NEWSREEL 20 JULY - 24 SEPTEMBER 2015





Volume 36 Number 3





Launceston Film Society screenings Village Cinemas Complex 163 Brisbane St, Launceston



MON 6:00 pm WED 4:00 pm & 6:30 pm THUR 6:00 pm Except school holidays

The Village Cinemas in Launceston have had a long partnership with the Launceston Film Society. It is a mutually beneficial partnership and without the goodwill of the Village, the LFS could not exist in its present form.

SUPPORT & ASSISTANCE

There is sometimes congestion in the foyer. Village management has requested that the LFS committee assist theatre attendants with the queue and process members' admission. We cannot be admitted to the theatre if another film is still screening or cleaning of the theatre is in progress. We ask your patience.

The Village Cinemas welcomes and appreciates your support for the candy bar.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

- 🖆 The Village Cinema offers a concession to LFS members for most of their screenings.
- For those who find it difficult to see the bottom of the screen and subtitles, booster cushions are available.
- ^E The LFS Committee may allow Village to screen a trailer before the LFS film.
- ^E In the interest of everyone's enjoyment the LFS committee requests members to please:
 - Be seated before the film starts
 - Turn off your mobile phone
 - ✓ Minimise noise including eating, drinking or talking once the film commences.
 - \checkmark Do not sit or stand at the back wall as this is a fire safety issue
 - Village rules for food and beverages apply.



launceston film society

PO Box 60, Launceston, 7250 Web: www.lfs.org.au

President Vice-President Secretary Treasurer Membership secretary Committee

Peter Gillard Mark Horner Gail Bendall Kim Pridham Gill Ireland Robin Claxton Janez Zagoda Anne Green

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

The LFS is a "Members Only" society. Our screening licence requires that admission to screenings is for members only. The rules of the LFS prevent you from lending your membership card to another person, even if you will not be attending the film. This is to maintain our "members only" status required under our screening licence.

Membership cards will be scanned. Membership cards will be scanned before admission. The only information on the card is your name and membership number. Scanning of the cards provides the committee with information about attendance at screenings. Each membership is valid for use (by the member) for only one screening per week. If you do not have your card someone from the committee will be there to record your name for verification against our membership database. Be assured that if you are a paid up member you will be OK to see the film. But please understand you may be delayed entry while other members are admitted.

Photo ID on membership cards. Most members now have a photo card. This is to ensure the "members only" rule above and also to speed up ID checks. **Those who have not sent in a photo should do so now as the time is coming when only photo cards will be accepted.** Members who have lost their card will need to supply a photo ID for their replacement card. (See section below on **"Lost Cards"**)

Seating is not guaranteed at LFS screenings. The Launceston Film Society proudly boasts about 1520 members. The largest cinema at the Village Cinemas complex holds around 300 people. A seat cannot be guaranteed.

Reserved seats. At the rear of the theatre, seats are reserved for people with special needs. Please do not take any of these seats unless you have a special need, and please make your need known to a committee member before admission. There are also seats reserved for the committee members who are needed in the foyer. Please do not take one of these seats until invited or a committee member removes the signs at the start of the film.

Censorship classifications. The censorship classification of each of the films screened is given in NEWSREEL along with consumer guidance (eg violence, or explicit sexual scenes). Films classified as R and MA 15+ and MA are often selected, and persons under the appropriate age limit will not be admitted.

Lost cards. If your card is lost we prefer that you apply for a replacement through our website <u>www. lfs.org.au</u> Go to the tab *"Membership"* and then select "Lost cards". You will be redirected to the secure site **Register Now** (retained by us) to pay the \$10 that is the cost of a replacement card. If you are unable to use the website then write to the LFS (PO Box 60, Launceston 7250) requesting a replacement card and include a cheque or money order for \$10. Please do not hand any money to the committee. We cannot accept money paid in this informal way. Your new card will be posted out to you. Do not forget to send a photograph. This can be emailed or posted.

Membership cards remain the property of the LFS. Recovered lost cards or cards no longer required should be returned to us.

Changing address. If you change your address, notify us (post or email) to ensure that you continue to receive the NEWSREEL.

Film discussion page. If you wish to post any comments about a film that the LFS has screened, we encourage you to do so on the page provided on our website.

