

WNCC



WOKING'S NEW CINEMA CLUB

DELIVERANCE

USA/1972

109 mins

Certificate X

in glorious
CINEMASCOPE

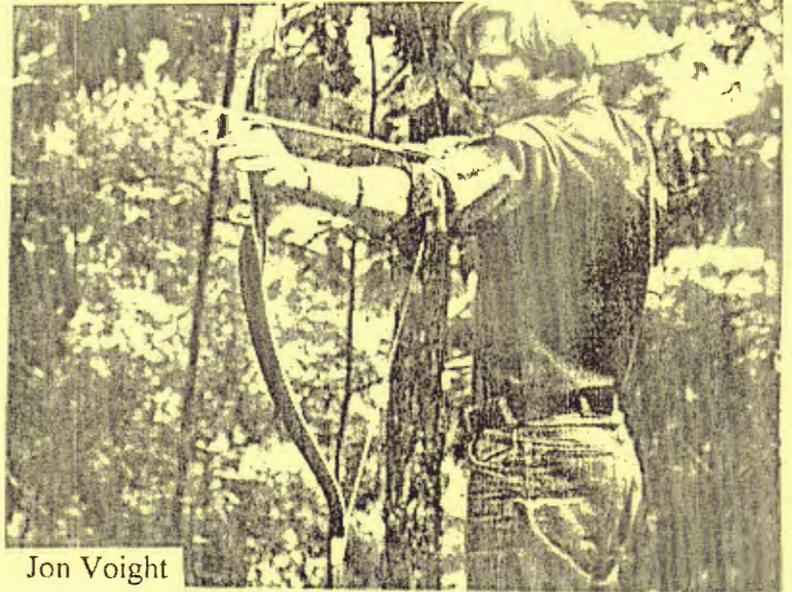
Starring:

Jon Voight as Ed Gantry
Burt Reynolds as Lewis Medlock
Ned Beatty as Bobby Trippe
Ronny Cox as Drew Ballinger
Billy McKinney as the Hillbilly rapist
Herbert Coward as
the toothless Hillbilly
James Dickey as the sheriff

Distributed by Warner Bros.
Produced and Directed by
John Boorman
Screenplay by James Dickey
From his novel
Photographed by Vilmos Zsigmond
Sound Recorded by
Walter Goss and Douglas Turner
Edited by Tom Priestly
Music by Eric Weissberg

It's a man's man's man's world

In the verses of his 1965 Rhythm and Blues hit record, James Brown describes men doing things; they build cars, trains, and toys for their children. But in the chorus he puts all these lines into a sort of context, where he states that all these activities 'would be nothing without a woman or a girl'. John Boorman's film, made seven years later, also shows men to be active, but instead of shaping the world in which they live, they are fighting for their very existence in a landscape which seems to be shaping them. The need for female company is, apparently, forgotten in the frenzy of self-preservation. But just as the word 'deliverance' has two dictionary definitions (release



Jon Voight

and/or surrender), Boorman's commercial project offers a selection of indulgences to its audiences, as evident in its respectable box office takings on release (over \$22 million).

White knuckle ride

For those of you with a penchant for sensory gratification, 'Deliverance' delivers. The combination of Zsigmond's photography, Priestly's editing and the drowning experience of Goss' and Turner's soundtrack took audiences on a memorable journey (remember that the exhilaration of the films of Lucas and Spielberg had yet to arrive). *Variety* magazine complained of a 'rhapsodic wallowing in the beauty' of the violence, such that it was (there are two killings in the film), but Boorman concentrates on squeezing every last drop of suspense out of the struggle to avoid death, rather than lingering on it. Add to this the stunning scenery of the Chattooga River in the Appalachian Mountains and you have an all-out assault of the senses.

And forgive us our trespasses...

But Boorman's films have never been a simple affair. In his Hollywood debut 'Point Blank' (1967), Lee Marvin's character is continually hunting down the person he thinks is responsible for his betrayal, only to find another layer of control above the one he has just dealt with. In 'Deliverance' control seems to be a false notion entirely; nature preys on living things, who prey on each other, but there is no overall plan. This Darwinian view may trouble religious people, and it is no coincidence that I have referred to The Lord's Prayer in the paragraph title; deliverance being one of the things we ask God for in The Prayer. What I think Boorman is asking is "Deliver who? And from what? And how?"

