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THE 63rd BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FULL 2019 PROGRAMME

Opening Night – THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DAVID COPPERFIELD

Closing Night – THE IRISHMAN

American Express Gala KNIVES OUT celebrates 10 years of partnership with the LFF

78 countries represented

40% of all films directed or co-directed by women

London, Thursday 29th August, 2019 (11:15) - The 63rd BFI London Film Festival (LFF) in partnership with American Express announces its full programme today, presenting 229 feature films from some of the world's greatest filmmakers and emerging talent.

For 12 days from **2-13 October 2019** the LFF will celebrate the diverse landscape of international cinema, showcasing films set to entertain and inspire, provoke debate and tackle the urgent issues of our time.

Amanda Nevill, CEO, BFI said "At this moment when the UK is adapting and reshaping our place in the world, the BFI London Film Festival really underlines the soft power of the art of film and showcases the dynamism of global exchange and partnership. All the BFI's cultural programmes, from BFI Southbank to BFI Player, have sought to be an active champion at the heart of the global cinema story and this year's LFF does this so powerfully with its incredibly rich and diverse programme and the international filmmaking community who love being here.'

Tricia Tuttle, BFI London Film Festival Director said, "In its 63rd year, BFI London Film Festival is one of the world's great public film fests. And that greatness comes from the fact that we serve one of the most vibrant and international cities in the world and welcome voracious, adventurous and cineliterate audiences. While there are many talking points emerging from this year's programme, a few really leap out: the strong instinct from filmmakers to explore urgent social and political issues through narrative and often through the use of genre; the striking emergence of a new generation of filmmakers exploding onto the international stage with startlingly bold, original and ambitious debuts; the continuing and welcome trend of increased gender balance in directing talent behind short film, first and second features. And while we're so delighted to see work from 78 countries in the Festival, we also love welcoming a particularly exceptional new wave of UK based filmmakers with cracking first and second feature films in LFF."

As Britain's leading cinema event and one of the world's most important film festivals, the programme offers UK audiences the chance to see some of the most anticipated new films from around the globe, including a host of new works destined to be major awards contenders. This October, the Festival will present 28 World Premieres, 12 International Premieres and 28 European Premieres, welcoming an impressive line up of first-class filmmakers and acting talent.

The programme presents stories from a broad range of voices, continuing to support both home-grown cinema and international productions. 78 countries are represented across short films and features, with 40% of all films directed

or co-directed by women. The Festival continues to act as a launch pad for debut filmmakers, often supporting them throughout their career, demonstrated by returning Festival alumni in this year's programme. The 229 feature films screening include: 41 documentaries, 7 animations, 13 archive restorations and 7 artists' moving image features. The programme also includes 116 short films.

The **Competitive sections** serve to recognise remarkable creative achievements from British and international filmmakers. Winners are selected by hand-picked juries across four categories: Official Competition, First Feature, Documentary and Short Film. Last year, audiences were placed at the heart of the awards celebrations for the first time, when the winning film from each section was presented to the public as a surprise screening, following the on-stage announcement of the winner. Building on last year's sell-out success, audiences will once again have the chance to buy tickets to these awards screenings and be part of the proceedings.

This year sees the return of Odeon's iconic flagship cinema, the redesigned **ODEON Luxe Leicester Square**. Each night of the Festival, a Headline Gala will screen in flawless 4k projection with pitch-perfect Dolby® Atmos sound. Luxe recliners offer space and comfort, ensuring every seat in the 800 seater venue is the best in the house. Films in Official Competition will be presented at the **Vue West End** and once again the festival's beautiful 800-seat purpose-built venue **Embankment Garden Cinema** will be housed in the tranquil surroundings of Victoria Embankment Gardens. First built for the Festival in 2016, this state-of-the-art venue is constructed to the highest technical specifications with raked seating, Christie Digital 4k RGB pure laser illuminated projection and Dolby® 7.1 surround sound, with audiences and filmmakers alike praising its quality of cinema experience.

Alongside the Galas, Special Presentations and films in Competition, the Festival will show a range of new world cinema in sections **Love, Debate, Laugh, Dare, Thrill, Cult, Journey, Create, Experimenta** and **Family** – which provide pathways for audiences to navigate the extensive programme.

Cinemagoers across the UK will have the opportunity to be part of the closing night celebrations, with simulcast screenings of Martin Scorsese's **THE IRISHMAN**, bringing the excitement of the Leicester Square premiere to cinemas nationwide. Continuing the Festival's offering to audiences outside of London, screenings of three new films will be brought to young film lovers, with curated screenings across the UK for primary and secondary schools as part of the LFF Education Programme.

LFF Connects gives audiences the chance to hear from creative leaders working at the intersection of film and other creative industries. The Festival's acclaimed Screen Talks offer a series of in-depth interviews with leaders in contemporary cinema. Participants confirmed so far include directors Rian Johnson, Kim Longinotto and Lukas Moodysson, with more to be announced nearer the Festival.

The Festival continues to develop its offering of both industry and public events. Audiences will have the chance to join in the film chat and soak up all the atmosphere at the official social hub down at BFI Southbank, where they can take part in free events. Designed to take you behind the scenes and get conversations flowing, events will include talks and debates, book signings, live DJ club nights and free short film screenings.

The Festival will partner with a host of London cinemas, with its films playing on 18 screens at 12 venues across the capital: BFI Southbank, BFI IMAX, Ciné Lumière, Curzon Mayfair, Curzon Soho, Embankment Garden Cinema, Empire Haymarket, the ICA, ODEON Luxe Leicester Square, ODEON Tottenham Court Road, Prince Charles Cinema and Vue West End.

OPENING & CLOSING NIGHT GALAS

As previously announced, this year's Opening Night gala will be **THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DAVID COPPERFIELD**, directed by the multi-award-winning writer, filmmaker and broadcaster Armando Iannucci (*The Death of Stalin*) and starring BAFTA Award winner Dev Patel as David Copperfield. The film will receive its European Premiere on Wednesday 2nd October at ODEON Luxe Leicester Square. This fresh take on Charles Dickens' classic novel boasts a stellar British

cast, led by Dev Patel, Tilda Swinton, Hugh Laurie, Peter Capaldi, Ben Whishaw, Paul Whitehouse and Gwendoline Christie, many of whom are expected on the red carpet in Leicester Square.

The Festival closes with the International Premiere of THE IRISHMAN, directed by one of the true giants of cinema, Martin Scorsese (*Silence, The Departed*), and starring Academy Award® winners Robert De Niro, Al Pacino and Joe Pesci. A film that has been many years in the making, THE IRISHMAN is a grand scale epic examining the influence of organised crime in post-war America. The festival is delighted to be bringing the work of this iconic filmmaker to the UK on Sunday 13th October in London, where there will be simultaneous preview screenings of THE IRISHMAN taking place at cinemas across the UK.

GALAS

HEADLINE GALAS

The American Express Gala is the European Premiere of KNIVES OUT, a fresh take on a classic ‘whodunit’ written and directed by Rian Johnson (*Brick, Looper*). A stylish tribute to mystery mastermind Agatha Christie, KNIVES OUT is a fun, modern-day murder mystery where everyone is a suspect. When renowned crime novelist Harlan Thrombey (Christopher Plummer) is found dead at his estate just after his 85th birthday, the inquisitive and debonair Detective Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig) is mysteriously enlisted to investigate. A witty delight for film fans, the film features a star-studded cast that includes Daniel Craig, Chris Evans, Ana de Armas, Jamie Lee Curtis, Toni Colette, Katherine Langford and Christopher Plummer. The film will premiere on Tuesday, 8th October at the ODEON Luxe Leicester Square.

The Mayor of London’s Gala sees Academy Award® winner Eddie Redmayne and Academy Award® nominee Felicity Jones reunite on screen, as aerial explorers in THE AERONAUTS. This heart-racing adventure story directed by longtime festival favourite Tom Harper (*Wild Rose, LFF 2018*) and written by Jack Thorne (*The Scouting Book for Boys, Harry Potter and The Cursed Child*) captures the audacity and romance of the Victorian race into the air, with special effects that will transport you to the skies as we follow Amelia Wren (Jones) and James Glaisher (Redmayne) on mankind’s highest ever balloon voyage.

