

Joint Press Release from British Film Institute, FILMCLUB, First Light Movies, Film Education and UK Film Council

Film partners launch plan to help more young people engage with the creative world of film

London – 3 June 2008. Leading film organisations have today published the first UK-wide film education strategy. *Film: 21st Century Literacy* aims to bring greater coherence and consistency to the provision of film education in the UK so children and young people have equal opportunities to watch, understand and make films.

The two main aims of the strategy are to enhance current activity and to initiate new, innovative activities including:

- investing in learning resources to accompany publicly funded films;
- establishing a comprehensive training and development programme for those involved in film education;
- developing online resources to provide access to the UK's film archives; and
- using new learning routes, such as the Creative & Media Diploma and the Arts Award.

In addition to the £12 million which is currently spent on film education activities across the UK, a further £750,000 of National Lottery funding from the UK Film Council will be made available over the next three years. This seed funding will help to pilot regional partnerships which will explore how best to plug gaps in film education provision and spread best practice across the UK.

An understanding of film is essential to literacy in the 21st century. It encourages learning, critical understanding, debate and conversation about film and the moving image in a wide range of issues, and gives young people a vehicle for their own creativity while boosting their team-working and communication skills.

Film: 21st Century Literacy is being led by the British Film Institute (BFI), FILMCLUB, First Light Movies, Film Education, and the UK Film Council, and developed in partnership with the National and Regional Screen Agencies and Skillset.

Today's launch at the BFI Southbank was attended by representatives from the film industry, policy makers and educationalists. Speakers included Sir Michael Bichard, Clive Jones CBE, Bonnie Greer, John Woodward and Bernard McCloskey.

Clive Jones CBE said: "In the UK we are lucky enough to have some of the best and most imaginative film education initiatives in the world, as well as a Charter for Media Literacy, which has been adopted by Government and is already being used as the template for action at a European level. However, despite this, film education remains disconnected and inconsistent – a bonus for some rather than an opportunity and

entitlement for all. This strategy is a first step on the road to changing that state of affairs.”

Bonnie Greer, First Light Movies board member, said: “In the same way that we take for granted that society has a responsibility to help children read and write – to use and enjoy words – we should take it for granted that we help children and young people to use, enjoy and understand moving images; not just to be technically capable, but to be culturally literate too.”

John Woodward, Chief Executive Officer of the UK Film Council said: “The idea behind the strategy is to use film to help children and young people prepare for adult life in the 21st century where visual literacy has become as important as the ability to read and write. If, along the way, we also ensure that young people discover the true richness and diversity of cinema then we will have been 100% successful.

“Thanks to the internet and TV, moving images are now ubiquitous but feature films have a unique ability to reach young people from all backgrounds. Film education activities emphasise communication and team-working skills so this strategy is about social and workplace skills as well as culture and literacy.”

The Strategy Action Group believes that film education has the capacity to contribute to both *Every Child Matters* and the Government’s ‘youth cultural offer’. It also supports the Charter for Media Literacy, drawn up by the UK Film Council and the main broadcasters in 2005.

Film: 21st Century Literacy is supported by a new website which goes live today: www.21stcenturyliteracy.org.uk

For media enquiries please contact: Caroline Nagle at the UK Film Council on 020 7861 7508 or caroline.nagle@ukfilmcouncil.org.uk

Notes to Editors:

1. *Film: 21st Century Literacy* was launched at a breakfast event at the BFI Southbank, London on Tuesday 3 June 2008.
2. *Film: 21st Century Literacy* is being led by the British Film Institute (BFI), FILMCLUB, First Light Movies, Film Education, and the UK Film Council, and developed in partnership with the National and Regional Screen Agencies and Skillset.
3. The strategy is available to download from: <http://www.21stcenturyliteracy.org.uk/downloads.html>
4. **British Film Institute (BFI)** - 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. BFI Education is charged with promoting moving image media literacy. It produces a range of resources and training packs for teachers and hosts conferences, seminars and workshops for learners of all ages.
5. **FILMCLUB** aims to bring classic and popular films to young people through a UK-wide network of school clubs, giving pupils a chance to share their passion and discover worlds that delight,

challenge and inspire. FILMCLUB aims to set up a network of 7,000 school based film clubs across the UK over the next three years to dramatically increase the opportunities for 5-18 year-olds to watch films. Through an interactive website, young people will have free access to rare and popular films, be able to write and upload their own reviews, learn about what is happening in their world of movies and invite big on and off screen talent to their school.

6. First Light Movies – inspiring young film

First Light Movies provides funding and expertise to enable five to 19-year-olds, throughout the UK, to create short digital films. To do this First Light Movies distributes £1.1million Lottery money through the UK Film Council funding and manages several other filmmaking projects.

www.firstlightmovies.com

7. Film Education - Since 1985 Film Education has been bringing film to education across the UK. It is a charity supported by the feature film industry. It runs free screenings and events for schools, distributes free resources to teachers and runs a series of teacher training programmes. Its flagship festival, National Schools Film Week is attended by 300,000 young people in over 500 locations every year. More than 2.4million school children are reached by its activities annually.

8. The UK Film Council

The UK Film Council is the Government-backed lead agency for film in the UK ensuring that the economic, cultural and educational aspects of film are effectively represented at home and abroad.

www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk