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From the President

Welcome to ReelNews November 2024 edition. There's plenty to catch-up on this time around . . . new rights fees from Roadshow, your FVFS annual membership fee is now lower in 2025. We have an Information Day coming up in Gippsland and there's film news and reviews. Read on, and please contribute; I'm sure you have plenty of interesting things to share with the wider Film Society community.



Henry Screen

Information Day December 7

When: Saturday December 7 2024

Where: in Gippsland - our hosting society is 'Films At The Bundy' situated at the Bundalaguah Hall, just 10km from Sale.

What: Everything you need to know about running your film society or how to start one. Great networking opportunities with established and new members. It's all free, and morning tea, afternoon tea and lunch are provided.

This is what you can expect -

- A brief "snapshot" summary from each attending film society.
- A presentation on DVD distributors and/or screening rights.
- A short workshop on selecting an annual program of movies.
- Enjoy three short films.
- Free lunch for anyone who pre-books a place.
- Separate presentation for anyone starting a film society.
- Open discussions on technology, sound, or anything of interest or concern.
- Meet people involved in other film societies.
- Join us after, in an evening meal (at the pub?).

ALSO . . .

Bring your DVDs that won't play and we will have a go at fixing them. Don't bin your excess DVDs. Bring them along and Ian Davidson will gladly find them a new home.

See full details on page 3 >

FVFS Membership Fee update

I remind members that FVFS membership fees are due by 1 January 2025, and in good news, that they have been reduced from the 2024 prices.

Film Society members' fees are based on their peak membership in the previous full membership year.

Up to 25 members	- \$21
26 - 50 members	- \$32
51 - 100 members	- \$53
101 - 500 members	- \$77
501 plus members	- \$102

NPV Film Festival and NPV Community Cinemas now only \$24.50

These prices are now reflected in the application forms available on-line at www.fvfs.org.au/join

Roadshow Rates Increase

After some lengthy negotiations, ACOFS have been able to reach agreement with Roadshow on a new scale of rights fees which will take effect immediately. The outcome means a modest increase based on the average attendance numbers of the Society.

ACOFS is always negotiating the best deals for members. As screening rights are a form of copyright, it is only logical that the screening rights fee for showing your own copy of a DVD should be based on the actual attendance at that screening rather than your total membership including people who could see it but choose not to. It would take some effort to report numbers on every screening, so ACOFS has proposed that the figure be based on the average attendance over the previous year. Roadshow, who recently announced some fee increases has agreed to base rights fees on average attendance numbers in the following categories. Note that this is a slight variation on the categories originally applied when the DVD rights agreement was set up.

Price categories for DVD screening rights approved by Roadshow, based on the average audience over the previous membership year, are:

- **Up to 20 attending (annual average) \$55 +GST**
- **21 to 40 attending (annual average) \$75 + GST**
- **41 to 75 attending (annual average) \$100 +GST**
- **Where more than 75 attend (annual average) the society would need to negotiate a price.**

The implication of this arrangement is that every member film society wishing to apply these discounted rights charges will need to keep track of their attendances to determine the average over the year. To make the process simpler it is suggested that all societies advise their Federations of the average audience when renewing their Federation membership, and that this information be collated in an ACOFS summary report available to the distributors to aid them in setting their prices.

Reported by Ian Davidson

Discussions At Whitehorse Film Society

The Whitehorse Film Society has been running discussion sessions after each screening, and has produced the following report from the most recent screening.

“There were 10 members who attended the after-film discussion this afternoon, to discuss HIVE (Kosovo, 2021). Four voted 4 stars and six gave it 5 stars, so for our group the average was 4.6 out of 5 stars. [The general audience gave it 4.1 stars from 54 votes].

There was much discussion about the dominance of the male fraternity there at that time and the disrespect afforded the women whose fathers, husbands and sons who had failed to return home after the conflict.

The confidence the women gained from their perseverance and their ultimate success was noticed in the gradual change in their manner.

There was a deal of comment about the persistence still of that male dominance in some societies and even after they had migrated to other countries like Australia, where there was not such significant dominance but the history of their upbringing came with them and came to the fore at times.

The lack of dialogue did not matter, as the actions and expressions of the actors conveyed the emotion without the need for extra dialogue. The intermittent music also contributed to the high regard for the film and the huge list of award nominations it received in many parts of the world.

There was indecision about whether the watch and clothing presented to the lead actor at the end of the film was recognised but not wanted to be agreed to, or whether it was truly not accepted as from the missing man. A clever end to a very good film.”

Ron Thomas

Whitehorse Film Society Discussion Group.



Film Society Information Day



SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER 9.30AM TO 4PM

Our next Information Day will be held in central Gippsland and will be hosted by the 'Films At The Bundy' Film Society (formerly known as the Court Film Society).

Everything you wanted to know about starting a Film Society but were too afraid to ask . . .

No matter what your question is we are bound to have the answer!

As the 'umbrella' body for film Societies throughout Victoria, the FVFS provides free support, advice, information and education for community groups interested in starting a film society, as well as on-going support for all our established members.

FVFS members enjoy a unique benefit - discounted prices for screening rights to show films on dvd, made possible by our formal arrangement with Film Distributors. The FVFS is a not-for-profit volunteer run organisation.

We'll discuss venues, equipment, programming, film rights, sourcing DVDs, Do's & Dont's and the necessary legal and admin requirements.

You'll enjoy the Q&A sessions and Society profiles.

Come along, it's free; morning tea, lunch & afternoon tea are included.

Travel subsidies are available for attending members - up to \$35 per member society, and based on \$0.25 per Km driven.

It's a great opportunity to meet with and learn from other Society members.

RSVP by December 3 to assist with catering - secretary@fvfs.org.au and advise any dietary requirements.

**Venue - Bundalaguah Myrtlebank Hall, (Home of Films @ the Bundy Inc)
Sale-Maffra Road Bundalaguah. (10km north of Sale).**

Saturday 7th December 9.30am to 4pm

Attendance is free to all existing Film Societies and all communities interested in starting a Film Society.

