

### PROGRAMMING FOR YOUR FILM SOCIETY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Everyone seems to have their own ways of programming for their film society, but for the uninitiated it seems to be a daunting challenge.

This paper highlights some of the key factors to consider when putting a programme together, and outlines some possible processes to consider.

At this time, the majority of film societies screen using DVDs (or BluRay) as the source, so comments have been made based on this assumption, but many of the processes will apply to screening from 35mm, DCP (Digital Cinema Package) or 16mm film.

Above all, there is no right or wrong way to approach programming – just many different ways – all of which have different pros and cons.

To prove the point from the last paragraph, we have included material from a number of film societies, all who have contributed to this Info Sheet by revealing their own film selection processes.

## 2. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES

- 2.1 Who are you programming for, yourself or your members? Where a single programmer chooses purely on the basis of his or her own likes and dislikes, the result may not satisfy all the members. There have been several instances where the outcome has been loss of members and ultimately closure of the society.
- 2.2 How do you judge what the members want? Feedback is the answer. Ask the members to suggest titles they would like to see, and at least consider them when making your final suggestions. Use the StarBox to collect feedback from members after each screening to judge how well each film has been received.
- 2.3 Should you adhere to members' requests implicitly? Many members will request films from long ago which may no longer be available, and are of little interest to others, so programming them just because a member asks, may not always be a great idea. Quite often the requesting member may not even attend the screening because "they have already seen it!"
- 2.4 Is the proposed program balanced? Different film societies may prefer to focus on different genre of film, so a balanced program for one society may not satisfy the taste of another.
- 2.5 Do you want to widen the horizon of the members? Programming only what the members are used to can lead to complacency, so be

prepared to include some films which “stretch” the members somewhat and offer them the occasional surprise.

- 2.6 What is the nearby competition? Are there public cinemas nearby which screen the sort of films you might want to see? Are there other film societies nearby?
- 2.7 Keep in mind the aims and purpose of the film society. Simply providing films for entertainment may not meet the aims of broadening the knowledge of the members and increasing their understanding of the world around them.
- 2.8 Has a film you are considering been on TV? Does it matter? What about Foxtel? Some will not come to a film that has been shown on TV, while others may be happy to see it a second time “on the big screen”.

### **3. HOW MANY ON THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE?**

- 3.1 With just one person doing the program selection there is danger that the selection can reflect just the interests of that person, perhaps ignoring the preferences of members, unless the members are canvassed at some point for their input. Even then, there is danger that all the knowledge of the processes involved and the “tricks of the trade” are known only by that one person. If they move on, there is no back-up person to carry on, or any new person could take over with a new approach to film selection which may not satisfy all members! Don't forget your succession planning!
- 3.2 With a small committee the work of canvassing members, researching titles, preparing short-lists of films, and deciding on a final programme can be spread across several people. The advantage is that the procedures and programming “philosophy” of the film society can be maintained and passed on to newer committee members.
- 3.3 Selection by all members needs a lot of coordination. Some members may have lots of suggestions while others may have little input. Experience shows that the larger the selection committee the more likely the programme will end up “middle of the road” or the average of all contributions.
- 3.4 Be prepared to accept members' suggestions “for consideration”, but still subject to the requirement to select a balanced program.

### **4. SHOULD YOU PROGRAM FOR 6 or 12 MONTHS?**

Whether you program for the full year of 12 or 10 months, for half a year or just a few screenings ahead will depend on your society and your aims. Your best marketing material is your printed program leaflet and brochure, which is much more likely to attract annual members if it includes all films for the year.

If you can persuade members to join up for the full year (usually 10 months, being for 10 or 20 films) you reduce your marketing effort needed throughout the year. Programming for six months at a time results in extra programming and marketing effort mid year. Admittedly, this may mean you can take advantage of recent releases - but you still run the risk of a DVD not being released in time.

Programming on a month to month basis (ad hoc) allows you to take advantage of recent releases, but the selection work is never-ending and the society would lack an annual program poster which is essential for marketing the society.

## 5. FROM THE 2019 INFORMATION DAY

At the 2019 Information Day, the workshop required six groups to each come up with a 12 month program based on a limited list of films. While the actual list of selected films was interesting, the real point of the exercise was to examine the processes involved in making the selection. Here is the report from one of the groups.

