

# 12th Annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival

Presented by the  
College of Media at Illinois

April 21-25, 2010

The Virginia Theatre  
203 W. Park, Champaign  
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 Ebertfest.com



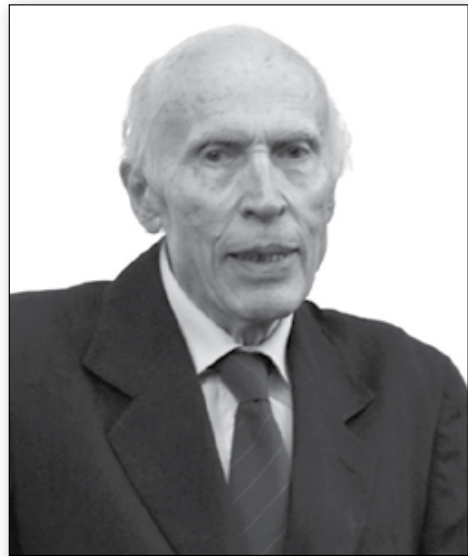
Roger Ebert

*This year's festival is dedicated to*

# John Hughes & Eric Rohmer



1950 - 2009



1920 - 2010

*"Both created  
distinctive virtual worlds  
from their imaginations."*

Roger Ebert



## FILM SCREENINGS AT THE VIRGINIA THEATRE

### Wednesday, April 21, 2010

7:00 pm *Pink Floyd The Wall*  
10:00 pm *You, the Living*

### Thursday, April 22, 2010

Noon *Munyurangabo*  
3:00 pm *The New Age*  
8:00 pm *Apocalypse Now Redux*

### Friday, April 23, 2010

1:00 pm *Departures*  
4:00 pm *Man with a Movie Camera*  
8:00 pm *Synecdoche, New York*

### Saturday, April 24, 2010

11:00 am *I Capture the Castle*  
2:00 pm *Vincent: A Life in Color*  
4:30 pm *Trucker*  
9:00 pm *Barfly*

### Sunday, April 25

Noon *Song Sung Blue*

## SPECIAL POST-FESTIVAL SCREENING

### Sunday, April 25, 2010

4:30 pm *The Soloist*

The Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance is pleased to announce that they will have a special showing of THE SOLOIST immediately following the close of Ebertfest (April 25). The Alliance was formed to challenge disability discrimination and promote education and awareness. This screening will be at the Virginia Theatre at 4:30 pm and it will be free to the public. The screening will be followed by a panel of guest speakers.

## Roger Ebert's Film Festival

# schedule of events

## LIVE WDWS ON-AIR INTERVIEW

Please Tune In to WDWS-AM 1400!

### Wednesday, April 21, 2010

9:00 am - 10:00 am  
*Jim Turpin's (WDWS) Ebertfest Interview*

## ACADEMIC PANEL DISCUSSIONS

### Thursday, April 22, 2010

9:30 am - 10:45 am  
*Getting the Damned Thing Made*  
Moderated by **Nate Kohn**  
Pine Lounge, 1st Floor

### Friday, April 23, 2010

9:00 am - 10:15 am  
*Do Film Students Really Need to Know Much About Classic Films?*  
Moderated by **Eric Pierson**  
Pine Lounge, 1st Floor

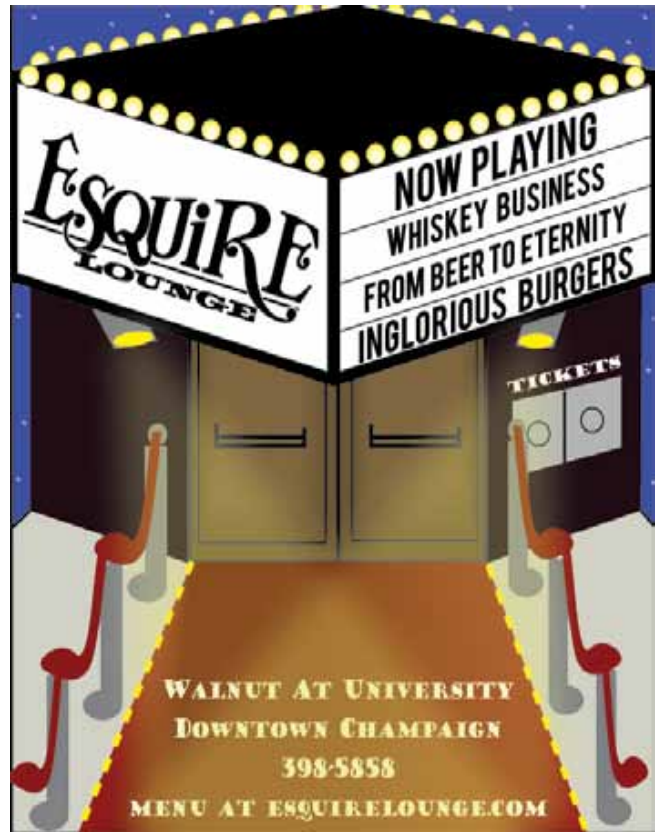
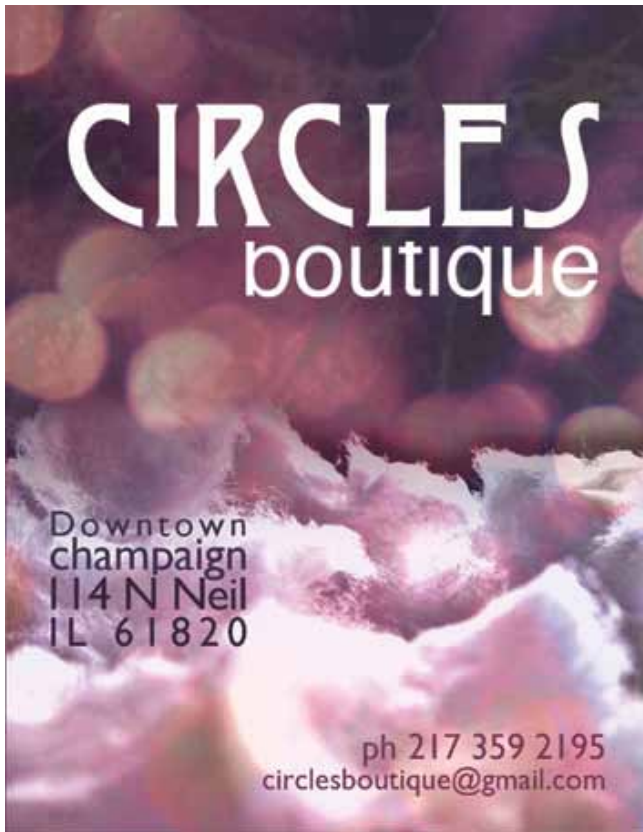
10:30 am - 11:45 am  
*The Global Web of Film Lovers*  
Moderated by **Omer Mozaffar**  
Pine Lounge, 1st Floor

## WORKSHOP

Free and open to the public

### Saturday, April 25, 2010

9:00am - 10:30 am  
*An Amateur Guide to No Budget Filmmaking*  
Moderated by **Don Tingle**  
Illini Union/General Lounge, 2nd Floor



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# contents

Welcome from Roger Ebert.....	4
Welcome from President Stanley O. Ikenberry.....	6
Welcome from the College of Media.....	9
Festival Dedication.....	11
Complete Schedule of Events.....	12
Important Information about the Festival.....	17
Dining Tips.....	19
Festival Guests .....	21-29
Festival Sponsors .....	68
A Look Back at Last Year's Festival .....	71
Special Thanks.....	75
Parking Information and Area Map.....	77
Bringing Apocalypse Now to Today .....	78

## MOVIE REVIEWS

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2010

<i>Pink Floyd The Wall</i> (7pm) .....	30
<i>You, the Living</i> (10pm) .....	32

### THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010

<i>Munyurangabo</i> (noon) .....	36
<i>The New Age</i> (3pm) .....	38
<i>Apocalypse Now Redux</i> (8pm) .....	40

### FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2010

<i>Departures</i> (1pm) .....	44
<i>Man with a Movie Camera</i> accompanied by the Alloy Orchestra (4pm) .....	46
<i>Synecdoche, New York</i> (8pm) .....	50

### SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 2010

<i>I Capture the Castle</i> (11am) .....	54
<i>Vincent: A Life in Color</i> (2pm) .....	56
<i>Trucker</i> (4pm) .....	60
<i>Barfly</i> (9pm) .....	62

### SUNDAY, APRIL 25, 2010

<i>Song Sung Blue</i> (noon) .....	64
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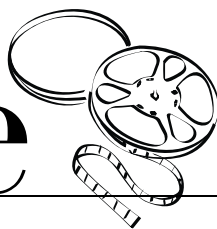
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# welcome



## to the 12th Annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival

*This year's festival is dedicated to John Hughes and Eric Rohmer*

From Roger Ebert

Sometimes it seems to me Ebertfest is not so much a film festival as a revival meeting. We have a special relationship with the movies, and here we gather with others of our persuasion. We love a big screen and great sound. We enjoy being part of an informed, like-minded audience. We detest 3-D and the marketing mind-set that goes along with it. We are open to all forms of movies, from 16mm to 70mm, from silents to talkies, from wide-screen to the classic 1:1.33, and from all over the world.

This began as the Overlooked Film Festival, "for films that have been, or will be, wrongly overlooked." Some filmmakers were understandably not eager to have their works so labeled. Now we simply celebrate films. I don't have a set of criteria in my selections. It's more that I see a film and am seized with the desire to share it with the Ebertfest family.

Again this year, our principal emcee will be the ebullient Chaz Ebert, who assists with the festival at every stage. I hope to play a larger role, but warn guests: The new computer voice you've heard about doesn't allow me to "speak again." I type, it talks. It's just that it sounds more like me.

"Synecdoche, New York" is this year's poster child. I believe many of its early viewers simply never understood what the film was demonstrating, or how. Trained on countless shallow linear narratives, they were unaccustomed to a film which, in its content and structure, was about life itself--and Charlie Kaufman's constant subject, the workings of the human mind ("Being John Malkovich," "Adaptation"). When I wrote



Drawing by Roger Ebert

a blog entry about it, however, I received an outpouring of agreement about its greatness.

This is one of those films, like "It's a Wonderful Life," that will go directly from failure to timeless classic without going through an intermediate stage of success. Indeed, if you give it some thought, "It's a Wonderful Life" wouldn't have been such a bad title if it weren't already taken. I feel it's a singular, stand-alone, one-off film, like "Metropolis," "2001," the works of Tati, "My Winnipeg," "Songs from the Second Floor," or anything by Bela Tarr.

Perhaps at the other end of the fame scale, we'll have an appearance by, and Jennifer Burns' lovely documentary about, Vincent P. Falk, the man in the coats of many colors who is a regular outside the State Street windows of Channels 7 News, and often

waves his coats to tourist boats passing under bridges on the Chicago River.

This film was recommended to me by my Sun-Times colleague Neil Steinberg, who wrote about it in his column. Like many Chicagoans, I'd noticed Vincent P. Falk around the Loop--how could I not?--and was moved by the fullness and joy of his life in the face of impaired vision. I invited it, and soon found myself exchanging e-mails with Vincent, whose visit this year will mark a return to his old stomping-grounds at the University.

Walter Murch, the Academy Award-winning sound and film editor, will appear after our giant-screen presentation of a newly restored print of Francis Ford Coppola's great film "Apocalypse Now Redux." This is the version of the great film that Murch supervised with Coppola,

and represents their agreed-upon final cut. Anyone familiar with film and sound editing and with "Apocalypse Now" will realize that Murch in some ways is its co-author.

I saw the film for the first time at its world premiere at Cannes. It is a film that cries out to be seen on a big screen, with surround sound. If you never have, in some sense you haven't seen it at all.

At the other end of the budget scale, we'll honor "Munyurangabo," a brilliant feature filmed in Rwanda, and its director, the Arkansas-born Lee Isaac Chung, writer, Samuel Gray Anderson, and co-producer Jenny Lund. The film received acclaim after its initial screenings in the *Un Certain Regard* section at Cannes; I missed that year's festival, and asked Chung for a DVD. It deeply touched me. After blogging about it, I heard from its admirers from all over, and most interestingly from a former high school teacher of Chung's in Arkansas, who painted a portrait of a bright, curious student.

Our free Saturday morning Family Matinee will showcase the inspired 2003 film "I Capture the Castle," based on the beloved novel by Dodie Smith. It tells the story of a real family living in a real castle with real problems. Like all of our family films, it's definitely not for children only. It was produced by our friend Anant Singh from South Africa.

It helps illustrate a feeling I'm getting, that modern "children's films" work actively to dumb down our children. With their bright colors, simplistic stories and reliance on repetitive action, they're like fast food, giving an immediate rush but no nutrition. Children instinctively like good movies, but then the bad ones

drive out the good. They love "2001" until they see "Transformers." They love "E.T." until they see "Monsters vs. Aliens." If I were a parent I would lay down the law: "Kids, you can see most any movie not rated R, but it must be a Real Movie. I respect you too much to allow you to see films for kids."

In an opening night program of contrasts, we'll be screening the only surviving 70mm print of "Pink Floyd the Wall," the rock opera by Roger Waters. It's a loan from the British Film Institute. Directed by Alan Parker, it combines live action and animation in a surrealistic portrait of a man in despair. I saw this film at its Toronto Film Festival premiere, and have loved it ever since. When Alan Parker came to the Chicago festival years ago, I dragged him home with me and for the first time he saw a laserdisc; I played "Pink Floyd." He called his office to order a laserdisc player.

We'll follow Parker's film with surrealism in a decidedly lower key: Roy Andersson's "You, the Living," from the Swedish director of the legendary "Songs from the Second Floor." Appearing in person will be actress Jessika Lundberg and production manager and assistant director Johan Carlsson, the author of a book about Roy Andersson.

Ebertfest regulars will recall our screening of "Songs from the Second Floor," and our guests, two actors, one of whom never spoke. Somehow, after an Andersson film, we understood. I am so grateful when I discover a filmmaker who has no interest in repeating a formula or mining a genre but has a completely original vision.

Michael Tolkin, the writer of the screenplay and the novel which inspired Robert Altman's "The Player" (1992), will appear after the screening of a film he wrote and directed, "The New Age" (1994), starring Judy Davis and Peter Weller. I thought it a great film at the time, and now find its story of a well-off couple facing financial ruin to be eerily relevant.

I was also considering Tolkin's great "The Rapture," about a

woman who believes in the literal word of scripture. The film is remarkable because it doesn't differ with her, but bravely follows her logic to the end. I wish Tolkin would direct more. These times call for his films.

Barbet Schroeder, the acclaimed French director whose career began by acting in early New Wave films, will appear with his "Barfly" (1987). It's based on the novel by the cult legend Charles Bukowski, and stars Mickey Rourke and Faye Dunaway. I spent an unforgettable day on the set with Barbet, Bukowski and Dunaway, when Rourke, while acting, bashed through a door with his fist and Schroeder had to break the news to him that he was off-camera at that moment.

One of the greatest perfor-

mal beauty of the film. Note its compositions. The eye-level scenes of corpse preparation suggest Ozu. Even an exterior shot of a building is framed in a beautiful way.

This will be the tenth year the famed Alloy Orchestra of Cambridge, MA will be in the Virginia's orchestra pit to accompany a silent classic, this year the Russian "Man with a Movie Camera." The score will, as always, be of their own composition.

The festival traditionally closes on Sunday afternoon with a film followed by a live musical performance, and do we have a discovery this year! We'll show Greg Kohs's documentary "Song Sung Blue," about a Milwaukee husband and wife duo named Lightning and Thunder, whose tributes to Neil Diamond and

can see we haven't forgotten our roots. Even in these hard times, she performed a magic act in flying Director Yôjirô Takita all the way here from Japan.

Jameel Jones and his cheerful staff at the Virginia Theater put out the welcome mat. The Champaign Park District and the Champaign Police Department are always helpful. Local volunteers act as drivers and guides for our guests. Betsy Hendrick throws her now-legendary Saturday night party. Where would we be without our fabled projectionists James Bond and Steve Kraus, who bring their own digital projectors to complement the theater's vintage 35/70mm projectors? A shout-out to our good friend Bertha Mitchell, who serves her famous downstate barbecue from the tent in front of the theater. Try it! You'll

---

***Now we simply celebrate films. I don't have a set of criteria in my selections. It's more that I see a film and am seized with the desire to share it with the Ebertfest family.***

---

mances of 2009 was by Michelle Monaghan, in the title role of "Trucker." She played a fiercely independent owner-operator of a big highway rig, forced to look after the son she is estranged from. Both actress Michelle Monaghan and writer-director James Mottern will be with us.

When I regard the names of the Best Actress nominees every year, I reflect that the Academy rarely strays off the reservation. Sometimes it will unbend a little to include someone like "Frozen River's" Melissa Leo, but I ask you: Isn't Monaghan's performance here Oscar-worthy?

We'll show Yôjirô Takita's brilliant 2009 Oscar-winning Japanese film, "Departures," which few people had seen when it won, and not many more have seen since. I fell in love with its story of an out-of-work classical musician who finds himself employed in the ceremonial preparation of corpses. Takita will be coming all the way from Japan to visit us. Apart from its story, I love the

Patsy Cline won large and loyal audiences. Then "Thunder," Claire Sardina, will perform, and trust me on this: She's dynamite.

This festival doesn't simply happen. It is a tribute to the hard work and generosity of spirit of hundreds of volunteers from my alma mater and my home town. My parents, Walter and Annabel Ebert, saw many movies at the Virginia, and dad even recalled seeing the Marx Brothers on the stage. The restoration of this palace has preserved a precious chapter in C-U history.

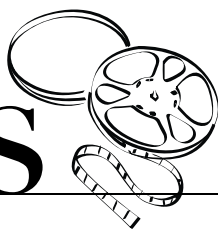
Nobody will ever know how hard Nate Kohn and Mary Susan Britt and her staff work on the festival. Nate, an Urbana native now professor at the University of Georgia and administrator of the Peabody Awards, helps me choose the films. He obtains the prints and permissions. He and Mary Susan work with our guardian angel, Mary Frances Fagan of American Airlines, to arrange transportation here. Mary Frances is another C-U native, so you

like it! The Illini Union plays host for most of our guests in the heart of the campus. We lost our beloved meeter-and-greeter Dusty Cohl in 2008, but the no less beloved Lady Joan Cohl returns as Conspirator-in-Chief.

The festival is a production of the College of Media of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, whose dean, Walt Harrington, has been generous in his support and encouragement. Leone Advertising is our invaluable webmaster at [ebertfest.com](http://ebertfest.com); Carlton Bruett is responsible for the posters and the look of the festival; The Daily Illini, my other alma mater, produces this splendid program. A special thank you to our leading sponsor the Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance.

And very special thanks to University President Stanley Ikenberry and his wife Judy, and Chancellor Robert Easter and his wife, Cheryl, for their generous support.

# greetings



from Interim President Stanley O. Ikenberry

## Welcome to the 12th Annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival!

Roger Ebert recently reminisced about the day his "Daddy" took him to the first movie he ever watched, the Marx Brothers in "A Day at the Races." The movie was just one of many activities father and son shared together – watching television in the basement, listening to music, attending athletic events, taking long drives and much more. Roger's roots grew deep in the soil of Champaign-



Urbana and the University of Illinois.

Roots of the Ebert Film Festival have taken hold as well. They have grown from the power of a remarkable man and the delight

***Roger's roots*** grew deep in the soil of Champaign-Urbana and the University of Illinois. *Roots of the Ebert Film Festival* have taken hold as well. *They have grown from the power of a remarkable man and the delight of a creative idea.*

of a creative idea. Why not bring overlooked films to a community that will enjoy them? This creative idea turns to magic when the venue for the Festival is the place where that man – Roger Ebert – lived, learned and grew to love movies, to write, and critique. Add the magic of local, national and international panel members who analyze the making, meaning and medium of film and you have "Ebertfest," the vi-

sion Roger Ebert and his business and life partner Chaz Ebert created more than a decade ago.

So, sit back and enjoy the movies. Linger in the company of others. Let these remarkable films receive the recognition they deserve. Roger and Chaz: We are grateful for your magic and for all you have given to our community and University.

**Let the fun begin.**

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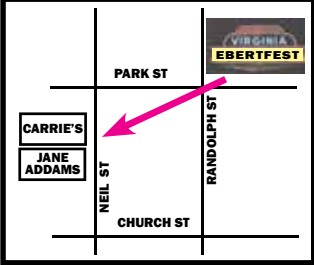
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# join us!



from **The College of Media**

## Celebrating community, filmmaking and Urbana's 'favorite son'

**From Walt Harrington**  
*Interim Dean, College of Media*

The 12th annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival, produced in cooperation with the College of Media, promises to be the best ever. Every year, the five-day event brings tens of thousands of visitors to Champaign-Urbana and enlivens the University of Illinois

and our wider community with good films and exciting visits from some of film's best actors, producers and directors. From the showing of obscure but brilliant movies to artistic and popular Hollywood blockbusters, Ebertfest honors the talent, creativity and artistry of film.

Thanks go to Roger and Chaz Ebert, who have worked tirelessly and selflessly as hosts of what has become one of the world's

premier film festivals. Roger's vision has been not only to show great movies to joyful audiences but to take viewers behind the curtain to see how movies are imagined and created by those making them. As one of America's great film critics, a Pulitzer Prize winner and a graduate of the College of Media's Department of Journalism, Roger is a favorite son from Urbana who has used his stature and experi-

ence to make Ebertfest a gift to his hometown community.

We are grateful to many sponsors, volunteers, Champaign Park District and the University of Illinois officers and staff members who work so hard on behalf of the festival.

But most of all, we are grateful to Roger, the founder of this great feast of films.

**Enjoy Ebertfest!**

## Festival remains true to original vision: Film at its finest

**From Nate Kohn**  
*Festival Director*

It is a great privilege to welcome you to the 12th annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival, a special event of the University of Illinois' College of Media in partnership with the greater Champaign-Urbana community and lovers of movies everywhere.

Our festival has changed little over the years, remaining true to Roger's original vision: the celebration and shared enjoyment of great movies, as they were meant to be seen by those who made them. Ebertfest is all about the films. We give no prizes, have no categories, and no business is done at our festival. That's how we conceived the festival and that's how it still is today.

In 1997, when Roger hosted a screening of "2001: A Space Odyssey" at the Virginia Theatre as part of the University's birthday party for HAL the computer, we got to talking about what makes a successful film festival. We agreed that movies are best seen on a really large screen. And

watching a movie is not something to be done alone – it is a communal activity, bringing together friends and strangers in a mutual emotional adventure. When we sit in the darkened Virginia, both alone and together, we enter another world, transported for a couple of hours from the routines of our everyday lives into the wondrous dreamscapes of shared imagination.

That is what this festival is all about – about sharing, and community, and Roger Ebert, and the love of great movies.

