



# **PRESS RELEASE: CURZON COLLECTION EXTRAVAGANZA RETURNS – BIGGER THAN EVER!**

- Free entry to the Heritage exhibition all weekend
- David Lean classics back on screen
- New Stairclimber now offers greater access to the historic building

Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 September see the Curzon Cinema opening to the public for the annual Curzon Collection Extravaganza. This year's event has expanded to offer two days of free entertainment for all the family as part of the Heritage Open Days weekend. Co-ordinated by the Civic Trust and supported by English Heritage, this annual celebration of architecture, history and culture spans all major cities, towns and hundreds of villages, bringing curiosity, discovery and enjoyment right onto people's doorsteps.

Both days offer a chance to explore the Curzon Collection of Heritage projectors, including demonstrations of early 'home movie' equipment and featuring a Butchers 35mm Empire projector as well as a 9.5mm Vox talkie. Having its premiere in the Collection is the Kalee Imperial 35mm projector which has recently been installed.

Also on offer throughout the weekend is a mini cinema showing archive films including Harold Lloyd and Laurel and Hardy comedy shorts, a film about the Lifeboat service in the Bristol Channel and also a film about the WW2 Kamikaze pilots. The main screen will also be showing cartoons and newsreels as well as – on Saturday only at 1pm – an Olde Tyme Magic Lantern Show with music and song performed live.

The Extravaganza offers free entry from 10.30am – 2.30pm. What is more, the full Collection will now be accessible to more people than ever before, thanks to the Curzon's new Stairclimber, which allows visitors unable to manage the stairs to be carried up them. The Stairclimber was purchased thanks to a donation to the Curzon by Bristol-based Health Insurer BCWA, part of the Simplyhealth Group.

Gareth Negus, Curzon director, said “While our main auditorium is accessible to all visitors through the rear entrance, other parts of the Curzon – in common with many historic buildings – have been more of a challenge. Thanks to BCWA’s generosity, more members of the community will be able to enjoy the full Curzon Experience.”

## David Lean centenary celebrated with digitally restored films

Following the day’s free entertainment, the main auditorium will be turned over to a celebration of the centenary of the great British film director **Sir David Lean**, with freshly restored digital prints of two of his greatest films. The comedy **Blithe Spirit** (U) and Dickens adaptation **Great Expectations** (PG) can be seen on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14th September respectively, at 3pm.

Filmed in 1945 in Technicolor, and based on Noel Coward's classic play, **Blithe Spirit** stars Rex Harrison, Kay Hammond, Constance Cummings and Margaret Rutherford, the film tells of the haunting of Charles Condomine by his first wife, Elvira who was summoned by Madame Arcati during a séance. Margaret Rutherford gives a splendid performance as the eccentric medium, and practically steals the film; the sophisticated script and witty repartee, adapted from Noel Coward’s play, match anything that Hollywood could produce at this time. **Great Expectations** (1946) remains one of the finest screen versions of Charles Dickens’ work, featuring a cast of renowned British actors including John Mills, Bernard Miles, Finlay Currie, Jean Simmons, Valerie Hobson, and making his film debut, Alec Guinness. Their slightly larger than life portrayals of the splendid Dickens characters, together with Lean's direction and Oscar winning black and white photography by Guy Green, make the film is a magnificent pictorial rendering of a much-loved novel.

Tickets for the films are on sale in advance at £6 each, or £18 for a family ticket (4 people, at least 2 under 15s). The Curzon is also offering a special joint price of £8 per person for both.

For more information, please contact Gareth Negus, Director, on 01275 879115 or [gareth@curzon.org.uk](mailto:gareth@curzon.org.uk), or Collection curator Maurice Thornton on 01275 790559.