

ACOFS Bulletin

Australian Council of Film Societies



NUMBER 75

August 2023

This Issue contains information important to your office bearers and film society programmers. Please also pass it on to all your committee and other interested people - including those who are not on email.

And please ensure your copy of The Bulletin does not get caught up in spam filters!

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1. From the Editor – Ian Davidson editor@acofs.org.au

Do you know the Copyright law?

We recently had brought to our attention the fact that a movie club who is not affiliated with ACOFS, was screening movies recorded off air, from the ABC. While it is not ACOFS responsibility to “police” this sort of situation, we felt we should at least remind everyone of the rules surrounding this type of situation, so appropriate advice can be given.

We have been advised that *“The DVD/movie distributors do not have the authorization to approve content shown via broadcast TV, and additionally, a broadcaster is unable to approve a public screening of film content.”*

So it seems that it may not be possible to get approval from anyone for an organisation to screen material recorded off air, and therefore to do so would contravene Australian copyright law - the law that requires that no screening be made in public without the approval of the rights owner.

So our recommendation to anyone that comes across groups that screen movies in public places without appropriate approval be alerted to the requirements of Australia’s Copyright law – not in any challenging way, but as an assistance to them to ensure they don’t end up on the distributors’ black list, or worse, be sued for their transgressions.



How are your skills when seeking screening rights?

In the screening rights section of this Bulletin (section 5) we have included several examples of how to get your DVD rights clearance. Please provide feedback on whether this is useful and whether you would like more or less of this sort of information.

2. From the ACOFS President FISMO™ IS ON A STEEP LEARNING CURVE!



There he is, working his way to the top! His aim is to learn how to find the Distributor who handles the non-theatrical screening rights for any DVD movie with at least 80% reliability. (Please, no Skynet jokes!)

When he reaches 80% reliability, he'll become available to all film societies in Australia free-of-charge forever.

You'll be able to simply **type in the movie you're looking to screen** ... and in under 10 minutes FISMO™ will have emailed you the name and contact details of the Distributor.

In most cases you'll have the details you're looking for in under 5 minutes. That's for a single movie. But what if you're looking for ten movies? In that case, FISMO™ will probably average a total of 20 minutes to find the lot.

At the recent ACOFS AGM I gave Delegates a brief demo of FISMO doing his Thing. In the five or six weeks since then, FISMO has gotten a lot smarter and a lot faster. And every time you use FISMO™ to search for a Distributor for your next screening, you'll help him become even smarter – and faster – thereby assisting the next Film Society who looks for screening rights.

Not bad, hey? 😊

Every Friday night at 10 pm drop in for ...

AN HOUR OF CHAOS WITH PRODOS OF ACOFS!

Yep! I'm available for **video-chatting** with YOU ... and with anyone and everyone involved or interested or supportive of the Film Society Movement.

In between people dropping by, Barboo (my lovely wife) and I explore a "surprise" study topic that I prepare each week and that has some sort of relevance to the Film Society Movement.

A short sample of some of the most recent "surprise" study topics:

- How to promote independent filmmakers who refuse to seek government (i.e. taxpayer) funding because they consider it immoral.
- An overview of Edward de Bono's "CoRT Thinking Programme" and the concept of "thinking tools".
- George Orwell's 1940 essay on "Boys' Weeklies" and the history of the British "twopenny weekly" hobby magazines.
- How to design a documentary investigating Winston Churchill's speeches to youth before, during, and after World War II.

- A chat with the super-smart and super-charming David Donaldson regarding several interesting independent filmmakers, plus the restarting of the Mercury Cinema in South Australia. (Also gave David a brief demo of FISMO™ in action!)
- Reading and discussing parts of the brilliantly perceptive 1912 novel, Tarzan of the Apes.
- The rise and fall, over several centuries, of the reputation of Sir Francis Bacon and the long dispute between those who favour experimentation versus those who favour reasoning as their primary method.
- The distinct, historic differences between the film festivals of Europe and those of Australia + the historic relationship between Film Societies and film festivals.
- And lots more!

If you'd like to be on the mailing list for the HOUR OF CHAOS, email me and I'll send you "The Lerrrv Button" which you can click and be instantly propelled, headfirst into the video-chatroom without ceremony: president@acofs.org.au ... or text me on 0421 492 743 with the message "CHAOS!".

