

Summer Film Festival Monday 20 July to Saturday 25 July

All screenings start at 2.00pm

In this Summer break the Apollo players are converting their beautiful theatre into a post war cinema for a Filmfest from the archives. Probably seen on TV but now an opportunity to see these wonderful films on the Big Screen, as they were meant to be shown

The Evolution of the Irony: A Six-Day Cinematic Journey

Cinema changed radically between 1942 and 1964. This curated film festival tracks that evolution across six consecutive afternoons. Viewers can watch Hollywood romance dissolve into post-war cynicism, before transforming into sharp British satire and American absurdity.

Here is the daily lineup for a journey through the changing soul of mid-century filmmaking.

Monday 20 July: *The Third Man* (1949) – The Dawn of Post-War Cynicism

The festival shifts starts with the awakening of post-war reality. Set in the crumbling, divided ruins of Vienna, this film noir masterpiece shatters the idealism following the end of the second world war. Through expressionist shadows and a haunting zither score, it introduces a world of black markets, moral ambiguity, and betrayed friendships.

Tuesday 21 July: *The Ladykillers* (1955) – The Collapse of Criminal Intellect

The festival now turns to British comedy, typical of many in the mid-1950s. A sinister gang of eccentric thieves plots a heist, only to be completely undone by their sweet, elderly landlady. The film serves as a brilliant allegory for post-war Britain, where calculated modern malice is hilariously defeated by traditional Victorian manners.

Wednesday 22 July: *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) – The Ultimate Absurdity

Only nine years but the mood has changed with the horror of the atom bomb with Stanley Kubrick's terrifyingly funny masterpiece. Moving from the romantic global conflict of Monday, cinema now views global destruction as a ridiculous joke. The threat of nuclear annihilation is placed in the hands of incompetent generals and politicians, representing the absolute peak of cinematic satire.

Thursday 23 July: *Casablanca* (1942) – The Peak of Romantic Idealism

And now, a step back to the darkest days of World War II. *Casablanca* represents the ultimate studio system masterpiece, where personal desires collide with global duty. Its earnest heroism and moral clarity set the baseline for the festival, showing a world where fighting for a cause still carries pure, romantic weight.

Friday 24 July: Some Like It Hot (1959) – Breaking the Hollywood Mold

As the festival enters the vibrant turn of the decade, American cinema challenges its own strict societal rules. Billy Wilder's breathless farce uses two cross-dressing musicians running from the mob to dismantle mid-century gender norms. It injects the festival with pure anarchic energy, expert pacing, and legendary comedic timing.

Saturday 25 July: Kind Hearts and Coronets (1949) – The Birth of Subversive Wit

Book ending with *The Third Man*, this Ealing Studios gem brings a distinctly British flavour to post-war disillusionment. We step back from the freedoms of the 50s and 60s and instead of noir shadows, it uses pitch-black comedy to attack the social hierarchy. Dennis Price plays an exiled heir murdering his way through his aristocratic family, with Alec Guinness brilliantly playing all eight victims.

From Hope to Dark Satire

The films reveal a clear historical shift in just over twenty years. Filmmakers stopped looking at global crises with earnest heroism and started using dark, brilliant laughter to survive them. One thing for sure, the retrospective celebrates the exact era when cinema grew up, got cynical, and became wildly subversive.

We hope you have time to visit our wonderful theatre and experience a time gone by with one or more of these spectacular films.

Tickets are available from the website www.apollo-theatre.org.uk