

## **Peter Morgan CBE to be awarded BFI Fellowship**

**EMBARGOED until 12.00 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2017, London** – The BFI is pleased to announce that British screenwriter and producer Peter Morgan CBE will be awarded the BFI’s highest honour, the BFI Fellowship, at the annual BFI Chairman’s Dinner, hosted by BFI Chair Josh Berger, on 21 February 2017, at Claridges, London.

With over 30 awards to his name, Peter is one of today’s most celebrated and influential screenwriters. His illustrious writing career includes some of the most successful films and television series of recent years, including *Frost/Nixon* (2008), *The Queen* (2006), *The Last King of Scotland* (2007), *Rush* (2013) and, most recently, the Netflix original smash hit, *The Crown* (2016). Netflix has credited much of its audience growth at the end of last year to *The Crown*, created and written by Peter, and winner of Best TV Drama at this year’s Golden Globes. *The Crown’s* Executive Producer and director Stephen Daldry will be onstage with cast members at the BFI & Radio Times Television Festival, BFI Southbank, on 8 April.

Josh Berger, BFI Chair said *‘I am absolutely thrilled to be recognising Peter Morgan’s rare talent and enormous contribution to both the big and small screen with a BFI Fellowship. He is rightly one of our most fêted and accomplished screenwriters, with a career spanning almost 30 years and delighting generations of audiences with his work. Peter has an uncanny knack for getting under the skin of prominent figures to portray an eclectic range of real life personalities, retelling the most iconic moments in our recent history and the individuals at the heart of them, to make engaging, elegant and accessible stories.’*

Peter Morgan said *“I couldn’t be more surprised, thrilled or proud to receive this honour - and look forward to being suitably teased and abused on the night.”*

The British establishment - its leadership and politics, have provided much inspiration for a number of Peter’s works. Helen Mirren played Queen Elizabeth II in *The Queen*, which Peter later adapted for the theatre, producing *The Audience* (2013), where Helen continued her portrayal of the Queen. *The Crown*, which looks back at the earlier days of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, won the 2017 Golden Globe for Best TV Drama Series and a second series has been confirmed.

Tony Blair has also reoccurred as a figure throughout Peter’s film and television work, with Michael Sheen returning to portray Britain’s ex-Prime Minister in an award-winning trilogy of films; *The Deal* (2003), *The Queen* and *The Special Relationship* (2010). The Academy Award nominated *Frost/Nixon* is another of Peter’s scripts to focus on recent political events. The film opened the BFI London Film Festival in 2008, as did Peter’s ensemble drama *360* in 2011.

Further characters that Peter has brought to life adeptly on the big screen are Ugandan President Idi Amin in the multi-award-winning *The Last King of Scotland*, footballing legend Brian Clough who

controversially coached Leeds United for just 44 days, in *The Damned United* (2009) and Formula One stars James Hunt and Niki Lauda, whose merciless rivalry was brought to life in *Rush*.

Peter will be joining the distinguished ranks of other BFI Fellows including Tim Burton, Clint Eastwood, Judi Dench, Martin Scorsese, Jeanne Moreau, Stephen Frears, Steve McQueen, Cate Blanchett, John Hurt, Maggie Smith and Hugh Grant. A number of BFI's Fellows have writing credits to their name, but Graham Greene and Lynda La Plante are the only other recipients who are known principally as writers for television and film.

Josh Berger will host the BFI Chairman's Dinner, held to thank the BFI's charitable donors for their support of the organization throughout the year, for the first time as BFI Chair. Prior to his appointment, he was a BFI Governor since 2011 Josh is the President and Managing Director of Warner Bros. Entertainment UK, Ireland and Spain.

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**Notes to Editors**

The Fellowship of the BFI (British Film Institute) was created in 1983 to coincide with the BFI's 50th anniversary. On that occasion the British film industry gathered in the Guildhall for a televised event at which the first group of Fellows were created - Marcel Carné, David Lean, Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger, Satyajit Ray and Orson Welles.

Since its creation, the BFI Fellowship has been awarded to key figures in British film and television including Peggy Ashcroft, Dirk Bogarde, Alec Guinness, Maggie Smith, Laurence Olivier, Vanessa Redgrave, Mike Leigh, Judi Dench and Helena Bonham Carter. Also recognised have been such film industry luminaries as Jack Cardiff, Sydney Samuelson and Jeremy Thomas, and some of the giants of world cinema, including Michelangelo Antonioni, Abbas Kiarostami, Akira Kurosawa, Jeanne Moreau, Elem Klimov and Bernardo Bertolucci. From the world of television key figures such as Alan Yentob, Greg Dyke, Jeremy Isaacs, David Rose, Michael Parkinson, Lynda La Plante, Lord Bernstein and Verity Lambert have all received the award.

Since 1983 a total of 81 Fellowships have been awarded.

**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

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 CBE.

**The BFI & Radio Times Television Festival**

The BFI has teamed up with *Radio Times* to create the largest and most prestigious television festival in the UK. The stars and creators of some of television's best-loved shows will be at BFI Southbank 7—9 April 2017 to share secrets and tell their inside stories. The Festival weekend will be an unmissable occasion for lovers of the small screen with more than 30 events. It will feature many of the biggest names in broadcasting, from Michael Palin to *Sherlock* mastermind Steven Moffat; international favourites; exclusive sneak previews and rare archive screenings; book signings; family programming; a fiendishly tricky TV quiz — and much more. The full programme will be announced on February 7. For the latest updates on new events visit the Festival website at [bfi.org.uk/radiotimestvfest](http://bfi.org.uk/radiotimestvfest)