WNCC
WOKING'S NEW CINEMA CLUB

The Main Feature

Season 31 - Issue Number 2

Le Premier Jour du Reste de ta Vie

(The First Day of the Rest of Your Life)

France 114 minutes
Production: 2008 Certificate 15

Director and writer	Rémi Bezançon
Music	Sinclair
Cinematographer	Antoine Monod

Cast

Zabou Breitman	Marie-Jeanne
Jacques Gamblin	Robert
Pio Marmaï	Albert
Marc-Andre Grondin	Raphael
Déborah François	Fleur
Roger Dumas	Pierre
Cecile Cassel	Prune
Sarah Cohen-Hadria	Clara
Camille de Pazzis	Moira
Jean-Jacques Vanier	Mathias Moreau

A smash hit natively and winner of three Cesars, this is a vibrant film filled with truths of everyday life, when communication, misunderstandings, circumstances and emotions mesh together like a single heartbeat.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that the success of the film was despite its opening in France on 23 July 2008, which coincides with the start of the traditional holiday season when families leave the capital and also the US blockbusters are released. Therefore it is considered a risky period for domestic films.

Indeed in an interview writer/director Rémi Bezançon stated "During three weeks in the Top 10 we were surrounded by nine American films! Yet, when I announced my release date I heard many "You're sick!", "Do not!", "You're going straight into the wall ..." and other "My dear, you must be green, right?" Well no, I always had confidence in the summer release date, it was a gamble, but still it was very strategic in the end. And ****, it's a profession where you have to take risks I think. And the film is still in cinemas, 31 weeks after it first opened!"

The classic French family drama gets a modern reboot in this unstoppably entertaining saga of life, love, death, pop music and an ongoing battle to cut down on the cigarettes.

Director Rémi Bezançon's smart script selects one key day in the past for each member of a typical suburban household, building up a picture of what makes them tick and drives them mad, as both individuals and a unit. We start in 1988 on the day older brother Pio Marmaï leaves the nest, and by the time punkette sister Déborah François (last seen at WNCC in "the Page Turner"), stoic dad Jacques Gamblin (who still thinks he's a rebel, even though he's middle aged with three grown-up kids) and company make it to the millennium, we feel we've lived through it with them.

Writer-director Benzacon tells this story with plenty of attitude and a lively, clever directorial style that keeps us glued to the screen. Edited together with wit and sensitivity, and scored with fantastic music, this expertly made film demonstrates real boldness in its use of both subtle surrealism and comedy. And while he refuses to shy away from raw emotion, Benzacon never indulges in sentimentality.

There's never a false moment in the actors' performances, all of whom are perhaps a bit impossibly beautiful. All five of the central actors find earthy honesty and multi-layered meaning as their characters grapple with love, purpose and mortality. There's also a sparky chemistry between them that is utterly convincing – as a result, it often feels like we're observing a real family, albeit an improbably good-looking one. And while there are moments that break our hearts, there are enough scenes that make us laugh out loud.

The film is both simple and yet emotionally dense, the performances are beyond reproach and almost everyone will find something that relates closely to their experiences. The comedy is beautifully handled.

Flawlessly acted, this film is likely to prompt guffaws and nods of quiet recognition in equal measure, managing that rare trick of being accessible without dumbing down or turning naff. Richard Curtis could perhaps learn a thing or two from watching this type of film!

Iain McGlashan

Record-breaking movie fan Gwilym Hughes dies

Gwilym Hughes with the late entertainer Roy Castle, presenter of the TV programme Record Breakers

A movie enthusiast who held a Guinness World Record for the number of films he had watched has died at the age of 65.

Gwilym Hughes, of Dolgellau in Gwynedd, used to watch up to 14 films a week and kept a record of each one he had seen.
He held the Guinness World Record from 2008 having sat through more than 28,000 movies.

He saw his first film, King Solomon's Mines, in 1953 but his favourite film remained Lawrence of Arabia, directed by David Lean.

Mr Hughes died on Monday at Wrexham Maelor Hospital. He leaves a widow, Eirlys.
A spokesperson for Guinness said: "We would like to offer our condolences to his family and friends."

Mr Hughes, a retired painter and decorator, became interested in films as a child after an illness left him in hospital for two-and-a-half years. For a time, he was strapped to an iron frame.

In an interview in 2008, he said he clearly remembered watching King Solomon's Mines.

He said: "You can imagine what it was like. I could only waddle my feet and move my hands and head.

"I was in an iron frame, and you saw these moving things in front of you. You just couldn't wait for the next time.

"They were so wonderful. It just clicked my imagination."

He started touring the cinemas in Dolgellau, Barmouth and Porthmadog and kept detailed records of what he had seen.

He included a cast list and often a photograph or newspaper cutting about the film.

The development of video and DVD meant he could watch films at home but said it did not rule his life. He said: "People think that I'm glued to the television set 24 hours a day but I'm not because I'm a member of about 10 organisations.

"I watch films from about 9pm until about 12. Sometimes I could set up one on the televisions in the study. It works out about 10 to 14 films a week."

His favourite films were Lawrence of Arabia, Hedd Wyn, Zulu, The Dambusters and The Sundowners.

Reactions to .... An Education – 9th September 2010

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Votes	~	~	~	~	~	1	2	9	15	6	2

Total received - 35 **Average Score – 7.83**

Your Comments

Wonderful
Better than expected and for a 12 certificate it dealt with the subject in a very mature way
Atmosphere of early 60s suburbia very well evoked – excellent direction and acting
Excellent
Very enjoyable
The innocence and wonder – reflects our own age
An evocation of another world. Excellent acting
Brilliant – most enjoyable to watch. Loved seeing the cars of the time and many of the school scenes were reminiscent of my schooldays.
Excellent performances – definitely one to watch again
Dated but still relevant – enjoyable.
Touching museum piece.
Great performance by Carey Mulligan – good direction etc. PS a bit hard to understand her at times – sound or what?
Love the new screen!
PS The sound was very loud.

Our next presentation on Thursday 14 October at 8pm:

THE HURT LOCKER

(cert 15)

This year's winner of 6 Oscars including Best Film, Best Director and Best Original Screenplay.

Tense and gritty war film from director Kathryn Bigelow, following the lives of an army bomb disposal squad in war-torn Iraq. Having to look death in the face daily, the soldiers of an elite ordnance disposal team struggle to accept their new sergeant, William James (Jeremy Renner), when he risks their lives with his reckless behaviour.

Repropoint sponsors photocopying of *the main feature*