

U3AC FILM GROUP - ARCHIVES

AUTUMN 2000

The Films of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressberger

Michael Powell and Emeric Pressberger first worked together in 1938 when Pressberger, an émigré from Nazi Germany, was assigned to write a script for *A Spy in Black* which was to be directed by Powell, who until then had apprenticed at Elstree Studios on varied assignments. Other collaborations followed and in 1942 they set up a production company together called The Archers, which in subsequent years went on to produce a succession of fine films notable for their vivid imagery and extraordinary beauty. Our opening presentations will be three films from that period.

A Matter Of Life And Death

(1946) (104 mins)

As a result of one million GI's being stationed in Britain towards the end of WW2, Powell and Pressberger were invited by the Ministry of Information to make a film about deteriorating Anglo/American relationships. For lack of resources the project was postponed, but when it finally appeared in 1946 *A Matter of Life and Death* was their most spectacular production to date. It told the story of the pilot of a doomed British bomber who makes contact with a female American ground controller in his last minutes and, astonishingly, survives after baling out without a parachute. There develops a metaphysical story of a heavenly trial which is in the mind of the injured airman and the growing earthly love that he has for the American controller.

A Canterbury Tale

(1944) (124 mins)

As with a number of Powell and Pressberger's films, this wartime production was cut to make it more conventionally acceptable. This version, which is a restoration by the National Film Archive, creates the ambience of the period rather than concerning itself with suspense and narrative. The story of an American serviceman making a pilgrimage to Canterbury Cathedral and a mystery concerning local girls is used purely as a framework in order to make a film, using the very limited resources available, about the epoch in which they were living.

Black Narcissus

(1947) (100 mins)

A visually striking, dramatically riveting film adaptation of a novel by Rumer Godden about a group of nuns enduring physical and emotional hardships in attempting to set up a mission in the remote Himalayas. Deborah Kerr plays Sister Clodagh, the insecure leader of the group, who is confronted by the repressed desires of Sister Ruth, played by Kathleen Byron, and the doubts and jealousies of the other nuns.

Portraits of India

Distant Thunder Ashani Sanket

(1973) (101 mins) Dir. Satyajit Ray

Satyajit Ray is still India's best known director. His trilogy, *The World of Apu*, has subsequently become a classic of world cinema. Unfortunately no good quality prints of this exist in this country. Our film, *Distant Thunder*, was made 18 years later, and is set in a remote village in 1943. The title of the film refers to World War 2, something which no one in the village comprehends other than that King George is fighting the Japanese. That distant event eventually affects them profoundly.

The Elder Sister Oppol

(1980) (143 mins) Dir. K S Sethumadhavan

The story of a 6 year old boy and his devotion to a young woman whom he thinks of as his elder sister. He becomes intensely jealous when she marries a military man and wants to go along too, thinking that he might save her from her plight. The film deals with this bizarre love triangle and in doing so broke some new ground in its portrayal of family relationships as shown in Indian Cinema.

The Seedling Ankur

(1973) (131 mins) Dir. Shayam Benegal

The films of Shayam Benegal are too little known, yet the best of them rank alongside Ray's work. As with most of his films, *The Seedling* is set against a rural background and deals with the oppressive constraints of a feudal society. It is a melodrama of a newly married young man from the city who is called on to take up the role of traditional landlord when he is sent alone to his rural home to look after his ancestral property. Benegal based it on events that he had witnessed as a student.

Classic Films from Japan

An Autumn Afternoon

(1963) (113 mins) Dir. Yasujiro Ozu

Yasujiro Ozu is considered to be the most Japanese of all film directors. The films of his mature period are all set at the centre of some small family drama. With his still, simple and logical style he observes the intimacies, humour and sadness of everyday life. We are showing the last film he made before his death in 1963 which tells the story of Hirayama, played by Chishu Ryu, one of Ozu's favourite actors, who finds

himself being urged by his friends to find a husband for his daughter Michiko. Of the 54 films he made during his lifetime this one qualifies among the best and exemplifies his style.

Living Ikiru

(1952) (143 mins) Dir. Akira Kurosawa

Shot in the early 1950s between his great internationally acclaimed pictures *Rashomon* and *The Seven Samurai*, this major work of Kurosawa received less acclaim than it deserved. In it we follow the story of Kanji Watanabe, a long-serving civil servant who is informed by his doctor that he is close to death, and who begins to evaluate what he has done with his life. Normally famed for his adaptations of Shakespeare's plays or his depictions of the Samurai tradition, Kurosawa, in this film, reveals another, more contemplative, side to his work.

Sansho The Bailiff

(1954) (125 mins) Dir. Kenji Mizoguchi

A scathing attack on man's tendency to exploit his fellow beings. Mizoguchi shows his immense compassion in this portrayal of an eleventh century governor sent into exile. Before separating from his family he teaches his children that "A man without mercy is like a wild beast". Mizoguchi has a keen sense of historic accuracy and detail and views life's cruelties in a detached, contemplative way, creating images of extraordinary visual beauty and emotional power.

An Actor's Revenge

(1963) (113 mins) Dir. Kon Ichikawa

Yukinojo is a female impersonator in a travelling *Kabuki* troupe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. During a performance in Edo he encounters a merchant, Lord Dobe, who with the aid of two other merchants, had driven his parents to suicide by ruining them. Yukinojo plans to wreak vengeance on them through Lord Dobe's daughter, Lady Namiji, who falls in love with him. Shot in 'scope and colour, it is full of visual splendour in its Kabuki theatre setting and its exteriors.

Black Orpheus (Orpheu Negro)

(1958) (107 mins) Dir. Marcel Camus

Immensely popular when it was first shown in Europe and America during the late fifties and early sixties, portraying as it does Brazil at its most exotic. Seen as a Brazilian film at the time, it was in fact the debut feature film of Marcel Camus, a young French director who was catapulted to fame by it when it was honoured and received major prizes at the Cannes and Venice Film Festivals. The Orpheus legend is recreated in Rio de Janeiro as the doomed lovers weave their way through the carnival-mad city frenetic with noise, colour and movement.

SPRING 2001

MERCHANT IVORY PRODUCTIONS: THE FILMS OF JAMES IVORY, RUTH PRAWAR JHABVALA AND ISMAIL MERCHANT

Through the personal intervention of Ismail Merchant we have obtained permission to screen these rarely seen films by the Merchant Ivory Corporation. It covers a range of the work done by the team over the years and we have taken one from their early work in India, one from their American period and finally an adaptation of a novel, a genre for which they have subsequently become famous throughout the world.

16 January **Shakespeare Wallah**

(1965) (120 mins)

The first film by the team to receive critical acclaim and a degree of popular success on the art house circuits. A group of travelling Shakespearean actors in post colonial India grapple desperately with the diminishing demand for their services as the theatre is supplanted by the emerging Indian film business. It is a bitter sweet tale which features Felicity Kendal in her first film role as well as other members of her actual family upon whom the story of the film is based. Another well known actress who received an award for her part in the film is the young Madhur Jaffrey.

23 January **Roseland**

(1977) (104 mins)

A film made up of three stories which are all set in an actual New York dance hall which was called Roseland. Each tale is linked by the theme of trying to find the right partner. It features many excellent American actors including Teresa Wright, Lou Jacobi, Geraldine Chaplin and Christopher Walken. It's a memorial to a venue that no longer exists and also a world of social interaction which has almost disappeared.

30 January **Maurice**

(1987) (135 mins)

An adaptation of E. M. Forster's novel *Maurice* the rights of which he bequeathed to King's College. Much of the location shooting was done in courts and halls of the college where Forster was a student and resided as a fellow during the last years of his life. The story, which he insisted was not to be published during his life, is of two undergraduates who fall in love and struggle to come to terms with their own feelings towards each other and towards the attitudes of the society in which they live. It was showered with awards for the director, for its lead actors Hugh Grant and James Wilby and for the group's regular composer Richard Robbins.

RECENT INTERNATIONAL CINEMA

16 October **The Entertainer** (1960) Dir. Tony Richardson (UK) 96 mins
A fascinating film featuring the work of some of the great theatrical figures of the 1960's. The original play by John Osborne was a huge success at the Royal Court Theatre with Laurence Olivier's tour de force performance reflecting, he claimed, his own personality "it had the advantage of being a complete break from the other sort of work I had done.... I have an affinity with Archie Rice. It's what I really am. I am not like Hamlet." The excellent supporting cast features Joan Plowright, Albert Finney, Alan Bates and Thora Hird and her daughter Sally Ann Field.

23 October **Oh What a Lovely War** (1969) Dir. Richard Attenborough 144 mins
The first feature film made by Richard Attenborough is a sprawling, stylized satire on war in which the songs are an integral part of the message. It was adapted, by the novelist Len Deighton, from Joan Littlewood's 1963 Stratford Theatre Workshop musical production and features cameo appearances by most of the British acting establishment of the time, John Gielgud, Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, Ian Holm, Vanessa Redgrave, John Mills, Susannah York, Dirk Bogarde etc. Filmed entirely in and around Brighton the film traces WW1 through a series of surreal set pieces, alternating between the front lines in France and the British home front, where generals and diplomats conduct a distant war that is actually fought by the young and the poor. It is heavily influenced by the Make Love Not War ethos of the 1960's. The original idea came from a Charles Cilton radio play called "The Long Long Trail".

30 October **Mephisto** (1981) Dir. Istvan Szabo (West Germany/Hungary) 144 mins
Academy Award winner for best foreign film in 1981 *Mephisto* is inspired by the Faust legend and features a grand performance from the German actor Klaus Maria Brandauer who plays Hendrik Hofgen an actor who finds unexpected success and mixed blessings when he comes to Berlin in the 1920's to work in the State Theatre. At a time when the Nazis are beginning to take over power in Germany he is appearing as Mephisto in a stage version of Goethe's Faust. He begins to realise how his "make believe" public role is converging with his private life and how it can lead to very tragic circumstances.

6 November **Cradle Will Rock** (1999) Dir. Tom Robbins (USA) 133 mins
Set in New York City in 1937 this complex film weaves a story based on real events in American history as industrial unrest erupts across the country. An outstanding ensemble cast characterizes real life artists, writers and politicians in an era in which Nelson Rockefeller is commissioning Diego Rivera to create murals for the lobby of the newly built Rockefeller Centre. Italian politicians are peddling Renaissance masterpieces to fund Mussolini's war in Abyssinia. Whilst the youthful Orson Welles rehearses a government funded production of *The Cradle Will Rock* a musical play addressing the political and social struggles of the period.

