

Press Release: October 2009

Screenwriter wins first David Lean Feature Film Screenwriting Award

Ilaria D'Elia has received the first ever **David Lean Foundation Feature Film Screenwriting Award**. Ilaria, who last summer graduated with an MA in Feature Film Screenwriting from Royal Holloway College, University of London, received the prize after she demonstrated exceptional screenwriting skills. She also showed excellent prospects of entering the industry.

The panel awarding the prize was comprised of leading professionals in the film industry, featuring the UK Film Council's Bradley Quirk; Peter Carlton, Warp Films and former Film4 Commissioning Executive; Susan Rogers, screenwriter and MAFFS Programme Director at Royal Holloway, agent Tanya Tillet from the Rod Hall Agency and Kate Leys, former Head of Development at Film4.

Ilaria impressed the judges with her commitment to originality and her dedication to the art of storytelling. Her screenplay 'Lily and her Sisters' is a true story set in war-torn Northern Italy during WWII. The judges were impressed with the script, explaining that it portrayed a truly cinematic vision written with depth and warmth of character.

Ilaria's screenwriting career has blossomed following her time studying at Royal Holloway. Since completing the MAFFS programme, her television series has been optioned by Lime Pictures (All3Media), she has acquired an agent and one judge had already heard mention of Ilaria's reputation in the industry as a promising new writer.

Susan Rogers set up the Skillset Accredited MAFFS at Royal Holloway after working in Hollywood for many years. She comments, "Ilaria's screenplay demonstrated exceptional screenwriting skills and the entire panel agreed that her screenplay stood out. She has not wasted a moment since finishing the MAFFS programme and has excellent prospects of succeeding the industry."

The other shortlisted writers were Maja Bodenstein, Peter Chapman, Jane Crawford, Nicky Kelly and Abi Van Walsum. The judges also reserved special mention to Maja Bodenstein for the freshness of vision coupled with ambition in her screenplay.

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