Ian Mundell

DVD

Expo 58

If you are taken with the 1950s atomic style of the Film Museum’s temporary venue in the Shell building, you should immerse yourself in its excellent 165-minute DVD, Expo 58. This was the World’s Fair that gave Brussels the Atomium and preached a brighter future through science.

The Atomium may have been the Expo’s centrepiece but, as these archive films (all subtitled in English) show, it was only one element in a futuristic international city constructed for six months at Heysel. Three documentaries give reverential and cynical tours of the buildings, while newsreel footage shows the steps taken to prepare the city. It is thanks to the Expo that Brussels has its road tunnels, for example.

Also on the DVD, two promotional films provide the political background, positioning the 58 World’s Fair at the summit of humanistic culture, while one amateur film gives a more succinct commentary, cutting from the Soviet pavilion to the American, before focusing on footloose tourists gathered around the fountains.

Visit www.cinematheque.be.

Vintage montage: Expo 58

The Bulletin

28/08/66