

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E

JUNE 2014 Issue 111
www.therexberkhamsted.com

POMPEII

JUNE 2014...

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

Britain's Best Cinema - Guardian Film Awards 2014

01442 877759

Mon-Sat 10.30-6.30pm Sun 4.30-5.30pm

Gallery	4-5
June Evenings	11
Coming Soon	27
June Films at a glance	27
June Matinees	29
Dear Mrs Trellis...	42-45

SEAT PRICES

Circle	£9.00
Concessions	£7.50
At Table	£11.00
Concessions	£9.50
Royal Box (seats 6)	£13.00
or for the Box	£73.00
All matinees £5, £6.50, £10 (box)	

BOX OFFICE:	01442 877759
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)

From 1st June tickets will go up £1 (evenings only, matinees stay the same)

We have managed to absorb all increases in VAT (aided by your voluntary contributions). So too we have not past on to you any hikes of any kind imposed upon us. Now we must do it for the Rex, which we hope you will agree, is a much better reason.

From 1st June, the new evening prices will be as follows:

Upstairs:	£9.00 and £7.50 (conc)
Downstairs:	£11.00 and £9.50 (conc)
'Royal Box':	£13.00 (no conc)
Whole box:	£73.00

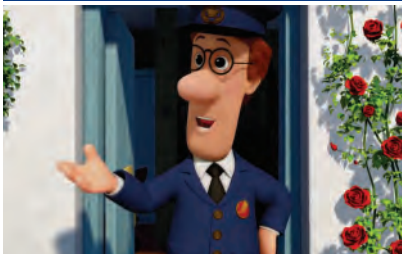
Matinees, stay the same with no concessions:

Upstairs:	£5.00
Downstairs:	£6.50
'Royal Box':	£10.00

Apparently, and without gimmickry, our matinees remain cheaper than many independents and most multiplexes, whilst still providing the exquisite relief of not having to go to one.

From the outset you, our audience, have provided industrial support for the well-being of the Rex, especially queuing every month on general release Saturday, rain or shine, and often taking your chances with the raffle on the door each night. A trillion thanks, as always

BEST IN JUNE



Postman Pat

Pat on the big screen with Jess & Mrs Goggins... bliss! Sat 14th 2.00

FILMS OF THE MONTH



Jane Bown: Looking for Light

"Ahh there you are" as she catches them, just there... Sun 22nd 6.00pm



The Wind Rises

Achingly beautiful. Mayazaki's last animation...? Mon 23rd 7.30



Exhibition

The delightful Joanna Hogg (Director) in Q&A Fri 27th 7.30

MARK KERMODE BOUGHT ONE, AND HE LIVES IN SOUTHAMPTON...! IT'S YOUR TURN NOW



Mark Kermode is seen here engaged in a dubious transaction with James Hannaway, who had come as a laundry basket and reaching for his gun. In fact it was rather a non-dubious encounter at Herts University, where Mark was invited by Radio Verulam to talk about his latest book on film and its critics entitled Hatchet Job. Playing to a packed house Mark strode

about the stage, without missing a beat or a word in his 120mph rant about film and its critics. Very funny as you'd expect, but also, enlightening, entertaining, sharp, and fabulously opinionated, as you would expect! The encounter above, is Mark giving The Odyssey cinema a tenner for the much prized, hand signed, Butch & Sundance certificate. Hip-hip... Hannaway is fumbling for a pen to sign it. An odd couple indeed.