To register your interest Contact Susan Davidson - secretary@fvfs.org.au

Muriel turns 30.

‘We’re all Muriel’: why we still love Muriel’s Wedding

30 years on P.J. Hogan’s classic Australian film Muriel’s Wedding is 30 and it plays as well today as it did when it had its world premiere. Muriel might have been “terrible” – but the film was a great success.

Australians love to laugh at themselves, and everyone loves an underdog. Muriel’s Wedding took more than A\$15 million at the box office in Australia —making it one of the highest-grossing Australian feature films of all time.

As fun as the film is with its kitsch aesthetic, bold colour palette and garish costumes, it has a unique mix of comedy and serious drama. It slips from the absurd to painful realism, with more depth than your average comedy and a twist in the plot that made it an original take on the genre.

While Australians generally have received it as hilarious, audiences elsewhere were more attuned to the tragedy, such as Muriel’s mother Betty’s suicide following relentless bullying, and Rhonda’s illness and disability. But it worked for audiences everywhere who warmed to the representation of friendship, its emotional compassion and critique of the narrow mindedness of small-town communities.

Sometimes it is the stars who can bring in an audience and make a film successful. However, although there were a lot of experienced actors in Muriel’s Wedding, Toni Collette (Muriel) and Rachel Griffiths (Rhonda) – whose performances were exceptional – were both playing lead and supporting roles for the first time in a feature film.

It was also Hogan’s first feature, so it is unlikely star power drew in audiences (although all of them were to become stars, and Hogan later directed My Best Friend’s Wedding with Julia Roberts, one of the top romantic comedies of all time). It did, however, have a wonderful trailer.

I asked Rachel Griffiths what she thought was the key to the film’s success and she identified its universality: it translated for an array of audiences and enabled broad identification.



She described the film as having one foot in the grotesque and the other in Ridley Scott’s 1991 getaway heist Thelma & Louise – another film about female friendship, independence and individual growth. Griffiths gave the example of going with the film to New York on its release and discovering it was wildly meaningful to the LGBTQIA+ community.

In conversation with a gay man in his late 20s, he described it as a parable for AIDS, which at that time was in full-blown crisis. According to Griffiths, he said: “We’re all Muriel. We don’t fit in.” Growing up in small towns where they are “the freak”, with closet musical tastes, he said: “We’re the outcasts in our family. Our fathers belittle us for being feminine. We escape to the big smoke with the promise of becoming ourselves and following our own journey. We replace our families who have rejected us with our chosen family who celebrate us.”

more ↓

Muriel turns 30 (con't.)

And when one of their own is struck suddenly by this terrible affliction, like Rhonda, they are sent home in humiliation, to be looked after, which is their worst fear. The aspiration is to be rescued by the adopted family and taken back to the big city and shown unconditional love.

Griffiths says: That’s the ending and the survival story of both Rhonda and Muriel, you go back to that kind of pride moment, to be proud of who you are. For Griffiths, Rhonda and Muriel have “a kind of blood-sister friendship, a bond that can’t be broken”. We all long for that deep acceptance. It is a parable of inclusion, where Muriel and Rhonda truly see and accept each other and themselves. A feminist film, I asked Griffiths if Muriel’s Wedding was received as feminist when it was released. She replied it wasn’t at the time it was made, but more recently this has come up.

Her explanation of why this wasn’t considered 30 years ago is informative regarding film criticism. She elaborated that the critics at the time were 90% male and their take on feminism expected powerful female lead characters who pursue their goals and achieve in the face of competition. In this story, there is a girl escaping patriarchal control. Muriel’s father, Bill Heslop (Bill Hunter), is a bully and narcissist who blames everyone else - especially the women – for his failures.

Griffiths aligns Muriel to the Cinderella myth because in the beginning she sees her value will only be ascribed to her once she marries. The film, Griffiths said, is “a fundamental kind of feminist journey”.

The central focus is Muriel’s personal growth in rejecting ideology that promotes romantic coupling as the pinnacle of happiness for women. Instead Muriel embraces her own worth and her friendship with Rhonda. Marriage is portrayed as a patriarchal structure that ideologically binds women – the marriages are variously fraudulent, starting with Tanya and Chook, then Muriel and, ultimately, her mother.

There are many elements that make Muriel’s Wedding an Australian classic, from the universal themes and relatability to how the story is able to extend beyond national borders. The film leaves us with admiration for resilience in the face of adversity, signalled by Muriel and Rhonda grinning assuredly at each other in the final scene.

It is a unique and very real comedy/drama with a highly engaging aesthetic and a feminist message. It is an opportunity to laugh at ourselves, despite quite a lot of tragedy and adversity — which is a very Australian thing to do!

The author wishes to thank Rachel Griffiths who was interviewed in Melbourne on August 17 2020.



*Published: September 27, 2024 6.19am AEST
in The Conversation. Author - Lisa French Professor & Dean,
School of Media and Communication, RMIT University*



Final Credits . . .

Vale . . . Gena Rowlands

Gena Rowlands, who has died at the age of 94, was a highly respected actor, with a fierce, edgy, often emotionally unstable on screen presence. She often played traumatised mothers or mother figures and her characters were often tinged with a brittle abrasiveness.

Born in Madison, Wisconsin in 1930, Rowlands began her distinguished acting career in 1956, playing opposite Edward G. Robinson in Paddy Chayefsky's play *Middle of the Night* on Broadway.

After several television roles, Hollywood quickly came calling, with small roles in *The High Cost of Loving* (1958) and *Lonely Are The Brave* (1962).

From that moment on, she rarely stopped working. Along the way, she worked with some of contemporary



cinema's most esteemed figures – Woody Allen, Jim Jarmusch, Terence Davies and Paul Schrader. But her ten collaborations with husband John Cassavetes catapulted her to fame.

Vale . . . Alain Delon

French actor Alain Delon, who melted the hearts of millions of film fans whether playing a murderer, hoodlum or hitman in his postwar heyday, has died aged 88.

Delon had been in poor health since suffering a stroke in 2019, rarely leaving his estate in Douchy, in France's Val de Loire region.

