



Reel Buzz

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PALACE NOVA

Pres Rep

Is there anybody out there?

The Adelaide University Film Society continues to stumble along despite an apparent lack of enthusiasm from its membership. Remember Thursday nights? That's when we usually show films in the Union Cinema – you must have seen the posters around the University. We take the time and trouble to book films, book the cinema, prepare posters and fact sheets and set the whole thing up for you, the members, and not because we have nothing else to do in the evening. Yet every week it is the same reliable people organising the event and the same few members attending the screening. Thank you to all those who take the time and are interested to attend but where are the rest of you?

This term we have only four weeks of film screenings – see the programme elsewhere in *Reelbuzz*. Particular note should be paid to the 24th October when we have the premier of *Blood Brothers*, a new film by local filmmaker Brenton Priestley.

For those of you with sick minds we have chosen *It's Alive* for the 31st October (Halloween), so come along at 7.00pm see the film and then go out and scare some kiddies!

Make an effort and join us at least once, who knows you may even like it! Remember we have your email addresses and the technology; there is nowhere to hide!!

A well-wisher

<http://www.aufs.org>

This Month's Quiz

1. In which film does Val Kilmer portray Elvis Presley – *Elvis Lives*, *Holiday in Vegas* or *True Romance*?
2. Who is director Tony Scott's older brother?
3. Writer/Director Cameron Crowe went 'undercover' and returned to high school to research the book *Fast Times At Ridgemont High* – true or false?
4. Is director Cameron Crowe married to a woman famous for being an actress or a musician?
5. Who said: "You can get further with a kind word and a gun than you can with just a kind word"? What film did he say it in?

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The answers to this quiz and many other exciting things can be found on our revamped website www.aufs.org

Don't forget to check it out regularly to keep up to date with what's happening at the movies.

There will be a weekend away, Goolwa-beach-house-madness, whatever you want to call it, during the holidays; most likely at the beginning of December. Check your email and the website for details.



Editor: Ed
Contributors: Allan,
Esther, Guy and Lou

Film Reviews

Sunshine State

Directed by John Sayles.

Starring: Angela Bassett, Edie Falco, James McDaniel and Ralph White.

Sunshine State is a confident and competent construction, almost Shakespearean in scope and style, of America's present predicament.

The opening glimpse into history, of flames engulfing the 'skull and crossbones' of a Buccaneer's flag is brought rudely into the present. Now, the destruction of an icon, to have been used on Buccaneer's Day, the annual event of a small coastal town in Northern Florida. The vandal is a painfully adolescent black boy.

A Company of 'unscrupulous land developers' moves into town. Simultaneously so does a 'Man Eating Alligator' side show. "Nature is overrated".. and the line between 'greedy developers' and 'ordinary folk' begins to blur.

This very American film traces a historical path through the lives of two families, one white one black. Each with independent and headstrong daughters as the leading protagonists (Angela Bassett and Edie Falco). Both women have not achieved their 'dream'. The 'dream', and its various constructions in time, is the object in this film.

On Lincoln Beach, in the 40's and 50's Black folk, former plantation workers, bought land and developed 'black community', in the separatist spirit of the 'Jim Crow' laws. Simultaneously White folk, former pulp mill workers were also buying land and pursuing the American dream on Delrona Beach.

What went wrong? What happened? Civil Rights happened.

Sunshine State presents big issues within the context of small town politics and morality and meanwhile challenges a Political Correctness which makes a cigarette smoker feel like a baby strangler.

Lou Crow

Garage Days

Directed by Alex Proyas.

Can rock 'n' roll dreams come true?

I guess if this is the first time you are reading about *Garage Days* you've been under a rock somewhere (or writing essays?). *Garage Days* is the long awaited new film by director Alex Proyas, director of the dark and moody films *The Crow* and *Dark City*. Surprisingly, *Garage Days* is not dark and moody (I've just remembered, we highbrow reviewers usually call this *film noir*!) but still contains the artistic flair of Alex Proyas' visual style.

