



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We can never thank our membership secretary Helen Jones enough for her patience and fortitude during the renewal/new membership process. The team at Highlands Creative have also been so kind and efficient.

By the time you read this newsletter all membership renewals and new applications will have been processed. Phew!

Please remember to use the FISH website as a resource, to edit your details if you have changes, and to email us with the new information so that our records are current.

To avoid confusion of colours (yellow to lilac), we will collect your **yellow cards** at your June screening and we will **POST TO YOU the lilac cards after 18th June**, the second screening date. **These are to be used for July and subsequent screenings for the next FISH year.**

Please check your mail/letter boxes.

We were happy that you liked *The Last Film Show*. The committee volunteers spend many hours trying to ensure that FISH membership is both pleasurable and thought-provoking.

Best wishes to all. **Roz Garwen**



### FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

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### FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

10.00 am Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024

8.15 pm Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024

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## *Goliath*

[France 2020]

**Spoiler alert : You may prefer to read this review after the screening**

DIRECTOR : Frederic Tellier

RUNNING TIME : 122 MINS

RATING : M

### **Synopsis:**

Inspired by [but not strictly based on] a true story of residents in a rural town fighting a mega agricultural manufacturer of a pesticide they believe is responsible for cancers and deaths among their own.

### **Review: Jane Fae**

Woke, worthy and – if you have even a smidgeon of concern over the future of this planet – worrying in the extreme. *Goliath* is that rarest of beasts; a genuine political thriller, with its focus firmly set on the politics, rather than some confected plot about assassinations, or palace coups.

*Goliath* asks the question of what those who care about the environment can do in the face of corporate lying, bullying and dirty tricks. At its heart are three impressive performances. We begin with the focus on Patrick (Gilles Lellouche), an environmental lawyer and campaigner, fighting for compensation following the death of a young woman from cancer. Because this, as the narrative quickly makes clear, is no sad accident of fate, but the result of breathing in a pesticide, tetrazine, peddled by evil megacorp, Phytosanis.

He is pitted against Mathias (Pierre Niney), a cold, calculating and frighteningly effective lobbyist, who has sold his soul to the aforementioned megacorp.

Between the two sits France (Emanuelle Bercot), schoolteacher by day, part-time worker, and reluctant activist, who has been pitched into the middle of this battle when her husband develops cancer, allegedly through exposure to this pesticide. Plenty of room here for a pivot to the dramatic, at the expense of the issues... or for an upbeat “villains get their come-uppance/good guys celebrate”, à la Erin Brockovich. Thankfully, writer-director, Frédéric Tellier, who made his name directing TV police and crime dramas for a French audience, does not succumb to the temptation.

What we get here is a crisp, downbeat, clever exploration of the issues, combined with a whodunnit in which, unusually, we know the identity of the doer from the very start; but are left wondering, until the very end, whether they will get away with it. In this he is aided and abetted by his co-writers, Gaëlle Bellan and Simon Moutaïrou.

## REVIEW cont.

Political drama is fraught with risk. On the one hand, there is the danger, already alluded to, that those holding the purse strings will lose heart and blink, blunting the politics with superfluous action. On the other, the fear that most of us have when presented with anything tagged as 'political', is that they will inevitably tip towards preachiness, if not outright propaganda; and that is even before the inevitable boredom sets in from – yawn! – the dialectical analysis of the role of the proletariat in achieving blah blah blah.

OK. Interest to declare; axe to grind. I am far from unsympathetic to the analysis provided by *Goliath*, which, it pleases me to report, goes far beyond the simplistic banalities so often served up by Anglo-Saxon political film.

There is action here, some of it quite shocking. There are also long interludes of dialogue in which both sides get to put a point of view in what feels like a more than decent exposition of their case. But, see above: it is possible that my bias is showing and someone more attuned to the anti-eco side of the fence might disagree.