13 November **Look Back in Anger** (1959) Dir. Tony Richardson (UK) 115 mins
Tony Richardson was one of the Artistic Directors in the original stage version of John Osborne's landmark play "Look Back in Anger" at the Royal Court in 1956, later on they formed the company Woodfall Films with the aim of "proving that good films, ones that showed British life as it really is, could be made cheaply". The two Tony Richardson films in our programme represent a good sample of their output. This screen adaptation was the first of their productions and was co-scripted by the playwright and Nigel Kneale. It is full of crackling dialogue with Richard Burton giving an intense, bravura performance as Jimmy Porter and Mary Ure, who repeats the role that she played in the original London and New York productions is excellent as Alison his downtrodden wife. Edith Evans, Clare Bloom and Donald Pleasance are among the supporting cast.
THE SCREENING OF THIS PARTICULAR FILM WILL BE OPEN TO U3AC CINEMA GROUP MEMBERS ONLY

20 November **Shakespeare in Love** (1999) Dir. John Madden (UK) 122 mins
Without doubt the most popular film of recent years to have dealt with the world of theatre. It is an affectionate comic tribute to our greatest playwright shown in the throes of creating his most popular play. Showered with awards world wide for the widest possible range of attributes particularly screenplay, art direction, ensemble cast performance and music as well as the performances of individual actors. Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman, the writers, conjure with the idea that the young William was inspired to write through falling in love with a girl dressed as a man who comes to audition at the Rose Theatre for the part of Romeo, in a play that he hasn't yet written.....

27 November **The Cherry Orchard** (1999) Dir. Michael Cacoyannis (Greece/France) 141 mins
A beautifully crafted and elegant version of Chekhov's play, by the veteran Greek director Michael Cacoyannis. Although harshly treated by the critics it really does deserve better and is full of fresh, sympathetic and vital moments that will help it to last as one of the best film adaptations to date. The excellent cast includes Charlotte Rampling, who is marvellous as Madame Ranyevskaya and the always impressive Alan Bates as Gayev.

4 December **Uncle Vanya** (1970) Dir. Andrei Konchalovsky (Russia) 104 mins
Two years ago we showed Louis Malle's outstanding film version "Vanya on 42nd Street". It will now be fascinating to have the rare opportunity to see this much praised, faithful Russian version adapted and

directed by Andrei Konchalovsky, renowned for his subsequent work as a writer with Andrei Tarkovsky. It features the great actor Innokenti Smoktunovsky famous for his portrayal of Hamlet in Kosintsev's 1960's film.

11 December **Noises Off** (1992) Dir. Peter Bogdanovich (USA) 102 mins
One of the funniest plays for many years, it is at the time of writing, playing once again to packed houses at the Piccadilly Theatre in the West End. Here we have a version that has been adapted for an American audience in which the action is transferred to the States as we follow the fortunes of a touring show that is headed for Broadway. In most aspects it remains completely faithful to Michael Frayn's original play with the vast majority of the dialogue being unaltered. New elements of comedy are added through its relocation and with a cast that includes Denholm Elliott, Michael Caine and Carol Burnett it should provide an end of season treat.

SPRING 2002

A PROGRAMME OF INTERNATIONAL CINEMA

15 January **The Chess Players** Dir. Satyajit Ray India (1985) (135 mins)
This opulent film was Bengali director Satyajit Ray's first historical project. It is set in the India of the 1850's. Wazed Ali Shah is the ruler of one of the last independent kingdoms of India. The British, intent on controlling the country and its wealth, have sent General Outram on a secret mission to clear the way for an annexation. While pressure is mounting amidst intrigue and political manoeuvres, Ali Shah composes poems and listens to music, secluded in his palace and his noblemen pass the time satisfying their all-consuming passion for chess.

22 January **The Insider** Dir. Michael Mann USA (1999) (158 mins)
The true story of Jeffrey Wigand, a former tobacco executive, who decided to appear on the CBS-TV News show "60 Minutes". As a matter of conscience partially prodded by producer Lowell Bergman, he revealed that the tobacco industry was not only aware that cigarettes are addictive and harmful, but deliberately worked on increasing that addictiveness. Unfortunately, both protagonists of this story learn the hard way that simply telling the truth is not enough. A compelling, intelligent drama with a superb cast including Russell Crowe, Al Pacino and Michael Gambon.

29 January **Shower** Dir. Zhang Yang China (1999) (92 mins)
Shower is a low-budget film about a father and his two sons. The father has a traditional bathhouse somewhere in a traditional Chinese village where local, mostly aged men, come to relax and to go bathing. The father has two sons: a 'retarded' son who lives with him and a son who lives in a big modern city and who comes to visit him. To this son the traditional village, the bathhouse and his 'retarded' brother seem strange and at times annoying. An amusing and touching film.

5 February **Some Voices** Dir. Simon Cellan Jones UK (2000) (96 mins)
Daniel Craig stars in this film as Ray, a young man who is discharged from a psychiatric hospital. He is returned, with a large supply of tablets, to his brother's care within "the community". When he falls for a woman, who reciprocates, life seems better than it has ever been, and he begins to question whether the endless tablets are actually necessary. It is an honest, truthful and insightful film in which the characters are drawn sympathetically but not blandly. The laughter – and it is not in short supply – comes from the foibles of the characters we are presented with, and as in life, provides relief from the more tragic elements.

12 February **Show Boat** Dir. James Whale USA (1935) (112 mins)
One of the outstanding musicals that came out of pre-war Hollywood. It features the music of Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein as well as the unique talents of Paul Robeson, Hattie McDaniel and Irene Dunne. Although shot in B/W it is considered to be superior to the later colour version which came out in the 1950s due to the fact that it remained completely faithful to the original play, has excellent performances from its stars and is well paced in its action. Not to mention a fine selection of songs including Make Believe, Ol' Man River, and Can't Help Loving' Dat Man of Mine.

19 February **Himalaya** Dir. Eric Valli France/Nepal (2000) (104 mins)
Eric Valli, the director, who divides his time between Katmandu, Paris and Los Angeles, is a longtime National Geographic photographer who made several documentaries before tackling this full-length feature film. Though the film is closely based on reality (Valli lived in Dolpo for years), Himalaya isn't a documentary – it's a fictional account of life among the Dolpopas. The film has a story, plot and emotional drama linking the characters Tingle, an old chief, who blames Karma a member of his tribe, for his son's death. Spectacular cinematography in Nepal's mountaintops, ancient rituals and powerful drama make this a film not to be missed.

26 February **Waking Ned** Dir. Kirk Jones Ireland (1999) (90 mins)

Two films directed by James Ivory

Autobiography of a Princess

(1975) (60mins)

In this delicate, understated and literate film James Mason plays the former tutor of the father of an Indian princess who is played by Madhur Jaffrey. The two of them discuss their experiences of colonial India and a mixture of drama and documentary footage is used as they reflect with differing viewpoints on life in the Maharaja's court.

and

Adventures of a Brown Man in search of Civilization

(1971) (54mins)

This film about the extraordinary Indian polymath Nirad Chaudhuri who was living and studying in England during the late 60's is set mainly in Oxford and London. It places the subject in a number of situations in which this nimble witted and voluble man can talk over a wide range of subjects. The elegant cinematography on both films is the work of Walter Lassally.

5 November **Two Daughters**

Dir. Satyajit Ray (1961) (114mins)

Two stories in the one film, both based on tales by Nobel Prize winner Rabindranath Tagore. The first is titled "The Postmaster" and relates how Ratan, an orphan, is mistreated by a local postmaster. When a Calcutta poet, Nandalal comes to Ratan's remote village he takes over the postmaster's job and hires Ratan as a servant girl. His kindness extends to teaching her to read and write and she, in turn, is devoted to him. Faced with the difficulties of living in abject poverty, the postmaster has to choose between staying with Ratan and returning to the city. In the second story, "Samapti", a student returns home from law school to discover that his overbearing mother has arranged a marriage for him with a local woman from a respectable family. Rebelling against this traditional custom, the young man decides to marry the tomboy he loves, with interesting results.

12 November **Short Cuts**

Dir. Robert Altman (1993) (3hrs)

Based on stories by Raymond Carver, Short Cuts follows 22 Los Angeles residents whose lives intersect over the course of a few days. It's a sprawling but intimate character piece that, much in keeping with the style of Carver's stories, has characters that are expressed using small gestures and everyday incidents rather than long speeches. The stories intertwine with just about enough threads to hold the tapestry together. And as is his hallmark, Altman has assembled a superb cast and given them plenty of room to work. It features a wealth of American acting talent including Jack Lemmon, Tim Robbins, and Andie McDowell

19 November **Lone Star**

Dir. John Sayles (1996) (134 mins)

John Sayles has been described as the filmmaking equivalent of an American folksinger, who tells his usually harsh, atmospheric tales with a soft, comforting voice that can turn a good short story into a sincere and original film. Truly independent, Sayles' films always cast an intrigued and ironic eye into the everyday lives of ordinary people. With "Lone Star", Sayles tackles a border-town mystery and packs his tale of murder and small-town intrigue with gentle, humanist touches. Sayles' style of story-telling is as deadpan, dry and methodical as his lead actor Chris Cooper who plays Sam Deeds, the reluctant Texas sheriff investigating a 40 year old murder that may or may not have been committed by his own legendary lawman father, Sheriff Buddy Deeds. The past unfolds in flashbacks and is revealed in the shadows of the present.

26 November **Gosford Park**

Dir. Robert Altman (2002) (137mins)

Featuring the cream of today's British acting fraternity, Gosford Park is a film that many will have seen but hopefully will find worth reviewing. Loosely situated somewhere between Renoir's classic film The Rules of the Game and an Agatha Christie who-done-it the film is a humorous view of the casual barbarity and snobbery that existed in the country house world of the 1930's. One scene to savour especially has Noel Coward providing the after dinner entertainment for the disdainful guests as the servants linger outside the door straining to hear each note; awed by the presence of this celebrity, yet cowed by the presence of their masters.

3 December **Limbo**

Dir. John Sayles (2000) (126mins)

The Secret of Roan Inish, also directed by John Sayles, was a compelling fantasy set on the West Coast of Ireland about a young girl's return to her family's island home and her encounter with her baby brother who had been lost at sea years before, it proved to be one of the most successful films from our 1999 season. Limbo doesn't have the same fairytale charm but it does follow the director's penchant for using distinctive locales, in this case a remote, pastoral Alaskan settlement. Always one to surprise with his unconventional approach he takes even greater risks in this film and demands more of his audience. For the first half it is a straightforward ensemble piece, creating a beautiful portrait of a rural village struggling to find middle ground between the economic need for change and the fervent desire of its citizens to keep things as they've always been. As the story progresses, three players emerge from the fray and it is their relationships and the effects of their personal histories which provide the dramatic engine that drives Limbo to its provocative conclusion.

