

THE REX

PROGRAMME

INTO THE WOODS
FEBRUARY 2015

"possibly Britain's most beautiful cinema.." (BBC)
Britain's Best Cinema - Guardian Film Awards 2014

FEBRUARY 2015 • ISSUE 119
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Mon-Sat 10.30-6.30pm Sun 4.30-5.30pm

THE-REX

CINEMA BERKHAMSTED

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Mon to Sat 10.30-6.30

Sun 4.30-5.30

SEAT PRICES

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Concessions £9.50

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The Rex
High Street (Three Close Lane)
Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2FG
www.therexberkhamsted.com

“Unhesitatingly The Rex is the best cinema I have ever..” (STimes Culture)

VALENTINE'S DAY



BRIEF ENCOUNTER

“Nothing lasts really. Neither happiness nor despair.”

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FILMS OF THE MONTH



TESTAMENT OF YOUTH

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FEBRUARY FILMS



Paddington

From the beloved novels by Michael Bond and with an all star cast including Jim Broadbent, Hugh Bonneville and Sally Hawkins, **Paddington** tells the story of the comic misadventures of a young Peruvian bear (Ben Wishaw) whom, after crossing oceans ends up in London in search of a new home. Lost and alone, until he encounters the kindly Brown family, it looks like his luck has changed until this rarest of bears catches the eye of the museum taxidermist (Nicole Kidman as fab Panto villain).

"A charming and sweet-natured family film, full of wit and fun, skewed towards young children but cheekily speckled with sly gags pitched at the older audience." (*Guardian*)

"Paddington is enchanting." (*Standard*)

"Endearing, hilarious, and for humans of a certain vintage, tearfully nostalgic." (*Times*)

"Through it all runs the touching story of an outsider making a new home for himself, and discovering that in the end, whatever our differences, anyone in London can fit in." (*Independent*)

"Please look after this bear says the tag around Paddington's neck. Rest assured, they have." (*Observer*)

We all know the story, come and see if they get it half-right. Bring the street.

Director: Paul King
 Cast: Ben Whishaw, Sally Hawkins,
 Hugh Bonneville
 Duration: 95 mins
 Origin: UK 2014
 Certificate: PG

When...

Sun 1 6.00
Wed 4 2.00
Sat 28 2.00



Testament Of Youth

When the writer Vera Brittain died in 1970, aged 76, after a campaigning life dedicated to working for peace and women's rights, her reputation was at its nadir. Her daughter, Baroness Shirley Williams, remembers "she believed that as a writer she had been forgotten, the fading voice of a dying generation." Yet her 1933 memoir of her early days and her experiences of bereavement and feminist struggle during the First World War was a bestseller again within a decade of her death.

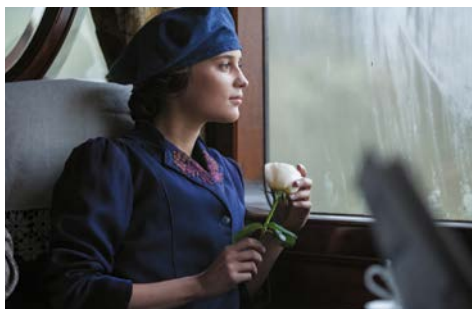
Brittan's experiences as a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse in hospitals at home and abroad, and her personal losses in the killing fields of France, are the focus of the film. Alicia Vikander finds perfect pitch in the role.

"Traditional, heartfelt and stirring in all the right ways, a natural successor to the war romances of Powell and Pressburger." (*Times*)

"...Desperately moving." (*Standard*)

"Once or twice, in her (Vikander's) glorious performance as Vera Brittain in Testament of Youth, you can hear a telltale Scandinavian vowel drop. It's worth the trade." ??? (*The Daily Telegraph*)

Where do you think the Telegraph finds these anal fingering types? Dismiss them all, good and bad. But don't miss this.



Director: James Kent
Cast: Dominic West, Kit Harrington, Hayley Atwell
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: UK 2015
Certificate: 12A

When...

