

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E

THE PATIENCE STONE
JANUARY 2014...

"Unhesitatingly The Rex is the best cinema I have ever seen..."
(STimes Culture)

"possibly Britain's most beautiful cinema..." (BBC)

JANUARY 2014 Issue 106
www.therexberkhamsted.com

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Mon-Sat 10.30-6pm Sun 4.30-5.30pm

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Mon to Sat	10.30 – 6.00
Sun	4.30 – 6.30

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

Some of the girls and boys you see at the Box Office and Bar:

Dayna Archer	Ellen Manners
Ally Clifton	Liam Parker
Kitty Clucas	Amberly Rose
Nicola Darvell	Georgia Rose
Ashley Davis	Sid Sagar
Romy Davis	Alex Smith
Karina Gale	Alex Stephenson
Ollie Gower	Liam Stephenson
Elizabeth Hannaway	Jordan Turner
Billie Hendry-Hughes	Bethanné Wallman
Natalie Jones	James Wallman
Abigail Kellett	Jack Whiting
Amelia Kellett	Olivia Wilson
Lydia Kellett	Roz Wilson
Tatjana LeBoff	Keymea Yazdanian
Emily Main	Yalda Yazdanian

Ushers:

Amy, Amy P, Annabel, Becca, Cameron, Ellen W, Ellie, Freya, Hannah, James, Katie, Lizzie, Luke, Meg, Patrick, Sophie, Zoe

Sally Rowbotham In charge
Alun Rees Chief projectionist (ret'd)
Jon Waugh Projectionist
Anna Shepherd Projectionist & writer
Martin Coffill Projectionist
Jacquie Rose Chief Admin
Oliver Hicks Best Boy (ret'd)
Simon Messenger Writer
Jack Whiting Writer
Jane Clucas & Lynn Hendry PR/Sales/FoH

Andrew Dixon Resident Artist
Darren Flindall Maintenance
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Betty Patterson Company Secretary and THE ORIGINAL VISIONARY of The Rex.

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

BEST IN JANUARY



All is Lost

No it's not, Redford's back. He's older, but still "better when he moves"
 Wed 29th / Thu 30th 7.30

FILMS OF THE MONTH



Cinema Paradiso

Simply, one of the most beautiful films ever made
 Sun 5th 6.00 / Wed 22nd 7.30



Blue Is The Warmest Colour

This too may be said to be another 'most beautiful' Sun 12th 5.00



The Patience Stone

And this too... Beauty from the other side of the earth Mon 27th 7.30

NELSON MANDELA 18 JULY 1918 – 5 DECEMBER 2013



President Mandela, awarding the 1995 Rugby World Cup to SA's captain Francois Pienaar, a historic victory over NZ's All Blacks. Madiba is wearing the despised Springbok's shirt, to shake Francois' hand. This picture went world-wide in seconds. It alone is said to have turned South Africa around. "Their open friendship helped forge a new country..."



It was in 1998, Billy was two and a half, Hannah only 4 months old, we were staying at The Mount Nelson, an old colonial style hotel in Cape Town, used mostly by business travellers or

rich old folk – Neil was there for work. Consequently we were the only people there who had kids. Mandela attended a charity breakfast there and we all lined up outside to wave him off when he left. I think it was widely known that he had a soft spot for kids and seeing our two in the crowd, he made a bee line for us – a very special day for us.

A cherished chance meeting with 'Madiba' himself. He's holding baby Billy's hands. A huge moment for a little St Albans' family: Helen & Neil Dawson (Billy's on his shoulders) with tiny sister Hannah, were all there together.



PHILOMENA AT THE REX 1ST DECEMBER 2013



Philomena with her daughter Jane in the foyer

Photograph by Oli Simpson

Philomena Lee came to the Rex on Sunday 1st December, to watch her film and talk to the audience. For the first time, and away from the International Premiere/Festival/Interview circus, she was in a setting where she could relax with her family around her, and be moved by the film. It was a remarkable evening, with the audience at the end coming to talk, to kiss her, or

just touch her hand. With an extraordinary presence, she held the stage with her own story, sharing laughter with the audience over scripted jokes added to the screenplay. Everybody was as deeply moved by her beauty, intelligence and humility as they were the film. A truly unforgettable evening in the company of a very special woman. Here's to her glittering all the red carpets at the 2014 film awards.



Judi Dench, in the film



And here the Philomenas together 2013

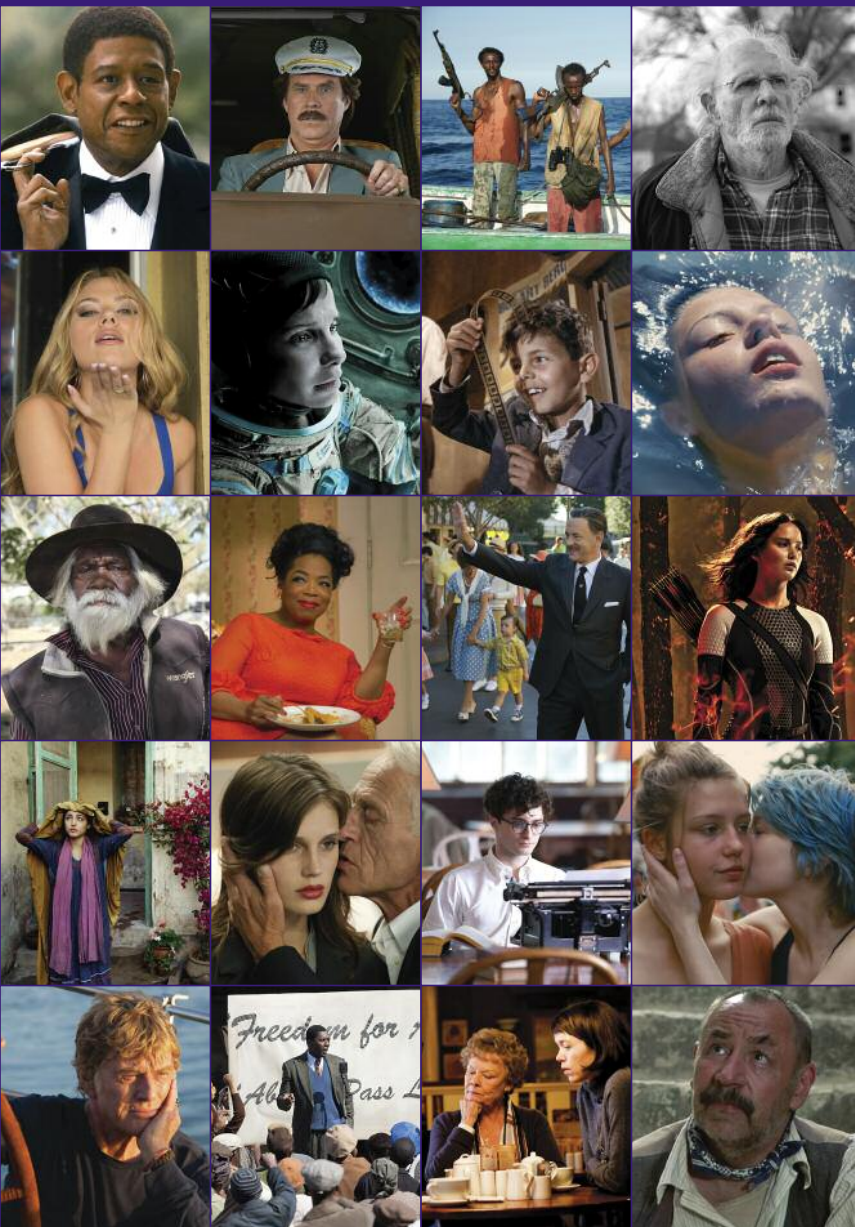
PETER O'TOOLE 2 AUGUST 1932 – 14 DECEMBER 2013



Already, those glorious RIP things have been said about somebody loved and treasured, but who didn't particularly treasure himself. "My fear is my concern".