Thanks for reading. Enjoy the rest of the ACOFS Bulletin.

Stay in touch. Be Creative.

At Your Service,

Prodos S N Marinakis

ACOFS President

"Make it Awesome with ACOFS!"

3. ACOFS AGM 2023

The recent AGM was a splendid affair!
We got through an enormous amount of material in very quick time. No-one was bored. There was zero waffling.

Everyone contributed useful, practical information and suggestions.

We had Delegates from all six state Federations.

The results of the election were as follows:

President: **Prodos S N Marinakis** (QLD)

Vice President: **Mark Horner** (TAS)

Secretary: **Jason Lockwood** (NSW)

Treasurer: **Kerry McKinnon** (QLD)

Bulletin Editor: **Ian Davidson** (VIC)

Committee: **Robert Chrzaszcz** (SA)

Committee: **Neil Graham** (WA)

Committee: **David Harcombe** (TAS)

Committee: **Henry Screen** (VIC)

Committee: **John Shortridge** (VIC)



And now, here are some excerpts from the opening remarks from the ACOFS

President to the 2023 AGM Delegates

*"I'm very pleased and honoured to have among today's Delegates not one, not two, but **three** past presidents of ACOFS!"*

John Turner, Ian Davidson, and Mark Horner. (wait for rousing applause to subside)

We also have with us some current Federation presidents:

Jason Lockwood of NSW, **Henry Screen** of Victoria, **Robert Chrzaszcz** of SA, and **Kerry McKinnon** of QLD. (less applause, because there's so many of them and they really can't applaud themselves.)

But the truth of it is that wherever you look across the Film Society Movement of Australia you will find intelligence, talent, ability, and dedication to one of the finest and best established independent, self-funded, artistic, cultural, educational institutions in the land: The Australian Council of Film Societies!

I remember, many years ago, when my lovely wife and I were editors of the Victorian Federation's newsletter, ReelNews ... one of the first people I interviewed for ReelNews was ... **John Turner**.

He said something to me during that interview, that I've never forgotten.

"They were four and a half words. Count them now as I share them with you. Ready? **'It's all about individuals'**."

So back at that time, when, with some of my favourite people, I created what is now called the "Screen & Study Institute" I made a rule.

We all love rules don't we?! So this was our rule.

Members of SASI (The Screen & Study Institute) were prohibited – prohibited -- from telling OTHERS what THEY should do. The only proposals they were allowed to offer had to take the form of:

'Here's what I would like to offer.' ... 'Here's what I can contribute.' ... "Here's what I am ready, willing and able to make happen."

At SASI, we call this: The John Turner Principle. The JTP.

'It's all about individuals'

What do you think of it?

I love it. It's inspiring because it's true.

And, of course, as ACOFS President, this is what motivates me.

The JTP.

Seeing what I can offer the Film Society Movement. And doing my best to set an example as a hard-working contributor to a worthy cause.

And also, seeing what doors can be opened, what barriers can be removed, what opportunities can be designed that invite and unleash the creative, constructive, inventive energies of my colleagues and fellow citizens!"

(end of excerpt)

4. Reports from State Federations

4.1 From Victoria – FVFS

Here at the FVFS we try to keep a close eye on developments in the 'Cinesphere' and this week a couple of things came to our attention which may have impacts on the wider film making and distribution universe both locally and internationally.

First up, we became aware of unofficial confirmation that Disney is pulling out of distributing its physical media (DVD and Blu-Ray) products in Australia.

Evidence of this appears with JB Hi-Fi's current 'fire sale' of Disney products, all going out the door for \$8 each, both DVD and Blu-Ray.

While it's true that much of the Disney catalogue is not typical film society fare, there are some titles we would want to have available locally. These discontinued titles could still be obtained from overseas retailers at least in the short term, however the cost and inconvenience of doing so does not appeal; and then there's the issue of rights – if Disney



holds all rights for a no-longer-distributed title then the likelihood of a local rights holder existing is very small. [See my note at the end of this article. Ed]

One option could be that Disney offers rights deals to a local distributor, but this remains to be seen.

