

**Embargo: Saturday 20 October, 7.40pm GMT**



## **62ND BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS® ANNOUNCES 2018 COMPETITION WINNERS**

**JOY – Sudabeh Mortezaei, wins Best Film Award in Official Competition**

**GIRL – Lukas Dhont, wins Sutherland Award in First Feature Competition**

**WHAT YOU GONNA DO WHEN THE WORLD'S ON FIRE? – Roberto Minervini, wins Grierson Award in  
Documentary Competition**

**LASTING MARKS – Charlie Lyne, wins Short Film Award in Short Film Competition**

The BFI London Film Festival celebrates the highest creative achievements of British and international filmmakers in its Competitive sections, applauding extraordinary storytelling and inventive filmmaking across all the categories. This year's line-up showcased the enormous depth and diversity of talent working in the global film industry today, with female directors or co-directors making up at least half of the films in Official Competition and Short Film Competition and 60% female directors in the First Feature Competition category.

**Tricia Tuttle, BFI London Film Festival Artistic Director said:** *"The 2018 LFF Awards nominations demonstrate the vibrancy of global filmmaking and I'm delighted for the winning filmmakers who have triumphed at the 62nd BFI London Film Festival. After much jury deliberation, our wonderful juries have selected four extraordinary films which encourage dialogue and understanding around issues of race, class, gender and sexuality. I applaud Sudabeh, Lukas, Roberto and Charlie for their boldly distinctive work and hope that our awards can help focus even more attention from UK and global audiences on their truly deserving films. For the first time, we've also placed audiences at the very heart of the awards celebration and I'm thrilled to be presenting the winners to packed houses of adventurous filmgoers."*

**This year's Jury Presidents were: LENNY ABRAHAMSON (Official Competition), FRANCIS LEE (First Feature Competition), SIMON CHINN (Documentary Competition) and RUNGANO NYONI (Short Film Competition)**

## **The winners:-**

### **JOY – Sudabeh Mortezaei, Official Competition (Best Film Award)**

Winner of both the first ever Hearst Film Award 2018 for Best Female Direction and the 2018 Europa Cinemas Label at the 75th Venice International Film Festival, Sudabeh Mortezaei (whose debut feature *Macondo* competed for the LFF's Sutherland Award in 2014), presents a vital and hugely affecting drama that tackles the vicious cycle of sex trafficking in modern Europe. It follows the life of Joy, a young Nigerian woman, who works the streets to pay off debts to her exploiter Madame, while supporting her family in Nigeria and hoping for a better life for her young daughter in Vienna.

**Lenny Abrahamson, Official Competition President said:** *"JOY is a provocative and unique film offering a devastating portrait of human resilience in the most inhuman of environments. A raw, fresh view on sex trafficking with a sharp feminist perspective sewn in throughout - director Sudabeh Mortezaei successfully immerses us in the women's lives with her documentarist approach exploring the traps of abuse and extortion without ever becoming exploitative itself. A vital beautifully made film that my fellow jurors and I urge you to watch."*

The Official Competition jury also gave a Special Commendation to **BIRDS OF PASSAGE - (*Pájaros de Verano*)** directed by **Cristina Gallego** and **Ciro Guerra**.

### **GIRL – Lukas Dhont, First Feature Competition (Sutherland Award)**

Lukas Dhont's (*Headlong, Boys on Film X*) feature debut was also bestowed with the coveted Camera d'Or and Queer Palm at the Cannes Film Festival, and has been selected as the Belgian entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 91st Academy Awards. GIRL is the story of Lara, a transgender teenager who dreams of becoming a ballet dancer in this extraordinary coming-of-age story. Lukas Dhont's richly empathetic and beautifully realised film sensitively explores Lara's complex inner emotions, expressing so much even when she herself cannot quite find the words.

