

THE-REX

PROGRAMME

SUFFRAGETTE
NOVEMBER 2015

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

NOVEMBER 2015 • ISSUE 128
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Mon-Sat 10.30-6.30pm Sun 4.30-5.30pm



THE-REX

CINEMA BERKHAMSTED

CONTENTS

Films At A Glance 16-17

Rants and Pants 24-25

BOX OFFICE: 01442 877759

Mon to Sat 10.30-6.30

Sun 4.30-5.30

SEAT PRICES

Circle £9.00

Concessions £7.50

Table £11.00

Concessions £9.50

Royal Box Seat (Seats 6) £13.00

Whole Royal Box £73.00

All matinees £5, £6.50, £10 (box)

Disabled and flat access: through the gate on High Street (right of apartments)

Director: James Hannaway
01442 877999

Advertising: Lynn Hendry
01442 877999

Artwork: Demiurge Design
01296 668739

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)

BEST IN NOVEMBER



Bill

No big names, no big film, shoved into kids matinees? It is glorious. Come early and don't miss an inch. Page 9

FILMS OF THE MONTH



Walk In The Woods

Robert Redford is Bill Bryson. Critics sniffy, so it will be fantastic. Don't miss. Page 8



The Gift

The best thriller to hit every cinema seat since...? Who cares, this is the best. Page 10



Palio

A heart stopping street race. Where is the Health & Safety dept when you them - most..? Page 12



Taxi Tehran

Extraordinary mischief in the face of real danger. Warm, witty & fabulous. Don't miss. Page 22



NOVEMBER FILMS



Director: Ken Kwapis
Cast: Robert Redford, Emma Thompson,
Nick Nolte
Duration: 104 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: 15
Company: Entertainment One UK

A Walk In The Woods

A Walk in the Woods is based on a memoir by travel writer, Bill Bryson. Stubbornly resisting old age and obsolescence, Bryson (Robert Redford) determines to hike the entire Appalachian Trail, bringing along his estranged ex-travel buddy Stephen (Nick Nolte) when everyone else refuses the invitation.

Bill is looking for something to occupy his time after a recent book's publication and to shake off a feeling of fatalism after a friend's death. The notion of walking the Trail does not appeal to his wife Catherine (Emma Thompson).

But the trek begins, with running gags immediately and pleasingly about the pair's age, Bill's commitment to experiencing the Trail properly contrasts with Stephen's commitment to cut corners and 'chase the ladies'. There are marauding bears, often odd supporting characters and difficulties involved in bathroom activities while in the great outdoors. "Blessed by Bryson himself (who has turned down several attempts to film his books) this is a rambling and episodic Road-Movie. The fine underplaying of Redford contrasts with the naturally broader Nolte (who sounds like he's been gargling razor blades)." (*LA Times*) It's great to see Redford back on wisecracking Sundance form. You might gradually warm to Nick Nolte, but where's Alan Arkin when you need him?

When...

Sun 1	6.00
Mon 2	2.00
Wed 4	2.00



Bill

History's most revered playwright gets the Horrible Histories treatment in this all-round family-fun escapade.

Bill tells the story of 'what really happened' during Shakespeare's 'lost years' - how the hopeless lute player Bill Shakespeare left his family and home to follow his dream. Along the way he encounters murderous kings, spies, lost loves, and a plot to blow up Queen Elizabeth.

Directed by Richard Bracewell and written by Laurence Rickard and Ben Willbond, Horrible Histories and Yonderland cast members Mathew Baynton, Simon Farnaby, Martha Howe-Douglas, Jim Howick, Laurence Rickard and Ben Willbond all star, playing 40 roles between them.

As you can see by the list of names, at going to print, nobody out there was talking about this film...

Now they are.

So come and see. It is bound to be fun, informative and more than a little silly, and a great relief after Macbeth. It's fabulous ensemble cast, take on the film with great enthusiasm.

Come for their energy and the great adventure of not quite knowing what you're coming to see...

Director: Richard Bracewell
 Cast: Mathew Baynton, Simon Farnaby, Martha Howe-Douglas
 Duration: 94 mins
 Origin: UK 2015
 Certificate: PG
 Company: Vertigo Films

When...

