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63RD BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS ANNOUNCES 2019 COMPETITION WINNERS

MONOS – Alejandro Landes, wins Best Film Award in Official Competition

ATLANTICS – Mati Diop, wins Sutherland Award in First Feature Competition

WHITE RIOT – Rubika Shah, wins Grierson Award in Documentary Competition

FAULT LINE – Soheil Amirsharifi, wins Short Film Award in Short Film Competition

The BFI London Film Festival 2019 Competition sections showcase an incredibly diverse range of talent from Britain and across the world; over 60% of the films in Competition across all sections are from a female director or co-director, with 16 countries represented across the producers and co-producers.

Building on the success of last year's new approach, placing audiences at the heart of the awards ceremony, the Competition sections seek to highlight and honour inspiring, inventive and intelligent filmmaking.

Tricia Tuttle, BFI London Film Festival Director said:

“Our awards highlight the most distinctive, urgent and accomplished filmmaking from around the globe and it has been an incredible Festival - with audiences moved, provoked and dazzled by these films, many of which engage with pressing social and political themes in very inventive ways.

“We are hugely grateful to our juries for their time this week in picking the award winners. I know the quality of the nominated films made many of the decisions very difficult and the juries brought a tremendous amount of passion, integrity and expertise to the deliberations.”

This year's Jury Presidents were: WASH WESTMORELAND (Official Competition), JESSICA HAUSNER (First Feature Competition), YANCE FORD (Documentary Competition) and JACQUI DAVIES (Short Film Competition).

THE WINNERS

MONOS – Alejandro Landes, Official Competition (Best Film Award)

Alejandro Landes delivers one of the most talked-about films of the year in MONOS: a hallucinogenic, intoxicating thriller about child soldiers that has inspired feverish buzz and earned comparisons to *Apocalypse Now* and *Lord of the Flies*.

While wearing its influences on its sleeve, the film is a wildly original vision from Landes and screenwriter Alexis dos Santos; the camera prowling over mud and organic decay, cutting swathes through the jungle, all to the strains of Mica Levi's visceral score.

Wash Westmoreland, Official Competition President said:

"Monos is a stunning cinematic achievement; marrying dynamic visuals, faultless performances and groundbreaking storytelling. It's a masterpiece!"

The Official Competition jury also gave Special Commendations to **HONEY BOY (Alma Har'el)** and **SAINT MAUD (Rose Glass)**.

Of *Honey Boy*, Westmoreland commented: "Its blisteringly honest performances and clear-eyed, inspired direction make this brilliant film an unforgettable experience."

And of *Saint Maud* and *Rose Glass*, Westmoreland said: "This dazzling directorial debut marks the emergence of a powerful new voice in British cinema."

ATLANTICS – Mati Diop, First Feature Competition (Sutherland Award)

A hypnotic, genre-shifting portrait of a girl's awakening, ATLANTICS tells the story of Ada, who faces impending marriage to another man when her lover Souleiman grows tired of labouring without pay on the gleaming towers of Dakar, and sets out across the sea with friends. As the women gather in the bar where the men used to drink, it seems that something else more mysterious has returned to them.

Jessica Hausner, First Feature Competition President said:

"Atlantics is a film that intrigued us by its original and refreshing use of genre elements in a story that also has a strong political impact. Set in a country that is going through transition, this film dares to invent a poetic fable, mysterious and challenging.

“A crime scene that becomes a nightmarish tale, held together by a story of the endurance and persistence of young love.”

The First Feature Competition jury also gave a Special Commendation to **HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD (Bora Kim)**.

Jessica Hausner said:

“We would also like to attribute a special commendation to *House of Hummingbird*, a film that surprisingly talks about the ambiguity within human relationships. Friendship, family, love – are questioned by the fact that feelings always are contradictory and change with time. A very profound insight on human existence.”

WHITE RIOT – Rubika Shah, Documentary Competition (Grierson Award)

A vital documentary blending fresh interviews with archive footage, *WHITE RIOT* profiles punky reggae protest movement Rock Against Racism. Chronicling the movement’s grassroots beginnings in 1976 through to 1978’s huge antifascist carnival in East London’s Victoria Park, the film features interviews and previously unseen footage of X-Ray Spex, Steel Pulse and The Clash, whose rockstar charisma and gale-force conviction took Rock Against Racism’s message to the masses.

