

## THREE FILMS BACKED BY THE BFI FILM FUND TO PREMIERE AT CANNES 2013

- *BFI Film Fund celebrates a discovery year for new and emerging talent at Cannes 2013*
- *Three films from first or second time filmmakers to have World Premieres in Cannes' prestigious International Critics' Week and Director's Fortnight sections*

**LONDON – Tuesday 23 April 2013:** Three films backed with Lottery funding through the BFI Film Fund will have World Premieres at the 2013 Cannes film festival in May; all three are from first or second time filmmakers in what looks set to be a 'discovery year' for new and emerging UK talent.

The Director's Fortnight will host the World Premiere of *The Selfish Giant*, the highly anticipated second feature from acclaimed writer/director, Clio Barnard (*The Arbor*), produced by Tracy O'Riordan for Moonspun Films. Irish director Ruairi Robinson's ambitious Sci-Fi thriller debut *Last Days on Mars*, produced by Michael Kuhn and Andrea Cornwell for Qwerty Films, will also premiere in the Director's Fortnight. Scottish writer/director Paul Wright's debut feature, *For Those In Peril*, produced by Mary Burke and Polly Stokes for Warp Films, will appear in Cannes' International Critics' Week. All three films received production funding from the BFI Film Fund, with *The Selfish Giant* and *For Those In Peril* also receiving support throughout their development.

**Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI Film Fund, comments:** "Well done to Clio, Paul and Ruairi. It's gratifying to see three such distinctive and personal talents in the spotlight at the world's biggest film festival, and to see them in the same sections that helped launch the careers of filmmakers like Ken Loach, Stephen Frears and Martin Scorsese. We're very proud to be involved with each of the films and wish them 'bon courage' for the festival."

As well as competing in their festival sections, as debut features both *Last Days On Mars* and *For Those In Peril* are eligible for the Cannes Caméra d'Or award. The prize, presented

at the Festival's closing ceremony by the jury president Carlos Diegues, is awarded to the best first film shown either in the Official Selection (Competition or Un Certain Regard), the Directors' Fortnight or International Critics' Week.

– Ends –

**Further information about the three films backed by the BFI Film Fund having World Premieres at Cannes (in alphabetical order):**

***For Those In Peril***

Aaron, a young misfit living in a remote Scottish fishing community, is the lone survivor of a strange fishing accident that claimed the lives of five men including his older brother. Spurred on by sea-faring folklore and local superstition, the village blames Aaron for this tragedy, making him an outcast amongst his own people. Steadfastly refusing to believe that his brother has died, he sets out to recover him and the rest of the men.

Written and directed by Paul Wright, who won the 2011 BAFTA for Best Short for *Until the River Runs Red*, and produced by Mary Burke and Polly Stokes for Warp Films. The film is a Warp X production backed by Film4, BFI Film Fund, Creative Scotland and Screen Yorkshire. Protagonist Pictures are handling international sales.

***Last Days On Mars***

The feature debut of Academy Award® Nominee Ruairi Robinson (*Fifty Percent Grey*), *Last Days On Mars* is based on a short story by Sydney J. Bounds and adapted by Clive Dawson. The film is produced by Michael Kuhn (*The Duchess*) and Andrea Cornwell (*The Scouting Book for Boys*).

*Last Days On Mars* centres on a group of astronauts on an exploratory mission to Mars who, on the eve of their return to Earth, discover colonies of bacteria living deep within the permafrost. But what should have been the discovery of the century rapidly turns to horror when one of the astronauts has a fatal accident. With just hours to go until the relief crew arrive, the group is faced with a desperate struggle to contain the infection and survive.

The film stars Liev Schreiber (*Salt, X-Men Origins: Wolverine*) alongside Olivia Williams (*The Ghost Writer, An Education*), Romola Garai (*One Day, Atonement*), Elias Koteas (*Shutter Island, Crash*), Tom Cullen (*Weekend*), Goran Kostic (*In the Land of Blood and Honey, Taken*) and Johnny Harris (*Snow White and the Huntsman, This is England 86*).

Backed by the BFI Film Fund, Irish Film Board and Prescience, Universal Pictures will release *Last Days On Mars* in the UK while Focus Features International is handling sales and distribution for all other territories.

### ***The Selfish Giant***

*The Selfish Giant* is a contemporary fable about 13 year old Arbor (*Conner Chapman*) and his best friend Swifty (*Shaun Thomas*). Excluded from school and outsiders in their own neighbourhood, the two boys meet Kitten (*Sean Gilder*), a local scrapdealer – the Selfish Giant. They begin collecting scrap metal for him using a horse and cart. Swifty has a natural gift with horses while Arbor emulates Kitten – keen to impress him and make some money. However, Kitten favours Swifty, leaving Arbor feeling hurt and excluded, driving a wedge between the boys. Arbor becomes increasingly greedy and exploitative, becoming more like Kitten. Tensions build, leading to a tragic event, which transforms them all.

Written and directed by Clio Barnard, who won widespread critical acclaim and multiple awards for her debut, *The Arbor*, an experimental documentary about Bradford playwright Andrea Dunbar. The film is produced by Tracy O’Riordan for Moonspun Films and backed by BFI Film Fund and Film4. Protagonist Pictures handle international sales.

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

#### **BFI Film Fund**

With a strong emphasis on new voices and fresh ideas, the BFI Film Fund – the UK’s largest public film fund with a budget set to rise to £24m by 2017 – nurtures and invests in a diverse mix of filmmakers, aiming to enrich British film culture, increase the economic value of UK film and help define Britain and its storytellers in the 21st century.

The BFI Film Fund champions creative excellence and boldness of vision, investing Lottery funding in the development, production and completion of short and long form projects and supporting filmmakers at every step of their journey to create distinctive and entertaining films.

Films recently supported by BFI Film Fund include Yann Demange's *71*, Declan Lowney's *The Alan Partridge Movie*, Amma Asante's *Belle*, Neil Jordan's *Byzantium*, John Michael McDonagh's *Calvary*, Daniel Wolfe's *Catch Me Daddy*, James Griffiths' *Cuban Fury*, Richard Ayode's *The Double*, Destiny Ekaragha's *Gone Too Far*, Kevin Macdonald's *How I Live Now*, Ralph Fiennes' *The Invisible Woman*, Ruairi Robinson's *The Last Days on Mars*, Roger Michell's *Le Weekend*, Sophie Fiennes' *The Pervert's Guide To Ideology*, Stephen Frears' *Philomena*, Clio Barnard's *The Selfish Giant*, Ken Loach's *Spirit of '45*, Jonathan Glazer's *Under the Skin*.

### **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 now 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 Greg Dyke.



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