

## DVD & Blu-ray press release



### The Complete Humphrey Jennings Volume One: The First Days

For the first time ever, all of Humphrey Jennings' remarkable films, including his wartime masterpieces *Listen to Britain*, *Fires Were Started* and *A Diary for Timothy*, will be collected together, newly remastered to High Definition, and released by the BFI across three volumes. Each volume will be released as a Dual Format Edition (containing all films on both Blu-ray and DVD), and will include essential special features, including alternative versions and collaborative works.

Humphrey Jennings (1907-1950), widely considered to be one of Britain's greatest documentary filmmakers, is best known for films which beautifully evoke everyday heroism in times of war and peace. Combining poetic observation and humanism with a subtle yet intense national feeling that is also very personal, Jennings was a visionary and progressive patriot.

Volume One of **The Complete Humphrey Jennings, The First Days**, gathers together 14 short films from the period 1934-1940 and provides a fascinating insight into Jennings' earliest days as a filmmaker, learning and developing his craft. It features the critically acclaimed *Spare Time* (1939), a memorable portrait of the inter-war working class made for the New York World Fair in 1939, and the rousing *London Can Take It!* (1940), accompanied by its alternative cut *Britain Can Take It!* This, the most renowned cinematic representation of the resilient heroism of ordinary Londoners during the early days of the Blitz, features iconic images of St Paul's Cathedral, the Palace of Westminster and the royal family. There are also previously neglected works, many of which will be available for the first time since their original release.

Post Haste (1934)  
Locomotives (1934)  
The Story of the Wheel (1934)  
Farewell Topsails (1937)  
Penny Journey (1938)  
Speaking from America (1938)  
The Farm (1938)

Making Fashion (1938)  
Spare Time (1939)  
SS Ionian (1939)  
The First Days (1939)  
Spring Offensive (1940)  
Welfare of the Workers (1940)  
London Can Take It! (1940)

#### Special features

- Presented in High Definition and Standard Definition
- *The Birth of the Robot* (1936): a Len Lye film for Shell on which Jennings collaborated
- *English Harvest* (1939): alternative cut of *The Farm*
- *Cargoes* (1940): an alternative cut of *SS Ionian*
- *Britain Can Take It!* (1940): an alternative cut of *London Can Take It!*
- 40-page illustrated booklet with newly commissioned essays and credits

**Patrick Russell, Senior Curator, Non-Fiction, in the BFI National Archive will be available to talk about Humphrey Jennings and these films.**

#### Release date: 19 September 2011

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIB1119 / Cert E

UK / 1934-1940 / colour, and black & white / English, optional hard-of-hearing subtitles / 211 mins / original aspect ratio 1.33:1 / Disc 1: BD50 / 1080p / 24fps PCM mono 2.0 audio (48k/24-bit) / Disc 2: DVD9 / PAL / Dolby Digital mono 2.0 audio (320kbps) / region 0

Available from DVD retailers & BFI Filmstore Tel: 020 7815 1350 or [www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore)

**Press contact: Jill Reading, BFI Press Office**  
Tel: (020) 7957 4759 or e-mail [jill.reading@bfi.org.uk](mailto:jill.reading@bfi.org.uk)