

# BRISTOL



a UNESCO Creative City

NEWS: For immediate release

## **BRISTOL FILM SECTOR GATHERS TO LAUNCH BRISTOL'S NEW UNESCO CITY OF FILM STATUS**

BRISTOL, 1 February 2017: Bristol's new UNESCO City of Film status will be officially launched this evening at a celebration event at Watershed Media Centre, attended by leading figures from the city's film sector.

The permanent status was awarded to Bristol by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) in November 2017, in recognition of its work as a world-leading film centre. Bristol now stands alongside Bitola, Bradford, Busan, Galway, Łódź, Qingdao, Rome, Santos, Sofia, Sydney, Terrassa and Yamagata as an official City of Film.

Opened by Mayor of Bristol Marvin Rees, the event will mark the official beginning of the City of Film programme and will feature presentations from key delivery partners revealing more about what the new status means for Bristol.

**Bristol's five-time BAFTA-winning screenwriter Jack Thorne** (*Kiri*, *National Treasure*, *This is England '86*, *'88*, *'90*) said: "Bristol is my home city, so I'm biased, but I think it's the most fascinating city in the country. There's always something to do and experience; from the incredible outdoor spaces to the People's Republic of Stokes Croft; from the brilliant Bristol Old Vic to the amazing carnival. I'm so proud it's got this new City of Film status, it's a place where stories should be told."

**Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol says:** "Tonight marks the beginning of a new opportunity for Bristol to grow our already booming cultural sector and connect the industry's success to communities across the city. As a UNESCO City of Film we have a unique chance to harness the power of a diverse industry and empower people to collaborate on combating inequality and break down the barriers to opportunity."

"Bristol is an outward looking city that understands the benefits of cooperating with partners across the world. Being part of the global UNESCO network with fellow creative cities means we're expanding our ability to build international relationships and exciting new partnerships. Our goal is to ensure that those relationships directly benefit all communities across the city and help establish opportunities to support filmmaking talent, education, training and employment, whilst also widening cultural participation and engagement for our film audiences."

**Mark Cosgrove, Watershed Cinema Curator and Film Hub South West & West Midlands Chair** said: "The UNESCO City of Film award is fantastic recognition of the rich film culture in Bristol and of the vital role film plays in the creative life of the city. Since 1982 Watershed has been presenting and celebrating the diversity of world cinemas. Audiences continue to be passionate and enthusiastic- and this passion and enthusiasm I am sure contributed to the UNESCO recognition. We very much look forward to working with partners across the city to develop local talent, production and audiences and to promote Bristol as a unique City of Film destination."

Four overarching priorities will guide the first four years of activity. These are:

1. Film Production: enhancing Bristol's reputation as a dynamic creative film hub, attracting and supporting TV and film production and inward investment
2. Film Culture: broadening engagement with Bristol cinema-goers through screen heritage projects and festivals, attracting visitors to the city and increasing screen tourism
3. Film Learning: unlocking talent, improving skills and increasing cultural capital by widening participation, engaging with schools and higher education providers
4. Reducing Inequalities: removing barriers and promoting inclusivity, using film as a tool to broaden learning and community engagement, inspire creativity and harness the potential of Bristol's dynamic multiculturalism

As well as showcasing existing successful film projects that helped Bristol achieve its UNESCO status, the event will also preview a selection of City of Film projects and collaborations in development, eg:

- A new Media Production Diploma at The Bottle Yard Studios for 16-19 yr olds, delivered by education provider Boomsatsuma
- Bringing together existing city film and music initiatives in order to broaden content and audience participation.
- Supporting and developing Film our City, a competition which invites Bristol's young filmmaking talent to capture the diversity and dynamism of Bristol on screen

Bristol is home to world-leading media. Aardman Animations set up studios in Bristol in 1976, finding fame with *Wallace and Gromit*, *Chicken Run*, *Shaun the Sheep*, and more recently *Early Man*, which opened in UK cinemas on 26 January 2018. BBC Bristol produces globally recognised radio, drama, factual and wildlife television, and the city is home to the largest production facility in the West of England, The Bottle Yard Studios, whose productions include *Poldark*, *Broadchurch*, and *Wolf Hall*. BBC Bristol also houses the globally significant Natural History Unit, spawning 'Green Hollywood', the world's largest concentration of firms producing wildlife content. With 11 community-driven international festivals dedicated to film annually, 10 cinemas, and 2 major universities (University of the West of England and University of Bristol) providing 28 film related degrees, Bristol will play a central role in this global network of like-minded cities.

Bristol City of Film is led by Bristol City Council, Bristol Film Office, UWE Bristol, University of Bristol, Screenology, Destination Bristol and The Bottle Yard Studios. City partners working together to develop City of Film projects include Watershed, Aardman Animations, Icon Films, Knowle West Media Centre, Calling The Shots, BBC Bristol, Slapstick Festival, Encounters Festival, Bristol Festivals, BFI SWWM Film Hub, Boomsatsuma, Bath Film Office, Afrika Eye Festival, We the Curious, Royal Television Society Bristol, Ujima Radio, Wildscreen Festival and many more.

