

Ree/Buzz

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PALACE NOVA

Editor's Epilogue

Its been a rather interesting couple weeks with a change of guard at the top and a new Buzz editor. As of August 16, Esther replaced Morgan as our new President and Felix assumed Esther's old position of VP. Morgan relieved herself for reasons outlined in her last ever Presidential Report. On behalf of the committee and all members, I'd like to thank Morgan for her outstanding contribution to the AUFS.

This is my first issue as Buzz Ed, and hopefully not my last. Keep a keen eye out for upcoming events over the next few weeks. *The film keeps rolling and time waits for no one* - please enjoy our small smorgasbord of film related propaganda.

Stewy J

President's Report

"Out with the New, In with the old"

Having handed in my resignation to old hands at the job, I commence writing what will be my final words as President of the Film Society.

I believe the film society is a great club that certainly gives all members the benefit to get their money's worth. There's a film every week, give-aways and additional activities such as weekends away and the end of year bash that all members are invited to join. I'm certainly going to continue to be a member and reap the benefits offered by the club.

In my role as president, I was constantly concerned not just with what the committee thought should happen, but with what members might want to see happen and therefore, in this final farewell, I'd like to reiterate that the lines of communication are open and your ideas and suggestions for making the club bigger and better would be welcomed by the committee.

The film society has around 200 members and Thursday screenings generally have an attendance of 20-30 people... so I am sure there must be some ideas out there as to how the weekly attendance might be increased - what would make you come along to more events? (Send your feedback and suggestions to the whole committee at committee@aufs.org and/or

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share with other members by emailing the discussion list at: discussion@aufs.org).

The club also relies heavily on just a few members to keep things running smoothly and it would be great to see more people getting involved - whether their involvement is as minimal as turning up to a few more of the events and offering feedback and ideas - right through to helping at the door, learning to project and projecting films. Projectionist are in serious shortage and I am a little fearful that they may become an extinct species.

Finally, it would be great to see a lot more new faces on the committee next year so that new and old ways were a little more balanced, resulting in much higher involvement by members.

I did enjoy the people I met through the film society and would like to thank all those who supported me while in my role of President by helping out, turning up to events and even just offering words of support. Thanks.

I'll see you at a film screening in the near future but in the meantime keep your eye out for emailed AUFS announcements telling you what is on and when or check out the AUFS website at www.aufs.org.

Later,
M.

Reviews

The Life and Death of Peter Sellers

Directed by Stephen Hopkins

Peter Sellers is one of the great chameleons and comedians, effortlessly slipping between one character and another. Indeed, the main point of this adaptation of Roger Lewis' book is that Sellers could be hundreds of characters yet had none of his own. He's a tragic figure, whose life was cut short at the early age of 54.

Geoffrey Rush plays Sellers about as well as anyone could, perfectly emulating his mannerisms and with *The Goon Show* relegated to an introductory footnote, which is unfortunate. Initially we find him

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married to Anne Sellers (the always delightful Emily Watson), someone he apparently loved throughout his life, but they are soon divorced when Sellers' instability, childishness – and lust for his beautiful co-stars – intervenes. Sophia Loren (Sonia Aquino) and Britt Ekland (Charlize Theron), the latter of which would become his second wife, are just two such women. We see brilliant recreations of some famous moments from his movies, including *The Pink Panther* and *Dr. Strangelove*, but the focus is more on his interactions with his mother (Miriam Margolyes), Blake Edwards (John Lithgow) and Stanley Kubrick (Stanley Tucci, who gets an hilarious introduction).

It's obvious everyone is having blast playing these famous people, and I even forgot to mention Stephen Fry as the shifty psychic, Maurice Woodruff. Some details might have been changed for convenience and there is of course huge compression in time, with large chunks of his life excised, but the film succeeds in its purpose. Lewis' book has its fans and its detractors, as neither the book nor the film paints a terribly positive picture of Sellers. Given all the information about his life, though, it seems reasonably accurate. As my fellow reviewer noted, "The Life and Death of Peter Sellers" isn't exactly why you might expect from the director of *Predator 2*, but it is an interesting, creative and enjoyable biography, especially if you're familiar with the characters involved.

