

Programme notes

October 2014

LLANCARFAN
COMMUNITY CINEMA

STELLAR WEEKENDER!

WELCOME to our Sci-Fi triple bill.

This weekend of futuristic film treats has been made possible with support from Film Hub Wales, part of the British Film Institute (BFI) Film Audience Network funded by the National Lottery.

Following the successful Gothic season, the BFI launched *Sci-Fi: Days of Fear & Wonder* in September with screenings all over the UK. We're delighted to be part of this landmark event.

FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER

EDGE OF TOMORROW (2014)

Dir: Doug Liman

Screenplay: Christopher McQuarrie, Jez Butterworth and John-Henry Butterworth

Cast: Tom Cruise, Emily Blunt, Bill Paxton

Runtime: 113 minutes

"The film's Groundhog Day-meets-Independence Day plot is actually pretty genius." *Time Out*

The epic action of *Edge of Tomorrow* unfolds in a near future in which an alien race has hit the earth in an unrelenting assault, unbeatable by any military unit in the world.

Major William Cage (Tom Cruise) is an officer who has never seen a day of combat when he is unceremoniously dropped into what amounts to a suicide mission. Killed within minutes, Cage now finds himself inexplicably thrown into a time loop—forcing him to live out the same brutal combat over and over, fighting and dying again...and again.

From the official film web site

This tale of time shifting, war mongering was shot on location in the UK and at Leavesden Studios in Hertfordshire, made famous as the home of the Harry Potter films. It stars Tom Cruise, alongside Emily Blunt and Bill Paxton.

The story is loosely adapted from a Japanese novel entitled 'All you need is kill' by Hiroshi Sakurazaka, and the film is directed by Doug Liman (*The Bourne Identity* and *Mr & Mrs Smith*).

Fun fact: The film was released in the US on 6 June 2014, the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. This is no coincidence as the film's main battle scenes are based on the Normandy beach landings.

SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER

FLASH GORDON (1980)

Dir: Mike Hodges

Screenplay: Lorenzo Semple Jr

Cast: Sam J. Jones, Melody Anderson, Max von Sydow, Topol

Runtime: 111 minutes

"There's plenty of colourful fun and an awful lot of men in tights. Don't listen to its po-faced detractors -- for sheer cinema fun, *Flash Gordon* can't be beaten."

Film 4

Alex Raymond's famous comic strip blasts to life in the action-packed sci-fi adventure *Flash Gordon*. When energy waves pull the moon out of orbit, New York Jets quarterback Flash Gordon (Sam J. Jones) unwittingly finds himself heading for the planet Mongo, where, with assistance from beautiful Dale Arden (Melody Anderson), he'll take on Ming the Merciless (Max von Sydow) and rescue humankind.

From the official film web site

Director Mike Hodges was an unlikely candidate for *Flash Gordon*, having made his mark with gritty British crime drama *Get Carter*. Yet some even more unlikely names were associated with the film, including famous Italian arthouse director Federico Fellini and visionary British director Nic Roeg (*Don't Look Now*, *Walkabout*).

The film was shot in the UK at Elstree and Shepperton studios, and Hodges, referring to the numerous problems that plagued production, once called it "the only improvised \$27-million movie ever made".

Originally conceived as a series of films, a sequel was never made after the film failed to generate the anticipated box office revenues.

Fun fact: George Lucas planned to remake the original *Flash Gordon* (1936), but when he learned that producer Dino De Laurentiis had bought the rights he wrote *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* (1977) instead.

Fun fact: most of Sam J. Jones's dialogue was dubbed following a disagreement with De Laurentiis that resulted in the actor refusing to go into the recording studio to loop his lines.

ALIEN (1979)

Dir: Ridley Scott

Screenplay: Dan O'Bannon

Cast: Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt, Ian Holm, Yaphet Kotto

Runtime: 116 minutes

"An old-fashioned scary movie set in a highly realistic sci-fi future, made all the more believable by expert technical craftsmanship."

Variety

A commercial crew aboard the deep space towing vessel Nostromo is on its way home when they pick an SOS warning from a distant planet. What they don't know is that the SOS warning is not like any other ordinary warning call. Picking up the signal, the crew realize they are not alone on the spaceship...

From Internet Movie Database

Like *Flash Gordon*, *Alien* was shot at Shepperton but here the similarities end. This is nightmarish territory for grown up imaginations, a 'haunted house in space' movie that spawned a franchise and set the template for sci-fi horror.

Director Ridley Scott can claim much of the credit for the film's success, but equally important was Dan O'Bannon's screenplay and H. R. Giger's remarkable production designs. The iconic monster was actually modeled on one of Giger's earlier prints, 'Necronom IV'.

Fun fact: The inside of the alien egg discovered by Kane was composed of real cattle hearts and stomachs. The tail of the 'facehugger' alien was a length of sheep intestine.

Fun fact: Meryl Streep was a contender to play Ripley, the role that made Sigourney Weaver famous.

Astronomical photographs

We're grateful to Richie Jarvis of South Common Observatory in East Sussex for allowing us to use his space images as part of our Sci-Fi Weekender slideshow.

The images, in order of appearance, are as follows:

- South Common Observatory in action
- Andromeda Galaxy
- The Moon
- Dumbbell Nebulae
- Jupiter
- Flame & Horse Head Nebulae
- The Sun
- Messier 92
- Whirlpool Galaxy
- Bubble Nebulae
- The Pleiades Cluster
- Great Orion
- Whirlpool Galaxy (2)

<http://www.nebul.ae/>