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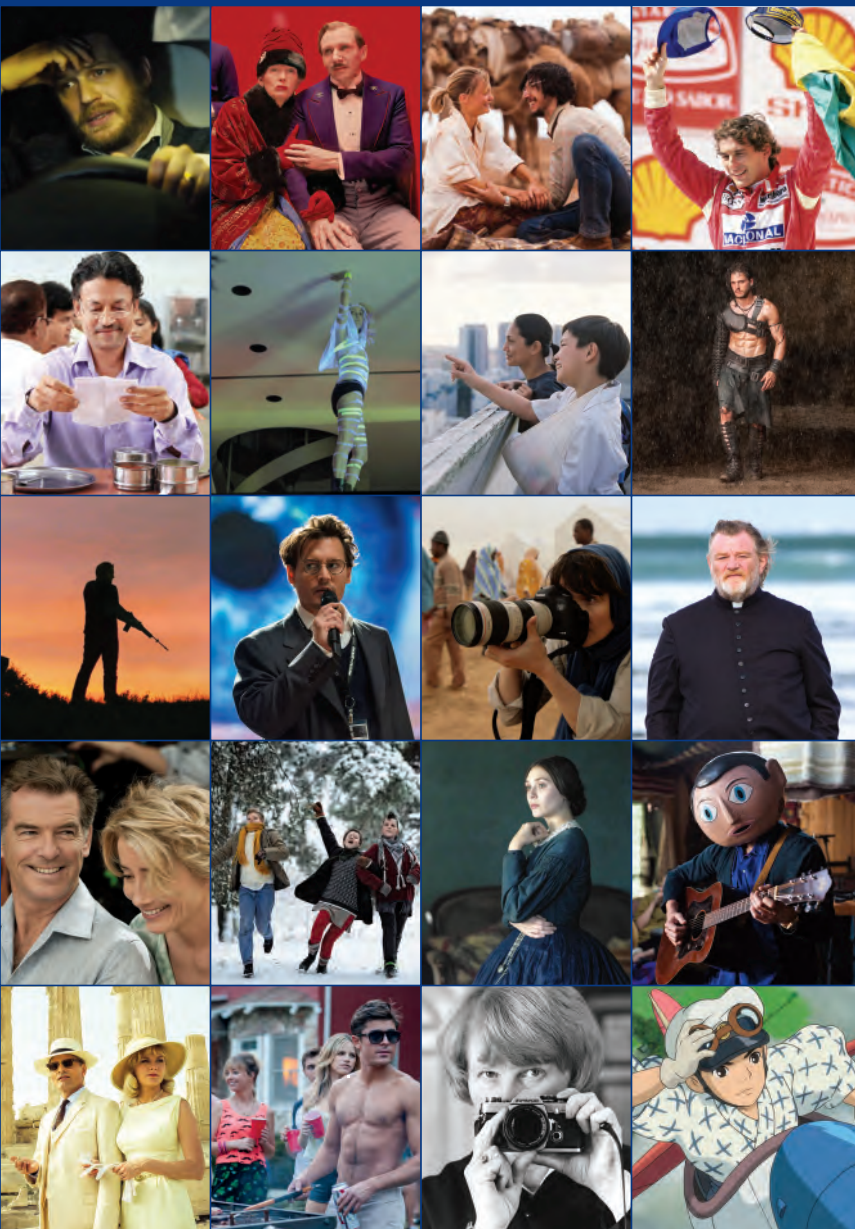
THE REX PLANE TREE...



Two pictures taken at different times of year and daylight, but still recognisable as “that fabulous tree outside The Rex...” The top picture shows its recent and possibly first real pruning. It looks like a bad haircut right now, but it comes into full leaf late in the Spring – mid-May into June. Congratulations to Dacorum’s Tree department for the trim to its majestic branches, after one broke off during high winds late last year. Tree Officer, Luke Johnson wrote to us in

March and talked on the phone about how the tree would be only lose its crown, unlike the severe pollarding further along the High Street, ostensibly so the CCTV camera perched high at the top of Castle Street can catch grainy images of traffic and dodgy muggers they will never catch, and don’t seem to exist. It will grow beautifully again and perhaps even last another 50 years. Thank you Mr Johnson, and the team who carried out the work on the last Sunday of April.





J U N E E V E N I N G S



Director: John Curran
Starring: Mia Wasikowska, Adam Driver
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: Australia 2014
By: Entertainment One UK

Tracks Sun 1 6.00, Mon 2 7.30, Tue 3 7.30

Tracks tells the incredible true story of Robyn Davidson, (Mia Wasikowska), a young woman who, in April 1977, undertook a perilous solo trek across 1,700 miles of stunning Australian outback, but terrain that is also some of the hardest and hottest in the world.

