to *Tangerine* (LFF 2015), THE FLORIDA PROJECT, an instant classic about childhood innocence set against the backdrop of America's failed economy.

More about Strand Galas can be found in each of the sections below but in 2017, they are: the Dare Gala, François Ozon's AMANT DOUBLE; the Family Gala, Benjamin Renner and Patrick Imbert's THE BIG BAD FOX AND OTHER TALES; the Thrill Gala, Takashi Miike's BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL; the Debate Gala, Samuel Maoz's FOXTROT; the Laugh Gala in association with Empire, Noah Baumbach's THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES (NEW AND SELECTED); the Love Gala, Dominic Cooke's ON CHESIL BEACH; the Create Gala, Michel Hazanavicius' REDOUBTABLE; the Archive Gala, SHIRAZ: A ROMANCE OF INDIA; the Cult Gala, Joachim Trier's THELMA and the Journey Gala, Todd Haynes' WONDERSTRUCK.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Eight Special Presentations shine the spotlight on new work from major directors. The European Premiere of DARK RIVER is Clio Barnard's searing, eloquent response to Rose Tremain's novel *Trespass* in which two siblings struggle to come to terms with their inheritance following the death of their father. With HAPPY END, Michael Haneke ingeniously reworks and updates the enduringly relevant themes of all his previous films in one brief, brilliant, sometimes slyly satirical gem, whilst Sally Potter's THE PARTY brings together a brilliant ensemble cast for a supremely entertaining satire on Britain's political elite. Lucretia Martel makes an eagerly awaited follow up to 2008's *The Headless Woman* with ZAMA, presented in association with Sight & Sound, a film charting the epic decline of an 18th century colonial empire ruled over by a distant Spain.

Following the success of last year's inaugural event, the BFI Flare Special Presentation returns with A FANTASTIC WOMAN, Sebastián Lelio's brilliant and avowedly queer drama about a transwoman navigating the death of her lover. The Documentary Special Presentation is the European Premiere of THE FINAL YEAR, recounting the final, momentous year of the Obama administration with extraordinary intimacy by Greg Barker, whose *Manhunt* screened in the LFF 2013 Documentary Competition, whilst the Experimenta Special Presentation, LOOKING FOR OUM KULTHUM sees the return of Iranian artist Shirin Neshat with a film-within-a-film about one of the Arab world's greatest ever female vocalists. Finally, 2017 sees the first LFF Connects Special Presentation with the European Premiere of the first two episodes of MINDHUNTER, David Fincher's sharply scripted *Zodiac*-style procedural, based on the men who first coined the phrase 'serial killer'.

Key filmmaking talent due to attend the Festival's gala and special presentation screenings include:

Andy Serkis, Andrew Garfield, Claire Foy, Martin McDonagh, Frances McDormand, Sam Rockwell, Valerie Faris, Jonathan Dayton, Emma Stone, Andrea Riseborough, Elisabeth Shue, Luca Guadagnino, Timothée Chalamet, Paul McGuigan, Annette Bening, Jamie Bell, Julie Walters, Saul Dibb, Sam Claflin, Asa Butterfield, Toby Jones, Stephen Graham, Yorgos Lanthimos, Colin Farrell, Nicole Kidman, Barry Keoghan, Richard Linklater, Bryan Cranston, Dee Rees, Carey Mulligan, Jason Mitchell, Mary J. Blige, Garrett Hedlund, Guillermo del Toro, Lynne Ramsay, Joaquin Phoenix, François Ozon, Patrick Imbert, Takashi Miike, Sean Baker, Brooklynn Kimberly Prince, Valeria Cotto, Bria Vinaite, Samuel Maoz, Noah Baumbach, Emma Thompson, Saoirse Ronan, Billy Howle, Michel Hazanavicius, Louis Garrel, Stacy Martin, Bérénice Bejo, Joachim Trier, Todd Haynes, Oakes Fegley, Jaden Michael, Clio Barnard, Daniela Vega, Greg Barker, Shirin Neshat, David Fincher, Jonathan Groff, Holt McCallanay, Sally Potter, Bruno Ganz, Emily Mortimer, Cillian Murphy, Kristin Scott Thomas, Timothy Spall, Lucrecia Martel.

AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS

The BFI London Film Festival Awards celebrate the highest creative achievements of British and international filmmakers showcased in our Competitive sections, applauding extraordinary storytelling and inventive filmmaking across all the categories. The winners in each competition are selected by festival juries and announced at the LFF Awards, a high profile awards dinner held at Banqueting House on Saturday 14 October.

The Best Film Award is presented to the winner of the Official Competition; the Sutherland Award is presented to the winner of the First Feature Competition and the Grierson Award is presented to the winning film in the Documentary Competition. Each section is open to International and British films. The Jury for each category will be announced ahead of the opening of the Festival. Paul Greengrass will be presented with the BFI Fellowship award at this year's Awards ceremony.

