

# Talking Pictures

## Looking forward

### Audience responses for Spring 2005:

The Motorcycle Diaries	80%
The Decline of the American Empire	51%
Last Life in the Universe	45%

### On-line

The Club's website has details on all our activities — past and present. Visit:

[www.keswickfilmclub.org](http://www.keswickfilmclub.org)

for a complete listing of the season's films, plus news, reviews and the chance to vote on your favourite films.

Use the new email facility to have your say on any particular film or matters in general. We're 'interactive'!

It has always seemed a good policy in life - you'll doubtless have thought this yourself - to have something to look forward to, however artificial that may seem when buying your concert ticket, booking that flight, or planning the New Year's film-going. This is our attempt to raise your midwinter spirits... The two brochures contain the best we can find for you from the crop of recent or impending releases, including the chance to see films at the Festival that won't get their release until March or even later. And, you'll notice, Alex and her gang have

made the 2005 Festival much more affordable for those who are keen to see a good number of films, so we're very hopeful that there will be many



*The Motorcycle Diaries*

more full weekend pass-buyers this time. You'll spot quite a few other new approaches in both the style and content of the 6th KFF, reflecting a lot of hard work on the part of the Festival Committee,

with the keen and valuable help of students and staff at Cumbria Institute of the Arts.

There will be an exhibition at the Theatre of the students' design work on our behalf, during the Festival.

Meanwhile, the Selection Committee has had its usual problem of sifting the excellent from the very good, and has come up with a varied programme of fifteen exciting features. All that and shorts to boot! We'll have a fascinating start to 2005.

Happy New Year!

## 'Memories are made of this'

In his 'Trailer Trash' column for The Observer, Jason Solomons writes about January's BBC4 World Cinema Award, saying that the 'unforgettable' Russian film *The Return* beat such strong contenders as *The Motorcycle Diaries*, *Zatoichi*, *Bad Education*, *Hero* and *Uzak* to take top spot. You can see *Zatoichi* at the Theatre by the Lake on

Tuesday, as one of their Pre-Festival Films, but we hope you managed to catch all the others in the course of our programme.

Solomons pays tribute to Andrei Zvyagintsev for *The Return*, speaking of his tears and of being left 'vaguely disquieted for hours after. I can still hear the threatening bass drone of its score.' The

montage of 'still' photos, like those (almost) in *Motorcycle*, had full effect on the writer (he could have mentioned *Dogville* too - it's becoming quite a trend) and he ends his piece by congratulating Zvyagintsev and thanking heaven for BBC4 and its commitment to world cinema.

Would that it's commitment extended to Cumbria...

## Equipment and Festival funding news

### Know your Club:

*Talking Pictures*

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*Festival Director:* Alex

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KA, RE, EL, DWM, IP, AS.

*Selection Committee:*

DWM, AS.

*Webmaster:* Stephen

Brown

*Chairman and Member -*

*ship Sec.:* Rod Evans

It's easy to keep the emailers up to date with KFC happenings - if they have time and inclination to read their weekly message, that is - but we're very conscious of the fact that the 40% of our members who are not 'online' can begin to feel a bit out of touch - a situation that will be addressed in 2005.

So a good number of you may not know that UK Film Council has given KFC (and 26 other film socs.) a grant to allow us to screen films digitally. We already had the Sanyo projector of course, thanks to the 'Awards for All' Lottery grant, but now the Club has been able to complete the kit with DVD player, Yamaha amp.,



Hero poster

Toshiba laptop, 5 large speakers, a good-sized screen and associated paraphernalia. Some of us on the committee are keen to go out 'on the road' with all this gear, in order to bring good cinema to smaller rural communities, and it will also be invaluable in such ways as an extra screen at the Theatre, or at any other venue which has a need for DVD projection

or audio back-up. If any of you members are interested in being involved with such initiatives, please let us know - particularly if you have a van!

The other good piece of news is that North West Vision has granted us £5000 to engage a consultant whose knowledge of festivals, and ways in which sponsorship and funding can be obtained, will allow the Keswick Film Festival to enjoy an extended run in a more independent and financially secure fashion. In view of the expertise we now have, both voluntary and professional, there could be exciting times ahead for KFF.

## End of Year Dinner, Sunday 19th December

This 'tradition' began in 2003 with a convivial do at Keswick Golf Club, and seemed well worth maintaining as an annual event. As the Golf Club couldn't have us late enough in the season this year, the idea of going somewhere more central to Keswick with plenty of room available turned into the suggestion of The Royal Bengal restaurant, which seemed to employ a friendly bunch of chaps and offered flexibility of menu. The expected increase in numbers attending didn't materialise, but the 36 who came found the experience most enjoyable - good food and service, the best of company, naturally. Members were thanked for their support, as were the committee for their hard work in delivering a reasonably organised organisation, David (BFFS) was applauded, and Ian promised a memento (Christmas post!) for his sterling work as Chairman over the last nearly five years.

## Back to business in 2005 - HERO on 9th January

Come and join us for a glass of wine to kick off the New Year and the spring season, before our first film, at 4.15pm. Don't be shy - we are a club, after all - and if you don't know anybody much yet, just attack a member of the committee or introduce yourself to someone: you're bound to have something in common and there are a lot of friendly people around. And while I'm on the subject, if any of you reading this have good ideas about how we can enhance the social,

clubbable side of things, do please let us hear them: we're always conscious that there's more to do in this area.

Back to the opening evening: *Hero* is described in the new, full-colour, Alan Smith-designed brochure (he does all the design work, but we spread the blurb-writing around the committee: again, let us know if you'd like to have a go). The director, Zhang Yimou, famed for *Red Sorghum*, *Ju Dou*, *Raise the Red Lantern*, *Not One Less* (screened

by KFC 4 years ago) and *The Road Home* amongst others, has always been highly concerned with the visual aspect of his films, and when working with a cinematographer of Chris Doyle's eminence and the starry cast he assembled, there was little doubt that the film would be great to look at. It might have won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film in 2003, but if you saw Almodovar's *Talk to Her*, you'll forgive *Hero* for coming second.

You'll have to ask Alan what the 'short' is about..

*Date for your diary*

**The 6th**

**Keswick Film Festival**

**11—13 February 2005**

*We've tried hard to bring you a selection of up-to-the-minute top-quality films.*

*See the Festival brochure for details .*

### BFFS

One of the three David Millers in the Club, David W, the one you probably know best as he introduces films, is to be congratulated on his election as Chairman of the British Federation of Film Societies. David has had an extremely busy year—read about it in the BFFS *Newsreel* sheet obtainable at Club screenings or on their website. After a sticky patch- UK Film Council is pretty demanding - the BFFS is clearly in good hands.