

Abergavenny Film Society

2024-2025



25 September 2024

Monster



Japan 2023

126 Minutes

Director: Hirokazu Kore-eda



When her young son Minato starts to behave strangely, his mother feels that there is something wrong. Discovering that a teacher is responsible, she storms into the school demanding to know what's going on. As the story unfolds through the eyes of mother, teacher and child, the truth gradually emerges. Kore-eda is a master at creating stories about families and this story about misunderstood children in a reactionary adult world is sensitive and hopeful. The late Ryuichi Sakamoto's wonderful score provides a subtle backdrop to this complex and acclaimed drama.



Festival de Cannes 2023 – Winner Best Screenplay and nominated for Palme d'Or

9 October 2024

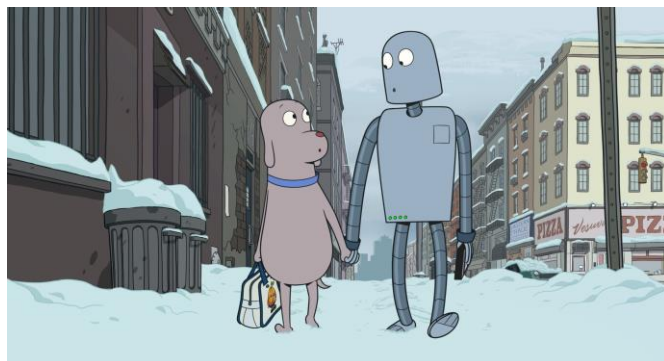
Robot Dreams



Spain/France 2023

102 Minutes

Director: Pablo Berger



Dog lives in Manhattan and he's tired of being alone so one day he decides to build himself a companion, Robot. Their friendship blossoms and they become inseparable, exploring together the sights and sounds of 1980s New York. But one summer night, Dog, with great sadness, is forced to abandon Robot at the beach. Will they ever meet again? Based on the popular graphic novel by Sara Varon and the first animation from Spanish director Pablo Berger, *Robot Dreams* is a dialogue-free love story about friendship, its importance, meaning and fragility. Wise and wistful, charming and often sharply humorous with evocative sound design and a lovely soundtrack, *Robot Dreams* is full of nods to silent cinema classics.

European Film Award 2023 – Best Animated Film

23 October 2024

12

The Quiet Girl

Ireland 2022

94 Minutes

Director: Colm Bairéad



Colm Bairéad's debut feature is an intricately exquisite coming-of-age drama that delves into the many layers of family relations through the eyes of a young girl. The film follows Cáit as she is sent to live with distant relatives for the summer. She is welcomed with open arms by Eibhlín but her husband keeps Cáit at arms length. Slowly but surely a warmth grows within this makeshift family and Cáit reaps the benefits until she discovers more than she anticipated.

The Quiet Girl won eight categories at the 2022 Irish Film and Television Awards including Best Film, Best Director and Best Actress and won the Grand Prix of the Generation Kplus International Jury Award at the 2022 Berlin International Film Festival.

6 November 2024

15

Io Capitano

Italy/Belgium/France 2023

121 Minutes

Director: Matteo Garrone



From Matteo Garrone comes this searing tale of two young boys' migration from Africa to Europe. *Io Capitano* is an odyssey traversing city, desert and ocean from West Africa to the Mediterranean Sea. Two Senegalese teenagers, Seydou and Moussa, leave Dakar for Italy. On a journey neither of the boys could have anticipated, they experience the dangers and the beauty of the desert, the intense brutality of detention centres in Libya and the perils of the sea in their pursuit of a better life. Highly emotional and honestly felt, *Io Capitano* is a story of epic scale but one which doesn't lose sight of the individual human stakes of the migrant crisis and the intensity of the suffering it propagates. Aided by terrific performances, a script with contributions from first-hand migrant accounts and exceptional desert photography, this film lays bare the gruelling reality of an epic journey through Africa and across the Mediterranean.



ACADEMY
OF MOTION PICTURE
ARTS AND SCIENCES

2024 Academy Awards – Nominee – Best International Feature Film (Italian entry)

20 November 2024

Wilding + The Elvermen + Heart Valley

Wilding

UK 2023

75 Minutes

Director: David Allen



At Knepp Castle in Sussex, conservation pioneers Isabella Tree and Charlie Burrell abandoned industrial farming practices and allowed nature to ‘rewild’ their 3,500-acre estate with remarkable results. Based on Tree’s bestselling book of the same name, Emmy-award winning nature documentarian David Allen’s *Wilding* is a charming and hopeful story of ecological regeneration. When they inherited the estate in the 1980s, Tree and Burrell attempted to modernise the farm but it proved unsustainable. In a leap of faith, they let nature take back the land, surrendering contemporary preconceptions about landscape, agriculture and the husbandry traditional for historic estates. The scheme was the first of its kind in Britain and one of the most significant in Europe. A beacon of hope for British wildlife, Knepp is now home to thriving flora and fauna of all kinds. Tree and Burrell have evolved into dedicated conservationists, knowledgeable about the catastrophic loss of biodiversity in Britain yet also hopeful that work like theirs can reverse the decline.