Mon 2	2.00, 7.30
Tue 3	12.30, 7.30
Wed 4	7.30
Thur 12	2.00
Wed 18	2.00, 7.30
Thur 19	7.30



Director: Morten Tyldum
 Cast: Benedict Cumberbatch, Keira Knightley
 Duration: 113 mins
 Origin: UK/USA
 Certificate: 12A

The Imitation Game

Based on Andrew Hodges' biography and marking the English-language debut of Norwegian director, Morten Tyldum (Headhunters) **The Imitation Game begins with Turing's (Benedict Cumberbatch) arrest in 1951.** Little did officials know the law would change and they were incriminating the pioneer of modern-day computing. Famously leading a motley group of scholars, linguists, chess champions and intelligence officers, Turing was credited with cracking the codes of Germany's World War II Enigma machine.

Flashbacks to his schooldays and his years at Bletchley Park paint a touching account of a man with few intellectual equals, even fewer social graces and no friends. Turing alienates his colleagues, exasperates his military masters and seems blithely unaware of the impact his blunt candour has on those around him. His rational mind also makes him blind to the sexism of his era as he becomes a fond champion of Joan Clarke (Keira Knightley) an equally formidable intellect with the disadvantage of being a mere 'gel'. Benedict Cumberbatch is nominated for an Oscar, but sadly up against Eddie Redmayne. "It's the performance of his career in what is also possibly the best British film of the year." (*Independent*)

When...

Thu 5 2.00, 7.30
Wed 25 2.00



The Theory Of Everything

Stephen Hawking won a post graduate place at Cambridge after cleverly blagging a 1st class honours in Theoretical Physics from Oxford to eventually become the celebrated author of the colossal *A Brief History of Time*. Not to mention: the cleverest, most famous crippled man in his own brief history of all time.

It is adapted from Jane Hawking's tender memoir.

As the film progresses, alongside Stephen's illness, we hear of his relationships, the people he loved who loved him and those he lost along the way.

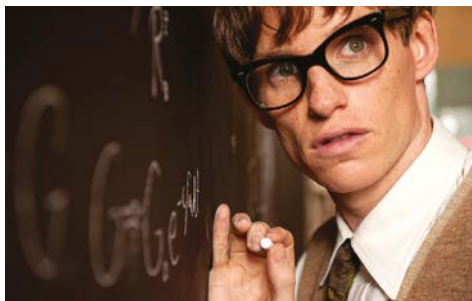
Forging close friendships here at school in St Albans, it is pretty certain Stephen would have seen a film at the Odeon?

Eddie Redmayne excels as he grows more and more into Stephen, from healthy, all dancing young buck into a motor neurone lump at 21, encumbered still with a frustrating, extraordinary mind.

It will be back and back, and Eddie Redmayne looks like pipping Benedict Cumberbatch to the Oscar post. It's a pain and shame both of these truly excellent British films are out in the same year.

"Breath taking... Heart breaking"

(*Entertainment Weekly*)



Director: James Marsh
 Cast: Eddie Redmayne, Felicity Jones, David Thewlis, Emily Watson
 Duration: 123 mins
 Origin: USA 2013
 Certificate: 12A

When...

Fri	6	7.30
Sat	7	7.00
Sun	8	6.00
Tue	10	12.30, 7.30
Wed	11	2.00, 7.30



Director: Shawn Levy
 Cast: Ben Stiller, Ben Kingsley, Owen Wilson, Robin Williams, Steve Coogan
 Duration: 98 mins
 Origin: USA 2014
 Certificate: PG

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb

Night at The Museum: Secret of the Tomb begins in uproarious fashion when security guard turned curator, Larry (Ben Stiller) organises a special effects show at the Museum of Natural History involving the characters and stuffed animals from the museum.

They run amok, terrifying the wealthy patrons. The cause for this behaviour is the fact that the magic Tablet of Akhmenrah, the Egyptian artefact that brings the Museum's various exhibits to life, is starting to corrode, and its power withering. That means that various characters that Larry has befriended over the years – Teddy Roosevelt (Robin Williams in his final film. Pity.) Egyptian pharaoh, Akhmenrah (Rami Malek), miniature cowboy, Jedediah (Owen Wilson) and Roman general, Octavius (Steve Coogan) among others, are all in danger of turning back to their stiff, lifeless, wax/porcelain selves. This necessitates a trip to the British Museum, where the rest of Akhmenrah's family can be found (including Ben Kingsley as his father) and where Larry has to sort matters out. "After two middling instalments, the third Night At The Museum is finally one to remember" (*Total Film*) or not... (*research Jane Clucas*) Come for the fab CGI stuff in Trafalgar Square.

When...