***1/2 (out of four)

Josh Blackman

Tom White

Directed By Alkinos Tsilimidos

Don't be put off by the fact that this is Aussie, because there's no Australian satire or blokes flipping snags on barbies. Colin Friels play Tom White, a normal guy who snaps under the pressure of a life too ordinary and goes missing going through a bit of a life crisis.

After suddenly leaving his job one afternoon, Tom wanders around Melbourne, the set of the entire film. His journey introduces him to an array of fellow Melbourneans, all of whom are experiencing the darker side of life. Tom connects with all these personalities and they manage to expose a side of Tom that has been suppressed by his 'normal' life. Malcolm (Bill Hunter) the grandiose denizen of the

streets, takes Tom under his wing. Together they indulge the highs and lows of homeless life, analysing their common fate with an amazing smiles on their faces.

Conventionality is thrown out the window with Tom's chosen journey as he rarely engages in regular conversions. It would be easy to classify the film as one-sided, as it focuses on Tom's life and ignores the real consequences of his actions. This can be forgiven however with the intense detail shown by writer Daniel Keene in all his characters and Friels' performance.

I have to admit, I was welling up without even knowing it! Paul Kelly and the Boon Companions perform the intro song, setting a fantastic vibe. Although I didn't totally understand the motives behind Tom's actions, I was never isolated from Tom's story. This is a touching story and if you like Aussie films but hate "Aussie films", this is a good see.

**1/2 (out of four)

Stewy Jones

A Touch of Spice

Directed by Tassos Boulmetis

This film was a box-office smash in Greece, although given its contents, it's hard to see why. The "spice" has both literal and metaphorical meanings, but the most obvious is that our protagonist's (Fanis), grandfather owned a store with a spice for every occasion. Not only do specific spices suit particular foods, but each spice has a particular meaning. As a character says in the film, "sometimes you must use the wrong spice in order to get the correct reaction". I may have paraphrased, but there are many such apparently profound statements in the movie, mostly delivered in voiceover.

I have refrained from describing the plot, because there isn't much to describe. Certainly the lack of formulaic Hollywood plotting might be refreshing at first, but writer/director Tassos Boulmetis' messy screenplay doesn't seem to know where its going. There are some obviously artificial but surprisingly successful special effects as we revisit frequent Istanbul over a period of about thirty years, seeing a Greek family being torn apart by the authorities who are ejecting masses of Greek citizens from the country. Fanis, when still only a boy, leaves for Greece, but his grandfather and his first love

<http://www.aufs.org>

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(“dance for me, and I’ll cook for you” he tells her) remain behind. He spends the following years spicing up others lives while failing with his own, wishing to be reunited with them, but opportunities always slip through his grasp.

That’s about as much of a structure as the screenplay has; the film instead focuses on the cooking metaphor and the results of the events in Istanbul. Certainly there must be many real people like those portrayed in the movie, and such thematic resonance seems to have struck a chord with the Greek public. This is understandable. However, as a film in itself it is too leisurely paced and too unfocused to really capture a general audience. It does feature an admirable musical score, but the direction and performances are only adequate. As such, unless you’re up on your spices, you can probably give this one a miss.

** (out of four)

Josh Blackman

I’m Not Scared

Directed by Gabriele Salvatores

I’m Not Scared is both a thriller and a family drama. That it succeeds on both counts is primarily due to some heartfelt performances from some child actors, especially our protagonist, Michele (Giuseppe Cristiano). He, his sister, and a few friends live in rural Italy. His father is rarely at home, and without such supervision, they are free to roam the countryside on their bicycles and do as they please. Michele stumbles across a creature hidden in some ruins some distance from their home. It is soon discovered that his father and their friends maybe involved, and he struggles with trying to appease his family and doing what he thinks is right.

Everybody is torn in two directions in this film. The boy’s mother clearly wishes to do what’s right for her children, and she puts up with her husband’s failings despite all she has to endure. Michele, and to a lesser extent his sister, cling to their normal Huck Finn way of living as the real world nips at their heels. A real distinction is made between the pure children and the corrupted adults. Some of the children have already been influenced by their immoral superiors – there will be more than one betrayal before the film is over.

