

# Keswick Film

January - March 2024



Now in our 25th Year

The Best of World Cinema  
Every Sunday



Keswick Film  
at the  
Alhambra  
St John's Street  
Keswick



[www.keswickfilmclub.org](http://www.keswickfilmclub.org)

 keswickfilmclub

 @keswickfilm

## *Keswick Film Club*

Welcome to our 2024 'Spring' Season... and our 25th year! We have been showing films in Keswick since 1998 and, and although Covid hit us badly, we are gradually increasing our audiences back again now, with over 100 a couple of times. The Club prides itself on being friendly so, if you haven't been before, or not for a while, why not come along and see some great World films...and bring your friends! You may not enjoy every film we show, but we are sure you will enjoy a lot of them. There is no need to join, just come along and see for yourself.

You might ask 'What is the point of a film club?' Our club was born in 1998 with the simple intention of trying to bring films to Keswick on Sunday nights that would not be shown otherwise; foreign movies, some by first-time directors and, yes, even some arty ones. The idea of a film festival started the following year. The popularity of the films made the programmers more adventurous, expanding their choices to the best of World Cinema: by 2004, 'Whale Rider' (from New Zealand) brought in an audience of 241. The festival, meanwhile, had become an annual event, showing films at both the Alhambra and Theatre by the Lake, where 'March of the Penguins' (from France) showed to 256 people in 2006. We have continued showing the best of World Cinema to this day, regularly getting well over 100 people until Covid inevitably brought numbers down.

And it isn't just you that like the Club! Along the way we have won many awards from the British Federation of Film Societies (now 'Cinema for All') including **Best Programme** four times, **Best Website** and even **Film Society of the Year**.

*We really hope to see you one Sunday night. There will always be one of us in the foyer waiting to greet you - why not pop in and say hello?*



*Vaughan Ames  
club chair*

### **COMMITTEE 2024**

Chair: Vaughan Ames (07909 878018), [info@keswickfilmclub.org](mailto:info@keswickfilmclub.org)  
Vice Chair: David Miller Secretary: Roger Gook  
Treasurer: Paul Titley Membership Secretary: Elspeth Payne  
Festival Co-ordinator: Ian Payne Shorts Co-ordinator: TBA

*Keswick Film Club is a voluntarily-run, not-for-profit organisation  
Registered Charity No. 1083395*

## *Where are these films shown?*

We are very lucky to be able to show both the Club and the Festival films in the beautiful Alhambra Cinema. Walk from the Market Square at the south end (by The Royal Oak) and keep going up St. John's Street for 200 metres until you see the Alhambra on your right. Now over a century old, the Alhambra is a 'must-see' in its own right!

## *When are these films shown?*

Most Club films are screened on Sundays at 5pm, but check in this brochure: there are two Club 'seasons', each with its own brochure, available in the Alhambra and around Keswick.

The **24th Keswick Film Festival** is from **29 February 2024 to 3 March 2024**.

For more information **Email** us - [info@keswickfilmclub.org](mailto:info@keswickfilmclub.org) or see our award-winning **website** - [www.keswickfilmclub.org](http://www.keswickfilmclub.org). You can follow us on **Facebook** - [keswickfilmclub](https://www.facebook.com/keswickfilmclub) or **X (Twitter)** - [@keswickfilm](https://twitter.com/keswickfilm). We even have a weekly email - see our website to signup.

## *How much will it cost?*

Not only do we bring you these great films from around the world, but they won't cost you the Earth either! If you do not want to join, it will cost you the same as any other film at the Alhambra - £9.

## *...and what if I join the Film Club?*

Then the savings start! For £10 per year, you get:-

- A reduction of £3 on all Club screenings (to £6.00)
- The chance to vote for films next season
- £1 off Film Festival screenings
- To attend Caldbeck Area Film Society and Brampton Film Club at members' rates and vice versa
- A copy of 'Talking Pictures', our members' newsletter

**Join** - The Alhambra have kindly volunteered to run our membership so you can now join online

- through our Club website - [www.keswickfilmclub.org](http://www.keswickfilmclub.org) or
- the Alhambra website - [www.keswickalhambra.co.uk](http://www.keswickalhambra.co.uk) or
- at The Alhambra Cinema itself at any club screening.