Though, if anything, it felt to me that, so keen were the writers to avoid accusations of partisanship, they stepped well across the line to make sure the villains got the space to put their arguments; and not just as straw men to be knocked down. No, at times, one was left wondering why anyone would listen to the whinging eco's, whose arguments were all heart and feeling and very little hard fact.

Then one is reminded of two things: that the bad guys really are bad, and they are in it for the money; and that when their backs are to the wall, they will do some very bad stuff indeed.

*Goliath* is a gripping film with something to say to all of us.

Source: [www.eyeforfilm.co.uk](http://www.eyeforfilm.co.uk) – Jane Fae 20/11/2023 Edited extracts accessed 1/1/2024.

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## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

The Membership Renewal process has gone smoothly and we appreciate the manner in which our membership has embraced the new system.

Membership to new members was opened on Thursday 23 May 2024 and we have been impressed by the response and our membership is filling fast.

If you have friends who wish to join, please refer them to the FISH website [fish.org.au](http://fish.org.au) which will advise if we are still accepting new membership applications. **Helen Jones [membership Sec.]**

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## COMING UP

July	<i>Fallen Leaves</i> [Finland]	Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> & Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup>
August	<i>Totem</i> [Mexico]	Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>
September	<i>Farewell Mr Haffmann</i> [France]	Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> & Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>

## **Some Thoughts on : *The Last Film Show***

The colour and joy of Bollywood, the hardships of the working classes as seen in *Slumdog Millionaire*, (without the graphic open-air sewer ponds), and with the courage and determination of *Lion*, this slightly over sentimentalised tale from the sub-continent, was an absolute delight. This was a really engaging heart warmer, despite a length that would've benefited from some judicious editing without impacting on the life affirming spirit in Samay's journey through life and light.

Not a perfect film by any means, but it was chock full of so many wonderful moments, and so pointedly dealing with an astonishing number of social issues, that it produced a film of great warmth, humour, integrity and heart.

My most memorable moments included;

- The projectionist Fazar's arranged deal to train Samay in projector use whilst almost overdosing on the free cinema viewings, in exchange for a generous and delicious meal each day.
- Samay and his friends making their own film. Most particularly, running in circles around the 'set' and camera, to create the illusion of train travel through the countryside. Priceless.
- The emotional reality of new technology overwhelming and replacing the old, redundant, but much loved, traditional technology.
- The magical joy created by the successful screening of the gang's recycled film and equipment.
- India is huge in the area of recycling, often by necessity as much of it is poverty driven. So, it was an absorbing scene to witness the old colour films being recycled into colourful bracelets, possibly ending up as Bollywood bling.

While primarily concerned with childhood dreams, determination and imagination, creating a feel-good, positive, optimistic and hopeful conclusion, it was terrific to see much more serious issues being dealt with very effectively through the innocence of young eyes. The caste system, recycling, the speed and impact of technological change, domestic violence and the loss of employment to 'progress', were all elements in the mix of this filmic journey.

This story was presented by the director in crisp, clean images of intense colours capturing landscape, village life, railways, industry and the cinema, as a pleasure to view. The cast was so effective to a person, right across the ensemble. Most impressive of all though, was the leading character Samay. Such a well-rounded, confident and engaging portrayal in one so young. As the film would suggest, methinks a very bright future lies ahead for him.

This latest FISH outing is cinematically related to *Cinema Paradiso*, and perhaps not quite matching those lofty heights, it was equally effective to that classic film, in taking me back to my own childhood to reimagine and relive the theatrical thrill of going to the 'pictures' or 'flicks'. Images abounded of lush, red, gold edged curtains, finally opening each session to God Save the Queen. With half my Minties and Fantales already consumed, the man in a maroon jacket with a tray full of goodies suspended around his neck, would always come to the rescue by providing Jaffas or Choctops..... or both!

I bet many FISHERs on Sunday morning and Tuesday evening, were caught in that wonderful web too.

**Ross Armfield.**