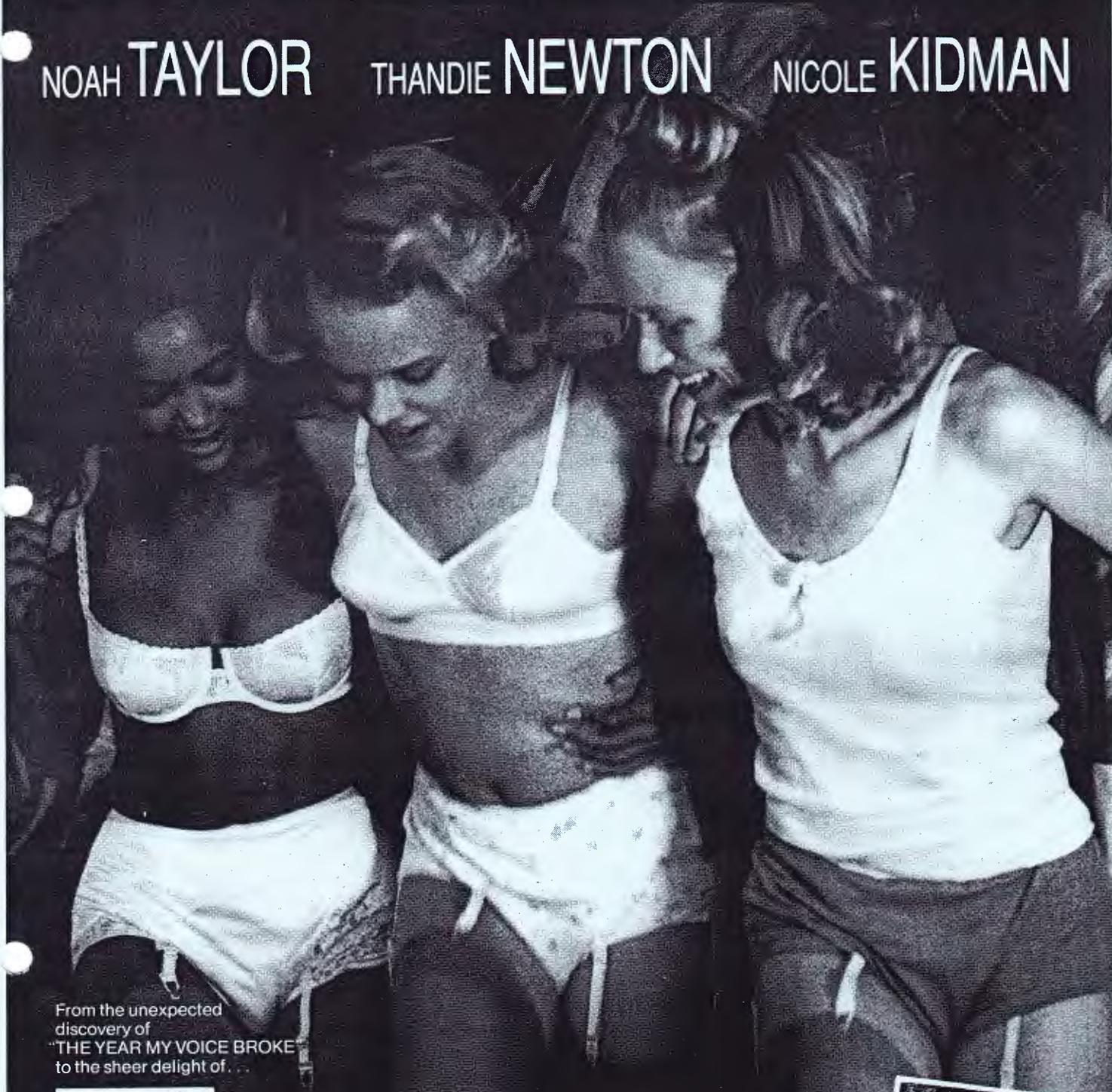


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- EMPIRE

NOAH TAYLOR THANDIE NEWTON NICOLE KIDMAN



From the unexpected discovery of "THE YEAR MY VOICE BROKE" to the sheer delight of...



A KENNEDY MILLER PRODUCTION OF A JOHN DUIGAN FILM

Flirting 12



WARNER BROS. Presents A KENNEDY MILLER PRODUCTION of A JOHN DUIGAN FILM "FLIRTING" with NOAH TAYLOR · THANDIE NEWTON · NICOLE KIDMAN Director of Photography GEOFF BURTON, A.C.S. Production Designer ROGER FORD Casting LIZ MULLINAR CASTING; Editor ROBERT GIBSON Post Production MARCUS D'ARCY Associate Producer BARBARA GIBBS Producers GEORGE MILLER DOUG MITCHELL · TERRY HAYES Written and Directed by JOHN DUIGAN

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Silver Award - 1986
Special Commendation - 1987
Film Society of the Year - 1988
Best Programme Notes - 1990
Special Commendation - 1992

Flirting

Australia 1989

Director: John Duigan

"Flirting" is the second part of Australian John Duigan's highly promising trilogy, taking the carved-out role of Danny Embling through from childhood to adolescence. The trilogy began with the award-winning and highly-respected "The Year My Voice Broke" (1987) which we screened and enjoyed last year.