## *Can I help run the Film Club?*

We need regular help to run the film shows, both for the club and the festival. Our emails each week will give details of what is needed. If you are willing, just see us after a film, or email us at [info@keswickfilmclub.org](mailto:info@keswickfilmclub.org) and we'll get back to you. Thank you in advance!

Sunday 7th January at 5pm

## FALLEN LEAVES (Kuolleet lehdet)

Members' choice

Director: Aki Kaurismäki. Finland 2023 (12A) 1hr 21min.  
In Finnish and Arabic with English subtitles.



A lovely tale of 'almost-doomed' romance starts our 25th Year. Ansa is sacked from her shelf-filling, supermarket job for taking home out-of-date food to give to the poor. Holoppa is sacked from his job in a scrapyards for drinking at work. All looks lost for both of them until they meet at an eclectic karaoke bar (!) and love beckons... but a lost address and even a charming stray dog still stand in their way... You have guessed it - Aki Kaurismäki is back with his latest comedic look at the world and its problems.

*'The tale is in its telling'*, as David Jenkins says in Little White Lies, and no-one tells a tale like Kaurismäki - remember *'Other side of hope'* we had here in 2017? He has won 60 awards along the way and this one won him the Jury Prize at Cannes Film Festival.

*'Present and correct is his usual shadowy noir lighting and a jukebox soundtrack of Finnish and other ballads. It builds on his other stories of Finnish working-class woe and wears its film-loving heart on its sleeve with wry nods to other directors throughout.'*

*Particular to Fallen Leaves is a deep, amused sigh at the limitations of men and alcohol, especially when paired. But it's not judgy, just jaded, at least until the clouds finally start to part. It finds genuine humour in its characters' almost down-and-out lot, but it's fully on their side – the side of those trampled on by modern times' - Dave Calhoun, Time Out.*



Sunday 14th January at 5pm  
**20 DAYS IN MARIUPOL**



Director: Mstyslav Chernov. *Ukraine 2023 (18)* 1hr 35min.  
In Ukrainian, Russian and English with English subtitles.



We hesitated about showing this documentary, but the constantly great reviews (100% on Rotten Tomatoes, 8.7 on IMDb) and the number of members who voted for it, persuaded us it should be seen: An inside view of the Russian occupation of this Ukrainian city is not going to be an easy watch, but probably one we all should see.

Near the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the city of Mariupol took the brunt of weeks of shelling and fighting. When Russia invaded the city, *'The Ukrainian Associated Press journalist and film-maker Mstyslav Chernov was there for 20 days, and filed video reports that helped to galvanise western opinion, particularly the horrific images of mass graves. But this movie is the uncut, unexpurgated version: the real nightmare, the real explicit obscenity which no TV executive would put on the nightly news'* - Peter Bradshaw, Guardian.

Whilst Chernov inevitably shows much of this nightmare, he also disproves many of the Russian myths: *'During the siege, Russian propaganda claimed that bombing victims were plants, singling out one wounded pregnant woman as 'an actress' wearing make-up. Chernov's footage shows that very woman stumbling, dazed through the rubble. There are no actors here'* - Phil de Semlyen, Time Out.

The Ukrainian people are still suffering and dying.

Lest we forget...



Sunday 21st January at 5pm  
**20,000 SPECIES OF BEES**  
(20,000 especies de Abejas)

Director: Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren. Spain, 2023 (12A, F)  
2hr 8min. In Spanish & French with English subtitles



A beautiful, gentle film about family, identity and so much more, which won its star, Sofia Otero the Best Actress award at the Berlin Festival... not bad for an 8 year old. Sofia plays Cocó, the youngest son of Ane, who is having problems with her marriage. When Ane takes her family to visit her own mother Lita in Spain, her own identity as a sculptor is thrown into doubt by Lita. Coco meanwhile is more and more sure he is a girl in a boy's body; the only person to accept this is her great aunt Lordes, who is happy with her bees, and with calling her Lucía. So...Pretty well the whole family have identity problems of their own.

The first film by Basque director Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren, this is a heart-warming attempt to look at some of these huge issues with an open mind, letting Lita tell Ane that she is being too soft on her son, that he just needs putting in his place, while Ane is allowed to support Coco/Lucia without making any real decisions, leaving only Lourdes to take Lucia's side, while she gets on looking after her thousands of bees...

