

# The Main Feature



Season 33 - Issue 11 (screening 28.2.13)



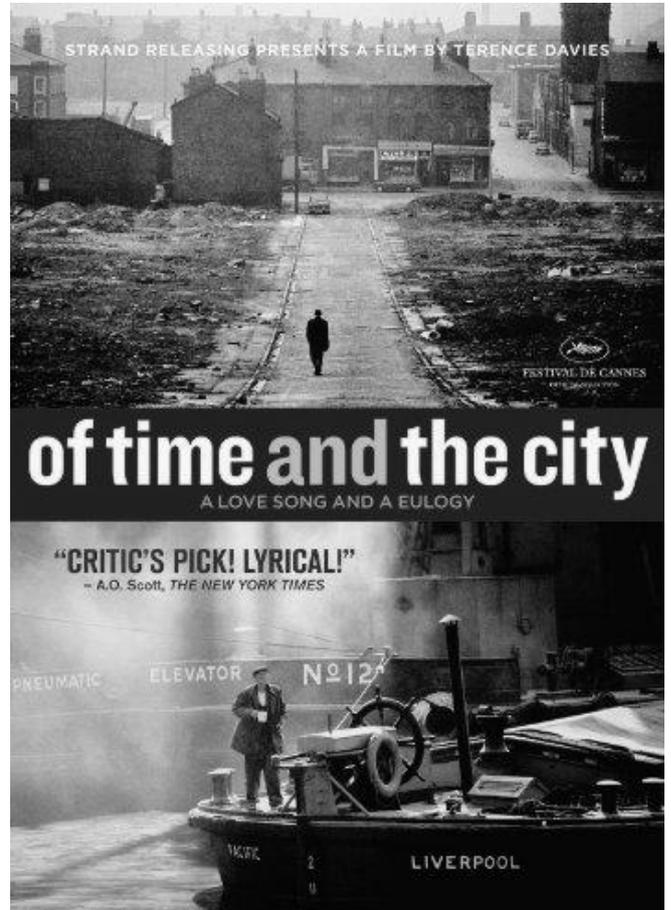
France and Belgium 78 minutes Cert PG  
UK release 31 July 2009

Directed and written by Dominique Abel, Fiona Gordon and Bruno Romy

#### Cast:

Dominique Abel – Dom  
Fiona Gordon – Fiona  
Bruno Romy - Le voleur de pain au chocolat  
Clement Morel – Eliot  
Philippe Martz – Gérard

*The printing of the notes for each film is undertaken by Repropoint free of charge*



UK 2008 Cert 12A 73 minutes Cert 12

Director, writer and narrator: Terence Davies



15 Poole Road, Woking Tel: 01483 596280



Rumba is the 2<sup>nd</sup> feature film made by the trio Dominique Abel, Fiona Gordon and Bruno Romy. It plays with little dialogue, a great deal of visual humour, burlesque and slapstick routines in a way that is reminiscent of the earlier comedic actors including Jacques Tati.

And not just in the comedy stakes. The film also has a universal quality that makes it able to touch on broad life themes that will be recognisable and carry meaning for young and old alike to relate to in different ways – friendship, companionship, accomplishment, loss and endurance – the notion of dealing with the inevitable setbacks of life, getting back up

and carrying on.

This highly original and charming film is set in a colourful world and blends theatre, dance, mime and dialogue and will appeal to all film fans seeking out something different.

You will need to be a little patient and indulgent, but its sweetness of nature without ever resorting to crudity will win you round.

\*\*\*\*\*



The best known film of Terence Davies is *Distant Voices, Still Lives*, which evoked his own boyhood in Liverpool as the youngest in a working-class Catholic family of 10 children. It was made in 1988 and won all kinds of awards including the International Critics Prize at Cannes. But Davies made only three feature-length films in the subsequent 20 years. He became a "whatever-happened-to?" conversation piece rather than a working director, until the release of his memoir "Of Time and the City".

Those who have been enjoying the events to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of the Beatles first

album may be surprised that the "Fab Four" are barely mentioned in the film, however it is important to emphasise that the film is Terrence Davies' record of his time and the city.

Scope: It's also very mischievous of you to combine the footage of youngsters at the Cavern with decidedly non-pop (and non-Beatles) musical accompaniment.

Davies: Not only could we not afford Beatles music but I absolutely detest pop music. It's agony to listen to, especially British pop music. Oh, God, kill me now—I'm ready to die after two minutes. I've never liked the Beatles. "Money can't buy me love." Oh, yeah, there's a big revelation. You can't imagine them writing a witty lyric. Look at Cole Porter. No one can write a Cole Porter song. No one can write a Lorenz Hart song. But then, music has changed. Popular music isn't aimed at people like me. After the rise of Elvis Presley and the Beatles, all my interest disappeared. I remember being taken by one of my sisters to see *Jailhouse Rock* (1957). I sat there riven with embarrassment. I thought, "Doesn't he look ridiculous?" And this awful voice. Had I been a spy, they'd only have to show me 20 minutes of that and I'd tell them anything.

