

Other Cinema

Flocking together



Whipping girl Drew Barrymore (left) stars in her directorial debut, 'Whip It!'

As Kathryn Bigelow flies home with a Bafta for 'The Hurt Locker', the Birds Eye View festival continues the celebration of female directors in film. **Sarah Cohen** previews the event

With Kathryn Bigelow in with a chance of becoming the first woman to win an Oscar for directing, it's worth noting that some of the year's best films directed by women were also some of the year's best films full stop. Think 'Fish Tank', 'An Education', 'Nowhere Boy', '35 Shots of Rum', 'Bright Star'.

Fittingly, the programmers at Birds Eye View, whose festival celebrating, championing and showcasing women filmmakers' runs from March 4-12, have recognised this by asking the public to vote for their favourite female-directed film of the year. The winning feature will be screened at the ICA on Oscar night (March 7) followed by an Oscar warm-up party in the bar.

The festival's lively programme also takes in award-winners and favourites from the festival circuit, such as Mia Hansen-Løve's Cannes-garlanded 'The Father of My Children' and Kim Longinotto's Sundance Grand Jury Prize-winner 'Rough Aunties'. The first is a portrait of a troubled Parisian film producer; the second is a powerful yet unsentimental documentary about a group of fearless women who look after abused children in South Africa.

The inclusion of Jessica Hausner's Venice hit 'Lourdes' is especially welcome. Hausner's film follows a young woman (Sylvie Testud) in a wheelchair who joins a pilgrimage to the holy site to relieve the monotony and

isolation of her life, even if she doesn't believe in the miracles those around her are desperate to experience. An element of mystery drives this story forwards, but it's Hausner's wry observations that are more intriguing: the ungracious behaviour of the pious, the complex motivations of carers and the depiction of Lourdes as an attraction every bit as crass and commercial as Disneyland.

Birds Eye View has an admirable commitment to lesser known global filmmakers. 'Entre Nos' is partly based on an episode in the childhood of Colombian co-writer/director Paola Mendoza, who also plays Mariana, an immigrant living on the breadline with her two kids in New York. It's heart-breaking to watch Mariana trying to remain upbeat to shield her little ones from the gravity of their predicament and even more heart-breaking to see that resolve slowly disintegrate.

Although it's ultimately uplifting, 'Entre Nos' isn't a barrel of laughs. So for pure popcorn pleasure, look no further than the closing-night presentation of 'Whip It!'. Drew Barrymore's directing debut stars Ellen 'Juno' Page as a teenager in suburban Texas who rebels against the beauty pageants into which her mother (a wonderfully brittle Marcia Gay Harden) enters her by joining a roller-derby team. Her teammates – and adversaries – have handles like Maggie Mayhem, Jabba the Slut, Bloody Holly and Smashley Simpson, and are played with joyful abandon by a winning squad of comic actresses including Juliette Lewis and Barrymore herself. 'Whip It!' is a riotous celebration of girl power in its truest form and so the perfect choice to close this femme-tastic festival. *Birds Eye View is at the ICA and BFI Southbank March 4-12.*

www.timeout.com/film

Screenings

How to use the listings

This section lists predominantly non-first-run fare: repertory programmes, special festival and season packages. Society screenings, film clubs, talks and other events are listed under [alt.cinema](#). For credits and reviews not given below see main [What's on Where](#) section.

NB: Our film listings cover programmes from **Fri 26 Feb to Thur 4 Mar** inclusive.

Barbican Centre

See [Central](#) for venue details and full listings
Saturday 27

11.00am: Disney: **One Hundred and One Dalmatians** (Wolfgang Reitherman, Hamilton Luske, Clyde Geronimi, 1960, US) Animated feature. 79 mins. 101 bundles of fun; enormous quantities of bog roll spring to mind. This is Disney at their finest.
4.30: Director's perspective: **Seven Days, Seven Nights** (Moderato Cantabile) (Peter Brook, 1960, Fr) Jeanne Moreau, Jean-Paul Belmondo. 95 mins. Subtitles. Moreau (a Cannes prize-winner for the role) plays a bored housewife who witnesses a murder in a Paris café and becomes increasingly obsessed by finding out more about the circumstances that led up to it.

Sunday 28

4.00: Silent Film & Live Music: **The Kreutzer Sonata** (Gustav Machaty, 1927, Cz) Eva Byronova, Jan W. Speerger. 95 mins.

BFI Southbank

Belvedere Road, SE1 8XT. Waterloo/Embankment. 020 7928 3232; daily ticket availability & m'ship 020 7633 0274. Tickets £8.60, concessions £6.25 (m's bers £1 off). Mon-Thurs early eve £4.25 for concs m's bers only. Fri, Mon mats £4.75 for members, £4.25 for concs. Movie Magic screening £1 children, £5 for accompanying adults. Under 16s, £5.25. Tuesdays: all £5.