*'And Lucía's grandmother is unlikely to be the only person who will push back against the idea of an eight-year-old questioning their gender identity. It's the most scalding of hot-button topics and a brave choice for a debut film. But with this gentle, empathic picture, Urresola joins a conversation that usually plays out as a screaming match, and tones it down to a murmur. It turns out that you hear a lot more that way'* - Wendy Ide, Guardian.



Sunday 28th January at 5pm  
**ANATOMY OF A FALL**  
(Anatomie d'une chute)



Director: Justine Triet. France 2023(15, F) 2hr 31min.  
In French, English and German with English subtitles.



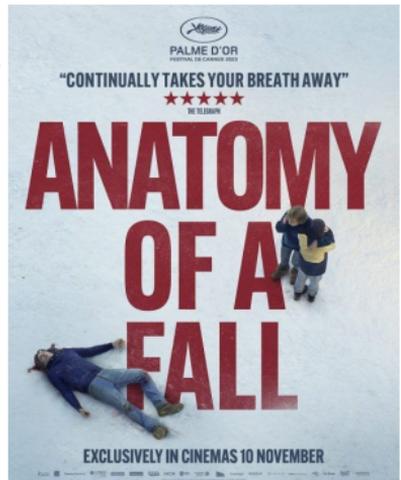
The Palme d'Or winner at Cannes this year is a whodunnit, deliberately built around uncertainty, where marriage is the prime suspect.

Sandra, a German author is married to Samuel, a French aspiring author. They live in an Alpine chalet with their visually-impaired son Daniel. Their marriage is argumentative, which becomes especially important when Samuel is found dead outside in the snow. Did he fall? Did he commit suicide? ...Or was he pushed? In a world where perceptions are more important than truth, the police accuse Sandra of murder. But did she do it?

Their marriage is picked over by both sides in the court, where any given 'fact' can be seen to have different meaning - *'Marriage, the film suggests, is like a mosaic. One or two highly coloured tiles might catch the eye but they can't, on their own, show the whole picture'* - Wendy Ide, Guardian.

Much of the film, then, is a courtroom drama, but Wendy Ide goes on to say *'A genre that can be prone to stuffiness and overly waffly dialogue, the courtroom drama here is electric, restlessly dynamic and compulsively watchable'*.

Is she guilty? You will have to decide. *'Each individual presents a starkly different vision of their shared existence - yet it's hard to say that either of them is wrong. Does the truth lie somewhere in between or does it encompass both of their realities? Or does it (gasp) simply not exist? The curse of wanting to know everything, it turns out, is the eventual realization that we know nothing'* - Bilge Ebiri, New York Magazine. Can you resist coming to see for yourself..?



Sunday 4th February at 5pm  
**LOST IN THE STARS**  
(Xiaoshi de ta)

Directors: Rui Cui & Xiang Liu . China 2022 (15)  
2hr 1min. In Mandarin, Thai and English with English subtitles.



A cracking, Hitchcockian, twisty thriller to go with the Keswick Chinese Film Festival at the Alhambra this weekend.

A Chinese couple go away to an island for a weekend to celebrate their wedding anniversary, but the wife goes missing. *'The unlucky holidaymakers in this instance are He Fei (Yilong Zhu, in an outstandingly good performance) and his wife Li Muzi, who come to Belandia, a fictional south-east Asian island-nation, to celebrate their one-year wedding anniversary. However, Li Muzi goes missing just days after they arrived... When he wakes up in his hotel the next day, there's a beautiful vampy woman there (Janice Man) who claims that she's Li Muzi, but He Fei insists she's an impostor...'* [Is he right, or has he lost his memory?] *'He hires local Mandarin-speaker Chen Mai (Ni Ni, also terrific) to help him investigate his wife's disappearance and liaise between him and the cops. A tough cookie who drives like Lewis Hamilton and seems honest enough, Chen Mai insists that He Fei tell her the whole truth about the circumstances of his wife's disappearance. Turns out he's not been completely honest, of course, and directors Rui Cui and Xiang Liu start skilfully peeling back the onion...'* - Leslie Felperin, *Guardian*.

The twists and turns continue throughout; definitely a thriller 'like they used to be'...