We saw The Beatles, Connery's first Dr No and Lawrence roughly within the same year. I loved George, wanted to be Lennon, thought I was Sean Bond and wanted to drink with Lawrence in full bedouin in that officer's mess. The gorgeous Peter O'Toole is dead. So we'll have to drink alone from now on.

A line fed to him as Lawrence but delivered as Peter O'Toole, might sum up a great and courteous rebel. "The trick, William Potter, is not minding that it hurts..."



J A N U A R Y E V E N I N G S

Gravity

Thu 2 7.30, Fri 3 7.30



A pair of satellite engineers are stranded in space. Gravity, or lack of it, is utterly unique.

Alfonso Cuarón worked for four years to get it done. It's been worth the wait. Sandra Bullock and George Clooney are Stone and Kowalsky; two astronauts out in the deep, cold abyss doing a little repair work on the Hubble telescope. So far so routine, but when they're told that a chunk of satellite debris is heading their way at high speed, they have to move quickly, not easy in space. This is when Gravity transforms from a therapeutic space adventure into one of the most tense thrillers of recent years; a suffocating, dizzying nightmare that I can only compare to a theme park virgin going a few rounds on Nemesis. Scientific inaccuracies aside, Gravity is a technical marvel. Thanks to the pioneering technology adapted to create this fantastic cinematic masterpiece, the 'camera' swoops, ducks, and dives; there is nowhere the viewer doesn't have access to. However none of that would work if it wasn't for such an assured performance from Ms Bullock. Space in all its vastness has been represented realistically in cinema before, Kubrick's 2001 springs to mind, but that was made with gaffer and string. Gravity makes space terrifying, which is as it should be, and it's only 91 minutes!

Director: Alfonso Cuarón
Starring: Sandra Bullock, George Clooney
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Warner Brothers

Philomena

Sat 4 7.00

Director: Stephen Frears
Starring: Judi Dench, Steve Coogan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK/USA/France 2013
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Judi Dench plays Philomena Lee, who in the early 1950s became pregnant as a teenager, she was sent as a 'fallen woman' to the convent of Roscrea and forced to give up her child for adoption.

Steve Coogan, who co-wrote and produced the film also plays the former BBC journalist, Martin Sixsmith. The script is adapted from Sixsmith's 2009 non-fiction book: The Lost Child of Philomena. Sixsmith, at a low ebb in his career, agrees to help Philomena search for her missing son with the aim of writing a story about her. Although, originally calling it 'a human interest story... for weak minded, ignorant people'.

Dench and Coogan's characters are the classic odd couple. On screen together throughout, their trail to find the boy brings them face to face with some long buried secrets.

"The brilliance of Judi Dench's performance lies in the sure-footed way she combines comedy and extreme pathos without ever lapsing into caricature." (*Independent*)

"The film is one of the few capable of allowing its watchers to shed a tear and laugh within more or less the same sequence" (*Standard*)

Another fabulous award winning turn by Dame Judi. Let's hope for the best during the new year's awards circus.

Philomena herself still lives in St Albans. She came to the Rex with her family in December and completely won-over the audience. (see page 5)



Cinema Paradiso

Sun 5 6.00



If ever a film came from the heart, it was Giuseppe Tornatore's nostalgic **Cinema Paradiso (1988)** now getting a re-release to celebrate its silver jubilee. A man takes us back to his Sicilian childhood as a cheeky scamp called Salvatore (Toto) played by a lovely little imp, Marcus Leonardi). Learning to love the magic of film, he befriends the reluctant old projectionist, Alfredo (Philippe Noiret, the most faultless French actor with the gentlest eyes. Died 2006 aged 76).

In the dark confines of the Cinema Paradiso, young Toto and the other townsfolk escape grim post-war Sicily to crowd into the tiny cinema in the town square.

Funny, affectionate, nostalgic, heart-breaking, and winner of the Best Foreign Language Oscar in 1989 (when 'Best Foreign Language' was a category) Cinema Paradiso is a love letter to the power of cinema and is now a constant presence in the top best films of all time.

"It is a wonderful and open-hearted tribute to the beauty of cinema... one of the finest films about innocence ever made, a perfect picture of a time when cinema was the only source of laughter and joy. The roaring, spitting, smoking, groping scenes in the old Paradiso might come from any culture at any time, just not now, not ours..."

(Camilla Long. *ST Culture*) Don't miss it for the world.

Director: Giuseppe Tornatore
Starring: Jacques Perrin, Philippe Noiret
Certificate: PG
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: Italy/France 1988
By: Arrow Films

Nebraska Mon 6 7.30

Director: Alexander Payne
Starring: Bruce Dern, Will Forte, Stacy Keach
Certificate: 15
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Paramount International Pictures

After making side trips to California's Central Coast (*Sideways*) and Hawaii (*The Descendants*) Alexander Payne returns to his home state of Nebraska for his sixth directorial feature, a wistful ode to small-town Midwestern life and the idealistic dreams of stubborn old men.

The premise seems a dead end: Bruce Dern plays an elderly man named Woody Grant living in Billings, Montana who gets a letter saying he's won \$1million. All he needs to do is call a number and maybe buy a magazine subscription.

Instead of laughing it off, Woody insists on travelling hundreds of miles to company headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska for his fortune. Since he's lost his driving license and his family won't let him walk, it comes down to his son, David (Will Forte) to take him.

The movie's true destination turns out not to be Lincoln but a stopover at the small Nebraska town where Woody once lived. His extended family is there and so are many old neighbours and friends. The film then turns its focus inward to the emotional heart of Woody's absurd, romantic quest.

"Bruce Dern is at the top of his game." (*Observer*)

"Alexander Payne's bittersweet road movie, which finds Bruce Dern in terrific form, blends hard truths with a soft heart". (*Guardian*) (research Jane Lucas). Sad to see Bruce Dern like this. Depressingly grey, but uplifting here and there.





Director: Lee Daniels
Starring: Forest Whitaker, Oprah Winfrey
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 132 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Entertainment Film Distributors



The Butler

**Tue 7 7.30, Wed 8 7.30,
Sat 11 7.00**

On the eve of Barack Obama's election victory in November 2008, The Washington Post tracked down 'a story from the back pages of history' that of Eugene Allen who served in the White House for 34 years before retiring as head butler in 1986.

Described as 'a figure in the tiniest of print', Allan had been called 'Gene' by Truman, talked golf with Ford and been invited to dinner by the Reagans. More importantly, he had seen America change from a segregated country in which he wasn't allowed to use public lavatories in his native Virginia to a superpower ruled by its first black president.

Inspired by this story, Lee Daniel's star-studded adaptation sees the fictional Cecil Gaines (Forest Whittaker) live an extraordinary life that takes him from the cotton fields of Georgia (where his mother is raped and his father shot) to the corridors of the White House (where the serving staff are black) via an apprenticeship that teaches him to first accept and then to reject the term 'house nigger' as servitude turns to empowerment.

"Forest Whitaker is quietly powerful as a servant who lived through the long battle for civil rights". (*M.Kermode*) (*research Jane Clucas*). It might be good if it's not too cloying. Shouldn't have watched the trailer so much. Come, try the whole film, see how it goes.

