

BFI PROGRESSES PLANS FOR NEW WORLD-CLASS CENTRE FOR FILM, TV AND THE MOVING IMAGE

Support pledged from London Mayor Sadiq Khan and film industry figures including Lord Puttnam, Helen Mirren, Idris Elba, Tom Hiddleston, Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Ralph Fiennes

EMBARGOED UNTIL 1330, 25.05.16 – LONDON

The BFI today announces steps towards realising its ambition to build a new International Centre for Film, TV and the Moving Image, with an offer of support of up to £87m towards the £130m total project cost, subject to a tender process beginning today. The BFI hopes to open the new building to the public in 2022.

The BFI is at the heart of film in the UK with a network of partners and alliances, filmmakers and audiences that together create an environment where film, TV and the moving image as a cultural art-form and economic driver can flourish. The major new cultural venue on London's South Bank (on the existing Hungerford Car Park site) will be a flagship national home for this most diverse, influential and rapidly evolving art-form.

The new Centre will be the final piece in the development of London's South Bank Cultural Quarter reflecting the UK's worldwide reputation for creativity and achievement in film, TV and moving image. It will fuel the imagination of both the public and industry; giving visitors - from school children to award-winning creatives - new experiences in film whilst providing a hub for filmmakers, artists and industry professionals to meet, exchange ideas, showcase their work and develop skills. Highlights include:

- Constantly evolving, rich programmes of film, TV and moving image to provide a depth of experience that includes on-stage interviews and masterclasses, world premieres, new releases, classics, restorations, film and live music events and presentations using new and emerging technologies;
- Adventures in some of the earliest experiments in moving images - including a giant zoetrope and new camera obscura to the latest wonders in holographic and virtual reality storytelling;
- The best possible presentation of films in three cinemas (800, 180 and 120 seats) in a technologically perfect environment screening on every format of film and digital – enabling work to be shown as the filmmaker originally intended;
- Using the BFI's world-leading knowledge of film and TV, a state of the art education and research centre will be open to school groups, students and families with free access to the world's biggest film collection, events and exhibition schedules and expert education teams;
- A major gallery space to present exhibitions of international scale celebrating Britain's award winning creativity and skills in areas such as animation and VFX to

showcasing the most intimate and rare film ephemera including scripts, private letters and photographs;

- Specially commissioned new moving image installations from great filmmakers and visual artists throughout the building's public spaces;
- With over 7 million views of BFI archive collections online in 10 months, the UK's appetite to explore its film heritage is bigger than ever. New creative presentations of the UK's national collection of film and TV – the BFI National Archive – will give the public a new way to enjoy over 100 years of filmmaking;
- The Centre will be a new home for the BFI London Film Festival, giving it a venue of international stature.

The BFI is currently working closely with the other key landowners (Southbank Centre, Braeburn Estates, Jubilee Gardens Trust and Lambeth Council) and the local community to ensure that the development will be sensitively designed to complement an expanded Jubilee Gardens. The new Centre will occupy a riverside position on London's South Bank and as part of this development Braeburn Estates will also create c.6,500 sqm of new green parkland on Jubilee Gardens, dramatically extending the current space between The London Eye and Hungerford Bridge.

One of the ambitions for the Centre is to work with the BFI's existing partners to share content digitally across the UK through a network of nationwide venues that can also host touring exhibitions and programmes and develop pioneering in-venue film education programmes. This builds on the success of the BFI's UK-wide strategy, including its VOD platform BFI Player, the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) and a national film education programme through Into Film.

The new Centre has been welcomed by London Mayor Sadiq Khan and Leader of Lambeth Council Lib Peck and has been embraced by industry figures including Lord Puttnam, Idris Elba, Helen Mirren, Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Tom Hiddleston, amongst others.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: *“London is home to some of the world's finest arts and cultural organisations, one of which is undoubtedly the BFI, an internationally renowned centre for independent cinema. These plans for a new state-of-the-art building offer a fantastic opportunity for the capital's moving image artists. As well as strengthening London's position as a global leader for the creative industries, the centre will create a new generation of TV and film lovers and give Londoners of all ages the chance to experience film and its amazing heritage in the UK.”*

Cllr Lib Peck, Lambeth Council leader said: *“We are already very lucky to have the BFI in our borough, it offers our residents great opportunities for learning, entertainment and inspiration. This new centre will be a significant resource for our young people and I look forward to seeing it further inspire their creativity.”*

Josh Berger, BFI Chair said: *“The UK's thriving film, TV and screen industries are world-class, fuelled by the vision and imagination of extraordinary British talent who are evolving our art-form at speed. As the new Chair one of my priorities will be to drive forward the BFI's new Centre to provide the opportunity to showcase British talent, creativity and vision to the world. It will inspire the next*

generation of award-winning British talent, filmmakers and visual effects geniuses, and give audiences one of the best places in the world to experience film in all its forms.”

