

The Great Disruptor
BFI celebrates Orson Welles' centenary
and premieres new documentary
Magician: The Astonishing Life and Work of Orson Welles
#AwesomeWelles www.bfi.org.uk/orsonwelles



'The patron saint of indie filmmakers' Richard Linklater

Wednesday 6 May 2015, London

On the day he would have been 100 years old, the BFI announces a major focus on the work of **Orson Welles** including a **two-month season at BFI Southbank**, a UK-wide theatrical re-release of *Touch of Evil* (1958), theatrical and DVD releases of a new documentary *Magician: The Astonishing Life and Work of Orson Welles* (Chuck Workman, 2014) and a DVD and limited edition Blu-ray release of the television series *Around the World with Orson Welles* (1955). A century after his birth and with *Citizen Kane* (1941) voted Sight & Sound magazine's greatest film of all time for 50 years, Orson Welles' position as a titan of cinema is assured and he is one of the few filmmakers that is generally regarded as a true genius. An artist and innovator who worked in a variety of mediums – on stage, radio and the big and small screen – Welles consistently pushed boundaries, disregarded norms, and flouted conventions, including those of Hollywood.

Orson Welles: The Great Disruptor at BFI Southbank, 1 July – 31 August

During July and August BFI Southbank will screen a comprehensive season of Welles' work in both film and TV, much of it starring himself. Besides famous classics like his first feature *Citizen Kane* – often cited as the greatest movie ever made – *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) and *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948), the season will offer audiences a chance to become acquainted with less familiar titles like *The Trial* (1962), *The Immortal Story* (1968) and *F for Fake* (1976). It will also include three remarkable adaptations of Shakespeare: *Macbeth* (1948), *Othello* (1952) and *Chimes at Midnight* (1966), the latter compiled from five plays and widely considered a highpoint of Welles' remarkable career. The season will be packed with rarities, including the recently discovered *Too Much Johnson* (1938) – filmed for an ambitious theatrical production two years before he made his feature debut – and six compilation programmes of rarities, featuring shorts, trailers, TV productions, theatrical adaptations, documentaries, and unfinished projects. There will also be three

accompanying talks by season curators **Geoff Andrew** and **Ben Walters** and from Welles biographer **Simon Callow**.

The season will feature extended runs of *The Third Man* (1949), re-released by Studio Canal in a new 4K restoration in cinemas on 26 June and on DVD and Blu-ray on 20 July, the BFI's re-release of *Touch of Evil*, and the BFI release of the fascinating new documentary *Magician: The Astonishing Life and Work of Orson Welles*.

Touch of Evil (1998 version) – released in selected cinemas UK-wide on 10 July

A BFI release of a UIP film

First press screening: Friday 8 May at 6.30pm at BFI Screening Rooms, 21 Stephen Street, W1

In a seedy US-Mexican border town, detective Miguel Vargas (**Charlton Heston**) and his newlywed wife Susie (**Janet Leigh**) become embroiled in a deadly maelstrom of crime and corruption as Miguel's investigations into narcotics rings bring him into conflict with local law-enforcer Hank Quinlan (**Orson Welles**). The last feature Welles made in Hollywood, *Touch of Evil* is a virtuoso foray into *film noir*, exhibiting his extraordinary sense of cinematic style, vivid characterisation and an almost Shakespearian flair for tragedy. Indeed, there are many who would argue that it rivals *Citizen Kane* as Welles' masterpiece. The 1998 version is a re-edit of the original by Walter Murch based on a 58-page memo Welles wrote to Universal with his suggestions of alterations to the studio's cut.

Magician: The Astonishing Life and Work of Orson Welles – released in selected cinemas UK-wide on 3 July and on BFI DVD on 24 August

A BFI release of a Calliope Films Production, presented by Cohen Media Group

Next press screening: mid-June, details TBC

Magician: The Astonishing Life and Work of Orson Welles is an illuminating, entertaining and ultimately moving new documentary by award-winning filmmaker **Chuck Workman**. It tells the fascinating story of Welles' life and career through copious interviews with the great man himself over half a century; through clips from works both familiar and seldom seen; and through testimonies from filmmakers, critics, friends and family members including **Martin Scorsese**, **Peter Bogdanovich**, **Jeanne Moreau**, **Charlton Heston**, **Simon Callow** and **Richard Linklater**, and Welles' collaborator and companion **Oja Kodar**.

Around the World with Orson Welles – released on BFI DVD and limited edition Blu-ray on 24 August

Though better known for innovative contributions to radio, film and theatre, Orson Welles also worked in television, often to ground-breaking effect. In 1955, Associated-Rediffusion commissioned Welles to write, direct and host a mini-series. Despite its grand title, the series was filmed entirely in Europe. Part home-movie, part cinematic essay, each episode takes the viewer on a fascinating journey across the continent. In Paris, we are introduced to famous artists such as Jean Cocteau; in Madrid, we attend a bullfight; and in Vienna, in an episode which was long believed lost, we are taken to the locations of *The Third Man*.

