

Reel/Buzz

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PALACE NOVA

President's Report

Contained herein: Mental Health Warning, Congratulations, Head's Up.

Hi Everyone,

We're on the home stretch now. Exams and essays are due, annual reviews have to be handed in. You can't afford NOT to come to Thursday movies the last four weeks of term – how else are you going to stay sane?!

Over the Uni holidays the film society had a weekend getaway to Goolwa. About 19 people got together in a beautiful beach house at Goolwa Beach and socialised, talked films, watched films, played pool, walked along the beautiful beach, and generally had a good time. Many thanks go to Tamara Stevers for her organisation, help and cooking skills - she cooked a massive meal for everyone on Saturday night. Also, thanks also go to Stewart Jones (your ReelBuzz editor) for all of his organising and leg work, not to mention allowing those who had brought bathers to invade his spa, Michael Hill for bringing the bulk of the DVDs, the DVD player, his treasuring skills and his sense of humour, Peter Cassidy for providing guacamole and lifts to and from Goolwa, and the AUFS committee for organising and supporting this event. I'd also like to thank all of the people who came along for making it a success – you guys are what it's all about!

So, what of films? Well, I'd like to rave about the last four screenings this year. We have a whole lot of Fawlty Towers, so just come along for a bit of term 4 stress relief. We have the original King Kong, which is being remade by Peter Jackson (as we speak, starring "our" Naomi Watts). The original is great and everyone should see it, even if it is just to be able to say you got to see the original (which is also a great film). Just think, you will be able to bag Jackson for not being true to the original (don't worry, he should be used to that by now!). We also have another original that has been remade recently – The Ladykillers. This is meant to be so much funnier than the recent Coen Brothers film, and a bit of a classic in its own right. Let's not forget the comedy pastiche Amazon Women

on the Moon that some of my nerdy friends have talked about for years. Maybe now I'll understand some more of those in-jokes and quotes (or maybe not). The sketch with Carrie Fisher is meant to be excellent, and it's right at the end, so maybe you should come and check that out too. Finally we have the Brando classic A Streetcar Named Desire. At the time it was filmed the American sensors when to town and all but banned the film because of its brazen sexuality. Brando was a God when this film was made – come and see why!

Esther

President and Film Fanatic

Film Reviews

Love Me If You Dare

Directed by Yann Samuelle

"Visually inventive in the style of Amelie, Love Me If You Dare tells the story of childhood friends Julien and Sophie. The pair have engaged in an elaborate game of dares and counter-dares increasing the risks as the years pass into adulthood. Although they share a deep bond that goes beyond friendship, and it seems inevitable that they will be together, the games drive them further and further away from being able to communicate their true feelings. This ultra-modern cartoon-fairytale is a brilliant study of game playing in all its facets - light and dark - and a reflection on how fantasies and ecstasies of childhood haunt and tempt us even in adulthood." (somewhere/one on the net)

Well I cannot summarise the plot any better than that. As for what I thought of the film here goes:

From the beginning we are led down the garden path... sometimes eagerly we follow and it's ever so nice and pleasant... and sometimes not. Sometimes we're pushed on rollers, with what feels like dirty trickery. But then isn't that what a good film does?!

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Music and imagery is composed and used to dictates one's emotional state in essence... we all know that...

Opening scenes are indeed reminiscent of Amelie's unique and charming filmic style... but that's about where the similarities end.

Games games and more games... a new meaning to mind games here. Remember Alexandra's Project? Well nothing like that!

Dramaticised dreams remind us of early school plays with only a higher budget....

Adult games...

What's a year between friends anyway?

"Better than banana milkshakes"..... "

Then it begins to get dark, very dark.... or is it grey?

The dare of dares!

Traverses all manner of colours and memories and even those dreams we may have thought about but never ever would have dared to follow through - us good girls anyway... then right back to the childhood rainbow we all aspired to as naive little twinkles. It's a life cycle, some dream - some make it reality.

****/5

Tamara

The Corporation

By far the best documentary / film this year. The Corporation takes a thorough look at the concept and entity known as a corporation. It follows the changing role they've had in our world, from their origin as publicly accountable 'services' to attaining the rights to grow as legal 'persons,' bound by law to act primarily in the interests of investors. It also examines the nature and interests of a corporation in human terms, and what such a 'person' would be like in our society.

The strength of the Corporation over others in its genre (being primarily Michael Moore films) is that it relies upon logic rather than emotion to influence the audience. Guest speakers from both sides of the business world (including

Michael Moore) present their views, and the film is narrated in a relatively neutral manner. Because of this its critique is notably more powerful and a lot less subjective. The movie covers seemingly every facet of Corporations in our lives, and exposes the literally disturbing power and impact they have. I walked out vowing "never buy a brand name again..."