10 December **Singing in the Rain**

Dir. Gene Kelly & Stanley Donen (1952) (103 mins)

Singing in the Rain has to be among the best of all the Hollywood Musicals. It has the memorable dance sequences that are a necessity as well as enjoyable songs, such as You are My Lucky Star. But it also has

the benefit of a strong comic storyline dealing with the history of cinema and memories of the early days of sound. Even without the music it would work as a comedy. It's a marvellous example of Hollywood laughing at itself and enjoying itself in equal measure ... co-directed by Stanley Donen and the dancer Gene Kelly, it features the exuberant talents of Kelly himself, Donald O'Connor, Cyd Charisse, Jean Hagen and Debbie Reynolds and is a truly joyful film.

SPRING 2003

Our programme for this season is something of a mixed bag but nonetheless it is full of interesting and entertaining films, three of which have been chosen by Film Group members. Some of them have a thematic link in that they reflect the world, as it was during the first half of the 20th century, whilst others explore how people cope in crisis situations. There are three that must qualify for the thriller category and others placing more emphasis on the humorous aspects of life. All-in-all 'not too bad'.

14 January **Le Boucher** Dir. Claude Chabrol France (93 mins) 1969
Le Boucher was one of the most successful of Chabrol's earlier films with its blend of suspense and character a la Hitchcock. A schoolteacher Hélène comes to a small Périgord village to begin a new job. She is soon romanced by the local butcher, Popaul, but is distracted by her job and memories of a previous failed relationship. The two lead actors Stéphane Audran and Jean Yanne, both stalwarts of many Chabrol films, play their roles to perfection and the manner and simplicity of rural life is beautifully observed.

21 January **The Go Between** Dir. Joseph Losey UK (118 mins) 1971
The director Joseph Losey and the writer Harold Pinter collaborated on a number of films together in the 1960's. In this one Pinter adapts the 1953 L P Hartley novel about a middle-aged man recalling a summer of his early adolescence at a country estate. He observes the lives of the adults in the household, all but two of whom conveniently ignore his presence. Marion an aristocratic lady is promised in marriage to another of her class, but she is secretly in love with a farm worker. The leading actors are Michael Redgrave, Margaret Leighton, Alan Bates and Julie Christie. **MEMBER'S CHOICE**

28 January **Burnt by the Sun** Dir. Nikita Mikhalkov Russia/France (152 mins) 1995
It was not until the 1990's that it became possible for Soviet filmmakers to deal more honestly with the 1930's era in Russia, a time when Stalin and his regime "reassessed" the contributions of many heroes of the Revolution. Nikita Mikhalkov's film introduces us to Colonel Sergei Kotov, a hero of the revolution, and his young wife and family who are enjoying a beautiful summer's day in the countryside. Most early stages of the film are lyrical and unhurried, in the manner of a Chekhovian comedy, as the family and friends enjoy their pastoral paradise but when Dimitri, an old lover of Kotov's young wife arrives, the suspicions and tensions begin to accumulate and it turns slowly into a fantastic symbolic fable in which the hidden forces of the State engulf those who get in the way. The director dedicated the film to "everyone who was *burnt by the sun* of the revolution."

4 February **Ballad of a Soldier** Dir. Gregori Chukhrai USSR (90 mins) 1959
Possibly the best loved of Russian films made about the second world war Chukhrai created a film that combines the great visual style of the classic Russian cinema with a human story of a soldier and the conflict between his duty and his family. It can still reach out and touch its audience in a way that represents cinema at its unique, naturalistic best. One of the first films to come out of the USSR following the Stalin years at a time when the Krushchev regime was allowing a slight thaw in artistic expression relating to works about WWII. It was popular both in the USSR and in the West, particularly for its anti-war sentiments.

11 February **Divided We Fall** Dir. Jan Hrebejk Czech (122 mins) 2000
Josef and Marie Cizek are a childless couple who are trying to live a normal life in the face of his sterility and the fact that their small town has been occupied by the German Army. To add to their problems Josef makes a spur of the moment decision to hide the son of his former, Jewish employer who has just escaped from a concentration camp. This exceptional film from Czechoslovakia gives us Jan Hrebejk's comic/serious view of what it must have been like to live in those times and in such circumstances with the constant fear of exposure, surrounded by suspicion, constantly having to be on ones guard. There are no heroes only people trying to survive. A beautiful film that is full of humour.

18 February **The White Balloon** Dir. Jafar Pinahi Iran (85 mins) 1995
Iranian filmmaker Jafar Pinahi's *The White Balloon* tells the story of Razieh, a seven-year-old girl intent on buying a new goldfish in time for Tehran's annual New Year's Day festivities (in Iranian culture, the goldfish is a symbol of life). She badgers her mother into giving her a 500-toman banknote and heads off to the marketplace alone; it is her first real experience away from her parents' watchful eyes, and the excitement and wonder she feels is superbly conveyed in Pinahi's first feature film. A touching insight into everyday Iranian life that was awarded the Camera d'Or prize at Cannes.

banker on holiday in Yalta, who becomes enamoured with a young woman whom he encounters as she takes her dog for a walk each day.

4 November **Don Quijote** G.Konzintzev (1957) (105mins) USSR
One of the great directors of Russian cinema, particularly well respected for his screen adaptations of Shakespeare (Hamlet and King Lear), turns his talents to the seminal Spanish novel Cervantes' *Don Quijote* to follow the great knight's search for truth, beauty and love. Created in Russia and Spain in the 1950's and filmed in Sovcolour and B/W. It stars in the leading role Nikolai Cherkassov one of the most famous of Soviet actors who during his career played in many historical epics including Eisenstein's films Ivan The Terrible and Alexander Nevsky. English dialogue version.

11 November **Unfinished Piece for Mechanical Piano** N.Mikhailkov (1977) (103mins) USSR
Last year's audience will remember the vivid impression made by Mikhailkov's *Burnt by the Sun*, and like that film this has the reputation of being a visually stunning piece of cinema. It lyrically displays the life style of the residents of a country estate at the beginning of the 20th century. Loosely based on Anton Chekhov's early and seldom performed play *Platanov* it is a well-paced drama exploring the relationships that exist below the surface of a community.

18 November **Wild Strawberries** Ingmar Bergman (1957) (91mins) Sweden
The film that catapulted Bergman to the forefront of world cinema is the director's richest, most humane film. Travelling to receive an honorary degree, Professor Isak Borg (played by the veteran Swedish director Victor Sjöström), is forced to face his past, come to terms with his faults, and accept the inevitability of his approaching death. Through flashbacks and fantasies, dreams and nightmares, *Wild Strawberries* movingly captures his voyage of self-discovery and renewed belief in mankind.

25 November **In this World** M.Winterbottom (2003) (88mins) UK
The first of two films showing the work of the prolific and versatile young British director Michael Winterbottom. It tells the story of two Afghan refugees living on the Pakistani border and was awarded the Golden Bear award at this year's Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin. The film is a "semi-documentary," shot using a digital camera that explores the life of refugees who have moved across the border after the bombing of Afghanistan began in October of 2001 and who then travel across Asia and Europe to seek asylum in Britain.

2 December **The Claim** M Winterbottom (2001) (120mins) UK
Bleak and beautiful, *The Claim* is another impressive film from Michael Winterbottom. Based on Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the film is set in 1867 in the heavy snow of the gold-mining country of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Peter Mullan stars as the unchallenged ruler of the town of Kingdom Come, a man who harbours a terrible secret from his past. The magnificent cinematography is by Alvin Kuchler and the memorable score by Michael Nyman. It also stars Sarah Polley, Milla Jovovich, and Nastassia Kinski.

9 December **Our Man in Havana** Carol Reed (1959) (111mins) UK
A brilliant 'entertainment' picture based on Grahame Greene's novel of the same name and scripted by the author himself, the film is directed by Carol Reed whose *The Stars Look Down* we enjoyed last term. An international cast includes Alec Guinness, Maureen O'Hara, Noel Coward, Ernie Kovacs and Burl Ives. The production company initially had problems in securing shooting locations, due to the political instability of Cuba, but the fall of the Batista government in 1959 was a blessing for Reed and his associates, who were soon able to secure permission from the jubilant Castro regime to shoot some of the film in Havana..

16 December **The Quiet American** Joseph L Mankiewicz (1958) (120mins) USA
Audie Murphy plays the quiet American who comes to Saigon, ostensibly on an economic mission. His story is told in flashback through the eyes of an embittered British journalist, played by Michael Redgrave, who is estranged from his wife and living with his Indochinese mistress. In the past year Michael Caine took on the Redgrave role in an acclaimed version reviving interest in the story. This adaptation of Graham Greene's novel, written by the director, is equally as enjoyable and impressive as the 2002 version and was undoubtedly a considerable influence on it.

SPRING 2004

The U3AC Film Group season for January to March will consist of 11 weekly screenings. The major part of the season will consist of a selection of outstanding recently released films from across the world in addition to one or two deserving earlier works that could do with an airing. As a tribute to Elia Kazan, who died last year, we will begin and end the season with two of his lesser known films from the 1950's, one featuring Marlon Brando in one of his first film roles and the other an early attack on the cult of celebrity written by Budd Schulberg who had also worked with Kazan on *On the Waterfront*.

13 January **A Face in the Crowd** Dir. Elia Kazan USA 1957 (125 mins)
Andy Griffith, in his film debut, plays "Lonesome" Rhodes, a talented entertainer discovered by Patricia Neal in an Arkansas jail. Rhodes gets his own local radio show where his home-spun philosophising and charm makes him a celebrity. Soon he graduates to a Memphis television show, then a national show in New York. He is aware of his power over his audience, and becomes a monster, hungry for political power. Lee Remick makes her screen debut as Rhodes' young wife, while Walter Matthau is his world-weary writer.

20 January **The Man Without a Past** Dir. Aki Kaurismaki Finland 2002 (97 mins)
An unusual film by the Finnish film director Aki Kaurismaki whose work displays a dark sense of humour. His characters live on the edge of survival but somehow never seem to lose their feeling of hope. The story is simple; a man loses everything, meets a woman who restores his sense of hope, and then has it all threatened again as he inadvertently plunges into a criminal enterprise.

27 January **Pather Panchali** Dir. Satyajit Ray India 1955 (115 mins)
Indian director Satyajit Ray's first feature film has become one of the classics of world cinema. It's a quiet, simple tale, relating the life of a small family living in a rural village in Bengal. When the father leaves for the city to pursue a writing career, the mother is left with the responsibility of caring for her children and an aging aunt. Gradually, the film's true central character emerges, Apu the young son. The music is composed and performed by Ravi Shankar. A multiple award winner, Pather Panchali was the first of Ray's celebrated "Apu Trilogy"

3 February **Max** Dir. Menno Meyjes USA 2002 (106 mins)
The first screening in Cambridge of a new and controversial film by writer/director Menno Meyjes who tackles the problem of creating a serious film using Adolf Hitler as one of the main characters. In order to do this he creates another main character Max Rothman, a wealthy Jewish art dealer. With these two main characters Meyjes paints a fascinating portrait of the years between WWI and WWII in Germany.

10 February **Spirit of the Beehive** Dir. Victor Erice Spain 1973 (97 mins)
The spellbinding first film of Spanish director Victor Erice set in rural Spain just after the end of the Spanish Civil War. Visually striking and poetic in its portrayal of the world as seen through the eyes of children, the film was received with some disquiet among Spanish audiences when it was first screened because of its allegorical nature. There is very little dialogue, it is one of the masterpieces of visual filmmaking.

17 February **Behind the Sun** Dir. Walter Salles Brazil 2001 (105 mins)
Walter Salles and his cinematographer Walter Carvalho follow up their impressive film *Central Station* with this adaptation from the work of the Albanian author Ismail Kadare's novel *Broken April*. A story of feuding families, honour and revenge which was easily transposed from the novel's 30's Balkans setting to the Brazilian sugarcane badlands of the 1910's, where similar blood feuds were rife.

24 February **Springtime in a Small Town** Dir. Tian Zhuangzhuang China 2002 (116 mins)
Originally well known as a classic Chinese film of the 1940's this remake has turned out to be a beautifully crafted drama of a disintegrating marriage. Seldom has there been such a delicately precise combination of cinematography and art direction in a film. Featuring just five characters it is a masterpiece of leisurely story telling which packs an emotional punch and stunning visual qualities.

2 March **Lantana** Dir. Ray Lawrence Australia 2001 (121 mins)
Made by the Australian director Ray Lawrence Lantana is a pacy and compelling thriller. Not only is Lantana well-written and well-directed but it has depth. At its core are the central themes of trust, grief, fidelity, betrayal and redemption. Anthony LaPaglia, Geoffrey Rush, Barbara Hershey and Kerry Armstrong all give great performances. Lantana is the name of the tropical shrub that surrounds the deceased at the film's opening which is used as a metaphor for the web of tangled relationships portrayed throughout the story.

9 March **Such a Long Journey** Dir. Sturla Gunnarson Canada 1998 (113 mins)
A sensitive drama set in Bombay in 1971 during the war with Pakistan detailing the conflicts that occur within the family of a decent, hardworking bank clerk whose world begins to crumble. An apolitical man he finds himself bound by loyalty to get involved in dealings that would normally be against his nature. A film full of insightful observations of the daily life in the city at that time. Subtly and sympathetically directed by Icelander Sturla Gunnarson and featuring one of India's leading actors Roshan Seth.

16 March **Nine Queens** Dir. Fabien Bielinsky Argentina 2000 (114 mins)
Another thriller but this time set in Buenos Aires. Based on the premise that two small time confidence tricksters try to pull the wool over the eyes of a wealthy stamp collector with a counterfeit sheet of rare 'Nine Queens' stamps. The film itself is almost like a confidence trick... nothing in it is what it seems to be as we are confronted with the many twists and turns of its complex plot.

23 March **Viva Zapata** Dir. Elia Kazan USA 1952 (115 mins)

Elia Kazan and John Steinbeck's fictionalised view of the life of Mexican revolutionary leader and President Emiliano Zapata from his peasant upbringing, through his rise to power in the early 1900s, to his death. Zapata, the child of tenant-farmers, was joined by Pancho Villa in his rebellion against tyrannical President Porfirio Diaz. The Oscar-nominated screenplay by John Steinbeck ignores some historical details in order to focus on the corruptive influence of power. Marlon Brando, Anthony Quinn and Joseph Wiseman give marvellous performances and the action is beautifully filmed, reflecting the influence of Eisenstein and archival photographs from the *Historia Grafica de la Revolucion*

AUTUMN 2004

Our programme will offer major films that incorporate the work of some of the world's leading cinematographers among them Nestor Almendros, Vittorio Satorro, Oswald Morris, Katsuo Miyagawa, Giuseppe Rotunno. We will also complete the screening of the final two parts of Satyajit Ray's *Apu Trilogy* and, in response to the request of several members, show the two famous Claude Berri films about the lives of Jean, Cesar and Manon. In total there will be 11 films.

5 October **The Sheltering Sky** Dir. Bernardo Bertolucci 1990 (138mins)
Our own society and culture are normally the factors that help us to lead a satisfactory life. In this film the protagonists search for something more by cutting themselves off from those links. John Malkovich, Debra Winner and Timothy Spall give remarkable, soulful performances in a film that fully evokes the sensations and experiences of western travellers escaping from the deprivations of WW2 to seek refuge and metaphysical satisfaction in an exotic, alien culture. The creative talents of the Italian director Bernardo Bertolucci and his compatriot the cinematographer Vittorio Satorro, combine to create this beautiful and sensuous film, shot on location in Tangiers and the Sahara desert from the novel by Peter Bowles.

12 October **The Leopard** Dir. Luchino Visconti 1963 (180 mins)
A beautiful, subtle film that charts the changing social order in Sicily during the mid nineteenth century, featuring a superb cast that includes Burt Lancaster, Alain Delon and Claudia Cardinale. "The Leopard" is taken from the novel *Il Geopardo*, written by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, a Sicilian aristocrat, who wrote from his own experience and the life of his own great-grandfather. That Luchino Visconti, the director, was himself a descendant of the ruling class the story eulogizes, enabled him to bring much of his own experience to bear. For many years only a severely cut version of the film existed, but we will show the most complete and best version, that was restored by the film's cinematographer Giuseppe Rotunno. It is always a marvel no matter how many times one sees it.

19 October **Winged Migration** Dir. Jacques Perrin 2001 (98mins)
A visual poem created by Jacques Perrin, Jaques Clauzaud and Michel Debats and 15 cinematographers which gives an astonishing insight into the life of the birds of the world as they make their amazing migratory journeys across the seven continents. Using very little dialogue the film involves the audience with its beautiful and breathtaking photography. If you've ever dreamed of having a bird's eye view of the world, this film will go a long way towards satisfying your desire.

26 October **Days of Heaven** Dir. Terence Mallick 1978 (95mins)
One of the legendary classic films of the 1970's, full of the beautiful panoramic cinematography of Nestor Almendros and underlined by Ennio Morricone's wistful musical score. Featuring the young Richard Gere as an itinerant worker, rambling through the mid-western states of the USA in the early part of the 20th century. His girlfriend, played by Brooke Adams, becomes entangled in a relationship with Sam Shepard, as a landowner who unwittingly intrudes, to create a dramatic love triangle.

2 November **Floating Weeds** Dir. Yasujiro Ozu 1959 (119mins)
Directed by the inimitable Yasujiro Ozu, the film concerns a group of travelling players who arrive at a small seaside town in the south of Japan. Komajuro Arashi, the aging master of the troupe, goes to visit his old flame Oyoshi and their son Kiyoshi, although Kiyoshi believes Komajuro to be his uncle. The leading actress Sumiko is jealous and so, in order to humiliate the master, persuades the younger actress Kayo to seduce Kiyoshi. The cinematographer on this film was Katsuo Miyagawa, who first found fame for his work on Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*

9 November **Aparajito** Dir. Satyajit Ray 1957 (127 mins)
Satyajit Ray's film continues the story of *Pather Panchali*, the film we showed last year, about Apu, born to a poor Brahmin family in a village in Bengal; whose father, a poet and priest, cannot earn enough to keep his family going. In this film after living awhile in Benares, 10 year old Apu and his mother move in with her uncle. Apu enters a local school, where he does well. By the time he graduates, he has a scholarship to study at a college in Calcutta. So off he goes. His mother is torn by his leaving, and by his growing independence. She loves her son very much and wants him to succeed, but she does not want to be left alone.

16 November **World of Apu** Dir. Satyajit Ray 1959 (117 mins)
Apu is a jobless ex-student dreaming vaguely of a future as a writer. An old college friend talks him into a visit up-country to a village wedding. This changes his life, for when the bridegroom turns out to be mad, Apu's friend asks him to become the husband. After initial revulsion at the idea, Apu agrees and takes his exquisite bride, Aparna, back to Calcutta. Subrata Mitra's ingenuity was responsible for the atmospheric, creative black and white photography on both of these Ray films.

23 November **Jean de Florette** Dir. Claude Berri 1986 (120 mins) **MEMBER'S CHOICE**
As the most requested 'member's choice' film we have pleasure in screening Claude Berri's phenomenally popular films of rural life in Provence. Yves Montand and Gerard Depardieu give moving characterizations as Cesar and Jean in this vivid interpretation of the 1930's Marcel Pagnol films of peasant life in southern France between the wars. The colour cinematography of Bruno Nuytten stunningly captures the beauty and occasional harsh nature of the rural life.

30 November **Manon des Sources** Dir. Claude Berri 1986 (113 mins) **MEMBER'S CHOICE**
The two films form a single unbroken narrative and demand to be seen together, this should provide a good opportunity for members to enjoy the story in its entirety. This second part continues as Manon has grown into a beautiful young shepherdess living in the idyllic Provencal countryside. She determines to take revenge upon the men responsible for the death of her father in the first film.

7 December **The Lion In Winter** Dir. Anthony Harvey 1968 (134mins)(70mm)
Based on the play by James Goldman, who also wrote the screenplay, the film focuses on the relationship of Henry II and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine at Christmas of the year 1183. King Henry is faced with the task of deciding who should succeed him. While he favours John, Eleanor favours Richard, the Lionheart. As the court manipulate and connive to influence the succession, Henry and Eleanor clash as two iron wills go against each other. With a cast working at the peak of their powers and with high energy, this is a classic that is seldom given the tribute of a 70mm screening. Peter O'Toole and Katherine Hepburn head a uniformly strong cast.

14 December **Oliver** Dir. Carol Reed 1968 (153 mins)
We finish the year with what has to be one of the most enjoyable film musicals to come from a British film studio. Made, almost 30 years ago, towards the end of Carol Reed's career it stands the test of time phenomenally well. Ron Moody performs magnificently, playing the character of Fagin, as he did in the original London stage version, and Oliver Reed is outstandingly menacing as the evil Bill Sykes. Oswald Morris the great English cinematographer was the creator of the marvellous visual style of the film.