With striking blue eyes, Delon was sometimes referred to as the "French Frank Sinatra" for his handsome looks, a comparison Delon disliked. Delon's roles included such highly regarded films as *The Leopard*, *Le Samourai*, *The Red Circle* and *Rocco And His Brothers*.



Violet Town Film Society



Earlier this year the Violet Town Film Society moved into the more centrally located, well appointed Community Hall and re branded our Film Society image and logo. We brought with us our repurposed

theatre seats donated to us when Euroa Cinema refurbished last year. While the audio visual facilities in the hall were adequate, we saw an opportunity to upgrade them significantly not only for our own use but to encourage and facilitate other community groups to make more use of the hall.

In February we made a submission to the Regional Development Victoria Tiny Towns grant program having secured support from eight community groups. We were delighted to learn in June that our submission had been successful.

Our enthusiastic steering committee hit the ground running to enable the timely and successful implementation of a motorised, full sized theatre screen, a new ceiling mounted projector and the wall mounting of our existing speakers. The significant grant, plus our own 20% co-contribution as well as some generous in-kind contributions, has given our small community of fewer than 1000 people an authentic theatre experience.

Our new equipment and set up was christened in October and was extremely well received by our Film Society patrons. We expect that all of the community groups that supported our grant submission will make good use of the new equipment for their own purposes and that our Film Society membership will increase as a result of the community's increased awareness and use of the enhanced facilities.

We are very grateful for the opportunity afforded us by the Regional Development Victoria Tiny Towns grant program.

Karen Russo, Violet Town Film Society

Peter Weir awarded Golden Lion at Venice Film Festival

Peter Weir, the Australian director of “The Truman Show”, “Gallipoli” and “Dead Poets Society”, was handed a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2024 Venice Film Festival and advised young film-makers to unplug to get ahead.

Weir, 80, made his international breakthrough with the 1975 arthouse classic “Picnic at Hanging Rock”, before moving on to work in Hollywood, making “Witness”, starring Harrison Ford, “Green Card”, with Andie MacDowell, and other hits.

He received an Honorary Oscar Award in 2022 and confirmed earlier this year that he was retiring from directing. Speaking to reporters in Venice, he said aspiring directors needed to get back to basics and escape the noise of modern living.

“Starting off today, I would say even don’t pick a camera up. I would pick up a pencil and paper ... I would practice like a gymnasium, exercising in here, not the muscles, but the mental muscles. We are capable of extraordinary things in here,” he told a news conference, pointing to his head.

“Unplug, get away from too much information, go somewhere quiet and into the country, go and work on a merchant ship.” Despite his ready advice, Weir said he did not want to mentor aspiring directors. “No, it should be lonely. It’s a lonely road. You have to travel alone.”

To honour Weir, Venice screened his 2003 film, the seafaring epic “Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World”, with Russell Crowe in the lead role.

He said the producers had originally wanted to make a sequel, but scrapped the plan because the movie didn’t do well enough at the box office - a decision that came as something of a relief to Weir.



“I always hoped there would not be sequels or remakes. I liked myself to move on. I didn’t ever want to repeat myself,” he said.

Weir said he had originally thought of being an actor, before deciding he was better off behind the camera. However, he admitted his heart lay in music.

“I would swap directing for composing,” he said.

Crispian Balmer Reuters Sept 2 2024

StarBox Update

Check out past StarBox scores in our Information Sheets which collate all films annually in alphabetical order. Download them from the FVFS website from this link - [All StarBox scores](#) click through to the required Information Sheet 17-21 xxx or scan this QR code . . .



StarBox scores are now given in Doc format from Sheet 17 - 21

Find your film rights!

The most asked questions we get at the Federation relate to problems finding the screening rights for a particular film or films. Often the cause of this problem is due to members not looking in the right place or not knowing where to look if the person concerned is not the regular person in the role of acquiring rights.



Click the link above to go to the Australian Government Classification web site.



Click the link above to go to the ACOFS page listing all distributor/rights holders.

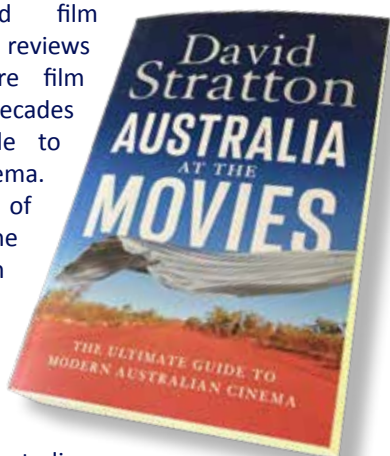
Search for the film you’re interested in and scroll down the page to find the listed ‘Applicant’ for classification; they will most likely be the rights holder for Australia.

ACOFS is the Australian Council of Film Societies, and is the custodian of the film rights fees agreement between the rights holders and Australian film societies.



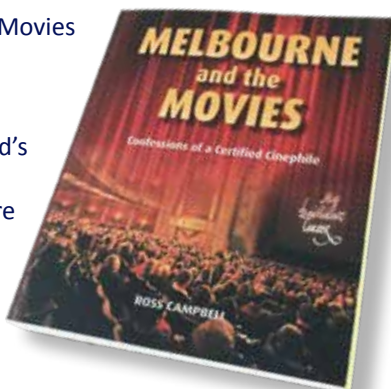
Great reading for movie lovers . . . *new books out now*

Australia's best-loved film critic David Stratton reviews (almost) every feature film from the past three decades in the ultimate guide to modern Australian cinema. From *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* to *The Dry*, from *The Big Steal* to *The Drover's Wife*, he tells us why they're worth watching, and reveals fascinating behind-the-scenes details. *Australia at the Movies* is the indispensable companion for every cinema lover: it's where you'll find your next favourite movie.



Melbourne And The Movies
by Ross Campbell.

It all began in Melbourne. the world's first feature film. Australia's first picture palace. Australia's first film festival. The excitement, diversity and history of Melbourne's vibrant film culture seen through the life of a movie obsessed Melburnian. the rebirth of Australian filmmaking in the 1970s.