OFFICIAL COMPETITION

The **Official Competition**, recognising inspiring, inventive and distinctive filmmaking, includes the following shortlisted titles:

- Robin Campillo, 120 BPM (BEATS PER MINUTE)
- Vivian Qu, ANGELS WEAR WHITE
- Majid Majidi, BEYOND THE CLOUDS (World Premiere)
- Nora Twomey, THE BREADWINNER (European Premiere)
- Juliana Rojas, Marco Dutra, GOOD MANNERS
- Xavier Beauvois, THE GUARDIANS (European Premiere)
- Andrew Haigh, LEAN ON PETE
- Andrey Zvyagintsev, LOVELESS
- Azazel Jacobs, THE LOVERS (European Premiere)
- Warwick Thornton, SWEET COUNTRY
- Cory Finley, THOROUGHbred (International Premiere)
- Annemarie Jacir, WAJIB

FIRST FEATURE COMPETITION

Titles in consideration for the **Sutherland Award** in the **First Feature Competition** recognising an original and imaginative directorial debut are:

- Daniel Kokotajlo, APOSTASY
- Léa Mysius, AVA

- Michael Pearce, BEAST (European Premiere)
- Ofir Raul Graizer, THE CAKEMAKER
- Gilles Coulier, CARGO
- Kogonada, COLUMBUS
- Rungano Nyoni, I AM NOT A WITCH
- Léonor Serraille, JEUNE FEMME
- Ana Asensio, MOST BEAUTIFUL ISLAND
- Carla Simón, SUMMER 1993
- Hlynur Pálmason, WINTER BROTHERS
- John Trengove, THE WOUND

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

The Grierson Award in the **Documentary Competition** category recognises cinematic documentaries with integrity, originality, and social or cultural significance. This year the Festival is screening:

- Maryam Goormaghtigh, BEFORE SUMMER ENDS
- Elvira Lind, BOBBI JENE
- Arash Kamali Sarvestani, Behrouz Boochani, CHAUKA, PLEASE TELL US THE TIME (International Premiere)
- Radu Jude, THE DEAD NATION
- Shevaun Mizrahi, DISTANT CONSTELLATION
- Frederick Wiseman, EX LIBRIS – THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
- Agnès Varda, JR, FACES PLACES
- Austin Lynch, Matthew Booth, GRAY HOUSE
- Brett Morgen, JANE (European Premiere)
- Lucy Cohen, KINGDOM OF US (World Premiere)
- Emmanuel Gras, MAKALA
- Sonia Kronlund, THE PRINCE OF NOTHINGWOOD

SHORT FILM AWARD

The Short Film Award recognises short form works with a unique cinematic voice and a confident handling of chosen theme and content. This year the Festival is screening:

- Gabriel Abrantes, THE ARTIFICIAL HUMORS
- Phil Collins, DELETE BEACH
- Billie Pleffer, FYSH (International Premiere)
- Anna Cazenave Cambet, GABBER LOVER
- Karishma Dube, GODDESS
- Aegina Brahim, LAWS OF THE GAME
- Jonathan Vinel, MARTIN CRIES
- Patrick Bresnan THE RABBIT HUNT
- Moin Hussain, REAL GODS REQUIRE BLOOD
- Kibwe Tavares, ROBOT & SCARECROW
- Kazik Radwanski, SCAFFOLD
- Harry Lighton, WREN BOYS (World Premiere)

Additional filmmaking talent attending for feature films in competition include:

Robin Campillo, Vivian Qu, Majid Majidi, Nora Twomey, Juliana Rojas, Marco Dutra, Xavier Beauvois, Laura Smet, Andrew Haigh, Charlie Plummer, Andrey Zvyagintsev, Azazel Jacobs, Warwick Thornton, Cory Finley, Annemarie Jacir, Daniel Kokotajlo, Michael Pearce, Ofir Raul Graizer, Gilles Coulier, Rungano Nyoni, Léonor Serraille, Laetitia Dosch, Ana Asensio, Carla Simón, Hlynur Pálmason, John Trengove, Maryam Goormaghtigh,

Elvira Lind, Arash Kamali Sarvestani, Radu Jude, Shevaun Mizrahi, Frederick Wiseman, Austin Lynch, Matthew Booth, Brett Morgen, Emmanuel Gras, Sonia Kronlund.

The Festival will announce its complete guest line up for all sections in early October.

STRANDS

The Festival programme is organised in sections to encourage discovery and to open up the Festival to new audiences. The strands are: **Love, Debate, Laugh, Dare, Thrill, Cult, Journey, Create, Family, Treasures and Experimenta**.

LOVE

Sweet, passionate, tough – Love is a complex and many-splendoured thing and this selection charts the highs and lows of many kinds of love from around the globe. The Love Gala is the European Premiere of Dominic Cooke's quietly heart-breaking film debut *ON CHESIL BEACH*. Saoirse Ronan and rising actor Billy Howle star as a young couple in the early 1960s struggling to physically connect on their honeymoon, impeccably adapted for the big screen by Ian McEwan from his own Man Booker-shortlisted novela.