SPRING 2005

The U3AC Film Group's programme will feature a wide variety of classic and contemporary international films. There will be examples of the current spate of documentary films being screened in cinemas across the country and, as a change from the heavy diet of last term's programme, three comedies plus adaptations of classic stage plays for your enjoyment

11 January **Apollo 13** Dir. Ron Howard (1995) USA (140mins)
Based on the book *Lost Moon* by Apollo 13 mission commander Jim Lovell and co-writer Jeffrey Kluger, *Apollo 13* tells the story of NASA's near tragic mission to the moon. A malfunction that occurred en-route left Lovell and his fellow crewmembers Fred Haise (Bill Paxton) and Jack Swigert (Kevin Bacon) with very little chance of survival. The astronauts and the mission control staff headed by Gene Kranz (Ed Harris) had to overcome one terrifying event after another in the face of overwhelming odds. Told with passion the film gives us some idea of the wonder of man's achievements in space travel.

18 January **The Blue Light** Dir. Leni Riefenstahl (1932) Germany (70mins)
The directorial debut of Leni Riefenstahl, who was later commissioned by Hitler to make *Triumph of the Will*, the most famous propagandist film of all time, and then *Olympiad*, her film of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, which served as a model for many later sports documentaries. Riefenstahl plays the lead and directs this visually stunning very early sound film. *Das Blau Lichte* is one of the genre of Weimar mountain films that were popular in Germany during the 1930's.

Partie de Campagne Dir. Jean Renoir (1936) France (40mins)
Charming Jean Renoir film of a Guy de Maupassant short story about a Parisian shopkeeper and his family who spend a day picnicking in the countryside. It is a film of great natural beauty in which the story and plot probably come second to the pure visual pleasure of watching it.

25 January **Twilight Samurai** Dir. Yoji Yamada (2002) Japan (130mins)
An outstanding award winning film from Japan that is a strange mixture of quiet Ozu-like observation and stark bursts of Kurosawa-like action. The film follows the daily life of Seibei Iguchi, a samurai with a meagre

salary and declining respect in his village. After going into debt with the sickness and death of his wife, he's stuck with the tight responsibility of looking after his ten and five year old daughters and his senile mother, while maintaining his crops, crafting, and working at an office job. The samurai days are declining with the Meiji era ready to begin and Seibei is gradually growing more akin to becoming a peasant rather than remaining a samurai.

1 February **The Underground Orchestra** Dir. Heddy Honigmann Holland (108mins)
The music, memories and fascinating personal stories of musicians playing for a living on the Metro and in the streets of Paris are revealed in this revealing insight into a world that we normally only hear in passing. Some are illegal immigrants, some political refugees but all speak eloquently through their music, their determination and their recollections. The music is both in the foreground of the action and also shown to be less important than the people and their experiences.

8 February **The Dish** Dir. Rob Sitch (2000) Australia (101mins)
Based on a true story, *The Dish* takes a witty, comical look at the differing cultural attitudes between Australia and the U.S. while revisiting one of the greatest events in history. In the run up to the 1969 space mission, that marked humankind's first steps on the moon, NASA was working with a group of Australian technicians who had agreed to rig up a satellite interface. That they placed the satellite dish in the middle of an Australian sheep farm in the back of beyond town of Parkes was just one of the reasons that NASA was concerned.

15 February **The Fog of War** Dir. Errol Morris (2004) USA (95mins)
An engrossing and probing documentary in which Robert S. McNamara discusses his experiences and lessons learned during his tenure as Secretary of Defence under John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. He talks concisely and forcibly about his work as a bombing statistician during World War II, his brief tenure as president of Ford Motor Company, and the Kennedy administration's triumph during the Cuban Missile Crisis. "My rule has been to try to learn, try to understand what happened. Learn the lessons and pass them on."

22 February **Mighty Aphrodite** Dir. Woody Allen (1995) USA (95 mins)
Woody Allen plays Lenny, a sports writer who is married to Amanda, played by Helena Bonham Carter, a woman who works in an art gallery. But their marriage is on the rocks so Amanda suggests that they adopt a baby, to which Lenny at first says no. After the adoption it takes no time for Lenny to change his mind. But as their son Max grows, Lenny is very curious about who left him for adoption and he starts snooping around until he tracks down Max's real mother. If you can imagine a Woody Allen comedy in the form of a Greek tragedy you'll be somewhere close.

1 March **Elektra** Dir. Michael Cacoyannis (1962) Greece (110 mins)
Irene Papas, the great Greek actress, takes the lead in this powerful rendering of Euripides' tragedy *Elektra*. It was the first film to give its director and screenwriter, Michael Cacoyannis, international recognition and he has since gone on to create many fine 'play to screen' adaptations including *The Cherry Orchard*, that we showed a couple of years ago. The plot is somewhat simplified from the original play but the outstanding black and white cinematography of Walter Lassely contributes immensely to the power and depth of the emotions expressed by the outstanding team of actors. Added to which there is a superb musical score by Mikis Theodorakis.

8 March **The Importance of Being Earnest** Dir. Anthony Asquith (1952) UK (110 mins)
A phenomenal cast of actors including Michael Redgrave, Dame Edith Evans, Margaret Rutherford, Michael Denison, Miles Malleon and Dorothy Tutin appear in this magnificent interpretation of Oscar Wilde's play of mistaken identities satirising the social customs of the upper classes of 19th century England. Shot in sparkling technicolour by Desmond Dickinson this entertainment will satisfy anyone who enjoys good dialogue and witty interchanges performed to perfection.

15 March **Julius Caesar** Dir. Joseph L Mankiewicz (1953) USA (120 mins)
An appealing and powerful adaptation, by Joseph L Mankiewicz of Shakespeare's play that uses some of the era's leading stage and screen actors in the leading roles. Marlon Brando, playing Mark Anthony, in only his fourth screen performance, James Mason, who started his acting career whilst a student at Cambridge, gives an emotional performance playing the tragic Brutus, John Gielgud, working in Hollywood for the first time, brings the screen alive in the role of Cassius. Full of familiar faces from standard Hollywood films it is fascinating to see how Louis Calhern, Edmond O'Brian, Deborah Kerr, Greer Garson and Robert Ryan, among many others, handle material unfamiliar to them. The brilliant b&w photography is by Joseph Ruttenberger.

22 March **Chicago** Dir. Rob Marshall (2002) USA (113 mins)
Reflecting a period in Hollywood mythology when gangsters were glamorous Rob Marshall's excellent adaptation of the successful Broadway stage musical *Chicago* is a colourful, exhilarating tongue-in-cheek high energy ride through the Roaring 20's. The choreography, cinematography and editing transform this stage piece into a true cinematic experience of light, sound and movement, especially in the dance numbers,

a marvellous performance by Emil Jannings, one of Germany's leading actors of the period, as the self righteous professor who is lead astray by his desire.

8 November **Noi Albinoi** Dir. Dagur Kari 2003 Iceland 90 mins
Noi, the film's 17-year-old hero, lives in a remote and snowy town, at the side of a fjord in the northwest of Iceland. He feels himself trapped by his circumstances and alienated from those around him; although he has a natural intelligence he finds nothing at his school that stimulates him. Dagur Kari, the film's director, uses this situation to tell a story that brilliantly captures the feeling, humour and melancholy of the country and its people, whilst his camera captures the cold, stark landscape.

15 November **La Grand Illusion** Dir. Jean Renoir 1937 France 114mins
Together with *All Quiet on the Western Front*, this film is probably the most famous of the early anti-war films. Set just before the outbreak of WW1, the stars, Jean Gabin and Pierre Fresnay, play two French pilots who are shot down over German territory and subsequently transferred to a POW camp. The infamous film director Eric Von Stroheim plays the camp commandant.

22 November **Maria Full of Grace** Dir. Joshua Marston 2004 Colombia 101mins
Maria is young, pretty and full of fire; not the kind of person who sees herself as a victim. She works on an assembly line on a small flower plantation in a village north of Bogota in Colombia. When she finds that she is pregnant by her boyfriend she makes a desperate attempt to free herself from her impoverished situation and change her life once and for all. There is an honesty and integrity about the story and its presentation that gives us the opportunity to understand the ease with which young people can get caught up in the dangerous world of drug running. A powerful piece of storytelling from a young first time director.

29 November **Gaslight** Dir. Thorold Dickinson 1939 UK 84mins
Patrick Hamilton's play *Angel Street* premiered in the West End during 1939. In this adaptation, Thorold Dickinson effectively brings to life the busy streets and low-life music halls of Victorian London to create a suspenseful psychological thriller featuring Anton Walbrook, Diana Wynyard, Robert Newton and Frank Pettingell. It is just one of the outstanding films made by this English director during the 1930/40's; the most famous being his adaptation of Alexander Pushkin's *Queen of Spades*. Atmospheric b/w photography by Bernard Knowles adds to the overall realism.

6 December **Since Otar Left** Dir Julie Bertucelli 2003 France 103mins
A fascinating and touching film by Julie Bertucelli, a young French filmmaker. She has created a brilliant story of life in Georgia as it has affected three generations of women. Using one event in the life of the Grandmother, Mother and granddaughter she explores life in soviet Georgia and how each generation, whilst having a common bond, has differing reactions and motivations. Esther Gorontin, as the 90-year-old Grandmother, gives an extraordinary performance in a fine film.

13 December **The Tramp and the Dictator** Dir. Kevin Brownlow 2002 UK 56 mins
Charlie Chaplin was born in the slums of London in 1889; by the end of the 1910's, he was one of the most famous men in the world. In the same week of the same year Adolph Hitler was born to peasant parents in the Austrian town of Braunau. This documentary, co-produced by British and German companies, uses interviews with co-workers and contemporary filmmakers to make comparisons of the lives of the two men and the background to the making, in 1939, of Chaplin's first 100% talking picture *The Great Dictator*.

Ruggles of Red Gap Dir Leo McCarey 1935 USA 90mins
Leo McCarey was one of the great directors of comedy during the 1930's working with, among others, the Marx Bros, Edgar Kennedy, Mae West and Cary Grant. *Ruggles of Red Gap* features Charles Laughton in the joyful comic role of an English butler transported to the Wild West as valet to a wealthy but unsophisticated couple. Zazu Pitts, famous comedy actress of many Hal Roach shorts in the 1930's, joins Roland Young and Charles Ruggles in this comedy masterpiece of the period.

SPRING 2006

The U3AC Film Group's programme this term will offer a wide variety of international films. As usual there will be a selection of outstanding contemporary films and in addition we will continue last term's series from the early years of cinema and re-discover some of the classic films from 1940's/1950's.

10 January **King's Game** Dir. Nikolaj Arcel (2004) Denmark (103mins)
An atmospheric Danish political thriller 'Kongekabale' (King's game) meditates on those in power and the games they play to get what they want. A first class piece of film-making from its young director Nikolaj Arcel, whose brisk pacing and mounting tension come directly from the thriller genre, but whose ultimate goal is not just to entertain but also to offer something to ponder. Shot in beautiful crisp tones of blue and silver, the corridors of power have never looked cooler or more aloof.

