

Volume 25 Number 8  AUG 2022		Website <a href="https://www.williamstown-film-society.org">https://www.williamstown-film-society.org</a> Email <a href="mailto:michaeljslee58@gmail.com">michaeljslee58@gmail.com</a> Phone 0478 624 528
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In the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, 104 Ferguson St, Williamstown, 7.30pm, Wednesday 31st August, 2022.

## 2022 Program

# Yesterday

Few stories tiptoe a line between horror and wish fulfilment as nimbly as this high-concept tragi-comedy. There's something profoundly disturbing about the idea of a world without The Beatles, whether you're a die-hard fan or someone known to drunkenly chant the "la la" bit of 'Hey Jude', and that's true even if the world's loss is our hero's gain. So while Danny Boyle's new film is still a largely warm and frequently surprising affair, its unusual premise gives it an edge that other jukebox hits – Bohemian Rhapsody, for example – have lacked.

Jobbing musician Jack (Patel) is a twentysomething teacher who's gigging with the help of his biggest fan, best friend and manager Ellie (James). After he's knocked out during a worldwide blackout, he awakens to learn that he is apparently the only person in the world who remembers The Beatles. Passing off their songs as his own, he wins fame and fortune – but at the price of his honesty and his friendship with Ellie.

A similarly high concept powered screenwriter Richard Curtis' About Time, but this has its eyes on wider issues than love and family, examining the vagaries of the music business and our modern idea of success. Boyle injects a surprising amount of unease during Jack's meteoric rise through the ranks of the music business: it's definitely the crowd-pleasing Slumdog Boyle, though, rather than the Trainspotting guy. Perhaps it's unfair to guess that he gives it a more working-class feel than much of Curtis' work, but there's definitely a more irreverent edge than, say, Notting Hill or Love Actually. The story even gives us a couple of moments that are likely to prove genuinely controversial, no mean feat in a film that could have been a mere nostalgia trip.

Boyle always excels with music, and these stripped-down, largely guitar-led Beatles numbers are unfailingly great: they remind you how much you love them (yeah, yeah, yeah), and how much you'd miss their music. Patel, previously best known for his work on EastEnders, proves a real musical talent and a sure-footed leading man, from Jack's most frustrated outbursts to his growing realisation that he might need to recalibrate his ambitions. Jack's biggest flaw is really his utter failure to realise that his best friend not only looks like Lily James but is also madly in love with him, a slightly preposterous notion that no film could sell. Poor James does a lot with her rather undercooked character, but the love story is easily the film's weakest element.

Really this is the story of what would happen if there were a cultural hole ripped through the world, and the film will make you ache to see The Beatles again at once. Sure, you could poke logic holes in the whole endeavour. A throwaway gag reveals that there is no Oasis without The Beatles, which tracks, but the rest of modern music exists unchanged? Including the career of Fab Four fan Ed Sheeran (who gamely sends himself up here)? Then again, such quibbles are testament to the film's central theme, that art is intertwined through everything in our history, that it shapes our very lives. Underneath the nostalgia value of this film, if you choose to look, is a rejection of celebrity culture and a reminder that it is the music that matters. That's always worth singing about. **(4 stars) Empire Online by Helen O'Hara posted 24.6.19**

[To watch a trailer head to the program on our website](http://www.williamstown-film-society.org)

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## **Results**

	5	4	3	2	1	Average
<b>Ford v Ferrari</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4.7</b>