

PUNISHMENT PARK

NOS WENER 19 MEDI 2003

Neuadd Goffa, Betws-y-Coed, drysau'n agor am 7yh

Mae Rêl Institiwt yn lansio eu tymor newydd o 'nosweithiau ffilm amgen' gyda ffilm dadleuol gafodd ei atal am dros dri-deg o flynyddoedd.

Wedi' gyfarwyddo gan Peter Watkins, gafodd 'Punishment Park' ei ffilmio yn UDA yn ystod rhyfel Fietnam ac achosodd stwr rhyngwladol pan gafodd ei ryddhau. Roedd i bob pwrpas wedi ei wahardd dim ond pedwar diwrnod yn ddiweddarach ac nid ydi erioed wedi ei ddangos ar deledu.

Mae Watkins yn defnyddio pobol go-iawn i gymeryd rhan y cymeriadau (myfyrwyr, gweithredwyr iawnderau sifil, swyddogion llywodraethol), sydd yn codi'r drama yn y ffilm ddogfen ffuglennol hwn.

Yn ffilm trawiadol o'i gyfnod, ychydig fuasai wedi rhagweld ei berthnas gofidus yn y ddadl chwyrnig heddiw rhwng iawnderau sifil a diogelwch cenedlaethol.

Fer yr arfer, mae'r 'noson ffilm amgen' yma yn cynnwys 'cabaret compere', ffilmiau byrion ac hysbysebion newydd wedi' comisiynnu – hefyd y coffi a chacennau enwog.

Amlinelliad y ffilm

1970, ac mae'r rhyfel yn Fietnam yn dwysau. Mae'r Arlywydd Nixon wedi penderfynnu ymgymeryd â cyrch fomio ar Cambodia. Yng ngwyneb protest cyhoeddus enfawr, datgan Nixon 'state of national emergency', ac - rydym ni yn meddwl - yn sbarduno y Ddeddf 'Internal Security Act 1950'. sydd yn rhoi hawliau i'r awdurdodau ffederal i ddal unrhyw berson sydd yn cael ei farnu i fod yn 'risg i ddiogelwch mewnol'.

Mewn ardal diffaeth, mae 'Grwp 637' (y rhan fwyaf yn fyfyrwyr prifysgol) yn y 'Bear Mountain Punishment Park'. Wedi dewis 'Punishment Park' yn hytrach nag cyfnod hir yn y carchar, maent yn cael gwybod am reolau'r 'gêm'. Cawn ryddid os wnawn nhw osgoi swyddogion yr heddlu sydd ar eu holau, a cyrraedd banner UDA sydd 53 milltir i ffwrdd ar draws y mynyddoedd o fewn tri diwrnod.

Yn y cyfamser, mewn pabell tribiwnlys agos, mae 'Grwp 638' yn cael eu tybio o fod yn euog cyn sefyll eu prawf ac maent yn ymgeisio yn aflwyddiannus i ddadlau eu achos dros wrthwynebu'r rhyfel yn Fietnam.

Mae 'Grwp 637' yn dechrau eu prawf ac yn blino yn sydyn mewn tymheredd o 110 gradd Fahrenheit. Mae rhai yn rhoi gorau iddi, eraill yn ceisio dianc, ac y gweddill yn benderfynol o gyrraedd y fanner yn coelio mai rhyddid fydd eu gwobr.

yn parhau...

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parhâd o dudalen 1

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Norbiton, Surrey, Watkins grew up in south Wales. After studying theatre at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, he began his career in advertising as an assistant producer and turned to amateur filmmaking in the late 1950s. In the mid-60s Watkins was commissioned by BBC-TV to make two feature-length docudramas incorporating a quasi-newsreel style and nonprofessional actors. The second of these, **The War Game** (1965), graphically portrayed the nightmare of nuclear war and was banned from broadcast. It was subsequently released in theatres and earned a best documentary Oscar in 1966. Watkins enjoyed modest success with the commercial feature film, **Privilege** (1967), but has subsequently worked primarily in the documentary genre, based in various Scandinavian countries.

One of his more recent films, *Resan* (1988), is an 873 minute (14 hours) epic that addresses such issues as the arms race and global hunger.

