

PRESS RELEASE

February 2007

Highlights at the BFI National Film Theatre

- **Out of the Shadows: 50 Cinematic Masterpieces**
The first part of a season of some of the most innovative films ever made will screen this month, in an alternative top 50 that challenges the value of recent polls
- **Luis Buñuel: Part Two**
This comprehensive season continues with films from the latter part of Buñuel's career, plus a **BFI** release of **Los Olvidados** (*The Young and the Damned*, 1950)
- **Troy Kennedy Martin**
A tribute to the renowned screenwriter of **Z Cars** and **The Italian Job** (1969), plus an on-stage interview
- **Shanghai Animation Studios**
A rare opportunity to sample some of the remarkable work from the Shanghai Animation Film Studios
- **Extended Run**
A BFI archive restoration of **David Lean**'s classic **Great Expectations** (1946)
- **Previews, interviews, events & learning**
 - **Special Preview: Hot Fuzz + The Guardian Interview with Simon Pegg, Edgar Wright and Nick Frost**
 - **Movie Magic Special Preview: Charlotte's Web**
 - **Cinema-going on Film**
 - **Coming up Roses**
 - **The Flipside: Live it Up and Arena: The Strange Story of Joe Meek**
 - **The Costume Interpreter: Dressing for the Oscars**
 - **Valentine's Day Screenings: Our Hospitality, L'Atalante, His Girl Friday and Madame de...**
 - **Projecting the Archive: Charlie Chaplin Keystone Restorations**
 - **Blacktronica & a screening of Bird**
 - **Beautiful South**
 - **Carol Morley: The Film-Making Years**
 - **London Premiere: Offshore**

Out of the Shadows: 50 Cinematic Masterpieces

Everyone enjoys 'all-time-best' lists, but how many of the countless lists compiled about the cinema are of any real value or even accurate as a representation of what's truly great about film as an art form? The **Out of the Shadows: 50 Cinematic Masterpieces** list is about films that mattered and matter still: great, important, innovative films that have influenced and inspired. We will present titles that have often been overlooked in recent polls in a season of films curated by Geoff Andrew, Head of Film Programming, in consultation with a number of BFI staff.

We start the season with the dawn of cinema as we present **Louis and Auguste Lumière's *L'Arrivée du train en gare à La Ciotat*** (1895), and **Georges Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon*** (*Le Voyage dans le lune*, 1902) – the first sci-fi film and inspired by **Jules Verne**. Early documentary and experimental styles are represented by ***The Man with a Movie Camera*** (1929), by **Dziga Vertov**, and ***A Colour Box*** (1935), **Len Lye's** foray into drawing and painting directly on to celluloid. One of the finest examples of screwball comedy is on offer with **Howard Hawks'** classic ***His Girl Friday*** (1940), with **Cary Grant** and **Rosalind Russell** delivering perfect comic timing.

In this season we also explore world cinema with some films that are staple favourites, as well as a number that are less well known, but which are masterpieces in their own right. Included is the visionary partnership of **Michael Powell** and **Emeric Pressburger**, with ***The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*** (1943). Audiences will delight in seeing Japanese masters such **Kenji Mizoguchi** with ***A Tale of Late Chrysanthemums*** (1939) and **Yasujiro Ozu's *Tokyo Story*** (1953). **Roberto Rossellini** is featured with ***Viaggio in Italia*** (*Voyage to Italy*, 1953), starring **Ingrid Bergman**; often cited by critics as one of the most beautiful films ever made. The same could also be said of **Chris Marker's** short ***Le Jétee*** (1962), which screens alongside ***Le Mépris*** (*Contempt* 1963), **Jean-Luc Godard's** visually arresting study of infidelity and betrayal.

The season continues through March and April as we celebrate the opening of our new look to our venue on the South Bank, offering every true admirer of film the opportunity to see these masterpieces on a big screen.

www.bfi.org.uk/shadows

Luis Buñuel

The **NFT's** comprehensive **Luis Buñuel** season continues this month with films from the latter part of his career, plus a **BFI** release of ***Los Olvidados*** (*The Young and the Damned*, 1950), one of his seldom seen, yet most highly regarded films.