Abandoning city life, Robyn arrives in Alice Springs and declares her ambition to cross the desert to the Indian Ocean to the amusement of the locals. However, after months of camping out and working on a camel farm, people begin to take her seriously. A chance meeting with National Geographic photographer, Rick Smolan (Adam Driver) provides her with the necessary financing for her expedition under the condition that he be allowed to photograph parts of her journey for the magazine. With only her dog and four unpredictable camels for company, she embarks on an inspiring and life changing journey of self-discovery.

"John Curran's film is less concerned with coming-of-age than simply coming-and-going: this is a simple and beautiful journey undertaken purely for its own sake, and approached in that spirit. Tracks will lead you to a place of quiet wonder." (*Telegraph*)

"The film rests on the ordinary-yet-enigmatic presence of Mia Wasikowska as Davidson." (*Time Out*)

"This is a vivid, heartbreaking and captivating, travel movie, character piece guided by an outstanding Mia Wasikowska." (*Empire*) It will win things next year. Come and see why.



The Love Punch

Wed 4 7.30



Emma Thompson and Pierce Brosnan play a divorced couple, acrimoniously separated after he left her for a younger woman.

Both have struggled forming lasting relationships ever since the split but, having bumped into each other at a wedding, their biting banter suggests that the flames of their former relationship have not been fully extinguished.

Brosnan also owns a thriving investment firm – at least it appears to be thriving until it's bankrupted by a dodgy Frenchman (Lauren Lafitte) who cripples their assets and saunters off with their pension money. Not only is their financial future at stake but so is that of their trusting investors, so the bickering pair cross the channel to confront the scoundrel. Joined in the chase by rogue-ish ex-serviceman, Jerry (Timothy Spall) and his gently nutty wife, Penelope (Celia Imrie), the four of them embark on a daring revenge heist involving the theft of a diamond necklace worth £10m which the villain has given to his bride. "This cast of national institutions make fools of themselves with a lack of vanity that's theoretically fun, but there's playing to the gallery, and then there's clambering up there to wiggle your bits at them." (*Telegraph*)

"No-one's expecting Alexander Payne from every film featuring people over 50, but you'd hope for more..." (*Guardian*) Don't, it is silly and fun with great faces and the Mediterranean. Come.

Director: Joel Hopkins
Starring: Celia Imrie, Pierce Brosnan, Timothy Spall, Emma Thompson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: France 2013
By: Entertainment One UK

Blue Ruin Thu 5 7.30

Director: Jeremy Saulnier
Starring: Macon Blair, Devin Ratray, Amy Hargreaves
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Picturehouse Ent. Ltd

Tense, tense, tense! There's no other word to describe last year's Cannes favourite.

A Southern beast of a thriller, *Blue Ruin* wants to be *Reservoir Dogs* by way of *Winter's Bone*, but saddles somewhere in between.

"Macon Blair stars as Dwight, a homeless drifter who finds out that the man convicted for doing his family a grievous wrong is about to be released from prison. Simultaneously cunning and inept, Dwight methodically sets out to exact retribution, but ends up putting himself and his remaining family in further danger. He has sad-sack brown eyes and a slumped posture, yet there is a dignity to him that draws sympathy nevertheless." (*Guardian*)

"Somewhat inevitably, Dwight finds himself facing an entire family of white-trash psychos, hauling in old high-school buddy Ben (Devin Ratray) as backup. But as the bodies pile up and the plot circles around on itself, that beautifully constructed web of suspense begins to dissipate." (*Time Out*)

As far as revenge tales go, it's brilliantly simple, yet frustratingly unfocused but, admirably, goes to great lengths to separate itself from the worn clichés to which the genre eludes.

Just soak in the unglamorous and unflinching visuals in the moody, almost dialogue free exchanges that naturally unfurl. It's an ambitious, if flawed project, with pleasant, moral complexities found in its lead character. Did I mention it was tense? (*Jack Whiting*) Don't miss.



Transcendence

Fri 6 7.30



When a hundred million dollar blockbuster opens with a scientist nattering wearily on stage at a TED-style event, you know you're in for something different.

