

U3A FILM GROUP – PROGRAMME: January – June 2024

Venue: Stewart Bowling Club; Time: 2.00pm

Friday 5 January 2024 – Hot Fuzz (2007)

Starring: Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Jim Broadbent, Timothy Dalton

Director: Edgar Wright

Running time: 116 minutes

The biggest smash of the year in the UK (where it had the sixth-biggest opening of all time for a comedy), Hot Fuzz is an action-packed comedy from the makers of the hit movie Shaun of the Dead. Nicholas Angel (Simon Pegg) is the finest cop London has to offer, with an arrest record 400% higher than any other officer on the force. He's so good, he makes everyone else look bad. As a result, Angel's superiors send him to a place where his talents won't be quite so embarrassing – the sleepy and seemingly crime-free village of Sandford. He is partnered with the well-meaning but overeager police officer Danny Butterman (Nick Frost), the son of amiable police chief Frank Butterman (Jim Broadbent). Danny is a huge action movie fan and believes his new big-city partner might just be a real-life "bad boy," and his chance to experience the life of gunfights and car chases he so longs for. As a series of grisly accidents rocks the village, Angel is convinced that Sandford is not what it seems and as the intrigue deepens, Danny's dreams of explosive, high-octane, car-chasing, gunfighting, all-out action seem more and more like a reality.

Friday 19 January 2024 – The Wife (2017)

Starring: Glenn Close, Jonathan Pryce, Max Irons

Director: Björn Runge

Running time: 96 minutes

A wife questions her life choices as she travels to Stockholm to see her husband receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. Behind any great man, there's always a greater woman - and you're about to meet her. Joan Castleman (Glenn Close): a highly intelligent and still-striking beauty - the perfect devoted wife. Forty years spent sacrificing her own talent, dreams and ambitions to fan the flames of her charismatic husband Joe (Jonathan Pryce) and his skyrocketing literary career. Ignoring his infidelities and excuses because of his "art" with grace and humour. Their fateful pact has built a marriage upon uneven compromises. And Joan's reached her breaking point. On the eve of Joe's Nobel Prize for Literature, the crown jewel in a spectacular body of work, Joan's coup de grace is to confront the biggest sacrifice of her life and secret of his career. Glenn Close received 14 best actress awards for her performance.

Friday 2 February 2024 – The Breakfast Club (1985)

Starring: Emilio Estavez, Judd Nelson, Molly Ringwald

Director: John Hughes

Running time: 97 minutes

Five high school students from different crowds in school (a nerd, a jock, a prom queen, a delinquent, and a loner) are thrown together for a Saturday detention in their school library for various reasons. Detention is supervised by the gruff and demeaning principal Richard Vernon. As the day progresses, each member tells the story of why they are in detention, and by day's end they realize they have more in common than they ever imagined.



Friday 16 February 2024 – No Country for Old Men (2007)

Starring: Tommy Lee Jones, Javier Bardem, Josh Brolin

Directors: Joel and Ethan Coen

Running time: 122 minutes

This is a neo-Western crime thriller, based on Cormac McCarthy's novel of the same name. The film is set in the desert landscape of 1980 West Texas. It follows three main characters: Llewelyn Moss (Brolin), a Vietnam War veteran and welder who stumbles on a large sum of money in the desert; Anton Chigurh (Bardem), a hitman who is sent to recover the money; and Ed Tom Bell (Jones), a sheriff investigating the crime. The film also stars Kelly Macdonald as Moss's wife Carla Jean, and Woody Harrelson as a bounty hunter seeking Moss and the return of the \$2 million. The film won 76 awards from 109 nominations from multiple organisations; it won four awards at the 80th Academy Awards (including Best Picture), three BAFTAs and two Golden Globes.

Friday 1 March 2024 – The Others (2001)

Starring: Nicole Kidman, Fionnula Flanagan, Christopher Eccleston, Elaine Cassidy, Eric Sykes, Alakina Mann, James Bentley

Director: Alejandro Amenábar

Running time: 100 minutes

Screen sensation and Golden Globe winner Nicole Kidman delivers an utterly unforgettable performance in this scary and stylish suspense thriller. While awaiting her husband's return from war, Grace (Kidman) and her two young children live in an unusually isolated existence behind the locked doors and drawn curtains of a secluded island mansion. Then, after three mysterious servants arrive it becomes chillingly clear that there is far more to this house than can be seen, Grace finds herself in a terrifying fight to save her children and keep her sanity. Acclaimed by critics everywhere, the unpredictable twists and turns will keep you guessing as it keeps you riveted to the edge of your seat.