Together at this festival, we are seeing – and by seeing, we are celebrating – movies that Roger considers worthy of our full attention, films that reveal and reflect the wonder of the human condition. We are honored to bring these movies to you, to share Roger's choices with you.

And we are seeing them as the women and men who made them intended them to be seen -- with state-of-the-art projection and sound on a screen the full width of the Virginia Theatre. For that, we thank our cinema designer

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***That is what this festival is all about***  
***– about sharing, and community, and Roger Ebert, and the love of great movies.***

---

James Bond, projectionist Steve Kraus, theatre manager Jameel Jones and all the people at the Virginia Theatre and the Champaign Park District who are restoring this magnificent movie palace.

We also thank Michael Barker of Sony Pictures Classics, Tom Luddy and American Zoetrope, MGM, Film Movement, Jennifer Burns, Greg Kohs, Alloy Orchestra, Meyer Gottlieb at Samuel Goldwyn, Marilee Womack at Warner Bros, Sue Jones at the British Film Institute, Regent Entertainment, Debbi Berlin at Palisades Pictures, and Monterey Media for graciously loaning us their very best 70mm and 35mm prints and digital masters.

I also want to thank all of our sponsors and volunteers for joining us in this endeavor. We look

forward to their unwavering support, and yours, as our festival continues to blossom each year in the Central Illinois Spring.

Finally, I want to recognize Associate Festival Director Mary Susan Britt, Dean Walt Harrington, President Stanley Ikenberry, and Chancellor Robert Easter, without whose hard work and enthusiastic support this festival would not be possible.

This festival is Roger Ebert's gift to his hometown, and for that we thank him and his wife Chaz. They are a remarkable team, and it is an honor to work with them.

So as the lights dim and the curtains open, please sit back and let the festival once again embrace you.

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# Filmmakers remembered, recognized for international accomplishments

By Marie Wilson, Daily Illini Staff Writer

**I**t's Roger Ebert's film festival and he chooses everything. The films to be shown, of course, and also who the festival will be dedicated to. He usually chooses a late figure in the world of cinema.

"Usually, if a major filmmaker died in the last calendar year that Roger really respected and thought highly of, then he'll dedicate the festival to that person," said Nate Kohn, festival director.

This year's Ebertfest will be dedicated to Eric Rohmer and John Hughes.

"They both died during the past year. And both created distinctive virtual worlds from their imaginations," Ebert said in an

e-mail interview.

The contrast between the films of Rohmer, a native of France who worked mainly as a director, and Hughes, an American who wrote more films than he directed, makes the pair an interesting choice, Kohn said.

"One is a French director and one is a quintessential American director," Kohn said. "Both achieved international recognition for their work."

## Eric ROHMER

*French New Wave director, writer, actor*

March 20, 1920 – Jan. 11, 2010

### Alternate names:

Maurice Henri Joseph Scherer, Jean-Marie Maurice Scherer, Gilbert Cordier

### First breakthrough movie:

"The Bakery Girl of Monceau" 1962

### Other popular movies:

"Claire's Knees" 1970

"Chloe in the Afternoon" 1972

### Last movie directed:

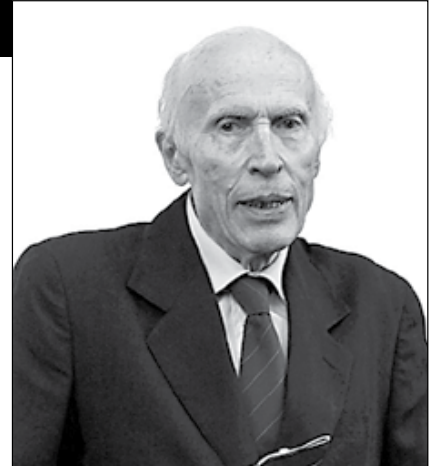
"Astree and Celadon" 2007

### Awards:

National Society of Film Critics Award in 1971 for Best Screenplay "My Night at Maud's"; National Society of Film Critics Award in 2000 for Best Foreign Language Film "Conte d'automne"

### Other facts:

A common theme in his "Six Moral Series" movies was men dealing with temptations outside their relationships.



## John HUGHES

*American writer, director, producer*

Feb. 19, 1950 – Aug. 6, 2009

### Alternate names:

Edmond Dantes

### First breakthrough movie:

"Sixteen Candles" 1984

### Other popular movies:

"The Breakfast Club" 1985; "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" 1986; "Home Alone" series 1990, 1992, 1997, 2002

### Last movie written:

"Drillbit Taylor" 2008

### Awards:

ShoWest Award for Producer of the Year 1991

### Other facts:

The "Brat Pack" of actors including Joan Cusack, John Cusack and Anthony Michael Hall were in many of Hughes' popular movies.



SOURCES: INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE; NEW YORK TIMES OBITUARIES

# schedule



of events for **Roger Ebert's Film Festival**

*Presented by the College of Media April 21-25, 2010*

*This year's festival is dedicated to **John Hughes** and **Eric Rohmer***

## FILM SCREENINGS AT THE VIRGINIA THEATRE

### Wednesday, April 21, 2010

7:00 pm *Pink Floyd The Wall*  
10:00 pm *You, the Living*

### Thursday, April 22, 2010

Noon *Munyarungabo*  
3:00 pm *The New Age*  
8:00 pm *Apocalypse Now Redux*

### Friday, April 23, 2010

1:00 pm *Departures*  
4:00 pm *Man with a Movie Camera*  
8:00 pm *Synecdoche, New York*

### Saturday, April 24, 2010

11:00 am *I Capture the Castle*  
2:00 pm *Vincent: A Life in Color*  
4:30 pm *Trucker*  
9:00 pm *Barfly*

### Sunday, April 25, 2010

Noon *Song Sung Blue*

All films will be shown at the Historic Virginia Theatre, 203 W. Park Ave., Champaign, IL. Roger and festival guests will appear on stage after each film to join the audience in discussions about the films. Festival passes (\$125), individual tickets (\$12) and student & senior citizen tickets (\$10) are on sale at the Virginia Theatre box office, at 217-356-9063.

For more information contact:

Mary Susan Britt at marsue@illinois.edu or 217-244-0552  
College of Media

## SPECIAL POST-FESTIVAL SCREENING

### Sunday, April 25, 2010

4:30 pm *The Soloist*

The Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance is pleased to announce that they will have a special showing of THE SOLOIST immediately following the close of Ebertfest (April 25). The Alliance was formed to challenge disability discrimination and promote education and awareness. This screening will be at the Virginia Theatre at 4:30 pm and it will be free to the public. The screening will be followed by a panel of guest speakers.

## ACADEMIC PANEL DISCUSSIONS

### Illini Union

1401 Green Street, Urbana, IL  
*Free and open to the public*

### Thursday, April 22, 2010

9:30 am – 10:45 am  
*Getting the Damned Thing Made*  
Moderated by **Nate Kohn**  
Pine Lounge, 1st Floor

### Friday, April 23, 2010

9:00 am – 10:15 am  
*Do Film Students Really Need to Know Much About Classic Films?*

Moderated by **Eric Pierson**  
Pine Lounge, 1st Floor

10:30 am – 11:45 am  
*The Global Web of Film Lovers*

Moderated by **Omer Mozaffar**  
Pine Lounge, 1st Floor



## ACADEMIC PANEL DISCUSSIONS

**Saturday, April 24, 2010**

9:00am -10:30 am

### ***An Amateur Guide to No Budget Filmmaking***

Moderated by **Don Tingle**

General Lounge, 2nd Floor

## **DIRECTIONS TO THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS:**

### ***From the Virginia Theatre to the Illini Union:***

- Turn RIGHT onto N. NEIL STREET
- Turn LEFT onto E. SPRINGFIELD AVENUE
- Turn RIGHT onto S. WRIGHT STREET
- Turn LEFT onto W. GREEN STREET
- The Illini Union will be on the right.

## LIVE WDWS ON-AIR INTERVIEW

**Please Tune In to WDWS-AM 1400!**

**Wednesday, April 21, 2010**

9:00 am - 10:00 am

### ***Jim Turpin's (WDWS) Ebertfest Interview***

## WORKSHOP

***Free and open to the public***

**Saturday, April 25, 2010**

9:00am -10:30 am

### ***An Amateur Guide to No Budget Filmmaking***

Moderated by **Don Tingle**

Illini Union/General Lounge, 2nd Floor

Whether you call it "amateur movie making" or "no-budget filmmaking," it's still making a movie, and you don't need expensive equipment to do it. Shooting and editing a short film is within reach of anyone with access to a video camera and a computer that can burn a DVD.

This workshop provides a basic overview of the amateur, no-budget filmmaking process. Filmmaking can be complicated, but you'll learn to break it down into small steps. You'll learn how to organize your story, plan the production, and shoot and edit your film using simple techniques. You'll learn low and no cost ways to give your short film a professional look, and how to overcome many of the technical obstacles to filmmaking.

Mr. Don Tingle is the Workshop Director for the Alabama Filmmakers Co-op, a Huntsville-based community service organization. Don has presented over 80 workshops on various aspects of low budget and amateur moviemaking. He leads multiple workshops for the North Alabama community, has served as host and moderator for panel discussions at film festivals and has interviewed actors, screenwriters and filmmakers. By day, Don is a Technical Director at a Huntsville based aerospace company and past president of Huntsville's Association of Community Artists.

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COMING SOON!

## *Tootsie's Lobby*

*The Virginia Theatre will be closed  
June 15 – November 1, 2010 for Renovation*

In June of this year the Virginia Theatre will close to complete one of the biggest renovations of her time. Thanks to a \$1 million gift left by Michael Carragher and other donations, the entire front part of the theatre will undergo a major transformation. New exterior doors and transoms will be installed along with new interior doors. A new marquee, fashioned after the original, rectangular sign, will soon light the entrance and boast the names of shows being featured for all to see. Step inside and you will be greeted by the warmth of restored plaster and woodwork, and a new concession stand and lighting, all reminiscent of the days when the theatre first opened her doors in 1921.

April marks the 12th year for Roger Ebert's Film Festival in this historic facility and although the renovations that will occur once the doors close in June will indeed be spectacular, there is still much to be done. The auditorium, upper lobby and dressing rooms still need considerable work to bring this facility back to her original glory. By donating online now at [www.champaignparkdistrict.com](http://www.champaignparkdistrict.com), you can help complete the restoration of one of Champaign's oldest remaining film palaces and in doing so ensure EbertFest and other events like it will always have a home in the Virginia Theatre.

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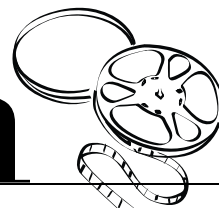
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# information



*what you need to know about the Festival*

## TICKET INFORMATION

- A Festival pass to all 13 screenings is \$125.
- Individual tickets are \$12, student and senior citizen tickets are \$10.
- Festival passes and tickets are available at the Virginia Theatre, 217-356-9063.
- Festival passes can be purchased online at [www.ebertfest.com](http://www.ebertfest.com) through Ticketweb.
- All the films are screened at the historic Virginia Theatre, 203 W. Park Ave., Champaign, IL.

## PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel discussions will be held at the Illini Union, 1401 W. Green St., Urbana, IL in the Pine Lounge on the 1st floor and the General Lounge on the 2nd floor.

- Thursday, April 22
- Friday, April 23
- Saturday, April 24

## FESTIVAL UPDATES

Updated schedules and information will be posted on the festival's Web site: [www.ebertfest.com](http://www.ebertfest.com).

## THEATRE GUIDELINES

- Theatre doors will open **ONE HOUR** prior to the **FIRST** screening of the day. This applies to everyone (all passholders - VIP and Festival - and individual ticket holders).
  - Seating for each film will begin approximately 30 minutes before each screening time. Seating is general admission only. NOTE: Some seats will be reserved for special guests of the festival. Please respect the designated areas.
- Only festival passholders are allowed in the theatre between screenings. Please wear and have your pass visible at all times! Festival staff will be checking for them.
  - A festival pass guarantees seating to all 13 screenings. Shortly before each film begins, any empty seats will be sold to individual ticket holders waiting in line. Latecomers cannot be guaranteed admittance. NOTE: Passholders — please arrive 15 minutes before each screening.
  - Passes/tickets cannot be refunded or exchanged.
  - The Virginia Theatre is equipped with wheelchair-accessible restrooms and adjacent companion seating. The Virginia Theatre has five slots for wheelchair patrons. Please call the theatre 217-356-9063 before the festival begins to arrange seating. NOTE: For every patron in a wheelchair only one companion may accompany a person requiring a wheelchair spot. All other accompanying patrons will need to sit elsewhere.
  - Assisted listening devices are available upon request at the Virginia Theatre. A single earpiece bud, ear speaker, or neck loop may be used by a patron to help enhance their enjoyment of the performance. Devices may be obtained at the box office before the show, and a personal credit card or driver's license will be held by the theatre staff until the device is returned at the completion of the performance. For specific questions about the assisted listening devices, please call the box office at 217-356-9063.
  - Smoking is prohibited in the Virginia Theatre.

## FESTIVAL MERCHANDISE

During the festival, you'll find great merchandise in the east lobby of the Virginia Theatre.

## SOLD OUT FILMS

If you want to see a film that is sold out, go to the Virginia Theatre Box Office 30 minutes before the screening time and wait in the rush ticket line. Shortly before the film begins, any empty seats will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. **NOTE:** At every festival since 2002, all patrons waiting in line for tickets for sold out films were able to get in.

## TICKET POLICY

The number of festival passes sold is limited to 1000. An additional 500 seats are reserved for individual ticket holders and sponsors. We want to make sure that everyone who wants to attend the festival — be it for one film or all of them — can be accommodated.

## NO RECORDING, PLEASE...

Copyright law strictly prohibits the use of any type of unauthorized video or sound recording equipment (including cell phones).

All Q&A sessions and panel discussions will be streamed live on the internet at [www.ebertfest.com](http://www.ebertfest.com)

12th Annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival 2010

Ebertfest 2010 April 21-25 Virginia Theatre 203 W. Park Ave. Champaign, Illinois

ILLINOIS COLLEGE of MEDIA

Tickets for individual Screenings Go On Sale April 5th!

As film exhibition in North America crowds itself ever more narrowly into predictable commercial fodder for an understanding audience, we applaud those brave, free spirits who still hold fast with the unbridled potential of the cinema. — Roger Ebert

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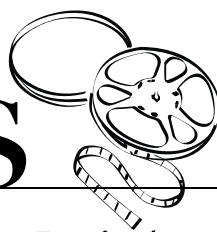
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# dining tips



*Festival restaurant sponsors*

If it's mid-afternoon and you're hungry or if it's late night and you need a quick bite to eat ... Champaign-Urbana has dining options for everyone.

We greatly appreciate our generous restaurant sponsors and encourage you to join us in patronizing them, not only during the festival but throughout the year. They are our subjective favorites among the many great restaurants in the Champaign-Urbana area. For a more complete list, check out these websites:

**the217.com Restaurant Guide:**  
[the217.com/restaurants](http://the217.com/restaurants)

**Champaign/Urbana Dining Guide:**  
[visitchampaigncounty.org](http://visitchampaigncounty.org)

## **Boltini Lounge**

<http://www.boltinilounge.com>  
Boltini has quickly become de rigueur for downtown folks. Intimate seating and a beautiful interior soothe you as you peruse the best-chosen list of liquor in town. Light fare includes small plates, cheese plates, salad and soup, flat breads, tacos, sandwiches and desserts. Outside seating. 4:00 p.m. – 2:00 a.m. daily.

211 N. Neil Street, Champaign, IL  
(217) 378-8001

## **Cowboy Monkey**

<http://www.cowboy-monkey.com>  
Cowboy Monkey is more than just a watering hole! We have some of the best food in town including appetizers, salads, sandwiches, fish tacos, and many other gourmet dishes. Full lunch menu and beer garden open. 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 a.m.

6 Taylor Street, Champaign, IL  
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## **Garcia's Pizza In A Pan**

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## **Great Impasta**

<http://www.greatimpasta.com>  
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## **Soma Ultra Lounge**

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**1999** | Dance Me to My Song | A Tale of Autumn | Surrender Dorothy | Hamsun | Maborosi | Battleship Potemkin | Household Saints | Shiloh | Thirteen | Tron  
**2000** | Sidewalk Stories | Grave of the Fireflies | American Movie | Legacy | The Terrorist | The Castle | A Woman's Tale | Children of Heaven | The Last Laugh | Dark City | Oklahoma! | Deja Vu **2001** | Everyone Says I Love You | Girl On the Bridge | Jesus' Son | The King of Masks | Maryam | Nosferatu | On the Ropes | Panic | Songs from the Second Floor | A Simple Plan | Such A Long Journey | 3 Women | **2001**: A Space Odyssey | Stanley Kubrick: A Life in Pictures **2002** | Patton | Innocence | Grand Canyon | Diamond Men | Paperhouse | Hyenas | A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries | Kwik Stop | Metropolis | Two Women | George Washington | Say Amen, Somebody | Wonder Boys **2003** | The Right Stuff | Stone Reader | The Grey Automobile | Your Friends and Neighbors | Blood and Wine | Medium Cool | What's Cooking? | The Black Pirate | L.627 | The Golden Age of Silent Comedy | Shall We Dance? | Charlotte Sometimes | 13 Conversations About One Thing | Singin' in the Rain **2004** | Lawrence of Arabia | Tarnation | The Son | Once Upon a Time...When We Were Colored | Tully | The General with short subject The Scapegoat | El Norte | My Dog Skip | Gates of Heaven | People I Know | Invincible | Sweet Old Song/Louie Bluiie **2005** | Playtime | Murderball | The Saddest Music in the World with The Heart of the World | After Dark, My Sweet | Yesterday | The Phantom of the Opera | Baadasssss! | The Secret of Roan Inish | Primer | Map of the Human Heart | Me and You and Everyone We Know | Taal **2006** | My Fair Lady | Man Push Cart | Duane Hopwood | Spartan | Somebodies | The Eagle | Ripley's Game | Millions | Claire Dolan | Junebug | Bad Santa | U-Carmen eKhayelitsha **2007** | Gattaca | The Weather Man | Moolaade | Perfume: The Story of a Murderer | Sadie Thompson | Come Early Morning | La Dolce Vita | Freddie Mercury, the Untold Story | Holes | Man of Flowers | Stroszek | Searching for the Wrong-Eyed Jesus | Beyond the Valley of the Dolls **2008** | Hamlet | Delirious | Yes | Canvas | Citizen Cohl: The Untold Story | Shotgun Stories | Underworld | The Real Dirt on Farmer John | Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters | Hulk | The Band's Visit | Housekeeping | The Cell | Romance and Cigarettes **2009** | Woodstock | My Winnipeg | Chop Shop | Trouble the Water | Begging Naked | The Last Command | Frozen River | The Fall | Sita Sings the Blues | Nothing But the Truth | Let the Right One In | Baraka

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Thank you for bringing C-U  
another year of excellent cinema.

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# guests

## *A warm welcome to our 2010 Special Festival Guests*

**T**he following are invited special guests for the festival.

As always, their attendance is contingent on factors over which they have little control, such as unforeseen changes in their work schedule. But we hope that most, if not all, will be with us — plus additional surprise last-minute guests.

### ***Pink Floyd The Wall***

*(Wednesday, April 21, 7:00pm)*

### ***You, The Living***

*(Wednesday, April 21, 10:00pm)*

**JESSIKA LUNDBERG** (actor) plays the lead role of Anna in Roy Andersson's "You, the Living" (2007). She is currently a fourth-year student at the Medical School, Faculty of Medicine at Umeå University, Sweden.

**JOHAN CARLSSON** (production manager/assistant director) has been involved in film production and directing since 2000. His production credits include "Songs from the Second Floor" (2000), "You, The Living" (2007) and "A Time for Everything" (2010), a feature-length documentary, which he also directed. He also directed the short film, "Everywhere" (2000).

### ***Munyurangabo***

*(Thursday, April 22, 1:30pm)*

**LEE ISAAC CHUNG** (director) grew up on a small farm in rural Arkansas and then attended Yale University to study Biology. At Yale, with exposure to art cinema in his senior year, he dropped his plans for medical school to pursue filmmaking. His first feature, "Munyurangabo," premiered at Cannes 2007 ("Un Certain Regard") and the Berlin Film Festival ("Generations"). His new film, "Lucky Life," will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2010. Lee resides in New York with his wife Valerie and manages Almond Tree Films, a production company he founded with his collaborators, Samuel Anderson and Jenny Lund.

**SAM ANDERSON** (co-writer & producer) was born in Latrobe, PA in 1981. He studied English Literature at Yale University. While there, he encountered the films of the French New Wave and was inspired to pursue a life in filmmaking. Sam now lives in Queens NY with his wife, Susan. He wrote and co-produced "Munyurangabo," as well as Lee Isaac Chung's upcoming film, "Lucky Life."

**JENNY LUND** (co-producer) loves to explore people, places, and ideas. She grew up in southern Missouri and studied sculpture and political science at Webster University in St Louis before dropping out and moving west to play in the wilderness of southern Utah. She eventually graduated with a B.A. in Film from the University of Utah and has since worked in independent film as a producer and camera operator. Jenny currently resides in New York and is a partner of Almond Tree Films along with Lee Isaac Chung and Samuel Anderson.

### ***The New Age***

*(Thursday, April 22, 3:00pm)*

**MICHAEL TOLKIN** (director) has been called "an LA Antonioni with a sense of humor" (The New Yorker, 1993). In Artforum he was called, "The only American filmmaker working near the level of Pasolini and Kiezlowski." As a writer/director, his two films, "The Rapture" and "The New Age," were opening night selections at the Telluride Film Festival. As a writer/producer, he is best known for "The Player," for which he won awards from the Writers Guild, The British Academy, and The Chicago Film Critics. His screenplay also won the PEN Center USA West Literary Award and the Edgar Allan Poe Award for best crime screenplay and an Academy Award® nomination for Best Screenplay. As one of the film's producers he was awarded the Golden Globe®, the New York Film Critics Circle Award and the Independent Feature Project Spirit Award for Best Picture. The Rapture (1991), starring Mimi Rogers and David Duchovny, was nominated for three Spirit Awards. Tolkin has also co-written four films: the HBO movie, "The Burning Season," starring the late Raul Julia and directed by the late John Frankenheimer, for which he shared the Humanitas Prize and an Emmy® Nomination; "Deep Cover," starring Laurence Fishburne and Jeff Goldblum; "Deep Impact," a Dreamworks co-production with Paramount Pictures; and also for Paramount, "Changing Lanes," which was named Best Picture of the Year by Catholics in Media. His most recent credit, which he shares with the late Anthony Minghella, is the screenplay for "Nine," which was nominated for four Academy Awards®.

His books, all published by Grove/Atlantic Books include "The Player," "Among The Dead,"

"Under Radar," all of which have been translated around the world, and "The Player, The Rapture, The New Age: Three Screenplays by Michael Tolkin." His fourth novel, "The Return of The Player," was published in 2006.