The only criticism/ warning I have is that the movie goes for 2 ½ hours, and covering so many topics, it didn't seem to give a sense of how far it was through its critique. In fact it may feel like a mental conditioning session A pleasure to watch, very interesting and couldn't be more relevant!

Brilliant! 4/4.

Michael Hill

Yu-Gi-Oh! The Movie

For those who don't know, Yu-Gi-Oh is the television series, complete with trading card game (called Duel Monsters in the television series), that has taken the under 17 world by storm.

Young Yugi is the Duel Monsters champion in a highly competitive Duel Monsters circle. In the card game, monsters (on the cards drawn) battle to death, the loss of all life points. Sound familiar? To those who have played this kind of card game, you'll know what I mean. To everyone else, you may need a bit more of an explanation: it's just a game on cards, cards drawn have a specific creature on them with life points, attacking abilities etc. There is an element of skill as the two card players have to decide how to use the cards they draw, and an element of chance, as the cards are drawn from a shuffled deck. Children across Australia are playing this game in school yards as you read this.

As the film opens we find that, unbeknownst to Yugi and the other duelists, Duel Monsters is an



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ancient game that holds the key to releasing the Egyptian god of death, Anubis. When some ancient artefacts and a set of unpredictable circumstances conspire to wake the embalmed Anubis, Yugi finds himself battling the spirit of Anubis in an increasingly real game of Duel Monsters, the outcome of which has the potential to destroy the entire world.

While the game itself is confusing to someone like me who has no idea about how the monsters interact and what the implication of a drawn card is before it is played, my 11 year old son thoroughly enjoyed this film. Towards the end, I even found myself drawn into the excitement of player skill and chance as the final battle between Yugi and the spirit of Anubis played itself out. If you're into 'Yu-Gi-Oh!', the movie will not disappoint (despite a little cheating regarding rules of play, apparently). If you are a parent being conned into taking your Yu-Gi-Oh! fanatic child to this film, the excitement is infectious and so ultimately this is not as unsatisfying an experience as many of the other children's films in this vein have been (should I mention Pokemon here?). Everyone else, this film may not be for you.

Esther Speight

The Terminal

Directed by Steven Spielberg

Tom Hanks as a man from a fictional European country who can hardly speak any English? Indeed, yes. After his country is overrun by a military coup while he is mid-flight, he becomes marooned at JFK international airport without a valid passport, and is hence unable to enter America. That Hanks makes this portrayal of this simple man believable indicates how good an actor he is, and how likeable a personality.

Instead of a serious drama, we have a mixture of light comedy and Spielbergian sentimentality of

Tom Hanks
Catherine Zeta-Jones

Steven Spielberg
The Terminal
Now In Theaters

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Life is waiting.

PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13
BRIEF LANGUAGE AND DRUG REFERENCES



neither the best nor worst kind. It's enjoyable and inoffensive. Viktor (Hanks) makes friends with many people, including a cleaner and a cook, as we follow his episodic adventures in his months-long stay at the terminal (an absolutely incredible set, by the way), with airport-chief Stanley Tucci standing in his way of entry to New York. Regrettably, the least successful subplot is the love story between Viktor and Amelia (Catherine Zeta-Jones), an air hostess having an unhappy affair with a married man. Zeta-Jones simply doesn't

convince, although the scene where they kiss in front of the fountain is such a beautifully lit piece of old-school romance that you almost forget their liaison doesn't make a lot of sense.

While not as explicitly as *The Majestic* a few years back, the influence of Frank Capra is evident here – it's Hanks' little man vs. corporate America, with Tucci as the villainous figurehead. The movie is much more intelligent than most people have given credit, with many sly stabs at consumerist and capitalistic America. "What can I do here?" Viktor asks when he arrives at the airport, which is filled with shops and advertising of all descriptions: "The only thing you can do – shop." The usual Spielberg cohorts are also present, including John Williams who provides a bouncy score and the brilliant Janusz Kaminski who, like he did in *Minority Report*, goes to town with the backlighting.

Not many people have a line up of films as impressive as Spielberg, and in that company *The Terminal* comes up short. It's not as excessive a blunder as *1941* or *Hook*, which floundered under excessive budgets; it's a smaller film with a simple agenda. But the Spielberg technical brilliance is here as always, and that, along with Hanks' endearing performance, makes *The Terminal* a moderate success.