Mon 2 7.30
Sat 14 2.00



Everest

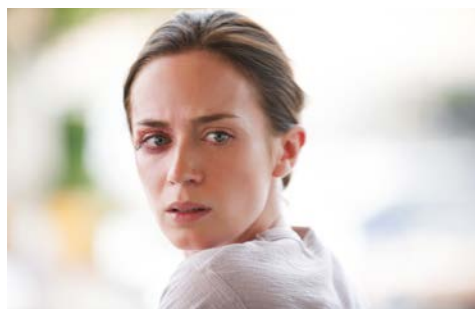
Brace yourselves, winter's coming. As bleak and unrelenting as the mountain it's set on, Everest does a great job of making you feel insignificant in the presence of mother nature at her worst. You'd rather be with the Martian!

Based on an actual trip to the summit in 1996 that ended in tragedy, an air of doom hangs over Everest, forcing you to wonder which of its endearing ensemble cast will make it down alive. The inevitability of death makes it all the more tough to watch. Who, as mountaineering jargon has it, will finish up 'gone'? Maybe John Hawkes's gentle, unassuming postman, whose trip is part-funded by school kids? Or Josh Brolin's millionaire family man from Texas? Or Jason Clarke's affable team leader? Or Jake Gyllenhaal's extreme-sports dude? Like Gravity and Birdman before it, Everest was this year's opener at the Venice Film Festival. Whereas they both went on to receive awards, Everest doesn't quite have that flavour, yet it plays out much in the same way as a horror - with each poor soul succumbing to the mountain. The fact it really did happen makes it all the more chilling. (*Jack Whiting*) Wrap up warm.

Director: Baltasar Kormákur
 Cast: Jake Gyllenhaal, Keira Knightley, Robin Wright
 Duration: 121 mins
 Origin: UK/USA/Iceland
 Certificate: 12A
 Company: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

When...

Tue 3 2.00
Thu 5 7.30



Sicario

It's true that strong performances and ballsy filmmaking can elevate a familiar narrative, and this violent narco thriller from Denis Villeneuve is such a film.

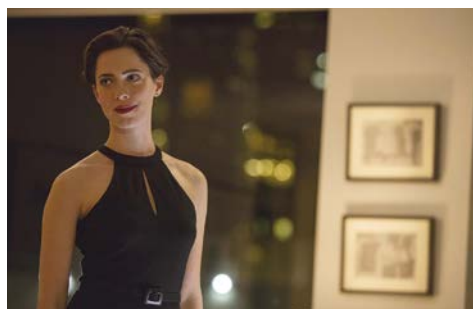
Similar to Jessica Chastain in *Zero Dark Thirty*, Emily Blunt stands out from her machismo surroundings by carving out a tough role in FBI agent Kate Mercer. Kate is drafted into a mysterious, agency-merging task force established to bait and bring down a key cartel leader. While her requests for information are blocked at nearly every turn: she's not even sure if her rule-bending team leader (Josh Brolin) belongs to the CIA or not. Still, he's a positive chatterbox compared to Alejandro (Benicio Del Toro) a quietly lethal ex-prosecutor with a personal stake in the hunt. Good guys and bad guys largely wear the same hats in this ethical minefield.

Villeneuve (*Indencies*, *Prisoners*) once again recruiting legendary director of photography Roger Deakins, turns Mexico into a visceral, utterly gripping warzone; the suspense will leave you breathless. It's making his mooted *Blade Runner* sequel that much more tantalising. (*research Jack Whiting*) Edge of the seat, tough guy stuff, if you're up for it.

Director: Denis Villeneuve
Cast: Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin, Benicio Del Toro
Duration: 121 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: 15
Company: Lionsgate Films UK

When...

Tue 3 7.30
Wed 4 7.30



The Gift

"Beware of enemies bearing gifts" was the big lesson from the Trojan War. Here actor/writer/director Joel Edgerton teaches us to be warier still when it's one of your own who is clutching the sweet surprise. Like *Single White Female*, *Cape Fear* or *Fatal Attraction*, the chills here come from lines being crossed and waters muddled. Jason Bateman and Rebecca Hall play Simon and Robyn, a wealthy married couple who have moved from Chicago to Los Angeles.

