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LATITUDE

12th - 15th July 2012

BAFTA at Latitude: Short films by emerging filmmaking talent showcased at the Me & My Latitude premiere



She Want Soul



Knife Edge

Latitude is proud to announce that **BAFTA** will premiere two short-form films by emerging British directors on Monday 23rd January 2012. The films are the first productions resulting from **Me and My Latitude**, a unique collaborative project designed to nurture, support and provide a platform for emerging filmmaking talent in the UK. The initiative involves the Academy working in partnership with Festival Republic, organisers of Latitude, the UK's leading arts and music festival.

She Want Soul by Director **Sameer Patel** and ***Knife Edge*** by Director **Caroline Bridges** will be shown at BAFTA's Run Run Shaw Theatre, London, in front of an invited audience. They will also take pride of place in the line-up for Latitude's Film & Music Arena in 2012, which is partly programmed in partnership with BAFTA.

Sameer and Caroline were chosen to each make a short film about an artist preparing to perform at Latitude 2011, with the aim of reflecting the diversity and inventiveness of the UK arts scene. The resulting intimate portraits of award-winning poet and writer Sabrina Mahfouz and 2011 Place Prize winning dance theatre company Lost Dog, give a striking and thought-provoking insight into what it is like to live and work as an artist in the UK today.

In *She Want Soul* visual poet Sabrina Mahfouz is presented in a unique and compelling way, shot similarly to a music promo, Sabrina is captured writing and performing as the vivid characters she creates. "In looking at the many identities Sabrina takes on in her poetry I was looking to make a statement about the New British Identity which I think Sabrina represents" writes Sameer about his film. "The Latitude Festival added a backdrop that gave an interesting contrast to Sabrina's character".

Knife Edge focuses on *Lost Dog*, as they prepare to perform their show, *It Needs Horses*, to a festival audience. Their rehearsal schedule is tight, the props have been left behind and the anxiety of putting the show on is palpable. As the company face these challenges, the performance becomes a creative interpretation of their anxiety dreams. Of the company Caroline comments, "Lost Dog's work relates to both dance and non-dance audiences on an emotional level. At times we all feel the need to perform or impress and so the performance anxiety felt by the dancers resonates with all of us."

BAFTA provided mentoring and professional support while Festival Republic selected BAFTA award-winning Executive Producer Beryl Richards to guide the Directors and gave unrivalled access to all the behind the scenes action at the festival with support from Latitude's Arts Curator Tania Harrison.

Creator of Latitude and Festival Republic Managing Director, Melvin Benn, said:

"For me this project was all about working with and supporting upcoming talent. Sameer and Caroline have not only created unique accounts of what it is to be a working artist in 2011 in their films, but they've also shown themselves to be future stars of British cinema.

*I'm looking forward to introducing *She Want Soul* and *Knife Edge* to the thousands of cinephiles at Latitude 2012."*

Amanda Berry OBE, Chief Executive at BAFTA, added:

*"BAFTA is immensely proud of the films made through the *Me and My Latitude* project. It was fantastic to see BAFTA members helping take promising new filmmaking talent to the next level. Not only do the films tell a story about the journey for those taking part in the project, but they also paint a bigger picture of the wonderful Latitude festival."*

Executive Producer, Beryl Richards, said:

*"I relished the chance to help create a completely new filmmaking initiative at a time when funding opportunities are diminishing and creating significant challenges for emerging talent. *Me and My Latitude* is a good news story which I hope will continue to offer inspiration to talented filmmakers, such as Sameer and Caroline, who both produced outstanding films."*

Sameer commented:

'Me and My Latitude was a thrilling opportunity as it gave me creative freedom, access to a top festival and the best support I could ask for from BAFTA and Festival Republic. I believe that Sabrina is one of the most talented writers and performers in Britain today and one to watch out for.'

BAFTA and Festival Republic are continuing their collaboration with further activities planned for 2012, due to be announced in the Spring.

Caroline said of the experience:

*"It was an honour to be selected for the first ever *Me and My Latitude* documentary project. In addition to having the privilege of working with BAFTA and Festival Republic, working with *Lost Dog* was an inspiration. They are a truly talented company with a wonderful sensitivity and were so open with me when they were under a lot of pressure. I cannot thank them enough."*

Ends

Notes to editors:

Latitude

Now in its seventh year Latitude Festival 2012 will place on 12-15th July at Henham Park in Suffolk. Latitude is the only UK festival to offer a truly pan-cultural experience to visitors who want a total arts experience, encompassing theatre, literature, dance, cabaret, comedy, film, fashion, poetry and contemporary art alongside live bands. Since the first festival took place in 2006, Latitude has grown into an event that attracts a capacity of 35,000 to see more than 500 acts across 18 arenas.

Me and My Latitude

BAFTA has partnered with the festival for the past six years and during this time it has presented film screenings with live orchestras and Q&As with some of the leading talent in the Film and Television Industry. In 2011 this relationship was developed further to extend BAFTA's involvement with Latitude and a shared aim was established to support new filmmakers. Two emerging talents were given the opportunity to create a short-form documentary charting the preparations and performances of an artist of their choice involved in the festival and they worked with BAFTA-winning filmmaker Beryl Richards who was the Executive Producer on the project.

The Directors:

Sameer Patel is currently finishing his Masters in Filmmaking at the London Film School. He has had one of his films selected to be on the National Gallery Website after it was influenced by the painting *A Fortune Teller in Venice* by Pietro Longhi, and another has been selected for the 2012 London Student Film Festival. After graduating in Economics from the LSE he worked in the City before leaving to film a documentary on the Cuban Hip Hop scene and later worked as a film producer and scriptwriter.

Sameer selected award-winning poet and writer Sabrina Mahfouz, creative in residence at The Hospital Club whose poetry has found a national audience on Radio 1 and BBC 1xtra, as the subject of his film, *She Want Soul*. www.sabrinamahfouz.com

Caroline Bridges completed an MA (Cinematography) at the National Film and Television School in 2011. She won Best Debut Director at the New York International Film Festival for her short film *Recompense*. Since graduating, Caroline has worked on many projects including BAFTA-winning artist, Alison Jackson's *Review of 2010* and shot a BBC promo for Birmingham Royal Ballet's TV production of *Cinderella*. www.carolinebridges.com

Caroline chose the award-winning dance theatre troupe Lost Dog for her film *Knife Edge*, whose full-length dance theatre works for organisations such as Scottish Dance Theatre and Phoenix Dance Theatre, have been drawing critical claim and awards since the company was set up in 2004. www.lostdogdance.co.uk

For further information please contact:

Tory Lyne-Pirkis at Midas
Margaret Murray at FMG

tory.lyne-pirkis@midaspr.co.uk
margaret@fmguk.com