



NEVER LET ME GO
STARRING CAREY MULLIGAN, ANDREW
GARFIELD AND KEIRA KNIGHTLEY
TO OPEN
THE 54TH BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

****EMBARGOED FOR PUBLICATION ACROSS ALL MEDIA UNTIL 00.00 FRIDAY 6 AUGUST ****



From left: Carey Mulligan, Keira Knightley and Andrew Garfield in
NEVER LET ME GO.

Photo Credit: Alex Bailey

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London – Friday 6 August. The 54th BFI London Film Festival, in partnership with American Express, is proud to announce that this year's Festival will open on Wednesday 13 October with the European premiere of **NEVER LET ME GO**, directed by Mark Romanek (*One Hour Photo*), based on the highly acclaimed, bestselling novel by Kazuo Ishiguro and adapted for the screen by Alex Garland (*Sunshine, 28 Days Later*).

The stars of the film are expected to attend the opening night screening, including Oscar® nominee Keira Knightley (*Pride & Prejudice, Atonement*), BAFTA winner and Oscar® nominee Carey Mulligan (*An Education*) and BAFTA TV award winner Andrew Garfield (*Boy A, Red Riding*).

NEVER LET ME GO is a remarkable story of love, loss and hidden truths. Kathy (Mulligan), Tommy (Garfield) and Ruth (Knightley) spend their childhood at Hailsham, a seemingly idyllic English boarding school where they discover a dark and haunting secret about their future. As they leave the shelter of the school behind

and draw inexorably closer to the devastating fate that awaits them as adults, they must also confront the deep feelings of love, jealousy and betrayal that threaten to pull them apart. Twentieth Century Fox will release the film in the UK on 14 January 2011.

Sandra Hebron, the Festival's Artistic Director comments: "It is a great pleasure to be able to open the festival with a film as accomplished and imaginative as NEVER LET ME GO. It combines impeccable film making, outstanding performances and a deeply moving story, and I couldn't wish for a stronger or more appropriate opening night."

On having the film's European premiere at the Festival, **Andrew Macdonald** of DNA Films comments: "We're delighted that NEVER LET ME GO has been selected to open this year's festival. It has been a privilege to be involved with bringing Kazuo Ishiguro's remarkable novel to the screen, and to work with such an exceptional British cast. We look forward to unveiling the film in London."

Director **Mark Romanek** adds: "I think I can speak for the entire cast and crew when I say that we are deeply honored and excited to have been selected to open this year's festival. For me personally, it seems the perfect way to celebrate the conclusion of an incredible filmmaking experience in the UK."

Fox Searchlight Pictures, DNA Films and Film 4 present **NEVER LET ME GO**. It is produced by Andrew Macdonald and Allon Reich. Alex Garland, Kazuo Ishiguro and Tessa Ross are Executive Producers.

The full programme for The 54th BFI London Film Festival will be announced at the Press Launch on Wednesday 8 September.

The Festival runs from 13-28 October 2010.

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For further press information about The 54th BFI London Film Festival please contact:

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Notes to Editors

About the BFI

The BFI is the nation's cultural organisation for film, keeping the breadth of voices in moving image culture alive and known. Through its venues, festivals, film releases and online, the BFI inspires people to understand and enjoy film culture, ensuring that everyone in the UK can see the broadest range and choice of films, otherwise not provided by commercial cinema. The BFI reaches an audience of over 7.5 million in the UK every year.

The BFI London Film Festival champions creativity, originality, vision and imagination by annually showcasing the best of contemporary world cinema, documentaries, shorts, animation and experimental film. The Festival is a highly regarded and anticipated event in Europe's cultural calendar, attracting leading international filmmakers, industry professionals and the media together with large public audiences to London for a two week celebration of cinema.

Last year's Festival hosted 193 feature films and 113 short films from 46 countries including 15 world premieres. There were 515 screenings and 553 filmmakers in attendance, drawing the highest ever audience attendance of over 130,000 filmgoers. The Festival opened with the World Premiere of FANTASTIC MR. FOX and closed with the World Premiere of NOWHERE BOY.

