

## **BFI Flare announces filmmakers in first LGBT Film Mentorship programme; and Mentors, including Russell T. Davies**

**London 19 March 2015** - BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival today announces the successful filmmakers who will take part in the inaugural BFI Flare Mentorship programme in partnership with Creative Skillset. This pilot programme offers support to five emerging LGBT filmmakers who will be mentored by a senior figure from the film industry as they develop industry knowledge, professional connections, their passion for cinema and an overview of LGBT features entering the marketplace with a tailored 9 month programme of talks and screenings.

The winning film-maker participants and their specially chosen mentors are:

- **Aleem Khan**, writer/director, whose short film *Three Brothers* was BAFTA nominated in 2015 and who is currently working on new feature, *After Love*.  
**Mentor: Ben Roberts**, Director, BFI Lottery Film Fund
- **Claire Kurylowski**, whose web-based work, *In Real Life*, garnered a place in Dazed Digital's Visionaries series and had its cinema premiere at the Institute of Contemporary Arts as part of London Short Film Festival  
**Mentor: Ester Martin Bergsmark**, award-winning Swedish filmmaker (*Something Must Break, She Male Snails*)
- **Islay Bell-Webb**, writer, an NFTS graduate who co-wrote *Slap* (directed by Nick Rowland), which was also BAFTA nominated earlier this year  
**Mentor: Russell T. Davies OBE** (*Doctor Who* and recently *Cucumber, Banana and Tofu*)
- **Rachelle Constant**, producer, who is currently a development editor at BBC Continuing Drama and recently produced short film *Two Dosas* which screened at BFI London Film Festival  
**Mentors: Mike Goodridge**, CEO of Protagonist Pictures, former editor Screen International; and BAFTA-nominated producer **Gavin Humphries**
- **Scout Stuart** whose debut feature *Mud* was selected for initial development with Creative England's iFeatures  
**Mentor: Hong Khaou**, director of BAFTA-nominated *Lilting*

**Tricia Tuttle**, BFI Deputy Head of Festivals, says, "*Watching BFI Flare (formerly LLGFF) grow in the last decades, we can see just how much LGBT cinema has matured and emerged from the shadows. This is rich, vibrant work representing the diversity of LGBT experience across the globe. But we were also aware there is still a lot of work to be done to support British filmmakers*

*who are LGBT identified and who may want to tell these stories. We were genuinely impressed by the number of quality applications we received, and blown away by the talent and spirit of our five selected filmmakers. The future of British LGBT cinema looks very bright indeed."*

Find out more on the BFI website:

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/flare/bfi-flare-mentorship-meet-filmmakers>

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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

**About Creative Skillset**

Creative Skillset empowers the Creative Industries to develop skills and talent; we do this by influencing and shaping policy and by securing the vital investment for individuals to become the best in their field and for businesses to grow. As the industry skills body for the Creative Industries, we work across film, television, radio, animation, visual effects, games, fashion, textiles, advertising, marketing communications and publishing.

Creative Skillset's Film Skills Fund, as part of its film skills strategy, is funded by the National Lottery via the BFI and through the Skills Investment Funds, which comprises industry and government co-investment. The film skills strategy focuses on addressing the vital skills and training needs of the industry to deliver maximum economic and cultural return: creating jobs, strengthening skills, building skills for the future and ensuring world-class film education.