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BFI ANNOUNCES 'VISION AWARDS' FOR 22 EMERGING UK PRODUCERS AND PRODUCER TEAMS

- **BFI Vision Awards will provide up to £2.2 million of National Lottery funding to 22 producers and producer teams based across the UK over next two years**
- **New focus of BFI Vision Awards supports up-and-coming producers to work with and develop new and emerging filmmakers**
- **Support for emerging producers outside London – based in Cardiff, Glasgow, Belfast, Leeds, Hull, Sheffield, York and Manchester**
- **Vision Award producers demonstrate a broad range of talent relationships, approaches and styles – including those working in Virtual Reality and immersive storytelling, artist film and documentary**

Wednesday 24 August 2016 – LONDON

The BFI today announces the recipients of its producer Vision Awards to provide invaluable support and funding to some of the UK's most promising producers, in order that they can build their career as they develop relationships and projects with some of the UK's most exciting and creative emerging filmmakers, contributing to the cultural and economic success of the UK's film industry.

The BFI's Vision Awards will give 22 production companies a degree of creative and financial autonomy to develop their film slates, an increase on the number of Vision Awards that it anticipated making initially (from 20 awards to 22), in response to the number of strong applications received through an open and competitive application process. Overall, almost 500 companies applied for the 2016 Vision Awards, which are backed by a total commitment from the BFI of £2.2 million of National Lottery funding.

In line with the BFI's focus on diversity and inclusion, the Vision Awards aim to support a range of voices, backgrounds and experiences. The selected producers represent a wide range of approaches to form and filmmaking, including for the first time, a producer at the vanguard of immersive storytelling, a producer with a strong background in animation and artist film, and a producer telling international stories through documentary. Fifteen of the awards are to women producers or partnerships, almost double the number of awards made to women through the last round of Vision Awards. Eight of the companies are wholly based outside of London, located in **Belfast, Cardiff,**

Glasgow, Hull, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield and York, and many others are working with writers and directors from around the UK.

Ben Roberts, Director of the BFI's Film Fund, says: "After two successful previous rounds of Vision Awards, we decided this time to focus on providing some crucial support to producers who are at an earlier point in their career. The Vision Awards will give the successful producers the resource and support to partner with us on one of the key areas of our work – discovering and developing brilliant emerging filmmakers and new material – and in turn will help them to build their businesses.

"We had an overwhelming response in this round, which means that whilst we weren't able to support all of the excellent and ambitious producers that we spoke to, we are really excited by the range and potential of those we will be working with through this vital scheme over the next two years. Congratulations!"

Matt Hancock, Minister for Minister of State for Digital and Culture, says: "The BFI, Government and the UK film industry have all worked hard to make Britain the best place in the world to make films, and we're determined to build on recent successes. Initiatives like the BFI's Vision Awards play an important role in supporting the next generation of filmmakers, and I'm very pleased that this year's successful applicants include such a wide range of diverse backgrounds, voices and experiences."

The BFI's first Vision Award,s in 2008, supported 15 companies looking to scale up their business and establish their international reputation through making critically acclaimed and commercially successful films. With its Vision Awards for 2013-2015, the BFI widened the field by supporting 19 companies, including 12 emerging companies. The 2016-2018 awards are focused on emerging producers, providing them with financial support for their development activity and designed to enable them to broaden the range of their relationships and the work they develop.

To help producers working at every level of experience, the BFI has introduced other measures including an increase in its project development funding to support producers with overhead allowances, whilst its 'locked box' of recycled development costs benefits producers who get their films into production with recouped funds to put back into their next project.

With over £50 million of Lottery funding to invest each year, the BFI is the UK's largest public investor in film, and the BFI Film Fund supports first-class British filmmaking, from talent and project development, through production, to audience development across exhibition, distribution and international sales.

BFI Vision Awards 2016-18 (in alphabetical order by company):

Rob Watson – Air Street Films Ltd, London

Rob Watson's Air Street Films has a particular emphasis on developing new women directors. Rob has a range of experience in feature films, from an associate producer credit on Destiny Ekaragha's

Gone Too Far!, to developing screenplays with Arinze Kene (*The Pass*), and is now working on the debut feature from writer-director Corinna Faith (*Ashes*) and with BIFA-winning writer-director Rob Savage (*Strings*) alongside Salon Pictures. Rob's vision as a producer is informed by his valuable experiences of building audiences through community engagement.

