

AMY O'HARA NAMED BFI NETWORK TALENT EXECUTIVE AT FILM HUB NORTH

- **Becomes one of the seven Talent Executives now delivering NETWORK throughout England, part of the BFI's UK-wide film talent development programme**
 - **£2.5m of BFI National Lottery funding to support emerging filmmakers nationally**

Tuesday 15 January 2018: Amy O'Hara has been appointed the new BFI NETWORK Talent Executive at Film Hub North. O'Hara will work alongside fellow Talent Executive Alice Ramsey to lead the talent development resource in the North of England. BFI NETWORK supports filmmakers early in their careers with short film funding, early feature development, industry-backed professional development, and community-building and networking support. O'Hara replaces Jessica Loveland, who recently joined the BFI as Head of BFI NETWORK.

O'Hara will be based out of the Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne, and joins from STX International where she helped to establish the UK and international office for the studio when it first opened in 2017, and was most recently the Digital Marketing Manager overseeing all their digital campaigns. Previously she was at Film4 for three years supporting new and emerging talent, following working as a Production Assistant on *Pulp: A Film About Life, Death and Supermarkets*.

Since its formation in 2012, BFI NETWORK has provided vital support to a growing number of new writers, directors and producers, delivering on a continued commitment outlined in the BFI's five year strategy **BFI2022** and supported by **National Lottery** funding. It consistently achieves awards success, with NETWORK short *The Field*, directed by Sandhya Suri, nominated for a BAFTA this year, while in 2018, Rungano Nyoni became the first filmmaker supported by BFI NETWORK, and subsequently the BFI Film Fund and Ffilm Cymru Wales, to win a BAFTA for her debut feature *I Am Not A Witch*.

Working closely with the BFI Film Fund team, the seven BFI NETWORK Talent Executives and national partners in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, offer funding, editorial support and professional guidance to help talent progress from making shorts to developing long-form stories, including features.

Talent Execs in England are based in BFI Film Audience Network organisations and venues, offering creative meeting spaces and audience platforms for filmmakers. As part of a national framework, they also advise on full scope of funding and training opportunities available to develop careers across the screen industries, and broker professional and creative relationships with peers.

Jessica Loveland, Head of BFI NETWORK, said: "It is great to have Amy on board, who has a strong track record of developing talent and strong projects. Over the last 12 months, it has been wonderful to see the execs effectively connecting with grassroots talent in their regions and establishing themselves as the access point for funding and support for emerging talent. I'm thrilled Amy will be joining the team as we continue to build on this success to further broaden our reach across the UK."

Holli Keeble, Chief Executive of Tyneside Cinema, said: "We're excited to welcome Amy to the Tyneside Cinema as part of her role with Film Hub North. Amy brings a wealth of experience in both production and distribution sectors, and is well placed to help early-career filmmakers get their work made, as well as being able to offer important insights on how to connect with exhibitors and audiences. Amy is a valuable addition to Film Hub North's talent development team and will develop further the support we provide to filmmakers across the region."

Amy O'Hara said: "I am absolutely thrilled to be joining the Film Hub North team as BFI NETWORK Talent Executive. They are doing a brilliant job of championing under-represented voices and supporting new and emerging talent in the North and I can't wait to be part of such an impressive community. There are so many exciting things happening in the region at the moment and I look forward to coming on board to help encourage, support and champion all the North has to offer."

In addition to Loveland, O'Hara and Ramsey, other members of the BFI NETWORK Talent Executive team are: Thomas Wightman, Film Hub South East; Alice Cabanas, Film Hub South West; Alexandra Jackson, Film Hub Midlands; and Josic Cadoret and Mathieu Ajan, Film Hub London. With the lead talent executives in outside England – Christine Morrow in Northern Ireland Screen, Alice Whittemore in Ffilm Cymru Wales, and Caroline Cooper Charles in the Scottish Film Talent Network – they work with the BFI to deliver NETWORK across the UK. The BFI Doc Society Fund also runs a programme for new and emerging documentary filmmakers, as part of BFI NETWORK.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About BFI NETWORK

Made possible through National Lottery funding, BFI NETWORK exists to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers. We collaborate with film organisations and leading cultural venues across the UK to provide funding for short films, support for the development of first features, as well as a range of professional and creative development programmes.

Find out more and watch supported work: www.bfinetwork.org.uk @bfinetwork

About the BFI Film Audience Network

Supported by National Lottery funding, the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN), is central to the BFI's aim to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone. Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN is a unique, UK-wide collaboration made up of eight Hubs managed by leading film organisations and venues strategically placed around the country. FAN also supports talent development with BFI NETWORK Talent Executives in each of the English Hubs, with a mission to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers.

BFI FAN Film Hubs are:

- Film Hub Midlands is led by Broadway, Nottingham working in partnership with the Birmingham-based Flatpack
- Film Hub North is led collectively by Showroom Workstation, Sheffield, HOME Manchester and Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne

- Film Hub South East is led by the Independent Cinema Office in collaboration with Saffron Screen in Saffron Walden and The Depot in Lewes
- Film Hub South West is led by Watershed in Bristol
- Film Hub Scotland is led by Glasgow Film
- Film Hub Northern Ireland is led by Queen's University Belfast
- Film Hub Wales is led by Chapter in Cardiff
- Film Hub London is led by Film London

About the BFI

At the BFI we support, nurture and promote the art of film, television and the moving image. A charity, funded by Government and earned income, and a distributor of National Lottery funds, we are at the heart of the UK's fast growing screen industries, protecting the past and shaping their future across the UK. We work in partnership with cultural organisations, government and industry to make this happen. We bring our world-class cultural programmes and unrivalled national collections to audiences everywhere, and promote learning about our art-form and its heritage. We support the future success of film in the UK by nurturing new voices and fresh ideas, enriching independent British film culture, challenging the UK's screen industries to innovate and defining Britain and its storytellers in the 21st century.

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