



# DRACULA in Cannes

It has been announced that the Cannes Classics section of the forthcoming 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the world's biggest film festival will feature the BFI National Archive's new restoration of **Dracula** (1958).

This screening on 17<sup>th</sup> May will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hammer Horror cycle which rapidly became a hugely influential and popular strand of British horror.

**Amanda Nevill**, BFI Director said,

"We are delighted to be showcasing our latest restoration. *Dracula* is, for many, the film that has come to characterise the British Gothic horror genre and we are proud to be able to show it in the prestigious Cannes Classics strand.

"The BFI National Archive holds the most significant collection of film and television material in the world. Caring for such an enormous collection is a great challenge to our resources, particularly as the balance between investing in preservation and making the collection available to a wider audience is so precarious. We are immensely grateful to the sponsor of this restoration, Simon Hessel, for his generosity and support."

Based on the novel by Bram Stoker first published in 1897, this was the first colour version of *Dracula*. It was a massive international success on its original release and established **Christopher Lee** for many as the definitive interpreter of the demonic count. **Peter Cushing** also gives a great performance as the vampire hunter Van Helsing. High production values and a host of character actors, aided by a cracking script by **Jimmy Sangster**, add up to a rich and satisfying horror classic.

## **Notes on the restoration of *Dracula***

**Andrea Kalas**

**Senior Preservation Manager, BFI National Archive**

The restoration of what many fans call the best Hammer horror film required extensive research into reported censored scenes. Rumour and fact, not unlike the *Dracula* story itself, are intermingled. Our research into missing scenes led us to every conceivable resource from the vaults of Warner Bros to an archive in Japan. Scenes censored by the BBFC for the release of the UK version, but included in the US version, have been recovered. In addition, the US title,

“Horror of Dracula”, had been attached to most theatrical and video releases. We have restored the original British release title with its distinctive illuminated “D.”

Ben Thompson of the BFI National Archive film lab oversaw the restoration and it is due to his diligence and perfectionism that the film is restored. We owe special thanks to Richard Dayton and Eric Aijala of YCM Laboratories and Tim Everett, Ned Price and Bill Rush at Warner Bros.

The film was restored from the original negative, except for the original British title and the censored scenes, which were from dupe negatives found in Warner Bros’ vaults. The original prints were released on IB-Technicolor prints, and Richard Dayton at YCM Laboratories in Burbank worked with Ben to achieve this particular look.

The restoration will have a UK theatrical release later this year and Dracula will become one of the many thousands of films vital to British film history that are preserved at the BFI National Archive.

The film was restored with the generous support of Simon Hessel.

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### **Notes to Editors**

1. For more information on the BFI, including details of the BFI’s theatrical touring programmes, DVDs and books, visit [www.bfi.org.uk](http://www.bfi.org.uk)  
There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archive, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.
2. The BFI National Archive is one of the world’s largest and busiest archives. It contains more than 230,000 films (features, shorts and documentaries) and more than 675,000 television programmes. The collection also contains internationally renowned holdings of posters, stills and designs along with the papers of major directors.

The collection is made available through public screenings at festivals and cinemas throughout the UK including regular screenings at BFI Southbank, alongside video and DVD releases, and online through the BFI’s unique education resource, Screenonline ([www.screenonline.org.uk](http://www.screenonline.org.uk)).

The Mediatheque at BFI Southbank opened in March 2007 and it is hoped to establish a range of satellite facilities across the UK which will allow free access to curated programmes of film and television from the BFI National Archive. The archive is regularly used by documentary film-

makers for its extensive range of material from across more than 110 years of film-making.