The Elvermen – short film

UK 2021

14 minutes

Director: Isla Badenoch



As the sun sets on the banks of the River Severn on the outskirts of Gloucester, a group of men gather in a race to catch a vanishing and valuable creature; the elusive elver. Isla Badenoch’s atmospheric view of this moonlit community shows how a rite of passage has changed into a fight for values, tradition and a connection to nature in an environment of impending change.

We are very grateful to Isla Badenoch for her kind permission to screen her film.

Heart Valley – short film

UK 2022

19 minutes

Director: Christian Cargill



Heart Valley follows a day in the life of Wilf Davies, a shepherd from the small village of Cellan in West Wales. The film looks at the world through Wilf’s eyes, asking questions about what it is we should truly value as a society.

We are very grateful to Christian Cargill for his kind permission to screen his film.

4 December 2024

Kidnapped

Italy 2023

125 Minutes

Director: Marco Bellochio



Veteran director Bellochio brings to life an almost unbelievable true story from a shocking and turbulent period in Italian history. In 1858, six-year-old Jewish boy, Edgardo Mortara, lived with his family in Bologna. Claiming that the boy was baptised by the family's maid as a baby, the Catholic Church decreed that Edgardo could no longer live with his Jewish family and that he should be taken to a school to be raised as a Catholic under the supervision of Pope Pius IX. Whilst the distraught Mortara family fought to get him back, they found themselves at the epicentre of a wider historical battle between the forces of Catholic authoritarianism and the political awakening taking place across Italy and Europe. Bellochio skilfully creates a gripping and colourful portrait of a small community in turmoil at the mercy of an all-powerful theocracy during the period of Unification.



Festival de Cannes 2023 – Nominee Palme d'Or

18 December 2024

Film to be confirmed.....

A surprise choice to accompany our annual Christmas Social.

8 January 2025



Anatomy of a Fall

France/Japan 2023

151 Minutes

Director: Justine Triet



When her husband Samuel is mysteriously found dead in the snow below their secluded chalet, Sandra becomes the main suspect when the police begin to question whether he fell or was pushed. The trial soon becomes not just an investigation but a psychological journey into the depths of Sandra's and Samuel's complicated marriage. With conflicting evidence and inconsistent testimony, words are wielded like weapons and shocking truths come to light in this gripping winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes.



Festival de Cannes 2023 – Winner Palme d'Or

22 January 2025



Driving Mum

Iceland/Estonia 2022

112 Minutes

Director: Hilmar Oddsson



Hilmar Oddsson's darkly comedic road movie is a bewitching 1980-set odyssey of self-discovery and acceptance across the beautifully photographed landscapes of Iceland. Middle-aged and disappointed, Jón spends his days knitting and listening to the radio with his domineering elderly mother on their rural Icelandic farmstead. With his life overtaken by looking after his home and his mother's needs, Jón's isolated world is upended when she suddenly passes away. Having left him a series of instructions to follow upon her death, Jón sets out on a journey across Iceland to honour his mother's final wishes including being buried in Eyrarbakki, her home village. Strapping her into his Mk II Ford Cortina, and with the beloved family dog Brezhnev in tow, Jón sets off on his strange journey. With his late mum still relentlessly nagging him from the back seat, he meets a variety of peculiar and charming strangers and encounters some ghosts from his past as well. Beautifully filmed in crisp black and white, *Driving Mum* is a heartwarming film with a fantastic central performance from Gunnarsson.

Tallin Black Nights Film Festival – Winner Grand Prix for the Best Film

5 February 2025

Àma Gloria



France 2023

84 Minutes

Director: Marie Amachoukeli



Cléo lives with her widower Dad Arnaud and her nanny Gloria in Paris. She loves her father but Gloria is the emotional centre of her world. When Gloria must return to her home in Cape Verde to attend to her own family, she's heartbroken and desperate to be reunited.