He's been offered a fancy new job with the promise of a big promotion. She's after a fresh start after a miscarriage and a battle with depression. But it's Simon's past that comes back to haunt them.

"In an impressive and unnerving directing debut, Joel Edgerton applies the same quiet assurance and attention to detail he's displayed in his acting projects." (*Guardian*)

"Hall gives a typically sensitive performance as the young wife who has a nagging sense of dissatisfaction about her seemingly perfect life." (*Independent*)

"For shivering tension and uneasy giggles, *The Gift* just keeps on giving." (*Telegraph*)

"This resourceful and edgy thriller adds a big string to the gifted Edgerton's bow." (*Empire*)

Back by great demand. For good old fashioned big screen thrills and twists, don't miss.

Director: Joel Edgerton
Cast: Jason Bateman, Rebecca Hall
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: Australia/USA 2015
Certificate: 15
Company: Lionsgate Films UK

When...

Thu 5 2.00
Thu 26 7.30



Macbeth

Michael Fassbender and Sean Harris steal the show in Justin Kurzel's mesmerising adaptation of Shakespeare's darkest play (You would expect Macbeth to steal his own show - but Macduff? Lead on...

Spurred by an unsettling prophecy from three witches that he will one day be crowned King (Thane) of Scotland, Macbeth (Fassbender), consumed by greed and tormented by ambition, murders King Duncan (David Thewlis) to take the throne for himself. Tortured with paranoia and guilt, he quickly becomes an oppressive and tyrannical ruler as the creeping onset of madness drives him apart from Lady Macbeth (another shining performance in Marion Cotillard) and his council.

The dark and bloody Highlands are truly brought to life amidst swirling mists and stifling smoke, perfectly captured by Adam Arkapaw (Animal Kingdom, True Detective) and his stunning cinematography. Bold, brutal and daring - and freezing - this is as raw as it gets.

"From the opening scarlet-and-black titles, Shakespeare's play is more eviscerated than adapted, in a lean, mean and powerful piece of cinema." (*Times*)

"Kurzel's chilling debut feature, the 2011 true-crime thriller *Snowtown*, suggested the then-37-year-old Australian filmmaker was a talent to watch. But this towering, consistently ingenious film establishes him as a director to cherish." (*Telegraph*) Wrap up warm and don't miss.



Director: Justin Kurzel
Cast: Michael Fassbender, Marion Cotillard
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: UK/France/USA 2015
Certificate: 15
Company: Studiocanal

When...

Fri	6	7.30
Sat	7	7.00
Sun	8	6.00
Mon	9	2.00
Thu	12	2.00, 7.30



Hotel Transylvania 2

As vampire movies go, this is about as pleasing as they get. Expect a sugar rush of colours, slapstick silliness, and movie monster references that may or may not go over your head.

With Dracula's daughter Mavis (voiced by Selena Gomez) now a young mother with her human husband Johnny (Andy Samberg), she's worried about raising her child in Transylvania. Dracula (Adam Sandler) and his band of buddies (voiced by Steve Buscemi, Kevin James, David Spade and others) conspire in a series of elaborate tricks to convince her not to move to California. It ends in a messy chase and Mel Brooks doing his 2000-year-old-man voice as Dracula's father. (*Guardian*) I have a fondness for director Genndy Tartakovsky's earlier work: *Dexter's Lab*, *Samurai Jack* to name two, but this feels more like a contractual obligation than anything from his creative wellspring. *Hotel Transylvania 2* doesn't have much for adults to sink their teeth into, but for kids it's fun. Can we all take a minute to appreciate only having to put up with Adam Sandler's voice? Brings joy to my heart. (*Jack Whiting*) The audience's too Jack.

Director: Genndy Tartakovsky
Voices: Adam Sandler, Selena Gomez,
Duration: 89 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: U
Company: Sony Pictures Releasing

When...