An unfortunate result of this approach is that the film does not so much offer us characters as vessels of philosophy. Lewis is the human cliché of animal behaviour - aggressive, volatile and respectful only of physical strength. Drew is the total intellectual - analytical and severed from his evolutionary roots. Bobby is the humanitarian - tolerant and civilised, and Ed is the empty vessel - waiting to be guided by whatever seems right for the situation, waiting to see which man

in this man's man's man's world knows the answer. The four city dwellers' original idea was to be released from the monotony of their daily routine, but by the end of the film they wish only to be released from the nightmare they have been trapped in. Or are they the manufacturers of this world, from which both the hillbillies and the countryside want to escape, but realise they cannot. Is the evil that everyone and everything wishes to be rescued from out there or within? Boorman concludes that any form of liberation has its price, and in this instance it is a twisted form of reincarnation. People and places are released through metamorphosis (accelerated evolution?), though as they were responsible for the mess from they wished to escape, they reappear as a twisted, imperfect version of what they should be; the disabled children of the hillbillies, Drew disappearing and then reappearing dead and distorted, Ed changing from naive to haunted, the valley being flooded as part of 'progress'. Retribution is omnipresent and indiscriminate, but is not triggered by an all-powerful overlooking force. Self-control is the key to survival.

PAUL COOK

Paul Cook is just one of the several WNCC members who write notes for each of the films screened during the season, based upon reviews and articles supplied by our notes editor, Ian Sowerby. If you would be interested in writing notes for any future film(s), please contact Ian at any Club evening.

A brief history of... the grim North

IN THE NORTH, even the rain-bows are in black and white. Most of the films were too: kitchen-sink drama in colour just wouldn't have looked right. Out, with the gleaming gold of a brass band the star of this week's *Brassed Off*, we look back at our big screen friends in the North:

The Man In The White Suit (1951) The textile mill meets big business. A classic shot is the fleet of Rolls-Royces bearing cadaverous boss Ernest Thesiger and his board in stately procession through small, grimy streets.

Room At The Top (1959) Laurence Harvey is the cold fish behind the boardroom take-overs, while Simone Signoret supplies the warmth in an ancient-looking Bradford.

Saturday Night And Sunday Morning (1960) Alan Sillitoe's Nottingham (we know it's in the East Midlands) turned into the most convincing industrial town in film. The workers live in back-to-backs so close you could hit a gossiping neighbour with your air rifle from your bedroom window. And Albert Finney (below) with



Shirley Ann Field) does: "Don't let the bastards grind you down" started here.

A Taste Of Honey (1961) Loads of fifties unmentionables thrown together - unwed pregnancy, gays and terrifyingly trollopy mothers in run-down Salford.

The Loneliness Of The Long-Distance Runner (1962) Sillitoe country again. Borstal-bound Tom Courtenay and chums spend a cold day-trip in Skegness. One spectacularly gloomy scene at a disused quarry was shot in Surrey.

A Kind Of Loving (1962) Alan Bates in northern horror scenario - girlfriend up spout and forced to live in claustrophobia with mother-in-law Thora Hird. Actually, US lounge crooner Mel Tormé used to have the formidable Hird as real-life mother-in-law.

This Sporting Life (1963) Muddily brutal sport scenes as Richard Harris out-northerners all contenders as a miner turned rugby player in Lindsay Anderson's gritty drama.

Billy Liarl (1963) Schlesinger chalks up a northern double, after his *A Kind Of Loving*. Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall escaped to London but their dreamer Billy never will.



