



PRESS RELEASE

13 December 2007

Silent Suspense!

Drama, suspense, mystery and pure gothic horror will be hitting the cinema screen in Clevedon next month, with the arrival of the 1925 silent classic *The Phantom of the Opera* (PG) starring “man of a thousand faces” Lon Chaney, at the Curzon Community Cinema.

Based on Gaston Leroux’s enduring tale, *The Phantom of the Opera* is one of the finest pictures of the late silent era and Lon Chaney was arguably the greatest performer of the period. His ability to literally transform himself into movie monsters is truly uncanny, especially considering the lack of technical resources in the 1920s. The rare use of two-strip Technicolor brings dazzling effect to the incomparable masquerade ball scene.

Curzon Director Gareth Negus said of the film, “This gothic presentation has all the elements of a suspense thriller. And Lon Chaney as Erik, the mysterious phantom with his skull-like appearance, makes this one of the most intense characters ever played on the screen. He is perfect as the cloaked figure creeping about the underground cellar of the opera house.”

The live organ music will be provided by “The Welsh Wizard” Byron Jones, who wowed the audience when he stepped in at the very last minute to provide the totally improvised musical accompaniment to screening of *The Black Pirate* at The Curzon back in 2004. He is a much sought after concert performer, and travels all over the country giving concerts on many of the loved and cherished Theatre Cinema Organs.

The Phantom of the Opera plays for one afternoon only on Sunday 13 January 2008 at 14:30. Doors open at 14:00. Tickets are priced at £7, with family tickets available at £21, and all proceeds from the evening will go to The Curzon Restoration Fund (Christie Organ Fund).



Notes to Editors:

1. *The Curzon is thought to be the oldest, purpose-built, continuously operated cinema in the world. We are committed to providing a high quality film experience and to be a thriving centre for cinema and the arts in our local community.*
2. *As part of the restoration of The Curzon, it is planned to restore and bring back into full working order the Curzon’s Christie Theatre Pipe Organ built in 1931 by Hill, Norman & Beard Ltd for the Regent Cinema in Poole. The organ, which currently lies in a dismantled state, was donated to The Curzon in 2005 by Weststar Holidays the previous owners.*
3. *Curzon Silents began in 2004, with the screening of *The Black Pirate*, starring Douglas Fairbanks. Since then four further Curzon Silents screenings have taken place and have proven very popular with local audiences. Full details can be found on the Curzon web site: www.curzon.org.uk.*

**If you have any questions regarding the content of this press release
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