

INTRODUCTION

The first attempts to begin a film ‘appreciation’ society in Wellington in the 1930s foundered on the opposition of the film trade, jealous of every film-going penny, and on the organisers’ vain hope that their impeccable seriousness would exempt them from the processes of film censorship.

The Wellington Film Institute, which was instigated at a public meeting a decade later, in October 1945, is seen as the foundation stone of the current Film Society movement. Its beginning is widely attributed to the influence of Gordon Mirams, a film censor and critic, whose book, *Speaking Candidly: Films and People in New Zealand* was published that year, and who, twenty years after it had been made, was still hoping some day to see *Battleship Potemkin* reach these shores.



The famous ‘Odessa Steps’ sequence in Sergei Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin* 1926.

New Zealand’s cities seemed much further apart in those days and independent groups in Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill had begun to import their own films before the end of 1946. In February 1947 these groups held their first conference in Wellington, founded the New Zealand Film Institute, and began to collaborate on the importing and distribution of films that otherwise would never be seen here. In the ensuing seventy-five years, no other voluntary organisation has put more films onto New Zealand screens.

During that time the Film Society has also played a crucial role in nurturing film culture in New Zealand. You will find the Film Society implicated in the beginnings of the Film Commission, the Film Archive and, of course, the annual Film Festivals, currently our most influential contribution to the ever-expanding options available to New Zealand filmgoers.

Film Societies continue, year-round, to present a wealth of movies which might not otherwise make it to New Zealand cinema screens. In the 21st century BluRay Discs and DVDs make it possible to run your own personal screening programme in the privacy of your own home, but that can never compare with the experience of sampling the best in international filmmaking with a group of fellow cinema enthusiasts. If there’s not already a Film Society in your neighbourhood, maybe it’s time there was. Making that happen is largely up to you.

This booklet will tell you everything you need to know about organising a Film Society in your community, but please do not hesitate to contact the federation’s officers if you have any questions at all. We’ll be happy as well to put you in touch with other people running Societies near you. Nobody is better qualified to tell you about the pitfalls and the pleasures, the trials and the rewards of running New Zealand’s longest running and only truly independent movie network.

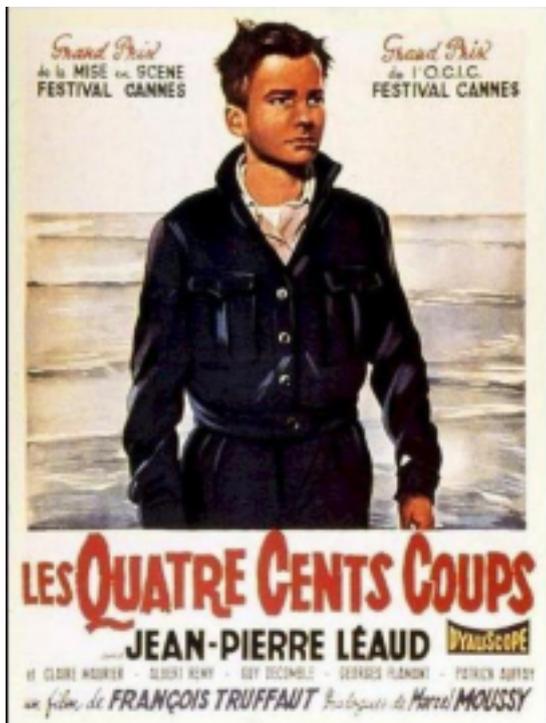
This introduction was written by Bill Gosden who was director of the New Zealand Federation of Film Societies Inc from 1981 until 1996. He then became the director of the New Zealand Film Festival Trust, established by the Federation in 1996 to take responsibility for the annual international film festivals. He resigned due to ill health in 2019 and died peacefully in November 2020 - RIP. This introduction is retained in his memory.

THE NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES

The Federation is an umbrella organisation which oversees the interests of some dozen or so affiliated Film Societies throughout the country. It negotiates for and acquires films for distribution, it sets national policy, gives practical and legal advice and generally assists in the running of the affiliated Societies. Membership of the Federation is open to any incorporated, approved Film Society of 30 or more whose rules comply with the Federation's non-profit, non-political aims and objectives.

The Federation is maintained by a film levy from affiliated Societies based on the membership of each Society, and whatever grants the Federation can acquire. This funding enables the Federation to share with the Film Festivals a full-time office in Wellington, and finances the acquisition of new film titles each year. The work of the Federation is regulated by a Management Committee which is elected and guided by the Annual General Meeting of the Federation.