Rosie Crerar and Ciara Barry – Barry Crerar Ltd, Glasgow

Producers Rosie Crerar and Ciara Barry have a wealth of experience from developing talent as executives (Creative Scotland, Digicult), producing award-winning short films (*Paris/ Sexy, The Bedfords, Rite*) and managing programmes for international film festivals (the BFI London Film Festival, BFI Flare, GSFF). They now join forces with an ambition to produce contemporary, outward-looking and culturally relevant feature films from Scotland. Having worked independently as producers with emerging writers/directors such as Ruth Paxton and Henry Coombes (*Seat in Shadow*), and in supporting roles on works by Scott Graham (*Iona*) and Peter Mackie Burns (*Daphne*), and also together on the DigiCult shorts initiative, Rosie and Ciara form a long-anticipated partnership with a united creative vision and a strong connection to the artistic landscape in their home city of Glasgow. They seek out stories that reflect the richness of the communities around them and aim to bring forward talents from the rich literary and cultural scene of their home city.

Chris Hees – Bridge Way Ltd, Hull

Producer of the Oscar®-nominated, BAFTA-winning animated short *The Bigger Picture* and RTS-winning production *How I Didn't Become A Piano Player*, Chris Hees has already earned more than 200 festival screenings and 70 awards for his outstanding work. Based in both Hull and London, he keeps one hand in the capital while keeping the other on the growing energy and talent within the UK City of Culture 2017. His vision for Bridge Way is to create strong, character-led, British feature films for international audiences, with a focus on Hull and Yorkshire-based talent, and he is currently developing work with director Brady Hood from Goole, Hull-based writer Chris Marshall and writer-director Weronika Tofiliska.

Rachelle Constant – Constant Productions Ltd, London

Rachelle Constant began her career as a script editor in TV drama, refining her development skills at both ITV and the BBC. Her first short *Two Dosas* was met with critical acclaim, premiering at the BFI London Film Festival in 2014 and winning awards at London Short Film Festival and Aspen ShortFest. A former mentee of the BFI Flare Mentorship programme, Rachelle thrives on working with and supporting a diverse range of new talent, particularly writers to help tell original and dynamic stories.

Yaw Basoah – Dark Pictures Ltd, London

Guiding Lights alumni Yaw Basoah set up Dark Pictures with a vision for exploring 'the dark side of human nature'. Yaw develops projects that bring under-explored arenas to light, including through dramatising mixed race experience and inspired by his Ghanaian heritage. His strong links with the music scene and desire to flex formal boundaries also provide fertile ground for the next two years and beyond. In collaboration with writer-director Faye Gilbert, Yaw is currently in production with their first feature, *Kill Her Witch*, funded through Film London's Microwave scheme. Nurturing a wide-ranging development slate and having already formed established connections with some of

the UK's brightest new talent, Dark Pictures seeks to create unique, culturally significant work that both represents and speaks to diverse audiences.

Loran Dunn – Delaval Film, Manchester

Manchester-based producer Loran Dunn has a strong desire to tell regional stories, having already delivered an impressive slate of shorts including the upcoming iShort *Lambing Season*, and Lucy Campbell's daring sci-fi *The Pig Child*, both funded by BFI NET.WORK. Having launched her career making music promos, Loran has maintained an exceptionally high standard of filmmaking from the very start, nurturing strong relationships with talent and consistently delivering brave, bold work with demonstrable confidence in both herself and her collaborators.

Bekki Wray-Rogers and Libby Durdy – Duck Soup Films Ltd, Leeds

Duck Soup Films is a collaboration between Leeds-based producers Libby Durdy and Bekki Wray-Rogers, who between them have an impressive track record with credits including the BAFTA award-winning *This Is England '88 and '90*, and the international EMMY award-winning *Utopia*. They are driven to create films which reflect a culturally and socio-economically diverse Britain, while working with and attracting emerging and established talent such as writer/director Rachel Tunnard (*Adult Life Skills*) and director Marc Munden (*The Mark of Cain*) to accomplish their vision.

Emilie Jouffroy and Kamilla Kristiane Hodøl – Elation Pictures Ltd, London

Kamilla Kristiane Hodøl and Emilie Jouffroy have a breadth of industry experience and an approach that combines entrepreneurial flair with the exhilaration suggested by their company name, Elation Pictures. Having previously worked across development and production at Film & Music Entertainment, Emilie's credits include BAFTA-winning short *Edmond*. Kamilla has produced a number of acclaimed short films, including the BAFTA-nominated *Manoman* and Aspen double-winner, *Thanks for Dancing*. Their international outlook combined with their strong talent connections present a company with a clear vision and a promising future. Talent they have, and are collaborating with, includes directors Stephen Fingleton (*The Survivalist*), Henrik Martin Dahlsbakken (*Cave*), Christopher Grøndahl (*NOKAS*), Eva Riley, Thordur Palsson, Isabelle Sieb, Nina Gantz and Simon Cartwright, as well as writers Jamie Hannigan (*Pilgrimage*), Amber Trentham, Islay Bell-Webb and Molly Naylor.