Starring Academy Award® winner Tom Hanks as beloved television entertainer Fred Rogers, the BFI Patrons’ Gala, A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, sees director Marielle Heller return to the festival after premiering her second feature *Can You Ever Forgive Me?* last year. The film is the perfect antidote for uneasy times and will melt the coldest of hearts. Matthew Rhys is excellent as magazine writer Lloyd Vogel (based on journalist Tom Junod) who is commissioned to write an article on the presenter. Regarding Rogers as a monolith of an unfashionable past, he asks: ‘Could anyone really be so good, so kind?’ But on spending more time with Rogers, Vogel begins to question his own misanthropic outlook.

British director Michael Winterbottom (*The Trip, The Wedding Guest*) brings us a sharp-tongued and timely satire in the Headline Gala European Premiere of GREED. The film stars Steve Coogan as Richard ‘Greedy’ McCreadie, a high-street retail tycoon who throws a lavish, Rome-themed 60th birthday bash to prove he’s still on top after a recent spate of fraud investigations. As guests start arriving, including McCreadie’s ex-wife (Isla Fisher), his empire starts to fall apart at the seams. Featuring a vast ensemble cast that includes Shirley Henderson and David Mitchell, this entertaining and anarchic farce pits humour against the 1%.

Celebrated screenwriter William Nicholson (*Les Misérables, Gladiator, Shadowlands*) directs Annette Bening and Bill Nighy in the Headline Gala HOPE GAP, a witty divorce drama that depicts a couple in their 60s as they face the end of their marriage after 29 years. Josh O’Connor plays their son, who discovers, on returning to his parents bohemian coastal home for the weekend, that his father has had enough and his bags are packed. Shot with a ravishing sense of design and colour, making the most of its lush English coastline, this is an emotionally astute portrait of a marriage; of regrets uncovered, decisions made too late and the precariousness of hope.

Taika Waititi’s JOJO RABBIT will receive its European Premiere in this exuberant and satirical Headline Gala. Jojo is a game, if somewhat inept, member of the Hitler Youth; his closest friend, an imaginary Adolf Hitler (Waititi, on hilarious form). When he discovers his mother (Scarlett Johansson) has been hiding a young Jewish girl (Thomasin McKenzie,

Leave No Trace) in their house, Jojo must go to war with his own conscience. Tackling the ludicrousness of racism and nationalism, Waititi has also crafted a film of great emotional charge and tenderness. Amongst an illustrious cast of comic greats including Sam Rockwell, Rebel Wilson and Stephen Merchant, Johansson dazzles on screen with one of her most charismatic performances.

This year's American Airlines Gala, the UK Premiere of THE KING, stars Timothée Chalamet in David Michôd's (*Animal Kingdom, The Rover*) visceral portrait of Henry V. The startling transformation undertaken by Hal in Shakespeare's Henriad series, from the fun-loving prince into the all-powerful monarch, is one of literature's most acute character studies. Here, Michôd and co-screenwriter and star Joel Edgerton adapt those texts to explore how a reluctant monarch took the crown and found himself embroiled in the very same wars he despised his father for. The superbly talented supporting cast includes Lily-Rose Depp as Catherine, future Queen of England, Ben Mendelsohn as Henry IV and Robert Pattinson as a particularly spicy Dauphin, heir to the French throne.

Matt Damon and Christian Bale star in the UK Premiere of LE MANS '66, a study of friendship that shaped 1960s motor racing, brimming with old-school Hollywood charm. Working from an excellent script by Jez and John-Henry Butterworth, director James Mangold (*Logan*) hooks you from the first scene and never lets go.

The May Fair Hotel Gala is MARRIAGE STORY, directed by Noah Baumbach (*While We're Young, Frances Ha*) and starring Adam Driver and Scarlett Johansson as an ill-fated couple who are married, have a son and run a theatre company together. Arguably Baumbach's most personal film to date, MARRIAGE STORY charts the unravelling of their marriage, often with bitter hilarity in even the most desolate of scenes. Baumbach shoots on gorgeous 35mm with a 1.66 aspect ratio that foregrounds performance, often with startling long takes.

FESTIVAL AND STRAND GALAS

Chilean director Pablo Larraín's (*Jackie*) EMA is this year's Festival Gala, starring the superb Gael García Bernal and featuring a spellbinding lead performance from newcomer Mariana Di Girolamo. In this character study of a beguiling woman ruled by heart and impulse, Larraín paints a picture of talented contemporary street/reggaeton dancer and teacher Ema. Larraín's film intersperses explosive, intoxicating scenes of dance amidst dramatic moments that are fractured in time.

The Family Gala is the UK Premiere of Jill Culton and Todd Wilderman's ABOMINABLE. This latest animated tale from Dreamworks is a fun, fast-paced action adventure about a little girl and her yeti companion in a race-against-time trip from China to the Himalayas. Boasting a compelling story and breathtaking visuals, ABOMINABLE is as beautiful as it is funny and exciting.

Kleber Mendonça Filho (*Neighbouring Sounds*) and Juliano Dornelles' critically acclaimed BACURAU, winner of the Cannes Jury Prize 2019, features as this year's Thrill Gala. This futuristic, sardonic and complex thriller explores the lives of misfits, mixed-heritage outsiders, whores, hippies and queers. They live in the margins in a dusty little town that has been wiped clean off the map by the middle-class elite from the north, who are busy ingratiating themselves, selling their country and its people to rich European and American interests.

This year's Laugh Gala, THE DUDE IN ME from director Hyo-jin Kang, is a sassy body-swap comedy from South Korea, which tells the story of a ballsy gangster who accidentally possesses a timid schoolboy. Employing dry humour to undercut macho culture, the film finds fresh twists to a classic premise, resulting in an upbeat, poptastic entertainment that sustains its surprisingly sweet energy and laughs to the last.

Mirrah Foulkes' JUDY & PUNCH features as the Dare Gala. Prepare for an audaciously brilliant first feature, with Mia Wasikowska splendid in this fairy tale with a feminine twist. Foulkes creates an origin story of sorts, but one that reimagines what might have happened if Judy decided not to take Punch's incessant battery quite so meekly.

Acclaimed filmmaker Robert Eggers, the Sutherland Award-winning director of *The Witch*, returns to terrorise audiences with his masterful maritime shocker THE LIGHTHOUSE, which is this year's Cult Gala. Once seen, never

forgotten, this hypnotic fusion of beauty and brutality is truly the stuff of nightmares, boasting extraordinary performances from Robert Pattinson and Willem Dafoe as a downtrodden lackey and baiting slave driver at the begrimed lighthouse where they've been assigned to work together for four weeks.

OFFICIAL SECRETS is filmmaker Gavin Hood's (*Eye in the Sky*) sharp political thriller, about a key moment in the history of the Iraq conflict, opening as this year's Debate Gala. It follows the story of Katharine Gun, an ordinary government contract worker faced with an extraordinary choice: in 2003, on the eve of the UK-US invasion of Iraq, Gun intercepted communications that revealed the UK was being asked to spy on UN Security Council Members to help influence votes sanctioning the Iraq invasion. Keira Knightley gives an excellent performance as Gun, alongside a strong ensemble cast that includes Matt Smith, Ralph Fiennes, Matthew Goode and Rhys Ifans.

The Love Gala, in association with Malta Tourism Authority, is the UK Premiere of Michael Schwartz and Tyler Nilson's effortlessly charming buddy movie, THE PEANUT BUTTER FALCON, about a young man in pursuit of his dreams. Zak, a restless 22-year old with Down's Syndrome, is frustrated by the slow pace of life at his nursing home. Itching for some excitement, he hatches a plan to meet his idol, a pro wrestler named The Salt Water Redneck. Zak makes a break from his geriatric prison with his worried carer in hot pursuit.

This year's Journey Gala is the thrillingly cinematic two-hander from Fernando Meirelles (*City of God, The Constant Gardener*), THE TWO POPES, starring Anthony Hopkins and Jonathan Pryce as a pair of men tussling over the future of the Catholic Church. Disillusioned Jorge Bergoglio (Pryce) is a strong contender for the revered position of head of the Church but is relieved when Joseph Ratzinger (Hopkins) gets the top job and becomes Pope Benedict XVI. When the two men are brought together over one summer, their clash of ideologies make for a passionate debate.