The photography is stunning, with beautiful landscapes and emotional close-ups. The ending might be too conventional, but it fails to obscure the emotional message it contains. Aitana Sánchez-Gijón and Dino Abbrescia are excellent as the mother and father, respectively, but the story is told from the children’s viewpoint, and the child actors are up to the task. A poignant tale of lost innocence and corrupted lives.

*** 1/2 (out of four)

Josh Blackman

Esther’s Quiz

1. Soon to be released Alien Vs Predator (2004) was alluded to in which film?
2. What two things do the films: Raising Helen (2004), The Princess Diaries (2001), Pretty Woman (1990) and have in common?
3. What beefy actor would you be meeting if you were introduced to Dwayne Douglas Johnson?
4. What film has the following tagline: The temperature where freedom burns!
5. What other film (and book) does this refer to?
6. What 2002 film featured a series of gross-out stunts?
7. Who received her first best actress nomination for The English Patient (1996)?
8. The Maltese Falcon was whose directorial debut ?
9. Who plays Gollum/Smeagol IN the Lord of the Rings Trilogy
10. Which film by director Billy Wilder’s was voted the funniest film of the century by the American Film Institute in 2000.

Film Choosing Night

The film choosing night for Term 4 will be held on Friday, 10th of September, at a secret location. The night will go from 7pm till late. If you are interested and would like to be involved, e-mail filmchoosinghost@aufs.org for more details.

Term III Program

All films are screened in the Union Cinema, Level 5, Union Building, at 7pm on Thursday evenings, unless otherwise stated. Membership for a year's worth of films is \$7. More detailed information can be found at www.aufs.org/programme

WEEK 5, Thursday 26th August

Aardman Animation Compilation 1983–1989

A collection of animations.
Claymation at its best. (45)



With Shorts:

**Fawly Towers: Gourmet
Dinner** (1975) (30 mins)
**A Star Is Bored (Looney
Tunes)** (1956) (7 mins)



WEEK 6, Thursday 2nd September

The Killing

After getting out of prison, Johnny Clay masterminds a complex race-track heist, but his scheme is complicated by the intervention of the wife of a teller (George Peatty) in on the scheme, the boyfriend of the wife, airport regulations, and a small dog. An early Kubrick film, and one of the primary influences on Quentin Tarantino's Reservoir Dogs.

16mm / 85 min / USA / 1956 / Drama

With Short: **Envy (Intercat)** (1951) (17 mins)

WEEK 7, Thursday 9th September

A Brief History of Time (1991)

A film about the life and work of the cosmologist, Stephen Hawking, who despite his near total paralysis, is one of the great minds of all time.

16mm / 80 min / UK / 1991 / Documentary

With Short: **Prest-O Change-O (Merrie Melodies)** (1939) (7 mins)

WEEK 8, Thursday 16th September

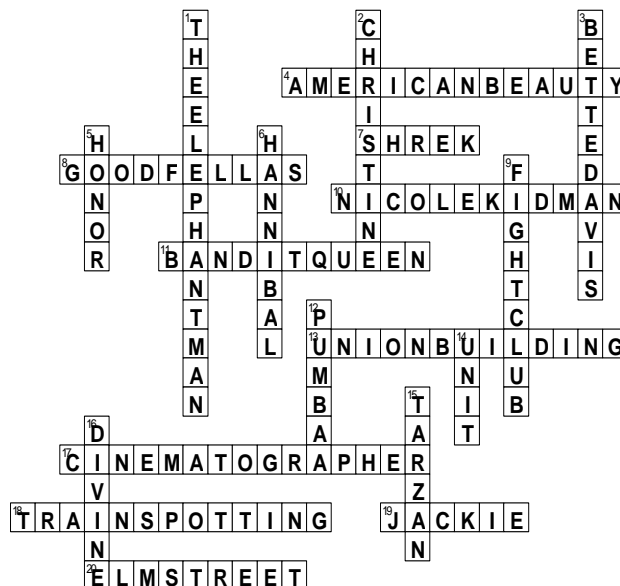
Adam's Rib (1949)

A woman is accused of murdering her husband and Katherine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy, both lawyers, find themselves on the opposite side of the case. Classic battle-of-the-sexes comedy.

16mm / 103 min / USA / 1949 / Comedy

With Short: **Morphology of Desire** (1998) (6 mins)

Answers To The Crossword



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