



EE
BRITISH ACADEMY
FILM AWARDS



NOMINEES ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2015 EE RISING STAR AWARD

- The EE Rising Star Award nominees for 2015 are: Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Jack O'Connell, Margot Robbie, Miles Teller and Shailene Woodley
- The winner will be announced at the EE British Academy Film Awards ceremony on Sunday 8th February 2015
- Nominees were selected by an influential group of jurors including actress Alice Eve, director Dexter Fletcher, film and TV producer Pippa Harris and casting director Nina Gold
- Voting is now open to the public at ee.co.uk/BAFTA

London, 7th January 2015: Today at BAFTA 195 Piccadilly, the nominations for the prestigious EE Rising Star Award 2015 were revealed. The nominations represent five actors and actresses who have demonstrated exceptional talent, and are destined to be bright stars in the future of cinema. 2015 marks the tenth anniversary of the EE Rising Star Award.

The nominees for 2015 are:

- **GUGU MBATHA-RAW** landed her first major feature film in 2011, with the release of *Larry Crowne*, directed by Tom Hanks and co-starring Julia Roberts, and later that year was included in BAFTA's Brits to Watch Initiative. In 2013, Mbatha-Raw starred alongside Willem Dafoe and Anton Yelchin in the Stephen Sommers directed film, *Odd Thomas*. In the same year, she went on to play the title role of Dido Belle, Britain's first mixed-race aristocrat, in the period drama film *Belle* alongside Tom Wilkinson and Emily Watson. The role was pivotal in her career earning her the Best Actress award and a nomination for Most Promising Newcomer at last year's British Independent Film Awards. Most recently, Mbatha-Raw took on a very different role for Gina Prince-Bythwood's *Beyond The Lights* as Noni, a present day pop singer torn between love, success and finding her authentic self in an exploitative industry, steered by her ambitious mother played by Minnie Driver. Mbatha-Raw has also

enjoyed a prestigious television career which has so far included roles in *Spooks*, *Dr Who*, *Marple – Ordeal by Innocence*, *Bonekickers* and *Fallout* and has appeared on stage as Ophelia opposite Jude Law's Hamlet.

Gugu Mbatha-Raw, commenting on her nomination, said: "I am delighted to be nominated for the EE Rising Star Award. It is such an honour to be recognised for a growing body of work and I am proud and excited to be included."

- **JACK O'CONNELL** became a household name when he played James Cook in popular TV series *Skins* which aired from 2007 and was made into a feature length episode *Skins Rise* in 2013. O'Connell also received critical acclaim for his punchy portrayal of Private Gary Hook in '71, for which he was nominated for a British Independent Film Award. The thriller, based on the troubles in Belfast, was first in competition at the Berlin Film Festival before being screened in Toronto. In 2013, O'Connell took the lead in British indie film *Starred Up*, where his portrayal of Eric, a violent reprobate prematurely transferred to an adult prison, earned him a nomination in the category of Best Actor at last year's British Academy Scotland Awards as well as another nomination for a British Independent Film Award. Most recently, O'Connell took the lead role in Angelina Jolie's film *Unbroken*, a chronicle of the life of Louis Zamperini, an Olympic runner who was taken prisoner by Japanese forces during World War II, which was released in December. O'Connell has also appeared in *Private Peaceful* (2012) and *300: Rise of an Empire* (2014). Jack has recently been awarded 'Breakthrough Performance' by the National Board of Review for *Starred Up* and *Unbroken* and has been nominated by the London Critic's Circle as 'Best British Actor of the Year'. Critics and audiences eagerly await this year's performance in *Tulip Fever* alongside Christoph Waltz and Holliday Grainger.

Jack O'Connell, commenting on his nomination, said: "Thank you to BAFTA and the jury. I'm honoured to be considered for the EE Rising Star Award amongst such a talented field; especially for films which I feel incredibly fortunate to have been a part of."

- **MARGOT ROBBIE** was first recognized for her role as Donna Freedman in soap opera, *Neighbours*. This role garnered her two Logie Award nominations for Most Popular New Female Talent and Most Popular Actress. Robbie earned her place among Hollywood's finest for her recent breakthrough role in Martin Scorsese's *The Wolf of Wall Street* in which she stars as the female lead opposite Leonardo DiCaprio, and alongside other acting heavyweights including Matthew McConaughey, Jonah Hill and Rob Reiner. In February, Robbie will star as an up-

and-coming con artist opposite Will Smith in *Focus*. The Warner Bros. film is directed by Glenn Ficarra and John Requa from a script they co-wrote.

- **MILES TELLER** made his feature screen debut, following several short films, opposite Nicole Kidman in the film based on the Pulitzer Prize winning play, *Rabbit Hole*. Last year, Teller firmly established himself on the film scene with his roles in *Whiplash* and *Divergent*. Critically acclaimed American drama *Whiplash* received the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival and Teller's intense performance as a struggling drumming student landed him a Best Actor nomination for the 2014 Gotham Awards. Teller will play Mr. Fantastic in *The Fantastic Four* with Michael B. Jordan, Kate Mara and Jamie Bell which will be released later this year. His previous film credits are diverse and include *Footloose*, *Project X*, *21 & Over*, *The Spectacular Now* and *That Awkward Moment* in which he starred alongside Zac Efron.

