

## The Illusionist

UK / France 2010

**Directed by**  
Sylvain Chomet

**Original Screenplay**  
Jacques Tati

**Art Director**  
Bjarne Hansen

**Score Composed by**  
Sylvain Chomet

**Voice Cast**  
*Tatischeff*  
Jean-Claude Donda

*Alice*  
Eilidh Rankin

*French cinema manager*  
Jean-Claude Donda

*Additional voices*  
Duncan MacNeil  
Raymond Mearns  
James T Muir  
Tom Urie

80 minutes

As part of our effort to take the Winchester Film Society on the road and experiment with different venues, we are delighted to be hosting our first ever event at The Point. Many thanks to Sarah, Harper and all at The Point for making tonight's screening possible. If you're new to WFS, we have a regular season every October to May at The Screen in Winchester, and occasionally organise additional screenings. Enjoy!

One of the several scripts that Tati wrote but never got round to filming, this heartbreaking and gentle farce was originally intended to feature Tati and his young daughter. But now it's adaptation into the realm of imagination has resulted in a picture that is at once mesmerizingly beautiful and subtly, emotionally nuanced in a way that only Pixar's animated features have managed to approximate of late. It is not just the most magnificent animated film of the past year, but also one of the best films of the year, period. Tati, I think, would be delighted. *The Illusionist* is absolutely mandatory viewing for aspiring animators and filmmakers. (In terms of pacing, scoring, editing and narrative, it's a film school until itself. For the rest of us, however, it's simply magic.

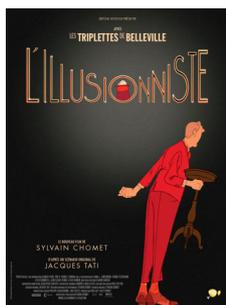
Marc Savlov, *The Austin Chronicle*

*The Illusionist* represents the magically melancholy final act of Jacques Tati's career. Tati, of course, was the tall Frenchman, bowing from the waist, pipe in mouth, often wearing a trench coat, pants too short, always the center of befuddlements. If you've seen *Mr. Hulot's Holiday* you know who he was, and if you haven't, it belongs on your must-see list. Tati, who died in 1982, wrote the screenplay for this film but never made it. He intended it for live action. As the story goes, his daughter Sophie Tatischeff still had the script and handed it to Sylvain Chomet. Chomet has drawn it with a lightness and beauty worthy of an older, sadder Miyazaki story. Animation suits it. Live action would overwhelm its delicate fancy with realism. If you recall the opening scenes of *Up*, you know that animation is sometimes more effective than live action for conveying the arc of a life. This magician does what he does well, but there's no longer a purpose for him. Did Tati feel the same when he wrote this in the 1950s, before "Hulot" was a success? Important to the charm of *The Illusionist* is the grace with which the character of Tatischeff has been drawn. He looks like Tati, but more important, he has the inimitable body language - the polite formality, the deliberate movement, the hesitation, the diffidence.

Roger Egbert, *Chicago Sun-Times*

Our 11/12 season ...

... at The Screen in Winchester will start in October. If you want to join our mailing list, send your details through to [graham.lumb@gmail.com](mailto:graham.lumb@gmail.com)



Voting for *Waste Land*: A-19 B-8 C-0 D-0 E-0 Attendance: 38 Rating: 92.6%