Members Requests. If you know of a film you would like to see, please let us know either by email at info@lfs.org.au or by handing information to a committee member at the door. Remember that we are aware of films recently reviewed in the press. It is the unusual films that are of most interest.

Life Members. For past services provided to the continuation of the Launceston Film Society, the following individuals have been granted life membership: Barbara Murphy, Edward Broomhall, Caroline Ball, David Heath, Michèle McGill, Peter Gillard, Stan Gottschalk and Rodney O'Keefe.

LEVIATHAN (M 15+)

Mature themes, coarse language, sexual references, nudity and violence.



Russia 2014

Director: Andrey Zvyagintsev Featuring: Aleksey Serebryakov, Elena Lyadova, Roman Madyanov, Vladimir Vdovichenkov, Anna Ukolova. Language: Russian with subtitles. Running Time: 140 minutes

Original review: David Stratton, The Australian. **Extracted by:** Peter Gillard

If anyone is curious what life is like for the average battler in Vladimir Putin's Russia, Leviathan offers some revealing and disturbing answers. The setting is a small town located in the northwest of Russia on the Kola Peninsula, across the Barents Sea from Finland. Kolia has lived for most of his life in the waterfront house with his second wife Lilya and Roman, his son by his first marriage. Kolia is a mechanic with his own business located next to his house. Kolia's life is about to be shattered by the local administration; Vadim Shelevyat, the corrupt mayor of the town, wants to confiscate Kolia's property — his house and his business — to develop the area.

Kolia is not about to surrender everything without a fight, however, and seeks the help of his friend, Dmitriy, a Moscow-based lawyer. These are the bare bones of the plot of a film that is filled with surprising revelations and developments as the film meticulously explores the extent of corruption even in this little community so far from the capital. This is a country where the police routinely break the law and act on behalf of the powerful against the weak, where the authorities are in cahoots with the church, and where thuggery and intimidation — even, as a last resort, assassination — ensure that the establishment retains its power over the citizenry.

Zvyagintsev, the director has said that the film is a loose reworking of the Book of Job, but Kolia isn't struggling against God — his struggle is against the Russian state. He notes in a statement accompanying the film: "Just as we are all, from birth, marked by original sin, we are all born in a 'state'; the spiritual power of the state over man knows no limit."

X+Y (M)

(A Brilliant Young Mind) Mature themes and coarse language



USA 2014

Written by: James Graham Director: Morgan Mattthews Featuring: Asa Butterfield, Rafe Spail, Sally Hawkins. Running Time: 111 minutes

Original reviews: Louise Keller, Urbancinefile; Sandra Hall, Sydney Morning Herald. Extracted and compiled by: Gail Bendall

"On the spectrum" – meaning the spectrum between Asperger's syndrome and autism – must be one of medicine's most misused terms. These days, it's routinely invoked by amateur diagnosticians to describe foot-in-the-mouth politicians or a boss who's never heard of commonsense. Nathan, the teenage hero of X+Y, is the real thing. Diagnosed in early childhood, he has a neuro-developmental disorder that brings with it a fascination with numbers, colours and patterns of light. These preoccupations have turned him into a mathematical whiz.

Nathan is pale and lanky with dark hair and an intent, wide-eyed expression, as if he's tuned in to music that no one else can hear, which is often the case. He has plenty to say but is afraid to say it. His talents in mathematics lead him to the prestigious International Mathematical Olympiad, where for the first time (at a training camp in Taipei), he is surrounded by kindred spirits. Like Nathan, they have brilliant minds and varying degrees of similarly anti-social behaviour.

After a fellow Olympiad candidate points up the close relationship between music and maths, lights, numbers and sounds come together in his head and he begins to hear music everywhere he goes. His relationship with other human beings is more difficult. His father, who might have eased his way, dies in the car accident that opens the film and Nathan, who is five at the time, never recovers. By then, he's already decided that his mother, Julie, is not as smart as he is. In other words, not worth talking to. Much as this hurts her, she responds with love and forbearance. Everything comes together at a coffee shop in Cambridge, when Nathan and Julie have the most important conversation of their lives and where complex equations are used as a meaningful metaphor.

This is a beautiful film on many levels.

CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA (MA 15+)

3, 5, 6 AUGUST

Strong coarse language



France 2014 Director: Olivier Assayas Featuring: Juliette Binoche, Kristen Stewart, Chloe Grace Moretz Languages: French, German, English, Swiss-German Running time: 124 minutes

Original review: Louise Keller, www.urbancinefile Extracted by: Kim Pridham

At the peak of her international career, Maria Enders (Juliette Binoche) is asked to perform in a revival of the play that made her famous twenty years ago when she played the role of Sigrid, an alluring young girl who disarms and eventually drives her boss Helena, an obsessed older woman, to suicide. Now she is being asked to step into the role of Helena. She departs with her assistant, Valentine (Kristen Stewart) to rehearse in Sils Maria, a remote region of the Alps. A young Hollywood starlet (Chloe Grace Moretz) with a penchant for scandal is to take on the role of Sigrid, and Maria finds herself on the other side of the mirror face to face with an ambiguously charming woman who is an unsettling reflection of herself.

The film begins in a train in the Swiss Alps where Valentine is fielding phone calls. Maria and Valentine are on their way to meet with the man who made Maria a star years ago, when he cast her in her career-making role as the youthful Sigrid. Much of the film is set in the beautiful Swiss Alpine location of Sils Maria, where the rehearsals take place. The fascination comes from the fact that we are never sure whether the lines spoken by Maria and Valentine are part of the play or of their own relationship.

It's all about the relationships and those interested in film and theatre will especially enjoy the banter between the women as they share confidences, contemplate life, truth, desire and humanity. Stewart was awarded Best Supporting Actress at the Cesar Awards in 2014 for her role, the first time an American actress received the honour.

10, 12, 13 AUGUST

'71 (MA 15+)

Strong themes, violence and coarse language.



UK 2014 Director: Yann Demange Featuring: Jack O'Connell, Sam Reid, Sean Harris. Running time: 100 minutes

Original review: Nev Pierce – Empire Magazine. Extracted by: Peter Gillard.

"Take it and give it back" is the shout in the boxing match that opens this strikingly accomplished film. It could serve ably as both précis of — and motto for — the combustible situation these young soldiers are about to ignorantly walk into: Belfast, 1971. A city divided largely along Protestant and Catholic lines — the Loyalists who want Northern Ireland to remain part of the UK, and the Republicans who want it to join Eire — Belfast is a kitchen-sink war zone.

This is a tribal situation the British Army are portrayed as blundering into, with elements both nefarious and naive. While a unit of undercover soldiers are clearly up to some Bad Stuff, the regular army is dodging it on the street — literally, as locals fling faeces at the unwelcome "Brits". More bewildered than he is belligerent, Gary is our avatar, left behind thanks to the panic of his inexperienced commanding officer.

Wounded and scared and largely silent, he struggles through the streets in a performance that's wonderfully watchable. This points to an element some might find uncomfortable: '71 is, in some ways, a popcorn thriller about a community in tragedy. But however exciting the setpieces, the film retains its integrity. The violence is seen, shockingly, and felt — from bomb to blade. This film puts you right there without political grandstanding, its glancing blows have a lasting impact. '71 is one of the best films of '14.

THE HOMESMAN (MA 15+)

17, 19, 20 AUGUST

Strong themes and violence.



USA 2014

Director: Tommy Lee Jones Featuring: Tommy Lee Jones, Hilary Swank, Grace Gummer, Miranda Otto, Sonja Richter Languages : English, Danish Running time: 123 minutes

Original review: Robbie Collins, The Telegraph **Extracted by:** Janez Zagoda

Life on the Nebraskan high plains in the mid-19th century could separate the men from the boys. You should see what it did to the women. Mary Bee Cuddy, is for the most part, the model American dreamer. She has two land claims out on the dust-blown prairie, and through sheer hard work and gumption, is wringing a small profit from each.

Yet to her fellow (male) settlers, she's not quite right. Mary Bee is in her 30s and still single: "plain as an old tin pail, and bossy," as she's disobligingly described by a potential suitor, who, after an amusingly awkward dinner at Mary's house, scuttles eastwards in search of someone meeker. Still, the community finds a use for her. After a brutal winter, three of the settler's wives have been driven mad by bereavement and financial ruin, and the parish priest needs someone to literally cart them back to a sanatorium in Iowa – the pioneer's journey in reverse.