I don't see this development as impacting film societies in the near future but, is it a forerunner of similar changes to come from other studios, producers, distributors or retailers?

Without official confirmation from Disney it's hard to know what their reasons are but my bet is that its purpose is to drive subscriptions for their streaming platform. Apparently Disney has also pulled its physical media from Asia and something similar is happening in Canada!

Click here to see [Disney Acquisitions over the years . . .](#)

The list includes films produced or released by all existing and defunct labels or subsidiaries of the Walt Disney Studios; including *Walt Disney Pictures*, *Walt Disney Animation Studios*, *Pixar Animation Studios*, *Marvel Studios*, *Lucasfilm*, *20th Century Studios*, *20th Digital Studio*, *Searchlight Pictures*, *Disneynature*, *Touchstone Pictures*, and *Hollywood Pictures*. The list does not include films produced by studios that are now owned by Disney (as part of acquisitions) but were historically not distributed by Disney during their original, initial time of release.

Next, a survey by Screen Producers Australia indicates disturbing trends in negotiations between Australian moviemakers and the various streaming services.

This extract from the if.com.au website explains -

"Streaming platforms are increasingly offering unrealistic budgets and unfair commissioning deals to Australian screen producers, according to new data from Screen Producers Australia (SPA).

"As part of its second commissioning survey, conducted from December 2022 to January 2023, the organisation invited members to answer perception-based questions, regardless of their experience with streaming platforms, with those that had engaged in deals asked to comment on how they found the process.

"While SPA reported some improvement in the reported practices and behaviours across the industry from [the inaugural 2021 survey](#), including in administrative complexities and communication, there were multiple areas of concern across the 16 commissioning platforms, which were grouped as public broadcasters, commercial free-to-air networks, subscription TV broadcasters/providers and streaming services.

"Of the 110 respondents that worked with streaming services between 2020 and 2022, only 40 per cent agreed their deals were fair in relation to overall budgets, deliverables, terms of trade, and rights retained, a drop of 36 per cent from the previous survey, which featured 301 responses.

"One international streamer stood out as particularly unfair, with just 10 per cent of producers who have been commissioned by them over the last three years regarding them as offering fair deals.

"Further, 36 per cent reported they had to agree to unfavourable variations to an existing deal with a streamer that offered no material benefits, representing an increase of 19 per cent from 2021.

"Free-to-air networks remain the platforms that producers feel offer the least appropriate budgets to match their delivery expectations, while 24 per cent of producers have reported that they have been encouraged to commence production without an official greenlight in the last 12 months, and 26 per cent reported said they had been pressured into variations (additional deliverables, or additional rights) without any material benefits.

"SPA CEO Matthew Deaner said the results highlighted the harmful and unfair industry conditions for Australian production businesses, a majority of whom are small to medium-sized enterprises, and identify poor business practices imported by international streamers here in Australia.

“Many of the streaming platforms’ business practices are comparable to fishing ‘super-trawlers’ with nets trawling our screen industry scooping up rights to our nation’s stories for at best, incredibly long lengths of time – at worst, in perpetuity – and often when they don’t intend to use them,” he said.

“This denies our SMEs and creatives the use and financial benefits of their own ideas in an ongoing way which in turn reduces the capacity they have to generate and develop their next ideas – thereby permanently damaging our screen ecosystem.

“Our screen industry is holding its breath to see whether the Australian Government will stand up for Australian audiences and its storytellers in the screen industry by introducing a 20 per cent reinvestment obligation on streamers with strong protections for intellectual property such as a reversion of rights to creators to ensure that we continue to foster a sustainable and vibrant screen sector in Australia for the benefit of our industry and audiences alike.”

You can see the full survey [here](#).

When we put the above developments alongside the screen writer and actor strikes in the USA we can see that streaming services are hungry beasts disrupting the film industry and not necessarily with good intentions.

We'll be watching all this closely and report any further developments.

Henry Screen, President FVFS, July 29 2023

[Note from the Editor: Our advice from Roadshow is that If a Disney movie is not available on DVD, Roadshow will still to be in a position to approve the screening rights for a registered film society to screen that Disney movie regardless of the source or medium, as long as the film society’s copy is obtained legally. This includes purchased downloads from iTunes, Google Play etc.(or a DVD from overseas). It does not include copies of movies from broadcast TV.]

