



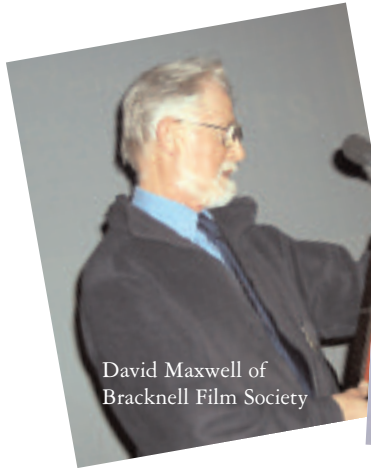
# NEWSREEL

UK FILM COUNCIL  
LOTTERY FUNDED

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES

JUNE 2007

## FSOY 2007 – THE ROLL OF HONOUR



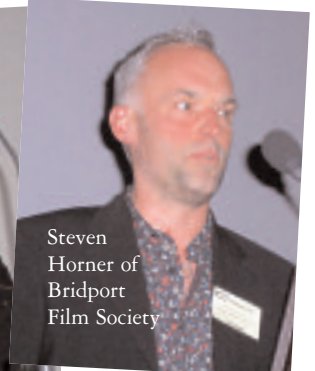
David Maxwell of Bracknell Film Society



Nic Roeg with Richard Stead of Keswick Film Club



Donna Aston of Penwith



Steven Horner of Bridport Film Society

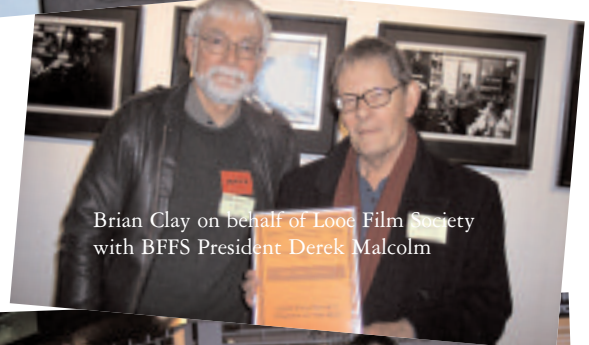


ALL PHOTOS – BRIAN CLAY

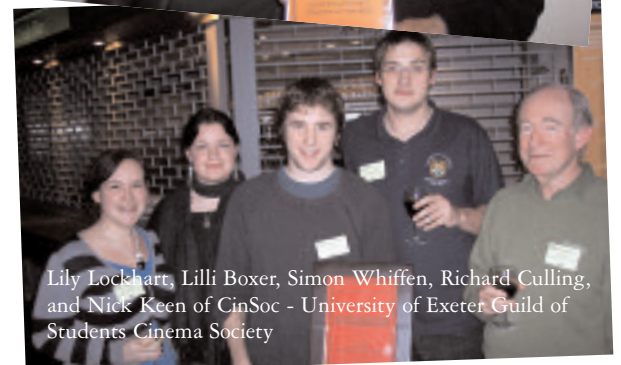
John Joe McFadden, Liz Woodruffe, Penny Amerena and Clare Collins of Wimbledon Film Club with BFFS President Derek Malcolm



Nic with Catriona Stares of CinéGuernsey



Brian Clay on behalf of Looe Film Society with BFFS President Derek Malcolm



Lily Lockhart, Lilli Boxer, Simon Whiffen, Richard Culling, and Nick Keen of CinSoc - University of Exeter Guild of Students Cinema Society

### BEST PROGRAMME NOTES

- Joint Winners* Bracknell Film Society and Bridport Film Society
- Distinction* Swindon Film Society and Trowbridge Film Society
- Commendation* Penwith Film Society and Winchester Film Society

### BEST WEBSITE

- Winner* Keswick Film Club
- Distinction* Forest Row Film Society and Wimbledon Film Club
- Commendation* Oxen Park Cinema Club and Winchester Film Society

### BEST MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

- Winner* CinéGuernsey
- Distinction* Dorchester Film Society
- Commendation* Keswick Film Club and Lytham St Annes Film Society and Wimbledon Film Club

### BEST PROGRAMMING

- Winner* Penwith Film Society
- Distinction* Club Film (Skye) and IGA Film Club and Keswick Film Club
- Commendation* Bracknell Film Society and Bridport Film Society and Louth Film Society and Winchester Film Society

### BEST NEW SOCIETY

- Winner* Real 2 Reel Cinema
- Distinction* Looe Film Society (Cinema by the Sea)
- Commendation* Diss Film Society and Largs Film Society

### COMMUNITY AWARD

- Winner* CinéGuernsey
- Distinction* Swindon Film Society
- Commendation* Oxen Park Cinema Club and Strathendrick Film Society

