

The 14th Portobello Film Festival 3-20 September 2009



**PORTOBELLO**  
FILM FESTIVAL



# 2009 report



## 700 Free Film Screenings

At the heart of Portobello Film Festival are shorts and features that embody the state of cinematic art on digital formats. Themes and highlights from over 700 films shown this year included Joanna



Lumley's heartfelt appeal for the displaced people of Mine: A Sacred Mountain in India, USA's sexy and disturbing Liminal, Virgin Media

Shorts' The Black Hole, Sidney Turtlebaum with Derek Jacobi, Palestinian revelations like Aki Nawaz's To Gaza With Love, packed weekend Matinees including Gus Berger's Duke Vin And The Birth Of Ska, a Horror evening starring The Black Blooded Brides Of Satan from Finland and Zombies & Cigarettes from Spain,



and the dedicated Spanish, Russian, French, USA and World Cinema sessions. Not to mention the avalanche of pro, low and no budget films from London film makers putting the forever

underachieving mainstream media and film to shame in a fireball of creativity, originality, flair and wit. Entry to all screenings and events at the Portobello Film Festival 2009 was free.



## London Film Makers Convention



The London Film Makers Convention is a twice yearly opportunity for all London film makers, from the best production houses to DIY street video makers, to show their latest work to the public, meet up, attend workshops, socialise and network in an informal, exciting environment.

For the first time we operated two screens (one in the Project Space, one in the atrium courtyard at Westbourne Studios) simultaneously for four days to maximise impact. It was encouraging to see this vast space filling up with filmmakers and public to check out London's latest film masterpieces.

Hanif Kureishi gave a wonderful Q&A on scriptwriting, illuminating the importance of original work and comedy, illustrated anecdotally with tales of Samuel Beckett and Peter O'Toole, followed by a screening of his culturally pertinent 90s movie *My Son The Fanatic*.



Byron Wijawardena demonstrated the most recent developments in Apple's Final Cut Pro digital editing, making professional and versatile systems now within the pocket of the most impoverished.

Andy Kimpton Nye screened his four landmark indie Brit director bios: of Alan Clarke, Terence Davies, Derek Jarman and Bill Douglas.

Helen Heathfield, Head Of Energy Management at Julies Bicycle, introduced an environmental film strand with a fascinating talk on carbon auditing.

Virgin Media Shorts and Encounters Bristol both showcased the best of their selections for 2009.

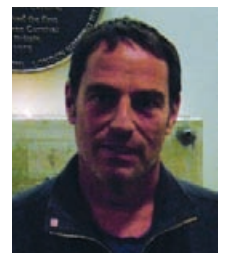
## The Beat Goes On

Portobello Film Festival 2009 remembered the Beat Generation and their cultural legacy, featuring UK premieres of films about Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, and the UK Beat poets and musicians, curated by Michael Horovitz (New Departures magazine and 1966 Albert Hall Poetry Olympics) at The Tabernacle on 4 & 6 September.



Michael showed a specially commissioned Greatest Hits film of his Poetry Olympics Superjams featuring Joe Strummer, Pete Townshend, Paul McCartney and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and performed a new version of Ginsberg's *Howl* that even included a shout for the Portobello Film Festival and free arts events. Fellow Beat survivor Lee Harris screened a film commemorating 50 years since the publication of *Naked Lunch* at the Beat Hotel Paris and brought Beat up to date with live poetry, hip hop soundtrack and VJ backprojection.

Uri Fruchtmann from Ealing Studios (and the Spice Girls movie) introduced his film of Allen Ginsberg's last London show at Heaven, never before screened in public.



The Beat theme continued through the urban artworks on display (Rap being a major source of inspiration for street artists) and a VJ masterclass and performance from original Turnmill's VJ Paul Blackwood, focussing on modern usage of Burrough's cut up techniques.





