

2002

Season 1



February 6

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

(USA) 1935, 90 mins.

Director Sam Wood **Cast** Groucho, Chico and Harpo Marx, Margaret Dumont.

The first Marx Brothers' film without Zeppo, this classic comedy is perhaps the funniest of the 13 films they made together. Groucho is tacky promoter Otis B. Driftwood trying to con social-climbing rich dowager Mrs Claypool into investing money in an opera company in exchange for introductions to New York's 'social set'.

Plus **THE LITTLE RASCALS: RUSHIN'**

BALLET (USA) 1937, 10 mins. **Director** Gordon Douglas.

While trying to track down Butch, Spanky and Alfalfa get caught up in a dance recital. From the 'Our Gang' series.



February 19

(PLEASE NOTE TUESDAY SCREENING)

FIRE (Canada/India) 1996, 108 mins.

Director Deepa Mehta **Cast** Shaban Azmi, Nandita Das, Kulbushan Kharband and Jaared Jaaferi.

The first part of Mehta's **Fire/Earth/Water** trilogy is an unflinching study of a lesbian love affair that interweaves hidden sexuality, repressed desire, crumbling patriarchy and cultural transformation in contemporary India. The tensions between traditional structures and contemporary values reflects social changes occurring across the sub continent. The film has caused riots in India because of its powerful subject matter. Based in Toronto, Deepa is considered a fine new director.

Patron Bruce Hodsdon
Screenings Fortnightly on
Wednesdays at 8pm
unless otherwise stated.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$30
6 months \$20 or 3 months \$15

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Enquiries Brian Dunne

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At ScreenSound Australia

McCoy Circuit Acton

March 6

THE LOVERS OF VERONA (France) 1951,
110 mins.

Director Andre Cayatte **Cast** Anouk Aimee,
Serge Reggiani, Pierre Brasseur.

In this intriguing romance, a producer is attempting a film version of "Romeo and Juliet". Anouk Aimee and Serge Reggiani play stand-ins for the film's leads, who themselves fall in love on the set. Instead of two feuding families, troubles erupt because he comes from a working class family, while her parents were powerful fascists and aristocrats who no longer enjoy the power they had during the war. The story builds to the inevitable tragic ending, with parallels to Shakespeare's play all too close.



March 20

AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

(UK) 1983, 60 mins.

Director John Schlesinger **Cast** Alan Bates,
Coral Browne and Peter Chelsom.

True story of a chance meeting in Moscow in the early 60s between an English actress and a British double agent and Soviet spy. Coral Browne was part of a cultural exchange tour in 1961 between Great Britain and the Soviet Union touring and giving performances as a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company. One night following a performance in a Moscow theatre she is approached by a man who is the traitor and double agent Guy Burgess now

residing permanently in the USSR. Oddly they strike up a friendship and he offers her the hospitality of his small apartment as well as an insider's view of life in a totalitarian state.

Plus **LE BAIN VORACE** (Aust) 1954, 11 mins.

Also known as Dial P for Plughole, this spoof of spy movies features Barry Humphries in an early film role. A gem from the collection at ScreenSound Australia.

April 3

AUSTRALIAN DREAM (Aust) 1987, 95 mins.

Director Jackie McKimmie **Cast** Noni
Hazlehurst, John Jarratt and Graeme Blundell.

One of a number of films from the period satirising the drudgery of Australian suburban living, the ironically titled **Australian Dream** stars Noni Hazlehurst as a bored housewife looking to escape her dull existence. Increasingly repelled by her husband, local butcher and political candidate played by Graeme Blundell, she falls for Jon Jarrett (then her real life husband), who appears in her life as a rather hairy stripper at a sex-aids party for suburban wives. Like a **Don's Party** for the 80s, everyone is drawn together for their 'Fantasy' Fancy-Dress party, where a predictable chaos ensues.

Plus **A DECENT BLOKE** (Aust) 1993, 25 mins.

An elderly couple from the country take financial advice from their seemingly upstanding young boarder. A cleverly written and acted Australian comedy.

Our thanks to ScreenSound
Australia and the National
Film and Video Lending
Service at Australian Centre
for the Moving Image.



SCREENING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

April 17

A STAR IS BORN (USA) 1954, 181 mins (restored version).

Director George Cukor **Cast** Judy Garland, James Mason, Jack Carson, Charles Bickford.