### BEST STUDENT SOCIETY

- Winner* CinSoc - University of Exeter Guild of Students Cinema Society

### THE ENGHOLM PRIZE FOR FILM SOCIETY OF THE YEAR

- Winner* CinéGuernsey
- Distinction* Winchester Film Society

## REFLECTIONS ON FSOY 2007

### DEREK MALCOLM, BFFS PRESIDENT, ON HOW IT WAS FOR HIM (AND HOW IT COULD BE FOR US!)

It was great to see Nic Roeg, one of our very best and certainly most imaginative directors, at the recent awards ceremony. I've always admired him as the natural successor to Michael Powell. But I was amazed, chatting to him afterwards, that he had never heard of the BFFS before receiving the invitation. "Marvellous", he said, "It's an alternative method of distribution!" It only goes to prove that we are not as well known as we should be, which may be part of the reason we never get enough money to become a more effective alternative method of distribution.

I must say I was a bit put out when I arrived (late unfortunately owing to an e-mail mix-up) to find nothing to suggest the awards were anything to do with BFFS. Instead, someone else I'd never heard of was running them. What with the National Film Theatre now being called the BFI Southbank (what a thrilling name!), I was more than a little confused.

We now have over a thousand community organisations of various kinds, not all of them under our aegis, more's the pity, showing mostly specialised films all over the UK. We would much like to support them all, and are uniquely equipped to do so. But we can't possibly do it effectively with our present financial resources. And if we can't get the money, at least we would plead to get our viewing sessions and awards ceremony back. One of the problems is that those capable of funding us won't do it unless they have more or less complete control. In a way that's understandable, since a few years ago we looked as if we were not doing our job as well as we could. But that, for several reasons, is no longer true. We're much better organised now, and it is clearly time for the UKFC to rethink the drastic cuts in funding made during that time.

The first thing we need is more staff, because those we have are under considerable strain and, though they have done wonders, would do even better with more help. We have almost certainly reached the limits of what we can achieve with an organisation made up chiefly of volunteers. We'll plug on regardless, no doubt. We have over sixty years of experience after all. But it would be nice to be able to deliver the public value of which we are capable, and thus to stimulate interest in the kind of cinema that isn't simply pitched at the lowest common denominator.

As a critic, I now have to see and review an average of nine new films every week, at least two-thirds of which I wouldn't put in front of Bruno, my Labrador. The other third, however, prove that the cinema still has something to offer more discriminating audiences. But its distribution is often fraught, and DVD beckons all too soon. We are all here to do something about this, and the BFFS is in as unique a position as critics to help. Andi Engel, who sadly died recently, was one of those distributors and exhibitors, who did just that. He founded Artificial Eye and made a huge difference to British film culture by buying and showing dozens of films by world class directors. I was glad to see, at his memorial service, so many of the pillars of the industry in this country in attendance and paying tribute to him. He was often a difficult man. But we owe him a great deal, and the way things are going we won't see his like again. All the more reason for the BFFS to do with it can for the better kind of cinema and the audiences who so rarely get to see it outside London. I hope you all know what an important job you are doing, particularly within the universities. If you open a window for the young, they are likely to look out of it with different eyes.

## LESLIE HARDCASTLE

*For BFFS members who have noted our campaign to get Leslie Hardcastle re-elected as BFI member-governor (we've left a sample footer bar in place below to remind you), and have registered that he is this year's holder of the Roebuck cup, we offer a brief introduction to the man and his work.*

Leslie, chair of the Uckfield Film Society, was born into a theatre family of long tradition. After two years service in the British Pacific Fleet he returned to British Lion Film Distributors where he handled film supply to 35mm film societies. In 1948 he joined the BFI where he remained for 46 years. "A story of great fortitude or a wasted life" as he would explain. Hardly wasted for he ran the NFT for 35 years, administrated 21 film festivals and created the Museum of the Moving Image with Tony Smith and David Francis.

But before all that he ran the Central Booking Agency which negotiated film supply to the many flourishing film soci-

eties which then ran on 35mm., some of which Hardcastle recalls had as many as 30 shows per season. When the NFT and the regional film theatres were born Leslie helped establish film supply from the film distributors for many years.

Genuinely surprised and delighted with the presentation of the Roebuck cup at this year's Film Society of the Year awards, he explained to the audience his belief that the film society movement was without a doubt the most dedicated, effective and economic way of spreading throughout the land an appreciation of world cinema with each society having to be efficient just to exist. This tradition and continuity has been successfully maintained since the film society movement began.

On reflection Leslie recalls the work of Mrs. Margaret Hancock, a citizen of Sheffield, and would like to pay tribute to her tireless and pioneering work as past secretary of the BFFS. When Leslie was manager of the Central Booking Agency



Leslie Hardcastle accepts the Roebuck Cup

she always demanded the very best for her film society flock. He regards Margaret as a true hero of the film society movement.

