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BFI CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL YEAR ***...and BFI Southbank enjoys best year ever***

In a year (March 2010 – March 2011) that has seen the BFI become the lead body for film in the UK, the organisation is celebrating record results for BFI Southbank and the BFI London Film Festival; BFI membership is increasing, its DVD label and IMAX cinema is thriving and theatrical releases are award-winning, and the BFI National Archive continues to lead the way in restoring and preserving the nation's film.

Audiences have been flocking to **BFI Southbank** and, as a result, it has just enjoyed its best ever year for admissions and income, with an 11% rise in admissions and a 5% rise in income from the previous year from cultural, commercial and hire activities. In the last year BFI Southbank hosted 1.41 million people who came to experience a total of 47 film and TV **Seasons**, led by the **Audrey Hepburn**, **Francois Truffaut** and **Grace Kelly** seasons; 20 **Extended Runs**, of which **Breakfast at Tiffany's**, **The Big Sleep** and **The Leopard** were the top performers (70% of income came from the BFI's own distribution titles); a total of 78 film and TV **Previews**, and **Strands** - most popular of which were **BUG**, **Film Fundays** and **The Flipside**.

Britain's biggest screen, **BFI IMAX**, continually attracts thousands of people to see event movies. From March 2010 - March 2011 its Top 3 films also made it the highest grossing cinema in the UK for **Tron: Legacy 3D** (64,351 tickets sold), **Alice in Wonderland 3D** (59,567 tickets sold) and **Inception** (55,244 tickets sold). Alice in Wonderland 3D achieved an average occupancy of 89%, Inception had 75% and Tron: Legacy 3D had 67%. Separate to its film successes, the recently refurbished and new-look BFI IMAX also saw sell-out shows for live opera from the **New York Metropolitan Opera** and live theatre with **Frankenstein** from the National Theatre, proving the enduring popularity of the big screen experience.

BFI Membership has also had a bumper year with 7,000 new members signing up and almost 70% of existing members renewing. BFI Members enjoy benefits including discounted tickets and 20% off purchases at Filmstore, early opportunities to buy tickets for sell-out screenings - including during BFI London Film Festival, and access to the exclusive Members Only areas of the www.bfi.org.uk.

The **BFI's Theatrical** and **DVD Distribution** titles continue to tell new stories about the history of British and international cinema. 302 titles were published across 41 new editions in 2010/11 including significant non-fiction collections from the BFI National Archive, cross referenced by international classics and previously obscure British features. **Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush** (Clive Donner, UK 1967) was the fastest-selling title released under the BFI's popular Flipside label, the strand specialising in overlooked British cult movies. **Shadows of Progress** (UK 1951-1977), was the best-selling non-fiction release of the year and the **Kurosawa Samurai Collection** (Japan 1954-62) was the best-selling foreign release.

The BFI attracted audiences of over 1 million to their cinema releases and screened its titles in over 1000 cinema and film festivals in the UK and worldwide. Newly restored **The Leopard** (Visconti 1963) was the top grossing classic of the year. Veteran filmmaker **John Krish** won the **Evening Standard Film Award's Best Documentary 2010**, following the BFI's theatrical revival of four of his short films 'A Day in the Life'. The release was part of the BFI's **Boom Britain** project, a major investigation of post-war British documentary that included a new book, **Shadows of Progress**, a Mediatheque programme and a DVD box set.

High profile titles such as **The King's Speech**, **127 Hours** and **Black Swan** were amongst the 300 films featured in the **54th BFI London Film Festival**, which saw record attendances in October 2010 with 132,000 people enjoying 580 screenings of new films from all over the world, red carpet spectacles, galas and talks in what was, according to *Time Out*, a 'vintage' year.

The BFI National Archive celebrated its 75th anniversary with a campaign to find the **75 Most Wanted** films and a fund-raising project to restore and release Hitchcock's nine surviving silent films. The largest donation to date was \$275,000 from The Film Foundation (chair: Martin Scorsese) in partnership with the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

The **BFI National Archive** also celebrated the centenary of Captain Scott's tragic polar expedition with a restoration of **The Great White Silence** (1924) dir. Herbert Ponting. The world premiere was an Archive Gala screening at the BFI London Film Festival, and will be released in cinemas and on DVD later this year.

Major acquisitions to the **BFI National Archive** included the **Halas & Bachelor** collection of British animation, the papers of director **Richard Lester**, and a newly discovered hoard of classic British television drama, starring some of the biggest names in UK cinema including Sean Connery, Dame Judi Dench and Dame Maggie Smith donated by the **Library of Congress**.

The BFI's chain of **Mediatheques** (offering free access to over 2,000 items of film and television) added the Discovery Museum in Newcastle to those already established in Wrexham, Cambridge, Derby and London.

Finally, the **BFI's YouTube channel** amassed over one million hits for the first film version of Alice in Wonderland entitled **Alice** (1903).

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

BFI Southbank

A cinema destination like no other in the UK, BFI Southbank is simply one of the coolest places to visit in London; whether its to watch a diverse and refreshing range of films unavailable in mainstream cinemas, preview some of the most exciting new film and TV releases, listen to thought provoking talks and discussions, participate in the Education programme, watch archive footage in the Mediatheque, shop in the Filmstore, meet for lunch, dinner or drinks at benugos and The Riverfront restaurants or attend an event at the beautiful private hire space The Blue Room.

Booking information

The BFI Southbank is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets. BFI Southbank Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £9.00, concs £6.65 Members pay £1.40 less on any ticket. Website www.bfi.org.uk/southbank

Tickets for FREE screenings and events must be booked in advance by calling the Box Office to avoid disappointment

BFI Filmstore

The BFI Filmstore is stocked and staffed by BFI experts with over 1,200 book titles and 1,000 DVDs to choose from, including hundreds of acclaimed books and DVDs produced by the BFI.

The benugo bar & kitchen

Eat, drink and be merry in panoramic daylight. benugo's décor is contemporary, brightly lit and playful with a lounge space, bar and dining area. The place to network, hang out, unpack a film, savour the best of Modern British or sip on a cocktail.

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archival collections, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.

BFI Video and Digital Downloads

The BFI releases around 40 new editions of British non-fiction, rare features and international classics each year on DVD and Blu-ray. Available from BFI Filmstore, Amazon, and all good retailers. Some titles are also available to stream or download online from platforms including LoveFilm and iTunes.

BFI National Archive

The BFI National Archive was founded in 1935 and has grown to become the largest collection of film and television in the world with over 180,000 films and 750,000 television programmes. Expert teams undertake the time-consuming and complex task of restoring films. With specialist storage facilities in Warwickshire and Hertfordshire the archive also boasts significant collections of stills, posters and designs along with original scripts, press books and related ephemera. We are funded partly by OfCom as the official archive for ITV, Channel Four and Channel Five. We record a representative sample of television across Britain's terrestrial channels and are the official archive of moving image records of Parliament.

BFI Mediatheques

Anyone can get access to collections of over 2000 titles from the archive for free at BFI Mediatheques around the UK, currently at BFI Southbank, BFI National Library, QUAD Derby, Central Library Cambridge and Wrexham Library, and Discovery Museum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

BFI National Archive Online

Our YouTube channel **BFIFilms** has over 300 items which can be viewed online. [Over 1,000,000 views have been recorded for *Alice in Wonderland* (1903) uploaded to coincide with the release of Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*]. Academic access for higher education is through the **BFI InView** project. Schools and educational institutions have access to a wide range of material at **screenonline.org.uk**. This is in addition to paid access at the BFI for other research needs.

***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at www.image.net under BFI / BFI Southbank / January 2010