Other highlights in this section include: *CLOSE-KNIT*, Naoko Oigami's quietly subversive and emotionally rich portrait of a transwoman whose maternal feelings are stirred by the arrival of her boyfriend's 11-year-old niece; *THE GROWN-UPS*, Maïte Alberdi's tender and bittersweet documentary portrait of Chileans Anita and Andres, who have Down's syndrome and are very much in love; the World Premiere of Carlos Marques-Marcet's *ANCHOR AND HOPE*, a London-set story about modern love and family featuring Oona Chaplin; John Cameron Mitchell's cosmic ride *HOW TO TALK TO GIRLS AT PARTIES*, sees aliens have landed in 1970s Croydon in a funny, energetic love story starring Elle Fanning, Alex Sharp and Nicole Kidman; the World Premiere of *JOURNEYMAN*, features Paddy Considine following up his acclaimed debut *Tyrannosaur* with the story of a boxer who must rebuild his life after a near-fatal injury; *GOING WEST*, a World Premiere from Norwegian newcomer Henrik Martin Dahlsbakken who delivers a sweetly delicious road movie; *LET THE SUNSHINE IN*, Claire Denis' darkly witty drama starring Juliette Binoche as an artist caught up in a series of unsatisfying affairs, and David Gordon Green's rousing yet devastating true-story drama *STRONGER* featuring a remarkable performance by Jake Gyllenhaal as a survivor of the Boston Marathon bombing.

DEBATE

Representing films that amplify, scrutinize, argue and surprise, *Debate* inspires riveting conversation, which is never more engaging than when the world outside the cinema is reflected back at us. This year's Debate Gala is Samuel Maoz's *FOXTROT*, a film that combines thrilling cinematography with superb performances, and highlights the absurdities of conscripted service.

Debate also includes: *BIRDS ARE SINGING IN KIGALI*, Joanna Kos-Krauze and Krzysztof Krauze's hard-hitting drama about the intertwined lives of two refugee survivors reeling from the impact of the Rwandan genocide and containing powerful central performances; the World Premiere of *THE CLIMB*, Michael Woodward's debut documentary that charts Greenpeace's daring all-female team that illegally ascended The Shard in protest against petroleum giant Shell's plans to dig for oil in the Arctic; the World Premiere of *THE FORGIVEN*, Roland Joffé's political drama starring Forest Whitaker as Desmond Tutu and Eric Bana as Piet Blomfeld, asking how far we can go in forgiving past crimes; the World Premiere of *ISLAND*, Steven Eastwood's haunting and deeply moving documentary combining observational footage with contemplative shots of the coastal landscapes of the Isle of Wight, and set among terminally ill cancer patients, and *THE VENERABLE W.*, Barbet Schroeder's disturbingly illuminating portrait of Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu, who was known for espousing anti-Muslim hatred.

LAUGH

From laugh-out-loud comedy, to dry and understated, *Laugh* celebrates humour in all its forms. This year's Laugh Gala, in association with Empire magazine, is Noah Baumbach's *THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES (NEW AND*

SELECTED). A stellar cast give uniformly excellent performances, including Dustin Hoffman, Ben Stiller, Adam Sandler, Elizabeth Marvel and Emma Thompson. Through the madcap antics of a neurotic, failure-obsessed clan, Baumbach surfaces bigger questions about how to value family and the meaning of success.

Laugh also includes: the World Premiere of Adrian Shergold's FUNNY COW, which contains a formidable performance from Maxine Peake as an aspiring stand-up comic confronting her violent husband and the sexist Northern England club circuit; INGRID GOES WEST, Matt Spicer's jet-black stalker comedy brilliantly skewers dangerous obsession and the sham of Instagrammed perfection with wicked and fearless performances from Elizabeth Olsen and Aubrey Plaza; joy and grace flow out of Dustin Guy Defa's observational comedy drama PERSON TO PERSON, starring Michael Cera as a reporter keen on quoting (his own) heavy metal lyrics; Daan Bakker's QUALITY TIME is perfect for lovers of experimental and irreverent cinema offering a portmanteau selection of stories of male arrested development; and Henrik Ruben Genz's WORD OF GOD is set months after the Chernobyl disaster and provides dark and dirty humour where pretty much nothing is off limits.

DARE

In your face, up-front and arresting, films in *Dare* take you out of, and beyond, your comfort zone. The Dare Gala is François Ozon's frisky new thriller, AMANT DOUBLE, a deliciously duplicitous tale of psychoanalysis and seduction that channels the spirits of Hitchcock and De Palma at their naughtiest and stars Jérémie Renier, Marine Vacth and Jacqueline Bisset.