An unfathomably bland Johnny Depp (his only other acting style being kooky?) plays Dr Will Caster who is assassinated by bunch of anti-technology people, led by Kate Mara, but not before best friend Max (Paul Bettany) and Caster's wife Evelyn (Rebecca Hall, the highlight of the film) secretly upload his consciousness into cyberspace. A ghost in the machine is created. Chaos ensues.

Wally Pfister, best known as Christopher Nolan's go-to cinematographer (one of the best in the biz) takes on full directorial duties, and it certainly looks the part, too. Framing with the clean, clinical precision seen in the likes of *Inception* and the *Dark Knights*. *Transcendence* unfortunately has the same approach to its characters, sapping them of any emotion or credible conviction.

The irony is that it struggles to transcend its themes: Don't Play God! Computers Will Fight Back! Hence it becomes the very villain Depp portrays: a cold, calculating Frankenstein monster of a movie, bolting together ideas that have been present in science fiction for decades. It's not for a lack of ambition, but if it could only lighten the mood and embrace its B-movie roots. As it is, it's: ctrl alt delete... end task. (*Jack Whiting*) Oh dear. Come for Rebecca Hall.

Director: Wally Pfister
Starring: Johnny Depp, Rebecca Hall, Morgan Freeman
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 119 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Entertainment Film Distributors

Pompeii

Sat 7 7.00

Director: Paul W.S. Anderson
Starring: Kit Harrington, Emily Browning
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 104 mins
Origin: Canada/Germany 2014
By: Entertainment One UK

A disaster epic based on the destruction of the real-life Roman town of Pompeii by its neighbouring volcano, has quite literally erupted onto the big screen. It's Titanic with sandals.

Before we get to the molten lava and the ash clouds, and the giant boulders (ie the good bits) there's a lot of sappy romance, and bloodless, gladiatorial duels to put up with. An oiled up Kit Harrington (aka Jon Snow from *Game of Thrones*, flexing his abs) attempts to woo wealthy lass Emily Browning. Unfortunately, such flirtations were frowned upon in 79 AD, especially by rapacious Roman senator Corvus (a miscast Kiefer Sutherland), who claims the girl as his own prize, while ordering guards to 'Kill them, kill them all' no less than twice.

"It's satisfyingly OTT, but no one gets turned to toast without being given a moment to audition for next year's pantomime season. Rubbish then, but laughable rubbish, often more with it than at it. Titter ye, indeed." (*Mark Kermode*)

I find myself rooting for the mountain. The characters in *Pompeii* are so pompeii, it's hard not to cheer when buckets of magma are dolloped on their silly heads. Go volcano! On a side note, apparently the ruins are 'nice' if you get a chance to visit them. (*research Jack Whiting*) Ryanair anybody? Small print: Vesuvius is excess.



The Love Punch

Sun 8 6.00

Director:	Joel Hopkins
Starring:	Celia Imrie, Pierce Brosnan, Timothy Spall, Emma Thompson
Certificate:	12A
Duration:	94 mins
Origin:	France 2013
By:	Entertainment One UK

Emma Thompson and Pierce Brosnan play a divorced couple, acrimoniously separated after he left her for a younger woman. Both have struggled forming lasting relationships ever since the split but, having bumped into each other at a wedding, their biting banter suggests that the flames of their former relationship have not been fully extinguished.

Brosnan also owns a thriving investment firm – at least it appears to be thriving until it's bankrupted by a dodgy Frenchman (Lauren Lafitte) who cripples their assets and saunters off with their pension money. Not only is their financial future at stake but so is that of their trusting investors, so the bickering pair cross the channel to confront the scoundrel. Joined in the chase by rogueish ex-serviceman, Jerry (Timothy Spall) and his gently nutty wife, Penelope (Celia Imrie), the four of them embark on a daring revenge heist involving the theft of a diamond necklace worth £10m which the villain has given to his bride. "This cast of national institutions make fools of themselves with a lack of vanity that's theoretically fun, but there's playing to the gallery, and then there's clambering up there to wiggle your bits at them." (*Telegraph*)

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Ilo Ilo **Mon 9** 7.30

Anthony Chen's portrait of a middle-class Singaporean family's struggle with financial, domestic and personal things during the economic crisis of the late 90s picked up well-deserved awards for best debut feature at festivals in Cannes and London.