17 January **Unter den Brucken** Dir. Helmut Kautner (1945) Germany (92mins)
Made in the last year of the Third Reich, this is a film that proves that artistic genius can flourish even under the most difficult circumstances. It completely transcends its time and presents a simple love story, the themes of which are universal. Through both his settings and his actors, Helmut Kautner achieves a naturalism which has seldom been equalled; a fortunate and unexpected treasure from a most unfortunate time.

24 January **Together With You** Dir. Chen Kaige (2002) China/Korea (120mins)
The story takes place in modern-day Beijing and revolves around a 13-year old prodigy named Xiaochun, who plays the violin with a passion and technical proficiency that few adult masters can match. Accompanied by his peasant father, Liu Cheng, Xiaochun comes to Beijing to further his opportunities as a musician. While his father works long hours, Xiaochun earns a little extra by playing for an eccentric young woman, Lili, who lives nearby. The stunning soundtrack complements outstanding classical performances with more traditional Chinese music.

31 January **The Cranes are Flying** Dir. M. Kalatozov (1957) USSR (95mins)
Based on a play by V. Rusov, this bold, rapturous film tells a love story set during the early years of World War II. Widowed by the war, Veronica, played by Tatyana Samoylova, reluctantly allows herself to be seduced by her late husband's cousin. Feeling nothing towards her seducer, she agrees to marry him, hoping that he'll be a surrogate for her fallen husband. It is regarded as one of the landmarks of Soviet film and the first indisputable masterpiece of post-Stalin cinema.

7 February **Familia Rodante** Dir. Pablo Trapero (2004) Argentina (103mins)
Familia Rodante is the sprawling tale of 84-year-old Emilia and her extended Buenos Aires family. When she receives word that her niece is to be married in the city of Misiones, more than a thousand miles away and close to the border with Brazil; and that she is to be Matron of Honour, she insists that as many relatives as possible accompany her on the trip. This means that her long-suffering son Oscar has to cram a dozen passengers into his rickety old motor-home - and, once on the road, cope with the problems of having the family bound in such intimacy for such a long journey. Trapero's magic lies in his camera and in how he cares for his characters and their story.

14 February **Stray Dog** Dir. Akira Kurosawa (1949) Japan (100mins)
Starring the young Toshiro Mifune, Kurosawa's film noir thriller takes place during a stifling hot summer in the actual black market slums that sprung up in Tokyo following the World War 2. Seen today, many of the locations are interesting documents of Japan's real devastation at that time. A young detective, Murakami, has the problem that his gun has been stolen, pick-pocketed from him by a lady thief on a packed bus; in a country where competence is famously bound to honour, Murakami loses not just his gun on that sweltering bus, but his pride as well.

21 February **Open Hearts** Dir. Susanne Bier (2002) Denmark (113mins)
The official Danish nominee for Best Foreign Language Film at the Academy Awards. *Open Hearts* was made according to the Dogme95 rules that have governed many recent cinematic efforts from Scandinavia. The significance of these rules is that the usual devices of adding special effects, additional lighting, extra sound, background music etc are foregone, so that the creative process can come to the fore. The screenplay by Anders Thomas Jensen, based on a concept by the director Susanne Bier, explores the idea that the strangers we meet can alter our lives in ways beyond our imagining. The result, in this case, is a poignant drama that explores love and loss.

28 February **Jour de Fete** Dir. Jacques Tati (1949) France (80mins)
The first and probably the warmest of Jacques Tati's feature films, celebrating rural and community life; brimmed full of humour, optimism and goodwill; a wholly enjoyable film, in which dialogue is incidental to the visual effect. François, the local postman, played by Jacques Tati himself, wants to be as efficient and as fast as the postmen in America. Affectionately remembered from screenings in B/W at the old Arts Cinema in Market Passage we will screen it, as originally shot, in colour.

7 March **Frida** Dir. Julie Taymor (2002) USA (123mins)
A chronicle of the highlights of Frida Kahlo's life beginning in 1922 and ending 30-plus years later. All of the fascinating characters to cross Frida's path are here - muralist Diego Rivera, who was the love and the heartbreak of her life; Leon Trotsky, the famous Russian revolutionary with whom she had a brief fling; and Nelson Rockefeller, who commissioned Rivera's most famous mural, then had it torn down. The film is blessed with some strong performances from, among others, the producer and star Selma Hayek as Frida, Alfred Molina as Rivera and Geoffrey Rush as Leon Trotsky.

14 March **Nights of Cabiria** Dir. Federico Fellini (1957) Italy (117mins)
Giulietta Messina, Fellini's wife, followed up her award winning performance in *La Strada* in 1956, with an equally compelling role in Fellini's lesser known, but equally rewarding film *Nights of Cabiria*, about a naïve,

Popularly and critically acclaimed as being one of the outstanding international film of the nineteen-sixties. The film is renowned for the lyrical beauty of its cinematography and the music of Mozart that is featured in the soundtrack. Based on a true life story and inspired by a well known Swedish ballad written by Johan Lindstrom Saxon, it tells the tragic and moving story of a circus performer, Elvira Madigan, and her lover Sixten Sparre, an aristocrat and officer of the Swedish army.

23 January **Nowhere in Africa** (2001) Dir Caroline Link Germany/UK (141mins)

A fascinating glimpse into a little known chapter in World War II history. *Nowhere in Africa* is the story of a small group of Jews who, on the eve of the war, fled to the wilds of Kenya to escape the rising tide of anti-Semitism in their home country. Superb wide screen cinematography captures the haunting beauty of the African countryside. Caroline Link who is both screenwriter and director turns Stephanie Zweig's autobiography into a majestic cinematic work.

30 January **Goodnight and Goodluck** (2004) Dir George Clooney USA (93mins)

In the early 1950's, during the early days of broadcast journalism, the Communist scare and the subsequent subversion of citizens' rights was at its apex, with blacklists and rampant accusations resulting in ruined lives and careers. The film reflects that era perfectly through focusing on the real-life conflict between television newsman Edward R. Murrow and Senator Joseph McCarthy. With a desire to report the facts and enlighten the public, Murrow and his staff defy corporate and sponsorship pressures to examine the lies and scare-mongering tactics perpetrated by McCarthy during his communist 'witch-hunts'.

6 February **The Keys to the House** (2004) Dir Gianni Amelio Italy/France (105mins)

Based on the novel *Born Twice* by Giuseppe Pontiggia *The Keys to the House* tells the story of Gianni, an Italian businessman in his early 30s whose girlfriend had died, years previously, giving birth to his son who was physically and psychologically impaired. At the time he was too immature and irresponsible for fatherhood. Now married and the father of a healthy toddler Gianni wants to re-establish contact with his son. The film features Charlotte Rampling in yet another impressive and moving film performance.

13 February **Sons and Lovers** (1960) Dir Jack Cardiff UK (103mins)

Jack Cardiff one of England's great cinematographers turns his talents to directing in this well crafted version of D.H.Lawrence's 1913 novel *Sons and Lovers*. He elicits powerful and compelling performances from his actors, particularly Trevor Howard and Wendy Hillier. The beautiful B/W photography was undoubtedly due to the combined efforts of Cardiff and Freddie Francis his chosen cameraman for the project. Dean Stockwell plays Paul Morel the young protagonist smothered by his mother's love and full of hatred for his father.

20 February **Waiting for Happiness** (2002) Dir Abderrahmane Sissako Mauritania(90mins)

Using the minimum of dialogue this Russian tutored director from Mauritania shares with us the day to day life of a small community living in the seaside village of Nouadhibou, a place of transit where the inhabitants are "waiting for happiness". Sissako is a director who reveals his themes at a leisurely pace allowing his audience to fully enjoy the visual and aural experience of the world he describes.

27 February **Match Point** (2004) Dir Woody Allen UK/USA (126mins)

Woody Allen takes one of his occasional forays outside of the comedy genre in this excellent romance/thriller. He takes full advantage the chance to work away from his usual New York milieu, locating the film in London, and has been inspired him to create one of his best films in recent years. A marvellous cast of British actors including Brian Cox, Emily Mortimer, Penelope Wilton and Matthew Goode support Johnathan Rhys Meyers and Scarlett Johansson in this cool, elegant, absorbing psychological drama of love affairs and class conflict.

6 March **5 Fingers** (1952) Dir Joseph L Mankiewicz USA (104 mins)

Based on a true story and set in neutral Turkey during WWII, James Mason plays an ambitious and extremely efficient valet for the British ambassador who tires of being a servant and forms a plan to promote himself to be a rich gentleman of leisure. His employer has many secret documents; he will photograph them, and with the help of a refugee Countess played by Danielle Darrieux, sell them to the Nazis. A witty screenplay, a music soundtrack by Bernard Hermann, an outstanding performance by James Mason and taut direction by Mankiewicz combine to make this an excellent spy/thriller.

13 March **Crash** (2004) Dir Paul Haggis USA (112mins)

Encompassing all races and the stereotypes that follow them, *Crash* delves into the reasons racial crimes occur. It doesn't criminalize the acts, but gives them humanity, showing us why they occur and not simply condemning the people who commit them. Paul Haggis the scriptwriter and director presents us with some of the best cinema to come out of the USA in recent years as he weaves a tale that involves a multiplicity of characters. Set in Los Angeles it follows eight main characters from all walks of life and races whose lives intersect at some point during one 24 hour period. These people are all different and all alienated, to the point of breaking, so much so that when they come together, things explode.

20 March **Shanghai Dreams** (2005) Dir Xiaoshuai Wang China (123mins)

Saraband is the last film directed by Ingman Bergman – his parting gift to the medium that made him world famous. In this final work he creates an epilogue not only to his 1970's film *Scenes from a Marriage* with Liv Ullman and Erland Josephson but also to the work over many years with the Bergman family of actors. The film is dedicated to Ingrid Karlebo, to whom he was married from 1971 until her death in 1995. The story is of an elderly couple who meet again after being divorced for 30 years, and is coupled with the tormented relationship between the man's son by an earlier marriage, and his granddaughter.

30 October **The Queen** (2006) Dir. Stephen Frears UK (102mins)
Stephen Frears chooses to focus on one of the most important turning points during the reign of Elizabeth II; her actions and reaction in the wake of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. This is not a conventional biopic per se, and is the stronger for it: by choosing to assess such a notorious event, the director and his scriptwriter Peter Morgan allow us to glimpse behind the expensively lined curtains of Balmoral. The hidden life of the modern royal family is shown as one firmly rooted in tradition, which during the difficult August of 1997, seems to be out of fashion.

