

# **Toni Erdmann wins *Sight & Sound*'s Films of the Year 2016**



**Embargoed 00:01 Friday 2 December 2016, London** – Today *Sight & Sound* – the BFI’s international film magazine – weighs in on the fight for film of the year. The German-Austrian comedy *Toni Erdmann* tops the poll, written, directed and co-produced by Maren Ade, who is one of three female directors in this year’s Top five, the film goes on UK release 3 February 2017. Barry Jenkins’ *Moonlight* was voted second place, with Paul Verhoeven’s *Elle*, starring Isabelle Huppert, in third place. The annual poll saw over 150 UK and international film critics nominate their top five films from the year and will be available today in full in the January 2017 issue of *Sight & Sound* and online at [www.bfi.org.uk/best-films-2016](http://www.bfi.org.uk/best-films-2016).

Director of *Toni Erdmann*, Maren Ade said “This makes us extremely proud, especially considering how many films you all watch in a year - and since

we are all longstanding followers of the poll!”

Nick James, Editor, *Sight & Sound* said “I am delighted that our poll recognises the talent of women directors at the top of the art form; this follows closely on from *Sight & Sound*’s Female Gaze issue which shone a light on overlooked female filmmakers, and it is encouraging to think that such neglect will soon be a thing of the past. I send my congratulations to Maren Ade, Kelly Reichardt and Andrea Arnold, but also to Barry Jenkins, for his deeply moving, trail-blazing second feature and to Paul Verhoeven, who has made a powerful and subversive woman-centric film.”

Three female directors made the top five, **Maren Ade**, **Kelly Reichardt** and **Andrea Arnold**. Each are synonymous with bold and original storytelling and their films, for which they are also script writers, are hotly anticipated by critics and audiences alike. Maren Ade’s *Toni Erdmann* was this year’s Laugh Gala in association with *Sight & Sound* at the BFI London Film Festival, Kelly Reichardt’s *Certain Women*, in fourth place, won Best Film in BFI London Film Festival’s Official Competition and British director Andrea Arnold’s BFI-backed *American Honey* is in fifth place following its success at this year’s Cannes Film Festival where it won the Jury Prize.

Barry Jenkins’ *Moonlight* received global critical acclaim at international film festivals this year, including the Toronto International Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival and Chicago International Film Festival, where it won Audience Choice Award. Barry Jenkins and lead actor Trevante Rhodes both took part in the BFI LFF BLACK STAR Symposium this October discussing on screen black representation in film. *Moonlight* traces the life of a gay African-American man and has been receiving much-deserved Oscar® buzz.

In third place Paul Verhoeven's thriller, *Elle*, starring the iconic French actress, Isabelle Huppert, was met by shocked laughter at the Cannes Film Festival this May, where it was nominated for the Palme d'Or as well as playing in 'Official Competition' at the BFI London Film Festival. Isabelle Huppert also stars in *Things to Come (L'Avenir)* in eighth place and was both written and directed by female filmmaker Mia Hansen-Løve. Both these films and nine others in the Top 20 feature strong women at their core, from *Toni Erdmann* in first place starring Sandra Hüller as a career-driven woman experiencing an awkward reunion with her father; to Hayley Squires as single mother struggling with the benefits system in *I, Daniel Blake* placing sixth; and the titular character played by Laia Costa in Sebastian Schipper's one-take wonder *Victoria* rounding off the Top 20.

*I, Daniel Blake*, which lifts the lid on the painful experience of navigating Britain's benefit system, backed by the BFI Film Fund continues to cause waves across the UK. The film earned legendary British director Ken Loach his second Palme D'Or at Cannes Film Festival and his biggest UK opening to date.

Thirteen of the Top 20 films featured in this year's BFI London Film Festival, including all the Top 5, as well as *Victoria* which screened in last year's BFI London Film Festival.

1. Toni Erdmann	Maren Ade
2. Moonlight	Barry Jenkins
3. Elle	Paul Verhoeven
4. Certain Women	Kelly Reichardt
5. American Honey	Andrea Arnold
6. I, Daniel Blake	Ken Loach
7. Manchester by the Sea	Kenneth Lonergan
8. Things to Come (L'Avenir)	Mia Hansen-Løve
9. Paterson	Jim Jarmusch
10. The Death of Louis XIV	Albert Serra
11. Personal Shopper	Olivier Assayas
11. Sieranevada	Cristi Puiu
13. Fire At Sea (Fuocoamare)	Gianfranco Rosi
13. Nocturama	Bertrand Bonello
13. Julieta	Pedro Almodóvar
16. La La Land	Damien Chazelle
16. Cameraperson	Kirsten Johnson
18. Love & Friendship	Whit Stillman
19. Aquarius	Kleber Mendonça Filho
19. Victoria	Sebastian Schipper

Last year's winner was *The Assassin*, from Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-Hsien, followed by Todd Haynes' *Carol* and *Mad Max: Fury Road* from director George Miller.

– Ends –

#### **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

**PRESS CONTACTS**

**Elizabeth Dunk – Press Office Assistant**

[elizabeth.dunk@bfi.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.dunk@bfi.org.uk) / +44 (0) 20 7957 8986 / 07584 162009

Images of the film nominated in Sight and Sound's Film of the Year Poll are available at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI / Sight & Sound Films of the Year 2016