



Moviedrome: Bringing the Cult TV Series to the Big Screen

Welcome to the Moviedrome

Fri 4 Jul 18:30

The Wicker Man (Final Cut)

Fri 4 Jul 20:45 (+ intro by Alex Cox and Nick Freand Jones) Fri 18 Jul 18:00; Mon 28 Jul 21:00

Walker

Sat 5 Jul 15:10 (+ intro by filmmaker and Moviedrome presenter Alex Cox); Tue 29 Jul 20:40

The Fly (1958)

Sat 5 Jul 18:30 (+ intro by season curator and Moviedrome's producer Nick Freand Jones); Sun 13 Jul 15:20

The Fly (1986)

Sat 5 Jul 20:55; Sun 13 Jul 18:20

The Great Silence Il grande silenzio

Sun 6 Jul 12:10 (+ intro by filmmaker and Moviedrome presenter Alex Cox); Tue 15 Jul 20:40

Sweet Smell of Success

Sun 6 Jul 18:00 (+ intro by filmmaker and Moviedrome presenter Alex Cox); Mon 21 Jul 21:00

An American Werewolf in London

Mon 7 Jul 18:30; Sat 26 Jul 21:00

Get Carter

Mon 7 Jul 20:45; Thu 17 Jul 20:30; Tue 22 Jul 18:10

Les Diaboliques

Tue 8 Jul 20:35 (+ intro by season curator and Moviedrome's producer Nick Freand Jones); Sat 12 Jul 11:35

Two-Lane Blacktop

Wed 9 Jul 20:45 (+ intro by season curator and Moviedrome's producer Nick Freand Jones); Sat 19 Jul 18:20

Witchfinder General

Fri 11 Jul 18:20 (+ intro by Reece Shearsmith); Mon 14 Jul 20:50

California Dolls (aka All the Marbles)

Sat 12 Jul 15:10; Wed 23 Jul 20:40 (+ intro by season curator and Moviedrome's producer Nick Freand Jones)

Shaft

Sat 12 Jul 18:20; Sat 19 Jul 20:50

Scarface

Sat 12 Jul 19:50; Sun 27 Jul 14:10

Exotica

Mon 21 Jul 18:10; Wed 30 Jul 20:45 (+ pre-recorded intro by filmmaker Atom Egoyan)

La Haine

Fri 25 Jul 21:00; Thu 31 Jul 18:00

Clockers

Sat 26 Jul 18:00; Thu 31 Jul 20:20

With thanks to

Bob Cummins and Sharon Maitland

Become a BFI Member

Enjoy a great package of film benefits including priority booking at BFI Southbank and BFI Festivals. Join today at bfi.org.uk/join

Moviedrome: Bringing the Cult TV Series to the Big Screen

Welcome to the Moviedrome

Moviedrome began on BBC2 at a time when there were just four TV channels in the UK, satellite broadcasting was in its infancy and streaming was decades away. It offered audiences a portal into the world of weird and wonderful cult cinema. To launch our season, join *Moviedrome* presenter Alex Cox alongside series producer and this season's curator Nick Freand Jones, for a conversation with broadcaster Samira Ahmed about this influential and inspirational series.

Moviedrome: Bringing the Cult TV Series to the Big Screen

'What is a cult film? A cult film is one which has a passionate following but does not appeal to everybody. Just because a movie is a cult movie does not automatically guarantee quality. Some cult films are very bad. Others are very, very good. Some make an awful lot of money at the box office. Others make no money at all. Some are considered quality films. Others are exploitation.' From 1988 to 2000 *Moviedrome* was presented by Alex Cox and then Mark Cousins. Across that time, more than 200 features were shown, and generations of movie fans and filmmakers would be informed and inspired by the selection, alongside the wit and wisdom of the introductions that preceded each screening. *Moviedrome* was a portal into the world of weird and wonderful cinema. This two-month season features some of the most notable titles screened and wherever possible they are preceded by the original televised introduction.

Nick Freand Jones, season curator and producer of *Moviedrome*

Nick Freand Jones: There was a lot of film on the BBC at that time. Across the two BBC channels you'd have possibly 25 or 30 movies showing a week. Satellite TV was in its infancy, there was no streaming. And we had hundreds of library titles that you could select from a list that each studio would have. Consequently, there was a catalogue of films as thick as a phonebook to choose from, including foreign language and older titles, and also stuff from the 70s and 80s.