The middle period of Buñuel's career saw him direct a plethora of work made on shoestring budgets and with the financial support of the Mexican film industry. He continued to explore themes of religion with films such as ***Nazarín*** (1958) and ***Viridiana*** (1961) - winner of the **Palme d'Or**. Buñuel was asked by the Spanish censors to change the ending of *Viridiana* (Spain had co-financed the film), which he did but not to their requirements, thus provoking a scandal.

This latter title, along with **The Exterminating Angel** (*El Angel Exterminador*, 1962), were two of Buñuel's most accomplished films made during his Mexican period until, after 35 years absence, he returned to France.

It was here that Buñuel went on to make a number of landmark works such as **Diary of a Chambermaid** (*Le Journal d'un femme de chambre*, 1963) starring the delectable **Jeanne Moreau** in this adaptation of **Octave Mirbeau's** novel that shocked French society upon its release. **Catherine Deneuve** is **Tristana** (1970), an orphaned girl who is sexually initiated by her much older uncle (**Fernando Rey**). **The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie** (*Le Charm discret de la bourgeoisie*, 1972), now regarded as seminal Buñuel, gained him an **Academy Award**; a social critique of the upper classes in the guise of an absurdist comedy. His swansong came with **That Obscure Object of Desire** (*Cet obscur objet du désir*, 1977), a dark comedy that, again, pokes fun at the bourgeoisie. Ray stars as a wealthy, aging satyr who is continually in pursuit of Conchita, played by both **Carole Bouquet** and **Angela Molina**, representing both the cool and the passionate sides of the character.

Luis Buñuel died in 1983 leaving behind a rich legacy and challenging films that continue to influence film-makers today.

www.bfi.org.uk/bunuel

Extended Run: Los Olvidados

Fri 16 February - Thurs 8 March

From its riveting Oedipal nightmare - 'perhaps the greatest of all movie dream sequences,' said Pauline Kael - to its wrenching final scenes, **Los Olvidados** draws the viewer into a reality of its own and never lets go. Set in the slums of Mexico City, the film details several days in the life of Pedro, a young boy of the streets, and his relations with his fellow gang members, his loveless mother, and especially with the charismatic, self-serving gang leader Jaibo, who makes Pedro an unwitting accomplice to murder...

Mexico 1950 Dir Luis Bunuel With Alfonso Mejia, Estela Inda 88 mins

New restoration by the UNAM Film Archive, Mexico. A BFI release

Extended Run: Great Expectations

Fri 2 February - Thu 15 February

David Lean's brilliant adaptation of the **Charles Dickens** classic follows the fortunes of Pip (played by **John Mills**). Introduced by a family friend to the eccentric recluse Miss Havisham, he becomes a regular visitor to her crumbling Gothic mansion and falls in love with her beautiful but stony-hearted niece Estella. When he turns eighteen, however, Pip's life is suddenly transformed by the generosity of a mysterious benefactor, and he moves to London to embark on a new life as a 'gentleman'.

Great Expectations received five Academy Award nominations and won two, for Best Cinematography and Best Art Direction. This masterpiece from the golden age of British cinema has been newly restored by the BFI National Archive and Granada International, funded by the David Lean Foundation.

UK 1946 Dir David Lean With John Mills, Alec Guinness, Martitia Hunt, Jean Simmons 118mins J-Cert PG A BFI Release

Troy Kennedy Martin

In February the **NFT** will celebrate **Troy Kennedy Martin's** contribution to British film and television with a season of his finest work. We are delighted to welcome the writer of hits such as **The Italian Job** (1969) and **Z Cars** (1962) to the **NFT** stage for an exclusive interview to discuss his writing career following a screening of this iconic caper film.

Kennedy Martin cut his teeth on TV plays such as *Incident at Echo Six* (1958) and first struck gold after co-creating *Z Cars*, which revolutionised police drama. An instant hit with topical storylines and complex characters, it was a welcome antidote to the cosy predictability of *Dixon of Dock Green*, injecting the genre with much needed energy and realism. In 1975 the formula experienced another seismic shift with the arrival of **The Sweeney**, for which Kennedy Martin was one of the writers. **John Thaw** starred as the brutal Detective Inspector Jack Regan, who headed up the unscrupulous, tyre-screeching Flying Squad against vicious, gun welding villains.

