

# Kenneth Branagh to receive the top accolade at London Critics' Circle Film Awards



**Acclaimed actor-filmmaker will be honoured with the Dilys Powell Award for Excellence in Film at the critics' awards ceremony on 17th January at The May Fair Hotel.**

LONDON, 16 NOVEMBER: The UK's top film critics will present Sir Kenneth Branagh with their highest accolade, the Dilys Powell Award for Excellence in Film, at their awards ceremony on Sunday 17th January.

Born in Belfast and raised in Reading, Branagh graduated from The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 1981 and is now its 16th president. He has enjoyed an acclaimed career as an actor, director, producer and screenwriter. His credits span theatre, TV and film. He notably adapted, helmed and starred in *Henry V*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Hamlet*. Other directing credits include *Peter's Friends*, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* in which he co-starred with Robert De Niro, the remake of *Sleuth* starring Michael Caine and Jude Law, and Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. In a 34 year on-screen career he has appeared in such films as *A Month in the Country*, *Dead Again*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Othello*, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *Woody Allen's Celebrity* and *Valkyrie*.

The recipient of many major screen awards, Branagh won the Best Supporting Actor Bafta for his portrayal of Sir Laurence Olivier in *My Week With Marilyn*, a role for which the Critics' Circle also honoured him. Uniquely, as a UK based filmmaker, he holds five Oscar nominations in five different categories. No stranger to the Hollywood blockbuster, he has directed *Thor*, *Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit* and this year's charmer, *Cinderella*.

Kenneth Branagh was knighted in 2012 for his services to drama and to the community in Northern Ireland.

In anticipation of receiving this latest award, Branagh said: "As a young filmmaker, I had the privilege of meeting Dilys Powell. She was passionate, rigorous, humane. Her criticism was illuminating, thoughtful and bracing. This recognition in her name is a great honour to me personally and very meaningful. My sincere thanks to the Critics' Circle."

Dilys Powell was an iconic British author and film critic who pioneered a new style of cinematic journalism. The British Film Institute famously described her as "open to new directions in cinema ... not constrained by the middle class shibboleths of 'good taste'." Her final review, of Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*, was published in *The Times* on the day of her death in June 1995.

Recent Dilys Powell Award honorees include Nicolas Roeg, Kristin Scott Thomas, Gary Oldman, Helena Bonham Carter and last year's recipient Miranda Richardson. The award has been given out annually since 1991, when it was presented to Dirk Bogarde.

The 36th London Critics' Circle Film Awards will be presented at the May Fair Hotel on Sunday, 17th January 2016, at a ceremony hosted by actor-filmmakers Alice Lowe and Steve Oram. Nominations will be announced on Tuesday, 15th December.

The red carpet event is sponsored by The May Fair Hotel, Audi and Cameo Productions.

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### Notes for Editors:

The 36th London Critics' Circle Film Awards will be held on 17 January 2016 at the May Fair Hotel. For further information about the awards, please contact: [londonfilmcritics@gmail.com](mailto:londonfilmcritics@gmail.com)

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### About The Critics' Circle:

Established in 1913, The Critics' Circle is the oldest organisation of its kind in the world, with more than 400 members who work in the UK media as critics of drama, art and architecture, music, film, dance and literature. Chaired by Anna Smith, the Film Section membership is made up of more than 140 UK film critics, broadcasters and writers, including Guardian critic Peter Bradshaw, the BBC's Mark Kermode and Sight & Sound Editor Nick James, and has presented its awards annually since 1980. [www.criticscircle.org.uk](http://www.criticscircle.org.uk)



### About The May Fair Hotel:

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### THE DILYS POWELL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FILM

- 1991 Dirk Bogarde
- 1992 Freddie Young
- 1993 Christopher Lee
- 1994 Richard Attenborough
- 1995 Wendy Hiller
- 1996 John Mills
- 1997 Michael Caine
- 1998 John Hurt and Albert Finney
- 1999 Mike Leigh
- 2000 Richard Harris
- 2001 Charlotte Rampling
- 2002 Lewis Gilbert
- 2003 Tom Courtenay

2004 Ken Loach  
2005 Bryan Forbes  
2006 Leslie Phillips  
2007 Julie Walters  
2008 Judi Dench  
2009 Quentin Tarantino  
2010 Kristin Scott Thomas  
2011 Nicolas Roeg  
2012 Helena Bonham Carter  
2013 Gary Oldman  
2014 Miranda Richardson  
2015 Kenneth Branagh