Deakin Scholarship

Deakin Film School - FVFS Scholarship

Our usual Annual Award/s for the best Student Project at Deakin University's Film Television and Animation Honours course will cease this year; and will be replaced in 2025 by a Scholarship of \$3000 to be awarded to a promising Student/Project decided by a selection panel comprising two Deakin course leaders and two FVFS committee members.



A friend of FVFS was passing through Burra in South Australia and snapped this poster . . .

Film Societies . . . alive and well around the country!



Seen & Recommended . . .

quality films for discerning film societies

The Teacher Who Promised The Sea 2023 Spain 1h 45m

Director: Patricia Font IMDb 7.4 ★★★★★

In a time of oppression before the Spanish Civil War, an atheist teacher and outsider encouraged children to imagine the world beyond their village.

The Teacher Who Promised the Sea is a story of trying to reconcile the past with two strong story threads. In the modern day, a woman hopes to find the remains of her great-grandfather in a mass grave. He was a student of a teacher whose story is told in the intertwined tale from the past. Masterful cinematography brings the story of an idealistic man to life while avoiding graphic depictions of mass atrocities. High tide and low.

HS



All Of Us Strangers 2023 UK 1h 31m

Director: Andrew Haigh IMDb 7.7 ★★★★★☆

One night in his near-empty tower block in contemporary London, Adam (Andrew Scott) has a chance encounter with a mysterious neighbor Harry (Paul Mescal), which punctures the rhythm of his everyday life. As a relationship develops between them, Adam is preoccupied with memories of the past and finds himself drawn back to the suburban town where he grew up, and the childhood home where his parents (Claire Foy and Jamie Bell), appear to be living, just as they were on the day they died, 30 years before.

HS



Army Of Shadows 1969 France 1h 56m

Director: Jean Pierre Melville IMDb 7.0 ★★★★★☆

France, 1942, under German occupation. Philippe Gerbier, a civil engineer, is a French Resistance commandant. Denounced by a French collaborator, he is interned in a concentration camp. He manages to escape, and rejoins his network in Marseille, where he has the traitor executed. This movie reveals rigorously and austerely what life was like in the French Resistance: the solitude and fear of its members; their relationships with one another; the constant threat of arrest by the Gestapo; the Resistance command structure and the way its orders were carried out. Head writer Joseph Kessel and co-writer/director Jean-Pierre Melville were both veterans of the "Shadow Army".

HS



more ↓

Seen & Recommended . . .

quality films for discerning film societies

The Critic 2023 UK 1h 41m

Director: Anand Tucker

IMDb 6.7



Sir Ian McKellen (The Lord of the Rings, The Good Liar) stars as a powerful London theatre critic who lures a struggling actress into a blackmail scheme with deadly consequences. A suspenseful drama co-starring Gemma Arterton (Quantum of Solace), Mark Strong (Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy) and Lesley Manville (Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris). A very enjoyable experience led by the always superb Ian McKellen.

HS

**Touch** 2024 Iceland/Japan 2h 1m

Director: Baltasar Kormákur

IMDb 7.4



Kristófer is a gentle, politically engaged Icelandic dropout from the London School of Economics, styled after Yoko-era John Lennon and working as a dishwasher in the Japanese restaurant owned by Miko's father. Miko is a soft-spoken young woman whose quiet demeanor belies a disarmingly frank manner. The 1960s scenes are interlaced with scenes of Kristófer as an old man (played by Egill Ólafsson) attempting to track down Miko a lifetime later in pandemic-era London and Japan, with a view to reconnecting. These types of love stories are seductive; it's never too late, they whisper – while at the same time showing, in the lost decades etched on Kristófer's face, how very untrue those seductive whispers are.

Directed by Baltasar Kormákur, and adapted for the screen by Kormákur and Ólafur Jóhann Ólafsson from Ólafsson's novel, Touch is defiantly unfashionable in its straightforwardness; romance fans mostly have to go looking for love nested cozily in other genres. But there are no car chases or pratfalls here; this is a love story, pure and simple and unashamedly emotional. Kormákur also understands the visual appeal of romance: it's not just about the pillow talk or heady declarations of passion, it's about the images, and he doesn't stint us in that regard. Even if it's something as simple as Kristófer and Miko taking a bus together, Kormákur's compositions scream painterly sentiment: manly arms in a creamy woollen sweater, her head tilted to gaze up into his eyes, their fingers interlocked, the sunlight as golden as it should be.

Catherine Bray, The Guardian



more ↓

Seen & Recommended . . . quality films for discerning film societies

Memoir Of A Snail 2024 Australia 1h 34m

Director: Adam Elliott

IMDb 8.2



“Memoir of a Snail” is a stop-motion animated film written and directed by Adam Elliot (“Harvie Krumpet”, “Mary & Max”). Featuring the voices of Sarah Snook, Kodi Smit-McPhee, and Jacki Weaver, it is yet another poignant story about human loneliness and finding purpose in this complex world.

If you enjoyed ‘Harvie Krumpet’ 2003 and ‘Mary and Max’ 2009, then you’ll want to see this film. It’s no wonder there’s a long time between films for Elliott - claymation is a slow process and he puts so much detail in to every scene; it’s a labour of great love and it shows.

In the 1970s, young Grace Pudel (voiced by Sarah Snook) lives with her twin brother Gilbert (voiced by Kodi Smit-McPhee) and their father Percy (voiced by Dominique Pinion) in Victoria, Australia. Due to her cleft lip and unusual hobby of collecting snails, Grace is frequently bullied by the other kids at school, often necessitating Gilbert to step in and defend her. One day, Percy suddenly dies in his sleep, causing both Grace and Gilbert to be sent off to separate foster homes located several miles across the country. Grace ends up being adopted by a married couple of swingers in Canberra while Gilbert is taken in by a deeply religious family of fundamentalist Christians in Perth. Despite their geographical handicap, the twins remain in close contact by writing each other letters recounting all of their experiences living with their different adoptive families.