Created in 2004, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network is a network of creative cities working together towards a common mission for cultural diversity and sustainable urban development. The Creative Cities Network is currently formed by 116 Members from 54 countries covering seven creative fields: Crafts & Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Music and Media Arts.

**– ENDS –**

For further information about Bristol, UNESCO City of Film, or to request images from tonight's launch event, contact Tara Milne – [taracmilne@gmail.com](mailto:taracmilne@gmail.com) / 075332134020

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **About the UK National Commission for UNESCO**

The UK National Commission (UKNC) works to support the UK's contribution to UNESCO and bring the benefits of UNESCO to the UK. It is the hub for UNESCO-related matters in the UK.

The UKNC has four core priorities:

- We provide expert, independent policy advice to the UK and devolved governments on UNESCO related issues.
- We advise and support individuals and institutions in the UK, its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies on accessing UNESCO accreditation and prizes and how to derive more value from their involvement with UNESCO.
- We support the UK Government's agenda in helping UNESCO to become more effective.
- We act as a hub for the UK's over 160 UNESCO designations.

In carrying out these roles, the UKNC relies on advice and support from its Expert Network including specialists in the fields of education, culture, the sciences and communication and information from across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

### **Bristol Film Office**

Bristol Film Office, a division of Bristol City Council, is a free service to all productions planning to film in the city. Dedicated to making film, television or commercial photography shoots run as smoothly as possible when on location in Bristol, it is the one-stop-shop for all filming enquiries. It can assist at all stages of production, from initial location and crewing advice to recce and logistical support. [www.filmbristol.co.uk](http://www.filmbristol.co.uk)

### **The Bottle Yard Studios**

The Bottle Yard Studios is a Bristol City Council initiative. The site, which operated for more than 50 years as a former winery and bottling plant, is now an established base for film and television production in the West of England, attracting major UK and overseas productions of all sizes.

The Bottle Yard Studios has eight stages available at competitive rates, just 15 minutes from Bristol city centre. It also offers a giant green screen studio, extensive back lot, workshop areas, production offices, costume and make-up rooms, dressing-rooms, storage, private roadways and parking. A creative hub of on-site tenants deliver a host of services including creative, digital, technical and audio/visual expertise, grips, transport, structural, fire and safety assistance.

Recent productions made at The Bottle Yard Studios include: Poldark (BBC), The Crystal Maze (Channel 4), Ill Behaviour (BBC), Broadchurch (ITV), Three Girls (BBC), The White Princess (STARZ), Sherlock: The Abominable Bride (BBC), Crazyhead (E4/Netflix), The Living and the Dead (BBC) We Can Be Heroes (dir. Claire Downes), Andy's Prehistoric Adventures (CBeebies), Golden Years (dir. John Miller); Galavant (ABC Studios), Wolf Hall ((BBC), The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies (ITV), Trollied (Sky 1). [www.thebottleyard.com](http://www.thebottleyard.com)

### **University of the West of England, Bristol**

The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) is the leading institution in the South West for employability and practice based learning.

The 30,000 students choosing to study at UWE Bristol benefit from an ambitious strategy that holds their future prospects at the heart of everything it does.

UWE Bristol has established strong industry networks and connections with over 1,000 employers, has a global and inclusive outlook and approach, focusing on research tackling real world problems and playing a pivotal role in the regional economy.

The university has invested over £300 million in infrastructure, buildings and facilities across all of its Campuses creating a backdrop and place for learning that is innovative, ambitious, connected, enabling and inclusive.

### **University of Bristol**

The University of Bristol is one of the most popular and successful universities in the UK. It was ranked within the top 40 universities in the world in the QS World University rankings 2015 and 9th in the country. The University of Bristol is ranked among the top five institutions in the UK for its research, according to new analysis of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014.

Bristol is a member of the Russell Group of UK research-intensive universities, and a member of the Worldwide Universities Network, a grouping of research-led institutions of international standing.

The University was founded in 1876 and was granted its Royal Charter in 1909. It was the first university in England to admit women on the same basis as men.

The University is a major force in the economic, social and cultural life of Bristol and the region, but is also a significant player on the world stage. It has over 16,000 undergraduates and nearly 6,000 postgraduate students from more than 100 countries, and its research links span the globe.

### **Screenology**

Screenology is home to the filmmakers. We are a production company and film school. We have set out to establish an exciting, progressive organisation immersed in the future of filmmaking. With centres in Bristol (and, from 2018, London), we offer a hub of activity for emerging filmmakers.  
<http://screenology.school>

### **Destination Bristol**

Destination Bristol is the destination management partnership for Bristol & South Gloucestershire, a joint venture between Bristol City Council and Business West. The organisation works with over 600 major businesses and strategic partners with the aim of increasing business competitiveness within the city centre, supporting employment and growth within the visitor economy, and raising the profile of the Bristol city region as a world-class place to visit.