The story is a domestic drama, with an addictive hint of soap, avowedly autobiographical and based on the director's own childhood experiences of being cared for (along with two siblings) by a maidservant from the Philippines: the title is a Mandarin phrase meaning 'mum and dad not at home'.

Angeli Bayani excels as the Filipino maid/nanny whose presence becomes the focal point of tensions within the family. While the father, Teck (Tian Wen Chen), hides both his redundancy and his smoking from his pregnant wife, Hwee (Yann Yann), troublesome son, Jiale (Koh Jia Ler), finds growing solace in the presence of 'auntie', a bond that threatens his increasingly frustrated mother.

"Shot with extraordinary intimacy and naturalism, and boasting superbly unaffected performances from the core cast, this sympathetic and engaging drama is deceptively gentle in its insight – compassionate yet unsentimental." (*Observer*)

"Low on feel-good pizzazz but absolutely brimming with love and respect." (*Standard*)

"Not all magically benevolent nannies fly on talking umbrellas, as we learn in this beautifully formed little heart-tugger." (*Empire*) Sounds a bit teary, but well worth the heartstrings.

Director: Anthony Chen
Starring: Chen Tianwen, Yeo Yann Yann, Angeli Bayani
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 99 mins
Origin: Singapore 2014
By: Soda Pictures

The Lunchbox **Tue 10** 7.30

Director: Ritesh Batra
Starring: Irrfan Khan, Nimrat Kaur, Nawazuddin Siddiqui
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: France/Germany/India/USA 2014
By: Curzon Film World

A mix-up in Mumbai's famous 'dabbawalla' lunchbox delivery system leads to an exchange of heart-felt letters.

Middle class housewife, Ila (Nimrat Kaur), is trying once again to add some spice to her marriage, this time through her cooking. Desperately hoping that this new recipe will finally arouse some kind of reaction from her neglectful husband. Irrfan Khan (*Life of Pi*), plays Saajan, a grouchy, widowed claims adjuster who discovers that his lunch has accidentally been switched with a co-workers. Curious about the lack of reaction from her husband, Ila puts a little note in the following day's lunchbox. This begins a series of notes between Saajan and Ila. Gradually their notes become little confessions about their loneliness, memories, regrets, fears and even small joys.

The sense of place – bustling, teeming modern Mumbai – is superbly realised in this enormously likeable, Indian romantic comedy-drama.

"A wistful, elegant love story played out across the streets of Mumbai, an unexpectedly aromatic charmer from first-time film-maker Ritesh Batra." (*Screen International*)

"Batra deftly unfolds a wonderfully observed range of subtle emotions, supported by a lightly paces and often humorous script." (BFI)

A veritable feast for the eyes. (*Anna Shepherd*)



Calvary Wed 11 7.30,
Thu 12 7.30, Fri 13 7.30



Set along the rocky cliffs of County Sligo, Irish Catholic priest Father James (the magnificent Brendan Gleeson) is told by a mystery man during Confession that he is going to be killed in precisely one week. His would-be assassin explains that his death is revenge for abuse as a child - and it would be better to murder a 'good priest'. Father James appears to have recognized the voice, and while he seeks counsel from the Bishop (David McSavage), he declines to name his prospective murderer, even in the face of his early demise.

Instead, in what amounts to an anticipatory whodunit that's equal parts Agatha Christie and a post-modern Cluedo, he makes his regular parish rounds. For the next seven days he is forced to soak up vicious abuse from his parishioners, including supercilious squire Dylan Moran and his wife-beating butcher Chris O'Dowd, as his appointment with fate looms. 'John McDonagh's follow-up to *The Guard* is a rich, ripe and altogether delicious whodunit with a difference.' (*Guardian*) 'It's puckish and playful, mercurial and clever, rattling with gallows laughter as it paints a portrait of an Irish community that is at once intimate and alienated.' (*Observer*)

'The mighty Brendan Gleeson - a man built like a wardrobe, with a face like he's been left on a cliff-edge, battered by north winds.' (*Time Out*) Don't miss at any cost.

