



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

LAUREA AD HONOREM IN SCIENZE FILOSOFICHE A KEN LOACH

Londra, 11 novembre 2025

Saluti del Rettore Giovanni Molari

Dear colleagues, dear students, dear Mr Loach,

It is with great pleasure that I greet you all, and thank you for your presence at this ceremony, which brings us together for the conferral of the Honorary Degree in Philosophical Sciences to Ken Loach.

I would like to greet my colleagues and students connected from Bologna and everyone who worked on this event, and the governance at King's College for hosting it.

My warm thanks to Prof. Alberto Burgio, Prof. Luca Guidetti, Director of the Department of Philosophy and Prof. Riccardo Brizzi, Director of the Department of the Arts, who proposed the conferral of this honorary degree.

It was a proposal that I immediately accepted with great enthusiasm, and for which I thank them, along with all the colleagues from the two Departments.

Through the ceremonies for the conferral of honorary degrees, Alma Mater aims not only at celebrating the excellence of those who receive this recognition, but also to present models whose

values and ideals can inspire our community - just as Ken Loach has done throughout his career.

It is my great privilege to speak on behalf of the entire Alma Mater Studiorum community to express our profound admiration and gratitude to Mr. Ken Loach.

We are grateful for his tireless work as a filmmaker who has never wavered in his commitment to portraying the lives of ordinary people.

Through his films, he has consistently shed light on the struggles, dignity, and humanity of working-class communities - voices too often overlooked.

We admire the authenticity, intellectual depth, and moral clarity that define every one of his works.

Ken Loach engages with reality in a way that is both artistically brilliant and socially and politically aware, reaching audiences across generations, cultures, and countries. His cinema is not only a mirror of society but also a call to empathy, resilience and social justice.

His extraordinary career, spanning over five decades and including 27 feature films and numerous documentaries, has earned him the highest international recognition: two Palme d'Or at Cannes, the Golden Bear for lifetime achievement in Berlin, and the Golden Lion for lifetime achievement in Venice, among many others.

His latest film, *The Old Oak*, continues to testify to his enduring relevance and profound insight into contemporary life, into the tensions and conflicts that permeate difficult current scenarios.

This recognition goes beyond mere artistic achievement: it acknowledges a rare combination of storytelling mastery, ethical rigor, and profound understanding of the social transformations shaping our world.

The University, in its truest sense, is called to embody and promote the values that Mr. Loach exemplifies: sensitivity and empathy towards diversity and the enhancement of human dignity, the cultivation of critical awareness, and the pursuit of justice.

In our classrooms and lecture halls, knowledge becomes an active force for the common good, memory transforms into care for the present and responsibility toward the future, and culture fosters a respect for fundamental human rights - the very principles that lie at the heart of democracy.

It is an honor to represent an institution that, in the very first lines of its Statute, proclaims: *“The preeminent value for the entire community of the Alma Mater Studiorum is the respect for the fundamental rights of the individual, which the University undertakes to promote and protect in all circumstances.”*

Awarding this honorary degree to Ken Loach is not only a recognition of his artistic brilliance but also a celebration of his commitment to social conscience and ethical responsibility.

Today, the Alma Mater Studiorum becomes the voice of a broader community - both national and international - expressing admiration for a life dedicated to the promotion of truth, justice, and the dignity of work.

Mr. Loach, I wish to say that this honorary degree is, above all, an honor for us who confer it. It is a source of pride and joy to count you among the graduates of the University of Bologna.

Your work will continue to inspire generations of students, scholars, and citizens who aspire to a society guided by integrity and courage.