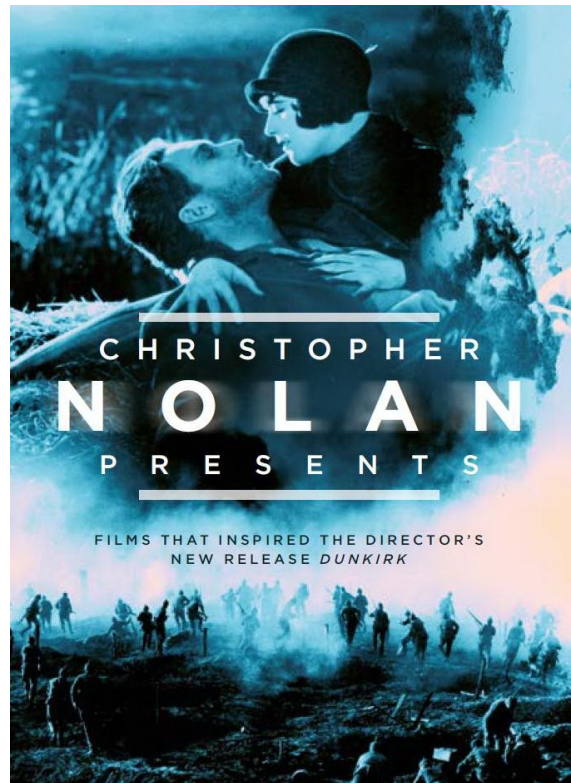


BFI Southbank announce season of films curated by award-winning director Christopher Nolan

Wednesday 24 May 2017, London.

Running from **1-31 July**, BFI Southbank are delighted to present a season of films which have inspired director **Christopher Nolan's** new feature *Dunkirk* (2017), released in cinemas across the UK on **Friday 21 July**. **CHRISTOPHER NOLAN PRESENTS** has been personally curated by the award-winning director and will offer audiences unique insight into the films which influenced his hotly anticipated take on one of the key moments of WWII. The season will include a **special preview screening of *Dunkirk* on Thursday 13 July**, which will be presented in 70mm and include an **introduction** from the director himself. Christopher Nolan is a passionate advocate for the importance of seeing films projected on film, and as one of the few cinemas in the UK that still shows a vast amount of celluloid film, **BFI Southbank will screen all the films in the season on 35mm or 70mm**. In 2015 Nolan appeared on stage alongside visual artist Tacita Dean at the BFI London Film Festival to discuss the importance of celluloid as an artistic medium, and he consistently shoots on film despite the industry's move toward digital.



Here, **Christopher Nolan** sums up his programming choices for this exclusive season:

“You might expect a season of films leading up to a screening of *Dunkirk* to be a selection of war movies. But I chose to approach *Dunkirk* more as survival story than war film. One look at James Jones’ essay on ‘Phony War Films’ (in which he takes down several of my old favourites) immediately shows you the perils of taking on real-life combat in a dramatic motion picture. In Jones’ estimation *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Lewis Milestone, 1930) said it first and best: war dehumanises. Revisiting that masterpiece it is hard to disagree that the intensity and horror have never been bettered. For me, the film demonstrates the power of resisting the convention of finding meaning and logic in individual fate. Most of the other films in this series fall into two different, but overlapping categories. From established classics of tension like *The Wages of Fear* (Henri-Georges Clouzot, 1953) and *Alien* (Ridley Scott, 1979) through to the more recent ticking-clock nail-biters *Speed* (Jan de Bont, 1994) and Tony Scott’s final film, the relentless *Unstoppable* (2010), our season explores the mechanics and uses of suspense to modulate an audience’s response to narrative.

Other titles explore the possibilities of purely visual storytelling, whether literally, in the case of the silent epics – Stroheim’s *Greed* (1924) and Murnau’s *Sunrise* (1927) – or in part, like the thrilling windswept beaches and crashing waves of *Ryan’s Daughter* (David Lean, 1970). The relationship of

geographical spectacle to narrative and thematic drive in these works is extraordinary and inspiring. Pure cinema. *The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966) is a timeless and affecting *verité* narrative, which forces empathy with its characters in the least theatrical manner imaginable. We care about the people in the film simply because we feel immersed in their reality and the odds they face. The visual splendour, intertwined narratives and aggressively anachronistic music of Hugh Hudson's *Chariots of Fire* (1981) combined to create a masterpiece of British understatement whose popularity rapidly obscured its radical nature. Finally, no examination of cinematic suspense and visual storytelling would be complete without Hitchcock, and his technical virtuosity in *Foreign Correspondent's* (1940) portrayal of the downing of a plane at sea provided inspiration for much of what we attempted in *Dunkirk*. All the films are screened on 35mm or 70mm prints. I hope you will enjoy the rare opportunity of seeing these incredible movies in their original analogue glory, as nature intended."