6 November **The Great Dictator** (1940) Dir. Charles Chaplin USA (124mins)
The New York Times of 16 October 1940 said 'No event in the history of the screen has ever been anticipated with more hopeful excitement than the première of this film.... The prospect of little 'Charlot', the most universally loved character in all the world, directing his superlative talent for ridicule against the most dangerously evil man aliveturns out to be a truly superb accomplishment by a truly great artist – and, from one point of view, perhaps the most significant film ever produced.'

13 November **Lucie Aubrac** (1997) Dir. Claude Berri France (115mins)
Based on Lucie Aubrac's autobiographical novel, the film tells the story of a couple of participants in the French resistance to German occupation during World War II. Passion and wit help Lucie free her husband Raymond from certain death at the hands of the Gestapo. This poignant film tells not only the haunting story of a French Resistance cell in Lyon but also the love of Lucie Aubrac for her husband, and the lengths she goes to in order to rescue him from prison.

20 November **The Plough that Broke the Plains** (1936) Dir. Pare Lorenz USA (25mins)
During the second half of the 1930's, the United States Government embarked on an ambitious public relations campaign to keep the American people informed about the New Deal and the necessity of its programs. In 1935, the Resettlement Administration, an agency established to provide aid to farmers, decided to produce films as one method of getting its message to a wider segment of the public. The Plough that Broke the Plains is one such film. The music soundtrack is by the eminent American composer Virgil Thompson

Louisiana Story (1948) Dir. Robert Flaherty USA (78mins)
Robert Flaherty was one of the great documentary directors of the 20th century. He had a style of artfully interweaving down-to-earth subject matter and fiction in entertaining yet respectful ways. Louisiana Story, Flaherty's final film, is a simple tale about a significant subject. A big oil company comes to Louisiana to drill for oil and disrupts the life of the plants, the animals and the people of the bayou.

27 November **Rembrandt** (1936) Dir. Alexandra Korda UK (85mins)
A wonderfully revealing account, chronicling the last twenty-five years in the life of Dutch painter Rembrandt, played by Charles Laughton, told with dignity and restraint. Beginning shortly after the death of his first beloved wife, Rembrandt sinks towards poverty, his art no longer appreciated by his patrons. He becomes entangled with his housekeeper, Geertje, played by Gertrude Lawrence, but the relationship turns sour as Rembrandt slips further into debt.

4 December **Miss Potter** (2007) Dir. Chris Noonan UK (92mins)
Beatrix Potter is depicted in this film as wilful and much ahead of her time; she uses the money from her successful children's books to buy up farms and other property in the Lake District. She eventually left 4,000 acres of countryside to England's National Trust, ensuring its protection. Renee Zellweger plays Potter as a good-natured but rebellious young woman intent upon doing something more than just making a good marriage. Her parents are generally dismayed, but Beatrix is determined to lead her own life. The excellent cast also includes Ewan McGregor.

SPRING 2008

This term's programme will consist of a selection of films from across the world. As usual we attempt to show films that are outside of the normal mainstream and include the occasional rarity that wouldn't otherwise be screened.

8 January **Bright Young Things** (2005) Dir. Stephen Fry UK (106 mins)
Starring Emily Mortimer, Martin Sheen

Stylishly adapted by writer/director Stephen Fry from Evelyn Waugh's 1930s comic novel *Vile Bodies*, this satirical romance chronicles the exploits of the young, idle rich, a group of decadent British aristocrats who seem to exist only to amuse themselves at parties. It features some diverting cameo performances from, among others, Jim Broadbent, Peter O'Toole and John Mills.

15 January **The Motorcycle Diaries** (2004) Dir: Walter Salles Argentina (126 mins)

Starring Gael Garcia Bernal, Roderigo de la Serna

An intoxicating film, chronicling the young Che Guevara's travels around South America in the early 50s; a visually stunning 'road movie' where the most important journey takes place within its hero's head - Guevara going from disaffected medical student to rebel with a cause. Director Walter Salles, probably best remembered for his film *Central Station* delivers a captivating portrait of 50s South America.

22 January **Balzac and the Chinese Seamstress** (2002) Dir: Sijie Dai China (110 mins)

Starring Xun Zhou, Kun Chen

During the Cultural Revolution the Chinese authorities send two young men, from bourgeois families, to an isolated community in the mountains. Seen as intellectuals and reactionaries, they need to be re-educated by the peasants living in the little village of 'The Phoenix in the Sky', where they work in the mines and the fields. Starved of intellectual and cultural stimulus, the boys obtain a suitcase of forbidden foreign books – a treasure chest of classic literature by Dumas, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Flaubert. But it is the melodramas of Honoré de Balzac that touch them most deeply and they share these reactionary thoughts with the Little Seamstress.

29 January **Bachelor of Hearts** (1958) Dir: Woolf Rilla UK (94 mins)

Starring Hardy Kruger, Sylvia Syms, Eric Barker

A light-hearted comedy, somewhat in the style of *Genevieve*, particularly memorable for its 'on location' work in Cambridge and depiction of the 'grad' life of the time. Filmed during the late 1950's and written by Frederick Raphael and Leslie Bricusse, it takes a look at college life from a visiting foreigner's viewpoint and in so doing records scenes of 'rag day' and the May Balls as they were then. Hardy Kruger plays the German exchange student mystified by the traditional customs and manners of University and Sylvia Sims plays his delightful guide and love interest.

5 February **Copenhagen** (2002) Dir: Howard Davies UK (90 mins)

Starring Stephen Rae, Daniel Craig, Francesca Annis

An adaptation of Michael Frayn's celebrated and award-winning stage play about the meeting between physicists Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg in 1941 Copenhagen.

The former is leading the faltering German research programme into nuclear energy while the latter is the acknowledged as the leading expert in nuclear fission by the physics community. Although the play may not have been too easily accessible, the film succeeds in engaging its audience totally; probably one of the best adaptations from stage to film ever created. **[AWAITING FINAL CONFIRMATION]**

12 February **The Walker** (2007) Dir: Paul Schrader USA (108 mins)

Starring Woody Harrelson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Lauren Bacall

Woody Harrelson plays Carter Page III, the gay son of a Virginian senator, who makes his living as a paid escort for middle-aged women in the upper crust circles of Washington D.C. His regular clients include the wives of senior politicians and when one of them becomes entangled in a murder investigation Carter seeks to protect her at the risk of implicating himself. On this occasion writer/director Paul Schrader has produced a marvellous script and masterminded an outstanding ensemble performance from his illustrious cast.

19 February **Le Doulos** (1963) Dir: Jean-Pierre Melville France (108 mins)

Starring Jean Paul Belmondo, Serge Reggianni

Jean-Pierre Melville belonged to the Parisian post-war intelligentsia who were infatuated with American literature, music and above all, film. He was an ardent film lover and reputedly saw at least five films a day for a long period of his life. In *Le Doulos (The Fingerman)* he has Jean-Paul Belmondo playing the duplicitous Silien, underworld criminal and police informer and Serge Reggianni as a dogged villain. The director's obsession with American cinema becomes apparent through the clothes they wear, the cars they drive and their self assured behaviour.

26 February **An Angel at my Table** (1990) Dir: Jane Campion New Zealand (150 mins)

Starring Kerry Fox, Alexia Keogh, Karen Fergusson New Zealand (1990) (150mins)

Janet Frame, the poet and novelist from New Zealand, grew up in a poor family with lots of brothers and sisters. Already at an early age she is different to the other children. She gets an education as a teacher but because of her abnormality she is locked up in a mental institution for eight years. Salvation comes when she starts to write books. Fortunately, her collection of short stories, *The Lagoon*, was published, which expedited her exit from the hospital. Soon after, Frame became well known and travelled throughout Europe, ultimately ending up back in New Zealand. Jane Campion whose following film *The Piano* was such a great success treats the story with passion and sympathy.

21 October **Longitude Pt 2** (2000) Dir. Charles Sturridge UK (125mins)
Starring Michael Gambon, Jeremy Irons
The continuation of the BBC's adaptation of Dave Sobel's book 'Longitude' with both screenplay and direction by Charles Sturridge.

28 October **The Assassination of Jesse James by The Coward Robert Ford** (2007) Dir. Andrew Dominik USA (160mins) Starring Brad Pitt, Sam Shepard, Casey Affleck
Another epic film, this time telling the story of Robert Ford, a seemingly insecure man seen as a coward by those around him. He has grown up idolizing the outlaw Jesse James. He finds James in Missouri and joins his gang, taking part in a train robbery. Gradually, he forms a complex love/hate relationship with James, still admiring him to the point of obsession, but also becoming resentful and somewhat fearful due to James' bullying nature. The film is beautifully photographed, well cast, written and directed by Andrew Dominik a new young director from New Zealand.

4 November **East of Bucharest** (2006) Dir. Corniliu Porumboiu Romania (89mins)
Starring Teodor Corban, Mircea Andreescu, Ion Sapdaru
On December 22, 1989 Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu left his country bringing about the end of Communism there, but, was there ever really a revolution? Our film reveals the truth, through the stories of three men, Virgil Jderescu, the host of a TV show that is going to discuss the 16th anniversary of that fateful day and his two guests, both of whom have personally witnessed the revolt. The result is a quirky East-European comedy initially showing us the post communist lives of the protagonists and progressing on to their memories of the day of the revolt.

11 November **Salt of the Earth** (1953) Dir. Robert J Biberman USA/Mexico (90mins)
Starring Rosaura Revueltas
Made during the height of the McCarthy era by a group of blacklisted filmmakers who were among the best Hollywood talent of the day, *Salt of the Earth* is a powerful and emotionally charged feature film. Rarely screened nowadays, it has strongly influenced many Socialist, Labour and, in particular, Women's movements, over the years since it was made. During production, the blacklisted cast and crew were subject to attacks by the House Un-American Activities Committee and other anti-Communist organizations, but nowadays it is seen as one of the most important American films of the 1950s. Based on a 1951 zinc miner's strike that took place in Silver City, N.M., it was denounced as subversive and subsequently blacklisted because it was sponsored by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. As well as the story of the strike, it also deals very effectively with the struggle of women, specifically the miners' wives, for recognition, dignity and equality.

18 November **Mifune** (1999) Dir. Søren Kragh-Jacobsen Denmark (98mins)
Featuring Anders W. Berthelsen, Iben Hjejle
Kresten has moved from his parent's farm on a small Danish island to Copenhagen in order to pursue his working career. When his father dies he has to move back to the farm, where nothing much has happened since he left. He places an advertisement in the local newspaper to get help running the farm and taking care of his retarded brother. Liva, a girl who is running away from annoying telephone calls, answers it. Shot according to the Scandinavian Dogme 95 formulae this unusual mixture of drama and romance, with a touch of humour, will be an entertaining and moving contrast to our group of comedies.