5. DVD Screening rights

Are you having difficulty getting your head around the ACOFS DVD rights approval process? Here are some examples of how to find your screening rights for non-theatrical screening of a DVD that you already possess.

Example 1. “The Duke”, 2020. Directed by Roger Michell.

The Classification index (classification.gov.au) tells us that “The Duke” was classified M on 29 October 2021 and the applicant was Transmission Films. It was again classified on 21 April 2022, the applicant this time being Universal Sony Pictures Home Entertainment. So it can be assumed that one or both of these applicants hold the screening rights. According to the ACOFS Fact Sheet 3B, the distribution company representing these applicants is Roadshow, so they should be approached for the rights.



Example 2. “The Quiet Girl”, 2022. Directed by Colm Bairead.

“The Quiet Girl” is not listed on the classification index, but if you go to IMDb you will find the original title is “An Cailín Ciúin”. Searching for this title in “Classifications” gives the result that it was classified M on 31 May 2022, and the applicant was Madman Entertainment. Looking at Fact Sheet 3B tells that for screening rights of Madman titles we need to approach Amalgamated Movies.

Example 3. “Hachi – A Dog’s Tale”, 2009. Directed by Lasse Hallstrom.

The Classification index tells us that this was rated G on 4 January 2010. The applicant was Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, so Fact Sheet 3B tells us to go to Amalgamated Movies for the rights.

Example 4, “Antionette dans les Cévennes”, 2020. Directed by Caroline Vignal.

This was classified M on 26 November 2020 and the applicant was Palace Films. Fact Sheet 3B says the rights can be booked direct from



Palace or from Roadshow at Roadshow prices. Note that by using the English title “Antionette in the Cevennes” in the classification index gives the same result.

Example 5. “Delicious”. 2021. Directed by Eric Besnard.

“Delicious” is not listed in the Classification Index. Checking in IMDb, you can see the original French title is “Delicieux”, and searching “Classifications” using this title tells us it was classified M on 25 January 2021, and the applicant was Palace Films. Fact Sheet 3B says the rights can be booked direct from Palace or from Roadshow at Roadshow prices.

Note that when you find a reference to a movie on the classification index, it may show that the film was presented “on-line”, “on a digital medium”, “35mm”, “DVD” etc. Whatever the medium used, it is the name of the film that is important for our purposes, as the listing gives us the name of the company seeking the classification, and hence the likely rights owner.

If you come across any examples of films that are hard to classify or do not result in finding a source for the screening rights, please let ACOFS know at dvdrights@acofs.org.au

6. News From the DVD Distributors

These lists are compiled from information supplied by the companies that hold the screening rights for the films and DVDs, but these distributors can not necessarily supply the DVDs. Their contact details are included here only where they have changed recently.

These titles have been provided by the respective distributors as being either new acquisitions or titles of interest to film societies. Only distributors who have provided information are included here, but all distributor contacts are still listed in ACOFS Information Sheet 3B. This information sheet, which is updated regularly, can be downloaded from www.acofs.org.au/resources

The latest update of Fact Sheet 3B was on 1 May 2023, so if you don't have the latest, download it from www.acofs.org.au/resources.

Note. ACOFS receives regular emails on released titles as well as emails in response to specific requests for Non-Theatrical titles, so the following list may include some titles which do not have non-theatrical rights. At least this list identifies the company who is most likely to hold the rights you are seeking!

Amalgamated Movies

65

Broker

Carmen

Close

High Life

Holy Spider

House of Z

How to Blow Up a Pipeline



James and Isey

John Farnham: Finding The Voice

Love Again

Missing

Notre Dame Brule

Paris, 13th District

The Passengers of The Night

The Pope's Exorcist

CLASSICS from Amalgamated:

Chopper

Footrot Flats: The Dogs Tale

Antidote Films

Climate Changers

Flyways

Swindle: Australia, East Timor and the Art of the Steal



Beamafilm

A Bag of Marbles (2017)
A Journey Through History
A Mermaid in Paris
An Englishman in New York
Barney Thomson
Being
Black Summer
Botticelli Florence
Cane Toads: The Conquest
Charlatan
China: The Long March into Space
Colour of Paradise
Colourful and Impossible
Daisy
Dancing in the Sky
Disclosure
Everybody Hates Johan
Gauguin in Tahiti
Grand Piano
Litigante
Lucky Grandma
Master Cheng
Munch