Director: John Michael McDonagh
Starring: Brendan Gleeson, Chris O'Dowd, Kelly Reilly
Certificate: 15
Duration: 101 mins
Origin: Ireland/UK 2014
By: Entertainment One UK

A Thousand Times Goodnight Sat 14 7.00

Director: Erik Poppe
Starring: Juliette Binoche, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Maria Kennedy
Certificate: 15
Duration: 117 mins
Origin: Norway/Ireland/Sweden 2014
By: Arrow Films

A well-travelled thriller that Susan Bier could have passed off in her sleep, *A Thousand Times Goodnight* follows a traumatized war photographer as she tries to re-adjust to her life at home.

"Binoche plays Rebecca, a passionate and talented photo journalist who clashes with stay-at-home husband Marcus (*Game of Thrones*' Nikolaj Coster-Waldau) over her attitude towards work versus maternal responsibilities. Were it Marcus choosing to put his profession first, there wouldn't be much of a film here.

As it is, Rebecca's obsessive and endless pursuit of excellence in her field raises a pertinent social conundrum. In recasting his own semi-autobiographical story with the gender roles reversed, Norwegian director Erik Poppe gives his film broader significance.

"The film distinguishes itself from Hollywood made photojournalist actioners where the movie pivots around the hero questioning his neutrality in the face of political injustice. Thanks to Binoche, you become so totally invested in the heroine's compulsion to record what she witnesses that, paradoxically, the action itself seems less subjectively coloured." (*Variety*) eh?

Poppe had first-hand experience as a photo journalist and imbues this inverted autobiographical doppelganger with a raw authenticity. It's sad to see the film play its best hand early on, perhaps leaving less to enjoy, but Juliette Binoche shines as always. (*Jack Whiting*) Apart from being smart-arse, Jack is 'action-boy' at heart, so ignore and come.



Senna Sun 15 6.00



It has left audiences stunned since its release in 2010. It should only be seen on the big screen. Even though it has a remarkably personal power, it must be experienced with an audience.

It is almost the full story of racing driver Ayrton Senna. Charming, petulant, hungry, enigmatic, outrageously fast and dangerous, quiet, then outspoken when pushed. This moving biography brims with energy and passion.

Beneath the helmet, Senna was a fascinating, contradictory mix of religious faith, boyish innocence, global celebrity and reckless determination.

"You couldn't have made this about Nigel Mansell." (*Guardian*)

The film's masterstroke is its exclusive use of archive footage, with no visible talking heads or modern-day interruptions.

"Director Asif takes us back to that era with a documentary that roots us in the emotion and feel of the period. No narration. No talking heads. No new footage. Those are the rules, and they make for a rousing film, both sad and uplifting.

Ambitiously constructed, deeply compelling, thrilling and in no way only for those who like watching cars drive in circles. A worthy paean to a truly dangerous talent." (*Empire*)

You don't need to know, or care, about motor racing. Come for his extraordinary presence, as remote as it was quick. You will be stunned. Back to celebrate his life, 20 years after that fatal day at Imola 1st May 1994. Bring your Dad.

Director: Asif Kapadia
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

We Are The Best
Mon 16 7.30

Director: Lukas Moodyson
Starring: David Dencik, Liv LeMoyne, Steve Kratz
Certificate: 15
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: Sweden 2014
By: Metrodome Distributors

Set in 1980s Stockholm – a coming of age comedy about three sports-hating 13-year-olds who form a punk band.

Pixyish, Mohawk-sporting Klara and her best friend Bobo, are young rebels looking for a cause. The lack of instruments or apparent musical talent does not hold them back from forming an all-girl punk band. They recruit their shy, classical guitar-playing schoolmate Hedvig, to complete the trinity.

Their experiences feel bang-on about the punk experience of the time, because it is at once about getting it right and getting it wrong. Wrong because they arrive on the scene too late and everyone says punk is dead, but right because they represent the essence of the original punk idea – reacting to boredom and banality, and seizing the moment.