Sat 7 2.00
Sat 21 2.00



Palio

Twice a year, the Italian city of Sienna hosts the wildest and oldest horse race in the world, the **Palio**. With bribery and corruption at play as much as the skill and rough play of the riders, this race is not Royal Ascot.

This documentary by filmmaker Cosmina Spender captures the intensity of the build up and action of the race and gives no illusions to the brutality and corruption that some of the racers go to on the path to victory.

One of those is legendary rider Gigi Bruschielli, who has won the 13 Palios in 16 years and is constantly accused of monopolizing the race. The film follows a former trainee of his, the handsome Giovanni Atzeni, who wants to win for the love of the race, not through collusion and bribes.

The real life tale of a small race is blown up to an epic and cinematic proportion, and looks absolutely breathtaking, and like their previous film *Senna*, it plays out like a drama and works incredibly well.

"A fascinating insight into a quite bonkers sporting event." (*LW Lies*)

"Rocky on Horseback" (*NY Times*)

"How can something like this still exist? And how can one film capture it in such elegant detail?" (*Vanity Fair*) For the sheer thrill, don't miss.

Director: Cosima Spender
Cast: Gigi Bruschielli, Giovanni Atzeni
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: UK/Italy 2015
Certificate: 12A
Company: Altitude Film Distribution

When...

Mon 9 7.30



The Intern

What do you do when you are a bored 70-year-old widower who wants to escape your comfortable life? You go for an interview for internship at an online clothes retailer: 'About the Fit' filled with savvy young people, that's what.

This is the thinking of Ben (Robert DeNiro) who when he goes for his interview is asked 'where do you see yourself in 10 years?' and other fun questions that clearly don't apply to him. This is what this film is about, highlighting the differences between the 'cool, tech based' young and the traditional well dressed older generation.

Over time, Ben builds relationships with the office hipsters and inevitably with the boss, Jules (Anne Hathaway).

Written and directed by Nancy Meyers (*The Holiday*, *It's Complicated*) so expect a comedy of errors crossed with *The Devil Wears Prada*.

"De Niro is easy going, and *The Intern* is indulgent good fun." (*Time Out*)

"As you'd expect, Meyers handles the material with assurance and charm, and there's fun to be had in the odd-couple dynamic at her film's heart." (*Empire*) I like De Niro's comedy. He has a good face for it. It's reassuring to find a little Cary Grant in a face that usually frightens you to death.



Director: Nancy Meyers
 Cast: Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo
 Duration: 121 mins
 Origin: USA 2015
 Certificate: 12A
 Company: Warner Brothers

When...

Tue 10
 Wed 11

2.00, 7.30
 2.00



Director: Robert Zemeckis
 Cast: Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Ben Kingsley, Ben Schwartz
 Duration: 123 mins
 Origin: USA 2015
 Certificate: PG
 Company: Sony Pictures Releasing

The Walk

Robert Zemeckis treats those with vertigo to a dizzying dose of the spectacular.

This is the startlingly true story of Philippe Petit, a French tightrope walker who, on the morning of August 7th, 1974, achieved the seemingly impossible and completed an illegal high-wire walk between the (then unfinished) twin towers of the World Trade Center.

Joseph Gordon-Levitt brings energy in abundance to the central role alongside 2015's omnipresent Ben Kingsley whose turn as gruff mentor Papa Rudy is smartly used to balance Petit's arrogance with confidence during the run-in to the big event. Inevitably there is a sizeable but necessary build-up that will have even the most patient of filmgoers eagerly twitching for the all-important finale but the payoff certainly does come in a breathtaking and exhilarating climax of palm-sweating cinema.

"The Walk is sometimes easier to watch with your eyes shut, in respite from the plunging peril of being poised, wobbling on a hurried, makeshift, tightrope, '100 miles' above Manhattan." (*Times*)

"A reminder that beauty, fun and the irresistible human impulse to create are the stuff that dissolves terror on contact." (*Telegraph*) (research Chris Coetsee) Well done the Telegraph for nonsense out of - come and see for yourself. Remember the true 'Man on Wire' Rex 2008.