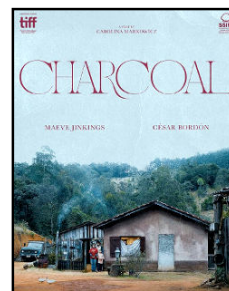
My Fight
Nicole Kidman Film Collection
Nicole Kidman Retrospective
Collection
Night Moves
Open Windows
Rosie
Skin Walker
Support the Girls
Testimony of a Thread
The Black Power Mixtape 1967 – 1975
The Happy Prince
The Jonsson Gang
The King's Speech
The Prado Museum
The Red House
Tintoretto
Together we Grow
Tracing Heritage
Warrior Lawyers
Welcome to the Punch
When the Cameras Stopped Rolling

Kismet Movies

A Bunch of Amateurs

Limelight

A Good Doctor
A Great Friend
Building Bridges: Bill Youren's Vision of Peace
Charcoal
Country Cabaret
Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War
Jack Mimoun & the Secrets of Val Verde
Let the Dance Begin



Madman

(DVD rights booked through Amalgamated Movies)

Broker
Handmaiden
Memories of Murder
Rachel's Farm
Red, White and Brass
The Breaker Upperers



Norwegian Embassy

Don't forget that this embassy has several good films available for film societies to borrow – for free! See the details in past ACOFS Bulletins and in the ACOFS Fact Sheet 3B.

Pivot Pictures

A Taste of Hunger
Crock of Gold: A Few Rounds with Shane MacGowan
Golden Voices
It Is In Us All (new release)
Miss Marx
Murder Party
Preparations to Be Together for an Unknown Period of Time
The Conference
The Killing of Two Lovers
Unsound



Potential Films

RKO - screening rights are available through potential films for any RKO title including titles such as Astaire/Rogers TOP HAT and FLYING DOWN TO RIO, The Val Lewton classics such as CAT PEOPLE, Hitchcock's SUSPICION and MR AND MRS SMITH.

lisa@potentialfilms.com

Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn
(DCP or Vimeo)

Bringing up Baby (35mm)

Carefree (35mm)

Citizen Kane (35mm & DCP)

Drive My Car (DVD)

Follow the Fleet (35mm)

Jour de Fete (35mm & DCP)

King Kong (35mm & DCP)

M Hulot's Holiday (35mm & DCP)

Metropolis (Blu-Ray)

Modern Times (35mm)

Mon Oncle (35mm & DCP)

Parade (DCP)

Playtime (35mm & DCP)

Roberta (35mm)

Russian Ark (35mm)



Shall we Dance (35mm)

Story of Vernon and Irene Castle
(35mm)

Swing Time (35mm)

The Blue Caftan (DVD)

The Gay Divorcee (35mm)

The General (35mm)

The Great Dictator (35mm)

The Magnificent Ambersons
(35mm)

The Night of the 12th (DVD)

The Origin of Evil

The Trouble with being Born (DCP
or Vimeo)

Three Summers

Traffic (DCP)

Wheel of Fortune and Fantasy
(DVD)

Roadshow

Beau is Afraid
Dumb Money
Evil Dead Rise
Force of Nature: The Dry 2



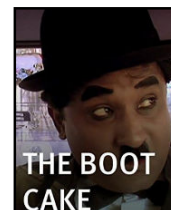
Hypnotic
Sweet as
The New Boy
You Hurt My Feelings

All up-coming films are listed on the Collections section of the Roadshow website at:

<https://ppl.roadshow.com.au/collections> .