The European Premiere of WESTERN STARS sees global music legend Bruce Springsteen perform the entirety of his 19th studio release in this year's Create Gala, co-directed by Thom Zimny and Bruce Springsteen. Resolved that he would not be taking the record on tour, Springsteen, collaborating with Zimny, opted instead to produce a feature-length film as a means of bringing the live experience to music lovers across the world. Set in the atmospheric surroundings of a majestic old barn, Springsteen's elegiac ode to the American West blends lush orchestration with emotional tenderness. Springsteen (joined by wife Patti Scialfa, a small orchestra and a handful of accompanying musicians) reflects on the songs and ruminates on the loves, challenges and regrets he has faced in his own life.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Eleven Special Presentations shine the spotlight on new work from major directors.

The eagerly awaited follow-up to Cory Finley's explosive debut *Thoroughbreds* (LFF 2017) is his BAD EDUCATION, which screens as a Special Presentation in association with Empire. Hugh Jackman and Allison Janney star in this school-set political thriller based on the true story of an embezzlement scandal that rocked the New York school system.

One of the UK's classiest cinematic storytellers, Roger Michell (*Enduring Love, Le Week-End, Notting Hill*) directs BLACKBIRD, a deeply moving and satisfying drama about the complexity of family love.

A glorious love letter to life and love in Mumbai, BOMBAY ROSE, from feature debut director and screenwriter Gitanjali Rao, is both epic and personal. Rao's exquisite animation allows characters to move seamlessly between real and imagined worlds, in this delicate and nuanced collection of stories.

Oscar-nominated Feras Fayyad's (*Last Men in Aleppo*) essential film THE CAVE tells the harrowing story of an underground Syrian hospital and its extraordinary staff. Fayyad crafts an urgent and poignant testimony of the humanity of the hospital staff, who risk their lives to maintain the health and hopes of the people they treat. But the film is also a call to action – a demand for a response to this intolerable humanitarian crisis.

Prolific Japanese director Takashi Miike proves in FIRST LOVE that he still has much to explore in the yakuza world, even after 2015's anarchic, bloody vampire flick-crime movie mash-up *Yakuza Apocalypse*. This time employing a love story

as a counterpoint to the intrigues of the Tokyo underworld, the film follows a young boxer on the brink of death as he falls in love with a woman caught in the crossfire between yakuza and triad gangs in a fight over stolen drugs.

Last seen at LFF with 2013's widely adored girl-punk charmer *We Are the Best!*, Swedish writer-director Lukas Moodysson returns with his first foray into episodic television in Special Presentation GÖSTA. The focus of this loving satire is on its extremely kind title character, the nicest child psychologist in provincial Sweden. Affectionately lampooning youthful idealism, Moodysson's empathetic storytelling transfers perfectly to the small screen.

A collaboration between two award-winning directors returning to the Festival, Anocha Suwichakornpong and Ben Rivers, the Experimenta Special Presentation is KRABI, 2562. The two merge their unique cinematic languages across reality and folklore in the eponymous tourist town, to create an absorbing and playful portrait of a people, place and time that makes for a series of haunting vignettes on the legacy of our age.

Featuring Britain's biggest star of the 1920s, the 'Queen of Happiness' Betty Balfour, this year's Archive Special Presentation is LOVE, LIFE AND LAUGHTER. The discovery of this cinematic treasure, lost for nearly a century, is a major event. Telling the story of a pair of working-class youngsters with big dreams, the film was rediscovered when an incomplete Dutch-language version was identified by archivists at EYE Filmmuseum in the Netherlands. This has been painstakingly pieced together by our restoration team with new English intertitles, bringing back to life a truly vivacious performance from Balfour.

Another Special Presentation is OUR LADIES, a loving adaptation of Alan Warner's novel *The Sopranos* by veteran director Michael Caton-Jones (*The Jackal*, *Basic Instinct 2*) and a perfect evocation of being young and riotously alive in mid-90s Scotland. Following a rebellious group of six teenage choirgirls on a day trip to a singing competition in Edinburgh, this unvarnished coming-of-age saga features brilliant central performances from young actors Eve Austin, Talulah Greive, Abigail Lawrie, Sally Messham, Rona Morison and Marli Siu.

The BFI Flare Special Presentation in association with Sight & Sound is PORTRAIT OF A LADY ON FIRE; a female portrait painter falls in love with her subject in Céline Sciamma's perfect new film. Whilst a devastatingly effective story of love set against impossible social and cultural barriers, it is also a film that redefines the construction of the gaze – of the protagonist, the camera, and the viewer – on the female form. It's Céline Sciamma on fire.

The final Special Presentation is ROCKS, a vibrant and hugely engaging portrait of female friendship and growing up in London, from director Sarah Gavron (*Brick Lane*, *Suffragette*). Based on a script from award-winning playwright Theresa Ikoko and Claire Wilson, the drama was developed through extensive workshops with the female cast, all of whom were discovered through casting sessions at schools. With magnetic performances across the board – particularly from Bukky Bakray, Kosar Ali and Shaneigha-Monik Greyson – ROCKS gives voice to London girls who have something to say.

Key filmmaking talent expected to attend the Festival's Gala and Special Presentation screenings include:

Armando Iannucci, Martin Scorsese, Robert De Niro, Stephen Graham, Rian Johnson, Tom Harper, Marielle Heller, Michael Winterbottom, Steve Coogan, William Nicholson, Taika Waititi, Roman Griffin Davis, Thomasin McKenzie, Alfie Allen, Archie Yates, David Michôd, Timothée Chalamet, Joel Edgerton, Ben Mendelsohn, Sean Harris, Lily-Rose Depp, Tom Glynn-Carney, James Mangold, Noah Baumbach, Adam Driver, Laura Dern, David Heyman, Pablo Larraín, Kleber Mendonça Filho, Juliano Dornelles, Mirrah Foulkes, Robert Eggers, Gavin Hood, Keira Knightley, Katharine Gun, Martin Bright, Michael Schwartz, Tyler Nilson, Zack Gottsagen, Fernando Meirelles, Jonathan Pryce, Thom Zimny, Bruce Springsteen, Cory Finley, Hugh Jackman, Roger Michell, Gitanjali Rao, Feras Fayyad, Jeremy Thomas, Lukas Moodysson, Ben Rivers, Michael Caton-Jones, Céline Sciamma, Noémie Merlant, Adèle Haenel, Sarah Gavron.

AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS

The BFI London Film Festival Awards celebrate the creative achievements of British and international filmmakers showcased in our Competitive sections, aiming to honour inspiring, inventive and distinctive filmmaking across each of the four categories.

The winners in each competition are selected by festival juries, and, following last year's reboot of the Awards format, will all be available for the public to book as an additional surprise screening. Preceding each will be the presentation of the award by BFI London Film Festival Director Tricia Tuttle and the Jury Chair to the winning filmmaker.

The Festival is delighted to make audiences a key part of the Awards celebration and increase their chances of seeing the very best new films on offer, all of which is vital to the Festival's mission of inclusion and accessibility for all.

The Jury for each category will be announced ahead of the opening of the Festival.

OFFICIAL COMPETITION

As previously announced, the **Best Film Award in Official Competition** recognises inspiring, inventive and distinctive filmmaking, and includes the following shortlisted titles:

- FANNY LYÉ DELIVER'D, Thomas Clay's intoxicating 17th Century drama with Maxine Peake in the title role
- HONEY BOY, Alma Har'el's artful and soul-baring examination of the lingering effects of emotional abuse, written by Shia LaBeouf, who stars alongside Lucas Hedges
- LINGUA FRANCA, a beautifully performed character study of a Filipino transwoman and undocumented immigrant in Brooklyn, from writer/director Isabel Sandoval, who also takes on the lead role
- LA LLORONA, Guatemalan director Jayro Bustamante's taut genre-bending thriller about an elderly general haunted by a spectre of the past during his trial for genocide
- MOFFIE, Oliver Hermanus' haunting examination of the violent persecution of gay men under Apartheid
- MONOS, a hallucinogenic, intoxicating thriller by Alejandro Landes about child soldiers high in the mountains of South America
- THE OTHER LAMB, Małgorzata Szumowska's beguiling, genre-tinged English-language debut examining life in an otherworldly cult
- THE PERFECT CANDIDATE, Haifaa Al Mansour's inspiring drama about a young doctor who becomes an electoral candidate to challenge Saudi Arabia's strict social codes
- ROSE PLAYS JULIE, an immersive and gripping drama from directing duo Christine Molloy and Joe Lawlor about a young woman seeking her biological mother
- SAINT MAUD, the debut feature from director Rose Glass, in which a mysterious nurse becomes dangerously obsessed with saving the soul of her dying patient.