The story follows a young Sydney band's struggle to get gigs as more and more pubs become pokie palaces. Through a bit of luck Freddie, the lead singer, played by Kick Gurry (*Looking for Alibrandi*) bumps into the rock 'n' roll manager of every band's dreams. This meeting gives them an inkling of a chance at the big break they've been looking for – and perhaps a gig at Home Bake.

This is the background to the film, but to do it any real justice I'd have to include some spoilers. Let's just say, there are themes of family, friendship, love, betrayal, and depression, nicely woven into this film, along with a good dose of hallucinatory drugs.

Visually, Proyas' begins the film with a whole lot of fast cuts that introduce the roller coaster ride that we are in for. He uses a number of visually interesting camera techniques (a la *The Matrix*) such as pausing on a character and then swinging us around so that we can view the character from a different angle, frozen in pose, and then back again. Mercifully, he does not subject us to the frenetically fast cuts that marred *Dark City*.

The music in *Garage Days* is an eclectic mix of mostly, but not restricted to, punk, pop, new wave and rock. The Specials, The Cure and George are the ones that have stuck with me, but all the music is well placed and adds to the texture of the film.

But, saving the best till last, this film is hilarious. Right from the opening scene where Pia Miranda and Kick Gurry have sex – a kind of post *Looking for Alibrandi* relief in a way, to the final scene where we look back nostalgically over the band's garage days, you will be laughing your ass off.

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<http://www.aufs.org>

More Reviews

My Big Fat Greek Wedding

Directed by Joel Zwick.

Starring Nia Vardalos (also writer), John Corbett.

It's easy to see why *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* has been such a hit in the USA, it's the kind of film the whole ethnic family can enjoy. My overall feeling of it is that the Yanks got a copy of *Wog Boy*, toned it down, added some more attractive people (apologies to Nick Giannopolis) and turned up the schmaltz.

Toula is a nice frumpy Greek girl who realises that her life is going to be one of working in her parents' restaurant until she dies if she doesn't change things soon. She sets out to take control of her life and find happiness. This begins with losing the coke bottle glasses, dressing well, and doing a computer course at the local college.

Being a Greek girl means that you have to manage your father. Through careful manipulation by her mother and aunt, her father decides that it would be better for her to work outside the restaurant and Toula starts working at a travel agency. This is where Ian Miller (played by John Corbett of *Sex In the City*) notices her and they begin a romance. As all of us know, an ethnic girl can't do that kind of thing without the family finding out, and soon her decision to see a non-Greek boy begins to rock the foundations of her family. But this is a comedy, so it never gets too serious. I do have to say that the romance angle was very sweet and had a genuine feel to it.

As the title implies, a wedding is soon being planned and American and Greek-American cultures are compared, contrasted and laughed at – all in the most inoffensive manner.

Well, I liked this film, but sadly it's no *Looking for Alibrandi*, and it is pitched at an older audience. Your mum will also like this film, so if you want something nice to take her out to, here it is.

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End of Fear Bash

Thanks to our generous sponsor Palace-Nova, the Film Society will celebrate the end of exams with a free mystery film 7 pm Wednesday 27th November at Palace. There might even be some drinks provided if we're lucky. All members and friends welcome!

<http://www.aufs.org>

Bloody Sunday

Directed by Paul Greengrass.

In the light of current events, those interested in the causes of terrorism should hasten to the Palace-Nova to see *Bloody Sunday*.

On 30 January 1972, British soldiers opened fire on unarmed civilians participating in a civil rights march through Derry, Northern Ireland. Twenty-seven people were shot, 13 killed. It was a turning point in the Irish troubles, boosting the ranks of the Irish Republican Army and fuelling a long and grim terrorist war.

Greengrass tells the story in the frame of one day and shoots it in documentary style - capturing a sense of urgency and impending chaos, showing us police, demonstrators, religious leaders and British soldiers through the same intimate lens. Nothing looks rehearsed, and each of the dozens of actors seems to respond to the action as it occurs.

The film is essentially a study of events sliding out of control. The organiser of the march, Ivan Cooper (played brilliantly by James Nesbitt) is determined that it will be a peaceful protest. But, despite his best efforts, young 'hooligans' insist on confronting the British security forces. And the hard men of the IRA lurk in the background.

