



LONDON FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES WINNERS AT NEW FESTIVAL AWARDS CEREMONY

London – 28 October 2009: The Times BFI 53rd London Film Festival announced its winners at the high profile awards ceremony held at London's Inner Temple this evening. Hosted by journalist and broadcaster, **Paul Gambaccini**, the six awards were presented by some of the most respected figures in the film world.

BEST FILM

In recognition of original, intelligent and distinctive filmmaking, the new award for *Best Film* was judged by an international jury chaired by **Anjelica Huston** and fellow jurors **John Akomfrah**, **Jarvis Cocker**, **Mathieu Kassovitz**, **Charlotte Rampling** and **Iain Softley**. The Star of London for *Best Film* was awarded to Jacques Audiard's *A PROPHET* and was presented by Anjelica Huston..

On behalf of the jury Anjelica Huston (Chair) said:

"A masterpiece: *UN PROPHETE* has the ambition, purity of vision and clarity of purpose to make it an instant classic. With seamless and imaginative story-telling, superb performances and universal themes, **Jacques Audiard** has made a perfect film."

The jury also gave a special mention to **John Hillcoat**'s *THE ROAD*, praising the film's breathtaking vision, extraordinary performances and profound political statement.

BEST BRITISH NEWCOMER

Presented for the first time, the award for *Best British Newcomer* celebrates new and emerging film talent, rewarding the achievements of a new writer, producer or director who has demonstrated real creative flair and imagination with their first feature. **Dominic Cooper** and **Jodie Whittaker** presented the *Best British Newcomer* Star of London to **Jack Thorne**, screenwriter of the film *THE SCOUTING BOOK FOR BOYS*. The jury said: "**Jack Thorne** is a poetic writer with an end-of-the-world imagination and a real gift for story-telling. Thorne's substantial authorship is revealed in the unique voices of the film's characters and the rich, soulful and playful layering of the story." The jury also gave a special mention to **J Blakeson**, the writer and director of *THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ALICE CREED*, commending his accomplished, original and ambitious filmmaking.

SUTHERLAND AWARD

The longstanding *Sutherland Award* is presented to the maker of the most original and imaginative first feature screening in the Festival. This year, **Scandar Copti** and **Yaron Shani** took the award for their film *AJAMI*, which was presented by **Alfonso Cuarón**. Jurors included **Paul Greengrass**, **Kerry Fox** and **David Parfitt**. The jury said "A bold and original piece of filmmaking, *AJAMI* tells an important story in a thoroughly engrossing and cinematic way. A fantastic achievement, **Scandar Copti** and **Yaron Shani** have made a film with a heart and a vision that speaks for a common humanity."

LONDON FILM FESTIVAL GRIERSON AWARD for Best Documentary in the Festival

This award is co-presented with the Grierson Trust, in commemoration of John Grierson, the grandfather of British documentary. The jury included **Nick Broomfield**, **Molly Dineen**, **Ellen Fleming** and **Christopher Hird**, and was presented by Broomfield to winner **Yoav Shamir** for his film *DEFAMATION*.

On behalf of the jury Nick Broomfield said:

"A fantastic film, *Defamation* does exactly what documentary, at its best, can do, making us re-examine our assumptions about an important and complex subject, in an absorbing and funny way. The film's intellectual courage, boldness of conception and the excitement of the journey on which it takes you make this a winning film."

BFI FELLOWSHIPS

The highest accolade that the British Film Institute bestows was awarded tonight to distinguished British actor **John Hurt** and renowned Malian filmmaker **Souleymane Cissé** for their significant achievements in the fields of acting and directing. Hurt, whose films *44 INCH CHEST* and *THE LIMITS OF CONTROL*, were featured in the festival, received his award from producer **Jeremy Thomas** and director **Michael Caton-Jones** both of whom have worked with Hurt on a number of films. Cissé's *TELL ME WHO YOU ARE* had its UK premiere at the festival this week and his award was presented to him by actress **Charlotte Rampling**.

The inaugural Star of London awards were commissioned especially for the Festival and designed by leading sculptor Almuth Tebbenhoff.

Guests at this evening's festivities included *Best Film* jurors **John Akomfrah, Jarvis Cocker** and **Iain Softley**; *Sutherland Trophy* jurors **Mark Cosgrove**, and **Gillian Wearing**; *Best British Newcomer* judges **Lenny Crooks, Christine Langan, Tessa Ross** and **Tanya Seghatchian**; and *Times BFI London Film Festival Grierson Award* jurors **Ellen Fleming** and **Christopher Hird**. Other guests included **Josh Berger, Hugh Bonneville, Peter Buckingham, Greg Dyke, John Fletcher, Lizzie Francke, Steve Jenkins, Cameron McCracken, David Morrissey, Lynda Myles, Stephen Poliakoff, Ken Russell, Sam Taylor-Wood, Ridley Scott, Stewart Till** and **John Woodward**.

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Notes to editors:

About the BFI : The BFI – the home of film in Britain. There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archive, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire everyone. www.bfi.org.uk

About the UK Film Council: The UK Film Council is the Government backed lead agency for film in the UK ensuring that the economic, cultural and educational aspects of film are effectively represented at home and abroad. We invest Government grant-in-aid and Lottery money in developing new filmmakers, in funding exciting new British films and in getting a wider choice of films to audiences throughout the UK. We also invest in training, promoting Britain as an international filmmaking location and in raising the profile of British films abroad. The UK Film Council is the principal funder of The Times BFI 53rd London Film Festival investing £1.8 million of Lottery money over three years. Our Festivals Fund is giving more people the opportunity to enjoy more films, learn about film and meet filmmakers through film festivals.

About the Times BFI London Film Festival Grierson Award for Best Documentary in the Festival:

This marks the fifth year for the presentation of this award. Previous winners are:

- 2008 **Renaud Barret** and **Florent De La Tullaye** for *Victoire Terminus*
- 2007 **Andrey Paounov** for *The Mosquito Problem & Other Stories*
- 2006 **Lauren Greenfield** for *Thin*
- 2005 **Michael Glawogger** for *Workingman's Death*

About Almuth Tebbenhoff – Sculptor of the “Star of London” award: Almuth Tebbenhoff works mainly in steel, clay, and increasingly, marble. She was born in Fürstenu in north-west Germany but in 1969, she moved to England where she has remained ever since. She studied ceramics at the Sir John Cass School of Art from 1972 to 1975 and following that, she set up a studio in London and for the next six years made studio ceramics, while she developed her ideas for sculpture. In 1981, Almuth established her Southfields studio in a former church hall. At first she worked in clay and wood, but in 1986 she started a two-year course in metal fabrication at South Thames College, London.

UK FILM | COUNCIL



THE GRIERSON TRUST

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