### ***Apocalypse Now Redux***

*(Thursday, April 22, 8:00pm)*

**WALTER MURCH** (sound & film editor/sound designer) has been honored by both British and American Motion Picture Academies for his film editing and sound mixing. In 1997, Murch received an unprecedented double Oscar® for both film editing and sound mixing on "The English Patient" (directed by Anthony Minghella), as well as the British Academy Award for Best Editing. In 1980 he received the Oscar® for Best Sound for "Apocalypse Now" and a nomination for Best Editing. He's received three other Oscar® nominations for Best Film Editing for "Julia" (1977), "Ghost" (1991), "The Godfather Part III" (1991) and "Cold Mountain" (2004). His Oscar® nominations for Best Sound also include "The Conversation" (1974).

His most recent work is "Tetro" for director Francis Coppola (2009), and "Wolfman" for Joe Johnston (2010). Among Murch's other credits are picture editing for "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," "Romeo is Bleeding," "The Talented Mr. Ripley," "K-19: The Widowmaker" and "Jarhead." Murch also directed and co-wrote with Gill Dennis the film "Return to Oz," released in 1985.

He has also been involved in film restoration, notably Orson Welles's "Touch of Evil" (1998), Francis Coppola's "Apocalypse

*continued on next page*



**11:00AM - LATE NIGHT**  
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Now Redux" (2001), and the "Edison-Dickson Experimental Sound Film" (1894). Murch was also sound effects supervisor for "The Godfather" and was responsible for sound montage and re-recording on THX-1138, American Graffiti, and "The Godfather Part II," as well as being re-recording mixer on all of the films for which he has also been picture editor.

Between films, he pursues interests in the science of human perception, cosmology and the history of science. Since 1995, he has been working on a reinterpretation of the Titius-Bode Law of planetary spacing, based on data from the Voyager Probe, the Hubble telescope, and recent discoveries of exoplanets orbiting distant stars. He has also published a number of previously untranslated works by the Italian poet and novelist Curzio Malaparte (1899-1956). Murch has written on film editing, "In the Blink of an Eye" (2001), and his work has been the subject of two other books, "The Conversations" by Michael Ondaatje (2002) and "Behind the Seen" by Charles Koppelman (2004).

Murch is the son of the painter Walter Tandy Murch (1907-1967). He graduated Johns Hopkins University with a B.A. in Liberal Arts in 1965, and was awarded an Oakley Fellowship to study Cinema at the Graduate Program at USC. In 2006 Murch was made an Honorary Doctor of Letters by The Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design in Vancouver, BC. He married Muriel (Aggie) Slater in 1965. They have four children, Walter, Beatrice, Carrie and Connie. Walter and Aggie live in California just north of San Francisco.

### Departures

(Friday, April 23, 1:00pm)

**YÔJIRÔ TAKITA** (director) was born in 1955 and joined Hiroshi Mukai's Shishi Productions as an assistant director in 1976, making his directorial debut in 1981 with Chican Onna Kyoshi and going on to helm some twenty feature films. His first commercial feature, "Komikku Zasshi Nanka Iranai!" (1986) was enthusiastically received

at the New York Film Festival, and his subsequent filmography includes "The Yen Family" (1988), "We Are Not Alone" (1993), "The Exam (Daddy's Last Run)" and "Secret" (both 1999). In 2001, his special-effects fantasy "Onmyoji (The Ying-Yang Master)" was a box office bonanza and led to a sequel, "Ohmyoji 2," in 2003. This was followed by the critically acclaimed historical drama "When The Last Sword Is Drawn" (2003), which garnered many awards, culminating in the Best Picture prize at the 2004 Japan Academy Awards. Since then he has released "Ashura" (2005), "The Battery" (2007) and "Departures" (2008), which won the prestigious Academy Award® for Best Foreign Language Film. His latest feature film is "Sanpei The Fisher Boy" (2009).

### Man With a Movie Camera

(Friday, April 23, 4:00pm)

**THE ALLOY ORCHESTRA** is a three-man musical ensemble, writing and performing live accompaniment to classic silent films. Working with an outrageous assemblage of peculiar objects, they thrash and grind soulful music from unlikely sources. Performing at prestigious film festivals and cultural centers in the U.S. and abroad (The Telluride Film Festival, The Louvre, Lincoln Center, The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, the National Gallery of Art, and others), the Alloy Orchestra has helped revive some of the great masterpieces of the silent era. An unusual combination of found percussion and state-of-the-art electronics gives the Orchestra the ability to create any sound imaginable. Utilizing their famous "rack of junk" and electronic synthesizers, the group generates beautiful music in a spectacular variety of styles. They can conjure up a simple German bar band of the 1920s or a French symphony. The group can make the audience think it is being attacked by tigers, contacted by radio signals from Mars or swept up in the Russian Revolution.

Terry Donahue (junk percussion, accordion, musical



saw, banjo), Roger Miller (synthesizer, percussion) and Ken Winokur (director, junk percussion and clarinet).

## Synecdoche, New York

(Friday, April 23, 8:00pm)

**CHARLIE KAUFMAN** (director) is the writer of "Being John Malkovich," "Human Nature," "Adaptation," "Confessions of a Dangerous Mind," and "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind." He is the writer and director of *Synecdoche, New York*.

## I Capture the Castle

(Saturday, April 24, 11:00am)

**BILL NIGHY** (actor) was born in Caterham, Surrey in 1949 and trained for the stage at the Guildford School of Acting. Following his debut at Newbury's Watermill Theatre, he worked in regional theatres in Edinburgh, Chester, and in Liverpool, where he formed a touring theater company with Julie Walters and Peter Postlethwaite.

Bill's long association with David Hare began in the early 1980s as a cast member in "Dreams of Leaving," a BBC film written and directed by Sir David. When Hare became Associate Director of the National Theatre in London, Bill became a founding member of the theater's ensemble, which also included Anthony Hopkins. He has appeared regularly to rave reviews, including the prestigious Olivier Award for Best Actor. On Broadway, Bill received critical acclaim for his role in David Hare's production, "The Vertical Hour," co-starring Julianne Moore. The Observer called it "one of the most remarkable performances ever seen on a New York stage."

Bill's long list of television credits includes virtually every major drama series on British TV. He won a BAFTA Best Actor Award for the cult-series "State of Play" and a Best Supporting Actor Golden Satellite Award for "The Lost Prince," both in 2003, and a Best Actor Golden Globe® for the

BBC production "The Girl in the Café" (2005).

Bill's work in film spans 30 years, including award-winning performances in "Still Crazy" (1998), "Love, Actually" (2003) and "The Constant Gardener" (2005). Other cinema credits include "Underworld: Evolution," "Shaun of the Dead," and "Enduring Love." In 2003, Bill won four LAFCA Best Supporting Actor awards for his performances in "AKA, Lawless Heart," "I Capture the Castle," and "Love Actually." And nobody will forget his stellar turn as the half-squid, half-human pirate captain Davy Jones in Gore Verbinski's "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" (2006) and "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End" (2007).

Bill appeared with Dame Judi Dench and Cate Blanchett in Richard Eyre's "Notes on a Scandal" (2007), and co-starred with Tom Cruise in "Valkyrie" (2008), a World War II thriller based on true events in Nazi Germany at the height of Hitler's power. His 2009 credits include the animated adventure "G Force, Underworld: Rise of the Lycans," "Astro Boy," Richard Curtis's "Pirate Radio" and "Glorious 39." In 2010 Bill will be seen in "Wild Target," opposite Emily Blunt, in "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," and in "Chalet Girl," which is currently filming.

## Vincent: A Life in Color

(Saturday, April 24, 2:00pm)

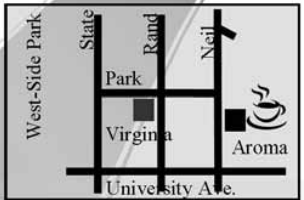
**JENNIFER BURNS** (director & producer) is the founder of Zweeble Films, and "Vincent: A Life in Color" marks her debut as Director/Producer. Prior to moving behind the camera, Jennifer had been working as an actor in Chicago in both theater and film and is an original member of the critically acclaimed improv company, pH Productions. Jennifer had been looking for the right project to kick start her production company and found it right outside her window: a spinning, jacket-twirling vision in fuchsia.

**VINCENT P. FALK** (star)

*continued on next page*


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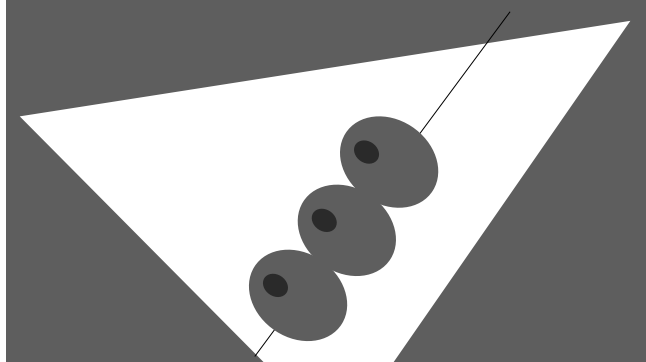
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## Trucker

(Saturday, April 24, 4:30pm)

**JAMES MOTTERN** (writer & director) has written and directed award-winning documentaries for a variety of media outlets including BBC and Discovery Networks. He is the former producer of the annual Slamdance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. He is the recipient of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting. Mottern has several projects in development with studios, including an original screenplay, "Boomerang," financed by Mandate Pictures and produced by Bona Fide Productions.

"Trucker," which he wrote and directed, had its World Premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival last spring.

**MICHELLE MONAGHAN** (actor & executive producer) continues to be one of the most sought-after actresses in Hollywood. Most recently Michelle starred in the box office hit thriller "Eagle Eye" for DreamWorks opposite Shia LaBeouf. Prior to that, she starred opposite Patrick Dempsey in the romantic comedy "Made of Honor."

Michelle burst onto movie screens and received rave reviews for her performance in "Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang," in which she starred opposite Robert Downey Jr. and Val Kilmer for writer/director Shane Black. She then joined Charlize Theron, Frances McDormand, and Sissy Spacek in "North Country" for director Niki Caro. More recently she starred in "Gone Baby Gone" with Casey Affleck and Morgan Freeman; in "The Heartbreak Kid" opposite Ben Stiller; and in "Mission: Impossible III" opposite Tom Cruise and Philip Seymour Hoffman for director J.J. Abrams. Her other film credits include "Perfume," "It Runs in the Family," "Winter Solstice," "The Bourne Supremacy," and "Mr. & Mrs. Smith."

## Barfly

(Saturday, April 24, 9:00pm)

**BARBET SCHROEDER** (director) (pronounced bar-BET) was born in 1941 in Tehran, Iran. His father is a Swiss geologist from Geneva, his mother a German physician. He grew up in Colombia, then at the age of 11 arrived in Paris, where he entered the French Lycée system and went on to study philosophy at the Sorbonne. His film experience was a collaboration at the French film magazine, Cahiers du Cinéma and L'Air (1958-63). In 1962 he worked as an assistant to Jean-Luc Godard for "Les Carabiniers," and directed two short B & W 16 mm films. In 1963, he created the production company Les Films du Losange and produced Eric Rohmer's "Chloe in the Afternoon" (1972) and "Claire's Knee" (1970).

Schroeder received both Oscar® and Golden Globe® Best Director nominations for "Reversal Of Fortune" (1990) and a DGA Best Director nomination for "Terror's Advocate" (2007), for which he also won the French César for Best Documentary (L'Avocat De La Terreur).

In a career that spans nearly 50 years, he has directed 18 films and produced 20 films. Some of the films he is most well known for in the U.S. include "Murder by Numbers" (2002), "Desperate Measures" (1998), "Before and After" (1996), "Kiss of Death" (1995), "Single White Female" (1992) and "Barfly" (1987), all of which he both directed and produced. For his complete biography and filmography, visit [www.barbetschroeder.com](http://www.barbetschroeder.com).

Barbet Schroeder has also appeared in a number of movies, mostly directed by friends. Audiences will remember him as the mechanic in Wes Anderson's "Darjeeling Limited" (2007), as Monsieur Henny in Christopher Doyle's segment of "Paris, Je t'aime" (2006), as the French President in "Mars Attacks!" (1996), and a man in a Porsche in "Beverly Hills Cop III" (1995).

## Song Sung Blue

(Sunday, April 25, 2009, noon)

**GREG KOHS** (director), ten-time Emmy® Award-winning filmmaker, has applied his passion for emotional, human storytelling to still photography, commercials, and documentaries. Kohs began his career while an undergraduate at Notre Dame as a sports photographer. His work was featured in national magazines such as *Sports Illustrated* and *Sporting News*. In 1991, Kohs joined NFL Films, allowing him to combine his love of sports with his passion for filmmaking, all while honing his skills as a storyteller. It is there that Kohs cultivated his real-as-dirt, captured-not-contrived filmmaking style. In 2000, Kohs successfully transitioned from making Super Bowl films to making award-winning Super Bowl commercials. This occurred as he signed an exclusive worldwide agreement as a commercial director with @radical.media. His international client roster includes Nike, MasterCard, AT&T, Walmart, EA Sports and Disney, among many others. Kohs, a member of the DGA, recently completed his first independent feature-length documentary, "Song Sung Blue." Over ten years in the making, this powerful award-winning film tells the story of Lighting & Thunder, a husband and wife singing duo, and their pursuit of the American Dream. A native of Detroit, Kohs now lives outside of Philadelphia with his wife and three children.

**CLAIRE SARDINA** ("Thunder"), a native of Milwaukee, is an entertainer and one half of Milwaukee's very own Lightning & Thunder, a husband and wife singing duo who pay tribute to the music of Neil Diamond, ABBA and Patsy Cline.

## 2010 Panelists & Special Guests

**ALI ARIKAN** is a cineaste and blogger from Turkey. Ali's writing on film, music, television and culture appears on his blog "Cerebral Mastication" (<http://cerebralmastication.blogspot.com>), Slant Magazine's official blog, "The House Next Door" (<http://www.slantmagazine.com/house/>), and "Edward Copeland on Film" (<http://eddieonfilm.blogspot.com/>). In addition, he is a contributor to various film and pop-culture sites on the blogosphere. He also believes in the transformative potential of Twitter (<http://twitter.com/aliarikan>).

Ali's first encounter with the awesome power of cinema was when he saw Ray Harryhausen's "The Clash of the Titans" at the now-defunct Akün Sinemasi in Kavaklıdere, Ankara. This led to an interest in both cinema and Greek Mythology, eventually paving the way for a lifelong immersion in the arts. His eclectic cinematic interests include the films of the 'movie brats,' Alfred Hitchcock, Jewish comedy, film noir, biographies, and movies about contemporary British history.

Originally from Ankara, Turkey, Ali has lived in Cologne, Germany; Durham and London, U.K. He currently resides in Istanbul, Turkey.



**MICHAEL BARKER** has been the Co-President of Sony Pictures Classics since its inception over 18 years ago. Sony Pictures Classics produces, distributes, and acquires independent films from all over the world.

Films currently playing or recently released on DVD include the Academy Award® nominated features "An Education" (Lone Scherfig), "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus" (Terry Gilliam), "The Last Station" (Michael Hoffman), "Coco Before Chanel" (Anne Fontaine) and three of the five Oscar® nominees for best Foreign Language film category: "A Prophet/Un Prophète" (France), "The White Ribbon" (Germany), and winner, "The Secret in Their Eyes" (Argentina). These films collectively earned 13 Oscar® nominations.

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Over the years Michael has worked with some of the world's finest filmmakers including Akira Kurosawa, Louis Malle, Pedro Almodóvar, Yimou Zhang, Ingmar Bergman, Guillermo del Toro, and Robert Altman. Past successes include "Capote," "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," and "Howards End," all nominated for the Best Picture Academy Award®.

**DAVID BORDWELL** is retired from teaching at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has written several books on film aesthetics and history, and he is a particular fan of silent movies and Asian filmmaking. A collection of his essays, "Poetics Of Cinema," was published in 2007. He and Kristin Thompson, who have collaborated on "Film Art: An Introduction" (9th edition, 2010), write about film regularly at [www.davidbordwell.net/blog](http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog).

**SEONGYONG CHO** was born in Jeon-ju, South Korea. He is 27 and is currently a graduate student at the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) in Dae-jeon, where he has lived in campus dormitories for over 10 years. He will complete his graduate course this summer and, so he is contemplating the next steps in his life. Nevertheless, his passion for good movies continues its primitive rampage, which includes weekly pilgrimages to the local multiplex. He started his blog in 2008 and wrote 380 reviews (in Korean) last year. In the midst of that, he manages to find time for books, music, exercise (usually treadmill and swimming), and corresponding with Mr. Ebert and other bloggers.

**TOM DARK** is a literary agent for the Heacock Hill Literary Agency (<http://www.heacockhill.com/>). Certain of his clients, if they are correct, may point the way toward faster-than-light technology, or present classically empirical evidence that suggests

consciousness forms biological matter, not the other way around. If they are wrong, no harm done. In any case, it is time for new ideas. The more basic, cheaper and the more accessible to individual experimentation, the better.

Tom has worked as an editor, writer, copywriter, promoter, producer, sound engineer, musician, actor, scriptwriter, political organizer, public speaker and a host of occupations, forgotten but for the philosophical experiment they represented. This experiment began in adolescence, owing to independent reading, wondering what philosophy ever had to do with anything. Forty years into this experiment, the question has become "what makes people keep dismissing philosophy?" Tom estimates he has watched about 20,000 movies in his life so far, but almost never meets anyone who recommends a film he has already seen.

**JIM EMERSON** is a writer and film critic with experience in nearly every aspect of making and watching movies, including screenwriting (and re-writing and re-writing), production, editing, exhibition, marketing, publishing features, interviews, criticism, and academic study. He is the founding editor-in-chief of, and a contributor to, [RogerEbert.com](http://RogerEbert.com), where he maintains a blog called "Scanners."

Emerson was the editor of the late Microsoft Cinemania, a multimedia movie encyclopedia on CD-ROM and the web, and was the editorial director of other massive film-related internet database endeavors, such as [Reel.com](http://Reel.com) and [FilmPix.com](http://FilmPix.com). A member of the Los Angeles Film Critics Association (while based in LA as the movie critic for the Orange County Register), he has written for many on- and off-line outlets, including Knight-Ridder, the Seattle Times, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Sun-Times, Lincoln Center Film Society's Film Comment, The Rocket, Seattle Weekly, MSN Movies, Premiere, [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), [CinePad.com](http://CinePad.com) and NPR affiliate KUOW.

He is also the co-author (with his friend and sometime writing partner, Julia Sweeney) of the play and screenplay,



"Mea's Big Apology," the film "It's Pat," and other projects. He was a consultant on Sweeney's monologues (and films) "God Said Ha!" and "Letting Go of God," and was a guest writer for SNL in 1994. Emerson has programmed loads of films and series at the University of Washington, Seattle art houses, the Seattle International Film Festival, and the Floating Film Festival (1998-2006).

**C.O. "DOC" ERICKSON**, an executive producer, has over fifty years' experience as a producer and production manager on many of Hollywood's biggest films. He began his career at Paramount Pictures, serving as production manager on five Alfred Hitchcock films: "Rear Window," "To Catch A Thief," "The Trouble with Harry," "The Man Who Knew Too Much" and "Vertigo." He left Paramount to become John Huston's associate producer on "The Misfits," "Freud" and "Reflections in a Golden Eye." He was production manager on Joseph L. Mankiewicz's "Cleopatra." He also spent three years supervising film production for Brut Productions and later became associated with Robert Evans on "Chinatown," "Players," "Urban Cowboy" and "Popeye." Other producer/production credits include "55 Days at Peking," "Blade Runner," "Groundhog Day," "Fast Times at Ridgemont High," "Magic" and "The Lonely Guy."

**WAEEL KHAIRY** is an Egyptian journalist born in London. After five years in the UK, his family moved back to their home country, Egypt, where Khairy has been living in Cairo ever since. His passion for cinema started at a very young age when his father gave him an old video cassette of "Jaws" as a birthday gift, the viewing of which triggered a movie-watching frenzy. Eager to know more about the art form of the twenty-first century, he devoted most of his time to reading and learning about motion pictures. At the American University in Cairo, he studied Communication Media Arts, Film, and Business.

He writes on a regular basis, and, while he works as a film critic for Egypt's only English-language film magazine C, he

prefers to write about the history of motion pictures, film theory, and film analysis. To satisfy this preference, he created his own blog, the Cinephile Fix, where his film essays and reviews are available for movie buffs around the world to read. His goal of having most of his work published and publically recognized, he has achieved! He has always felt that film was a medium often misunderstood as simply a form of entertainment (much like video games) and, while it is that, some films exceed that notion, becoming masterpieces of art, regardless of the medium. He is working on a book that should help films be taken more seriously in both the Middle East and the rest of the world.

**TROYLENE LADNER** is an architect working as a project manager in Jersey City, NJ, where she lives with her husband, takes music lessons, and goes to the movies. She started going to the movies at the Roseland, Beverly, and Normal Theaters in her hometown, Chicago. She first used the internet in the late 1990s, and subscribed to CompuServe specifically to participate in the "Go Ebert" forum. She has contributed to various subjects on Roger Ebert's Journal (<http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/>), questions to the Movie Answer Man, and a cliché to his Movie Glossary.

**CHRISTY LEMIRE** is the movie critic for The Associated Press, based in Los Angeles. She began reviewing films for the AP in March 1999 while covering general assignments in the Dallas bureau, then moved to New York in 2000 to write about all aspects of entertainment. There, she became the first full-time film critic in the AP's history in 2004.

Christy is a member of the Los Angeles Film Critics Association. She has covered the Oscars, Golden Globes, Emmys, Grammys, Latin Grammys and MTV Video Music Awards. She's also reported from the New York, Tribeca, AFI and South by Southwest film festivals. Christy filled in several times as a guest critic on "At the Movies With Ebert & Roeper" and appeared on the show's most subsequent incarnation, "At the Movies." She's been a guest host

on "The View" and appeared on "Good Morning America," "Today," "American Morning," "The O'Reilly Factor" and "Charlie Rose," to name a few. She also fills in regularly on "What the Flick?!" the movie review spin-off of the political talk show "The Young Turks." Christy grew up in Woodland Hills, Calif., and graduated from Southern Methodist University in Dallas. She and her husband, Chris, had a baby boy, Nicolas, in November. NELL MINOW reviews movies every week as The Movie Mom for [Beliefnet.com](http://Beliefnet.com) and radio station across the country. She is the author of The Movie Mom's Guide to Family Movies, and her articles and reviews have appeared in the Chicago Sun Times, Kansas City Star, USA Today, Child Magazine, and the Chicago Tribune.

