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## **ZAWE ASHTON PROVIDES INSPIRATION TO OUTSTANDING YOUNG FILMMAKERS AT THE BFI FILM ACADEMY GRADUATION**

- **66 BFI Film Academy graduates aged 16-19 unveil the six films they have created as part of the course at the National Film and Television School at a special industry premiere at BFI Southbank**
- **Now in its fifth year, the BFI Film Academy has a track record in developing graduates ready to pursue a successful career in the UK film industry**
- **From Newcastle to Cornwall, Belfast to Cambridge, talent comes from across the UK**

**LONDON – Thursday 20 April 2017.** Actress, writer and filmmaker **Zawe Ashton** was a special guest at the BFI Film Academy graduation event today to present a new generation of filmmakers to the UK film industry. Sixty six talented filmmakers from across the UK premiered their films at BFI Southbank to an exclusive audience of outstanding UK film industry leaders, with Ashton sharing her experiences of developing a successful career, from acting through to creating her own projects. The BFI Film Academy, which for five years has provided 16-19 year olds with a valuable entry point to the film industry by offering both technical and artistic skills, continues to be backed by the **Department for Education (DFE)** in England.

The BFI Film Academy's screening and graduation ceremony was hosted by the BBC's Film 2017 critic and journalist **Danny Leigh** with **Amanda Nevill, Chief Executive of the BFI** and **Nik Powell, Director of the National Film and Television School**. Ashton presented the young filmmakers with their graduation certificates.

Talking to the graduates about developing careers in film actress, writer and filmmaker **Zawe Ashton** said, *“The BFI Film Academy is such an important initiative – providing talented young people the opportunity to develop new skills and build a career in film. Film has the potential to be the most representative art form of our age and the BFI Film Academy is committed to realising just that.”*

**Amanda Nevill, Chief Executive of the BFI** said: *“You only have to look at the credits at the end of a film to see that there is an opportunity for every single young person, no matter their skills or dreams, to enter the film industry. Five years on it is so exciting to see how this initiative is really working, with talented young people from all corners of the UK and every background making their way up the film industry ladder.”*

**Nik Powell, Director of the National Film and Television School** said: *“Jon Wardle, Pete Fraser and their team of NFTS tutors, graduates and staff have created a great environment for the students. They have also given them access to some high profile filmmakers currently working in the industry. It is brilliant for the NFTS to be working with the BFI to deliver this level of training to young emerging talent, and their energy, innovation and ability to learn during the 12 day course never ceases to amaze me.”*

In its fifth year and open to young people from anywhere in the UK, the BFI Film Academy offers a real chance for talented 16-19 year olds to develop the specialist filmmaking skills they need to be part of the future of the UK film industry – no matter where they’re from or what their background. The BFI Film Academy offers bursaries to help those in need with costs, ensuring it is open to as diverse a range of young people as possible. Based right across the UK the Academy has created more than 4,500 places for young people on courses run across the UK since 2012.

Today’s industry premiere at BFI Southbank marks the end of an intensive two-week residential for students of the BFI Film Academy’s Craft Skills course run by the world-leading National Film and Television School (NFTS). The residential delivered by NFTS is the pinnacle of the BFI Film Academy, featuring talented students mostly selected from regional BFI Film Academy courses that have been running across the UK from September 2016.

At the NFTS, the young filmmakers have been working with leading British film talent including Oscar winning director **Asif Kapadia** (*Amy, Senna*), producer **Duncan Kenworthy** (*The Pass, Four Weddings and a Funeral, Love Actually*) and writer, director **Destiny Ekaragha** (*Gone Too Far!, Hot Pepper*) in

honing their skills and expertise, culminating in the production of the six short films seen for the first time today.

Previous BFI Film Academy students who have gone on to further develop their skills and move into the industry include Mdamiri Nkemi, who was the editor on *A Moving Image*, a feature which premiered in official competition at the 60<sup>th</sup> BFI London Film Festival; Alex Shipman who has worked on a number of studio films including *Jack Reacher*; Molly McGregor who was a producer's assistant on *Dark River*, the new film from celebrated British director, Clio Barnard; Charlotte Regan's short *Standby* was BAFTA nominated and screened at the Toronto International Film Festival where it won the Future Film Lab Award and earned Charlotte a place on the Sundance Ignite Fellowship programme; and Sam Jones released his short film *Lifeline* on Vimeo which trended on the platform thanks to high viewing figures, and won him the BFI RAW Award at the Future Film Festival, giving him a £5,000 budget to make his next short film.

