



**APRIL 1 2011**

## **BFI STRENGTHENS BOARD AND INCREASES PRODUCTION FUNDS AS NEW ERA FOR FILM BEGINS**

Today the BFI becomes the lead body for film in the UK, and immediately sets the pace for change with the appointment of five new Governors. In addition, the BFI is further supporting filmmakers by channelling an increased **£3m** towards funding for UK production (from £15m – 18m), as it delivers on its commitment to put overhead savings back into film.

BFI Chair Greg Dyke has confirmed that five new Governors - with a sixth to be announced next week - will join the BFI Board, following over 100 applicants from some of the biggest names across all sectors of the industry. Representing a dynamic, hugely talented and diverse range of expertise they include: highly respected US and European film and TV industry executive, **Josh Berger**, the President and Managing Director, Warner Bros. Entertainment UK, Ireland and Spain; former MP and Cabinet Minister **Rt. Hon James Purnell** - who has been coming to BFI screenings since the age of 15 and is a dedicated supporter of the arts; BAFTA winning film and TV director and founder of the very successful education charity, FILMCLUB, **Beeban Kidron** (*Bridget Jones*, *Edge of Reason*; *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*); **Lisbeth Savill**, Head of Film and Television Practice at Olswang, winner of the Women in Film and Television Business Award (December 2010) and involved in the financing of a string of hit movies including *The King's Speech*; and **Matthew Justice**, Film and TV producer and MD of Big Talk (the production company behind *Shaun of the Dead*, *Hot Fuzz*, *Rev*, *Paul* and the much anticipated new release *Attack The Block*). The new Governors take up their posts from today, 1<sup>st</sup> April, replacing three retiring Governors, Eric Fellner, Caroline Michel and Peter Watson, plus two vacant posts.

**Greg Dyke** said “*We are about to see the biggest change to the film landscape in the past ten years and these new board members have each been chosen for the individual skills, wisdom and strengths they will bring to the BFI so that it can lead on delivering a dynamic new plan for film in the UK. The Board members stepping down provided a rock-steady hand to help guide the BFI through some of the most challenging times in its history and they can*

be proud of their achievements. I want to thank them for everything they have done for the BFI.”

**Amanda Nevill, Director BFI** said ‘Today heralds a new chapter for the BFI and a new era for film, which I believe will be one of the most fertile, exciting and successful times for British film.

Building on the experience and expertise of both the BFI and the UKFC, we now have an historic opportunity to create a single voice and cohesive vision for film. The new era isn’t about an organisation, it’s about film, film makers and audiences, and that will be our focus.’

**Minister for the Creative Industries, Ed Vaizey said:**

“The BFI is now the lead agency for film. The transfer of UKFC activities has been concluded with no disruption to film makers. I would like to pay tribute to the hard work and dedication of the staff at UKFC and the BFI who helped make this happen and who put the interests of film first. The BFI will be administering British film certification; taking over as the Lottery distributor; and overseeing a 60% increased share of Lottery proceeds for British films. In retaining key industry expertise and building on the wealth of knowledge already in the BFI I am confident that the future of British film is in safe hands.”

The BFI is now the Lottery distributor for film which includes funding for film development and production, distribution (the P&A Fund), training and education through Skillset and First Light. It also takes on the strategic partnerships for film across the devolved nations and funding in the English regions; responsibility for UK film certification, which is the gateway to the UK film tax credit; and the MEDIA Desk UK<sup>1</sup>. In supporting Film London and the British Film Commission, the BFI also takes on promoting British film and talent internationally. The BFI recognises the importance of the Research and Statistics Unit (RSU) to the film industry, and will seek new commercial partnership funding models to support it.

The BFI adds this new remit to its already thriving portfolio which reaches millions of people across the country. This includes BFI Southbank (currently reporting record figures) and BFI IMAX (always one of the top three most commercially successful cinema screens in the world); publishing; *Sight & Sound* magazine; cinema distribution; the BFI DVD label; Festivals; including the hugely successful BFI London Film Festival; BFI Education; BFI Library and the BFI National Archive – the world’s busiest film archive.

---

<sup>1</sup> Providing guidance for filmmakers seeking European funding

The BFI today welcomes 38 new colleagues from the UK Film Council, ensuring a seamless transition and continuity across all activities.

