

***UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 19 APRIL 2012, 11.59PM

ADRIAN WOOTTON ILLUSTRATED FILM TALKS KICK-OFF MELBOURNE CELEBRATES DICKENS SEASON

Former British Film Institute and London Film Festival Director Adrian Wootton returns to Melbourne for another series of his acclaimed **Illustrated Film Talks**, this year focusing on Charles Dickens and Film to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the author's birthday.

The **Illustrated Film Talks** kick-off a wider *Melbourne Celebrates Dickens* season running from 17-26 August, as part of the global *Dickens 2012* initiative, that combines events from the **Melbourne International Film Festival**, **MIFF 37th South Market & Accelerator** and **The Wheeler Centre**, as well as **Australian Centre for the Moving Image** (ACMI) and the **Melbourne Writers Festival**.

Presented exclusively in Melbourne by the **Melbourne International Film Festival's MIFF 37th South Market & Accelerator** and **The Wheeler Centre**, this year's **Adrian Wootton Illustrated Film Talks** celebrate Charles Dickens – the most adapted novelist in the history of film and TV, with around 400 films and TV series made so far from his books. Wootton is Co-Director of *Dickens 2012*, the Charles Dickens Museum and Film London-co-ordinated worldwide project to celebrate the life, work and enduring legacy of Dickens, and has co-curated the British Film Institute's *Dickens on Screen* season and wrote, narrated and produced the BBC/Film London documentary *Arena: Dickens on Film*.

A former Director of the London Film Festival, British Film Institute and the UK's National Film Theatre, Wootton is presently Chief Executive of Film London & the British Film Commission, Director of crime and mystery festival Crime Scene and a program advisor to the London Film Festival and Venice Film Festival. He contributes screen culture articles to *The Guardian* and *Sight & Sound*, regularly reviews films on BBC Radio and is working on several book projects. During last year's MIFF, Wootton presented a series of his Illustrated Film Talks on a range of cinema greats, including Raymond Chandler, Howard Hawks and Graham Greene.

This year's **Illustrated Film Talks** program includes:

- **Dickens on Film (Saturday 18 August: 4.30pm to 6pm)**: Liberally sprinkled with slides and film clips, this talk examines the rich legacy of Dickens adaptations on film and TV, from 1898 to the present day, and describes how Dickens was a great innovator of narrative, character, subject matter and imagery - and influenced the creation of the cinematic medium itself.
- **Dickens and Crime Fiction and Film (Sunday 19 August: 4.30pm to 6pm)**: With a plethora of photo slides and multiple film clips, draws on Wootton's research into Dickens's fascination with, and writing about, true crime, social injustice and penal reform, his fictional work in and influence on the crime fiction and detective genre in literature (including his collaboration with other authors, such as Wilkie Collins).

MIFF will also celebrate the Dickens bi-centenary with the world debut of the **MIFF Premiere Fund**-supported feature documentary *First Fagin* (from Director **Alan Rosenthal** and Producer **Veronica Fury**). The film explores the adventures of one of Australia's most infamous convicts, Ikey Solomon, who inspired Charles Dickens comic and grim character of Fagin from *Oliver Twist*. The time and date of the premiere will be announced in early July.

Lectures occur at the **Village Roadshow Theatre at the State Library** and lecture tickets (at \$19 for each talk or \$14 concession) can be booked at www.wheelercentre.com (MIFF passes are not valid). Film tickets for the tie-in movie *First Fagin* will be available on the MIFF website www.miff.com.au from 13 July.

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A special *Dickens on Film Student Program* will be presented by **MIFF 37°South Market & Accelerator** and **The Wheeler Centre**, in association with the **Melbourne International Film Festival NextGen** program, comprising a repeat screening of *First Fagin* (9.30am, Friday 17 August, at the Village Roadshow Theatre at the State Library) directly followed by Adrian Wootton's Illustrated Film Talk **on the Life of Dickens** (from 11am to 12.30). This talk examines the life and times of Dickens, his literary legacy and innovations, his key fascination with - and lasting influence on - crime fiction, and his inspiration for countless screen adaptations. This program is targeted at students and school groups; however bookings are open to the general public.

ACMI's Melbourne Celebrates Dickens program, **Of Paupers and Gentlemen: Charles Dickens on Film**, sees a selection of rare, restored and celebrated classic Dickens adaptations screening at ACMI from Monday 20 August to Wednesday 22 August 2012. The ACMI Dickens line-up comprises: **A Tale of Two Cities** (director Jack Conway, 1935); **Mystery of Edwin Drood** (Stuart Walker, 1935); **Great Expectations** (David Lean, 1946); **The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby** (Alberto Cavalcanti); **Great Expectations** (Alfonso Cuarón, 1998). For full program and ticketing details, visit www.acmi.net.au

The *Melbourne Celebrates Dickens* season concludes with a series of events, from 23-26 August, at **The Melbourne Writers Festival (MWF)**, starting with the MWF unrolling the red carpet to feature a renowned Dickens aficionado in its Opening Night event on Thursday 23 August at the Melbourne Town Hall.

Keep an eye on the following websites for more information about the various Melbourne Celebrates Dickens (17-26 August) activities:

- The Wheeler Centre: www.wheelercentre.com
- MIFF 37°South Market: www.miff37degreesSouth.com
- Melbourne International Film Festival (2-19 August): www.miff.com.au
- Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI): www.acmi.net.au
- Melbourne Writers Festival (23 August – 2 September): www.mwf.com.au/2012/
- Dickens 2012: www.dickens2012.org

About Dickens 2012

Dickens 2012, co-ordinated by the Charles Dickens Museum and Film London in association with the Dickens Fellowship, is an international celebration of the cultural and educational significance of the life and work of Charles Dickens to mark the bicentenary of his birth. Dickens-related activity will take place all over the world under the **Dickens 2012** (www.dickens2012.org) banner to celebrate one of the world's most inspiring authors and provide a legacy for future generations.

Dickens 2012 partners include the BBC (*Dickens on the BBC*: November 11-February 12), British Council (International Dickens 2012 Programme: Nov 11-June 12), BFI (*Dickens on Screen*: Dec 11- March 12), Museum of London (*Dickens and London*: Dec 11-June 12), Museum Strauhof, Zurich (*Charles Dickens*: Dec 11-Mar 12), Penguin ('*Charles Dickens, A Life*' by Claire Tomalin and Special 2012 editions) and the Royal Mint (*Dickens* £2 coin). *Dickens 2012* has an expanding list of supporters, which includes names such as Simon Callow CBE, Sir Derek Jacobi, Sir Cameron Mackintosh, Miriam Margolyes OBE and Peter Ackroyd CBE, and is backed by the Mayor of London as a cultural highlight in 2012.



MIFF 37°South Market is the exclusive Australia/NZ partner of Film London's Production Finance Market (PFM).

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