A draft programme is sent to each Society before Christmas and their programming committees are asked to comment on the selected programme noting any titles that may not appeal to their particular members. Catalogues, with detailed information on each title, follow soon afterwards. Programme confirmations are sent out to Societies in January. Most Film Societies operate from February or March to November or early December.



WHAT IS A FILM SOCIETY?

There is a key difference between operating commercially and operating as part of the Federation of Film Societies. Should a group of people in an area which has no local commercial exhibitor wish to screen Bluray Discs or DVDs for their own enjoyment, they need not necessarily form a Film Society. They can contact commercial distributors of Bluray Discs and DVD films and rent movies for such screenings. The Federation cannot rent films to such groups which choose to operate 'commercially'.

Commercial Operators must record details of all tickets sold and then pay the distributors an agreed percentage of the takings for the hire of the films. This requires sophisticated accounting and the employment of someone with office skills. It would also involve the operator in various commercial requirements linked to employment law and the IRD!

The Film Society movement operates differently. It shares the cost of the Wellington Office located in the same building and with some of the same staff as the International Film Festival. Michael McDonnell is the staff member responsible for sourcing a fresh programme for Film Societies each year. These films are obtained from the suppliers to be screened on a 'non-theatrical' basis. The Federation makes a one-off payment to the distributors which is not tied to the number of people attending. This means that film-goers cannot be charged for each individual screening. Instead they have to pay an annual membership fee - \$50.00 of which goes to the Federation for each 'waged' member or \$40.00 for those who are 'unwaged'. Individual Film Societies will need to charge more to cover their costs. The general principle is that nobody makes a profit. We are 'non-profit' making clubs (although, hopefully you will have an annual surplus!) and we screen most of our films to 'members only'. However, it is possible to offer a 'sample membership' which allows someone to attend any three films of their choice (typically this costs them \$30 or \$35 of which \$15 is paid to the Federation).

Michael is sourcing almost all films on Bluray Disc which provide a higher picture quality than a standard DVD and are the preferred option. There is a wide range of digital (more accurately 'electronic') projectors available. (see page 6).

Nowadays some of the films that Michael gets for the Federation's use are on the DCP (digital cinema package) format used by commercial cinemas. These require a very expensive projector. So, many societies will come to some arrangement with a local commercial cinema to screen there once a week or once a fortnight or only when a DCP format is programmed. If possible it is best to agree an annual payment to the cinema based on a 'per member' formula. If the theatre management ask for a flat 'per screening' payment there is a danger that you could go bankrupt half-way through the season if your membership does not reach the expected level. The 'per member' system can often be sold to the cinema on the basis that if you do well they will get more than they might for the flat rate.

In summary, a Film Society can be described as a “non-profit cultural body formed to encourage the appreciation of film from the point of view of art and education, as well as entertainment, by supplementing the film fare provided by local commercial exhibitors, and by hosting seminars, discussions and social events”. A Film Society is, therefore, complementary to the service provided by local commercial exhibitors.

STARTING A FILM SOCIETY

In order to run an efficient and successful Film Society, you will require the following:-

A Bluray/DVD player

A digital projector

Competent projectionists

A good venue for screening

An enthusiastic committee to carry out the duties

Assuming you can foresee the above being quite manageable within your area, the first step in starting a Society is, of course, the search for members. A public meeting, advertised in the local paper, and a notice to teachers and cultural organisations in the area is often the best approach.

If there is a Society already operating within thirty kilometers of your proposed new Society you will need to obtain their permission to proceed. You may like to consider the alternative of becoming a sub branch of the existing nearby Society (details available on request). Owing to the work and expense involved in obtaining and distributing films the Federation insists that all affiliated Societies must have at least thirty full members, or be prepared to pay an annual per capita subscription equivalent to that for thirty members. An on-line copy of the Federation's catalogue is available on request so that you can survey the range of films available.

BECOME A 'REGISTERED CHARITY'

Once you have a group of interested people together you will need to register as a 'charity'. This will ensure that you have a 'tax-exempt status'. You can write to the Charities Services to request the necessary forms at PO Box 12138, Thorndon, Wellington Central 6144 or use the internet to access all the necessary information and the application documents via www.charities.govt.nz. There is sub-heading within this web-site entitled [applying for registration?](#), then click on Starting up. You will find a PDF document you can download and study – the procedure will seem bureaucratic and somewhat daunting, but stick with it and ignore questions which do not seem relevant. You will need to send a copy of your society's rules and you also have to fill in details of all your officers i.e., the president, secretary, treasurer and committee members. The necessary form is there on the web-site to be downloaded. Once registered you will have to send a copy of your accounts each year. If your income is less than \$10,000.00 per annum this will cost you nothing but if it exceeds that amount the fee is \$50.00 (if you post the details electronically) and \$75.00 if you ask them for paper forms.