**Francis Lee, First Feature Competition President said:** *"GIRL is an extraordinary coming of age story featuring a truly remarkable central performance - it is not afraid to tackle a number of difficult subject matters which are dramatically effective and fully believable. Throughout there's a complex balance between heartbreak and hope that keeps the audience absorbed – this is an imaginative and original directorial debut and my fellow jurors and I are excited to see what director, Lukas Dhont does next".*

### **WHAT YOU GONNA DO WHEN THE WORLD'S ON FIRE? – Roberto Minervini, Documentary Competition (Grierson Award)**

Selected for the main competition section of the 75th Venice International Film Festival, Roberto Minervini's (*The Other Side, Stop The Pounding Heart*) thought-provoking and all-too-relevant documentary follows a Louisiana community during the summer of 2017, in the aftermath of a string of brutal police shootings of black men that sent shockwaves throughout the country. A meditation on the state of race in America, this film is an intimate portrait of the lives of those who struggle for justice, dignity, and survival in a country not on their side.

**Simon Chinn, Documentary Competition President commented:** “A truly thought-provoking and all too urgent documentary - through stunning and unflinching black and white frames we’re offered a raw and emotional snapshot of African-American life in the Deep South in the aftermath of a police shooting. It reveals, with both intimacy and empathy, the lives of those still fighting for dignity and respect at a time of enduring racial division and injustice nearly 6 decades after the birth of the civil rights movement. The powerful and subtle storytelling made the film a unanimous winner for the Jury.”

**LASTING MARKS – Charlie Lyne, Short Film Competition (Short Film Award)**

Charlie Lyne’s short documentary (*Beyond Clueless, Fear Itself*) charts the story of sixteen men put on trial for sadomasochism in the dying days of Thatcher’s Britain. Men with shared sexual desires, lucky to have found each other, yet unfortunate to be considered criminal for expressing them.

**Rungano Nyoni, Short Film Competition President stated:** “In a strong and diverse Shorts selection, Charlie Lyne’s *LASTING MARKS* fascinated us all by resurrecting forgotten history. Uniquely presented as a slideshow of court documents and organised via an oral history by the prosecuted Roland Jaggard, Lyne recounts the story of a group of men put on trial for sadomasochism in the 1980s. A must-watch.”

For the first time this year, the winners were revealed in front of a public audience on Saturday, October 20 at Vue Leicester Square. The Best Film, Sutherland and Grierson Award-winning films were presented as surprise screenings, and all presentations of the Festival’s official award, the bronze Star of London, were made on stage, by Artistic Director Tricia Tuttle and the President of each Jury to the winning filmmaker. This placed packed audiences at the centre of the awards celebration, encouraging them to experiment and see the winning films as a surprise.

**This year’s Awards are supported by Italian luxury eyewear brand, Persol and the nominees and winners were invited to celebrate their achievements at a special party in their honour hosted by the BFI and Persol.**

The juries were led by: Academy Award®-nominated director **Lenny Abrahamson**, nominee for the LFF Best Film Award for *Room* (LFF 2015 and also director of *Frank*, winner Best Screenplay BIFA 2014); **Francis Lee**, winner of the 2017 BIFA for Best Début Screenwriter for *God’s Own Country*; the prolific, award-winning documentary producer **Simon Chinn**, who won the 2009 and 2013 Academy Award® for Best Documentary for *Man on Wire* and *Searching For Sugarman* respectively; and director **Rungano Nyoni**, whose film *I Am Not A Witch* was in the First Feature competition in the Festival last year (securing her a nomination for the IWC Schaffhausen Filmmaker Bursary Award in association with the BFI), won the BAFTA for Outstanding Début by a British Writer, Director or Producer and is the UK’s entry for Best Foreign Language Film for the 2019 Academy Awards®.

