



**For immediate release**

## **UK FILM AT SUNDANCE 2012**

***Nine feature films with UK involvement in the official selection,  
including three funded by BFI Film Fund***

***BFI and BFC to promote UK film and help drive inward investment***

**LONDON – Thursday 19 January 2012:** Robert Redford’s Sundance Film Festival begins today and UK films are well represented at the world’s premier indie film festival, with nine features – including three backed with Lottery through the BFI Film Fund – and 11 shorts making the official selection. During the festival the BFI (British Film Institute) and British Film Commission (BFC) will join the British Consulate-General Los Angeles to host a special event at Sundance, helping to raise the profile of UK films and talent and promote the UK as a world-class filming destination.

Selected UK feature films included the BFI Film Fund backed *Shadow Dancer* directed by Academy Award® winner James Marsh, Jon Wright’s *Grabbers* and Andrea Arnold’s *Wuthering Heights*. Other UK films screening are Stephen Frears’ *Lay the Favourite*, Sally El Hosaini’s *My Brother the Devil*, Bart Layton’s *The Imposter*, Dylan Southern and Will Lovelace’s *Shut Up and Play the Hits*, Ice-T and Andy Baybutt’s *Something For Nothing: The Art Of Rap*, and Malik Bendjelloul’s *Searching for Sugar Man*. A US made feature documentary, *The Invisible War*, executive produced by UK based Teddy Leifer through RISE Films has also been selected.

Amanda Nevill, CEO of the BFI comments: “It’s been an exciting start to the year for the UK film industry, with a strong showing at Sundance, recent success at the Golden Globes, high hopes for the BAFTAs and Oscars® and British films currently topping the UK box office. Congratulations must go to all the UK films and talent in the international spotlight at the festival. Supporting the Britain’s film industry internationally is a priority for the BFI and,

*alongside our partners at the BFC and the British Consulate-General, we're delighted to be here in Sundance flying the flag for UK film."*

Adrian Wootton, Chief Executive of Film London & the British Film Commission comments: *"I am delighted to be here at Sundance representing the British Film Commission with my partners and colleagues from the BFI. It has been widely reported recently that the British film industry is enjoying a "golden age" and while I'm proud of our achievements and those of our wonderfully talented filmmakers, I realise that we need to capitalise on this success and continue to grow and drive our industry forward. From a British Film Commission point of view, that means ensuring the UK retains its global competitiveness, and is a top choice for ambitious, big budget productions from all over the world."*

On Monday 23 January the BFI joins the British Film Commission and the British Consulate-General Los Angeles in hosting a reception for UK film talent to meet international industry figures. The event will celebrate new British films and filmmaking, raising the profile of UK film at the festival with international producers, sales agents and distributors, and helping to forge relationships between US and UK film businesses.

The event will also be used to help attract and encourage inward investment feature films to the UK. Home to state of the art facilities, highly skilled crew, excellent locations and the lucrative Film Tax Relief, the UK is one of the most popular production centres in the world, recently hosting *World War Z* starring Brad Pitt, Ridley Scott's *Prometheus* and *Snow White and the Huntsman* starring Charlize Theron, while the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bond film, *Skyfall*, is currently in production.

The 2012 Sundance Film Festival takes place from January 19-29 in Park City, Utah.

#### **UK FILMS IN SUNDANCE:**

UK films in Sundance backed with Lottery through the BFI Film Fund are:

***Shadow Dancer*** (Director: James Marsh, Screenwriter: Tom Bradby) — When a widowed mother is arrested in an aborted bomb plot she must make hard choices to protect her son in this heart-wrenching thriller. Cast: Andrea Riseborough, Aidan Gillen, Domhnall Gleeson, with Gillian Anderson and Clive Owen. *Screening in the Premiere section.*

**Grabbers** (Director: Jon Wright, Screenwriter: Kevin Lehane) — When the residents of an idyllic Irish fishing village are attacked by mysterious, blood-sucking sea creatures, a high blood alcohol content could be the only thing that gets them through the night. Cast: Richard Coyle, Ruth Bradley, Russell Tovey, Bronagh Gallagher. *Screening in the Park City at Midnight section.*

