



Press release

## Discover The Flipside A new DVD and Blu-ray strand from the BFI

On **25 May** the BFI launches **Flipside**, a new strand presenting weird and wonderful British films in new high-quality editions on DVD and Blu-ray. The first three releases are Richard Lester's darkly comic **The Bed Sitting Room** (1969) and Arnold Louis Miller's pioneering Mondo-influenced 'shockumentaries' **London in the Raw** (1964) and **Primitive London** (1965).

Developed from its popular monthly screening slot at BFI Southbank, the BFI's Flipside series on DVD and Blu-ray is designed to revisit and reappraise British films that have slipped through the cracks of cinema history – films that were overlooked, marginalised, or undervalued at the original time of release, or sit outside the established canon of recognised classics. Subject matter will vary widely (and will encompass everything from nuclear war to Soho striptease, from forbidden love to international intrigue) and is likely to appeal to a diverse range of film fans, many of whom may be unfamiliar with the BFI's more traditional DVD and Blu-ray output.

All Flipside releases, newly-mastered in HD from original film elements, are presented with a wide array of special features and extensive illustrated booklets containing informative notes and thought-provoking essays. Initial contributors include respected writers Stewart Home and Iain Sinclair. They are priced at £17.99 on DVD and £22.99 on Blu-ray.

Three new Flipside titles will appear approximately every three months. Future releases include long-unavailable British cult titles such as Peter Watkins' **Privilege** (1967) and Gerry O'Hara's **That Kind of Girl** (1963). Details of the titles to be released on the 25 May are as follows:

### **The Bed Sitting Room (Richard Lester, 1969)**

**UK / colour / PG / 91 mins + 90 mins extra material / ratio 1.85:1 / optional subtitles for hearing-impaired / DVD cat no: BFIVD834 / BD cat no: BFIB1019**

In the hazy aftermath of World War III, the fallout from a 'nuclear misunderstanding' (which lasted two minutes and twenty eight seconds, including the signing of the peace treaty) is producing strange mutations amongst the survivors, and the noble Lord Fortnum finds himself transforming into a bed sitting room...

This vividly imagined, darkly satirical filmic vision of a post apocalyptic England, directed by Richard Lester (*A Hard Day's Night*, *How I Won the War*, *The Knack*), is based on the highly-regarded play by Spike Milligan and John Antrobus. It also boasts great performances by the cream of '60s British comedy and acting talent: Rita Tushingham, Ralph Richardson, Peter Cook, Harry Secombe, Dudley Moore, Spike Milligan, Michael Horden, Roy Kinnear, Arthur Lowe, Dandy Nichols and Marty Feldman.

Sam Dunn, Head of BFI Video Publishing, comments: 'Lots of people talk about "lost classics", but *The Bed Sitting Room* is a film that truly deserves that description. It beggars belief that such a startling piece of British cinema could have remained hidden away for so long.'

### Special features

- Three Bernard Braden *Now and Then* interviews; Richard Lester (1967, 17 mins), Spike Milligan (40 mins) and Peter Cook (30 mins)
- Original trailer
- Illustrated booklet with essay by Michael Brooke (BFI Sight & Sound contributor) and original review, promotional material and biographies

### **London in the Raw (Arnold L. Miller, 1964)**

**UK / colour / 15 / 76 mins and 47 mins versions + 80 mins extra material / ratio 1.33:1 / optional subtitles for hearing-impaired / DVD cat no: BFIVD840 / BD cat no: BFIB1021**

'The world's greatest city laid bare! Thrill to its gay excitement, its bright lights, but be shocked by the sin in its shadows!'

Following on from his *Take Off Your Clothes and Live*, and influenced by the world-wide success of Italian 'Mondo' movies, which combined documentary footage with staged sequences to salacious effect, legendary British low budget movie mogul Arnold Miller concocted this fascinating exploitation-style documentary.

Peering voyeuristically behind the grimy net-curtains of London life into seedy bars and clubs for beatnik 'art lovers', and burrowing beneath the glittering façade of the capital's glamorous cocktail lounges and casinos, *London in the Raw* provides a cynical, sometimes startling vision of life on and off the rain-spattered streets of 1960s London.

#### Special features

- Remastered to HD from the original negative
- Alternative, more explicit, version of the feature (46 mins)
- Three 1960s 'London Sketches': **Pub** (Peter Davis, 1962, 15 mins); **Chelsea Bridge Boys** (Peter Davis, Staffan Lamm, 1966, 30 mins); **Strip** (Peter Davis, Staffan Lamm, Don DeFina, 1965, 25 mins)
- Original trailer
- Illustrated booklet with essay by controversial novelist and critic Stewart Home (author of *Down and Out in Shoreditch and Hoxton*); original review and original promotional material; recollections by Davis, DeFina and Lamm and biographies

#### **Primitive London (Arnold L. Miller, 1965)**

**UK / colour / 15 / 87 mins + 65 mins extra material / ratio 1.33:1 / optional subtitles for hearing-impaired / DVD cat no: BFIVD839 / BD cat no: BFIB1020**

The sensational follow-up to *London in the Raw*, *Primitive London* sets out to reflect society's decay through a sideshow spectacle of 1960s London depravity – and manages to out do its predecessor. Here, we confront mods, rockers and beatniks at the Ace Café, cut some rug with obscure beat band The Zephyrs, witness a seedy Jack the Ripper re-enactment, smirk at flabby men in the sauna and goggle at sordid wife-swapping parties as we discover a pre-permissive Britain still trying to move on from the post-war depression of the 1950s.

#### Special features

- Remastered to HD from the original negative
- **Carousella** (John Irvin, 1966, 25 mins): a controversial dramatised documentary on the lives of a group of striptease artistes
- Three Bernard Braden interviews: Al Burnett, Soho nightclub owner, (1967, 17 mins); Stuart McCabe, Soho strip club manager, (1968, 15 mins); 'Shirley', Soho stripper (1968, 6 mins)
- Original trailer (English and French language options)
- English and French language versions of feature and trailer
- Illustrated booklet with essays by Iain Sinclair, Vic Pratt (BFI Curator) and William Fowler (BFI Curator); biographies, recollections, contemporary reviews and original promotional material

Flipside titles are produced by **Vic Pratt** and **William Fowler**, Curators in the BFI National Archive and BFI's Head of Video Publishing, **Sam Dunn**. **All are available for interview.**

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