



**Welcome to the opening film in ABCD's new
Online programme which we hope will provide you
with some cinematic sustenance in these Covid restricted days**

Bringing Up Baby

USA 1938 102mins Cert U

In this engagingly bizarre story, sappy socialite Susan Vance (Katharine Hepburn) and absent-minded palaeontology professor David Huxley (Cary Grant) hunt for her missing pet leopard (the Baby of the title) and a fossil - the latter stolen by the heroine's dog, while Major Horace Applegate (Charles Ruggles) makes loony 'phone calls (don't ask!). All the increasingly befuddled Huxley is trying to do is secure a \$1 million donation for his museum.

Director Hawks' priceless farce is high on the list of the all-time great American film comedies, being distinguished by a truly witty screenplay (by Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde - based on the latter's story) that's packed with endless funny situations and hilarious lines. Hawks takes all the nonsense, as you must with farce, at a breathless gallop, frantically picking up the pace into a frenzy.

Bringing Up Baby is most fondly remembered for the delightful, delirious, slapstick playing from a perfectly matched Hepburn and Grant. Adding enormously to its appeal, not one of the magnificent supporting cast puts a foot wrong - Ruggles is hilarious, May Robson is superbly bewildered as Aunt Elizabeth and Fritz Feld has a field day as the psychiatrist.

An admired classic today, the film (surprisingly) flopped commercially on its release, perhaps because Hepburn was then suffering under the soubriquet of 'box-office poison', because of disputes with her studio. Now it's valued especially because of the impeccable star pairing, its good humour and its genius in turning nonsense into an art form. Hawks blamed the film's box-office failure on its characters being too madcap, with no straight men or women to ground it. This, of course, is the film's actual appeal.

Bringing Up Baby was reworked by old movie buff Peter Bogdanovich as *What's Up Doc?* in 1972 with Barbra Streisand and Ryan O'Neil which we've screened twice - once in 1976 and again in 2015.

Acknowledgements: Derek Winnert, derekwinnert.com

"Without peradventure of a doubt *Bring Up Baby* will take its place among the most insane comedies of the year, and yet one of the most original [...] fantastically amusing [with] never a dull moment. And you can't tell what's going to happen next"
Anon, *Los Angeles Times*, Feb 19th 1938

Leading Players

Katharine Hepburn
Cary Grant
Charlie Ruggles
Mary Robson
Fritz Feld

Susan Vance
David Huxley
Major Applegate
Aunt Elizabeth
Dr Lehman

Production Credits

Director Howard Hawks
Producers Cliff Reid, Howard Hawks (uncredited)
Screenplay Dudley Nichols, Hagar Wilde
Cinematography Russell Metty DP
Original Music Max Steiner (uncredited)

Zoom discussion meeting link

<https://zoom.us/j/93926745055?pwd=V3lBUzNoVHViSINlZmZBa0kzdk40QT09>

Meeting ID: 939 2674 5055 Passcode: kekq9U

October 29th - 7.30pm to 8.15pm



ABCD Film Society Online

Tel: 01235-521976/522163

<https://abfilms.org.uk>

CINEMA

For **ALL**