



NEWSLETTER 10

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The Gap Week Films Vote Results Are In

John was Up until all hours last Wednesday night counting the votes for our Gap Week Films (May 16th and June 6th). And we can now declare the results:

COMEDIES	Votes cast	DRAMAS	Votes cast
THE PARTY	54 ***	MUKTI BHAWAN(HOTEL SALVATION)	59 ***
THE DEATH OF STALIN	49	CE QUI NOUS LIE (BACK TO BURGUNDY)	44

So we shall now seek to book the two winning titles *** for our Gap Weeks. As always, the distributors may prove tricky negotiators, so watch this space for confirmation of what we will be screening when!

Our Chair goes AWOL!

I missed the first few films of this term, because I was spending time in Montpellier in France, in particular with a very small new family member, Sienna. However, in my three week absence from the **Phoenix**, I did not forget my cinematic duties/pleasures and thus managed to visit a couple of local cinemas in that beautiful southern French city. Here are a few of my reflections on where cinema is in France presently, a situation somewhat different from that here in the U.K.

I start with a question: how often at the Phoenix do we see in the opening production credits the names and logos of Canal+, Cine+, or links to various French television channels (TF1, FR2, France Télévisions, ARTE, etc.), and these not only in French film productions. There are countless big film development companies in France that are helping to produce films not only for the home market (both cinema and TV movies), but to support film-making in countries around the world, both Francophone and otherwise.



And furthermore, as well as the big multiplexes (Gaumont, Pathé, UGC) that can be found in many of the bigger and smaller cities around France, there are smaller cinemas in many towns, including places which if they were in the U.K. might well have been closed down years ago as unprofitable or unwanted. Some of these are now independently run - a lovely example I know of is La Boîte à Images in Brignoles (pop. 15000) in the Var département of France. Elsewhere local councils,

yes you read that correctly, run the cinema, seeing what is known as *le septième art* as a key part of their cultural delivery programme.

In the centre of Montpellier, there is a lovely old Gaumont cinema showing standard mainstream films, both homegrown and Hollywoodian. Out of town is another, modern, Gaumont, with some 17 screens and IMAX and 4DX capability (though none of those lie-back-and-enjoy-it seats we have locally). But tucked away in one of the seedier suburbs of town is the truly delightful Cinéma Nestor Burma (named after a well-known fictional character created by French crime novelist Léo Malet). Boasting a balcony and a small stalls seating area, the Nestor Burma is run by the city council offering *une programmation grand public et art et essai avec une forte spécificité Jeune Public* (mainstream, independent (world) cinema, and a specific youth-oriented programme).



The city's key aim is "to present to folks in Montpellier a cultural tool offering cinema of high quality, aiming to develop the cinemagoers of the future" (*my translation from their manifesto*). Their monthly programme reflects those aims perfectly. In my four weeks there, my grandson enjoyed **Paddington 2**, whilst on the same day you could also see **Le Crime de l'Orient Express** (*version originale, sous-titrée en français*) or the Zambian **I Am Not a Witch** (a possible for the Phoenix next year). In February, the cinema was to participate in the 11th National Festival of Christian Cinema, having also been involved, equally nationally, in the Télérama Festival de Cinéma, sponsored by the French equivalent of Radio Times, tickets for which cost a mere £3 a film.

The appreciation of film has long been an essential part of French culture, and film production in that country rates highly in the top ten of film-producing nations around the globe. Attendances match those of the U.K., but a significant difference is that as well as UK and US movies, the French also lap up domestic production (sadly for us, many of those do not get distributed here unless they have won awards at festivals). And they start young.



My 7-year-old grandson went on a (regular) school visit to the Gaumont multiplex recently and on the programme they watched was a selection of black and white silent movies by the likes of Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd. Tom thoroughly enjoyed it, but I suspect the follow-up lesson was not quite as silent! So ... if you ever visit Montpellier, and have an evening to spare, why not pay a visit to the Nestor Burma, Emilie Menguy who runs the place pretty well on her own will be pleased to see you! Oh yes, the first of the films I saw was **Normandie Nue**, directed by Philippe Le Guay (we screened **Les femmes du 6e étage** and **Cycling With Molière**) and starring François Cluzet and our very own Toby Jones. It was agreeable, especially if, like me, you love Normandy. The second film **La Villa (The House by the Sea)** was wonderful, and set at the opposite end of the country in one of the beautiful calanques along the coastline close to Marseille. As it was made by one of my favourite directors, Robert Guédiguian, it was unlikely I wouldn't like it, and indeed it scored a rare 10/10 in my opinion. We have included several of his films in past Phoenix programmes. Back in 2005 we had **The Last Mitterand** (82%) and eight years later we showed **The Snows of Kilimanjaro** (88%). I'd like to think we might consider **La Villa** for the Phoenix programme for next year, distributors permitting, but we shall see ...