“Our group felt that the following points are essential to keep in mind when creating a program of films for a film society:

1. Know your audience.
2. Focus on a balanced program.
3. You are selecting films for your group not just yourself.
4. Be familiar with the titles under consideration. Eg:
  - Storyline/plot
  - Genre
  - Length
  - Classification (Rating, G, PG, M, MA etc))
  - Colour /B&W
  - Read reviews or watch trailers.
  - The film must have been viewed by at least one member of the selection committee.
5. Criteria for a balanced annual program:
  - Begin the year / season with an audience ‘grabber’.
  - Finish the year / season on a high note.
  - Have a balanced range of content throughout the season.
    - different film eras
    - different genre
    - foreign language / cultures
    - documentaries
    - animation
  - Alternate genres / styles eg. do not run 2 documentaries back-to-back.
6. Ensure availability:
  - Once selections have been made identify current holder of non-theatrical screening rights.
  - Have a reserve list of a few extra titles (you can always roll them over to the following year).
7. Aim at a 6 month or 12 month program. It gives a structure to your year / season and your audience / group feels informed.
8. Film selection by committee. More than one for a diversity of opinion and to spread the work-load. Not too large: decision-making becomes difficult and drawn out.

## **6. YARRA RANGES FILM SOCIETY**

“At this time of the year we are starting to seriously think about a film *program for the next year*. We have a democratic process which begins in August and is finalised in November before the December screening.

To start the ball rolling, the committee members are asked to suggest any films that they may have seen. With the Melbourne International Film Festival happening, many people get to see a range of new recent releases which are not yet screened at the cinemas. There are usually many suggestions from these. It is a great start towards putting together a film program.

This is followed by a member suggestion sheet available at the September screening. All members are encouraged to add their suggestions to this list. Again, many members, especially those who have a strong interest in film, are able to make great recommendations.

All the suggestions are then compiled and I would call this the long list of possible film screenings. All suggestions are considered and then a number of criteria are applied to produce the short list. Some of the criteria to be considered for a film to progress from the long list to the short list include:

- Are the screening rights available?
- Is there a copy of the film available?
- Has the film been shown recently in the local commercial cinemas?
- Is there a mix of international films suggested?
- What classic or “from the vault” films are included?

For our program, we choose to screen three films from the vault and the rest are recent releases.

The short list is circulated to members in the October newsletter and all members are asked to vote. The results from this voting survey produce the final selected films for the year, which are then put together into a screening program and sent to the publishers. Last year’s selection were the top films voted for by the members from the short list. Again, screening availability and local cinema programming may impact the final selection.

The screening dates for each film is selected by the committee and a program is prepared for the printers and for electronic publishing. These are available to the public, including the film community, before the December screening. This provides an opportunity to encourage new members to our film society, as well as provide an informed decision for current members to renew their membership at the December screening.

## **7. CAMBERWELL FILM SOCIETY**

Our programming is completed by our committee which consists of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and 3 more committee members where we meet once a year to select 11 movies for the following year’s screenings - we only screen once a month excluding January.

During the year we constantly ask ALL members to assist us by nominating any films they think we should screen.

We also have a criteria of trying to select a variety of films from different genres, such as an old, current, foreign, documentary, musical, drama, comedy etc. We try to make it as varied as possible.

Once the films have been selected we then have to make sure it is available from the distributor as we have to pay to screen these movies.

When this is all approved we then produce a printed leaflet to distribute to encourage new members. We also have a website that is then updated to the current movie selections - another method of finding new members.

## **8. MURRINDINDI FILM SOCIETY**

We have been sourcing our programmes from the NFSA but it is getting harder to make a good selection and we will be looking at other sources next year. Our method is to select a number of films in each genre, then discuss and select at our AGM

## **9. ALPINE FILM SOCIETY**

Alpine have planned in several different ways. We have had some years where we have acquired as many of the most recent films as possible. That is not an easy way to go because we had to wait for release dates. And juggle dates of showing to accommodate the release dates.

We also found that in some instances using that method we had reduced numbers at our film nights. When we started the Society we had no cinema within 100 km but now have Bright. This means our members can see the latest releases if they are keen and able.

This year we are showing favourite oldies. Members were able to select their choices and from that we drew up a list of films for the year. We took nine choices and left three months available for any new releases that appealed. It has been our most successful year in many ways.

We take choices and suggestions at our Christmas film night. That is always a fun film and members are in good spirits and enthused about new selections for next year.

[Editor's note: I suspect this would not be a feasible approach at larger film societies where the larger attendance might make this unworkable.]