The six episodes that were broadcast on Britain's then-new ITV channel are: *Pays Basque I*; *Pays Basque II*; *The Third Man Returns to Vienna*; *St.-Germain-des-Prés*; *Chelsea Pensioners* and *Madrid Bullfight*.

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TITLES SCREENING IN ORSON WELLES: THE GREAT DISRUPTOR:

JULY:

Arena: The Orson Welles Story

UK 1982. Dir Leslie Megahey. With Orson Welles, Alan Yentob, John Huston, Jeanne Moreau, Anthony Perkins. 160 min.

Welles surveys his whole life in this epic two-part interview

Citizen Kane

US 1940. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Everett Sloane. 119 min. U.

The greatest movie ever made retains its power to surprise

The Magnificent Ambersons

US 1942. Dir Orson Welles. With Joseph Cotten, Dolores Costello, Tim Holt, Agnes Moorehead, Anne Baxter. 88 min. U.

Welles's follow-up to Citizen Kane is a testament to lost opportunities

It's All True

US/France 1942/1993. Dir Bill Krohn, Myron Meisel, Orson Welles Richard Wilson, Norman Foster. With Manuel 'Jacare' Olimpio Meira, Jeronimo André De Souza, Raimundo 'Tata' Correia Lima, Manuel 'Preto' Pereira Da Silva. 89 min.

A documentary about Welles's ambitious but abortive Brazilian portmanteau project

Journey into Fear

US 1943. Dir Orson Welles, Norman Foster. With Joseph Cotten, Orson Welles, Dolores Del Rio, Ruth Warrick. 70 min. PG.

A tongue-in-cheek thriller

Too Much Johnson

US 1938. Dir. Orson Welles. With Joseph Cotten, Virginia Nicholson, Edgar Barrier. 40 mins.

Welles's newly unearthed professional film debut

The Stranger

US 1946. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Edward G. Robinson, Loretta Young, Billy House. 95 min. PG.

Welles's most conventional film as director still offers some surprises

The Lady from Shanghai

US 1947. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, Glenn Anders. 87 min. PG.

A baroque noir with a twisted plot and truly bizarre locations

Macbeth

US 1948. With Orson Welles, Jeanette Nolan, Dan O'Herlihy, Roddy McDowall. 107 min. PG.

This lean take on the Scottish play anticipates TV studio drama

Jane Eyre

US 1943. Dir Robert Stevenson. With Orson Welles, Joan Fontaine, Margaret O'Brien. 98 min. PG.

Welles the actor brooding on cue to fund Welles the magician

Othello

US 1952. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Micheál Mac Liammoir, Suzanne Cloutier, Robert Coote. 90 min. U.

A masterpiece of ramshackle independent production and seductive montage

Mr Arkadin (aka Confidential Report)

US 1955. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Peter Van Eyck, Michael Redgrave, Paola Mori. 100 min. PG.

Shades of Citizen Kane in this slippery investigation into a hollow man

The Trial

UK 1962. Dir Orson Welles. With Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Elsa Martinelli, Orson Welles. 118 min. PG.

This chilly, witty Kafka adaptation finds new uses for experimental techniques

AUGUST:

Arrested development: how Orson Welles tried to revolutionise TV and why TV wouldn't let him

An illustrated talk by Ben Walters. 60 min.

An illustrated talk exploring Welles's radical yet little-known approach to TV

Around the World with Orson Welles

Associated-Rediffusion 1955. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles.

A colourful, charming travelogue series developing Welles's televisual language

Chimes at Midnight

France/Spain/Switzerland 1966. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Keith Baxter, John Gielgud, Jeanne Moreau. 119 minutes. PG

Welles gives his uproarious, tragic Falstaff in a bravura masterpiece

The Immortal Story

France 1968. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Jeanne Moreau, Roger Coggio, Norman Eshley. 57min. 15

+ Person to Person

CBS 1955. With Orson Welles, Edward R. Murrow. 31min.

Two titles shedding light on Welles's intriguing engagement with television

F for Fake

France/Iran/West Germany 1976. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Oja Kodar, Clifford Irving, Elmyr de Hory. 85min. PG

A mischievous essay on identity drawing on Welles's televisual language

Filming 'Othello'

West Germany 1978. Dir Orson Welles. With Orson Welles, Michaél Mac Liammoir, Hilton Edwards. 85min.

This reflection on 1952's *Othello* is as tricky as its subject

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

***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at www.image.net under BFI / Orson Welles: The Great Disruptor