

Audio Description Awareness Campaign

Press release

11 July 2014

RNIB joins forces with the UK cinema industry to highlight increased number of audio described films

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), the Cinema Exhibitors' Association and UK film distributors are together launching a campaign to highlight the availability of audio description (AD) in UK cinemas.

The campaign will go live on Friday 11 July with the release of Twentieth Century Fox's highly anticipated summer blockbuster 'How to Train your Dragon 2'. Fox have created a specially-adapted version of the audio described trailer for the film and have generously donated items for a competition that will run on RNIB's Insight Radio and in Insight magazine.

Last year, 135 out of 202 English language films released in the UK were available with audio description, while nine out of the top 10 films each week have AD.

Steve Tyler, Head of Strategy, RNIB Solutions from RNIB said:

"Many people aren't aware of the number of films that are available with audio description in cinemas across the UK. AD makes films easier to follow by providing a commentary that describes body language, expressions and movements.

This campaign is a great way to raise awareness and encourage greater numbers of blind and partially sighted people to visit the cinema and show that there is a demand for this service."

Grainne Peat, Policy Executive at the Cinema Exhibitors' Association, said:

"The growth in availability of audio described films, and the provision of audio description in UK cinemas, has been one of the key accessibility developments of recent years. With the roll-out of

digital projection technology across the whole UK sector, many more cinemas are now capable of providing AD for their customers.

We are delighted to have partnered with RNIB and colleagues in film distribution to help raise awareness on the availability of AD in UK cinemas. People with any degree of sight loss may find AD beneficial and we would encourage everyone to ask their local cinema about the facilities they provide.”

Demir Yavuz, UK Technical Manager at the Twentieth Century Fox, added:

“20th Century Fox has been a big supporter of AD in cinemas since it was first introduced, we not only take pride in our films but also the AD we create for every film. The AD for ‘How To Train Your Dragon 2’ was a challenge we relished with the vibrant world of Berk and beyond and the numerous amount of colourful Dragons on screen to describe not to mention the spectacular action. In fact we feel the AD is so good it is worth the price of admission to see the film all over again!”

AD provides a voice commentary which describes action, body language, expressions and movements etc. As it fits within the silent gaps in the film soundtrack, AD doesn't interfere with the dialogue. It provides the audio commentary via a headset so that viewers with sight loss can understand what is happening on the screen when this is not self-evident via the dialogue.

AD is delivered through a headset in cinemas, which is provided when you collect your ticket. It runs each time the film is shown and remains undetectable to anyone not wearing a headset.

For more information please visit www.rnib.org.uk/ad

- Ends -

Notes to editors

For media enquiries, please contact Rachel Harby, Public Relations Officer, on 0207 391 2043 or 0207 391 2223, email rachel.harby@rnib.org.uk

About RNIB

RNIB is the leading charity working in the UK offering practical support, advice and information for anyone with sight difficulties. If you, or someone you know, has a sight problem RNIB can help. Call the RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999 or visit www.rnib.org.uk