

PRESS RELEASE

9 January 2015

For immediate release



Fairfax House
YORK

Looking through the lens at:

The Georgians on Silver Screen

2015 Film Festival launched at Fairfax House

In this fourth biennial festival of classic period film, Fairfax House pays homage to the days of St George's Hall, when this Georgian townhouse was better known to the people of York as a cinema and dancehall. Showcasing eleven award-winning films that evoke the golden age of filmmaking at Hollywood and Pinewood, Fairfax House returns to its early-20th century days transforming its 'saloon' to a cinema to bring some of the greatest names of silver screen back to the house.

PHOTOCALL: Thursday 15 January at 2.00pm

To launch the 2015 Festival the Fairfax House Commissionaire and Usherettes put the spotlight on a Georgian screen heroine in the saloon 'cinema'.

The Silver Screen Festival is now into its fourth year with previous themes including WWII, Murder and Mystery. In perhaps the most appropriate theme of all, Silver Screen 2015 focuses on films celebrating the Georgian age with classic greats such as *Tom Jones*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Frenchman's Creek* bringing drama, rollicking adventure, poignant romance and unbridled intrigue to the Saloon big screen.

This week-long festival opens with a gala night of glamour, music, food and wine and a special screening (Mon 2 Feb) of the ultimate classic tale, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (Leslie Howard). A mix of evening and matinee performances shown on a large screen filling the entire saloon follows across the week culminating on the finale night with the other great Georgian classic romance *Pride & Prejudice*. A line-up of cinema's greatest names in acting appear as dashing heroes, rakish villains and feisty heroines of the Georgian age immortalised in the studios of Hollywood and Pinewood.





Hannah Phillip, Director of Fairfax House:
“Through the Festival our aim is to mark Fairfax House’s former life as St. George’s Cinema and a period that played such an impactful role in the house’s history. It is, after all, not only a period that many will remember, but also an era that is tremendously important in York’s heritage, when the city’s eleven cinemas played a huge part in everyone’s lives.

The Silver Screen Festival is part of the museum’s wider aim to explore Fairfax House’s rich ongoing history beyond the eighteenth century, and connects closely to a major project to capture oral histories of people who remember St George’s whether as a cinema, dance hall, fitness studio or something else entirely.

As more and more oral histories take place, the more we uncover and learn about this house’s fascinating, rich history that most certainly did not end after the eighteenth century. It is so valuable to gather this information while it is available.

A team of volunteer interviewers are actively engaged in gathering memories, and have succeeded in turning up fascinating new details, such as dog competitions that used to take place in the dining room as we know it today. We encourage people to come forward if they have any recollections at all. No matter how small, they are all valuable.

Fairfax House will again be involved in **York Residents’ Festival** across the weekend of 31st January to 1st February. Not only will visitors be able to buy tickets for Silver Screen but we will be actively encouraging people to participate in our oral history project or consider even becoming a volunteer.”

For more information about *The Georgians on Silver Screen* and the *St George’s project* visit www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk

Ends

Press Contacts: Hannah Phillip, Director Tel: 01904 655543

Email: hannahphillip@yorkcivictrust.co.uk



The Georgians on Silver Screen opens on **2nd February** and closes on **8th February**. Across these 7 days the following films will be screened:

GALA OPENING Monday 2nd February: 7.00pm

THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL (1934)

Leslie Howard and Merle Oberon

Silver Screen 2015 opens with an evocative gala night of red carpet glamour (with on-screen 'big band music', canapés and sparkling wine) and the screening of one of the most iconic Georgian-period films produced for the silver screen, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (shown at St George's Cinema in 1947). In Baroness Orczy's classic story of espionage, intrigue and romance set during Robespierre's Reign of Terror, an elusive English gentleman and master of disguise, the Scarlet Pimpernel (Howard), and his league of valiant men use unparalleled daring to rescue aristos from the insatiable Madame la Guillotine.