Friday 26

2.30: NFT3: **Gentlemen Prefer Blondes** (U) See [What's on Where](#) for review
6.10: NFT2: Depp: **Blow** (Ted Demme, 2001, US) Johnny Depp, Penelope Cruz. 123 mins. Perhaps because it sticks too closely to Bruce Porter's source book, this account of George Jung's rise from small-time dope dealer to major league coke player feels both too long and yet not epic enough; the storyline sprawls over several decades before sliding into sentimental anticlimax.

6.20: NFT3: Ozu's influence: **Three Monkeys** (15) (Nuri Bilge Ceylan, 2008, Tur/Fr/It) Yavuz Bingöl, Hatice Aslan 109 mins. Subtitles. Working-class patriarch Eyüp acquiesces when his politician boss Servet runs over and kills a stranger and asks his employee to serve time in jail on his behalf. Ceylan manages to lend his film a vivid sense of the universal and the theatrical by setting it largely in one bold location. This is cinema that requires patience, but the rewards are many.

6.30, 8.45: NFT1: **Gentlemen Prefer Blondes** (U)

6.40: Studio: **Letter from an Unknown Woman** (U) See [What's on Where](#) for review
8.30: NFT3: Hepburn and Tracy: **Desk Set** (Walter Lang, 1957, US) Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn. 103 mins.

8.40: Studio: **Bright Star** (PG) See [What's on Where](#) for review

8.50: NFT2: **British Animation Awards 2010 Programme 3** The third programme opens with 'Train of Thought' (Leo Bridle, Ben Thomas, GB, 2009), an ingenious if rather slick tale of a world constructed entirely of paper, which feels rather like an artsy version of A-Ha's 'Take on Me' video. It's followed by the painfully avant garde 'Unicycle Film' (Thomas Hicks, GB, 2009), an entrancing but perplexing Lynchian experience. Pick of the bunch is 'Fields of Vision' (Rob Zywiets, GB, 2009), which recreates the simple illustrative style of classic children's books to fine comic effect, before going brilliantly bonkers half way through. But it's closely matched by the marvellous 'Codswallop' (The Brothers McLeod, GB, 2009), a dizzying and colour celebration of Shrilegyesque absurdity. (Th)

Saturday 27

2.00: NFT2: **Outside The Law: Stories From Guantanamo** (Polly Nash, Andy Worthington, 2009, GB) Doc. 74 mins. £5.

2.30, 4.30, 6.40: Studio: **Letter from an Unknown Woman** (U)

3.50, 6.10, 8.30: NFT3: **Gentlemen Prefer Blondes** (U)

4.00: NFT1: Ozu: **The Flavour of Green**

Tea Over Rice (Yasujiro Ozu, 1952, Japan) Shin Saburi, Michiyo Kogure. 116 mins. Subtitles. Beginning in very light-hearted mood with four women deceiving their husbands to go drinking at a spa, this exquisite Ozu film gradually turns far darker as it charts the marital crisis between one of the group's number and her taciturn husband. At once a study of the shortcoming and strengths of the traditionally arranged marriage, an exploration of what constitutes deceit, and a beautifully understated celebration of love tentatively rekindled, also one of the director's most 'active' film. Very funny and very moving, as only Ozu's finest films can be.

4.20: NFT2: **Bright Star** (PG)

6.20: NFT2: **British Animation Awards 2010 Programme 2**

This second programme of locally sourced animation opens with disturbing short d 'My Blood is My Tears' (Andy Glynn, GB, 2009), in which three self-harmers recount their experiences over a blood-red backdrop. It stands in stark contrast to the next film, 'Damaged Goods' (Barnaby Barford, GB, 2009), a sweetly whimsical tale of romance played out with kitsch Victorian-era porcelain dolls. Stunningly original flipbook nightmare 'The Black Dog's Progress' (Stephen Irwin, GB, 2009) feels more like art installation than a traditional cartoon, but it's a remarkable if slightly sickening piece of work. 'Text Island' (Chris Gavin, GB, 2009) is equally impressive: a brief but spectacular deforestation parable told entirely with a pegboard and thousands of multicoloured plastic letters. And there's a lot of fun to be had with 'Heartstrings' (Rhianon Evans, GB, 2009), a sweet, short romance starring two sheepish woolly puppets. (Thu)

6.30: NFT1: Ozu: **An Autumn Afternoon** (Yasujiro Ozu, 1962, Japan)

Chishu Ryu, Shima Iwashita. 112 m. Subtitle Ozu's final film is a movingly valedictory affair, its familiar story of Ryu's elderly widower marrying off daughter Iwashita carrying even more poignancy than usual: a poised and wise reminder of passing time and the inevitable approach of mortality. The gentle humour's there as ever, but in 't' sub-plot showing Ryu's former teacher's twilight years beset by drink-sodden regrets, the emotions are darker and tougher than previously.

8.40: Studio: **Bright Star** (PG)