Saving Mr Banks

Thu 9 7.30



The testy stand-off between Walt Disney and PL Travers, the formidable author of *Mary Poppins*, is well-known in film circles. Travers resisted attempts by Disney, his screenwriters and composers, to make her fictional heroine more lovable, and railed at the thought of animation being used in the 1964 film bearing her name.

This clash has been reworked into a cat-and-mouse game that often resembles a seduction. In one corner: Tom Hanks as Disney, all bluff charm and sweet persuasive reason. In the other: Emma Thompson as the prickly Travers, protective of her literary creation, a stickler for facts and grammar, and suspicious of the wearingly cheerful optimism of the studio's culture. Will starchy old PL finally get thawed by Walt's rich warmth? Will she abandon her haughty resistance to his folksiness and schmaltz? And can this intensely American figure faithfully represent the quintessential Britishness (Australianness in fact) of the *Mary Poppins* story?

"Smart, witty entertainment. Job done. Spit spot". (*Telegraph*)

"An enormous spoonful of sugar and the tiniest bit of medicine: it all goes down, just about". (*Guardian*)

"It boasts a fine (eyebrows and small disapproving mouth) performance from Thompson, who starts the movie in eccentric groove like a prickly version of Joyce Grenfell's Miss Gossage, but slowly and subtly reveals her character's vulnerabilities and complexities".

(*Independent*) (*research JC*)

Director: John Hancock
Starring: Emma Thompson, Tom Hanks
Certificate: PG
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: Australia/UK/USA 2013
By: Walt Disney Int'l

Don Jon

Fri 10 7.30

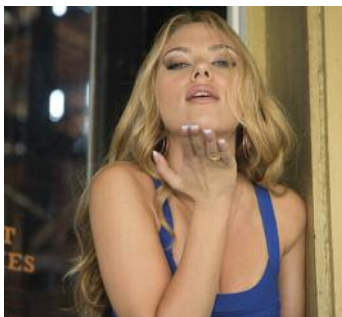
Director: Joseph Gordon-Levitt
Starring: Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Julianne Moore, Scarlett Johansson
Certificate: 18
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Warner Brothers

Joseph Gordon-Levitt writes and stars in his directional debut (clever boy?) with the confidence and flair expected only from (some) veteran film makers.

Don Jon is a rom-com of sorts that doesn't flirt with its themes so much as tackling them head on, with hilarious results.

Those themes, as it turns out, are to do with two types of unfulfilling addictions. Gordon-Levitt plays Jon, a latter-day lothario whose real-life conquests leave him longing for the unreal fantasies of hardcore pornography. When he finally meets the girl of his dreams (Scarlett Johansson), he promises to put aside the porn, but can't, any more than she can renounce the dopey Hollywood love stories that fuel her own fantasy dreams. Only when he starts to connect with a night-school classmate (Julianne Moore) who has experienced both the pleasure and pain of genuine human interaction does Jon begin to understand what it means to lose yourself in someone else.

One could view *Don Jon* is the sweet and punchy alternative to Steve McQueen's *Shame*, and Gordon-Levitt does a fantastic job in front and behind the camera. Issues regarding sex, porn, and addiction don't exactly chime success in cinema, but *Don Jon* combines them skillfully, painting a compelling ménage à trois. (*research/review Jack Whiting*) It sounds good. Not to be missed? Come and see.





Director: Abdellatif Kechiche
Starring: Adèle Exarchopoulos, Léa Seydoux
Certificate: 18
Duration: 180 mins
Origin: France 2013
By: Curzon Film World



Blue is The Warmest Colour

Sun 12 **5.00**

The winner of the Palme d'Or in 2013's Cannes Film Festival, Abdellatif Kechiche's stunning portrait of a relationship is a remarkable achievement.

Adapted from the graphic novel by Julie Maroh, Kechiche's film explores a journey through different frontiers that occur in any love affair. Shot in intimate hand-held close-up, it is a work of unhurried, unforced naturalism, but is also full of an intoxicating youthful vigour.

Adèle's life is changed forever when she meets blue-haired Emma. After an encounter in the street, Adèle daydreams this confident older art student into her life.

Soon after, Emma does enter Adèle's life, making way for an intense and complicated love story that spans a decade and is touchingly universal in its depiction. Emma teaches Adèle to discover desire and to assert herself as a woman and as an adult.

"Blue is the Warmest Colour is mostly tremendous, and anchored by two of the year's most fiercely committed performances." (*Telegraph*)

"Fearless, relatable and beautiful, this is one of the year's best. Holding you so close for so long, you won't want to break free." (*Total Film*)

Come see why the Palme d'Or (with Jury headed by Steven Spielberg) was awarded to leading actresses: Léa Seydoux and Adèle Exarchopoulos and their director, as Blue is the Warmest Colour makes its long anticipated appearance here at the Rex. (*Anna Shepherd*)

Utopia

Mon 13 7.30



John Pilger returns to his native Australia to see if the treatment of Aborigines has improved since his earlier documentary: *The Secret Country* in 1985.

Utopia is an epic portrayal of the world's "oldest continuous human culture" and an investigation into a suppressed colonial past and rapacious present. The illuminating moments of the film come from the Aborigines themselves. The people whose ancestors lived in Australia prior to British colonisation, have now been pushed to the fringes of society, often living in shocking levels of deprivation, dying early and getting barraged with racial abuse along the way. One of the world's best kept secrets is revealed against a background of the greatest boom in mineral wealth.

"To see this is to engage with arguably the most shocking case of political and social oppression in an affluent country." (*LittleWhiteLies*)

"When the subject and subjects are allowed to speak for themselves, they glow like throbbing wounds, unlike when Pilger stands and preaches the injustices." (*Financial Times*)

Utopia is both a personal journey and universal story of power and resistance and how modern societies can be divided between those who conform and a dystopian world of those who don't. (*Anna Shepherd*) The now familiar story of big business stopping at no trick too dirty to get its hands on mineral wealth below Aboriginal (or any) soil.

Director: John Pilger
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: UK 2013
By: Dartmouth Films

Saving Mr Banks

Tue 14 7.30

Director: John Hancock
Starring: Emma Thompson, Tom Hanks
Certificate: PG
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: Australia/UK/USA 2013
By: Walt Disney Int'l

The testy stand-off between Walt Disney and PL Travers, the formidable author of *Mary Poppins*, is well-known in film circles. Travers resisted attempts by Disney, his screenwriters and composers, to make her fictional heroine more lovable, and railed at the thought of animation being used in the 1964 film bearing her name.

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(*Independent*) (research JC)



Philomena

Wed 15 7.30, Tue 21 7.30



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Steve Coogan, who co-wrote and produced the film also plays the former BBC journalist, Martin Sixsmith. The script is adapted from Sixsmith's 2009 non-fiction book: *The Lost Child of Philomena*. Sixsmith, at a low ebb in his career, agrees to help Philomena search for her missing son with the aim of writing a story about her. Although, originally calling it 'a human interest story... for weak minded, ignorant people'.

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Philomena herself still lives in St Albans. She came to the Rex with her family in December and completely won-over the audience. (see page 5)

Director: Stephen Frears
Starring: Judi Dench, Steve Coogan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK/USA/France 2013
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Captain Phillips

Thu 16 7.30

Director: Paul Greengrass
Starring: Tom Hanks
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 134 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

We're still reeling from the intensity of A Hijacking and now another cargo ship has been boarded by Somali pirates, this time however, Tom Hanks is on board, so it'll all be okay...

Captain Phillips is the true-ish story of a skipper whose vessel was overrun by pirates off the coast of Somalia in 2009. It gives British director Paul Greengrass licence to indulge two of his favourite storytelling pastimes: high-stakes tension and real-world politics, and lots of hand-held camera shake (see United '93 and the Bourne's: Supremacy & Ultimatum).

