



[www.facebook.com/bfifilmacademy](https://www.facebook.com/bfifilmacademy)

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmacademy](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmacademy)

**BFI FILM ACADEMY GRADUATES SHOWCASE THEIR WORK TO UK FILM INDUSTRY**  
**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION SUPPORTS FUTURE FILMMAKERS WITH £2MILLION FUNDING**

- Sixty six graduates aged 16-19 from all over the UK premiere their six films created for BFI Film Academy course at the National Film and Television School at special industry premiere at BFI Southbank
- Award-winning filmmaker Francis Lee provides inspiration to the next generation of filmmaking talent, who are set to join illustrious Film Academy alumni pursuing successful careers
- Now in its 6<sup>th</sup> year, graduation event has become established talent spotting forum with representatives from BBC Films, Working Title and Pathe in attendance
- From Newcastle to Plymouth, Belfast to Cambridge, talent comes from across the UK, from a range of backgrounds and over half are female
- Since 2012, 85% of Film Academy alumni have pursued film education or become employed in the sector, with some securing work in companies such as LucasFilm, Disney, Framestore and the BBC, and on productions including Steven Spielberg's Ready Player One and Clio Barnard's Dark River
- BFI Film Academy is supported by the Department for Education, the National Lottery, Creative Scotland and Northern Ireland Screen

**LONDON – Friday 13 April 2018:** Following the Department for Education (DFE) in England's £2million investment in the future of the successful BFI Film Academy, 66 talented new graduates today premiered their work at a special Graduation ceremony at BFI Southbank to an audience of UK film industry leaders. At the event, special guest **Francis Lee**, the award-winning writer/director of 2017's *God's Own Country*, shared his experiences of developing a successful career, which saw him attract box office success and critical acclaim for his debut feature. The Film Academy, now in its sixth year, provides 16-19 year olds with a proven entry point to the film industry by offering both technical and artistic skills.

Hosted by **Danny Leigh**, BFI Senior Curator Fiction TV & Film, **Amanda Nevill**, CEO of the BFI and **Dr Jon Wardle**, Director of the National Film and Television School presented the young filmmakers

with their graduation certificates. With the BFI Film Academy becoming a trusted and effective route into the industry, the annual Graduation is regarded as an opportunity to spot and meet new up and coming talent. Companies attending this year include BBC Films, Lucasfilm, Number 9 Films, Working Title, Pathe, Warp Films, Origin Pictures and Lionsgate.

Talking to the graduates about developing careers in film award-winning filmmaker **Francis Lee** (*God's Own Country*) said: "The BFI Film Academy is such a fantastic opportunity – a chance to develop crucial skills to build a career in film. But what I think makes it so special is that it is open all across the UK, so young talent, no matter where they live or what their background, can access this brilliant training."

**Amanda Nevill, CEO, BFI**, said: "We are thrilled to continue our partnership with the Department for Education in England and grateful for their ongoing support to deliver this unique opportunity for 16-19 year olds, regardless of where they live or their background. We are proud the BFI Film Academy has established itself as a gold standard training programme and an effective route into the industry for many who would simply not have had this opportunity otherwise. Boasting 5,000 graduates since it launched in 2012, it's fantastic to see our alumni go on to hone their skills and develop successful careers in film and beyond. Congratulations to our fabulously talented 2018 graduates, they are the future of the industry."

**Jon Wardle, Director of the National Film and Television School**, said: "This year's cohort of young emerging filmmaking talent has once again impressed us with their energy and creativity during the residential at the School. I would like to thank the NFTS tutors, graduates and staff for putting so much effort into mentoring the students who have not only put in a huge amount of work but also enjoyed masterclasses from high profile filmmakers such as *Suffragette* director Sarah Gavron and *Rogue One* director, Gareth Edwards. We take our partnership with the BFI to deliver this fantastic experience incredibly seriously as it's vital in ensuring there is a steady and diverse pipeline of talent coming through."

In its sixth year and open to young people from anywhere in the UK, the BFI Film Academy offers a chance for talented 16-19 year olds to develop the specialist filmmaking skills they need to be part of the future of the UK film industry. The BFI Film Academy offers bursaries to help those in need with costs, ensuring it is open to as diverse a range of young people as possible. Based right across the UK the Academy has created more than 5,000 places for young people on courses run across the UK since 2012. Of all alumni, 85% have pursued film education or become employed in the sector, with only 5% reporting not continuing any film related activity since completing the Film Academy.

Today's industry premiere at BFI Southbank marks the end of an intensive two-week residential for students of the BFI Film Academy's Craft Skills course run by the world-leading National Film and Television School (NFTS). The residential delivered by NFTS is the pinnacle of the BFI Film Academy, featuring talented students mostly selected from regional BFI Film Academy courses that have been running across the UK from September 2017.

At the NFTS, the young filmmakers have been working with leading British film talent including filmmakers like Sarah Gavron (*Suffragette*, *Bricklane*), Gareth Edwards (*Rogue One*, *Godzilla*), Rachel Robey (*The Levelling*), Richard Cox (*Happy Valley*, *Trauma*) and Destiny Ekaragha (*Gone Too Far*). in honing their skills and expertise, culminating in the production of the six short films seen for the first time today.