FIRST FEATURE COMPETITION – SUTHERLAND AWARD

Titles in consideration for the **Sutherland Award** in the **First Feature Competition** recognising an original and imaginative directorial debut are:

ATLANTICS (Dir. Mati Diop). A hypnotic, genre-shifting portrait of a girl's awakening. When Souleiman grows tired of labouring without pay on the gleaming towers of Dakar, he sets out across the sea with friends, leaving Ada to face impending marriage to another man. But as the women gather in the bar where the men used to drink, it seems that something has returned to them.

BABYTEETH (Dir. Shannon Murphy). A feverish Australian drama featuring a superb performance by breakout star Eliza Scanlen as Milla, a seriously ill teenage girl who falls madly in love with a young drug dealer. Milla's infatuation with the dodgy-but-charming Toby leaves her parents, Henry (Ben Mendelsohn) and Anna (Essie Davis) faced with a tricky dilemma.

CALM WITH HORSES (Dir. Nick Rowland). Cosmo Jarvis gives a visceral performance in Rowland's gripping feature debut as Douglas, the hired muscle for a crime family in rural Ireland. As he becomes embroiled in a violent pageant of retribution, the time soon comes for Douglas to choose sides.

HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD (Dir. Bora Kim). Announcing a bright new voice in South Korean cinema, Kim brings both humour and elegance to her autobiographical debut in this absorbing coming-of-age drama about teenager Eunhee and her dysfunctional Seoul family circa 1994.

INSTINCT (Dir. Halina Reijn). Carice van Houten plays respected clinical psychologist Nicoline, who after starting a new job at a penal institution finds herself flirting with danger in her sessions with inmate Idris. Soon, the boundaries between doctor and patient begin to blur as tensions escalate.

THE LAST BLACK MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO (Dir. Joe Talbot). Jimmie dreams of reclaiming the beautiful late 19th-century home his grandfather built, before hard times and changing demographics forced his family out. He and best friend Mont scheme to make the dream a reality, in Talbot and writer-performer Jimmie Fails's gorgeous, inventive meditation on art, architecture, black culture and gentrification in California's Bay Area.

MAKE UP (Dir. Claire Oakley). A riveting psycho-sexual drama in which teenager Ruth travels to a seaside holiday park to stay with her boyfriend Tom, and one day finds evidence he might be cheating on her. As her desire to uncover the truth turns into an obsession, she begins to realise she might be looking for something else entirely.

RELATIVITY (Dir. Mariko Minoguchi). It is love at first sight when Nora and Aaron first meet on a rainy day in an underground station, but Aaron's fate takes a dramatic turn and changes Nora's life in an instant. Minoguchi's debut is a romantic narrative of ambitious proportions, effortlessly looping between the present and past while making clever use of cinema as an unfurling emotional landscape.

SCALES (Dir. Shahad Ameen). A visually resplendent tale set in a small Gulf fishing village, where the population live in thrall to the otherworldly creatures of the sea. The inhabitants traditionally sacrifice female children to them until one of those girls, Hayat (meaning 'life' in Arabic), rejects her fate and fights against the patriarchal hegemony.

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION - GRIERSON AWARD

The **Grierson Award** in the **Documentary Competition** category recognises cinematic documentaries with integrity, originality, and social or cultural significance. This year the Festival is screening:

COLD CASE HAMMARSKJÖLD (Dir. Mads Brügger). This wild, stranger-than-fiction documentary depicts the most disturbing true-crime investigation to have been seen in recent years, in which Brügger attempts to solve the mysterious death in 1961 of second Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld.

COUP 53 (Dir. Taghi Amirani). The latest from award-winning documentarian Amirani is a decade-long investigation into the CIA/MI6-led coup of 1953 that removed Iran's democratic Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadegh. What begins as an interrogation of the mystery still surrounding the affair develops into a taut thriller, exposing rigorous secrecy and underlining the ongoing ramifications of this pivotal political episode.

CUNNINGHAM (Dir. Alla Kovgan). This eye-popping 3D portrait of great American choreographer Merce Cunningham celebrates the centenary of his birth. An exquisitely crafted and artistically ambitious documentary, the film explores his creative process in the period between 1942 and 1972 when he rose from struggling dancer to become one of the most influential choreographers of the 20th century.

I AM (NOT) A MONSTER (Dir. Nelly Ben Hayoun-Stépanian). Starting with the thoughts of political theorist Hannah Arendt, this thought-provoking and playful documentary sees Hayoun-Stépanian travel the world to ponder the means by which freedom of learning and innovative education can exist in contemporary times.

THE KINGMAKER (Dir. Lauren Greenfield). Imelda Marcos, matriarch of the Marcos dynasty, still hopes to see her maternal delusions validated and political power restored while Philippine activists fight for transparency and democracy. Her former peers, including the widows of governmental figures, tell the story of a woman scarred by an

emotional blow that transformed her into a bulletproof-bra-wearing megalomaniac, who now mythologises her mothering instincts.

MYSTIFY: MICHAEL HUTCHENCE (Dir. Richard Lowenstein). Capturing INXS lead singer Michael Hutchence's rise to super-stardom and subsequent tragic fall, MYSTIFY gives remarkable insight into his life and a truth he took to the grave. A tapestry of voices and home movies animate Hutchence's personality, kicking tabloid speculation into oblivion and letting his story emerge with emotional and revelatory depth.

OVERSEAS (Dir. Sung-A Yoon). Each year, hundreds of thousands of Filipino women train to become domestic workers abroad. Yoon reveals the personal stories, dreams and heartaches of these trainees, exposing at the same time the economic and familial pressures pushing Filipino women to accept jobs abroad, which can sometimes resemble modern-day slavery.

A PLEASURE, COMRADES! (Dir. José Filipe Costa). The patriarchal power relations and sexual taboos of post-dictatorship Portugal are laid bare in this humorous and sex-positive docudrama with a feminist soul, as an older generation travels in time to bravely and joyfully re-enact the testimonies of those who lived through it.

WHITE RIOT (Dir. Rubika Shah.) This vital documentary blends fresh interviews with archive footage to profile punky reggae protest movement Rock Against Racism, from the movement's grassroots beginnings in 1976 through to 1978's huge antifascist carnival in Victoria Park featuring X-Ray Spex, Steel Pulse and The Clash, whose rockstar charisma and gale-force conviction took RAR's message to the masses.

SHORT FILM AWARD

The Short Film Award recognises short form works with a unique cinematic voice and a confident handling of chosen theme and content. This year the festival is screening:

- IF YOU KNEW – Dir. Stroma Cairns
- WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE WATER AND THE MOON – Dir. Jian Luo
- WHITE GIRL – Dir. Nadia Latif
- FAULT LINE (GOSAL) – Dir. Soheil Amirsharifi
- GUO4 – Dir. Peter Strickland
- IN VITRO – Dir. Larissa Sansour, Søren Lind
- ALGO-RHYTHM – Dir. Manu Luksch
- BETWEEN (ENTRE) – Dir. Ana Carolina Marinho, Bárbara Santos
- IN BETWEEN (NË MES) –Dir. Samir Karahoda
- CHILD – Dir. Talia Zucker
- WATERMELON JUICE (SUC DE SÍNDRIA) – Dir. Irene Moray
- QUEERING DI TEKNOLOJIK – Dir. Timothy Smith

Additional filmmaking talent expected to attend for films in competition include:

Thomas Clay, Charles Dance, Freddie Fox, Tanya Reynolds, Zorana Piggott, Rob Cannan, Alma Har'el, Isabel Sandoval, Jhett Tolentino, Jayro Bustamante, Oliver Hermanus, Alejandro Landes, Małgorzata Szumowska, Raffey Cassidy, Denise Gough, Christine Molloy, Joe Lawlor, Ann Skelly, Orla Brady, David Collins, Rose Glass, Mati Diop, Shannon Murphy, Alex White, Rita Kalnejais, Andrew Commis, Nick Rowland, Bora Kim, Halina Reijn, Carice van Houten, Claire Oakley, Mariko Minoguchi, Julius Feldmeier, Shahad Ameen, Mads Brügger, Taghi Amirani, Alla Kovgan, Nelly Ben Hayoun-Stépanian, Lauren Greenfield, Richard Lowenstein, Sung-A Yoon, José Filipe Costa, Rubika Shah, Nadia Latif, Larissa Sansour, Søren Lind, Gunman Xuman, Mukul Patel, Ana Carolina Marinho, Bárbara Santos, Timothy Smith.

