**A Celebration of Cinema**

One of the overriding aspects to *Their Finest*, is the deep and pure appreciation of the craft of filmmaking, celebrating the collective experience of not only making a movie, but indulging in one, together. What heightens this notion, is that we're looking back into a time when cinema meant more than it ever has in Britain.

“It means a lot to us as filmmakers to make a film about a period where films were as important as they were,” Lone Scherfig claimed. “To remind us why we spend all our adult life doing this instead of something worthier, like being a nurse, where you might respect yourself more. We have to remind ourselves that we have a right to do this job, even if there are days where you laugh for sixteen hours.”

“We also wanted to celebrate how wonderful it can be to sit in a cinema and watch films with an audience, she continued. “The world of filmmaking is one I really love and know, and as a tribute to cinema the film was a great technical challenge. But the underlying drama, how much the characters have at stake means a lot for the depth of the film. Behind the screwball dialogue they know that the film they are making plays a part in winning the war and that every work day can be their last.

Amanda Posey also remains hopeful that this film can inspire audiences, and serve as a reminder of how special the cinema experience can be.

“It's a celebration of how much cinema can mean, and what it can do. It doesn't have to be a hard-hitting documentary to change people and make a difference in their lives, and these films, sometimes they were escapism and sometimes they were getting an important propaganda point across, but it really encapsulates a time where cinema really mattered, and it reminds you that it can always do that, at different times and in different ways.”

Stephen Woolley also felt similarly about the project, wanting to cast a light over an era where film mattered so tremendously.

“As a person inspired by cinema I jumped at opportunity to make a movie about filmmaking when it was incredibly important. That period was undoubtedly on reflection, a golden age of British cinema, and the filmmakers who stayed in Britain and made films during the war went on to be probably the greatest filmmakers we've ever produced. To name just three teams ( and their were many more ) David Lean and Noel Cowerd made *Brief Encounter* whilst the war was ending, Powell and Pressburger made *A Matter of Life and Death* the last MOI inspired film during those final days and then of course Carol Reed and Korda whose *The Third Man* made after the war was inspired not just by the post war situation in Vienna but the style of the films that were forged in Britain ( authentically reflecting the world ) during this time. Cinema has never been and will never be more relevant than it was then. "

“They were making films at a time when watching or attending the cinema also tangibly meant something much more significant than it does now. Cinemas had an incredible hypnotic effect, it meant so much to people because they were deprived of information which they acquired from the up to date newsreels and documentaries ( radio and newspapers couldn't show them anything!) and they really held on to the ritual of going to the pictures as a way of meeting friends and family , gossiping and catching up, and that warmth and comradeship was important in people's lives. The power of movies in that atmosphere was far greater than we could imagine now. *Their Finest* we hope is a film you also have to experience at the cinema, we worked very hard to make our movie in a small way reflect that time."

Gaby Chiappe was a key part in ensuring that be the case, and the screenwriter wanted this endeavour to truly commemorate the shared, communal experience of watching a film at the pictures.

“Cinemas were closed briefly at the beginning of the war as there was a fear they'd be dangerous, but they opened them again because people wanted to go,” she said. “I think there's something really different, and special, when watching a film with other people, rather than at home. There are fewer and fewer ways in which we do things together, our tendency is to do things in isolation and there's a hankering for doing things collectively, with other people.”

Gemma Arterton was in agreement. “It's great that we have so much access now to everything, but there's something so brilliant about seeing a film in a group and laughing together, there's nothing really that beats it. It's like going to the theatre, what makes it so special is that you're there with other people and you're experiencing it with them at the same time. It's escapism, it takes you away for an hour and a half, from whatever crap is going on in your life. It's so important, and as technology gets more advanced, I still hope people will always go to the cinema.”