## Saturday Morning Pictures

Portobello Film Festival weekend mornings at The Tabernacle and afternoons at The Mosaic Centre in Earls Court did not forget families and kids, and offered free screenings of the best in family entertainment: Wall-E, Happy Feet, Garfield 2, Magic Roundabout (with Robbie Williams as Dougal and Kylie Minogue as Florence), and Pooh's Hefalump Adventure. Sponsored by RBK&C's Early Years service this is a very popular strand that should continue throughout the year, especially in a culture where public viewing is taking a back seat to home videos. Nothing beats watching a film in a theatrical environment.

## World Cinema

Portobello Film Festival's international partners - film festivals & distributors - in St. Petersburg, Munich, Madrid, Amsterdam and Dublin, and others, from



as far apart as USA, Iran and Korea, presented popular evenings of foreign work, often higher budget than some of the UK productions and a great way to take the pulse of World Cinema. These strands were especially well attended and even filled up venues on Sunday afternoons. The Spanish, French, and US contributions deserve mention.

No less than 4 of the 10 awards this year were given to non UK films: Pachamama from USA, Todas from Spain, Free Jolito from Mexico, with the Best Film Award going to the delirious poetic Kurosowa/Jodorowski hybrid Vermillion Souls from France and Japan.

## Video Cafe

The Video Cafe has long been the bear pit of the Portobello Film Festival. We



endeavour to show every film submitted, but in recent years the numbers of films sent in (and the increasing number of feature films) has meant less-easy-to-categorise films are put on a menu that can then be requested by the public or the filmmakers. This is the Video Cafe: not unlike the gong show at the Comedy Store. Films have to be good or well attended to make a splash. It's a great social event and can feature the craziest organic programming (a film about Olympic Weightlifting followed by a film about pollution from a chemical plant in Japan followed by a film about knife crime followed by a thriller followed by a comedy followed by video art) but the audience get into the spirit of this live event.

There is also the option of bringing your film along on the night for late entrants and one such film (a trailer for forthcoming feature Rock & Roll Lovely) even won a prize at the Award Ceremony.

## Youth Film Festival

There are many films being made by the nation's youth but there are few public exhibition forums for them.

Portobello Film Festival 2009 presented our first Youth Film Festival, concentrating on the



better films made by kids and even introduced one night by Dominic West from The Wire for Nick Marcq's Latimer Films selection. There was also work by youth projects such as the EU Stranger Festival, Video College, Transient Film Exchange, First Light, and YCTV. Sponsored by

RBK&C PAYP, the Youth Film Festival took great pains not to ghettoise these youth works but give them a glamorous, funky public platform. Grove Roots made by local schoolkids about Ladbroke Grove's multicultural history won a prize at the Award Ceremony.

## Caribbean Film Corner

Produced in association with Kalinago Entertainment, the Festival presented a 2 day showcase for contemporary Caribbean films at The Tabernacle on 16 & 17 September. The first night featured shorts from Trinidad, Jamaica, Dominican Republic and Martinique including the highly rated *Power Of The Vagina* by Jimmel Daniel. The second night featured an actors/directors workshop from Horace Ove (*Pressure*) and Rudolph Walker, including a lively debate on the exclusion of Caribbean filmmakers from mainstream UK film industry, followed by a screening of one of Horace's recent works.



## Street Art

Portobello Film Festival regularly showcases current urban art – we even had a contribution from Banksy in our 2003 programme – and over the years has championed this vital art movement which history will probably regard as as crucial as



the Impressionists and Pop Art.

This year's cover was designed by C6



Dotmasters and is based on a poster for an Australian prison girls exploitation film. It features 40 separate stencils.

The Courtyard space at Westbourne Studios was decorated by 6X7 foot screens especially painted by C6, Solo 1, Sickboy and Bash. Zeus covered a large part of the floor with his Streetopoly game. Zeus also designed the breathtaking gold Trellick statuettes that were awarded for the first time as prizes.

