



## **Hitchcock... and the Others**

### **A season of double bills**

#### **Playhouse Cinema, Eden Court**

**Sunday 12, 1:30pm and Monday 13 September, 6:00pm:**

### **Hitchcock's *Shadow of a Doubt***

**Sunday 12, 5:15pm and Monday 13 September, 8:15pm:**

### **Roger Donaldson's *No Way Out***

The last eighteen months have been marked by the worst plague for a century, a deepening of economic inequality, apocalyptic natural disasters, savage racial prejudice, severe restrictions on individual liberties and a democratic system under serious threat. Amidst the mayhem the future of cinema might seem like trivial pursuit. But with many cinemas, particularly smaller independent ones, in danger of never opening their shutters again, and fewer distributors taking a risk on those less bankable films, the appeal of the big screen, the people around you, the public space, the energy, joy and enlightenment should never be downplayed. Nobody is going to pay homage to the fact that they saw *Star Wars*, *Jaws*, *The Seven Samurai* or *Psycho* on their sofa when asked what their favourite movie experience was.

Many of the old movie companies find it no longer imperative to renew the license for cinematic exhibition, once they have invested in a Blu-ray or DVD version of a picture. While investigating the availability of works by a handful of great directors, I discovered that there are still several old prints safeguarded in archives of many tremendous films, even in the UK, yet distributors no longer prioritise the screening rights. At present, for example, none of the surviving films of Japanese master Kenji Mizoguchi, a director who's *Ugetsu*, *Sansho the Bailiff* and *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum* I have wanted to screen for years, are obtainable to be screened in public. This is similar to no longer hearing a Mozart symphony being performed live by a great orchestra, or seeing a Vermeer painting exhibited in a brilliantly designed museum. He is far from being the only master who is being neglected.

During the next few months I would like to invite you on a journey to discover or rediscover films made by not just one of the greatest directors, but one of the greatest artists of the twentieth century. They will feature introductions before, talks and discussions after each screening. Cinema is the art form of that century, and Alfred Hitchcock is still its most recognizable name. French writers and budding directors, like François Truffaut, Claude Chabrol and Jacques Rivette, of *Cahiers du Cinéma* dubbed him Le Papa du Cinéma. He is, admittedly, far from being neglected. But he remains underestimated. This major retrospective, screened over the next few months at Eden Court should be ample prove of his prominence.



The season is called *Hitchcock and The Others*. They are all double bills, where the Hitchcock is followed by a film either clearly inspired by the master or a kind of inspiration itself. Seen together it hopefully intensifies the pleasure of contrasting them and finding the parallels.

Most of the cinemas where I first saw them have been turned into shopping centres or have been razed to the ground, but I do remember them as places I felt embraced, the sort of magical domains where a light coming from behind created entire new worlds in front of everyone. Although I hope and believe that cinema-going, like all other theatrical and live art forms, will survive the present crisis, it is going to need a huge change in attitude of governments worldwide. Most politicians have totally ignored the arts. Culture is essential to the human experience, to our sense of sharing and to our mental well-being. The movies have an egalitarian quality that connects us, even when sitting in the dark. And at home one watches a film, in the cinema, even with social distancing established, one becomes part of it.

Although Hitch fooled around in television land, mainly to attract a new audience to see his movies, a great Hitchcock film, particularly when seen in the cinema where they were made for, is unsurpassed in the power to hypnotize you, and bring to life ideas and emotions that

simply cannot be captured by so many other films. The sustained brilliance of his films, from the *Lodger* (1927) to *Family Plot* (1976), is a unique phenomenon. There are a few minor works among them, but no director maintained such a long streak of masterpieces full of technical ingenuity, experimentation, complexity, psychological insight and spiritual resonances, this combined with an enormous mass-audience appeal. What these films also will highlight is the use of music, integral to the visualization of his major themes, and when the music is totally absent like in *The Birds*, the use of sound. His influence on filmmakers worldwide remains profound. The Father of Cinema indeed.

Tony Janssens (InFiFa)

### **InFiFa's Hitchcock and The Others**

**Sunday 12 and Monday 13 September:**

**1330 (S) 1800 (M) *Shadow of a Doubt***

**1715 (S) 2015 (M) *No Way Out* (Roger Donaldson)**

**Sunday 26 and Monday 27 September:**

**1700 (S) 1800 (M) *Rear Window***

**1945 (S) 2030 (M) *Red Road* (Andrea Arnold)**

**Sunday 10 and Monday 11 October:**

**1700 (S) 1800 (M) *Psycho***

**1930 (S) 2030 (M) *Dressed to Kill* (Brian de Palma)**

**Sunday 24 and Monday 25 October:**

**1400 (S) 1800 (M) *The Birds***

**1730 (S) 2030 (M) *Them!* (Gordon Douglas)**

**Sunday 13 and Monday 14 November:**

**1330 (S) 1800 (M) *Marnie***

**1700 (S) 2030 (M) *Magnificent Obsession* (Douglas Sirk)**

To be continued...

**All screenings: The Playhouse Cinema, Eden Court**