

PRESS RELEASE

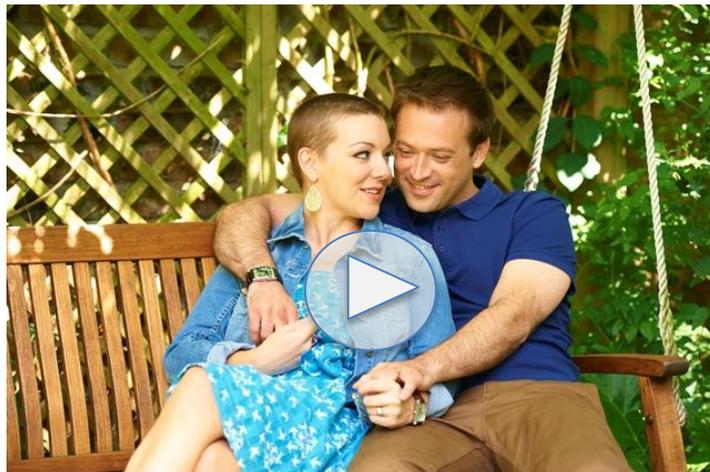
18 September 2015

BBC
FIRST

BBC First Celebrates Sponsorship of BBC First British Film Festival with an on-screen movie season

BBC First has become the naming sponsor of the BBC First British Film Festival presented by Palace and screening in Palace Cinemas nationally during October and November.

BBC First is celebrating its sponsorship with The British Film Season, an on-screen season of TV movies, many based on true-life stories, which will run on the channel for six weeks from October 7. Showcasing an array of on-screen talent such as **Emily Watson**, **Sheridan Smith**, **Eddie Izzard** and **Tom Hollander**, the films will screen each Wednesday from 8.30pm in a three hour block.



Tim Christlieb, Director of Channels, BBC Worldwide Australia and New Zealand, said: “We are delighted to have come on board as the naming sponsor of the BBC First British Film Festival. BBC First is all about showcasing world-renowned, award-winning British talent on both sides of the camera with stories that challenge, immerse and entertain, all with a uniquely British perspective, so this is a natural fit for us.

“Our on-channel British Film Season is no exception, starring many of the UK’s best-loved actors in dramas written by award-winning writers such as **Victoria Wood**, **Andrew Davies** and **Nigel Williams**. The films offer an insight into many fascinating real-life stories from the emotionally moving such as *The C Word* and *A Song for Jenny* to intriguing tales of one of classical music’s biggest frauds, famous poet Dylan Thomas’s last days in New York and

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how quintessential English author PG Wodehouse came to be exiled from Britain over charges of treason.”

Australian premiere titles included in the season are:

The C Word

7th October at 8.30pm



Love, laughter, loneliness - the struggle against cancer stirs the emotions. **Sheridan Smith** stars in this poignant drama based on Lisa Lynch's blog and best-selling novel. Lisa was 28 when first diagnosed with an aggressive, malignant tumour in her breast. Told with warmth and humour, *The C Word* follows Lisa's journey, and the love and support she received from her devoted husband, Pete, and her family. Her only release is to write. What starts off as a blog seen by few steadily becomes a profound inspiration to many. Powerful and heartfelt, it is a no-holds-barred yet tender portrayal of the reality of living with cancer, based on Lisa's defiant words. Equally, it is a story about the power of love.

A Song for Jenny

7th October at 10.10pm



A mother's story of love and loss. Based on a book by Julie Nicholson and marking the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attack on London on 7 July 2005, this poignant film explores grief, loss and forgiveness and one woman's response to her daughter's death in the bombings. With raw immediacy and unflinching honesty, the film revisits the horrific events as they unfolded, and reveals an ordinary family torn apart by this tragic act of violence - from the moment the bombings first hit the news, through the harrowing days spent searching for her to a heart-breaking attempt, along with Jenny's devastated partner, to discover the truth about her final moments. Starring **Emily Watson**.

Loving Miss Hatto

14th October at 8.30pm



Written by Victoria Wood, this tender, moving, funny drama tells the true story of an 'ordinary' married couple who managed to pull off the greatest hoax the classical musical world has known. When Joyce Hatto died in June 2006 she was considered one of the greatest pianists Britain had ever produced. A collection of little known recordings released in her later years had brought her real fame. But a few months after her death, Joyce's husband, William Barrington-Coupe, admitted they were a fraud - he had embellished Joyce's own playing with

those of other pianists. Starring **Mamie McCoy, Rory Kinnear, Francesca Annis** and **Alfred Molina**.