HS & IMDb



Venice Film Festival 2024

The 81st edition of the film festival closed on Saturday, with Pedro Almodovar’s English-language debut ‘The Room Next Door’ winning the festival’s most prestigious prize, the Golden Lion, which is awarded for best film. Starring Tilda Swinton and Julianne Moore, the film received an 18-minute standing ovation when it premiered at Venice earlier in the week – one of the longest in recent memory.

Almodovar is a darling of the festival circuit and was awarded a lifetime achievement award at Venice in 2019 for his bold, irreverent and often funny Spanish-language features.

Now aged 74, he has decided to try his hand at English, telling reporters that it was like science fiction for him.

While The Room Next Door had been widely tipped to win, the runner-up Silver Lion award was a surprise – going to Italian director Maura Delpero for her slow-paced drama set in the Italian Alps during World War II – ‘Vermiglio’.

The best director award went to US filmmaker Brady Corbet for his three and a half-hour-long movie The Brutalist, the epic tale of a Hungarian Holocaust survivor played by Adrien Brody, who seeks to rebuild his life in the United States.

The festival marks the start of the awards season and regularly throws up big favourites for the Oscars, with eight of the past 12 best director awards at the Oscars going to films that debuted at Venice.

The prize for best screenplay went to Murilo Hauser and Heitor Lorega for I’m Still Here, a film about Brazil’s military dictatorship, while the special jury award went to the abortion drama April by Georgian director Dea Kulumbegashvili.

Frenchman Vincent Lindon was named best actor for his performance in the movie The Quiet Son.

The Venice jury this year was headed by French actress Isabelle Huppert.

Various online news sources.

For the love of cinema

What we're missing from *At The Movies*, 10 years after its last season.

At the Movies was first broadcast on the ABC on July 1 2004, with the final episode broadcast on December 9 2014. Hosted and conceived by Margaret Pomeranz and David Stratton, they first began presenting together on SBS's *The Movie Show* on October 30 1986, inaugurating one of the most culturally significant collaborations in Australian film culture.

Reflecting on the significance of program in this anniversary season, there is much to give present-day readers pause for thought.

The last episode of *At the Movies* brought with it a sense of the end of an era. Academic Huw Walmsley-Evans worried this might be the last picture show: The Australian public need and want smart, entertaining and accessible critical discussion of film. It would be a far better tribute to Margaret and David if we gave someone else a go at providing it.

Critic Luke Buckmaster saw Margaret and David's retirement as marking a "symbolic end of the golden age of traditional film reviewing in Australia". Fight misinformation. Be part of the solution.

Thanks to the internet, there is no shortage of information about films, or taste judgements about the moving image today. But the promise of diversity of perspectives does not always hold up. What we are now getting less of is well-practised, entertaining and accessible cultural mediation

Beyond summary judgement

At the Movies had no shortage of critics. Reviewing, especially on television, is often seen as a poor relative to the kind of respected critique found in film journals and essays.

It is true that any broadcast review faces a highly circumscribed format, and a lot of emphasis is often given to story synopsis. Also, because of the way promotion works, information about actors and directors is deemed crucial.

Following the conventional idea that the review is written for consumers, there is a temptation to jump into a loud

summary judgement of the type that might appear on posters.

But Margaret and David did not always follow the pattern of a generic or typical review.

Over the ten years of *At The Movies*, there were seven films which received five stars from both Margaret and David: *Brokeback Mountain* (2005); *Good Night, and Good Luck* (2005); *No Country for Old Men* (2007); *Samson & Delilah* (2009); *A Separation* (2011); *Amour* (2012); and *Birdman* (2014).

These seven reviews provide a glimpse into Margaret and David's style of reviewing – a style they have been able to playfully extend and subvert.

None of these reviews are led by summary judgements. Instead, they tend to be descriptive and designed to draw the viewer into engagement with the film through a recap of the story, context or an aspect of critical reception.



The pattern goes something like this: after a synopsis of the main story and key complications, a claim is made as to the value of the film. The claim is backed up by an elaboration laced with information about the film, entailing an observation about craft such as performance, dialogue, directing, writing, cinematography, editing or music.

The elaboration is carried over into the ad lib section for more free flowing discussion and exchange.

The synopsis is presented over clips from the films, and the claim is presented to camera, with a feeling of adjudication: a sense this is measured testimony to what has been seen and heard, what they think the audience will gain from it, and analysis of how well the film has been "made" or "done".

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For the love of cinema (con't)

This structure creates a deliberative approach that is a feature of many At theMovies reviews. For Brokeback Mountain, Margaret’s claim is “This exquisite film was made by Ang Lee who seems to be able to bring such truth to his films, despite the wide variety of genres and cultures that he explores.”

Lee “has made all the right choices,” with Margaret observing “every shot has a point”.

For Good Night, and Good Luck, Margaret says “there’s nothing monochromatic about [director George] Clooney’s passion for his subject or the importance of his message,” with “the way he’s approached it” being the main point of elaboration.

For Samson & Delilah, Margaret says “This is for me one of the most wonderful films this country has ever produced”. The elaboration is, “It is exquisitely made, it’s full of discipline”.

Birdman, in Margaret and David’s very last review together, is “wonderfully directed, beautifully performed by a stellar cast”, according to Margaret, the elaboration being it is “really beautifully written and stunningly performed and beautifully made”.

Logos, pathos and ethos

We are not looking simply at reviews led by summative judgement, but an elaborate and deliberative chain of argument or reasoning. Alongside logos, the appeal to reason or logic, other terms from classical rhetoric provide useful analytical tools.

The pathos, or feeling expressed in the review (frequently expressed by being “moved”), is usually tethered to the claim and the way the film is made, and the way it makes the reviewer feel.

Ethos, integrity of character, becomes key to understand the logic of the review, but is displaced away from the critics and turned into an issue related to filmmaking and its treatment of the audience.

There are exceptions, and there are occasions where disdain is offered rather than praise and Margaret and David step out of the polite version and offer harsh, outright critique.

