

The 14th Keswick Film Festival – 21st to 24th February

What are YOU going to see?

There is an abundance of choice on offer for the 14th Keswick Film Festival. This year the programme comprises 38 films and events. Whilst you can pick and choose by purchasing individual tickets, a pass entitles you to come to any of the presentations and is the ideal way to explore all that is available, and at £45 is an absolute bargain.

The gala party, open to all pass-holders, presents wonderful food kindly donated by local restaurants. This is an ideal start to the festival and one that has been much enjoyed over the years – make sure you do not miss out. The opening film that then follows is an extraordinary story that was five years in the making; *Everyday* tells the story of how a family copes when the husband/father is sent to prison and you literally see the family growing older during his period of incarceration. A cracking start and all in the presence of our guests and Patron John Hurt.

Friday begins with either the story of one of the most iconic photographs ever taken (*Man at Lunch*) or a depiction of youthful Iranians (*Circumstance*) that actually shows that country as it is. After that the choice really heats up! Israel (*Yossi*), America (*Scent of a Woman*) or Japan (*I Wish*)? Human drama, Oscar winning classic or charming children? Early evening sees the pupils of St Herbert's school present their *Story of St Kentigern* performing music with a film they have made. There is also a visit by renowned doctor Lucy Mathen, who will present her film, *Junction For Having Fun* and finally at the Alhambra there is the searing drama about the effects of bullying, *Play*. Friday closes with another three-way choice - cult American horror in a special new version hosted by co-director Russell Cherrington (*Nightbreed – the Cabal Cut*), the gripping story of an Iranian woman who goes missing (*About Elly* from the maker of award winning *A Separation*) or the stunning portrayal of the effects of social networking (*Suicide Room*). And that is just the first full day!

Saturday sees a jam packed programme and the welcome return of Rheged as an official venue. For early risers and those interested in human rights, *Stealing A Nation* at the Theatre at 09.30 is a thought-provoking start to the day with speakers from the Chagossian Support Group, as is the film that follows – *Back To The Square*. For all the family there is *Rise of the Guardians* at the Alhambra at 10.30. This is a free entry – available from the cinema. This film is a first time screening in Keswick and is a brilliant story told through use of stunning animation. Short-film makers then have the opportunity to compete for the Osprey awards and for those who love short-films this is a golden chance to see some superb presentations. Alternatively, at Rheged there are two quite magnificent films and with use of the IMAX screen will be truly glorious. *Chasing Ice* and *Nostalgia For The Light* are multi-award winners and both take our planet as the core of their story but in contrasting content and style. Simultaneously at the Theatre there is a meditation on the passing of time in the haunting *Found Memories*. Late afternoon is a straight choice between the life-affirming bio-pic, *Rupture* or the award-winning *Good Vibrations*. One is the true story of how Bond girl Maryam D'abo survived a brain haemorrhage and the other tells the story of Belfast music legend Terri Hooley, making full use of the music he helped create. Early evening is another humdinger of a choice - Patron John Hurt's pick, *Tulpan*, introduced by our patron, or one of the most intense dramas you are likely to see, *The Wave*. Saturday closes with our John Hurt special, *Owning Mahowny* with John doing a Q&A after the film, or the equally brilliant depiction of boarding-school life, *Evil*.

The final day is another cornucopia of choice! This year the Festival is making full use of The Main House and Studio at the Theatre By The Lake, as well as the Alhambra cinema. That means a total of 13 presentations. So, what are they? Sunday begins at 11.00. In the Main House, Keswick Peace and Human Rights Group present the first film to be made in Occupied Palestine in over 15 years (*Habibi*). It presents an insider view of this much maligned State and is a great opportunity to experience life as it actually is albeit as told in a fictional story. Again we have a guest born and who lived for some years in Gaza to talk about the film and the political situation. The Studio has the biopic of that amazing Jazz musician, Ken Skyora in the documentary *The Man With The Jazz Guitar*. Over at the Alhambra there is a rare chance to see a film originating from Africa; *La Pirogue*. Following that at the Alhambra there is a documentary, this time about one of the world's foremost photographers, *McCullin*. Down at The Theatre the

distinctly musical theme continues with the story of Benjamin Britten in *Peace and Conflict* where we welcome many of the young cast. Only previewed last week it will be introduced by director Tony Britten with Anwen Rees Myers the producer and with John Hurt who provides the voiceover. The Studio presentation also features a young cast but in a very different environment. *Kauwboy* was the Netherlands entry for the Oscars, and is one that is well worth catching. Mid-afternoon then has three highly distinctive choices. Do you opt to listen to (and question) two of the most brilliant minds in British cinema (Tony Britten and Don Boyd), watch a touching movie called *Touch*, or an intriguing horror oriented drama, *The Last Will and Testament of Rosalind Leigh*. That then leads onto an equally taxing choice. Don Boyd hosts a screening of *War Requiem* – stunning anti-war film that uses the music of Benjamin Britten and poems of Wilfred Owen to quite outstanding effect. The Studio welcomes Jan Feull from the Bfi to host the archive screening of *Steel*; this follows previous year's archive portrayals of the Coal and Shipbuilding industries. And, The Alhambra has the emotionally powerful *A Simple Life*.

The closing presentation then takes place at The Alhambra, commencing 20.45. *Ashes* is another great British film that deserves a wide distribution and we are delighted to be able to bring it to Keswick. A worthy end to what we hope you will agree is a great festival and we look forward to seeing you at many of the presentations.

Phew! For full details of the festival, a brochure is available from the Alhambra or The Theatre or you can download from www.keswickfilmfestival.org.