



Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

## **KARLOVY VARY IFF ANNOUNCES MORE GUESTS AND THE OPENING FILM OF THE 57<sup>TH</sup> EDITION**

Scottish actor, director and producer Ewan McGregor and Swedish actress Alicia Vikander will be the guests of the first weekend of the 57th Karlovy Vary Festival. Both actors will receive the Karlovy Vary IFF President's Award and present their latest films. This year's edition of the festival will open with *Firebrand*, in which Alicia Vikander took on the leading role of Katherine Parr. Ewan McGregor will present the film *You Sing Loud, I Sing Louder* to the festival audience, in which he stars alongside his daughter, actress and producer Clara McGregor.



Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

## EWAN MCGREGOR WILL RECEIVE THE FESTIVAL PRESIDENT'S AWARD

This year's 57th edition of the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival welcomes as its guest Scottish actor, director, and producer Ewan McGregor. This winner of a Golden Globe, an Emmy, two European Film Awards, and numerous other awards will be on hand to receive a Festival President's Award and to present his new film *You Sing Loud, I Sing Louder*, in which he appears alongside his daughter Clara, who will also be a guest of this year's festival.



Ewan McGregor is one of the most exceptional actors working today. His extensive filmography is a unique combination of the tradition of British cinema with the grandeur of Hollywood productions. He began his acting career in the 1990s after graduating from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, when he got his first roles in television series. Above all, however, he began to work with director Danny Boyle. His role in the dark comedy *Shallow Grave* (1994) earned him an Empire Award for best British actor, and their next joint film, *Trainspotting* (1996), was an international sensation. The second most successful British film of all time, *Trainspotting* (like its source material, the novel by Irwin Welsh) became a cult hit. McGregor and Boyle teamed up again for the 1997 romantic comedy *A Life Less Ordinary*, in which McGregor appeared alongside Cameron Diaz.

Photo Credit: Jeff Vespa

There followed two films from the world of music – *Little Voice* (1998, dir. Mark Herman) and the gripping musical drama from the glam-rock era *Velvet Goldmine* (1998, dir. Todd Haynes). In 1999, Ewan McGregor began to appear in giant Hollywood productions. He first portrayed Obi-Wan Kenobi in George Lucas's cult sci-fi *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*, after which he shot the war drama *Black Hawk Down* (2001) with Ridley Scott and the musical *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) with Baz Luhrmann. The latter film won two Oscars out



## Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

of eight nominations, took home the Screen International Award (for best non-European film) at the 2001 European Film Awards, and earned Ewan McGregor a European Film Award for Outstanding European Achievement in World Cinema and his first nomination for the Golden Globes. *Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones* (dir. George Lucas) hit cinemas in 2002.

Over the years, Ewan McGregor's acting talents have been sought out by a number of renowned directors, including Tim Burton (the 2003 fantasy comedy-drama *Big Fish*), Michael Bay (the 2005 action sci-fi *The Island*), Marc Forster (the 2005 mystery-drama *Stay*), Woody Allen (McGregor was one of the leads in the 2007 romantic mystery *Cassandra's Dream*), and of course George Lucas, who again cast him as Obi-Wan Kenobi in the third episode of his legendary sci-fi epic, *Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith* (2005). The Star Wars saga is one of the biggest pop culture phenomena of recent decades.

In 2009, McGregor appeared alongside Tom Hanks in Ron Howard's adaptation of the Dan Brown bestseller *Angels & Demons*, and the following year he excelled in Roman Polanski's thriller *The Ghost Writer*, for which he won the European Film Award for Best Actor. In 2010 he starred in the comedy drama *Beginners* (dir. Mike Mills, Olivier Bugge Coutté). The romantic film *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* (2011, dir. Lasse Hallström) earned him his second Golden Globe nomination. He subsequently created a role in the disaster drama *The Impossible* (2012, dir. J.A. Bayona). In 2016, Ewan McGregor made his directorial debut with a film adaptation of Philip Roth's *American Pastoral*, in which he played the main role. The following year, he again teamed up with Danny Boyle for *T2 Trainspotting*, which revisited the main protagonists of their cult film twenty years later. In 2019, he played the main role in the horror-thriller *Doctor Sleep* (2019, dir. Mike Flanagan), a sequel to Stanley Kubrick's cult classic *The Shining*.

McGregor won a Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Miniseries or Television Film for his appearance in the third season of the successful series *Fargo* (2017). In 2021, he was nominated in the same category for his portrayal of eccentric fashion designer Halston in the eponymous Netflix series – a performance that also won him an Emmy.

He reprised the role of space guru Obi-Wan Kenobi in the 2022 series of the same name. The series broke Disney+ viewership records and became the platform's most-watched show worldwide.

He's currently filming the miniserie *Gentlemen in Moscow*, which he is producing as well.