Miles Teller, commenting on his nomination, said: "Thank you BAFTA for the nomination! I'm very proud to represent *Whiplash* and all those who worked incredibly hard on such a wonderfully fulfilling gem of a film. The ovation it received at the London Film Festival remains one of my proudest moments as a young actor."

- **SHAILENE WOODLEY** found breakthrough success for her performance opposite George Clooney in the BAFTA and Academy Award-nominated film *The Descendants*. Woodley firmly established herself as a rising Hollywood actress when she was cast as Beatrice, the leading heroine in action adventure film *Divergent*, which also featured EE Rising Star nominee Miles Teller. Woodley has received critical acclaim for her tragic portrayal of a young cancer patient in the witty yet heart breaking love story *The Fault in our Stars*. Woodley's TV credits include *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*, *Felicity: An American Girl Adventure*, and recurring roles on *Crossing Jordan*, *The O.C.* and *Jack & Bobby*. Among the many accolades she has received was a 2012 Independent Spirit Award for Best Supporting Actress, a National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actress, a Golden Globe nomination and a Critics Choice Award nomination. Shailene will soon be starring in both *Insurgent* and *Allegiant* as the final two instalments of the *Divergent* trilogy, and will this year begin filming the lead female role opposite Joseph Gordon Levitt in Oliver Stone's next movie *Snowden*.

The EE Rising Star Award is the only award at the EE British Academy Film Awards to be voted for by the public. Voting is now open at ee.co.uk/BAFTA. The winner will be announced at the EE British Academy Film Awards on Sunday 8th February 2015.

2015 marks the 10th anniversary of the EE Rising Star Award, an award which has set a standard for identifying talent destined for future film stardom. Since being crowned the first Rising Star in 2006, James McAvoy has gone on to be nominated for two more BAFTAs and has starred in seven major award-winning films.

The other previous winners have included Eva Green in 2007, Shia LaBeouf in 2008, Noel Clarke in 2009, Kristen Stewart in 2010, Tom Hardy in 2011, Adam Deacon in 2012 and Juno Temple in 2013. Last year's nominees were Dane DeHaan, George MacKay, Lupita Nyong'o, Léa Seydoux and the eventual winner, Will Poulter.

The jury who selected the five nominees from the hundreds suggested by BAFTA members and industry experts comprised Jury Chair Deputy Chair of BAFTA's Film Committee, Pippa Harris, actress Alice Eve, director Dexter Fletcher, experienced film critic, James King; *Game of Thrones* & *The King's Speech* Casting Director, Nina Gold; Film & TV Producer and Director of Entrepreneurship at the Tony Elumelu Foundation, Parminder Vir; *Love Actually* & *Les Misérables* Producer, Debra Hayward; *Nanny McPhee Returns* Director, Susanna White; previous Director of the UK Association of Independent Producers, Marc Samuelson; as well as leading film and arts journalists.

The award was created in honour of Mary Selway, the highly respected BAFTA-winning casting director whose career spanned three decades and over ninety films before she died in 2004.

Pippa Harris, EE Rising Star Award Jury Chair and Deputy Chair of BAFTA's Film Committee, said: "It's a huge honour to chair the EE Bafta Rising Star jury once again, and selecting the five nominees this year from such a talented field was extremely tough. It's now up to the British public to select the winner, which is what sets this award apart and makes it so very special."

Spencer McHugh, Director of Brand at EE, added: "We will see the 10th EE Rising Star crowned at the 2015 BAFTAs and I couldn't think of a stronger line up to celebrate this anniversary than the hugely talented nominees we have announced today. I wish them all the best of luck."

Stephen Fry announces the EE Rising Star Nominees 2015, please click here to view, share or embed - <http://youtu.be/jXgFTpIYGEA>

For more information on the EE Rising Star Award please visit ee.co.uk/BAFTA

- ENDS -

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EE runs the UK's biggest, fastest and most reliable mobile network, pioneering the UK's first superfast 4G mobile service in October 2012. EE's 4G coverage today reaches 75% of the UK population. EE's 2G coverage reaches 99% of the population while 3G reaches 98%. EE's superfast fibre broadband service covers 54% of the UK population, and ADSL broadband service covers 98.7% of the population.

In the last few years, EE has received extensive independent recognition including being ranked the UK's best overall network by RootMetrics®, Best network at the 2014 Mobile News Awards, Fastest Network at the 2013 uSwitch Awards, Best Network at the 2014 Mobile Choice Consumer Awards and What Mobile Awards 2013, Network Innovation at the 2013 Recombu awards and Best Network for Business at the 2013 Mobile Industry awards.

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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. In addition to its Awards ceremonies, BAFTA has a year-round, international programme of learning events and initiatives that offers unique access to some of the world's most inspiring talent through workshops, masterclasses, scholarships, lectures and mentoring schemes, connecting with audiences of all ages and backgrounds across the UK, Los Angeles and New York. BAFTA relies on income from membership subscriptions, individual donations, trusts, foundations and corporate partnerships to support its ongoing outreach work. To access the best creative minds in film, television and games production, visit www.bafta.org/guru. For more, visit www.bafta.org.