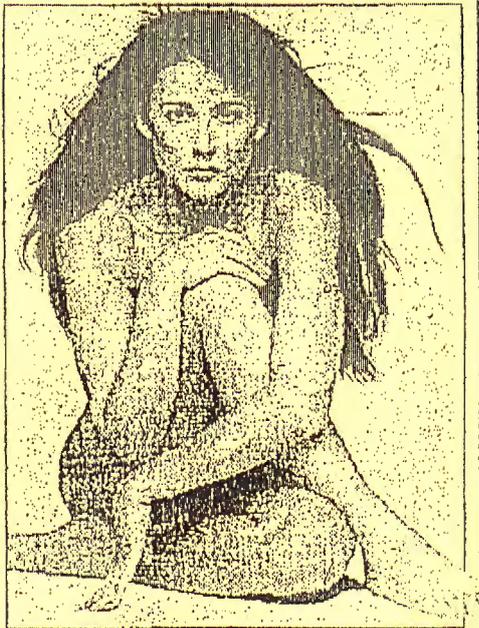
Kes (1969) The all-time champ - a hilarious and deeply sad Ken

Loach film set in and around Barnsley, starring David Bradley (below left). Even the comic football match refereed by Brian Glover - "We're Manchester United, I'm Bobby Charlton" - is impeccably Loachian. No such thing as a level playing field.

Raining Stones (1993) Drain-cleaning, loan-sharking, sheep-stealing and the great Ricky Tomlinson in Ken Loach's grimly humorous nod to *Bicycle Thieves*. Set in Oldham. *Rob Mackie*

REACTIONS

NEWS AND VIEWS



AWAY from the serious Oscars, the past year's most dreadful films and performances reaped honours of a far less coveted kind — the Golden Raspberry Awards.

Demi Moore's flop Striptease (above) led the way, picking up 'Razzies' for worst picture, worst actress, worst director, worst screenplay, worst screen couple (Moore and Burt Reynolds) and worst song, Pussy, Pussy, Pussy, Whose Kitty-Cat Are You? Unhappily, Moore tied as worst actress with herself, for her role in The Juror. The worst actor award was also a tie, between Tom Arnold (Big Bully) and Pauly Shore (Blo-Dome). The tongue-in-cheek 17th annual Razzies named Marlon Brando as worst supporting actor for Island of Dr Moreau.

From 'The Daily Mail' (25.03.97)

From 'The Guardian' Media Section

The worst miscastings of all time

THERE have been some terrible movie miscastings, but few more glaring than beefcake Bruce Willis as a psychologist in Color Of Night. (Amazingly he also played a shrink opposite Meryl Streep in the lamentable Death Becomes Her). Whatever next? Arnold Schwarzenegger in the Lite And Times Of Bobby Fischer? Woody Allen as a quarterback in the Dallas Cowboys Story? Kim Basinger in Disney's The Golden Heart Of Mother Theresa? Here's a selection of some of the worst castings in the movies:

Mel Gibson in Hamlet (Dir: Franco Zeffirelli, 1990). Virtuoso swashbuckling, sure; but a Danish intellectual overwhelmed by existential doubt? Er, no.

Juliette Binoche in Damage (Dir: Louis Malle, 1992). Did we get a flicker of passion? We did not.

George Lazenby in On Her Majesty's Secret Service (Dir: Peter Hunt 1969). Sean Connery turned down the chance to be James Bond again, so we got 000 rather than 007 from Lazenby.

Michelle Pfeiffer in Frankie And Johnny (Dir: Garry Marshall, 1991). Pfeiffer failed hopelessly to look unattractive.

Sterling Hayden in Johnny Guitar (Dir: Nicholas Ray, 1951). The hip, cynical onymous axeman? Well, he was certainly onymous. St Joan, however, was marvellous.

Harvey Keitel in The Piano (Dir: Jane Campion 1993). Great Scot? Well, no. Keitel's ludicrous accent as a Scotsman gone Maori. Groovy tattoos, though.

Charlton Heston in The Ten Commandments (Dir: Cecil B. DeMille 1956). Commandment No 11: Thou shalt not cast Charlton as Moses.

John Wayne in The Conqueror (Dir: Dick Powell, 1956). The Duke plays a Mongol leader. More Genghis can't than Genghis Khan.

Humphrey Bogart in The Return Of Dr X (Dir: Vincent Sherman, 1939). Bogart plays a vampire who terrorises the city. Fangs for the memory.

Michael Caine, Sylvester Stallone, John Wark and others too numerous to mention in Escape To Victory (Dir: John Huston, 1981). Preposterous stuff especially from Wark, the Ipswich midfielder making his Hollywood debut. The boy Pelé done good, but how exactly were the Brazilians involved in WW2?

Roger Daltrey in Lisztomania (Dir: Ken Russell, 1975). The Who's vocalist as great pianist and composer. Stop chuckling at the back.