**MICHAEL MIRASOL** was born in 1975, into a quiet family in San Juan, Metro Manila (Philippines). He writes, "From what I recall, I grew up in a fairly middle class neighborhood, but my mother would tell you that we were always poor. Thanks to mom and dad though, it never felt that way."

His mother grew up in much harder conditions, having only a pair of shoes to walk several kilometers to get to school in the province. Though she was a local beauty, she was smart and tough, working hard all the way to high school. Once she got the chance to move to the city to study at the University of the Philippines, she never looked back. It was still pretty tough for her even after she finished, helping support her six sisters. But she did find her way to work as a secretary for several government offices. His father grew up in the same kind of environment (same province, Bicol region) with his three brothers. He told of childhood memories dating back to the Japanese occupation of the Philippines during World War II. He too was tough, but with a razor-sharp intelligence. He was a slacker in high school and in his early college days. But then he discovered the military, joined the Philippine Military Academy, and applied to both West Point and Annapolis. His preference was the army, but he got his entrance

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exams results first for the Navy, which he aced. Just as he was preparing to leave for Annapolis, he received his results from West Point. He aced them too.

**ELVIS MITCHELL** has hosted "The Treatment," with its inside look at the creators of popular culture, since KCRW first aired the program in April 1996. Mitchell served as the film critic at the New York Times from January 2000 until May 2005. In October 2002, he gave the prestigious Alain Locke lectures on African American culture at Harvard University and, subsequently, has been a visiting lecturer at Harvard in Visual and Environmental Studies and in African American Studies. The former entertainment critic for NPR's "Weekend Edition," Mitchell has also been film critic at the Fort Worth Star Telegram, where he received the 1999 AASFE award for criticism, the LA Weekly and the Detroit Free Press. He has been editor-at-large at Spin magazine and is special correspondent for Interview magazine. He also hosts the TCM interview program "Under the Influence." A WGA Award nominee for his work on "The

AFI Lifetime Achievement Award: Sidney Poitier," he also produced and co-created the NAACP Image Award winning "The Black List: Volume One," a documentary focusing on achievement in the African American community that HBO acquired and ran after the film's debut at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival (where Mitchell has twice served on the Dramatic Competition Jury). "The Black List: Volume Two" was carried by HBO in February 2009, and the final installment had its premiere February of this year.

**OMAR MOORE** has loved film, it seems, forever. He loves to see, write and talk about them. He writes and edits "The Popcorn Reel" (<http://www.popcornreel.com>), his movie review and celebrity interview website. He has contributed letters about film and legal issues to The New York Times. He is a lawyer, athlete, songwriter, interviewer, photographer, political junkie, music lover and sports fanatic. Born and raised in London, he lived in New York City for many years and currently lives in San Francisco.

Moore is one of Roger Ebert's

Far-Flung Film Correspondents, a member of the San Francisco Film Critics Circle, and is the San Francisco Indie Movie Examiner for Examiner.com (<http://www.examiner.com/x-27041-SF-Indie-Movie-Examiner>). You can find more of his commentary on The Blog Reel, <http://popreel.blogspot.com/>, You Tube (<http://www.youtube.com/popcornreel>), Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/popcornreel>) and FaceBook (<http://www.facebook.com/popcornreel>).

**KIM MORGAN** is author and proprietress of Sunset Gun, in which she covers the grand spectrum of cinema -- classic to current, screwball to grindhouse, arthouse to noir. She also writes for MSN Movies where she authors, The Hitlist. Her film, music and culture pieces have been published at Huffington Post, GQ, IFC, Entertainment Weekly, Garage Magazine, LA Weekly, Salon and more.

In addition, Kim served as editorial consultant and writer for ClickStar, where she worked with Peter Bogdanovich, Morgan Freeman, and Danny DeVito, writing and producing DeVito's documentary series, "Jersey Docs."

Previously, she was head film critic for the Willamette Week and weekly film critic for Portland's daily newspaper, The Oregonian. She's also appeared on AMC, VH1, Reelz and Starz and in various film documentaries, including the upcoming feature, "American Grindhouse." She recently guest programmed for Turner Classic Movies. Her most exciting moment was sitting in for Roger Ebert, guest hosting "Ebert & Roeper."

A film noir expert, she's presented movies and moderated interviews for both the Los Angeles and the Palm Springs Noir Festival. In addition, she co-wrote "The Official Michael Jackson Opus," the first biography approved by the Jackson family and estate. She currently lives in Los Angeles.

**HOWIE MOVSHOVITZ** is currently director of film education in the College of Arts & Media at the University of Colorado Denver. He has been film critic for Colorado Public Radio since 1976 and a contributor on film topics to NPR's "Morning Edition" and "All

Things Considered" since 1987. He has a BA in English from the University of Pennsylvania and a PhD in English from the University of Colorado at Boulder. From 1966 to 1969 he was a VISTA Volunteer in rural New Mexico and Colorado. He became a film critic as a direct result of his now 40-year friendship with Roger Ebert.

**OMER MOZAFFAR** is a part-time instructor at various colleges throughout the Chicago area, including the University of Chicago and Loyola University. He usually lectures on Theology, Mysticism, History, and Literature. He was recently named by Roger Ebert as one of his "Far Flung Correspondents."

**RICHARD NEUPERT** coordinates the Film Studies program at the University of Georgia, where he is the Wheatley Professor of the Arts and a Josiah Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor. His books include "The End: Narration and Closure In The Cinema," "A History Of The French New Wave," and the forthcoming "History Of French Animation." Neupert is also on the board of the Ciné movie theater in Athens, GA.

**MICHAEL PHILLIPS** is the film critic of the Chicago Tribune. With A.O. Scott, he has co-hosted "At the Movies" since September 2009. He wrote about film for the San Diego Union-Tribune and the Twin Cities Weekly "City Pages," where he served as arts editor. He was also the film critic for Minnesota Public Radio. Across the last twenty years, he has been the drama critic of the Dallas Times Herald, San Diego Union-Tribune, St. Paul Pioneer Press, Los Angeles Times, and Chicago Tribune. Currently he teaches at the University of Chicago Graham School and the annual USC/NEA arts journalism workshop in LA. His popular two-minute video reviews of the latest releases can be found at [chicagotribune.com/movies](http://chicagotribune.com/movies). He lives on Chicago's northwest side with his wife and their 9-year-old son, who considers hot buttered popcorn "the ace of snacks," one step above "king." Michael is proud to call Roger and Chaz his colleagues and his friends.



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**ERIC PIERSON** is an associate professor and department chair of the Communication Studies Department at the University of San Diego. His current book project, "Blaxploitation: Hollywood's Cash Cow Revisited and Reframed," focuses on the political, economic, and social climate that contributed to the manufacturing and maintenance of Blaxploitation films. His work on black images and audiences has appeared in the Encyclopedia of African American Business History, Screening Noir, and the Encyclopedia of the Great Black Migration. He has done research in the area of public policy, of which his most recent work appears in the Journal of Mass Media Ethics. He is co-author of "The Rhetoric of Hate on the Internet: Hateporn's Challenge to the Modern Media Ethics," which explores the role and responsibility of internet service providers with regard to content that encourages bigotry and hate.

Pierson holds two degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a BFA in Fine Arts in 1983 and a Ph.D from the Institute for Communications Research in 1999.

**DAVID POLAND** is the creator and publisher of [moviecitynews.com](http://moviecitynews.com), host of the half-hour online interview series DP/30, and he still finds time to stir it up daily on The Hot Blog.

**RICHARD ROEPER** was the co-host of "Ebert & Roeper" for eight years. He reviews new movies every week for Starz, on [richardroeper.com](http://richardroeper.com) and for YouTube and [hulu.com](http://hulu.com). Roeper also review films and is a correspondent for the Reelz Channel. Along with Roe Conn, Roeper hosts a daily radio show on WLS-AM from 2-6pm.

Roeper's newspaper column has been appearing in the Chicago Sun-Times since 1987 and has been syndicated to newspapers throughout the world. The column has garnered numerous honors, including the National Headliner Award. He has contributed to Esquire, TV Guide, Entertainment Weekly, Maxim and other publications.

Roeper is the author of eight books, including "Bet the House," which was published in April 2010. From 2002-2005, Roeper was the film critic for the CBS

affiliate in Chicago. Prior to that, he was a regular commentator for seven years on the Fox affiliate in Chicago, winning three Emmy® awards. Roeper has appeared as a guest on "The Tonight Show," "Top Chef," "Entourage," "Nightline," "Oprah," "The Howard Stern Show," "The O'Reilly Factor" and many other programs.

**LISA ROSMAN**, a former labor organizer, writes as a film reviewer and journalist for such publications as Us Weekly, Salon.com, Time Out New York, and her own indieWire blog, New Deal Sally. She has commented on the Oxygen Channel, TNT, the IFC, and for public radio. From 2005-2009, she served as the film editor of the online magazine Flavorpill. Most notably, she also once served as the assistant for Elmo on Sesame Street.

**GERARDO VALERO** was born in 1962 in Mexico City, where he currently resides with his wife Monica. He has a degree in Architecture and a MBA from the IPADE Business School in Mexico. His interest in movies started at a very young age as his father used to take him and his brothers to double or even triple features at their neighborhood theater. He mostly remembers seeing Tarzan movies and Disney classics, though mostly they watched a lot of forgettable war and cowboy movies. He remembers "The Poseidon Adventure" being talked about by everyone at his school, and by the time he saw "Jaws" at age thirteen, it became his favorite all-time film and somehow still remains so, even after watching it more times than he can recall.

Valero first learned of Siskel & Ebert in the mid-eighties during one of many summers he spent with friends in Columbus, Ohio. By 1988 it appeared on a cable station in Mexico and soon became a must-watch for him. Then the internet came along, and in 1999, he emailed Roger his very first suggestion for his Little Movie Glossary, which, incredibly, he chose for one of his coming Yearbooks! Since then Valero has sent him dozens (or hundreds) of suggestions and, even though his days of batting 1.000 in that department didn't last very long, he has happily been published about 20 times in Roger's annual

Movie Yearbook. He has also contributed to Time Magazine's "10 Questions" (segments on Alex Trebek, Andy Roddick and Hillary Swank) and to "Freeze That Frame" in the long-defunct Video Review Magazine (1991).

Valero has won prizes in a number of trivia contests: an Omega watch for the James Bond contest (1995) and a VCR for the Lethal Weapon one (1996), both by Premiere Magazine (Mexico Premiere), and his first DVD player in the Godfather trivia contest by Cinemex, a Mexican movie chain (1998). His main interests are movies and DVDs, playing tennis, following the NY Yankees and, whenever possible, traveling. His favorite film is still Jaws, but the first two Godfather movies make him question his standings every time he watches them.

**KIM VOYNAR** is the features editor and a film critic for Movie City News, Hollywood's homepage. When she's not seeing movies or writing about movies, she stays busy homeschooling her four youngest kids and chasing after Sophie, her recalcitrant Jack Russell Terrier.

**GRACE WANG** is a writer and dreamer who strives to merge reality with her inner world of fantasy and imagination. Her writings have been published in both Chinese and English, in mediums ranging from a national children's newspaper to medical journals to international law and policy publications.

Grace has a deep passion for cinema and writes related musings on her website, Etheriel Musings (<http://etheriel.wordpress.com>). Her film pieces have been published on [highdefdiscnews.com](http://highdefdiscnews.com), <http://culturemagazine.ca> and [rogerebert.com](http://rogerebert.com). Grace is a regular contributor to Roger Ebert's Far-Flung Correspondents feature on his website.

In her spare time, Grace tends to wander (4 continents, 15 countries so far) and has experience in performing arts and modeling. Samples of her short stories, poetry and photography can be found on Etheriel Musings

Grace lives to write, and hopes to write to live. She currently resides in Toronto.

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# Pink Floyd The Wall

## Into madness, isolation from everyone

By Roger Ebert

The rock opera "Pink Floyd the Wall," first performed in 1978, came at a time when some rock artists were taking themselves very seriously indeed. While the Beatles and Stones had recorded stand-alone songs or themed albums at the most, The Who produced "Tommy" in 1969 and "Quadrophenia" in 1973. David Bowie and Genesis followed, and "Pink Floyd the Wall" essentially brought a close to that chapter.

This isn't the most fun to listen to and some viewers don't find it to much fun to watch, but the 1982 film is without question the best of all serious fiction films devoted to rock. Seeing it now in more timid times, it looks more daring than it did in 1982, when I saw it at Cannes. Alan Parker, a director who seemed to deliberately choose widely varied projects, here collaborates with Gerald Scarfe, a biting British political caricaturist, to make what is essentially an experimental indie. It combines wickedly powerful animation with a surrealistic trip through the memory and hallucinations of an overdos-

---

***This isn't the most fun to listen to and some viewers don't find it to much fun to watch, but the 1982 film is without question the best of all serious fiction films devoted to rock.***

---

ing rock star. It touches on sex, nuclear disarmament, the agony of warfare, childhood feelings of abandonment, the hero's deep unease about women, and the life style of a rock star at the end of his rope.

What it doesn't depict is rock performance. There are no actual concert scenes, although there are groupies and limousines and a personal manager. Or perhaps there are concert scenes, and they're disguised as an extended portrait of a modern fascist dictator whose fans morph into an adoring populace. I don't believe this dictator is intended as a parallel to any obvious model like Hitler or Stalin; he seems more a fantasy of Britain's own National Socialists led by Oswald Mosley.

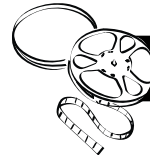
"Pink Floyd the Wall" was writ-

ten almost entirely by Roger Waters, the band's intellectual, self-analytical, sometimes tortured lead singer. Its central character, named Pink, is played by Bob Geldof, of all people, who could not be less like Pink. The credits say he is being "introduced." He's onscreen more than anyone else, goes through punishing scenes, and even sings at times, although this isn't a performance film but essentially a 95-minute music video. Geldof morphs through several standard rock star looks, all familiar from other stars: The big-haired sex god, the attractive leading man, the haunted neurotic, the cadaverous drug victim. In his most agonizing scene, he shaves off all his body hair in a bloody reprise of Scorsese's famous short "The Big Shave."



A scene from "Pink Floyd The Wall"





Wednesday 7pm

There's also a scene where he trashes a hotel room; he must have carefully studied the room destruction in "Citizen Kane." The scene involves a terrified groupie (Jenny Wright) who flees around the room and cowers behind furniture but inexplicably doesn't flee immediately into the corridor. More frightening is that although Pink narrowly misses her with a wine bottle and a piece of furniture, he doesn't seem really aware that she's there.

The girl is earlier portrayed as concerned about him, and rather sweet. That sets her aside from the other females in the movie. There is Pink's mother, so devastated by her husband's death in war that she becomes smothering and domineering toward her son. Then Pink's wife, alienated by his zombie-like disconnection from life, turning finally to an anti-war lecturer to cheat with a man who cares about something. These are both at least recognizable women. The most grotesque female figure in the film is created by Scarfe's animation.

This is a flower so gynecological that Georgia O'Keefe might have been appalled. The bloom seduces a male flower, ravishes him, plunders him, and ultimately devours him. Perhaps she reflects Pink's terror of castration. Scarfe distorts the flower into other shapes for disquieting transformations, as a dove becomes a screaming eagle and then a warplane, landscapes are devastated and walls and goose-stepping hammers march across the land.

As you have gathered, I'm not describing what we think of as a "musical." This is a bold, relentless visualization of Waters' despair. It incorporates a theme that



A scene from "Pink Floyd The Wall"

resonates with British audiences, an educational system ruled by stern, kinky headmasters. The opera's most famous song becomes its best scene. As Parker visualizes "Another Brick in the Wall," students on a conveyor belt are fed into blades that extrude them as ground meat. In the process, the students lose their faces behind blank masks, which are seen again in the faces of the dictator's followers. Message: Education produces mindless creatures suitable as cannon fodder or the puppets of fascists. I gather Waters wasn't keen on attending the reunions of his old school.

There is a narrative, although "Pink Floyd the Wall" doesn't underline it. It suggests that Pink has vivid images of his father's ordeal under fire, is raised too protectively, was incapable of a successful marriage, took no pleasure in casual sex, and finally disappeared into psychological catatonia under the influence of drugs. The opening scene returns later, suggesting all of the action in the film takes place in Pink's head in that hotel room in more or less the film's running time.

The best audience for this film would be one familiar with filmmaking techniques, alert to directorial styles, and familiar with Roger Waters and Pink Floyd. I can't imagine a "rock fan" enjoying it very much on first viewing, although I know it has developed a cult following. It's disquieting and depressing and very good. No one much enjoyed making it. I remember Alan Parker being somewhat quizzical at the time; I learn from Wikipedia that he fought with Waters and Scarfe and considered the film "one of the most miserable experiences of my creative life." Waters' own verdict: "I found it was so unremitting in its onslaught upon the senses, that it didn't give me, anyway, as an audience, a chance to get involved with it."

So it's difficult, painful and despairing, and its three most important artists came away from it with bad feelings. Why would anybody want to see it? Perhaps because filming this material could not possibly have been a happy experience for anyone -- not if it's taken seriously. I believe Waters wrote out of the

## A CLOSER VIEWING

**Pink Floyd: The Wall**  
(1982) Rated R for Sex, nudity, violence, gore, profanity

Directed by **Alan Parker**  
Written by **Roger Walters**

**Bob Geldof**  
as Pink  
**Christine Hargreaves**  
as Pink's mother  
**James Laurenson**  
as J.A. Pinkerton (Pink's father)  
**Kevin McKeon**  
as Young Pink  
**Bob Hoskins**  
as Rock and Roll manager

Running time: 95 minutes  
Print Courtesy: **British Film Institute**

dark places in his soul, fueled by his contempt for rock stars in general, himself in particular, and their adoring audiences. He was, in short, composing not as an entertainer but as an artist. Sir Alan Parker is a cheerful man, although not without a temper, and there is no apparent thread to connect this film with his credits such as "The Commitments," "Fame," "Bugsy Malone" or even such heavier films as "Shoot the Moon: and "Angela's Ashes." I can't say I really know Parker, but I've spent enough time around him to sense he wasn't congenitally drawn to this material.

Those tensions and conflicts produced, I believe, the right film for this material. I don't require that its makers had a good time. I'm reminded of my favorite statement by Francois Truffaut: "I demand that a film express either the joy of making cinema or the agony of making cinema. I am not at all interested in anything in between."

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***This is a bold, relentless visualization of Waters' despair.***

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# You, the Living

Nobody understands me, nor endures my tuba



A scene from "You, the Living"

By Roger Ebert

In a sad world and a sad city, sad people lead sad lives and complain that they hate their jobs and nobody understands them. The result is in some ways a comedy with a twist of the knife, and in other ways, a film like nobody else has ever made — except for its director, Roy Andersson of Sweden.

Andersson's "You, the Living" is hypnotic. Drab, weary people slog through another depressing day in a world without any bright colors. A bitter alcoholic woman sits on a park bench hatefully insulting a fat, meek man, screams that she will never see him again, finds out there's veal roast for dinner, and says she may drop by later. A tuba player complains that the bank has lost 34 percent of his retirement fund. He says this while a naked Brunnehilde with a Viking helmet has loud sex with him. A carpet salesman loses a sale because someone sold the

end off a 10-foot runner.

So it goes. There are 50 vignettes in this film, almost all shot with a static camera, in medium and long shots. Sometimes the characters look directly at us and complain. A psychiatrist says he has spent 27 years trying to help mean and selfish people be happy and asks, what's the point? A girl imagines her marriage with the rock guitarist she has a crush on. The tuba player is hated by his wife and his downstairs neighbor. A bass drum player is also unpopular when he rehearses.

This is the kind of comedy where you don't laugh aloud, I think, although I've not seen it with an audience. You laugh to yourself, silently, although you're never quite sure why. Andersson choreographs the movements of actors who enter and leave rooms, call off-screen or interact with other people we see in other rooms beyond them. He films in bedrooms, living rooms, kitchens, a bar, restaurants, offices, a courtyard, a barbershop and a bus stop in the rain.

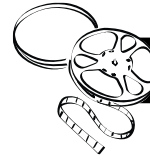
Or it looks like he does. I learn that every space in this

movie was constructed on a set. It took three years to shoot, was financed from six countries and 18 sources, and used mostly plain-looking non-actors. It is meticulous, perfectionist, in its detail. Andersson's tone has been compared to Jacques Tati's, and certainly they're similar in constructing large, realistic sets that allow them to control every detail of the decor, sound and lighting.

There's joy in watching a movie like "You, the Living." It is flawless in what it does, and we have no idea what that is. It's in sympathy with its characters. It shares their sorrow, and yet is amused that each thinks his



Jessika Lundberg plays the lead role of Anna in Roy Andersson's "You, the Living." She is currently a fourth-year student at the Medical School at Umea University in Sweden.



Wednesday 10pm

suffering is unique. The alcoholic woman who complains over and over that no one understands her is all too understandable. She calls her mother a sadist for serving non-alcoholic beer with dinner: "What's the point of living if you can't get drunk?"

Several elaborate set pieces are masterful. One involves long banquet tables lined with joyous people in eveningwear who enact a peculiar, traditional ritual involving them standing on their chairs. Another involves a man who proposes to yank a tablecloth out from under all the dishes on a table. And then there's the scene of the young woman imagining her honeymoon with the rock guitarist. This one I won't say a word about: You have to watch it as it plays. Keep in mind that the film was all shot on soundstages. I believe the publicity blurb that states 26,200 screws were used in

this production.

Roy Andersson, now 66, has been one of Europe's most successful directors of TV commercials, but has made only four features in 30 years. I showed

spoke in the movie and never spoke onstage, either.

"You, the Living," is a title that perhaps refers to his characters: Them, the Dead. Yet this isn't a depressing film. His

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***There's joy in watching a movie like "You, the Living." It is flawless in what it does ... It's in sympathy with its characters. It shares their sorrow, and yet is amused that each thinks his suffering is unique.***

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his "Songs from the Second Floor," winner of the Jury Prize at Cannes 2000, at my Ebertfest. I can only imagine what he must be like. After the failure of his second film, he waited 25 years to make the third one. We invited him to Ebertfest, and he sent two of his actors — one who never

characters are angry and bitter, but stoic and resigned, and the musicians (there are also a banjo player and a cornetist) seem happy enough as they play Dixieland. In their world, it never seems to get very dark out, but in the bar, it's always closing time.