The Festival will announce its complete guest line-up for all sections in late September.

STRANDS

The Festival programme is organised in sections to encourage discovery and to open up the Festival to new audiences. The strands are: **Love, Debate, Laugh, Dare, Thrill, Cult, Journey, Create, Experimenta, Family and Treasures.**

Here are some of the highlights to be found in these strands. Full details of all the films found in the strands, including late additions will be found on the Festival website.

LOVE

Sweet, passionate, tough – Love is a complex and many-splendoured thing and this selection charts the highs and lows of many kinds of love from around the globe. The Love Gala, in association with Malta Tourism Authority, is the UK Premiere of Michael Schwartz and Tyler Nilson's effortlessly charming buddy movie, **THE PEANUT BUTTER FALCON**.

Family relations unravel to wonderfully excruciating comic and dramatic effect in **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**, Cédric Kahn's ensemble drama starring Catherine Deneuve, Emmanuelle Bercot and Vincent Macaigne. Director Shonali Bose (*Margarita with a Straw*, LFF 2014) returns to the Festival with **THE SKY IS PINK**, a compelling and emotionally devastating true story about a young couple (Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Farhan Akhtar) who will stop at nothing to save their sick daughter. Aki Omoshaybi's earnest debut **REAL** explores the love between two people who work hard to keep their romance on track while struggling to manage personal hardship. Starring Liam Neeson and Lesley Manville, **ORDINARY LOVE** is an intimate and sensitively-handled drama about a couple dealing with breast cancer; directors Lisa Barros D'Sa and Glenn Leyburn capture both the extremity and the everydayness, in this warm and thought-provoking drama. British actor-turned-director Tom Cullen's feature debut **PINK WALL** covers six years in six scenes: from first sparks to the dying embers of a love affair, it's an intense and deeply affecting relationship study. Anthony Chen returns following his Sutherland win for *Ilo Ilo* (LFF 2013), with **WET SEASON**, a hugely satisfying Singapore-set portrait of a woman on a journey to rediscover herself. And one of the most buzzed-about films from Directors' Fortnight at Cannes, **AND THEN WE DANCED** is set to delight fans of *Call Me by Your Name* as well as lovers of traditional Georgian dance.

DEBATE

Representing films that amplify, scrutinize and surprise, Debate thrives on conversation, which is never more engaging than when the world outside the cinema is reflected back at us. This year's Debate Gala is Gavin Hood's politically charged fable, **OFFICIAL SECRETS**.

THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM, Daniel Gordon's thought-provoking drama about the Australian Rules football star, raises crucial questions about casual racism, drawing upon Australia's colonial past and its treatment of the Aboriginal population. Celebrated director Terrence Malick returns to the festival with **A HIDDEN LIFE**, a Second World War-set true story that calls for grace as it explores the importance of unsung resistance. Naomi Watts, Octavia Spencer, Tim Roth and Kevin Harrison Jr. lead the cast in Julius Onah's **LUCE**, a gripping psychological thriller about subjectivity and code-switching in modern America. **THE REPORT** by Scott Z Burns, starring Adam Driver, Annette Bening and Jon Hamm, is a politically urgent drama in which the American government take a hard look at itself. Acclaimed director Ciro Guerra follows *Birds of Passage* with **WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS**, an allegorical epic penned by JM Coetzee in an adaptation of his own literary masterpiece; starring Mark Rylance, Johnny Depp and Robert Pattinson. Benedict Andrew's stylish drama, **SEBERG**, sees Kristen Stewart shine as the idealistic yet fragile 'It' girl Jean Seberg, who finds herself a target of J Edgar Hoover's FBI when she becomes romantically involved with a Black Panther and flaunts her disregard for America's misogynistic and racist institutions. James Norton stars as Welsh journalist Gareth Jones in Agnieszka Holland's **MR JONES**, which traces Jones' 1930s visit to Soviet Ukraine where he uncovered the truth of Stalin's state-sponsored famine, a visit that reputedly inspired George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

LAUGH

From laugh-out-loud comedy to dry and understated, Laugh celebrates humour in all its forms. This year's Laugh Gala, THE DUDE IN ME from director Hyo-jin Kang, is a sassy body-swap comedy from South Korea.

The Festival will also present Manele Labidi Labbé's debut feature ARAB BLUES, a provocative culture clash comedy, starring Golshifteh Farahani (*About Elly*, *Paterson*) as a Parisian psychoanalyst attempting to set up a practice in a post-Arab Spring Tunis. In bittersweet comedy AXONE, director Nicholas Kharkongor tells the story of immigrants in Delhi who are attempting to organise a wedding party, but soon find everything going wrong! The vertiginous ups and downs in two men's friendship spans several years and outrageous events in the award-winning US indie comedy THE CLIMB, from director Michael Angelo Covino. *The Inbetweeners* star Simon Bird's directorial debut DAYS OF THE BAGNOLD SUMMER is a funny, charming and wince-inducingly accurate adaptation of Joff Winterhart's graphic novel about a single librarian trying to reconnect with her introverted, metalhead teenage son. Acclaimed Palestinian filmmaker Elia Suleiman returns with another deadpan take on life in exile with the typically assured and moving IT MUST BE HEAVEN. Billie Piper stars in her own directorial debut RARE BEASTS, a no-holds-barred anti-romcom about a modern woman's struggles in work and love. The European Premiere of THE LOST OKOROSHI, directed by Abba Makama, follows a man who wakes up to discover he has undergone a transformation and takes a revelatory journey to see if ancestral tradition has a place in modern life.

DARE

In-your-face, up-front and arresting films in Dare take you out of your comfort zone. The Dare Gala is Mirrah Foulkes' audacious and brilliant first feature, JUDY & PUNCH.

Winner of the top prize at the Tribeca Film Festival, contemporary Southern gothic BURNING CANE heralds 19-year-old director Phillip Youmans as a serious new talent. DOGS DON'T WEAR PANTS is J-P Valkeapää's playful dark comedy about a dominatrix offering an emotionally-paralysed widower an unexpected chance for sexual and psychological release. Olivier Dacastel and Jacques Martineau return with DON'T LOOK DOWN, an elegant and intimate drama about love and revenge: in a high-rise apartment, a woman and five men gather to share their experiences of a man they have all been involved with, to their cost. Legendary filmmaker Werner Herzog is on thought-provoking form with his latest offering FAMILY ROMANCE, LLC, dramatising the work of a 'rent-a-relative' service in this Tokyo-set meditation on contemporary alienation. FIRE WILL COME, Olivier Laxe's raw yet ravishing sensory experience telling the story of a pyromaniac who returns to his mother's farm, is a visually jaw-dropping study of the Galician landscape, which the Festival is delighted to be screening in the BFI IMAX. Jérémie Clapin's I LOST MY BODY, winner of the Grand Prize at the Cannes Critics' Week, is a striking animation that follows a severed hand searching for its owner. Jessica Hausner's first English-language feature, LITTLE JOE, is a pleasingly cool, witty and unsettling story of the pitfalls of placing too much trust in everyday science. ZOMBI CHILD is the latest provocation from Bertrand Bonello (*Nocturama* (LFF 2016)), splicing Haitian history and folklore with contemporary life at an elite girls' boarding school in Paris.