The British commander (Nicholas Farrell) is portrayed as a decent man who is not seeking violence. But he has been persuaded to authorise a dangerous plan in which an élite army unit will lie in wait for any 'hooligan' activity, and then round them up. Unfortunately, this unit hates the Irish with a passion - and has been issued with live ammunition. Tragedy unfolds before our eyes.

There's not a false note, no trace of "acting" - just a sense of realism that's very, very rare onscreen. In a hospital sequence, post-massacre, Greengrass creates an amazing density of detail: families wait for news of the injured, untended bodies line the corridors, nurses scramble for help, and reporters, dazed and helpless, hold notepads.

This cinéma-vérité style will not be to everyone's taste. One unimpressed reviewer described the cinematography as "so irritating in its unsteadiness that it makes the Dogme films seem static". But to my mind, *Bloody Sunday* is a great achievement: tense and passionate, a warning to government forces to act with restraint lest they be hoist with their own petard.

Paul Huntley

Programme *Cam & A*

Apologies for the short notice and the disappearance of the hoped-for night of shorts, both due to problems in the booking process.

Unless otherwise specified, films will be screened in the Union Cinema, level 5 of the Union Building, at 7pm on Thursdays; admission is free for members; membership is available for \$3 at the door. Door prizes will be drawn at all films.

For more information about the AUFS, check our website at www.aufs.org

Thursday 10th October:

THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

1960. Directed by Roger Corman. Starring Jonathon Haze & Jackie Joseph.

Classic black comedy about a young man who breeds a bloodthirsty plant - "Feed me! Feed me!" - and is forced to kill to feed it. The basis for the hit musical. Features an unbelievably young Jack Nicholson as a keen masocist at the dentist.

Admission free for all!

7pm ***WEDNESDAY*** 16th October:

GASLIGHT

1944. Directed by George Cukor. Starring Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten & Angela Lansbury.

Paula Alquist's (Bergman) aunt is murdered in her own house. Paula is sent away to protect her from the trauma; ten years later she has inherited the house and returns with her new husband, Gregory Anton (Boyer). However, Anton's motives are ulterior in the extreme and Paula is driven towards insanity by suspicion and the oppressiveness of the house, shrouded in the notorious fog of Victorian London. The cast and directing are superb in this atmospheric psychological thriller.

Plus short film:

RUNNING, JUMPING AND STANDING STILL FILM (1959)

The Goons make it to celluloid. Starring Spike Milligan.

Also Note: the Philosophy Club will be screening **BLOW UP**, a classic 1960s film about a photographer's disengagement with his subjects, even when they are murdered. 7pm sharp, Thursday 17th October, in

the Hughes Lecture Theatre, level 3 of the Hughes Building. A \$2 donation applies.

Thursday 24th October:

BLOOD BROTHERS

2002. Directed by Brenton Priestley. Starring Alex Freezer.

The world premiere of a local filmmaker's feature film. An ironic thriller in which Alec Frost, a teenage druglord, attempts to train a savage stranger in the art of crime. The director will be present to provide his insight into filmmaking, followed by free drinks and nibbles.

See further: <http://www.blood-brothers-movie.8m.com>

A gold coin donation applies.

Thursday 31st October: Hallowe'en Special!

IT'S ALIVE!

1973. Directed by Larry Cohen. Starring John P. Ryan & Sharon Farrell.

We celebrate Halloween with some good (?) schlock horror. The Davies' newborn child goes on a murderous rampage through suburban Los Angeles in a continuation of the Satanism-themed films that started with Roman Polanski's controversial *Rosemary's Baby* (1968).

Plus short film:

PSYCHO - PROMOTIONAL TRAILER (1960)

The original 7-minute teaser, featuring a personal endorsement by Alfred Hitchcock, hopefully not in the shower.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUIZ

1. The sinking of the Titanic.
2. *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*
3. Both based on books by Dr Oliver Sachs.
4. *Fight Club*
5. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

was the most popular DVD purchase at the printing of the last *Reelbuzz*, but *Lord of the Rings* has overtaken it. My sources now say that *Monsters Inc.* (just released) may knock *Lord of the Rings* off the top spot soon!

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<http://www.aufs.org>