



Reel/Buzz

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PALACE NOVA

Hellooo Film Soccers!

For those of you not fortunate enough to have made my acquaintance yet, there's no escaping now hehehe :o) Really, there is little to say at this junction other than that I am excited to be in this position where I get the last say on what films I can watch *giggle* (no, it really *is* a democratic system, I promise!) and I hope to maintain an enjoyable club as well as perhaps get a little more juice flowing.

Socially speaking, as our illustrious and dedicated Webmeister has divulged to you on our web site (DO check it out!), we have many a friendly escapade on offer throughout the year. First up is our timely Film Choosing Night! To be held this coming Saturday (29th March) with pizza, muffins, fermented and flammable liquids, chips, dips, whips and what-have-you, we implore you to share your wits and opinions with us! Held every term, there's plenty of opportunity to get used to us ;o) Twice a year we collectively run away to the beach side (or country-side), to sloth out with videos, taste sensations and an abundance of fresh air, all for *insanely* minimal \$ to cover costs. Stay tuned.

I must point out that our good friends at Palace Nova Eastend Cinemas not only supply our weekly door prize of a FREE double pass, but they regularly screen films for the media, pre-release. So if you are interested in being one-step-ahead of the rest of society, then simply come on down (or even email us) with your interest.

As those before me have proclaimed, this is your society, and in order for it to prosper, we need your help – for example, the films don't show themselves! We plan very soon to hold a "Learn how to project" session, and this is your chance to put your money where your mouth is (or should that be put your mouth where your \$7 is...). Anyway, keep your eyes about!

We look forward to phlebotomising your sweet fresh blood *evil cackle*

Watch out – We're coming to get ya!

Miss Tameister Stevers
(Alias: Tamara)

<http://www.aufs.org>

The editor says Hi

A big and cheerful greeting to all members of the AU Film Society. I am using this brief note here to get acquainted with all the film fans either on or off campus who have decided to migrate to the celluloid splendour that is our Society.

I hope to be there to absorb and publish (through *ReelBuzz*) the numerous and varied opinions about film. So get involved by seeing films, reviewing them and sending them to me at editor@aufs.org. I hope that with the guiding hand of my experienced co-editor Anna I can keep dialogue about movies interesting and ongoing. This is Felix singing out and wishing you many happy times in front of the 24 fps flicker of the cinema screen.

Felix Staica

BE INVOLVED!!
Film Choosing Night for Term 2
screenings:

Saturday 29th March, 7pm
Welcome, welcome, welcome!
email peter@petercassidy.com
or call 8356 3382 for the secret
beachside location

Editors: Felix & Anna
Contributors: Tamara
& ESther & Brenton

Film Reviews

Roger Dodger

Directed by Dylan Kidd
Starring Campbell Scott

When the opening scene of *Roger Dodger* opened with a loudmouthed, sarcastic, pessimistic man lecturing those around him about how women no longer need men, I thought, oh god, not another one of these stupid, let's look at male female relationships and spend an entire film in a coffee shop arguing about it. In fact, it even has wobbly hand held camerawork - and of course I thought this was another attempt at "dogma" film-making by people who should just give up.

Happily, I was very wrong. Whilst being an exploration of sexual relationships and how men and women relate to each other, it was well done and insightful with an interesting story and script to back it up. And, very importantly, the wobbly hand-held camera was left behind at the end of the first scene.

Roger Swanson (Campbell Scott) is an advertising executive who is witty, sarcastic and probably nothing less than excellent at his job. He would be smooth with the ladies, but he allows his pessimism to creep into his interactions with them. He is either manipulating or being brutally honest in his bitterly articulate way.

Roger's much older boss, played by an aging Isabella Rossellini (who is apparently gorgeous to others, but just looks old and haggard to me), has been having a covert sexual relationship with him. She decides that it's over and Roger can't quite take the rejection. Into Rogers life appears Nick, Roger's 16 year old nephew. He has dropped in to see New York and get advice about women from his womanising uncle Roger. Thus begins Nick's education and Roger's awakening. Their quest to get Nick acquainted with women is interesting, funny and truly surprising for all of the characters as well as the audience.

Needless to say, Roger learns that perhaps the world is a little less straightforward than his pessimistic view allows for, that people aren't as predictable as you'd want to believe, and that there is something special about innocence, family and friendship.

The Reelbuzz: Don't let these closing "feel-good" comments put you off. *Roger Dodger* is an interesting ride.

The Good Girl

Directed by Miguel Arteta

Stars Jennifer Aniston, John C. Reilly, Jake Gyllenhaal
Don't let the fact that Jennifer Aniston stars in *The Good Girl* discourage you. Her performance as a lower-middle class Texan, stuck in a crappy job and dull marriage, is about as far as you can get from the trendy



cosmopolite she plays on *Friends*. She shows here that she's a credible actress with genuine range.

As her husband, the pug-ugly Reilly (who has offered terrific support in several high-profile films this year, *Gangs of New York*, *Chicago*, *The Hours*) invests his potentially unlikable character - a dense, pot-head house-painter with such humour and sympathy that he would have stolen the show if the rest of the acting wasn't as consistently superb. Jake 'Donnie Darko' Gyllenhaal notches up another performance as a disturbed young man and even Tim Blake Nelson's (from *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*) hayseed schtick rings true.

Stylistically, the film is as flat as its settings (the discount store where Aniston works, the crummy motel room where she carries on her affair with Gyllenhaal), but the made-for-TV visual feel is more than compensated for by Miguel Arteta's sensitive direction, Mike White's nuanced and unpredictable script and, of course, the performances. It's also a well edited and nicely paced 93 minutes. All in all, as a realistic, moving and funny ode to the lives of middle Americans, *The Good Girl* beats the smug *About Schmidt* hands down.

