

Terrence Malick at BFI Southbank in September.

The work of Terrence Malick is showcased at **BFI Southbank** throughout **September** with a season of films from a writer-director who may justifiably be described as the modern American cinema's great poet-philosopher.

His recent award of the **Palme d'Or**, at Cannes this year, for the mesmerising *Tree of Life* (2011) reinforces this notion and provides a timely opportunity to review all of his feature films, from *Badlands* (1974) to *The New World* (2005), with a new digital restoration of *Days of Heaven* (1978), restored under the watchful eye of Malick himself.

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Badlands

USA 1974. With Martin Sheen, Sissy Spacek, Warren Oates. 94min. 15
Malick's dazzling directorial debut, based on a seemingly random killing spree undertaken by a young Dakota couple in the 1950s, eschews pat psychological explanation for something more ironic, complex and daring. The luminous images, the use of Carl Orff's music, the dialogue and the voiceover providing excerpts from the teenage girl's artless diary situate the precise recreation of a moment in American history within a larger, more mythic context. Note a rare sighting of Malick himself.

Fri 2 Sept 20:50 NFT3
Sun 11 Sept 20:30 NFT3
Tue 13 Sept 20:50 NFT3
Sun 18 Sept 20:30 NFT3

The Thin Red Line

USA 1998. With Sean Penn, James Caviezel, Nick Nolte, Elias Koteas, John Cusack. 171min. 15

Adapted from James Jones' novel about the attempts of a US platoon to wrest control of Guadalcanal from the Japanese, this is one of the most extraordinary war movies ever made. An epic, near-pantheist meditation on the roles played by conflict, violence and destruction in nature and the cosmos, it goes far

beyond the usual patriotic ‘war is hell but...’ clichés, positing its horrors as the inevitable consequences of a paradise having been unfathomably lost.

Sat 17 Sept 17:30 NFT3

Sat 24 Sept 19:40 NFT3

Sat 1 Oct 19:40 NFT3

The New World

USA 2005. With Q’orianka Kilcher, Colin Farrell, Christian Bale, Wes Studi. 150min. 12A

Another paradise discovered (when the English reach the Virginian wilderness in 1607), another lost (when the Powhatan princess ends up in a wintry England). But paradise may also be an internal realm, and Malick’s sumptuously beautiful retelling of the Pocahontas story blends stirring historical drama with a rapturous love story, as the girl is courted by John Smith and then John Rolfe. Genuinely Romantic in its allusions, lush landscapes and thrilling use of Wagner, it explores notions of perfection within various realms, from politics to human passion

Tue 27 Sept 20:20 NFT3

Sat 8 Oct 20:10 NFT3

Wed 12 Oct 18:00 NFT2

The Tree of Life

USA 2011. With Brad Pitt, Sean Penn, Jessica Chastain. 138min. Digital. 12A

At once Malick’s most explicitly ‘spiritual’ film – one might even call it a prayer for this planet – and arguably his most audacious, ambitious and personal, this brings together the experiences of an ordinary Texan family in the 50s (particularly those of the eldest of three brothers) and the origins of our world. The narrative, almost symphonic in structure, is impressionistic, elliptical and predicated on a series of unanswered questions murmured in voiceover by some of the characters – yet it never once fails to hold the attention. And the film’s strange beauty is perhaps itself part of the response to the overriding ‘why’. A film truly unlike any other.

Fri 23 Sept – Wed 12 Oct

See calendar for screens and times

Days of Heaven A BFI release

USA 1978. Dir Terrence Malick. With Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, Robert J Wilke, Stuart Margolin. 94min. Digital. PG.

In 1916, after trouble at work, Bill (Richard Gere) leaves Chicago for Texas, together with girlfriend Abby (Brooke Adams) and his sister Linda (Linda Manz). Passing as siblings in order to find work, the lovers keep up the

pretence when it becomes clear the shy farmer they work for (Sam Shepard) – rumoured to be dying, with no one to inherit his fortune – has fallen for Abby... Famously encouraging cinematographers Nestor Almendros and Haskell Wexler to shoot during the crepuscular ‘magic hour’, Malick created a rapturous, visually sublime meditation on American history and myth that is at once lyrical, epic and resonant in its tantalising echoes of the Bible. The pervasive sense of profoundly beguiling mystery is further enhanced by Ennio Morricone’s magnificent score and Linda’s inarticulate yet strangely expressive, even wise narration. A masterpiece

Fri 2 Sept – Wed 12 Oct

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Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work

Promoting British film and talent to the world

Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

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www.bfi.org.uk/southbank

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***** PICTURE DESK *****A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at www.image.net under BFI / BFI Southbank /

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