

The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

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"BRITISH CINEMA" AT MoMA A HIGHLIGHT OF 1983 "BRITAIN SALUTES NEW YORK"

BRITISH CINEMA, a year-long retrospective of 60 years of film-making in Great Britain, will be presented by The Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art as a highlight of the city-wide festival "Britain Salutes New York," which will present an array of British culture to New Yorkers during the spring and summer of 1983.

BRITISH CINEMA is scheduled to inaugurate film exhibitions in MoMA's expanded facilities in May '83. 200 feature-length and 150 short works, including documentaries and animated films, will be screened in the two Roy and Niuta Titus Auditoria, constituting the largest and most comprehensive survey ever mounted of British film history.

The first part of BRITISH CINEMA will be devoted to the work of Michael Balcon, the producer whose career parallels the history of British cinema for five decades, from 1922 to 1977. Balcon established Gainsborough and Ealing Studios, gave Alfred Hitchcock his first assignment, worked with major directors and virtually every leading actor and writer on many films, including Evergreen, The 39 Steps, Nicholas Nickleby, King Solomon's Mines, The Lavender Hill Mob, Dead of Night and Kind Hearts and Coronets. Balcon very much believed in a national cinema, films rooted in British life and humor and relevant to a British audience. His productions offer us a fascinating glimpse of British social and familial life, British wit and popular comedy, as well as mid-century historical events such as the Second World War and its aftermath. There is a "team spirit" hovering over these productions; Balcon had a loyal group of writers, musicians, editors, cameramen, directors and actors, all kept very busy.

Part Two of BRITISH CINEMA will be a chronological survey beginning with early silents and encompassing Grierson's documentaries; Olivier's postwar contributions; American-British co-productions; Americans in Britain such as Stanley Kubrick and Richard Lester; the '60s social realism of Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, John Schlesinger and Tony Richardson; and animation, experimental and documentary films of the '70s. Many films in Part II, particularly those produced by Alexander

Korda, stand in contrast to Balcon's characteristically "British" cinema; Korda strove for lavish productions and an international audience, exemplified by his sentiment that "The English must give the world the Rolls-Royce and not the Ford. Mind you, Fords are excellent cars."

An exhibition of posters and set designs from Balcon productions will accompany the retrospective, and a catalogue of critical essays and commentaries will be published. Actors and actresses, directors, writers and producers will attend the opening festivities and special screenings throughout the series.

BRITISH CINEMA will also celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the British Film Institute, whose Chairman is Richard Attenborough and whose Patron is HRH the Prince of Wales. The British Film Institute is collaborating with the Museum's Department of Film on the organization of BRITISH CINEMA and its accompanying activities, and the Institute's National Film Archive will make available highest quality prints of celebrated British masterworks rarely seen in America as well as important British films virtually unknown here.

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For further information, please contact Alicia Springer, Film Press Representative, 956-7289.
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