

## Graduation 2012

### Acceptance Speech from Honorary Graduate David Yates

This is a very special day, and it is a great privilege to be part of YOUR day.

I've been sat here watching every one of you take this very long walk, and the film director in me has been observing how each of you handle it, and I've been making lots of mental notes as you walk past about what it is to take those steps across that floor. They represent quite a journey, a much more significant journey than the single steps that you've taken, and today is a celebration of everything you've achieved in the years here, and all I really want to do is wish you the very very very best as you go forward.

I graduated in 1987, having had a wonderful social time here. It was a great period of development for me – perhaps not brilliant academically (but that's all my fault), and the world then was quite an interesting place. I graduated in the year that there was this great stock market crash, and it was the eve of a big recession, so coming back twenty-four, twenty-five years later, feels uncannily similar.

I think the Chancellor said some very profound words, and some very important things about the world that you are about to go into, and it's going to be challenging for everybody, and it's important that you keep your spirit, and you keep your energy, and you keep your conviction, and you keep your enthusiasm, because you are going to inherit what we're leaving you, and it needs all that passion, enthusiasm, energy, commitment to get through what I'm sure will be a difficult few years.

However, having picked up some of the spirit in the room, having talked to some of your tutors, I know you are very well prepared for that, and some of you are entering perhaps the best profession in the world, and as storytellers, however good or bad the times are going forward - and however bad they are, they will get better - you will have a crucial role to play in reflecting and promoting some very positive ideals and messages, however entertainingly. If you are an actor, a director, a producer, your role in difficult times becomes even more important.

But really I just wanted to say congratulations. It's a wonderful thing to get to today, and it's a real privilege to share this on the day that you get yours, and the very very very best of luck and wishes for your years ahead.