

NEW CURATORIAL APPOINTMENTS FOR DANNY LEIGH AND WILL MASSA AT THE BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE

Embargoed until 27th June 2017

The BFI today announces that Danny Leigh and Will Massa have joined the BFI National Archive curatorial team, directly reporting to Robin Baker, BFI Head Curator. In his new role as Senior Curator of Fiction Film and Television, Danny will help to develop, interpret and care for this world class collection, bringing the treasures to as wide an audience as possible. Danny's remit includes building the BFI's National Archive's collection of new British film and TV – including new and emerging forms of moving image - alongside Will who has been appointed Curator of Contemporary Fiction Film in a newly created role.

Both of these exciting new appointments mark a new strategic focus for the Archive in helping the curatorial team to engage more fully with the contemporary film and TV industries, to ensure that the BFI are able to bring a wider range of the best new and recent British film and television into the national collection. Will joined the BFI in May with Danny starting on 26th June.

Danny comes with a wealth of over 20 years' experience working in film journalism. He writes regularly for the Financial Times and The Guardian. As a broadcaster, he has been co-host of BBC1's long-running Film programme, Film 2017 and has written and presented documentaries for BBC4 and Radio 4 as well as making films for BBC Arts Digital. As a programmer, he was part of the team that launched the educational charity Film Club (now Into Film), and has worked with numerous festivals and independent cinemas. He has had a long relationship with the BFI, writing for Sight & Sound and as a seasoned speaker and moderator appearing at live on stage events at BFI Southbank. He recently consulted on the BFI's Alan Clarke and London projects. He is also a novelist, and is writing his third book for Faber & Faber.

Will joins the BFI from the British Council's Film department where he was Senior Programme Manager, delivering a variety of UK film showcasing and partnership projects across the Americas and EU Europe. Prior to the British Council Will worked in talent development at regional screen agencies Screen Yorkshire and North West Vision+Media and was an Associate Partner at programming consultancy Reel Solutions. From 2011-2013 he was Head of Development on Rankin Film Productions' national short film initiative Collabor8te and is currently a board member at Encounters Short Film and Animation Festival in Bristol.

Danny Leigh said *“A place is nothing without memory, and in Britain the BFI National Archive is our national memory kept alive in moving pictures. You don’t get many chances to shout from the rooftops about screen history at the same time as celebrating the most vital film and TV happening now, and I feel very lucky because this new role at the Archive gives me exactly that chance. It’s going to be a thrill and a privilege to make it my new home.”*

Will Massa said *“I am absolutely thrilled to be joining the BFI’s Curatorial team. It’s a real privilege to join such a passionate group of experts and I’m looking forward to engaging with filmmakers and the broader industry to make sure that contemporary British filmmaking is comprehensively represented within the national collection.”*

Robin Baker, BFI Head Curator, BFI National Archive said *“We’re delighted to be welcoming Will and Danny to the BFI’s team of expert film and TV curators, bringing an extraordinary range of knowledge and experience with them. They will play a vital role in building the national collection of film and TV. As well as developing the BFI’s cultural programme Will and Danny will be working with contemporary filmmakers, production companies, broadcasters and festivals to ensure that the BFI is able to collect the best new British work – and that it is safely preserved in the BFI National Archive for future generations. The story of British film and TV is full of missing titles: films and programmes that were lost or wiped. In the digital age there is an even greater risk of films going AWOL, maybe forever. So Will and Danny will be looking for the support of the filmmaking community to make sure that new films are safe and fully preserved as soon as they are made.”*

ENDS.

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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.

About the BFI National Archive

The BFI National Archive was founded in 1935 and has grown to become the one of the largest and most important collections of film and television in the world with over 180,000 films and 750,000 television programmes. For over 80 years the BFI has been an international leader in film preservation and guardian of Britain's unparalleled film and TV heritage. The BFI is an innovator in presenting films to audiences in new and dynamic ways, from cinemas to film festivals, outdoor events to online video-on-demand. At the heart of all its activities is the BFI's central aim to ensure that everyone in the UK has access to the widest possible range of film and their own film heritage.

That heritage includes all-time great British directors Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean and Powell and Pressburger; and the rich vein of documentary filmmaking, in which Britain led the world, including the lyrical work of Humphrey Jennings. The archive also boasts a significant collection of filmmakers' papers as well as extensive stills, posters and production and costume designs along with original scripts, press books and related ephemera.

Expert teams undertake the time-consuming and complex task of restoring films at the BFI John Paul Getty Jr Conservation Centre in Hertfordshire. The BFI's most precious film materials are kept in optimum conditions in the world-leading Master Film Store in Warwickshire.