The opening night featured the documentary *The First Season* introduced by New York laser artists Graffiti Research Laboratories and a film they had made with a paraplegic former gang member painting using lasers with his eyeball!

The Festival also presented a street art showcase at



the Muse Gallery featuring Joe Rush, Snug, Seize, Part2ism and Code FC that served as a prelude for the highly praised October Mutate Britain show under the Westway.

Alvaro, founder member of Joe Strummer's 101ers screened a biopic and played a live set at the Inn On The Green, and cult punk author Tom Vague penned a Portobello Beat History for the brochure and hosted a screening/talk on Portobello Carnival History featuring Carnival pioneers and historians.

## Award Ceremony

For the second time (last here in 1998!) we presented our Award Ceremony at the iconic Tabernacle. The ceremony was open to the public and can be seen on our website [www.portobellofilmfestival.com](http://www.portobellofilmfestival.com). A good time was had by all.

The winners were:

### BEST FILM

Vermillion Souls (Masaki Iwana, France)

### BEST DOCUMENTARY

I Voted Today (Al Alvarez, UK)



### YOUTH FILMMAKERS

Groove Roots (Groove Roots Crew, UK)

### BEST COMEDY

Free Jolito (Marcos Bucay, Mexico)

### BEST SHORT FILM

Bagatelle (Ben Adler, UK)

### BEST DRAMA

Todas (Jose Martret, Spain)

### BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

Pachamama (Toshifumi Matsushita, USA)

### TIME OUT AWARD FOR BEST LONDON FILM

Terry (Nick Nevern, UK)

### BEST FILM SHOWN AT THE VIDEO CAFE

Trailer for Rock and Roll F—ing Lovely

### AUDIENCE AWARD

Captive (Gus Alvarez UK)



## Press

"This column likes to draw attention to free events wherever possible. The Portobello Film Festival in Notting Hill is a perfect example, there's no admission charge to any event in its 18 day programme" [www.news.bbc.co.uk](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk)

"The hip London district of Notting Hill has been hosting the annual Portobello Film Festival since 1996. This year the curtain goes up on September 3 and more than 700 films will be screened free of charge." **Irish Mail**

"The launch of the Portobello Film Festival was a noisy affair. Performers for the forthcoming Carnival could be heard practising upstairs...downstairs it was more leisurely as guests were entertained by film clips from the festival which silenced the room as two naked girls began to fight on screen."

### Evening Standard

"The spotlight is on modern movies" **The Times**

"Far too much film related fun to describe: shorts, features and talks, activities for kids and adults, community events, clubs and conventions, TV shows and documentaries, all of it absolutely free."

### Time Out

"Wire actor Dominic West (aka Jimmy McNulty) appears at London's Portobello Film Festival, where he will introduce the work of young film makers on 10 September." **The Independent**

**Portobello Film Festival London**

including rare footage of a middle-aged Kerouac. There's also the best environmental films, (like the Joanna Lumley-narrated *Mine: Story Of A Sacred Mountain*, pictured), the London Film Makers Convention, guests like Stephen Frears and Hanif Kureishi, and weekend kids' screenings.

**ANDREA HUBERT**  
Various venues, Thu to 20 Sep, visit [portobellofilmfestival.com](http://portobellofilmfestival.com)

A celebration of all things independent and left of centre since 1996, the festival returns with 700 more free film screenings all over Notting Hill. For literary types, don't miss *The Beat Goes On*, a retrospective of the beat poets and writers.

