

11 SHORT FILMS COMMISSIONED AS PART OF BORN DIGITAL

BFI and BBC's continued partnership supports more new and emerging talent with funding and broadcast commission

For Immediate release: 8 February 2019, London – The BFI and BBC reveal today the 11 short films commissioned through **Born Digital**, the third edition of the UK-wide collaboration between the BFI and BBC Four to support emerging talent from a variety of disciplines, following the successful **Listen to Britain 2017** and **Animation 2018** projects. Each filmmaker will receive up to £5,000 to make a short which will explore what it means to be 'born digital', marking the 30th anniversary of the World Wide Web in March 2019. These films will premiere at BFI Southbank on the anniversary, 12 March, as well as be broadcast on BBC Four in early spring 2019.

The selected filmmakers have been chosen from across the UK and their films will tackle a range of topics relating to the connected world; exploring themes such as AI, data, privacy, isolation, community, love and more. Additionally the films offer a commentary on a range of social issues, reflecting the diversity of the UK and are a mixture of genres including drama, documentary and experimental filmmaking. Each one will run around 4 – 12 minutes.

The narratives explore the digital landscape through the eyes of both digital natives and those who experienced the pre-internet world. Filmmakers have been challenged to reflect on, respond to and capture the experience of living in a digital environment, as well as show how they have been shaped by it or even resisted it. The commissions also promise to be innovative with the tools, techniques and visual grammar developed over the last 30 years of technological change.

The films were shortlisted by the BFI's Broadcast Producer Gillian Scothern, BBC Arts Editor Lamia Dabboussy, and Siobhan Logue from Plimsoll Production, a Bristol and Cardiff based independent production company who will manage the development and delivery of the short films. Logue will provide practical guidance, working with the filmmakers to complete the films.

This project is part of the BFI's Born Digital celebration, which will include a series of BFI Southbank seasons, events and see them working with partners across the UK to mark the 30th anniversary of the World Wide Web in 2019.

Jonty Claypole, Director of Arts, BBC says: "There's no doubt the internet changed the world we live in, and the 11 films we've commissioned through Born Digital will explore that in many different ways. I'm delighted that BBC Arts and BBC Four are continuing to partner with the BFI in order to find and nurture new talent. The quality of submissions we received for Born Digital was really impressive, and I'm looking forward to introducing these brilliant film makers to our audiences."

Gillian Scothern, Broadcast Producer, BFI, says: "Born Digital offers an exciting springboard which has resulted in a range of daring and diverse stories. This project continues our brilliant partnership with the BBC, enabling us to not only support these dynamic, emerging filmmakers from across the UK, but also to give these stories a platform to connect with audiences. I'm confident the shorts we

have selected will be entertaining, whilst interrogating, questioning and highlighting the digital landscape we take for granted.”

Selected filmmakers and project summaries:

Binge Watching

Writer/Director: Nosa Igbinedion. Producer: Leon Mayne

A drama set in the near future where virtual reality allows a person to see life through the eyes of someone very different, which questions whether experiences become shared or commodified.

Roger

Writer/Director: Reuben Hamlyn. Producers: Max Keegan, Ceci Golding, Theodora de Jasay

In this drama about a cutting-edge gig-work app, Lena embarks on her new job as a “Roger”. Unnerved by her new role, she strives to build a relationship with her employer through unexpected means.

Have We Met Before?

Writer/Director: Oliver Mason. Producer: Syd Heather

Have We Met Before? is a short docudrama exploring the history of sex in the homosexual community from the 1970s to the present day, and how the internet has changed the way gay men meet forever.

toni_with_an_i

Writer/Director: Marco Alessi. Writer: Mary Antony. Producer: Ksenia Harwood

toni_with_an_i is an upbeat drama about 14-year-old oddball Toni who is having a tough time with the bullies at school. One day, the internet and a passion for performance saves her.

Without Bounds to Beat

Director/Editor: Oliver Endersby. Producer: Berta Lozano Ferrer

Without Bounds to Beat is an experimental documentary that recounts a town’s revival of an ancient folk tradition, placing it in contrast to today’s digital technologies.

LilMissCandy786

Writer/Director: Myriam Raja. Producer: Nathanael Baring

In search of an identity, Candy wanders through the digital landscape, leaving fragments of herself behind in this experimental short drama.

My Sweet Prince

Writer/Director: Jason Bradbury. Producer: Grace Carroll

Alcopops. Cigarettes. MSN Messenger. VHS tapes. Boys. Set on the Isle of Wight, fragments of the director’s own teenage video diaries collide with the fictional story of 15-year-old Tommy, in this short film about the evolution of identity and online exploration of sexuality in the early 00’s.

Outlying

Director/Producer: Kieran Hennigan

A documentary on one of Scotland's most isolated and breath-taking islands, where all 35 residents prepare for the remarkable roll-out of fibre-optic broadband.

Skin

Writer/Director: Daisy Stenham. Producer: Romy Waller and Nkem Egbuchiri

Set in the undisclosed future where developments in technology mean less personal privacy, *Skin* explores questions of our autonomy and essential humanness – and what it is to experience love and loss in the futuristic age.

ill, actually

Director: Zoë Hunter Gordon. Producers: Celestine Fraser and Hannah Tookey

ill, actually is a short documentary exploring the challenges of being young and chronically ill in a carefully curated online culture. When you're too ill for IRL, where do you turn?

Janitor of Lunacy

Director/Writer: Umi Ishihara. Producer: Alice Lewis

Janitor of Lunacy follows a young woman's descent into a digital wormhole via her obsession with a BDSM account run by an unknown user. The film examines social media's ability to acquire organicity whilst also distorting subjective reality.

- Ends -

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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.

BBC Arts

The BBC is the biggest creator of arts content and is Britain's creative partner – a stage for the nation to experience the very best arts; when they want, how they want.

- **The nation's stage:** access to arts and culture programming for all through the licence fee – we create and showcase more arts and culture than any other broadcaster
- **An Innovator:** constantly finding new ways to bring the best quality culture to audiences; working with the arts sector as partner and acting as a hot house for new talent
- **Britain's creative partner:** a bold force in the UK creative sector as creator and commissioner, also a platform for new talent
- **An investor in quality:** we only present the highest quality arts and culture programming, crafted by skilled production teams and shared with all audiences
- **Bringing the nation together:** like no other we create and amplify moments in arts and culture, cutting through with a broad audience

***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting Born Digital can be found via the link below:

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