## **10. BEECHWORTH FILM SOCIETY**

At Beechworth Film Society we start our film selection early in the new year by asking committee members to identify films that they have an interest in screening. We like to give members a diverse experience, so we try to select against a number of film 'categories':

- at least one documentary
- at least one animation
- a range of genres
- a range of eras
- a range of countries

We also look to ensure female directors get a reasonable showing - which is challenging given the absolute dominance of the industry by men for so many decades.

We have an end of year screening with food and drinks, which is typically a Hollywood (occasionally Bollywood) classic.

At our end-of-year screening we invite members to nominate films they would like to see and add that to the mix when we start setting up the films for the following year.

Of course, screening rights are always a challenge, so we usually vet the committee and member nominated films for availability, which culls quite a lot of them. We then curate a final list with a few back ups and kick off the

year. The screening order can change from the original order as we review the “flow” of films through the year. And occasionally if a great film that we couldn’t find screening rights for becomes available we will drop it in.

It seems to work for us, with a steady membership, including new faces each year. We survey every couple of years and have found that our members are “happy to go on the journey”. They don’t love every film, but they love the diversity.

## **11. MACEDON RANGES FILM SOCIETY**

Clearly one of the most important functions of the committee is selecting the screening list for the coming season. This would normally take place around September/October for the following year.

The Committee meets and each committee member can bring a list of films for consideration for the new program.

The guidelines for film selection are;

- Length of film - no more than 2 hours.
- Selection should cover a range of genres (e.g. foreign language, drama, comedy, classic, western, animation, documentary).
- For the first and last film of the year, the committee aims to choose a film which has broad audience appeal, i.e. upbeat/comedy.
- Consider shorter films for the winter months

When selecting films it is important to take into account the membership’s make-up and preferences whilst not limiting the choices only to perceived ‘safe’ ones, at the expense of quality films that may ‘push the boundaries’ a little.

## **12. GOULBURN VALLEY FILM CLUB**

Committee Members attempt to view as many potential movies during the year. We believe it is important that at least one committee member views a film that will be included in the following year’s program.

In September, we advise members that we are about to meet to decide the following year’s program and if they would like to nominate a film title to advise by email or list on an A4 sheet provided at a screening.

We meet early in October to decide on the following year’s program. This normally takes around two hours. We take into account:

- Member suggestions
- Recommendations from committee members
- Starbox results from other Film Societies

We choose approximately 15 titles from which we will later narrow down to a final 12. This is because we are not sure at this stage who owns the screening rights and whether the title will be available for screening.

We try to choose a mixture of drama, comedy, foreign films (usually six - seven) and an Australian title. We like to start the year with some better known titles and usually finish with a comedy.

We allocate the preferred 12 films to dates already selected at an earlier meeting. Once we have obtained the screening rights we commence production of our program which we get professionally printed.

The program and membership form for the following year are handed out at our early November screening. Members not present have that information posted.

### **13. EURAW FILM SOCIETY**

Is there a film you want to screen? Track down the distributors in Australia via IMDB. If there's none, contact the distributors/producers directly, explain what a film society does in Australia, offer a token amount for each screening, negotiate their rate until you meet half way, then get a contract in place.

Most of our films are negotiated individually with each distributor. Rates are between zero to hundreds of Euros. The most we have paid for a film was 300 Euros (negotiated from 1,000).

Persistence pays off.

[Editor's note: The films that Euraw FS screen are almost all from Eastern Europe, and many are not distributed in Australia hence no-one in Australia has the rights.

Also, if IMdB does not mention an Australian distributor, check the classification index to see if it has approval for screening in Australia.]

### **14. FERNTREE GULLY FILM SOCIETY**

In October, four of us get together to bring reviews, comments and recommendations about films seen or heard about. We aim for 11 films for the year and try to have six English language films and five foreign language ones. Also the aim is a mix of drama, comedy or lighter subject matter films, films of other cultures as well as, if available, promoting good Australian cinema. This seems to take about two hours one evening in October.

If a member recommends a film during the year we take that into account and find out what we can about it and its availability and whether we think it would suit our audience. Between us we seem to have a keen ear for what our audience will tolerate such as some swearing but they do not like any unnecessary violence in the unfolding of a plot. Know your audience and choose films accordingly and be prepared to push the envelope a little now and again.

We send a list to Village cinemas with dates and the films we choose and in most cases it works just perfectly.