And if you know of any good cinemas in far-flung places that you would recommend to members, please write the details on your voting slip, and we will mention them in a future Newsletter.

Courtlye Musick

On March 10th 2018 local group Courtlye Musick will be giving a concert of vocal and instrumental music from Tudor and Elizabethan times. This concert will be in aid of Amnesty International and has the title **Time to Pass with Goodly Sport**. It will take place at Christ Church, Freemantle, Southampton SO15 3BT, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets £8. Disabled access. For information about Courtlye Musick, go to <http://www.courtlyemusick.co.uk/>

And still on a musical note (possibly C#) here is our termly round-up of the musics you have been listening to whilst you wait for our film to start, read the Weekly Film Notes, chat about the previous week's vote, and generally get comfy. All playlists can be accessed on Spotify by following the links given.

First up for **The Salesman** we had a selection of current Iranian tunes, some of which might be considered as top ten favourites: [spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:4WHyMpcfTQJvFEXV2xz9I5](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4WHyMpcfTQJvFEXV2xz9I5)

Finding music to go with Pacific Island-set **Tanna** was tricky, but you heard tunes from Huarere (a Maori word for the weather but also the name of a musician from Vanuatu) and the late and wonderfully eclectic Bob Brozman, whose album *Blue Hula Stomp* seemed eminently appropriate:

[spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:5IMYIFyVtVHe79ceg8RyFO](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5IMYIFyVtVHe79ceg8RyFO)

Lévon Minassian, a French-Armenian duduk player, provided the music for **The Promise**, our HMD screening about the Armenian genocide (a duduk is an ancient double reed woodwind instrument made of apricot wood, indigenous to Armenia. Commonly played in pairs, while the first player plays the song, the second plays a steady drone called dum): [spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:4t44XBG3ljibPmRjqX48Z0](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4t44XBG3ljibPmRjqX48Z0)

The lengthy (!) **Aquarius** focused on the movie's soundtrack, with songs by (amongst others) Gilberto Gil, Amar Azul, and, curiously, Queen. [spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:27WayL6S83fp89jAemKBYa](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/27WayL6S83fp89jAemKBYa)

Our fifth film welcomed you and a young Nigerian man to Germany, so the pre-film music was a mix of tunes from both countries, including Kraftwerk, Sportfreunde Stiller, Rex Williams and Ibealaoke Chukwukez.

[spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:4xTKDyNmWXfwOHRgkQCwT](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4xTKDyNmWXfwOHRgkQCwT)

We could not resist the lure of love for our Saint Valentine's day songs, all of which however touched on the subject in a way to reflect the unhappy situation of our film **After Love**. Tracks from Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks* had to feature, alongside Ry Cooder's *Mexican Divorce*, Liz Phair with her *Divorce Song*, and, inevitably, Tammy Wynette's *D-I-V-O-R-C-E*.

Music has always been an integral part of Aki Kaurismäki's films (remember the Leningrad Cowboys) so we have featured songs from **The Other Side of Hope**'s soundtrack, all beautifully matching the tone of the film. Tom Waits would be proud if he were included. [spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:2i2PM8mPjvrszJasRhKPKN](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2i2PM8mPjvrszJasRhKPKN)

Still to come, the modern-day Western **The Shepherd** tempted us to create a sheep-themed playlist so you will have enjoyed Nick Cave's *Sheep May Safely Graze*, the sadly-departed Tim Hardin's exquisite *Black Sheep Boy*, Stoneleigh Worship Band's version of the *23rd Psalm*, and Steve Dawson playing *Baa Baa Black Sheep*. [spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:6JhZYbbPMf20x47HAVIJbR](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6JhZYbbPMf20x47HAVIJbR)

The Eagle Huntress, set in the extraordinary scenery of Mongolia, is also themed, around the wings of the titular bird. Thus John Philip Sousa's *The Invincible Eagle* spreads its wings alongside tunes from the Steve Miller Band (*Fly Like an Eagle*), Plainsong (*I'll Fly Away*) and The Beach Boys (*California Saga (The Beaks of Eagles)*). [spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:1FHq9XENyfsaNalUqRbuu](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1FHq9XENyfsaNalUqRbuu)

Finally this term, the playlist for **Lady Macbeth**, set in the North-east of England, includes folk songs from those parts, with The Unthanks featuring, along with master of the English concertina, Alistair Anderson, and the fabulous Kathryn Tickell, supremo of the Northumbrian small pipes.

[spotify:user:gcole1951:playlist:17u3DR9Jn12SbZ6mfY8C0h](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/17u3DR9Jn12SbZ6mfY8C0h)

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