

newsletter

June – July

BENDIGO FILM SOCIETY

Bendigo Film Society Inc.

Member of the Federation of Victorian
Film Societies A14539Z

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Sponsors



Australian Women Directors

by Sue Gillett

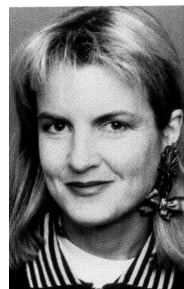
It was probably Gillian Armstrong's first feature film, *My Brilliant Career*, which, due to its enormous success, marked the beginning of a renaissance in women's film-making in Australia. Backed by government incentives, the Australian film industry thrived during the 70ies and 80ies and a new 'National Cinema' was born. *My Brilliant Career*, the story of a girl maturing in her artistic ambition despite the

hostility of her environment, rubbed shoulders with such legendary, men's-own stuff as *Gallipoli*, *Breaker Morant* and *The Man from Snowy River*.

Gillian Armstrong (right), pioneer though she was, was neither alone nor unprecedented as a woman making movies down-under. Between 1921 and 1933 sixteen feature films were either produced or directed by women without, it must be added, any encouragement from the industry or government. Lottie Lyell, Kate Howard and Louise Lovely all began their film careers as actresses of the silent era and progressed to making films in their own right. Lyell and her partner Raymond Longford produced the classics *The Dinkum Bloke*, *The Bushwackers* and *Fisher's Ghost*. However, opportunities for women to move from in-front-of to behind the camera almost completely disappeared over the next 40 years. It wasn't until the 70ies that women would once again hold the camera.

This contemporary phase of Australian women's film-making is much more feminist in origin, with women deliberately exploiting film as a political medium. 1975 was International Women's Year and women began collectively to celebrate being women, to agitate for changes in areas affecting women's lives and to make films. In particular, women's independent film-making, supported by initiatives such as the Women's Film Workshop (1974) and the unique Women's Film Fund (1975), began to thrive. Many of these films were experimental in form, audacious in subject matter, and cheeky in tone. Whilst 'independence' denied these

women access to major cinemas and audiences it did allow them creative freedom, a freedom of vision and style, from which later women directors have benefited. Jackie McKimmie's *Australian Dream*, also reveals this legacy in an irreverent film of female fantasy which nonetheless conforms to more mainstream standards of production and narrative design.



Beyond the 80ies this tendency towards the collective production gave way to the more individualised projects of single directors making feature films. The influence of the Women's Liberation Movement was beginning to wane and the nature of feminist politics was changing, especially in the face of a backlash against 'feminism' and any separate women's projects.

The films on BFS' program this year all come from this third phase of women's film-making in Australia, though this is not to say that they represent a less spirited or challenging representation of women's experiences. Together they demonstrate some of the range of creative talent and the diversity of ideas of our women directors, their humour, experimentation and seriousness. ^{www}

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BFS themes, still to come...

Latin-American Cinema – F**kland;

Oz Women Directors – Bedevil;

David Lynch – Elephant Man, Dune, Lost Highway, Pretty as a Picture;

Political Thrillers – Die Verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum, Z, The Ploughman's Lunch, Ill Gattopardo. ^{www}



These Months' Events

Thursday 6 June

7:30 **Sin the Movie**, Urata 2000
8:45 **Ai No Corrida** (The Realm of the Senses), Oshima '76
(10:25)

Thursday 20 June

7:30 **Bedevil**, Moffatt 1993
9:15 **Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque Nervioso** (Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown) Almodovar, '88
(10:45)

Thursday 4 July

7:30 tea, coffee and biscuits
8:00 **Apocalypse Now Redux**, Coppola 1979-2001
(11:20)

Thursday 18 July

7:30 **Porklips Now**, Fosselius 1980
8:15 **Guelwaar**, Sembene 1992
(10:10)

Friday 26 July

*** Mid-Winter Movie Marathon ***

7:30 **F**kland**, Marques 2001
9:00 **Blade Runner**, Scott 1982
11:00 **The Masturbating Gunman**, Savage 1997
0:30am **Narcosis**, Bakaitis 2000
2:00am **Gimme Shelter**, Maysles 1970
(3:30)

Thursday 1 August

7:30 **Chaplin's First Films**, 1916
Lumiere Programme, 1896
News From Home, Movietone & Cinesound '46
8:15 **The Elephant Man**, Lynch 1980
(10:15)

Bendigo Film Society Inc.

Venue: Campbell Theatre in the Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street.

Some of the movies have not been classified; content may challenge, offend or not be suitable for children.

