

Joanna Hogg's **THE SOUVENIR** is Sight & Sound's Best Film of the Year



Friday 29 November 2019, London: Sight & Sound, the BFI's international film magazine, announces Joanna Hogg's **THE SOUVENIR** (2019) as the Best Film of the Year. In second place is **PARASITE**, Bong Joon-ho's darkly comic thriller, followed by **THE IRISHMAN**, the latest film from Martin Scorsese.

Sight & Sound's Best Films of the Year sees 100 international critics, programmers and academics who contribute to the magazine, voted for their top ten films from the year. **THE SOUVENIR** is the first British film to rank at number one in over a decade, after Steve McQueen's **HUNGER** in 2008. The full results are available online today at bfi.org.uk/best-films-2019 and the full Top 50 is published in Sight & Sound's January 2020 issue, available digitally on Friday 29 November and on newsstands by Thursday 5 December. The top 10 films are as follows:

Rank	Title	Director
1	THE SOUVENIR	Joanna Hogg
2	PARASITE	Bong Joon-ho
3	THE IRISHMAN	Martin Scorsese
4	ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD	Quentin Tarantino
5	PORTRAIT OF A LADY ON FIRE	Céline Sciamma
6	PAIN AND GLORY	Pedro Almodóvar
7	ATLANTICS	Mati Diop
8	BAIT	Mark Jenkin
9	US	Jordan Peele
10	VITALINA VARELA	Pedro Costa

An autobiographically inspired drama, **THE SOUVENIR** is a deeply personal examination of Hogg's own youthful experiences and the result is a beautifully crafted portrait of self-discovery. The film, which is executive produced by Martin Scorsese, won the World Cinema Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Film Festival where it received its World Premiere, and is nominated for eight awards at the British Independent Film Awards including Best British Independent Film and Best Director. **THE SOUVENIR** was developed and produced with the support of the BFI Film Fund using funds from the National Lottery and a sequel is in production, due for release in 2021. Sight & Sound's January issue will include an in-depth interview with Joanna Hogg.

Director of THE SOUVENIR Joanna Hogg says: "It's an honour and pleasure for the film to be recognised by the critics, programmers and academics who have contributed to this year's poll. The success of *The Souvenir* has been in no small part due to the passionate support of its many champions within the industry and for that I and my collaborators are immensely grateful."

Editor in Chief Mike Williams says: "Nothing starts an argument like a roundup of the year's best films, and I expect Sight & Sound's 2019 Best Film of the Year list to spark as much passionate debate as ever this time around. That said, this year's winner – Joanna Hogg's remarkable **THE SOUVENIR** – was the overwhelming choice of our 100 voting critics."

No squabbles there then. The year's big film stories have been dominated by the works and opinions of established male industry titans, so it's encouraging and exciting that a British female director has triumphed so emphatically with such an uncompromised, autobiographical story."

Other films in the Top 20 which have been nominated for Best British Independent Film at this Sunday's BIFAs are Mark Jenkin's BAIT (2010), which has placed eighth, and documentary FOR SAMA (Waad Al-Kateab, Edward Watts, 2019), placed fifteenth. Bong Joon-ho's PARASITE (2019) has been nominated in BIFA's Best International Independent Film category, as has PORTRAIT OF A LADY ON FIRE (Céline Sciamma, 2019) – fifth in the Sight & Sound list – and MONOS (Alejandro Landes, 2019), which came thirteenth.

PARASITE has received critical acclaim ever since its World Premiere at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival where it won the Palme d'Or. It has been screening at international film festivals this year and will be released in UK cinema on Friday 7 February 2020. Previous Palme d'Or winners Martin Scorsese and Quentin Tarantino follow Bong Joon-ho in third and fourth place with THE IRISHMAN (2019) and ONCE UPON A TIME... IN HOLLYWOOD (2019) respectively.

The best of global cinema is recognised with half of the Top 10 being non-English language films. Alongside PARASITE (South Korea) and PORTRAIT OF A LADY ON FIRE (France) is Pedro Almodóvar's PAIN AND GLORY (2019 / Spain) in sixth place, ATLANTICS (2019 / France, Senegal) – the directorial debut from Mati Diop – in seventh and VITALINA VARELA (Pedro Costa, 2019 / Portugal) in tenth place. This trend continues into the Top 20 which includes HAPPY AS LAZZARO (Alice Rohrwacher, 2018 / Italy) in eighteenth place and MARTIN EDEN (Pietro Marcello, 2019 / Italy) in twentieth place, as well as the formerly mentioned MONOS (Colombia) and FOR SAMA (UK, Syria).

The Top 20 consists of a significant number of films selected for 2019's BFI London Film Festival including THE IRISHMAN which closed the festival and is currently available on Netflix. Both ATLANTICS and MONOS received accolades at this year's LFF, winning First Feature Competition and Best Film in Official Competition respectively. The Festival's Surprise Film, Josh and Benny Safdie's UNCUT GEMS, is placed twelfth, followed by Noah Baumbach's MARRIAGE STORY (2019) in fourteenth. Other LFF films appearing in Sight & Sound's list include THE LIGHTHOUSE, which placed seventeenth, and PORTRAIT OF A LADY ON FIRE.

– ENDS –

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Press Contacts:

Elizabeth Dunk – Junior Press Officer

elizabeth.dunk@bfi.org.uk / 020 7957 8986

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