"There is a Bugsy Malone feel to *We Are The Best!* A spectacle of children playing at being adults and doing it badly, but not as badly as the actual grownups." (*Guardian*)

"What makes it so special is its mix of barbed humour, tenderness and its Adrian Mole-like insights into what teenage years are like." (*Film4*)

Lukas Moodysson's adaptation of his wife Coco's semi-autobiographical graphic novel perfectly captures what it feels like to be young anywhere and misunderstood everywhere. (*Anna Shepherd*)

Poor things... It sounds fabulous and too much to miss, so don't.



In Secret Tue 17 7.30



Based on Emile Zola's scandalous novel, *Therese Raquin*, *In Secret* is a tale of obsessive love, adultery and revenge set in the lower depths of 1860s Paris.

Therese (Elizabeth Olsen of *Martha Marcy May Marlene*), a sexually repressed beautiful young woman, is trapped into a loveless marriage to her sickly cousin, Camille (Tom Felton from *Harry Potter*) by her domineering aunt, Madame Raquin (Jessica Lange).

The trio abandon rural French life to move to Paris where Camille has secured an unglamorous but steady office job, while his mother opens a fabric shop. Therese gets used to her dull life, helping out in the store (located in a dark corner of an alley off a main thoroughfare) while her evenings are spent watching Madame play dominos with an eclectic group. Then one day, Lauren (the suddenly in everything, Oscar Isaac) comes strolling into her life. Therese and Laurent are soon in the throes of a passionate affair and carnal pleasure soon turns into a relationship, declarations of love and a deadly plan is enacted so they can be together forever. Uh oh!

"Sensitive performances from a willing cast bring Zola's novel to life on the big screen." (*Empire*)

"A stylish, nervy film, one that captures the manners and mores of its 19th century setting while making the emotions it deals with utterly contemporary." (*NY Times*)

Director: Charlie Stratton
Starring: Ashley Olsen, Oscar Isaac, Jessica Lange
Certificate: 15
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Locke Wed 18 7.30

Director: Steven Knight
Starring: Tom Hardy, Ruth Wilson, Andrew Scott
Certificate: 15
Duration: 85 mins
Origin: UK 2014
By: Lionsgate Films UK

Summoning the spirit of Richard Burton, Tom Hardy plays Ivan Locke, a soft-spoken Welshman on a journey.

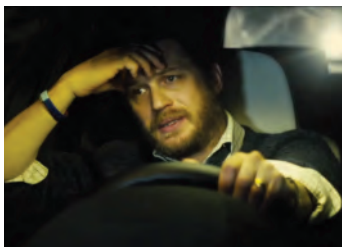
The manager of a building site in Birmingham, his personal and professional lives have reached critical mass on the same night. Locke drives from Birmingham to Croydon in a BMW. Gradually his destination, and the reason for his hurry, is revealed through a series of calls that he makes on his Bluetooth carphone.

Filmed in just 8 nights, almost everything happens off-screen. Picking up on the intuition of Iggy Pop's song *The Passenger* – that driving at night is a form of cinema – but gives it a twist. Perhaps best known for writing for other directors: *Dirty Pretty Things* for Stephen Frears and *Eastern Promises* for David Cronenberg. On this smaller, more script-oriented film, he has flourished.

"This is a masterclass in how the most local, most hemmed-in stories can reverberate with the power of big, universal themes." (*TimeOut*)

"Locke is a gripping and deeply cinematic human and ethical drama." (*Screen International*)

A tense Brit drama with a coolly propulsive score and gorgeous night-time cinematography. (*Anna Shepherd*) Amazing. How nice to say 'amazing' about a close cropped close up in-a-car-Brit-no-budget film. Don't miss.





Director: Lenny Abrahamson
Starring: Michael Fassbender, Domhnall Gleeson, Maggie Gyllenhaal
Certificate: 15
Duration: 95 mins
Origin: Ireland/UK 2014
By: Curzon Film World

Frank Thu 19 7.30

Starring Michael Fassbender as 'an inspired by' character that captures Chris Sievey's real Frank Sidebottom, punk anarchic spirit.

Jon, Domhnall Gleeson, has long dreamed of making it big in the music industry, but doesn't really have the talent to get there. Craving and straining to write music, Jon's everyday observations about chip shops and passing strangers are irredeemably banal.