## FILMBANK UPDATE

Following our report in the Jan edition of NR it appears that we a little optimistic in our hopes that the procedural changes which Filmbank were introducing would be having an impact by January. The new computer system designed to improve efficiency and accuracy of records proved tricky to install (when don't they?) and the backlog of orders this generated was only just cleared by March. However, Rachele Peterson assures us that the plan is back on track and improvements will be felt soon. Meanwhile, the letter to distributors from ICO/BFFS regarding quality of materials provided to Filmbank has been sent and their responses are eagerly awaited.

*Regional Viewing Session Titles*

BFFS is currently working with Filmbank on behalf of its BFFS Regional Groups to ensure that Filmbank titles screened at Regional Viewing Sessions continue to be shown with no cost to the Groups. This long established practice was questioned recently due to changes in procedure at Filmbank and some confusion arose as to this arrangement. It is hoped that a formal agreement can be reached to ensure film society and community cinema programmers across the nation can view titles on behalf of their organisations.

*Filmbank Questionnaire*

In an initiative aimed at defining and quantifying issues that customers continue to have with Filmbank services BFFS has surveyed film societies via a simple questionnaire. This will provide measurable baseline data from which to detect the much hoped for improvements from the perspective of the customer. This initiative was welcomed by Filmbank to whom we are also reporting the outcome of the survey. Here is a flavour of the findings. The results should be considered in context of the last 12 months, the period asked about.

An impressive 59 questionnaires were returned within a week, with 91% of respondents having used Filmbank services in the past 12 months. The split between those of you booking commercially and non-commercially showed the increasing number of organisations screening to the public: 63% non-commercial (members only) booking v 46% commercial (opening screenings to the public).

By far the greatest problem experienced was in communications, with simply getting through to Filmbank by phone or email an issue for 78% and 70% of respondents, respectively. This was followed by almost 60% reporting they had not received prompt confirmation of

bookings and almost the same proportion (57%) taking issue with the information available about Filmbank-handled titles. Almost one third (31%) had experienced a problem with non-delivery of a booked title in the booked format. No positive comments were recorded under this section of the survey.

When asked 'Have you detected any improvement in the service from Filmbank in the past 3 months?', 61% of those who responded said no, but 30% said yes, which may explain why the overall expression of service satisfaction was higher than might be expected with an equal number of respondents saying they were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied as said they were not at all satisfied. So possibly an early sign that service improvements are starting to be felt.

Comments as to areas of improvement centred on progress in communications ('They are more helpful when you can speak to someone') and administration ('Booking confirmation and invoicing better') but the overall tone of the comments was that there is still a lack of consistency and reliability in service delivery.

The continued significance of Filmbank to the sector was illustrated by responses to the 2 questions 'Has your use of Filmbank increased in the last 2 years?' and 'Would you use Filmbank's services in the next 12 months?' 54% of respondents said no to the former, but almost 80% said yes to the latter.

Of the 31% who stated that Filmbank's new scale of charges will have a material effect on the operation of the film society, the comments indicated that this would be detrimental both to smaller societies who just about break even to larger societies who were reluctant to pay more for an unreliable service. Several mentioned that while they felt they had to go to Filmbank for some titles they would be actively seeking titles from other sources.

The effect of Filmbank's recent clarification of their terms and conditions on the operation of film societies was felt by 31% some of whom had taken the opportunity to review their practices and were now operating under a commercial licence that was far less restrictive in terms of advertising, payment for admission, etc, and some of whom felt the price increases would make it harder to keep going.

So, overall, signs of light at the end of the tunnel, but a feeling that it is still some way off. BFFS will continue to monitor the situation and actively feed back to Filmbank on issues of concern you raise.

The full survey report can be viewed on the BFFS website at [www.bffs.org.uk/downloads.html](http://www.bffs.org.uk/downloads.html)

**REGIONAL GROUP DEVELOPMENT GOES FULL STEAM AHEAD**

As part of our strategy of getting out and about in the regions and finding out what the needs are of film societies and community cinemas, networking events are being held in Solihull (West Midlands region) and Ely (Eastern region) in June. As well as answering topical questions, these events will also seek to establish the demand for the formation of more BFFS Regional Groups to deliver on-the-ground advice and support to both start-up and established organisations.

**BFFS NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

DIARY DATE! BFFS will be holding its Annual Conference at The Showroom, Sheffield on Saturday 1 December 2007. The day will comprise interactive training/information seminars, screenings from the National Block Booking Scheme, the AGM and the Annual Dinner. This day event will enable this year's AGM time to deal with major changes required to the governance of BFFS that will require your input.