Sat 7 2.00
 Tue 17 12.30



Mr Turner

A supremely enjoyable biopic of the British artist known as 'the painter of light' Joseph Mallord William Turner, played tenderly by Timothy Spall (who spent two years learning to apply paint to canvas as Turner is said to have done).

The film begins in 1826, with Turner 51 years old. He works from a studio in his London town house where his housekeeper Hannah and elderly father, William Senior keep things ticking over.

The film spans a quarter century until his death in 1851 and follows him wherever he goes.

In Margate, Turner meets a friendly landlady (Marion Bailey) who comes to play an important role in his later life.

At the Royal Academy we see him walking around, joking curmudgeonly with friends and winding up John Constable.

We get towed into the paintings as he creates them: The Fighting Temeraire and Rain, Steam and Speed.

"If there is one film you should see on the largest screen possible (at the Rex and Odyssey) this year, it is Mr Turner, a joyous bellyflop into the seascapes of his paintings." (*Times*)

It's Mike Leigh, overlong and measured to within a hair, but it's Timothy Spall's finest bottom-lip moment.

Director: Mike Leigh
 Cast: Timothy Spall, Marion Bailey, Paul Jesson
 Duration: 149 mins
 Origin: UK 2014
 Certificate: 12A

When...

Mon 9 2.00



The Green Prince

Set against the chaotic backdrop of events in the Middle East, Nadav Schirman's film retraces the details of a highly unprecedented partnership that developed between sworn enemies.

In the style of a tense psychological thriller, this extraordinary documentary recounts the true story of two men, Mosab Hassan Yousef, the son of a Hamas leader, who emerged as one of Israel's prized informants, and the Shin Bet agent, Gonen Ben Yitzhak, who risked his career to protect him. Accepting from the outset that his actions would be interpreted as unforgivable betrayal (someone who "raped their own mother" would seem less shameful, says Yousef) our edgily eloquent subject explains how he supplied information both to prevent terrorist attacks and to protect his father, Sheikh Hassan Yousef. Meanwhile Yitzhak describes the bond of trust that grew between him and Yousef; a bond that saw the informant's "handler" turned upon by his own organisation, leaving both men out in the cold.

"It's a remarkable story, told with slick thriller flair." (*Observer*)

"Depending on your perspective, Nadav Schirman's troubling documentary is either a story about heroism and friendship or a study in extreme treachery." (*Independent*) Don't miss this extraordinary film.

Director: Nadav Schirman
 Cast: Mosab Hassan Yousef, Gonen Ben Yitzhak
 Duration: 101 mins
 Origin: Germany 2014
 Certificate: 15

When...

Mon 9 7.30



Director: Ridley Scott
 Cast: Christian Bale, Joel Edgerton, Ben Kingsley
 Duration: 150 mins
 Origin: USA 2015
 Certificate: 12A

Exodus: Gods and Kings

Ridley Scott continues to do what he does best - unleashing cinematic hell over expansive landscapes, and not much else.

Believing his birthright entails him to a life high on the Egyptian hog (circa 1300 BC), Moses (Christian Bale) is a man who doggedly tends to hard diplomatic graft while his ineffectual brother-in-arms and actual heir to the throne, Ramses (Joel Edgerton) bumbles around in a selection of shimmering frocks and nibbles from handily-placed platters.

Discovering his Hebrew heritage by accident, Moses is duly banished from the kingdom he helped to build, his political foresight now noticeably absent as Ramses constructs narcissistic monuments to himself by summarily abusing his legions of Hebrew slaves. Following a long wander through the desert, Moses looks inside himself and decides that he's been put on this Earth to lead his people to freedom.

Try as he might, but Scott can't quite infuse the characters with any meaningful depth; so if we're comparing Biblical epics, I'd take the oddball antics of Noah over this, but squabbling rivalries aside, the digital plagues do look lovely! *(Jack Whiting)*
 Must be seen on an epic screen...

When...