Amanda Nevill, BFI CEO said: *“British film and British filmmakers deserve a home now more than ever, a building that will express our optimism, our confidence and our excitement about Britain’s leading role in the future of film, television and the moving image at home and internationally. It will be a place where filmmakers and audiences will come together to be inspired by our creative legacy and to be part of this most fast moving, dynamic and popular art-form.”*

Alexandra Shipman (19), BFI Future Film Young Programmer and BFI Film Academy Graduate said: *“Being involved with the BFI Future Film Festival and BFI Film Academy has helped me enormously as an aspiring filmmaker. I’ve learnt how to make films, had my films screened at BFI, and helped to plan events for other young filmmakers. The prospect of a new BFI International Film Centre with first class education and filmmaking facilities in London is really exciting, and would benefit me and other young filmmakers enormously.”*

Lord David Puttnam said: *“British film and TV is the envy of the world. We combine being at the forefront of the latest innovations in technology with a legacy of over 100 years of filmmaking driven by an extraordinary and seemingly endless pool of talent and creativity.*

Why then do we still not have a 'home' that reflects this? Tate Modern, The Royal Opera House, The National Theatre, The British Museum – every other major art-form have buildings to be proud of and which support their role in delivering culture to the world. This is what British film and TV have long needed and deserved – it’s also the initiative I’ve waited my whole life to celebrate!”

Tom Hiddleston, actor said: *“I believe this is the most exciting cultural development to happen in the UK for some time. All the major art-forms in Britain quite correctly have national homes except one: film. British film - the tradition which has created and produced so much extraordinary talent both in front of and behind the camera - needs a national home, and the BFI is the organisation to build it.*

The new BFI Centre would blow the doors wide open for everyone. Filmmaking is an art, a craft, and it’s also a real job. British directors, British actors, British crews, and British films are famous all over the world. The new development will help to democratise and diversify the pool of talent coming into the industry.”

Helen Mirren, actor said: *“The proposal for a new centre is a very exciting one and will bring young people and their energies and understanding of the modern world into this amazing form of culture and of self-expression – cinema.”*

Idris Elba, actor said: *“Britain is a great centre of creativity and film is at its heart. If we want to see this continue to flourish, then we have to encourage young people from all backgrounds to think about it as a career, which we aren’t going to do if we don’t shout about it. It’s time we had a proper National home worthy of this 21st century art-form, and I’m excited for all of the brilliant opportunities this will bring.”*

Tom Hooper, filmmaker said: *"I began making films as a child and I know first-hand the powerful impact this medium has on young people who want to tell their stories. I couldn't be more excited about a place that captures the magic of the movies and fuels the imaginations and enthusiasm of Britain's next generation of filmmakers – the BFI's new Centre promises to do exactly that."*

Gugu Mbatha-Raw, actor said: *"The BFI is to culture what the Thames is to London... a vital life-force quenching the city with inspiration. An oasis to the pioneering medium of film, the BFI belongs alongside London's iconic beacons of wonder and discovery; this new Centre will open up the magic of moving image to inspire our filmmakers and film lovers of the future."*

Ralph Fiennes, actor and filmmaker said: *"Film is one of the most potent and provocative art-forms which the BFI nurtures through its continued support of British and international filmmaking. The proposal for a high profile and distinctive home for the BFI in the heart of London is very exciting. A building that would not only utilise the most cutting-edge digital technology but would also provide access to the extraordinary BFI National Archive. An essential destination for all filmmakers and film lovers."*

Mel Brooks, filmmaker, actor, comedian, composer, songwriter said: *"Please consider supporting this visionary project that will create a new heartbeat for British filmmaking. Britain deserves a home for film that reflects its stature internationally – a place that's on a par with your other great institutions like The British Museum, National Gallery, National Theatre – a home that shows the world how important British film is and where years from now the next Powell and Pressburger may be discovered and supported."*

Romola Garai, actress said: *"Film has given Britain so much. So much pleasure, excitement, knowledge and investment. It's time to give it the home it deserves and the kind of recognition that can develop our future filmmakers and film goers."*

John Hurt, actor said: *"The BFI has spent the last 65 years under Waterloo Bridge – in that time cinema and television has developed into the great modern art-form. It's time we had a building that reflects the scale of our achievements and our ambition for the future but more importantly gives everybody the opportunity to fully experience the world of film in all its glory. Let's give it the home it deserves."*

David Walliams, actor and author said: *"Film is the greatest art-form. It touches all of us. A film can change the way we think or feel. But best of all it's magic. It's like watching our dreams become real. The BFI is the best place in the world to celebrate this brilliant art-form. It would be fantastic if this institution could expand and find a new home."*

Stephen Frears, filmmaker said:

*"When I was young, film was at the centre of the Universe.
I learned my life from films.
Anything that gives film the importance it deserves gets my support."*

*Films are after all part of the export business.
This new Centre sounds great."*

Images can be downloaded via www.image.net

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About the BFI

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

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

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 Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger.

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