THRILL

The Thrill strand, in association with EMPIRE, features nerve-shredders that'll get your adrenalin pumping and will keep you on the edge of your seat. This year's Thrill Gala is Kleber Mendonça Filho and Juliano Dornelles' spellbinding BACURAU.

The Festival will present the World Premiere of Wash Westmoreland's EARTHQUAKE BIRD; Alicia Vikander is astonishing in this dark thriller set in 1989 Tokyo, in which she plays a murder suspect at the centre of a tumultuous love triangle. Bangkok-born, Thai-Irish writer-director Tom Waller's THE CAVE is the first film to dramatise 2018's astonishing rescue of the Wild Boars football team from Tham Luang cave. David Thewlis excels in GUEST OF HONOUR, another typically complex and mischievous offering from Canadian auteur Atom Egoyan, about a punctilious food inspector dedicated to uncovering the secrets of restaurants high and low. Yaron Zilberman's INCITEMENT is a chilling and urgent account of twisted ideology and religious obsession that carries a universal message and tries to fathom what drove a young law student to assassinate Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Lijo Jose Pellissery's JALLIKATTU is

a thrilling, nightmarish ride into the depths of human bloodlust, finding a rampaging buffalo hunted by a violent mob; slickly shot, paced and acted, this rollercoaster of a film compellingly explores the dark heart of human nature. A directionless call centre salesman gets more than he bargained for when he joins a local gym in MUSCLE, directed by Gerard Johnson; this testosterone-fuelled thriller is a meaty exploration (and critique) of amplified machismo, propelled by two extraordinary central performances from Cavan Clerkin and Craig Fairbrass. Nima Javidi nimbly reflects on notions of freedom and the fragile nature of authority in THE WARDEN, an ambitious follow-up to his award-winning *Melbourne*. Javidi's thrilling second feature is as astutely crafted as it is suave and seductive.

CULT

From the mind-altering and unclassifiable to fantasy, sci-fi and horror, in the Cult strand, the dark side is welcomed. This year's Cult Gala is Robert Eggers' masterful and terrifying maritime shocker, THE LIGHTHOUSE.

Quentin Dupieux presents DEERSKIN, which sees one man's love for his designer jacket escalate to dangerous heights in what might just be the strangest serial killer film ever made. Johannes Nyholm returns to the festival with KOKO-DI KOKO-DA, the follow up to his extraordinary Sutherland-nominated film *The Giant* (LFF 2016): a phantasmagorical horror, pitch black comedy and searing psychodrama following a couple at breaking point who head to the great outdoors for a camping trip in the hopes of salvaging their fractured relationship – but unbeknownst to these unhappy campers, they are not alone in the forest. LITTLE MONSTERS by Abe Forsythe sees Lupita Nyong'o shine in a delirious zom-com that guarantees you'll never listen to Taylor Swift in the same way again. Lorcan Finnegan presents VIVARIUM, in which Imogen Poots and Jesse Eisenberg play a pair of first-time buyers who get more than they bargained for in this twisted fable about the horrors of suburban living. Adapted from Nathan Ballingrud's novella 'The Visible Filth', Babak Anvari's WOUNDS sees Armie Hammer and Dakota Johnson drawn into a bizarre nightmare, as they attempt to return an abandoned cell phone to its rightful owner. Richard Stanley, visionary director of horror classics *Hardware* and *Dust Devil*, makes a triumphant return with COLOR OUT OF SPACE, a dazzling adaptation of HP Lovecraft's otherworldly tale, starring Nicolas Cage and Joely Richardson; in this thrilling combination of absorbing family drama and outré sci-fi madness, the Gardners are looking forward to a new, happier chapter in life – but their plans are abruptly interrupted when a meteor crash lands on their property.

JOURNEY

Whether it's the journey or the destination, these films will transport you and shift your perspective. This year's Journey Gala is THE TWO POPES, the thrillingly cinematic two-hander from Fernando Meirelles (*City of God, The Constant Gardner*).

In director Hikari's debut feature 37 SECONDS, a young woman with cerebral palsy strikes out for independence with the help of a sex worker; this sensational Japanese debut is a warm-hearted and clear-eyed exploration of the sexual experience of a person with disabilities. In THE CORDILLERA OF DREAMS, veteran documentarist Patricio Guzmán completes his trilogy about Chile's troubled past, meditating on how the Andes shaped its sense of identity. After her 1930s-set *Planetarium* (LFF 2016), writer-director Rebecca Zlotowski returns to the present with the coming-of-age drama AN EASY GIRL, which investigates desire, the lure of the high life and the imagery of modern female sexuality, set in a sun-baked Cannes. Director Ga-eun Yoon's rich and joyous THE HOUSE OF US proves her one of the world's finest filmmakers at capturing contemporary childhood onscreen; performing the cinematic magic trick of immersing us in children's perspective while allowing us to bring adult understanding to their experience. In Karim Ainouz's THE INVISIBLE LIFE OF EURÍDICE GUSMÃO, winner of Cannes' Un Certain Regard prize, a sumptuous tale of two sisters cruelly separated by family and fate makes for deeply moving drama. In MONSOON, Hong Khaou follows *Lilting* (BFI Flare 2014) with this gorgeous drama that evokes the disorientation of returning to an unrecognisable homeland; Londoner Kit (Henry Golding, *Crazy Rich Asians*) travels to Vietnam to scatter his mother's ashes and to connect with the place he departed from as a child, and finds that everything he knew has changed.

CREATE

The Create strand channels the electricity of the creative process, celebrating artistic expression in all its forms.

This year's Create Gala, WESTERN STARS, sees music legend Bruce Springsteen present his 19th studio album in this spectacular visual treat for music fans the world over.

Faders on stun: Hollywood sound editor Midge Costin's directorial debut, MAKING WAVES: THE ART OF CINEMATIC SOUND, is an immersive, educational and hugely enjoyable documentary exploring the power of sound in cinema. Acclaimed documentary filmmaker Kim Longinotto's SHOOTING THE MAFIA sketches a captivating portrait of defiant Sicilian photographer Letizia Battaglia, whose extraordinary work recorded the Mafia's violent crimes. Stephen Kijak's SID & JUDY documents Judy Garland's life beyond the Yellow Brick Road, her post-MGM triumphs and tragedies vividly recalled in a revelatory documentary that utilises her impresario husband Sidney Luft's memoirs. TALKING ABOUT TREES, a beautifully shot documentary by Suhaib Gasmelbari, follows four veteran members of the Sudanese Film Club as they aim to return cinema-going culture back to the country. Olivier Meyrou's YVES SAINT LAURENT: THE LAST COLLECTIONS, withheld from release for nearly 20 years, is an exquisitely crafted and moving documentary observing the last few years in the company of style icon Yves Saint Laurent. Stanley Nelson's MILES DAVIS: BIRTH OF THE COOL sees 20th century music's trumpet-playing prince of darkness receive the candid documentary his controversial genius deserves. Starring Tim Roth and Clive Owen, François Girard's THE SONG OF NAMES is a riveting musical odyssey and historical detective story set against the backdrop of the Holocaust. Mike Figgis' enthralling documentary SOMEBODY UP THERE LIKES ME follows the turbulent life and career of Ronnie Wood, legendary rock guitarist and long-time member of The Rolling Stones.

EXPERIMENTA

Experimenta features films and videos by artists that revolutionise and reshape our vision of cinema. The Experimenta Special Presentation is KRABI, 2562 by Ben Rivers and Anocha Suwichakornpong.

Nina Danino's I DIE OF SADNESS CRYING FOR YOU, a meditation on Spanish popular copla songs and their mighty female singers, is an evocative and passionate film essay. Brad Butler and Noorafshan Mirza present RUPTURES, set in Turkey, in which an MP, a former Police Commissioner, a right-wing assassin wanted by Interpol and a woman named Yenge are all involved in a car crash. Roz Mortimer's THE DEATHLESS WOMAN is an elegiac account of the Nazi genocide of the Roma community expressed through the supernatural myth of the 'deathless woman'. Louis Henderson and Olivier Marboeuf's OUVERTURES reflects on the legacy of Haitian revolutionary Toussaint L'Ouverture, and follows a collective's process of translating Édouard Glissant's play Monsieur Toussaint from French to Creole. Los Angeles-based artist Mariah Garnett presents TROUBLE, a personal account of an estranged father set against the Northern Ireland conflict; this heart-breaking story interwines interviews and investigations which reveal the traumatic effects of political upheavals on Belfast communities then and now, as well as added queer playfulness featuring trans actress Robyn Reihill. Jeffrey Perkins' GEORGE: THE STORY OF GEORGE MACIUNAS AND FLUXUS, executive produced by Jonas Mekas, traces the history of the Fluxus movement through rare footage, recreation of happenings and interviews with key figures in this portrait of artist George Maciunas.