Last year's Chinese Film Festival was amazing and this year's is looking equally good; I can thoroughly recommend it if you are at all interested in Chinese movies. *Lost in the Stars* is being shown by the Film Club to fit; looks like a great film too!



Sunday 11th February at 5pm

## THE PEASANTS

Directors: DK & Hugh Welchman. Poland 2023 (15, F)  
1hr 54 min. Polish and Latin with English subtitles



Taking a Polish classic novel as a basis, the mak-



ers of 'Loving Vincent' have produced a 'ravishingly beautiful visual triumph'. The story is of Jamila, a striking blonde beauty who is admired by every male in the village, including both the rich

Maciej and his eldest son Antek, who Jamila loves. When Maciej arranges a marriage for himself with Jamila, the affair with his son continues, with disastrous results.

BUT the reason to see this film is much more to do with its construction. *'It's the sheer luminosity of the images on display that keeps you thoroughly enthralled. The filmmakers' technique involves shooting the entire film in live-action form, with real actors and sometimes real sets, and then painting tens of thousands of frames in rotoscoping fashion to produce the feeling of oil paintings come to dynamic life. The result is near hallucinatory in its effect, as if walking through an art museum filled with masterpieces that have lives of their own'* - Frank Scheck, Hollywood Reporter.

Sunday 18th February at 5pm

## LOVE LIFE

Director: Kôji Fukada. Japan 2022 (12A) 2hr 3min  
In Japanese and Korean with English subtitles.



In a film strangely reminiscent of 'Past Lives', but with a very different feel, 'Love Life' explores Love and Life as past loves come back to haunt the lives of a Japanese couple.



In a wonderful, chaotic family, 'The delicate domestic balance shared by Taeko and her second husband, Jiro, is upended when a tragedy strikes the family, in this wrenching Japanese melodrama from Kôji Fukada. Relations are further strained by the arrival of

Taeko's deaf and seemingly vulnerable ex-husband, Park, back into her life. Since Taeko is the only person who can communicate with him – Park speaks Korean sign language – the responsibility for his care falls to her. But the gap between Taeko and Jiro, both physical and emotional, grows ever wider. It's a solid, sensitively handled study of the aftermath of a trauma' - Wendy Ide, Observer. And I haven't even mention Jiro's parents involvement, or his ex-girlfriend Yamazaki...

Sunday 25th February at 5pm

## POOR THINGS

Director: Yorgos Lanthimos. UK 2023 (NC) 2hr 21min.  
In English.



Keswick Film has had a knack of picking the Oscar films before the date; well, *'Poor Things'* is giving off the vibes already as we go to print, so it might well be very hot by the time you see it in February. The latest from the strangely brilliant director Yorgos Lanthimos (Best Director Award?), it stars Emma Stone (Best Actress Award?) as Bella, the 'Frankengirl' brought back to life by Doctor Baxter (Willem Defoe). Rather than becoming a monster, however, Bella gets more and more complete as she discovers first how to move and talk, then the pleasures of the flesh (with sleazy, caddish Duncan Wedderburn (Mark Ruffalo - Best Actor Award?)). But to Wedderburn's disgust, she then turns to reading and before you know it, she is out-thinking and out-smarting the men.

*'Poor Things' is a defiantly strange film, a movie that obviously echoes Shelley's Frankenstein, but it's more about liberation than the folly of playing God. With the possible exception of the warmth that Dafoe surprisingly brings his mad scientist, the men in 'Poor Things' are uniformly awful, faux intellectuals who hold power over Bella purely because of gender and society. Through each episodic development in the script by Tony McNamara ('The Favourite') from the book by Alasdair Gray, Bella becomes more self-aware and confident'* - Brian Tallerico, RogerEbert.com.

The film and, especially, Emma Stone get great reviews inspiring, for instance, Peter Bradshaw in the Guardian to rave *'Everything in it – every frame, every image, every joke, every performance – gets a gasp of excitement... And his leading lady is someone who takes it to the next career level, or the level beyond the next level'*.

Put this one in your diary now!



# The 24th Keswick Film Festival

29<sup>th</sup> February - 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

## Welcome to Keswick Film Festival

The programme takes us across the globe, with outstanding films from UK, Europe and around the world.