**SHEFFIELD MAYORAL CIVIC RECEPTION SETS SEAL ON BFFS IN NEW HOME**

The cold, the snow and the bleakness of a February Friday in Sheffield were swept away by the wonderful welcome and generous hospitality extended to the BFFS by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield.

The occasion was an opportunity for BFFS to meet with like-minded people and we are grateful to Lord Mayor Councillor Jackie Drayton for her support. Councillor Drayton will be familiar to those of you who attended the BFFS dinner held in the Cutlers Hall during 2005 when her passion for Sheffield shone through.

The Civic Reception, at which the Lord Mayor was presented with a memento from BFFS, also allowed BFFS to renew its historic links with Sheffield. The event certainly marked our arrival in Sheffield in some style. It has allowed us to bring BFFS and the work of film societies to the attention of many regional and national organisations and we are already reaping the benefits.

**VACHON'S 'A KILLER LIFE' A CRACKER**

Christine Vachon's name is something of a byword in the industry. As a successful producer of independent films with a string of hits to her credit, as proprietor of Killer Films, her New York-based production company, and as author of *Shooting to Kill*, a detailed guide to the business of producing films, she has maintained a high profile as a tough and successful dame in the guys world of film-making.

Her new book, *A Killer Life*, sort of takes up where *Shooting to Kill* left off. It's tightly autobiographical, focused on doing the business in NYC (and Cannes), and it provides a powerful and welcome antidote to the fixation on directorial auteurism that we all share to an extent (all my recorded movies have a director's name attached).

If you want to truly understand the complex alchemy by which films become what they are, you could do an awful lot worse than starting with this highly readable account of the whole process, from start to finish, by the producer of (among many other movies) *Boys Don't Cry* and *One Hour Photo*.

**DEVELOPMENT OF FILM SOCIETIES IN MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES**

In an exciting new project BFFS is working with Screen Yorkshire and the Bradford City of Film Strategy to encourage the development of

community cinema for and by minority ethnic groups. The project is designed to celebrate the film culture and heritage of minority

ethnic communities and to enhance access to film between minority ethnic communities and other communities.

# BFFS LAUNCHES NATIONAL BLOCK BOOKING SCHEME FOR 2007-8

BFFS is pleased to introduce a new way for film societies with DVD projection to get hold of films at a reasonable cost and with minimum hassle. Taking the tried and tested approach of block booking, which has delivered excellent results in the Yorkshire and SW regions for a number of years, BFFS has set out to create a national system which will offer what film societies need, sustainably and indefinitely.

In the BFFS scheme, member societies will be able to

- book films at an economical flat rate - £80 inc VAT for the 2007-8 season
- advertise these films without restriction
- apply ticketing and admission arrangements that best suit their local community audience.

The scheme is based on a show-and-send-on system, in which each participating society must send the DVD they have booked on to the next booker as soon as they have shown it. This means that participants will all be dependent on each other for efficient transfer. To participate in the scheme, a society must first enrol. To do this, you need to obtain an enrolment pack, from the BFFS website ([bffs.org.uk](http://bffs.org.uk)) or from BFFS Sheffield. One you have the pack, you enrol by completing the letter of agreement and returning it by post to BFFS Sheffield. When BFFS has confirmed your enrolment, you will be able to submit your bookings, either by completing the forms in Word and sending them by email, or by posting them. Note: you can only enrol if you are a full, startup, school or student member of BFFS.

## THE FILMS – MORE INFO AT [BFFS.ORG.UK](http://BFFS.ORG.UK)

### Atash (Thirst)

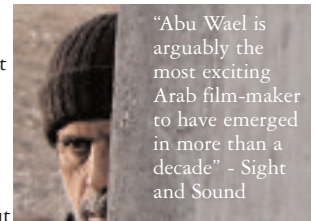
2004, 110 mins, Israel/Palestine, Cert. 12A, Dir: Tawfik Abu Wael  
Cast: Hussein Yassin Mahajne, Amal Bweerat, Roba Blal, Jamila Abu Hussein, Ahamed Abel Elrani

International Critics' Prize, Cannes 2004

This debut feature from Palestinian Tawfik Abu Wael has a lot going for it: Assaf Sudry's striking cinematography, Wissam Gibran's fine music, and strong first-time performances from a cast of non-professionals. Also impressive is the way the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is allowed to cast a

shadow over the familial tensions even though it's never explicitly depicted or alluded to. Rather, while it's a film about freedom and rebellion, need and desire, fear and oppression, tradition and change, its milieu feels mythic rather than contemporary, poetic rather than a realistic reflection of everyday life.

