



A Look Back at 2008 and Forward to 2009...

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Despite the economic down-turn, community cinema has been on the up in the South West during 2008 with established venues growing their audiences and even more new start-ups, mostly under the **Film West by South West** banner. There were two highly successful Viewings in Wincanton (breaking all SW Viewing attendance records) and at Exeter University. This issue of **Film SW** combines reviews of recent developments and events with the usual round-up of the best films of 2008 which should be on your screens in 2009.



'The Visitor' - likely to feature in 2009 film programmes

◆ South West Society News

➤ **Bude Community Cinema** - following the closure in 2007 of 'The Rebel', a small independent cinema in the Cornish village of Pounderstock, a small group of local residents got together to set up their own film society. In September 2008, these enthusiasts linked up with Cornwall's Arts Touring Scheme, **Carn to Cove**, to present a season of five films. This has been so successful that further films are planned for 2009, starting with 'Atonement' on Friday 23 January - see www.budecinema.org.uk for more information.

➤ **Trial Screenings** - Chris Baker is lining up two start-ups in January as part of the continuing Film WbySW initiative - Wellow near Bath and Shipham in Somerset. Meanwhile, successful trial screenings in the summer have resulted in new screens in North Wraxall and Kington Langley in Wiltshire and Chudleigh in Devon.

➤ **Batcombe Film Society** celebrated their tenth anniversary back in October with a Gala Evening in their Jubilee Hall. This featured Neil Brand, the celebrated accompanist and champion of silent cinema, in a presentation entitled 'The Silent Pianist'. Our exclusive photo (right) shows founders of the Somerset society, Virginia Membery, Bruno Cristofoli, Sarah Maude and Elizabeth Hunt. Neil Brand was far from silent in recounting his experiences in accompanying classic films all over the world. The evening climaxed with the screening of a Laurel and Hardy masterpiece with enthusiastic provision of sound effects from the audience.

◆ NEW TITLES PRE-VIEWED IN 2008

★ An exciting selection of new releases were up for consideration for the coming 2009 seasons at two Viewing events held back in the autumn. The South West event, hosted by CinSoc at Exeter University, attracted 85 delegates from 27 Societies to Devonshire House on the campus. The highlight of the day was a new release from the BFFS Block Booking scheme – **In Prison My Whole Life** – a powerful documentary on the renowned Death Row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal with an inciteful introduction from Human Rights lawyer, Niki Adams, who had travelled down especially from London. Top ratings also went to **The Visitor**, from the director of *The Station Agent*, and the indie comedy **In Search of a Midnight Kiss**, another BFFS title. The full details of the reactions can be found on the SW website but, for the record, the ratings of the features were as follows....

Exeter University - top features

In Prison My Whole Life	92.9
The Visitor	91.9
In Search of a Midnight Kiss	80.0
The Pope's Toilet	72.5
Summer Hours	72.2
Somers Town	71.9

★ The Edinburgh venue for the ICO Screening Days in November was too far away for most of us but it was good to see another BFFS title, **Four Minutes**, top the ratings. The other top features, with more than ten viewers voting, were:

Filmhouse, Edinburgh - top selection

Four Minutes	87.0
Summer	82.8
Anvil Total	77.9
Dean Spanley	77.0
Il Divo	77.0
Che: The Argentine	76.4
The Class	75.7
Rachel Getting Married	69.4



★ Neil Brand and the Batcombe crew

Films of the Year 2008

Here is our usual round-up of the top film choices by some of the critics plus FSW contributors to help with your selections for your next season....

• *Guardian* (Jason Solomons)

1. Couscous
2. Man On Wire
3. There Will Be Blood
4. Gomorrah
5. My Winnipeg
6. In Search of a Midnight Kiss
7. Before the Devil Knows You're Dead
8. 4 Months, 3 Weeks & 2 Days
9. Son of Rambow
10. Sweeney Todd

• *Observer* (Philip French - alphabetical)

1. Appaloosa
2. Changeling
3. Couscous
4. The Diving Bell and the Butterfly
5. The Edge of Heaven
6. Gomorrah
7. In Bruges
8. Man on Wire
9. No Country for Old Men
10. Waltz with Bashir

• *Sight & Sound* (Various critics)

1. Hunger
2. There Will Be Blood
3. WALL-E
4. Gomorrah
5. A Christmas Tale
5. The Class
7. Of Time and the City
8. Happy-Go-Lucky
9. The Headless Woman
9. Let the Right One In

• *Time Out* (Various Critics)

- There Will Be Blood
- Of Time and the City
- WALL-E
- My Winnipeg
- Flight of the Red Balloon
- Memories of Matsuko
- You, the Living
- Changeling

• *David Denby* (New Yorker)

1. Defiance
2. Rachel Getting Married
3. The Class
4. The Wrestler
5. Vicky Christina Barcelona
6. WALL-E
7. Milk
8. Trouble the Water
9. Revolutionary Road
10. I've Loved You So Long

• *Venue* (Bristol/Bath)

- No Country for Old Men
- Before the Devil Knows...
- The Bank Job
- Priceless
- The Fall
- The Baader Meinhof Complex
- Hunger
- In Bruges
- WALL-E
- The Boy in Striped Pyjamas

• *Film South West* (Brian Clay)

- No Country for Old Men
- Diving Bell and the Butterfly
- There Will Be Blood
- The Orphanage
- In Bruges
- Mamma Mia
- Man on Wire
- Hunger
- I've Loved You So Long
- Dean Spanley

• *Film South West* (Ralph Willett)

- There Will Be Blood
- I've Loved You So Long
- Summer Hours
- Gone Baby Gone
- Appaloosa



Couscous



Sun 1 Feb

DATES FOR YOUR 2009 DIARY

Yeovil Film Day - COMEDY

Yeovil College from 2pm featuring: **Duck Soup**, **The Apartment**, **The Big Lebowski** plus Cinematheque cake and an optional Italian meal at Tamburino's. All SW members welcome as guests - contact Kim Rixon on 07804 527177.

Sun 22 Feb

David Lean - Centenary

Shaftesbury Arts Centre Bell Street, Shaftesbury 2.40 pm **The Making of Lawrence of Arabia**

followed at 4.15 pm by **Lawrence of Arabia**.

Tickets: £9 including tea and cakes.

Box Office 01747854321



Sun 8 Mar

SW Regional Viewing/AGM

The newly refurbished Pound Arts Centre in Corsham are our hosts for a day of new releases and the SW Group AGM. Details later on the website

Sat 14 Mar -

Global Village Festival

Sat 21 Mar

Sixth annual celebration of world cinema for the Corsham area. Details from 01249 715 704.

Sat 18 Apr -

ICO Screening Days

Mon 20 Apr

bfi Southbank. Details later.

Lympstone Receive Top Award



Ralph Willett and Lympstone Film Society

At the Exeter Viewing, SW Co-Chair Ralph Willett presented members of Lympstone Film Society with their Distinction certificate in the best New Society category. Ralph had picked up the award on their behalf at the Film Society of the Year ceremony in Sheffield back in September. Details of the 2009 competition will be sent out later in the year.

BFFS Membership Renewal

In 2009, BFFS will be making even more resources available to its members including:

- § Brand new titles on the National Block Booking Scheme
- § Fantastic new interactive website featuring exhibitor of the month
- § Community Cinema Sourcebook - an indispensable guide

To make sure you don't miss out - return your joining form to the BFFS Central Office asap!

Film South West is the Newsletter of the South West Group of the British Federation of Film Societies

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