

## **HONG KHAOU'S LILTING GETS EUROPEAN PREMIERE - OPENING NIGHT OF 28<sup>TH</sup> BFI LONDON LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL**

**LONDON – Wednesday 12 February 2014:** The 28<sup>th</sup> BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival will open on 20<sup>th</sup> March with the European premiere of *LILTING*, Hong Khaou's poetic drama of love and loss, starring Ben Whishaw, Cheng Pei Pei (*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*), Andrew Leung, and Peter Bowles, which opened the World Cinema Dramatic Competition at this year's Sundance Film Festival.

*LILTING* is produced by Dominic Buchanan, through Film London Microwave in association with BBC Films, with Exec Producers Stink, SUMS Film & Media and Bob & Co. Artificial Eye will distribute in the UK and Protagonist Pictures are handling international sales. *LILTING* is UK-based Hong Khaou's debut feature, following two successful shorts which both played at the LLGFF in previous years.

Critics have warmed to *LILTING*'s gentle charms, as a love story, a tale of culture clash and miscommunication, and a lyrical engagement with the effects of sudden loss, on loved ones and their close family. Cinematography by Ula Pontikos (*Weekend*) won an award at Sundance.

Hong Khaou said, "I'm so thrilled *Lilting* will be opening the LLGFF. It's a wonderful film festival to kick off our home and European premiere. It feels like a perfect fit to have it in London and at the BFI. I'm thankful Clare and her team have given us such a prestigious slot, it shows a lot of love and faith in *Lilting*."

Clare Stewart, Head of Cinemas and Festivals, BFI said, “Hong Khaou’s warm-hearted film offers just the kind of unexpected delight we look for in a festival. With great performances and an inventive structure, the film has an authentic and unclichéed approach to some of the big questions. Ben Whishaw and Cheng Pei Pei give extraordinary performances and we are thrilled to be launching the festival with such a treasure.”

The full programme of the LLGFF (20<sup>th</sup> March – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2014) supported by Principal Sponsor Accenture will be released at a public launch event on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February at BFI Southbank, and online. Programmers promise a bumper festival with 50 features, a new VOD strand through the BFI Player, an enhanced industry offer including an LGBT talent development programme, plus visiting filmmakers, events, installations and a previously unseen Jarman work. Following a wide audience consultation in 2013, the BFI will also announce a new name for the Festival, and launch its monthly incarnation at BFI Southbank alongside a collection of contemporary and archive LGBT film available to stream on the BFI Player. The new brand will be unveiled at the launch event.

## **SYNOPSIS**

### **Lilting dir. Hong Khaou, UK 2014, min**

Staggering from loss after the recent death of his lover Kai, Richard (Ben Whishaw) reaches out to Kai’s mother Junn (*Crouching Tiger’s* Cheng Pei Pei), a Chinese-Cambodian woman who has never assimilated or learned English in her 20-something years in London. Kai was Junn’s lifeline to the world; she relied on him for everything, but despite this enforced intimacy, he never came out to her and Junn remains fiercely critical of Richard through a fugue of maternal jealousy and denial. British director Hong Khaou’s film uses a cinematic idiom all of its own, weaving narrative strands from past and present, real and imagined, between mother and son and also between Richard and Kai (a boyishly beautiful Andrew Leung). Lingering, tender scenes of the lovers are dreamily captured by *Weekend* cinematographer Ula Pontikos (who deservedly nabbed a Sundance award). While serious and moving as a study of loss, *Lilting* also gracefully incorporates humour and warmth through a subplot in which Junn is wordlessly courted by an elderly Englishman (Peter Bowles), aided by a translator supplied by Richard. A lyrical exploration of the pleasures and pains of communication, produced under the auspices of Film London’s hugely successful Microwave scheme, this is a precious British film to celebrate. It’s also a sophisticated portrait of a gay male relationship that goes beyond the first flushes of love to the heights and bittersweet depths of sharing a life, albeit briefly, with someone you love. The BFI couldn’t be more delighted to open this year’s LLGFF with the European premiere of *Lilting*.

## **LLGFF**

The 2013 edition of the LLGFF took place over 11 days and enjoyed an extraordinary audience response with 22,000 attendances, an increase of 1,000 on the 2012 festival, across 130 programmes of screenings and events. Led by BFI Head of Cinemas and Festivals, Clare Stewart, and BFI Deputy Head of Festivals Tricia Tuttle, the festival is programmed by a team of five programmers Brian Robinson, Emma Smart, Jason Barker, Michael Blyth and Nazmia Jamal.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Applications for press accreditation open on the 19 February 2014, please visit the website to apply online. For any accreditation enquiries please contact: Lucy Aronica 020 7 957 4833 [lucy.aronica@bfi.org.uk](mailto:lucy.aronica@bfi.org.uk)

– Ends –

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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

### **About Accenture**

Accenture has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with the BFI (British Film Institute) and was delighted to extend the connection to become An Official Partner of the BFI for the next three years. Accenture is proud to continue as principal sponsor of the BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival and its on-going partnership with the festival demonstrates Accenture's longstanding commitment to supporting diversity. Recognised as an employer of choice for LGBT people, Accenture was named in the top five in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index 2014 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row; the index is an annual benchmarking exercise that showcases Britain's top employers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff.