Thu 12 7.30
Fri 13 7.30



Annie

Quvenzhané Wallis stars as Annie (Quvenzhané's the youngest ever Oscar nominee: Best Actress for *Beasts of the Southern Wild*). Annie is a young, happy foster kid who is also tough enough to make her way on the streets of New York in 2014. Originally left by her parents as a baby with the promise that they'd be back for her someday, it's been a hard knock life ever since with her mean foster mother, Miss Hannigan (Cameron Diaz). But everything's about to change when the hard-nosed tycoon and New York mayoral candidate, Will Stacks (Jamie Foxx) advised by his brilliant Vice President and his shrewd and scheming campaign advisor (Rose Byrne) makes a thinly-veiled campaign move and takes her in. Stacks believes he's her guardian angel, but Annie's self-assured nature and bright, sun-will-come-out-tomorrow outlook on life just might mean it's the other way round. "Foxy himself just about emerges from this mess intact, largely by keeping his performance fairly restrained. But everyone and everything else is drowning in goo." (*Guardian*) "Quvenzhané Wallis is delightful without being twee." (*New Statesmen*) "There's not much delight to be had in an orphan's bedazzlement by this corporate paradise." (*Telegraph*) (research Jane Clucas)

Director: Will Gluck
 Cast: Quvenzhané Wallis, Cameron Diaz, Jamie Foxx
 Duration: 118 mins
 Origin: USA 2014
 Certificate: PG

When...

Sat 14 2.00



VALENTINE'S DAY

Brief Encounter

Lean's international reputation was established with this study of unfulfilled passion and guilt; themes that would recur in his later work and all but taboo here at the end of the war when only uplifting happily ever after films were being made?

If not unheard of, infidelity was taboo, firmly hidden in heavy duty lead-lined serge pants, during the war years. Critically debated, mocked, referenced and remade, this account of an unconsummated affair between a middleclass housewife and a doctor, forced to meet at a railway station, retains a tight emotional grip on contemporary audiences. In 2010, Kneehigh Theatre Co set it in a West End cinema to packed houses and rave reviews. It is its quintessentially polite, posh, awkward Englishness which sets it apart. Where else would you find such suppressed passion bursting from the line: "just one last cup of tea...?"

Director: David Lean
 Cast: Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard, Stanley Holloway, Joyce Carey
 Duration: 86 mins
 Origin: UK 1945
 Certificate: PG

When...

Sat 14 7.00

THE ODYSSEY

FEBRUARY FILMS: 01727 453088

DATE	FILM	TIME
1 SUN	THE HOBBIT: BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES	6.00
2 MON	THE IMITATION GAME	7.30
3 TUE	THE IMITATION GAME	7.30
4 WED	THE IMITATION GAME	2.00
4 WED	PADDINGTON	7.30
5 THU	BIRDMAN	7.30
6 FRI	EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS	7.30
7 SAT	ANNIE	2.00
7 SAT	EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS	7.00
8 SUN	PRIDE	6.00
9 MON	ANNIE	7.30
10 TUE	GONE GIRL	7.30
11 WED	NORTHERN SOUL	2.00
11 WED	BIG EYES	7.30
12 THU	NORTHERN SOUL	7.30
13 FRI	THE IMITATION GAME	7.30
14 SAT	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 3	2.00
14 SAT	VALENTINE'S DAY: CASABLANCA	7.00
15 SUN	PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR	1.30
15 SUN	BOYHOOD	6.00
16 MON	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 3	2.00
16 MON	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	7.30
17 TUE	FROZEN SINGALONG	2.00
17 TUE	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	7.30
18 WED	ANNIE	2.00
18 WED	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	7.30
19 THU	PADDINGTON	2.00
19 THU	FOXCATCHER	7.30
20 FRI	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	7.30
21 SAT	JUNGLE BOOK	2.00
21 SAT	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	7.00
22 SUN	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	1.30, 6.00
23 MON	AMERICAN SNIPER	7.30
24 TUE	AMERICAN SNIPER	7.30
25 WED	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	2.00
25 WED	WILD	7.30
26 THU	A MOST VIOLENT YEAR	7.30
27 FRI	INTO THE WOODS	7.30
28 SAT	INTO THE WOODS	2.00, 7.00

COMING SOON REX & ODYSSEY

BACK BY DEMAND

A Most Violent Year
Theory of Everything
Testament of Youth
American Sniper

NEW RELEASES

50 Shades of Grey
Kingsman
Second Best Marigold Hotel
White God



50 Shades Of Grey



Kingsman



Second Best Marigold Hotel

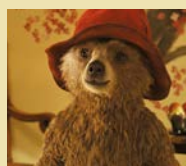
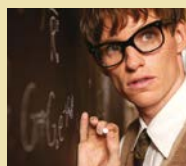


