



Saturday, May 14, 2016

Press Release

## **UK FILM INDUSTRY BODIES UNITE AT CANNES FILM FESTIVAL OVER 50% PUBLIC FUNDING**

### **Directors UK's Industry Panel at Cannes Discussed 50:50 Public Funding for UK Films**

Saturday 14th May - Earlier today Directors UK, the professional association for British screen directors, hosted "**Directing the Future of Film**", a panel discussion at the NEXT pavilion, at the Marché de Film at Cannes International Film Festival.

The panel which included Amanda Nevill (CEO) and Ben Roberts (Director of Film Fund) from the BFI, Celine Haddad (Senior Film Executive, Talent Development) at Creative England, Anna Serner (CEO) of the Swedish Film Institute, Francine Raveney (Head of PR) at the European Women's Audiovisual Network, and chaired by director Beryl Richards (Chair at Directors UK), discussed what decisive actions should be taken to create a film industry where gender does not determine success.

As part of the publication of their commissioned study "**Cut Out Of The Picture - A Study Into Gender Inequality Amongst Directors in the UK Film Industry**" Directors UK called for 50% of publicly funded films in the UK to be directed by women by 2020. Following the BFI's announcement earlier this week, alongside Creative England's public support for 50:50, the panel discussed the factors causing gender disparity and the unconscious bias effecting this. The discussion explored issues such as the importance of distinguishing between quotas and targets and focusing on the talent and quality in storytelling; the practical steps to be taken to improve equality and champion future women directors; and how to measure the success of these endeavours.

The BFI's Ben Roberts acknowledged the role that publicly funded films play in providing a safe environment in which to make films, and the industry's need to recognise that women directors should be given the same opportunities and to be allowed to fail in the same way as their male counterparts, adding "you know when you have reached true equality when women are allowed to make bad films". He also highlighted the impact that festivals and awards, such as BAFTA, have in advancing gender equality in film and raising the profile of women directors. Celine Haddad from Creative England added that critics also have a role to play in reviewing more films by women.

Beryl Richards, Directors UK Chair, who chaired the event said, "Bringing together the people who can make change happen and focusing on how we can deliver these targets is a positive step. It was inspiring to hear from Anna Serner about how the quality of films made by the Swedish film institute was only strengthened by looking at the applications from a different perspective and has resulted in many more festival awards after their women directors hit above 50% in Sweden. This is something that should also be achievable in the UK."

Further information of Directors UK's recommendations calling for 50% of films backed by UK-based public funding bodies to be directed by women by 2020, and other suggestions to create an equal industry for all directors, available at [www.directors.uk.com](http://www.directors.uk.com).

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

- Journalists wishing to receive further information about the panel event should contact Tolu Akisanya, details below.

- **DIRECTORS UK** is the single voice of British screen directors representing the creative, economic and contractual interests of over 6,000 members – the overwhelming majority of working film and television directors in the UK. Directors UK campaigns for the rights, working conditions and status of directors in the industry and works closely with fellow organisations in the UK, Europe and around the world to represent directors’ rights and concerns. It also promotes excellence in the craft of direction both nationally and internationally, and champions change to the current landscape to create an equal opportunity industry for all.
- A PDF copy of the full report “**Cut out of the Picture – A study of Gender Inequality Amongst Directors within the UK Film Industry**” and further information can be found at [www.directors.uk.com](http://www.directors.uk.com)

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#DUKFilm5050

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