

PRESS RELEASE:

ROMOLA GARAI TO LAUNCH BIRDS EYE VIEW'S 2012 EVENTS, AS FESTIVAL DIRECTOR RACHEL MILLWARD BIDS FAREWELL



Twice Golden Globe nominated **Romola Garai** (*The Hour*, *Atonement*) is confirmed to speak at Birds Eye View's trademark International Women's Day Gala, part of BEV Springs 2012, on Thursday March 8th at BFI Southbank, 8.30pm, with **Abi Morgan** (*The Iron Lady*, *Shame*, *The Hour*, *Brick Lane*) joining for post-screening discussion.

Birds Eye View founder **Rachel Millward** will also give her last address as Festival Director, before she hands on the baton to the next incumbent, currently being recruited.

The Gala opens with Bishi ("The New British Diva" - New York Times) performing an innovative audio-visual piece **Dia Ti Maria**, followed by a programme of diverse and outstanding short films from internationally emerging women directors, two of whom will be in attendance. They will be joined for post-screening discussion by screenwriters **Abi Morgan**, **Moira Buffini** (*Jane Eyre*, *Tamara Drewe*) and Britain's hotly emerging writer-director **Sally El Hosaini** who will share preview clips from *My Brother The Devil* - winner Europa Cinema's Best European Film, Berlinale. The event is followed by a free After Party with tunes from BBC 6 Music's DJ Nemone and 'Mary Pickford' *Alnwick* rum-based cocktails free to all ticket holders. *For details of films and speakers, please see below.*

Birds Eye View Founding Director, Rachel Millward, says:

"It has been an immense privilege to lead Birds Eye View on such a journey, from its tiny beginnings to the vibrant international festival it has become. The highlights are many: premieres of Oscar winning films, masterclasses with world-leading talent, perspectives from women in 'developing' countries, retrospectives celebrating women's contribution to cinema from comedy to horror, and outstanding work from a new generation. I will be forever inspired by the brilliance and diversity of women's creative vision in film, and remain indebted to the courage and imagination of the writers and directors I am so proud to celebrate."

DETAILS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY GALA PROGRAMME:

Opening performance:

BISHI performs new piece *Dia Ti Maria*, a multi-sensory recreation of the fundamental female archetype as a superstar of song, in an 8 minute choral piece exploring loss, fortitude and self-realization. Originally commissioned by the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, the US debut grabbed the front page of the New York Times who announced Bishi as the 'New British Diva'. Bishi sings all 50 voices on the recording while framed by an immersive video performance.

Films:

The Red Virgin

UK PREMIERE. dir. Sheila Pye; 17 min

Hildegart Rodríguez Carballeira was born in Madrid in 1914 to her mother Aurora, who pledged to bring her up as the world's first fully free woman. In 1933 Aurora killed her daughter for having failed. Spanish stars Maribel Verdú and Ivana Baquero lead this drama based on a staggering true story.

Bottle

dir. Kirsten Lepore; 5 min

This touching and visually stunning stop-motion short details a transoceanic conversation between two characters via objects in a bottle. Only Kirsten's third release, it has won awards at Slamdance, the Stuttgart Animation festival, the BAFTAs and more.

Mokhtar

dir. Halima Ouardiri; 15 min

Based on a true story, Mokhtar recounts the tale of a young boy who finds a fallen owl and decides to keep it, despite the fact that the bird is considered a bad omen.

With thanks to the Dubai Film Festival.

Sinema Leo

UK PREMIERE. dir. Christiane Buchmann; 4 min

Elisonguo Kiwia loves movies and dreams of creating a thriving film industry in his home country Tanzania. He drives his truck into far flung villages, captivating audiences with the help of a petrol powered projector.

Baldguy

UK PREMIERE. dir. Maria Bock; 12 min

A slick and stylish comic musical about being who you are and loving whomever you want.

Speakers:

Film directors **Sheila Pye** (*Red Virgin*) and **Christiane Buchmann** (*Sinema Leo*) will be in attendance.

The post screening panel discussion will feature:

Abi Morgan

British playwright and screenwriter now famous for films *The Iron Lady*, *Shame*, *Brick Lane* and TV series *The Hour* and *Sex Traffic*.

Sally El Hosaini

Welsh-Egyptian writer-director Sally El Hosaini first became involved with Birds Eye View in 2010, with the BEV & Script Factory's *She Writes* training programme. Her debut feature *My Brother the Devil* won the World Cinema Cinematography Award at Sundance and Europa Cinemas' Best European Film at Berlin this year.

Moira Buffini

Described by David Grieg as a metaphysical playwright, actor turned writer Moira Buffini's most recent screen hits were her adaptations of *Tamara Drewe* (2010) and *Jane Eyre* (2011), both gaining her critical praise and audience delight.

www.birds-eye-view.co.uk

For press information, interviews or images, contact: Elizabeth Benjamin 020 7 923 2861 / Elizabeth@margaretlondon.com