Reilly, Ace of Spies (1983) was another astonishing success for Kennedy Martin. An epic 12-part espionage thriller packed with excitement and intrigue that turned actor **Sam Neill** into a household name. He then delivered what is arguably his greatest work, **Edge of Darkness** (1985), an ambitious BBC drama series that won six **BAFTA** awards. It proved so successful with the public that the programme received a repeat run on BBC1 - a mere ten days after the final episode was broadcast on BBC2. Another triumph for the big screen is **Kelly's Heroes** (1970) with the cool as ever **Clint Eastwood** and **Donald Sutherland**.

Season coincides with the publication of Lez Cooke's new study **Troy Kennedy Martin**

www.bfi.org.uk/kennedymartin

Shanghai Animation

When the Shanghai Animation Film Studios opened in 1949 a golden age in Chinese animation began. Artists were encouraged to experiment and try new techniques such as stop-motion and traditional painting. Still flourishing, the studios are now producing work for an international market, including television shows and web animation, as well as material for local audiences. The **NFT** is delighted to present a season of their work that offers a rare opportunity to access their archive and view some of the best animation from China.

Feature films that will screen include **Uproar in Heaven** (*Da nao tian gong*) (1964), with the eponymous Monkey King, China's answer to Mickey Mouse. He also appears in **Lotus Lantern** (1999), which tells of the divide between the mortal world and the world of the Gods, and is based on an ancient Chinese fairytale. Programme One includes **36 Words** (1984), in which an artist transforms Chinese characters into shapes and creatures, and in Programme Two a small boy fights evil spirits and the might of the legendary Dragon King in **Nezha Conquers the Dragon King** (1979). There are also several short films that are suitable for younger audiences in Programme Three: a family of monkeys attempt to capture the moon from the sky in **Fishing the Moon from the Pool** (1981).

These films are ideal for half-term and offer unique viewing pleasures.

www.bfi.org.uk/shanghai



Previews, interviews, events & learning:

Special Preview: Hot Fuzz + The Guardian Interview with Simon Pegg, Edgar Wright and Nick Frost

Mon 12 Feb 6.30 NFT1

Midsomer Murders meets *Lethal Weapon* in this cracking new comedy from the creative team behind *Spaced* and *Shaun of the Dead*.

UK 2007 Dir Edgar Wright With Jim Broadbent, Paddy Considine Tickets £13.75, concs £8.25

Courtesy of Universal Pictures



Movie Magic Special Preview: Charlotte's Web

Sat 3 Feb 1.20 NFT1

EB White's classic novel returns to the big screen in this live-action tale about Wilbur, a pig, who is determined to escape the inevitable trip to the kitchen table.

USA 2006 Dir Gary Winick With voices of John Cleese, Robert Redford, Julia Roberts 96 mins J-Cert U

Courtesy of Paramount

Movie Magic: Animation Workshop

Sat 24 Feb 2.00–3.30 NFT Green Room

Uncover the magic of the Shanghai Animation Film Studio at this hands-on animation workshop for children of 7-12 years old. Tickets £1.00

Interview with Troy Kennedy Martin

Tue 6 Feb 8.30 NFT1

The Italian Job

Tue 6 Feb 6.30 NFT1; Sat 10 Feb 4.00 NFT1; Wed 28 Feb 8.40 NFT2

An outing for this classic, cockney heist film.

UK-USA 1969 Dir Peter Collinson With Michael Caine, Noël Coward, Benny Hill 100 mins J-Cert PG

Joint ticket available (Tue 6 Feb only) £11.50, concs £8.25

Cinema-going on Film

Sun 18 Feb 4.10 NFT2

In an illustrated lecture, Allen Eyles looks at the way British cinemas and the cinema-going experience have been recreated in films.

Coming Up Roses (Rhosyn a Rhith)

Sun 18 Feb 6.30 NFT2; Thu 22 Feb 6.10 NFT3

'Cinema-going on Film' is coupled with a rare revival of this acclaimed comedy, where locals in a small, Welsh town attempt to save their cinema.

UK 1986 Dir Stephen Bayley With Dafydd Hywel, Iola Gregory 93 mins J-Cert PG

Joint ticket available (18 Feb only) £11.50, concs £8.25

The Flipside

This month the legendary, 60s independent pop producer Joe Meek is celebrated with a plethora of rarely screened film and television, as part of this new strand.

