



## DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Hello to all our members,

It's time to take stock on a tumultuous year and a rather eclectic program.

Our 2018 program featured some outstanding historical dramas (*The Lives of Others* and *Alone in Berlin*), a remarkable true-story Australian drama in *Don't Tell*, two compelling documentaries (*The Family* and *I Am Not Your Negro*) and some lacklustre character studies (*The Dancer* and *Neruda*)

The black sheep of the year was *Aguirre: The Wrath of God*, a bleak, mesmerising West German drama that I and fellow committee member Tom Weber (the film's most passionate advocate) adore, but which most of our members found boring and pretentious.

The Healesville Mini Film Festival featured Richard Linklater's *Before* trilogy (*Before Sunrise*, *Before Sunset* and *Before Midnight*). While the trilogy was well-received, it attracted a small turn-out.

Looking forward, our film repertoire for 2019 contains a diverse array of international comedy and drama, a couple of classics and a mighty triple-feature of Akira Kurosawa films (and – spoilers – *The Death of Stalin*, our March film, ranks #9 on my countdown of 2018's best films).

### REMINDER: MEMBERSHIP FEES:

These are the membership fees for 2019:

<b>Full:</b>	\$70.00
<b>Concession:</b>	\$65.00
<b>Youth (under 25):</b>	\$35.00

Current members will be able to renew their memberships on our December screenings (at both venues), as in past years, and EFTPOS facilities will be available on both December and February film nights.

Memberships will also be available (with a \$2.50 surcharge) over the counter at the Arts Centre or The Memo, or online as for this year.

### CHRISTMAS DINNER

**BOOKINGS ARE CLOSED** for the **WARBURTON DINNER**.

**Limited seats are still available for the HEALESVILLE DINNER.** Email [lorrainesorrell@yahoo.com.au](mailto:lorrainesorrell@yahoo.com.au) to reserve your place. *Get in quick!*

**Warburton's Christmas Dinner:** December 11, 6 PM at the Warburton Arts Centre

**Healesville's Christmas Dinner:** December 18, 6 PM at the Healesville Memorial Hall.

The cost is \$10, paid on the night by prior arrangement through email.

At either gathering, you are advised to arrive early in order to secure the renewal of your membership.

### DVD LIBRARIES, HEALESVILLE AND WARBURTON

There will be *no borrowing* at this year's final screenings (Warburton or Healesville).

You are strongly encouraged to return any hired films you still possess.

## FRITZ'S POEM

*Neruda*

Nov 2018

November's film, *Neruda*, and what I learned from it:  
Poetry plus power-play puts people in Peril!  
Which wouldn't be widely welcome in Warburton!



F.R.

## STAR RATINGS FOR *NERUDA*



2.8 from Healesville's viewers

3.1 from Warburton's viewers

2.9 overall

*Neruda* is a fairly mediocre film, which is reflected in its middling star result.

*Neruda*, a heavily-fictionalised drama about Chilean poet, senator and fugitive Pablo Neruda, dazzles with its surface presentation but has little of substance beneath.

The film has an elegant score and beautiful art direction, and I enjoy police officer antagonist Óscar Peluchonneau's (Gael García Bernal) deep characterisation. The film amusingly juxtaposes Peluchonneau's diligent manner and confident, contemplative narration with his rather gormless behaviour and lack of perception. The explicit framing of Peluchonneau as a supporting character in Neruda's life also gives him strong personal motivation to apprehend Neruda, thereby "writing" his own story.

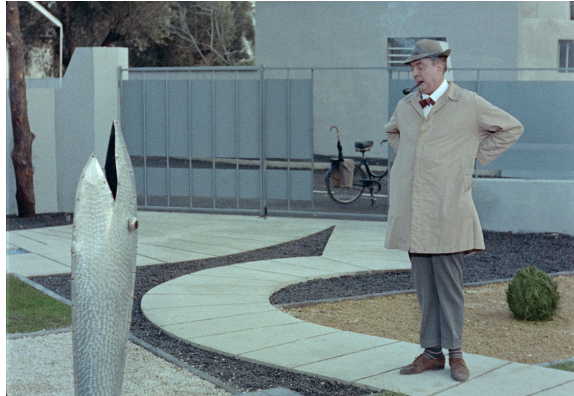
Unfortunately, the bombastic protagonist Neruda (Luis Gnecco) quickly becomes overbearing. The film also undermines its own suspense in having Neruda flagrantly dining out and visiting bars and brothels, doing little to conceal himself despite being wanted by the authorities.

Neruda's allies stress the importance of him remaining in Chile, as fleeing the country would damage his reputation and harm the resistance against the country's new oppressive regime. At yet, the climax follows Neruda as he escapes Chile through the Andes. As such, much of the film's preceding drama feels pointless.

*Neruda* has beautiful aesthetics and a great supporting character, but the narrative is sluggishly-paced and severely lacking in tension.

## DECEMBER'S SCREENING

1958 French comedy film      *Mon Oncle*      120 minutes (approx.)  
Rated G



Winner of the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar in 1958, *Mon Oncle* is a beloved comedy by legendary French filmmaker Jacques Tati, who also stars as the awkward yet loveable Monsieur Hulot. *Mon Oncle* is a vibrant and offbeat response to France's increasing modernisation and industrialisation at the time.

## FEBRUARY'S SCREENING

*The Country Doctor*  
2016 French comedy      Rated M      102 minutes (approx.)

**WARBURTON SCREENING:** Tuesday February 12  
**HEALESVILLE SCREENING:** Tuesday February 19

## THE HEALESVILLE MINI FILM FESTIVAL

Our fifth annual Healesville Mini Film Festival celebrates the extraordinary legacy of Japanese director Akira Kurosawa.

The first internationally-recognised Japanese filmmaker, Kurosawa pioneered hard-hitting action and morally-grey characters in cinema, and became known for his meticulous editing and innovative camera techniques.

His influence can still be felt today, from *The Magnificent Seven* to the plot of *Star Wars*.

Kurosawa's films explore heroism, corruption, bravery and cruelty. The three films screening in next year's Mini Film Festival epitomise these themes, and also star Toshiro Mifune, Kurosawa's long-time friend and most frequent collaborator.



### Sunday March 3 2019

9:45 am: *Yojimbo* (1961, M, 110 mins)  
1:10 pm: *Sanjuro* (1962, PG, 95 mins)  
3:15 pm: *Rashomon* (1950, PG, 88 mins)