**Wuthering Heights** (Director: Andrea Arnold, Screenwriters: Andrea Arnold, Olivia Hetreed) — A freshly conceived retelling of Emily Bronte's classic novel about Heathcliff and Cathy, two teenagers whose passionate love for each other creates a storm of vengeance. Cast: Kaya Scodelario, James Howson, Solomon Glave, Shannon Beer, Steve Evets. *Screening in the Spotlight section.*

Other UK feature films screening at the festival are:

**Lay the Favourite**, USA/UK. (Director: Stephen Frears, Screenwriter: D.V. DeVincentis) — An adventurous young woman gets involved with a group of geeky older men who have found a way to work the sportsbook system in Las Vegas to their advantage. Cast: Bruce Willis, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Rebecca Hall. *Screening in the Premiere section.*

**Shut Up and Play the Hits** (Directors: Dylan Southern, Will Lovelace) — A film that follows LCD Soundsystem front man James Murphy over a crucial 48-hour period, from the day of their final gig at Madison Square Garden to the morning after, the official end of one of the best live bands in the world. *Screening in the Park City at Midnight section.*

**My Brother the Devil** (Director and screenwriter: Sally El Hosaini) — A pair of British Arab brothers trying to get by in gangland London learn the extraordinary courage it takes to be yourself. Cast: James Floyd, Saïd Taghmaoui, Fady Elsayed . World Premiere. *Screening in the World Cinema Dramatic Competition.*

**The Imposter** (Director: Bart Layton) — In 1994 a 13-year-old boy disappears from his home in San Antonio, Texas. Three and a half years later he is found alive thousands of miles away in Spain with a shocking story of kidnap and torture. But all is not what it seems in this tale that is truly stranger than fiction. World Premiere. *Screening in the World Cinema Documentary Competition.*

**Searching for Sugar Man**, Sweden/UK (Director: Malik Bendjelloul) — Rodriguez was the greatest '70s US rock icon who never was. Hailed as the greatest recording artist of his generation he disappeared into oblivion – rising again from the ashes in a completely different context many miles away. World Premiere. DAY ONE FILM. Screening in the World Cinema Documentary Competition.

**Something For Nothing: The Art Of Rap** (Director: Ice-T, Co-Director: Andy Baybutt) — Through conversations with Rap's most influential artists – among them Chuck D, Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre, Eminem, MC Lyte, Mos Def, and Kanye West – Ice-T explores the roots and history of Rap and reveals the creative process behind this now dominant art form. Screening in the Documentary Premieres.

Also appearing at the festival, and executive produced by UK based Teddy Leifer, is:

**The Invisible War**, (Director: Kirby Dick) — An investigative and powerfully emotional examination of the epidemic of rape of soldiers within the U.S. military, the institutions that cover up its existence and the profound personal and social consequences that arise from it. Screening in the US Documentary Competition.

UK shorts screening in competition at Sundance:

**Don't Hug Me I'm Scared** (Directors: Joseph Pelling, Rebecca Sloan) — A short film about teaching creativity by This Is It Collective.

**Long Distance Information** (Director and screenwriter: Douglas Hart) — Da always said not to talk to strangers...but you've got to phone home sometimes. Funded through Film London's London Borough Film Fund Challenge.

**Random Strangers** (Director: Alexis Dos Santos, Screenwriters: Laurence Coriat, Alexis Dos Santos) — Rocky and Lulu live in opposite sides of the planet: they bump into each other in ChatRoulette and decide to stay in touch. Using video diaries, secret confessions, fictional representations of facts of their lives made with toys, dance performances and songs, they create a place where they can truly be themselves. But how real is their world?

**Moxie** (Director and screenwriter: Stephen Irwin) — A pyromaniac bear misses his mother.

**Tooty's Wedding** (Director: Frederic Casella, Screenwriters: Laura Solon, Ben Willbond) — A young couple's marriage hilariously hits the rocks during a weekend wedding in the country.

**Into the Middle of Nowhere** (Director: Anna Frances Ewert) — The documentary is about the uniqueness of childhood and the exploration of the human mind. In an outdoor nursery based in the woods, children create their own individually constructed worlds and can test out the boundaries of reality.

