



SWINDON FILM SOCIETY

.... for the best in world cinema

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021-22 SEASON

Introduction

We were very pleased to reopen on September 1st, 2021 with the film *Bait*. There were, of course, some essential inconveniences at the Arts Centre, but they were overcome. Last season's films had lower attendances, but were generally well received. In fact, we were able to finish the season as planned, including showing the film *1945* (from the previous season) in place of *The Last Black Man in San Francisco*. We would like to thank all members and guests who supported us throughout the last season.

Once again, we were really pleased with the contribution made by the Wyvern staff and volunteers.

Finance

These notes should be read in conjunction with the annual financial accounts which have been audited.

OUTLINE: In the year ending 31st July 2022, the Society made a loss of £2,427. This was our first full year of operations since the Covid pandemic and although we were able to screen the complete programme of 14 films, the membership and attendance figures were lower than normal, reducing our income whilst our expenditure remained at normal levels. The Income & Expenditure Statement, which gives the figures for the past 7 years from the year 2015-16, shows the loss this year to be the highest during that period. We did not run a programme in 2020-21; the previous full-year for comparison purposes has therefore been taken as 2019-20.

INCOME: The total income has decreased by £3,144 compared to the previous full year in 2019-20. We received £2,399 less in membership fees and £614 less in ticket sales. This was probably as a result of the reduced certainty shown by our audiences in committing to a full season and making Pay As You Go membership preferential as well as reducing the overall attendances.

SPENDING: Our spending increased by £610 compared to 2019-20. The two biggest costs continue to be the hire of the Arts Centre and paying the film licences. We reduced some expenditure by not holding a Christmas party but other costs were unavoidable. We are grateful to Ian Robertson, retired accountant, who has once again been kind enough to examine our books and sign them off free of charge, also to

Richard Turpin for the Website maintenance and Rachel Martin for artwork and design services.

SUMMARY: We would rather be showing films than remaining closed but in order to do so in 2021-22 it was necessary to accept a financial loss. Fortunately, the Society still has assets amounting to £10,538 and although this situation is not sustainable in the longer term, one loss-making year was bearable. The costs of membership and ticket admissions were unchanged from 2018-19 but given the ongoing uncertainty resulting from the pandemic and rising prices, an increase was recommended for the following year, 2022-23.

Membership

SFS membership for the 2021-22 season was significantly down on past years. This was almost certainly the result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic which imposed restrictions on social activities and meant many people were still hesitant to attend inside events. The total number of members in 2021-22 was 153. This compares with 215 members in 2019-20 (we did not run a 2020 -21 season) and an average of 245 over the last five years. The most significant drop off last year was in PAYG members which was less than half that of previous years.

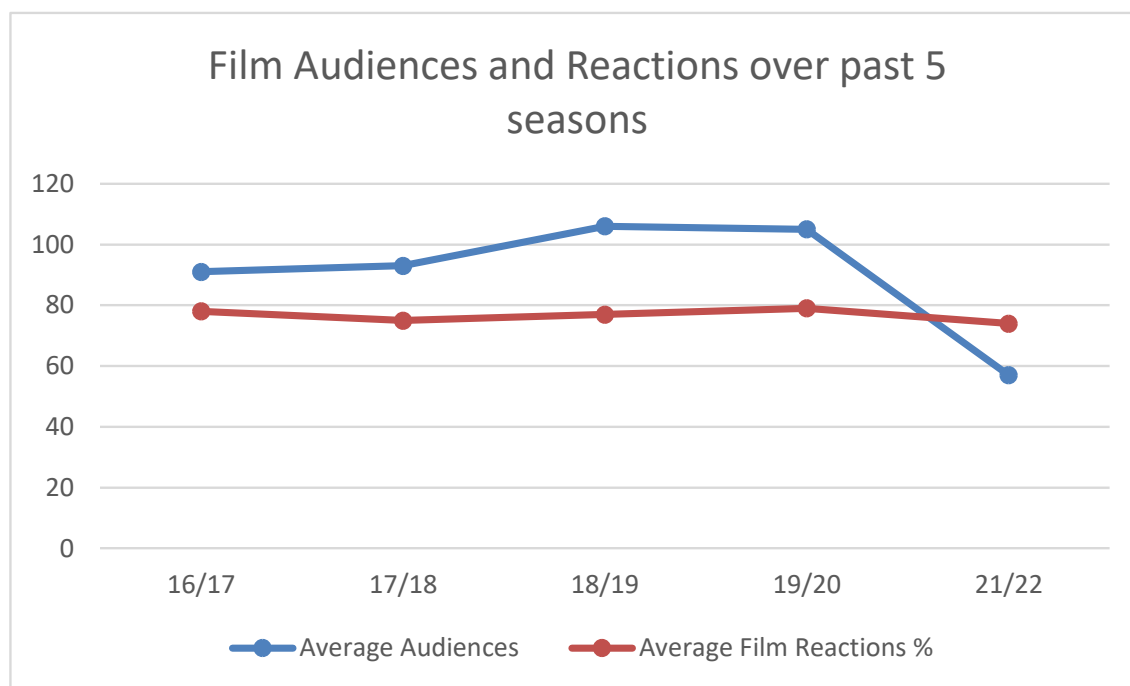
41 members joined the Society for the first time in this season, which was a drop from the previous year's total of 49 first time members. However, the core membership continues to be very loyal - 48% have been members for at least 5 years and 35% have been members for 10 years or more.



Film Audiences and Reactions

Audience attendance was also much lower in 2021-22 with an average attendance of just 57 people. The best attended film was *A Season in France* - 79 people came to this film. *The Peanut Butter Falcon* and *Capernaum* both had an audience of 43, the joint smallest of the season.

Audience reactions averaged at 74%. The top scoring film was *The Keeper* with 91%, whilst the lowest rated film was *The Chambermaid* scoring just 51%.



Marketing and Advertising

For 2021-22, we continued as much as possible to write, print and distribute our traditional material for the SFS season brochure, posters, advertisements, synopsis sheets, membership cards, reaction slips, etc. Our designer Rachel Martin was on board as always, and she continued to support us with all these items. Rachel was most helpful, and her creative touch is always much appreciated.

When possible, we also continued to include articles and adverts in the local print media such as *The Handy Mag* and the Wyvern brochure. Content was also shared with the Wyvern Theatre's website. Special thanks to Richard Turpin, our very own webmaster, who kept our fantastic swindonfilm.org.uk website updated throughout the season, as always.

Following the lockdown, we were not always able to promote the SFS as much as usual as some print media remained unavailable. However, in spite of events, we did manage to screen a new programme of 14 films.

Current Season 2022-23

We will be celebrating our 75th anniversary with the screening of *Miracle On 34th Street* (1947). The films chosen generally deal with a wide range of modern issues although are not too pessimistic. Meanwhile, we are continuing to maintain our first-class website and seeking to improve our visibility around the town. We would like to thank Sue Pycroft for her help in publicising the new season. Our attendances have now greatly improved. The membership will be kept informed of developments and we welcome any comments and suggestions for future screenings.

Meanwhile, thank you for your continued support and enjoy all the films!

Swindon Film Society - November 2022

A member of Cinema for All / British Federation of Film Societies

swindonfilm.org.uk