This year's Festival is in the second of a three-year Lottery funding partnership with the UK Film Council.

The BFI is a public body part funded by DCMS through the UK Film Council. For every £1 it receives in grant-in-aid, the BFI raises a further £1.50 through self-generated means.

www.bfi.org.uk
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About American Express

American Express Company is a diversified worldwide travel, financial and network services company founded in 1850. It is a leader in charge and credit cards, Travellers Cheques, travel and insurance products.

American Express is a headline sponsor of the internationally recognised and respected London Film Festival, and supporter of the BFI's year-round cultural programme. The partnership builds on the company's heritage in film as founding sponsor of the Tribeca Film Festival and regular supporter of the Sundance Film Festival, and supports the BFI's own objective of making a wide choice of British and world cinema available in the UK.

The BFI is also part of American Express' Preferred Seating programme, enabling cardmembers to snap up some of the best seats at the hottest events, often before they go on sale to the general public. Cardmembers can look forward to getting closer to the stars, film-makers and films they love at London Film Festival, with priority tickets and best seats in the house at cinemas, meet-and-greets with celebrities as well as the acclaimed "Screen Epiphanies" events at the BFI.

About the UK Film Council

- The UK Film Council – <http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/> – is the Government's lead agency for film in the UK, supporting the UK film industry, celebrating UK film culture and nurturing UK film talent at home and abroad.
- Since its creation in 2000, the UK Film Council has invested over £160m of Lottery funding into more than 900 films which have entertained over 200 million people and helped generate over £700 million at the box office worldwide, generating £5 for every £1 of Lottery money it has invested.

- Its support develops new filmmakers, funds ambitious new British films and gets a wider choice of films to audiences throughout the UK. It also invests in training British talent, promoting Britain as an international filmmaking location and raising the profile of British films abroad.
- Since 2000 the UK Film Council has funded such films as *Bend it like Beckham*, *Bright Star*, *The Constant Gardener*, *Fish Tank*, *Gosford Park*, *Happy-Go-Lucky*, *In the Loop*, *The Last King of Scotland*, *Man on Wire*, *Nowhere Boy*, *Red Road*, *St Trinian's*, *This is England*, *Touching the Void*, *Vera Drake*, *The Wind That Shakes the Barley* and *Streetdance 3D*, the UK's first 3D film.
- Upcoming films backed by the UK Film Council include Mike Leigh's *Another Year*, Stephen Frears's *Tamara Drewe*, Nigel Cole's *Made in Dagenham*, Joe Cornish's *Attack the Block*, Rowan Joffe's *Brighton Rock*, Lynne Ramsay's *We Need to Talk about Kevin*, Justin Chadwick's *The First Grader*, Tom Hooper's *The King's Speech*, Peter Mullan's *Neds* and Andrea Arnold's *Wuthering Heights*.
- Current UK Film Council funding initiatives include:
 - maintaining the UK's place as a production destination for internationally financed films, generating inward investment to the UK of £4.7bn over the past ten years;
 - the world's first Digital Screen Network, which has invested in 240 digital screens in cinemas across the UK, increasing film choice, bringing the 3D experience to a wider audience, and ensuring the UK has more digital cinemas than any other European country;
 - supporting over 200 film societies and independent regional film venues;
 - UK film festivals, including the BFI London Film Festival, the Edinburgh International Film Festival, and the Sheffield International Documentary Film Festival;
 - working with Skillset, the UK skills and training industry body for the creative industries, enabling almost 7,000 people to further their filmmaking careers;
 - giving over 20,000 young people the opportunity to get involved in filmmaking through First Light and Mediabox;
 - bringing FILMCLUB to thousands of schools, introducing new generations of children to the best of British and international cinema.
- The UK box office has grown by 62% since the UK Film Council was created (in 2009 it reached record levels of £944 million), with British films accounting for 23% of all UK cinema takings over the ten years to 2009.