Kevin Costner in Sizzle Beach USA (Dir: Richard Brander, 1974). The man who Pauline Kael called "Feathers For Brains" for his work in Dances With Wolves plays a superstar in his first movie, a bout of soft porn hokum. The thinking woman's Oliver Tobias.

WNCC 17th Season - Members' Reactions

<u>Title</u> (No of Reactions)	<u>Average Score</u>
Remains Of The Day (53)	8.4
The Usual Suspects (46)	6.8
Once Were Warriors (43)	6.6
Anchors Aweigh (22)	7.2
The Round-Up (18)	5.7
Shawshank Redemption (48)	8.5
It Happened One Night (35)	7.4
Il Postino (53)	8.1
Room At The Top (35)	7.5
Funny Bones (37)	7.7
Shorts Programme (38)	6.6
The Big Sleep (33)	7.7

see overleaf for reactions to 'The Big Sleep'

BIG SCREEN STEAM

Don't forget that this Saturday sees the Big Screen Steam presentation by Woking Borough Council in association with WNCC. There are two separate performances at 3.00 pm and 7.30 pm. Tickets are available from Pauline Lock (01483 475745); Hammicks Bookshop in Woking; or from The Ambassadors Box Office (01483 761144 - credit cards accepted).

NEWS AND VIEWS

NEW LIFE FOR GOLDWATER LODGE !

Now open in Goldwater Park
LAKESIDE CAFE

at Goldwater Lodge,
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Sports Pavilions

(Entrance at the Lake Side of the Building)
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Drinks, Ice Cream and Confectionery.

Comfortable seating inside, with
patio chairs and tables for fine
weather.

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The Big Sleep (20/3/97)

33 Reactions giving an average score of 7.7

REACTIONS

Some of your comments

As far as detectives go, Bogart will always be the finest.

Clever and witty - but very hard to follow.

Up to expectations - very, very good.

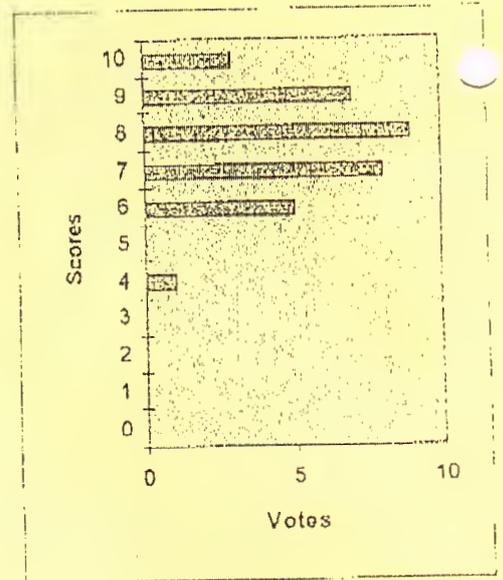
Just nostalgia - good for its age.

Haven't seen it before. The dialogue really cracked.

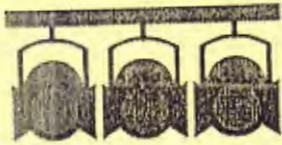
Utterly confused as to what it was all about but the chemistry between Bogart and Bacall was great!

An excellent story, not as complicated as I was expecting. Lauren was lovely.

Helen Sayers



see previous page for a summary of this season's reactions to date



COMING
NEXT

24 April 1997

'REQUIRED VIEWING...'
Tense, exciting, superbly made!
BARRY NORMAN FILM OF

'BREATHTAKING' **'EXQUISITE'**
DAILY TELEGRAPH INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

'ENTHRALLING CINEMA'
TIME OUT

SHANGHAI TRIAD ¹⁵

by ZHANG YIMOU with GONG LI

A powerful gangster picture, set in the opium haze of 30s Shanghai's mob-controlled clubland. Gong Li stars as the sassy cabaret singer and doomed gangster's moll caught in a power-play between her ruthless triad boss and his ambitious right-hand man. From Zhang Yimou, director of *Red Sorghum* and *Raise The Red Lantern*, this is another visually stunning and dynamic piece of New Chinese Cinema.

Performance Ends 10.20pm (approx.)

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