



BAFTA SEARCHES FOR THE BRITISH COMEDY STARS OF THE FUTURE

New comedy writers will have their work showcased at the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival and the New York Television Festival

Call for applications now open

London, 27 March: The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) and Rocliffe today announced a call out for scripts from emerging comedy screenwriters for a chance to showcase their work in front of the cream of the UK and US television industry at two major international television festivals. For the first time, the BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum will take place at the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival (GEITF) in August, as well as for a third consecutive year at the New York Television Festival (NYTVF) in October.

Places for both events are open to British UK-based comedy screenwriters who have not yet had a television series commissioned, although they may have broadcast writing credits. The successful entries will be selected by an industry jury of comedy professionals from the UK and US. The jury for the NYTVF in 2012 included Jennifer Saunders, Chris Addison, Vicki Pepperdine, Andrew Newman, Damon Beesley, John Morton, Kevin Cecil, Mark Freeland, Shane Allen, Margot Gavan Duffy, Jill Offman, Saskia Schuster.

BAFTA, with its branches in New York and in Scotland, and Rocliffe are offering this opportunity in partnership with British Airways, GEITF and the NYTVF, and the chosen writers will receive:

- A BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum showcase featuring professional actors performing their work in front of an industry audience at GEITF or the NYTVF. Audience members across the festivals will include representatives from BBC, Channel 4, ITV, Sky, Comedy Central, Sky, FOX, FX, VH1, MTV, IFC and major independent production companies;
- Feedback during the event from top TV industry guests – gaining vital tips and encouragement. Previous guests at NYTVF have included Jenni Konner (*Girls*) and Phil Rosenthal (*Everybody Loves Raymond*);
- One-to-one development mentoring sessions by top UK and US comedy commissioners and independent production companies;
- A GEITF festival pass and/or a New York Television Festival 'Official Artist' pass;
- Pitch training;
- Travel and accommodation for the festival for which they are selected;
- One-to-one meetings with top UK talent agents;
- Bespoke industry networking opportunities.

The writers who took part in last year's NYTVF have received a very positive reception to their work. Writing partners Matthew Barry and Kayleigh Llewellyn said: "Winning BAFTA Rocliffe New York 2012 was akin to being awarded a Golden Ticket into the industry. It was the launching pad we needed to bring our project to the attention of the top comedy commissioners. Since returning from New York our script, *Grey*, has been



optioned by Company Pictures and is currently in development with the BBC for a BBC One primetime series. We are also developing a second project with Objective Productions and have signed with a top literary agent. All of these opportunities were afforded to us because of BAFTA Rocliffe."

Sarah Courtauld has been hired as a writer on a new sketch show, *The Kerry Howard Show*, slated for BBC Three in 2013, she also won the Hasbro Studios development deal with a children's TV concept, *Buckle and Swash* at the NYTVF in 2012.

Jury Chair Andrew Newman, said: "We encourage any budding comedy writer, whatever their background, to apply. Participants will continue the legacy of the BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum which, for over 13 years now, has helped launch the careers of new writing talent."

Director of the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival, Louise Benson said: "The TV Festival is constantly seeking ways to identify and support new talent so I'm very proud to be partnering with BAFTA and Rocliffe. The scheme will join a suite of opportunities we provide for stars of the future and I can't wait to see the finalists' work in Edinburgh!"

Founder and Executive Director of the NYTVF, Terence Gray, said: "We're honored to continue our relationship with BAFTA and Rocliffe and look forward to welcoming the 2013 writers to the NYTVF in October. There's an incredible demand for great comedic voices and creators in the US television market right now and we're thrilled that this unique partnership provides a viable State-side showcase for great UK-based talent."

Farah Abushwasha co-founder of Rocliffe said: "We have seen first-time writers plucked from obscurity to become the next new players on the television comedy stage with both option deals and representation. It proves UK talent has universal appeal. This scheme is about supporting new writers, finding the diamonds in the rough, giving their work the polish it deserves and ultimately helping them gain paid employment."

The closing date for entries for the BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum at the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival (GEITF) and the New York Television Festival (NYTVF) is 22 May, 2013. Applicants must submit a ten page extract from their sit-com or sketch show for consideration for the schemes. Each script will be considered for both events albeit different writers may be selected for each event.

All writers who submit receive an industry standard report to enable them to progress their idea.

@BAFTA and @Rocliffeforum will hold several online tweetups to answer writers' questions, using the hashtag #EnterRocliffe.

Full application details and terms and conditions can be found at:
<http://www.bafta.org/about/supporting-talent/rocliffe/>.