A Poet in New York

21st October at 8.30pm



Written by acclaimed screenwriter Andrew Davies, *A Poet in New York* explores the final days of Dylan Thomas, known for his wild, hard-drinking lifestyle as well as his brilliance. Thomas arrives in New York where he planned to rehearse, write and party, before travelling to Hollywood to write an opera with the equally famous composer Stravinsky. But what might have been a triumphant new path in his career turned into a requiem for a man whose life had spiralled out of control and Thomas died in a smog-ridden New York in 1953 at the age of just 39. Moving between the present in New York and the poet's past in Wales, this drama explores how Dylan Thomas's experiences had

made his life virtually untenable and examines the part his destructive personality played in his own demise. Starring **Tom Hollander** and **Ewan Bremner**.

Castles in the Sky

28th October at 8.30pm



Eddie Izzard stars in this funny, moving and inspiring factual drama about the story of radar. On 26 February 1935, Robert Watson-Watt demonstrated for the first time that aircraft could be detected by bouncing radio waves off them. It was this invention that did more than anything else to save the RAF in the 1940 Battle of Britain. This drama follows those early years as Robert Watson-Watt and his team of scientists worked tirelessly to see their invention taken seriously, from the highs and lows, to the battles for funding and the political wrangling, before getting a final taste of victory.

Legacy

4th November at 8.30pm



Distrust is the best defence against betrayal. **Charlie Cox, Romola Garai, Andrew Scott** and **Simon Russell Beale** star in this gripping espionage thriller set during the height of the Cold War. MI6 agent Charles Thoroughgood must put his training to the ultimate test when he is asked to recruit Russian diplomat Viktor Koslov. But then Viktor reveals some disturbing information about Charles' family and suddenly everything Charles had believed about his late father is called into question.

Wodehouse in Exile

11th November at 8.30pm



Tim Piggott-Smith, Zoe Wanamaker, Paul Ritter and **Julian Rhind-Tutt** head up this smart, pithy and witty film about how author PG Wodehouse came to face a charge of treason during the Second World War, and how this quintessential Englishman became an exile from his own country. In 1941, Wodehouse was released from internment in Germany and persuaded by the German Foreign Office to record five infamous broadcasts to the USA, wittily relating his experiences of camp life. What had been a hit with his fellow internees was met with anger back in England. The master of fanciful plots had become a pawn in one of the biggest propaganda battles of the war between Germany and the Allies over the entry of the United States into the conflict.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Presented by Palace, The BBC First British Film Festival returns for its third year with a standout selection of Festival favourites and box office hits from the British Isles, taking place nationally at Palace Cinemas from October 27 to November 18.

Titles announced so far include *Youth*, *Suffragette*, *Brooklyn* and *45 Years* with the full program to be announced later this month.

About BBC Worldwide Australia & New Zealand

Australia & New Zealand (ANZ) is a priority territory for BBC Worldwide, focusing on growth across all its core business areas. Recently relocated to McMahons Point, BBC Worldwide ANZ wholly owns six channels: BBC First, UKTV, BBC Knowledge and CBeebies on Foxtel and Fetch TV in Australia; UKTV and BBC Knowledge on Sky TV in New Zealand; and is responsible for the distribution and promotion of BBC World News which transmits in both countries. BBC Worldwide ANZ distributes great British content from the BBC and other producers to free-to-air, subscription channels and SVOD platforms in Australia and New Zealand. It works with partners to bring BBC Worldwide DVDs, consumer products, entertainment formats and live events to the local market, as well as offering advertising opportunities for the BBC's world renowned bbc.com news site. In 2014/15, it generated headline sales of £81.9m, up 7.8% year-on-year.

About BBC Worldwide

About BBC Worldwide BBC Worldwide is the main commercial arm and a wholly owned subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Its vision is to build the BBC's brands, audiences, commercial returns and reputation across the world. This is achieved through investing in, commercialising and showcasing content from the BBC around the world, in a way that is consistent with BBC standards and values. The business also champions British creativity globally. In 2014/15, BBC Worldwide generated headline profits of £138.6m and headline sales of £1,001.8m and returned a record £226.5m to the BBC. For more detailed performance information please see our Annual Review website:

<http://www.bbcworldwide.com/annualreview>

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The logo for Foxtel, featuring the word "FOXTEL" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a gradient of orange and red, and have a white outline.