## A CLOSER VIEWING

**You, the Living**  
(2007) No MPAA rating

Written and Directed by Roy Andersson

Jessika Lundberg  
as Anna  
Elisabet Helander  
as Mia  
Bjorn Englund  
as Tuba player  
Leif Larsson  
as Carpenter  
Ollie Olson  
as Consultant  
Kemal Sener  
as The Barber

Running time: 95 minutes  
Print Courtesy: Palisades Pictures

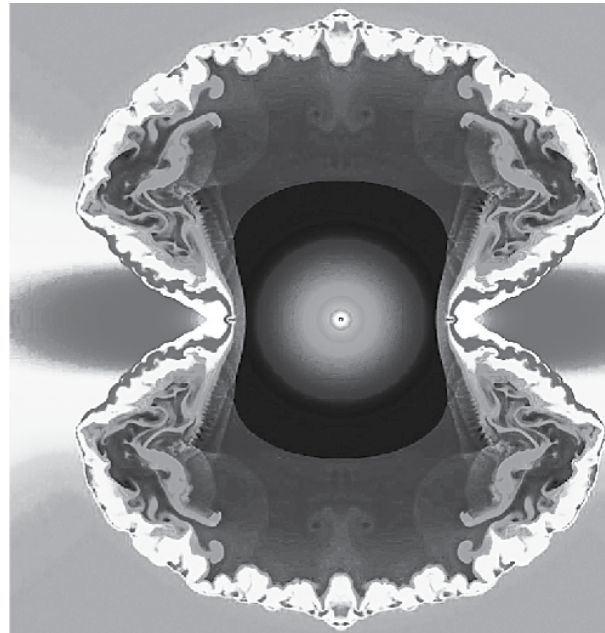
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# Munyurangabo

## Boys on life's road in newly calm Rwanda

By Roger Ebert

Perhaps the best way to approach a subject of bewildering complexity is with simplicity. "Munyurangabo" considers the genocide in Rwanda entirely through the lives of two adolescent boys. They are not symbols. They are simply boys who have been surviving on their own in a big city but are not toughened and essentially good. That's all.

Its story involves one of those miracles that can illuminate the cinema. It was directed by Lee Isaac Chung, 30, a first-generation Korean-American who grew up on a small farm in rural Arkansas. It was shot on location in Rwanda in two weeks. It involved only local actors. It is the first film in the Kinyarwanda language (with few, excellent and easy-to-read subtitles). It is in every frame a beautiful and powerful film — a masterpiece.

An opening shot shows Sangwa and Munyurangabo, called Ngabo, as friends embarking on a cross-country journey. They trek through a pastoral landscape, stricken by drought. There are no dangers along the way. They have been in Kigali, the capital city. They will stop at Sangwa's family farm. He hasn't seen his mother for three years. All seems well, although weighing in our mind is the machete Ngabo carries in his knapsack. Sangwa's mother is joyful to see him, his father reserved and stern: What kind of a boy runs away from home for three years? Why did he not stay to help his family raise his younger siblings? What kind of a thing is that? Who is



A scene from "Munyurangabo"

this boy he is traveling with?

The answers to those questions comes in the unfolding of the story, an experience you should have without viewing the trailer, which provides an item of information you don't require. I will discuss instead the rural society Sangwa (Eric Ndurunkundiye) rejoins, and the city boy, Ngabo (Jeff Rutagengwa), sees for the first time. These people are poor. They catch water in plastic jugs from a trickle on the hillside. They till the soil by hand. They live in a house made from mud bricks. But this is not the wretched poverty you imagine. These people possess dignity and have a life they accept on its own terms, which is all they have known. Children run and laugh. Everything is done in its own time.

Sangwa's mother (Narcicia Nyirabucyeye) cherishes her boy and finds food for him when there is none. His father (Jean Marie Nkurikiyinka) is stern and not quick to forgive, but speaks to his son in reasoned words that obviously sink in. He knows what life is likely to bring Sangwa.

Chung, who also co-wrote with Samuel Gray Anderson, is a born filmmaker. You see that in his eye, his cinematography and his editing. He avoids point-

less reaction shots and obvious payoffs; his strategy is to view a scene, give it weight and let it stand. Everything is perfectly clear, but nothing is hammered home. We get the point. He knows we do.

The timing and precision of the way Chung explains the boys' journey and the way he spaces out the information is so much more effective than crude narrative storytelling. Since all



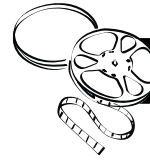
Director Lee Isaac Chung's "Munyurangabo" premiered at Cannes in 2007. Lee resides in New York with his wife Valerie and manages Almond Tree Films, a production company he founded with his collaborators, Samuel Anderson and Jenny Lund.

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***The timing and precision of the way Chung explains the boys' journey and the way he spaces out the information is so much more effective than crude narrative storytelling.***

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Thursday noon

is known between the boys, they never have to tell each other anything simply so we can listen. All dialogue is to the moment, and therefore we understand everything. The playing out of Ngabo's big decision is handled with a perfect sense of the time he takes to arrive at it, and the way it was prepared for and comes about.

There is an extraordinary passage outside a little roadside restaurant. When Ngabo approaches it, an older boy is sitting outside in the shade. He sees the machete in the knapsack. He takes a swig from his beer and observes that tomorrow is National Independence Day. He has been asked to recite a poem he wrote. "Would you like to hear me say it?"

He doesn't wait for a reply. He begins with confidence and pride. It is all there, the whole

canvas, Rwanda, its past, its future. The poet is played by Edouard B. Uwayo, and this is his own poem. Chung's decision to use it as he does is the right one, and the young poet's face evokes depths of wisdom.

"Munyurangabo" played in the Un Certain Regard section of Cannes 2007, where Variety's Robert Koehler called it, "flat-out, the discovery of this year's batch." It won the grand jury prize at the AFI Film Festival. The Tomatometer stands at 100. If it seems like I'm trying to persuade you about this film, I am. It is rolling out across country in those few places where a film like this is welcomed.

You can find it on DVD, and it went to Film Movement subscribers, who receive and can keep a film a month. They certainly got their money's worth.



Samuel Anderson, writer and co-producer for "Munyurangabo" first encountered French New Wave films at Yale University. He now lives in New York with his wife, Susan.

More about this film in Ebert's blog [http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/07/the\\_light\\_in\\_the\\_tunnel.html](http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/07/the_light_in_the_tunnel.html)

## A CLOSER VIEWING

### Munyurangabo

(2007) No MPAA rating

Directed by **Lee Isaac Chung**  
Screenplay by **Samuel Gray Anderson and Chung**

**Jeff Rutagengwa**  
as Munyurangabo  
**Eric Ndurunkundiye**  
as Sangwa  
**J-M Vianney Nkurikiyinka**  
as Papa Sangwa  
**Narcicia Nyirabucyeye**  
as Mama Sangwa  
**Jean Pierre Harerimana**  
as Gwiza

Running time: 97 minutes  
Print Courtesy: **Film Movement**

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## Finding belief with dwindling money

By Roger Ebert

That's what we're good at  
- shopping and talking."  
- Dialogue from "The New Age" Peter and Katherine Witner are conduits for vast amounts of money, which flow from their extravagant Beverly Hills salaries into the hands of the people they buy their lifestyle from. They live in a designer house with walls covered by "important" paintings, and their friends are as wealthy as themselves. Their personalities are made out of psychobabble and arrogance; they are obsessed with their toys, but, hey, you're okay, I'm okay, and that's okay.

Then one day they both find themselves out of work, with only enough cash in the bank to finance about 30 more days of opulence before the whole structure of their lives comes crashing down. "The New Age," Michael Tolkin's film about their dilemma, is a satire, but it avoids making them into easy targets. They're too vulnerable to really dislike; without their credit cards, they're like Boy Scouts without any way to start a campfire.

Tolkin knows the world of Peter and Katherine from the inside out, as he showed in his screenplay for "The Player," another X-ray of the lifestyles of the rich and famous. "The New Age" also has something in common with the 1992 film Tolkin wrote and directed, "The Rapture." It shows his characters caught up in the search for quick spiritual fixes. As their bank account shrinks, the Witners (played with frightening accuracy by Peter Weller and Judy Davis) turn to a series of gurus whose prescriptions run



Movie poster for "The New Age"

from meditation in the desert to all-night pool orgies.

This need to believe in something is almost required by the hedonistic lifestyles of the characters. While many spiritual programs advocate humility, the New Age beliefs of the Witners allow them to star as the objects of their own worship. If you feel right about yourself, if you think positive, if you send out the right aura, then success, of course, will come to you. The catch is that failure and poverty are therefore somehow your own fault, too.

At one point in the movie, the Witners are encouraged to get in touch with their own fears, and Peter utters a classic line: "I know what I fear the most. Having to work to make money." But work they do. The Witners pool their diminishing savings and borrow money to open a trendy

boutique. One of their gurus (played by the droll voluptuary Patrick Bauchau) stands in the center of the empty storefront, tuning in to the space, before advising them where to place the dressing room. Opening night is a great party, but soon the store is failing, and the few customers who do wander in are not much encouraged by the Witners' increasingly bizarre adaptation to the world of retail.

Tolkin gives us one richly detailed set piece after another, involving luncheons, openings, massages, telephone tag, psychic consultations, sex, heartfelt conversation, and pagan rituals led by a bald-headed woman who sees what others cannot see. Meanwhile, the material universe remains the one thing Peter and Katherine can really count on. This is the kind of movie where ancient Chinese sayings can find themselves in the same conversation with co-dependency.

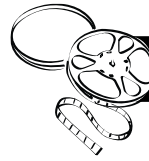
For the Witners, everything centers on themselves. "We were born when the economy was expanding," Peter says. But now that it's contracting, there's no room for people who consider their jobs primarily as a source of money to finance their "real" lives. Down and down they go, the Witners, auctioning their important paintings, losing their house and their cars, failing at business, all the time looking for spiritual fixes, as they wander through the New Age supermarket of Southern California. It's as if they have a disease named Overdrawn. One former friend of Katherine is frank about why she didn't invite them to her latest party: It makes people uncom-

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***While many spiritual programs advocate humility, the New Age beliefs of the Witners allow them to star as the objects of their own worship.***

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Thursday 3pm



Michael Tolkin, director and writer of "The New Age"

fortable to be around failure.

The ending of the movie is perhaps a bit too manipulative.

Maybe not. Tolkin is a director who is not afraid to push stories to their limits, and the final situation in which the Witners find themselves is one which was a real possibility right from the first.

What's best about the movie is that Peter and Katherine are so smart.

They understand everything that's happening, they're articulate, sardonic, witty and savage about it, and yet there's not much they can do. "The reason you keep falling," one spiritual adviser explains to them, "is because there's no bottom." Thanks a whole lot.

## A CLOSER VIEWING

### The New Age

(1994) Rated R for Sexuality and language

Written and directed by Michael Tolkin

Peter Weller

as Peter Witner

Judy Davis

as Katherine Witner

Patrick Bauchau

as Jean Levy

Rachel Rosenthal

as Sarah Friedberg

Running time: 112 minutes

Print Courtesy: Warner Bros

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# Apocalypse Now Redux

## Themes of 'horror' run chillingly deep

By Roger Ebert

More than ever it is clear that Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now" is one of the great films of all time. It shames modern Hollywood's timidity. To watch it is to feel yourself lifted up to the heights where the cinema can take you, but so rarely does. The film is a mirror reflecting our feelings about the war in Vietnam, in all their complexity and sadness. To those who wrote me defending the banality of "Pearl Harbor," I wrote back: "See 'Apocalypse Now' and reflect on the difference."

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***To those who wrote me defending the banality of "Pearl Harbor," I wrote back: "See 'Apocalypse Now' and reflect on the difference."***

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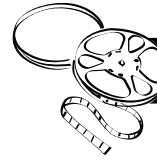
The movie comes to us now in a new version, 49 minutes longer than the original. The most unexpected thing about "Apocalypse Now Redux" may not be the restored footage, however, but the new Technicolor dye-transfer prints. An expert on prints, Jeff Joseph, tells me: "This is essentially a reworking of the old three-strip Technicolor process. Instead of the chemical development of colors, color dyes are transferred to the film directly, resulting in the stunning 'Technicolor' look of the '40s and '50s: Lush, gorgeous, bright, sharp

and vivid, with deep, rich, true blacks."

The physical look of the film is therefore voluptuous and saturated. This is what would be at risk with digital projection. Coppola also pushes the envelope with the remastered soundtrack, and I was reminded of the film's world premiere at Cannes in 1979, when the old Palais was so filled with light and sound that I felt enveloped; the helicopters in the famous village assault could first be heard behind me, and then passed overhead, and yes, there were people who involuntarily



A scene from "Apocalypse Now Redux"



Thursday 8pm

ducked. To be able to come home from the hellish production conditions on the Philippines locations with a film of such technical mastery is miraculous.

The story concerns a journey upriver by Capt. Willard (Martin Sheen), who commands a patrol boat to penetrate behind enemy lines and discover the secret redoubt of the almost mythical Col. Kurtz (Marlon Brando) – one of the Army's most decorated soldiers, now leading his own band of tribesmen. The story is

approach to Kurtz's compound, the shadowed Kurtz and his bleak aphorisms, and the giggling ascent of the stoned photographer (Dennis Hopper), who is the Fool to his Lear.

To the majesty of these scenes in their progression to Kurtz's words "the Horror," Coppola has now added 49 minutes, most of them devoted to a visit by the crew to a French plantation, a colonial leftover that somehow survives. At dinner the Americans and French discuss the colonial

day," and 20 years later, seeing it again, he found it "relatively tame."

To consider "Apocalypse Now" mainstream or tame in either form is a bizarre judgment for Coppola to pass on his picture, but then he has a history of incautious and inexplicable remarks about it, going back to the infamous Cannes press conference where he confessed he had "problems with the ending," and many critics thought he was talking about the Kurtz episode, and not (as he was) the closing titles.

My own feeling is that the original cut was neither mainstream nor tame, but epic filmmaking on a scale within the reach of only a few directors – Tarkovsky, Lean, Eisenstein, Kurosawa. The new version therefore triggered my suspicion. I was happy to see the additional footage, and indeed had seen it before, in outtake form. Did the movie require it?

Some of the footage enters seamlessly into the work and disappears, enriching it. That would include the river footage and some moments with the photographer. The new Brando footage, including some more pointed analysis of the war, is a valuable addition. The Playmate footage simply doesn't work; it was left out of the original because a typhoon prevented him from completing its filming, Coppola says, but "Walter found a way to get in and out of the sequence." Perhaps, but no reason to be there.

It is the French plantation sequence that gives me the most pause. It is long enough, I think, that it distracts from the overall arc of the movie. The river journey sets the rhythm of the film, and too much time on the banks interrupts it (there is the same problem with the feuding families in Huckleberry Finn). Yet the sequence is effective and provoking (despite the inappropriate music during the love scene). It helps me to understand it when

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***In a note released with the film, Coppola emphasizes that this new material was not simply shoehorned into the original version of the film, but that "Redux" is "a new rendition of the movie from scratch."***

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based on Conrad's Heart of Darkness, but replaces the implacable mystery of the upper reaches of the Congo with the equally unfathomable mystery of the American venture in Vietnam. When you get to the bottom of who Kurtz has become and what he is thinking, you can see how the war transformed the original American idealism.

The movie consists of a series of set pieces. The most famous is the assault on the village, opening with the helicopter loudspeakers blasting Wagner at the terrified students and teachers, and continuing with Lt. Kilgore (Robert Duvall) and his swashbuckling bravado on the beach ("I love the smell of napalm in the morning"). Other sequences are also in the permanent memory of moviegoers: The drugged monotony of the river journey, the sudden gunfire that kills everyone on the sampan, the Playboy Playmates entertaining the troops, the dreamlike final

history of Vietnam, and Willard's eyes meet those of Roxanne (Aurore Clement), a widow who will spend the night in his arms. Other new footage includes dialogue and byplay on the boat, a second encounter with the Playmates, and additional dialogue by Kurtz.

In a note released with the film, Coppola emphasizes that this new material was not simply shoehorned into the original version of the film, but that "Redux" is "a new rendition of the movie from scratch." He and his longtime editor Walter Murch "re-edited the film from the original unedited raw footage – the dailies," he says, and so possibly even some of the shots that look familiar to us are different takes than the ones we saw before.

The 1979 version "terrified" him, he says, because it was "too long, too strange and didn't resolve itself in a kind of classic big battle at the end." Facing financial disaster, he shaped it for the "mainstream audience of its

## A CLOSER VIEWING

### Apocalypse Now Redux

(2001) **Rated R** for disturbing violent images, language, sexual content and some drug use

Directed by **Francis Ford Coppola**  
Written by **John Milius** and **Coppola**

**Marlon Brando**  
as Kurtz  
**Robert Duvall**  
as Kilgore  
**Martin Sheen**  
as Willard  
**Frederick Forrest**  
as Chef  
**Dennis Hopper**  
as Photographer  
**Aurore Clement**  
as Roxanne  
**Laurence Fishburne**  
as Clean  
**Albert Hall**  
as Chief  
**Harrison Ford**  
as Col. Lucas

Running time: 202 minutes  
Print Courtesy: **American Zoetrope**

Coppola explains that he sees the French like ghosts; I questioned how they had survived in their little enclave, and accept his feeling that their spirits survive as a cautionary specter for the Americans.

Longer or shorter, redux or not, "Apocalypse Now" is one of the central events of my life as a filmmaker. To have it in this beautiful print is a luxury. This new version will make its way to DVD and be welcome there, but the place to see it is in a movie theater, sitting not too far back, your eyes and ears filled with its haunting vision. Now this is a movie.

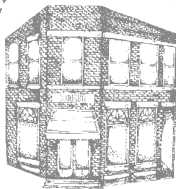
"Apocalypse Now" is one of Roger Ebert's "Great Movies."



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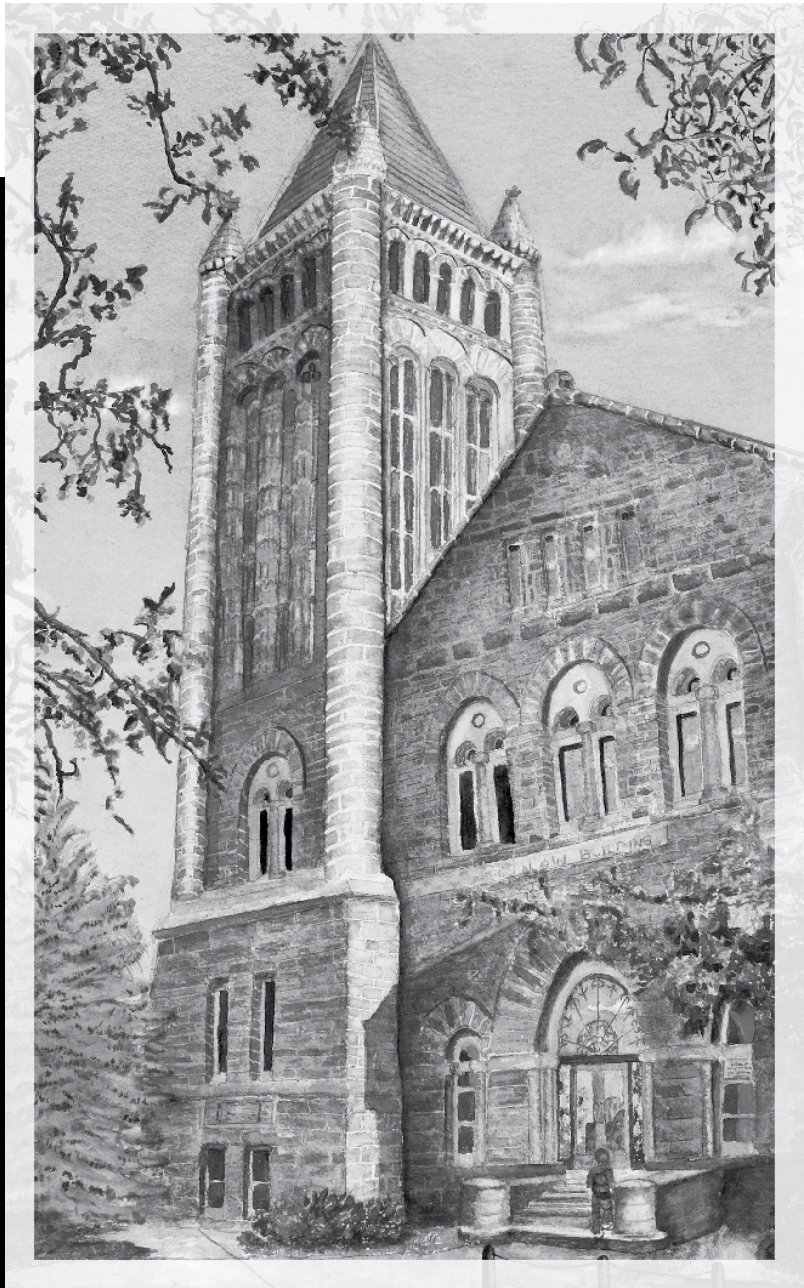


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# Departures

## Living while preparing for dying

By Roger Ebert

**D**eath is for the living and not for the dead so much.

That observation from the mourner of a dead dog in Errol Morris' "Gates of Heaven" strikes me as simple but profound. It is the insight inspiring "Departures," the lovely Japanese movie that won this year's Oscar for best foreign film.

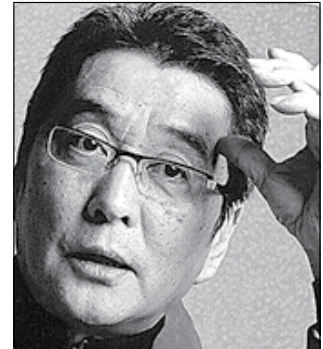
The story involves a young man who apprentices to the trade of "encoffinement," the preparation of corpses before their cremation. As nearly as I can recall, there is no discussion of an afterlife. It is all about the living. There is an elaborate, tender ceremony carried out before the family and friends of the deceased, with an elegance and care that is rather fascinating.

The hero is a man who feels he is owed a death. The father of Daigo (Masahiro Motoki) walked out on his mother when the boy was 6 years old, and ever since Daigo has hated him for that

abandonment. Now about 30, Daigo is a cellist in a small classical orchestra that goes broke. He and Mika (Ryoko Hirose), his wife, decide to move back to a town in the north of Japan and live in his childhood home, willed to him by his recently departed mother. He finds no work. He answers a want ad for "departures," which he thinks perhaps is from a travel agency.

The company serves clients making their final trip. Daigo is shocked to discover what the owner (Tsutomu Yamazaki) does; he cleans and prepares bodies and painstakingly makes them up to look their best. The ritual involves undressing them in behind artfully manipulated shrouds in front of the witnesses. The owner is a quiet, kind man, who talks little but exudes genuine respect for the dead.

Daigo doesn't tell his wife what he does. They need the money. His job is so low caste that an old friend learns of it



Yojiro Takita, director of "Departures", which won the Academy Award for Best Foreign language Film.

and snubs him. The clients are generally grateful; one father confesses cheerfully that the process freed him to accept the true nature of his child.

A lot is said about the casting process for a movie. Director Yojiro Takita and his casting director, Takefumi Yoshikawa, have surpassed themselves. In a film with four principal roles, they've found actors whose faces, so very human, embody what "Departures" wants to say about them. The earnest, insecure young man. His wife who loves him but is repulsed by the notion of him working with the dead. The boss, oracular, wise, kind. His office manager, inspirational but with an inner sadness. All of these faces are beautiful in a realistic human way.

