



BRITISH ACADEMY
TELEVISION AWARDS

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**PAUL WATSON TO RECEIVE THE SPECIAL AWARD
AT
THE BRITISH ACADEMY TELEVISION AWARDS, SUPPORTED BY SKY+**

On Sunday 20 April 2008, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts will present Paul Watson with The Special Award at its annual Awards ceremony.

A Gift of the Academy, The Special Award is presented to individuals or teams for Outstanding Creative Contribution to the industry and this year the award is given in honour of uncompromising director Alan Clarke, and will be presented by John Hurt. Previous recipients of this Award include Beryl Vertue, Paul Greengrass, Adam Curtis and Andy Harris.

John Willis, TV Committee Chair said: "Paul Watson is one of the giants of documentary film-making. Over several decades he has created a string of memorable and often controversial documentaries, always striving for innovation in both form and content and invariably succeeding. He is a very well deserved winner of this prestigious BAFTA Special Award."

Paul started off his career as a painter and artist, achieving a First Class Honours from the Royal College of Art, before moving into television in the late 1960's with documentaries which continue to spark controversy.

Paul won a mask from the SFTA (Society of Film and Television Arts) in 1969 before the Academy was re-named BAFTA in 1976. He is credited with creating reality or fly-on-the-wall television when in 1974 he made THE FAMILY – a groundbreaking series which followed the everyday life of the Wilkins family in Reading which signaled the start of the docu-soap.

His notable projects include THE FISHING PARTY (1985) which cast a satirical eye on a group of fishermen from the City, SYLVANIA WATERS (1992), a docu-soap set in Sydney which made a star of Noeline Baker and sparked fierce debate regarding British prejudices about Australians. His documentaries have been diverse in subject matter from the NOTHING DOING (1975) about youth unemployment to DESERT DARLINGS (2002) following six couples' relationships as they trek across the Namibian Deserts.

He's accumulated six BAFTA nominations, including MALCOLM AND BARBARA – A LOVE STORY in 1999, and this year the follow-up, filmed over 11 years MALCOLM AND BARBARA – LOVE'S FAREWELL which is nominated in the Single Documentary Category this year. The latter won a Broadcasting Press Guild Award (April 2008) for Best Documentary. LOVE'S FAREWELL followed the deterioration of Alzheimer victim Malcolm Pointon.

RAIN IN MY HEART (BBC2) followed the stories of four alcoholics and was BAFTA-nominated last year.

Paul's awards for RAIN IN MY HEART include: the Prix Europa, Berlin, the Leipzig Prize for Best Humanitarian Film Award, the Grierson for best documentary and the Mental Health Media Award.

Moving into play-writing Paul has just completed two Radio 4 plays for the BBC. One, with a reality-TV angle, follows a young TV producer who has an idea which she thinks will change the world.

An interview with Paul Watson will be featured on the night of the Awards at www.bafta.org/awards/television along with red carpet highlights and backstage interviews with all the winners and clips of all the nominated programmes.

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Notes to editors:

Paul Watson's BAFTA history:

A Year In The Life won in 1969 (when BAFTA was named SFTA)
The Block was nominated in 1972
The Fishing Party was nominated in 1986
The Home was nominated in 1996
Malcolm & Barbara: A Love Story was nominated in 1999
Rain In My Heart was nominated in 2006
Malcolm & Barbara: Love's Farewell is nominated in this year 2007