It also sees Tom Hanks playing an unexceptional guy at the heart of an exceptional crisis. (Bearded, paunchy and comfortable; the complete antithesis of his skinny captors).

"Greengrass doesn't deny either, their heroic qualities, Phillips shows resilience and courage yet there's nothing superhuman about any of them." (*Time Out*)

"It might have all been another Hollywood-formula flick with American might taking on the alien other. But Greengrass gives Phillips and his captors equal bearing, with time to discover shared beliefs and fears" (*Rolling Stone*) It is without a doubt one of, if not the best role of Hanks' career.

Applause too to Greengrass for delivering yet another edge-of-seat movie. (research Jack Whiting). It was all a bit shouty for me.





Director: Francis Lawrence
Starring: Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 146 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Lionsgate Films UK



The Hunger Games: Catching Fire **Fri 17** 7.30, **Sat 18** 7.00, **Sun 19** 6.00

This sequel to the wildly successful Hunger Games gets down and dirty with its contestants upping the stakes, and a triple OTT in costume design.

"The story picks up in the classico-futurist kingdom of Panem, where an annual bread-and-circuses spectacle has teenagers competing for rations in a televised fight to the death. The first film introduced us to Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence), a bold 16-year-old who volunteers for the fight. By the start of *Catching Fire*, she is a champion, celebrity and role model, trapped in the crowd-pleasing romance she concocted with fellow contender Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson) while her secret lover Gale (Liam Hemsworth) languishes on the sidelines.

President Snow (a brilliantly malign Donald Sutherland, and looking better than ever) is still in charge, but Katniss's clever, rule-bending victory has made the populace itch for revolution. Snow's Machiavellian media chief (Philip Seymour Hoffman) suggests a simple solution: commission a special, all-star Hunger Games that will bring Katniss back into the arena, where she will lose her reputation and then her life. *Catching Fire* continues to distance itself from the *Twilight* crowd and succeeds admirably; inching ever closer to the televised carnage of *Battle Royale*, but with nary a drop of blood in sight. Lawrence too brings a gravitas seldom seen in young actresses. Roll on part three. *(research Jack Whiting)*

Jeune et Jolie

Mon 20 7.30



In many ways an extension of his mischievous and deft *In the House*. François Ozon's latest film – *Jeune et Jolie*, continues to explore the effects of a rebellious teenager's behaviour and the impact on a typical bourgeois family.

Like a modern-day telling of Buñuel's classic *Belle De Jour* (1967), but rather than Catherine Deneuve's bored housewife; the film links teenage schoolgirl, Isabelle (model Marine Vach) on an unexpected journey of self-discovery, albeit in an unconventional way.

After a brief holiday romance, Isabelle returns to Paris life; and for no directly-clear reason, she embarks on a secret life of prostitution. Divided into four seasonal chapters, each accompanied by a different tune from Françoise Hardy.

"The crisp elegance of Ozon's style commands your interest, even as the film's blank psychology pays dwindling dividends." (*Telegraph*)

"An engagingly provocative French drama with an enigmatic central performance from newcomer Marine Vach, and a superbly written script that steers commendably clear of the expected clichés." (*ViewLondon*)

Ozon's unsensational approach perfectly complements the youthful irreverence of the main character, while leaving audiences to come to their own moral conclusion. (*Anna Shepherd*)

Another tale of youth and beauty, an age old story from French master-story tellers. Not to be missed.

Director: Francois Ozon
Starring: Marine Vach, Fantin Ravat
Certificate: 18
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: France 2013
By: Lionsgate Films UK

Cinema Paradiso

Wed 22 7.30

Director: Giuseppe Tornatore
Starring: Jacques Perrin, Philippe Noiret
Certificate: PG
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: Italy/France 1988
By: Arrow Films

If ever a film came from the heart, it was Giuseppe Tornatore's nostalgic *Cinema Paradiso* (1988) now getting a re-release to celebrate its silver jubilee. A man takes us back to his Sicilian childhood as a cheeky scamp called Salvatore (Toto) played by a lovely little imp, Marcus Leonardi). Learning to love the magic of film, he befriends the reluctant old projectionist, Alfredo (Philippe Noiret, the most faultless French actor with the gentlest eyes. Died 2006 aged 76). In the dark confines of the *Cinema Paradiso*, young Toto and the other townsfolk escape grim post-war Sicily to crowd into the tiny cinema in the town square.

Funny, affectionate, nostalgic, heart-breaking, and winner of the Best Foreign Language Oscar in 1989 (when 'Best Foreign Language' was a category) *Cinema Paradiso* is a love letter to the power of cinema and is now a constant presence in the top best films of all time. "It is a wonderful and open-hearted tribute to the beauty of cinema... one of the finest films about innocence ever made, a perfect picture of a time when cinema was the only source of laughter and joy. The roaring, spitting, smoking, groping scenes in the old *Paradiso* might come from any culture at any time, just not now, not ours..."

(*Camilla Long. ST Culture*) Don't miss it for the world.





Director: John Krokidas
Starring: Daniel Radcliffe, Ben Foster
Certificate: 15
Duration: 104 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: The Works UK Distribution



Kill Your Darlings

Thu 23 7.30

Daniel Radcliffe dons another pair of iconic glasses, this time to play Beat Generation icon Allen Ginsberg.

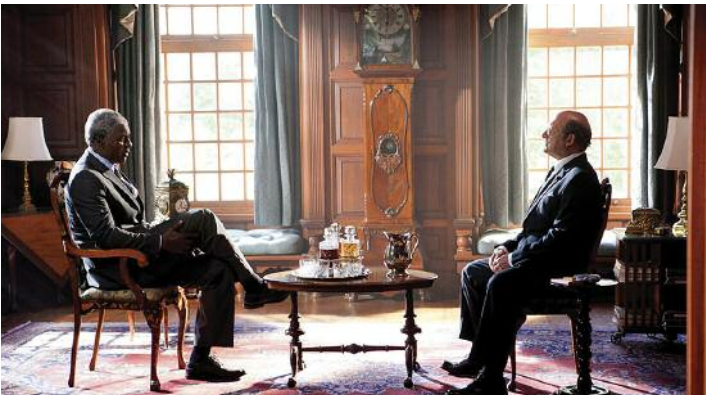
Set during the famed poet's early years at Columbia University in the 1940s. He swiftly falls under the spell of handsome, charismatic Lucien Carr (Dane DeHaan) who sees himself as the architect of an artistic 'New Vision'. Carr introduces Ginsberg to Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs, bringing together the founding fathers of the Beat Movement. Meanwhile, an older outsider named David Krammerer (Michael C. Hall) becomes obsessed with free spirited Carr. Ginsberg becomes embroiled in a real life murder case that involved the stabbing to death in dubious circumstances of one gay man by another.

"Sex, drugs, murder, radical verse and Radcliffe make persuasive bedfellows in Krokidas' live-wire lit-pic. It gets busy, but fizzy direction and Radcliffe's rigour help to keep its pulse alive". (*Total Film*) "The story is somewhat specialised but as films about writers go, especially the Beats, this is one of the best, an intoxicating, absorbing and handsome exploration of what it really means to be inspired, featuring Daniel Radcliffe's best post-Potter performance." (*Empire*) Come see Radcliffe shake off his childhood cloak and pupate into a praiseworthy and mature actor. (*Anna Shepherd*)





Director: Justin Chadwick
Starring: Idris Elba, Naomie Harris
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 147 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Twentieth Century Fox



Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom

**Fri 24 7.30, Sat 25 7.00,
 Sun 26 6.00, Tue 28 7.30**

He was 27 years in jail for speaking out, much of it tortuous hard-labour, breaking rocks for no reason.