We thought to create a new strand for all this library material, some of which was a bit curious. I had in my mind the cinemas that – when I first moved to London in the 70s – were showing late night double bills, places like the Paris Pullman, the Scala, the Academy. The double bill would start at 11 – you might stay awake through the whole thing, or you might start watching *Two-Lane Blacktop* [1971] and wake up in whatever followed it. If you didn't live in London, you couldn't see films like that unless you happened upon them on television.

So when we were casting around for what sort of movies we should be screening, this broad definition of cult came up. And Alex seemed like the man [to present the films] because he had a kind of cult reputation of his own. He clearly knew a lot about cinema. He had technical expertise as well as cultural acumen. And he was opinionated and political and quite different to the sorts of faces that you would traditionally see on the BBC.

Sight and Sound

Never miss an issue with **Sight and Sound**, the BFI's internationally renowned film magazine. Subscribe from just £25*
* Price based on a 6-month print subscription (UK only). More info: sightandsoundsubs.bfi.org.uk



BFI Player

We are always open online on BFI Player where you can watch the best new, cult & classic cinema on demand. Showcasing hand-picked landmark British and independent titles, films are available to watch in three distinct ways: Subscription, Rentals & Free to view.

See something different today on player.bfi.org.uk

25 & Under

We want to open up great independent and classic film and TV for all, making it as accessible as possible. If you are under the age of 26, you can get discounted tickets for BFI Southbank and BFI Festivals. BFI Southbank cinema tickets are £4, with festival tickets £5, so you can enjoy the very best of cinema from around the world at an affordable price.

Sign up today and verify your age online, and you can start enjoying discounted tickets immediately.

BFI Southbank

Welcome to the home of great film and TV, with three cinemas and a studio, a world-class library, regular exhibitions and a pioneering Mediatheque with 1000s of free titles for you to explore. Browse special-edition merchandise in the BFI Shop. We're also pleased to offer you a unique new space, the BFI Riverfront – with unrivalled riverside views of Waterloo Bridge and beyond, a delicious seasonal menu, plus a stylish balcony bar for cocktails or special events. Come and enjoy a pre-cinema dinner or a drink on the balcony as the sun goes down.

For the first movie, we showed *The Wicker Man*, which didn't at that time have quite the storied cult reputation it does now. It was beginning to be thought of as a film that maybe had been cut too heavily. We had traced a longer version of the film to the Roger Corman offices in Los Angeles and I remember there was great excitement about the presence of some extra scenes. It seemed like the ideal first film for this run really – a genuine find.

With both Alex and Mark as presenters it was the same principle. We didn't want them there to be salesmen. We wanted them to be there as people who would have interesting things to say about films, even those that might not appeal to them directly. Because the cult definition was so broad, the selection could go from the very highest of high art to the lowest of low art and everything in between. And that's what made it different; everything prior centred around films that people liked, whereas *Moviedrome* was a way of smuggling into the BBC schedule these kinds of oddities.

There were certain obvious titles that we wanted to have for the BFI season. *The Wicker Man*, because it was the very first. *Scarface* [1983], because that was Mark's first movie that he introduced when he took over. Curiosities like *Carnival of Souls* and *The Great Silence* [1968], a then very rare spaghetti western which Alex had identified as one that would be really interesting. Also, ideas like having both versions of *The Fly* [1958/86], which played in different series. Or putting *Mommie Dearest* [1981] and *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* [1962] together, something we hadn't done on the show itself. It was a way of not just replicating, but maybe embroidering what had been done before.

I'm very heartened by how people seem to have these great memories of it. There's this whole second life on the internet, with people talking about it and putting the intros up on YouTube. I recently worked with John Maclean [director of *Tornado*], who said *Moviedrome* was his film education because he grew up in a small village in Scotland and there wasn't a cinema. And Edgar Wright has been very vocal about Alex's influence through the series. I think curation is needed just as much, if not more, in the modern film landscape. With the big streamers, it's not even a human who's making the decisions about what gets prominence.

Nick Freand Jones was talking to Matthew Taylor, bfi.org.uk, June 2025