



## Culture in brief: Montclair Film partners with Jazz House Kids for screening series



*A scene from "Anatomy of a Murder." COURTESY MONTCLAIR FILM*

For the 10th Anniversary of the Montclair Jazz Festival, Montclair Film will hold a screening series that begins July 26. The four classic films to be shown, "Anatomy of a Murder, featuring a score by Duke Ellington; "Elevator to the Galows," with a score by Miles Davis; "Alfie," with music by Sonny Rollins, and performances captured in "'Round Midnight,' showcase jazz music.

Each screening will have a pre-screening performance by Jazz House Kids ensembles.

Montclair Film also announced a continuation of their ongoing partnership with Montclair Improv Comedy. Montclair Improv Comedy will host a monthly performance at Montclair Film, improvising a never-before-seen film, inspired by audience suggestions. Dates are June 29, July 27, Aug. 24, and Sept. 28, 8 p.m. Each

screening is \$10, \$8 for members.

For more information, visit [montclairfilm.org](http://montclairfilm.org).

Each screening is at Cinema505, 505 Bloomfield Ave.

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READ: 2019 MFF; SOUNDS OF A JAZZ LEGEND

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## **Sunday, July 28**

7:30 PM / Cinema505

“Elevator to the Gallows” (1958)

Director: Louis Malle

Cast: Jeanne Moreau, Maurice Ronet, Georges Poujouly

France/ 91 Min

Florence (Jeanne Moreau) is married to the wealthy arms dealer Simon Carala (Jean Wall), but is carrying on a torrid affair with one of her husband’s employees, Julien (Maurice Ronet). Julien daringly climbs into Simon’s office on a rope, kills him and leaves unnoticed. However, Julien accidentally leaves the rope at the crime scene and realizes he must retrieve it. On his way out, he becomes stuck in the building’s elevator. But he soon finds that his bad luck is just beginning.

Composer Miles Davis assembled a group featuring French jazz session musicians (Barney Wilen on tenor saxophone, René Urtreger on piano, and Pierre Michelot on bass) along with expatriate drummer Kenny Clarke at Le Poste Parisien Studio. The sequences of the film needing underscoring were projected in front of the band and they improvised music to the scenes based on the harmonic outlines Davis provided.

## **Friday, August 2**

7:30 PM / Cinema505

“Anatomy of a Murder” (1959)

Director: Otto Preminger

Cast: James Stewart, Lee Remick, Ben Gazzara, Arthur O’Connell

USA/ 161 Min

Semi-retired Michigan lawyer Paul Biegler (James Stewart) takes the case of Army Lt. Manion (Ben Gazzara),

who murdered a local innkeeper after his wife (Lee Remick) claimed that he raped her. Over the course of an extensive trial, Biegler parries with District Attorney Lodwick (Brooks West) and out-of-town prosecutor Claude Dancer (George C. Scott) to set his client free, but his case rests on the victim's mysterious business partner (Kathryn Grant), who's hiding a dark secret.

"Anatomy of a Murder" is noteworthy for being one of the first films to extensively feature jazz in the musical score - the entire musical soundtrack was composed by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn and played by Ellington's orchestra. Several of the Ellington band's sidemen, notably Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves, Harry Carney, Russell Procope, and William "Cat" Anderson, are heard prominently throughout the film, and Ellington himself appears briefly as "Pie-Eye," the owner of a roadhouse where Paul Biegler (Stewart) and Laura Manion (Remick) have a confrontation. Despite being heard "in bits and pieces" the score "contains some of his most evocative and eloquent music... and beckons with the alluring scent of a femme fatale." Including small pieces by Billy Strayhorn, film historians recognize it "as a landmark — the first significant Hollywood film music by African Americans comprising non-diegetic music, that is, music whose source is not visible or implied by action in the film, like an on-screen band."



*"Alfie." COURTESY MONTCLAIR FILM*

**Sunday, August 4**

7:30 PM/ Cinema505

"Alfie" (1966)

Director: Lewis Gilbert

Cast: Michael Caine, Shelley Winters, Millicent Martin

USA/ 114 Min

Set in postwar London, "Alfie" features Michael Caine as a chauffeur bent on promiscuity. After impregnating his girlfriend he takes off on vacation. He continues his life of womanizing, but he can't hide forever. A misfortune strikes and Alfie is forced to face the product of his ways.

As Udiscovermusic.com writes "In the 1966 British romantic comedy "Alfie," it is Sonny Rollins' score that steals the leading role!" Recorded at Twickenham Film Studios the soundtrack features, saxophonist Sonny Rollins along with some of Britain's finest jazz musicians, Keith Christie on trombone, Tubby Hayes and Ronnie Scott on tenor sax, pianist and arranger Stan Tracey, Dave Goldberg plays guitar and Phil Seaman on drums.

### **Friday, August 9**

7:30 PM / Cinema505

"Round Midnight" (1986)

Director: Bertrand Tavernier

Cast: Dexter Gordon, François Cluzet, Sandra Reaves-Phillips

USA/ 133 Min

In the 1950s, Dale Turner (Dexter Gordon, who was nominated for an Academy Award for his performance in the film), a gifted black saxophonist with a drinking problem, leaves behind New York and his estranged family and relocates to Paris. There he plays for a progressive, jazz-loving audience without being judged by his race, and ages quietly in peace. Not intending to turn away from his vices, Dale nonetheless becomes the project of a French fan (François Cluzet) who tries to help him fight his alcoholism, ultimately inspiring both Dale and his music.

The film's music was recorded live to camera, with players like Ron Carter, Herbie Hancock, Bill Higgins, Bobby Hutcherson, John McLaughlin, and Wayne Shorter joining Dexter Gordon on classic tunes. The spontaneity of their performances is preserved, creating a beautiful homage to the ex-pat experience of jazz musicians seeking to find freedom in the City of Lights.