In film terms if it helps, think of Cool Hand Luke being forced to dig that huge hole, fill it in, then dig it again and again. Nelson Mandela walked slowly to freedom, took charge of a country in turmoil and about to explode into a 100 years war. Then miraculously calmed it down. And even though, it is still a tough place to live, and probably will be for ever, it is not suffocated by bloody civil war.

Then, as if to defy the life sentence, his jailors and the State, he died at 95, a free man in one piece.

"I'm getting heartily sick of hearing people say Mr Mandela's greatest achievement was his capacity to forgive. No that's not his greatest achievement. His greatest achievement was overthrowing you buggers, and the fact that he didn't then force you to spend the rest of your life cleaning every toilet in Soweto with your own toothbrush, is frankly disappointing..." (*the exquisite Jeremy Hardy: News Quiz 13.12.13*) There is no victory greater than to win without retaliation, grandstanding, incitement or a smug arrogance. Although a bit of toothbrushing toilets wouldn't have gone amiss.

The Patience Stone

Mon 27 7.30



Golshifteh Farahani plays a beautiful but careworn woman in a ruined war-zone, (possibly Afghanistan) obediently tending to her wounded husband, who is in a persistent vegetative state after being shot in the neck. In life, he was a cruel and tyrannical husband, and his wife is now sensing that despite the crushing burden of caring for him, she has a euphoric kind of freedom in speaking her mind to his mute, unblinking quasi-corpse. It's a situation which exposes her to danger from the marauders, but also allows her to say things she would never have dreamed of saying to her husband during their marriage. The man has become what ancient tradition called a "patience stone", a mystical jewel to which all cares and worries can be cathartically confided. "Her candid story is gripping; her sensuality and sexuality, together with defiant self-respect, powerfully uncoil. This is a film to be compared with Almodovar's *Talk To Her* or maybe Dennis Potter's *Brimstone and Treacle*. Its final moments have overwhelming force". (*Guardian*) "After countless macho movies about Afghanistan in the shadow of war, it is refreshing to encounter a film with such a lyrical and offbeat approach". (*Independent*) (research Jane Clucas) Try not to lose patience, just don't miss.

Director: Atiq Rahimi
Starring: Golshifteh Farahani
Certificate: 15
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: Afghanistan/France/
 Germany/UK 2012
By: Axiom Films

All Is Lost

Wed 29 7.30, Thu 30 7.30

Director: J. Chandor
Starring: Robert Redford
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Sometimes simplicity is all you need. Here, Robert Redford is lost at sea on a leaky boat. That's it, no dialogue, just one man against the elements in a game of pure survival.

Redford takes on an almost wordless role as an extraordinarily unlucky sailor. He awakes one morning to find that his yacht has been pierced by a cargo container, one corner of the metal monstrosity embedded in the fibreglass hull like an oblong wrecking ball. Worse still, water has gushed in and shorted out all the power on the vessel, rendering any contact with the rest of the world impossible.

As Gravity has proven so confidently, the concept of one person stranded against insurmountable odds is utterly thrilling and emotionally draining, as this shows, albeit with splinters and sea water replacing computer wizardry. And it's all him, at 75!

"Robert Redford delivers a tour de force: holding the screen effortlessly with no acting support whatsoever. After a period of scaling back performance to accommodate directing and the Sundance festival, he appears to be re-emerging energised." (*Guardian*)

Redford clearly isn't ready to retire, and in understatement alone, were it not for this year's weighty political competitors, he would secure awards for the best performance of his illustrious career. (research Jack Whiting) Try Jeremiah Johnson, Jack (1972).

For me, Robert Redford can do no wrong.





Director: Adam McKay
Starring: Will Ferrell, Paul Rudd, Christina Applegate, Meagan Good
Certificate: 15
Duration: 119 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Paramount International Pictures



Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues

Fri 31 7.30

By the beard of Zeus! Has it really been nine years? Ron Burgundy's story truly did enter legend as its cult status caused the fans to demand a sequel.

And inevitably, here it is.

Ron has left the sleepy streets of 1970s San Diego for the bright 1980s lights of the Big Apple. Now married to co-anchor Veronica Corningstone (Christina Applegate) Burgundy, looking more like a porn star than a newsmen, is flying high. Until, that is, the pair's new boss, Mack Harken (Harrison Ford) bumps Corningstone up to primetime, and dumps Burgundy altogether.

After a spectacularly inept suicide attempt, a washed-up Ron is rescued by his former producer who rallies behind his one-time news champ. Reignited, Burgundy then reconnects with his posse, Champ Kind (David Koechner), Brian Fantana (Paul Rudd) and weatherman Brick Tamland (Steve Carell), who then face-off with slick newscaster Jack Lime (James Marsden), himself now oblivious to change. Delivering 24-hour news inexplicably brings Burgundy and his merry band of misfits back into vogue. With supposedly enough unrestrained, improvised material to fill around five hours, Anchorman's zaniness doesn't disappoint. For the uninitiated it may all seem a little too 'WTF', but all you Burgundy fans out there, be rest assured, it's a doozy. *(research Jack Whiting)*. At under two hours, there'll be somewhere Ferrell fans will find the missing 3 hrs improv.

COMING SOON

New releases

American Hustle
 Railway Man
 12 Years A Slave
 Michael Kohlhaas

Back by demand

Blue Is The Warmest
 Colour
 All Is Lost
 Mandela
 Philomena
 Gravity
 Anchorman 2
 The Butler



American Hustle



Railway Man



Michael Kohlhaas

12 Years A Slave



JANUARY FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	Wed	CINEMA CLOSED – NEW YEARS DAY	
2	Thu	GRAVITY	2.00, 7.30
3	Fri	GRAVITY	7.30
4	Sat	SAVING MR BANKS	2.00
4	Sat	PHILOMENA	7.00
5	Sun	CINEMA PARADISO	6.00
6	Mon	PHILOMENA	2.00
6	Mon	NEBRASKA	7.30
7	Tue	THE BUTLER	12.30, 7.30
8	Wed	PHILOMENA	2.00
8	Wed	THE BUTLER	7.30
9	Thu	THE BUTLER	2.00
9	Thu	SAVING MR BANKS	7.30
10	Fri	DON JON	7.30
11	Sat	FREE BIRDS	2.00
11	Sat	THE BUTLER	7.00
12	Sun	BLUE IS THE WARMEST COLOUR	5.00
13	Mon	GRAVITY	2.00
13	Mon	UTOPIA	7.30
14	Tue	GRAVITY	12.30
14	Tue	SAVING MR BANKS	7.30
15	Wed	PHILOMENA	2.00, 7.30
16	Thu	NEBRASKA	2.00
16	Thu	CAPTAIN PHILLIPS	7.30
17	Fri	THE HUNGER GAMES 2	7.30
18	Sat	CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS 2	2.00
18	Sat	THE HUNGER GAMES 2	7.00
19	Sun	THE HUNGER GAMES 2	6.00
20	Mon	THE HUNGER GAMES 2	2.00
20	Mon	JEUNE ET JOLIE	7.30
21	Tue	THE HUNGER GAMES 2	12.30
21	Tue	PHILOMENA	7.30
22	Wed	CINEMA PARADISO	2.00, 7.30
23	Thu	CINEMA PARADISO	2.00
23	Thu	KILL YOUR DARLINGS	7.30
24	Fri	MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM	7.30
25	Sat	FROZEN	2.00
25	Sat	MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM	7.00
26	Sun	MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM	6.00
27	Mon	MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM	2.00
27	Mon	THE PATIENCE STONE	7.30
28	Tue	MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM	12.30, 7.30
29	Wed	CAPTAIN PHILLIPS	2.00
29	Wed	ALL IS LOST	7.30
30	Thu	ALL IS LOST	2.00, 7.30
31	Fri	ANCHORMAN 2	7.30



J A N U A R Y M A T I N E E S

ALL MATINEES: Balcony £5.00 • Table seats £6.50 • Royal Box seats £10.00
Matinee Warning: May contain babies

Gravity

Thu 2 2.00



A pair of satellite engineers are stranded in space. Gravity, or lack of it, is utterly unique.