FAMILY

Showcasing films for the young, as well as the young at heart, this year's Family strand is, as always, an international affair. The Family Gala is the UK premiere of Jill Culton and Todd Wilderman's ABOMINABLE.

Bears and humans just don't get on! In this adaptation of Dino Buzzati's classic story THE BEARS' FAMOUS INVASION, we find out why; this children's classic is joyously depicted by Lorenzo Mattotti, who presents a compelling story that works on different levels depending on the viewer's age. In Edmunds Jansons' JACOB, MIMMI AND THE TALKING DOGS, a sassy group of talking dogs give plenty of attitude to Jacob and his cousin Mimmi, but they also help out when a local park is threatened. This section also includes a programme of animated shorts for younger audiences which bring together eclectic, exciting and colourful films from all around the globe. In Pawo Choyning Dorji's live-action drama LUNANA: A YAK IN THE CLASSROOM a teacher in Bhutan, struggling for inspiration, travels to the most remote school in the world, where it takes being so far away to understand the importance of his work...and to appreciate the value of yak dung! Fresh from its success in China, we will be presenting the visually ravishing animation WHITE SNAKE at the

BFI IMAX. Directors Amp Wong and Ji Zhao tells the story of a girl with magical gifts who embodies the Chinese legend of the White Snake in a jaw-dropping landscape of demons, serpents and delight!

TREASURES

The Treasures strand brings recently revived and restored cinematic classics and discoveries from archives around the world to the Festival in London.

John Hurt is exceptional in David Lynch's *THE ELEPHANT MAN*; this compassionate immersion into the vicious world experienced by 'freaks' in 19th century London has undergone an exclusive 4K restoration process supervised by Lynch. *THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH* is an uncanny tale from the pen of Poe, directed by Roger Corman, shot by Nicolas Roeg, and starring Vincent Price – a match made in Heaven. Or Hell! Cameroonian feature *MUNA MOTO* is a welcome restoration of a classic social realist African masterpiece that champions the ideals of Third Cinema aesthetics. Budd Boetticher's magisterial western, *RIDE LONESOME*, stars Randolph Scott as a haunted loner seeking vengeance in a bleak, elemental world full of dangerous strangers. *SAY AMEN, SOMEBODY* is an exuberant, joyous and deeply moving, critically acclaimed documentary that celebrates American gospel music, spotlighting giants of the business Willie Mae Ford Smith and Thomas A Dorsey. *SWEET CHARITY* sees Shirley MacLaine star as unlucky-in-love taxi dancer Charity Hope Valentine in Bob Fosse's joyous adaptation of the hit Broadway musical. Nina Menkes' critically acclaimed underground classic, *QUEEN OF DIAMONDS*, is one of the most subversive and originally independent films of the 1990s, set in a hallucinatory Las Vegas landscape. Following the story of disaffected Firdaus, a struggling Blackjack dealer, set between glittering casino lights and a deteriorating desert oasis, this is a remarkable and provocative masterpiece of American independent filmmaking, ripe for critical evaluation.

LFF SCREEN TALKS

LFF SCREEN TALK: RIAN JOHNSON

We're delighted to welcome Rian Johnson to the BFI London Film Festival, to talk about his career and the making of his fifth feature *KNIVES OUT*: a wickedly witty and stylish murder mystery, which the Maryland-born filmmaker has described as "an attempt to capture the twisty fun of an Agatha Christie whodunit." A graduate of the USC School of Cinematic Arts, Johnson debuted with 2005's *Brick*, which ingeniously transposed the stylized tropes of Dashiell Hammett's hardboiled detective fiction to a Californian high school setting. Made for just \$500,000 and boasting a memorable lead performance by Joseph Gordon-Levitt, this fresh take on neo-noir won the Special Jury Prize for Originality of Vision at Sundance Film Festival. Three years later, Johnson showed his comedic verve with globe-trotting conman caper *The Brothers Bloom*, before reuniting with Gordon-Levitt (starring alongside Bruce Willis and Emily Blunt) for 2012's time-travelling sci-fi thriller *Looper*. A critical and commercial hit which further displayed his dazzling command of genre, it enjoyed success which led this most inventive of Hollywood auteurs to both write and direct *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*. A fearlessly bold continuation of the beloved space opera saga, the latter became the highest grossing film of 2017 and one of the most successful movies of all time.

LFF SCREEN TALK: KIM LONGINOTTO

We're delighted to welcome back Kim Longinotto to the BFI London Film Festival, to talk about her storied career and her new documentary *Shooting the Mafia*, an eye-opening profile of Sicilian organised crime photographer Letizia Battaglia. Longinotto has been blazing a trail for British nonfiction filmmaking for more than four decades. She debuted at LFF with 1976's *Pride of Place*, an unvarnished look at her old boarding school which prompted Longinotto's former headmistress to brand the young filmmaker 'a class traitor' (the school closed the following year). Frequently focusing on marginalized people and extraordinary women from around the world fighting oppression, her filmography includes such ground-breaking factual pieces as *Shinjuku Boys* (1995), which spotlighted Tokyo's transgender club scene, and *Divorce Iranian Style* (1998), an arresting chronicle of Iran's patriarchal court system. She won the 2008 World Cinema Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Film Festival for the South Africa carers portrait *Rough Aunties*, and was the recipient of Sheffield Doc/Fest's Inspiration Award in 2010. Longinotto explored 20th-century cinema's depictions of sex and desire with 2014's archival tapestry *Love Is All*, while continuing her avowedly feminist, globe-spanning work with the following year's *Dreamcatcher*, about a Chicago charity which helps women leave the sex industry.

LFF SCREEN TALK: LUKAS MOODYSSON

We're delighted to welcome back writer-director Lukas Moodysson to the BFI London Film Festival, to talk about his career and the making of his first TV series *Gösta*. Set in rustic Småland, this loving satire about a kindly child psychologist (played by rising *Midsommar* star Vilhelm Blomgren) has been described by its creator as 'a mix of comedy and Dostoevsky – as funny as possible and as serious as possible.' Raised in provincial Sweden, Moodysson made an immediate mark on global cinema with 1998's *Show Me Love*: a hugely acclaimed coming-of-age drama depicting the awkward romance between two teenage girls in a boring small town. His seemingly effortless blend of empathy and insight continued two years later with *Together*, a humorous portrait of an idealistic commune in 1970s Stockholm. The filmmaker took a darker turn with third feature *Lilya 4-ever* (2002), a drawn-from-real-life tale of sexual slavery, and the experimental porn exploration *A Hole in My Heart* (2004). He made his English-language debut with 2009's *Mammoth*, starring Michelle Williams and Gael García Bernal, followed by a triumphant return to Swedish storytelling with 2013's *We Are the Best!*, an exuberant adaptation of his wife Coco's girl-punk graphic novel.

INDUSTRY & EDUCATION

This year's industry events programme will accent the Festival's focus on the issues and debate that are urgent for industry and filmmakers, maximise opportunities for Industry delegates to access international delegates and filmmakers attending the Festival, augmenting the full benefits package available for Industry delegates.

The industry programme, supported by the Mayor of London, via Film London, includes access to the LFF CONNECTS strand which celebrates artists working at the intersection of film and other creative industries; the talent development programme BFI NETWORK@LFF; and a host of new format discussions, panels and networking events.