Membership \$49 yearly, \$39 concession, \$69 partnered; 3 and 6 months available.

To join, send a cheque or turn up.
PO Box 567 Vic 3552

The Bendigo Film Society reserves the right to substitute film titles, should the need arise.

Now
is a good time to join.

Mid-Winter Movie Marathon... can you last the distance?

7:30pm **F**kland** Jose Luis Marques, Argentina 2000. The title refers to the film's setting and is a rather less than subtle allusion to the secret agenda of its protagonist: a very diabolical plan to revenge Argentina's defeat in the Falklands.

9:00pm **Blade Runner** Ridley Scott, USA 1982. A dark, brooding thriller, ranking as one of the all-time favourite science fiction movies.

11:00pm **The Masturbating Gunman** Mark Savage, 2001

0:30am **Narcosis** Mark Bakaitis, 2000. Two favourites of the 2001 Melbourne Underground Film Festival.

2:00am **Gimme Shelter** Albert & David Maysles, 1970. The music that thrilled the world... and the killing that stunned it.

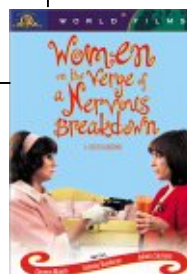
free entry – pizza slices and soft drinks \$1



most movies from, and reviews adapted from: Australian Centre for the Moving Image (CineMedia)



BEDEVIL Tracey Moffatt, Australia 1993. An astounding work of Australian cinema that combines iconography drawn from Aboriginal mythology, urban Australia, and popular culture. It sits alone in the "Indigenous Australian supernatural mystery-comedy" genre and comprises of three ghost stories. In "Mr. Chuck" the ghost of a US soldier haunts a billabong. In "Choo Choo Choo Choo" Ruby (played by Tracey Moffatt) and her family are haunted by an invisible train. In the final story, "Lovin' The Spin I'm In", a grieving Islander mother and her Greek-Australian neighbours are under the spell of two ghostly lovers. This is a wonderful film.



MUJERES AL BORDE DE UN ATAQUE NERVIOSO (WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN) Pedro Almodovar, Spain 1988. Wickedly funny movie of an actress who gets dumped by her lover, and how she responds. Full of zany characters and richly applied satire, and some great plot twists. Very offbeat and comical, your time will be well rewarded. This was Almodovar's international breakthrough film, and is one of his best loved. In Spanish with English subtitles.

PORKLIPS NOW Ernie Fosselius, USA 1980. We follow Dullard who is sent to deal with a renegade butcher whose low, low prices threaten the profits of the Meatcutters Protective Association. A hilarious, dead-on parody of Apocalypse Now!

APOCALYPSE NOW REDUX Francis Coppola, USA 1979-2001. In the tradition of such obsessively driven directors as von Stroheim and Herzog, Coppola approached the production of *Apocalypse Now* as if it were his own epic mission into the heart of darkness. On location in the storm-ravaged Philippines, he quite literally went mad as the project threatened to devour him in a vortex of creative despair, but from this insanity came one of the greatest films ever made. We follow Captain Willard on his mission into Cambodia to assassinate a renegade Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando), who has reverted to a state of murderous and mystical insanity. One measure of the film's awesome visceral impact is the number of sequences, images, and lines of dialogue that have literally burned themselves



into our cinematic consciousness, from the Wagnerian strike of helicopter gunship on a Vietnamese village to the unflinching fearlessness of the surfing warrior Lieutenant Colonel Kilgore (Robert Duvall), who speaks lovingly of "the smell of napalm in the morning". With over 48 minutes restored this version takes the focus away from Willard's search for Kurtz and brings it back to a more general statement about Vietnam and Western Colonialism. Finally as it was meant to be seen!

THE ELEPHANT MAN David Lynch, UK 1980. "I am not an animal! I am a human being! I... am... a man!" Based on the true story of John Merrick, a 19th-century Englishman afflicted with a disfiguring congenital disease. With the help of kindly Dr. Frederick Treves, Merrick attempts to regain the dignity he lost after years spent as a side-show freak. This multi-award winning film stars Anthony Hopkins, John Hurt, John Gielgud and Anne Bancroft.

GUELWAAR Ousmane Sembene, Africa 1992. 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. The satire of bureaucracy and corruption can be very funny. The great pleasure of 'Guelwaar', however, are its digressions from the narrative, when it slows down to record a way of life, even in extremis; the mish-mash of rites (tribal, Christian/Islamic); the colourful clothes and murals, the music. In Wolof and French with English subtitles.