Ronin Films

Light Years- Re-mastered
Music Central
The Boot Cake
The Bystander Story
The Story of the 1967 Referendum. (DVD and On Demand)
Where the Water Starts
For member prices refer to the "private purchase" price, but remember



you then have to pay the appropriate screening rights fee. Ronin will accept the recommended \$50 plus GST for DVD screening rights. www.roninfilms.com.au for details and purchase prices. Many of their titles are now available from KANOPY STREAMING, but approach Ronin for the DVD or digital file and screening rights for a member film society. Craig McConnell on orders@roninfilms.com.au

Umbrella Entertainment (Nikita Leigh-Pritchard)

Float
13th Floor
Amy (1997)
Audition
Australian Dream (1987)
Bride of Re-Animator
Dead End Drive-In (1986)
Emerald City (1988)
Final Cut
FP 4EVZ
God is a Bullet
Godless: The Eastfield
Exorcism
Good Boy
Hellraiser
Hercules Returns (1993)
Holy Shit!
I Saw the Devil
Incredible But True
Kids
Love and Other Catastrophes
Malum
Metal Skin (1994)



Most Dangerous Game, The
Puberty Blues (1981)
Pusher 1
Pusher 2
Pusher 3
Re-Animator
Rebel Dread
Ribspreader
Shadow (2022)
Sky Pirates (1986)
Smoking Causes Coughing
Society
Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and
Spring
Subject
Suka
The Tunnel: The Other Side of
Darkness,
Unleash: The Documentary
Wake In Fright

Go to www.umbrellaent.com.au/screenings to view their full catalogue and complete a booking enquiry. Blu-Ray and DVD materials can also be purchased via their webstore directly. www.Umbrellaent.com.au

Or contact nikita@umbrellaent.com.au or theatrical@umbrellaent.com.au or call on 03 9020 5136.

Contact Nikita to be added to the mailing list of new releases.

For Australian titles in the Umbrella catalogue (of which there many), Umbrella may be able to assist you to invite the director to attend your screening for a Q and A.

7. News from the NFSA

The NFSA has a new website, which can be accessed at <https://loans.nfsa.gov.au/>
You will be able to see newly added titles via the “New Item List” and “New item Search”. But nothing has been added in the past three months.

NFSA is now Streaming - Introducing “NFSA Player”

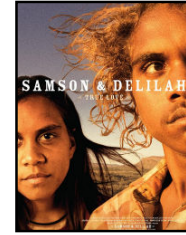
In June 2023 the NFSA launched “NFSA Player”, a new streaming platform featuring selected titles from the National Film and Sound Archive’s audio-visual collection.

People across Australia now have the ability to view a curated selection of feature films, TV series, documentaries, performance, animation and more, direct from the collection, in full and on demand.

NFSA Player is proud to launch with the *Buwindja* Collection - a selection of 17 superb titles curated to reflect the 2023 NAIDOC Week theme: For Our Elders. *Buwindja* (‘Remember’ in the Dharawal language), continues the traditions

of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytelling, and is a snapshot of the history of Indigenous voice through screen.

Don't miss Warwick Thornton's award-winning *Samson & Delilah*, Rachel Perkins' extraordinary TV movie *Mabo*, Stephen Page's dance film *Spear*, drama series *The Gods of Wheat Street*, Essie Coffey's landmark documentary *My Survival as an Aboriginal*, the rock n' roll documentary-style drama *Wrong Side of the Road*, biographical features about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders such as Noel Tovey and Ruby Langford Ginibi, and much more.



These titles can be streamed on demand, in full, without ads, as many times as you like in the 30-day rental period. Stream from the web, on your mobile or tablet. You may even choose to cast from a device to your TV so you and the whole family can enjoy the *Buwindja* collection from the comfort of your couch. NFSA Player is also available as an app.

NFSA Player does not require a subscription. Simply pay for what you'd like to view, and you'll have 30 days to watch your selection as many times as you like. You can rent titles individually, or save by purchasing the complete *Buwindja* collection. There's also special content that you can watch for free.

Film societies (as community groups) are able to 'rent' individual titles for \$55 (Category A), or the whole *Buwindja* collection for \$220 (Category B). Once you have added an option to your cart, and paid the relevant price, you will be sent a code to use within the NFSA Player. You will also need to create an account on the NFSA Player. (Additional details will be included in Fact Sheet 3B).

If a title is available on "NFSA Player" that is also in the NTLC collection it is likely that you will be able to screen a downloaded version to your members – but check with NTLC first to double check that there are no "special conditions" attached to that film.