Alfonso Cuarón worked for four years to get it done. It's been worth the wait. Sandra Bullock and George Clooney are Stone and Kowalsky; two astronauts out in the deep, cold abyss doing a little repair work on the Hubble telescope. So far so routine, but when they're told that a chunk of satellite debris is heading their way at high speed, they have to move quickly, not easy in space. This is when Gravity transforms from a therapeutic space adventure into one of the most tense thrillers of recent years; a suffocating, dizzying nightmare that I can only compare to a theme park virgin going a few rounds on Nemesis. Scientific inaccuracies aside, Gravity is a technical marvel. Thanks to the pioneering technology adapted to create this fantastic cinematic masterpiece, the 'camera' swoops, ducks, and dives; there is nowhere the viewer doesn't have access to. However none of that would work if it wasn't for such an assured performance from Ms Bullock. Space in all its vastness has been represented realistically in cinema before, Kubrick's 2001 springs to mind, but that was made with gaffer and string. Gravity makes space terrifying, which is as it should be, and it's only 91 minutes!

Director: Alfonso Cuarón
Starring: Sandra Bullock, George Clooney
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Warner Brothers

Saving Mr Banks

Sat 4 2.00

Director: John Hancock
Starring: Emma Thompson, Tom Hanks
Certificate: PG
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: Australia/UK/USA 2013
By: Walt Disney Int'l

The testy stand-off between Walt Disney and PL Travers, the formidable author of Mary Poppins, is well-known in film circles. Travers resisted attempts by Disney, his screenwriters and composers, to make her fictional heroine more lovable, and railed at the thought of animation being used in the 1964 film bearing her name.

This clash has been reworked into a cat-and-mouse game that often resembles a seduction. In one corner: Tom Hanks as Disney, all bluff charm and sweet persuasive reason. In the other: Emma Thompson as the prickly Travers, protective of her literary creation, a stickler for facts and grammar, and suspicious of the wearingly cheerful optimism of the studio's culture. Will starchy old PL finally get thawed by Walt's rich warmth? Will she abandon her haughty resistance to his folksiness and schmaltz? And can this intensely American figure faithfully represent the quintessential Britishness (Australianness in fact) of the Mary Poppins story?

"Smart, witty entertainment. Job done. Spit spot". (*Telegraph*)

"An enormous spoonful of sugar and the tiniest bit of medicine: it all goes down, just about". (*Guardian*)

"It boasts a fine (eyebrows and small disapproving mouth) performance from Thompson, who starts the movie in eccentric groove like a prickly version of Joyce Grenfell's Miss Gossage, but slowly and subtly reveals her character's vulnerabilities and complexities".

(*Independent*) (research JC)



Philomena

Mon 6 2.00, Wed 8 2.00



Judi Dench plays Philomena Lee, who in the early 1950s became pregnant as a teenager, she was sent as a 'fallen woman' to the convent of Roscrea and forced to give up her child for adoption.

Steve Coogan, who co-wrote and produced the film also plays the former BBC journalist, Martin Sixsmith. The script is adapted from Sixsmith's 2009 non-fiction book: *The Lost Child of Philomena*. Sixsmith, at a low ebb in his career, agrees to help Philomena search for her missing son with the aim of writing a story about her. Although, originally calling it 'a human interest story... for weak minded, ignorant people'.

Dench and Coogan's characters are the classic odd couple. On screen together throughout, their trail to find the boy brings them face to face with some long buried secrets.

"The brilliance of Judi Dench's performance lies in the sure-footed way she combines comedy and extreme pathos without ever lapsing into caricature."

(Independent)

"The film is one of the few capable of allowing its watchers to shed a tear and laugh within more or less the same sequence" *(Standard)*

Another fabulous award winning turn by Dame Judi. Let's hope for the best during the new year's awards circus.

Philomena herself still lives in St Albans. She came to the Rex with her family in December and completely won-over the audience. (see page 5)

Director: Stephen Frears
Starring: Judi Dench, Steve Coogan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK/USA/France 2013
By: Twentieth Century Fox

The Butler

Tue 7 12.30, Thu 9 2.00

Director: Lee Daniels
Starring: Forest Whitaker, Oprah Winfrey
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 132 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Entertainment Film Distributors

On the eve of Barack Obama's election victory in November 2008, The Washington Post tracked down 'a story from the back pages of history' that of Eugene Allen who served in the White House for 34 years before retiring as head butler in 1986.

Described as 'a figure in the tiniest of print', Allan had been called 'Gene' by Truman, talked golf with Ford and been invited to dinner by the Reagans. More importantly, he had seen America change from a segregated country in which he wasn't allowed to use public lavatories in his native Virginia to a superpower ruled by its first black president.

Inspired by this story, Lee Daniel's star-studded adaptation sees the fictional Cecil Gaines (Forest Whittaker) live an extraordinary life that takes him from the cotton fields of Georgia (where his mother is raped and his father shot) to the corridors of the White House (where the serving staff are black) via an apprenticeship that teaches him to first accept and then to reject the term 'house nigger' as servitude turns to empowerment.

"Forest Whitaker is quietly powerful as a servant who lived through the long battle for civil rights". *(M.Kermode)* *(research Jane Clucas)*. It might be good if it's not too cloying. Shouldn't have watched the trailer so much. Come, try the whole film, see how it goes.



Free Birds

Sat 11 2.00



Owen Wilson voices Reggie, a turkey, who like all the other turkeys, is heading for the chop, only to be miraculously saved by the president himself.

The prez has chosen him as the traditional 'pardoned turkey' and so living with America's First Family, Reggie finds out about top-secret military plans to develop a time machine. He sneaks into this hi-tech craft, on a personal mission to head back to Plymouth Colony 1621, and change the turkey-eating tradition so he and his kind can be spared. Now, given what we know about what continues to be the Thanksgiving food of choice in America, how can the film arrive at a happy ending?

"It's troublesome to know that anyone who's seen *Chicken Run* will wonder why they're not enjoying a well-constructed Aardman animation rather than attempting to make sense of this incoherent transatlantic trifle." (*Mark Kermode*)

"The target audience may be the kids who'll stare goggle-eyed at any low-rent Pixar knockoff, but the purported humour and reliance on nonsensical plot twists are pure stoner. To call this a turkey would be an insult to poultry." (*Time Out*)

Why do grown-up crits get so animated about kids cartoons?

Take no notice, it's a January Saturday afternoon, and it is only a "trifle".

See what the "goggle-eyed" kids think

Director: Jimmy Hayward
Starring: Owen Wilson, Woody Harrelson
Certificate: U
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Entertainment One UK

Gravity

Mon 13 2.00, Tue 14 12.30

Director: Alfonso Cuarón
Starring: Sandra Bullock, George Clooney
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Warner Brothers

A pair of satellite engineers are stranded in space. Gravity, or lack of it, is utterly unique.

