

BFI ANNOUNCES SCI-FI SPECTACULAR AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM



First glimpse of the BFI's UK-wide autumn blockbuster: **SCI-FI: Days of Fear and Wonder**

Wednesday 4 June 2014

The BFI's **Sci-Fi blockbuster** project will blast off from the forecourt of the **British Museum** in spectacular style with a trilogy of science fiction classics screening over three successive nights, from **Thursday 28 to Saturday 30 August**. Following the sold-out screenings presented at the British Museum with the BFI GOTHIC Blockbuster in 2013 and the Hitchcock launch the year before, the BFI returns with a trio of classic Sci-Fi film treats: *Flash Gordon*, *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* and *The Man Who Fell to Earth*.

The historic grounds of the British Museum will be transformed for the series of big screen events over the August Bank Holiday weekend, which will see the three Sci-Fi classics projected onto a huge, state-of-the-art screen – the BFI's biggest outdoor screen to date at the British Museum – and will be accompanied by a stellar soundsystem, thrilling audiences of up to 1,200 each night. Each evening the out-of-this-world entertainment will be accompanied by special guests and the opportunity for viewers to participate in the terrestrial fun. On Thursday 28 August the earth will be unhinged from its axis with the screening of London-set classic, *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (1961). Friday will see us attempt inter-galactic contact with *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), starring **David Bowie** as a stranded alien. The weekend will conclude with a cult classic as we venture to planet Mongo on Saturday 30 August with *Flash Gordon* (1980).

These extra special outdoor screenings provide a curtain-raiser for the Fear and Wonder to come in the BFI's UK-wide Sci-Fi focus, launching in October and running until December. This

major film season, in cinemas and online on BFI Player, presented in partnership across the UK with the BFI's Film Audience Network, features over one hundred film and television titles. Details of the full programme, including screenings, events, film and DVD releases, special guests and more will be revealed on Thursday 17 July at BFI Southbank.

Heather Stewart, BFI Creative Director said: "*Across literature, television and of course film, the UK has blazed a Sci-Fi trail and played a central role in cinema's most enduring and popular genre – from science fiction's origins with writer HG Wells, to our time-travelling television hero Dr Who, to the latest instalment of Star Wars shooting right now at Pinewood.*

Sci-Fi reveals our hopes and fears for the future, lets us make contact with the Cosmos, and takes us on a fantastical journey to the limits of our humanity - we're excited to open up new worlds of Sci-Fi film for audiences across the UK, and this spectacular event at the British Museum is the perfect curtain-raiser to our autumn blockbuster."

BFI PRESENTS THREE, MUST-SEE SCI-FI CLASSICS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM'S BREATH-TAKING FORECOURT:

WORLD PREMIERE NEW RESTORATION: *THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE*

20.15-22.30, Thursday 28 August

A Fleet Street journalist (Edward Judd) investigates the world's increasingly ferocious weather conditions and discovers that the Earth has been knocked off its axis by extensive nuclear testing. Is the Earth doomed? Aided by a vivid depiction of the world of newspaper journalism, and extensive location shooting on the streets of London, director Val Guest delivers one of the best of all British sci-fi films and the chilling scenes of a deserted London rival those in *28 Days Later*.

UK 1961. Dir Val Guest. With Janet Munro, Edward Judd and Leo McKern. 99min. Cert PG
Courtesy of BFI Distribution

Event and BFI National Archive restoration generously supported by Simon W. Hessel

THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH

20.15-23.00, Friday 29 August

An alien, stranded on Earth while on a mission to find water for his own world, initiates a plan to amass a fortune in order to fund a space programme that will help him return to his home planet. David Bowie's impressive performance, in his first major screen role (and clearly building on his other-worldly public persona), helped, in tandem with Roeg's mesmerising direction, to turn this into a cult film.

UK 1976. Dir Nicolas Roeg. With Rip Torn, Candy Clark, Buck Henry. 138min, Cert 18

Courtesy of STUDIOCANAL and Park Circus Films

DAZZLING DIGITAL TRANSFER: *FLASH GORDON*

20:15 – 22:30, Sat 30 August

Alex Raymond's popular comic strip character bounds on to the screen to heroically save the Earth from the hissable villainy of Ming the Merciless (Max von Sydow on splendid form), ruthless ruler of the planet Mongo. Mike Hodges directs with verve and wit, Queen provide the memorable score and Fellini's frequent collaborator, Danilo Donati, provides costume and set designs that ravish the eye. And not forgetting Brian Blessed with wings!

UK 1980. Dir Mike Hodges. With Sam J. Jones, Melody Anderson, Timothy Dalton. 107min, Cert PG

Courtesy of STUDIOCANAL and Park Circus Films

Tickets and booking details:

Thursday 5 June

BFI Members and Patrons priority booking opens at 11:30 am

Friday 6 June

Public booking opens at 11:30a.m

Each film £15, no concessions. Joint ticket (all 3 screenings) £39.

Book through the BFI: bfi.org.uk/sci-fi <http://bfi.org.uk/sci-fi> or 020 7928 3232

SCI-FI: DAYS OF FEAR AND WONDER will run from October – December 2014 with a UK-wide programme of film and DVD releases, special screenings, events, guests and more.

Invitations to the press launch at BFI Southbank on 17 July will be issued imminently.

NOTES TO EDITORS

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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
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

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 £11.00, concs £8.50 Members pay £1.50 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 Shop

The BFI Shop 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.

***** 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 /Sci-Fi: Days of Fear and Wonder