

**BFI ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR PHILIPPA LOWTHORPE,
ANDREW STEGGALL AND JANE LINFOOT IN LATEST ROUND OF
FIRST FEATURE AWARDS**

London, Monday 29 July 2013: The BFI Film Fund today announces **Philippa Lowthorpe's SLEEPING OUT**, **Andrew Steggall's DEPARTURE** and **Jane Linfoot's THE INCIDENT** as the feature debuts they intend to support through the second round (April – June) of the First Feature Awards. The awards are subject to a distinct editorial process that creates a level playing field for first time directors applying to the fund for feature film projects budgeted under £2million.

Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI Film Fund, comments: "Last week the BFI's Statistical Yearbook revealed there's still a long road to travel in bringing stories from a broader range of filmmakers to our cinema screens, so it's gratifying to see a diversity of voices finding opportunities through our First Feature strand. We felt that Philippa, Andrew and Jane would bring unique and distinctive qualities to their work, and we're pleased to be supporting their journeys."

Philippa Lowthorpe is a BAFTA award winning director who began her career making documentaries. She moved into drama with *The Other Boleyn Girl* for BBC2 in 2003 and was most recently the lead director of the award-winning hit series, *Call the Midwife*. **SLEEPING OUT** sees Philippa once again team up with writer Stephen Butchard and producer Simon Lewis, with whom she also collaborated for the landmark BBC One drama series, *Five Daughters* in 2010. Set in Leeds, **SLEEPING OUT** tells the story of Jack and Toby, both 14, who live on the streets and dream of getting laid. When Jack falls in love with a murderer's young girlfriend, it puts their lives in danger and tests their friendship to the limit.

Originally trained as an actor, Andrew Steggall has directed a number of theatre and opera productions, including directing Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* at the Old Vic Theatre with

Jeremy Irons in the UK, and later with actors and musicians in Iraq and in Kurdistan. Andrew has written and directed four short films, including the award-winning *To the Marriage of True Minds* and the Film London funded *The Red Bike*. Produced by Pietro Greppi and Guillaume Tobo, set in the South of France, **DEPARTURE** is a lyrical film, borrowing elements of opera and mythology, to chart the unravelling of an English family as they sell their holiday home whilst teenage son, Elliot, wrestles with a burgeoning sexuality and his mother, Beatrice, confronts the end of her marriage.

Writer and director Jane Linfoot was named a Screen International Star of Tomorrow in 2008, her three critically acclaimed short films have competed internationally, and her recently completed fourth short film, *Sea View*, was awarded production funding through the BFI Shorts scheme. Jane's first feature film, **THE INCIDENT**, produced by Caroline Cooper Charles, is an atmospheric psychological drama, telling a thought-provoking, affecting story of a couple whose comfortable lives are disrupted when they ignore the plight of a troubled young girl.

A commitment to new and emerging talent is outlined in the BFI's future plan *Film Forever*. The First Feature Awards editorial process, in which the BFI Film Fund continues to welcome applications year round but considers them collectively, is designed to create a level playing field and provide an opportunity for fresh and exciting voices from a diverse range of filmmakers to shine through.

As is now standard practice for the BFI Film Fund, applicants who receive a positive decision in principle will be issued with a Letter of Intent, enabling some of the projects to secure the final stage of their funding by demonstrating the Film Fund's commitment and endorsement.

The closing date for round 3 awards is 6 September 2013, and subsequent deadline dates will be published at bfi.org.uk/filmfund.

– Ends –

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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.