Although our cinema is not suited for use of the StarBox way of reviewing films we get good feedback as people come out of the cinema and find its the films they are not sure about (eg "Rams") that they talk about between themselves the most.

[Editor's note: Ferntree Gully FS screen in a commercial cinema, using DCP technology, so have to rely on the theatre operator to order and show the films, so their choice of films may be slightly different from societies limited to DVD technology].

### **15. TATURA FILM SOCIETY**

At Tatura we have suggestion boards at the back of our room so that members can ask for movies in the coming season. We explain that we need to be able to both source and then find the rights holder to be able to follow through on those requests.

Otherwise we are due to sit down and discuss next year's season (ours runs March to February due to when we started), where we ask our 8 committee members to come along with film ideas, armed with FVFS information on what other societies are showing, along with any they've seen

during the course of the year. Being two hours north of Melbourne limits what others may have seen, but we still get some good suggestions that way.

Then we discuss our thoughts and try to come up with a range of movies - drama, comedy, foreign subtitled, etc. so that the members get to see all different genres.

I don't think we are very different to other societies but that's what we do up here in Tat.

## **16. ARAPILES FILM SOCIETY (Palais de Pixel)**

Our programming is based on recommendations from our members, other film societies' star ratings/programming on ReelNews and anything else we might have come across on the internet, news etc.

Committee members get together in summer to decide the films that make it to the program. We usually check reviews and watch trailers online, ensure we have a range of genres, balance of Australian/foreign/subtitled films. Difficulties with locating screening rights and/or DVDs then decide whether the film makes the final cut.

## **17. SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS**

The Southern Fleurieu Film Society has the committee select films for our program. We do ask for suggestions from members. The seven committee members source films from libraries, personal collections, members collections, and sometimes we buy DVD's if we can't get a free copy to watch. We also put forward suggestions from what we have seen on Netflix, SBS on demand, other on-line sources, and from what other film societies have programmed. We do not program a film unless the committee has watched it. We expect to spend a few hundred dollars on DVD's each year that may or may not make the program.

The committee watches all films put forward for consideration and we discuss them at committee meetings. We are conscious of what our membership likes and this does limit the films we can choose. We generally avoid films we think are too mainstream and are likely to have been seen by members. For example, The Castle was recently suggested by a member but we felt it was likely most people had seen it already. I put forward La Grande Bouffe as I feel it is a significant film but it is unlikely to get on the program because some other committee members think it will be too much of a shock for many members. Ultimately the committee votes on each film and we go with the majority.

We do not have any strict criteria to follow, in choosing films. Generally we program about 50% foreign language films. Films that contain lots of violence do not appeal to most members. A bit of violence (in context) is usually okay. We consider one documentary enough each year. Westerns, Sci-Fi, war films, and horror films are never likely to get on the program (based on members' feedback). We try to get one Australian film on the program each year. The first film of the year is usually an uplifting comedy drama and the last film of the year a comedy.

We have a 120 minute limit on film length which precludes many excellent longer films. We are considering programming longer films and having an interval.

It is a wonderful feeling to get positive feedback from members and a star rating well over 4 stars for any film. It is even better if this happens with a challenging film. Mostly it happens with crowd pleasers and we feel we need a couple of those each year to keep members on side. Programming is our most difficult and time consuming task. Numerous times we have said we'd like to organise a second program for the more adventurous members – a program that would contain films considered too 'challenging' for the general membership. A good idea, I think, but more work

## **18. WHITEHORSE FS (From REELNEWS #99)**

Everyone seems to do it a bit differently. At Whitehorse we initially seek suggestions from all members, but mainly the committee, and compile a "long list" of suggestions and possible titles. There may be as many as 200 in this list.

We then do a quick check of all titles to see that we can purchase the DVD if chosen, and we determine the likely rights owners for each of them. This is relatively easy and preferred to waiting until a film has been selected before ruling it "out". If we fail on either count then we defer the suggestion to next year.

Then in early August a subcommittee of 5-6 people gets together and discuss every suggested film, look at reviews or the trailer if we know nothing about it (Trailers are available for most titles through IMDb or YouTube), and come up with a short list of around 80 titles.

This list is then given to every member to tick their choices before being handed back for analysis by the sub-committee.

In late September the subcommittee compiles the results and determines the top 20 titles from the feedback received, but then modifies that list to include some "unknowns" that we want to include, and promoting some that "should have" scored better. We also ensure that we have a balanced programme considering genre, language, country, topic etc. Maybe one doco and one older film, but discarding any that upset the balance, even though possibly receiving many requests!