The job requires a "homesman": someone smart, strong and trustworthy, who can survive by himself for weeks on the trail. Except no man in town is up to the task; certainly none of the women's husbands, who view their wives with the kind of puzzled disappointment they might feel towards broken farm equipment. The homesman has to be a homeswoman. Mary Bee grits her teeth and saddles up.

Briggs is a bedraggled, ass-scratching, evasive army deserter and claim-jumper whom Mary Bee cuts down from a noose not long into her journey. Mary Bee needs his help, and this odd couple trundle together across the wide open landscape, encountering American Indians, bandits and anything else the country can throw at them.

The Homesman may be old-fashioned in its bones, but it's not a film to be watched and then tidily packed away.

CITIZENFOUR (M)

24, 26, 27 AUGUST

Coarse language.



USA 2015 Director: Laura Poitras Featuring: Edward Snowdon, Glenn Greenwall, William Binney. Languages: English, Portugese, German Running time: 114 minutes

Original reviews: Ronnie Scheib, Variety. Godfrey Cheshire, www. Roger Ebert Extracted & Compiled by: Robin Claxton

No amount of familiarity with whistleblower Edward Snowden and his shocking revelations of the U.S. government's wholesale spying on its own citizens can prepare one for the impact of Laura Poitras' extraordinary documentary. Far from reconstructing or analysing a fait accompli, the film tersely records the deed in real time, as Poitras and fellow journalist Glenn Greenwald of The Guardian, meet Snowden over an eight-day period in a Hong Kong hotel room to plot how and when they will unleash the bombshell that shook the world.

Poitras was contacted by the anonymous "Citizenfour", who sought her help in exposing proof of the governments indiscriminate gathering and processing of U.S. citizens' emails, bank accounts, digital transactions etc. She then convinced Snowden to be filmed. Snowden makes it clear that he lacks both the desire and the competence to decide which information to make public; rather, he believes, it is the job of the journalists to whom he transmits the data to avoid releasing any documents that could compromise national security. Snowden is concerned that he may end up as the story, rather than his revelations. As it turns out Snowden does become a more visible presence than the US National Security Agency (NSA) betrayal that so profoundly touched billions of lives.

The film is exceptional in the way it tells a story in which the filmmaker and her work play a part. It is as if the Watergate burglars had taken along a film maker who recorded their crimes and the cover-up that followed. The issues in Citizenfour however, are arguably more potent than Watergate.

Snowden is portrayed as a fascinating, calm, utterly sincere gatherer of unwelcome information whose scientific brain collates and analyses data with an odd combination of cool distance and deep-seated paranoia.

Once Snowden goes undercover, Greenwald becomes the public promulgator of his legacy, holding press conferences and appearing before committees around the world.

WILD TALES (MA15+)

31 AUG. 2, 3 SEPTEMBER

(Relatos salvajes) Strong violence.



Argentina/Spain 2014 Director: Damian Szifron Featuring: Maria Marull, Monica Villa, Dario Grandinetti, Rita Cortese. Language: Spanish, with subtitles Running time: 122 minutes

Original review: Geoffrey MacNab, The Independent. **Extracted by:** Janez Zagoda

Wild Tales is a raucously entertaining collection of "six deadly stories of revenge". The brilliance of the film lies in its combination of excess and ordinariness. There is a lot of violence here, often staged in a manner so extreme and so comical that it verges on the cartoonish. At the same time, the young Argentine writer-director Damián Szifron roots the tales in circumstances that every cinemagoer will recognise. If you've ever had a parking ticket or attended a wedding that got out of hand or held a grudge from schooldays, you will recognise the motivations of the protagonists.

The stories are quite different from one another but are linked by common themes. As Szifron has written, they are about "catharsis, vengeance and destruction... and the undeniable pleasure of losing control".

The film begins in relatively muted fashion. Two passengers discover they share a common link with "Gabriel Pasternak" – a would-be composer and musician held back by his own complete lack of talent. From this quiet beginning, the story amplifies – and amplifies and amplifies.

