



BAFTA CALLS ON 11-16 YEAR OLDS TO ENTER ITS YOUNG GAME DESIGNERS COMPETITION

Hollyoaks and Newsround stars gather at the Science Museum to launch the third year of the initiative

London, 1 May: The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) is launching **BAFTA Young Game Designers 2012**, a competition that aims to inspire the game designers and game-makers of the future by giving young people the chance to design and create their own video game and develop it with industry professionals.

The competition is open to 11-16 year olds and has attracted hundreds of entries from across the UK every year since it began in 2010. This year, for the first time, young people have two ways to enter:

The **Concept Award** is for those who have an idea for a new game, and can describe the characters, the world of the game, and how it will be played.

The **Game-making Award**, presented by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE), will suit young people who want to make their own games using game-making software or programming languages. This is their chance to show off their technical skills as well as their creativity.

Young people can enter one or both categories, either as an individual, as a pair or as a team of three. The top three entrants in both categories will be invited to the British Academy Children's Awards in November, and the winners will have their game developed with experts from the University of Abertay Dundee, as well as visiting a leading games studio.

On Tuesday 1 May, BAFTA will launch this year's competition at the Science Museum, London. *Hollyoaks* actress **Anna Shaffer**, who also played Romilda Vane in the *Harry Potter* films, and *Newsround*'s **Ore Oduba** will join pupils from Chelsea Academy, Hammersmith Academy, and Paddington Academy for a series of workshops where industry experts will reveal how commercial games are made. The event will be hosted



by TV presenter **Nigel Clarke**, and speakers will include Mark Parry, Senior Designer at SCEE London Studio, Kristian Francis of BAFTA 'Ones to Watch' Award-winners Swallowtail, Mark Green, Games Specialist at the Science Museum Group, and Jamie Cason, Game Producer at Miniclip. The workshops begin at 09:00 in the Antenna Gallery on the ground floor of the museum, and end with an open after-school session for the public from 15:45 until 17:00. The event is free to attend but spaces are limited.

The initiative has also been supported by actor/comedian **Ricky Gervais**, girl band **The Saturdays** and actor/presenter **Tyger Drew-Honey** who, together with Ore and Anna, have recorded a 'call to action' film to encourage entries.

The BAFTA Young Game Designers initiative seeks to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to become the next generation of successful game designers. It aims to demystify the creative process of games development and highlight how key qualifications in areas such as maths, physics and computer science are essential for those wishing to enter the industry.

Harvey Elliott, games industry veteran and Chair of BAFTA's Children's Committee, said:

"We are delighted to be running BAFTA Young Game Designers again this year, particularly at a time when there has been much debate about how to re-energise the ICT curriculum and make it more relevant to future employment opportunities. Last year, we had some fantastic entries that showcased the skills and creativity of the UK's young people and we are excited to build on this in 2012.

"We are also pleased that previous participants have already been inspired to pursue interesting and fulfilling careers that they may never have thought existed."

In 2011 the competition was won by 15 year-olds Noah Shepherd, Louis Scantlebury and Nathaniel Weisberg for their game *Rollin' Scotch*. The prototype of their game, re-named *Stick 'Em Up*, is available for free from the iTunes App Store and Android Market.

Nathaniel said:



"It was a great experience and really fun to do with friends. When you first get to see the prototype of your own game, it's awesome!"

Dan Pearce, a member of the first winning team in 2010, is already planning to study Computer Games Development at university. He said:

"The opportunity given to me by BAFTA taught me a lot about game development from all walks of the industry.

"I'm working on three very different projects as a means of further studying the industry and I hope to see them all through within a year from now. I'm managing, I'm designing, and I'm programming. The experience given to me is allowing me to scale each project appropriately and I can't thank the people who've helped me on this journey enough."

BAFTA has partnered with Abertay University and Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE) on the initiative. The launch event is also supported by games industry trade body UKIE.

The competition is open to all young people in the UK aged 11-16. The deadline for entries is 22 October 2012. Further details about how to enter, as well as teaching resources and details of workshops around the country, can be found at www.bafta.org/ygd.

Teachers and students are invited to log on to the site to view a live-streamed workshop from the National Media Museum at 13:00 on Thursday 17 May. An edited version of the workshop will be available after the event.

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About BAFTA

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts is an independent charity that supports, develops and promotes the art forms of the moving image by identifying and rewarding excellence, inspiring practitioners and benefiting the public. In addition to its Awards ceremonies, BAFTA has a year-round Learning & Events programme that offers unique access to some of the world's most inspiring talent through workshops, masterclasses, lectures and mentoring schemes, connecting with audiences of all ages and backgrounds across the UK, Los Angeles and New York. BAFTA relies on income from membership subscriptions, individual donations, trusts, foundations and corporate partnerships to support its ongoing outreach work. For further information, visit www.bafta.org.

About Abertay University

Abertay University launched the world's first computer games technology degree in 1997, and runs both the UK Centre of Excellence for Computer Games Education and the international game design contest Dare to be Digital.

Our unique partnership with BAFTA makes Dare the exclusive pathway to the BAFTA Ones to Watch Award, a major recognition of up-and-coming games talent.

Through the Abertay University Prototype Fund start-up and small developers across the UK have access to funding to create new prototypes and attract additional investment, another practical way Abertay supports the growth of a sustainable, successful games industry.

Abertay has the highest number of Skillset accreditations for computer games courses (five out of 12 across the UK) as well as holding full Skillset Media Academy status, recognition of the important industry skills that are developed on our courses.

For more information please visit www.abertay.ac.uk/studying/schools/amg/

About Sony Computer Entertainment Europe Ltd

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE), based in London, is responsible for the distribution, marketing and sales of PlayStation®3, PlayStation®Vita, PlayStation®2, PSP™ (PlayStation®Portable) and PlayStation®Network software and hardware in 109 territories across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Oceania. SCEE also develops, publishes, markets and distributes entertainment software for these formats, and manages the third party licensing programs for the formats in these territories.

More information about PlayStation products can be found at www.playstation.com.

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Quote from Maria Stukoff, Head of Academic Development and Partnerships:



"This is explosive! We are very excited to partner with BAFTA and Abertay University and provide opportunities for young game-makers to showcase their games. This is a great initiative to acquire new skills and to learn all about the video game industry and the variety of career paths open to talented creators!"

About the Science Museum, London

The Science Museum's collections form an enduring record of scientific, technological and medical change from the past. Aiming to be the best place in the world for people to enjoy science, the Science Museum makes sense of the science that shapes our lives, sparking curiosity, releasing creativity and changing the future by engaging people of all generations and backgrounds in science, engineering, medicine, technology, design and enterprise. www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

Quote from Mark Green, Web Producer, Science Museum Group (based at the National Railway Museum):

"It's enormously gratifying to be helping inspire the next generation of game designers at the launch of Bafta Young Game Designers 2012. We've worked with some of the UK's top developers on the Science Museum's award-winning web games, and we're pleased to be able to share our experience and passion for games."