



The Best of COI

Five decades of Public Information Films

2-disc Blu-ray release on 20 April 2020

Established in April 1946, the Central Office of Information (COI) was the successor to the wartime Ministry of Information and went on to produce and distribute thousands of films for use across Britain, the Commonwealth and the world. Although perhaps best remembered now for the short public information films, particularly from the 1970s, the COI's huge range of films had different purposes, for instance some were aimed at specialist audiences and others were made to promote Britain abroad.

Reflecting that, this 2-disc Blu-ray collection, released by the BFI on 20 April 2020, brings together many of the COI's most loved (and in some cases feared) and most interesting productions from 1944 – 1981 which are now preserved in the BFI National Archive. Among them are *Design for Today*, *Apaches*, *Lonely Water* and *Charley's March of Time* along with two previously unreleased COI classics, *Smoking and You* and *Waverley Steps*. Special features are four public information 'fillers', short but hard-hitting films designed to shock, including the chilling, iconic *AIDS: Iceberg* (1987), directed by Nic Roeg with music by Brian Eno.

Other renowned directors that passed through the portals of the COI include luminaries of the British documentary movement such as Paul Rotha, Humphrey Jennings and Lindsay Anderson and in later years the likes of Hugh Hudson (*Chariots of Fire*) and Peter Greenaway (*The Draughtsman's Contract*).

DISC 1

Children of the City (1944)
 Brief City (1952)
 Design for Today (1965)
 Voyage North (1965)
 Lonely Water (1973)
 Drive Carefully, Darling (1975)
 Apaches (1977)
 Building Sites Bite (1978)
 Insight: Zandra Rhodes (1981)

DISC 2

Your Children and You (1946)
 Waverley Steps (1948)
 Charley's March of Time (1948)
 What a Life! (1948)
 Another Case of Poisoning (1949)
 Riding on Air (1959)
 Smoking and You (1963)
 The Poet's Eye (1964)
 Opus (1967)
 Never Go With Strangers (1971)

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Special features

- *Searching* (1974, 1 min): meticulously planned and expertly executed by director John Krish, *Searching* won the COI a Golden Lion at Venice. It still hits hard and still hurts
- *Grain Drain* (1975, 1 min): the perils of farmyard grain pits are laid bare in this filler that is simple yet terrifyingly effective
- *Tornado Trailer* (1985, 2 mins): cut together from the rushes of a longer COI film, *Tornado*, this adrenalin-filled two minutes features synth music by BAFTA-winning composer Chris Gunning
- *AIDS: Iceberg* (1987, 1 min) Part of perhaps the most chilling government campaign ever made, the features music by the legendary Brian Eno and was directed by Nic Roeg (*Don't Look Now*)

Product details

RRP: £24.99 / Cat. no. BFIB1376/ E

UK / 1944-1981 / black and white, colour / 367 minutes / English language / original aspect ratios / BD50 x 2: 1080p, 24fps, PCM 1.0 mono audio (48kHz/24-bit)

Press contact for more information:

Jill Reading, BFI Press Officer
E-mail: jill.reading@bfi.org.uk
Tel: (020) 7957 4759
@bfi

BFI DVD/Blu-ray releases can be ordered from home entertainment online retailers or from the BFI Shop (online only) at <https://shop.bfi.org.uk/>. However, shipping will be delayed until the Shop re-opens (date unknown at present).

About the BFI

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of World Cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.

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