8. Drop me a Line

Thank you to all the readers who have emailed me in the past. If you want to have your say, please send all comments, suggestions and articles to ian24davidson@gmail.com

This newsletter is intended to reflect information and news from all State Federations and your members, so please let us know about anything of interest.

Please send me a brief email to say the information included in this Bulletin is valuable to you, and what other information you would like.

Ian Davidson, editor.

9. Letters

8.1 Letter from Western Tiers FS (Tasmania)

As has been reported by most film societies, the rise of streaming services has yet to make any obvious impact on our membership numbers. However, crystal ball gazing might suggest that this may not be the case in the long term.

Like many other societies, our members are predominantly retirees. Television arrived into our homes offering only the small number of free-to-air options available in our local area. Cinema was for us a dominant force in our social and romantic lives. This was especially the case if we had a taste for the exotic. For most of our lives, there was no alternative if we wanted to see Art House or foreign language movies.

Younger generations are growing up with a totally different experience. They expect to pay for their home viewing but with an overwhelming amount of content available 24/7.

While it is becoming clear that streaming services can, and do, remove some content after a short time, it is still the case that the expectation is there that I stay home and watch what I want, when I want.

The waning numbers attending cinemas demonstrate that the sense of occasion which we grew up associating with an outing to the cinema is increasingly a thing the past. Without our generation's passion for the cinema, where will future generations find any enthusiasm for film societies?

More immediately though, our society is finding streaming services are already making a significant impact on our film selection process.

Our society has made the conscious decision to screen recent release movies; predominantly Art House but also including feature length documentaries in our selection. The members of our Film Selection Sub-Committee often propose movies that we have not seen, based on watching previews along with extensive research of as many different review sources as we can access.

There are two ways in which streaming services have limited our access to movies. Firstly, more and more movies are being produced by the streaming services themselves to enable them to provide unique content to entice subscribers. Initially their focus was on mainstream movies so the impact on our film selection process was negligible. However, in more recent years, the content is diversifying and there are more and more streaming service produced movies that would have been of interest to us.

The second, and currently far more significant, impact is on the local availability of discs of a much broader range of movies. Our society's facilities are such that we are limited to movies available on DVD or Blu-Ray. There are an increasing number of movies that are never released on disc in Australia. Many have American and/or European disc release but presumably the Australian market is too small to be economically viable for them to produce a Region 4 disc release. In Australia these movies are only available in cinemas or through streaming services. Of course, it is our beloved Art House movies and documentaries that in the past would have been destined for these small disc releases.

Here's hoping for successful negotiations with streaming services that will allow us access to a fuller range of options. As for the long term survival of film societies, that will be a matter for future consideration.

Lyn Prove - Western Tiers Film Society

Comment from the Editor

Thanks Lyn for that thoughtful and insightful letter.

It is an unfortunate fact, that the distributors of any movie have the final say on whether a film society can be granted the rights to screen a particular movie. Screening services in particular, seem to guard their property jealously and generally do not want any "competitors" screening their movies. So I don't see what can be done about that but find a better film to screen from somewhere else.

*Note that not all streaming services take the same line. Services such as **Beamafilm** or **Kanopy** welcome societies who wish to screen their films. They are both listed in the ACOFS contact list in Fact Sheet 3B.*

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, NFSA now offer streaming services, but whether they are available to film societies is yet to be determined.

*The Whitehorse Film Society recently reported that they were able to arrange screening rights for "La Belle Époque" from **Roadshow** even though the DVD was not yet available in Australia. (It is still not available here almost nine months later!). They were able to purchase a DVD from the UK, but it was Region 2 (which they were able to screen on their equipment)*



but it turned out to be in French or Italian, with Italian or French sub-titles - no English at all! (A trap to watch out for). They were able to download a copy legally from Apple TV (for a small fee of \$9.99) which could then be recorded to memory stick or DVD to be screened to the film society. The original rights approval still applies regardless of how the movie was obtained – as long as it was obtained legally.