ADOLYGIADAU : Prydain

The Sun (a review of 'Punishment Park' and 'Fortune and Men's Eyes'): "... is sincerity a virtue when the eyes of both directors are hooded in the blinkers of their own extreme sickness? ... Propagandist Peter Watkins is left **hopelessly adrift in his own hopeless mind.**"

The Observer: "This is a thoughtful and sincere film and any thinking person should go and see it... It is hysterical and obsessed, but faced with the way things are going, it would be odd, given his concerned and committed temperament, if it were not."

Daily Mail: "Peter Watkins ... has gone to Southern California for his fierce and frightening new film ... A few years ago we might have dismissed the film as the figment of a crazed imagination. **Today its documentary overtones are all too horribly real.**"

The Guardian: "Peter Watkins, a **sincere, honest and talented filmmaker** who wears his heart so obviously on his sleeve that one almost weeps for him, since there are so few romantics left."

The Scotsman: "It's a **stark, uncompromising, brilliant film**... an important cinematic statement which ought to be widely shown. It will not be; see it now."

Time Out: "It is crucially important ... that films like this one survive financially in sufficient numbers to keep the door open for others. And when you look around at the kind of propaganda decorating your local (cinema), you can't help believe that Watkins' film can be effective and that it is **easily the most subversive film to show for a long time.**"

ADOLYGIADAU: UDA

New York Times: "A movie of such blunt-wrong headed sincerity that you're likely to sit through the first ten hysterical minutes of it before realising that it is essentially the wish-fulfilling dream of a masochist... [this is] **futuristic nonsense....**"

yn parhau...

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parhâd o dudalen 2

Playboy: "Seldom has the cause of peace and freedom been served so mindlessly."

The Staff: 'evil... the pornography of hate ... hugely depressing, not merely because it rather accurately reflects some of the worst aspects of life in this country, but because it exaggerates those aspects, not simply on the screen, but in the psyches of those Americans who see it. As such, it becomes part of the problem.'

Village Voice: '... extraordinarily believable, and it is impossible to emerge from his 90 minutes of psychodrama unbruised. The considerable gut reactions Watkins' films provoke may partially explain the extent to which they are despised and ignored ... But if the hopelessness of Watkins' vision increases with each film, his technical brilliance has been sharpening to contain this rage, and the distance he has travelled since 'Privilege' is a phenomenon that American audiences deserve to see.'

Rolling Stone: 'Peter Watkins' film is a **cinema verite masterpiece** of technique... one of the finest films about dissension in America that's been made in a long time..." (Rolling Stone voted 'Punishment Park' one of the 10 Best Films of 1971)

The Village Voice: 'Peter Watkins ... seems to have permanent "controversial" status ... Many critics dismiss him as a paranoid, which is rather irresponsible... Watkins may in fact be **our greatest realist**... the film expresses exactly what is happening in this country.'

San Francisco Chronicle: 'It is a devastating indictment, a paralysing drama and a chilling prognosis. It is unquestionably a polemic but I'm not at all sure that it is loaded ... Through the sounds ... the cutting, the photography, the acting ... Watkins has created a **profoundly disturbing** motion picture.'

ADOLYGIADAU: Ffrainc

Le Monde: "[Peter Watkins'] works remain hidden, or forbidden, in most cases... 'Punishment Park', which is now available... more than twenty years after its first screening ...reveals what was -and still is - carefully hidden behind Mickey mouse's big smile ... A tale in which Walt Disney would have put his anti-Communist and anti-Semitic opinions into practice, and turned his gigantic leisure parks into concentration camps ... 'Punishment Park' is also a **great lesson of cinematography**, excluding any kind of didactic attempt. Presumably, the only park that is worth a detour."

Les Cahiers du Cinema: "... a very powerful and impressive political documentary-fiction... reveals the contradictions of an America in confrontation."

Télérama: "Peter Watkins is the **last of 'the angry young men'** to have preserved his furious insolence."

Le Nouvel Observateur: "A rebel and a filmmaker whose **brilliance and original vision** guarantee him to remain unique in the history of film, Watkins is catching everybody. **In 1971, it was frightening. Today it still is.**"

-DIWEDD-

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