

## **BAFTA Qualifying Aesthetica Short Film Festival 2015 Boosts York's Creative and Cultural Offer with 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition**

Thousands of visitors were attracted to the city of York from Thursday 5 to Sunday 8 November to experience exceptional short films and industry events at the BAFTA Qualifying Aesthetica Short Film Festival (ASFF), York's international short film festival.

This year it was the festival's 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and in that time it has screened over 1,500 films from over 65 countries. Attendees for this year included a diverse mix of industry professionals, young families, film fans, students, tourists and more, some travelling from as far afield as Brazil, the USA, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland and France.

ASFF is a city-wide affair that engages and endorses local businesses. The [ASFF Friends Project](#) returned for its second year, championing independent businesses by including them in a network of recommended places to shop, eat and drink while in York.

97 businesses displayed an ASFF window sticker showcasing the festival, and they were promoted by ASFF on its website and through its social media channels. The ASFF Twitter account was a hive of activity across the weekend, as filmmakers and festival goers tagged themselves in different venues throughout the city, engaging with and contributing to York's leisure and tourism industry.

Extending its connection with the city, ASFF 2015 also worked with 16 unique venues. Films were screened in a number of iconic locations all within walking distance of each other, combining the historical with the contemporary. The Festival Hub, located at Visit York, provided a central starting point with screening venues including City Screen, Reel Cinema, Middletons Hotel, Bootham School, York St John University, Friargate Theatre, 1331 and Grand Opera House York among others. See our [Partners](#) and [Venues](#).

Total admissions for 2015 reached 20,000, an increase of 2,000 admissions on 2014 standing testament to the festival's continual growth as a major cultural hub in the UK as well as its burgeoning impact on the city's creative output. ASFF is also a strong ambassador for education and offers many opportunities for budding practitioners and students to develop and hone skills critical to their future career or further study.

Some of the film world's most acclaimed talents came to York to offer masterclasses, including Channel 4, Ridley Scott Associates, National Theatre, director Tim Pope and editor Robbie Gibbons. Masterclass attendees in total were 2,800 with people travelling from London, Manchester, Leeds, Norwich, Sheffield, Edinburgh and within York.

For the second year running, there was an opportunity for York students aged 11 - 14 to participate in the ASFF Youth Engagement Day 2015, supported by the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) and [Aesthetica Magazine Ltd](#). This initiative took young people beyond Hollywood and into world cinema by introducing them to diverse British and global filmmaking cultures. It offered cross-curriculum learning and exposed students to new ideas and concepts.

The accreditation from BAFTA, which recognises ASFF as a BAFTA Qualifying Festival and enables its films to be considered by a committee from the organisation, further establishes York's creative and cultural offer. ASFF champions films that demonstrate innovation and excellence, and through bold programming the festival expands audience choice for independent cinema in York spanning 11 genres from drama, documentary and comedy to experimental, fashion and music video.

Cherie Federico, Festival Director says: "ASFF champions York as a leading city of culture not only shown through its impressive footfall figures but also online, engaging communities in conversation on Twitter, Facebook and more, and involving local independent businesses. It was fantastic to see so many people journeying around York and discovering parts of the city for the first time."

**ASFF 2016 opens for entries on 1 December 2015.**

**ASFF 2016 will take place from 3 to 6 November in York.**

- 2015 Programme: <http://aestheti.cc/m24ks>
- Trailer: <http://aestheti.cc/trailer2015>
- Press Images: <http://aestheti.cc/q7ghy>

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

1. ASFF 2015 ran 5 - 8 November across the city of York. Visit [www.asff.co.uk](http://www.asff.co.uk) and @asffest and [www.facebook.com/aestheticamagazine](http://www.facebook.com/aestheticamagazine)

2. ASFF 2015 screened over 375 films from 49 countries, including USA, Canada, Australia, China, Brazil, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Cuba, France, Germany, Ireland and the UK.

3. ASFF 2015 categories: advertising, animation, artists' film, comedy, dance, documentary, drama, experimental, fashion, music video, thriller and a Family Friendly Programme.

4. Special screenings included Creative England's iShorts, 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary showcase and panel discussion, as well as strands by guest countries: China, Cuba and Brazil.

5. Industry events included masterclasses with Channel 4, Ridley Scott Associates, Beggars Group, Association of Camera Operators and. Plus daily networking sessions with industry leaders, Meet the Film Festivals and Meet the Filmmakers. [www.asff.co.uk/asff2015/events](http://www.asff.co.uk/asff2015/events)

6. Partners and supporters include: York St John University, BFI, City of York Council, York Science Park, University of Arts London, Grand Central, Creative England, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Creative Skillset, The Guild of Television Cameramen, Brandy Brown's Cinema, York Museums Trust, Visit York, York Conferences, Riding Lights, Mosaic Events, Firefly, According to McGee, New Visuality, Make it York, York Means Business, Richer Sounds, Transdev, Shooting People, The Advertising Bike Company, Cellhire, BFFF, Tate, Hepworth Wakefield, Popchips, Taylors of Harrogate. See all partners [www.asff.co.uk/partners](http://www.asff.co.uk/partners)

7. 97 local businesses were part of the ASFF Friends Project 2015. Businesses displayed a window sticker for ASFF and were recommended during the festival and online. [www.asff.co.uk/while-in-york](http://www.asff.co.uk/while-in-york)

8. Awards were given out for Best of Fest, People's Choice, Best of Category and York Youth Vote. [www.asff.co.uk/asff2015](http://www.asff.co.uk/asff2015)

9. The festival is produced by Aesthetica Magazine. Visit [www.aestheticamagazine.com](http://www.aestheticamagazine.com)

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