



SAVING MR. BANKS

EUROPEAN PREMIERE

CLOSES THE 57TH BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL



Embargoed until 3pm UK Thursday 8th August

London, 8th August, 2013: – The 57th BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express is delighted to announce that this year's Festival will close on Sunday 20 October at the Odeon Leicester Square with the European Premiere of Disney's SAVING MR. BANKS, the extraordinary untold story of how one of the most beloved tales of all time, *Mary Poppins*, was brought to the big screen.

SAVING MR. BANKS is directed by John Lee Hancock (*The Blind Side*) and stars two-time Academy Award®-winner Emma Thompson (*Sense and Sensibility*, *The Remains of the Day*, *Howards End*) as the London-based author of *Mary Poppins*, P.L. Travers, and fellow double Oscar®-winner Tom Hanks (*Forrest Gump*, *Philadelphia*) as Walt Disney. They lead a stellar international supporting cast including Colin Farrell (*In Bruges*), Paul Giamatti (*Sideways*) and Ruth Wilson (*Luther*). The film boasts a number of other British filmmaking talents including producer Alison Owen, p.g.a. (*Jane Eyre*, *Elizabeth*) and co-writer Kelly Marcel (who is writing the screenplay for the forthcoming *Fifty Shades of Grey*) with production companies Ruby Films and BBC Films.

John Lee Hancock, Emma Thompson and Tom Hanks are all expected to attend the Closing Night Gala.

Clare Stewart, BFI Head of Exhibition and Festival Director says: *“There is only one word that gives full expression to the inventiveness and creativity of the film that will be our Closing Night Gala for the 57th BFI London Film Festival – SAVING MR. BANKS is supercalifragilisticexpialidocious! Positively overflowing with its ebullient love of storytelling and the filmmaking process, SAVING MR. BANKS is also a magical ode to the brilliance and volatility of the two very different creative forces behind the making of Mary Poppins, with Emma Thompson superb as the protective author P.L. Travers and Tom Hanks in charming form as Walt Disney.”*

Producer Alison Owen adds: *“SAVING MR. BANKS is very much about British manners versus American values, as Pamela Travers and Walt Disney battle over the rights to Mary Poppins, so it feels absolutely fitting that the LFF Closing Night should be our European Premiere, and we feel very honoured. We hope Pamela Travers would approve wholeheartedly. We filmed the London sequences in the street where Pamela lived, and London was both the start of the journey for Mary Poppins and for our movie, so we feel like we're beginning in the right place.”*

SAVING MR. BANKS is a poignant, sharply funny and moving story of personal journey and discovery, which reveals how P.L. Travers' emotional connection to her characters and exhaustive apprehension to Walt Disney's creative vision nearly dismantled the entire twenty-year endeavour to transform a work of personal significance into one of the most endearing classic films in cinematic history. The film is directed by John Lee Hancock, produced by Alison Owen, Ian Collie and Philip Steuer, and written by Kelly Marcel and Sue Smith. Walt Disney Studios releases the film in UK cinemas winter 2013.

The 57th BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express runs from Wednesday 9 October-Sunday 20 October. The full programme for the Festival will be announced on Wednesday 4 September.

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Images for SAVING MR. BANKS are available at www.image.net

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 London Film Festival

BFI London Film Festival is an iconic international film festival that supports London's position as the world's leading creative city. It presents the best new British and international films to an expanding London and UK-wide audience. It provides career-enabling opportunities for British and international filmmakers through its industry and awards programmes.

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Clare Stewart biography

Clare Stewart's sixteen 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).



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