Maintaining our tradition of the last 20 years we have a mix of films that challenge and inform, that will make you laugh and make you cry and take you from the edge of your seat to the very, very back.

Add in the Osprey short film awards and the amazing talent to be seen in the showcase of our local Arts students, Keswick is the place to be this spring.

Register on our website for regular news from now till February.

[www.keswickfilmfestival.org](http://www.keswickfilmfestival.org)

Or follow us on Facebook or X (Twitter)

Tickets and passes are available from January at

**THE ALHAMBRA CINEMA**

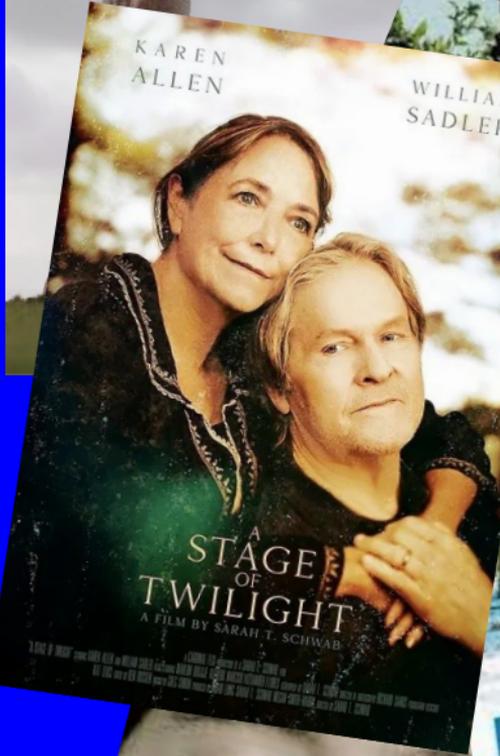
**017687 72195**

or buy online from the Alhambra website via

[www.keswickfilmfestival.org](http://www.keswickfilmfestival.org)

# 2024 Keswick Film Festival

Just a few of the many films to see!



Sunday 10th March at 5pm

## THE HOLDOVERS

Director: Alexander Payne. USA 2023 (15) 2hr 13min.  
In English.



You have nowhere to go for the holidays, so what do you do? Well, in the case of student Angus, you stay at school with your hated History teacher Mr Hunham and... oh, yes, the school cook Mary. Mr Hunham is there because he refused to pass the son of one of the school's rich benefactors and as a punishment he is left looking after the 'holdovers' - those with no home to go to. Mary is there because her son has been recently killed in Vietnam and doesn't want to be home alone.

*'Nothing about The Holdovers' sounds particularly special, and yet it's one of director Alexander Payne's best films – very funny, occasionally touching and a sterling example of the bonds that can be forged by an unlikely family. Set in a stiff New England private school in 1970, it passes the "should see" test with flying colours' - Brian Lowry, CNN. I should also add that it stars Paul Giamatti who never fails to be "worth watching".*

Alexander Payne has made several movies about guys like Mr Hunham and Angus - losers who show just how bad men can make their own and everyone else's life. We had *'Nebraska'* here in 2013, and you will probably have seen *'Sideways'* or *'About Schmidt'*. Well, he is back here at his best.

*'Payne is the maestro of the emasculation comedy, in which men try to live with dignity and meet with grave embarrassment instead. For a world that has seemingly been designed for their pleasure and comfort, it's all so unpleasant, so uncomfortable' - Annie Berke, New Republic.*



Sunday 17th March at 5pm

## SHAYDA

Director: Noora Niasari. Australia 2023 (NC, F) 1hr 57min In English and Persian with English subtitles.



Shayda tells the story of the titular character's attempt to escape her abusive husband's clutches. The pair have moved to Australia for Hosain to become a doctor, though he wants to return to Iran. Frightened of his continual violence, Shayda takes her daughter Mona into a women's shelter while filing for divorce, but the courts, as often happens, take Hosain's side and give him rights to see his daughter alone. We see Shayda's fear that Hosain will take Mona out of the country in the opening scene as Shayda takes her daughter to the airport to show her places she can hide 'just in case'.

