

# Talking Pictures

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## Spring programme 2011

So here we go, about to embark on another new year, which we hope will bring you health and happiness - but there are things which don't change:

We'd like to invite you as usual to have a drink with us at the beginning of our spring programme, so please do come along at **4.15 p.m. on 9th January** to renew contact with fellow-members and get *The Kids Are All Right* going with a swing.

And then the **spring pass** will be on sale at the usual **£28** - still a good reduction, even if not quite matching this autumn's giveaway!

Have you thought about your passes and tickets for the **Festival**? Ring the Theatre on 01768774411 or go to [www.theatrebythelake.co.uk](http://www.theatrebythelake.co.uk)

You will see that our spring programme figures the usual mixture of languages and countries, but we always like to keep a little surprise to greet you in the new brochure: this time it's our removal lock, (alpen)stock and crampons to Rheged on 20th March to get the full experience of the vastly impressive IMAX screen for a KFC projection of *The Wildest*



*Dream* - not only Everest in all its glory, but also

the intersecting stories of George Mallory, the first man to attempt the summit, and Conrad Anker, the mountaineer who finds Mallory's frozen remains 75 years later. So a visual feast to be followed by a real feast, for we've asked Rheged to lay on a meal for those KFC members who would like to make a whole evening of it, and we're hoping to lay on transport too if numbers warrant it.

As for the rest, some will be pleased to see four English language films on the list - others may rue the absence of subtitles... Two from South America, (Mexico) as different as chalk and cheese, two from the USA (likewise), 2.5 from Asia and the others from Europe. Two 'straight' and two

dramatised documentaries represent a sign of the times - it used to be a little daring to include one a few years ago. In particular if you haven't come across *The Arbor*, Clio Barnard's story of the life of playwright Andrea Dunbar's life, you should have a



pleasant surprise - no.5 in Sight & Sound's Top Ten. And the no.2, *Uncle Boonmee*, winner of the Palme d'Or in 2010, is said to be a delight. We hope that you will enjoy them all. R.F.E.

## Other Film Festivals – Dinard By Ann Martin

At last year's festival Jan Dunn, one of our guests told me about the English Film Festival in Dinard. It has been going for 22 years and premieres new English films, has guests and retrospectives and is not particularly known or attended by Brits except those in the film trade. I decided I would go and see what it was like. The timing is good as a new film there is likely to not yet be released and may be suitable for the February festival.

It was great! I suppose I felt free of Festival responsibility,



able to wander from film to film seeing four a day, the sun shone



and there were lots of delightful French anglophiles who I could practice my bad schoolgirl French on. And Dinard is on the coast just across from St Malo so when I wanted a breath of fresh air there were walks on the beach, along the coast path and a few brave people swimming.

It was very low key and friendly – just like our very own Festival, and there were guest directors wandering about who one could

chat to – or invite to Keswick. So I chatted to Peter Mullan (one of our favourite actor/directors), Kay Mellor and Sue Johnston (from *Brookside*, *The Royle Family*, etc.) the directors of *Treacle Jnr* and Barney Platts-Mills. So I'll be there next year. Should we arrange a Film Club trip?

### Festival Finances – and footfall!

Most of the people who go to the Festival give really positive feedback, and many are Film Club members. Those who don't come to the AGM of the Film Club may wonder why I talk a lot about sponsorship and now – increasing footfall. Did you know:

- If we don't get sponsorship we lose about £5,000 each year,
- Getting sponsorship in a time of recession gets harder,
- If 100 people got an extra friend buying a pass that's £4,500

So tell your friends!

## Take Three Films: "That's entertainment!?"



**By Mike Rose  
-Troup**

I was mildly chided (on behalf of the committee) by a long time KFC member for serving up another slice of 'miserabilism.'

