

The Main Feature

Season 40 – Issue 13 - Screening 8 October 2020

Welcome back ...

... to the interrupted 40th season of Woking New Cinema Club. In consultation with Mayford Village Hall, we have made some changes to the way we operate to keep everyone safe. There will be no interval for refreshments; the seats are socially-distanced but household groups can sit together; there is cleaning before and after the film; and we ask members to wear a face-covering throughout. There are a couple of other changes too – the order of the films for the remainder of the season has been adjusted, and you can give your reactions and comments on line. Enjoy the film, and the rest of the season! The 41st season, which will be shorter than usual, will begin in the New Year.

Swimming with Men

UK, 2018

96 min, Certificate 12A

Director Oliver Parker
 Screenplay Aschlin Ditta
 Producer Stewart Le Marechal, Anna
 Mohr-Pietch, Maggie
 Monteith

Cinematography David Raedeker

Cast

Rob Bryden	Eric Scott
Rupert Graves	Luke
Thomas Turgoose	Tom
Adeel Akhtar	Kurt
Jim Carter	Ted
Daniel Mays	Colin
Charlotte Riley	Susan
Jane Horrocks	Heather Scott



Tonight's film is a comedy which should help cheer us up amid the Covid gloom. It's directed by Oliver Parker (*Johnny English*, *Dad's Army*) and it brings together an ensemble cast led by Rob Brydon, who was interviewed in 2018 on BBC Radio 5 Live by Mark Kermode and Simon Mayo.

Simon Mayo: What's the film about?

Rob Brydon: It's a comedy, but it's got a lot of heart. It's the story of a middle-aged man, Eric, who I play. He's in an unhappy marriage with Jane Horrocks – it's hard to imagine, but he is – and he's unhappy at work. He's an accountant, and he's hit a brick wall and he finds his comfort at the swimming pool, swimming, he just ploughs up and down hiding from his wife. Then one day he looks under the surface and there is a group of middle-aged men all sat on the bottom: Jim Carter is there, Daniel Mays, Adeel Akhtar, Rupert Graves and they are a synchronised swimming team.

Eric ends up joining the team, he leaves his wife, lives in a motel, and the team enters the World Championships.

It's about men getting to a certain age and not knowing where they are. What they get out of being in this group – that's the touching thing about it – they get this real comfort. There's a send up of *Fight Club* in that they have their own rules, and you don't talk about swim club, you leave your personal life at the door, but all of the men in it have some chink in their armour, some thing that's niggling at them.

Mark Kermode: And it's based on a true story?

RB: There's a documentary called *Men Who Swim* which is all about a Welsh guy, called Dylan, who went to Sweden, met a girl and moved there, couldn't find his feet and in an effort to integrate he joined this synchronised swimming team – in fact, that team appears in our film as the Swedes when it comes to the World Championships.



SM: The idea of men adrift is an interesting one. It's a middle-aged male film for men trying to work out where they fit in. There's bereavement, and divorce and all that – and that's really the heart, the grist of the film.

RB: Yes, it's men suddenly ... I'm 53 and I think you can get to a certain age and you realise that the end is (hopefully) a long way off, but

nonetheless it's in sight. I think a lot of men start asking 'What have I done?', 'Have I achieved what I wanted to achieve?' and 'Where am I in my life?'. In the past you could say that's all in the future, I can sort that out later, that's further down the road. Especially now, with all the gender politics that are very front and centre, I think it's quite a fitting time for a film that looks at men who are wondering 'Well, what am I meant to be doing?'.

Brydon added that people can have a chuckle about synchronised swimming but said 'Good Lord, give it a go, it is exhausting.'

I wonder if there is an emerging film genre - underdog sports. Think of *Cool Runnings* and *Eddie the Eagle* or an odd little French film I saw last year *Les crevettes pailletées* (The Sequinned Shrimps) which follows the fortunes of a gay water polo team coached by a water polo star disgraced because of homophobic remarks. The common feature is that the first half of the film describes the relationships and the second half has the jeopardy in the form of a competition.

Or maybe it's just about a bunch of misfit, slightly bumbling men trying to deal with their feelings through the medium of synchronised swimming – the mid-life crisis film genre. As Mark Kermode put it 'Perhaps it should have been called *The Pool Monty*'.

Michael Hipkins



We thank Red Eye for subsidising the cost of printing these notes. Red Eye Print, Unit 2D, Lansbury Estate, 102 Lower Guildford Road, Knaphill, GU21 2EP Tel: 01483 772111

We will gather your reactions to tonight's film electronically: send an email to reactions@wncc.org.uk. See page 4 for details.

The films which complete the fortieth season:

22 October Lunchbox

A mistaken delivery of a lunchbox in Mumbai leads to an encounter between a lonely, young housewife and a widower.

12 November Can You Ever Forgive Me?

A best-selling celebrity biographer takes desperate steps when her books no longer sell. Melissa McCarthy recruits Richard E. Grant to help in her deceptions. Based on a true story.