Last year, Accenture Interactive supported the BFI as it worked to define its vision for the future of the BFI National Archive access and respond to the changing needs of the film watching public. The BFI worked with Accenture experts across digital strategy, customer experience and digital video services on how a BFI branded player would be able to robustly serve a growing video-on-demand audience with an evolving catalogue of old and new content, while retaining the BFI's unique curatorial values. Accenture continues to support the BFI and its vision for the future of UK film.

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 281,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US\$28.6 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2013. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).



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#### **LLGFF Sponsors**

In 2014 the Festival is delighted to welcome back a number of its most valued and longstanding partners. Accenture joins us for a second year as Principal Sponsor, Renault returns as the LLGFF's valued car partner, American Airlines also continues as the Festival's official airline and the May Fair Hotel, for a fifth successive year, will be accommodating some of the festival's special guests. We would also like to thank our special screening sponsors the LGBT Interbank Forum for their continued support of the LLGFF and are thrilled to welcome Celebrity Cruises as a new partner for this year. Thanks also go to Konditor & Cook, Topolski, Green and Blacks, Christie, Unique Digital, Skillset and other funding contributors. Finally, thanks goes to our returning Media partners, G3 and Attitude and our Distribution Partner Impact.

#### **About Film London Microwave**

Launched in 2006, Film London Microwave is the acclaimed feature film-making fund set up by Film London with BBC Films, with support from Creative Skillset. Committed to discovering and investing in emerging London-based film-makers, Microwave backs talented teams with fresh voices and strong stories. A unique 'apprenticeship' scheme, it provides an intensive approach to film-making with the emphasis on original ideas, tightly focussed scripts and short production schedules. Film-makers are supported by an extensive training and mentoring programme from development, through production, all the way to the film's release in the UK and internationally.

To date, eight features have been completed through Microwave all of which have secured theatrical distribution in the UK, including BAFTA-nominated *Shifty* from Eran Creevy and Ben Drew's *iLL Manors*.

Film London, as the capital's film and media agency, aims to ensure London has a thriving film sector that enriches the city's businesses and its people. The agency works with all the screen industries to sustain, promote and develop London as a major international production and film cultural capital, and it supports the development of the city's new and emerging film-making talent. Film London is funded by the Mayor of London, the National Lottery through the BFI, and receives significant support from Arts Council England and Creative Skillset. [www.filmlondon.org.uk](http://www.filmlondon.org.uk)

### **About BBC Films**

BBC Films is at the forefront of independent filmmaking in the UK, developing and co-producing around eight films a year. Christine Langan is the Head of BBC Films.

Recent releases include BAFTA, Golden Globe and Academy Award® nominated Saving Mr. Banks from director John Lee Hancock; Stephen Frears's BAFTA, Golden Globe and Academy Award® nominated Philomena; BAFTA and Academy Award® nominated Ralph Fiennes's The Invisible Woman; no.1 hit comedy Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa from director Declan Lowney; Dustin Hoffman's directorial debut Quartet; Rufus Norris's BIFA award-winning directorial debut Broken. Pascal Chaumeil's A Long Way Down opens in March; Joanna Hogg's Exhibition will be released in April, and Ben Kellert's Mrs Brown's Boys D'Movie - based on the hit BBC TV series - will be in cinemas summer 2014.

BBC Films has an impressive back catalogue, which includes titles such as Simon Curtis's Academy Award® nominated My Week with Marilyn; Lynne Ramsay's intense thriller We Need to Talk About Kevin; Lasse Hallström's Golden Globe nominated romantic comedy Salmon Fishing in the Yemen; Cary Fukunaga's gothic romance Jane Eyre; Nigel Cole's compelling true-life drama Made in Dagenham; Lone Scherfig's Academy Award® nominated and BAFTA award-winning An Education; Armando Iannucci's Academy Award® and BAFTA award-nominated In the Loop; Jane Campion's Academy Award® nominated Bright Star; and Andrea Arnold's BAFTA award-winning Fish Tank.

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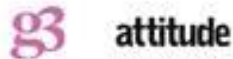
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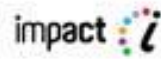


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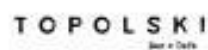
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