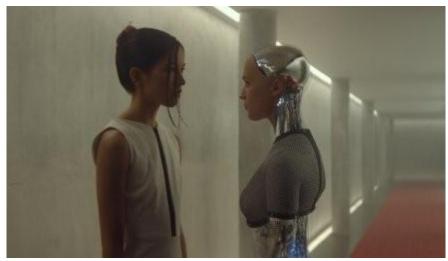
The overture establishes the pattern that all the subsequent stories will follow. Each begins in mundane fashion. A man's car is towed away when he is in a shop buying a birthday cake for his daughter. A waitress looks after a customer who comes from her own village. A bride suspects that her husband may have been having an affair. What makes the movie exhilarating is the way that its characters throw off their shackles, discovering just how liberating and intoxicating it can be to transgress. They use violence, sex and subterfuge to get their own back on a world that is trying to grind them down. There is tremendous, infantile glee in misbehaviour, which occasionally takes grotesque forms.

A delicious chocolate box of nastiness.

7, 9, 10 SEPTEMBER

EX MACHINA (MA 15+)

Strong themes, violence and nudity.



UK 2014 Director: Alex Garland Featuring: Domhnall Gleeson, Oscar Isaac, Alicia Vikander Running time: 108 minutes

Original review: Rob Vaux; Sci-Fi Movie Page. **Extracted by:** Gail Bendall

Ex Machina immediately enters the running for the best science fiction film of the year just by following through on the promise of its concept. It knows what it wants to tell us, and frankly we've heard it before. But it flashes some terrific little variations on the expected formula, along with shades of real darkness that assures you it's playing for keeps.

At its crux, stands the world's first functional artificial intelligence created by a maverick genius who has devoted the resources of his gigantic software company into her creation. He's been laboring over her in complete solitude for months, but now he has to put her to the test: can she convince another person that she is more than just pre-arranged responses? So he ferries in one of his brighter employees for a week of thorough testing to see what happens.

Naturally, nothing goes the way anyone intended, and naturally Ava has more up her silicon sleeve than her male overseers suspect. Director Alex Garland cloaks her machinations, and the ensuing suspense, in the film's bigger question: does having a soul mean that this construct is human? Or is it something entirely new, something that (naturally) we may not be able to control as well as we like?

The real kick is that neither of these male geek icons stops to think about how Ava might have her own ideas. They both project what they want onto her: creating in their minds a pleasing image of her, rather than trying to understand what she really is.

Add to that some exquisite technical details (creating suspense out of silence and tension around the unspoken) and a quiet bit of special effects wizardry (Ava displays a brilliant bit of concept design), and *Ex Machina* turns into the kind of film that science fiction fans pray for.

TESTAMENT OF YOUTH (M)

14, 16, 17 SEPTEMBER

War themes, death and bloody injury



UK 2015 Director: James Kent Written by: Vera Brittain (autobiography), Juliette Towhidi (screenplay) Featuring: Alicia Vikander, Kit Harington, Taron Egerton Running Time: 130 minutes Original review: Sandra Hall, Sydney Morning Herald Extracted & Compiled by: Anne Green

The life of Vera Brittain was shaped by a wealth of talent and an equally potent store of bad luck, all of which hit her during her 20s. Unfortunate enough to fall in love at the outbreak of World War I, she had to watch her lover, her brother and their childhood friends go off to fight –with disastrous results.

It was a devastating coming-of-age but its tragedies made her a writer. *Testament of Youth*, published in 1933, was immediately embraced as a seminal memoir, vibrantly giving voice to those who loved and mourned. Screenwriter Juliette Towhidi picked her way through diaries, letters, as well as the memoir, finishing with talks with Brittain's daughter, Shirley Williams, former Labour cabinet minister and baroness in the House of Lords. The on-screen Brittain flourishes. She is a hot-headed character determined not to give in to her father's wish that she sit at home playing the piano until Mr Right comes along.

Roland Leighton is a friend of her brother's and during that languorous, sunstruck summer before the war, he comes to stay at the Brittains' house in the country, winning Vera over with his own ambitions as a writer and his interest in her writing. The film makes light but effective work of mapping the social stratifications of pre-War England. The Brittains are prosperous and middle-class. The Leightons are more cosmopolitan. Roland's father is a former literary editor of the *Daily Mail* and his mother is a well-known romantic novelist and a potentially intimidating presence. It's a measure of Vera's independent spirit that she chooses not to be awed.

The film's second half brutally renders all these refinements irrelevant; they are thrust aside by the war. As a nurse in France, she becomes intimately acquainted with the human cost of the conflict to both sides –an experience which turns her into a pacifist. At the heart of the story is the importance of words in her life and that of Roland's, for the letters and the poems they exchange are crucial to all that they cherish in one another.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH (M)

21, 23, 24 SEPTEMBER

(Le Sel de la Terre) Mature themes.



