



## **BFI CELEBRATES AMANDA NEVILL WITH BFI FELLOWSHIP**

**London, February 14 2020**

The BFI has honoured its outgoing CEO Amanda Nevill with a BFI Fellowship on her last day in her role at the BFI. The surprise award was presented by BFI Chair Josh Berger at BFI Southbank last night in front of a packed cinema of industry guests and colleagues at a moving and celebratory event to mark her departure. The Fellowship honours and celebrates Amanda's outstanding contribution to British film, television and the moving image and pays tribute to her 17 years at the helm of the UK's lead organisation for film. During her tenure Amanda has taken the BFI from strength to strength. Amongst many other achievements, she has ensured the BFI National Archive is safe and accessible for future generations, successfully taken on the role of the UK's National Lottery distributor for film, transformed BFI Southbank into one of the coolest venues in London, launched the BFI Film Academy, VOD service BFI Player and BFI Network across the UK, and introduced the pioneering BFI Diversity Standards to the industry.

**Amanda Nevill said** "Never in my wildest dreams had I imagined being gifted a BFI Fellowship. I am still in a state of mild but pleasurable shock. I hope that everyone I have worked with at the BFI will know they own a tiny bit of this award. I have always stood on giants shoulders, working for an art form and industry that is the zenith of humankind's artistic endeavour. It also joyously means I can, with no excuse, stay close to and applaud an organisation and the people I respect and love so much."

**BFI Chair Josh Berger said**, 'It gives me enormous pleasure to honour Amanda Nevill with a BFI Fellowship. Amanda has driven the transformation of the BFI with boundless enthusiasm, energy, and determination and with an infectious love of cinema, television, and the moving image in all its forms. The BFI is unrecognisable today from the cultural body that Amanda inherited in 2002. It is now internationally respected and revered and one which the industry and Government look to for expert leadership and guidance. Culturally the BFI remains a world leader, at the vanguard of supporting British independent film and the exhibition of world cinema. Amanda is a truly exceptional leader, she has been at the apex of our industry for years, a completely inspirational figure who has highlighted the art of the possible and always embraced opportunities to mentor and empower.'

On stage tributes to Amanda at BFI Southbank last night were also made by filmmaker Paul Greengrass and BFI Trust Chair Caroline Michel (CEO of Peters Fraser and Dunlop), with actors Tom Hiddleston, Zawe Ashton and David Walliams, Working Title's Eric Fellner, filmmakers Carol Morley and Gurinder Chadha, BFI Film Academy alumni and many others contributing to a film that celebrated Amanda's enormous achievements across the industry.



Amanda will be joining the distinguished ranks of other BFI Fellows including Martin Scorsese, Greg Dyke, Cate Blanchett, Vanessa Redgrave, Akira Kurosawa, David Lean, Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Jeanne Moreau, Stephen Frears, Steve McQueen, Peter Morgan, John Hurt and Jeanne Moreau.

### **Amanda Nevill – Biography**

Amanda Nevill CBE was appointed CEO of the BFI by Anthony Minghella in 2003, and since then she has led its complete transformation, turning it into a major internationally influential organisation.

In 2011 the BFI became the lead organisation for film in the UK. It is a government arms-length body and the distributor of National Lottery funds for film. Its five year strategy BFI2022 is designed to support a vibrant, national film culture in which independent film is widely enjoyed, as part of a thriving and diverse UK film industry, equipped to meet the rapid changes in the film landscape. Amanda, the organisation's first female CEO, has championed changes to increase diversity and inclusion across the industry including introducing the BFI's Diversity Standards which are embedded within its funding decisions and activities and have been recently adopted by BBC Films, Film4 and BAFTA.

Under Amanda's leadership, the BFI National Archive, the UK's national collection of film and television is safe for future generations with the opening of the world-leading, state-of-the-art BFI Master Film Store in Warwickshire in 2011 and the modernisation of the BFI's Conservation Centre in Berkhamsted. Public access to those collections was made possible thanks to the launch of the video-on-demand platform BFI Player in 2012 which has so far has made 10,000 titles from the BFI National Archive and Regional Archives available for free to people all over the UK, through the BFI's Britain on Film project. So far, the films have been viewed over 70 million times.

Amanda has put audiences at the heart of her vision for the BFI. The BFI London Film Festival has become one of the most significant film festivals in the world, she set up a UK wide film partnership network – the Film Audience Network, launched the hugely successful BFI Film Academies and transformed BFI Southbank into one of the coolest arts venues in London. The BFI's blockbuster projects, including Black Star and Comedy Genius, have been enjoyed by audiences all over the UK and programmed by venues around the world. The BFI has also recently given much prominence to its international partnerships, including a tour of Shakespeare on Film, Hitchcock's silent films, restored by the BFI National Archive, in over 70 different countries and a focus on cultural and industrial collaboration with China, leading towards the signing of a new co-production treaty in March 2015.

The BFI is a major investor in British film with the largest public fund in the UK via the National Lottery (around £26 million a year to support film development and production, talent development, distribution, exhibition, export promotion, education and skills). The BFI has invested in films including Ken Loach's Palme d'Or winning *I, Daniel Blake*, Rungano Nyoni's *I Am Not A Witch* (selected for the UK foreign language Osca<sup>®</sup>r entry in 2019), Francis Lee's multi-award winning *God's Own Country*, Tom Harper's *Wild Rose*, Joanna Hogg's *The Souvenir* and Gurinder Chadha's *Viceroy's House*.

With film and television production booming in the UK, and screen industries one of the fastest growing, Amanda has focused on building the strategy and evidence capability of the BFI to support that growth. She launched the recent UK Film Skills Strategy, and the comprehensively persuasive



Screen Business Report that provided an economic evaluation of the screen industries fiscal incentives.

Before joining the BFI, Amanda was one of the Directors of The National Museums of Science and Industry as Head of the National Museum of Photography, Film and TV (NMPFT) in Bradford for nine years, during which time she had become a Government expert advisor to ensure that important photographic collections were retained in the UK. Under Amanda's tenure the Museum underwent a £16 million redevelopment and became the most visited museum outside London, attracting as many as one 1 million visitors a year. The Museum also won a raft of national and international awards for design, content, innovation and excellence. It has since rebranded as the National Media Museum.

Prior to the NMPFT Amanda was at the Royal Photographic Society which she joined in 1985. Here she was responsible for the public face of the Society, its archives and the Commercial Centre in Bath, before going on to become its Chief Executive Officer in 1990.

Amanda's first job was at the Rowan Gallery in London which she joined in 1976. She went on to set up the first ever British contemporary art fair in Bath in 1980.

Amanda was educated in England and France. She is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Amanda was awarded an Honorary FRPS, and Honorary Doctorates from Bradford University, Bradford College, Norwich University of the Arts and the University of York and received a CBE in 2015 for services to the film industry. She was the Women in Film and Television Barclay Business Award winner in 2016 and Veuve Clicquot's Social Purpose Woman of the Year in 2018 for her work on inclusion in the industry.

She has two daughters and five grandchildren which, she says, trumps all of the above.

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