The enterprise of undertaking is deadly serious, but has always inspired a certain humor, perhaps to mask our fears. The film is sometimes humorous, but not in a way to break the mood. The plot involves some developments we can see coming, but they seem natural, inevitable. The music is lush and sentimental in a subdued way, the cinematography is perfectly framed and evocative, and the movie is uncommonly absorbing. There is a scene of discovery toward the end with tremendous emotional impact. You can't say it wasn't prepared for, but it comes as a devastating surprise, a poetic resolution.

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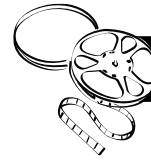
***The music is lush and sentimental in a subdued way, the cinematography is perfectly framed and evocative, and the movie is uncommonly absorbing.***

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Masahiro Motoki in "Departures"





Friday 1pm



Scene from the "Departures"

Some of the visual choices are striking. Observe the way Takita handles it when the couple is given an octopus for their dinner and are surprised to find it still alive. See how vividly Daigo recalls a time on the beach with his

dad when he was 5 or 6, but how in his memory his father's face is a blur. And how certain compositions suggest that we are all in waiting to be encoffined.

In this film, Kore-eda's "After Life" and of course Kurosawa's

great "Toku," the Japanese reveal a deep and unsensational acceptance of death. It is not a time for weeping and the gnashing of teeth. It is an observation that a life has been left for the contemplation of the survivors.

## A CLOSER VIEWING

### Departures

(1982) Rated PG-13 for thematic material

Directed by Yojiro Takita  
Written by Kundo Koyama

Masahiro Motoki  
as Daigo

Ryoko Hirose  
as Mika


Tsutomu Yamazaki  
as Mr. Sasaki

Yo Kimiko  
as Assistant

Kazuko Yoshiyuki  
as Tsuyako

Running time: 130 minutes

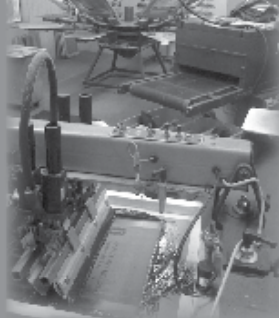
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# Man with a Movie Camera

featuring The Alloy Orchestra

## A film about a film about itself



A scene from "Man with a Movie Camera"

By Roger Ebert

In 1929, the year it was released, films had an average shot length (ASL) of 11.2 seconds. "Man With a Movie Camera" had an ASL of 2.3 seconds. The ASL of Michael Bay's "Armageddon" was – also 2.3 seconds. Why would I begin a discussion of a silent classic by discussing such a mundane matter? It helps to understand the impact the film made at the time. Viewers had never seen anything like it, and Mordaunt Hall, the horrified author of the New York Times review, wrote: "The producer, Dziga Vertov, does not take into consideration the fact that the human eye fixes for a certain space of time that which holds the attention." This reminds me of Harry Carey's advice in 1929 to John Wayne, as the talkies were coming in: "Stop halfway through every sentence. The audience can't listen that fast."

"Man With a Movie Camera" is fascinating for many better reasons than its ASL, but let's begin with the point Dziga Vertov was trying to make. He felt film was

locked into the tradition of stage plays, and it was time to discover a new style that was specifically cinematic. Movies could move with the speed of our minds when we are free-associating, or with the speed of a passionate musical composition. They did not need any dialogue – and indeed, at the opening of the film he pointed out that it had no scenario, no intertitles, and no characters. It was a series of images, and his notes specified a fast-moving musical score.

There was an overall plan. He would show 24 hours in a single

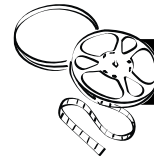
day of a Russian city. It took him four years to film this day, and he worked in three cities: Moscow, Kiev and Odessa. His wife Yelizaveta Svilova supervised the editing from about 1,775 separate shots – all the more impressive because most of the shots consisted of separate set-ups. The cinematography was by his brother, Mikhail Kaufman, who refused to ever work with him again. (Vertov was born Denis Kaufman, and worked under a name meaning "spinning top." Another brother, Boris Kaufman, immigrated to Hollywood and won an Oscar for filming

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***There is a temptation to review the film simply by listing what you will see in it. Machinery, crowds, boats, buildings, production line workers, streets, beaches, crowds, hundreds of individual faces, planes, trains, automobiles, and so on. But these shots have an organizing pattern.***

---





Friday 4pm

"On the Waterfront.")

Born in 1896 and coming of age during the Russian Revolution, Vertov considered himself a radical artist in a decade where modernism and surrealism were gaining stature in all the arts. He began by editing official newsreels, which he assembled into montages that must have appeared rather surprising to some audiences, and then started making his own films. He would invent an entirely new style. Perhaps he did. "It stands as a stinging indictment of almost every film made between its release in 1929 and the appearance of Godard's 'Breathless' 30 years later," the critic Neil Young wrote, "and Vertov's dazzling picture seems, today, arguably the fresher of the two." Godard is said to have introduced the "jump cut," but Vertov's film is entirely jump cuts.

There is a temptation to review the film simply by listing what you will see in it. Machinery, crowds, boats, buildings, produc-

tion line workers, streets, beaches, crowds, hundreds of individual faces, planes, trains, automobiles, and so on. But these shots have an organizing pattern. "Man With a Movie Camera" opens with an empty cinema, its seats standing at attention. The seats swivel down (by themselves), and an audience hurries in and fills them. They begin to look at a film. This film. And this film is about – this film being made.

The only continuing figure – not a "character" – is the Man With the Movie Camera. He uses an early hand-cracked model, smaller than the one Buster Keaton uses in "The Cameraman" (1928), although even that one is light enough to be balanced on the shoulder with its tripod. This Man is seen photographing many of the shots in the movie. Then there are shots of how he does it – securing the tripod and himself to the top of an automobile or the bed of a speeding truck, stooping to walk through a coal mine,

hanging in a basket over a waterfall. We see a hole being dug between two train tracks, and later a train racing straight towards the camera. We're reminded that when the earliest movie audiences saw such a shot, they were allegedly terrified, and ducked down in their seats.

Intercut with this are shots of this film being edited. The machinery. The editor. The physical film itself. Sometimes the action halts with a freeze frame, and we see that the editor has stopped work. But that's later – placing it right after the freeze frame would seem too much like continuity. If there is no continuity, there is a gathering rhythmic speed that reaches a crescendo nearer the end. The film has shot itself, edited itself, and now is conducting itself at an accelerating tempo.

Most movies strive for what John Ford called "invisible editing" – edits that are at the service at the storytelling, and do not call attention to themselves. Even

## A CLOSER VIEWING

**Man with a Movie Camera**  
(1929) No MPAA rating

Written and directed by **Dziga Vertov**

**Mikhail Kaufman**  
as The cameraman

Running time: 68 minutes  
Print Courtesy: **Alloy Orchestra**

with a shock cut in a horror film, we are focused on the subject of the shot, not the shot itself. Considered as a visual object, "Man With a Movie Camera" deconstructs this process. It assembles itself in plain view. It is about itself, and folds into and out of

*continued on next page*

# The Alloy Orchestra



**TERRY DONAHUE** (junk percussion, accordion, musical saw, banjo), **KEN WINOKUR** (director, junk percussion and clarinet) and **ROGER MILLER** (synthesizer, percussion).

*Alloy Orchestra is a three-man musical ensemble, writing and performing live accompaniment to classic silent films. Working with an outrageous assemblage of peculiar objects, they thrash and grind soulful music from unlikely sources.*

*Performing at prestigious film festivals and cultural centers in the U.S. and abroad (The Telluride Film Festival, The Louvre, Lincoln Center, The Academy of Motion Pictures, the National Gallery of Art), Alloy has helped revive some of the great masterpieces of the silent era.*

*An unusual combination of found percussion and state-of-the-art electronics gives the Orchestra the ability to create any sound imaginable. Utilizing their famous "rack of junk" and electronic synthesizers, the group generates beautiful music in a spectacular variety of styles. They can conjure up a French symphony or a simple German bar band of the '20s. The group can make the audience think it is being attacked by tigers, contacted by radio signals from Mars or swept up in the Russian Revolution.*

# Man with Camera

*continued from previous page*

itself like origami. It was in 1912 that Marcel Duchamp shocked the art world with his painting "Nude Descending a Staircase." It wasn't shocked by nudity – the painting was too abstract to show any. They were shocked that he depicted the descent in a series of steps taking place all at the same time. In a way, he had invented the freeze frame.

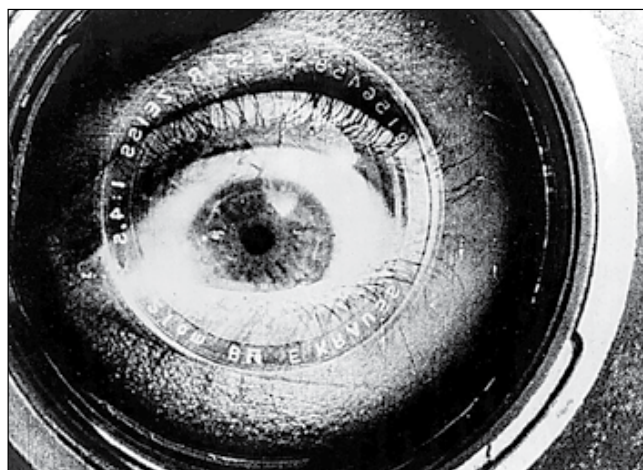
What Vertov did was elevate this avant-garde freedom to a level encompassing his entire film. That is why the film seems fresh today; 80 years later, it is fresh. There had been "city documentaries" earlier, showing a day in the life of a metropolis; one of the most famous was "Berlin: Symphony of a Great City" (1927).

By filming in three cities and not naming any of them, Vertov had a wider focus: His film was about The City, and The Cinema, and The Man With a Movie Camera. It was about the act of seeing, being seen, preparing to see, pro-

cessing what had been seen, and finally seeing it. It made explicit and poetic the astonishing gift the cinema made possible, of arranging what we see, ordering it, imposing a rhythm and language on it, and transcending it. Godard once said "The cinema is life at 24 frames per second." Wrong. That's what life is. The Cinema only starts with the 24 frames – and besides, in the silent era it was closer to 18 fps. It's what you do after you have your frames that makes it Cinema.

The experience of "Man With a Movie Camera" is unthinkable without the participation of music. Virtually every silent film was seen with music, if only from a single piano, accordion, or violin. The Mighty Wurlitzer, with its sound effects and different musical voices, was invented for movies.

The version available in the U.S. is from Kino, and features a score by composer Michael Nyman ("The Piano"). It was premiered



*A scene from "Man with a Movie Camera"*

performed by the Michael Nyman Band on May 17, 2002 at London's Royal Festival Hall. As the tempo mounts, it takes on a relentless momentum. Another score was created by the Cinematic Orchestra, and you can hear it while viewing nine minutes of the film here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvTF6B5XKxQ>

A famous score was created by the Alloy Orchestra of Cambridge, Mass., which devotes itself to

accompanying silent cinema. To mark the 80th anniversary of the film, the Alloy obtained and restored a print from the Moscow Film Archive, and performed their revised score in the city. They will tour with the print in 2010, and on their schedule is Ebertfest 2010.

The surrealist milestone "Un Chien Andalou" (1928), by Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali, is also in Ebert's Great Movies Collection.

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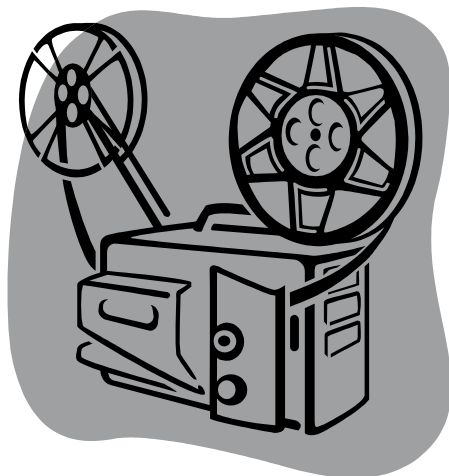
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## Reflecting life's chaos through plot

By Roger Ebert

**F**air warning: I begin with a parable, continue with vast generalizations, finally get around to an argument with *Entertainment Weekly*, and move on to Greek gods, "I Love Lucy" and a house on fire.

The parable, *The Ilo-Ilo* stars of John Doe's life are his wife, his children, his boss, his mistress, and his pastor. There are more, but these will do. He expects his wife to be grateful for his loyalty. His children to accept him as a mentor. His boss to value him as a worker. His mistress to praise him as a sex machine. His pastor to note his devotion. These are the roles he has assigned them, and for the most part they play them.

In their own lives, his wife feels he has been over-rewarded for his loyalty, since she has done all the heavy lifting. His children don't understand why there are so many stupid rules. His boss considers John Doe as downsizable, and fears he may also get the axe. His mistress asks herself why she doesn't dump this creep and find an available man. His

pastor has a pretty good idea what goes on during the other six days of the week.

This dynamic radiates out into every other life on earth and down through time, shading gradually into other religious or irreligious value systems. Every other life relates to those encounters in the same way, depending on local conditions. Life's a stage, and we bit players upon it. Charlie Kaufman's "Synecdoche, New York" is a film that boldly tries to illustrate this universal process by using a director immersed in a production of indefinite duration on a stage representing his mind.

The film is confused, contradictory and unclear, so I am informed by those unmoved by it. Owen Gleiberman of *Entertainment Weekly* grades it "D plus" and has what I agree is a reasonable reaction to this film: "An artist makes a movie that is so labyrinthine and obscure, such a road map of blind alleys, such a turgid challenge to sit through that it sends most people skulking out of the theater – except,

that is, for a cadre of eggheads who hail the work as a visionary achievement."

I imagine he speaks for a majority opinion on this film. I am resigned to belonging to a cadre of eggheads hailing "Synecdoche," although I have praised many a film, like "The Golden Compass," that Gleiberman dismissed as not Great Trash but the compacted variety. Naya, naya, naya! Who's the egghead now? But Owen is a terrific chap and we like each other, especially when we find ourselves enlisted in the same cadre.

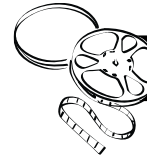
He cites "Last Year at Marienbad" (1961) as another example of obscure obfuscation. How clearly I remember seeing that film in the early 1960s at the University of Illinois. My reaction was precisely the same as the one I felt after seeing "Synecdoche." I watched it the first time and sensed it might be a great film, and that I had not mastered it." We all met with Gunther Marx, a professor of German. We sat over coffee in the Illini Union, late on that rainy night in Urbana. "I will explain it all for you," he said. "It is a working out of the anthropological archetypes of Claude Lévi-Strauss. We have the lover, the loved one, and the authority figure. The movie proposes that the lovers had an affair, that they didn't, that they met before, that they didn't, that the authority figure knew it, that he didn't, that he killed her, that he didn't. Any questions?"

We gaped at him in awe. I was instructed long ago by a wise editor, "If you understand something you can explain it so that almost anyone can understand it. If you don't, you won't be able to understand your own explanation." That is why 90% of academic film theory is bullshit. Jargon is the last refuge of the scoundrel. Yes. But if a work seems baffling yet remains intriguing, there may be a simple key to its mysteries. I doubt that James Joyce's *Ulysses*



Philip Seymour Hoffman looks up at Hope Davis in a scene of "Synecdoche, New York"





Friday 8pm



Charlie Kaufman, director, and Anthony Bregman, producer, stand on the set of "Synecdoche, New York"

had a big opening weekend. You start it and start it and start it, and you shore up in uncertainty and dismay. Then someone tells you, "It's an attempt to record one day in the life of some people in Dublin, mostly focusing on Leopold Bloom. It uses or parodies many literary styles and introduces a new one, the stream of consciousness, which defines itself. Try finding somebody Irish to read the tricky bits aloud." Voila! And now we celebrate Bloomsday, June 16.

For thousands of years, fiction made no room for characters who changed. Men felt the need for an explanation of their baffling existence, created gods, and projected onto them the solutions for their enigmas. These gods of course had to be immutable, for they stood above the foibles of men. Zeus was Zeus and Apollo

was Apollo and that was that. We envisioned them on mountaintops, where they were were little given to introspection. We took the situation as given, did our best, created arts that were always abstractions in the sense that they existed outside ourselves. Harold Bloom believes Shakespeare introduced the human personality into fiction. When Richard III looked in the mirror and asked himself what role he should play, and Hamlet asked the fundamental question To be, or not to be, the first shoe was dropped, and "Synecdoche" and many other works have dropped the second shoe.

Sometimes the most unlikely-seeming films will slot right into this groove of projection, strategy and coping, as they involve the achievement of our needs and desires. You could put Harold

Ramis' "Groundhog Day" (1993) on the same double bill with "Synecdoche." Bill Murray plays a weatherman caught in a time loop. As I wrote at the time: "He is the only one who can remember what happened yesterday. That gives him a certain advantage. He can, for example, find out what a woman is looking for in a man, and then the 'next' day he can behave in exactly the right way to impress her."

Not science fiction. How the world works. On "I Love Lucy," even ditzy Lucy understood this process. I will act as if I am the kind of woman Cary Grant would desire. We all live through "Groundhog Day," but it is less confusing for us because one day follows another. Or seems to.

My first time through "Synecdoche" I felt a certain frustration. The plot would not stay still. It kept running off and barking at cats. The second time was more soothing. I knew what was going on. It is what goes on every day of our lives, made visual by the inspired set design, rooms on top of rooms, all containing separate activities, with the protagonist trying to satisfy, or direct, or obey or evade, or learn from, or receive solace from, the people in all of the rooms.

Jerry Lewis' "The Ladies' Man" (1961) does the same thing, with a famous set that must have been an inspiration for "Synecdoche." Maybe that's another film I need to see again. Those French, what philosophers. Jerry Lewis, shake hands with Alain Robbe-Grillet. The French are correct that Jerry is funnier.

It occurs to me that many movies tell the stories of pre-Shakespearian gods. The hero is introduced, remains constant throughout the movie, behaves as he can and must, and wins at the end. That is comforting for us, and one reason we go to the movies. Imagine that "The Dark Knight" was exactly similar, frame by frame, from beginning to end,

## A CLOSER VIEWING

**Synecdoche, New York**  
(2008) **Rated R** for language and some sexual content and nudity

Written and directed by **Charlie Kaufman**

**Philip Seymour Hoffman**

as Caden Cotard

**Catherine Keener**

as Adele Lack

**Sadie Goldstein**

as Olive

**Tom Noonan**

as Sammy Barnathan

Running time: 124 minutes

Print Courtesy: **Sony Pictures**

**Classics**

but has a brief extra scene at the end where Batman slips on a wet floor in the Batcave, hits his head on the floor, and is killed. Then the camera slowly pulls back to show the dead caped crusader in the gathering gloom and then up in an invisible wipe to the Moon over Gotham City. What's your best guess? Final gross over a billion?

Yes, Owen, I think "Synecdoche, N.Y." is a masterpiece. But here I've written all this additional wordage about it, and I still haven't reviewed it. How could I? You've seen it. How could I, in less time than it takes to see the movie, summarize the plot? I must say that in your finite EW space, you do a heroic job of describing what happens. But what happens is not the whole point. The movie is about how and why the stuff that happens – happens. Might as well try to describe the plot of Ulysses in 800 words or less. All you can do is try to find a key. Just in writing

*continued on next page*

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**Yes, Owen, I think "Synecdoche, N.Y." is a masterpiece. But here I've written all this additional wordage about it, and I still haven't reviewed it. How could I?**

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# Synecdoche

continued from previous page

that, I think I have in a blinding flash solved the impenetrable mystery of Joyce's next novel, *Finnegans Wake*. It is the stream of conscious of a man trying to write *Ulysses* and always running off to chase cats.

## Footnotes:

Comparable to great fiction? Yes, with the same complexity and slow penetrability. Not complex as a strategy or a shortcoming. Complex because it interweaves and cross-refers, and every moment of apparent perplexity leads back somewhere in the movie to its solution. Some great fiction, like *Ulysses* or *The Sound and the Fury* or *The Golden Bowl*, was hypertext when hypertext wasn't a name, but only a need. Henry James seems the steadiest of hands, but underneath, his opening chapters are straining to touch the closing ones, and the middle hides concealed loyalties. And when he writes "intercourse," you never

quite know what he means. Very hypertextual.

*Why is the house always on fire, but nobody seems to notice it? Don't unhappy homes always seem like that? Aren't people always trying to ignore it?*

*The voice-over. Maybe the only time I've heard coughing in a voice-over.*

*That matte painting. Right. It moves.*

*What does the title mean? In my review, I wrote: "It means it's the title. Get over it." Not so fast there, Mickey Spillane. As I should have positively known in a Charlie Kaufman screenplay, it is a word that has a meaning. Wikipedia informs me:*

**Synecdoche** (pronounced "si-nek-duh-kee"; from Greek *sinekdohi* (σινεκδοχή), meaning "simultaneous understanding") is a figure of speech in which:

- \* a term denoting a part of something is used to refer to the whole thing, or



A scene from "Synecdoche, New York"

- \* a term denoting a thing (a "whole") is used to refer to part of it, or

- \* a term denoting a specific class of thing is used to refer to a larger, more general class, or

- \* a term denoting a general class of thing is used to refer to a smaller, more specific class, or

- \* a term denoting a material is used to refer to an object composed of that material.

In other words, the playwright's life refers to all lives, and all lives refer to his life. So Kaufman gives the whole thing away right there in his title. Talk about your spoilers.

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# I Capture the Castle

## Family matinee

## Surviving life, love in a decaying castle

By Roger Ebert

*Information for parents: The MPAA advises: This movie is rated R "for brief nudity." For more information please visit IMDB FAQs and Parents Guide. No children will be admitted without parent or adult guardian.*

**I** Capture the Castle" is the kind of novel dreamy adolescents curl up with on rainy Saturdays, imagining themselves as members of a poor but brilliantly eccentric family living in a decrepit English castle. It's that kind of movie, too, about a sublimely impractical family given to sudden dramatic outbursts. It's a romance ever so much more inspiring for teenage girls than the materialist propaganda they get from Hollywood, teaching them to value genius above accessories. And there's a serious undercurrent; this story was close to the heart of the author, Dodie Smith, whose other novel, *101 Dalmatians*, was more light-hearted and aimed at younger readers.

As the movie opens, the Mortmain family on a country outing finds a castle – small and run-down, it is true, but undeniably a castle – and the father, James, stands on the battlements and declares, "I will write masterpieces here!" He is given to such pronouncements, often followed by a sideways glance to see if anyone believes him. He did write one well-regarded book, it is true, but now he descends into a long barren period, and in 1936, when the story takes place, the Mortmains are behind on the rent, short on food money and increasingly desperate.