Live It Up

Fri 9 Feb 6.20 NFT2

Groovy pop musical with David Hemmings and Steve Marriott. Fab sounds from Heinz, The Outlaws, Jennifer Moss, Gene Vincent and many more.
UK 1963 Dir Lance Comfort 74 mins J-Cert U

Arena: The Strange Story of Joe Meek

Fri 9 Feb 8.20 NFT2

Meek recording artistes and family members reveal all in this acclaimed BBC documentary.

BBC 1991 Dir Alan Lewens 60 mins Joint ticket available £11.50, concs £8.25

Afterwards, in the NFT Café Bar (free admission): DJ Big Beat Kris spins far-out Meekian waxings until midnight!

Bird

Fri 23 Feb 8.00 NFT1; Sun 25 Feb 3.20 NFT2

A complex and moving look at the life of the jazz pioneer Charlie 'Yardbird' Parker, described as the best American film about jazz.

USA 1988 Dir Clint Eastwood, with Diane Venora 160 mins J-Cert 15

Blacktronica

Fri 23 Feb 10.00-1.30am NFT Film Café

Following the Fri 23 screening of *Bird*, DJ Charlie Dark and friends return.
Admission free

Blacktronica



Projecting the Archive: Charlie Chaplin Keystone Restorations

Tue 20 Feb 6.10 NFT3; Sun 25 Feb 3.50 NFT3

Four newly restored Chaplin Keystone comedies that illustrate the adventurous experimentation of Chaplin the stage star in his transition to screen genius.

The Star Boarder USA 1914 Dir George Nichols c17 mins

The Fatal Mallet USA 1914 Dir Mack Sennett c19 mins

The Face on the Bar-room Floor USA 1914 Dir Charles Chaplin c17 mins

The Knockout USA 1914 Dir Charles Avery c32 mins Total c85 mins J-cert

The Costume Interpreter: Dressing for the Oscars

Mon 12 Feb 6.20 NFT2

Bronwyn Cosgrave traces the fashion trends of the widely watched Academy Awards ceremony from its inception in 1929 to the present.

Special preview: 21st London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

Fri 16 Feb 5.30 NFT1

Join the programmers and members of the press for a special preview of some of the highlights of this year's festival (which runs 21 March – 4 April).

Admission is free but tickets must be booked in advance through the Box Office

Beautiful South

A celebration of South London's emerging and diverse cinematic talent, that also offers emerging creatives the opportunity to network with industry professionals.

Session One

Thu 8 Feb 6.30 NFT1

It will feature a selection of films produced as part of training programmes for first-time filmmakers and emerging artists.

Tickets £1.00

Session Two

Thu 8 Feb 8.15 NFT1

A guide to getting that first crucial break into film-making. Following screenings of chosen works from up and-coming South London film-makers, an industry panel will discuss opportunities in traditional and digital, followed by a networking event in the NFT Café. Tickets £1.00

For further event details, including submission information, please see the BFI website at www.bfi.org.uk, or e-mail us at www.myspace.com/beautifulsouthfilmmight

Media Partner: Live Magazine



Eat Our Shorts!: Lodz Profile

Thu 15 Feb 6.30 NFT1

This fifth edition of 'Eat Our Shorts!' profiles the work from The Polish National Film School, presenting a blend of work from past alumni including Kieslowski, Polanski and Wajda alongside work from current students. Presented in association with NAHEMI, PWSFTV and The Polish Film Institute.

www.nahemi.org



Carol Morley: The Film-making Years

Tue 13 Feb 6.30 NFT3

The London premiere of *The Madness of the Dance* (2006)

London Premiere Screening: Offshore (Gallivant)

Tue 27 Feb 6.30 NFT1

This follows the 14hr 17min cross-channel relay swim by film-maker Andrew Kötting, his brothers, friends and family. Supported through the London Artists' Film and Video Awards, it will be accompanied by a selection of Kötting's short films.



Press contacts: Colette Geraghty, Ian Cuthbert or Ilona Cheshire

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Booking information

The NFT is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets.

NFT Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £8.60, concs. £6.25. Members pay £1 less on any ticket. Website www.bfi.org.uk/nft

Notes to Editors

There's more to discover about film and television through the British Film Institute. Our world-renowned archival collections, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.

***** PICTURE DESK ALERT *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting National Film Theatre screenings can be found at www.image.net under

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If further images are required contact BFI Stills, Posters & Designs.

For information and prices e-mail stills.films@bfi.org.uk or phone 020 7957 4797