Other highlights in the strand include: Eliza Hittman's BEACH RATS, a gripping investigation of repressed sexual desire in a hyper-masculine environment; Jon Garaño and Aitor Arregi's touching drama GIANT, set in 19th century Spain and based on the true story of Mikel Jokin Eleizegi, allegedly the tallest man of his time; Semih Kaplanoğlu's spellbinding dystopian sci-fi, GRAIN in which climate change has caused the near-extinction of human life; Liu Jian's adult animé HAVE A NICE DAY, a biting, bone-dry satire on contemporary Chinese social mores and featuring plenty of bloodthirsty Tarantino-esque genre thrills; the European Premiere of Bornila Chatterjee's THE HUNGRY, which reworks Shakespeare's bloody *Titus Andronicus* into a macabre modern tragedy set in Northern India; Barbara Albert's resplendent drama MADEMOISELLE PARADIS, based on the true story of Maria Theresia 'Resi' von Paradis, a gifted blind musician and contemporary of Mozart, paraded through Vienna's courts to perform; Jean Libon and Yves Hinant's jaw-dropping and extraordinary documentary SO HELP ME GOD, which details the work of an unorthodox Belgian judge Anne Gruwez as she tackles gruesome crimes, domestic violence and other sordid cases; and WESTERN, director Valeska Grisebach's contemporary western in which tensions mount between German construction workers and Bulgarian villagers in a small rural town.

THRILL

Thrill features nerve-shredders that'll get your adrenalin pumping and will keep you on the edge of your seat. This year's Thrill Gala is Takashi Miike's savage and inventive action thriller, BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL, based on the famous manga series by Hiroaki Samurái about a samurai cursed with immortal life and has the distinction of being Miike's 100th feature film.

Thrill also features: the European Premiere of Nattawut Poonpiriya's Thai teen thriller BAD GENIUS, in which young brainiac Lynn uses a very special set of skills to cheat on behalf of her classmates in the high-stakes world of entrance exams for elite international universities; the European Premiere of Anurag Kashyap's THE BRAWLER in which a young and talented Indian boxer dreams of being champion, but is knocked sideways when he falls for the niece of the man blocking his road to success; Aaron Katz's GEMINI in which a heinous crime tests the complex relationship between a tenacious personal assistant, Jill played by Lola Kirke and her Hollywood movie star boss Heather played by Zoë Kravitz; the Safdie brothers' latest film GOOD TIME features Robert Pattinson as a small-time New York criminal, who after a bank robbery goes seriously wrong, devises a plan to spring his injured accomplice from police custody; Jennifer Peedom's spectacular documentary MOUNTAIN, is a mind-blowing symphony of images and sound chronicling the powerful attraction mountains hold over us; love, crime and action combine in a taut and twisty thriller-cum-romance in Michaël R. Roskam's RACER AND THE JAILBIRD starring Adèle Exarchopoulos as Bibi, a young racing driver

and Matthias Schoenaerts as Gigi the Jailbird, a dashing playboy with, it seems, time and money to burn; Ian Nelms and Eshom Nelms' blackly comic, crime noir, *SMALL TOWN CRIME* (European Premiere) stars John Hawkes as alcoholic former cop Mike, channelling a drunk Columbo who embarks on his own unofficial crime investigation while Octavia Spencer plays his supportive sister Kelly who is starting to lose patience with Mike's lying, drifting and drinking; and the International Premiere of Xin Yukun's sophisticated arthouse thriller, *WRATH OF SILENCE* featuring martial arts maestro Song Yang, as a mute bruiser who returns to his home, a remote farming village, following the disappearance of his son. With tight plotting, memorable characters and an unforgettable climax, director Xin Yukun establishes himself as a new international filmmaker you need to know.

CULT

From the mind-altering and unclassifiable to fantasy, sci-fi and horror, in the Cult strand, the dark side is welcomed. The Cult Gala is Joachim Trier's subtle shocker *THELMA*, a supernaturally-tinged tale of a young woman's macabre coming of age.

Other titles in the strand include: S. Craig Zahler's genre-bending, bone-crunching exercise in slow-burn suspense, *BRAWL IN CELL BLOCK 99*, starring Vince Vaughn as a former boxer-turned mechanic involved in a drug deal that goes wrong that sees him behind bars; the walking dead get a second chance at life in David Freyne's debut *THE CURED* starring Ellen Page in an inventive and surprising post-zombie era drama where a cure has been found for the infected and the rehabilitated are transitioned back into society; the World Premiere of Jeremy Dyson and Andy Nyman's *GHOST STORIES* in which they bring their hit London stage play to the big screen, with suitably chilling results. Nyman plays Phillip Goodman, an academic and professional sceptic out to debunk claims of the supernatural, but when he stumbles across a long lost file containing three unsolved cases of the Occult, his whole belief system – not to mention his sanity – is thrown into question; *LET THE CORPSES TALK* is directing duo Hélène Cattet and Bruno Forzani's adaptation of Jean-Patrick Manchette's influential 1971 crime novel and the result is a sun-drenched Western-tinged, crime-caper; *MY FRIEND DAHMER* is director Marc Meyers' adaptation of John Backderf's revered graphic novel and is an unnerving portrait of one of America's most prolific murderers, Jeffrey Dahmer; and Paco Plaza's much-anticipated new horror film, *VERONICA*, inspired by an actual unsolved case in Spain and a no-holds-barred supernatural shocker.

