

## SIR ALAN PARKER DONATES WORKING ARCHIVES TO BFI



**I-r: Sir Alan Parker with Madonna on set of Evita; with Mickey Rourke on Angel Heart; directing an Oliver Twist commercial; demonstrating custard pie technique on Bugsy Malone. Credit: BFI National Archive**

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015, London.** Sir Alan Parker, one of Britain's most distinguished filmmakers has donated his entire working archive to the BFI National Archive. The collection covers over 45 years of filmmaking, from his early work as a commercials director for television, through to his career as an internationally renowned, award-winning director of some of the finest films of the period, from **Bugsy Malone** (1976) and **Midnight Express** (1978) to **Mississippi Burning** (1988) and **Angela's Ashes** (1999) interspersed with a string of hugely popular musicals including **Fame** (1980), **Pink Floyd - The Wall** (1982), **The Commitments** (1991) and **Evita** (1996). To celebrate the donation, BFI Southbank will host a Focus On Sir Alan Parker from 24 September to 4 October, including a special on stage event, Sir Alan Parker and Lord Puttnam Unplugged, on 24 September, and an exhibition of his work.

The Sir Alan Parker archive covers every period of his career, starting with his work as an advertising copywriter. All of his features are represented, with a wealth of scripts, production papers, promotional materials, posters and Parker's own filmmaking diaries, offering a hugely important resource for students of film and television. The archive also includes a particularly rich collection of photographs and production stills, by photographers including Greg Williams, Mary Ellen Mark, Terry O'Neill and David Appleby, documenting his films to an exceptional degree.

Nathalie Morris, Senior Curator - Special Collections, BFI said, *"This is an exceptionally rich archive charting the work of a British filmmaker who has had a hugely successful international career. Sir Alan Parker is one of several distinctive talents to emerge from a very particular place and moment – the British advertising industry of the late 60s and early 70s. His archive will provide a wealth of insights into his working process as a writer and director, as well enhancing our understanding of the film industry, and filmmaking, over the past 40 years. The BFI National Archive is delighted to be preserving this archive for the nation. We are incredibly grateful to Sir Alan for his generous donation."*

Sir Alan Parker said, *"It seems that I've accumulated an awful lot of stuff over forty years of filmmaking and I can't think of a better home for it than the BFI National Archive. As a past chairman of the BFI, I know how everything is so diligently cared for out at Berkhamsted and it's good to know it's in safe hands and will be available to future students of film."*

The collection which comprises over 70 large document boxes has been transported to the BFI National Archive at Berkhamsted where it will be stored in optimal archival conditions. Once catalogued, the archive will be open to the public, with selected material being digitised for access.

#### **FOCUS ON SIR ALAN PARKER AT BFI SOUTHBANK**

To mark this new and exciting acquisition, BFI Southbank will host a Focus on Sir Alan Parker from 24 September – 25 October 2015. Parker and producer David Puttnam (whose papers are also held by the BFI National Archive) have been friends since their days as advertising luminaries in the 60's beginning their film careers together in the early 70's. At **Sir Alan Parker and Lord Puttnam Unplugged on Thursday 24 September** for the first time ever, the two of them take to the stage to talk about working together in film, their friendship and their unique views on the film industry, past and present. This event will be followed by a screening of ***Midnight Express*** (1978); directed by Parker, produced by Puttnam and with an Oscar®-winning screenplay by Oliver Stone, ***Midnight Express*** remains as powerful now as when it first came out in 1978. Also screening as part of the focus will be Parker's feature debut, the stylish and uplifting film for all ages ***Bugsy Malone*** (1976), starring Jodie Foster and Scott Baio. There will be a Family Funday screening on Sunday 4 October, complete with a Funday workshop in the BFI Foyer before the screening.

There will be two exhibitions at BFI Southbank as part of the focus, the first of which offers a peek into the newly acquired **Alan Parker archive**, spanning his career from his early work in advertising through to his most recent feature film work (Thu 24 Sep – Sun 25 Oct, Mezzanine). The second exhibit ***The Cartoons of Alan Parker*** will run in the BFI Southbank Atrium from Fri 25 Sep – Mon 5 Oct and will showcase Parker's infamous cartoon work. Parker began drawing cartoons 50 years ago when working as a copywriter at a small ad agency. *'We had to turn out 10 ads a day,'* he says, *'so the most expedient method was to come up with an idea, a line, and draw a cartoon.'* During his later career as a film director and writer, Parker continued to be a prolific cartoonist, mostly lambasting the pretensions and excesses of art and the film industry (the BFI included!).

