

## SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Hello to all our members,

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

I hope everyone is keeping well.

We have been informed by the Yarra Ranges Council that their venues will be closed until at least the 31<sup>st</sup> of December and that our bookings for the remainder of the year have been cancelled.

This is disappointing, but we look forward to next year.

This year's **Annual General Meeting** will be held on Zoom on **Tuesday November 10 at 7 PM**. You will receive more information later, but please make note of the date.

Don't forget that you are welcome to borrow from our DVD library. The catalogue can be found on the Film Society website. Email *Lorraine Sorrell* ([lorrainesorrell@yahoo.com.au](mailto:lorrainesorrell@yahoo.com.au)) to reserve DVDs from the Healesville library or *Jim Cluberton* ([j.cluberton@bigpond.com](mailto:j.cluberton@bigpond.com)) to reserve DVDs from the Warburton library. Under current restrictions, the DVDs will be mailed to you.

### DUEL - REVIEW

It's not in our DVD library, but if you haven't seen it yet, the Steven Spielberg movie *Duel* is well worth a watch.

Released for television in 1971, this was Spielberg's first feature-length film. At 25, Spielberg was directing episodes of *Columbo* when he was approached to direct a TV movie. After reading the script and scenario, Spielberg thought Dennis Weaver would be perfect for the lead part, and he was delighted when Weaver agreed to take it on.



I won't go into any detail about the plot for fear of spoiling. Let's just say it's about a salesman on a business trip. On the highway, mostly through the desert of California, he finds himself in an apparent road-rage situation.

Spielberg creates a feeling of menace using sound and visual devices, with more than a little homage to Hitchcock. Many interpretations of the film's meaning have been offered over the years, but Weaver's description of it as "*High Noon* on wheels" is apt. I felt it had shades of *Bad Day at Black Rock* as well.

A young Spielberg makes an accidental cameo in the film; it was only noticed when the film was finalised and it was too late to edit out. Hint: it has something to do with the phone box scene.

**Vivienne Bond**  
**YRFS President**

We still have a long period of lockdown to go, but with the steady downward trend in new cases, I am very confident that Victoria is successfully containing the coronavirus once more.

Sadly, it looks like Victorian cinemas may not reopen until at least November.

Even if they do reopen in November, I won't have time to include any films I see in my year-end best and worst lists for the Mail newspaper.

Even so, as we stare enviously at our neighbouring states' open cinemas, this year

has featured a great crop of Netflix and streaming movies. Some recent additions to my top ten best list include the tense, funny and surprisingly even-handed satirical thriller *The Hunt*, the sensitive, well-paced superhero drama *Freaks: You're One of Us*, and two excellent South Korean films: the oddly touching zombie drama *#Alive* and the gut-wrenching crime thriller *Time to Hunt*.

I'm sad about the cancellation of the rest of the year's Film Society screenings, but the Committee is working hard on the next year's program and ensuring 2020's paid memberships still get their money's worth. Once we have a finalised plan on transferring paid memberships into next year, we will let you know.

Cheers.  
Seth

## VALE

We are very sorry to hear of the passing of one of our long-term members, **Klaus Limp**. Our condolences and thoughts go out to Dagmar and family at this time.

## REVIEW OF THE 2020 MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

This year's MIFF was a very different experience due to the impact of Covid-19.

Although using any of the usual cinema locations was not possible, the festival ran online and participants were able to stream their selections to their own homes – a very welcome alternative, under the circumstances.

How many of you took part in this streamed film festival?

I managed to view fifteen feature films across the twenty days of the festival.

Here are my top five picks (in no particular order):

**1. Farewell Amor (USA)**

An Angolan refugee is reunited with his wife and daughter in New York after seventeen years. A gentle, beautifully-acted and finely-observed family drama.

**2. La Llorona (Guatemala)**

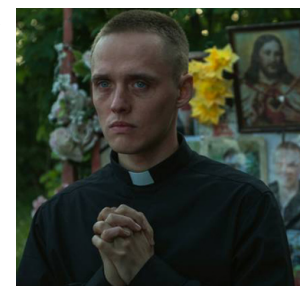
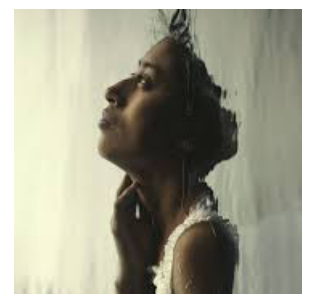
A general's world and family begin to crumble when he is charged with genocide. Echoing actual events in Guatemala during the 1980s, this eerie, slow-burning political allegory creates an atmosphere which is hard to describe. The title refers to "the weeping woman", a ghostly folktale character grieving for her lost children.

**3. Corpus Christi (Poland)**

A young parolee from a juvenile detention centre takes on the role of a priest in a small town rife with pain and grief. This provocative drama is an engrossing exploration of guilt and redemption, and a condemnation of narrow-mindedness and dogmatism.

**4. Kuessipan (Canada)**

Two Innu girls are the closest of childhood friends, but as they grow up their lives begin to diverge. Using mainly non-actors, this



beautiful film succeeds both as a study of female friendship and as an insight into the culture and traditions of the first-nation Innu people.

**5. Identifying Features (Mexico)**

A Mexican woman desperately searches for her son, who went missing after heading to the United States in search of a better life. Sometimes harrowing, the film starkly portrays the lawless nature of life in some areas of Central America today. Stunning cinematography is a feature of this compelling drama.



We would be interested to hear from any of our members and their MIFF 2020 experiences.

Send us an email at: [info@yarrarangesfilmsociety.org.au](mailto:info@yarrarangesfilmsociety.org.au)

**Laurie Hastings**