*** (out of four)

Josh Blackman

Weekend Away



The traditional group shot.



Friday - Michael's Day

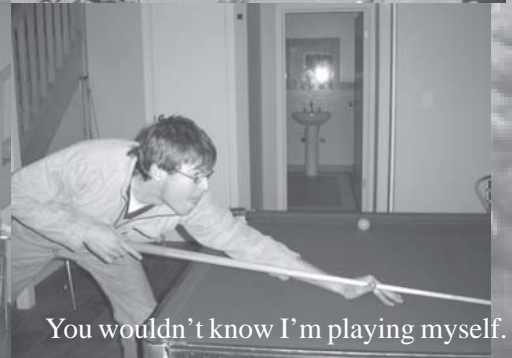
The weekend began with the traditional AUFS rite of passage. Like the Teotihuacan rituals of ancient Aztec, each AUFS initiate had to masochistically burn their eyes by watching a Friday night ABBA special.

After this Fraternity class punishment was over, the feast of fish, chips, & pizza that was provided by the hunter-gathers began! Following the feast the war paint was put on and Peter Cassidy was beaten by default at a game of Belgium Snooker. Clearly the highlight of the weekend! For those not versed in the art of belgium snooker, it is a lot like normal snooker except the holes are not regulation size, and the table warps to one side creating a vortex.

Next the seers of the tribe then found an ancient relic of the early ninty's: 'Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid!' After placing the viewing stone into the primitive pre-DVD tape player, we observed that dead men indeed didn't wear plaid! Which was the much believed theory at the time, along with that of peanuts having souls.

By this time the sun had well gone down, and like good Aztec's retreated to our seperate caves doused the lamps and whimpered in fear of the darkness.

To find out what happened on Saturday and Sunday, a) ask someone who was there, or b) look at the photos and join the dots yourself.



You wouldn't know I'm playing myself.

Problem: What happens when two of your own film critics review the same film because you can't get yourself organised?

Answer: Put them both in and hope they don't contradict each other!

Catwoman - By Damo

Directed by Pitof. (Yes, he only has one name)

Halle Berry prancing around in a skin tight, skimpy leather costume? This film has gotta be good! But sadly no, this is one of the worst super-hero films for quite a while. And the thing is, it could have and should have been so much better.

Catwoman introduces us to the world of Patience Phillips (Halle Berry), a meek artist who hates her job working in advertising for cosmetic company Beauline. After Patience is flushed out of a pipe into the sea and dies, a mystical cat named Midnight resurrects her and imbues her with super-cat powers. Hmm. Anyway, she now has a dual personality — that of the unconfident Patience, and her new emerging alter ego of Catwoman. Catwoman is confident, sexy, independent, powerful and did I mention the leather bikini? She is the opposite of Patience, and she begins trying to find out who killed her. There's a tepid love story thrown into the mix with detective Tom Lone (Benjamin Bratt), and Sharon Stone is also along for the ride.

The plot line, when present, is rather boring and there are plot holes galore. Some bits are just plain silly and the pacing is all over the place. French director Pitof brings some stylish camera work to the film, however at times it's annoying, and the fight scene editing is far too 'slick'. You don't know what the hell's happening with no camera shot lasting longer than one second! And there's not much to say about the acting except they did their best with a bad script. Strangely, the set design was fairly good with a grungy-art feel to it (almost Andy Warholish), and the costumes were hip and interesting (even the non-leather ones). In fact, these two points were the film's strengths. However, when a film's only strengths are set and costume design, you know something's wrong.

Catwoman's ultimate failing was mainly due to its lack of definition. It tried to be dark and serious, and also soft and romantic, but also camp and sexy. In the process, it was none of these. It would have been better if it had a darker feel to it like the catwoman of *Batman Returns* a lá Michelle Pfeiffer, or even if it just had more fun.

Having said all of this, *Catwoman* is still mildly entertaining and Halle Berry is good to watch on screen. But overall, it should have been a whole lot better.

*1½/5

Catwoman - By Felix Statica

Director Jean-Christophe Comar, most often credited as Pitof, has coughed up an oozing fur-ball with the unfortunate Halle Berry as the heroine Patience/Catwoman. Supported by Sharon Stone as the evil cosmetic queen Laurel Hedare, this tedious affair stumbles along through bad CGI landscapes and lamentable writing. It's not even 'bad funny', the last saving grace of so many otherwise awful films.