Michelle Eastwood – Escape Films Ltd, London

BAFTA-nominated producer of the feature film *In Our Name*, and shorts including *Hesitation*, *By The Grace of God* and BFI-funded *Gutpunch*, Michelle Eastwood has a notable track record for finding and nurturing new talent, and delivering unique, critically acclaimed films. She will continue to grow her emphasis on talent based outside of London and specifically her work with deaf and disabled filmmakers, which she has built up through collaborations with 104 Films and the British Sign Language Broadcasting Trust. Michelle is currently working with filmmakers including directors Ted Evans, Moin Hussain, Gavin Williams, Phil Sheerin and Dawn Shadforth, writer/director Afarin Eghbal, writers Andrew Yerlett (short – *Gutpunch*) and Emma Crowe, playwrights Kellie Smith, Curtis Cole and acclaimed novelist Tom Benn.

Catryn Ramasut – ie ie Productions Ltd, Cardiff

Cardiff-based company ie ie Productions was founded by producer Catryn Ramasut in 2005. With a background in documentaries, the most recent being the award-winning multi-platform production *American Interior* directed by Gruff Rhys and Dyl Goch, Catryn plans to widen her slate to include features and animation, with projects already in development including *Candyllion*, an animated feature (inspired by Gruff Rhys' 2007 album) and a documentary about the legendary Rockfield recording studio in Monmouth. The company's distinctive vision embraces the language and culture of Wales and a focus on female protagonists from diverse backgrounds.

Jacqui Davies – Jacqui Davies Ltd, Twickenham

Jacqui Davies started her prolific career in animation, producing a large number of animated shorts. From 1997 she began collaborating with visual artists producing and commissioning ambitious moving image works for gallery, site-specific installation, stage, broadcast and cinema, including large scale exhibitions and moving image projects for galleries internationally, and shorts for Animate, Random Acts, Channel 4 and Dazed Digital. Her first feature, *The Sky Trembles and The Earth Is Afraid*, with artist Ben Rivers, was funded by the BFI and met with critical acclaim, premiering at Locarno in 2015. Jacqui is now in pre-production with *Ray & Liz*, with first-time director/artist Richard Billingham.

Jude Goldrei – Lunar Lander Films Ltd, Sheffield

Sheffield-based producer Jude Goldrei seeks to create a sustainable company with ambitions to produce diverse, smart genre films with international appeal. She is passionate about working with women filmmakers and talent outside of London. With a number of short film credits including Aurora Fearnley's *Murmur*, she currently has five features in development with a range of talent including Nick Payne (*The Sense of an Ending*), Carolina Giammetta, Alex Winckler, Lucy Moore and Joy Wilkinson. Jude will be expanding her work with regional theatres and building on her experience of grassroots work with filmmakers nationwide.

Rupert Lloyd – Noor Pictures Ltd, London

Producer of the BAFTA-winning and Oscar®-nominated feature *Theeb*, Rupert Lloyd has a unique and internationally-facing vision for Noor Pictures. With a strong focus on telling stories which offer audiences a 'different perspective', his work aims to challenge preconceptions of underrepresented cultures with ambitious, alternative narratives. Rupert has established relationships with emerging talent from across the UK (in particular East Anglia) and is developing projects with talent including Anglo-Jordanian director Naji Abu Nowar (*Theeb*), Nikias Chryssos (*Der Bunker*) and Cyrus Massoudi (*Gholam*).

Brian J Falconer – Out of Orbit Ltd, Belfast

Brian J Falconer, a 2015 Guiding Lights participant, is the producer of BAFTA-winning and Academy Award® nominated short *Boogaloo and Graham*. Based in Belfast, Brian aims to champion both established and emerging Northern Irish talent. Among his many projects, he is already in development with playwright Owen McCafferty (*Mojo Mickeybo*, *Scenes From The Big Picture*), directors Lisa Barros D'Sa and Glenn Leyburn (co-directors *Good Vibrations*, *Cherrybomb*), renowned composer-director David Holmes (*'71*, *I Am Belfast*, *Hunger*), and celebrated filmmaker Mark Cousins (*I Am Belfast*, *A Story of Children And Film*). Brian also has a focus on working with upcoming talent

such as writer-director Jonathan Beer, writer Marc McElroy and Northern Irish photographer and debut director Helen Warner.

Olivier Kaempfer and Cecilia Frugiuele – Parkville Pictures Ltd, London

Parkville Pictures' previous successes include three first features: Alex Taylor's SXSW 2016 debut *Spaceship*, produced through the iFeatures programme; Sundance 2014 break-out hit *Appropriate Behaviour* from the exciting new talent Desiree Akhavan; and Jules Bishop's EIFF 2012 'Best Of The Fest' *Borrowed Time*, made through Film London's Microwave scheme. Nurturing diverse voices and delivering distinctive stories from script to screen are at the heart of the company's mission, as they build an increasingly impressive development slate merging bold new talent alongside follow-up features by both Taylor and Bishop, with Akhavan's second feature set for production in October 2016.