White God

THE-REX

FEBRUARY FILMS:
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DATE	FILM	TIME	PAGE
1 SUN	PADDINGTON	6.00	8
2 MON	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	2.00, 7.30	9
3 TUE	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	12.30, 7.30	9
4 WED	PADDINGTON	2.00	8
4 WED	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	7.30	9
5 THU	THE IMITATION GAME	2.00, 7.30	10
6 FRI	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	7.30	11
7 SAT	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: SECRET OF THE TOMB	2.00	12
7 SAT	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	7.00	11
8 SUN	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	6.00	11
9 MON	MR TURNER	2.00	13
9 MON	THE GREEN PRINCE	7.30	13
10 TUE	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	12.30, 7.30	11
11 WED	THEORY OF EVERYTHING	2.00, 7.30	11
12 THU	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	2.00	9
12 THU	EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS	7.30	14
13 FRI	EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS	7.30	14
14 SAT	ANNIE	2.00	15
14 SAT	VALENTINES DAY: BRIEF ENCOUNTER	7.00	15
15 SUN	THE HOBBIT: BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES	6.00	18
16 MON	THE HOBBIT: BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES	2.00	18
16 MON	BIG EYES	7.30	19
17 TUE	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: SECRET OF THE TOMB	12.30	12
17 TUE	FOXCATCHER	7.30	19
18 WED	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	2.00, 7.30	9
19 THU	FROZEN SINGALONG	2.00	20
19 THU	TESTAMENT OF YOUTH	7.30	9
20 FRI	INTO THE WOODS	7.30	20
21 SAT	INTO THE WOODS	2.00, 7.00	20
22 SUN	WILD	6.00	21
23 MON	WILD	2.00	21
23 MON	LEVIATHAN	7.30	22
24 TUE	WILD	12.30, 7.30	21
25 WED	THE IMITATION GAME	2.00	10
25 WED	AMERICAN SNIPER	7.30	22
26 THU	AMERICAN SNIPER	2.00, 7.30	22
27 FRI	TRASH	7.30	23
28 SAT	PADDINGTON	2.00	8
28 SAT	TRASH	7.00	23





The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies

By now there's no use converting the unconvinced. As the 'defining chapter' graces our screens in all its bombastic sheen, that poor little book has been stretched into nearly nine hours.

We pick up right where chapter two left off. The dragon Smaug (Benedict Cumberbatch's soothing tones) has escaped and heads straight for the nearby town. Now that Bilbo (Martin Freeman), Thorin (Richard Armitage) and his band of dwarves have conquered the mountain, a much larger challenge awaits them.

Meanwhile Sir Ian McGandalf (hint: he'll be the main McGrey in the [future-past?] Lord of the Rings) arrives just in time to warn our heroes of an impending evil with armies of orcs and goblins on the march. They join an increasingly crowded battle royale including elves, eagles, and men that make up the chaotic third act.

"The modest subtitle to Tolkien's original book was *There and Back Again*. The films have pumped this up to: *There. And there! Almost There! Not Quite There! Not Quite Almost There!*" (*Guardian*) At least, wherever "There" is, it is almost finally over this time...?

Director: Peter Jackson
 Cast: Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Cate Blanchett
 Duration: 144 mins
 Origin: New Zealand/USA 2014
 Certificate: 12A

When...

Sun 15 6.00
Mon 16 2.00



Big Eyes

Tim Burton's most intimate and subtle film since *Ed Wood* (1994) with whom it shares its writers. Gorgeously shot in widescreen colour, a refreshing change of pace for Hollywood's oddity. Based on the real life story of an artist in the 50s/60s known as 'Keane', who painted ghoulish and naïve pictures of women and children with very big eyes.

At the heart of *Big Eyes* is a gigantic fraud. The outside world believed that Keane's work was done by Walter Keane (Christoph Waltz) when, in fact, his wife Margaret was responsible for everything. (Amy Adams recently won the 2015 Golden Globe for Best Actress in this role).

Big Eyes works both as a biopic and as a timelessly relevant piece of social commentary.