We then have to decide when to screen the 20 films to be most useful for promoting and selling to our members as a "package". We usually start with the most popular or well known (based on requests) and end the year with a crowd pleaser."

Remember that films screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival (or Sydney Film Festival) may not be available on DVD, or their screening rights may not be available for another 18 months after the festival.

## **19. CORANGAMITE FILM SOCIETY**

The Corangamite Film Society has been operating for about ten years. Over that time it has experimented with different screening formats. These include:

Thursday Pictures	Monthly screenings from February to December
Double headers	Two films each Thursday monthly screening
Short films	Introductory original short films
Sunday Classics	Sunday afternoon screenings
St Kilda Short Film Festival	Annual Saturday night host screening
Corangamite Film Festival	Annual five day screening program
Mobile Cinema	Community screenings at various locations.

The Sunday Classics and Double Header screenings fell by the wayside early on through lack of member interest as well as involving too much effort for the return.

In the early years programming films was our most difficult and time-consuming task. Committee members would bring long lists of suggested titles and we would struggle to narrow down the program to 10 or so films for the year. We also asked members for their suggestions, which was problematic as it added to the already long list and it was sometimes practically impossible to accept all suggestions. We have experimented with taking direction from one individual on our Committee, but this has generally not worked out well so we now ensure that all of our Committee members have some input into the film selection.

We now have a Selection Committee which is a sub-committee of the Committee of our Association. Any member who wishes to participate is welcome to join the sub-committee. The sub-committee brings back a recommended program for consideration by the Committee as a whole, having already checked that DVDs are available and the distributors are identified.

The Committee adopts or varies the recommended program of 5 titles each half year, taking into account the following standing criteria:

- The program must be varied (ie, different genres, subject matter, ratings, etc).
- The program represents different film-making cultures (country of origin).
- The program offers no more than two American titles (per half year).
- There is generally no more than one sub-titled film in each half year.
- The program includes at least one Australian title per half year.

We meet for dinner prior to each monthly Committee meeting, where members informally discuss any topic they wish to, prior to the meeting proper, which generally takes less than an hour. It is often in these informal discussions that prospective film titles are first suggested and discussed. In this way the process of programming is an ongoing one for the Corangamite Film Society.

We have surveyed our members from time to time on all aspects of our operations, and have found that this practice works for them. Some members have told us they generally don't appreciate excessive violence or profanity. We avoid major release 'Hollywood' and 'blockbuster' titles to give members the opportunity to experience films they might otherwise be unlikely to encounter.

We understand that each film is someone's child, and it is impossible to choose between children. No formula can do the selection task for you. Nonetheless, a selection must be made, so we set out to offer our members a rich and varied cinema experience.

## **20. DOOKIE FILM GROUP**

At the end of our first, short season in 2015, I sent out an Excel spreadsheet with several film suggestions. I asked members for further suggestions, and got a longish list. I put all suggestions on a second version, sent that out and asked people to tick those they liked. I ended up with such a long list it really wasn't all that helpful.

The next year we had a small white-board at each screening, and members could write suggestions on that.

Each year we have done this:

In about September the committee began to plan. During the year I read film reviews in newspapers and online. I also listen to what interested people say. I see a selection of films at Nova or Kino when I visit Melbourne. I again produced an Excel sheet with about 15 that I thought suitable. I included columns for genre, country, classification, director, if it had subtitles etc. I also include ratings on IMDb and ReelNews. This was sent to the committee. I asked for other suggestions. I usually get a few.

I ask committee members to have a look online, at trailers.

We have a committee meeting to select and consideration is given to suggestions from members.

We think about variety of genres, not having too many subtitled ones, avoiding very violent or confronting films. I discourage having too many 'marshmallow' ones, (ones that are too soft, lacking in any challenge), avoiding films you could easily see in Shepparton.

We find ReelNews to be reeeeely useful. We pay attention to the Film Groups who have scored certain films in high categories, and look for those which might be a bit like us, as opposed to big city groups.

We don't usually have great difficulty coming up with our ten films.

We sometimes have two meetings to do this.

We then choose the order in which the films will be shown.

When in a program form, I send it out to the committee for proof reading.