"Flirting" draws immediate comparisons with a lesser-known German film "Passion Flower Hotel" (1977), which incidentally was Nastassia Kinski's first film (although it's probably one she'd rather forget!). Both are rites-of-passage romantic comedies set within the boundaries of two single-sex boarding schools which happen to be within a stone's throw of each other. In both cases, the initiations of love prove to be more enticing than the lessons on offer, although the comparisons tend to end there, as "Flirting" is a much better film than its predecessor (which was more of a recipe for sketchily covered soft porn to be honest!)

"Flirting" may not be entirely original, but it is an unexpectedly refreshing comedy with a script that manages to include anthropology, political uprisings and the works of Albert Camus! Most importantly, it gives a poignant and wholly convincing portrayal of nonconformist interracial love, taking a much more positive angle than the one Spike Lee adopted in "Jungle Fever" (1988). In fact Duigan's directorial approach in "Flirting" bears more than a passing resemblance to the beguiling style adopted by Bill Forsyth in "Gregory's Girl" (1986), with interesting cameo roles adding to the general amusement of the plot.

Noah Taylor plays the part of Danny well, just as he did in the earlier film, and British schoolgirl Thandie Newton gives an outstanding debut as his cohabiting cohort. Thandie is still combining her acting career with her school studies at the moment, and has just taken part in a new British film "The Young Americans" which also stars the ubiquitous Harvey Keitel. Alas, the film, coming out in October, is not very good, so she may need to try and get a role in the third part of Duigan's trilogy to get some credibility back!

Look out too, for good performances in the supporting cast, with a particularly strong one from Tom Cruise's wife Nicole Kidman as the prissy headgirl Nicola Radcliffe. You'll also find buried in the credits of the film, the name of George Miller in the role of producer. "Flirting" may be a far cry from his earlier "Mad Max" films, but it's nice to see such collaboration growing in Australian Cinema, whereby someone such as Miller gets involved in the making of a film by a promising young director, in this case of course, John Duigan. Duigan has just completed the film "Wide Sargasso Sea", an adaptation of Jean Rhys' romantic novel, starring Nathaniel Parker and Rachel Ward, which hasn't impressed the critics as much as "Flirting" did. It has already received a muted response from a generally low-key cinema release.



Producers

George Miller
Doug Mitchell
Terry Hayes

Screenplay

John Duigan
Director of
Photography
Geoff Burton

Cast

Noah Taylor
Danny Embling
Thandie Newton
Thandiwe Adjewa
Nicole Kidman
Nicola Radcliffe



Flirting



Noah Taylor, Thandie Newton

Australian cinema though is going through a resurgence at the moment thanks largely to their Government's intervention. Funding for films is much more of a viability there than it is here, and particularly so for female directors, as part of that fund has been specially allocated to encourage them. It means therefore that directors such as Gillian Armstrong (whom we spoke of course, in Reel to Reel last season), Jocelyn Moorhouse (director of "Proof" which we also showed last season), Jackie McKimmie and Ann Turner can get their projects off the ground, securing private sponsorship to bump up the funds supplied by the government. If we broaden that outlook to include a focus on New Zealand and the forthcoming under an Antipodean umbrella, we cannot ignore the work of Jane Campion ("Sweetie", "An Angel at My Table" and can acknowledge at least award-winning release "The Piano") and can acknowledge at least too, the work of Vincent Ward ("The Navigator" & "Map of the Human Heart").

It is also encouraging to see that Duigan's film was given the distribution backing here of a major company, in this case Warner Brothers. It meant it was able to be seen by a much larger audience and on the whole, it has been received very well. Probably after seeing the film tonight, you'll be able to understand why.

(A final note: members and guests are requested to restrict any flirting they may wish to do tonight to the interval please, to avoid distracting others watching the film!)

Matt Arnoldi

JOHN DUIGAN



HE MAY HAVE read Sartre as a youth, but Australian director John Duigan protests he was never the school nerd — or 'dag', as the Aussies have it. His new film 'Flirting' is partly autobiographical, but otherwise the resemblance seems tenuous between this pensive, steely-haired man and Danny Embling, the angular, angst-ridden teen whose woes were first chronicled in 'The Year My Voice Broke'.

In common with its predecessor, 'Flirting' achieves the near-impossible feat of conveying a drily yet deeply felt sense of teenage romantic agony. 'A lot of films about young love can be patronising,' says Duigan. 'Even as a phrase, "puppy love" is demeaning. The passions one experiences at that age are just as profound as the passions so-called "mature" human beings experience.'

'Flirting' develops an anarchically comic view of public school hell that's closer to 'Down With Skool' than to 'Dead Poets Society' — Peter Weir's young gentlemen were never this convincingly acne-ridden. Duigan's light touch is evident in cartoon-like tricks like the school's most cane-happy teacher suddenly appearing in SS uniform. It's that blind certainty in the importance of a rigid disciplined system. When he canes people he's not doing it as a psychopath, but with a certain methodical detail, putting chalk on the cane so he can hit the same spot every time, making sure the boys are actually hurt.

