



High reaction scores to films at Spring Viewing Days at Shipham & Launceston.



Exceptionally high reaction scores were the norm at both Cinema for All South West Viewing Days. Scandi noir thriller “The Guilty” (available now from Troy Film Agency) was voted best film at Launceston, while the audience at Shipham awarded top marks to “Faces Places” directed by the legendary French director Agnès Varda (available from BFI now).

Delegates to both events loudly praised their hosts: Shipham Community Cinema at Shipham, and FLIC, Carn to Cove & CFlym at Launceston.

Full details of the audience reaction scores at both events are overleaf.

Shipham results

Faces Places	95%
Green Book	91%
The Divine Order	89%
Shoplifters	86%
The Guilty	86%
Wildlife	64%

Launceston results

The Guilty	93%
Shoplifters	89%
Green Book	88%
Faces Places	84%
The Divine Order	84%
Wildlife	67%

Combined results

Faces Places	91.4%
Green Book	89.8%
The Divine Order	88.7%
The Guilty	88%
Shoplifters	87.5%
Wildlife	65.2%



A selection of photos taken at Shipham and Launceston, delegates at the latter venue were over looked by a giant mural of the famous Cornish poet Charles Causely. More details are on the Cinema for All South West website. [SW website](#) .

Summer is on the way; so with beach reading in mind why not pick up a book on cinema?

Let's begin with Peter Bradshaw's recent Guardian survey of works on Hollywood. The novel chosen is F. Scott Fitzgerald's posthumous, unfinished *THE LAST TYCOON* (1941). The protagonist Monroe Stahr, a Hollywood director is one more of Fitzgerald's humane, charismatic heroes, undernourished by a society of "weary desperadoes" and based on the brilliant producer Irving Thalberg who died tragically young. Avoid the movie which is marked by "woefully respectable, dead-eyed civility" (David Thomson).

Bradshaw chooses Thomson's *THE WHOLE EQUATION* (2005) for his "History of Hollywood" slot, though it's only one of a number of Thomson titles which touch on or feature Tinseltown. A more useful pick from his substantial list might be *THE BIG SCREEN* (2012) since it covers French, Italian and Russian cinema as well as American. Thomson has been described as possibly the greatest living writer of film studies. He is almost certainly the most knowledgeable as two outstanding works testify: *A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF FILM* (1995, revised paperback) and *HAVE YOU SEEN? A PERSONAL INTRODUCTION TO 1,000 FILMS* (2008). Thomson's style is often just on the formal edge of conversation; this draws the reader in and the material does the rest.

I have found the writer who most closely resembles Thomson to be Anthony Lane, the film critic of *THE NEW YORKER*. Like some of Thomson's books, Lane's *NOBODY'S PERFECT* (2002) is a weighty doorstop of over 700 pages. He's as lively, frank and readable as Thomson and in this instance more varied: beside 100 film reviews he offers essays on writers (e.g. T.S. Eliot, Evelyn Waugh, Pynchon — and two pieces on Bestsellers!) as well as "Profiles" ranging from film stars to photographers.

In 2016, a year after the death of Philip French, the Watershed Cinema in Bristol initiated an annual Philip French lecture; in the same year the Critics' Circle launched the Philip French award for the most innovative filmmaker of the year. *NOTES FROM THE DREAM HOUSE, 1963 - 2013* (2018) draws on his reviews, most notably from his contributions to *The Observer* over a period of 40 years. He was never less than entertaining and stimulating, sometimes provocative ("There is no such thing as an uninteresting Western") but always supported by his impressive memory, one steeped in literature and the visual arts.

The personal touch identifies his work: a review of *THE THIN BLUE LINE* (1989) about a miscarriage of justice in Dallas begins with a reference to Mrs. Thatcher (don't ask!). His response to *DAY FOR NIGHT* (1973) ends: [it was] one of the few occasions when I've emerged from the cinema better than when I went in."

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