A copy of the Federation's Rules is available if requested - it can be useful when drawing up your Society's constitution. You will need to include a declaration amongst the "Objects" of your Society to the effect that "The primary purpose of the Society is the exhibition of films otherwise than for financial gain". It is also important to list 'donations' along with 'subscriptions' as part of your annual income in order to ensure that the IRD allows you tax-exempt "donee status".

Also, send a copy of your rules, and a letter of application for affiliation to the Federation so that we can ensure that your aims are in accordance with those of the Federation.

WELCOME TO OUR RANKS!

MONEY

You will need to charge a yearly subscription to your members; when fixing this, allowance should be made for the hire of a venue and projector, the cost of notices, printing, postage, freight (you are expected to pay the onward freight on the films you use, usually by courier) and the annual subscription to the Federation. This subscription - payable in two instalments - is currently (2023) \$50.00 per member with a reduction to \$40.00 for senior citizens (aged 65+), registered unemployed and full-time students. For school students there is an especially low rate of \$20.00 (School students should be aware that they will not be admitted to films carrying a restricted censor's certificate.) Remember that you must pay for a minimum of thirty members i.e., \$1500.00 p.a.

The Federation sends out certificates for membership declaration and payment in March or April and again in October each year.

RAISING FUNDS FROM GRANTS

Many societies make application to various funding bodies for grants. It would be nice to be able to get help with running costs but not many bodies make grants for day-to-day expenses. However, it is relatively easy to obtain money for specific items or projects e.g., for a digital projector and/or Bluray player; for publicity i.e. payment for the programme brochure; for a 'special' screening e.g., payment to a pianist to play for a silent film.

Most councils are able to allocate funds delegated to them by Creative New Zealand through local 'community grants'.

Another possible source is offered by the gaming trusts formed to distribute profits from gaming machines. Popularly known as 'pub charities' these give much of their largesse to sporting bodies but have been directed to offer support to cultural activities as well. Film Societies are well positioned to fulfill this obligation for them. You should stress the age range and cultural variety of your membership in your application.

New Zealand Post offers pre-paid envelopes to many charities. Application needs to be made in July but you can store the envelopes for your annual mail-out of programmes at the start of the next season. Application should be made through your local Post Office or on-line. Note: In many cases it will be necessary to stress that you represent a 'Registered Charity' (see page 4.)

PROJECTION

If you are screening in a hall or meeting room, you will need to have access to a digital projector and BluRay player in order to show our programme.

There are two types of digital projector on the market. The majority are primarily designed for 'Powerpoint' data shows. Projectors designed for data shows are more concerned to provide the maximum brightness which means that they work well where there is ambient light (e.g. in a lecture situation) – Thus the publicity stresses their brightness through the number of 'lumens' that they can output. The tiny dots (pixels) which make up the image can be a nuisance when projecting moving images.

However, projectors with the letter 'DLP' (digital light processing) as part of their product descriptor are intended for video display. The DLP machines use some form of mirror technology in conjunction with a spinning colour wheel instead of the LCD (liquid crystal display) slide screen that is inside most data projectors. This offers a wider contrast range which means that there will be more detail in the darker parts of a pictorial image and the pixels will not be obvious. However, the DLP machines need full black-out to maximize their visual advantage.

Cheaper DLP machines (circa \$2-3,000.00) cannot operate from a distance greater than approx seven metres from the screen which means that in some situations e.g. where the projector can be placed in a theatre's projection box it will be necessary to buy an admittedly expensive one (\$10-20,000.00) like the Panasonic that can manage theatrical distances! This is their 'large venue' model PT EX12LU that would cost around \$US13k plus more for the appropriate lens.



From the audience point of view it is probably more filmically authentic if they can't see the projection machinery so, the projection box is the best bet when it is possible to place it there. It is also more secure. However, a projector can be hung from the ceiling if that is preferable and the picture can be flipped vertically so that it comes out the right way up!

Another important consideration is the aspect ratio that the projector can output. A 'native 16:9' projector will maximize the display when cinemascope films are being projected. The word 'native' means that the default (built in) provision is provided to show wide-screen movies. Quite a few of the DLP projectors do have the 'native 16:9' provision but tend to need the best black-out as their light output is compromised by the large screen area to be covered.

