



## APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER

Hello to all our members.

Here is a quick message from Vivienne Bond, our President:

I hope everyone is staying safe and well in this strange and difficult time.

I have received notification from Belinda Rogers, the Event Services Officer for Yarra Ranges Council, that council ventures are to remain closed until further notice. This, of course, includes The Memo in Healesville and the Arts Centre in Warburton. The decision has been made to prevent spread of COVID-19 and protect individuals and community health.

It is envisaged that the closures will extend to at least August 31.

The centres have cancelled the Yarra Ranges Film Society bookings up to that date and we will be informed if there is any variation in this plan.

The committee met on April 7 via the Internet. At this stage we are really hoping to resume our scheduled program in September, but as with everything at present, it's uncertain.

Where paid-up members this year are concerned, we are looking at carrying over membership into 2021 on a pro-rata basis so that the full value of the membership fee is provided to you.

We will know more about how this will work out as the year progresses.

Thank you for all your patience.

Vivienne Bond  
YRFS President.

This will be a pretty short newsletter. There will be no review of *Secrets and Lies*, as Healesville's screening last month was cancelled (and thus, we only have the star rating from Warburton).

This is an unprecedented global crisis, but we can stay safe and protect our loved ones by staying indoors as much as possible, upholding social distancing rules and maintaining good hygiene.

If we limit our contact with others and our points of exposure, the virus will have no-one else to infect and its current victims will either recover or die (mostly recover, thankfully).

Australia already shows promising signs of containing the coronavirus. We just have to stick with it until the virus burns itself out.

On April 11, the Victorian State Government extended the state of emergency by another month (expires on May 11).

This may be frustrating – the authorities keep moving the goal-posts – but I figured an extension of social isolation may be necessary to ensure the coronavirus's containment and to prevent overloading our hospitals.

Since Covid-19 has an incubation period of 2-10 days, I think that an extension to the state of emergency is sensible for us to avoid being blindsided by potential new cases from the Easter break, as I'm sure a few irresponsible people defied social isolation to visit their families.

This crisis will pass, and the committee is eager to continue our screening program as soon as it is safe to do so.

Cheers.  
Seth

## HEALESVILLE MINI FILM FESTIVAL

*Custody*: 4.4 stars

*Who You Think I Am*: 4.3 stars

*Just To Be Sure*: 4.2 stars

The 2020 Healesville Mini Film Festival on March 15 was a resounding success with large attendance, and the films received high praise from our viewers.

I was slightly skeptical of this year's programming, as choosing recent French films felt a bit like an easy low-hanging fruit approach for giving the Festival a wider appeal.

(I've also been lobbying for an Ingmar Bergman triple-feature for years, but I've largely let go of this unfulfilled dream.)

But my skepticism dissolved immediately against the sheer quality of the films we showed.

*Custody* is a taut, remarkably-acted thriller about a family desperately trying to cut off or avoid their abusive ex-husband / father. The film exemplifies the raw emotional power of cinema at its most technically basic, and maintains heavy tension as microaggressions and small lies build to an explosively distressing climax. *Custody* also has a perfect ending, as the plot continuing after the father's arrest would have only hurt the film with extraneous details.

*Who You Think I Am* is a compelling, darkly funny drama about catfishing, which is the act of drawing someone into a romantic relationship online through a false identity. Driven by an enthralling performance from French acting royal Juliette Binoche (who also starred in *Three Colours: Blue*, one of the films in our first ever Mini Film Festival), the film challenges our empathy, as we are disturbed by protagonist Claire's ongoing deception toward her love interest but acknowledge her genuine connection with him and her newfound energy and passion for life. *Who You Think I Am* also invites us to consider the incomplete, idealised versions of ourselves that we present online. I do think the film's narrative became overcomplicated by the end, however.

*Just To Be Sure* is a sweet, witty comedy. The performances are authentically low-key, and Erwan is an affable protagonist as he navigates sudden changes in his family. The driving theme is fatherhood, and the film steadily deconstructs the importance of this family role. Joseph, the man Erwan believes is his biological father, turns out not to be related to him; Bastien may not be Erwan's biological father either, but is still his dad; Madjid, the father of Erwan's daughter Juliette's child, skips out at the first sign of commitment. "Father" becomes a nebulous concept as the film progresses, but since Erwan and his family are all happy and love each other regardless of biological connection, Erwan ends up no longer putting so much stock in fatherhood. *Just To Be Sure*'s narrative feels slightly unfocused, but this reflects the jumbled, stop-and-start nature of real life.

I'm looking forward to the 2021 Mini Film Festival, and the committee will be seeking your ideas as we start planning this event later in 2020.

## STAR RATING FOR SECRETS AND LIES



4.0 from Warburton's viewers

## FRITZ'S POEM

### *Secrets and Lies*

The film about secrets and about lying,  
So full of emotions, full of crying,  
Kept me guessing, wanting to find out  
What the arguments were all about.  
The raw emotions, dialogue so unkind.  
Well-played, the question: "What's behind?"  
The answers finally trickled through  
At a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday barbeque.  
The revelations finally were dropped  
After the champagne cork was popped,  
Unravelling more angst and despair  
And keeping me glued to my cinema chair.



F.R.  
March 2020