Alfonso Cuarón worked for four years to get it done. It's been worth the wait. Sandra Bullock and George Clooney are Stone and Kowalsky; two astronauts out in the deep, cold abyss doing a little repair work on the Hubble telescope. So far so routine, but when they're told that a chunk of satellite debris is heading their way at high speed, they have to move quickly, not easy in space. This is when *Gravity* transforms from a therapeutic space adventure into one of the most tense thrillers of recent years; a suffocating, dizzying nightmare that I can only compare to a theme park virgin going a few rounds on Nemesis. Scientific inaccuracies aside, *Gravity* is a technical marvel. Thanks to the pioneering technology adapted to create this fantastic cinematic masterpiece, the 'camera' swoops, ducks, and dives; there is nowhere the viewer doesn't have access to. However none of that would work if it wasn't for such an assured performance from Ms Bullock. Space in all its vastness has been represented realistically in cinema before, Kubrick's 2001 springs to mind, but that was made with gaffer and string. *Gravity* makes space terrifying, which is as it should be, and it's only 91 minutes!



Philomena

Wed 15 2.00



Judi Dench plays Philomena Lee, who in the early 1950s became pregnant as a teenager, she was sent as a 'fallen woman' to the convent of Roscrea and forced to give up her child for adoption.

Steve Coogan, who co-wrote and produced the film also plays the former BBC journalist, Martin Sixsmith. The script is adapted from Sixsmith's 2009 non-fiction book: *The Lost Child of Philomena*. Sixsmith, at a low ebb in his career, agrees to help Philomena search for her missing son with the aim of writing a story about her. Although, originally calling it 'a human interest story... for weak minded, ignorant people'.

Dench and Coogan's characters are the classic odd couple. On screen together throughout, their trail to find the boy brings them face to face with some long buried secrets.

"The brilliance of Judi Dench's performance lies in the sure-footed way she combines comedy and extreme pathos without ever lapsing into caricature." (*Independent*)

"The film is one of the few capable of allowing its watchers to shed a tear and laugh within more or less the same sequence" (*Standard*)

Another fabulous award winning turn by Dame Judi. Let's hope for the best during the new year's awards circus.

Philomena herself still lives in St Albans. She came to the Rex with her family in December and completely won-over the audience. (see page 5)

Director: Stephen Frears
Starring: Judi Dench, Steve Coogan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK/USA/France2 013
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Nebraska

Thu 16 2.00

Director: Alexander Payne
Starring: Bruce Dern, Will Forte, Stacy Keach
Certificate: 15
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Paramount International Pictures

After making side trips to California's Central Coast (Sideways) and Hawaii (The Descendants) Alexander Payne returns to his home state of Nebraska for his sixth directorial feature, a wistful ode to small-town Midwestern life and the idealistic dreams of stubborn old men.

The premise seems a dead end: Bruce Dern plays an elderly man named Woody Grant living in Billings, Montana who gets a letter saying he's won \$1million. All he needs to do is call a number and maybe buy a magazine subscription. Instead of laughing it off, Woody insists on travelling hundreds of miles to company headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska for his fortune. Since he's lost his driving license and his family won't let him walk, it comes down to his son, David (Will Forte) to take him.

The movie's true destination turns out not to be Lincoln but a stopover at the small Nebraska town where Woody once lived. His extended family is there and so are many old neighbours and friends. The film then turns its focus inward to the emotional heart of Woody's absurd, romantic quest.

"Bruce Dern is at the top of his game." (*Observer*)

"Alexander Payne's bittersweet road movie, which finds Bruce Dern in terrific form, blends hard truths with a soft heart". (*Guardian*) (research Jane Clucas). Sad to see Bruce Dern like this.

Depressingly grey, but uplifting here and there.



Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs 2 **Sat 18** 2.00



The first shower of meatballs was a hyperkinetic, sugar-rush of fart jokes and sight gags that proved successful with kids and adults alike, and round two doesn't show signs of slowing down.

It picks up not long after the first film leaves off, with the town of Swallow Falls, devastated by the foodnados and foodalanaches unleashed by our hapless inventor hero Flint Lockwood (Bill Hader) it is now in desperate need of cleanup. To the rescue comes Flint's hero Chester V (Will Forte) part mad scientist and part Steve Jobs, who offers the services of his huge tech company Live Corp to tidy things up. Meanwhile, Flint goes off to Live Corp's headquarters and enters the race to achieve a lifelong dream and join the company's hive-mind of inventors. But before the movie can turn into *The Internship*, Flint and his pals are called back to their island, which has apparently been overrun by armies of living food monsters, including a terrifying cheeseburger with chips for legs and a thousand sesame seeds for eyes.

A little undercooked when stacked up against the original, then, but *Cloudy 2* retains a lot of the feverish energy that has made it a surprise success. (*Jack Whiting*) Fun, silly food antics and great animation. Don't miss.

Directors: Cody Cameron, Kris Pearn
Voices: Bill Hader, Anna Faris, James Caan, Benjamin Bratt
Certificate: U
Duration: 95 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire **Mon 20** 2.00, **Tue 21** 12.30

Director: Francis Lawrence
Starring: Jennifer Lawrence
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 146 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Lionsgate Films UK

This sequel to the wildly successful Hunger Games gets down and dirty with its contestants upping the stakes, and a triple OTT in costume design.

"The story picks up in the classico-futurist kingdom of Panem, where an annual bread-and-circuses spectacle has teenagers competing for rations in a televised fight to the death. The first film introduced us to Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence), a bold 16-year-old who volunteers for the fight. By the start of *Catching Fire*, she is a champion, celebrity and role model, trapped in the crowd-pleasing romance she concocted with fellow contender Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson) while her secret lover Gale (Liam Hemsworth) languishes on the sidelines.

President Snow (a brilliantly malign Donald Sutherland, and looking better than ever) is still in charge, but Katniss's clever, rule-bending victory has made the populace itch for revolution. Snow's Machiavellian media chief (Philip Seymour Hoffman) suggests a simple solution: commission a special, all-star Hunger Games that will bring Katniss back into the arena, where she will lose her reputation and then her life. *Catching Fire* continues to distance itself from the *Twilight* crowd and succeeds admirably; inching ever closer to the televised carnage of *Battle Royale*, but with nary a drop of blood in sight. Lawrence too brings a gravitas seldom seen in young actresses. Roll on part three. (*research Jack Whiting*)





Director: Giuseppe Tornatore
Starring: Jacques Perrin, Philippe Noiret
Certificate: PG
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: Italy/France 1988
By: Arrow Films



Cinema Paradiso

Wed 22 2.00, Thu 23 2.00

If ever a film came from the heart, it was Giuseppe Tornatore's nostalgic **Cinema Paradiso (1988)** now getting a re-release to celebrate its silver jubilee. A man takes us back to his Sicilian childhood as a cheeky scamp called Salvatore (Toto) played by a lovely little imp, Marcus Leonardi). Learning to love the magic of film, he befriends the reluctant old projectionist, Alfredo (Philippe Noiret, the most faultless French actor with the gentlest eyes. Died 2006 aged 76).

In the dark confines of the Cinema Paradiso, young Toto and the other townsfolk escape grim post-war Sicily to crowd into the tiny cinema in the town square.

Funny, affectionate, nostalgic, heart-breaking, and winner of the Best Foreign Language Oscar in 1989 (when 'Best Foreign Language' was a category) Cinema Paradiso is a love letter to the power of cinema and is now a constant presence in the top best films of all time. "It is a wonderful and open-hearted tribute to the beauty of cinema... one of the finest films about innocence ever made, a perfect picture of a time when cinema was the only source of laughter and joy. The roaring, spitting, smoking, groping scenes in the old Paradiso might come from any culture at any time, just not now, not ours..."

