



BFI news release

BFI to bring Ken Russell's controversial masterpiece *The Devils* to DVD for the first time

15 November 2011 – The BFI is thrilled to announce that it will be releasing one of the 'most-wanted' British films of all time, Ken Russell's bold and brilliant religious drama *The Devils* (1971), on DVD for the first time.

Forty years ago, *The Devils* caused outrage amongst audiences and critics after one of the longest-running battles with the BBFC was resolved, and the film was finally seen in cinemas. Now recognised as a landmark in British cinema history the film will at long last get its DVD premiere on **19 March 2012**, in the original UK 'X' certificate version.

Oliver Reed and Vanessa Redgrave give magnificent performances in what remains Ken Russell's most dazzling and controversial film – for which he won the prize for Best Director, Foreign Film at the Venice Film Festival. Based on John Whiting's stage-play and Aldous Huxley's novel, the film charts the seventeenth-century events that took place in the French city of Loudun. Reed plays priest Urbain Grandier, and Redgrave is Sister Jeanne, whose erotic obsession with him fuels the hysterical fervour that sweeps through the convent.

Derek Jarman designed the striking, highly memorable sets and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies composed a supremely well-matched score for Russell's arresting depiction of the breakdown of civilisation.

Film critic and expert Mark Kermode, who has written and broadcast extensively about *The Devils*, will be contributing to the special features. He comments:

'Ken Russell is one of Britain's greatest living filmmakers and *The Devils* remains his most incendiary work – an extraordinary and impassioned depiction of the unholy marriage of church and state which is as relevant today as it was when the film was first released.'

Sam Dunn, Head of BFI Video Publishing says:

'We are absolutely delighted to be able to announce the DVD premiere release of this extraordinary film. *The Devils* is one of the greatest British productions of all time, and our special edition will not only feature the longest version of the film ever to have been released on DVD, but will also include a host of new and exciting extra features.'

An announcement detailing the full list of extras and technical specifications will be made nearer to the release date.

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For more details or to speak to Sam Dunn please contact:

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

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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