



NEWSLETTER 1

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Welcome to another year of The Phoenix the Best of World Cinema



Yes, the Phoenix is back – in December, as inheritors of the original Southampton Film Society, we will start our 88th year, whilst feeling as young as ever! It is great to welcome you back for our new season. And as our strapline indicates, our thirty films always come from around the globe (in fact thirty different countries are involved) so we are hoping there will be something for everyone, and that you will enjoy the careful selection in our 2018-2019 programme. As always there will be a chance to vote for your choice of movie in our Members' Gap Week film (May 15), and we have our customary titles that tie in with events in the year (**The Breadwinner** marks International Human Rights Day, and **Insyriated** links with Holocaust Memorial Day), and we have certainly not forgotten our end-of-term Christmas film (**I Got Life (Aurore)**) with our traditional drinks and mince pies (and maybe a quiz question or two) afterwards. And although we are at the start of a new Phoenix year, please do let us know of any films you think we should be screening in the future – our film selection committee's list importantly includes all the suggestions made by members throughout the year on their voting slips. A reminder too that there is a lot of extra information about the Phoenix Southampton Film Theatre on our website <http://thephoenix.org.uk/>. That includes a catalogue of all the films we have screened since at least the end of the last century! They are listed by audience rating, date screened, and title, to make navigation easy. You can also find copies of all our past Newsletters, and various sets of statistics for each screening.

And please, if you know of anyone who loves a great film, and who is not yet coming to the Phoenix, do tell them about us, and encourage them to join you on a Wednesday for the Best of World Cinema.

IMDb or Rotten Tomatoes?

You will know that we often refer to the Internet Movie Database, or IMDb as it is better and more succinctly known. Perhaps in a very different way, Rotten Tomatoes is another useful website to find out about movies of all shapes and genres. Both sites are a treasure trove for cinema fans (movie buffs?) and are well worth investigating for information about films and reviews of anything that has ever been committed to celluloid. One useful tool is the ratings (like our members' votes) given to all the films included in their web pages.

The IMDb gives a star rating out of 10 for the movies on its site, so for example **Untouchable (Intouchables)** from 2011, which was our highest scoring audience vote with 98% (and 97% when we screened it a second time!) is rated at 8.5/10 (based on 628,000 votes). However, care should be taken when reading such ratings since they can depend on the number of votes submitted.

To prove the point Buñuel's classic **El ángel exterminador (The Exterminating Angel)**, which some of you were less than keen on, and was our least popular film last year, is IMDb rated at 8.2/10 (from 23,426 votes).





In contrast, the wonderfully named Rotten Tomatoes website offers two scores for films. Its Tomatometer (“the percentage of Approved Tomatometer Critics who have given the movie a positive review”) gives the French art house comedy 74%, with an average rating of 6.7/10 from 121 reviews, of which 90 were deemed Fresh, and 31 were Rotten!

On the other hand, its Audience Score is 93%, with an average rating of 4.3/5 (based on 44,952 “users”. For information, some of you will perhaps be aghast, even incredulous, to learn that the corresponding ratings for Buñuel’s 1967 film are 96% (so an average rating of 9/10 from just 23 reviewers, of which only one “rotten”) and 93% in the audience score, averaging 4.3/5 (from 7,230 viewers). At least in the case of **Intouchables**, the Phoenix votes pipped both websites’ scores, and Phoenix members are never wrong!!

Our final Newsletter of last year’s programme was published with three films still to be voted on. Here are the percentages, with a selection of your comments. The voting scores for all of last year’s films can be found on the website.

Things to Come

A sensitive and consistently interesting story of a life changing in quite ordinary ways.

An exercise in life’s ordinary crises. I loved the cat.

The French do love their philosophers.

Very French and very enigmatic. The volume was very loud, but great to hear Woody Guthrie.

Even the cat could not save it!

The tedious soap-opera that French cinema does so well.

Att: 135 76.2%



Harmonium

Best Japanese film seen at the Phoenix. Gripping to the end.

Very different to anything I’ve seen before – applaud the ambition, even if it flagged in the latter part.

This was much too grim for the Phoenix.

Great pre-screening music, thank you.

Dysfunctional, and a very poor story.

Rather stilted and although fable-like in a mesmerising way, unresolved!

Att: 99 77.5%

The Square

Intriguing and curiously gripping. Difficult to separate reality from perception. An excellent mix of psychodrama and social comment. Great cinematography and direction.

A note-perfect description of the structures, egos and preoccupations of contemporary art culture.

Well that didn’t seem like 142 minutes, gripping stuff and very thought-provoking. Loved the chimp!

Sisyphus.

It was boring and LONG and barmy.

The worst film ever?

Thank you to all the Phoenix people who make the Society possible.

Att: 128 75.5%



And finally, we have a new mailing list for the new programme year. If you gave us your email address when you renewed (most of you did) then already you should have received a



MailChimp Phoenix delivery into your inbox (on September 14). If you cannot find it there, check it has not gone into your spam box, and if it has, to avoid that happening again, make sure you change settings appropriately so you are amongst the first to know of any news from the Phoenix. We will not be sending regular mailouts, but when they do come they make for a good read (it says here). If you received nothing yet, simply give your email address to Adrian or Graham and your name will be added straightaway.

And as we indicate in our Weekly Film Notes, we have a FaceBook page. We can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Phoenix-Southampton-Film-Theatre-359040014531838/>

Although our page does not get updated every week, we welcome comments, questions, and suggestions (including film suggestions for future screenings). And above all we like it when you “Like” or even “Love” us, so please do find us and click appropriately.

Find us on

www.thephoenix.org.uk

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