**Karlovy Vary International Film Festival**

McGregor's passion for travel and motorcycles is reflected in his positively received travel documentaries and documentary series, in which he appears as a guide alongside his friend Charley Boorman.

In 2013, Ewan McGregor was appointed an Officer in the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his services in the fields of drama and charity.

In the road movie *You Sing Loud, I Sing Louder* (2023, dir. Emma Westenberg), which McGregor will present at the 57th KVIFF, a father and daughter (Ewan McGregor and his real-life daughter Clara McGregor) set out on a journey filled with unexpected encounters during which they find a way back to each other after a period of alienation. Clara McGregor is credited as a producer, as well as with the story alongside scriptwriter Ruby Caster and producer/actress Vera Bulder. Ewan McGregor is the film's executive producer.



*You Sing Loud, I Sing Louder*



Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

## ALICIA VIKANDER TO RECEIVE KVIFF'S PRESIDENT AWARD

Oscar-winning Swedish actress and producer Alicia Vikander will be a guest at the opening ceremony of the 57th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, where she will be presented the KVIFF President's Award.



Photo Credit: Julian Ungano

Vikander began her artistic career during her childhood years, training as a ballet dancer at the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm. Alicia appeared in a number of stage productions and Swedish TV series, *Andra Avenyn*, before being cast in her breakthrough debut film role, in Lisa Lansgeth's feature *Pure* (2010). It was for this performance that Vikander went on to win the Shooting Star program for promising young actors at the 2011 Berlinale.

Alicia then went on to star in *A Royal Affair* (dir. Nikolaj Arcel) which earned her another breakout moment. Also starring Mads Mikelsen, the historical drama received an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Language film.

The following year, she appeared alongside Keira Knightley and Jude Law in Joe Wright's adaptation of *Anna Karenina*. That same year Vikander was nominated at BAFTA for the Rising Star Award.

2015 was a standout year, Vikander had several films release including, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (dir. Guy Ritchie), and sci-fi psychological thriller, *Ex Machina* (dir. Alex Garland), Vikander starred as Ava, a female robot. Vikander earned Golden Globe and BAFTA nominations for her performance. She also starred in acclaimed drama, *The Danish Girl* (dir. Tom Hooper), and won both a Screen Actors Guild Award and an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress.



### Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

In 2016, she starred alongside Matt Damon and Tommy Lee Jones in the big-budget action thriller *Jason Bourne* (2016, dir. Paul Greengrass), and later that year in the romantic drama *The Light Between Oceans* (2016, dir. Derek Cianfrance). Vikander starred in independent feature, *Euphoria*, with Eva Green and directed by Lisa Lansgeth. Vikander produced the film through her production company Vikarious. In 2018, Vikander took on the iconic action hero Lara Croft in Warner Bros. action feature, *Tomb Raider* (dir. Roar Uthaug). In 2020, she starred opposite Julianne Moore in *The Glorias* (dir. Julie Taymor), a biopic about feminist icon Gloria Steinem, and also *The Green Knight* (dir. David Lowery) in which she took on two roles. 2021 saw her star in *Blue Bayou* (dir. Justin Chon) which received its worldwide premiere at the Cannes Film Festival.

In 2021, Vikander starred and Exec Produced the television adaption of Olivier Assayas's cult film, *Irma Vep*. Produced by HBO/A24, the series was written and directed by Assayas's and premiered at the Cannes Film Festival. Returning there again this year, Vikander's latest project to screen there is *Firebrand*, which was in Official Competition and sees her take on the role of Katherine Parr, the sixth wife of Henry VIII.



Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

## FIREBRAND TO OPEN THE 57<sup>TH</sup> KARLOVY VARY IFF

The 57th Karlovy Vary IFF will open with the British historical drama *Firebrand*, starring Alicia Vikander and Jude Law.

*Firebrand* is directed by Karim Aïnouz from a screenplay by Henrietta Ashworth and Jessica Ashworth, based on the novel *Queen's Gambit* by Elizabeth Fremantle.



In blood-soaked Tudor England, Katherine Parr, the sixth and last wife of King Henry VIII, is named Regent while tyrant Henry is fighting overseas. Katherine has done everything she can to push for a new future based on her radical Protestant beliefs. When an increasingly ailing and paranoid King returns, he turns his fury on the radicals, charging Katherine's childhood friend with treason and burning her at the stake. Horrified and grieving, but forced to deny it, Katherine finds herself fighting for her own survival. Conspiracy reverberates through the palace. Everyone holds their breath – for the queen



**Karlovy Vary International Film Festival**

to slip up, for Henry to take her head like wives before. With the hope for a future free of tyranny at risk, will Katherine submit to the inevitable for the sake of King and country?

*Firebrand* premiered at the 76th Cannes Film Festival, where it was selected to compete for Palme d'Or.