



TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE

AN ONGOING SERIES OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMS PRESENTED IN 35MM BY THE YALE FILM STUDY CENTER

WEDNESDAY
MAY 16, 2018

7:00PM • WHITNEY
HUMANITIES CENTER

SCHOOL OF ROCK

PRESENTED WITH SUPPORT FROM
PAUL L. JOSKOW '70 M.PHIL., '72 PH.D.



"I love the studio system. I would like to have been Vincente Minnelli or Howard Hawks making a film or two a year in the studio system, but you know, that had its downside. I think you had to sublimate your own ego on the surface. Secretly you're making your film, but at least on the surface you had to show that you're being a company man. At least talk the talk. And it's a lot of hard work. When I do a studio film I'm not slumming. I work just as hard on that to make it be as good as it possibly can and push everyone around me to work well." —Richard Linklater

"It's a long way to the top if you wanna rock 'n' roll." —AC/DC

Rock 'n' roll elementary school's in session in *SCHOOL OF ROCK*, the 2003 Richard Linklater-directed comedy starring Jack Black as a dubiously-credentialed substitute giving fourth-graders lessons in teamwork, self-expression, and stickin' it to the man. The Paramount hit has been called "uncut bliss" (David Edelstein), "hip and consistently hilarious" (Lou Lumenick), "exuberant, raucous, and thoroughly endearing" (Ann Hornaday), and "the cinematic equivalent of a near-perfect three-minute pop song" (Mark Caro). "With its family-friendly approach, good-natured script, brisk rock soundtrack, and hugely energetic central performance," wrote Thomas Christie, "*SCHOOL OF ROCK* was to firmly propel Linklater's reputation to new heights, elevating his recognition as a highly-skilled independent filmmaker into the wider annals of American popular culture."



The project originated with screenwriter Mike White, who also plays Black's roommate Ned, and who was inspired by the childlike antics and passion for music of his real-life next-door neighbor Jack Black. Black co-starred in the White-penned 2002 comedy *ORANGE COUNTY*, produced for Paramount by Scott Rudin. With the renewed interest in the Langley Schools Music Project in mind, White approached Rudin with "this idea of Jack jamming around with a bunch of kids." Rudin offered the project to Linklater, who, like Stephen Frears before him, initially turned it down. *SCHOOL OF ROCK* was to become Linklater's first work-for-hire directing job, and with a budget of \$35 million, it's his most expensive film to date. (By contrast, the budget for *BOYHOOD* was just \$4 million.) The studio production's classical narrative, with a traditional 3-act structure and clear and positive character arcs, is at odds with Linklater's usual freewheeling formal inventiveness, but as Christie wrote, "he refused to tone down his enlightened, free-thinking views for the purposes of mainstream filmmaking, instead couching his potential objectives of examining the authenticity and justification of authority within a deceptively straightforward comedic storyline." Rob Stone calls the results "a joyfully Buñuelian perversion of the 'inspirational tutor' genre typified by films such as *MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS* and *MUSIC OF THE HEART*."

DIRECTED BY **RICHARD LINKLATER**
SCREENPLAY BY **MIKE WHITE**
PRODUCED BY **PARAMOUNT**
(2003) 108 MINS.
STARRING **JACK BLACK, MIKE WHITE, JOAN CUSACK, SARAH SILVERMAN, AND MIRANDA COSGROVE**

For the cast, Linklater selected child actors who were also skilled musicians, and he then brought in Sonic Youth's Jim O'Rourke to give them their own rock school. Linklater attributed his success with working with the children to the fact that he had a ten-year-old daughter of his own at the time: Lorelei Linklater, star of *BOYHOOD*, which began filming just months earlier. *SCHOOL OF ROCK* was largely shot at Staten Island's Wagner College and Long Island's Buckley Country Day School during the winter break, and at the Union County Performing Arts Center in Rahway, New Jersey. A critical and commercial success, the film earned Black a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actor in a Comedy or Musical and an MTV Movie Award win for Best Comedic Performance (despite his character's rant against MTV, which, like Paramount, is a subsidiary of Viacom). It also led to a chain of "School of Rock"-branded extracurricular music schools, an Emmy-nominated Nickelodeon series, and an Oliver-winning stage adaptation by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

DID YOU KNOW: THE MEMBERS OF LED ZEPPELIN ARE NOTORIOUSLY RELUCTANT TO LET ANYONE LICENSE THEIR MUSIC. A DECADE AFTER BEING DENIED "DAZED AND CONFUSED" FOR *DAZED AND CONFUSED*, LINKLATER TRIED TO WIN THEM OVER WITH A PERSONAL VIDEO PLEA FROM JACK BLACK RECORDED ON THE FILM'S "BATTLE OF THE BANDS" STAGE IN FRONT OF A THOUSAND EXTRAS CHANTING, "ZEPPELIN, ZEPPELIN!" THE PLOY WORKED, AND THEY ALLOWED THE USE OF "IMMIGRANT SONG" (GOOD NEWS, SINCE THE SCENE USING IT HAD ALREADY BEEN SHOT).

NEXT UP: "I DIDN'T KILL MY WIFE!" "I DON'T CARE!" WITH THESE TWO ICONIC LINES OF DIALOGUE, HARRISON FORD AND TOMMY LEE JONES BEGAN A RIVETING CAT-AND-MOUSE GAME AS THE ESCAPED CONVICT DR. RICHARD KIMBLE AND THE MAN HUNTING HIM DOWN, U.S. MARSHAL SAMUEL GERARD, IN DIRECTOR ANDREW DAVIS'S 1993 HIT *THE FUGITIVE*. CELEBRATE 25 YEARS OF THE SEARCH FOR THE ONE-ARMED MAN WITH A 35MM SCREENING ON **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27 AT 7 PM.**