"A celebration of all things left field since 1996, the festival returns with a retrospective of Beat poets and writers...the best environmental films...and the London Filmmakers Convention" **The Guardian**

## Statistics

### Attendance (09)

Westbourne Studios weekdays:  
12 days: 3600

Westbourne Studios weekends:  
5 days: 2500

Tabernacle:  
6 Days (inc Kids films & Awards  
Ceremony): 1800

Inn On The Green  
6 Days: 1200

Muse Gallery:  
12 Days: 1200

**Total (18 days): 10,300**



### Origin of the films

London 200  
Rest of UK 135  
Spain 67  
Russia 50  
Italy 34  
Germany 33  
USA 29  
France 17  
Holland 17  
Ireland 11  
Turkey 11  
Australia 10  
India 8  
Canada 7  
Austria 6  
Belgium 6  
Sweden 5  
Argentina 5  
Iran 4  
Palestine 4  
Finland 3  
Japan 3  
Norway 3  
Romania 3  
Nigeria 2  
Mexico 2  
Switzerland 1  
Korea 1  
Sri-Lanka 1  
New Zealand 1  
Hungary 1  
Serbia 1  
Georgia 1  
Croatia 1  
Denmark 1  
Brazil 1  
Thailand 1

### Analysis of Market Research Questionnaires

#### Gender

Female: 46%  
Male: 54%

#### Festival Rating

(5: excellent, 1: poor)  
5: 60%  
4: 31%  
3: 6%  
2: 2%  
1: 1%

#### Age

18-25: 29%  
26-35: 42%  
36-45: 16%  
45-55: 8%  
Over 55: 5%

#### Origin

British: 39%  
Irish: 6%  
Black British: 10%  
Mixed Race: 7%  
Caribbean: 7%  
African: 3%  
Asian: 3%  
European: 18%  
Australian: 2%  
Other: 7%

#### Postcode Attendance

W10/W11: 19%  
W8: 5%  
W2: 4%  
NW10: 1%  
W12: 3%  
Other: 68%

#### Where Did Audience Find Out About Festival?

Family/Friends/  
Word Of Mouth: 25%  
Internet: 24%  
Local Publicity: 26%  
National Press: 6%  
Other: 19%

#### First Time Audience

64%



You know you've arrived when you feature in an unsolicited 118 advert in the Metro.



# Switch on for non-stop cinema

MOVIE buffs can indulge in recession-friendly entertainment with a weekend of non-stop cinema.

The Portobello Film Festival, billed as 'the biggest celebration of independent film in Europe,' has returned to Notting Hill this month for its 14th year and will showcase more than 700 independent films for free.

Highlights include talks and screenings with notable film directors, including Stephen Frears and Hanif Kureishi, and the Youth Film Festival which will be presented by 'The Wire' star Dominic West.

The festival will also pay tribute to the 'Beat Generation,' featuring films of Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg and UK Beat poets and musicians.

Jonathan Barnett, director of the festival, said: "This is a hugely exciting time and I'm hopeful that this year's Portobello Film Festival will reflect this new creative spirit and energy.

"Some of the submissions from young people show an incredible verve and imagination. But it's not just about the new generation coming in; we also want to

reflect on London's previous creative spirit."

● The *Times*' very own photographer Rory Gilder has screened his film, a short James Bond spoof called 'E World Me,' at the festival to rave reviews.

Shot in 24 hours in Cannes, the film features a Sven-Goran Eriksson lookalike as agent 'Double-O-Nothing,' who is waylaid in his attempts to reunite director Stephen Spielberg with a crystal skull.

Mr Gilder said: "The easy part was filming it, but it was tough to edit it into a short film. We've had good feedback – people have told me they loved the film and found it really funny, especially when the agent gets mistaken for Sven-Goran Eriksson by the paparazzi who chase him through the streets of Cannes."

The festival, which ends on Sunday, takes place at Westbourne Studios in Acklam Road, the Tabernacle in Powis Square and The Inn on the Green in Thorpe Close.

For full listings visit [www.portobellofilmfestival.com](http://www.portobellofilmfestival.com)



Portobello Film Festival runs an Event Management Practical Work Experience programme for unemployed people and would like to thank these wonderful unpaid volunteers who made the Festival such a great success.

## PORTOBELLO 2009 FILM FESTIVAL

[www.portobellofilmfestival.com](http://www.portobellofilmfestival.com)

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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

