

# The Cutting Room



A New Look at the World of Film

Volume 1 Number 2 2010

## SILENT CINEMA SPECIAL

An extensive interview with Kevin Brownlow (*pictured right*), the world's leading authority on silent films. Our conversation ranges from Brownlow's loving restoration of Abel Gance's 1927 masterpiece, *Napoléon* (and his friendship with the French director), to his illuminating personal encounters with the greats of both the silents and the



talkies, including Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, Janet Gaynor, Gloria Swanson, Marlene Dietrich, Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean and Stanley Kubrick.



**PLUS:** We assess the recent discovery of missing scenes from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* in Argentina. Do they help to plug the holes in the plot?

### OBITUARY:



What made Eric Rohmer so special?

Do you recognise these two films, which Camila Wilson feels should have been given the nod at the 2010 Oscars - but weren't?



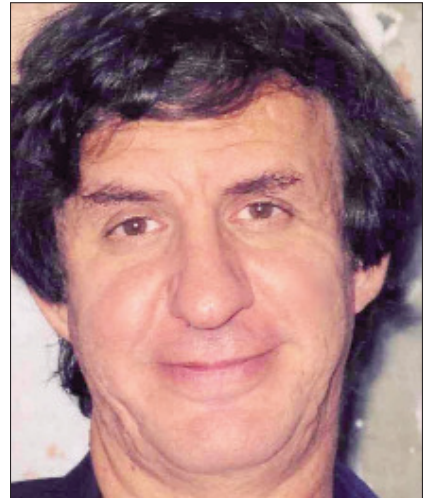
FIFTY YEARS OLD - THE FILM THAT SCUPPERED AN ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER

SLUMDOG REVISITED - SHUBHANGI VAIDYA REPORTS FROM INDIA

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

This issue of *The Cutting Room* is a special edition dedicated in large part to the silent cinema. Not entirely: even in my extensive interview with Kevin Brownlow - the world's leading expert in this field - amidst the wonderful insights into the restoration of *Napoléon* and the life and times of its legendary director, Abel Gance, as well as Brownlow's own two films and his working alongside David Lean on that director's autobiography - there are plenty of illuminating allusions to the transition to sound cinema, to the reasons why Alfred Hitchcock always thought of himself as an American filmmaker (even though he made many intriguing silent films in the UK before leaving for the United States).



But the non-talkies take an unashamed front seat, and at a timely moment, when missing scenes from Fritz Lang's 1927 masterpiece, *Metropolis*, have turned up in, of all places, Argentina. Many of the rediscovered scenes are not exactly in the best of condition - indeed, Kevin Brownlow tells me they're so lousy that they're virtually indecipherable - but some, at least, help to explain a number of hitherto mystifying lacunae in the plot of this extraordinary film.

We also take a look back at two of the films that, in the views of our writer, Camila Wilson, should have won Oscars at the 2010 Academy Awards but were almost totally ignored. And remember the film that won all those gongs the previous year? We report from India on how *Slumdog Millionaire* was really received in the nation where it was set.

Fifty years ago, *Peeping Tom* scuppered the brilliant career of its British director, Michael Powell. We cast an analytical glance back half a century at the controversy surrounding this disturbing movie which one critic at the time, Derek Hill, said should be swiftly flushed down the nearest sewer. Dilys Powell initially felt the same way but changed her mind later, calling it a masterpiece.

Finally, we pay tribute to one of the true greats of twentieth-century cinema - the French director, Eric Rohmer - who died on January 11, 2010, at the age of 89.

**ADAM FEINSTEIN**

## CONTENTS: Volume 1 Number 2, 2010

Editorial .....2  
 Marlon Brando ..... 3  
 Around the globe .....4

*Metropolis* find ..... 9, 11  
*Slumdog* revisited .....10-11  
 Film reviews ..... 12

Why I Love: *La Belle et la Bête* ..... 5

**THE MOVIES THE OSCARS FORGOT:**  
 pages 13, 40

*Peeping Tom* fifty years on ..... pages 6-7

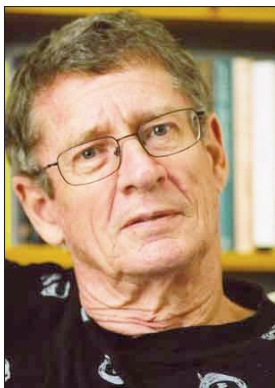
**THE CUTTING ROOM INTERVIEW:**  
 Kevin Brownlow - pages 14-38

**OBITUARY: Eric Rohmer** ..... 8

# The cut Marlon Brando never forgave

ANYONE who has seen the 1989 anti-apartheid film, *A Dry White Season*, will remember the powerful performance of Donald Donald Sutherland as a teacher at a South African school who receives an the film. They will probably also recall how Marlon Brando completely dominates the screen in a small role as an eccentric barrister. Few may realise just why Marlon Brando disowned the film, however..

This was revealed by André Brink,



**André Brink: he said, that, though he loved film as a medium, he decided to stay away from the filming of *A Dry White Season*, a move he later regretted**

the South African novelist and author of the novel on whom the movie is based. Speaking at an event at Foyles bookshop in London’s Charing Cross Road on april 21, Brink told his audience: “There was a court room scene in which the judge orders two ushers to remove Brando from the court,. Now, Brando was a huge man-mountain at the



**Marlon Brando in *A Dry White Season***

time of the filming, and the two ushers were very slightly built. Unfortunately, Brando decided - for reasons known only to himself - to

resist the attempts to take him out of the courtroom. The sight of these two thin ushers trying to manoeuvre the huge Brando out of the room was hilarious - but the film-makers decided that they couldn’t possibly use the scene and it was cut from the finished film. Brando was furious -- he never forgot or forgave them from deleting what he considered was his finest moment in the movie”