Source: Time Out



"Abu Wael is arguably the most exciting Arab film-maker to have emerged in more than a decade" - Sight and Sound

### The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros

2005, 100 mins, Phillippines, Cert. 15, Dir: Auraeus Solito  
Cast: Nathan Lopez, Soliman Cruz, Ping Medina, Bodjie Pascua  
Berlin Film Festival 2006 - Best Feature Film - Teddy Sundance Film Festival - nominated for Grand Jury Prize (World Cinema)

12-year-old Maximo ('Maxi,' played by the entirely disarming Nathan Lopez) lives with his criminal father and two macho 'brothers' and effectively replaces his late, lamented mother. It's not just that he does most of the housework and cooking, but



also that he likes dressing in women's clothes. Everything is fine until Maxi strikes up a friendship with a figure of a kind never seen before in Sampaloc: an honest, righteous cop, good looking in his way, somewhat bemused by the constant attentions of a young transvestite. The problem, of course, is that policeman Victor is dedicated to jailing Maxi's father and his boys, and to making an honest man of Maxi himself.

Tony Rayns, London Film Festival

### Be With Me

2005, 93 mins, Singapore, Cert. 12A, Dir: Eric Khoo  
Cast: Theresa Poh Lin Chan, Elizabeth Choy, Seet Keng Yew, Ezann Lee

I was one of the twelve folk who gave Eric Khoo's very gentle, sweet-natured film an 'A' vote after viewing for the second time at the South West's Topsham viewing session in November 2006 - twenty six voters resulted in an RI of 76%. It warranted a repeated viewing - Khoo's use of very little dialogue gave a profound insight into the truly extraordinary life of Theresa Chan, a 61-year-old teacher of disabled children in Singapore who fights every minute to live a normal life despite herself suffering deafness at the age of 12 and blindness two years later.

Paul Schilling, SW Regional Group



### Beyond Hatred (Au dela de la Haine)

2005, 86 mins, France, Not Certificated, Dir: Olivier Meyrou  
Berlin International Film Festival 2006 - Winner, Best Documentary  
It's unlikely to appeal to your mainstream moviegoer, but this French documentary achieves remarkable things with a depressing subject. It concerns the brutal murder of a young, gay man named Bruno Chenu by a trio of skinheads in a park in Rheims, but it avoids all the obvious routes.

We never see the faces of the victim or his killers. Instead, we spend time listening to Chenu's family, two years after the murder, as they prepare

for the trial. And what an intelligent, reflective, dignified family they turn out to be. They have taken great pains to get beyond grief and anger and "the hatred on which you rebuild yourself", and towards a constructive understanding. They even write sympathetic letters to their son's killers.

There are echoes of Nicolas Philibert's classroom documentary *Etre et Avoir* in the film's delicate, patient tone. Out of such miserable circumstances, it's a film that ultimately empowers society's victims, and leaves a feeling that there's hope for civilised society - in France, at least.

Steve Rose, The Guardian

### China Blue



2005, 86 mins, USA, Cert. 12A, Dir: Micha X. Peled

There's a terrible irony to the designer jeans uniformly worn by the teenage laborers featured in *China Blue*, Peled's meticulously vivid exposé of a sweatshop in southern China. Jasmine, 16, is

one of the tens of millions of Chinese who have left their rural villages in search of work. At the Lifeng factory, she and the girls snip and sew for pennies an hour (sometimes purchasing "energy medicine" on the street to work all night). They are beholden to a deadbeat boss who is himself beholden to the criminally low-balled purchase orders coming in from all over the world, for clients like Levi and Wal-Mart.

China Blue feels stage-managed at times, but the conditions of this 750-person factory are heartbreaking, as are the wistful faces of the girls as they stumble back to their 12-person dorm room and wonder who could possibly fit into the fatass jeans they are literally slaving to produce. Don't look now, but it might be you.

Michelle Orange, Village Voice

### Esma's Secret (Grbavica)

2006, 95 mins, Austria/Bosnia-Herzegovina/Germany/Croatia, Cert. 15, Dir: Jasmila Zbanic, Cast: Mirjana Karanovic, Luna Mijovic  
Berlin International Film Festival 2006: Winner, Golden Bear, Peace Film Award, Ecumenical Jury Award

Esma's Secret is a terrific drama, written and directed by Jasmila Zbanic, about the lingering and corrosive after-effects of war in the Balkans. Mirjana Karanovic plays Esma, an industrious single mother working in a night-club who is struggling to feed and clothe her feisty 12-year-old daughter Sara (Luna Mijovic).

They live in Grbavica, a part of the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo, that is sur-

rounded by mass graves. Sara believes her father is a war martyr - a fiction that she has been fed to protect her from a truth altogether more awful. The city and its inhabitants are shown in a period of reconstruction. The film, never flash or melodramatic, shows them trying to find cures for the physical and mental abuse they have suffered. The two lead female performances are very strong, with Zbanic especially moving as a mother who has left a trail of secrets and lies behind her.

