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## **Day for Night** (La Nuit américaine) (France 1973)

**Directed by François Truffaut**

Starring Jacqueline Bisset, Nathalie Baye, Alexandra Stewart, Jean-Pierre Léaud, Valentina Cortese, François Truffaut

115 mins | Cert 12A

A BFI release

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Release date: 18 February 2011

Opening venues: BFI Southbank , Odeon Panton Street plus key cities nationwide

**Day for Night** (La Nuit américaine), released by the BFI on 18 February, is one of cinema's most entertaining films about the joys and frustrations of making movies. Truffaut's affectionate and humorous tribute to film, dedicated to Lillian and Dorothy Gish, was a huge international success on its release in 1973, popular with critics and audiences alike. In 1974 it won both the BAFTA for Best Director and the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

In **Day for Night** (the title alludes to the technical term for night scenes shot in the daytime), Ferrand, a film director – played by Truffaut himself - is shooting a film called *Meet Pamela* about a young French man, Alphonse (Jean-Pierre Léaud who previously played Antoine Doinel in *The 400 Blows*) who introduces his new wife Julie (Jacqueline Bisset) to his parents Séverine (Valentina Cortese) and Alexandre (Jean-Pierre Aumont), with disastrous consequences. **Day for Night**, which opens on the first day of shooting of *Meet Pamela* at the Victorine studios in Nice, captures the highs and lows of cast and crew – from the hilarious to the tragic - and shows how Ferrand and his dedicated assistant Joelle (Nathalie Baye) cajole the actors and

manage each situation, occasionally taking inspiration from the real-life tensions and crises which exceed those of the drama they are trying to shoot.

Repeatedly asked if he was not afraid of destroying the mystery of the craft he loved, Truffaut responded that *'an aviator can explain everything that he knows about piloting a plane, but he will never succeed in demystifying the intoxication of flight'*. One of his most delightful and sheerly enjoyable films, **Day for Night** brilliantly explores the gulf between reality and cinematic illusion while also capturing the exhilarating magic of movie-making.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Day for Night is released on 18 February at selected cinemas nationwide. It plays at BFI Southbank as part of its François Truffaut season which runs from 1<sup>st</sup> February to 28 March.**

**On 4 February the BFI also releases *Silken Skin* directed by François Truffaut.**

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