This is usually reserved for a film that has not done things well or treated audiences shabbily. Even on these occasions, there is usually some appeal to open-mindedness and a sense that the hosts are there to look out for the audience’s interests.

The dynamic between Margaret and David was essential to what made the program entertaining. However, beyond interest in the friction of their screen partnership we should also focus on their love of cinema, the valuable work they performed as informed cultural mediators – and ask how that is being supported today.

This article draws on the author’s forthcoming book At the Movies, Film Reviewing, and Screenwriting: Selective Affinities and Cultural Mediation, to be published by Intellect Press.

Published: August 14, 2024 1.28pm AEST - The Conversation. Author: Steven Maras, Associate Professor in Media and Communication, The University of Western Australia

Editor’s Note: David Stratton was patron of FVFS for many years until his retirement at the end of 2023.



StarBox results received since Issue #142



Please do not forget to report your StarBox scores!

Please calculate the scores to 1 decimal place and send them to us at starbox@fvfs.org.au after each screening, so that our ReelNews report can be kept up to date. The formula is written on the side of the StarBox.

See compiled results (in alpha order) from all years, at www.fvfs.org.au/ideas Info Sheet 17+

DVD TITLE	SOCIETY	STARS
KEEPER. THE	WHITEHORSE FS	4.8
FALLOUT, 2013	TARWIN LOWER FS	4.8
SHACKLETON: THE GREATEST STORY OF SURVIVAL.	MARYSVILLE FS	4.8
VELVET QUEEN, THE	CHEWTON FS	4.8
HARVIE KRUMPET, (2003)	TARWIN LOWER FS	4.7
BANK OF DAVE	REELS FS	4.7
ABLAZE	CAMBERWELL FS	4.7
UNITED KINGDOM, A	BAROSSA FC	4.7
MRS HARRIS GOES TO PARIS	WINCHELSEA MC	4.6
ROMAN HOLIDAY	WHITEHORSE FS	4.6
RACHEL'S FARM	WHITEHORSE FS	4.6
ABLAZE	SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS	4.6
QUIET GIRL, THE	CAMBERWELL FS	4.6
FATHER, THE (2020)	BARINGO FC	4.6
LADY IN THE VAN, THE	TARWIN LOWER FS	4.5
TENOR, THE	REELS FS	4.5
BUTCH CASSIDY & THE SUNDANCE KID	MARYSVILLE FS	4.5
BROKER	FILMS AT THE BUNDY	4.5
GIANTS, THE	CROYDON FS	4.5
ALL ABOUT EVE	CAMBERWELL FS	4.5
IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT	WILLIAMSTOWN FS	4.4
LIFE AS A HOUSE, (2001)	TARWIN LOWER FS	4.4
CROSSROADS (1986)	TATURA FS	4.3
INNOCENCE (PAUL COX)	MURRINDINDI FS	4.3
SCRAPPER	FILMS AT THE BUNDY	4.3
FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS	CAMBERWELL FS	4.3
ROAD DANCE, THE	BRIGHT FS	4.3
PAN'S LABYRINTH	BAROSSA FC	4.3
FERRARI	BARINGO FC	4.3
THIS BEAUTIFUL FANTASTIC	WHITEHORSE FS	4.2
OLIVE TREE, THE	WHITEHORSE FS	4.2
BLUE CAFTAN, THE	SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS	4.2

more ↓

StarBox results continued . . .



DVD TITLE	SOCIETY	STARS
EMPIRE OF LIGHT	GOULBURN VALLEY FC	4.2
SHAYDA	FILMS AT THE BUNDY	4.2
INNOCENT, THE	CROYDON FS	4.2
RIVER	YARRA RANGES FS – WARBURTON	4.1
MIRACLE CLUB	WHITEHORSE FS	4.1
HIVE	WHITEHORSE FS	4.1
BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE N'HOOD, A	WHITEHORSE FS	4.1
AMERICAN UTOPIA	ST ANDREWS FS	4.1
RED VIOLIN	MARYSVILLE FS	4.1
HONEYLAND (2019)	FILMS AT THE BUNDY	4.1
BLUE CAFTAN, THE	CAMBERWELL FS	4.1
QUO VADIS AIDA	ARAPILES MPS	4.1
IN THERAPY	YARRA RANGES FS - HEALESVILLE	4.0
DEATH IN BRUNSWICK	TARWIN LOWER FS	4.0
FULL TIME	LITTLE FS	4.0
BLUE CAFTAN, THE	CROYDON FS	4.0
ANATOMY OF A FALL	BARINGO FC	4.0
RED, WHITE AND BRASS	WHITEHORSE FS	3.9
GOODBYE LENIN	SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS	3.9
BRIDES (UK/GREECE)	SALE FS	3.9
LIVING	MYRTLEFORD FS	3.9
BALLOON	DOOKIE FS	3.9
BROKER	BRIGHT FS	3.9
O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?	TATURA FS	3.8
BANSHEES OF INISHERIN, THE	ST LEONARDS FS	3.8
MUSTANG	MYRTLEFORD FS	3.8
DARK WATERS	ARAPILES MPS	3.8
RIVER	YARRA RANGES FS – HEALESVILLE	3.7
LIFE AND DEATH OF PETER SELLERS	LITTLE FS	3.7
ONE FINE MORNING	CROYDON FS	3.7
FULL TIME	BRIGHT FS	3.7
I AM LOVE	BAROSSA FC	3.7
ERNEST AND CELESTINE	BARINGO FC	3.7
BELFAST	WINCHELSEA MC	3.6
NIGHT OF THE 12TH	WHITEHORSE FS	3.6
BELFAST	DOOKIE FS	3.6
PENGUIN BLOOM	ARAPILES MPS	3.6
SHOPLIFTERS	WILLIAMSTOWN FS	3.5

more ↓

StarBox results continued . . .