An MA in European history and philosophy before he turned to acting and directing, Duigan hopes to divide his career between Europe and Australia. He's recently been in Marseille planning a film about African musicians in Europe; after that, he plans to take up the Danny and Thandie story two years from now, in the unlikely context of Paris '68. Duigan's predilection for Paris is partly to do with his own youthful fascination for Sartre: 'From as far away as Australia, even his name seemed redolent of Parisian cafés, smoky philosophical discussions.' Paris is also a fitting place to take Danny, surely a cinematic soul brother to Antoine Doinel, the alter ego that Francois Truffaut developed film by film over the years and simply could not let drop. The Danny Embling story, as they say, could run and run. ■

JANE CAMPION

With just three feature films and a batch of shorts to her credit, New Zealand born, but Australia-based, Jane Campion has achieved the rare feat of winning two prestigious Palme d'Ors at the Cannes Film Festival in the space of five years. She has also consolidated her reputation as a film-maker of prodigious talent.

Jane Campion won her first Palme d'Or in 1986 for her first short film, *Peel*, and then this year her acclaimed third feature film *The Piano* took the Palme d'Or in the main competition. In between, she made several shorts (including *Passionless Moments*, *A Girl's Own Story* and *After Hours*) as well as two feature films.

After her first feature, *Sweetie* in 1989, Campion was hailed as a talent to watch, and she confirmed that view in 1990 with a stunning adaptation of New Zealand writer Janet Frame's three-volume autobiography, shot for television, but also cut into an impressive theatrical version.

At Cannes this year those who saw the screening of *The Piano* early in the festival came out convinced that they had seen the winning film

(eventually, *The Piano* shared the Palme d'Or with Chen Kaige's *Farewell to my Concubine*) and astounded at the brilliance of Campion's work. The film, financed by France's CiBy 2000 and starring Holly Hunter and Harvey Keitel, was a critical one for Campion.

Prior to Cannes she said: '*The Piano* is important in my development because it is bigger in budget and has a more commercial story, so that it broadens the options that are open to me - particularly if it is liked, of course.' Prophetic words - the film is a critical and commercial success, and for her next project Campion is working on *Portrait of a Lady*, an adaptation of the classic Henry James novel, to be shot in the UK and Italy.

MARK ADAMS



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From Australia in the 1960's we move back in time on TUESDAY OCTOBER 5th. to the U.S.A in the 1940's and who better to get you "in the mood" right from the start at 8.0pm. than **TEX BENEKE** and the **GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA**? Yes, a rare chance to see a legend in action and then meet the equally unforgettable **BARTON FINK!**

BARTON FINK

Dir. Joel & Ethan Coen (USA/1991/Cert 15/Colour/116 mins) with John Turturro, John Goodman, Judy Davis, Jon Polito
Barton Fink (John Turturro) is an intense young playwright who achieves overnight success on Broadway in 1941 with a play about the Common Man. Hollywood beckons. It is impressed by his conscience. His first assignment, however, is to pen a wrestling picture for Wallace Beery. Fink checks into a dank, putrid hotel for long term residents (the stationery is embossed with the legend: *a day or a lifetime*) and is promptly stricken by severe writer's block. But help is at hand from Charlie, an insurance salesman, played by John Goodman, who inhabits the room next door... Gothic, playful and unpredictable, *Barton Fink* combines elements of Kafka and David Lynch with superb acting, superlative writing and impeccable visual design. It also won an unprecedented triple of awards at Cannes: the Palme d'Or, Best Direction for Joel & Ethan Coen, and Best Actor for John Turturro. "See *Barton Fink* and experience what audiences in 1941 felt when they saw *Citizen Kane*." *Los Angeles Times*

Plus!

Tex Beneke and the Glenn Miller Orchestra

USA 1946 - 17 mins
dir Will Cowan

One of the best of the Universal music shorts, extensively featuring **Tex Beneke**, ten sax, voc, with the **Glenn Miller Orchestra** plus strings, supported by **Artie Malvin**, **Bobby Nichols** and **Lillian Lane** - the **Crew Chiefs**. Numbers: 'Chattanooga choo choo', 'Meadowlands', 'Cynthia's in love', 'Little brown jug' and 'Hey! ba-ba-re-bop'.

PERFORMANCE ENDS 10.45 p.m.

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WINNER PALME D'OR CANNES 1991
WINNER BEST ACTOR CANNES 1991
WINNER BEST DIRECTION CANNES 1991

JOEL & ETHAN COEN
JOHN TURTURRO JOHN GOODMAN
BARTON FINK

JOHN TURTURRO JOHN GOODMAN BARTON FINK JOEL BAITS RICHARD LORBER JON POLITO JOE CLAYTON RICHARD DREYFUS RICHARD DREYFUS
JOHN GOODMAN CASSIDY BRUCE WALKER B.S.C. JOHN CRALLEN PLACE JAMES BAY BALSBERGHEIT THE JIM PEARLS BILL MURPHY
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