



Programme notes 43rd season, film 9

Programme for tonight – 1st February 2012

THE MAID (*La nana*) (15)

Dir. Sebastián Silva, Chile/Mexico 2009, 96mins (subtitles)

With engaging performances and story telling, this film offers a pleasing take on a bourgeois family and its servants. When a new maid is taken on to help maid Raquel (Catalina Saavedra), who has worked for a comfortable Santiago family for more than 20 years, jealousy and resentment build up and sabotage follows.

Deadpan, handheld technique allows the director to mine mundane situations for subtle hazard but also to take his story in unexpected directions, initial reticence preserving the potential for surprise. There's a similar quality to Saavedra's performance, whose Raquel is now downtrodden, wily and vulnerable. The result offers a fruitful ambivalence far richer than any butler-did-it cliché. (*Ben Walters*)

Next Film Night – 1st February 2012

THE SHOP AROUND THE CORNER (U)

Dir. Ernst Lubitsch, USA 1940, 99mins

Matuschek's is the gift shop around the corner. Among the staff is Alfred Kralik, a likeable young man who's in love with a woman he has never met and whose name he doesn't even know (their "romance" has been conducted through a post office box). When Klara Novak comes to work as a clerk in the shop, the sparks begin to fly: she and Alfred can't stand each other. Of course, what neither knows is that Klara is the woman Alfred has been romancing through the mail. Starring - Margaret Sullivan and James Stewart

Your comments on DRIVE shown on 25th January

Member rating: 54%: Voting A-8, B-7, C-4, D-7, E-7 (write in F-2)

Member comments: I feel I can't grade this film as I found it far too violent for me personally. Michael Mann-like (*Heat/Thief*) with painterly framing and techno/electro soundtrack (as in *Heat/Thief*); the main character was required to be a cipher - part McQueen/Eastwood/Brando. It is the nastiest film I've ever seen - were they all baddies? Couldn't see who was good or bad - when they were bad they were very, very, very horrid! And he seemed such a nice man. The start of the movie really set the scene for the rest of the film; unusual to have so much blood and gore at CFS - made me jump more than once. Brilliant, excellent cinematography - scorpion jacket was a perfect touch. Very well made and utterly horrible. What a horrible film. Wow! Great story with suspense and action; good music too. Reminiscent of Scorsese; gripping and wonderfully atmospheric; brilliant acting. Slow and much much too much violence - unrealistic! Gratuitous violence is not entertainment. Can't say enjoyable but excellent of its kind! What a terrible film - inhumane! The worst ever. An excellent but gory film with great atmospheric music really adding to the tension! - a great departure from the norm CFS. Mr Cool turns out to be a nutter! Lousy titles, lousy music, bad acting. Slow - needed a change of pace; unnecessarily explicit violence. Achingly cool, fantastic soundtrack; heard there was a lot of blood, so knew to take off my glasses when it got too graphic! Gripping and totally realistic; well done CFS - a very different film. Gripping, gruesome, edge of the seat stuff. Slow, long drawn out extreme violence - not what we come to the Elgiva for. Poor acting, gratuitous violence! Too violent for my liking. Bloody. A bit too violent for a January evening. Modern film noir but, although stylish, ultimately empty at its core. A good film but not one I "enjoyed". Gross, gratuitous, horrid. When the violence started I just shut my eyes for the rest of the film. Tarantino without the humour! A very strong cast and well acted and directed - Gosling superb almost like McQueen/Eastwood in understated menace. Photography superb underpinned with an unsettling and riveting soundtrack. A story sadly of our times about the criminal sub strata of Los Angeles society and, as such, a legitimate story for a film and a legitimate film for CFS to show - not all films can be gentle French Comedies! Some of the images were so shocking and mind/sense grabbing that they overshadowed the real strengths of the acting and direction and reduced the film almost to B movie status - a pity.

Member ratings and comments for all of the films shown so far this season and for all of the 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 seasons can be found in the Programme section of our website www.chilternfilmsociety.org.uk