*One difficulty experienced by many societies is that screening rights for many films expire after five or 10 years and are not renewed. This means that many older films (and some not so old) may not be screened in Australia unless a company has renewed those rights, or an overseas company (such as **Park Circus** in Glasgow) has purchased the international screening rights and can approve the screening. (see Fact Sheet 3B for details of Park Circus).*

Another interesting point is that to counter the poor diction or increased level of background sounds and support music, many film societies now turn on the English captions on English language films. One interesting case was “The Angels’ Share”, a Scottish film that many found difficult to understand. Unfortunately, the Region 4 version did not have English Captions, but as Whitehorse Film Society had purchased the Region 2 DVD, as it was available sooner, they discovered, to their delight, that English captions were available on this version. As I recall, the cost was not much more than the R4 version - even with postage from the UK.

A further development in the marketplace is that Ultra HD 4K disks will apparently not have regional coding. While regional coding for DVDs, and to some extent Blu-Ray discs was a disincentive for many to purchase from overseas, this restriction appears to have been lifted, making purchases of Ultra HD 4K discs from overseas a real possibility.

Ian Davidson, Editor.

8.2 A Letter from Court Film Society (Victoria)

I am a member of the Court Film Society in Stratford, Gippsland,. We are just a small but enthusiastic group. My job is to secure the rights for screening.

This can be such a hard job, increasingly so!

Our latest selection of films that we would like to show looks so difficult. For three of them, I can only find a streaming service listed for world-wide distribution. Other countries have a distributor but not Australia. I realise that I must get permission and pay for the rights but how do I start to find a contact at Apple TV, Netflix, Disney Plus?

I have looked but all of these companies do not make direct contact simple. No phone numbers or email addresses available easily. I am wondering if other committees are having the same difficulty?

Terri Allen, Court FS.

Comment from the Editor

You are not alone in not being able to contact these streaming services unless you are paid-up member. But even if you did manage to contact them their catalogues generally fall into two categories. Firstly, any film made by that company, or for them exclusively, will generally not be available for screening by a film society. The company is unlikely to sell screening rights to anyone they see themselves competing with. And that is assuming a DVD is available with these movies. Notable exceptions to

this rule are those streaming services actually listed in Fact Sheet 3B and in the above distributors list.

Secondly, a film made by a movie studio and sold to the streaming service (with rights to stream to households) is likely to be available at some stage from independent distributors who will have purchased the screening rights for public screenings.

As always, the film societies don't have any inherent right to be able to screen any film from any source they want. The availability of a film or DVD to be screened by a film society is a marketing decision made by the company who owns the rights, and unfortunately, sometimes they guard those rights religiously and will not let anyone else screen their beloved movies.

I have done some research, following the guidelines of ACOFS Fact sheet 3B, and found the following. Note that the company that sought classification in Australia is more than likely the company who owns the rights. But the distributor you need to contact in each case is explained in ACOFS Fact Sheet 3B.

- *"Undercover", 1983. Try Roadshow for the rights.*
- *"The Power of the Dog", 2021, NZ. With Netflix, so give up on this one.*
- *"Corsage", 2022. Try Vendetta for the rights.*
- *"Summer of Soul", 2021, USA. Disney. So I would try Roadshow for the rights.*
- *"The Shadow of the Day", 2022 ("L.Ombre del Giorno" according to IMDb). Rights appear to be with Palace.*
- *"Cha Cha Real Smooth", 2022. With Spherex, who I have not come across before, but they may have some link with Roadshow! Try them.*

NOTE: IMDb is a useful starting point as it identifies the correct film, alternative title (if any), year and director, all of which are helpful when searching on the Classification Index!

Do you have the DVDs already, or is that another story?

[See also my note at the foot of section 4]

Regards
Ian Davidson, Editor

10. Something else



11. Future Deadlines

We aim to distribute The ACOFS Bulletin at the start of February, May, August and November and would be happy to receive articles for publication at any stage – but note our deadlines are the end of the month preceding publication.

Items we hope to receive include new acquisitions and special DVD announcements from distributors, and items of interest to our film society readers, especially from members of other film societies. Amusing anecdotes are always welcome.

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1. If clicking on a highlighted link in this newsletter does not take you to your Internet browser, try copying it and pasting it into your browser search bar.
2. Please ensure your spam filter is NOT set to capture our emails which include relevant material from ACOFS, such as this Bulletin.

ACOFS and the State federations do not necessarily endorse the statements or view contained in any personal statements in articles, letters to the editor or in the films mentioned in this Bulletin.