- Ends -



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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 and to access the best creative minds in film, TV and games production visit <http://guru.bafta.org/>

About BAFTA New York

BAFTA New York (www.bafta.org/newyork/) is charged with carrying BAFTA's mission forward in the US. This is accomplished through a vibrant community of senior level professionals based in the New York epicenter of international media production.

BAFTA New York's annual calendar includes a diverse line-up of programs and events, with over 70 pre-release film screenings, talkbacks with talent, and panels focusing on industry trends in television, film and multimedia. Educational Outreach is aimed at underserved youth in the NYC schools, and also includes The BAFTA New York Media Scholarship Program established to support undergraduate students pursuing media studies at public institutions located within the New York City area. The 2012-2013 grantee was Hunter College in New York City. BAFTA New York is also devoted to BAFTA's spotlight on new and emerging talent as exemplified by the BAFTA Roccliffe New Writing Forum.

BAFTA New York works closely with the British Consul General to promote the British profile in the US, and also collaborates with many New York based organizations and festivals, such as: The Producers Guild of America [PGA], New York Women in Film and TV [NYWIFT], Screen Actors Guild [SAG], St. Georges Society, BBC AMERICA, The Paley Center for Media, DocNYC, New York Television Festival [NYTVF], Tribeca Film Festival, and Hamptons International Film Festival.

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BAFTA New York is committed to working in tandem with those who share its commitment to supporting the quality and integrity of the moving image across all platforms.

About BAFTA Scotland

BAFTA in Scotland is an integral branch of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts. Since 1989, we have helped support, promote and develop all forms of the moving image in Scotland - film, television and games. Through the British Academy Scotland Awards and BAFTA in Scotland New Talent Awards, we celebrate and reward excellence, championing both established and emerging talent. With a comprehensive range of screenings, educational events and masterclasses, BAFTA in Scotland is at the core of the screen industries on Scotland, regularly engaging its members, the wider industry and reaching out to the public.

About Rocliffe

Rocliffe created a series of events, notably the New Writing Forums, now held at BAFTA and renamed the BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum. With its inception in 2000 by founding member Farah Abushwasha and a team of dedicated volunteers including award winning director Susan Jacobson and casting director Laura Dickens CDG. The format of the New Writing Forum is truly original – following a public script call-out in the months before the event, three diverse pieces are selected from the hundreds received and performed live by professional actors in front of a live audience. The pieces are framed by especially composed music by new composers from Air Edel and digital art. The event showcases undiscovered talent – a must attend for agents and talent scouts alike; development focused discussions generated by the readings; exposure to and advice from experienced industry members; feedback from an audience and an invaluable method to test out new concepts and material. Given the often isolating nature of the industry, the forums create the ideal environment for networking as well as unknown writers the chance to get their work seen and heard. Past featured writers include James Dormer, Jack Thorne, Josh Appignanesi and Claire Wilson.

About GEITF

Now in its 38th year, The Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival is the essential annual event for anyone involved in the media industry. GEITF 2013 takes place on 22 - 24 August.

- A diverse programme of over 50 sessions includes debates about important industry issues, future trends, glossy entertainment sessions and some of the most innovative leaders in the media delivering keynote speeches.
- The Festival is attended by over 1,600 delegates, representing the full spectrum of the industry - from chief executives, controllers and commissioners to producers, directors, marketers, writers, new media companies, distributors and press.
- GEITF is a charitable organisation. Proceeds from sponsorship and the sale of each delegate pass support the GEITF's talent schemes. The schemes identify and support emerging talent to promote a healthy and diverse future for our industry.



- Karl Warner, Executive Editor, BBC Entertainment Commissioning, is the 2013 Advisory Chair.
- Elaine Bedell, Director of Entertainment and Comedy, ITV, is the Executive Chair.
- Join in the conversation on Facebook/ThisIsEdinburghTVFestival, talk to us on Twitter @edinburghtvfest and network with us on Linked In

About NYTVF

Established in 2005, the NYTVF constructs new and innovative paths of development and talent identification, while simultaneously complementing the traditional television development model. By partnering directly with networks, studios, production companies, digital platforms and brands, the NYTVF provides its Industry Partners with a streamlined development model, leveraging its vast creative community of over 12,000 independent producers and production companies, to create content with specific partners in mind. During the annual New York Television Festival – held each fall in New York City – the NYTVF brings together its top artists and industry decision-makers for a series of events designed to foster networking, collaboration and education. The Festival also marks the culmination of the organizations yearly development efforts and features screenings of top independent content, educational panels, fan events, red carpet premieres, and more. For more information on the NYTVF and the annual Festival, visit www.nytvf.com, and to learn about opportunities to submit for its year-round competitions, visit <http://www.nytvf.com/submit.html>.