DVD TITLE	SOCIETY	STARS
MON ONCLE	SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS	3.5
ANTONIA'S LINE	SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS	3.5
REDEMPTION OF A ROGUE	REELS FS	3.5
IN THERAPY	YARRA RANGES FS - WARBURTON	3.4
SILENT RUNNING (1972)	WILLIAMSTOWN FS	3.4
LANGUAGE LESSONS	WHITEHORSE FS	3.3
BROKER (S KOREA)	GOULBURN VALLEY FC	3.3
BANSHEES OF INISHERIN, THE	GOULBURN VALLEY FC	3.3
TRIANGLE OF SADNESS	CROYDON FS	3.3
CARAVAGGIO'S SHADOW	BARINGO FC	3.2
VICTORIA	SOUTHERN FLEURIEU FS	3.1
AMERICAN IN PARIS, AN	MARYSVILLE FS	3.1
ANNA'S SOMMER	MURRINDINDI FS	3.0
AFTER YANG	BRIGHT FS	3.0
MAN IN THE HAT	ST LEONARDS FS	2.9
EVIL DOES NOT EXIST	MILDURA FS	2.8
PRISCILLA	BARINGO FC	2.8
MINARI	CAMBERWELL FS	2.4

Starbox results compiled by Ian Davidson

WHAT'S BEING SCREENED . . .

All FVFS member organisations are listed below. Details have been sourced from programs, emails and websites. Films that have been programmed over the next couple of months are included where known. If your film society's screenings are not listed, please send program details to secretary@fvfs.org.au for inclusion in future issues. Please note that where known, the company approving the rights is listed in square brackets. It would be appreciated if you could provide the country and year of the films you are screening to ensure the correct film is listed.

Alpine Film Society

Anglesea Movie Club

Deck the Halls, USA, 2006.
Casablanca, USA, 1942.
The Duke, UK, 2020.
Hachi: A Dog's Tale, UK/USA, 2009.

Arapiles Motion Picture Society

Quo Vadis, Aida?, Bosnia+, 2020.
Penguin Bloom, Australia, 2020.
Street Gang: How We Got to Sesame Street, USA, 2021.

Artist Film Screening Society

Ballarat Film Society

EO, Poland, 2022. [High Gloss]
Smiley, Australia/UK/USA, 1956. [Roadshow]

Baringo Film Club

The Father, UK, 2020.
Ferrari, USA+, 2023.
Ernest & Celestine, France+, 2012.
Priscilla, Italy/USA, 2023.
Anatomy of a Fall, France, 2023.
Caravaggio's Shadow, Italy/France, 2022.

Barwon Heads Film Society

The Origin of Evil, France/Canada, 2022.
The Holdovers, USA, 2023.

Beechworth Film Society

Three Identical Strangers, UK/USA, 2018.

Bright Film Society

The Road Dance, UK, 2021.
Herself, Ireland/UK, 2020.

British History Screen & Study Salon

Buninyong Film Festival

(Held 24th - 25th May 2024)

Camberwell Film Society

Delicious, Belgium/France, 2021. [Palace]
Where Am I Going (Quo Vado?), Italy, 2016. [Palace]

Celebrate Israel Screen & Study Salon

Chewton Film Society

The Duke, UK, 2020.
Belfast, UK, 2021.
Living, UK+, 2022.

Corangamite Film Society

Anatomy of a Fall, France, 2023.
The Man in the Hat, UK, 2020.

Croydon Film Society

The Innocent, France, 2022.
Decision to Leave, South Korea, 2022.
Driving Madeleine, France, 2022.
Plancha/Happy 50, France, 2022.

Dookie Film Group

Belfast, UK, 2021.
One Life, UK, 2023.
The Last Daughter, Australia, 2022.

F Project Cinema

Ryuichi Sakamoto: Coda, Japan, 2017.
Boy, New Zealand, 2010.
Not Quite Hollywood, Australia, 2008.
Perfect Days, Japan/Germany, 2023.
Brand Bollywood Down Under, India, 2023.

Ferntree Gully Film Society

Broker, South Korea, 2022.
Last Film Show, India+, 2021.

Films At The Bundy Inc. (formerly Court FS)

Broker, South Korea, 2022.
Shayda, Australia, 2023.
Honeyland, North Macedonia, 2019.
Scraper, UK, 2023.
Blue Jean, UK, 2022.

Flickside Film Society (Arts Yackandanda)

Forest Film Society 3461

Limbo, Hong Kong/China, 2021.

Forrest Flicks Film Society

Amsterdam, USA/Japan, 2022.
The Grand Budapest Hotel, USA/Germany, 2014.
O Brother, Where Art Thou, UK/France/USA, 2000.

Geelong Classic Cinema

God Loves Atheists Screen & Study Salon

Goulburn Valley Film Club

Delicious, France, 2021.
The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, UK, 2023.

Grampians Film Society

All That Breathes, India, 2022.
The Boat with No Name, Australia, 2022.

Healesville Mini Film Festival

(Held 17th March 2024)

Horsham Film Society

Kingston Moviehouse

Blossoms in the Dust, USA, 1941.
Three Coins in the Fountain, USA, 1954.
The Catered Affair, USA, 1956.
Dial M for Murder, USA, 1954.
Three Amigos, USA, 1986.
The Rainmaker, USA, 1997.
Meet Me in St Louis, USA, 1944.
Christmas in Connecticut, USA, 1945.

Liberate Education Screen & Study Salon

Little Film Society

The Life & Death of Peter Sellers, UK/USA, 2004.
The Son, Belgium/France, 2002.
Being There, USA, 1979.

Lounge Lizards Film Society

LV Film Society

Io Capitano, Italy/Belgium/France, 2023.
Robot Dreams, Spain/France, 2023.
Perfect Days, Japan/Germany, 2023.
Radical, USA/Mexico, 2023.
The Old Oak, UK/France/Belgium, 2023.

Macedon Ranges Film Society

Empire of Light, UK/USA, 2022.
Julie and Julia, USA, 2009.

Maldon Movies Film Society

Wicked Little Letters, UK/USA/France, 2023.
The Scent of the Green Papaya, France, 1993.
The New Boy, Australia, 2023.
Master Cheng, Finland/China, 2019.
Tampopo, Japan, 1985.

