

FILM

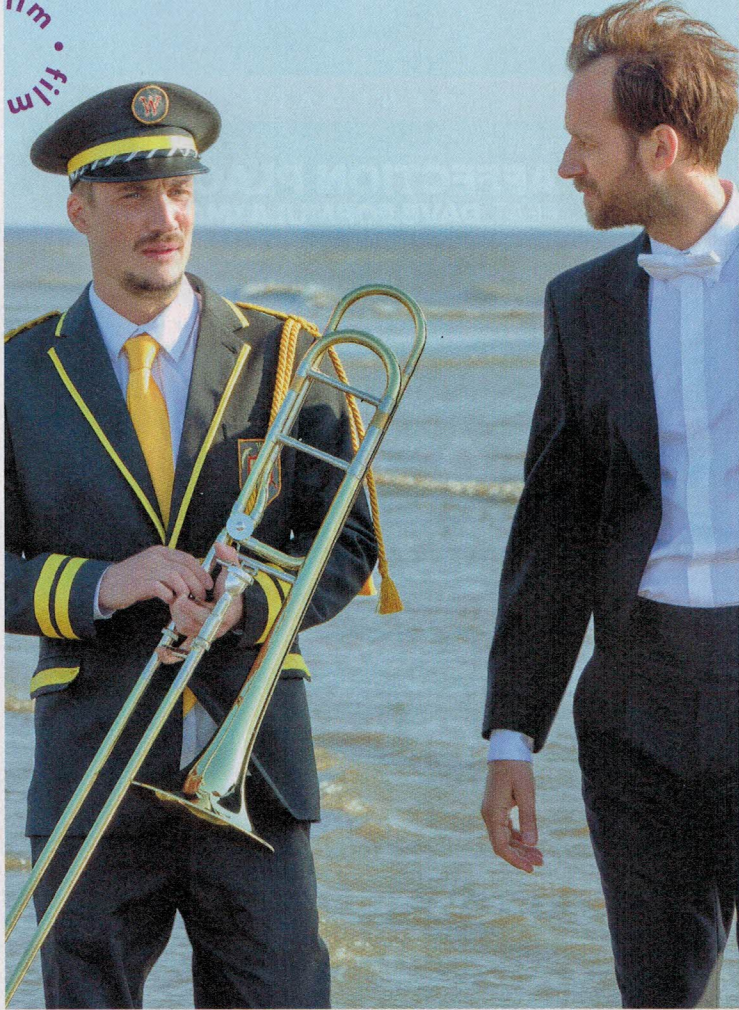
THE MARCHING BAND

You might say Emmanuel Courcol has taken the baton with his new film *The Marching Band*. After Bradley Cooper's *Maestro* and the Cate Blanchett-starring *Tár*, the French writer-director is following suit with another film about a classical conductor. Just don't point that out to him. 'I don't want to be part of a fashion trend,' he sighs. Courcol's film is a little different. It tells the story of Thibaut (Benjamin Lavernhe), an acclaimed conductor who has leukemia and needs a bone marrow transplant. It's a journey that leads him to discover not only that he was adopted, but that he has a brother Jimmy (Pierre Lottin), a trombone player and factory worker.

While the siblings get acquainted after Jimmy becomes Thibaut's donor, it's clear that life dealt them very different hands. Courcol wanted to explore 'the injustice of destiny,' as he puts it. 'Sometimes the family or the social class you're born in makes your fate, so that's the injustice of it. If you're not born in a favourable condition, it's very hard to catch up on what you've been missing.'

His research included watching *Tár*, which made him realise just how much he'd need from his actor. Lavernhe went into training, working with real-life conductor Antoine Dutilleul to perfect his baton-waving skills. 'Benjamin said he wanted to be at least as good as Cate Blanchett. So when they met in Cannes, he told her that, and he was quite happy with the results.' That result is a feelgood film which has already performed well at the French box office, drawing comparisons to British effort *Brassed Off* (which was set around a depressed industrial northern town, not unlike the choice of Lille here). Whatever the struggles, Courcol wanted his tune to be ultimately upbeat. 'I do see a lot of warmth, hospitality and solidarity in the people living in that part of France.' (James Mottram)

■ In cinemas from Friday 16 May.



MUSIC
CLYDE CHORUS

The city of Glasgow is celebrating its 850th birthday this year, and what better way to commemorate the occasion than with a three-day weekend jamboree of its storied musical history. A UNESCO City Of Music, Glasgow's sonic achievements are well documented, and the eclectic Clyde Chorus line-up plays host to a collection of Scotland's most exciting artists.

Spread out across six locations, organisers have done an excellent job of showing off Glasgow's impressive array of stages. One particularly unique host venue is The Savings Bank, a lavish Victorian remnant nestled between a baklava shop and a Chinese restaurant in the Southside. The Glasgow Mela and Glasgow Jazz Festival Showcase will take over the former financial hub on the Friday evening, with a rich line-up that includes Mama Terra, a four-person strong collective of local acid-jazz aficionados. Indie rockers Lucia & The Best Boys will shake the walls of the old bank the following afternoon, followed by a trad takeover led by Celtic Connections in the evening. Included in those Celtic celebrations is songstress Siobhan Miller who has been crowned Best Singer at the Scots Trad Music Awards not once, not twice (not even thrice), but four times.

Clyde Chorus-goers seeking a new-age Scottish sound should head to Box Hub on Friday evening, where Triple01s are set to give an energetic demonstration of a unique brand of Glaswegian drill. Performing at The Pearce Institute (aka The PI) the following afternoon is alt-pop hero Nina Nesbitt, though you may need to stand outside the venue with a wad of cash and a strong sense of optimism if you haven't already sourced a ticket. (Danny Munro)

■ Various venues, Glasgow, Thursday 29–Saturday 31 May.