

Dual Format Edition press release



Jour de fête

A film by Jacques Tati

The BFI's re-mastered Jacques Tati series continues with the world premiere Blu-ray release of *Jour de fête* (1949) on 29 October. Tati's award-winning feature debut, about an appealingly inept postman, is a dazzling blend of satire and slapstick. This new Dual Format Edition contains two versions of the film, both newly mastered to high definition; the 'Thomsoncolor' version which was first shown in 1995 and Tati's rarely-seen 1964 reworking of the original which features additional sequences, hand-painted details and English dialogue.

Jour de fête, an hilarious exposé of the modern obsession with speed and efficiency set amidst the rural surroundings of a tiny French village, was early evidence of Jacques Tati's unique talent and was internationally acclaimed as a comic masterpiece.

Tati himself plays an appealingly self-deluded buffoon, François – a postman who, impressed by the bristling efficiency of the U.S. postal system, makes a misguided attempt to introduce modern methods in the depths of rural France. Initially released in black and white, but also shot in Thomsoncolor, an untested colour process at the time, the film was later restored and finally made available in its original delicate colour.

Jour de fête was shot in the summer of 1947 in the little town of Sainte-Sévère-sur-Indre in the Berry region of central France. Tati's antics on his wayward bike are endlessly inventive and the film also serves as an affectionate, gently mocking tribute to a vanishing way of life. It was an expansion of the 15-minute short, *L'École des facteurs*, that Tati had made the previous year, and almost all the gags in the short are brought into the longer film.

Postman François' brief infatuation with 'American' methods of speed and efficiency prefigures the satire on modernity that Tati would go on to develop in *Mon Oncle* (1958), also released on 22 October in a Dual Format Edition, and *Playtime* (1967), a previous BFI Dual Format Edition release. At first *Jour de fête* aroused little interest among French distributors. Not until after its London premiere in March 1949, when it got good reviews and went on general release, did the French industry sit up and take notice. It won a prize at the Venice Film Festival, and in 1950 was awarded the 'Grand Prix du cinéma français'.

Special features

- Presented in both High Definition and Standard Definition (on both Blu-ray and DVD)
- Original 1949 colour version, first seen by audiences in 1995.
- Tati's alternative 1964 version, which re-works the original 1949 black and white version, adding a new character (the English-speaking painter) and elements of hand painted colour with English voice-over, 79 mins
- Original trailer (DVD only)
- Three shorts: *Soigne ton gauche* (René Clément, 1936); *L'école des facteurs* (Jacques Tati, 1947); *Cours du soir* (Nicolas Ribowski, 1967) (all DVD only)
- Illustrated booklet with film notes and credits

Product details

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFI1048 / Cert U

France / 1949 / colour / French with English subtitles / 81 mins / Original aspect ratio 1.37:1 // Disc 1: BD50 / 1080p / 24fps / PCM audio (48k/24-bit) / Disc 2: DVD9 / PAL / Dolby Digital audio (320 kbps)

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Images are available at www.image.net under BFI DVD 2012

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