25 November **You, the Living** (2007) Dir. Roy Andersson Sweden (95mins)
Starring Jessica Lundberg, Elisabeth Helander
This is probably the most unusual film in our programme this term; a brilliant, affecting and at times outrageous observation of the human condition. *You, the Living* is a poetic work set in Stockholm but with a universally applicable theme. Giving us the opportunity to look in the mirror and see elements of comedy, frailty and tragedy. Rather than telling us a story we are presented with an amalgam of more than fifty vignettes involving various characters through whom we experience multiple events and emotions. It is a comedy to rate among the list of outstanding films of 2007.

2 December **The Master Builder** (1988) Dir. Mike Darlow UK (110 mins)
Starring Leo McKern, Jane Lapotaire, Miranda Richardson
Ibsen's middle aged master builder Halvard Solness is unhappily married and worried that in the future he will be eclipsed by someone younger. Then into his life bursts the young Hilde, who idolises him. This subtle and imaginative production enjoys two finely tuned lead performances. Leo McKern's relaxed, attractive Solness and an enchanting, knowingly innocent Hilde from Miranda Richardson; with an excellent supporting performance from Jane Lapotaire as Mrs. Solness. Ibsen remains the most performed playwright - after Shakespeare - across the mediums of theatre, cinema and TV. It is planned to include other BBC Ibsen productions in next term's programme.

9 December **My Blueberry Nights** (2007) Dir. Kar Wei Wong China/France (90mins)

Based on the acclaimed novel by Ian McEwan and with a screenplay by Christopher Hampton, the director Joe Wright has produced one of the outstanding films of 2008. Remaining faithful to the sentiments of the original novel and carefully creating the style and ambience of the period, a work of grandeur and emotional power has emerged. It's a boldly unconventional period melodrama in which the director, who made *Pride and Prejudice* in 2005, has drawn another memorable performance out of Keira Knightley.

13 October **Bicycle Thieves** Dir. Vittorio De Sica Italy (1947) (90mins)
featuring Lamberto Magiorani, Enzo Staiola
In post-World War II Italy, poverty is a dire reality for a large portion of the population. Work is scarce and the opportunities for employment are few and far between. Vittorio de Sica's "Ladri Di Biciclette" is probably the most famous of the films to come out of the Italian neo-realist movement of that period; It is a moving tale of a man's desperate search for his stolen bicycle.

20 October **Frost/Nixon** Dir. Ron Howard UK/USA (2008) (122mins)
featuring Frank Langella, Michael Sheen
In recent years the screenwriter Peter Morgan has created a number of entertaining dramas based on current events and personalities (The Dual, The Queen, That Damned United). His subject this time is the legendary battle between Richard Nixon, the disgraced president with a legacy to save, and David Frost, the ambitious television personality with a reputation to make. For three years after being impeached, Nixon remained silent, but in the summer of 1977 the former commander-in-chief agreed to sit for one all-inclusive interview to confront the questions of his time in office and the Watergate scandal that ended his presidency. The remarkable performance by Frank Langella provides a gripping and enthralling experience.

27 October **The Magnificent Ambersons** Dir. Orson Welles USA (1942) (90mins)
featuring Joseph Cotten, Anne Baxter, Tim Holt and narrated by Orson Welles
Despite the fact that this film is a shortened version of Orson Welles' original concept what remains is a compelling experience. It is a wonderful film; one of great pathos and sensitivity. Orson Welles was drawn to Booth Tarkington's novel because Tarkington had been a friend of his father and Welles identified strongly with the story, seeing something of his own family's history there. Welles' script and direction give a feeling of richness and depth; each scene being carefully composed in collaboration with the cinematographer Stanley Cortez.

3 November **O'Horten** Dir. Bent Hamer Sweden (2008) (90mins)
featuring Baard Owee, Ghita Norby
After receiving recognition at the 1995 Cannes film festival with his first feature film, *Eggs*, writer/director/producer Bent Hamer followed up with *Kitchen Stories*, his bizarre and fascinating exploration on the kitchen habits and routines of single men in rural Norway. Following a period of time working in the USA, Hamer has now returned to his homeland to further demonstrate his astute observations of everyday life among ordinary people. *O' Horten* is an offbeat coming-of-(late)-age film that asks that familiar question of what to do with one's life. In this story the main protagonist, Horten, is just about to retire.

10 November **The Fallen Idol** Dir. Carol Reed UK (1948) (95mins)
featuring Ralph Richardson, Michele Morgan
One of the gems of 40s British cinema, *The Fallen Idol* was the first collaboration between director Carol Reed and screenwriter Graham Greene, who went on to make *The Third Man*. Skilfully adapted from Greene's novella *The Basement Room*, *The Fallen Idol* is the story of lonely eight-year-old Phillippe, caught up in a bewildering world of grown-up deceptions. The son of the French ambassador to London, Felipe is neglected by his parents and hero-worships the embassy butler Baines played by Ralph Richardson. The film succeeds on every level but built primarily around the impressive, understated and affecting performance of Ralph Richardson and the elegant B/W cinematography of George Perinal.

17 November **A Dry White Season** Dir. Euzhan Palcy USA (1989) (97mins)
featuring Donald Sutherland, Janet Suzman, Marlon Brando
Ben du Toit is a South African schoolteacher who has always considered himself a man of caring and justice, at least on the individual level. When his gardener's son is beaten up by the police at a demonstration by black school children, he gradually begins to realize his society is built on a pillar of injustice and exploitation. The cast includes Donald Sutherland as the school teacher, Janet Suzman as his wife and Marlon Brando playing a British barrister specializing in human rights who takes up a case against the Special Police. The film was directed by Euzhan Palcy, a black woman from Martinique who had so impressed Brando with her first film, "Sugar Cane Alley", that he agreed to act in the film without a fee.

24 November **Gilda** Dir. Charles Vidor USA (1946) (110mins)
featuring Rita Hayworth, Glenn Ford, George Macready
This film noir classic features one of the 1940s' greatest 'femme fatale' performances, with Rita Hayworth playing the seductive wife of the owner of an illegal casino. Glenn Ford plays the casino manager assigned to keep an eye on her. The husband doesn't know that they are former lovers who now despise each other.

May 4 **Boudu Sauve des Eaux** Dir. Jean Renoir France (1932) (80mins)
Even though *Boudu Sauvé Des Eaux* and its style of anarchic humour may look dated now, the film is still great fun to watch. It isn't a masterpiece of cinema, but still holds up today, more than 70 years after its release. Michel Simon's anarchic performance dominates proceedings, rolling his eyeballs and wreaking havoc with his clumsiness, his clowning foreshadowing both Jacques Tati's *Monsieur Hulot* and Peter Sellers' *Inspector Clouseau*.

May 11 **Sunset Boulevard** Dir. Billy Wilder USA (1950) (110mins)
Joe Gillis (William Holden) is a B-movie writer who can't find enough work to keep his head above water. When repossessors arrive to take away his car, he leads them on a merry chase that ends with him pulling off the road and turning into the driveway of a crumbling old mansion on Sunset Boulevard. At first, Joe thinks the relic is deserted. After all, the swimming pool is empty, the tennis court is in disrepair, and the ostentatious house is well past its prime. But, upon further investigation, he discovers that it is inhabited by a silent movie queen - Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson), who is attended by her stoic, faithful butler, Max von Mayerling (Erich von Stroheim).

May 18 **Tulpan** Dir. Sergei Svortsevov Kazakhstan (2008) (102mins)
Asa lives on the steppe in southern Kazakhstan, and he dreams of having his own yurt to live in and his own sheep to tend. All he needs to achieve his goals is a wife. He'll get a few sheep as soon as he's married, and he wants to start his own life as a shepherd as soon as possible. The problem is that there is nobody around for him to marry. There are very few people still living in his area and almost no unmarried women. Winner of the Un Certain Regard award this year at the Cannes Film Festival.

May 25 **Mon Oncle** Dir Jacques Tati France (1958) (117mins)
Jacques Tati's observational style of filmmaking never, seemingly, attempts to make you laugh, and yet it succeeds in doing so. Through the eyes of his memorable character Monsieur Hulot he gently and affectionately comments on the lives of people living in a neighbourhood of Paris during the 1950s. But, as with all Tati's work, the jokes are in the details and not in the story. This Oscar winning film shines as brightly as ever.

June 1 **The Aviator** Dir Martin Scorsese USA (2004) (169mins)
A handsome biography of filmmaker, pilot and millionaire Howard Hughes, **The Aviator** is probably Martin Scorsese's politest ever feature film. An extremely well told and entertaining story of a man who inherited great wealth and who lived an extraordinary life, as he sets out to dominate Hollywood and the skies before becoming a notorious recluse. Leonardo DiCaprio proves an ideal choice for the tarnished American hero, he deserves great praise for his performance, as does Scorsese for his visualisation of the entire project.

June 8 **The Apartment** Dir. Billy Wilder USA (1960) (124mins)
Billy Wilder co-wrote and directed *The Apartment* after making the even better known *Some Like It Hot*. It's hard to think of anyone currently working in Hollywood who could remotely match his achievement in making these two contrasting but equally brilliant comedies back to back. Jack Lemmon, who stars in both, was also at his peak, a fascinating actor capable of combining traditional physical comedy with a modern sense of performance as neurosis, whilst at the same time remaining very funny. His co-star in the picture is Shirley Maclaine.

June 15 **Bright Star** Dir Jane Campion UK/Australia 2009 (120mins)
As the story of the three-year long nineteenth century love affair between Keats and his neighbour Fannie Brawne, *Bright Star* is foremost about wildly passionate love. But given Keats' early death, it is not an easy story of love. Jane Campion, the film's director, is at her most relaxed, most charming, and succeeds in creating a passionate, compelling work. A perfect film; completely engaging and beautifully acted by all involved.

June 22 **Amadeus** Dir. Milos Forman USA 1984 (180mins)
Adapted, by Peter Schaffer, from his own play, *Amadeus* is the story of court composer Antonio Salieri and his jealous rivalry with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. It works on a level of pure entertainment, but as a character study, it is phenomenal. The relationship between the two men is complex: Salieri is gifted enough to appreciate great music but not quite enough to compose it. He is the person closest to Mozart who truly recognises his genius, but at the same time he dislikes the man: Mozart is portrayed as a juvenile, irresponsible, crude boy with the most irritating giggle imaginable. Foreman and his craftsmen have created a visually stunning work that is resplendent with the glorious music of the composer.