Tuesday 3rd February: 3.00pm

FRENCHMAN'S CREEK (1944)

Joan Fontaine, Arturo de Cordova and Basil Rathbone

When an English noblewoman seeking escape from her loveless marriage falls for a dashing French pirate and joins him for adventure raiding the Cornish coast, she must choose between following her heart on the high seas, or resuming her responsibilities as a wife and mother. Filmed in lavish Technicolor, this is a lush and romantic adventure story.

Tuesday 3rd February: 7.00pm

TOM JONES (1963)

Albert Finney

A ribald and rowdy romp through the mansions and taverns of Georgian England. Henry Fielding's fallen hero, bed-hops his way out of a good home and almost into a hangman's noose, via a series of misadventures and misunderstandings. One of the most critically acclaimed and popular comedies of its time, winning four Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

Wednesday 4th February: 3.00pm

THAT HAMILTON WOMAN (1941)

Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier

Two of Hollywood's biggest legends, Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier, star in this Academy award-winning story based on one of history's most ill-fated love affairs between Emma Hamilton, the beauty of her age, and England's greatest hero, Admiral Horatio Nelson.

Wednesday 4th February: 7.00pm

CAPTAIN HORATIO HORNBLOWER R.N. (1951)

Gregory Peck and Virginia Mayo

In this swashbuckling adventure set on the high seas and based on C.S. Forester's novel, a British naval captain must undertake a special assignment delivering weapons to a Latin American rebel. But when political alliances shift, Hornblower discovers that he must now face El Supremo, the enemy of the British forces.

Thursday 5th February: 3.00pm

MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY (1935)

Charles Laughton and Clark Gable

Frank Lloyd's Oscar-winning film tells the story of the infamous mutiny aboard HMS Bounty. Charles Laughton portrays Captain Bligh, a seafaring monster ruling with the law of fear; Clark Gable is first officer Fletcher Christian, whose will to obey erodes and crumbles under Bligh's tyranny.

Thursday 5th February: 7.00pm

MAN IN GREY (1943)

James Mason, Margaret Lockwood, Phyllis Calvert, Stewart Granger

Set in Regency England, *The Man in Grey* tells the story of a beautiful, ebullient woman (Calvert) whose life is ruined by a callous and hedonistic husband (Mason) and a calculating “best” friend (Lockwood in one of her most dastardly roles). An all-star cast brings this elaborate, romantic, melodramatic costume drama to life.

Friday 6th February: 3.00pm

KITTY (1945)

Paulette Goddard and Ray Milland

London, 1783: a profligate nobleman grooms a beautiful Cockney pickpocket to marry into society as a lady. Leisen’s ornately rendered take on *Pygmalion* stars Ray Milland and Paulette Goddard as blithely amoral accomplices whose wildly successful arrangement grows ever more complicated as she falls for him and he seems incapable of seeing past her origins.

Friday 6th February: 7.00pm

A TALE OF TWO CITIES (1958)

Dirk Bogart, Dorothy Tutin, Christopher Lee and Donald Pleasance

A former French aristocrat and a disillusioned alcoholic English lawyer fall in love with the same woman amidst the turmoil of the French Revolution. Based on Charles Dickens’ epic novel, this critically acclaimed film tells a tale of great sacrifices made for the sake of principle.

Saturday 7th February: 7.00pm

JAMAICA INN (1939)

Maureen O’Hara, directed by Alfred Hitchcock

Alfred Hitchcock’s rip-roaring adaptation of Daphne du Maurier’s tense and atmospheric tale of thieves and cut-throats on the rugged Cornish coast. When Mary (Maureen O’Hara), an orphan girl, goes to live with her Uncle Joss (Leslie Banks), landlord of the Jamaica Inn, she quickly discovers a dark secret that puts her life in jeopardy.

FINALE NIGHT Sunday 8th February: 7.00pm

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (1940)

Greer Garson and Laurence Olivier

Sparks fly when spirited Elizabeth Bennet (Garson) meets single, rich and proud Mr. Darcy (Olivier) in MGM’s luscious adaptation of Austen’s most famous novel. Mr. Darcy reluctantly finds himself falling in love with a woman beneath his class. Can each overcome their own pride and prejudice?