The more common 4:3 projectors will work in 16:9 mode but place black bands at the bottom and top of the image - these can be hidden by using the zoom facility but some vertical resolution will have to be sacrificed when working with wide-screen movies. Actually, Film Societies don't screen that many cinemascope movies!

PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Developments are continuous – for those with internet connections the best equipment reviews are to be found at <www.projectorcentral.com> or you could contact the Federation for advice.

People with e-Bay experience might choose to take the risk and purchase their projector via the web. Some societies have done so successfully. It is the cheapest way – especially if our dollar is strong but you may have to forgo a warranty.

WHAT ELSE WILL YOU NEED?

A BLURAY PLAYER – be sure that the one you buy is ‘multi-zoned’. Most DVD players bought in New Zealand will play discs from all regions. But some will only play discs bought in certain countries (this was a failed attempt by film distributors to control the date of release for their films in various territories). BluRay players are particularly likely to be ‘zoned’. **Whereas there are six national groupings by region for standard DVD discs defined by the numbers 1–6 there are only three for BluRay discs defined by letters.** The BluRay zones are: **Region A:** North America, Central America, South America, Korea, Japan, South East Asia. **Region B:** Europe, Middle East, Africa, Australia, New Zealand. **Region C:** Russia, India, China and Rest of World. The Federation will try to provide Region B BluRay discs, but some will be Region A.

Larger Film Societies have been encouraged to invest in a professional BluRay Disc Player. The current recommended model player is a Panasonic - Model DMP-BD84 (‘Hardware Modified’ i.e. fixed to be multi-zoned) from Rapallo in New Zealand (rapalloav.co.nz). This model allows for change of Zones and its output via HDMI also upscales DVD discs to get the best quality available from them as well. It comes in at just under \$500. (The previously recommended player [now discontinued], also from Rapallo, was an Oppo BDP-103AU at over \$1,000.) If you contract to hold your screenings in a commercial cinema, you may have to install your region-free player there so that they can screen both Region A and B BluRay discs.



Most BluRay players on sale in New Zealand are locked to Region B, but if you search the internet and shop around you may be able to find one that can be switched between Regions.

It may also be useful for your player to be capable of playing various formats so that any ‘home movies’ offered to your society on disc or USB ‘stick’ can be played at your venue.

SPEAKERS – these may be driven by an amplifier connected to your player but it is possible to **specify** that the player itself should give you a sound output (‘5:1 Surround Sound’ is usually the descriptor) that can be connected directly to the speakers.

You will need advice as to what you require for your specific venue but they need not be hugely expensive e.g. hundreds rather than thousands of dollars!

VENUE

Finding a suitable venue in which to screen is most important. A reasonably central location is usually best, or at least one which can easily be found by intending members. Start with a small hall - if your membership outgrows it you can change your venue later. Ensure that you can achieve a complete blackout - check that windows do not admit distracting light from street-lighting or passing traffic. Some Societies use school facilities: one of your local schools may have an "audio-visual" room which can be made available. To enhance the social aspects of your Society it is ideal if facilities for making refreshments are attached to the venue. An application for a licence can be made to the local City Council if you wish to sell alcoholic beverages to your members. It may be that you can come to an arrangement to screen your films in a local cinema (see page 3)

DISTRIBUTION OF FILMS

The physical distribution of our films is handled by the Federation Office in Wellington. All programme bookings and dispatches are arranged by the Federation office. The responsibility for films arriving in time for screening lies with the receiving Society, and every Society is responsible for forwarding their film on to its next destination, promptly.

The cost of courier freight needs to be budgeted for but this is much cheaper for BluRay than it was for film! All

discs must be dispatched by a courier system that has tracking available so that they can be traced if running late. A reliable courier company is preferred rather than the cheapest one.



La Grande Illusion (dir Jean Renoir, 1937, France)

CHECKLIST

FORMING A FILM SOCIETY

- Call a public meeting and draft a constitution
- Register your Society as a 'Charity' (see page 4) .
- Apply to the Federation for affiliation
- Elect a committee.



