

Watershed, 1 Canon's Road, Harbourside, Bristol, BS1 5TX
Box Office: (0117) 927 6444

May 07 – Watershed Podcast Notes

Welcome to Watershed's podcast.

This month's podcast is dedicated to the **Spirituality and Film** Season, Watershed's contribution to Bristol's **Festival of Ideas** (Wed 9 – Wed 30 May). **Spirituality and Film** (Wed 9 – Sun 20 May) explores the question; can film engage with the spiritual?

Mark Cosgrove, Head of Programme, Watershed, interviewed Stephen Hinde, a Buddhist teacher within the Longchen Foundation tradition. Stephen will be introducing some of the **Spirituality and Film** screenings and will also be taking part in a panel discussion on Sun 13 May which aims to provide a public forum to debate and explore if cinema is, in fact, the 21st century church? or is it just fiction to pass the time?

Philosopher Colin McGinn in his recent book 'The Power of Cinema' likens the hushed reverence of cinema to the hushed reverence of a church or temple. If this is true, what are we being asked to engage in when we watch films? is it simply entertainment? or is there more to cinema than meets the flickering eye? To explore this we are screening a series of films from **Three Colours Blue** and **Raging Bull** through to **Groundhog Day** (a classic Buddhist Text) and the films of Eric Rohmer. Visit watershed.co.uk/spirituality or see below for full listings.

Festival of Ideas: Spirituality and Film Season

Wed 09 - Sun 20 May

Stories have forever been used to convey philosophical and universal truths to a wide audience, and cinema arguably plays a key role in carrying on that collective tradition. This season of screenings and discussions presented by Watershed as part of the **Festival of Ideas** explores whether cinema can deal with notions of spirituality and philosophical ideas. We revisit a selection of classics from **Raging Bull** to **Three Colours: Blue** in a more contemplative light, looking at spiritual notions such as rebirth, redemption and enlightenment. Other highlights include a **Buddhist Double-Bill** followed by a special **Birdman of Alkijazz** live performance to silent masterpiece **Light of Asia** at Arnolfini. Full programme details at ideasfestival.co.uk

Raging Bull 18

Wed 09 May 1800hrs Watershed

Dir: Martin Scorsese 1980 USA 129 mins

Raging Bull is not so much about boxing as it is about a man with paralysing jealousy, for whom being punished in the ring serves as confession, penance and absolution. Based on the life of boxing champion Jake LaMotta, Scorsese's classic follows the fighter from his tumultuous home and professional life through his descent into the world of seedy nightlife to, ultimately, the beginning of the path to redemption. Both violent and poetic, **Raging Bull** appreciates that a life can only be valued when the darkness surrounding it is acknowledged.

Introduced by Mark Cosgrove, Watershed's Head of Programme.

Three Colours: Blue 15

Thu 10 May 1800hrs Watershed

Dir: Krzysztof Kieslowski France/poland/Switzerland/UK 1993 1hr 38mins Subtitled

This penetrating, hypnotic meditation on loss stars Juliette Binoche as the sole survivor of an automobile crash that killed her husband, a celebrated composer, and their only child. Dealt the cruelest sort of freedom, she sets out to purge all remnants of her former existence in an attempt to sever her ties to the past. Though she tries to live a numb, anonymous life, old feelings and responsibilities bubble to the surface and the music that still surrounds her eventually draws her back from a ghostly existence into the realm of humanity.

Introduced by Mark Cosgrove, Watershed's Head of Programme.

Groundhog Day PG

Fri 11 May 1800hrs Watershed

Dir: Harold Ramis 1993 USA 101 mins

In a hilarious twist on reincarnation, arrogant weatherman Phil (Bill Murray) finds himself inexplicably trapped in an endless cycle in which he is forced to repeat Groundhog Day over and over again. With no consequences for his actions, Phil amuses himself with cynical recklessness and suicidal self-destruction. It is only when, an endless number of days later, Phil learns humility, understanding and acceptance of his fate that he is able to break free of the cycle.

Intro by Dr Rupert Gethi, Director of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, University of Bristol.

Ghost Dog 15

Sat 12 May 1500hrs Watershed

Dir: Jim Jarmusch France/Germany/USA/ Japan 1999 1hr 56mins

Imagine a world in which a gangland assassin follows an ancient Samurai code and communicates via carrier pigeon, where Mafia bosses recite Snoop Doggy Dog and your only friend is a Haitian ice-cream seller. Only then do you begin to get a flavour of this delightfully multi-genre, multi-cultural, deftly out-of-sync film. Ghost Dog (Forest Whitaker) is a rogue mob hit man whose absorption of the Samurai philosophy and discipline has transformed him from a no-hope drifter into a highly effective killer. Jarmusch brilliantly mixes the philosophical and the romantic with deadpan humour.