This is the best of four versions of this classic Hollywood story, about a great actor who makes a star of an unknown actress whose career waxes as his wanes. Produced by her then husband Sidney Luft, this was the come-back film for Judy Garland after being sacked by MGM. She brings to the role and the singing a passionate intensity which is heart-rending, making this the greatest role of her career. When the film was premiered, exhibitors complained that it was too long so Warner Brothers took about 30 minutes out of the film. During the 80s, film historian Ronald Haver undertook a restoration, and painstakingly searched for the missing footage. He found some of the footage, and where footage could not be found, he was able to match some sound track to stills. Sadly, George Cukor died in 1983, the night before the premiere of the restored version, which was much closer to the film he wanted it to be. With a combination of film and video, we will be showing as closely as possible the restored version.

May 1

GUELWAAR (Senegal/France) 1992, 113 mins.

Director Ousmane Sembene. **Cast** Omar Seck, Ndiawar Diop and Mame Ndoumbe Diop.

When the body of a local political activist, philandering patriarch and pillar of the local Christian community is mis-identified and buried in a Muslim cemetery, a tempest of family conflict and religious fanaticism culminates in a tense standoff. Generally claimed as Sembene's most brilliant work, the film explores the heterogenous nature of identities formulated by multiple histories of internal and external colonisations. At once a black comedy, political allegory and social satire, **Guelwaar** is an indictment of the twin evils of homegrown African corruption and neocolonial Western aid.

May 15

LA GRANDE ILLUSION (France) 1937, 111 mins.

Director Jean Renoir **Cast** Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, Julien Carette, Dita Parlo and Erich von Stroheim.

A "poetic realist" masterpiece which eloquently reveals the absurdity of war in a story about

escape from a World War I German prison camp. One of the first sound film masters of the mobile camera, Renoir structured his film through a series of long takes in deep focus moving gracefully yet subtly among the characters to embed them in rather than isolate them from their environments. With this observational style he examines the "grand illusions" threatening Europe in the 1930s and humankind in general: war and the artificial distinctions of class and nation that drive it. The film was a hit in the US as well as in France, and received a special prize at the 1937 Venice Film Festival despite being banned in Italy and Germany.

May 29

THE SOUTHERNER (USA) 1945, 91 mins.

Director Jean Renoir **Cast** Zachary Scott, Betty Field, Beulah Bondi and J.Carrol Naish.

Based on the Sessions Perry novel *Hold Autumn in Your Hand*, this is French director Jean Renoir's most critically respected American film. It depicts the struggles of a family to start a farm in the American South, battling to make a living despite the weather, illness and inhospitable neighbours. The film won the prestigious International Prize at the Venice Film Festival and Renoir received an Oscar nomination for best director.



June 12

SUNRISE (USA) 1927, 110 mins.

Director F.W. Murnau **Cast** George O'Brien, Janet Gaynor and Margaret Livingstone.

Made by master silent film director F.W. Murnau, **Sunrise** stars Margaret Livingstone as one of the first femme fatales in cinema history. 'The Woman from the City' is a seductive creature who seduces 'The Man', a farmer, with images of glamour and excitement to the point where he contemplates murdering his wife. A lovely and dizzying collection of images brings the realities of country and city life alive, for both characters and audience. A simple story beautifully realised, and winner of three Oscars at the 1929 Academy Awards, **Sunrise** is a fine example of silent filmmaking, surpassing even Murnau's other triumph **Nosferatu**.

Live music performed by students from the Canberra School of Music.



June 26

THE AWFUL TRUTH (USA) 1937, 91 mins.

Director Leo McCarey. **Cast** Irene Dunne, Cary Grant and Ralph Bellamy.

One of the top five screwball comedies of the 1930s, this helped to cement a genre that waxed golden until the end of WWII. Irene Dunne and Cary Grant are a squabbling couple who separate because of supposed infidelities on both sides. They part, but cannot really keep away from each other. Grant finds himself hooked up with a socialite, Dunne becomes engaged to a millionaire hick played by the hapless Ralph Bellamy. When not dating others or baiting one another in a verbal war, Grant and Dunne wage a custody battle over their pathetic pooch. Gags, double entendres, witty remarks, snide comments, and fast-paced dialogue helped director Leo McCarey win an Oscar for Best Director.



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McCoy Circuit Acton

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McCoy Circuit Acton



Tribute to Billy Wilder

July 10

DOUBLE INDEMNITY

(USA) 1944, 106 mins.
Director Billy Wilder **Cast** Fred MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyck and Edward G. Robinson.

One of the greatest film noirs, Billy Wilder's corrosive study of a hapless insurance agent (Fred MacMurray) snared by a femme fatale (Barbara Stanwyck) into a plot to murder her husband, and collect on an insurance scam. A shrewd insurance assessor Barton Keyes (Edward G. Robinson) smells a rat as the scam unravels. The fine screenplay by Raymond Chandler captures the seedy side of Los Angeles life. Another acid study by Billy Wilder (*Sunset Boulevard*, *Ace in the Hole*, *The Lost Weekend*, *Some Like It Hot*) of the dark side of human nature.