THE ORGANISATION

SETTING UP A COMMITTEE

Your committee will be made up of like-minded people who, hopefully, all enjoy films. In filling the key committee positions though, you need to be fairly hard-headed, and select the best person for the job. Duties vary but a typical Society could look like this: -

- **The President** should be a person with a highly developed sense of responsibility who will convene regular meetings; chair them efficiently; enthuse loudly and articulately about the Society and films in general (ideally, the president should be the Society's spokesperson when fronting up to the media) and be able to delegate authority easily while retaining responsibility.
- **The Secretary** should have a good working relationship with the president; be an avid phone-caller; supervise the door duties; keep membership lists up to date; answer correspondence; distribute mail and magazines, and liaise closely with the Federation office, particularly in the event of problems, but also to keep the Federation alert to your needs, wishes, and your Society's state of health. (Larger societies may appoint a separate Membership Secretary.)
- **The Treasurer** must be someone who can use a calculator; or at least has a good, honest head for figures. The treasurer should work out a budget, based on the number of members you expect; the amount of income you will derive from them; and set that against your expected outgoings. The treasurer should keep a close eye on regular takings, deal with annual payments to the Federation and present accounts at the AGM. It is usual practice for all cheques from your Society be countersigned by two people - the treasurer, and the president or secretary. A simple sample Excel spreadsheet is available on request.
- **The Film Handler** should be **one** person who must be responsible for the films which are received by the Society and sent on to their next destination. It is important, in the interest of efficiency and harmony, that one person should remain film handler for the whole year, so that other Societies know whom to contact if a film goes missing or is delayed. The handler should always send on a film **as soon as possible** after the screening. One of the worst sins a Society can commit is to make another Society miss out on a film through inefficient handling.
- **In Addition** you will probably need three or more other **committee members** to help carry out door and other duties. A good way to keep in touch with your membership is to try to get at least one new committee member each year.

MARKETING THE ORGANISATION

A new Society needs the equivalent of 30 members to become affiliated to the Federation. Above that, the sky is the limit. But how to attract the members? You need to publicise yourselves well, and a good way to start is to appoint a **Publicity officer**.

Free publicity is available from many different sources, so learn to use it:-

- Write a press release at least a week before the start of your year
- Make use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc
- Arts pages of newspapers will usually oblige with feature articles, especially if they already have a page devoted to film previews.
- Radio stations usually have free 'community noticeboard' slots.
- Libraries have display cases which you can fill with posters and leaflets.
- Offer yourselves for interviews on radio, TV, or newspaper (it can be a good idea to get to know a sympathetic reporter who, in return for a complimentary subscription, may be willing to write up forthcoming attractions).
- Ensure you get a regular listing in the 'Societies' section of any free local paper

Publicity which costs, but is essential

- **Prepare a Printed Brochure.** "Blurbs" - short descriptions of all the new films available for the year will be supplied by the Federation office. You will need a computer savvy person to adapt this material into a brochure for your specific programme and to find a way of getting it printed. Place these in strategic places (libraries, shops, tourist offices, universities, technical institutes, and other educational establishments) and maintain supplies.
- Design yourselves a bold logo and buy regular small advertisements in the entertainment section of your local newspapers - next to the cinemas'.
- At the start of your year, splurge on several large advertisements. You should be prepared to spend a little money to attract more members.
- **THE MOST IMPORTANT ADVERTISING IS WORD OF MOUTH** - if you have a friendly Society, showing good films in reasonably civilised surroundings without any slipshod amateurism, late starts, breakdowns and avoidable omissions, the word will quickly spread and you'll have a thriving Society (but no amount of promotion will sustain a dissatisfied clientele!)

NEWSLETTERS

- The larger Societies have newsletters to give members regular information about events and detailed critiques of the films about to be screened. Newsletters are an excellent way of keeping your members in touch and maintaining their interest. They can be anything from a typed, photocopied, page to a professionally printed, interesting, magazine (Auckland Film Society's '**Close-Up**' is an excellent example and all Societies may ask for copies.) Nelson prints a weekly 'Newsreel' and sends out an e-mail every Sunday (using the 'Google Groups' facility) previewing the coming week's film. Some societies are now using Mail Chimp for weekly emails instead of newsletters.



NEWSREEL

NELSON FILM SOCIETY

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STARBUCK
(Ken Scott, Canada 2011) 109 min
Director: Ken Scott
Producers: Joseph Lemieux, André Robitaille



Production: Gabriel Film
 Screenplay: Ken Scott, Martin Petit
 Photographs: Pierre Gail
 Editor: Yvon Théberge
 Music: David Goffin
 With: Patrick Huard (David Ancelet), Julie Leberton
 Olivier, Antoine Bernard (Suzanne), Igor Dudo (David
 (David), Fionnula Flaherty (Cécile Berthel), Marc Bilange
 (David's brother), David Michaud (Antonin), JOCK MACLEOD
 (David), David Giguère (Confession), Sarah-Anne Lalonde
 (Cécile)