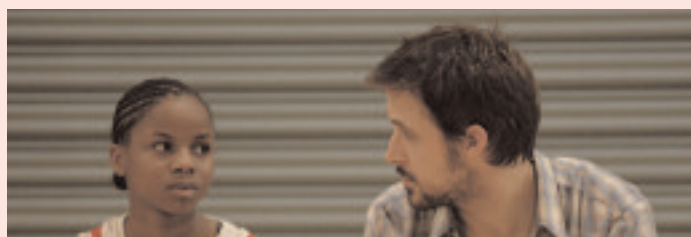


Source: [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)

**Half Nelson (available from 24th Sept 2007)**

2006, 106 mins, USA, Cert. 15, Dir: Ryan Fleck  
 Cast: Ryan Gosling, Jeff Lima, Shareeka Epps  
 Oscar nomination - Ryan Gosling for Best Actor in Leading Role  
 San Francisco Film Festival - FIPRESCI prize - winner  
 Sundance Film Festival - Grand Jury Prize - nominated  
 Superbly natural performances by Gosling and Epps lift this addiction drama into something extraordinary. They create such raw, sympathetic characters that even a down-beat story doesn't put us off. This is gripping, moving and extremely thoughtful filmmaking.

The script is a terrific blending of straightforward drama and character-defining surprises, which continue right to the very end. The filmmak-



ers really get in there and examine both Dan and Drey and the decisions they have made and are making, good and bad.

Rich Cline, [shadowsonthewall.co.uk](http://shadowsonthewall.co.uk)

**KZ**

2006, 97 mins, UK, Cert. 12A, Dir: Rex Bloomstein  
 Sundance Film Festival 2006 - Grand Jury Prize - nominated  
 Director Bloomstein soberly inspects the visitors to and staff of the Mauthausen memorial site, originally set up as a forced labour camp for socialists, gays and other undesirables, rather than the extermination



camp the Nazis built in Poland. That's not to say Mauthausen doesn't contain its share of unspeakable horrors, and you get a sense of how easily forgotten they are when Bloomfield takes his camera into the nearby town and elicits the gormless reactions of young-marrieds living in former SS quarters. It is left to the bitter testimonies of the camp guides to demonstrate the continuing price of the Nazis' enthusiasm for atrocity.

**London to Brighton**



2006, 85 mins, UK, Cert. 18, Dir: Paul Andrew Williams  
 Cast: Lorraine Stanley, Johnny Harris, Georgia Groome  
 BAFTA Awards 2006 - Carl Foreman Award for Most Promising Newcomer  
 Dinard Film Festival 2006 - Golden Hitchcock Award

Edinburgh International Film Festival - New Director's Award  
 At last - after years in the Mockney doldrums, the British crime flick gets a double-barrelled shot in the arm. London To Brighton is a brutal and brilliantly assured debut from writer/director Paul Andrew Williams. And he's not the only new name to watch - there are terrific turns from unknowns Lorraine Stanley and Georgia Groome, respectively playing a hooker and a teenage runaway in flight from some very unsavoury characters. World-beatingly grim, it'll put you through the wringer, but you won't regret the journey.

Source: [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)

**Lost Embrace**

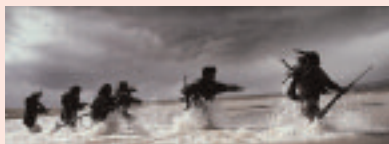
2004, 99 mins, Argentina/France/Italy/Spain, Cert. 15, Dir: Daniel Burman  
 Cast: Daniel Hendler, Adriana Aizemberg, Jorge D'Elia  
 Berlin International Film Festival 2004 - Silver Bear (Best Actor, Jury Grand Prix) + Golden Bear nomination  
 Set in a Buenos Aires galeria (shopping mall), this superb, minor-chord comedy places lingerie clerk Ariel (the sweet and doleful Daniel Hendler from 'Whisky') at the rueful centre of a group of garrulous, mainly Jewish, fellow shopkeepers, family and mild idiosyncrats as he receives a

series of revelations about the father he never knew. Shot like 'The Office' on a mobile, hand-held camera which zooms in and out to catch background events and character reactions, Burman's affectionate, talkative film trades on acceptable levels of sentimentality and boasts a series of winning performances, notably Hendler's and Adriana Aizemberg's as his evasive mother.  
 Wally Hammond, [timeout.com](http://timeout.com)