– ENDS –

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SEASON LISTINGS:

Preview: Dunkirk + intro by director Christopher Nolan

Netherlands-UK-France-USA 2017. Dir Christopher Nolan. With Tom Hardy, Cillian Murphy, Mark Rylance, Kenneth Branagh. RT and cert TBC. 70mm. Courtesy of Warner Brothers

Dunkirk opens as hundreds of thousands of British and Allied troops are surrounded by enemy forces. Trapped on the beach with their backs to the sea they face an impossible situation as the enemy closes in. We're delighted to screen Nolan's much anticipated vision of an event that shaped our world.

Tickets £24, concs £19.20 (Members pay £2 less)

THU 13 JUL 20:15 NFT1

Greed

USA 1924. Dir Erich von Stroheim. With Gibson Gowland, Zasu Pitts, Jean Hersholt. 132min. 35mm. PG. With live piano accompaniment

Hollywood's more serious stabs at realist fiction emulate the social and psychological nuances of the 19th-century novel, and no one has taken American film further down that road than Stroheim. Shot on location in San Francisco and Death Valley, the film was cut to less than a third of its original nine hours, but remains extraordinary for its unflinching vision of the corrosive power of money.

SUN 2 JUL 15:10 NFT1 / SUN 9 JUL 14:15 NFT3

Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans

USA 1927. Dir FW Murnau. With George O'Brien, Janet Gaynor, Margaret Livingston. 94min. 35mm. With score. U

Murnau's foray into American cinema sees him construct a world free of geographic and social specifics – a dreamlike rural landscape and a brash cityscape that is everywhere and nowhere. Made at the end of the silent era, it pioneered the use of synchronous sound on film, for Reisenfeld's score as well as such sound effects as traffic, whistles and church bells. *Sunrise* stands as a haunting fable – a dream of crime, love, loss and redemption.

MON 3 JUL 20:40 NFT2 / SAT 8 JUL 18:20 NFT2 / WED 12 JUL 20:50 NFT2

All Quiet on the Western Front

USA 1930. Dir Lewis Milestone. With Lew Ayres, Louis Wolheim, John Wray. 133min with restored soundtrack. 35mm. PG

All Quiet on the Western Front is rightly recognised as one of cinema's most enduring and emotive portrayals of the tragedy of the Great War. This epic film concerns a generation of German schoolboys who – exhorted by their patriotic teacher – enlist enthusiastically but are ultimately destroyed in the war. Based on Erich Maria Remarque's classic novel, the film proved highly controversial and was banned in many countries.

SUN 2 JUL 17:20 NFT3 / THU 6 JUL 18:00 NFT3

Considering All Quiet on the Western Front

TRT 90min

During WWI, Lewis Milestone, a recent Russian émigré to the US, made films for the Signal Corp, and this experience undoubtedly informed his 1930 Hollywood masterpiece, *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Film historian Kevin Brownlow (who interviewed Milestone about his film career in the 1960s) will be joined by film professional Mamoun Hassan to discuss – alongside film clips and a rare trailer – the history and achievement of what is considered to be the greatest anti-war film of all time.

Tickets £6.50

THU 6 JUL 20:40 NFT3

Foreign Correspondent

USA 1940. Dir Alfred Hitchcock. With Laraine Day, George Sanders, Joel McCrea. 119min. 35mm. PG

Made partly to raise the American public's awareness of the Nazi threat, this picaresque espionage adventure follows a US journalist to London and Holland to cover a mooted peace treaty; instead, with the help of a diplomat's daughter, he uncovers a conspiracy. Set pieces abound, including one at Westminster Cathedral and a windmill that conceals a sinister secret.

SAT 1 JUL 15:20 NFT1 / SUN 22 JUL 15:10 NFT3

The Wages of Fear Le salaire de la peur

France-Italy 1953. Dir Henri-Georges Clouzot. With Yves Montand, Charles Vanel, Véra Clouzot. 147min. 35mm. EST. PG

Watched by a hungry vulture, a child plays with cockroaches in the dusty street of a South American shantytown. So begins one of the most nerve-wrackingly suspenseful films ever made, as four desperados take on a suicidal mission to drive two trucks full of nitro-glycerine along precipitous, pot-holed roads. As the tension mounts, this journey to hell is propelled to its misanthropic conclusion by a truly unsettling score.