This is director Noora Niasari's confident personal debut, which won an Audience Award at Sundance for the World Dramatic Competition program. *'Reportedly based on the filmmaker's own experience, this drama surges with truth, thanks in no small part to a stunning performance from Zar Amir Ebrahimi, winner of Best Actress at Cannes for 'Holy Spider.' Ebrahimi plays [Shayda], alternately processing the trauma of her past and trying to carve out a new future for her daughter. With her abusive husband in the narrative mix, 'Shayda' hums with inevitable dread. It's a tug-of-war between hope and fear that gives Ebrahimi the platform to carve out a completely three-dimensional character. We come to care for Shayda and her daughter. And, by extension, the thousands of women in the tragically same position in the world'* - Brian Tallerico, RogerEbert.com.

*'The film is set in 1995 in the lead up to and during Persian New Year, the celebrations signifying an opportunity for rebirth – though Niasari doesn't overegg the symbolism. Nothing in Shayda feels laboured. The director sticks closely to her actors, prioritising people over place'* - Luke Buckmaster, Guardian.



Sunday 24th March at 5pm

## THE END WE START FROM



Director: Mahalia Belo. UK 2023(NC, F) 1hr 42min.  
In English.



We end our year with an appropriately named film which brings hope to a world full of troubles. Jodie Comer stars as a woman who gives birth just as terrible floods hit London; new life begins as the old life ends. The film continues to emphasise the individuals' problems rather than the bigger picture, focusing on our unnamed hero trying to survive as food gets harder to find. She first escapes from London up North with her partner, then tries to reach a commune with a new-found friend, all the while having to fend for her baby.

*'The End We Start From explores more than motherhood at the end of the world, its subject is every nuance of womanhood at any stage of life. The film takes great care to convey just how wild and new that enormous new stage in life is, how deeply tied to who you were before, and always will be. It's heartening that neither of the seismic changes that occur in this story is what makes or breaks its people: the journey gets harder, but you just keep walking through. Eventually, the rain will always stop' - Ellen Kemp, Evening Standard.*

*'The End We Start From'... provides us with an unusual, female-powered alternative within a field of films that are usually heavier on action than words. It's carried to the finish line by Comer, an actor whose naturalism is an ideal fit for a character forced to constantly react to the ever-changing situation in front of her, no time for anything but a need to survive. When she does get the briefest of pauses, to deliver a moving monologue about a deep-rooted fear of death or to finally allow herself to cry, it's all the more impactful for the restraint that's surrounding and Comer is outstanding whatever the mode. As a big screen star, she's just beginning' - Benjamin Lee, Guardian. Don't miss her big start! We hope you have enjoyed our 25th year, and that we get a great summer before we start our new year in September!*



## January

- Sunday 7th 5pm **Fallen Leaves**  
Finland, (12A) Aki Kaurismäki's 'almost-doomed' romance
- Sunday 14th 5pm **20 Days in Mariupol**  
Ukraine, (18) Inside the Russian occupation
- Sunday 21st 5pm **20,000 Species of Bees**  
Spain, (12A, F) A family with identity problems
- Sunday 28th 5pm **Anatomy of a Fall**  
France, (15, F) Did he fall or jump? ...Or was he pushed?

## February

- Sunday 4th 5pm **Lost in the Stars**  
China, (15) Is his wife missing or has he lost his memory?
- Sunday 11th 5pm **The Peasants**  
Poland, (15, F) Paintings come to life in this story of love and lust
- Sunday 18th 5pm **Love Life**  
Japan, (12A) Love, life, tragedy, confusion...
- Sunday 25th 5pm **Poor Things**  
UK, (NC) 'Frankengirl' learns to outsmart the men

Thursday 29th February - Sunday 3rd March

## 24th KESWICK FILM FESTIVAL

[www.keswickfilmfestival.org](http://www.keswickfilmfestival.org)

## March

- Sunday 10th 5pm **The Holdovers**  
USA, (15) A student, his teacher and the cook share a holiday
- Sunday 17th 5pm **Shayda**  
Australia, (NC, F) An Iranian woman fights for custody of her child
- Sunday 24th 5pm **The End we Start From**  
UK, (NC, F) A woman fights to survive with her child

Note: F Rated films denote significant female involvement - director and/or writer  
Front page picture is from 'Poor Things' (25th February)

[www.keswickfilmclub.org](http://www.keswickfilmclub.org)



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