



**EUROPEAN PREMIERE OF
FREE FIRE**



TO CLOSE THE 60TH BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

LONDON – Monday 1 August, 2016: The 60th BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express® is proud to announce that this year's Closing Night gala will be Ben Wheatley's high-octane action thriller FREE FIRE. The film will receive its European premiere on Sunday 16 October at the Odeon Leicester Square, attended by cast and filmmakers.

Massachusetts late '70s. Justine (Brie Larson) has brokered a meeting in a deserted warehouse between two Irishmen (Cillian Murphy, Michael Smiley) and a gang led by Vernon (Sharlto Copley) and Ord (Armie Hammer) who are selling them a stash of guns. But when shots are fired in the handover, a heart stopping game of survival ensues.

Ben Wheatley says “I'm very proud to be showing FREE FIRE at the BFI London Film Festival. To be the closing film is a great honour. LFF have been fantastic in supporting the films I've made (me and an army of 100s) and I can't wait to show FREE FIRE to the Festival audience!”

FREE FIRE is Wheatley's third film to be presented at the Festival, following *High-Rise* (2015) which screened as Festival Gala and *Sightseers* (2012) which screened as Laugh Gala.

BFI London Film Festival Director, Clare Stewart says: “Ben Wheatley's ascent as one of the UK's most dazzling cinematic talents continues with this ballsy actioner. Dripping with blood, sweat and irony, FREE FIRE's bravura filmmaking pays knowing tribute to the films of Sam Peckinpah and features a terrific cast who clearly relish bringing Wheatley and co-writer Amy Jump's vivid characters to the screen. We are thrilled to be presenting the European Premiere as our Closing Night gala, ensuring that the 60th edition of the BFI London Film Festival goes out with a bang!

Film4 and BFI present a Rook Films Production of a Ben Wheatley film. Starring Sharlto Copley, Armie Hammer, Brie Larson, Cillian Murphy, Jack Reynor, Babou Ceesay, Enzo Cilenti, Sam Riley, Michael Smiley and Noah Taylor. Its executive producers are Martin Scorsese and Emma Tillinger Koskoff, Reno Antoniadis, David Kosse and Sam Lavender, Ben Roberts and Lizzie Francke, Danny Perkins and Dan MacRae. The film is produced by Andrew Starke, directed by Ben Wheatley with a screenplay by Amy Jump and Wheatley. STUDIOCANAL will release the film in UK and Ireland in 2017.

The 60th BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express® takes place from Wednesday 5 October-Sunday 16 October 2016. The opening night film is the previously announced Amma Asante's A UNITED KINGDOM. The full Festival programme will be announced on Thursday 1 September 2016.

- Ends-

Festival Information & Ticket Booking

Purchase Festival tickets online at bfi.org.uk/lff, by phone from 10:00-20:30 daily at +44 (0)20 7928 3232, or visit the BFI Southbank Box Office 11:00-20:30. BFI Members' priority booking opens 10.00, 8 September - join at bfi.org.uk/join; Public booking opens 10.00, 15 September.

Social Media:

@BFI | #LFF

Facebook.com/londonfilmfestival

@StudiocanalUK

Film Assets

Images are available on www.picselect.com / www.studiocanal.co.uk/press

PRESS CONTACTS

For further information about the 60th BFI London Film Festival

PREMIER - Rupert Goodwin, LFF Head of Press & Publicity

rupert.goodwin@premiercomms.com Tel: +44 20 7292 8330

PREMIER - General Press Enquires & Accreditation
LFFPress@premiercomms.com Tel: +44 20 7292 8330

For further information about the UK release of FREE FIRE

STUDIOCANAL – Suzanne Noble, Head of UK Publicity & Corporate Communications
Suzanne.Noble@studiocanal.co.uk Tel: +44 20 7534 2700

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 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.

BFI London Film Festival 2015

The 2015 BFI London Film Festival opened with the European premiere of Sarah Gavron's agenda-setting *Suffragette*. The film kicked off a festival focusing on and celebrating strong women, including a keynote address from campaigner Geena Davis as part of the Global Symposium on Gender in Media, hosted by the LFF in collaboration with the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media and Women in Film and Television (WFTV). The festival closed with the European Premiere of Danny Boyle's *Steve Jobs*, and saw 164,000 attendances across 568 screenings in 16 London venues and Opening and Closing night cinecasts to 45 venues across the UK.

The festival welcomed leading lights from across the international film industry in 2015, Acting talent supporting films at the Festival included: Carey Mulligan, Meryl Streep, Michael Fassbender, Kate Winslet, Johnny Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch, Saoirse Ronan, Emory Cohen, Cate Blanchett, Rooney Mara, Tom Hiddleston, Sienna Miller, Elizabeth Moss, Mohammed Assaf, Maggie Smith, Alex Jennings, Alan Bennett, Rachel Weisz, Colin Farrell, Ben Foster, Chris O'Dowd, Brie Larson, Agyness Deyn, Peter Mullan, Bryan Cranston, Helen Mirren, John Goodman, Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje, Michael Caine and Harvey Keitel.

Directors presenting their work included Lenny Abrahamson, Hany Abu-Assad, Sean Baker, Mir-Jean Bou Chaaya, Danny Boyle, Esther May Campbell, Scott Cooper, John Crowley, Jonás Cuarón, Terence Davies, Stephen Frears, Cary Fukunaga, Sarah Gavron, Luca Guadagnino, Davis Guggenheim, Lucile Hadžihalilović, Todd Haynes, Nicholas Hytner, Yorgos Lanthimos, Guy Maddin, Deepa Mehta, László Nemes, Jerzy Skolimowski, Simon Stone, Ondi Timoner, Johnnie To, Athina Rachel Tsangari, James Vanderbilt, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Ben Wheatley and S. Graig Zahler.

Clare Stewart biography

Clare Stewart's 20 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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