JOURNEY

Whether it's the journey or the destination, these films will transport you and shift your perspective. This year's Journey Gala is Todd Haynes' new film *WONDERSTRUCK*, an enthralling adaptation of Brian Selznick's acclaimed young adult novel. Featuring Julianne Moore and Michelle Williams in supporting roles alongside a gifted young cast, Oakes Fegley and newcomer Millicent Simmonds, a deaf actress making her film debut, it is both a whimsical children's film for adults and a refreshingly grown-up film for children.

Other *Journey* titles include: Arshad Khan's *ABU*, a compelling documentary about a young Pakistani man's difficulties in coping with migration and the resultant cultural change, his emerging sexuality and an increasingly orthodox father; Iraqi filmmaker Mohamed Jabarah Al-Daradji's *THE JOURNEY*, a taut, thought-provoking thriller that tackles what might just be the final moments of a potential suicide bomber's life; David Batty's stylish documentary *MY GENERATION*, presented and narrated by Michael Caine, playfully explores the impact of Britain's working class cultural revolution in the 1960s and features a wealth of archive footage and a spot-on soundtrack from The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks and The Who, which makes for an exhilarating journey back in time; the European Premiere of Egyptian director Amr Salama's *SHEIKH JACKSON*, a bittersweet and poignant tale of an Islamist preacher experiencing a crisis of faith following the death of the King of Pop, Michael Jackson; Marc J. Francis and Max Pugh's fascinating and immersive exploration of mindfulness, *WALK WITH ME*, featuring narration by Benedict Cumberbatch, follows the daily rituals and routine of Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh and offers a rare insight into life within a monastic community; and the World Premiere of *THE WHITE GIRL*, where debut director Jenny Suen collaborates with legendary cinematographer Christopher Doyle on an intoxicating and textually rich film.

CREATE

The brand new *Create* strand channels the electricity of the act of creation, celebrating artistic expression in all its forms. The inaugural Create Gala is Michel Hazanavicius' REDOUBTABLE, an audacious, multi-layered biopic of French cinema's most notorious director, Jean-Luc Godard.

Also in *Create*: Greg Kohs' ALPHAGO the story of how Google's DeepMind team took on Go world champion Lee Sedol, posing questions about whether computers can think creatively and whether there is an algorithm for intuition; the World Premiere of THE BALLAD OF SHIRLEY COLLINS, Rob Curry and Tim Plester's portrait of one of the great British folks singers who mysteriously lost her voice in 1980; G-FUNK tells the story of how three childhood friends from East Long Beach Warren G, Snoop Dogg and the late great Nate Dogg, transformed hip-hop into a global phenomenon and changed the world; the World Premiere of William Badgely's HERE TO BE HEARD: THE STORY OF THE SLITS is a riveting film about the game-changing and largely female feminist punk band; Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman's LOVING VINCENT is a stunning, fully painted animated feature created in the style of Van Gogh's paintings matching extraordinary style with richly satisfying storytelling, broadcast live from the National Gallery to cinemas nationwide; and Julian Rosefeldt's MANIFESTO starring Cate Blanchett as thirteen different characters in this energetic tribute to artistic troublemakers.

FAMILY

Showcasing films for the young, as well as the young at heart, this year's Family section is, as always, an international affair. The Family Gala is THE BIG BAD FOX AND OTHER TALES, an outstanding, laugh-a-minute animation from Benjamin Renner and Patrick Imbert, the team behind *Ernest & Celestine* (LFF 2012, Family Gala) and is guaranteed to appeal to adults as much as it will to children.

Other highlights include Chang-yong Moon and Jin Jeon's beautifully made documentary BECOMING WHO I WAS about a young monk Padma Angdu, who is said to be the latest incarnation of a religious teacher, known as a Rinpoche, and his attempts to reach the home he had in a former life; Xuan Liang and Chun Zhang's visually breath-taking Chinese animated fantasy, BIG FISH & BEGONIA is as near to the best of Studio Ghibli as you're likely to find anywhere; Meikeminne Clinckspoor's family adventure CLOUDBOY is about 12-year-old Niilas who is sent away against his wishes to spend the summer with his estranged mother in Swedish Lapland, among the indigenous reindeer herding Sami people; and winner of the top prize at this year's Annecy Animation Film Festival, Masaaki Yuasa's anime LU OVER THE WALL brings human and merfolk together with surprising outcomes. This funky, upbeat tale is full of energy, features cute 'merdogs', musical mermaids and a giant humanoid shark and has a really cool soundtrack.

This section also includes a programme of animated shorts for younger audiences which bring together eclectic, exciting and colourful films from all around the globe.