26 November BlacKkKlansman

An African-American police detective manages to infiltrate the local Ku Klux Klan branch with the help of a Jewish surrogate who eventually becomes its leader. Spike Lee directs.

10 December Comme un avion (Sweet Escape)

Michel, a fifty year-old graphic designer decides to abandon his urban lifestyle. One day, he assembles a kayak and embarks on an adventure.

Tom Bromley of the Salisbury Journal says it's great that drive-in cinemas are making comeback

The origins of the drive-in cinema date back to New Jersey in the early 1930s. The person with the brainwave was Richard Hollingshead, a cinema fan by night and car worker by day. Hollingshead's mother found going to the movies uncomfortable, thanks to the narrow, wooden seats, and so he set about creating an automobile alternative in his drive. He stuck a projector on the car roof, tied a sheet to a couple of trees and stuck a radio behind for the sound.

By June 1933, Hollingshead had developed this idea into a patented product, working out the correct positionings of car, screen and sound to create an outdoor cinematic experience. The first movie shown was the slightly ominously-titled *Wives Beware* about a married man who pretends to lose his memory so he can see other women. 'The whole family is welcome,' the drive-in's slogan ran, 'regardless of how noisy the children are'. What the whole family made of the husband's amnesia-affair antics is left to history.

It wasn't until after the Second World War, and Hollingshead's patent expired, that the drive-in really took off. By the late 1950s, there were around 4000 across the US, and the phenomenon became firmly ensconced in both Americana and teenage culture: best encapsulated in the film *Grease*, perhaps, when John Travolta is left stranded at the drive-in by Olivia Newton-John.

The late fifties and early sixties were the peak of the drive-in as part of culture and the cinematic experience. As cities expanded, drive-in locations became bought by property developers, and the arrival of the VHS and video rentals shrunk their reach still further. The number of drive-ins dwindled down to a few hundred for fans and aficionados.

Fast forward to 2020, however, and suddenly the drive-in is both back and has gone international. In response to the pandemic and the ongoing closure of cinemas and theatres, drive-in venues have started springing up across the UK. And not just cinemas either: comedian Mark Watson is currently running a Drive and Dine tour, featuring stand-ups such as Shappi Khorsandi and Ed Byrne, and food provided by chef Tom Kerridge.

For sure, the drive-in doesn't feel quite the same experience in the UK as the US. Being sat in your car in a disused cattle market with the windscreen wipers going doesn't quite have that golden Americana feel you might be hoping for. And just as you can get stuck behind the tall guy in the cinema, so the person parking up in front with the 4x4 can obscure the view. But get good weather and book yourself a slot in the front rows, and you can enjoy the unexpected cinematic experience of the year.

<https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/18602253.tom-bromley-great-drive-in-cinemas-making-comeback/>

Comments and reactions to: **The Magnificent Seven**

No of reaction slips received = 22

Average score = 8.05

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

Love it, an all-time great!!

Baldly supreme

Classic! Great choice for Big Screen – thank you

Good classic film – thoroughly enjoyable

Yul Brynner, Steve McQueen, James Coburn – The Great Three

A classic old western film that has aged well. I much enjoyed watching it. What did they do with all the dead bodies?

Enjoyable – surprisingly deep story

Audio slightly out of sync, part 2?

A master-class. Tarantino, please take note

When Hollywood knew how to make Westerns. Great cast and theme music

Never seen before – very enjoyable good old-fashioned cowboy film with no Indians!

Still my favourite cowboy movie!

Great escapism

A film that wears its moral heart on its sleeve. Great score

Position	Film	Average score
1	Green Book	8.43
2	Bohemian Rhapsody	8.35
3	The Magnificent Seven	8.05
4	The White Crow	7.29
5	Il Capitale umano (Human Capital)	7.22
6	Before the Flood	7.17
7	Pillow Talk	7.11
8	Stan and Ollie	6.92
9	Ballon (Balloon)	6.91
10	Todos lo saben (Everybody Knows)	6.71
11=	Sherlock Jr	6.52
11=	La Tortue Rouge (The Red Turtle)	6.52
12	Manbiki kazoku (Shoplifters)	6.45

Forthcoming attraction: 22 October 2020

One World Week – Lunchbox A mistaken delivery in Mumbai's famously efficient lunchbox delivery system connects a young housewife to an older man in the dusk of his life as they build a fantasy world together through notes in the lunchbox. The Lunchbox is *perfectly handled and beautifully acted; a quiet storm of banked emotions*. The Guardian

Your reactions – email to

reactions@wncc.org.uk. Use marks out of ten and any comments you have. Use the scale below to help you:

1. One of the worst films you have ever seen
2. A poor or distasteful film
3. Just bearable though you wouldn't want to watch it again
4. Not really worth watching - it might be an OK film but not your sort of film
5. Just worth watching – you did not feel you had wasted your time

6. You quite enjoyed the film – above average acting or direction
7. You enjoyed the film – your sort of film; you recognised the quality of the acting and direction
8. You would watch this film again – a highly enjoyable film
9. In your top 100 films – excellent in most departments (acting, direction, script, cinematography)
10. In your top 10 films of all time – a classic