Films de France present

A

JACQUES TATI
FILM

MONSIEUR HULOT'S HOLIDAY
"U."

Grand Prize of International Critics
CANNES FILM FESTIVAL 1953

"One of the Best Films of 1953"
SAY ALL THE LEADING FILM CRITICS
In the cold of winter, on the first bright spring day, who hasn’t longed for the summer holidays to come round again? Then we’d see new places, new faces! Everything would be different. Even we ourselves. But would we?

Instead won’t we be more like ourselves than ever? Won’t the hiking enthusiast hike, the fisherman fish, the stroller stroll, the sunbather bask, the bridge-fiends play bridge, the sportsman play tennis and ride and sail, the flirts flirt, all more actively than at home?

This then is the story of a summer holiday that might be anywhere, where one meets new people, only to find that they are old friends we’ve known all our lives. The French have a phrase for it—“Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.”
The STORY

Monsieur Hulot sets off to the seaside in a contraption that visibly has four wheels, audibly—and very audibly—possesses some form of engine but which otherwise hardly resembles any known make of car, dead or alive.

On the road, he is bullied by giant American cars, dogs, buses, bicycles and jay-walkers, but finally reaches his destination, the one and only hotel on a deliciously small, sandy beach in Brittany. He introduces himself to his fellow-guests in the most unfortunate manner, though his manners are very old-world indeed.

Monsieur Hulot overflows with kindness. He exudes good will to all but, either by bad luck or bad judgment, his every move sets in train a series of minor and major disasters.

Does the wind blow? He leaves open the door—and newspapers, hats, tablecloths fly in all directions. Does he go on the beach? A pleasure boat on a slipway mysteriously launches itself. Does he go canoeing? His craft sinks ignominiously beneath the weight of his personality. Does he play tennis? His unorthodox service batters the pride—and the persons—of his opponents. Does he hire a horse? His mount is a mule that fully lives up to the reputation of his breed, much to the discomfort of Monsieur Hulot and an unoffending onlooker. Does he start off for a picnic or an excursion in his rattles-trap car? A series of accidents to his passengers and the car end unexpectedly in a cemetery and a country house. Does he try to put his best foot forward with the local glamour-girl? He does, and usually trips up right before her eyes.

The list of all poor Monsieur Hulot’s misadventures gets longer as day follows day at the seaside resort. The eve of departure comes and with it the greatest disaster of all, which revolves around fireworks—which in turn revolve around Monsieur Hulot, and most of the visitors.

Yet when the farewells are said, there is a good deal of sadness among his fellow-guests. After all, Monsieur Hulot did mean well—and he did make them laugh more often than he made them cross.

Cert. "U"  Length 8,200 ft.

Running time 91 mins.  10 reels.
LAUGHTER -- AND PRAISE -- UNLIMITED

Sunday Times—
Ravishingly funny—I laughed from beginning to end.

Daily Express—
Malicious and delightfully funny—had me laughing out loud with more enjoyment than any other comedy this year.

Daily Herald—
Hilarious chaos. His final escapade is one of the funniest bits of visual cinema since Chaplin made “The Gold Rush.” This film must be seen.

Evening News—
Leaves your eyes sticky with tears and your stomach muscles aching.

Sunday Chronicle—
Excruciatingly funny—I delightedly commend it.

Reynolds—
Laughter unlimited.

Sunday Dispatch—
Really very, very funny.

Daily Mail—
Gentleness, polish, inspired lunacy. Don’t miss this one.

News Chronicle—
Chaos—glorious and unconfined.

Star—
Very, very funny.

What’s On—
Bristles with comedy—one of the biggest cinematic laughs of the year.

New Statesman—
This new harliquinade is both funnier and more stylish than “Jour de Fete”—Tati achieves the ecstasy of fun.

Time and Tide—
A joy for ever.

Tatler—
The most refreshing, beguiling and hopeful event in several film years.

Kine Weekly—

The Cinema—
Brilliantly fresh and original clowning. Non-stop gags. Irresistible comedy offering.

Daily Film Renter—
Excellent laugh-a-second comedy of wide appeal. Took the Critics Grand Prize at Cannes—it deserved it.

... and M. Hulot even had Mr. Punch in stitches ...