**Mountain Patrol (Kekexili)**

2004, 90 mins, China/Hong Kong, Cert. 15, Dir: Chuan Lu  
 Cast: Duo Bujie, Zhang Lei, Qi Liang  
 Hong Kong Film Awards 2006 - Best Asian Film  
 Sundance Film Festival 2005 - Grand Jury Prize (World Cinema Dramatic) - nominated  
 Lu Chuan's devastating *Kekexili* is based on real-life incidents a decade ago in the mountains of the Kekexili national park in Tibet. Poachers, most of them desperately poor local farmers, are plundering the herds of chinu, a Tibetan antelope prized for its pelt. Volunteers led by Ri Tai team up as

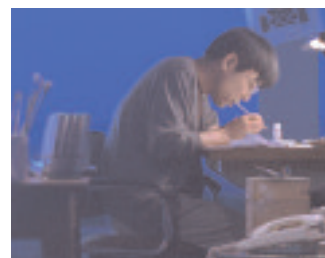


game wardens to protect the animals and there is a fateful clash between the two sides in the snowy wastes; several die, but some of the poachers get away.  
 Ri Tai decides to pursue them and leads a dwindling band of men on a chase that rapidly seems suicidal... Clearly filming in the most adverse conditions and using a largely non-pro cast, Lu smartly minimises the need for exposition by using the figure of a visiting Beijing photo-journalist as the audience-surrogate; the reports filed by his real-life prototype helped goad the Chinese government into policing the area.  
 Tony Rayns, London Film Festival

**Tony Takitani**

2004, 76 mins, Japan, Cert. U, Dir: Jun Ichikawa  
 Cast: Issei Ogata, Rie Miyazawa, Shinohara Takahumi  
 Locarno International Film Festival 2004 - FIPRESCI prize and Special Prize of the Jury (Jun Ichikawa)  
 Sundance Film Festival 2005 - Grand Jury Prize - nominee  
 Adapted from a short story by Haruki Murakami, 'Tony Takitani' is about a soul regretfully acclimatised to solitude: born after the war and given a Western name by his forward-looking but misguided father, Tony (Issey Ogata) struggles to make friends, develops an aptitude for technical illus-

tration and eventually meets a young woman (Rie Miyazawa) whose passion for fashion mirrors his own fetishistic fascination with the look of things - a moving, expressive and refreshingly unsentimental film whose compact running time reflects the quiet efficiency of its narrative, characterisation and mise en scène.  
 Ben Walters, [timeout.com](http://timeout.com)



**Unknown White Male**

2005, 88 mins, USA/UK, Cert. 12A, Dir: Rupert Murray  
 Sundance Film Festival 2005 - Grand Jury Prize (World Cinema - Documentary) - nominee  
 This conundrum of identity originated in 2002 when a thirtysomething English broker, Doug Bruce, woke up on the New York subway with no idea where he was and no memory of who he was. The Coney Island hospital he checked into simply registered him as "unknown white male". Medical examination would later reveal that Doug had succumbed to a rare "fugue state" amnesia whereby his episodic memory - of his life, work, loved ones - was completely wiped: in short, the person he had once been had vanished. His long-time friend, Rupert Murray, contact-



ed him some months later to investigate what happened, and this documentary is the result. The mystery of his trauma deepens as we see Doug trying to reboot his whole cognitive system: he knows about geography, for instance, but doesn't know what snow is, or cricket, or fireworks. More disconcerting is the film's chronicle of reintroduction to his family and friends, whom he meets as if for the first time. He doesn't know them, and they can't locate the person he once was.  
 At some point one wonders if this isn't an elaborate hoax by people who've watched Memento too many times. Can this really have happened? By the end you feel inclined to give the filmmakers the benefit of the doubt. If Doug is faking then it's one of the best impersonations of bewilderment you've ever seen.

## BITESIZE AUTUMN COLLECTION NOW AVAILABLE FOR 'BUY-TO-SCREEN'

The success of the shorts-to-screen scheme has led our friends at Bitesize to release another great selection of shorts for screening to BFFS members. Their Autumn Collection 06 of five cutting-edge films is available to buy-screen-keep until the end September for the sum of £70. With a 15 certificate the collection comes highly recommended:

'The best the thriving short film market has to offer' - *The Guardian*.

**VAGABOND SHOES**

(Dir. Jackie Oudney, UK, 2006, 18 mins)  
On a Friday night in London, Alec, an enigmatic homeless man, sits across the street from a black-tie party at a posh hotel. A chance occurrence gives Alec the opportunity to enter this high society gathering, where the layers of his personality and his past are revealed to an unsuspecting audience.

WINNER – BEST SHORT –  
KODAK/BAFTA SHOWCASE 06.  
WINNER – BEST SHORT – N.Y.C

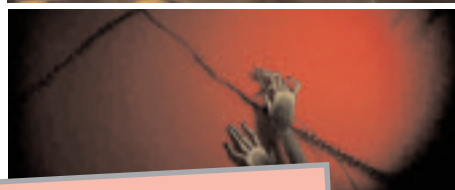
**DEATH OF THE REVOLUTION**

(Dir. The Blaine Brothers, UK, 2006, 6 mins)  
When Tony is told off for stealing a pencil, his ten year-old logic seethes at the injustice. What course of action is open to him other than to inspire a juvenile revolt? With truth, justice and his comrade pupils marching by his side, what can possibly stop him?

