

Red Buzz

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PALACE NOVA

Prez Rep

Review

Without any 'beating around the Bush' (George Dubya was very disappointed!) I have to announce that my plans to invade Iraq and increase our membership have been put on hold - due to Little Johnnie's mother not letting him out to play after 6.00pm and Nartarsha the Spot Destroyer refusing to lend me her Wonder Woman outfit. So I will have to be content playing God with you lesser mortals currently under my benevolent control. If only that were true - where were you, when I needed you? The SGM turnout was abysmal. I have no idea how we managed to con three innocent citizens into becoming committee members. Just as well for the rest of you that they couldn't play Simon Says too well!

Anyway despite rumours to the contrary the club will continue to review films and publish them in *Reelbuzz* and on our website www.aufs.org. Also ignoring low attendance numbers we will continue in our erratic quest for world domination by showing films every Thursday night at 7.00pm - come on let's try and fill the Union Cinema at least once before the end of the year. It's a month into semester 2 - by now you should realise that assignments and essays take second place to a social life. Remember that an AUFS Thursday night film doesn't give you a hangover, though it may destroy a few brain cells if it is directed by Andy Warhol and you probably won't respect us in the morning!

I see the Editor is making faces at me now so I'd better go and take my medication.

Vambo

Yes, I think you better. Anyway, **The Film Choosing Night** will take place at Peter Cassidy's on **Saturday September 7th from 7 pm**. All most welcome! Please contact Peter for further details: peter.cassidy@rocksoft.com or 0412 283366

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8 femmes (Eight Women)

Directed by Francois Ozon

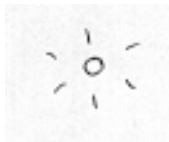
In an opulent alpine mansion, seven women and a man are gathered for a family reunion. But soon the man is dead, knifed in the back, and the seven - make that eight - women are left to fight out, Agatha Christie-style, who is the most likely culprit. But it seems they all have a motive (of course) and all have something, usually many things to hide. And so their secrets are revealed in the course of their ensuing investigations of one another, old bitternesses emerging and new bitternesses being created in a whodunnit spiced with music, comedy and a little light pathos.

8 femmes unites a great many female stars of the French screen, some for the first time, and some not, e.g. the film sees Danielle Darrieux play Catherine Deneuve's mother for no less than the third time. Most of the cast shines, and, though they are caricatures, larger than life in their roles, they are not offensively so, and the concept of a musical murder mystery is not over-done - the great bulk of it is straight talking. The tunes are mostly catchy, too, and some are potentially moving. A great deal of character revelation and interaction takes place here, and, while this held some interest and was played well, *8 femmes'* characters sometimes reveal histories of betrayal and intrigue so baroque that it is a little cliched and irritating even though obviously deliberate here, and probably necessary too for the development of the film's central themes.

I was ultimately convinced that this was a fair work and probably would be enjoyed by a large number of people particularly those who are more tolerant with respect to the "cutesy" than myself.

Matthew Harvey

Unedited version of this review can be found on our website www.aufs.org



australian rules

Directed by Paul Goldman.

Starring Nathan Phillips, Luke Carroll and Lisa Flanagan.

Based on the award-winning novel *Deadly Unna?* by Phillip Gwynne, *australian rules* is a story about relationships, explored through the issues of maleness, adolescence and racism. All the stereotypes have been included in this film. The abusive father, the Aboriginal older brother just out of prison, the depressed backwater town and the probably doomed love between black and white (*Romeo and Juliet?*).

The reluctant hero of the film is Gary Black, superbly played by Nathan Phillips. Blacky's best friend is Dumby Red (Luke Carroll) an Aboriginal kid from the nearby Mission who is the star player of the local Australian Rules team, which is mainly comprised of Aboriginal players. Blacky himself is a 'gutless wonder' according to his father and an average footie player but becomes the town hero when he accidentally helps the team win their first championship. To complicate matters in a town full of open racism, Blacky is forming a relationship with Dumby's sister Clarence (Lisa Flanagan). Following the celebration of the championship win, all the underlying tensions and frustrations between black and white and young and old explode in violent confrontation on various levels.

