

## ***GOTTA DANCE, GOTTA DANCE!***

BFI Southbank present a two month season of dance films and events as part of Big Dance 2014



**Thursday 22 May 2014, London.**

**BFI Southbank** today announce ***Gotta Dance, Gotta Dance!***, a two month season of dance films and events, programmed during July and August as part of **Big Dance 2014**. Taking place in the UK every two years, Big Dance is the UK's largest festival of dance participation and performance, and this season will celebrate big screen tales with dance at their heart.

From the million dollar franchise *Step Up* (2006, 2008, 2010, 2012), to BFI-backed hit *Streetdance 3D* (2010), to remakes of 80s cult hits such as *Footloose* (2011) and *Fame* (2009), dance films have become nothing short of a phenomenon in the last decade. These films come from a long tradition of dance on screen, and BFI Southbank's *Gotta Dance, Gotta Dance!* two month season will showcase the very best of the genre, offering audiences a chance to relive, or experience for the first time, the pulse-quickenning star turns of **Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Shirley MaLaine** and more. The season will screen some of the most groundbreaking dance films ever made including ***Singin' in the Rain* (1952), *West Side Story* (1961), *Top Hat* (1935), *Strictly Ballroom* (1992) and *Pina 3D* (2011).**

**Busby Berkeley** was a radical choreographer who, having made his breakthrough working on *42nd Street*, reached his zenith on ***Footlight Parade* (1933)**. Across six numbers, Berkeley uses his trademark kaleidoscopic overhead shots to showcase his geometric, art deco patterning of hundreds of scantily-clad female dancers in ever more fantastical, budget-blowing sequences; a big screen experience if there ever was one. That same year, **Fred Astaire** was becoming a star. Of the nine films in which he was perfectly partnered by **Ginger Rogers**, ***Top Hat* (1935)** is the most exquisitely fashioned. ***The Red Shoes* (1948)** took cinematic dance to hitherto unexpected emotional levels. Using **Jack Cardiff's** powerful cinematography, the great British team of **Powell and Pressburger** gave Hans Christian Andersen's story raw passion and gripping desperation, with an exquisite cast led by **Moira Shearer**. **Stanley Donen's** masterpiece about the advent of the talkie, ***Singin' in the Rain* (1952)**, will also be screened in all its glory; this film about filmmaking still feels fresh over 60 years later. A number of years after his star turn in *Singin' in the Rain* **Gene Kelly** appeared alongside **Catherine Deneuve** and **Françoise Dorléac** in **Jacques Demy's *Les Demoiselles de***

**Rochefort** (1967); the film focuses on twin sisters Delphine and Solange and takes place over the course of one weekend in Rochefort, where a fair is coming to town.

**Baz Luhrmann's** first film **Strictly Ballroom** (1992) stars **Paul Mercurio** as a young ambitious ballroom dancer teamed with an unlikely partner ahead of a competition. Visually ravishing with dynamic dance sequences, **Strictly Ballroom** was an exhilarating and successful screen debut for Luhrmann. Also screening will be **Billy Elliott** (2000), a film which spawned a hugely successful musical and made dance political, telling the story of 11-year-old Billy, who discovers a passion for ballet that he has to keep secret from his working-class family. In a reversal of **Billy Elliott's** adaptation for the stage, **Sweet Charity** (1969) was a big screen version of an already popular musical, which was in turn based on **Federico Fellini's** **Nights of Cabiria** (1957). Directed and choreographed by **Bob Fosse** and starring **Shirley MacLaine**, **Sweet Charity** was a financial disaster, but has since entered the pantheon of great movie musicals.

Inspired by the play of the same name by **Federico García Lorca**, **Blood Wedding** (1981) was written and directed by **Carlos Saura** and depicts a dance company performing a flamenco adaptation of Lorca's play. This overtly theatrical film was the first part of Saura's 1980s flamenco trilogy and was followed by **Carmen** (1981) and **El Amor brujo** (1986). Also inspired by a play was the phenomenally successful Oscar-winner **West Side Story** (1961). **Jerome Robbins'** and **Robert Wise's** thrilling musical pitted the Jets against the Sharks in a re-imagining of the Montagues and Capulets of **Romeo and Juliet**.