**For FAQ's please visit:**

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/about/policy/bfi-ukfc-transfer.html>

### **PRESS CONTACTS:**

**Judy Wells, Head of Press and PR, BFI**

Tel: 020 7957 8919 or email: [judy.wells@bfi.org.uk](mailto:judy.wells@bfi.org.uk)

**Nick Mason Pearson, Director of Press and Public Affairs, BFI**

Tel: 020 7957 8901 or email: [nick.pearson@bfi.org.uk](mailto:nick.pearson@bfi.org.uk)

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **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 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

#### **Board of Governors**

The BFI is governed by a Board of 15 Governors subject to the terms and conditions set out in its Royal Charter and they are the trustees of the charity. The Chair of the Board of Governors is appointed, with the approval of the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, by the UK Film Council.

The BFI is a charity, not-for-profit and our policy is that these non-executive posts are unremunerated.

For more information about the role of BFI Governors see

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/about/howweare/governors/intro.html>

The recruitment process of Governors to the BFI Board fully follows the code of practice as laid out in the Nolan principles -

[http://www.publicappointmentscommissioner.org/Code\\_of\\_Practice/e0908a66106.html](http://www.publicappointmentscommissioner.org/Code_of_Practice/e0908a66106.html)

The other BFI Governors are: Greg Dyke (Chair); Ashley Highfield; Cy Young; Peter Foy; Professor Sir Howard Newby CBE; Shami Chakrabarti CBE; Sir Christopher Frayling; Tessa Ross CBE; David Thompson and Matthew Freud

## Biographies

**Josh Berger** is President & Managing Director, Warner Bros. Entertainment UK, Ireland and Spain and oversees all the company's business activities in the three territories including Warner Bros. Pictures, Warner Home Video, Warner Bros. International Television Distribution, Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment, Warner Bros. Digital Distribution and Warner Bros. Consumer Products. A graduate of Harvard University, Josh sits on the boards of, among others, leading games publisher & developer, TT Games; Filmbank, a leader in non-theatrical distribution; and the climate change action organisation, The Climate Group. He is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the British Screen Advisory Council, Young Presidents' Association and an associate to the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. He is also a member of the BAFTA Film Committee.

**James Purnell** was Head of Corporate Planning at the BBC from 1995-97. He was adviser on culture, media and sport, and the knowledge economy to Tony Blair from 1997 until 2001, when he was elected as a Member of Parliament. He served as a Minister, first in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and later in the Department of Work and Pensions. In June 2007, he was promoted to Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and in the following January he moved back to DWP as Work and Pensions Secretary. He stood down as an MP at the 2010 election and took up the chairmanship of ippr's trustees in September. He is currently producing documentaries and dramas for Rare Day. He is also a trustee of the National Theatre.

**Lisbeth Savill** is a Partner and Head of Film and Television at Olswang. She specialises in commercial work for many UK, US and European independent producers and distributors as well as a number of the US major studios. She concentrates on the financing of films and, in particular, the use of co-production structures and structured financings. Libby has been involved in many industry bodies, including recently completing two terms as a Board Director of Film London. She was awarded the Women in Film and Television Business Award for 2010, the only lawyer in private practice to have been so honoured in WFTV's 20 year history of giving this Award.

**Beeban Kidron** has spent the last 30 years working in feature film, television and documentary, directing such films as *Bridget Jones*, *Edge of Reason*; *To Woo Fong*, *Thanks For Everything Julie Newmar*; *Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*; and her latest documentary for the BBC about temple prostitutes in Southern India, *Sex, Death And The Gods*. She is the co-founder and vice-chair of FILMCLUB, an education charity with wide reaching social and academic benefits. With approximately 250,000 children watching, discussing and reviewing films each week - FILMCLUB is transforming the lives of young people.

**Matthew Justice** is currently Managing Director of Big Talk, the multi-award winning Film and Television production company. He has over twenty years' experience in Film and Television. Prior to joining Big Talk, Matthew ran his own company, Lunar Films, where he produced David Mackenzie's Berlin Silver Bear-winning *Hallam Foe*, Cedric Klapisch's multiple César-winning *The Russian Dolls* and Raul Ruiz's *Klimt*. His latest film is the much-anticipated *Attack the Block*, directed by Joe Cornish.