This followed the screening of *Mother* (Madeo) the shocking story of a mother's successful fight to prove her son innocent of a murder he had actually committed. Some of the audience in the circle that evening had gasped and flinched (one nearly jumped out of his seat) at the moment when the mother killed the witness to her son's crime. So the following week, after *White Material*, perhaps I ducked though the foyer to avoid a similar challenge. Here a post-colonial civil war, including out of control child soldiers, engulfed the wildly dysfunctional family of a plantation

owner who seemed blessed with superhuman insensitivity to what was happening around her. The notes warned us that this was, 'a world gone mad' and there was no moral compass to help the audience decide between the sides in the conflict. Then I skipped a week to catch *Down Terrace*. This time the warning was more emphatic, 'a black comedy,' said Philip French in the Observer, 'very dry, very droll.' I think the body count was six, and that in only 89 minutes. But for some in the audience there were laugh-out-loud moments all through Ben Wheatley's low-cost first feature.

What Philip French actually said was, 'highly entertaining black comedy' and yet of these three it was *Down Terrace* that scored the lowest immediate audience reaction, only 55.73% including 6 one star votes. Despite the horror, our audience evidently does appreciate committed film making about big issues and with highly intelligent scene-grabbing performances. The ambiguous setting of *White Material* nudged us into reflecting on our own troubled colonial disengagement,

which has had little contemporary artistic examination. The score was pretty good for a Claire Denis film - 67.75% was just ahead of *35 Shots of Rum*, voted by Sight and Sound as 4th best film of 2009! *Mother* made the best immediate impression scoring 77.3% for the intensity of its insight into a very human frailty and another wonderful central performance by Hye-Ja Kim. Our appreciation of this film was also enhanced by Gay Pye's articulate and informative introduction based on her own experience of living in Korea.

Despite the cruelty, suffering and pessimism my appreciation of these films always contains some enjoyment. Sincere exploration of serious themes continues to be rewarding and this is the promise that ensures we try to turn up every Sunday, whatever the film.

My favourites from the 2010 Autumn season? *I Am Love* - sensuality and decadence; *Revanche* - an intelligently plotted thriller; and, *The Headless Woman* - elusive, mysterious, fascinating. Surprisingly two of these three have no incidental music.

## KFC spring 2010

The Secret in Their Eyes	88.62%
The Concert	88.48%
Lebanon	87.76%
City of Life and Death	83.17%
Revanche	78.93%
Mother	77.30%
I Am Love	74.71%
Lion's Den	71.76%
Still Walking	70.60%
White Material	67.75%
L'Enfer	66.13%
Skeletons	63.81%
L'Enfer d'H-G Clouzot	59.80%
Down Terrace	55.73%
The Headless Woman	40.52%
La Danse - Paris Opera Ballet	???????

Average audience size: 114

## Sight & Sound's Top Ten of 2010

You might like to see what 85 film critics who contribute to our favourite magazine voted as the best of 2010 (*A Prophet* creeps in to this year as well as coming number one in 2009!)

1. The Social Network - David Fincher USA
2. Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives - Apichatpong Weerasethakul Thailand, etc..

3. Another Year - Mike Leigh UK
4. Carlos - Olivier Assayas France/Ger/Belg
5. The Arbor - Clio Barnard UK
- 6= I Am Love - Luca Guadagnino Italy
- 6= Winter's Bone - Debra Granik USA
- 8= A Prophet - Jacques Audiard France
- 8= Film socialisme - Jean-Luc Godard Fr/Switz
- 8= Poetry - Lee Changdong South Korea
- 8= Nostalgia for the Light - Patricio Guzman Fr/Ger/Chile
- 8= The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu - Andrei Ujika Romania

The last four are not yet on release in the UK, two are on our spring programme, two have already been screened by KFC and we've avoided the two American ones and Mike Leigh's latest, trying to avoid clashes with the Alhambra's own programme. Oh, and there's *Carlos*, which, at over 5 hours long, is one we really wanted to bring you, but the distributors have refused to allow any more full-length screenings, and the truncated version doesn't, apparently, cut the mustard.

But with 85 critics voting for their favourite 5 films, there are quite a few votes for others on our spring programme - not only the Mexican critic for *Leap Year!* - but notably *Of Gods and Men*, and for this autumn's *The Headless Woman* (yes, honestly!) and *La Danse*. But not a single vote for *Avatar*, and only one for *Inception*. They don't like CGI!

R.F.E.