When...

Wed 11 7.30



The Martian

Ridley Scott's adaptation of Andy Weir's lone-wolf drama witnesses Matt Damon's plight upon the fourth planet from the Sun.

After an unforeseen mega storm on Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney (Damon) is presumed dead and left behind. However, he has miraculously survived. Alone on an unfamiliar planet, Matt must gather his wits (and some wit) to muster enough strength to survive whilst finding a way to signal Earth. Stunning big screen Ridley Scott visuals, a terrific central performance and a ridiculous (Kermode says marvelous) disco soundtrack are ultimately stood up by Drew Goddard's superb screenplay. Sci-fi Carry On aside, it is the humour Damon extracts from his against-all-odds character that makes living on Mars relatable and believable.

"We are so used to sci-fi movies where the heroes shoot Martians with ray guns (are we?) that Scott's botanical approach can't help but seem offbeat and refreshing." (*Independent*)

"A gripping Robinson Crusoe-style survival story." (*Times*)

"It's a film about micromanaging, fixing things on the fly, and a lot of Ridley's gruff, technocrat personality shines through." (*Telegraph*) (research Chris Coetsee) Trust the Telegraph to find micro management, while the other crits simply rub each other's over excited cheeks together. It is Outer Space in Hollywood. But don't miss.



Director: Ridley Scott
Cast: Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain
Duration: 141 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: 12A
Company: Twentieth Century Fox

When...

Fri	13	7.30
Sat	14	7.00
Sun	15	6.00
Mon	16	2.00

THE ODYSSEY

LONDON ROAD, ST ALBANS

NOVEMBER FILMS: 01727 453088

DATE	FILM	TIME
1 SUN	ST ALBANS FASHION WEEK - DIOR AND I	6.00
2 MON	LEGEND	7.30
3 TUE	MACBETH	7.30
4 WED	MACBETH	2.00, 7.30
5 THU	MACBETH	7.30
6 FRI	THE MARTIAN	7.30
7 SAT	EVEREST	2.00
7 SAT	THE MARTIAN	7.00
8 SUN	MACBETH	1.30
8 SUN	THE MARTIAN	6.00
9 MON	THE MARTIAN	7.30
10 TUE	THE GREAT BEAUTY	7.00
11 WED	THE INTERN	2.00
11 WED	THE GIFT	7.30
12 THU	THE INTERN	7.30
13 FRI	THE WALK	7.30
14 SAT	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 2	2.00
14 SAT	SICARIO	7.00
15 SUN	PAN	1.30, 6.00
16 MON	THE PROGRAM	7.30
17 TUE	BRIEF ENCOUNTER	7.30
18 WED	BRIEF ENCOUNTER	2.00
18 WED	SICARIO	7.30
19 THU	THE LOBSTER	7.30
20 FRI	SPECTRE	7.30
21 SAT	BILL	2.00
21 SAT	SPECTRE	7.00
22 SUN	SPECTRE	1.30, 6.00
23 MON	SPECTRE	7.30
24 TUE	SPECTRE	7.30
25 WED	SUFFRAGETTE	2.00
25 WED	SPECTRE	7.30
26 THU	SPECTRE	7.30
27 FRI	SUFFRAGETTE	7.30
28 SAT	SUSTAINABLE ST ALBANS WEEK - COWSPIRACY	10.45
28 SAT	PAN	2.00
28 SAT	SUFFRAGETTE	7.00
29 SUN	SUFFRAGETTE	1.30, 6.00
30 MON	SUFFRAGETTE	2.00, 7.30

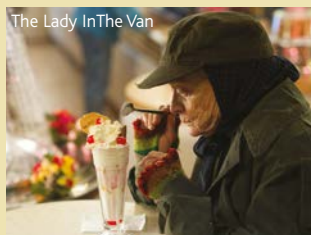
COMING SOON REX

BACK BY DEMAND

SPECTRE
SUFFRAGETTE
MACBETH
PANS LABYRINTH

NEW RELEASES

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE
THE LADY IN THE VAN
STEVE JOBS
CRIMSON PEAK
DRESSMAKER



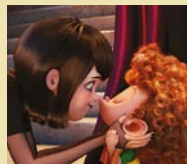
THE-REX

NOVEMBER
FILMS:

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DATE	FILM	TIME	PAGE
1 SUN	WALK IN THE WOODS	6.00	8
2 MON	WALK IN THE WOODS	2.00	8
2 MON	BILL	7.30	9
3 TUE	EVEREST	2.00	9
3 TUE	SICARIO	7.30	10
4 WED	WALK IN THE WOODS	2.00	8
4 WED	SICARIO	7.30	10
5 THU	THE GIFT	2.00	10
5 THU	EVEREST	7.30	9
6 FRI	MACBETH	7.30	11
7 SAT	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 2	2.00	12
7 SAT	MACBETH	7.00	11
8 SUN	MACBETH	6.00	11
9 MON	MACBETH	2.00	11
9 MON	PALIO	7.30	12
10 TUE	THE INTERN	2.00, 7.30	13
11 WED	THE INTERN	2.00	13
11 WED	THE WALK	7.30	14
12 THU	MACBETH	2.00, 7.30	11
13 FRI	THE MARTIAN	7.30	15
14 SAT	BILL	2.00	9
14 SAT	THE MARTIAN	7.00	15
15 SUN	THE MARTIAN	6.00	15
16 MON	THE MARTIAN	2.00	15
16 MON	SUFFRAGETTE	7.30	18
17 TUE	SUFFRAGETTE	2.00, 7.30	18
18 WED	SUFFRAGETTE	2.00, 7.30	18
19 THU	SUFFRAGETTE	2.00, 7.30	18
20 FRI	SPECTRE	7.30	19
21 SAT	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 2	2.00	12
21 SAT	SPECTRE	7.00	19
22 SUN	SPECTRE	6.00	19
23 MON	SPECTRE	2.00, 7.30	19
24 TUE	SPECTRE	2.00, 7.30	19
25 WED	SPECTRE	2.00, 7.30	19
26 THU	SPECTRE	2.00	19
26 THU	THE GIFT	7.30	10
27 FRI	THE LOBSTER	7.30	20
28 SAT	PAN	2.00	21
28 SAT	THE PROGRAM	7.00	22
29 SUN	SPECTRE	1.00	19
29 SUN	PAN	6.00	21
30 MON	SUFFRAGETTE	2.00	18
30 MON	TAXI TEHRAN	7.30	22





Suffragette

After a dramatic opening to the London Film Festival where feminist protesters set off smoke bombs, *Suffragette* is a film directed by a woman, written by a woman, produced by women and with a cast fronted by women.

Director Sarah Gavron and screenwriter Abi Morgan reunite after 2007's *Brick Lane* for a film set during the height of the uprising. It begins in London in 1912 when the leaders of the women's suffrage movement, including Emmeline Pankhurst (cue: Meryl Streep) call for a national campaign of civil disobedience after decades of peaceful protest have born no fruit. We follow foot soldier Maud Watts (the mesmerising Carey Mulligan) a wrung-out laundress drawn into the struggle by her feisty colleague Violet (Anne-Marie Duff).

"*Suffragette* is a tart reminder to those who are casual about democratic gender equality that votes for women were not something that naturally evolved due to the ruling class's innate decency; they had to be fought for." (*Guardian*)

"Mulligan is on seriously good form here, showing Maud's gradual transformation from bystander to activist with riveting emotional precision." (*Telegraph*)
 "Without an ounce of flounce or make-up, Mulligan gives everything to the part." (*Times*)

Hope it's a good film and not just a sermon.

Director: Sarah Gavron
 Cast: Carey Mulligan, Meryl Streep
 Duration: 106 mins
 Origin: UK 2015
 Certificate: 12A
 Company: Twentieth Century Fox

When...

Mon 16	7.30
Tue 17	2.00, 7.30
Wed 18	2.00, 7.30
Thu 19	2.00, 7.30
Mon 30	2.00



Spectre

We've been expecting you Mr. Bond... At least, we've been anticipating SPECTRE. The legalities are settled, and the nefarious organisation makes a welcome return to our screen.