When David (Patrick Huard) discovers that the thousands of dollars' worth of sperm he donated in his late teens has made him the father of 323 children, it's hard to know whether to chalk it up to good timing or to fate having an easy laugh. Just days earlier, David, a hapless delivery truck driver for his family's outdoor shop, found out that his girlfriend (Julie Leberton) is pregnant, but having doubts about keeping her to himself, he's had to blame her (when we meet him, David is \$80,000 in debt and growing pot, and poorly so, in his apartment), but her pregnancy weakens his paternal instincts, and not a moment too soon it seems. Of his 323 existing kids, 342 are using the fertility clinic; David used to find out his identity.

Starbucks' quirky premise no doubt helped it become a box-office hit in Canada, and successful director Ken Scott the opportunity to do a Hollywood remake starring Vince Vaughn, out in theaters later this year. But it's also suggestions in David's situation and yet another example of modern-family postcardish getting stuffed into the traditional-family-values message of conventional cinema. As if David's

leap into fatherhood wasn't enough to establish the film's theme, everyone around him also overcome by the grandson of parenting. David's brother is on edge about the prospect of having a child, while David's lawyer (Antoine Bernard), a father of four, complains at every opportunity about his kid who "doesn't pick up the frequency of my voice." But of course both turn out to be loving, caring parents when it comes down to it. And while there's a preponderance of male characters in the film (David's girlfriend is the only prominent female), the filmmakers don't grant much specificity to anyone's norms and anxieties as fathers. We never hear a word about or see the wife of David's lawyer, yet it's never made clear whether he's a single father. Rather than getting into particulars, the film focuses platitudes—essentially the "kiss or not" variety—that are apt for any family or gender.

Starbucks is, on the face of it, a comedy, though one might say that (but considering how it catches laughs for non-comedians). As part of their lawsuit, David's 342 kids send him personal profiles, presumably to touch David's heart and convince him to come out as the father. David decides instead to become their guardian angel, stalking them one by one until he finds a moment to show them with a random act of kindness. And while this leads to one great scene where David finds himself at a meeting with all 342 of his unknowing children, otherwise it's just more fodder for David's self-realization and yet another sappy montage. One might assume that discovering you've fathered hundreds of children would call into slight question the notion that all blood runs thicker than water. Starbucks, though, is more intent on making it a pivotal event for hundreds of insights about the importance of family. And once you realize that discovering 323 new kids will be an overwhelmingly positive event in David's life, it really takes a lot of the fun out of the gag.

—Tomer Shekel



www.nzfilmsociety.org.nz

- Set up a website - or piggyback on the Federation's national website.
<https://www.nzfilmsociety.org.nz/societies.html>
 You will also find contact details for the Federation at the foot of each page of this website.
- The Federation will supply well researched and entertaining information about the films for you to use in your publicity and newsletters. Don't forget to send copies of your newsletter to the Federation Office - we like to know how you are getting on!

HOW TO CHOOSE AND PRESENT YOUR PROGRAMMES

Procedure

Late in the year your Society will receive a descriptive list of the films which will be available to you for the following year. You will also receive booking request forms, one on which you are required to list your screening dates for the following year and another to list the films you would like to screen. Unfortunately it is not always possible to fulfil every request. All this is clearly set out on the forms provided. In January you will be sent confirmation of your programme. Wherever possible the Federation will have provided the titles you requested.

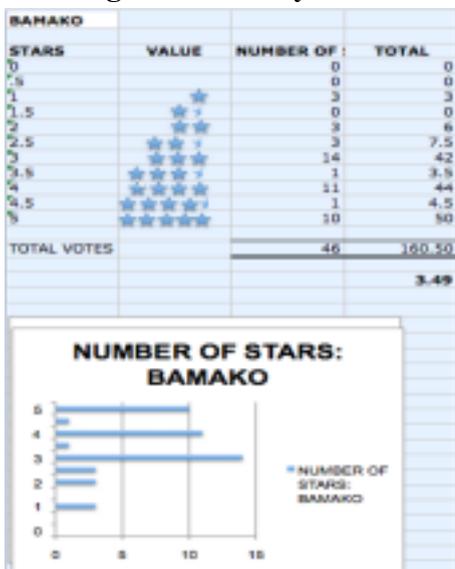
Societies should reflect the needs and tastes of their members in their booking requests. You should not allow the situation to occur where the tastes of one, or a few, members of your committee dictate the requests for all. Your primary objective should be to provide as broad a range of films as possible to your members. Many committees select their titles by voting and, provided that your committee represents a cross-section of your membership, this can provide a desirable programme. You should not shy away completely from difficult films: the catalogue will give you a clear indication of which these are. Keep your programme as 'international' as possible and try to present a selection of drama, comedy, documentary, live-action, animation, period film, contemporary film, silent and sound film.



