

Foxlowe Films

Numbers don't lie

MAUREEN WISKIN
reports

As we near the end of our fourth season of bringing quality art films to audiences in the Leek and Moorlands area, the Film Group has spent a little time taking stock and reviewing the hard data we have collected to see what it tells us.

The picture is very gratifying!

In the four seasons to date we have shown 46 adult films and four films for children.

The total audience numbers now approach an amazing 2,350 which includes conservative estimates of film sales for the remaining three films this season. The total for children's films is 300 over the same period.

The average audience per film for adults has been 52 and 75 for children, which is high for a cinema of this size and at such an early stage in its development.

A good proportion of films have attracted over 80 people and only once did numbers tip below the break-even point and even then it was a film that was highly rated by those that attended.

These figures reflect the philosophy behind Foxlowe Films to screen art films of various genres to as wide an audience as possible and to provide an opportunity to see more esoteric films other than the long run blockbusters at the multiplexes. It's not just about bottoms on seats although the atmosphere of a full house does add to the experience.

An increasing number of cinema goers now come regularly even if they haven't heard of the

film. Anecdotal evidence suggests that they are willing to take a risk knowing that all our films are researched and chosen very carefully. All films will have been highly rated by critics and ourselves and will have been nominated for or gained prestigious awards, some of which you may not be familiar with.

Even more amazingly Foxlowe Films continues to attract new customers at every showing. It is particularly pleasing that there has been an increase in numbers of those who are visitors to the area and are attracted to what the Foxlowe Arts Centre has to offer to Leek as a tourist centre.

None of this would have been possible without the vision behind the Foxlowe and the hard work to turn it into the success it is clearly demonstrating. So a big thank you to them and those of you who have seen one or more films.

As we go to press the line up for this autumn's 14 week programme has been agreed but exact details are as yet to be confirmed. Many of these we saw at the pre-release showings at the British Film Institute in April and were highly rated there.

The list includes: Before Midnight, Mud, The Great Gatsby, Behind the Candelabra, Summer into February, and Beware of Mr Baker.

Others, less visibly promoted, but still stunning in their own way are: The Village at the End of the World, The Company You Keep, Mahanagar (The Big City), and Wadja. For Christmas we promise a great golden oldie with Cary Grant and David Niven.

So pencil in every Tuesday between September 17th and December 17th for our longest season yet.

Programmes and tickets available from mid-August.

the SITUATION : Friday 5th July

Local not-for-profit music promoters, *The Situation*, have excelled themselves with this month's bill for Friday, 5th July, presenting at the Foxlowe Arts Centre a night of atmospheric dark pop.

Headlining are the outstanding London-based *Vuvuvultures*, following their successful Brazilian tour, taking in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo we bring to Leek these Art-rockers par excellence, playing a glorious melange of dark and distorted melodic pop strangeness.

Situation compere and co-founder, Simon Edwards, said: "It's a real coup to get a band of Vuvuvultures' standard to play in Leek, and this will be a real highlight in *The Situation's* calendar this year.



The immense success of our Big May Birthday has helped open a lot of doors for us. Steve Hammersley, *The Situation's* band-booker, agreed: "Yes, after Big May, a lot more bands have heard of us, locally and nationally, and that is reflected very much in this month's bill."

Second up are *The Black Mirrors*, from Stoke-on-Trent, a Garage Punk three piece taking influence from the melancholy, macabre and perverse. Their amazingly dynamic live shows and debut E.P have received critical acclaim and been a springboard to developing a cult following.

Opening the event are *Moscow*, from Stoke-on-Trent. Andy Norton, the newest member of *The Situation* said: "Moscow are dark and staccato moody loud-boys, with flavours of *Suicide*, and *The Jesus And Mary Chain*. If your feet don't tap to these thrusting beats, your legs must be broken!"

Setting the scene as the doors open, and also rounding off the evening, will be a mesmerising soundscape from local soundsmith and DJ, Ling. "This guy is fantastic." said Simon Edwards: "Feel the noise, melt and re-emerge... Phew, if you don't come to this one, you'll regret it forever!"