SAT 15 JUL 18:00 NFT1 / SAT 22 JUL 17:40 NFT3

The Battle of Algiers La battaglia di Algeri

Algeria-Italy 1966. Dir Gillo Pontecorvo. With Jean Martin, Yacef Saadi, Brahim Hadjadj. 121min. 35mm. EST. 15
Algiers functions as both the site and symbol of struggle in this dazzling reconstruction of nationalist opposition to French occupation during the 1950s. The Old City nurtures and shelters the guerrilla fighters who, despite brutal reprisals, repeatedly venture from it to attack the colonial might of the new 'European' city. *Battle of Algiers* is an award-winning masterpiece of political cinema.

TUE 4 JUL 18:15 NFT3 / SUN 9 JUL 20:10 NFT1

Ryan's Daughter

UK 1970. Dir David Lean. With John Mills, Sarah Miles, Robert Mitchum. 194min (+ interval). 70mm. 15

With a harsh critical response at the time of its release, *Ryan's Daughter* is a triumph of sensual storytelling for David Lean. Robert Bolt's script reworks Hardy-esque formulae into a story about romantic excess and moral cowardice, set during the Troubles of 1916, woven into a vision of damnation. Freddie Young and John Mills won Oscars®, and deservedly so.

SUN 16 JUL 15:15 NFT1 / WED 19 JUL 19:00 NFT1

Alien

UK-USA 1979. Dir Ridley Scott. With Sigourney Weaver, John Hurt, Ian Holm. 116min. 35mm. 15

The *Alien* phenomenon began here as the crew of the *Nostromo* are woken from stasis by the ship's computer and grudgingly sent to investigate a transmission of unknown origin. They discover a deadly alien species and

as the crew are picked off one by one, Ripley takes her place as the ultimate sci-fi heroine. This iconic classic features designs from HR Giger and a brilliant script by Dan O'Bannon.

SUN 23 JUL 20:15 NFT1 / SAT 29 JUL 20:45 NFT1

Chariots of Fire

UK 1981. Dir Hugh Hudson. With Ben Cross, Ian Charleson, Ian Holm, Nicholas Farrell. 123min. 35mm. PG

Hugh Hudson's visually magnificent, emotionally exhilarating account of the struggle by Harold Abrahams and Eric Liddell to compete on their own terms at the 1924 Olympics seemed to herald a new highpoint in British cinema and was a hit at the Oscars®. With fine use of slow motion, *Chariots of Fire* tugged at the heartstrings of a nation.

SAT 15 JUL 15:20 NFT3 / SUN 23 JUL 17:40 NFT1

Speed

USA 1994. Dir Jan de Bont. With Keanu Reeves, Sandra Bullock, Dennis Hopper. 116min. 35mm. 15

This blockbuster hit has non-stop, edge of the seat thrills and spills. Reeves turns in a strong performance as the hero, a SWAT cop dealing with a crazed bomber who has wired up a bus to explode if the speed drops below 50mph. Bullock shines as the feisty passenger at the steering wheel. A thoroughly enjoyable roller-coaster ride of a movie.

TUE 25 JUL 20:50 NFT1 / SUN 30 JUL 17:20 NFT3

Unstoppable

USA 2010. Dir Tony Scott. With Denzel Washington, Chris Pine, Rosario Dawson. 98min. 35mm. 12A

With the poster tag line reading '1 million tonnes of steel, 100,000 lives at stake, 100 minutes to impact', Tony Scott's final film as a director is about a runaway freight train, a retired railroad engineer and a rookie conductor who must figure out a way of trying to avert disaster. It's a well-made, suspenseful thriller that works as a great companion piece to *Speed*.

SAT 29 JUL 17:50 NFT3 / MON 31 JUL 20:45 NFT1

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 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 Josh Berger CBE.

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 £12.10, concs £9.70 including Gift Aid donation. Members pay £2.00 less on any ticket - www.bfi.org.uk/southbank.

Young people aged 25 and under can buy last minute tickets for just £3, 45 minutes before the start of screenings and events, subject to availability - <http://www.bfi.org.uk/25-and-under>.

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 under BFI / BFI Southbank / 2017 / July / Christopher Nolan Presents