Buster Keaton in Sherlock Jnr 1924

You will be criticized! Remember, whatever you programme, there will be somebody who will be happy to tell you how little they enjoyed it and that you should have programmed the spectacular Russian ballet film that their wife's sister-in law saw in 1958 at the wonderful little Film Society in Sheffield. Learn not to be too discouraged!

You might like to let your members 'vote' their response to each week's film:



Some societies devise a voting system so that members can let you know what they thought of the film. A common method is to print strips of five stars inviting your people to tear off the number of stars that they think that the film merited. They drop these into a box and then using a simple Excel computer programme you can record and display the result. Or it can be done on-line. This can be reported in your weekly e-mail preview. Members may need to be told to vote on their personal response rather than on their intellectual judgment of its quality!

Keep records of numbers attending and the rating response. They will be needed for your reports to the Federation!

THE YEAR IN FOCUS:-

- JANUARY** · Receive confirmation of programme from the Federation.etc., and prepare your own programme for printing
- Prepare for Federation AGM. Appoint your delegate. Submit any remits you may have for the AGM's consideration.
 - Contact old members before their free evenings become committed to other organisations!
- FEBRUARY** · Step up your recruitment campaign; press releases, displays, widespread distribution of leaflets, posters etc.,
- First screening?
- MARCH** · Keep a high profile in your community.
- A delegate should attend the Federation AGM (a fare will be paid by the Federation).
- APRIL** · Return membership declaration and subscription payment to the Federation
- MAY** · Run smoothly!
- JUNE** · Run smoothly;
- JULY** · Run smoothly!
- AUGUST** · Run smoothly
- SEPTEMBER** · Run smoothly
- OCTOBER** · Return final membership declaration and subscription payment to the Federation
- Book screening venues for next year
- NOVEMBER** · Final screening(s) and recruitment drive for next year
- DECEMBER** · Receive new catalogue supplements from the Federation; prepare booking requests
- Enjoy a well-earned rest!

WHERE THE FILMS COME FROM

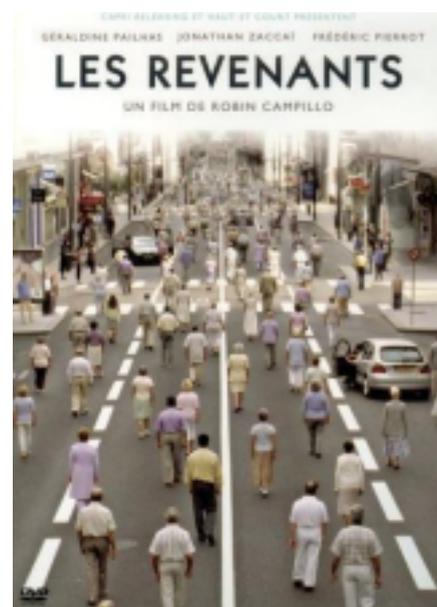
The obvious starting point in the search for Film Society movies is hearing about movies. The Federation subscribes to numerous overseas film journals, is on the mailing lists of many overseas film distributors, maintains frequent contact with equivalent overseas organisations and enjoys particularly close relationships with independent distribution agencies in New Zealand and Australia. An increasing number of New Zealand film personnel visit the world's major Film Festivals and often provide useful first-hand accounts of the wares on display. Occasionally we even receive welcome suggestions from Film Society members.

Once we've established that a title may be of interest to Film Society members, the work begins. The first task is to ascertain who holds the New Zealand projection rights on the film. There are a number of ways of obtaining this information; more often than not our friends involved in distribution outside New Zealand can tell us what we need to know.

Of course no rights are worth owning unless we can also obtain a screening copy - subtitled where necessary - of the title in question. In recent years this has proven a major stumbling block. As the 'art-house' market has grown film-owners are increasingly concentrating on DCP exploitation of their foreign-language titles. The funding structure of the Film Society movement in New Zealand was never geared towards paying for our own sub-titling and we simply cannot afford this expensive process ourselves. Negotiations for attractive films may have to be abandoned for want of an affordable copy.

