

**BFI Distribution acquires Mark Cousins' WOMEN MAKE
FILM: A NEW ROAD MOVIE THROUGH CINEMA**

LONDON – 4 December 2019. The BFI has acquired **WOMEN MAKE FILM: A NEW ROAD MOVIE THROUGH CINEMA**, written and directed by **Mark Cousins** (*The Story of Film: An Odyssey*) for distribution in the UK and Ireland. This epic 14-hour long documentary, which had its World Premiere at TIFF 2019, is produced by John Archer for Hopscotch Films, with narrators including **Tilda Swinton, Debra Winger, Sharmila Tagore** and **Jane Fonda**. **WOMEN MAKE FILM** is a guide on how to make a movie in thematic chapters, with all the examples from 183 women filmmakers from around the world; some well-established but others little-known, under-appreciated or even forgotten.

Narrator and Executive Producer **Tilda Swinton** says “Women have been making films for eleven decades. Sustaining and informing and inspiring the cinema from its earliest days. We have always had the opportunity to recognise this wealth, screen it, celebrate it and build on its root system. Here’s a starter pack, a booster jet, a treasure trove: the gift of a new confidence in the boundlessness of cinema history and in the emboldening promise of her bounteous legacy.”

Following festival presentations in February/March 2020 to be announced, **WOMEN MAKE FILM** will be available for cinemas UK-wide to book from May 2020 and screened at BFI Southbank in May, accompanying a season of films chosen by Mark Cousins and

directed by women featured in the documentary. It will also have a BFI home entertainment and digital release in May 2020.

Mark Cousins comments "We are thrilled that one of the world's great film organisations has acquired WOMEN MAKE FILM. The BFI is lending a powerful shoulder to the wheel. Its visibility and credibility means that the 183 filmmakers in WOMEN MAKE FILM will be seen by a wider audience. Brava."

This acquisition, negotiated with Hopscotch Films by BFI Acquisitions Manager Laura Dos Santos, builds on the ongoing work of the BFI in supporting female filmmakers, from the *Women with a Movie Camera* strand at BFI Southbank to the filmmakers it funds, such as Joanna Hogg, Sarah Gavron and Phyllida Lloyd. In June 2019 the BFI released *Early Women Filmmakers 1911-1940*, a Blu-ray box set featuring the work of nine of early cinema's most innovative and influential women directors. This year's BFI London Film Festival featured 40% female directors in the programme.

Producer **John Archer** of Hopscotch Films says "We're delighted that the BFI is distributing WOMEN MAKE FILM. It speaks to the BFI's core cultural values, particularly increasing audiences' appreciation of a wider range of films. With its emphasis on education and diversity the BFI is the perfect partner."

Stuart Brown, BFI Head of Programme and Acquisitions says "The BFI is fully committed to supporting women in film across all of its activities. Providing audiences with opportunities to see these films, many of which have been hidden from view, is what we are all about. We're all really excited to be a part of WOMEN MAKE FILM, and are especially looking forward to seeing a lot of the films presented on the big screen at BFI Southbank, both in our launch season in May, and in future seasons dedicated to the work of the women celebrated in this new opus."

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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.