July 24

TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT

(USA) 1972, 109 mins.
Director George Cukor **Cast** Maggie Smith, Alec McCowen, Louis Gossett Jr. and Robert Stephens

The story of a stuffy bank clerk's travels with his eccentric and shady aunt is taken from the story by Graham Greene. The style and acting make this movie. Alec McCowen delivers a tour de force as the strait laced clerk and Maggie Smith is as good as always as his aunt.

Tribute to Robin Anderson

August 7

RATS IN THE RANKS

(Aust) 1996, 97 mins.
Directors/Producers/Writers Robin Anderson and Bob Connolly.

This intimate and revealing observational documentary charts the unfolding drama leading up to the annual mayoral election at Leichhardt Council in inner Sydney. The incumbent Independent mayor Larry Hand, a 'master politician', schemes and connives, playing off factions, grudges and personalities in an attempt at re-election. When the councillors agreed to openness and full co-operation in the making of the film, they didn't expect that their candid behaviour would help **Rats in the Ranks** become the highest grossing Australian documentary ever.



Please note screening begins at 7.30pm

August 21

PRINCESS MONONOKE

(Japan) 1997, 133 mins.
Director Hayao Miyazaki.

In this animated feature set in ancient times, Prince Ashitaka embarks on a quest to find the legendary Deer Spirit. He finds himself caught up in a fight between a village of miners and the Spirits of the Forest led by San, a girl raised by the Wolf Spirit, and called Princess Mononoke. An amazing story with a strong environmental subtext, it has been described as the **Star Wars** of animated features. This film was hugely popular in Japan, with director Hayao Miyazaki described as the 'Japanese Walt Disney'. He is also well known for drawing manga comics.

Presented in association with ScreenSound Australia's Flicks program for Science Week.



4 September

7pm ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Come and have your say!

8pm DEATH IN BRUNSWICK

(Aust) 1991, 100 mins.
Director John Ruane **Cast** Sam Neill, Zoe Carides, John Clarke and Deborah Kennedy.

Carl, insecure, in his thirties, going nowhere and still living with his mother in inner-city Melbourne, gets a job as cook in a sleazy Brunswick pub nightclub. After becoming smitten with bubbly, young waitress Sophie, Carl is involved in the 'death' of the title and enlists the help of his only mate, Dave the Gravedigger. Left to face both the thugs at the nightclub and, even more daunting, Sophie's Greek father, Carl must take the hard decisions and become a man. One of a string of inner-city Australian films of the period with a blackish sense of humour, **Death in Brunswick** is certainly one of the most successful, due mainly to excellent performances pitched just in the right place between drama and farce. Sam Neill is at his comic best as Carl, Zoe Carides absolutely shines as Sophie in her first major role, complemented by the dry, understated humour of John Clarke and Deborah Kennedy.

September 18

LIGHTS FROM AFAR

(Germany) 1998, 98 mins.
Director Helga Reidemeister.

A documentary in which the film-maker follows the experiences of a young photographer named Robert Paris, a former citizen of East Berlin, who searches for both his personal identity and the new identity of the reunified Germany. Eleven years after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the film-maker examines the state of Germany and finds trauma, deep resentment and disillusionment, in a Berlin bereft of artistic freedom and full of exploiters and opportunists.

Plus **NR.73**
 (Germany) 1995, 17 mins.

A prisoner and his interrogator play a game of cat and mouse with each other.
Presented in association with the Goethe Society, Canberra.

October 2

CLEAN SLATE (Coup de Torchon)

(France) 1981, 128 mins.

Director Bertrand Tavernier. From the novel "Pop. 1280" by Jim Thompson.

Cast Philippe Noiret, Isabelle Huppert and Stephane Audran.

Tavernier and his veteran collaborator Jean Aurenche have transposed the novel, set in America's Deep South, to a seedy French colony in Africa in the 1930s. Noiret is superb as a cynical police officer who decides to rid himself of the town undesirables - the easy way. Shot entirely in Senegal (the setting of *Guelwarr*, shown by Reel McCoy earlier this year) this is an exuberant black comedy full of unexpected pleasures. We have previously shown Tavernier's *Watchmaker of St Paul* and *A Week's Vacation*.



October 16

THE CRANES ARE FLYING

(Russia) 1957, 97 mins.