## **LISTINGS**

### **Sir Alan Parker and Lord Puttnam Unplugged**

Director Alan Parker and producer David Puttnam have been friends since their days as advertising luminaries in the 60's beginning their film careers together in the early 70's. Here, for the first time ever, the two of them take to the stage to talk about their friendship and their unique views on the film industry, past and present.

*Joint ticket available with Midnight Express £16, concs £12 (Members pay £1.70 less)*

**THU 24 SEP 18:30 NFT1**

### **Midnight Express**

*UK 1978. Dir Alan Parker. With Brad Davis, John Hurt, Randy Quaid,. 121min. Digital. 18*

In 1970 an American student on holiday in Turkey is arrested for smuggling drugs out of the country and faces a lifetime locked away in a harsh Turkish prison. Directed by Parker, produced by Puttnam and with an Oscar®-winning screenplay by Oliver Stone, *Midnight Express* remains as powerful now as when it was first released in 1978.

*Joint ticket available with Sir Alan Parker and Lord Puttnam in Conversation*

**THU 24 SEP 20:40 NFT1**

### **Funday: Bugsy Malone + Q&A With Sir Alan Parker**

*UK 1976. Dir Alan Parker. With Jodie Foster, Scott Baio, Florrie Dugger. 93min. Digital. U*

In this stylish and uplifting film for all ages, two rival gangs in 1929 New York fight to control the city. Dandy Dan looks to have the edge when he reveals his secret weapon: the splurge gun, which fires an endless supply of custard. Bugsy Malone and his sweetheart Blousey dream of a new life in Hollywood, but soon get caught in the crossfire.

**SUN 4 OCT 13:20 NFT1**

### **The Cartoons of Alan Parker**

Sir Alan Parker began drawing cartoons 50 years ago when working as a copywriter at a small ad agency. 'We had to turn out 10 ads a day,' he says, 'so the most expedient method was to come up with an idea, a line, and draw a cartoon.' During his later career as a film director and writer, Parker continued to be a prolific cartoonist, mostly lambasting the pretensions and excesses of art and the film industry (the BFI included!). His films have won 19 BAFTA awards, 10 Golden Globes and 10 Oscars®. His cartoons are yet to win anything... Parental guidance advised.

**FRI 25 SEP – MON 5 OCT ATRIUM**

## **Alan Parker exhibition**

Charting Parker's career from advertising copywriter to internationally renowned director, his exhibition offers a peek into this exciting new acquisition.

**THU 24 SEP – SUN 25 OCT MEZZANINE**

### **Notes to editors:**

#### **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 is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Greg Dyke.

#### **About the BFI National Archive**

The BFI National Archive was founded in 1935 and has grown to become the one of the largest and most important collections of film and television in the world with over 180,000 films and 770,000 television programmes. For over 80 years the BFI has been an international leader in film preservation and guardian of Britain's unparalleled film and TV heritage. The BFI is an innovator in presenting films to audiences in new and dynamic ways, from cinemas to film festivals, outdoor events to online video-on-demand. At the heart of all its activities is the BFI's central aim to ensure that everyone in the UK has access to the widest possible range of film and their own film heritage.

That heritage includes all time great British directors Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean and Powell and Pressburger; and the rich vein of documentary filmmaking, in which Britain led the world, including the lyrical work of Humphrey Jennings. The archive also boasts significant Special Collections of filmmakers' papers, including the papers of David Lean, Ken Loach and David Puttnam, as well as extensive stills, posters and production and costume designs along with original scripts, press books and related ephemera.

Expert teams undertake the time-consuming and complex task of restoring films at the BFI John Paul Getty Jr Conservation Centre in Hertfordshire. The BFI's most precious film materials are kept in optimum conditions in the world-leading Master Film Store in Warwickshire.



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**\*\*\* PICTURE DESK \*\*\***

**A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting this story and BFI Southbank screenings can be found at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI / BFI Southbank / September 2015/Sir Alan Parker**