Previous BFI Film Academy alumni have progressed into great roles in the industry. Thanks to a pioneering programme with Lucasfilm, a number of BFI Film Academy alumni were placed as paid

trainees in various craft and technical roles on *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, the latest film in the Star Wars canon, which will receive its World Premiere at the Cannes International Film Festival. While others have worked with organisations including BBC, BFI, LucasFilm, ITV, Lime Pictures, Red Opal Media, Sleeping Giant Media, The Framestore, The Walt Disney Company, as well as working on film and TV productions such as Clio Bernard's BFI-backed *Dark River*, Asif Kapadia's *Amy*, Steven Spielberg's *Ready Player One*, *Game of Thrones*, Christopher McQuarrie's *Jack Reacher*, BBC Three's *Ackee* and *Saltfish* and BBC One's *Call the Midwife*.

Between September 2017 and February 2018 young filmmakers selected through an open application process have taken part in courses across the UK. During the BFI Film Academy Craft Skills two-week residential course, the exceptional young filmmakers get to learn from experienced industry professionals about every area of filmmaking, from scriptwriting and directing through to pre-visualisation, production design, location management, shooting, sound recording and mixing, editing and cinematography.

**The films premiering at the BFI Southbank today are:**

- ***Nightless*** – A working-class mother prioritises security over an employment opportunity, putting her relationship with her traumatised daughter at risk.
- ***Hindsight*** – Tony, an ex-convict and addict, desperate for a new relationship with his daughter and former partner, must overcome his past temptations and prove that he's finally changed his ways.
- ***Clown in a Church*** – The determination of an ambitious journalist transforms an amateur documentary about a dissatisfied clown into an essay on the meaning of morality.
- ***The Narrator*** – Finally rebelling against the narrator that controls her life, an ordinary woman desperately tries to break free from her role as the leading lady in a movie she's tired of starring in.
- ***Cabin Fever*** – In an isolated cabin in North Dakota, a widowed doctor must confront his past after a young man breaks into his home.
- ***Bittersweet*** – In 1952, a struggling Scottish single-mother must choose between financial security and the safety of her son when someone comes knocking at her door.

**BFI Film Academy graduating film teams 2018:**

***Nightless***

DIRECTOR Cameron Dent  
WRITER Rachael Simoes  
PRODUCERS Harry Orsborn, Rosie Robinson  
CINEMATOGRAPHERS Anita Markowska, Thomas Hall  
SOUND RECORDISTS Alanah Walker, Mercer MacWilliam  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Lottie Brocklesby  
EDITORS Aatiqa Rehman, Macy Trieu-Dingle  
LEAD TUTOR Brady Hood

***Hindsight***

DIRECTOR Oisín O'Reilly  
WRITER Dora Cowper  
PRODUCERS Natalie Hall, Titus Indrapally  
CINEMATOGRAPHERS Dylan Adams, Tallulah Self  
SOUND RECORDISTS Liam Pym, Sophie Cooksley  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Matilda Carboni

EDITORS Rebecca Sprague, Sarah Uwadiale  
LEAD TUTOR Lesley Manning

***Clown in a Church***

DIRECTOR Ruda Santos  
WRITER Nancy Page  
PRODUCERS Carys Jones, Raheem Ahmed  
CINEMATOGRAPHERS Charlotte Marshall, Lukacs Dulo  
SOUND RECORDISTS Angel Gitau, Nick Corrigan  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Mercy Scarlett  
EDITORS Harriet Kennedy, Luke Furmage  
LEAD TUTOR David Winstone

***The Narrator***

DIRECTOR Nicholas Connor  
WRITER Joshua Brooks  
PRODUCERS Abdullah Khan, Lucy Percival  
CINEMATOGRAPHERS Skye Fisher, William Jensen  
SOUND RECORDISTS Caleb Carter, Nicole Adams  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Agatha Genissel  
EDITORS Anand Nagra, Madeleine Fletcher  
LEAD TUTOR Rob Watson

***Cabin Fever***

DIRECTOR Eva Sykes  
WRITER Dimitri Bakalis  
PRODUCERS Aisha Olalere, Joseph Carty  
CINEMATOGRAPHERS Grace Talbot, Matthew Spencer  
SOUND RECORDISTS Jake Tracey, Tara Humphris,  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Evie Hauler-Davies  
EDITORS Aiden Hetheron, Orbanie Gayle  
LEAD TUTOR Brian Ward

***Bittersweet***

DIRECTOR Ravi Ghelani  
WRITER Leigh Riddick  
PRODUCERS Neil Thomson, Nicola Orr  
CINEMATOGRAPHERS Alex Maynard, Caroline Preynat-Viero  
SOUND RECORDISTS Aseem Ansar, Molly Schutten  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER Ellen Beaufoy  
EDITORS Jessica Christian, Jordan Steeds  
LEAD TUTOR Tammy Riley-Smith

**For photos, interviews and further information:**

Colette Geraghty, PR Manager, Industry & Corporate | BFI  
[Colette.Geraghty@bfi.org.uk](mailto:Colette.Geraghty@bfi.org.uk)  
+ 44 (0)20 7173 3256 / 07957 864 362

**Notes to Editors**

**About the BFI Film Academy**

The BFI Film Academy aims to help train and inspire the next generation of British filmmakers, supporting talented and committed young people aged 16-19 to develop the commercial and cultural knowledge and skills to help make a career in film a reality.

Since 2012, the BFI Film Academy has been offering training for every film industry role, from writing and directing through to production, sound design, editing and camera, and provides learning around film history and cinematic storytelling to inspire an appreciation of film culture in the round.

The BFI Film Academy is supported by the Department for Education in England, the National Lottery, Creative Scotland and Northern Ireland Screen.

[www.bfi.org.uk/filmacademy](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmacademy) | [www.facebook.com/bfifilmacademy](https://www.facebook.com/bfifilmacademy)