Friday 15 March 2024 – Official Secrets (2019)

Starring: Keira Knightley, Matt Smith & Matthew Goode

Director: Gavin Hood

Running time: 107 minutes

The true story of a British whistle-blower who leaked information to the press about an illegal NSA spy operation designed to push the UN Security Council into sanctioning the 2003 invasion of Iraq. A morality tale for the 21st century, Official Secrets tells the true story of British Intelligence whistle-blower Katharine Gun who, during the immediate run-up to the 2003 Iraq invasion, leaked a top secret NSA memo exposing a joint US-UK illegal spying operation against members of the UN Security Council. The memo proposed blackmailing smaller, undecided member states into voting for war. At great personal and professional risk, journalist Martin Bright published the leaked document in The Observer newspaper in London, and the story made headlines around the world. Members of the Security Council were outraged and any chance of a UN resolution in favour of war collapsed. But within days, Bush declared he no longer needed UN backing and invaded anyway. As Iraq descended into chaos, Katharine was arrested and charged with breaching the Official Secrets Act. Martin faced potential charges too. Their legal battles exposed the highest levels of government in both London and Washington with having manipulated intelligence in order to sell an illegal war.



Friday 5 April 2024 – The Maltese Falcon (1941)

Starring: Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Peter Lorre, Sidney Greenstreet

Director: John Huston

Running time: 97 minutes

Who Murdered Miles Archer? No-one knows. But what Archer's partner, Private Eye Sam Spade (Humphrey Bogart) does know is that Archer was killed while investigating the disappearance of a priceless statue...and now Spade has three mysterious clients who want him to find it – at any cost! A film noir masterpiece that marked John Huston's directorial debut and redefined Bogart's screen persona. Nominated for three 1941 Academy Awards, this suspense-filled classic remains one of the most enthralling mystery-thrillers ever made.

Friday 19 April 2024 – Three Colours – Blue (1993)

Starring: Juliette Binoche, Benoît Régent, Héléne Vincent, Florence Pernel, Charlotte Véry

Director: Krzysztof Kieślowski

Running time: 94 minutes

This is a drama directed and co-written by Polish filmmaker Krzysztof Kieślowski. It is the first of three films that make up the Three Colours trilogy, themed on the French Revolutionary ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, followed by White and Red. The subject of the film is liberty, specifically emotional liberty, rather than its social or political meaning. Set in Paris, the film follows a woman whose husband and child are killed in a car accident. Suddenly freed from her familial bonds, she tries to isolate herself and live in seclusion from her former ties. However, she discovers that she cannot escape human connections. Upon its release, Blue received critical acclaim and won several accolades, including the Golden Lion and the Volpi Cup for Best Actress at the Venice Film Festival. It remains one of Kieślowski's most celebrated works.

French, with English subtitles

Friday 3 May 2024 – The Notebook (2004)

Starring: Gena Rowlands, James Garner, Rachel McAdams

Director: Nick Cassavetes

Running time: 118 minutes

A poor yet passionate young man falls in love with a rich young woman, giving her a sense of freedom. However, social differences soon get in the way. With almost religious devotion, Duke, a kind octogenarian inmate of a peaceful nursing home, reads daily a captivating story from the worn-out pages of his leather-bound notebook to a fellow female patient. To keep her company, Duke recounts the fascinating love affair between impecunious but poetic country boy Noah and Allie, an affluent city girl. And little by little, Duke unfolds a Southern, lumber-scented summer romance beneath the tall trees of late 1930s North Carolina. Indeed, it seems as if the silent manuscript possesses the unfathomable power to penetrate the opaque clouds that enclose the silver-haired dame; slowly but surely, the enchanted lady becomes immersed in the strangely alluring fairy tale of the young ardent lovers' highs and lows. But nobody knows what tomorrow holds. Are all summer loves doomed to fail?



Friday 17 May 2024 – Twelve Monkeys (1995)

Starring: Bruce Willis, Madeline Stowe, Brad Pitt

Director: Terry Gilliam

Running time: 129 minutes

Between the past and the future, sanity and madness, dreams and reality, lies the mystery of the Twelve Monkeys. The year is 2035 and humankind subsists in a desolate netherworld following the eradication of 99% of the Earth's population, a holocaust that makes the planet's surface uninhabitable and mankind's destiny uncertain. Cole (Bruce Willis), a reluctant volunteer and Dr Kathryn Raily (Madeline Stowe) have only two clues to solve the puzzle of the Twelve Monkeys which threatens to completely erase humanity from the planet.

Friday 7 June 2024 – The Greatest Showman (2017)

Starring: Hugh Jackman, Michelle Williams, Zac Efron

Director: Michael Gracey

Running time: 105 minutes

This biographical musical drama tells the story of how P.T. Barnum (Hugh Jackman) built his circus empire. This was largely accomplished by using "freaks" (bearded lady, dog-faced boy, etc.) to draw curiosity to his museum and later shows. Though initially deemed as catering to the "lowest common denominator", Barnum's shows eventually won over the hearts of people (especially children) around the world.

Friday 21 June 2024 – The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2011)

Starring: Judy Dench, Bill Nighy, Dev Patel, Tom Wilkinson, Maggie Smith. Penelope Wilton, Celia Imrie

Director: John Madden

Running time: 124 minutes

An acclaimed cast lights up this witty romantic comedy. When seven cash-strapped Brits journey to a retirement resort in India, friendship and romance blossom as they touch each other's hearts in the most unexpected ways. In the end, they will all discover that life and love can begin again when you embrace today and let go of the past.