In recent years some Societies have moved into commercial multiplexes or university campuses where DCP projectors are available. As a result the Federation is prepared to negotiate for some films in this format. However, nowadays, fortunately, more and more 'art' films are being issued on the BluRay format (see page 3).

The programme we purchase each year is supplemented with films which are made available to us from the libraries of the Goethe Institut in Wellington, and the Confucius Institute of Victoria University of Wellington. These institutions are generous enough to let us select what we like from their collections. Without their assistance Societies would be hard pressed to field complete programmes in any year. We are also constantly discussing the possibilities with the cultural agencies of other Governments with varying degrees of success.



Les Revenants (They Came Back) dir Campillo, 2004, France – supplied by the French Embassy.

In putting together the annual programme every effort is made to encompass as wide a spectrum of film-making styles, subjects and nationalities as possible. But finally the choice comes down to the simplest of considerations: we make every effort to find out what is available to us and we take the best of what we find.



A Zed & Two Noughts (dir Peter Greenaway, 1985, G.B/Neth)
- a film obtained through the sponsorship of the British Council.

Considering the difficulties involved the Federation has been surprisingly and consistently successful in assembling strong programmes over the years. The number of major titles which have fallen through the nets of commercial distribution and into our hands, is gratifying. All of these films have enjoyed commercial success almost everywhere else in the English-speaking world. Yet, for many years the only way to see them in New Zealand was to join the Film Society. Clearly the primary aim of Film Society exhibition - to supplement the choice of films available to the New Zealand film-goer - is still a valid one.



Illustrious Energy (Leon Narby) N.Z., 1988, a film obtained through the New Zealand Film Commission or directly from the director.

PROJECTING FILMS:- BLURAY PROJECTION

HANDLING BLURAY DISCS

- These discs are fragile and easily damaged. Do not touch the playing (shiny) surface with your fingers
- Hold the disc with your fingers on the edge and the centre hole
- The disc should only be put down in its traveling case or in the tray of the player. DO NOT put it down on any other surface
- When cleaning, stroke from the centre to the edge rather than using a circular motion.

THE PLAYER:

- Turn on power at the wall...
- Switch on the player AND any speaker amplifier
- OPEN THE PLAYER – insert the disc (it will run forward to the menu – you will see it when you turn on the projector).
- If necessary, adjust the zone for BluRay

THE PROJECTOR:

- Press ‘ON’ on the projector’s remote – wait for it to warm up – it takes about 30 seconds (often a red light will change to green and then the menu will gradually brighten up).
- Turn the house lights off and look at the menu – select the correct option (you should choose the language of the film – subtitles can be secured next).
- Press ‘subtitle’ on the remote or move the cursor to the option offered in the title sequence and choose ‘ENGLISH’ press the ‘ENTER’ button in the centre to choose this...
- Adjust the sound on the amplifier, you should go into the auditorium when the film is running to check that it is right and adjust the volume knob up or down as required.
- Hopefully, the ‘aspect ratio’ on the projector will have been correctly set – the basic choice is between 16:9 and 4:3 (if you have to adjust this press MENU on the projector’s remote control then go down one to POSITION and choose the alternative setting – you will see the effect immediately. When O.K., press MENU again and you will be back to the film).
- LET THE MOVIE RUN FOR A WHILE TO CHECK ALL IS WELL – Then when it looks good press STOP (the square button) TWICE – this will take the disk back to the beginning of the film (not all the way back to the menu).
- Then (if you have the option) press SHUTTER or ‘CLOSE DOWSER’ on the projector remote. It will blank out the screen.
- When READY TO ROLL – press the PLAY (right arrow) on the remote and when you hear the opening music press ‘SHUTTER’ or ‘OPEN DOWSER’ on the projector remote – and it should all come up in the right place on the screen.
- Now, dim the auditorium lights and go check the sound level in the auditorium.

AT THE END

- If available - close the 'SHUTTER' or 'DOWSER' using the projector remote. ● Press 'STANDBY' on the projector remote – the option to switch off will appear on the screen (if you open the SHUTTER!) – press ENTER on the projector remote and the light will go out. THE FAN WILL KEEP RUNNING (for several minutes). Don't switch off at the wall until it has stopped!
- Press 'OPEN' on the remote and remove the disk (**don't forget to do this**) and **immediately place it back in the case – it may need to be forwarded to the next film society urgently** – check.

CENSORSHIP

You are required to display the censorship certificate and enforce any restrictions which may relate to age or the requirement that the film be screened to members only.
[Censorship certificates are available to download from the Federation's Drop Box - Registered Film Societies will be given access to this.]

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