(Camilla Long. *ST Culture*) Don't miss it for the world.



Directors: Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee
Certificate: PG
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Walt Disney Int'l



Frozen Sat 25 2.00

Disney's *Frozen*, an animated fairy tale musical inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's 'The 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, the panicked king and queen decide to isolate their daughters from the outside world and push Elsa to keep her emotions in check (out of fear that she will cause serious harm). Several years later, following some tragic circumstances, grown-up Elsa (Idina Menzel) and Ana (Kristen Bee) no longer share the close bond that 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 (Santino Fontana). Unfortunately, Elsa's mounting emotions start to break free, as she terrifies the locals with her powers and inadvertently starts an eternal winter upon fleeing the kingdom.

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

"This is terrifically enjoyable – romantic, subversive, engaging and enthralling'. (*Observer*)

"Frozen is the best Disney since Aladdin, a glittering, sparkling cartoon epic..." (*CL. ST Culture*). Definitely don't miss.



Director: Justin Chadwick
Starring: Idris Elba, Naomie Harris
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 147 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom

Mon 27 2.00, **Tue 28** 12.30

He was 27 years in jail for speaking out, much of it tortuous hard-labour, breaking rocks for no reason.

In film terms if it helps, think of Cool Hand Luke being forced to dig that huge hole, fill it in, then dig it again and again. Nelson Mandela walked slowly to freedom, took charge of a country in turmoil and about to explode into a 100 years war. Then miraculously calmed it down. And even though, it is still a tough place to live, and probably will be for ever, it is not suffocated by bloody civil war.

Then, as if to defy the life sentence, his jailors and the State, he died at 95, a free man in one piece.

"I'm getting heartily sick of hearing people say Mr Mandela's greatest achievement was his capacity to forgive. No that's not his greatest achievement. His greatest achievement was overthrowing you buggers, and the fact that he didn't then force you to spend the rest of your life cleaning every toilet in Soweto with your own toothbrush, is frankly disappointing..." (*the exquisite Jeremy Hardy: News Quiz 13.12.13*)

There is no victory greater than to win without retaliation, grandstanding, incitement or a smug arrogance. Although a bit of toothbrushing toilets wouldn't have gone amiss.



Captain Phillips

Wed 29 2.00



We're still reeling from the intensity of *A Hijacking* and now another cargo ship has been boarded by Somali pirates, this time however, Tom Hanks is on board, so it'll all be okay...

Captain Phillips is the true-ish story of a skipper whose vessel was overrun by pirates off the coast of Somalia in 2009. It gives British director Paul Greengrass licence to indulge two of his favourite storytelling pastimes: high-stakes tension and real-world politics, and lots of hand-held camera shake (see *United '93* and the *Bourne*'s: *Supremacy & Ultimatum*).

It also sees Tom Hanks playing an unexceptional guy at the heart of an exceptional crisis. (Bearded, paunchy and comfortable; the complete antithesis of his skinny captors).

"Greengrass doesn't deny either, their heroic qualities, Phillips shows resilience and courage yet there's nothing superhuman about any of them." (*Time Out*)

"It might have all been another Hollywood-formula flick with American might taking on the alien other. But Greengrass gives Phillips and his captors equal bearing, with time to discover shared beliefs and fears" (*Rolling Stone*)

It is without a doubt one of, if not the best role of Hanks' career. Applause too to Greengrass for delivering yet another edge-of-seat movie. (*research Jack Whiting*). It was all a bit shouty for me.

Director: Paul Greengrass
Starring: Tom Hanks
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 134 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

All Is Lost

Thu 30 2.00

Director: J. Chandor
Starring: Robert Redford
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: USA 2013
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Sometimes simplicity is all you need. Here, Robert Redford is lost at sea on a leaky boat. That's it, no dialogue, just one man against the elements in a game of pure survival.

Redford takes on an almost wordless role as an extraordinarily unlucky sailor. He awakes one morning to find that his yacht has been pierced by a cargo container, one corner of the metal monstrosity embedded in the fibreglass hull like an oblong wrecking ball.

Worse still, water has gushed in and shorted out all the power on the vessel, rendering any contact with the rest of the world impossible.

As *Gravity* has proven so confidently, the concept of one person stranded against insurmountable odds is utterly thrilling and emotionally draining, as this shows, albeit with splinters and sea water replacing computer wizardry. And it's all him, at 75!

"Robert Redford delivers a tour de force: holding the screen effortlessly with no acting support whatsoever. After a period of scaling back performance to accommodate directing and the Sundance festival, he appears to be re-emerging energised." (*Guardian*)

Redford clearly isn't ready to retire, and in understatement alone, were it not for this year's weighty political competitors, he would secure awards for the best performance of his illustrious career. (*research Jack Whiting*) Try Jeremiah Johnson, Jack (1972).

For me, Robert Redford can do no wrong.



ST ALBANS – THE ODYSSEY...



Photograph by Jacqui Adams

We still need that ridiculously illusive £500,000 to complete the job. It seems we've never stopped chasing that same half million... One way or another we have raised it five times, but just as we get close, it runs away, like those cruel running tricks played by older kids (still?) on their little sisters and brothers. It pains that circumstances 'beyond our control' have cost us half of our original £1.6m budget.

While we have never let set-backs set us back, we need to find this last £500k in the first two months of the new year if we are to finish the job by the Summer.

Our genuinely brilliant builder, Procare, is hugely supportive and totally on our side, as is our architect and project management under Robert Martell & Co. Each is doing everything within an ever tightening budget to complete on time for opening in the Summer.

So it's a tanner for a personally signed limited edition Butch & Sundance '£10' replica. Or £1000 (£1500 for a box seat) to name your seat for life, and to enjoy a number of special seat-holder treats in the first year of opening.

This is a great New Years resolution gift for a loved one, or your company, or to yourself - because you deserve it...?

So with both ends of the crazy money

Clockwork from top left: St Albans Abbey Gdns Christmas market sunset 8th December. We had jolly nice Odyssey stand/hut for a week in December.

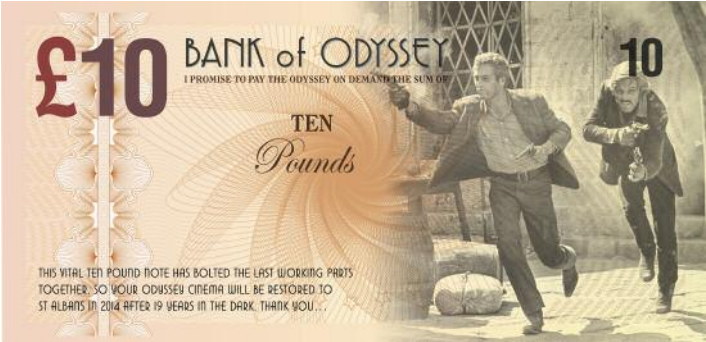
This looks like the toilet block in Gulag conditions (top right). It is in fact the toilet block we 'inherited' and a toilet block you too will inherit. Butch & Sundance's tenner (middle) Lastly take-in these two ladder pictures, and remember them when we open. The solitary ladder in the foyer (June 2010) is next to working ladders in the same space (Dec 2013). What a difference two ladders make...





spectrum on offer, I wish you a Happy New Year. Here's to glorious opening parties at the Odyssey this Summer. Do either or both now. The reward is

simple: a beautifully restored cinema, my programming, but your cinema, back in St Albans after 19 years and a couple of grey hairs.



2014 CALENDARS

THE ODYSSEY

CINEMA ST ALBANS

OUR FIRST EVER ODYSSEY CALENDAR



2014

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