All the ingredients are in place to make this a Bond classic, for better or worse. We've got a new M (Ralph Fiennes) Q (Ben Wishaw) and Moneypenny (Naomie Harris) gadgets, chases and quips. Skyfall showed, with its insane box office haul, that there's no slowing down for 007 and it helps that a lean Daniel Craig doesn't look remotely middle-aged, even though you'll have to grit your teeth whenever he delivers a double entendre (leave that to the experts Dan: Connery and Moore).

Christoph Waltz's Hanz Oberhauser is almost too good a choice for Bond's foil, yet their dark, tangled past forms the yin and yang of the story, and by keeping the stakes personal it ups the action.

Spectre never buckles under its own weight.

Casino Royale may still be the ace in the hole for Craig's era (and one of the best in the entire series to boot) but Spectre hits the target. (*Jack Whiting*) and there's Aston Martin's shiny new bonnet to sit on girls. Next Bond: Sid James.



Director: Sam Mendes
Cast: Daniel Craig, Monica Bellucci
Duration: 150 mins
Origin: USA/UK 2015
Certificate: 12A
Company: Sony Pictures Releasing

When...

Fri	20	7.30
Sat	21	7.00
Sun	22	6.00
Mon	23	2.00, 7.30
Tue	24	2.00, 7.30
Wed	25	2.00, 7.30
Thu	26	2.00
Sun	29	1.00



Director: Yorgos Lanthimos
Cast: Colin Farrell, Rachel Weisz, Olivia Colman
Duration: 118 mins
Origin: Ireland/UK/Greece/France/Netherlands
Certificate: 15
Company: Picturehouse Ent. Ltd.

The Lobster

The Lobster is the first English-language feature from Yorgos Lanthimos, director of the highly acclaimed Dogtooth. It is a satire on the subject of our universal obsession with relationships and our conviction that couplehood is the supreme expression of human happiness, a civilised institution which distinguishes us from the beasts. In a dystopian future, adults who are single, either through failure to find a partner or bereavement, must check into a hotel with other singles and find a genuinely compatible partner within 45 days, or they are transformed into an animal of their choice and released into the forest. But they can gain extra time for this 'search' period by volunteering for hunting trips into the forest to kill rebellious "singles" who have escaped into the wild there, living as singleton outlaws.

At the centre of the story is David (Colin Farrell) who enters the Hotel with his brother who has been turned into a dog, thus begins a domino effect that will make him both an outcast and a fugitive. "A poisonously effective work from an utterly singular director. You walk out feeling ever so slightly changed by it. There are few higher compliments." (*Times*) Please don't come as a roll-mop herring!

When...

Fri 27 7.30



Pan

JM Barrie's timeless children's tale gets another sideways swipe and this one might be the most bonkers of the lot.

Peter, played by 12-year-old Levi Miller, has been suffering in a London orphanage ducking Nazi bombs. Things aren't much better when nuns sell off Peter and his fellow orphans to the pirate Blackbeard (Hugh Jackman, so hammy his acting should be served with pineapple). Then it's off on a flying ship to a steam punk-bleak Neverland where the kids are used as child labor to produce crystalized pixie dust that works as a Fountain of Youth for Blackbeard. Blackbeard incinerating fairies, and a frankly bizarre rendition of Smells Like Teen Spirit, Pan is pretty dark stuff if you ask me; and the decision to have Hook (played by Garret Hedlund with an insufferable drawl) as a young adventurer on Peter's side is a curious one; is this an early warning of another franchise? Director Joe Wright steers the ship on this monstrous, CGI stuffed nightmare, and after such low-key delights as *Pride & Prejudice* and *Atonement*, this could be considered a 'what on Earth was his thinking?' career move. Think happy thoughts. (research Jack Whiting) Visually, a kids party. So come for jelly.



Director: Joe Wright
Cast: Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund, Rooney Mara
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: USA 2015
Certificate: PG
Company: Warner Brothers

When...

