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## **SIFF GIVING GOLDEN SPACE NEEDLE TO EWAN MCGREGOR**

*Star of New Movie Beginners to Receive Award for Outstanding Achievement in Acting*

**Seattle, WA** – The 37th Seattle International Film Festival, the largest and most highly attended event of its kind in the United States, today announced that actor Ewan McGregor is the recipient of the 2011 Golden Space Needle Award for Outstanding Achievement in Acting. Mr. McGregor will appear in person on Sunday, May 22 at the Egyptian Theatre.

Known for successfully portraying an array of diverse characters, from his breakthrough role as the heroin-addicted Mark Renton in Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting*, to singing and dancing opposite Nicole Kidman in Baz Luhrmann's award-winning musical *Moulin Rouge!*, for which he earned a Golden Globe Award® nomination, Mr. McGregor has proven himself as a true actor time and again.

"Ewan's captivating performances in mainstream, independent, and art house films are a testament to his passion for acting and unyielding determination to being the best he possibly can at his craft," said SIFF Artistic Director, Carl Spence. "We are truly honored to recognize such a supremely talented and dedicated actor as Ewan McGregor."

The tribute event on May 22 will feature the Seattle premiere of the actor's new film, *Beginners*, written and directed by Mike Mills. A comedy/drama about how deeply funny and transformative life can be, even at its most serious moments, *Beginners* imaginatively explores the hilarity, confusion, and surprises of love through the evolving consciousness of Oliver (Mr. McGregor). Oliver meets the irreverent and unpredictable Anna (Mélanie Laurent of *Inglourious Basterds*) only months after his father Hal Fields (Academy Award® nominee Christopher Plummer) has passed away. This new love floods Oliver with memories of his father, who, following the death of his wife of 45 years, came out of the closet at age 75 to live a full, energized, and wonderfully tumultuous gay life – which included a younger boyfriend, Andy (Goran Visnjic of *ER*). The upheavals of Hal's new honesty, by turns funny and moving, brought father and son closer than they'd ever been able to be. Now Oliver endeavors to love Anna with all the bravery, humor, and hope that his father taught him. *Beginners* will be released by Focus Features in select cities beginning June 3.

Immediately following the screening, SIFF will present the Golden Space Needle Award to Mr. McGregor, who will then participate in an on-stage interview featuring film clips highlighting the actor's work and answering questions from the audience.

A special tribute dinner for Mr. McGregor and 75 guests will take place immediately following the screening and interview at Prava Studios and will be prepared by James Beard Award-winning chef, Thierry Rautureau of Rover's and Luc Restaurants in Seattle. Tickets for the dinner are \$250, which includes reserved seating to the tribute event, and are available for purchase at SIFF.net.

Special retrospective screenings of *Moulin Rouge!* and Peter Greenaway's *The Pillow Book*, and the Seattle premiere of another of Mr. McGregor's new films, David Mackenzie's *Perfect Sense*, will also be featured at the Festival, which runs from May 19 through June 12.

A native of Perth, Scotland, Mr. McGregor made his acting debut in Bill Forsyth's *Being Human*. He soon earned widespread praise, and won an Empire Award, for his performance in *Shallow Grave* (1994), his first collaboration with director Danny Boyle. His numerous other film credits include Tim Burton's *Big Fish*; Woody Allen's *Cassandra's Dream*; Ron Howard's *Angels and Demons*; Ridley Scott's *Black Hawk Down*; Todd Haynes' *Velvet Goldmine*; Mark Herman's *Little Voice*, for which he shared a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination with his fellow actors; George Lucas' second *Star Wars* trilogy of *The Phantom Menace*, *Attack of the Clones*, and *Revenge of the Sith*; Pat Murphy's *Nora*, in which he played James Joyce; David Mackenzie's *Young Adam*, for which he received London Film Critics Circle and British Independent Film Award nominations and won a BAFTA (Scotland) Award for Best Actor; Grant Heslov's *The Men Who Stare at Goats*; Glenn Ficarra and John Requa's *I Love You Phillip Morris*, opposite Jim Carrey; and, in the title role, Roman Polanski's *The Ghost Writer*, for which he won the European Film Award for Best Actor.

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## About SIFF

Now in its 37th year, the Seattle International Film Festival is the largest and most highly attended film festival in the United States, showcasing more than 400 films from over 60 countries to an audience of 150,000 attendees annually. In the fall of 2011, SIFF will open the SIFF Film Center at Seattle Center's Alki Room, thereby fulfilling its longstanding vision of creating a permanent home where SIFF's successful film, education, and community outreach programs can thrive.

The 37th Seattle International Film Festival is made possible in part by support from Xfinity, The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, Brotherton Cadillac Buick GMC, Alaska Airlines, Don Q Rums, The Wallace Foundation, Wong Doody, American Airlines, Modern Digital, POP, City Arts Magazine, The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and Warren Miller Company.