"It's not the kind of performance that screams for attention. No showboating physical transformation or wrenching psychological endurance test. As the artist Margaret Keane, Amy Adams is quietly extraordinary." (*Times*)

"Despite its sharp feminist sting, *Big Eyes* never loses its light touch. Maybe the lesson here is that Burton should venture out of his dark, creepy comfort zone more often." (*Entertainment Weekly*) (research Anna Shepherd)

Director: Tim Burton
 Cast: Christoph Waltz, Amy Adams, Terence Stamp
 Duration: 106 mins
 Origin: USA 2014
 Certificate: 12A

When...

Mon 16 7.30



Foxcatcher

Based on actual events, *Foxcatcher* tells the story of Olympic Gold Medal-winning wrestler, Mark Schultz (Channing Tatum), who sees a way out from the shadow of his more celebrated wrestling brother, Dave (Mark Ruffalo) and a life of poverty when he is summoned by eccentric multi-millionaire, John du Pont (Steve Carell) to move onto his estate and train for the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Du Pont had for 10 years maintained a private training camp for wrestlers, called Foxcatcher after the family racing stable.

Desperate to gain the respect of his disapproving mother (Vanessa Redgrave), du Pont begins "coaching" a world-class athletic team and lures Mark into dangerous habits, breaks his confidence and driving him into a self-destructive spiral.

"Steve Carell, Channing Tatum and Mark Ruffalo give career-best performances in the horribly compelling true story of the billionaire who mentored a US Olympic wrestling team." (*Guardian*) "Extremely well crafted in a wintry, slow burning way but has an emptiness at its core." (*Independent*)

"It appears to be about wrestling but is in fact a disturbing, testosterone-rich tour of the inadequacies of a deranged American billionaire." (*Times*) An Oscar for a horribly distracting prosthetic nose...? It's happened before.

Director: Bennett Miller
 Cast: Steve Carell, Channing Tatum, Mark Ruffalo
 Duration: 134 mins
 Origin: USA 2015
 Certificate: 15

When...

Tue 17 7.30



Frozen Sing-A-Long

Disney's Frozen, an animated fairy tale musical inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's Snow Queen takes place in the kingdom of Arendelle, where the young princess Elsa was born with the ability to magically create ice and snow using her bare hands. When Elsa slips up and nearly kills her sister Ana, by accident.

Fearing Elsa might cause serious harm, the panicking king and queen decide to isolate both daughters from the outside world!

Years later, following some tragic events, grown-up Elsa and Ana no longer share the close bond they once had. However, upon Elsa's coronation day, people from all over the kingdom flock to meet the new queen and Ana meets and falls for the handsomely goofy Prince Hans. Unfortunately, Elsa's mounting emotions start to break free, as she inadvertently ices the kingdom into eternal winter.

"Cheesy critical metaphors are hard to avoid: with such warmth within its icy landscape, this is a celluloidbaked Alaska." (*Guardian*)

"Enjoyable; romantic, subversive, engaging and enthralling." (*Observer*)

"Frozen is the best Disney since Aladdin, a glittering, sparkling cartoon epic..." (*ST Culture*). Stay cool if you miss it, it's set to freeze up here like a bad icicle, all year round.

Director: Chris Buck
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 2013
Certificate: PG

When...

Thu 19 2.00



Into The Woods

Hollywood's defilement of folklore continues as Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's Broadway hit gets the Disney treatment.

Red Riding Hood (Lilla Crawford), Cinderella (Anna Kendrick), Rapunzel (Mackenzie Mauzy) and a pre-beanstalk Jack (Daniel Huttleston) hardly need explaining. (Johnny Depp plays the big bad wolf, but you probably already guessed that.) The baker (James Corden) and his wife (Emily Blunt), though, are Sondheim and Lapine's creations: they're a loving, hard-working couple whose marriage has been cursed with childlessness, and who must find a red cape, a golden slipper, a lock of yellow hair and a white cow, and present them to the not-necessarily-wicked old crone next door (Meryl Streep), to lift the spell.

The stage musical was laced with existential darkness, which is all but absent from the screen. Instead I am reminded why Disney's recent revamping of fairy tales (including Alice in Wonderland and Maleficent) left a sour taste in my mouth. Still, it's easy to overlook such faults when Sondheim's songs shine through. Into the Woods is a glossy, yet disjointed affair that gets by on the strength of its performers. (*research Jack Whiting*) It is fabulous on the big screen, and lives happily ever after.

Director: Rob Marshall
Cast: Meryl Streep, James Corden, Emily Blunt, Anna Kendrick, Johnny Depp
Duration: 125 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: PG

When...