Elhum Shakerifar – Postcode Films Ltd, London

Elhum Shakerifar is a BAFTA-nominated documentary producer, whose credits include the multi-award winning *A Syrian Love Story* and *The Reluctant Revolutionary*. Combining creative storytelling skills with an innovative and open-minded approach to finance and distribution, Elhum has proven herself to be a pro-active and promising new filmmaker, placing imagination and integrity at the heart of her vision for Postcode Films.

Serena Armitage – Red Breast Productions Ltd, York

Producer of the Academy Award®-winning short *Stutterer*, Serena Armitage cut her teeth as a factual television producer at ITV. As she develops the film branch of her career, Serena places narrative focus on the themes of social mobility, disability and immigration, while forming long-term collaborations with writers such as Benjamin Cleary (*Stutterer*), Richard Higson and Miranda Campbell Bowling.

Camilla Bray – Rosetta Productions Ltd, London

Starting her career at Sixteen Films, Camilla Bray has now founded her own company Rosetta Productions, with her credits including UK/Australian co-production *Oranges and Sunshine* and UK/German co-production *Summer*. Camilla has an impressively diverse slate of features already in development with a variety of funders including the BFI, BBC Films and Film4, and is working with a number of exciting filmmakers including Brian Welsh (*In Our Name*), Sally El-Hosaini (*Babylon, My Brother the Devil*), Fyzal Boulifa and theatre director Marianne Elliott.

Bennett McGhee – Silvertown Films Ltd, Pinner

Bennett McGhee set up Silvertown Films in January 2015 after eight years with Wildgaze Productions. With experience across all aspects of production and development, Bennett has quickly established himself as a promising independent producer with his first feature documentary *Bo66y*. Striving to develop fearless, authentic material with both leading and emerging writing talent, Bennett's established partnerships include Matthew Orton, Daniel Hayes and Ed Lilly.

Emily Morgan – Soda Pictures Ltd, London

2015 Screen Star of Tomorrow Emily Morgan has developed a slate of feature projects in partnership with the UK distributor Soda Pictures. Emily has successfully attracted a number of exciting projects, including Welsh-Zambian director Rungano Nyoni's *I Am Not A Witch* as well as developing work with her long term collaborator Claire Oakley. She will now build on her wide-ranging connections with filmmakers – including through past work as production executive on Film London's London Calling Scheme – and drive forward her expansive, international scope for story.

Rienkje Attoh – So & So Productions Ltd, London

Rienkje Attoh's first feature, *A Moving Image*, directed by Shola Amoo, premiered at this year's Los Angeles Film Festival and was nominated for a World Fiction Award. With a mission statement for So & So Productions that seeks to inspire, provoke and entertain, her ambitious slate combines strong commercial awareness with a desire to explore complex narratives around social justice, race, identity and other rich thematic territory.

Eleanor (Nell) Whitley, London

Marshmallow Laser Feast, among its many creative ventures, specialises in virtual reality and immersive storytelling. Having produced a number of projects, including Marshmallow Laser Feast's critically acclaimed *In The Eyes of the Animal* which premiered in New Frontiers at this year's Sundance Film Festival, Nell, who has now branched out to develop her own projects, has a reputation for driving forward award-winning, ambitious work in a variety of forms – live events, art installations and digital media – as well as her innovative collaborations with UK filmmakers, demonstrating a ground-breaking style and unique vision for the future of UK film.

ENDS

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About the BFI

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Highly anticipated films backed by the BFI include this year's Cannes Film Festival Palme d'or winner *I, Daniel Blake* directed by Ken Loach and the Jury Prize award winning *American Honey* by

filmmaker Andrea Arnold; John Michael McDonagh's ***War On Everyone*** which premiered at this year's Berlin Film Festival; Gurinder Chadha's ***Viceroy's House***; Colm McCarthy's ***The Girl With All The Gifts*** which is premiering at the Locarno Film Festival; Mercedes Grower's ***Brakes***; and Pete Travis' ***City of Tiny Lights***.

Films supported by the BFI include Ben Wheatley's ***High-Rise*** starring Tom Hiddleston; Sarah Gavron's critical and box office hit, ***Suffragette***; John Crowley's BAFTA-winning and Oscar® nominated ***Brooklyn***; James Spinney and Peter Middleton's ***Notes on Blindness***, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and is on release in the UK; Sean McAllister's ***A Syrian Love Story***, BAFTA-nominated and Grand Jury prize winner at Sheffield Doc/Fest; Yorgos Lanthimos' BAFTA-nominated ***The Lobster*** which premiered In Competition at Cannes 2015; Andrew Haigh's ***45 Years*** which won Silver Bear awards for Charlotte Rampling and Tom Courtenay at the Berlin Film Festival and went on to be BAFTA and Oscar® nominated.

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