"...A lovely, witty thing..." - Simon Callow  
OFFICIAL SELECTION EDINBURGH FILM FESTIVAL 06  
[www.charlieproductions.co.uk](http://www.charlieproductions.co.uk)

**LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME ALONE**

(Dir. Duane Hopkins, UK, 2003, 16 mins)  
A young boy, a young girl. Against the backdrop of the countryside they try to understand and express their feelings for each other. A study in the articulations and limitations of first love.  
WINNER BEST SHORT – EDINBURGH FILM FEST 03

**THE GROTLYN**

(Dir. Benji Davies, UK, 2006, 6 mins)  
I know when the Grotlyn's been,  
Slipping through your house unseen,  
I see the wicked path it went,  
With mischief making mal-intent,  
This creature with a blackened heart,  
Its demon soul now withered dark...  
OFFICIAL SELECTION at EDINBURGH,  
LONDON ANIMATION, AND  
SOHOSHORTS FILM FESTS 06  
[www.thegrotlyn.com](http://www.thegrotlyn.com)

**CUBS**

(Dir Tom Harper, UK, 2006, 9 mins)  
A gang of inner city kids have discovered a fresh sport... the dark new world of urban fox hunting.  
Starring Ashley Walters (Bullet Boy, Life'n'Lyrics) this acclaimed short introduces stunning new filmmaking talent in director Tom Harper – One of Screen International's "Stars of Tomorrow"  
WINNER RUSHES SOHO SHORTS – BEST SHORT 2006

Current shorts collections available from BFFS now comprise: Best v Best Vols. One and Two, and Bitesize Cinema Spring 06 and Autumn 06. For the new collections and all queries on this scheme, please contact Ros Hill at the BFFS office on [info@bffs.org.uk](mailto:info@bffs.org.uk) or call 0845 6037278.

## WHO ARE THESE SHOOTING PEOPLE?

Those of you who attended the 2007 BFFS Film Society of the Year awards ceremony at the BFI Southbank will be aware that our good friends at Shooting People provided a bumper selection of their DVDs and books as prizes to the winners. We thought it was about time that we told you a little more about the Shooting People organisation, its background and activities, why BFFS is working with them and what else they may have to offer you.

Cath Le Couteur and Jess Search set up Shooting People in November 1998 after making their first short film, believing that an online network for filmmakers to exchange info and ideas could radically enhance this collaborative process. Shooting People launched with just 60 filmmakers. Through word of mouth, the community has grown to an active membership of over 30,000. It has also attracted patrons as diverse as Richard E Grant, Christine Vachon, Nick Park, Morgan Spurlock, Kevin MacDonald and Sally Potter.

Thus Shooting People is an online community of filmmakers sharing resources, skills and experience. Members post to and receive daily

email bulletins covering all aspects of filmmaking; they add their events and screenings to website film calendars, and network with other members at parties, salons and screenings in London, New York and elsewhere in the UK. All with the aim of getting their films made and seen.

It is on the latter common goal that BFFS has been working with Shooting People. We believe that the work of independent filmmakers will be of interest to the audiences of independently-minded film societies and community cinemas. The association of these two organisations has opened up opportunities for the two ends of the film business to come together, believing that there is unique potential for filmmakers to develop new possibilities across film production and exhibition. We also share an ethos of the power of communities in helping each other.

So far we have collaborated on making two collections of short films available for the buy-screen-keep scheme – Best v Best Vols. One and Two, and two Shooting People titles are on the current National Block Booking Scheme listing – *Unknown White Male* and *KZ*.

Shooting People have now made available to BFFS members even more special offers, see below and also on Page 3 for a review of Christine Vachon's book *A Killer Life*. To find out more about the Shooting People network and how to join go to [www.shootingpeople.org/account/auth.php](http://www.shootingpeople.org/account/auth.php) and click on 'Join Here' for more information.

OFFERS, OFFERS, OFFERS...  
FROM THE SHOOTING PEOPLE  
WEBSITE

Buy (for home viewing only) both Best v Best Vols. One and Two and pay just £22 + £3 p&p - a saving of over £8! Splendid!

Buy Christine Vachon's insider indie filmmaking book *A Killer Life* (review on page 3) for just £12 + £3 p&p. A killer price!

To access these special offers go to the SP website at [www.shootingpeoplefilms.com/bffs](http://www.shootingpeoplefilms.com/bffs) and follow the instructions.