Marie Amachoukeli's solo directorial debut is an acutely affecting drama powered by a really astounding child actor. Full of personality with her thick glasses and a tangle of curls, Mauroy-Panzani's intricate performance is a window back into the roiling intensity of a small child's emotions, instincts, and inherently self-centred view of the world. A film that works both as a simple heartfelt drama and as a clear allegory of colonialism, Àma Gloria is a beautifully drawn study of a young girl learning about the broader contexts of her world and other people's worlds.

Jerusalem Film Festival: 2023 winner of the Nechama Rivlin Award for Best International Film

19 February 2025



Kneecap

Ireland, UK 2024

105 Minutes

Director: Rich Peppiatt



An Irish rap group rails against British imperialism in Rich Peppiatt's riotous, unruly comic docudrama Kneecap. An exhilarating origin story for the real-life Belfast-based band combining fact and a liberal helping of fiction, it's enthusiastically performed by the rappers themselves backed by Irish actors including Michael Fassbender, Josie Walker and Simone Kirby. In West Belfast, 2019, two working-class drug dealers, Naoise Ó Cairealláin and Liam Óg Ó Hannaidh team up with schoolteacher JJ Ó Dochartaigh to form a hip-hop group. Rapping in Irish Gaelic in line with their proud republican ethos, their verses combine richly textured lurid tales of sex and drugs with polemic and rebellion against authority, riling Irish radio and unionist politicians alike. Following the group through drug binges, cross-community mud-slinging and anarchic sell-out gigs, Kneecap is a rags-to-riches tale that's steeped in local lore and humour drawn from the absurdity of history whilst also highlighting the ongoing battle to save the Irish language.

5 March 2025



Rose

Denmark 2023

106 Mins

Director: Niels Arden Oplev



Best known for directing the original film version of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, Niels Arden Oplev teams up with another Scandi screen star, Sofie Grabol, for his most personal film to date. A story of two sisters, it's based on his own family history and full of feeling. Set in the late '90s, it sees sisters Ellen and Inger take a bus trip to Paris. Inger is schizophrenic, a fact she announces to their fellow passengers. Ellen sees their holiday as a chance for the sisters to bond and to find out if Inger might be able to live more independently. Inger herself has a hidden agenda for the trip. Eloquent on the stigmas faced by those with mental illness, Rose is also committed to honesty about the difficulty of living with profound disorders like schizophrenia. There are no easy answers in this subtle, heartfelt, funny and involving drama, which features an excellent performance from Grabol in particular.

19 March 2025

Certificate TBC

Black Box Diaries

Japan/UK/USA 2024

103 Mins

Director: Shiori Ito



In 2017, journalist and writer Shiori Ito's memoir *Black Box* launched a societal reckoning in Japan. In the book, Ito publicly accused a prominent TV journalist of raping her two years previously. She had reported her assault to the police at the time, only to be told it was a 'black box': it had happened behind closed doors and there were no grounds for prosecution. A raw, remarkable and tightly wound documentary lent substantial narrative rigour by Ito's journalistic skills, *Black Box Diaries* sees this first-time director take her courageous investigation to the screen. Unfolding her story like a thriller whilst combining secret investigative recordings and emotional first-person video, Ito pieces together the crime she experienced, fighting on her own behalf in the face of the authorities' refusal to do so in any meaningful way. A searing exposé of Japan's desperately outdated judicial and societal systems as well as a vivid, highly personal evocation of the psychological impacts of surviving sexual assault, *Black Box Diaries* sees Ito's quest for justice become a landmark case in Japan's #MeToo movement.

San Francisco International Film Festival 2024 - Winner - Special Jury Award for Best Documentary Feature

2 April 2025

Certificate TBC

Goodbye Julia

Sudan/Egypt/Germany/France/KSA/Sweden 2023

120 mins

Director: Mohamed Kordofani



Wracked by guilt after covering up a murder, Mona, a northern Sudanese retired singer in a tense marriage, tries to make amends by taking the deceased's southern Sudanese widow, Julia and her son Daniel into her home. Unable to confess her transgressions to Julia, Mona decides to leave the past behind and adjust to the new situation unaware that the country's turmoil may find its way into her home and put her face to face with her sins.



Festival de Cannes 2023 – Winner - Prix de la Liberté



25 September	Monster	12
9 October	Robot Dreams	PG
23 October	The Quiet Girl	12
6 November	Io Capitano	15
20 November	Wilding + The Elvermen + Heart Valley	PG
4 December	Kidnapped	12
18 December	To Be Confirmed	
8 January 2025	Anatomy of a Fall	15
22 January	Driving Mum	12
5 February	Àma Gloria	12
19 February	Kneecap	18
5 March	Rose	12A
19 March	Black Box Diaries	tbc
2 April	Goodbye Julia	tbc