Marysville Film Society

Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid, USA, 1969. [Roadshow]
Ghostbusters, USA, 1984. [Amalgamated]

Melbourne Horror Film Society

Teeth, USA, 2007.
Jennifer's Body, USA/Canada, 2009.

Mildura Film Society

La Bete (The Beast), France, 2023.
Monster, Japan, 2023.

Monash Film Society

Mount Eliza Fifty-Five Plus Film Group

Movies at Numurkah Film Society

WHAT'S BEING SCREENED con't . . .

Murrindindi Film Society

Anna's Sommer, Germany/Greece/Spain, 2001.

Innocence, Australia, 2000.

Myrtleford Film Society.

Mustang, France/Germany+, 2015.

Living, UK+, 2022.

Network Film Club

Port Campbell Film Society

Mad About the Boy: the Noel Coward Story, UK, 2023.

The Crow's Egg, India, 2014.

Pain and Glory, Spain/France, 2019.

Lost Illusions, France/Belgium, 2021.

Port Lincoln Film Society (SA)

John Paul Gaultier: Freak & Chic, France, 2018.

Catch Me if You Can, USA, 2002.

Portarlington Film Society

Living, UK, 2022.

Broker, South Korea, 2022.

Close, Belgium/Netherlands/France, 2022.

Two is a Family, France/UK, 2016.

Tar, USA, 2022.

PRODOS Screen & Study Salon

Prom Coast Film Society

The Taste of Things, France/Belgium, 2023.

Midnight Oil: The Hardest Line, Australia, 2024.

The Bike Riders, USA, 2024.

Red Rock Film Society

Faces Places, France, 2017.

Tracks, Australia, 2013.

Reels Film Society (SA)

Redemption of a Rogue, Ireland, 2020.

Bank of Dave, UK, 2023.

Tenor, France, 2022.

The Menu, USA, 2022.

Docteur? (A Good Doctor), France, 2019.

Sale Film Society

The Old Oak, UK/France/Belgium, 2023.

Mrs. Henderson Presents, UK/USA, 2005.

Science and Technology Screen & Study Salon

Smart Girls Screen & Study Salon

St Andrews Film Society

Mishima, USA, 1985.

Lunana: A Yak in the Classroom, Bhutan, 2019.

St Leonards Film Society

The Vanishing (Spoorloos), France/Netherlands, 1988. [Trak Cinema]

Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris, UK/Hungary, 2022. [Universal Pictures Int.]

Southern Fleurieu Film Society (SA)

The Last Days of Chez Nous, Australia, 1982.

Asteroid City, USA, 2023.

Sun Country Movie Club

Surf Coast Film Society

Tarwin Lower Film Society

Life is a House, USA, 2001.

Fallout, Australia, 2013.

Harvie Krumpet, Australia, 2003.

Some Like It Hot, USA, 1959.

Tatura Film Society

Crossroads, USA, 1986. [Amalgamated]

Where the Crawdads Sing, USA, 2022.

[Roadshow]

Teddy Bobo Screen & Study Salon

The Impossible Screen & Study Salon

Trentham Film Society

The Phantom of the Open, UK, 2021.

L'Innocent, France, 2022.

Man on Wire, UK/USA, 2008.

Sweet As, Australia, 2022.

Past Lives, USA, 2023.

Violet Town Film Society

(formerly St Dunstons Hall FS)

Warburton Film Festival

(Held 14-16 June 2024)

Warrandyte Film Society

The Great Escaper, UK/France/Sweden, 2023.

Whina, New Zealand, 2022.

Claire Darling, France, 2018.

Doctor Zhivago, Italy/UK/USA, 1965.

The Eight Mountains, Italy/Belgium+, 2022.

Whitehorse Film Society

Alcarras, Spain/Italy/France, 2022. [Palace]

Night of the 12th, France/Belgium, 2022.

[Potential]

The Miracle Club, Ireland/UK, 2023. [Roadshow]

A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood, USA, 2019. [Amalgamated]

Other People's Children, France, 2022.

[Palace]

Penguin Bloom, Australia, 2020. [Roadshow]

Williamstown Film Society

Ego: the Michael Gudinski Story, Australia, 2023.

The Lady Killers, UK, 1955.

Winchelsea Movie Club.

Belfast, UK, 2021.

Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris, UK/Hungary, 2022.

Yarra Ranges Film Society - Warburton

Suburbicon, UK/USA/China, 2017.

It's A Wonderful Life, USA, 1946

Yarra Ranges Film Society - Healesville

Suburbicon, UK/USA/China, 2017.

It's A Wonderful Life, USA, 1946

*What's being screened
compiled by Susan Davidson*



A brief reminder . . .

to all members to ensure your contact details as shown on the FVFS website are kept up to date. They are intended to be used by the FVFS secretary and DVD distributors as well as potential new members, so it is important that they are current.

Please use this link www.fvfs.org.au/members/ or scan this barcode to check the contact details for your society. When you re-apply for membership with the FVFS each year, you are asked to check these contact details but it appears that many applicants approve the details without actually checking the website. In some cases the contact is not the secretary of the film society, so unless you tell us when there is a need to change the details, they will remain the same. We will only change the details at your request. If you are unsure about publishing your email address, consider setting up a generic email account, such as fredsfilmsociety@gmail.com and arranging for it to forward all incoming emails to the address of your current secretary.



Contact the membership officer on admin@fvfs.org.au if you need to update anything.

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Tell your story.

Items for possible publication are welcome, especially your StarBox results, info about your film society's annual programs, activities and any ideas you would like to share. Please send your submissions for articles to reelnews@fvfs.org.au Deadlines for submissions are the end of January, April, July and October, for publication in the following months. Please send StarBox scores to starbox@fvfs.org.au

Note: If you are submitting an article for inclusion in ReelNews, please add your name and the name of your Society to the article so that you can be credited as the author, and also note the correct spelling of 'ReelNews' when including it in your article.

To make life easier for the editor, please send your articles in Word format or in the body of the email, and send your jpeg images separately. And please ask someone to proof read your article before submission. Thank you!