



Media Information

02 June, 2023

Industry figureheads Ncuti Gatwa, Terri White and Asif Kapadia to judge BMW Filmmaking Challenge in partnership with BFI

The BMW Filmmaking Challenge in partnership with the BFI has enlisted industry figureheads Ncuti Gatwa, Terri White, and Asif Kapadia to judge and champion the untold stories of emerging UK filmmakers.

Respected as trailblazers within their fields, each judge brings their unique perspective and experience to select a winning film from five shorts to premiere as part of the Closing Night of the BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express, on 15 October 2023. After the premiere, all five films will be available to watch on BFI Player (<https://player.bfi.org.uk>).

The partnership between BMW and the BFI aims to support aspiring filmmakers, helping them to develop their careers and uncover fresh perspectives in the film industry. Inspired by the all-electric BMW i7 and its ultra-wide 31.3-inch rear-passenger theatre screen, the Challenge is designed to stretch filmmakers artistically and bring their unique stories to life in just 90 seconds under the 'Evolving Perspectives' theme.

Announced by Michaela Coel in January 2023, the BMW Filmmaking Challenge in partnership with the BFI received almost 400 applications. The BFI has shortlisted five teams, awarding each a £10,000 production budget, access to 8K camera equipment and mentoring from Michaela Coel, to bring their vision to life. With the films now in production, judging will take place in September, with the winning short premiering at the 67th BFI London Film Festival as part of the Closing Night Gala.

Actor Ncuti Gatwa, known for his role in the popular Netflix series Sex Education has garnered critical acclaim for his performances. He comments "As an actor, I have always tried to seek roles that challenge perspectives. I like playing complex characters and understanding the power of storytelling and its impact on people and society at large."

With his deep understanding of the transformative potential of television and film, Gatwa brings his passion for subversion and his belief in the importance of untold stories to this project, adding "I was drawn to this project because short film is the trajectory for emerging voices to flourish, it's an exciting time for the genre."

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Terri White believes the Filmmaking Challenge is a unique platform for filmmakers to transform screen culture as it stands. The acclaimed film journalist turned screenwriter, says, "There is an undeniable sense of excitement surrounding short films as a medium in our country. The short film not only encourages greater representation – as a more accessible medium that doesn't need deep pockets – it's also traditionally been a place where filmmakers can play, experiment and innovate with new technologies and visual approaches. I have confidence that this competition will showcase exceptional entries and potentially unearth a future star in the world of film".

This view is supported by new research published today by BMW, which reveals interesting insights about the consumption of short-form film and video content: 51% of the public surveyed believe it influences perceptions of societal issues, 57% of people think it can shape public debate, and 52% believe it can drive social change. Nearly half (49%) feel that user-generated content has led to a broader representation of voices and perspectives in everyday life.

According to 38% of respondents, the rise of short-form content consumption is being driven by rapid advancements in technology. While cinema remains the location of choice for two in five (41%) to watch big blockbuster movies, advancements in mobile screen technology is driving more consumers to watch short-form content on the move.

Commenting on this, White adds "Film shifts culture and culture shifts film. It's a symbiotic relationship that has always been at the heart of our cinematic experiences. With platforms like YouTube and Vimeo and tech now in everyone's pockets, making and distributing the moving image has never been easier. But what about watching? As our lives have become lived more on the move, we've found the cinematic experience lagging - who wants to watch something brilliant on a tiny device? The ultra-wide BMWi7 theatre screen is a bridge between the tellies in our homes and the big screens at the pictures. A massive step on for on-the-go screen culture."

Oscar® award-winning director and producer, Asif Kapadia emphasises that shorts allow filmmakers to experiment with different styles and techniques, telling powerful stories in a

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condensed format that leans into the fast-paced, always-connected world we live in today. "Short films are an incredible way to experiment and push boundaries. When you have a short length, you have the freedom to try out new styles and techniques. The wide theatre screen format takes it to the next level, allowing filmmakers to create something visually stunning. But it's not just about what you see – it's about what you hear too. Sound plays a crucial role in making a film look great. With 90 seconds, anything is possible."

He sees short films as a vital tool for filmmakers looking to make a break in the industry and that was how he started his career. In this case, the 32:9 aspect ratio and 8K technology inspired by the BMW i7 has encouraged filmmakers to experiment with exciting new formats, and Asif believes that "continuing to build a body of work that demonstrates your capabilities as a filmmaker and building industry connections is key to success, that's why I wanted to be involved in this project."

Ends

The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2022, the BMW Group sold nearly 2.4 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2022 was € 23.5 billion on revenues amounting to € 142.6 billion. As of 31 December 2022, the BMW Group had a workforce of 149,475 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company set the course for the future at an early stage and consistently makes sustainability and efficient resource management central to its strategic direction, from the supply chain through production to the end of the use phase of all products.

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The BFI

We are a cultural charity, a National Lottery distributor, and the UK's lead organisation for film and moving image.

Our mission is:

- To support creativity and actively seek out the next generation of UK storytellers
- To grow and care for the BFI National Archive, the world's largest film and television archive
- To offer the widest range of UK and international moving image culture through our programmes and festivals - delivered online and in venue
- To use our knowledge to educate and deepen public appreciation and understanding
- To work with Government and industry to ensure the continued growth of the UK's screen industries

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Tim Richards.

The BFI London Film Festival

BFI London Film Festival (LFF) is the UK's largest film festival and a major international film event.

The Festival introduces the finest new British and international films, series and immersive art works to London and UK-wide audiences, attracts significant international industry participation which shines a spotlight on UK talent. Each year the festival shows work from over 70 countries, representing a variety of languages, genres and formal styles, with presentations ranging from intimate screenings and installations to major red carpet productions. The artistic programme is complemented by a rich range of talks and events for public and industry audiences.

The 66th edition featured an exciting range of 167 feature films from both established and emerging talent and hosted 23 World Premieres, 7 International Premieres and 22 European Premieres. It was attended in person by 189.2k audience members, while 101.9k attended the Festival online.

In 2022, the Festival welcomed more than 750 international and UK filmmakers, XR artists and series creatives to present their work at venues across the capital.

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