**Belly** (Director: Julia Pott) — Oscar is coming of age, against his better judgment. In doing so he must experience the necessary evil of leaving something behind, but he can still feel it in the pit of his stomach.

**Bobby Yeah** (Director: Robert Morgan) — Bobby Yeah is a petty thug who lightens his miserable existence by brawling and thieving stuff. One day, he steals the favorite pet of some very dangerous individuals, and finds himself in deep trouble. He really should learn, but he just can't help it.

**A Morning Stroll** (Director: Grant Orchard) — When a New Yorker walks past a chicken on his morning stroll, we are left to wonder which one is the real city slicker.

**Robots of Brixton** (Director: Kibwe Tavares) — The trials and tribulations of young robots surviving at the sharp end of inner city life, living the predictable existence of a populous hemmed in by poverty, disillusionment and mass unemployment.

**Slow Derek** (Director: Dan Ojari) — The tale of Derek, an office worker, as he struggles with the true speed of planet earth.

Also in Park City, and premiering at the Slamdance Film Festival on Friday 20 January:

**Unconditional** (Director: Bryn Higgins, Screenwriter: Joe Fisher) – Starring Christian Cooke, Harry McEntire and Madeleine Clark, *Unconditional* is a darkly humorous and

twisted love story about two teenage twins who fall under the spell of a charismatic man played by Christian, offering love on one condition: the boy becomes his sister.

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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

#### **About the BFI Film Fund**

The BFI Film Fund funds bold and exciting British films and brilliant filmmakers.

Films backed by the BFI Film Fund include Steve McQueen's **Shame**, Phyllida Lloyd's **The Iron Lady**, Martin McDonagh's **Seven Psychopaths**, Fernando Meirelles's **360**, Omid Nooshin's **Last Passenger**, Ken Loach's **The Angel's Share**, Carol Morley's **Dreams of a Life**, Terence Davies's **The Deep Blue Sea**, James Marsh's **Project Nim**, Ben Wheatley's **Kill List**, Peter Strickland's **Berberian Sound Studio**, Michael Winterbottom's **Trishna**, Rufus Norris's **Broken** and Jonathan Glazer's **Under the Skin**.

Recent releases include the American Academy® award-winning **The King's Speech** directed by Tom Hooper, Lynne Ramsay's **We Need To Talk About Kevin**, shown In Competition at Cannes this year, Andrea Arnold's **Wuthering Heights**, Joe Cornish's **Attack the Block**, Richard Ayoade's **Submarine**, Clio Barnard's **The Arbor**, Nigel Cole's **Made in Dagenham**, Mike Leigh's **Another Year**, Peter Mullan's **Neds** and Max Giwa and Dania Pasquini's **Streetdance 3D**.

#### **About the British Film Commission**

The British Film Commission (BFC) is the national body in charge of attracting, encouraging and supporting the production of international feature films in the UK. With offices in the UK and the US, the BFC provides free professional advice to help make productions in the UK a reality.

The British Film Commission is managed by Film London through a public/private partnership which is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport through the BFI.

[www.britishfilmcommission.org.uk](http://www.britishfilmcommission.org.uk)

### **About Film London**

Film London, as the capital's film and media agency, aims to ensure London has a thriving film sector that enriches the city's businesses and its people. The agency works with all the screen industries to sustain, promote and develop London as a major international production and film cultural capital, and it supports the development of the city's new and emerging film-making talent. Film London is funded by the Mayor of London, the National Lottery through the BFI, and receives significant support from Arts Council England and Skillset.

Film London's activities include:

- Managing the national remit for inward investment through film
- Maintaining, strengthening and promoting London and the South East's position as a film-friendly region to attract investment
- Investing in new and established talent through a range of specialised production schemes
- Boosting employment and competitiveness in the capital's film and media sectors by facilitating funding as well as supporting training and business development activities
- Maximising access to the capital's film culture by helping audiences discover film in all its diversity
- Working with a wide range of partners to promote London through the production industries
- Utilizing opportunities provided by London 2012 and its legacy to strengthen the capital's film industry and culture

An independent evaluation of Film London concluded that for every £1 invested in the agency, £4 comes back to the city.

[www.filmlondon.org.uk](http://www.filmlondon.org.uk)