



31 May 2010

MELVYN BRAGG TO RECEIVE ACADEMY FELLOWSHIP

AT THE PHILIPS BRITISH ACADEMY TELEVISION AWARDS

On Sunday 6 June 2010, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts will present **Melvyn Bragg** with the Academy Fellowship at its Television Awards ceremony.

Awarded annually by the Academy, the Fellowship is the highest accolade bestowed upon an individual in recognition of their outstanding and exceptional contribution to television. Recent Fellows include Richard Curtis, David Jason, Bruce Forsyth and Sir David Frost. Last year's recipients were Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders.

John Willis, TV Committee Chair, said: "BAFTA is delighted to honour Melvyn Bragg for his unique contribution to British broadcasting. His commitment to the arts has shone through in over three decades of quality programme-making and his influence has been enormous."

One of the most respected broadcasters of his generation and a prolific author, Lord Bragg - he became a Life Peer in 1998 - is best known for the multi award-winning **The South Bank Show**, which ended its illustrious 32-year run on ITV last year.

As both presenter and series editor, Lord Bragg made the weekly show that brought high art and popular culture to a mass market. It was an institution that garnered over 30 BAFTA nominations, broadcast to 60 territories across the world and personally earned Lord Bragg seven BAFTA nominations (*1). He gained unrivalled access to many artists, performers and organisations, providing insight to the work of the very famous and a public platform to the lesser known. He recently re-interviewed a number of previously featured subjects for ITV1's **The South Bank Revisted**.

His one-off specials have been both notorious and critically-acclaimed, earning him two BAFTAs for **An Interview with Dennis Potter** and a win for **Laurence Olivier: A Life**.

Lord Bragg said: "It is such an honour to be recognised in this way, and I am truly delighted and touched to have been given this accolade. I have been lucky enough to devote my life to my main passion, so to be awarded for this is even more astounding. The list of past recipients highlights what an incredible accolade this is."

Before his break in television in 1967 with the BBC's **Monitor** arts series, Lord Bragg's career began in radio with the BBC in 1961, a medium to which he returned in 1988 as presenter of Radio 4's **Start the Week** and, a decade later, the long-running and highly popular series on the history of ideas, **In Our Time**.

The Philips British Academy Television Awards will be hosted by Graham Norton from the London Palladium and broadcast on BBC One on Sunday 6 June.

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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. BAFTA's year-round Learning & Events programme offers unique access to some of the world's most inspiring talent through workshops, masterclasses, lectures and much more. It works with groups of all ages and backgrounds across the UK. For further information visit www.bafta.org. BAFTA relies on income from membership subscriptions, individual donations, trusts, foundations and corporate partnerships to support our ongoing outreach work.

(1) BAFTA Awards History

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| 1979 | WON BEST PROGRAMME /SERIES WITHOUT CATEGORY | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1981 | NOMINATED BEST PROGRAMME /SERIES WITHOUT CATEGORY | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1982 | NOMINATED BEST PROGRAMME /SERIES WITHOUT CATEGORY | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1982 | WON BEST DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMME | LAURENCE OLIVIER: A LIFE |
| 1983 | NOMINATED BEST PROGRAMME /SERIES WITHOUT CATEGORY | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1984 | NOMINATED BEST PROGRAMME /SERIES WITHOUT CATEGORY | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1986 | NOMINATED BEST FACTUAL SERIES | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1988 | NOMINATED BEST FACTUAL SERIES | THE SOUTHBANK SHOW |
| 1994 | WON HUW WHELDON AWARD FOR THE BEST ARTS PROGRAMME OR SERIES | AN INTERVIEW WITH DENNIS POTTER |