

Our high-profile speakers last year included:

Colin Pons Course Leader, MA Filmmaking and Course Leader for the Summer School.

Senior Lecturer & Course Leader of MA Filmmaking at Sheffield Hallam University, Colin is a well-respected producer of over 35 features, documentaries and shorts through his company Studio of the North. Colin, an honorary ambassador of EWA (European Women's Audio Visual Network), has worked extensively as a mentor, advisor and tutor for clients who include Film London- Microwave, EAVE (European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs) and Screen Skills (formerly SkillSet).

Caroline Cooper Charles Caroline's 20 year career within the film industry has evolved from running her first production company with acclaimed music video director Dawn Shadforth to her most recent combined roles as Strategic Development Executive for Screen Yorkshire and Talent Development Executive for Scottish Film Talent Network. Along this journey she has spent time as Head of Film at Creative England, Head of Creative Development at Warp X, managed the UK Film Council's nationwide short film programme through her company Lifesize Pictures and spent a year as Director of the Sheffield Doc/Fest. Caroline has also continued her own producing career and is currently Executive Producing a number of projects. With a particular expertise in identifying and cultivating new and evolving voices, Caroline is passionate about championing talent based outside of London.

Maggie Ellis Maggie is Head of Film London's Artists' Moving Image Network (FLAMIN), a department which commissions artists' films and runs the prestigious annual Jarman Award. With a career in the art, film and TV industries spanning nearly 30 years, Maggie has helped launch the careers of some of the UK's most highly regarded filmmaking talent through her work on short and feature film commissioning initiatives including Film London's Microwave, London Calling and FLAMIN Productions schemes. Maggie is a director on the board of Sheffield Media and Exhibition Centre Centre (SMEC), a mentor on The Hospital Club's Emerging Creatives programme and a member of Cine-Regio, the European network of film funders.

Alice Ramsey Alice works as BFI NETWORK Talent Executive at Film Hub North, working with artists and new writers, directors and producers across the North of England on short film productions and early feature ideas. Prior to this Alice worked in the film team at Creative England and at international sales and film finance company Bankside Films.

Solon Papadopoulos A winner of six Royal Television Society awards, a US Cine Golden Eagle and two BAFTA nominations, Sol's love for a good tale has taken him down the dual paths of factual and fiction storytelling. As producer his output has included features, documentaries and dramatic shorts. Sol has produced six feature films: Under The Mud a community-written micro-budget feature which he directed, a trilogy of the critically acclaimed films by director Terence Davies Of Time & The City, Sunset Song and A Quiet Passion. The Daily Telegraph voted Of Time & The City as one of the top ten British films of all time. In 2016 Sol produced A Prayer Before Dawn which premiered in Cannes in 2017. His latest production, Sometimes Always Never starring Bill Nighy and Sam Riley wrapped shooting in December 2017. Great stories, whether fact or fiction, drive Sol's passion for storytelling.

Lyn Papadopoulos Lyn Papadopoulos cut her storytelling teeth at Coronation Street and Hollyoaks working on many major, award-winning storylines. She is also an experienced script editor and reader. Having previously written for Family Affairs, Moving On and BBC Education, she's currently writing for Hollyoaks.

David Wilkinson David Wilkinson entered the entertainment industry in 1970 as an actor. He has since produced and/or distributed/acted in over 120 feature films and has helped 57 first time directors get their film made or released. David became a director at the age of 57 and his second directed film Postcards from the 48° opened in UK cinemas in July 2018.

Peter Chipping Peter started in television as an editor gaining credits across many prime-time shows, after which he moved into directing corporates, commercials and then multi-camera studio. Switching to directing factual and entertainment he then discovered the dramatically intriguing world of serial killers and true crime and, more recently, WWII battles.

Carol Salter Carol is an award-winning documentary director with a Fine Art and film editing background. Her debut feature documentary film Almost Heaven won Best Documentary at the British Independent Film Awards 2017 and premiered at Berlin International Film Festival 2017. Working as a self-shooter with a small camera to achieve empathy, trust and intimacy in her filmmaking, Carol is highly experienced in filming within the NGO sector for Oxfam, Save the Children and others. Carol's previous films such as Unearthing the Pen and Mayomi have screened internationally and won numerous awards including at IDFA, Edinburgh and Sheffield Doc/Fest..