Having left the city in 1973 he now lives in a flat in south London and says of his home city:

"When I go there, everywhere is full of memory. Literally all over the city, I've got huge memories of what it was like before it changed. That's why it's foreign, because all the places I knew have been pulled down. For instance, where I had lived, just outside the city center, there were eight cinemas within walking distance, and that was without the eight in town. So there were 16 cinemas just in my area. When I went out to show the film there, the last cinema in town was closing down. It was the Odeon where, in 1952, at seven, I had seen "Singin' in the Rain," my first film. It really pierced my heart because I had my cinematic

education in those cinemas, the ones that were near me. Every time I go back, something else is gone, and I think, “Oh, I remember that when it was...” So it’s completely alien now, but then I also think that my country has become different. When you are a child, obviously, you perceive things with the intensity of childhood, as though this is the be-all and end-all of everything. Certainly, that’s how I was. Perhaps it’s just the quality of getting older.” [laughs]



The film was made on a budget of £250,000, pulled together from various sources and dispensed by a committee organised under the flag of Liverpool's year as European City of Culture.

He was interviewed for the magazine CinemaScope.

*What was Liverpool like when you returned to make the film?*

Davies: It was awful. Because my old neighbourhood had been torn down. There were eight cinemas within walking distance of my house, and now there’s one left. Where I lived is riven with drugs. That would have been inconceivable when I was growing up. They took drugs in America, but they didn’t in England—and they certainly didn’t in Liverpool. Perhaps the odd aspirin, but that’s about it. It’s changed. There’s a new stylishness, which is good, with ordinary people going out and actually knowing about good food and good wine. I thought that was wonderful because in my day the most exotic thing was a rum and peppermint, if you could afford it.

*Scope: So would you admit that some of the changes are for the better?*

Davies: Of course. And there has to be change. But in that sense, I’m really reactionary because I hate any kind of change. I want things to stay as they are. It’s absurd but there’s a part of me that wants that.

*Scope: Yet the footage of New Brighton really makes the place feel as fantastic as it must’ve felt to visitors back then.*

Davies: Yes! But those were home movies. And that lovely colour—all those soft reds and blues. We’d go to New Brighton for a day out because that’s all we could afford. No one went abroad. But it was still exotic to go for an *entire* day. And if the sun was shining, that was even better.

*Scope: Did making this film have any kind of therapeutic effect?*

Davies: No, it never does. A true catharsis makes you accept what has been lost. But I’m full of regret because I remember how happy I was. Just for four years—from seven to 11—I was ecstatically happy and everything seemed magical. Literally, I was sick with happiness.

*Scope: Then what happened?*

Davies: I realized at 11 that I was gay. And being Catholic, that ruined my life. I decided I would be celibate. And I am and have been for a long time. My childhood was over in a second. That makes me full of regret. I just wanted to be ordinary and normal, with a car, two-and-a-half children, and a dog named Rover! It happened in the summer after leaving primary school. One day, these bricklayers were building a wall at the back of the house. It was hot so they just had jeans on. I looked out of the window and I thought, “I shouldn’t be looking at another man like this.” In an instant, my childhood ended. It was awful. I still can’t go over it. I just wanted to be ordinary. I still do. I think everyone else has got the key to life and I haven’t.

Iain McGlashan

## Reactions to **Wolke 9** 8.2.13

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall	~	3	8	6	7	3	3	1	~	1
Total received – 32	Average Score – 4.56									

### Your Comments

They were old enough to know better! Certainly food for thought  
 Clever portrayal of (ageless) guilt – pedantic action Sad drama well acted.  
 Terrific performance by Ursula Werner as Inga 90 minutes too long  
 Thanks very much - A pity not to see the credits The singing was good  
 “Boring .....go and hang from the ceiling....now!” and inevitably sad  
 Some nice filming of trees and countryside – you can keep the naked bodies though.  
 Germans less inhibited than the Brits! I didn’t think the end was realistic  
 A serious subject, a gloomy evening, but hardly commercial  
 I don’t think a British cinema club is ready for this film. Maybe it is a bit too close to home – very moving.  
 A brave choice. The only character I felt sorry for was Werner. The first thing I’m going to do when I get home is to get rid of the filter coffee machine!

Position	Film	Average Score
1 <sup>st</sup>	The Best Exotic marigold Hotel	8.39
2 <sup>nd</sup>	The Artist	8.28
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Hugo	7.84
4 <sup>th</sup>	My Week With Marilyn	7.56
5 <sup>th</sup>	Le Ballon Rouge	7.33
6 <sup>th</sup>	A Separation	6.97
7 <sup>th</sup>	Pal Joey	6.88
8 <sup>th</sup>	La Grande Illusion	6.67
9 <sup>th</sup>	Peepli Live!	6.17
10 <sup>th</sup>	Crin Blanc (White Mane)	5.83
11 <sup>th</sup>	French shorts combined score	5.65
12 <sup>th</sup>	La Boulangère de Monceau	4.81
13 <sup>th</sup>	Wolke 9	4.56
14 <sup>th</sup>	La Carrière de Suzanne	2.00

## *Our next film:*

**8pm on  
 Thursday  
 14 March  
 2013:**

*Japanese winner  
 of the 2009  
 Oscar for Best  
 Foreign Language  
 Film*