The season will also include a free illustrated talk for seniors conducted by film historian **Stephen Bourne**, examining one of the greatest dance teams in the history of cinema **The Nicholas Brothers**. Audiences can then see the brothers in action in a new 4K restoration of **Stormy Weather** (1943), which also features the talents of Fats Waller and Cab Calloway. Another event for seniors will be a screening of **Dance Hall** (1950), the charming tale of four factory girls who spend their evenings dancing the night away at the Chiswick Palais starring **Petulia Clark** and **Diana Dors**.

Completing the programme will be screenings of two inspiring dance documentaries, **Pina 3D** (2011) and **Routes** (2008). **Wim Wenders'** **Pina 3D** focuses on the life and work of contemporary dance choreographer **Pina Bausch**, who died unexpectedly during pre-production. Wenders was convinced to go ahead with the production by Pina's fellow dancers, who also appear in the film to talk about her legacy and perform some of her best-known pieces, a fitting tribute to an extraordinary dancer. **Routes** is the debut feature by **Alex Reuben** and is a road movie through the dance and music of the American Deep South. **Routes** captures all manner of dancing, from Clogging and Krumping to Memphis Hip-Hop and Indian Smoke Dance, all in a vivid stream of sound and vision.

The season will be complemented by a nine week film course **Gotta Study, Gotta Dance!**, looking at the choreographers, dancers and directors whose innovations have produced many mesmerising moments of cinema. Audiences will be able to relax in the **BFI Reuben Library**, where a selection of dance related books, reviews, designs and images from the BFI's collections will be made available to browse. During August there will also be a dedicated collection, **Dancing Feet**, in the **BFI Southbank Mediatheque**, where users will be able to watch inspiring dance-devoted films for free.

*In association with Big Dance*  
<http://www.bigdance.org.uk/>



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## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **Screening in July:**

#### **Dance First, Think Later: Great Dance Scenes in Non-Dance Films**

As a complement to our round up of great dance movies, this illustrated talk by the season's curator, Senior Film Programmer Geoff Andrew, explores how dance has been used, often very differently, in films which are neither musicals nor about dance. Using clips from a wide range of titles, we will look at the ways in which scenes of dance – be it self-expression or social interaction, ritual or spectacle – have been used to enhance the story, characterisation, mood or meaning of a film.

**Mon 14 July 18:20 NFT3**

#### **Footlight Parade**

*USA 1933. Dir Lloyd Bacon. With James Cagney, Joan Blondell, Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler. 101min. U*

The first film to make a song'n'dance story out of the vexed relationship between stage, screen and sound wasn't *Singin' in the Rain*. Warner Bros.' supreme backstager *Footlight Parade* got there two decades earlier with tart comedy and six jaw-dropping Busby Berkeley dance numbers. His unmissable, 15-minute 'By A Waterfall' sequence with 100 female dancers in an 80'x40' pool with sealed glass corridors for underwater filming, proves that nothing succeeds like excess.

**\*Introduced by Philip Kemp**

**Mon 21 July 18:10 NFT2\***

**Sun 27 July 16:15 NFT1**

#### **Hollywood's New Deal in Song & Dance: Footlight Parade and the Great Depression**

In this talk Harvey Cohen (author of 'Duke Ellington's America' and the forthcoming 'The Great Depression: Musicals and Hollywood's New Deal') examines the curious combination of entertainment and politics embedded within Depression-era hit *Footlight Parade*. While exploring the unique and moving fashion with which this song-and-dance spectacular reflected the grim realities of the Great Depression, Cohen also shows us the ways Hollywood moguls used cinema to support Roosevelt's New Deal programs, or even undermine them.

**Mon 21 July 20:30 BFI Reuben Library**

#### **Top Hat**

*USA 1935. Dir Mark Sandrich. With Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers. 101min. U*

Dance musical meets screwball comedy in the fourth – and finest – Astaire-Rogers teaming. The mistaken identity plot features comedy cameos aplenty from the likes of Edward Everett Horton and Erik Blore, but it's the dancing that truly sizzles, with Rogers winningly determined to give Astaire a run for his money in 'Isn't This A Lovely Day,' and shimmering in ostrich feathers while perfectly partnering him in Irving Berlin's Oscar®-winning 'Cheek to Cheek.'