Opens on April 24 at the Palace

Brenton Priestley

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The Man Without a Past

(*Mies vailla menneisyyttä*)

Directed by Ari Kaurismäki

Starring Markku Pelyola and Kati Outinen

Before I saw *The Man Without a Past* I had a vague idea of Kaurismäki as a depressing film maker

portraying down and out alcoholics on the verge of ruin, as many Finnish directors seem to. Do I have to say I was in for a



surprise? This film is so gentle and loving you leave the theatre feeling all fuzzy inside, but still in a spare, particularly Finnish way.

The main character is a man who is attacked and bashed so badly he almost dies in hospital. Because of this he loses his memory and has no idea of who he is and what he is actually doing in the little town he finds



himself in. Thanks to his own inventiveness and other people's generosity he manages to find himself a place to live and to

furnish it with scraps from the town dumpster. The question that keeps haunting him and those around him is: who is he?

Ultimately *The Man Without a Past* is a film about love of life, the importance of friendships and making the best of any situation. And it also includes one of the most understated love stories I have ever seen. I recommend this film to anyone who can read subtitles.



Film 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 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?
6. Which famous "Australian" actor was born on the 3rd of January, 1956 in Peekskill, New York? (Hint – he's married to an Adelaide girl).
7. Actor Russell Crowe was born in Perth – true or false?
8. Julia Roberts was once engaged to actor Kiefer Sutherland – true or false?
9. Why did Sharon Stone cause a moral outcry in the USA in 1992?
10. What 1996 film had the tagline "Don't Answer The Phone. Don't Open The Door. Don't Try To Escape"?
11. Julia Roberts had a body double for most of the long-shots and extreme close ups in *Pretty Woman* – true or false?
12. In what film does Julia Robert's character talk about the use of body doubles?
13. What famous family film has the tagline "The Happiest Sound In All The World!"
14. What film, released in 1999, was notorious for causing viewers to have motion sickness?
15. Meryl Streep has been nominated for 5, 7 or 11 Academy Awards?



Answers in the next issue of *ReelBuzz*

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Programme Term

WEEK 4, Thursday 27th March

The Philadelphia Story (1940)

Directed by George Cukor.

Starring Cary Grant, Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart.

A divorced couple clash in this intelligent and fast-paced screwball comedy where the comic tension arises from the fact that the couple know each other too well. Jimmy Stewart won an Academy award for his role. (112 min)

WEEK 5, Thursday 3rd April

DOUBLE FEATURE!!

Rock All Night (1958)

Directed by Roger Corman.

Starring: Dick Miller, Russell Johnson, Abby Dalton, The Platters, The Blockbusters, Nora Hayes.

Al's Place is a rock and roll bar that plays host to the Platters and the Blockbusters together with an assortment of 'terminally hip barflies'. Two murderers on the run hold the place hostage. This 'fairly deranged rock and roll suspense picture' is a personal favourite of Corman's: 'one of the strangest movies I ever made'. It was shot on one set in a fortnight. (60 min)

Freaks (1932)

Directed by Tod Browning.

This film sets up a nightmare collision between normality and abnormality when a group of circus freaks take revenge upon a beautiful trapeze artist and her strongman lover after they have tried to kill a midget. Browning used real circus "freak" performers to play sympathetic victims without a hint of sentimentality or voyeurism. The real horrors are the strong and handsome 'normal' people. Banned in the UK for 30 years and heavily cut in the USA. (63 min).

WEEK 6, Thursday 10th April

A Night of Short Films (a.k.a. 'The Projectionist's Nightmare')

In no particular order:

Dawn Flight (1976)

Starring Dennis Arndt.

A surreal story of a young glider pilot. In stunning aerial manoeuvres, tree-top chases, and pursuits through rocky canyons he is haunted by a mysterious super-pilot. Oscar nomination (1976) for best short film. (22 min)

Ubu (1978)

An animated version of the story Ubu Roi by Alfred Jarry. The monstrous Pa Ubu is persuaded by his wife to kill King Wenceslas. Once the deed is done Ubu revels in his power, greed and cruelty. However, the escaped Prince Bugrelas, son of Wenceslas, raises an army to avenge the death of his father and to reclaim his kingdom. The soundtrack consists of electronic grunts and other sounds while the verbal force is retained through the use of dialogue in comic-strip bubbles of various colours. (18 min)

Loony Tom the Happy Lover (1951)

A slapstick comedy which has become a film classic on both sides of the Atlantic. It pictures the amorous progress of a prancing, baggy-trousered, bowler-hatted, demented and blissfully happy tramp who capers across a sunlit countryside making love to every woman he encounters. (10 min)

In The Night Kitchen (1987)

Based on the classic children's story. Presents the animated story about a little boy's dream-fantasy in which he helps three fat bakers get milk for their cake batter. By the same guy who wrote *Where the Wild Things Are*: Maurice Sendak. (6 min)

Klatka (The Cage) (1986)

A rat desperately tries to escape from its confinement accompanied by triumphant music. The camera finally draws back so that the viewer can see what the rat has been escaping from. (6 min)

Revenge of the Kinematograph Cameraman (1912)

Gees, we thought this one sounded interesting. A very early example of 'pixilation' by the hard-working pioneer Wladyslaw Starewicz. Starewicz and his helpers painstakingly manipulated a cast of flexible insect figures to tell this story. Silent production on the theme of infidelity. Insects take the parts of protagonists in a pioneering work of animation. (14 min)

Watchmaker Mole (1976)

Once again Mole graces our screens. We can't get enough of this cute little eastern bloc guy. Tells a story about the Mole who gets mixed up with a game of marbles and a cuckoo clock. (6 min)

And more...

<http://www.aufs.org>