



accelerator

MIRIAM MARGOLYES & ADRIAN WOOTTON KICK-OFF “MELBOURNE CELEBRATES DICKENS”

MELBOURNE: The Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) world premiere this Thursday (August 16th) of *The First Fagin*, narrated by *Harry Potter* star **Miriam Margolyes**, and MIFF’s **Adrian Wootton Talks Dickens** series kick-off the *Melbourne Celebrates Dickens* season commemorating the 200th anniversary of Charles Dickens’ birth.

Margolyes is a lifelong admirer of the works of Dickens – and performs the one-woman show *Dickens’ Women* - so it is fitting that she narrates *The First Fagin*, a feature-length docu-drama which delves into the life of Ikey Solomon who is credited as the real life inspiration for the Fagin character in Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*. Supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, the film is directed by **Alan Rosenthal** and **Helen Gaynor** and produced by **Veronica Fury**

Presented exclusively in Melbourne by the **Melbourne International Film Festival’s MIFF 37°South & Accelerator** with **The Wheeler Centre**, former British Film Institute and London Film Festival Director **Adrian Wootton** returns exclusively to Melbourne for another series of his acclaimed **Illustrated Film Talks**, this year celebrating the timeless appeal of Dickens that has made him the most screen-adapted author of all time. For more details on each talk, and to book tickets, see http://miff.com.au/films/film_talks/adrianwoottontalksdickens

The **Wootton Talks Dickens** series comprises:

- **THE LIFE OF DICKENS (Fri 17 Aug, 11am-12.30)**. This session 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 talk is preceded, at 9.30am, by an encore screening of **MIFF Premiere Fund**-supported feature documentary *First Fagin* narrated by *Harry Potter* star **Miriam Margolyes** (film tickets sold separately).
- **DICKENS ON FILM (Sat 18 Aug (talk and screening) 4.30 – 7pm)**. Liberally sprinkled with slides and film clips, this talk examines the legacy of Dickens screen adaptations from 1898 to the present, and highlights Dickens as an innovator of narrative, character, subject and imagery - and shows how he influenced the creation of the cinematic medium itself. **This session includes (at the end of the talk at 6pm) a special screening of the documentary *Dickens on Film* (director: Anthony Wall; Producer: Adrian Wootton; 60 mins)**
- **DICKENS: CRIME FICTION & FILM (Sun 19 Aug, (talk and screening) 4.30 – 7pm)**. With a plethora of slides and film clips, this lecture 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). **This session includes (at the end of the talk at 6pm) a special screening of the documentary *Dickens in London* (Director Chris Newby; Writer Michael Eaton; 63mins)**

The *First Fagin* screenings and **Wootton Talks Dickens** series kick-off *Melbourne Celebrates Dickens* season from 17-26 August, a part of the global *Dickens 2012* initiative, that encompasses events from **MIFF 37°South & Accelerator**, **The Wheeler Centre**, **Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI)** and the **Melbourne Writers Festival**. Co-ordinated by the Charles Dickens Museum and Film London with the Dickens Fellowship, *Dickens 2012* (www.dickens2012.org) is a global celebration of the life and work of Dickens marking the bicentenary of his birth. *Dickens 2012* supporters include Sir Derek Jacobi, Sir Cameron Mackintosh and Miriam Margolyes OBE.

To book tickets, go to www.miff.com.au or www.wheelercentre.com

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