This year's Festival marks the fourth year of the IWC Schaffhausen Filmmaker Bursary Award in association with the BFI. At £50,000, the Bursary is the most significant of its kind in the UK, supporting exceptional new filmmaking talent. The Bursary is eligible for emerging writers, directors and writer/directors resident in the UK, and premiering their first or second feature in the Festival. Last year's winner was Richard Billingham (*Ray & Liz*) with Harry Woolfiff (writer/director, *Only You*) and Nicole Taylor (writer, *Wild Rose*) shortlisted nominees. Previous recipients of the Bursary were writer/directors, Daniel Kokotajlo (*Apostasy*) in 2017 and Hope Dickson Leach (*The Levelling*) in 2016.

The Festival will host Press and Industry screenings at Vue West End, provide a Digital Viewing Library, delegate hubs, discounts at partner venues and at LFF Connects and Screen Talks, and numerous networking opportunities with delegates and filmmakers.

Details of the full industry programme will be announced in September. Industry delegate accreditation is open now and closes on Wednesday 11 September. Visit www.bfi.org.uk/lff/professional-delegates for further details

BFI LFF Education returns to this year's Festival with a new offer for young people of all ages keen to engage with the wealth of film on offer throughout the BFI LFF programme. BFI LFF Education sets its sights to increase primary and secondary students' access to the Festival and attending BFI LFF special guests, in partnership with Into Film. Additionally the Festival host a day dedicated to young aspiring filmmakers aged 16-25, offering transformational opportunities and exclusive access to filmmaking talent. The BFI LFF Critics Mentorship Programme returns for a second time, following a successful inaugural year in 2018. 16-25 year olds can also apply for Future Film Accreditation and take advantage of our 25 and Under £5 rush ticket offers.

The BFI London Film Festival Education programme is supported by funding contributors LaCie and The Sir John Cass's Foundation and event delivery partners Into Film Festival

For further information visit bfi.org.uk/lffeducation

BFI PLAYER

The BFI London Film Festival experience can be enjoyed UK-wide on BFI Player, the BFI's VOD service, featuring Festival collections showcasing films from previous years. BFI London Film Festival content will be a key attraction in the range of services on BFI Player – at player.bfi.org.uk/

SPONSORS AND FUNDERS

We are delighted to welcome back **American Express**, our Principal Partner and Preferred Payment Partner. This is a very special year as we celebrate ten years of this extraordinary partnership.

We are thrilled to see the return of **American Airlines** as Main Sponsor and Official Airline. We're delighted to have **IWC Schaffhausen** return as the Festival's Official Time Partner and Headline Partner of our fundraising Gala LUMINOUS, where we will announce this year's winner of the IWC Schaffhausen Filmmaker Bursary Award in association with the BFI.

We give heartfelt thanks to **The May Fair Hotel**, who return as the Festival's Official Hotel Partner.

We extend a very warm Festival welcome to our returning partners: **LaCie** who support our Future Film Day for young filmmakers and **The Malta Tourism Authority** who are partnering on our Love Gala and Love Strand.

We are delighted to welcome new sponsors who join us this year: **Heart of London Business Alliance**, **Facebook** and **Nyetimber** – our official sparkling wine partner.

The BFI London Film Festival is made possible thanks to support from **DCMS** and **The National Lottery** and many other cultural institutions and organisations. We are also delighted to be supported directly by the **Mayor of London** through **Film London** as a funding contributor.

The remastering and new score of the BFI Archive Gala film is supported by the **Eric Anker-Petersen Charity**. With additional support from the **Michael Marks Charitable Trust** and the **John S Cohen Foundation**. Films by the British Mutoscope and Biograph Company, Prestwich and Gaumont all restored in 2018 by the BFI National Archive in collaboration with **EYE Filmmuseum** and **Haghefilm**.

A huge thank you goes to the Festival's generous in-kind Sponsors: returning photography sponsor **Getty Images** and cinema advertising partner **Digital Cinema Media**. Additionally, we would like to welcome back **DDA** and thank **Audemus Spirits**: **Pink Pepper Gin**, **CPC London**, **Dalston's Soda**, **Viña Pomal**, **Global**, **Harkness Screens**, **Impact Marketing**, **Picture Production Company** and **Newman Displays** for their continued support.

Cinema partners returning this year are **Ciné Lumière**, **Curzon**, **Empire**, **ICA**, **ODEON Luxe Leicester Square**, **ODEON Tottenham Court Road**, **Prince Charles Cinema** and **Vue**.

We are delighted to welcome back returning Media Partners **Evening Standard**, **Empire**, **Time Out**, **Sight & Sound**, **Screen International**, **The Hollywood Reporter**, **Variety** and **Little White Lies** as well as valued Broadcast Partner **BBC Radio London** for continuing to provide invaluable media support.

The Festival would also like to give a huge thanks to returning sponsor **Christie Digital**.

Finally, the Festival would like to thank the many embassies and cultural institutes who support the Festival by helping to bring in filmmakers to present their work.

Please see below a wetransfer link to press releases from a selection of the Festival's sponsors and funders:

- Ends-

For further press information and general enquiries about the 63rd BFI London Film Festival:

Please note the different festival sections, contacts and accreditation for 2018

OPENING/CLOSING AND HEADLINE GALAS, SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS and ASSOCIATED SCREEN TALKS:

Email: LFFPress@ddapr.com | Tel: +44 (0)207 932 9800

Head of Press: Kate Hudson Festival Publicity Assistant:

For Opening/Closing Night Red Carpet Media Enquiries and all Red Carpets for HEADLINE GALAS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

Email: LFFRedcarpet1@ddapr.com | Tel: +44 (0)207 932 9800

Media Manager: Hannah Tatum

MAIN FESTIVAL PROGRAMME AND STRAND GALAS, LFF AWARDS, EVENTS and FILMMAKER TEAS:

Email: LFFPress@ddapr.com | Tel: +44 +(0)207 932 9800

Head of Press: Lucy Powell

For Red Carpet Media Enquiries for MAIN FESTIVAL PROGRAMME AND STRAND GALAS

Email: LFFRedcarpet2@ddapr.com | Tel: +44 (0)207 932 9800

Media Manager: Emma Greenwood

GENERAL ENQUIRIES and FESTIVAL ACCREDITATION

BFI London Film Festival PR Manager: Mia Farrell

Email: Mia.Farrell@bfi.org.uk | Tel: +44 (0)20 7957 8970

Accreditation email: LFFPressAccreditation@bfi.org.uk

Director of Press and PR, BFI: Judy Wells

Email: Judy.Wells@bfi.org.uk

Festival Information & Ticket Booking

BFI Members' priority booking opens 10:00am, 5th September – join at www.bfi.org.uk/join

Public booking opens 10:00am, 12th September

Telephone Bookings: +44 (0)20 7928 3232 between 10:00 – 20:30 (from Tuesday 3rd September – Sunday 13th October)

Online: www.bfi.org.uk/lff

In person: BFI Southbank Office: 11:00 – 20:30 *(open 10:00am from 5th + 12th September)

NOTES TO EDITORS

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.

The BFI London Film Festival

BFI London Film Festival is Britain's leading film event and one of the world's best film festivals. It introduces the finest new British and international films to an expanding London and UK-wide audience and attracts significant international film industry participation. LFF is a compelling combination of diverse films, red carpet glamour, friendly audiences and vibrant exchange. LFF provides an essential profiling opportunity for films seeking global success; promotes the careers of British and international filmmakers through its industry and awards programmes and positions London as the world's leading creative city.

Tricia Tuttle Biography

Tricia Tuttle's appointment as Director of BFI Festivals follows her role as Artistic Director of the 62nd Edition of the BFI London Film Festival and five successful years as Deputy Head of Festivals at BFI, including BFI Flare and BFI London Film Festival. Moving from North Carolina in 1997 to complete a joint MA at BFI and Birkbeck, University of London in Film and TV Studies, Tricia has a passion for film that has seen her work as a programmer, lecturer, writer and journalist. Her career has spanned a five-year tenure at BAFTA, starting in 2008 and with her appointment as Film Programme Manager in 2011. Tuttle has been instrumental in evolving BFI Festivals, continuing to expand audience reach year on year and introducing impactful initiatives such as BFI Flare's FiveFilms4Freedom, in partnership with the British Council. In March 2019, she was recognized in Variety's annual International Women's Impact Report as a woman making an impact in showbiz around the globe.



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