Sat	28	2.00
Sun	29	6.00



The Program

The Program fills in the gaps that 2013 doc *The Armstrong Lie* failed to truly reveal. It helps that it's in the form of a riveting drama, with an incredible Ben Foster at the handlebars.

Based on David Walsh's doping exposé, Stephen Frears' new film portrays the disgraced American cyclist Lance Armstrong as a modern-day Faust. As played by Foster, Armstrong has a relentless, near psychotic drive. After overcoming cancer, he declares that he never wants to be 'that close to losing' again. The Mephistophelian doctor Michele Ferrari (Guillaume Canet) offers him what the doctor calls, with obvious irony, 'a heavenly vision'. By taking the wonder drug EPO, he can 'learn to fly'.

It's blissfully refreshing to see a sports film that doesn't follow the lovable underdog, but one that relishes in its anti-hero, almost mirroring the downfall of Walter White in *Breaking Bad*. Armstrong is just as riveting to watch and fun to side with, as he is easy to deplore; the fact that he fully convinces himself he wasn't cheating, means he loses his grip on right and wrong. Foster embodies all that arrogance and determination with glee.

Then there's the fabulous Chris O'Dowd as his foil. Don't miss. (*research Jack Whiting*) Tuck everything in to your socks and fly.

Director: Stephen Frears
Cast: Ben Foster, Chris O'Dowd, Lee Pace
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: UK/France 2015
Certificate: 15
Company: Studiocanal

When...

Sat 28 7.00



Taxi Tehran

Winning the best prize at Berlin in January, director Jafar Panahi's latest defiance won Berlin's Golden Bear, but not for running rings around its government's censors.

Crafted from a series of apparently unrelated encounters *Taxi Tehran* chronicles a barrage of 'fares' with their comings and goings, all the while under the watchful eye of Panahi's dashboard-based double camera setup. His remotely controlled cameras secretly revolve between the action both inside and outside the cab. From the flourishing market of pirated Blockbuster films to the sensitive issues of capital punishment, these 'topics of conversation' all over the Capital are brilliantly interwoven with a multitude of intelligent references to modern cinema. Certainly it's rare that a director, officially prohibited, is capable of producing such a humorous and humane piece of topical cinema.

"This sly, sharp and relentlessly clever middle finger to censorship is Panahi's boldest act of defiance to date." (*Time Out*)

"It tells you more about modern Iran, I think, than you'll discover on the news." (*Guardian*)

"This is a delightful surprise, and though it is even more minimalistic than his last two illegal exports, it is also fun." (*Screen International*)

Well done Berlin. It is fabulous. Better, it is illegal freedom. Come for it all.

Director: Jafar Panahi
Cast: Jafar Panahi
Duration: 82 mins
Origin: Iran 2015
Certificate: PG
Company: New Wave

When...

Mon 30 7.30

Blowers and Bly at the Rex

You may already know, if not you will hear more in the coming months.

I (James Hannaway) am accused by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) of breaches to health & safety regulations during the early stages of restoration in St Albans.

All I can say about it right now is that the first magistrates hearing in Stevenage on 13th October was adjourned until November 17th.

However, a delicious irony: the date of that first Court appearance (adjourned) at 9.30 on the morning of 13th was the same day we (The Odyssey) were invited to be awarded at 7.00pm by St Albans Civic Society for the beautiful restoration of the Odyssey cinema... (The StA Civic Society started the whole Odeon ball rolling in 2005.)

Unfortunately I wasn't present at either - accused or awarded. But many thanks to St Albans Civic Society

for their exquisite timing. So too and always of course to all the people of StA who never faltered in their early support, and who now come in hundreds to enjoy the magic they helped to create.

I or someone will keep you up to date.

Opposite: Henry Blofeld and John Bly. A fabulous evening of cricketing mischief from the BBC Test Match commentary box with tales of antique mischief from Tring and The Antiques Road Show. Two gorgeous characters being themselves, swapping tall tales for a great audience on Sunday 11th October. Great applause.

As for the picture below: this is the demolition of the Police Station at the corner of the High Street and Kings Road (Berkhamsted). Clearly, a fabulous drop kick - lob - toss.