Between September 2016 and February 2017 young filmmakers selected through an open application process have taken part in courses across the UK. During the BFI Film Academy Craft Skills two-week residential course, the exceptional young filmmakers get to learn from experienced industry professionals about every area of filmmaking, from scriptwriting and directing through to pre-visualisation, production design, location management, shooting, sound recording and mixing, editing and cinematography.

**The films premiering at the BFI Southbank today are:**

- **The Chime of Youth** – When Emily is given a mysterious Christmas box from her Grandmother, she re-discovers her sense of imagination
- **Have Some** – Princess doesn't say much. She loves her Dad, but charity does not always start at home
- **Hurt** – In the land of fertile field, an escape to happiness is always promised, at least on the surface anyway
- **Look At What the Cat Dragged In** – After Christopher becomes a prisoner in his own home, the persistence of a scratchy stranger tugs him back into reality- feet first

- **Nothing in the Middle** – Judy and Alan have vowed to stay true to each other and to love for better or for worse. This is the worse
- **Red Miss** – They seem to be a normal family but when the enigmatic house guest, Red Miss, returns home, normality turns swiftly to nightmare

### **BFI Film Academy graduating film teams 2017:**

#### **The Chime of Youth**

Director – Cara Howard

Writer – Louanne Honey

Producers – Adekemi Roluga, Lorna de Mello

Cinematographers – Charlotte Halpern, Matthew Willson

Sound Recordists – Jaan Kurtulan, Nathaniel Turner

Production Designer – Krishan Sharda

Editors – Amanda White, Mairi-Kate Giannico

Lead Tutor – Ewan Stewart

#### **Have Some**

Director – Emma Wise

Writer – Jethro Robathan

Producers – Kerry Allan, Louis Thomson

Cinematographers – Francis Pesquera, Sam O’Neill

Sound Recordists – Aidan Sharples, Natalia Adamou

Production Designer – Amy Jobe

Editors – Pip Watkins, Rosie-Anne Wright

Lead Tutor – Lewis Arnold

#### **Hurt**

Director – Gabrielle May Wood

Writer – Murray Murray

Producers – Alex Bird (Norfolk), Jagpreet Jhamat

Cinematographers – Camilo Canaveral, Mia Campbell

Sound Recordists – Claire Lamarra, Paul Osborne

Production Designer – Athenais Laffont

Editors – Klaudia Cichocka, Louis Binns

Lead Tutor – David Winstone

### **Look At What the Cat Dragged In**

Director – Mishaal Memon

Writer – Katie Price, Wylie Queenan

Producers – Melodie Karczewski

Cinematographers – Cameron Brydone-Reed, Karolina Jagiellowicz

Sound Recordists – Anna Campfield, Peter Threipland

Production Designer – Elkie McCrimmon

Editors – Sam Redfearn, Tosin Ogunleye

Lead Tutor – Eva Riley

### **Nothing in the Middle**

Director – Joe Lowen-Grey

Writer – Lotta-Maija Nurmela

Producers – Diara Vassallo-Ndiaye, Jacob Crow

Cinematographers – Ewan Gaff, Nela Reslerova

Sound Recordists – Ciara Sims, Patch De Salis

Production Designer – Hazel Singzon

Editors – Molly McHale, Sam Hudson

Lead Tutor – Brian Ward

### **Red Miss**

Director – Daniel Purse

Writer – Zia Holloway

Producers – Liam Gillooly, Millie Bennett

Cinematographers – Callum Dawson, Primrose Elliot-Pears

Sound Recordists – Holly Jones, Ben Keeling

Production Designer – William Smith

Editors – Ali Hassan, Krizzah Policarpio

Lead Tutor – Lesley Manning

**For photos, interviews and further information:**

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**Notes to Editors**

**About the BFI Film Academy**

The BFI Film Academy aims to help train and inspire the next generation of British filmmakers, supporting talented and committed young people aged 16-19 to develop the commercial and cultural knowledge and skills to help make a career in film a reality.

The BFI Film Academy offers training for every film industry role, from writing and directing through to production, sound design, editing and camera, and provides learning around film history and cinematic storytelling to inspire an appreciation of film culture in the round.

The BFI Film Academy forms a key part of the BFI's ambitious plans to revolutionise film education for 5-19 year olds, a core aim of the BFI's *Film Forever* five year plan to support the future success of UK film. Film Academy funding partners include the Department for Education in England, the National Lottery, Creative Scotland and Northern Ireland. Strategic partners include BAFTA, Pinewood Studios and Creative Skillset, helping to ensure the Academy is a gold standard film industry-focused educational programme.

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