

DVD press release



The Children's Film Foundation London Tales

**The Salvage Gang; Operation Third Form;
Night Ferry**
Released 23 July 2012

For over 30 years the Children's Film Foundation produced quality entertainment for young audiences, employing the cream of British filmmaking talent. After many years out of distribution, these much-loved and fondly-remembered family films return to the screen, newly transferred from the best-available elements held in the BFI National Archive. In *London Tales*, the first volume of themed DVD releases from the BFI, villains, conmen and plain bad luck are no match for plucky London youngsters.

The CFF was a non-profit making pan-industry initiative, set up in 1951 by the owner of the Odeon and Rank cinema chains to make home-grown entertainment for young cinemagoers to see at the 'Saturday morning pictures'.

One of the Foundation's major contributions to the British film industry was encouraging directorial and acting talent. Michael Powell, Lewis Gilbert, Alberto Cavalcanti and John Krish all worked for it and famous film and TV names such as Francesca Annis, Michael Crawford, Susan George, Richard O'Sullivan, Dennis Waterman, Keith Chegwin, Gary Kemp, Leslie Ash, Phil Collins, Sadie Frost and Matthew Wright all started out in CFF films.

Key themes of the films include adventure, mysteries, monsters, science-fiction, ship wrecks, races and animals, with regional content from Scotland to South West England.

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker **John Krish** (*I Think They Call Him John*), **The Salvage Gang** (1958) is an affectionate tour of bomb-damaged London, featuring performances from a young **Frazer Hines** (*Doctor Who*, *Emmerdale*) and a cameo by **Wilfred Brambell** (*Steptoe and Son*). When four friends try to raise enough money to replace a broken saw, their money-making schemes take them on an unexpected journey through the capital.

With its groovy 1960s soundtrack, **Operation Third Form** (1966), by Children's Film Foundation veteran **David Eady**, is a pacey boys' own adventure. A fresh-faced **John Moulder Brown** (*Deep End*) gives a sparkling performance as the schoolboy out to foil a pair of North London crooks with his crack spy unit – his classmates and kid sister...

Night Ferry (1976) stars **Bernard Cribbins** (*The Railway Children*, *Doctor Who*) as 'Pyramid', a dastardly master-of-disguise who plans to smuggle an ancient Egyptian mummy out of the country. When young Jeff, played by **Graham Fletcher-Cook**, discovers the plan, a dangerous chase via South London's Victoria Station and Clapham Junction ensues.

Screening at BFI Southbank – Saturday 21 July at 3.10pm, with special guests

The Salvage Gang and *Operation Third Form* will be screened at BFI Southbank on Saturday 21 July at 3.10pm in the Capital Tales strand. John Krish, director of *The Salvage Gang* and actors Frazer Hines and Amanda Coxell will be introducing the screening.

Frazer Hines and Amanda Coxell (now Mandy Dunn) are available for interview and BFI National Archive curators can talk about these films.

Cont.../ Special features

The CFF collection is now preserved in the BFI National Archive. A selection of the films will be screened at BFI Southbank and released on BFI DVD over the next few years. Several films from the collection can already be watched for free in BFI Mediatheques and more will be made available in due course.

Special features

- Brand new High Definition transfers of all films
- *Topic – Children’s Theatre* (1959, 14 mins): US TV show *Topic* on the work of the Children’s Film Foundation, with John Krish on the set of *The Salvage Gang*, J Arthur Rank and the CFF director Mary Field
- Illustrated booklet with essays by Andrew Roberts and Vic Pratt

Product details

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIVD948 / Cert U

UK / 1958 + 1966 + 1976 / black & white and colour / 50 mins + 56 mins + 58 mins / DVD 9 /
Dolby Digital mono audio (320kbps) / Original aspect ratio 1.33:1

The CFF became the Children’s Film and Television Foundation in 1982 and film production finally stopped in 1987 as television took kids away from the Saturday morning pictures. The Children's Film and Television Foundation is now known as The Children's Media Foundation

For further information and DVD review copies please contact:

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

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

About the CFTF

CFTF films have won well over forty prizes at major film festivals and the CFTF itself received The Michael Balcon Award, presented by the British Academy of Film & Television Arts, for outstanding British contribution to Cinema.

More recently the Foundation had been involved in script development for both film and TV but this function has now ended.

From November 2011 the Children's Film & TV Foundation will be known as The Children's Media Foundation. The CFTF has merged with the campaigning group Save Kid's TV and in the future will act on behalf of the audience as an advocate for quality range and diversity in the media choices presented to children and young people in the UK.