Making things worse is the obligatory love-angle, in this case furnished by Tom Lone (Benjamin Bratt), a cop who happens to be on duty when a mystical cat visits the mild-mannered Patience in her apartment, forcing her to appear suicidal. Tom, in all his macho finery and bravado comes to her rescue. The twist, if you still haven't worked it out, is that he becomes the detective following the apparently criminal acts of Catwoman, who burgles jewels and so forth.

But Patience knows too much about a new anti-aging creme the company she does advertising for is about to release. Only as Catwoman, a stronger, more agile and altogether more feline version of her pallid former self can she right wrongs and "triumph on the side of Good" (the current American paradigm).

How lucky I was not to have paid to see this. If you do however wish to go see it, you may get your kicks out of the whole leather costume and implied associations that pepper—rather clumsily—the film throughout. When Ms Berry tries to be playful with the material, inserting a little sly gesture here or there, the moment doesn't last long enough: we are back to the droning pace and monotony of Pitof's direction.



The filmmakers refuse to indulge us with any campy throwbacks to the colourful predecessors of characters: rather, they aim for the sleek and chic black of a new-millennium world. Unluckily for everyone involved, and for the audience, Pitof is no Tim Burton.

If you love cats, or Halle Berry, or both, then go see *Catwoman* out of sheer eye-candy motivations. Otherwise, there's little on offer in this skimpy, flimsy computer-game on film. Oh, a piece of trivia thanks to imdb.com: "Halle Berry's stunt- and body-double is the 29-year-old Hawaiian male actor Nito Larioza, an expert in martial arts"... which is always nice.

Term 4 Program and Quiz

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 9 - Thursday, October 7th **Amazon Women on the Moon (1987)**

A series of short sketches, most of which parody late-night television and the low-budget movies one often finds there.

Short: Fawlty Towers - the Germans (1975) (30 mins)

WEEK 10 - Thursday, October 14th **King Kong (1933)**

Classic version of beauty and the beast theme. Final sequence of Kong atop the Empire State Building is now cinema folklore; "Erotic, ecstatic and destructive, the great semi-human simian symbolises the contradictory impulses of civilised man.

Short: Fawlty Towers - Any Complaints/Waldorf Salad (1975) (30 mins)

WEEK 11 - Thursday, October 21st **The Ladykillers (1955)**

Seeings as the Coen Brothers have put out an inferior version of this classic British comedy, we thought we'd show the fabulous original.

Short: Fawlty Towers - Communication Problems (1975) (30 mins)

WEEK 12 - Thursday, October 28th **A Streetcar Named Desire**

Stunning production of Tennessee Williams play, with Brando as the animalistic Stanley Kowalski and Leigh as his wistful neurotic sister-in-law, Blanche Dubois, pressed together in a grim New Orleans tenement.

Short: Fawlty Towers - The Psychiatrist (1975) (30 mins)

Editor: Stewart Jones
Contributors: Esther, Josh, Felix, Damo,
Tamara, Michael

1. Which town featured in both Bowling for Columbine (2002) and Fahrenheit 9/11 (2004)?
2. Why is this place important to Moore?
3. List these winners of the Best Picture Oscar in chronological order:

The English Patient

A Beautiful Mind

Schindler's List

Chicago

Braveheart

The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King

The Silence of the Lambs

Forrest Gump

American Beauty

Titanic

4. Which Character from a movie in the list above said "First she steals my publicity. Then she steals my lawyer, my trial date. And now she steals my goddamn garter."
5. What film does this quote come from: "I can't fire them. I hired these guys for three days a week and they just started showing up every day. That was four years ago."
6. Screenwriter Gregory Allen Howard heard some guys raving about a football team in the barber shop of the small town he had just moved to. He was amazed and impressed when he found that the football team was the team local high school team of 1971. What 2000 film resulted from the script he wrote?
7. Which villain did Danny DeVito play in a Batman movie?
8. Who played Cat Woman in the same Batman film?
9. What was the name of this Batman film?
10. Where was actress Charlize Theron born?

Answers:

1. Flint, Michigan

2. Michael Moore grew up in Flint, Michigan.

3. The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King (2003)
Chicago (2002), A Beautiful Mind (2001), American Beauty (1999), Titanic (1997), The English Patient (1996), Braveheart (1995), Forrest Gump (1994), Schindler's List (1993)

The Silence of the Lambs (1991)

4. Velma Kelly (played by actress Catherine Zeta-Jones says this about Roxie in the film Chicago (2002).

5. High Fidelity (2000) John Cusack.

6. Remember the Titans (2000)

7. The Penguin

8. Michelle Pfeiffer

9. Batman Returns (1992)

10. South Africa