TREASURES

Integrated into our strands, our *Treasures* selection brings recently restored cinematic classics from archives around the world to the Festival in London. The Archive Gala is the World Premiere of the BFI National Archive restoration of the silent film SHIRAZ: A ROMANCE OF INDIA (1928), a ravishing, romantic tale based on the story of the 17th century Mughal ruler Shah Jahan, his queen and the building of the world's most beautiful monument to love, the Taj Mahal. Directed by Franz Osten, based on a play by Niranjan Pal and starring and produced by Himansu Rai, the film was shot entirely in India and performed by an all-Indian cast. A new score commissioned by the BFI from world-renowned sitar player and composer Anoushka Shankar will be performed live with an ensemble of musicians playing Indian and western instruments. The restoration and new score are part of the BFI's contribution to the UK-India Year of Culture 2017.

Other highlights include the World Premieres of the 4K restoration by Sony Pictures Entertainment of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH (1946); the digitally remastered experimental documentary FRANTZ FANON: BLACK SKIN WHITE MASK (1996), directed by artist and filmmaker Isaac Julien, as well as the new 4K restoration, by The BFI National Archive and The Film Foundation, with funding provided by the George Lucas Family Foundation, of Terry Gilliam's first feature as a solo director, JABBERWOCKY (1977). The Festival will also screen the 4K restoration of Toshio Matsumoto's

FUNERAL PARADE OF ROSES (1969), a wild, kaleidoscopic vision of the underground scene in 1960s Japan and a significant influence on Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* and Italian genre-master Dario Argento's eye-popping slice of technicolour terror, SUSPIRIA (1977) with stunning 4K restoration.

EXPERIMENTA

Experimenta, in association with Lux, features films and videos by artists who transform our experience of seeing moving images. Arts Council England are also generously supporting the Experimenta programme.

Highlights include: the World Premiere of Benedict Seymour's DEAD THE ENDS, a politically urgent retelling of Chris Marker's *La Jetée* bookended by the 2011 London riots; ERASE AND FORGET, Andrea Luka Zimmerman's film is an excavation of the influence of fiction on truth in the American imagination of warfare and gun culture; the World Premiere of LEK AND THE DOGS, Andrew Kötting's account of the ultimate outsider uses a range of visual styles derived from avant garde and genre cinema, and Kevin Jerome Everson's TONSLER PARK uses an unobtrusive observational style to divulge the mechanisms behind the operation of Election Day at polling stations in Charlottesville, Virginia.

SHORTS

The eclectic range of shorts this year will make audiences experience a range of emotions from euphoria to sadness as they cover all the different strands in the programme.

Like A Heartbeat Drives You Mad (LOVE Strand) brings together stories of disapproving parents, difficult love and traumatic break-ups in this selection of films from all over the world, including Daisy Jacob's THE FULL STORY, an animation about a father's affair, family break-up and sibling rivalry.

Distilled Identities (DEBATE Strand) explores stories that question identity and belonging, including Kazik Radwanski's SCAFFOLD, depicting the daily interactions of two Bosnian-Canadian builders reminiscing about home as they make repairs.

There is dark, dry and witty on-screen humour in short form with *Gits and Shiggles* (LAUGH Strand), including Kate Herron's SMEAR, in which the awkward reality of a first-time smear test is made funny by one woman's crushing femininity.

My Loneliness is Killing Me (DARE Strand) presents a selection of films asking existential questions about our place in the world at a time when we are more connected than ever, including SALT & SAUCE by Alia Ghafar, a film about battered sausages and trying to figure out what the hell you're doing with your life.

The Thrill of the Chase (THRILL Strand) provides an adrenaline shot to put us on the edge of our seats. In OKSIJAN by Edward Watts, the true story of a seven-year old Afghan boy who finds himself trapped in a refrigerated truck with 14 other refugees as they are smuggled into the UK. In 1745 by Gordon Napier, two slave sisters escape into the Scottish wilderness in the year of the Jacobite rising.

There are alternative fictions and skewed realities in *Strange World* (CULT Strand), including Seth Ickerman's TURBO KILLER, a sci-fi take on *The Fast and the Furious* and Kitty Faingold's BODY WORLD, in which a fully grown new born woman is birthed into a hazy summer's garden.

Heading for that Adult Crash (JOURNEY Strand) explores the stressful journey from childhood to adulthood, including Aneil Karia's WORK about a 17 year old dancer attempting to contain her growing contempt towards an unjust world, and Patrick Bresnan's THE RABBIT HUNT, in which an initiation rite is performed on boys on the cusp of manhood in Pahokee, Florida.

London Calling (JOURNEY Strand) spotlights some of the capital's most exciting upcoming filmmakers including SAMIRA'S PARTY by Bijan Sheibani, in which the bonds between 14-year old Samad and his mum are put to the test on a trip to the supermarket, and FIGHTER by Bugsy Riverbank Steel, about a boxer with Down's syndrome who fights for his right to get in the ring in the tense minutes before a boxing match.

Hoping. Fearing. Dreaming (CREATE Strand) examines lives yet to be lived including DELETE BEACH, a collaboration between Turner Prize-nominated Phil Collins and leading animation Studio 4°C.

LFF CONNECTS & SCREEN TALKS

The acclaimed LFF Connects series returns with a programme of agenda-setting talks from the world's leading artists and thinkers who are working at the intersection of film and other creative industries, while the Festival's acclaimed Screen Talks series will welcome some of the most exciting international actors and directors in contemporary cinema to discuss their body of work.