The Mortmains are: James (Bill Nighy), the father who seems to be going around the bend; his wife, Topaz (Tara Fitzgerald), a long-tressed artist; younger sister Cassandra (Romola Garai), who is the narrator, and the official family beauty, Rose (Rose Byrne), who is so impatient with poverty that at one point she runs out into the rain and announces she

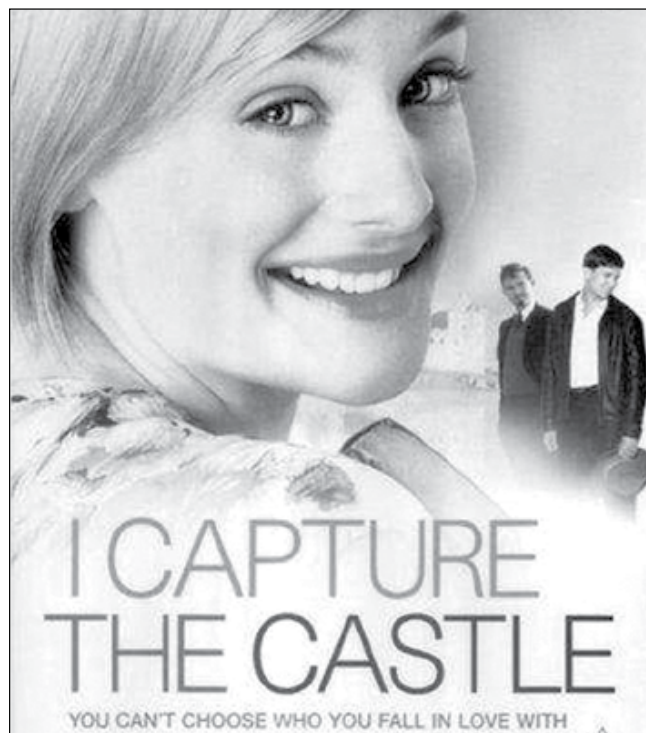
plans to sell herself on the streets and will borrow the train fare to the city from the vicar.

The girls' mother died some years earlier, and Topaz does her best with two ungrateful girls and a husband who seems on the edge of madness. Then one day all changes when two young Americans arrive in the district. They are Simon and Neil Cotton (Henry Thomas and Marc Blucas), the sons and heirs of the owner of the property, and rather than collect the back due rent, they proceed to fall in love with Rose – Simon obviously, Neil quietly. Their British mother (Sinead Cusack) is both appalled and amused by the family, and invites them over to dinner, an event that has to be seen to be believed.

"Why are you all dressed in green?" the brothers ask on their first meeting with this family. It has to do with a surfeit of dye, and too much time on their hands. The family is educated, literate, creative, but alarmingly unworldly; what the brothers take for artful naivete is artless lack of sophistication. Rose however knows that she will marry anyone to get out of the leaky, drafty castle, and that leads to a complicated romantic melodrama which also involves Cassandra and Neil's secret feelings, not necessarily for each other.

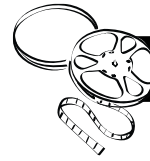
The film is shot with that green British palette that makes everything look damp and makes us imagine the sheets will be clammy. The countryside is unspeakably picturesque, and the girls flourish here; it is sad to see the wild-haired Rose in town, after her engagement and after the hairdressers have styled her into a copy of everyone else. The father, meanwhile, sinks into dependency, and the family finds a way to treat his writer's block that is heartless but effective.

The first-time director, Tim Fywell, handles his material with an excusable fondness for the eccentricities of his characters,



"I capture the Castle" movie poster





Saturday 11am

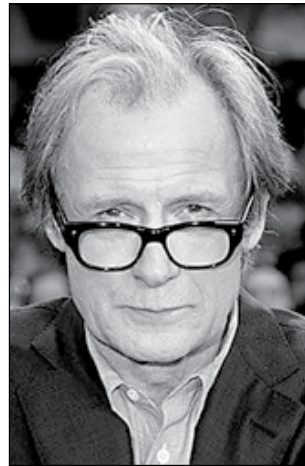
***It's a romance*** ever so much more inspiring for teenage girls than the materialist propaganda they get from Hollywood ... And there's a serious undercurrent; this story was close to the heart of the author, Dodie Smith ...

but generates touching emotion through the plight of Cassandra, who is honest and true, and finds her way almost blindly through the labyrinth of love, trusting her best instincts. Romola Garai, who was Kate in "Nicholas Nickleby," is heart-winning in the role.

We like these people, which is important, and we are amused by them, which is helpful, but most of all we envy them, because they negotiate their romantic perplexities with such dash and style.

It would be fun to be a member of the Mortmain family – maybe the younger brother, who shows every sign of growing up to be Harry Potter.

*Note: The R rating ("for brief nudity") is another attempt by the MPAA to steer teenagers away from useful and sophisticated entertainments, and toward vulgarity and violence. If this movie is R and "Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle" is PG-13, then the rating*



Actor Bill Nighy, who plays James Mortmain, will appear at the showing of "I Capture the Castle."

board has no shame. Better the Angels as strippers than an innocent nipple during a swim in the castle moat?

## A CLOSER VIEWING


**I Capture the Castle**  
(2003) Rated R for brief nudity

Directed by **Tim Fywell**  
Written by **Heidi**


**Romola Garai**  
as Cassandra Mortmain  
**Rose Byrne**  
as Rose Mortmain  
**Henry Thomas**  
as Simon Cotton  
**Marc Blucas**  
as Neil Cotton  
**Bill Nighy**  
as James Mortmain

Running time: 113 minutes  
Print Courtesy: **Samuel Goldwyn Films**

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# Vincent: A Life in Color

Film screening sponsored by: Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance

## Fashionista of his own accord

By Roger Ebert

You might never have heard of Vincent P. Falk, but if you've been a visitor to Chicago you may well have seen him. He has performed for the patrons on every single tour boat cruising the Chicago River. And he is known to every viewer of the NBC/5 morning news, and the ABC/7 afternoon news. He's the smiling middle-aged man with a limitless variety of spectacular suits. He stands on the Michigan or State street bridges, showing off his latest stupefying suit. He flashes the flamboyant lining, takes it off, spins it in great circles above his head, and then does his "spin move," pivoting first left, then right, while whirling the coat in the air. Then he puts it on again and waves to the tourists on the boat, by now passing under the bridge, always wearing a suit for the occasion: Shimmering black for Kwanzaa, red for Christmas, neon green for St. Patrick's Day so blinding Mayor Daley wouldn't have the nerve to wear it.

For ABC/7, he stands outside the big windows of the news studio, which open onto State Street. You can't miss him. For NBC/5, he's worked his way up to regular Friday morning appearances. The station's news studio overlooks Pioneer Court Plaza, and when the anchors go outside to chat with people, there's Vincent. He's agreed to appear ex-



Vincent P. Falk in canary yellow in Chicago. Falk plans to attend the showing at the festival.

clusively on the Channel 5 early news, where I have never seen him, because his usual spin on Fridays is just before the 6 a.m. sign-on of the Today show.

He also does radio; WGN talker John Williams, interviewed in the film, does his show in a Tribune Tower studio with a window on

tinted glass in the daytime, but he knows the studio is there, just as he seems to know a lot of other things.

He's well-informed on the personnel of the TV news operations, for example, recently writing me: "For months, Channel 7 has been cutting me out of the crowd

shots. But, recently, I've been getting in the shots on weekends. This is when Michael Wall is usually the director. But I'm still being cut out of the shots all the time on weekdays, when Jef Kos is usually the director." How many viewers with 20/20 vision know those names?

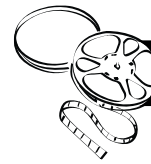
You might be forgiven for suspecting that Vincent is a few doughnuts short of a dozen. I know I did. Then I saw a remarkable new documentary by Jennifer Burns named "Vincent: A Life in Color," which unfolds into the mystery of a human personality. His life is one that Oliver Sachs, the poet of strange lives, might find fascinating. Considering that Vincent has been showing up for years and performing his "show" with flamboyant new suits, would

---

***I can easily believe he buys his own suits.  
What I can hardly believe is that they are sold.***

---





Saturday 2pm

it surprise you to learn that he is a college graduate? A computer programmer? A former deejay in gay North Side discos? Owns his own condo in Marina City? Buys his own suits? Legally blind?

All of these things are true. I can easily believe he buys his own suits. What I can hardly believe is that they are sold. We accompany him on a visit to his customary clothing store, which perhaps caters otherwise to members of the world's second oldest profession. Surely he's their best customer; I don't recall ever seeing the same suit twice in the film.

Jennifer Burns, who both produced and directed the film, says that like most Chicagoans, she'd seen Vincent and his colorful suits around for years. How could she not? Then one day she was looking out her office window, watching him performing for a tour boat, "and I was struck by the look of sheer joy I saw on his face. I thought to myself, whatever else you have to say about this guy, he has figured out what makes him happy and he does it, regardless of what anyone else thinks." She approached him, and he agreed to be the subject of a film – not surprising, since his pastime is drawing attention to himself. The subtext of the film

is how differently life could have turned out for Vincent.

What Burns discovered was not quite the story we might have expected. Vincent, whose surname comes from one of his foster families, was an orphan abandoned by his mother, and raised at St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless. He was already blind in one eye, and glaucoma was dimming the sight in his other. After eight years he was placed in a foster home with Clarence and Mary Falk, who he considers his father and mother; he has had a star named after her. In the documentary, Sister Bernadette Eaton, who taught him as a boy, says at first she didn't realize he could read.

I e-mailed Vincent: "I'm missing something here. The nun says she was 'surprised' to learn you could read. So she didn't teach you. Did you teach yourself?" He responded quickly with a e-mail that was articulate and friendly. That was a surprise, because in the film he has some difficulty in expressing himself. His words don't flow smoothly, he repeats himself, gets tangled up, deflects questions with a joke. A co-worker in the doc says if you ask him something, he'll patiently respond, and then he's outta there. No small talk.

Vincent wrote: "I really don't remember who would have taught me to read. Maybe one of the other nuns. Maybe when I started going to school. I went to pre-school (they didn't have Kindergarten), 1st grade, and 2nd grade at St Joseph's. Then, I started 3rd grade my first school year after moving in with the Falks. And, I did attend all those grades at the proper time, with respect to my age (they didn't see a need to hold me back a year or so before starting me in 1st grade, or anything like that)."

I asked Burns what she thought. "I'm sorry this wasn't more clear in the film, Sister Anna Margaret (who declined to be interviewed) recognized that Vincent's problem wasn't intellectual but visual and taught him to read, along with the rest of the class, making sure he was always pushed up against the blackboard so he could see. It was the administration, who had previously written him off as incapable of learning, who were surprised to learn that Vincent could read."

In high school he was picked on; a classmate recalls students would sneak up behind him, tap him on the shoulder, and jump away before he could whirl and try to see them. He began to defend himself with humor, especially with puns, which are still an addiction. He didn't want to be considered blind any longer, Burns says, so he stopped using a cane. He was a member of the National Honor Society, the chess club, the debate team...and the diving team, luckily never diving into a pool without water. We meet his diving coach, who was as surprised as we are. It was in high school that he started wearing colorful suits, for reasons he does not explain. My theory: Being the class clown was better than being the class misfit.

Vincent reads with his left eye held less than an inch from a book or computer screen. He uses

## A CLOSER VIEWING

**Vincent: A Life in Color**  
(2008) No MPAA rating

Directed by **Jennifer Burns**

**Vincent Falk**  
as Himself

Running time: 96 minutes  
Print Courtesy: **Zweeble Films**

a monocular telescope for spotting approaching tour boats. His optometrist says he has severe tunnel vision; his good eye is a fraction of normal, and the visible image is like an iris shot surrounded by blur. He walks freely all over the Chicago Loop, often running a few steps or even skipping, so high are his spirits. The movie uses graphics to represent what he can see; it is terrifying to think of him crossing a street.

On his web site, he does report one injury: "For the six week period from February 1, 2003 - March 8, 2003, there were no pictures posted to this site. This hiatus was caused by personal injury, due to being hit by a taxicab on January 29, 2003 (specifically, a Ford Crown Victoria). The accident occurred on Clark St. right by Quaker Tower."

Vincent, a bright student, was accepted at the Illinois Institute of Technology, studying aeronautical engineering. Yes. After two years he transferred to the University of Illinois, where he planned to study computer science in a program where admission standards are ruthless. At Urbana he became fascinated by audio equipment, not unusual among the visually impaired, "but my parents didn't like that, and hauled me back up to Chicago.

*continued on next page*



Jennifer Burns, director and producer of "Vincent: A Life in Color," is the founder of Zweeble Films. She got into production, creating her own company after dabbling in both theater and film in Chicago.

# Vincent

*continued from previous page*

They boxed up all my audio stuff and put it in the garage."

He got back into the audio field, and became a popular deejay, first for the go-go boys at Stage 618, and then at the gay disco Cheeks. He didn't exactly fit the image, his old boss recalls, and he held the albums an inch from his face, but he was a great spinner. It was during this time he concluded he was gay. For the past 20 years, he's been a computer programmer for Cook County, helping to track billions of dollars in tax revenue. "He's one of the most brilliant programmers I've ever met," his current boss says.

All of which is admirable, but how does it explain the suits? Having worn them since he was a teenager, he says he gave his first Chicago River bridge performance around 2000, adding the "spin move" about a year later. He knows the times when every tour boat passes his bridges, and the guides know his name and point him out as a landmark somewhere between the Wrigley Building and Marina City. To the guides on the Mercury boats, he is "Riverace" (rhymes with "Liberace"). The captain of one of the Wendella boats says you can set your watch by him. His bridges and the TV studios are within a short walk of his home.

There is a great deal of discussion in the documentary about Vincent's motivation. It explains nothing. Vincent himself will only say that he likes to entertain people, to cheer them up a little. One person in the doc



*Falk entertains people on boats on the Chicago River.*

speculates that Vincent has spent a lot of his life being stigmatized and isolated, and the suits are a way of breaking down barriers. I confess that the first time I saw him, I saw a man with unfocused squinting eyes and a weird suit, and leaped to conclusions. But by the time I saw this documentary, things had changed in my life. Anyone seeing me walk down the street would notice an unsteady gait, a bandage around my neck, and my mouth sometimes gaping open. If they didn't know me, they might assume I was the Village Idiot. You can easily imagine Vincent becoming an isolated agoraphobe, locked onto a computer

screen. But he spends hours every day in the fresh air and sunshine, picking up that tan and getting lots of exercise.

That's why I respond to Vincent, and applaud him. If people take one look at me and don't approve of what they see, my position is: Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke. So here is a man who likes to wear pimp suits and wave them at tour boats. So why not? What are the people on the boats so busy doing that they don't have time for that? I suspect something like 99 percent of them are more entertained by Vincent than by the information that Mies van der Rohe designed the IBM

Building, which stands across the street as an affront to the tinny new Trump Tower. As least they can smile and wave and tell the folks at home about that wacky guy they saw on the bridge.

The film gathers an impressive array of people who have had roles in Vincent's life, including a lifelong friend who was another foster child with the Falks. It is beautifully photographed by Patrick Russo, who contrasts Vincent's life in color with the looming riverside architecture and its busy sidewalks. Vincent will never be mistaken for a man in the crowd.

---

***Having worn them since he was a teenager, he says he gave his first Chicago River bridge performance around 2000, adding the "spin move" about a year later. He knows the times when every tour boat passes his bridges, and the guides know his name and point him out as a landmark somewhere between the Wrigley Building and Marina City.***

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# Trucker

## A path to nowhere leads to honesty

By Roger Ebert

There's one of those perfect moments in "Trucker" when I'm thinking, This is the moment to end! Now! Fade to black! And the movie ends. It is the last of many absolutely right decisions by the first-time writer-director James Mottern, who began by casting two actors who bring his story to strong emotional life. Both of them show they're gifted and intelligent artists who only needed, as so many do in these discouraging times, a chance to reveal their deep talents.

Michelle Monaghan was on the brink of inhabiting forever the thankless role of the good-looking, plucky female in action movies about men ("Mission: Impossible III"). She was excellent in "Gone Baby Gone," and here she confirms her talent. Jimmy Bennett, who was 11 or 12 at the time of shooting, has been good in heavy-duty projects before ("Orphan") and played the young Captain Kirk in "Star Trek" (2009), but here shows a subtlety and command of tone that is remarkable. (It's time for him to start billing himself as James. He'll be relieved when he's 20.) Together these actors create an abrasive relationship that side-

---

***It opens after a one-night stand with a guy who tries to be nice, but she doesn't need a nice guy in her life. Nor does she need to be nice with Peter, but one thing she does do: She's always honest with him ... Her performance clearly deserves an Oscar nomination.***

---

steps all sentimentality, in a film that correctly ends when a lesser film would have added half an hour of schmaltz.

Monaghan is Diane Ford, a trucker who just paid off her own rig. She's 30-ish, cold, hard-drinking, promiscuous, a loner. Bennett plays her son, Peter. She left him with his father Len (Benjamin Bratt) soon after his birth, has stayed away, doesn't like kids – or men, either, although she uses them. One man (Nathan Fillion) has been her best friend for four years, but that involves getting drunk together and never having sex.

Len gets sick. Colon cancer. He's been living for years with Jenny (Joey Lauren Adams), who now needs time to care for him. It's up to Diane to look after the kid. She doesn't want anything

to do with him. "Just for a few weeks," Jenny pleads. Just until Len gets better. Sure.

You are anticipating, as I did, that "Trucker" would turn into one of those predictable movies where the mother and son grow to love each other. It doesn't end with mutual hate and abandonment, but it damn near does. The kid is as tough as his mom. "Answer me!" she says. "I don't talk to bitches!" he says. Len and Jenny seem nice enough. Where did he learn to talk like that? Little pitchers have big ears.

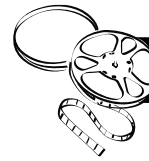
I concede the story arc is fairly predictable, assuming neither one murders the other. But Mottern and his actors take no hostages. Diane is hard and tough, and stays that way. Her son is angry and bitter, and stays that way. Does they need to love and be loved? Sure. We know that, but they don't. By the end of the film, she hasn't called him "Peter" and he hasn't called her "Mom." He's "kid" or "dude," and she's "you." They have to be together whether they like it or not, and they know it.

That said, Monaghan makes Diane more sad than off-putting. She isn't a caricature. She works hard, values her independence, is making payments on her small suburban home on an unpaved street, is living up to her bargain with herself. The movie spares us any scenes where she's "one of the guys." It opens after a one-night stand with a guy who tries to be nice, but she doesn't need a nice guy in her life. Nor does she need to be nice with Peter, but



Courtesy monterey media inc. COPYRIGHT © MMVIII Trucker Productions, LLC

A scene from "Trucker"



Saturday 4:30pm

one thing she does do: She's always honest with him and speaks with him directly, and I think he knows that. Her performance clearly deserves an Oscar nomination.

Peter is loved by his father and Jenny. He hasn't been mistreated. He probably senses how sick his dad really is and knows he wasn't parked with Diane because anyone wanted him there. He's been told things about his mother that are, strictly speaking, true. She did leave him and Len soon after his birth. She does want to avoid seeing him. He says something revealing that he knows of her promiscuity, although he may not quite understand it.

What Mottern does is lock these two characters in a story and sees what happens. Something will have to give. The supporting performances by Nathan Fillion, Benjamin Bratt and Joey



Courtesy monterey media inc. COPYRIGHT © MMVIII Trucker Productions, LLC  
Michelle Monaghan, star of "Trucker," plans to attend the showing of "Trucker."

Lauren Adams are precisely what is needed: direct, open, no "acting," good tone control. They are good people, but very real people, with no illusions about life.

I value films that closely regard specific lives. I know they usually must have happy endings. Not always. Haven't we all learned to

expect certain things in a story about a mother and a son? Aren't those things in fact generally true to human nature? I hope to feel elevation at the end. But a film should earn it, not simply evoke it. "Trucker" sets out on a difficult and tricky path, and doesn't put a thing wrong.

## A CLOSER VIEWING

### Trucker

(2008) Rated R for language and sexual situations

Directed and written by James  
Written by Name

**Michelle Monaghan**

as Diane

**Jimmy Bennett**

as Peter

**Nathan Fillion**

as Runner

**Benjamin Bratt**

as Len

Running time: 90 minutes

Print Courtesy: Monterey Media  
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# Barfly

## The regulars, nothing artificial about it

By Roger Ebert

Louis Armstrong was trying to explain jazz one day, and he finally gave up and said, "There are some folks that, if they don't know, you can't tell 'em." The world of Charles Bukowski could be addressed in the same way. Bukowski is the poet of Skid Row, the Los Angeles drifter who spent his life until age 50 in an endless round of saloons and women, all of them cheap, expensive, bad or good in various degrees. "Barfly," based on his original screenplay, is a grimy comedy about what it might be like to spend a couple of days in his skin – a couple of the better and funnier days, although they aren't exactly a lark.

The movie takes place in a gutbucket bar down on the bad side of town, where the same regulars take up the same positions on the same bar stools every day. Your private life is nobody's business, but everybody in the joint knows all about it. To this bar, day after day, comes Henry (Mickey Rourke), a drunk who is sometimes also a poet. The day bartender hates him, probably for the same reason all bartenders in gutter saloons hate their customers: It's bad enough that they have to serve these losers, without taking a lot of lip from them, too.

Henry and the bartender head for the back alley to have a fight. Henry is beaten to a pulp. Hawking up spit and blood, he tosses down another drink and heads off for the hovel he calls his room. Another day, another adventure. One day he looks up

from his drink and sees, sitting at the other end of the bar, a woman named Wanda (Faye Dunaway). She looks like she belongs in the place and she doesn't look like she belongs in the place, you know? She looks like a drunk, all right, but she's still kind of classy. Henry and Wanda strike up a conversation and, seeing that Henry is flat broke, Wanda invites him home.

up in the bar, Wanda is already there. The rich girl and Wanda do not coexist.

That's basically what the movie is about. "Barfly" is not heavy on plot, which is correct, since in the disordered world of the drinker, one thing rarely leads to another through any visible pattern. Each day is a window that opens briefly after the hangover and before the blackout, and you



A scene from "Barfly"

The dialogue scenes between Rourke and Dunaway in this movie are never less than a pleasure, but their exchanges on that first night are poetry. She explains that if a guy comes along with a fifth, she is likely to leave with that guy, since when she drinks she always makes bad decisions. He nods. What other kinds of decisions are there when you're drunk? They drink, they talk, they flirt, they coexist. Another day, another adventure.

One day a beautiful rich girl with long hair (Alice Krige) comes to the bar looking for Henry. She publishes a literary magazine and has purchased some of Henry's stuff. He likes this development. They go to her house and drink, talk, flirt and coexist. The next time she turns

can never tell what you'll see through that window.