The adaptation from novel to screen is where this film loses some of its impact. The relationship between Blacky and Clarence has been strengthened and works well, both actors standing out in their roles far better than some more familiar faces. However, reducing the action of the novel from one year to a single week has required the omission of, for me, vital background information. As a result, Prospect Bay doesn't feel like a real fishing town that relies on the tourist trade for its survival. Blacky himself doesn't fit into the old country values of Prospect Bay and the reasons why he stays there and accepts the local attitudes has been omitted. A final criticism would have to be the ending, which is followed by what could be described as an epilogue to future reconciliation. For me, the real and more powerful emotional end to the film was ten minutes previously and was just as positive for the future.

This is a good film and worth seeing but not an excellent one. Certainly it raises many issues that still need to be debated about in Australia but perhaps that's

the problem - it's all been done before. And why couldn't they keep the original title, which is indigenous slang for 'cool, isn't it'? Now wouldn't that have been deadly unna?

Screening at PalaceNova Eastend Cinemas from August 29th.

Dubya

Metropolis (2001)

Directed by Rintaro. Animated.

The city of Metropolis is futuristic and cosmopolitan, and is basking in the pride of its latest achievement, the Ziggurat, a massive technological edifice. However, there is a dark side to this prosperity: the increasing use of robots has created an underclass of unemployed humans, discontented and volatile, and the Ziggurat is, in fact, part of industrialist Duke Red's scheme to depose the incumbent president and install a perfect machine government. The Ziggurat's centrepiece is Tima, a humanoid robot, built by rogue scientist Laughton.

This film is Katsuhiro Otomo's (writer and director of *Akira*) adaptation of Osamu Tezuka's 1949 manga, which was inspired by Fritz Lang's classic 1927 SF. This number of re-interpretations should warn you against expecting a straightforward remake: in fact, about the only feature common to the two films is the presence of a super-advanced female robot. In both films she is a tool intended to reinforce centralised control over the population but in the 2001 version her exposure to the realities of human and human-robot relations ultimately causes her to explode into the mother of all adolescent rage-against-injustice tantrums.

Metropolis' themes are, in fact, the stock-in-trade of Japanese anime: maladjusted teenagers, social decay, the totalitarian tendencies of centralised power, and the abuse of technology with its catastrophic consequences, all spiced with heavy borrowings from Western cultural traditions (are Eastern traditions insufficiently apocalyptic or am I just unable to spot them?).

A lot of the story and characters are predictable but it's involving and you'll get that vaguely perplexed feeling that is the hallmark of Japanese anime. Though the variation in animation styles from Astroboy-type caricature to super-smooth computerisation is a bit too noticeable, the stylistic references to Fritz Lang's origi-

nal - Art Deco design and swingin' 1920s soundtrack (the original was silent, of course) - gives the whole thing a memorable steampunk quality. It is worth the watch.

Screening at PalaceNova Eastend Cinemas from 19th September.

Guy

The Business of Strangers

Directed by Patrick Stettner.

Starring Stockard Channing and Julia Stiles.

When I came out of this movie all the other reviewers were discussing the film. Half of them loved it and the other half were indifferent. Director Patrick Stettner's first feature film, *The Business of Strangers* is a tight drama with a little sprinkling of black humour thrown in, set in the anonymous atmosphere of an airport hotel. Power is the main theme, whether it is manifested



through gender, economics, class, youth or sex. Julie Styron, beautifully portrayed by Stockard Channing, is a strong and successful businesswoman who has given her life to become Vice President of a large company in a male dominated world. But she is still full of insecurity and when her boss calls her to an unexpected meeting during one of her constant business trips she fears the worst and takes her anger out on her latest assistant (Paula Murphy) played by the engaging Julia Stiles.

Later that day the two women are trapped by circumstance and meet up in the airport hotel. The power plays begin. They flirt, drink, lie, and reveal their inner flaws, using an unsuspecting businessman (Frederick Weller) as a pawn in their psychological game. Stockard Channing is perfectly cast as Julie, continually aware of her power and how fragile it could be. Julia Stiles convincingly swings from victim to aggressor throughout her portrayal of Paula as she manipulates everyone around her. Frederick Weller as the businessman generates a genuinely repulsive character that you can't help feeling sorry for by the end. There is not much more to say about this film.

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It's good, it's tight, beautifully filmed but ultimately left me unconvinced.

Screening at PalaceNova Eastend Cinemas from September 5th.