Other Jurors previously announced were: Official Competition (Best Film Award) **Baz Bamigboye, Emilia Clarke, Dominic Cooper, Cairo Cannon, Gonzalo Maza, Andrea Riseborough**; First Feature Competition (Sutherland Award) – **Maria Djurkovic, Natalie Dormer, Will Poulter, Inge de Leeuw, Ben Bailey Smith**; Documentary Competition (Grierson Award) – **Lucy Cohen, Charlie Lyne, Daisy Asquith, Anita Rani**;

Short Film Competition (Short Film Award) – **Ayo Akingbade, Joe Lawlor, Christine Molloy, Oliver Sim, Anya Taylor-Joy**

**\*ENDS\***

**For further press information and general enquiries about the 62<sup>nd</sup> BFI London Film Festival:**

*Please note the different festival sections, contacts and accreditation for 2018*

**FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES ABOUT COMPETITIVE SECTIONS:**

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**LFF Film Assets**

Images are available on [www.image.net](http://www.image.net)

Trailers/Clips are available on <http://panther4.dmsukltd.com>

**Social Media:** @BFI | #LFF

**GENERAL ENQUIRIES and FESTIVAL ACCREDITATION**

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**BFI Head of Press and PR: Judy Wells**

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## **Festival Information & Ticket Booking**

BFI Members' priority booking opens 10.00am, 6 September – join at [www.bfi.org.uk/join](http://www.bfi.org.uk/join)

Public booking opens 10.00am, 13 September

Telephone Bookings: 020 7928 3232 between 10:00 – 20:30

Online: [www.bfi.org.uk/lff](http://www.bfi.org.uk/lff)

In person: BFI Southbank Office: 10:00 – 20:30

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead organisation 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 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 Josh Berger.

### **The BFI London Film Festival**

BFI London Film Festival is Britain's leading film event and one of the world's best film festivals. It introduces the finest new British and international films to an expanding London and UK-wide audience and attracts significant international film industry participation. LFF is a compelling combination of diverse films, red carpet glamour, friendly audiences and vibrant exchange. LFF provides an essential profiling opportunity for films seeking global success; promotes the careers of British and international filmmakers through its industry and awards programmes and positions London as the world's leading creative city.

### **The Star of London**

The Star of London is the official award presented by the BFI London Film Festival to the winners of its competitive categories. It is made of bronze and was designed for the Festival by Sculptor Almuth Tebbenhoff.

## Tricia Tuttle Biography

Tricia Tuttle's appointment as Artistic Director follows five successful years as Deputy Head of Festivals at BFI, including BFI Flare and BFI London Film Festival. Moving from North Carolina in 1997 to complete a joint MA at BFI and Birkbeck, University of London in Film and TV Studies, Tricia's passion for film has seen her work as a programmer, lecturer, writer and journalist. Her career has spanned a five year tenure at BAFTA, starting in 2008 and with her appointment as Film Programme Manager in 2011; programming the BFI London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival (the pre-cursor to BFI Flare) and as Event Producer at London's The Script Factory. Highly regarded by the BFI and industry, Tuttle has been instrumental in evolving BFI Festivals, continuing to expand audience reach year on year and introducing impactful initiatives such as BFI Flare's FiveFilms4Freedom, in partnership with the British Council.



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

## About Persol

Persol is an eyewear brand which boasts a 100-year heritage, its name synonymous with exquisite materials and artisanal Italian craftsmanship. Long at the confluence of the everyday and the extraordinary, Persol glasses were originally conceived to help tram drivers navigate the streets of Turin but they have since become the favourite of actors, artists and the cultivated and curious.

Persol has had a strong link with cinema since the swinging 60's when Italian actor Marcello Mastroianni wore the 649 model in 'Divorce, Italian Style' and King of Cool Steve McQueen donned a pair of, now iconic, folding 714 model in 1968 hit 'The Thomas Crown Affair'. These days Persol is the brand of choice of contemporary movies stars such as Bradley Cooper, Daniel Craig and Lea Seydoux.

[persol.com](http://persol.com)



## About Amex Invites

American Express connects Cardmembers to the kinds of rewarding experiences and opportunities that matter to them and their businesses. Through Amex Invites, Cardmembers have access to presale tickets, as well as the best seats and exclusive offers at some of the UK's most sought-after entertainment events via partnerships with a range of entertainment institutions including AEG, Live Nation, Somerset House, The British Film Institute and The National Theatre. Amex Invites is just one example of the powerful backing that American Express provides its customers.

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