



# THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES

PRESS INFORMATION FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Patron: **KEN LOACH**  
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## Community Cinema Volunteers Get Their Rewards

The **2011 Film Society of the Year Awards** took place at the **Ciné Lumière**, London on the 17th September, hosted by the **British Federation of Film Societies (BFFS)**.

The awards are a celebration of the achievements of UK film societies and community cinemas, and recognise their significant contribution to both cultural cinema and community cohesion.

The awards were presented by **Togo Igawa**, the prolific UK-based Japanese actor and star of the French hit film **Le Herisson**. In his address, Togo commented on the similarities between his approach to finding audiences, and that of film societies: *'My personal aim is 'not to expect audiences to come to you, but to go and find your own audience'. That is why I am here today and I would like to encourage film societies' most important maxim - 'embrace local community'.*

The **Engholm Prize for Film Society of the Year** for the most vigorous and dynamic organisation was awarded to Swindon Film Society for excellence across the board. **Swindon Film Society** have made a recent deliberate move from being an inwardly-focused film society to an outwardly-focused community provider; partnering with a wide range of community arts and action groups to provide a resource for all. They have also helped other local communities develop their own screening groups - helping to make sure much of their region can access Cinema for All.

For his dedication to the film society movement, the **Roebuck Cup** was awarded to **John Salisbury**. John's indefatigable contributions have undoubtedly made BFFS and the sector wiser, healthier and a good deal more aware of their significance and potential.

The Film Society of the Year Awards were sponsored by non-theatrical licensing specialists, the **Motion Picture Licensing Company (MPLC)**. In his address, Bruce Lawrence, UK Licensing Manager acknowledged the importance of film societies and community cinemas to the film industry, *'Many film society members volunteer their time to help bring enjoyment to many others. New or little-known directors have the chance to showcase their work to a wider audience, gaining valuable experience, exposure and insight via the dedicated support of the film clubs and film societies in the UK. Long may this continue for the future.'*

In recognition of the work these volunteers do in their communities, non-theatrical distributors **Filmbank** this year presented 3 organisations with cash prizes through the Filmbank Audience Award. Majella Griffin, General Manager said, *'We are delighted to recognise the valuable work that BFFS members do to enhance their communities through film with our new annual Audience Award.'*

**Award host BFFS Vice-Chair Guy Thomas** said *'UK film societies and community cinemas have been doing some amazing things this year and it is important to be able to recognise their work with the 42nd annual Film Society of the Year Award ceremony. BFFS is honoured to be able to continue this tradition, through which we reward the volunteers who work tirelessly to bring cinema to their communities.'*

This year's award for Best Student Society was sponsored by **Sheffield Hallam University**. Prizes were kindly donated by **CineMoi, Little White Lies, Arrow Films, Wallflower Press, Filmbank** and **MPLC**.



## **BFFS Film Society of the Year Awards Roll of Honour 2011**

### **BEST FILM PROGRAMMING**

WINNERS: Bracknell Film Society, Forest Row Film Society  
DISTINCTIONS: Edinburgh Film Guild, Louth Film Club  
COMMENDATIONS: Keswick Film Club, Swindon Film Society, Chorley Empire Community Cinema, Brampton Film Club, Screen at Hay

### **BEST FILM EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

WINNERS: Birmingham International Film Society, Edinburgh Film Guild  
DISTINCTIONS: Swindon Film Club, Lewes Junior Film Club  
COMMENDATIONS: Passengerfilms (London), Portsmouth Film Society

### **COMMUNITY AWARD**

WINNERS: Portsmouth Film Society, Swindon Film Society  
DISTINCTION: Colinsburgh Community Cinema  
COMMENDATION: Lewes Junior Film Club

### **BEST MARKETING AND PUBLICITY**

WINNER: Torbay Film Club  
DISTINCTIONS: Chatteris Community Cinema, Louth Film Club, Brampton Film Club  
COMMENDATION: Campus Cinema (Exeter University)

### **JIM DEMPSTER AWARD FOR INNOVATION**

WINNER: Moorflix with Moorfoot Community Films (Midlothian)  
DISTINCTIONS: Dulwich Paradiso and Free Film Festivals  
COMMENDATION: Gallery Films (Dulwich)

### **FILMBANK AUDIENCE AWARD**

WINNER: Dedham Films  
RUNNERS UP: Lewes Junior Film Club, Brampton Film Club

### **BEST NEW SOCIETY**

WINNER: Pix in the Stix (East Lothian)  
DISTINCTIONS: Chatteris Community Cinema, Dedham Films  
COMMENDATIONS: Portsmouth Film Society, Moorflix (Midlothian)

### **BEST STUDENT FILM SOCIETY**

WINNER: Film Unit  
DISTINCTION: Warwick Student Cinema  
COMMENDATIONS: Campus Cinema (Exeter University), Edinburgh University Film Society

### **AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION BY AN INDIVIDUAL**

Andrew Maddison Warwick Student Cinema  
Aysegul Epengin Portsmouth Film Society  
Hugh Devonald Bracknell Film Society  
Nicola Hay Edinburgh Film Guild  
Owen Morgan FLIX, Loughborough University  
Rod Evans Keswick Film Club  
SPECIAL MENTION:  
Brad Scott Forest Row Film Society

### **ENGHOLM PRIZE FOR FILM SOCIETY OF THE YEAR**

WINNER: Swindon Film Society  
SPECIAL MENTION: Portsmouth Film Society

**ROEBUCK CUP:** John Salisbury

## NOTES FOR EDITORS:

**BFFS** is the national organisation for the development and support of the film society and community cinema movement in the UK. Its 450+ member organisations across the UK represent a membership of over 68,000 individuals. BFFS members screen about 8,000 films per year of over 800 different titles to a combined total audience of over half a million. BFFS has supported specialised (art-house) cinema exhibition in the voluntary sector since its inception over 60 years ago and today continues to provide advice, technical support and education opportunities to communities across the UK. Each year BFFS hosts the UK Film Society of the Year Awards, recognising excellence in all aspects of film society and community cinema endeavours.

BFFS extends a diversity of viewing choice critical within the UK cultural economy and offers increased opportunities for access and diversity – not only in more remote regions of the country where access to any sort of cinema is restricted, but also in metropolitan areas with no alternative to mainstream titles. Community exhibitors have a strong history of bringing to audiences those films not on general commercial release and in this way have provided national exposure for many minority interest and foreign-language films. Many recent specialised films made here and abroad owe much of their exhibition opportunities in Britain to film societies and community cinemas.



BFFS President Derek Malcolm and special guest, actor Togo Igawa with Carmen Slijpen and Mary Burke of Lewes Junior Film Club.

More images are available at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ivanlieman/6158646251/in/set-72157627697339788>

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