Beatrice Neumann A sales and distribution consultant offering advisory, educational and strategic services to filmmakers, companies and institutions, Beatrice's clients include Edinburgh International Film Festival, IFFR Cinemart, Creative England, Film London and individual filmmakers. Other projects include Distribution Rewired, a 2-day event on emerging distribution models and methods in collaboration with the Edinburgh International Film Festival, and the direct distribution event release of Battle Mountain: Graeme Obree's Story in over 60 screens in the UK. Beatrice's newest venture is ADDA, a company dedicated to building audiences and creating new revenue streams through digital and real world add-ons like games, apps, books and sophisticated social media campaigns.

Orson Nava Orson has a background in directing dramas, music videos and documentaries for Channel Four, the BBC and ITV. His most recent short drama A Viable Candidate premiered at the African Film Festival in Lagos and is screening at Encounters Film Festival, Bristol in September 2018. Orson has previously lectured in Film at the University of East London, Middlesex University, Sheffield Hallam University and the Central Film School and is currently a full time funded doctoral researcher at the University of East London.

Alex Usborne Alex has produced 12 feature films including Tales from a Hard City, The Acid House, Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll and I Am Breathing. Most recently he produced Notes on Blindness which premiered at Sundance, won the BIFA Award for best documentary and was nominated for three BAFTA awards including Outstanding British Film. Alex was awarded an MBE in May 2018.

Jay Arnold Jay has over twenty years' experience in independent film exhibition, working in cinemas, film festivals and in advisory, funding and strategic roles. Having worked for Sheffield's independent cinema The Showroom from its opening in 1995 he joined the newly formed regional screen agency Screen Yorkshire in 2003, working with Yorkshire's independent cinemas, festivals and regional film archive. Following time at Creative England and the BFI he went into freelance roles with Creative Scotland, National Science and Media Museum, Live Cinema UK and Sheffield Doc/Fest. He is now part of the Film Team at the British Council while continuing with freelance and consultancy work in the film exhibition sector.

Rebecca Mark-Lawson Rebecca is an award-winning fiction and documentary producer working with a range of diverse talent through her company Tyke Films. With a background in practical production she cut her teeth working for visionaries like Penny Woolcock and Ken Loach. Appointed as Talent Development Executive for regional screen agency EM Media she worked on titles including Shane Meadows' Dead Man's Shoes and This Is England, Michael Winterbottom's Cock and Bull Story and Anton Corbijn's Control. Rebecca then ran Lifesize pictures delivering a slate of award winning shorts for the UK Film Council, BBC, C4 and Film Four.

Matt Harlock Award-winning director Matt Harlock's first feature film American: The Bill Hicks Story was the second most successful documentary released in UK cinemas in 2010 and is 6th on the iTunes Docs Bestsellers chart. His drama short films have been shown on Channel 4, Film4, HBO and Sky. In 2017 his festival hit Ink, Cocks & Rock'n'Roll premiered on Vice and his current project – supernatural comedy horror short Deep Clean starring Paul Kaye – is the precursor to a feature/TV series. Matt is also the founder of No Direction Home, the director's networking community.

Adrian Barber Adrian is the festival director of Bolton International Film Festival. As a social documentary film-maker and photographer Adrian has over twenty years experience with a wide range of arts organisations. Working primarily on long term social documentaries in the community art sector his work has been displayed at festivals, museums and galleries across the North West. Commissions and funding have come from the Arts Council, Awards for All, Contour Housing, Bolton at Home, Regenda Homes, the Harris Gallery, Bolton Museums and Library, Mid Pennine Arts and numerous commercial clients.

Cherie Federico Cherie Federico is the Director of the Aesthetica Short Film Festival, a BAFTA- recognised event which screens films from over 40 countries as well as attracting key industry figures from across the sector. A strong believer in clean design, striking photography, critically engaging content, Cherie is a key protagonist of bringing the best new contemporary talent to the fore alongside established practitioners. Cherie is also the Director of Aesthetica Magazine, founded in 2003. Aesthetica Magazine is one of the leading British art and culture publications with a print and digital readership of 340,000 and is also exported to 20 countries of Aesthetica Magazine, founded in 2003. Aesthetica Magazine is one of the leading British art and culture publications with a print and digital readership of 340,000 and is also exported to 20 countries.