LFF CONNECTS: JULIAN ROSEFELDT & CATE BLANCHETT

Artist Julian Rosefeldt is renowned for his visually opulent and meticulously choreographed moving image artworks. Inspired equally by art, film, architecture and the history of popular culture, he creates complex multi-screen installations that carry viewers into surreal, theatrical realms. Here he is joined by BFI Fellow Cate Blanchett to discuss their collaboration on the critically acclaimed, 13-channel video installation MANIFESTO (in the Festival's *Create* strand), a deconstruction of art manifestos and a call for original thought, which has been adapted and reassembled as a 90-minute feature and receives its European Film Premiere at the Festival (Fri 6th October, NFT1).

LFF CONNECTS: NITIN SAWHNEY

Nitin Sawhney is firmly established as a world-class multi-hyphenate artist – producer, composer, multi-instrumentalist and DJ. He has composed for multiple forms, from film and videogames to dance and theatre. Highly prolific, his collaborations include some of the world's leading orchestras and songwriters, including Paul McCartney, The London Symphony Orchestra, A R Rahman, Brian Eno, Sinéad O'Connor, Anoushka Shankar, Cirque Du Soleil and Akram Khan. Having composed the score for the Festival's Opening Night Gala film BREATHE, he is currently collaborating with that film's director Andy Serkis on the upcoming *Jungle Book*. (Sat 7th October, Vue7).

LFF CONNECTS: IAN MCEWAN

One of the greatest modern British writers, Ian McEwan made a name for himself writing dark and gripping novels, often notorious for their extreme themes. His work has also explored the impact of unusual situations on ordinary people and examined how social and political issues determine personal lives. With his latest adaptation ON CHESIL BEACH as this year's Love Gala, we're delighted to have McEwan join us to discuss the different disciplines of writing for the page and the screen and explore why his fiction continues to have such enduring appeal for big screen storytellers (Sun 8th October, Curzon Soho).

LFF CONNECTS: JOHAN KNATTRUP JENSEN

Based in Copenhagen, the progressive production studio Makropol strives to create transforming stories with tools from the new digital age. Their credo is: art can drive innovation and innovation can be art. Makropol employ virtual- reality technology to test the boundaries of film narrative. Building on traditional visual storytelling, they introduce new opportunities for audiences to interact with plotlines and characters, and one another. Johan Knattrup Jensen graduated from the progressive alternative film school Super16 in 2012 and is considered to be among the pioneers of cinematic virtual reality. Here, he leads a masterclass on Makropol's most significant virtual reality projects, highlighting the discoveries and detailing the challenges that have determined their approach to cinema (Tues 10th October, NFT3).

LFF CONNECTS: DAVID FINCHER

One of the most revered filmmakers of a generation, Fincher began his career making pop promos with some of the world's most influential artists, from Madonna to Michael Jackson. He has also directed a series of iconic ad campaigns for major international brands. As a feature filmmaker he has few peers, with a back catalogue including *Se7en*, *Fight Club*, *The Social Network*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. MINDHUNTER (this year's LFF Connects Special Presentation) marks Fincher's return to the small screen after overseeing *House of Cards* for Netflix. Fincher returns to the BFI London Film Festival to discuss MINDHUNTER in the context of his career and the recent boom in long-form episodic drama (Tue 10th October, NFT1).

LFF CONNECTS: DEMIS HASSABIS

Demis Hassabis, the co-founder of renowned artificial intelligence (AI) lab DeepMind, is recognised as one of the world's smartest thinkers in his field. DeepMind is on a scientific mission to push the boundaries of AI, developing programs that can learn to solve any complex problem. Greg Kohl's documentary *AlphaGo* (in the LFF Create strand), details how DeepMind's AlphaGo algorithm beat a world champion at the notoriously difficult Chinese board game Go. Demis Hassabis will discuss his journey from junior chess champion and videogame creator to world-renowned AI pioneer. He will also talk about the Go challenge and speculate on how AI will shape the future (Wed 11th October, NFT3).

LFF SCREEN TALK: TAKASHI MIIKE

The revered Japanese director achieved global prominence with his astonishingly graphic films *Audition* and *Ichi the Killer* in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Now with a hundred films under his belt, the prolific filmmaker has defied all attempts to pigeon-hole him as a niche director, being both a big-budget hit-maker and film festival darling. Best known for over-the-top violence and gore, his films cover the gamut of genres and styles including light-hearted children's films (*Zebaman* and *The Great Yokai War*) period pieces (*Sabu*) subdued road movies (*The Bird People in China*) and farcical musical-comedy-horror films (*The Happiness of the Katakuris*). He joins us to talk about his life in film on the occasion of his 100th movie, which the Festival presents as this year's Thrill Gala, the blood-drenched supernatural samurai *BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL*. (Mon October 9th, Curzon Soho)

INDUSTRY & EDUCATION

The Festival offers a full benefits package for Industry delegates. This year's industry programme, supported by the Mayor of London, via Film London, includes the LFF Connects strand which celebrates artists working at the intersection of film and other creative industries; the talent development programme NET.WORK@LFF; Screen International's UK Stars of Tomorrow 2017 and a host of other panels, talks and networking events.