Tickets are available at only £4.50 from the bands, the venue (upstairs in the gallery), Colloco (Sheepmarket, Leek), Music Mania (Hanley), or you can pay on the door, £5. Doors open at 8:30pm. First act onstage just after 9pm and the evening winds up at 11:30pm.

Summer Workshops for young people

Acting, creative writing, digital photography, gardening, hand-made cards, printing, introduction to the guitar, making your own puppet and weaving.

Full details in programme

Love Architecture

ERICA BROOK discovers more than the eye can see: Leek's Hidden Heritage

Local architect, Patrick Redmond, with the help of Chris Thompson, Exhibition Co-ordinator, curated the current exhibition at the Foxlowe Art Centre as part of the RIBA's nation-wide *Love Architecture Festival 2013*. Patrick has taken an opportunity to invite us to "look at the buildings around us in a new light and view the drawings that created them as works of art in their own right."

Leek Mayor, Cllr John Fisher, opened the exhibition where he expressed his enthusiasm for Leek and its "architectural heritage of great worth", congratulating Patrick Redmond for the range of examples on display. The exhibits have been borrowed from the Leek Historical Society, Leek Library and Museum collections, the County Records Office, the Royal Academy and Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

This is an exhibition which asks us to look beyond bricks and mortar and consider the inception of each building, which in each picture used in the exhibition will



St Edward's Church, Leek.

have begun its life with an inspired man taking a pencil, and experimenting with lines on paper, through which emerge buildings of great beauty. Gerald Horsley's drawings of the chancel of Norman Shaw's All Saints, Compton and the detailed study of the roof, are two meticulously executed examples of visible thought processes. Patrick

compares this development of line on line, mark on mark, with the use of the computer which is "fixed at the point of origin and lacks the emotional content derived from the creative hand."

Even the ageing process of these drawings creates its own beauty as can be seen in the All Saints section; the perished edges of the yellowing paper, seem to add to, rather than detract from, the sensitive plans for Norman Shaw's gem of a church, which is Leek's only Listed Grade I building.

Patrick's plea for a return to the 'simple' use of paper and pencil, is heartfelt and confirmed in what we see in this exhibition. The archive drawing material is complemented by photographs and paintings representing creative minds of a different order, with buildings as seen by Rob Pointon, Mark Wood, Darren Roberts and Brett Trafford amongst others, offering a present-day vision and an interesting contrast to the architectural drawings. The whole exhibition will surely inspire and draw us into the mysterious world of the creative mind.

The Exhibition is sponsored by the RIBA, North Staffs Society of Architects, SMDC, ctd architects and the Foxlowe Arts Centre. The exhibition runs until 28th June.

Thanks to Dave Swarbrook generously funding vital equipment Wi-Fi throughout the Centre has been considerably enhanced.

Thanks also to our IT co-ordinator Marc Briand for researching, sourcing and installing the equipment

Foxlowe Garden News

ALISON McCREA



Now that summer has finally appeared, there is great activity in the garden. Various plants have migrated to new locations; new ones have joined them and all this is overseen by the magnificent fox who has recently taken up residence beside the terrace.

At every hint of sun, café customers and other visitors spill out on to the terrace and beyond. The Staffordshire Knot has reappeared in the lawn beside the terrace and other areas of this lawn will be maintained for maximum daisy production, since for many of our visitors this is an essential resource. We intend to keep the large lawn short to make space for events.



The new fence beyond this has been installed by members of the Churnet Valley Project, coordinated by Martin Evans of the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, for which we are immensely grateful.

Thanks also to all Foxlowe supporters who donated plants this month, especially those which are attractive to bees, as we are keen to provide a habitat for these important and endangered insects. New plants are always welcome but at this time of year it's better to let us know in advance before bringing them, so that we can plan the best place for them and get them into the ground with minimum delay. If you would like to offer plants or time, please telephone or text Alison McCrea on +447753172564 and she will reply as soon as possible.

