

CHARULATA (THE LONELY WIFE)

Directed by Satyajit Ray

India 1964, 117 mins, Cert U

Madhabi Mukherjee, Soumitra Chatterjee, Sailen Mukherjee

New 50th anniversary restoration
A BFI release



**Opening on 22 August 2014 at BFI Southbank
and selected cinemas nationwide**

18 June 2014 – Satyajit Ray's own favourite of his films, set in late 19-century Bengal, boasts a marvellously vital Victorian heroine: Charulata, spellbindingly portrayed by Madhabi Mukherjee, is beautiful, intellectual and dangerously bored. Now newly restored, Ray's masterpiece will be released in UK cinemas on 22 August.

Racing from window to window in her vast, ornate mansion, Charulata spies hungrily on the outside world through opera glasses. Her wealthy husband Bhupati (Sailen Mukherjee), the high-minded editor of a political journal, is too preoccupied with the latest tax legislation and the forthcoming English election (*Disraeli v Gladstone*) to pay much attention to his wife. Somewhat unwisely, he invites his charming younger cousin Amal (Soumitra Chatterjee, who previously starred in Ray's *The World of Apu*) to come and keep her company. An aspiring writer who shares Charulata's passion for poetry, Amal is keen to encourage her literary talent ...

This is a household of seething, suppressed emotions, subtly revealed by Subrata Mitra's eloquent camera. A richly atmospheric soundtrack – bird song, horses' hooves, the cry of the kulfi vendor – evokes the wider world, while Ray's wistful score and the romantic songs beloved of Charulata and Amal heighten the sense of longing.

Adapted from a 1901 novella, *Nastanirh (The Broken Nest)* by the great Bengali writer Rabindranath Tagore, *Charulata* was described by its director as 'the one film I would make the same way if I had to do it again'.

Enthusiastically received at home and abroad, *Charulata* was awarded the Silver Bear for Best Direction at the Berlin Film Festival of 1965. Fifty years on, this big screen revival should not be missed.

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