Allan

Am Quiz

1. What 1912 disaster spawned two block buster films, one in the 1950s and one in the 1990s?
2. What film ends with the main character coming back after the closing credits and saying to the camera "You're still here? It's over. Go Home. Go"?
3. What do the movies *At First Sight* (romantic comedy) and *Awakenings* (medical drama) have in common?
4. Which film has the tagline "Mischief. Mayhem. Soap"?
5. To date, which is the most purchased DVD in Australia - *The Phantom Menace*, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, *Apocalypse Now Redux*?

ESther

Answers to the last Quiz

1. *The Majestic* is the only film in the list not to be based on a Stephen King novel.
2. *Carrie*, also Steven King's first published novel.
3. Each year, more movies are produced in India than in Hollywood. About 800 movies are released annually in India, about twice the output of Hollywood.
4. *Gone With The Wind* has been the best-attended film in history, since its release in 1939.
5. Alfred Hitchcock was born in England.
6. *A Beautiful Mind* won best film. The other nominees were *Gosford Park*, *In the Bedroom*, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* and *Moulin Rouge*.
7. True. David Fincher directed *Alien3*.

*Ansvarig utgivare: Sol
Medverkande: Allan, ESther,
Matthew Harvey*

Programme Cam 777

WEEK 5, Thursday 29th August

Forbidden Planet (Cinemascope Print) (1956)

Directed by Fred M. Wilcox.

Starring Walter Pidgeon, Anne Francis, Leslie Nielsen.
"And Francis stars in Forbidden Planet" – Rockie Horror Picture Show.

When Adams and his crew are sent to investigate the silence from a planet inhabited by scientists, he finds all but two have died. Dr. Morbius and his daughter Altaira have somehow survived a hideous monster which roams the planet. Unknown to Adams, Morbius has made a discovery, and has no intention of sharing it (or his daughter!) with anyone.

With two shorts that share a strange numerical link:

Melbourne Cup, 1896

What it says, the running of the 1896 Melbourne Cup - one of the oldest surviving pieces of Australian film available.

Black Panthers (1968)

Directed by Agnès Varda.

This 30 minute long film looks at a rally to free the party's leader, Huey P. Newton. There's no pretence of objectivity - the Black Panther Party shared in the copy-right. Speakers at the rally included Bobby Seale, Stokely Carmichael, and H. Rap Brown, and there's a short interview with Newton, in prison. Other segments include white people at a firing rage (some of which are children), and members of the police department explaining the gear they carry in the trunks of their cars.

This film documents some of the most important and controversial black leaders of the late 60s, and is a must see for anyone interested in sixties radicalism of the Panthers.

WEEK 6, Thursday 5th September

Bunny Lake Is Missing (1965)

Directed by Otto Preminger.

Ann Lake has recently settled in England with her daughter, Bunny. When she goes to retrieve her daughter after the girl's first day at school, no one has any record of Bunny having been registered. When even the police can find no trace that the girl ever existed, they wonder if the child was only a fantasy of Ann's. When Ann's brother backs up the police's suspicions, she appears to be a mentally disturbed individual. Are they right?

With short:

Dreams of a Rarebit Fiend: The Pet (1921)

After eating a rarebit, a man has an odd dream in which his wife takes in a strange-looking animal that eats everything in sight and keeps growing until it threatens the entire city.

WEEK 7, Thursday 12th September

The Shining (1980)

Directed by Stanley Kubrick.

Starring: Jack Nicholson

Kubrick's atmospheric and visually disturbing adaptation of the Stephen King story about a writer and his family who become off season caretakers of a remote mountain resort hotel. As they are snowed in and cut off from the world the hotel and its haunted secrets begin to come to life. A Stanley Kubrick classic.

With short:

Poo (1983)

Directed by Steve French.

The nocturnal activities of the oddly assorted inhabitants of an apartment block are brought to light through inventively eccentric animation.

WEEK 8, Thursday 19th September

Les Diaboliques (1955)

Directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot.

A man is killed by his wife and his lover. A tight and suspenseful thriller that builds up to a dramatic finale that has audiences on the edges of their seats!

With short:

Blood Brothers Promotional Reel (2002) (Blood Brothers, the debut film of local director Brenton Priestley will be screened on the 17th October).

An exciting programme of Iranian films will be shown at the Mercury Cinema on Wednesday nights during September. Please check the Advertiser or call the Mercury for details. The curator of the films has told us that AUFS members can get specially priced tickets for the screenings - \$8 per screening or \$26 for a 4 ticket pass on presentation of Film Society membership cards.

<http://www.aufs.org>