Fri 20 7.30
Sat 21 2.00, 7.00



Wild

Adapted by Nick Hornby from the best-selling true life story, Wild stars Reese Witherspoon as Cheryl, a young woman in the midst of a personal crisis and without hope.

After years of destructive behaviour and the end of her marriage and the death of her mother, she makes a wild decision. With absolutely no experience, and driven only by something other than mere determination, she hikes more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest alone.

Her journey is largely internal, "A primal grab for a cure, for the thread of my life that had been severed," she writes. "I could feel it unspooling behind me, the old thread I'd lost, the new one I was spinning, as I hiked." Director Jean-Marc Vallée (Dallas Buyers Club) intercuts this trip with visions of Cheryl's past in non-linear snippets as she's prompted by the present to think back to the moments that shaped her, both good and bad.

"Reese Witherspoon is great in the part, whether conducting minor operations on herself, screaming aloud her frustration, or just rolling around trying to lift her unmanageable rucksack. You really hope she makes it." (*Standard*) Let's hope their right. Come and see.



Director: Jean-Marc Vallée
Cast: Reese Witherspoon, Laura Dern
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: 15

When...

Sun	22	6.00
Mon	23	2.00
Tue	24	12.30, 7.30



Leviathan

The great trial of Job is reborn in this magnificent Russian movie, first seen at Cannes 2014.

Kolia (Alexey Serebriakov) is a car mechanic with a modest property on prime real estate: a beautiful spot on the Barents Sea, but the crooked mayor Vadim, a wonderful show of Russian mafia chutzpa from Roman Madyanov, looking like Boris Yeltsin, wants the land. 'Wants' means 'Will Have'. Leviathan shows a world governed by drunken, depressed men: everyone is drowning in corruption, vodka and despair.

"The wonder of Andrey Zvyagintsev's brilliant new film is that it works both as a Chekhovian family tragedy and as an extremely barbed satire on corruption in contemporary Russia." (*Independent*)
 "Stunningly shot and superbly acted, especially by Madyanov, this is film-making on a grand scale." (*Guardian*)

"It's visceral, rebellious fare. Let's hope it repeats the success of Nikita Mikhalkov's 1994 *Burnt By The Sun* and takes home the trophy at the Academy awards." (*Observer*)

"A modern classic weaving together rich characters, witty satire, thriller elements and political bite. Among the finest films of 2014." (*Film4*) And you'll see it here first-ish ahead of the awards circus. Don't miss.

Director: Andrey Zvyagintsev
 Cast: Vladimir Vdovichenkov, Elena Lyadova, Aleksey Serebryakov
 Duration: 141 mins
 Origin: Russia 2014
 Certificate: 18

When...

Mon 23 7.30



American Sniper

An imposing Bradley Cooper plays real life Navy SEAL Chris Kyle, a sharpshooter who's 160 confirmed kills - throughout four tours in Iraq - earned him the title Devil of Ramadi.

Apparently his father told him there are three kinds of people: sheep, wolves and sheepdogs, and that Chris would be the third ensuring the predators didn't devour the innocent.

That's how Chris, who has an almost evangelical view of patriotism, sees his function. Soldiers are searching for clues to the whereabouts of a top al Qaeda operative known as the Butcher, while Chris perches on a housetop looking for suspicious actors. Among these may be a boy concealing a pipe bomb, and a woman ready to toss it.

"This is a melodrama that demonstrates rather than examines the psychological burden of having to decide who lives and who dies." (*Digital Spy*)
 American Sniper sees Clint Eastwood back on track as director after a spate of off trackers: Hereafter, J. Edgar, Jersey Boys Here, there is confidence, focus and real dramatic weight to the telling of this true-life story, and at 84, making what amounts to a Western, Clint couldn't be more comfortable. (*research Jack Whiting*)

Director: Clint Eastwood
 Cast: Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller
 Duration: 133 mins
 Origin: USA 2015
 Certificate: 15

When...