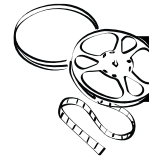
"Barfly" was directed by Barbet Schroeder, who commissioned the original screenplay by Bukowski and then spent eight years trying to get it made. (At one point, he threatened to cut off his fingers if Cannon Group president Menahem Golan did not finance it; the outcome of the story can be deduced by the fact that this is a Cannon release.) Rourke and Dunaway take their characters as opportunities to stretch as actors, to take changes and do extreme things. Schroeder never tries to impose too much artificial order on the events; indeed, he committed to filming Bukowski's screenplay exactly as written, in all its rambling but romantic detail.

---

***Each day is a window that opens briefly after the hangover and before the blackout, and you can never tell what you'll see through that window.***

---





Saturday 9pm



Barbet Schroeder directs during the filming of "Barfly." Schroeder has received both Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for past films. He plans to attend the showing of the film. Photo copyright Albane Navizet

The result is a truly original American movie, a film like no other, a period of time spent in the company of the kinds of

characters Saroyan and O'Neill would have understood, the kinds of people we try not to see, and yet might enjoy more

than some of our more visible friends. "Barfly" is one of the year's best films.

## A CLOSER VIEWING

### Barfly

(1987) Rated R

Directed by **Barbet Schroeder**  
Produced by **Schroeder, Fred Roos**  
and **Tom Luddy**

### Mickey Rourke

as Henry

### Faye Dunaway

as Wanda Wilcox

### Alice Krige

as Tully

### Jack Nance

as Detective

### J.C. Quinn

as Jim

Running time: 90 minutes

Print Courtesy: **MGM**



Roger Ebert with novelist Charles Bukowski and Faye Dunaway on the set of "Barfly" (1987) Sun-Times Library

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# Song Sung Blue

## Their love story was next to heavenly

By Roger Ebert

*Hold me, and make it the truth...  
That when all is lost there  
will be you.  
Cause to the universe I don't  
mean a thing  
And there's just one word that I  
still believe and it's  
Love... love. love. love. love.  
— "Love Boat Captain," Pearl Jam*

**S**ong Sung Blue" tells a love story about two people who are apart only three days after 1989, who love each other in good times and in bad, and whose romance blossoms in shabby bars, smoky clubs and, once, in front of 30,000 people. Their names are Mike and Claire Sardina. If you're from Milwaukee, you oughta know them. They performed under the name "Lightning & Thunder," and were famous enough locally that they sold out their bookings. When they had troubles it made every local TV news show. And they had troubles. Who else do you know who had two out-of-control cars run into their house in four years?

Because they made a lot of home videos, their earliest days together are recorded. We even see them performing at the Wisconsin State Fair, and being married after the ceremony with 700 (Thunder) or 1,000 (Lightning) guests. His proposal was made over the phone: "This is Lightning. Will you be my Thunder?"

Their act was built around Mike's covers of Neil Diamond songs, and Claire doing Patsy Cline, Abba and Blondie material. I know, but they were good. Close your eyes and with Mike you almost think you're hearing the real thing. Mike was standing behind a red velvet crowd control rope once at a Neil Diamond concert, "and when he walked by, he looked at me, and it was like he was looking in a mirror."

There's one session in a jam-packed club where L&T and the audience are having such a blast, their joy of performance is palpable. They've never even heard



"Song Sung Blue" is director Greg Kohs's first independent feature-length documentary. He plans to attend the viewing of "Song Sung Blue."

of Eddie Vedder when he chooses them to do an encore with Pearl Jam at Summerfest, the huge Milwaukee music festival. That's when they had the audience of 30,000. Backstage, Lightning tells Eddie he doesn't think it's a Neil Diamond kinda crowd. But Vedder is no superstar snob and joins them onstage, sits on a box, and reads the lyrics while singing "Forever in Blue Jeans." He makes it a Neil Diamond crowd.

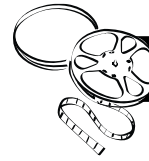
Lightning & Thunder fans would travel to hear them, but they never performed much fur-

ther afield than Chicago. Nor did they make any recordings that iTunes has heard about. They were popular in Milwaukee, a friend explains, "because they were normal, and Milwaukee is normal." They lived in a normal house on a normal street with a normal van and a normal flagpole. It was the second marriage for both, and Thunder's kids Rachel and Dana lived with them. He had the Diamond haircut and sideburns, and a little more hair. She was on the plumpish side. Then the first car ran into their

---

***L&T are strong people. There's a time when Thunder has every reason to quit her career, and she stays cheerful and carries on. Can't let Lightning down.***

---



Sunday 12noon

***This documentary, directed by Greg Kohs, is a superb marriage of home movies, TV, clippings and posters, and concert footage.***

house, they had a setback, and both made a conscious decision to take up smoking to lose weight.

They didn't even drink. Lightning served in Nam as a "tunnel rat," crawling with a machine-gun into Cong tunnels. When he came home he became an alcoholic and heroin addict and it nearly killed him. They took home movies of him proudly holding his diploma from rehab. He never touched a drink or a drug for the next 30 years. They had the ability to inspire friends who dedicated themselves to their careers. One of their managers even turns out to be Lightning's dentist. Times got very rough for them, but they were always still in love, and still dreaming of that big break, even after their career was pretty much a memory. Not for them the 9 to 5 life.

One night over dinner at Denny's, Thunder asked Lightning if, since he knew so much about computers, he might be able to make a living on the internet. "Keep your eyes on the prize," he told her. They aimed for Vegas. I think they were dreaming of a main stage, which was unlikely A Neil Diamond tribute band from Milwaukee? Besides, Lightning never used the Neil Diamond name. He just sang the songs. In his mind, it was a tribute to Lightning & Thunder. He couldn't help how much he looked like guy. But if a booker had found the imagination to book them as a lounge act, I think they would have been wildly popular, compared to those insipid quasi-karaoke acts. Maybe too popular. I'd walk away from blackjack to listen to them.

This documentary, directed by Greg Kohs, is a superb marriage of home movies, TV, clippings and posters, and concert footage. Kohs was doing some filming at a Harley-Davidson convention in Milwaukee (birthplace of the motorcycle) and came upon L&T performing for some wildly dancing bikers. He started shooting right then and there, and shot them for eight years, not knowing how his story would end. He apparently became so familiar he was the fly on the wall during family fights, triumphs and heartbreaks. L&T are strong people. There's a time when Thunder has every reason to quit her career, and she stays cheerful and carries on. Can't let Lightning down.

This kind of film, like "Hoop Dreams," is only possible when a filmmaker stakes a bet on an



Mike and Claire Sardina, or Lightning and Thunder, performed for years. Claire Sardina plans to attend the showing.

## A CLOSER VIEWING

**Song Sung Blue**  
(2008) No MPAA rating

Directed by **Greg Kohs**

**Mike Sardina**

as Lightning

**Claire Sardina**

as Thunder

Also featuring **Rachel**

**Cartwright, Dana Cartwright,**

**Frances Stingl, Jim Stingl, Don**

**Dardina, Bob Babisch, Tom**

**D'Amato, Art Gompper, Dr.**

**Dave Watson, Mark Shurilla,**

**the Esquires, Ann Knackert,**

**Angelina Sardina.**

Running time: 87 minutes

Print Courtesy: **Corn Filmworks, Inc.**

unknown outcome. I won't tell you how it ends, except that Eddie Vedder does something out of the blue that is simply astonishing, and shows genuine class. Stars do nice things for people all the time, but this is something that shows thoughtfulness and insight, and with no expectation that the world would ever hear about it.

And for Mike and Claire Sardina,  
*when all is lost there will be you.  
Cause to the universe I don't  
mean a thing*

You can't see this film because it hasn't been picked up for distribution. It won both audience awards at Slamdance 2008 (the popular vote, and the juried award). It was named best documentary at the Chicago and Atlanta underground film festivals, and at the surface-level Boston, Philadelphia, Sydney, and Memphis festivals. Distributors, get your hands on a screener!



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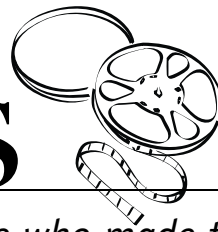
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## IRIS CHANG: THE RAPE OF NANKING

A feature documentary film by Bill Spahic and Anne Pick  
from Toronto-based Real to Reel Productions

**April 27, 2010, 6 p.m. (CST)**

To air on UI-7, University of Illinois cable channel  
and online at: [media.illinois.edu/service/ui7live.html](http://media.illinois.edu/service/ui7live.html)

The Rape of Nanking brings the audience along with author and journalist Iris Chang (1968-2004) on her passionate pursuit of the truth surrounding the Nanking Massacre of 1937 during which almost 300,000 Chinese women, children and soldiers were systematically raped, tortured, and murdered by invading Japanese forces. The film shows the effect on Chang as she unearthed extraordinary stories of survivors, diaries and films from western missionaries who stayed behind to create a safety zone for refugees, and confessions of Japanese soldiers.

Chang was raised in Champaign-Urbana, attended University Lab High School, and earned a bachelor's of science in journalism from the University of Illinois.



This screening is brought to you by the Department of Journalism in the College of Media at Illinois.

# last year

*A look back at the 2009 Festival*

*Photos courtesy of  
Thompson McClellan*



*The festival audience listens to Chaz Ebert's introduction of "The Last Command" on Friday, April 24, 2009 as the Alloy Orchestra sits in the pit.*



*Catinca Untaru,  
actress in "The  
Fall," smiles.*



*David Bordwell, right, moderates a discussion at the Illini Union.*



*"Trouble the Water" director Carl Deal, second from left, pauses for a picture with Scott and Kimberly Roberts and their daughter during dinner.*

*All Q&A sessions and panel discussions will be streamed live on the internet at [www.ebertfest.com](http://www.ebertfest.com)*

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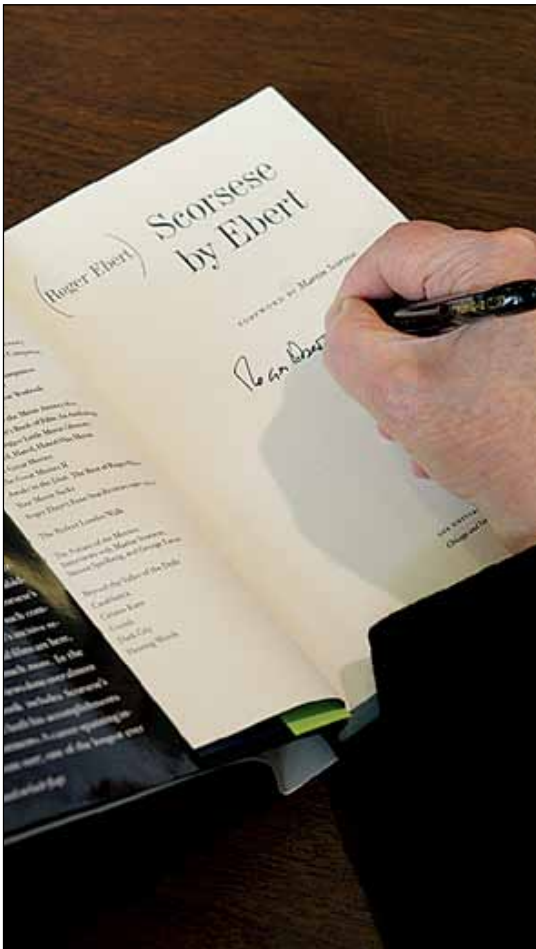




From left, festival director Nate Kohn, Chaz Ebert, producer Mark Magidson and director Ron Fricke receiving their Golden Thumb awards after the screening of "Baraka."



Kimberly and Scott Roberts perform after "Trouble the Water" screening.



Roger signs books at a book signing at the Illini Union Bookstore during 2009 festival.



From left, David Bordwell, director Rod Lurie and actor Matt Dillon discuss "Nothing But the Truth" after the screening.



Nina Paley, director of "Sita Sings the Blues," accepts her Golden Thumb award.

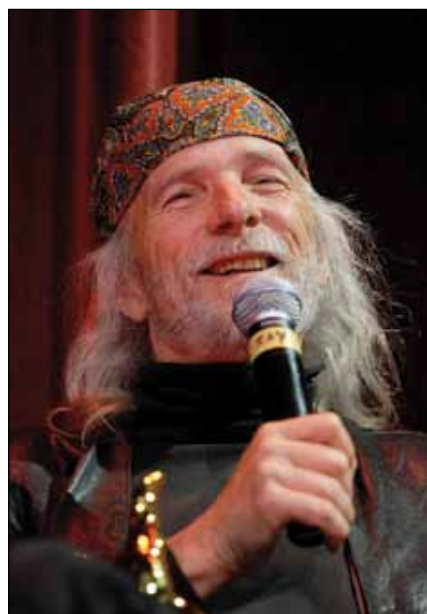


From left, Guy Maddin, Kristin Thompson, Michael Phillips sit on stage with Alloy Orchestra members Roger Miller, Ken Winokur and Terry Donahue after "The Last Command" screening.





*From left, critic Dean Richards, director Courtney Hunt, actress Misty Upham and Michael Barker, of Sony Pictures Classics, converse after the screening of "Frozen River."*



*Michael Wadleigh, director of "Woodstock," answers questions during the Q & A.*




*Roger welcomes attendees to the 11th annual film festival.*



*From left, festival director Nate Kohn, director Karen Gehres and Lisa Rosman speak on stage after "Begging Naked."*



*From left, former Chancellor Richard Herman, Chaz, Roger, former President B. Joseph White and Susan Herman at the 2009 Opening Gala.*



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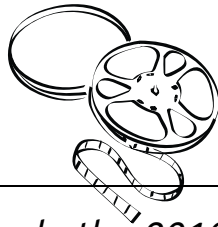
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# thanks!



*to those who made the 2010 Festival possible*

## FESTIVAL GUESTS

Alloy Orchestra  
Sam Anderson  
Ali Arian  
Michael Barker  
David Bordwell  
Anthony Bregman  
Jennifer Burns  
Johan Carlsson  
Seongyong Cho  
Lee Isaac Chung  
Tom Dark  
Doc Erickson  
Vincent P. Falk  
Charlie Kaufman  
Wael Khairy  
Greg Kohs  
Troylene Ladner  
Christy Lemire  
Jenny Lund  
Jessika Lundberg  
Bill Nighy  
Nell Minow  
Michael Mirasol  
Elvis Mitchell  
Michelle Monaghan  
Omar Moore  
Kim Morgan  
James Mottern  
Howie Movshowitz  
Omer Mozaffar  
Walter Murch  
Richard Neupert  
Michael Phillips  
Eric Pierson  
David Poland  
Richard Roeper  
Lisa Rosman  
Claire Sardina  
Barbet Schroeder  
Yôjirô Takita  
Michael Tolkin  
Gerardo Valero  
Kim Voynar  
Grace Wang

## FESTIVAL STAFF

Festival Programmer and Host  
**ROGER EBERT**

Festival Director  
**Nate Kohn**

Festival Producer and Co-Host  
**Chaz Ebert**

Associate Festival Director  
**Mary Susan Britt**

Festival Blogger  
**Lisa Rosman**

Conspirator in Chief  
**Lady Joan Cohl**

Manager, The Virginia Theatre  
**Jameel Jones**

Front House Coordinator,  
The Virginia Theatre  
**Anthony Howell**

Facility Coordinator,  
The Virginia Theatre  
**Jody Groff**

Technical Director,  
The Virginia Theatre  
**Mike Frederick**

Projectionists  
**James Bond**  
**Steve Kraus**

Website  
**Leone Advertising**

Festival Photo Blog  
**Robert Baird**

Coordinators  
**Anna Beaver**  
**Sophie Kohn**

Program Supervisor  
**Kristi Bruce Amatucci**

Graphic Design  
**Carlton Bruett**

Chair, Academic Panels  
**Dr. Norman Denzin**

Festival Program  
**Liz Kalkowski, *The Daily Illini***

## VOLUNTEERS

Roger Ebert's Film Festival thanks all of its loyal and hard-working volunteers. Without you, the Festival would not be possible. We are deeply grateful for your dedication, time and commitment – not only during the festival, but all year round.

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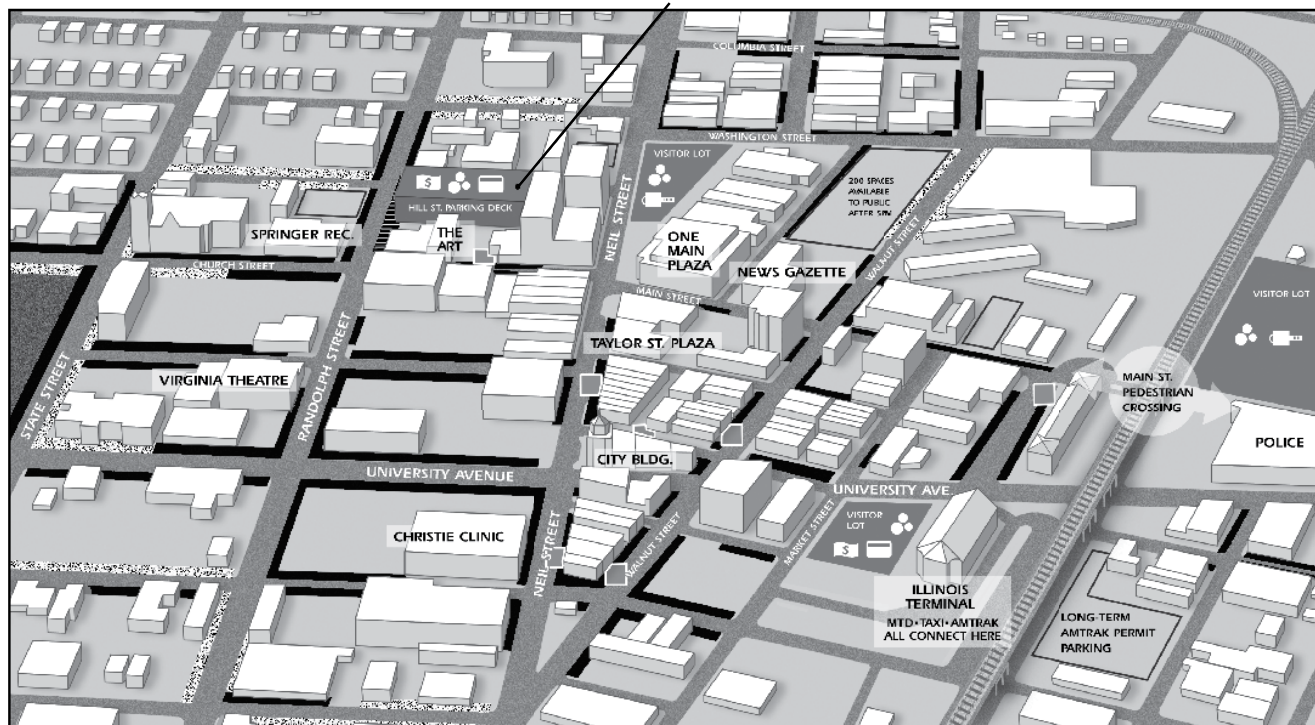


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# 30 years after release, war film still hitting home

By Liz Kalkowski, Daily Illini Staff Writer

Marlon Brando came to the set overweight and Martin Sheen suffered a heart attack. Extreme weather destroyed several expensive sets. Release dates were continually delayed, and the movie had few Oscar nominations. With all these setbacks the record for Francis Ford's "Apocalypse Now" looked bleak. Not unlike the themes and techniques of for its interpretation of the Vietnam War, application to Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness.

But since its 1979 release, the film gathered sincere reaction, both praise and criticism, from the public.

So much that the creators re-evaluated footage and expanded the original 49 minutes into "Apocalypse Now Redux."

And Roger Ebert noticed, choosing it as one of the films in this year's festival.

"It is a film that demands to be seen in widescreen and surround sound, and a restored version became available," Ebert wrote in an e-mail.

Tim Newcomb, associate professor of English at the University for almost 10 years and who has taught "Apocalypse Now" in Intro to Film, said that the film has been shown and discussed as part of the class for longer than he's been at the University and thousands of undergrads have been taught it.

"Over time its stature has grown," Newcomb said. "One of the most unique films ever attempted by a U.S. filmmaker."

He said that "Apocalypse Now Redux," as an expanded version of the original "Apocalypse Now," is "monumentally ambitious" in striving to deal with the American experience in Vietnam.

Newcomb added that the original film was three to four hours longer, and had to be cut. "Apocalypse Now Redux" is, con-



A scene from "Apocalypse Now"

ceivably, closer to the original idea. Including some new subplots, such as when the United Service Organizations become more and more unruly during a performance by three women until they are almost attacking the women.

"The 'Redux' extends (to show) that American troops are so adrift they don't belong," Newcomb said. "They just become more and more crazed and redux tries to bring that out."

Newcomb said the film sees little overlap to today, other than American's imperial army trying to control foreign space.

"Vietnam as setting is a big part of 'Apocalypse Now,'" he said. "With the wars in the jungle and Arabian desert presents such different conflict (than today)."

Others have more issue with ties to today.

Dr. Ronald Jackson, head of

African American studies and professor of cinema studies, said that while the film does approach some of the same issues of race, culture and militarism confronted today, it also produces issues of xenophobia.

"When considering the contemporary relevance of 'Apocalypse Now,' a film released in 1979, there are clearly significant parallels to present-day United States related to war and xenophobia," Jackson said. "At the moment we declare war we declare an enemy and the political and economic interests of our position toward the enemy tend to drive a sense of xenophobia or anxiety toward the stranger. This happened with the Vietnam War and it is happening now with Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan."

"It doesn't do much to help us," Jackson said. "People have to remember that words are

powerful. Stories are the most powerful discourses we have available."

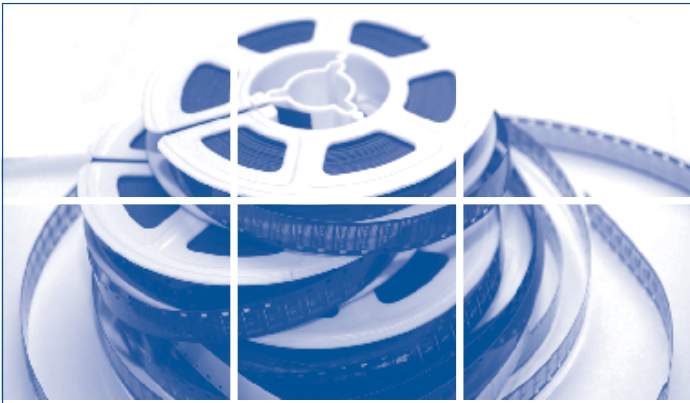
Ebert said the viewer should decide if theme and message of the film are applicable today.

"Certainly it is one of the greatest American films, the most ambitious, the most entertaining," Ebert wrote in an e-mail.

Ellen Warmbrunn, who has attended the festival for the past eight years, said she is really looking forward to the discussion to follow the showing of the film.

"After the (Vietnam) war, a lot of movies were made," she said. "It will be good to see the reaction of people from that era, and new viewers too."

*The film will be shown on Thursday at 8 p.m.*



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