Director Mikhail Kalatozov **Cast** Tatiana Samoilova, Alexei Batalov and Vasily Merkuriev.

The film was made during the de-Stalinization period of the late 50's. Set during the Second World War it deals with a beautiful Moscow girl (Tatiana Samoilova) who is trapped in a loveless marriage with an unpatriotic and hence decadent pianist after her fiancée (Alexei Batalov) goes to the front. A moving tale of tender love. The film earned Kalatozov widespread international acclaim winning a Palme d'Or at the 1958 Cannes Film Festival. His subsequent output was relatively unexceptional. Samoilova won an honorary award for her superb performance at the same festival. Although making 10 subsequent films she never achieved the same success.

Plus **A SAUCER OF WATER FOR THE BIRDS**

(Aust) 1993, 13 mins.

An animated short in which a woman and her grandmother play cards. As they are dealt, the film cuts between pre-war Poland, Europe during the war, the woman's childhood, and the present.



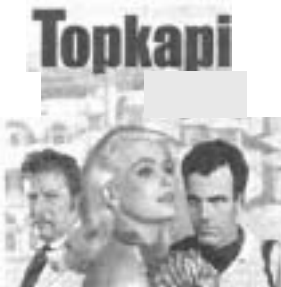
October 30

CAMILLE

(USA) 1936, 108 mins.

Director George Cukor **Cast** Greta Garbo, Robert Taylor and Lionel Barrymore.

Camille is one of the most romantic movies ever made and a classic, melodramatic love story from Hollywood's golden age. Director George Cukor's glossy adaptation of Alexandre Dumas' *La Dame aux Camelias* is one of MGM's most lavish productions of the 1930s. Directing Garbo for the first time, Cukor captured the most poetic, exquisite and restrained performance from the great screen goddess. Her portrayal of the beautiful Parisian courtesan, who fatefully falls in love with a young French nobleman, is the definitive version of the *Camille* story. Garbo's final scene is among the finest ever committed to film, as she signals death with her eyes in a lingering close-up.



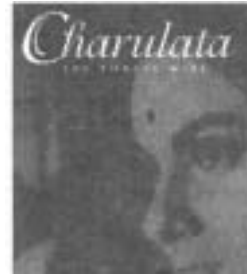
November 13

TOPKAPI

(USA) 1964, 119 mins.

Director Jules Dassin **Cast** Melina Mercouri, Peter Ustinov, Maximilian Schell and Robert Morley.

This lighthearted thriller with lots of action is about the theft of a jewelled dagger from an Istanbul museum. The locations and stars are enough reason to see this movie which is said to have inspired the TV series *Mission Impossible*. Melina Mercouri, Maximilian Schell, Robert Morley are all good but Peter Ustinov puts in an academy award winning performance. Director Jules Dassin has made a lighter return to his classic French film *Rififi*.



November 27

CHARULATA

(India) 1964, 117 mins.

Director Satyajit Ray **Cast** Madhabi Mukherjee (Charulata), Sailen Mukherjee (Bhupati) and Soumitra Chatterjee (Amal).

This Satyajit Ray period piece, set in Calcutta in the last decade of the 19th century, is a story of an intelligent woman Charulata, neglected by her husband Bhupati, who instead is passionate about his newspaper *The Sentinel*. Bhupati is aware of this and asks his handsome cousin Amal, to keep her company and encourage her literary interests, after some months their feelings towards each other grow. Ray manages to create a highly charged atmosphere of restrained yet innocent lust. Inspired by New Wave film makers Truffaut and Goddard, in this film Ray starts to experiment with his visual style.



December 11

HAROLD AND MAUDE

(USA) 1971, 91 mins.

Director Hal Ashby **Cast** Ruth Gordon, Bud Cort, Vivian Pickles and Cyril Cusack.

Harold is a depressed, death-obsessed 20 year-old man-child who spends his free time attending funerals and staging fake suicides in front of his mother. At a funeral, Harold befriends Maude, a 79 year-old woman who has a zest for life. She and Harold spend a lot of time together during which she exposes him to the wonders and possibilities of life. After rejecting his mother's three attempts to set him up with a potential wife Harold announces that he is to be married to Maude. However, Maude has a surprise for Harold that is to change his life forever.

Plus **MICKEY'S CHRISTMAS CAROL**

(USA) 1983, 26 mins.

This adaptation of Charles Dickens' story marked the return of Mickey Mouse to the screen after thirty years. Scrooge McDuck is Ebenezer Scrooge, Mickey is Scrooge's book-keeper Bob Cratchit, Donald Duck is Scrooge's nephew and Goofy is the ghost of Jacob Marley.



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