

Peterborough Arts Cinema

Films that make you think

Thursday 18th May at 7:30pm

Djinn and Juniper
Peterborough Science Fiction Club

Under the Shadow (2016)
Iran PG-13 | 1h 24min

Director; Babak Anvari,
Stars; Narges Rashidi, Avin
Manshadi & Bobby Naderi

Shideh (Narges Rashidi) and her family live amid the chaos of the Iran-Iraq war, a period known as The War of the Cities. Accused of subversion by the post-Revolution government and blacklisted from medical college, she falls into a state of malaise. With Tehran under the constant threat of aerial bombardment, her husband (Bobby Naderi) is drafted and sent to the frontlines by the army, leaving Shideh all alone to protect their young daughter, Dorsa (Avin Manshadi).

Wise men say that while God (who is all merciful) created angels from light and humanity from dust made the ifrit from fire and the djinn from smoke. For every human there is a djinn, but unlucky is the person who encounters their own djinn. Wise men are prone to talking foolishness at times...

In the 1940 remake of **The Thief of Bagdad** Abu the thief (played by Sabu) the first wish that the genie grants is for sausages. His second wish is to know where Ahmad (the rightful Sultan of Bagdad) is, rather than tell the boy he takes him to the temple of the Idol of the All-Seeing Eye. To gain the jewel Abu then has to fight a giant spider. When later the two are reunited, Abu accidentally wishes Ahmed to Bagdad, the genie is now free and leaves Abu in the desert.

In **A Thousand and One Nights** (1945 and featuring Phil Silvers as Aladdin's friend Abdullah, who uses 1940's slang and talks about TV) the genie of the lamp (named Babs and equally a product of the twentieth century) was played by Evelyn Keyes.

The first of Ray Harryhausen's Sinbad movies **The 7th Voyage of Sinbad** (1958) featured a cyclops, a roc, serpent women and a skeleton warrior as well Barani another genie of the lamp (or a genie of another lamp).

Barbara Eden starred in **I Dream of Jeannie** that started in 1965 when her bottle was found by astronaut Captain Tony Nelson (Larry Hagman). The series ran for five years and had a couple of reunion movies (though without Larry Hagman, however the two stars did appear together in **Dallas**).

The horror-movie series **Wishmaster** (1997 – 2002) featured an evil djinn, imprisoned in a fire opal in the twelfth century and liberated in the twentieth, much to the terror of everyone concerned.

Much lighter in tone (and content) is **Kazaam** (1996), a musical/comedy fantasy which did little the further the film career of former-basketball star Shaquille O'Neal.

The djinn returned to horror movies with the 2009 Afghanistan set **Red Sands**. The setting for Tobe Hooper's 2013 film **Djinn** was the United Arab Emirates. For **Jinn** (2014) the setting was back to America, though the central character was a Muslim-American tormented as a result of a curse upon an ancestor.

With **Under the Shadow** (2016) the venue is Tehran in the immediate aftermath of the revolution and during the war with Iraq, and Mark Kermode named the film as the best of the year.

Peterborough SF Club was founded in 1976 to promote science fiction, fantasy and horror in the city. They are looking forward to the British Fantasy Convention that is due to be held in The Bull Hotel at the end of September.



