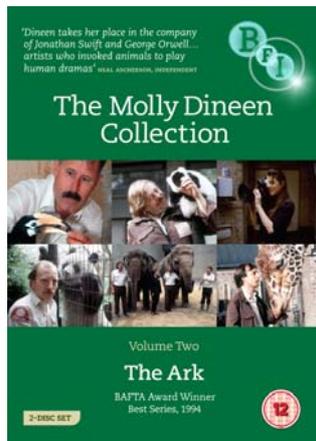


BFI DVD press release



The Molly Dineen Collection Volume Two – The Ark

Molly Dineen is one of Britain's most acclaimed contemporary documentary filmmakers, known for her intimate and probing portrait films, and the recipient of accolades including BAFTA, Grierson and Royal Television Society awards. Released on 22 August, this is the second of three volumes from the BFI that will bring all her films to DVD for the first time, each containing extensive extra features and booklets. Volume Two is the complete multi-award-winning series *The Ark* (1993), which has not been available since its original broadcast.

When Molly Dineen went to London Zoo in 1991 she planned to make 'a small film about the life of the keepers and animals'. Nine months later, she had shot over 100 hours of footage and had begun an edit that would last the best part of a year. The result was the BAFTA Award-winning four-part series *The Ark*, charting one of the most turbulent years in the history of the much-loved menagerie from the perspective of both the keepers and management.

The series was enormously popular and, at the time of its first transmission, was widely recognised as a metaphor for an ailing, increasingly divided Britain, in which social problems that once seemed manageable now seemed intractable.

Through these gripping hour-long films, Molly Dineen reveals the inner workings of London Zoo as the institution is rocked by uncertainty and change in the face of drastic cuts. It is not only members of staff, passionately committed to their work, who face redundancy; heartbreakingly tough decisions must be made about which animals to remove from the Zoo's lively and lovable collection. Tensions continue to build as rebel groups threaten an all-out coup.

Dineen's obvious rapport with her subjects elicits revealing and moving responses to her direct questioning from behind the camera. The quartet of films that tell this fascinating behind-the-scenes story are shot through with intimacy, wit and compassion: the hallmarks of Molly Dineen's exceptional work.

Special features

- New interview with Molly Dineen on the making of *The Ark*, featuring Alan Yentob and sound recordist Phil Streather (2011, 30 mins)
- New interview with Molly Dineen and editor Edward Roberts on the craft and techniques of editing observational documentary (2011, 20 mins)
- Illustrated booklet with new essays and notes, with contributions from Guardian and BBC Radio 4 journalist Mark Lawson, writer Stella Bruzzi and BFI National Archive curators

The Molly Dineen Collection brings together Dineen's portraits of British people and institutions struggling to cope with the effects of change, providing an insightful look at the evolution of Britain over the past 25 years. Volume One, out now, contains Dineen's award-winning debut *Home from the Hill* (1987), along with *My African Farm* (1988), *Heart of the Angel* (1989) and *In the Company of Men* (1995). Volume Three, released on 7 November 2011, will include *The Lie of the Land* (2007), *The Lords' Tale* (2002) and *Geri* (1999). An additional feature will be the Party Political Broadcast, *Tony Blair* (1997).

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For review copies, interview requests or more information please contact:
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Notes to editors on page 2

.../2

Notes to editors

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIVD913 / Cert 12 / 2-disc set
UK / 1993 / colour / 240 mins / 2 x DVD-9 / original aspect ratio 1.33:1 / Dolby Digital mono
audio (320kbps)

BFI DVDs are available from all good DVD retailers and the BFI Filmstore Tel: 020 7815 1350
or www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore

Images are available at www.image.net under BFI >DVD & Blu-ray 2011

July 2011