France 2014 Directed and written by: Wim Wenders and Juliano Ribeiro Salgado Featuring: Sebastião Salgado, Wim Wenders, Juliano Ribeiro Salgado Language: French, Portugese, English Running time: 105 minutes Original review: Andrew Pulver, The Guardian Extracted & Compiled by: Anne Green

Sebastião Salgado is the Brazilian photographer whose nightmarish pictures of teeming, dirtswamped gold miners electrified the world's media in the mid-1980s. Now 70, Salgado has had his life story told by the joint force of his own son Juliano and Wim Wenders, and it's a story that has turned out to have its own uplifting dynamic and character arc.

From his early years growing up on a Brazilian farm and a brief career as an economist, through his increasingly large-scale photographic projects that took him to many of the world's most hostile and dangerous conflict zones, his timeline ends with a late-life return to his homeland and a determination to connect with the ravaged natural environment. This, at least, is the outline, and Salgado makes a magnetic subject – seeming, in his reflective, autumnal mood, a little older than he actually is. You do get the impression of someone unswervingly focussed on his photography, to the extent of sacrificing large chunks of his family life to spend years on the road.

Salgado's pictures benefit from his habit of befriending and connecting with his subjects, explained by Wenders' reverential voiceover. It's testament to the strength of Salgado's purpose, and the brilliance of his work, that the reverence never seems out of place, as his career is tracked from the gold mines, through the Sahel and the Gulf war oil fires, and into the death-frenzy of mid-90s Rwanda. It's made clear that here, in the Rwanda-Congo border country, that Salgado came to the end of something; not compassion, exactly, but the ability to force himself into the lives of utterly miserable and desperate human beings; his subsequent retreat into environmental activism and nature photography making perfect sense.

In this context, the co-operation between Wenders and Salgado Jr. works well, mixing the former's heavyweight presence as both interviewer and storyteller, and the latter's ability to harvest intimate, deep-buried subtleties that may otherwise not have seen the light of day.

RESULTS OF FILM VOTING

Three green dots given to each voter for the films best liked One black dot for the film least liked.

APRIL 2015 TERM 1

	GREEN	BLACK	SATISFACTION
Still Life	182	2	180
Locke	157	3	154
Calvary	152	1	151
A Most Wanted Man	134	0	134
Charlie's Country	119	3	116
The Immigrant	88	9	79
Predestination	49	28	21
In Bloom	14	36	minus 22
20000 Days on Earth	29	100	minus 71

JULY 2015 TERM 2

Pride	208	3	205
Selma	134	1	133
A Thousand Times Goodnight	132	0	132
The Dark Horse	126	4	122
Living is Easy with Eyes Closed	77	1	76
Finding Vivian Maier	83	12	71
Folies Bergere	71	13	58
Whiplash	73	19	54
Human Capital	52	4	48
Rock the Casbah	52	9	41
Kill the Messenger	25	3	22

The satisfaction score is calculated by subtracting the number of black dots placed for the film from the number of green dots placed.

PROGRAMME

20 JULY - 24 SEPTEMBER 2015

SESSION TIM	MES	MOVIE	LENGTH
20, 22, 23	JULY	Leviathan (M 15+)	140 Minutes
27, 29, 30	JULY	X+Y (M)	111 Minutes
3, 5, 6	AUGUST	Clouds of Sils Maria (MA 15+)	124 Minutes
10, 12, 13	AUGUST	'71 (MA 15+)	100 Minutes
17, 19, 20	AUGUST	The Homesman (MA 15+)	123 Minutes
24, 26, 27	AUGUST	Citizenfour (M)	114 Minutes
31 2, 3	AUGUST SEPTEMBER	Wild Tales (MA15+)	122 Minutes
7, 9, 10	SEPTEMBER	Ex Machina (MA 15+)	108 Minutes
14, 16, 17	SEPTEMBER	Testament of Youth (M)	130 Minutes
21, 23, 24	SEPTEMBER	The Salt of the Earth (M)	105 Minutes

After the Film – Film voting at the Plough Inn (across the road)

School Holidays

Next Screening: Monday, 12 OCTOBER 2015

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