**\*Introduced by David Benedict**

**Thu 3 July 20:45 NFT1**

**Sun 6 July 16:15 NFT1**

**Fri 11 July 20:40 NFT1\***

#### **The Red Shoes**

*UK 1948. Dirs Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger. With Moira Shearer, Anton Walbrook, Marius Goring. 133min. U*

Anton Walbrook's manipulative ballet impresario asks his new leading lady: 'What do you want from life? To live?' To which Moira Shearer replies, 'To dance.' In addition to being an art director's fevered dream, Powell and Pressburger's genre-busting, lush, plush and dangerous-to-know masterpiece of

dance and drama is a startlingly passionate story of art, jealousy, love and death that remains unsurpassed, and which has directly influenced artists from Kate Bush to Martin Scorsese.

**Sat 5 July 15:30 NFT2**

**Tue 8 July 20:20 NFT2**

### **Singin' in the Rain**

*USA 1952. Dirs Stanley Donen, Gene Kelly. With Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor. 102min. U*

'Singin' in the Rain and childbirth were the hardest things I ever had to do in my life,' remembered Debbie Reynolds, who was just 19 at the time of filming, and no dancer. But dance she did: out of a cake, over the furniture and into movie history. Kelly's rhapsodic and beloved title dance was shot on one August day (plus half a day's retakes) before 5pm when local residents turned on their lawn sprinklers, reducing the studio's water pressure to a dribble.

**\*Introduced by David Benedict**

**Wed 9 July 18:20 NFT1\***

**Wed 16 July 20:40 NFT1**

### **Strictly Ballroom**

*Australia 1992. Dir Baz Luhrmann. With Paul Mercurio, Tara Morice, Bill Hunter. 94min. PG*

Ambitious young dancer Scott Hastings (Mercurio) and his unlikely partner Fran (Morice) battle against tradition by attempting to win a competition on their own terms. Having taken ballroom lessons as a child, dance came naturally to writer-director Baz Luhrmann. His exhilarating and successful screen debut is effectively a musical without the singing – the dynamism of its dance sequences being the source of both the film's emotional peaks and the engine of its delicious rom-com plot.

**Wed 16 July 18:30 NFT2**

**Sun 20 July 15:50 NFT3**

### **Billy Elliot**

*UK 2000. Dir Stephen Daldry. With Jamie Bell, Julie Walters. 111min. 15*

Director Stephen Daldry's feature debut made dance political. Lee Hall's screenplay encompasses social and sexual politics in a compelling tale of personal triumph against the odds in the unlikely setting of the mid-80s miners' strike. Peter Darling's explosive and dazzlingly expressive choreography runs from joy to rage, and drives the tale of 11-year-old Billy, who discovers a passion for ballet that he has to keep secret from his working-class family.

**Thu 24 July 20:30 NFT2**

**Sat 26 July 18:10 NFT3**

**Tue 29 July 20:30 NFT3**

### **Free Seniors' Talk: The Nicholas Brothers**

Film historian Stephen Bourne presents an event dedicated to Harold and Fayard Nicholas – one of the greatest dance teams in the history of cinema, with a career that began at the Cotton Club in Harlem and spanned over 60 years. We begin with a screening of *The Nicholas Brothers: We Sing and We Dance* (UK 1992. Dirs Chris Bould, Michael Martin. 52min). This film includes sequences from *The Pirate* with Gene Kelly, *Down Argentine Way* with Carmen Miranda and a routine from *Stormy Weather*. It also includes unique home movie footage of the brothers with Fred Astaire.

**Free for over-60s, otherwise tickets available at normal matinee price**

**Mon 7 July 11:00 NFT3**

### **Stormy Weather**

*USA 1943. Dir Andrew L Stone. With Lena Horne, Bill Robinson, Cab Calloway and his Cotton Club Orchestra. 78min. New 4K digital restoration. U*

Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson returns home in 1918 after fighting in WWI and meets a beautiful singer (Lena Horne). This glorious digital restoration features entertainment giants such as Cab Calloway, Fats Waller and the Nicholas Brothers, whose 'Jumping Jive' sequence was considered by Fred Astaire to be 'the greatest movie musical number' he'd ever seen.

**Mon 7 July 14:00 NFT1\***

**Wed 9 July 20:45 NFT1**

**\*Free Seniors' Matinee for over-60s, otherwise tickets available at normal matinee price**

### Screening in August:

#### **Seniors' Matinee: Dance Hall**

UK 1950. Dir Charles Crichton. With Donald Houston, Petula Clark, Natasha Parry, Diana Dors. 80min.