Yance Ford, Documentary Competition President commented:

“In the spirit of the Grierson Award criteria, *White Riot* is both a provocation and a tremendous opportunity. In this moment around the world the film implies that perhaps the lessons of the past were never learned.

“This rhetoric and politics of this moment in our history is familiar. And although language and symbols evolve, their meaning remains. Without nostalgia for 1979, the power of *White Riot* is that it points directly at 2019.

“Rubika Shah has used the power of film to remind us of where we have been and asks how long it will take us to change course.”

FAULT LINE (GOSAL) – Soheil Amirsharifi, Short Film Competition (Short Film Award)

In Amirsharifi’s film, Nahal is an Iranian schoolgirl who must create a new version of the truth in a strict environment, despite there being unintended consequences to her self-preservation.

Jacqui Davies, Short Film Competition President said:

“This is a film that provoked intense discussion as we continued to decode it long after watching; for its sophisticated layering of story, beautifully controlled performances and uncompromising and singular

vision that provokes the audience to piece together the unseen events that motivate all of the characters' actions.

“This subtle and unusual film manages to do something profoundly transgressive - formally and politically - whilst concealing the very things that make it so subversive. We all were desperate to watch this film again and again.”

The Short Film Competition jury also gave a Special Commendation to **IF YOU KNEW (Stroma Cairns)**.

Davies said that the jury gave the commendation “For demonstrating real understanding of the components of film - image and sound - as it brilliantly exploits their possibilities and to produce a highly sensual and tactile experience for the audience, communicating unrepresented lives in cinema - from a filmmaker whose career we are excited to follow.”

Last year’s awards were a sell-out success when audiences were placed at the heart of the celebrations, with the winning film from each competitive section presented to the public as a surprise screening.

Once again, the Competition winners received their award on stage from Festival Director Tricia Tuttle and respective Jury Presidents in front of a public audience, at a special screening of each winning film on Saturday 12th October at Vue Leicester Square.

The winner of each Competition section was also awarded a commemorative 35 mm print of their winning film, provided by festival sponsor CPC London.

The Official Competition jury was led by acclaimed *Colette* and *Still Alice* director **Wash Westmoreland**, whose latest film *Earthquake Bird* also screened in this year’s Festival; the First Feature Competition (Sutherland Award) jury was headed up by Austrian director **Jessica Hausner**, whose latest film *Little Joe* also featured in this year’s Festival; the Oscar-nominated director of *Strong Island*, **Yance Ford**, led the jury of the Grierson Award for Best Documentary; and finally, award-winning British film producer **Jacqui Davies** presided over the Short Film Competition jury.

Other Jurors previously announced were: Official Competition (Best Film Award) – **Jane Crowther, Hayley Squires, Sudabeh Mortezaei** and **Mohamed Hefzy**; First Feature Competition (Sutherland Award) – **Shola Amoo, Theresa Ikoko** and **Hong Khaou**; Documentary Competition (Grierson Award) – **Cíntia Gil** and **Julia Nottingham**; Short Film Competition (Short Film Award) – **Amrou Al-Kadhi, Mark Jenkin, Alex Lawther** and **Marli Siu**.

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the BFI

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of World Cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers

- Works with Government and Industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.

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.

Tricia Tuttle Biography

Tricia Tuttle's appointment as Director of BFI Festivals follows her role as Artistic Director of the 62nd Edition of the BFI London Film Festival and 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. 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. In March 2019, she was recognized in Variety's annual International Women's Impact Report as a woman making an impact in showbiz around the globe.



About CPC London

Based in Kent, CPC London creates affordable high quality 35mm prints direct from a data source in a fast and efficient way. Their unique direct-to-print from data technology ensures the highest quality 35mm positive prints in either colour or black and white, eliminating all stages involving expensive negative intermediates.

CPC are proud to be giving four commemorative 35mm prints of each LFF Award-winning Official Competition title, one for each winner of the Best Film, Best First Feature, Best Documentary and Best Short Film.

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