Panel: Spirituality and Film Sun 13 May

Sat 12 May 1330hrs Watershed

This panel explores whether cinema can deal with notions of spirituality, philosophical ideas and spiritual debate. Is cinema the 21st century church or is it just fiction to pass the time? Is

Groundhog Day a classic Buddhist text or is it just a damn funny film? This panel explores whether cinema can deal with notions of spirituality, philosophical ideas and spiritual debate.

We're delighted to welcome a range of guest speakers including; Ian Christie, Anniversary Professor of Film and Media History at Birkbeck College, Stephen Hinde, a Buddhist teacher within the Longchen Foundation tradition, Keith Tester, Professor of Cultural Sociology at the University of Portsmouth, Dr Rupert Gethi from the University of Bristol and Father Robert King, Catholic Chaplain, University of Bristol.

Fee: £4.00 full/ £3.00 concessions.

Éric Rohmer Double Bill:**A Tale of Springtime U****Sun 13 May 1500hrs Arnolfini****Dir. Eric Rohmer France 1990 1hr 47mins Subtitled**

With an introduction by Keith Tester, Professor of Cultural Sociology at the University of Portsmouth. The first of Rohmer's quartet of seasonal films is a charming tale of a philosophy teacher who becomes involved in the romantic and emotional machinations of her younger friend, the girl's amorous father, and the father's naive lover. A small joy recognising the beauty in the rhythms of everyday life, with strong characterisation and intelligent dialogue.

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An Autumn Tale U**Dir. Eric Rohmer France 1998 1hr 52mins Subtitled****Sun 13 May 1715hrs Arnolfini**

A warm, gently farcical coda on the difficulties of finding love in middle age, ruminating on the art of conversation and the rules of attraction. As each character reveals, through language or simple inflection, his or her position on love, work, longevity, and life itself, the film unfurls like a simple, well-choreographed dance.

Fee: £5/£3.50**Buddhist Double-Bill:****Travellers & Magicians****Sun 20 May 1400hrs Watershed****Dir: Khyentse Norbu 2003 Aus/Bhutan 1hr 48mins Subtitled**

Director and Buddhist monk Norbu's (*The Cup*) second film follows the journey of Dondup, a young villager who sets out to fulfill his lifelong dream to move to America. He encounters a fellow travelling monk who suggests that Dondup consider being satisfied with what life has dealt him before setting off to parts unknown. An unforgettable and enchanting tale.

Intro by Stephen Hinde, a Buddhist teacher within the Longchen Foundation tradition.

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Jew in The Lotus**Sun 20 May 1630hrs Watershed****Dir: Laurel Chiten 1998 USA 58 mins Subtitled**

In 1990, eight Jewish delegates travelled to Dharamsala, India, to meet with the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet and share 'the secret of Jewish spiritual survival in exile'. When writer Rodger Kamenetz was invited to go along to chronicle the event, his whole life changed unexpectedly. Based on the spiritual truths pursued and examined in Kamenetz's best-selling book of the same title, the film delves deep into the role that intense personal suffering plays in helping people discover human truths rarely understood by others. Not a definitive look at Judaism or Buddhism, but a complete portrait of a man in the process of formation.

Birdman of Alkijazz: Light of Asia With Special Guest Ray Russell

Sun 20 May 2000hrs Arnolfini

Dir. Franz Osten & Himansu Rai India/Germany 1925 1hr 37mins

£8.00/£6.00 Ticket holders entitled to a free Southern Comfort mixer from the bar.

This season's improvisational jazz battle sees the **Birdman of Alkijazz** (musician Tony Orrell) get spiritual with one of the finest jazz guitarists Britain has ever produced, Ray Russell, who has worked with musicians such as Bryan Ferry, Van Morrison and the John Barry Seven, as well as composed the award-winning theme for **A Touch of Frost**. The fearsome duo will be performing a live accompaniment to early silent masterpiece **Light of Asia** which tells the compelling life story of Prince Siddhartha Gautama, - the man who became the Buddha - from his privileged life to his spiritual riches and enlightenment. With an opulence and cast of thousands only possible through the involvement of the then still powerful Maharajah of Jaipur, this is a landmark film, which reveals the romantic appeal of Indian mysticism to many Europeans in the 1920s.

Tickets available from:

* **Watershed:** Fee: £6.00 full / £4.00 concessions (unless otherwise stated)

To book a ticket for a screening or event at Watershed please call Box Office: 0117 927 5100

For programme information please visit **watershed.co.uk**

* **Arnolfini:** Fee: £5.00/£3.50 (unless otherwise stated)

To book a ticket for a screening or event at Arnolfini please call Box Office: 0117 917 2300 / 01

For programme information please visit **arnolfini.org.uk**