This year's Festival marks the second year of the IWC Schaffhausen Filmmaker Bursary Award in association with the BFI. At £50,000, the Bursary is the most significant of its kind in the UK film industry, supporting exceptional new and emerging writers, directors and writer/directors resident in the UK, and premiering their first or second feature in Official Selection at the BFI London Film Festival. The full industry programme will be announced in September.

The Festival again hosts Press and Industry screenings at Picturehouse Central, the Digital Viewing Library, a host of delegate hubs, discounts at partner venues and numerous networking opportunities with delegates and filmmakers. Visit www.bfi.org.uk/lff/professional-delegates for further details.

The BFI London Film Festival Education programme is supported by funding contributors The Film Music Foundation and BFI Film Academy, and event partners Into Film, London Music Masters and no.w.here. It includes a diverse range of morning screenings of films selected from the festival programme and special events for schools, students and young people, all featuring a wide range of film industry professionals, as well as the opportunity to take part in one of our three Young Juries for students, secondary and primary schools. For students in Higher Education, the Festival also offers a Student Accreditation scheme and the Film School Programme presented in partnership with the National Film & Television School, London Film Academy, London Film School and Birkbeck College.

BFI PLAYER

The BFI London Film Festival experience can be enjoyed UK-wide on BFI Player, the BFI's VOD service, featuring a Festival digital channel showing regular red carpet action and film maker interviews. BFI London Film Festival content will be a key attraction in the range of services on BFI Player – at player.bfi.org.uk/

BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL: AT A GLANCE

The 61st BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express®

4 – 15 October 2017

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- **BFI Members:** 10:00am 7 September
- **Amex priority booking** opens at 10.00am, 12 September
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Telephone Bookings: 020 7928 3232 between 10:00 – 20:30

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...ENDS...

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We welcome the **Royal Bank of Canada** as a Main Sponsor of the Festival for the second year and are thrilled to see the return of **American Airlines** as Main Sponsor and Official Airline. We're delighted **IWC Schaffhausen** return as the Festival's Official Time Partner.

We give heartfelt thanks to **The May Fair Hotel**, who return as the Festival's Official Hotel and **Renault**, our Official Car Partner.

The BFI London Film Festival is made possible thanks to support from **DCMS** and **The National Lottery** and many other cultural institutions and organisations. We are also delighted to be supported directly by the **Mayor of London** through **Film London** as a funding contributor.

The remastering and new score of the BFI Archive Gala film, SHIRAZ, is supported using public funding by **Arts Council England**, alongside additional support from **Matt Spick**; **PRS Foundation's 'The Open Fund'**; **the George Harrison family**, on behalf of the **Material World Foundation**; and all donors to the BFI's **Film is Fragile** fundraising campaign.

A huge thank you goes to the Festival's generous in-kind Sponsors: returning photography sponsor **Getty Images** and cinema advertising partner **Digital Cinema Media**. Additionally, we would like to welcome **DDA** and **Four Colman Getty** and thank **Exterion Media**, **Fever-Tree**, **Green & Black's**, **Harkness Screens**, **The Hospital Club**, **The House of St Barnabas**, **Impact Marketing**, **The Library**, **Picture Production Company**, **Pink Pepper Gin**, **TV5 Monde** and **The Union** for their continued support. We would also like to thank new sponsors **Dalston Cola** and **Maltsmiths**.

Cinema partners returning this year are **Odeon**, **Vue**, **Curzon**, **Picturehouse**, **ICA**, **Empire Haymarket**, **Ciné Lumière**, **Prince Charles Cinema** and **Rich Mix**.

We are delighted to welcome back returning Media Partners **Evening Standard**, **Time Out**, **Empire**, **Sight & Sound**, **Screen International**, **Variety**, **The Hollywood Reporter** and **Little White Lies** as well as valued Broadcast Partners **BBC London** and **Magic FM** for continuing to provide invaluable media support. We are also pleased to welcome **VICE** as a media partner this year.

The Festival would also like to give a huge thanks to returning sponsors **Christie Digital**, **Dolby Laboratories, Inc.** and **Newman Displays**.

Finally, the Festival would like to thank the many embassies and cultural institutes who support the Festival by helping to bring in filmmakers to present their work.

For further press information and general enquiries about the 61st BFI London Film Festival

Please note separate DDA and Four Colman Getty details for the BFI LFF sections:

Film clips are available via [Panther](#)

e: guest.pol@dmsukltd.com

p: [Letmein1](#)

Images available via [image.net](#)

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead organisation 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 film makers in the UK - investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK

- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger.

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 diverse films, 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 22 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). She has been BFI Head of Festivals and BFI London Film Festival Director since October 2011.



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