



MISSION TO LARS

Reviewed by
Daniel May

Mission to Lars, as the name could suggest, is actually not a dubious science fiction flick. Instead it is an entertaining and insightful documentary that focuses on Tom Spicer, a middle-aged man suffering from Fragile X Syndrome (a rare form of autism). Tom's life long dream has always been to meet Lars Ulrich, the diminutive drummer of iconic metal band Metallica.

Feeling guilty about not giving their brother the attention and affection he rightly deserves over the years, film-maker Will & journalist Kate decide to make amends by making Tom's life long dream come true.

What ensues, when they finally get Tom on the plane, is a hectic and eventful

Californian road trip to locate Tom's hero. Tracking down the drumming legend is not as easy as originally hoped as Tom's complex Fragile X Syndrome, which counts shyness, fear of crowds and loud noises as some of its symptoms, comes into play.

This witty, enlightening and poignant documentary is not about where the Spicers finish their trip, but how they travel there. You will most certainly find yourself enduring every tense, strenuous and wonderfully warm moment of the voyage with them as if you were apart of this unique family. What impressed me most about this documentary is the way it treats its main focus, Tom, with unpatronising sympathy.

A must see...

Mission to Lars screens at Cinema City on Wednesday 11th July at 6.30pm.

PING PONG - NEVER TOO OLD FOR GOLD

Previewed by
Sam Leonard

Ping Pong follows eight pensioners from across the planet as they compete in the over 80s category of the World Table Tennis Championships in Inner Mongolia: Terry (81) having been given a week to live, not only recovers, but gets in sight of winning gold; Inge (89) has used table tennis to train her way out of dementia; Australian Dorothy de Low (100) creates a sensation as the oldest competitor at the championships. With Ping Pong, you're never too old for gold.

Directed by UK filmmakers Hugh Hartford and produced by Anson Hartford (Banyak films) the film will be out in cinemas from 6th July 2012 in the run up to the Olympics.

Ping Pong's cast includes 90 year old British table tennis champion Les D'Arcy who will be an Olympic Torch bearer.

LES D'ARCY - 'THE MOTIVATOR'

A sports fanatic all his life, Les also competes in



triathlon, weightlifting, shot-put and hammer throw. He is starting training for the pole vault but his family is trying to persuade him otherwise. Since his wife died Les has lived alone. His eccentricities set him apart from many people the same age. He writes and publishes poetry combating the problem of loneliness among the elderly. Les had a weekly slot on local radio reporting Table Tennis News, including one dark year in the 1990s when 8 people died at the table during competitions. Two of these were 'Stan the Bat' - he had a personalized bat; and 'Steady Eddie' - he always got the ball back.

Ping Pong screens at Cinema City on Thursday 9 August at 6.00pm

BEN RIVERS - TWO YEARS AT SEA

Using 16mm cameras, artist Ben Rivers documents the solitary existence of Jake, a man who lives in isolation in the middle of the forest in a remote part of Scotland.



The film follows his unconventional life, capturing moments of profound beauty. Jake is seen in all seasons, surviving frugally, passing the time with strange projects, living the radical dream he had as a younger man, a dream he spent two years working at sea to realise.

The film was shot over the course of a year, in five separate blocks - and each time I would stay with Jake the whole time, along with Chu, my sound-recorderist.

Ben Rivers: "I was waiting for snow for almost two months, then finally it was forecast as being heavy, so we jumped in the car and headed up to Aberdeenshire, while everyone else was told to stay off the roads. I was having difficulty deciding whether to film in colour or not, and in the end thought that b/w would help move the film away from an idea of documentary.

I also wanted to hand-process the film, which feels particularly appropriate to this film. I've made a series of films about people who live in the wilderness, and they live very physical lives, and you're there with the dirt and the muck and the elements and all that stuff, and it's not in any way sanitized. I think that to mirror that with the physical nature of film—having my hands on it, processing it, not handing it over to a kind of mechanized or industrialized way of working—was important. It's hands on, do-it-yourself.

It makes sense as a continuation of what I'm interested in Jake's life and in some of the other peoples' lives. It feels natural." Gracefully constructed, TWO YEARS AT SEA creates an intimate connection with an individual who would otherwise be a complete outsider to us.

Ben Rivers will be at Cinema City for a Q&A screening of Two Years at Sea on Monday 30 July at 6.15pm

CinemaCity

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13-19	THE PLAYERS (18)
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20-26	RESTORATION*CHARIOTS OF FIRE (PG)
	NEW DIGITAL RESTORATION
20-31	ELECTRICK CHILDREN (CERT BCB)
20-31	THE DARK KNIGHT RISES (12A)

TUE 17 JULY, 6.00
DOUBLE BILL: BATMAN BEGINS (12A)
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