## **21. LV FILM SOCIETY**

Following some misses early on in our existence, the LV Film Society has adopted a policy that we will never schedule a film without at least two Committee members having seen it first. We've decided that we don't trust critics' reviews enough to use them as the basis for programming. We draw initial information from a range of sources (David Stratton's Nova reviews, FilmInk, MIFF, IMDb, friends etc) and develop a long list of movies we want to see.

Where a long-listed movie is already out on DVD, we'll buy it and distribute it around the Committee to get an overall consensus. Whether we screen it or not, the DVD then goes into our library, either as an 'unscreened' movie or as a 'screened' movie, after it's been shown. As a result, we now have a significant library, with approximately equal numbers of screened and unscreened DVDs.

We decide a six-monthly program twice a year, one commencing in February, the other in July. During the year, and particularly during the lead-up to programming, Committee members try to see as many films as possible. Due to our remoteness from good cinemas, we will often go to somewhere like the Nova Cinema and see two or three movies in a sitting. In recent years, we've also held a Committee day, where the Committee will watch at least two DVD movies as a group. The ultimate decisions around what to screen are decided by the full Committee (seven members), often with spirited discussion around the final one or two films to fit into our program. Occasionally, we'll have to rely on trusting the judgement of the two or three Committee members that have caught a particular movie at the cinema.

We're very conscious of programming a mix of genres (eg. drama, humour, documentary) and foreign language movies and also feel an obligation to stretch our audience a bit (that is, not just show movies that we know they'll like). Over time, we've developed a bit of pattern in trying to program a humorous or uplifting movie first up, then finishing the year with something music-based, for example 'Sing Street' or 'Begin Again'.

## **22. OTHER SOURCES OF DVDs**

DVDs are available from other sources apart from the retail shops and eBay.

The Norwegian Embassy has a range of films on DVD available for free loan (see details in past ReelNews and on the FVFS website). No rights are payable when screening these DVDs non-theatrically.

The FVFS Indi Library (ie independently funded and produced) is available for a moderate rights fee. In general these titles will not be available commercially, and in many cases the director is willing to speak to the film at the screening.

The NFSA library is still expanding, but at a lesser rate than before. The ACOFS Bulletin provides regular update information, but the reader can also search the NFSA database themselves.

Shorts. Consideration should be given to screening short films, either with each feature, or even as a special "shorts day". The FVFS can supply copies of some shorts on USB Memory.

Some of the Short Film Festivals, of which there are several now, may be able to provide short film packages for your society.

## **23. SCREENING RIGHTS**

As it can impact on your programming choice, it is worth considering the availability of your DVD screening rights.

Member film societies can access the special agreement that ACOFS has made with DVD distributors on your behalf, for your non-theatrical

screenings. ie screenings to members only, in a public venue, and where there is no admission charge.

The implication of the agreement (and Australian copyright law) is that if you cannot find a current rights owner, or the rights have expired in Australia, then you cannot screen that title legally in public (which covers most film societies). One alternative is to find the owner of the international rights and seek their permission to screen the DVD.

Generally speaking, the older a DVD movie is, the less likely that any Australian distributor still has current screening rights. If a DVD is currently available from Australian retail or on-line stores then some distributor will have screening rights, so it is just a matter of finding them.

More information about how to obtain screening rights for your DVDs can be found in the ACOFS Fact Sheet 3B, available for downloading from [www.acofs.org.au](http://www.acofs.org.au).

## **24. CONCLUSION**

Remember your film society is not just another local cinema. It has a purpose which, among other things, focusses on treating films as an art form. It may use the term "Bringing World Cinema to your members"

Not just entertainment.

Most aim to select titles from the World Cinema genre, but may be cautious when it comes to:

- Subtitles
- Violence
- Sex
- Bad language
- Horror
- War
- R, MA or M ratings

A balanced programme takes into account:

- Country/language
- Genre (comedy, drama, bio, doco etc)
- Subject
- Feel
- Availability
- Age
- Cost

Many societies insist that at least one member of the selection committee see each selected film before-hand. But if you know your reviewers and trust their judgement, that may not be necessary. After all, if you have already seen all the films, where is the incentive to join the film society?

There are almost as many ways to go about selecting a film program as there are film societies, and each society will argue that their way is best. But this paper has attempted to highlight the main factors that may influence your

decisions. It is up to the individual society to decide what is best for their situation.

## **25. MORE INFORMATION**

More information can be found on the FVFS website [www.fvfs.org.au](http://www.fvfs.org.au)

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