With the Sydney and Melbourne film festivals under their belts, many ALR readers may well feel they've had Film up to their eyeballs. But think again. There's a veritable deluge of crucial celluloid upon us at the moment, and Disinformation thinks it only proper to bring readers' attention to two pics in particular. Mike Leigh's High Hopes (which hasn't opened yet) is the latest in a string of chronicles of (yes, you've guessed it) the seamy side of Thatcher's Britain. But this one's got a novel twist. In Leigh's future Britain the two-thirds/one-third society is here with a vengeance. The two-thirds have become identikit yuppies, it seems, getting stuck right into the home renovations and the two-week fads. The other third's a woebegone, mouldering underclass living on yesterday's dreams and last fortnight's dole cheque. Cyril and Shirlie, the film's anti-heroes, are shadows of 'sixties radicalism drifting in the Twentyfirst Century margins in a haze of political nostalgia and wishful thinking. Perhaps a parable with a wider than British resonance ...

High Hopes opens at Melbourne's Kino on July 21. Salaam Bombay was voted best film by the audience at Sydney's film festival in June. A far cry from the staple violence-and-romance of India's film industry, it's a chronicle of Bombay's street kids, starring the kids themselves. In order to make the film in Bombay's red light district, the filmmakers had to present a special case to the city's madam's union. In return for a cash deal and a promise not to film during late-night working hours, director Mira Nair was given free rein. The film's already been an unlikely success in Paris and New York. Now it's about to open, belatedly, in Bombay itself. Catch it at the Dendy in Sydney or the Kino in Melbourne, now.

Among the other little gems around at the moment is the remarkable stayer Bagdad Cafe, described by The Age as "cleverly controlled whimsy set among a group of eccentrics in the Mojave Desert", and featuring the Rubensesque talents of Marianne Sagebrecht. It's still going strong after several months at the Kino in Melbourne and the Mandolin in Sydney. Distant Voices, Still Lives is the film which, according to one critic, finally disproved Truffaut's old maxim about 'British cinema' being a contradiction in terms. A passionate evocation of working class memories, neither nostalgic nor bitter, it's also still a survivor at the Kino. After a long stint at the AFI cinema in Sydney, it's now been relegated to the upmarket Cremorne Orpheum. Business as Usual, starring Glenda Jackson and the increasingly impressive Cathy Tyson, is a stirring piece of straight-down-the-line agitprop on the subject of sexual harrassment. It's still showing at, you guessed it, the Kino. And of course, for those taking a break from agitprop, the rip-roaring matinee action of Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (see the review in this issue) is on the Greater Union circuit in Sydney, and at the Russell cinemas in Melbourne. But be warned: if you've a secret horror of the species rodent, this may not be the movie for you.