#### **PG**

After a dull day at the factory, a group of four young women spend their evenings at the Chiswick Palais in pursuit of some glamour and fun. Relationships are formed and broken to the energetic beat of the dance band. With its multiple leading female characters and with the input of writer Diana Morgan, the film gets into the hearts and minds of the women as they search for their identity in a post-war world.

**Free for over 60's (tickets in person only), otherwise normal matinee price**

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

#### **West Side Story**

USA 1961. Dir. Robert Wise, Jerome Robbins. With Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer. 151min.

It's fair to say that secondary performers Russ Tamblyn and Rita Moreno far outshine the leads and much of the gangland world looks self-consciously stagey but none of that matters: this 10-Oscar-winner is a dance-drama sensation. Jerome Robbins was sacked during the troubled shoot but his high-adrenaline choreography of the Leonard Bernstein/Stephen Sondheim score brings Arthur Laurents' acute revamp of *Romeo and Juliet* to pulsating, unforgettable screen life.

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

#### **Les Demoiselles de Rochefort**

France 1967. Dir Jacques Demy. With Catherine Deneuve, Françoise D'Orléac, Gene Kelly 126min.

Following his triumph *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, Jacques Demy reteamed with composer Michel Legrand and Deneuve for this homage to Hollywood musicals. Deneuve and her real-life sister sing and dance through a search for love and escape in a wafer-thin story deliriously upstaged by the movie's crazy, candy-coloured sense of the absurd and Norman Maen's joyous, frankly jaw-dropping choreography. All that plus George Chakiris, Grover Dale and a balletic Gene Kelly and his unique French accent.

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

#### **Sweet Charity**

USA 1968. Dir Bob Fosse. With Shirley MacLaine, Sammy Davis Jnr. 149min

Having turned Fellini's gritty *Nights of Cabiria* into the soft-centred stage musical *Sweet Charity*, Bob Fosse attempted a return to darkness in his restless film version, his directing debut. The unquenchable highlights are the signature dance sequences from the sleaze-filled "Hey, Big Spender" to the euphoric trio "There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This" via the Sixties explosion "The Rhythm of Life". MacLaine is wounded and wonderful, not least in her über-Fosse solo "If My Friends Could See Me Now."

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

#### **Blood Wedding**

Spain 1981. Dir Carlos Saura. 71min.

The visceral, fervently poetic writing of Spain's Federico Garcia Lorca sounds forced in too prosaic English, just one reason why Carlos Saura's version of his *Blood Wedding* is so powerful: dialogue is banished. In this dance re-telling of the tale of a fateful marriage ruined by past feuds, Saura follows a group of dancers preparing for and giving the performance. Their embodiment of the threat and passion of flamenco fires up Lorca's drama in this genre-busting, dramatic dance film.

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

#### **Pina (3D)**

Germany 2011. Dir. Wim Wenders. 103min

The revolutionary Pina Bausch was the most widely and wildly admired and copied theatre-maker of the second half of the twentieth century – not bad for a choreographer. As befits so iconoclastic a dance-maker, Wim Wenders' extraordinary documentary is one part investigation, one part tribute – Bausch died during the filming – and wholly a celebration of her re-imagining of the possibilities of

dance. Unique access to her devoted dancers and Wenders' visual authority make this a dazzling one-off.

**+ The London Story**

UK 1986. Dir. Sally Potter. 16min

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

**Routes: Dancing to New Orleans**

UK 2008. Dir. Alex Reuben. 55min

Alex Reuben's joyous low-budget documentary explores and celebrates the physical, communal, even the political and spiritual aspects of everyday dance as he travels south from New England to post-Katrina New Orleans, filming a wondrously diverse array of steps and styles, traditional and modern, solitary and social, performed by ordinary Americans in a range of locations. The music and movements are captured with a thrilling intimacy and exhilarating simplicity.

**+ Que Pasa?**

UK 2001. Dir Alex Reuben. 1min

**+ Line Dance**

UK 2004. Dir Alex Reuben. 5min

Two animated shorts show their director's keen sense of rhythm and form.

**+ Newsreel: Melt Down**

UK 2011. Dir Alex Reuben. 6min

Dance as unadulterated movement and simple spectacle, with Reuben recording a live performance in London's Brunswick Square during 2011's Dance Umbrella.

**DATE AND TIME TBC**

**About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead organisation 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](http://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**

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**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](http://www.image.net) under BFI / BFI Southbank / July 2014 / Gotta Dance, Gotta Dance!