Wed 25 7.30
Thu 26 2.00, 7.30



Trash

Directed by Stephen Daldry (Billy Elliot) Trash is set in the seedy favelas and landfills of Brazil where pickers search through rubbish for a living. One such forager, 14-year-old Raphael Fernandez (Rickson Tevez in a stunning debut) finds a wallet containing a wad of cash, a flip-book photo of a little girl and the key to a station locker. Along with his best friend, Gardo and a pariah called Rato, who lives in a sewer, they hide their find from a corrupt police inspector who appears ready to move heaven and earth to recover it. Key to solving the mystery is a list of numbers scrawled on the back of a photograph and a Bible in the hands of a prison inmate whose murdered son was an advisor to a corrupt mayoral candidate. The race is on between the boys and the police to solve the riddle and recover a missing fortune along with a ledger containing a litany of corrupt officials. "Stunning performances from a trio of young Brazilian actors. They paint an indelible portrait of young lives on the edge of nowhere, and happen to save Daldry's otherwise compelling tale of corruption from a rubbish ending." (*Guardian*)



Director: Stephen Daldry
Cast: Rooney Mara, Martin Sheen
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: UK/Brazil 2014
Certificate: 15

When...

Fri	27	7.30
Sat	28	7.00

And the Bafta/Oscar goes to...

It is a great pity to see two young Brit actors, not just up against each other in the same year, but fighting off a few undeserving, over-feted Hollywood rivals, most notably Birdman and Foxcatcher. But it is their non-rivalry at stake here. We might like to see them both get it, but chances are the Oscar will go to the insignificant, indulgent Birdman or worse, Steve Carell's false nose for the empty Foxcatcher. American Sniper looks good though. It has come up on the rails at the last minute, perhaps to snatch one more Oscar for the everlasting Clint Eastwood...?

Bafta will undoubtedly find for Benedict C or Eddie R. These boys will live to fight another Oscar day, as will Wes Anderson. It is his Grand Budapest Hotel that has been such a fabulous surprise.

We have championed it at the Rex every month since its release in February 2014. Not for awards, or even thinking it could be in the running. It is the most un-award seeking film for a hundred years. It stands alone as being simply absorbing from beginning to end.

It has nine Oscar nominations and eleven from Bafta, including the biggies: Best Film, Director, Editing, Original Screenplay, Cinematography, Sound, Design, Original music, etc. With a mere (Bafta) nod to a nice acting award, it is nominated in all the best categories to make a film bounce off the screen and into the audiences lap. So at the Rex and Odyssey we're rooting for The Grand Budapest to win it all, with a glass raised to the two Brit boys in the nice acting dept.



The Odyssey: First January...2015



Photo: Pink Soul Pictures

The Odyssey in St Albans finally opened on 27-30th November 2014. The opening weekend was made up of four films from across the last 50 years of the 20th century.

The undisputed 1969 classic Western: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid kicked the weekend off, followed by a Friday 'Blockbuster' Back to the Future, to celebrate the fun of a Friday night escapist movie. Saturday had to be the timeless Cinema Paradiso to indulge the Odyssey in its nostalgic place in new St Albans history. Sunday took us right back to the innocence of the post-war B-Movie era where Hollywood churned out Musicals, Romantic comedies, Gangster noir and Westerns by the dozen. Singin' In The Rain has carried itself on its own magic and energy, for over 60 years, and as such is as fresh today as it was in 1952. It was the perfect closing to our opening weekend.

We took on Christmas and the New Year with a full non-stop programme of matinee and evening shows. This turned out to be more running before we could crawl. We made some pretty good mistakes and gathered spectacular complaints, most of which I have yet to acknowledge. We'll wait until they're all in?

The BT lines were up and down, the auditorium was freezing, the auto-lighting in the toilets left you fumbling in the dark. So when the light did come on, you were facing the wrong way!

The bars are not finished. Some seating in the balcony had/has less legroom than a double decker bus, and in others you couldn't see the whole screen. The young ushers were brand new and froze at the sight of a ticket, but managed to get most people to one seat or another. Computers failed, bins were overfull, the fledgling (though perfect pitch) sound system shook the foundations and echoed around the cul-de-sac at the back like Concorde taking off in the garden. Apart from that...

Go and see the Odyssey, but you mustn't abandon this, your first home, unless you're one or two of those 10 yr paid up loyal Rexolettes who only live seven minutes walk from the Odyssey! Throughout the Spring, you can look forward to seeing a slow motion transformation to the foyer, which right now looks like a brightly lit departure lounge with soft furnishings. The sightlines in the auditorium are getting better, the sound is tamed and the heating will be full blast by the summer! As the finishing touches begin to form, you will feel this Paradiso Odyssey taking shape around you.