Lacking a keyboard player, Frank - who wears a papier mâché head which he refuses to take off, agrees to hire Jon, but existing devotees and bandmates such as Don (Scoot McNairy) and Clara (Maggie Gyllenhaal) are deeply suspicious of this dopey newcomer, to whom their leader has taken such an unaccountable liking. Before long, they are on the road to Ireland, where an unexpected weekend gig turns into months; recording an album in the middle of nowhere.

"Fassbender's faceless performance offers a masterclass in body language." (*TotalFilm*)

"Anyone who has ever toiled day-and-night in search of musical perfection, only to reach a point of artistic indifference, will relate to this delightfully screwy black comedy." (*LittleWhiteLies*)

From the writers of *The Men Who Stare At Goats*, Frank is sure to be just as hilarious and weird. (*Anna Shepherd*)

"I can't think of anyone who would want to watch a film about a creepy 1980s comedy act, except people really missing Jimmy Savile." (*ST Culture*)





Director: Nicholas Stoller
Starring: Seth Rogen, Rose Byrne, Zac Efron
Certificate: 15
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd



Bad Neighbours

Fri 20 7.30, Sat 21 7.00

Animal House is back baby! But there's a role switcheroo; the grownups are now the heroes, and the mischievous students embrace their villainous side.

Seth Rogen and Rose Byrne play Mac and Kelly, a happily married couple with the most adorable film baby you've ever seen (yuk, that's very gay Jack). When the new neighbours turn out to be a fun-crazed fraternity, hell bent on honouring their forefathers by inventing the most outrageous party games, as yet untried by student kind, becoming friends is no option.

This frat house, led by the psychotic Teddy, a fantastically maniacal Zac Efron, chiselled to perfection [that too] is at first a curiosity for the couple. Not wanting to be spoilsports, they suggest a shaky truce to the kids to 'just keep it down'. The noise level doesn't stay that way for long, and soon neighbourhood war is declared.

"After a shaky start, *Bad Neighbours* blossoms, with inspired visual gags in excellent poor taste. That it never feels too dark is largely down to the sweetness of Rogen and Byrne." (*Time Out*)

The battle plays out in a series of crass skits. These increasingly bonkers one-upmanships push the boundaries of taste, yet there is nary a dull moment. So switch off sense and leave your dignity at the door. This is a low-brow treat. (*research Jack Whiting*) Low indeed Jack.



Directors: Luke Dodd, Michael Whyte
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: UK 2014
By: Soda Pictures



Jane Bown: Looking For Light

Sun 22 6.00 with introduction
by Director Luke Dodd

Now 89, Jane Bown reflects on her life in this moving portrait of the Photographer; a gifted artist who shot many key 20th Century figures.

The film details her unique working method; how the sorrow of her early childhood informed her unique photographic style. Here, in a short 90 minutes, we are privileged to see much of her iconic life's work spanning six decades.

The Observer published its first Jane Bown photograph in December 1949, beginning a romance between Britain's oldest Sunday newspaper and the country's most-loved photographer. Since that time, Jane has given us the most astonishing variety of portraits: ordinary people and the famous, whose faces we suddenly learn to see, and even become haunted by.

Those unfamiliar with Bown's life story will instantly recognise her images of everyone from Samuel Beckett to Mick Jagger and the Queen, athletes, bishops, models and nuns... "The film has the good grace to pause on her remarkable pictures: rich, deceptively simple and always black and white." (*Telegraph*) "This portrait, co-directed by Luke Dodd and veteran filmmaker Michael Whyte, is as gentle and admiring as Bown's own prolific portrait photography." (*Guardian*) A rare chance to see Jane Bown's extraordinary pictures on a huge yet intimate scale. (*Anna Shepherd*) "Ahh there you are..."



The Wind Rises

Mon 23 7.30



The master of exquisite storytelling, Hayao Miyazaki (considered the Walt Disney of Japan: an unfair comparison?) has entered legend with this his allegedly final film.

Beautifully crafted, *The Wind Rises* is a fictionalised biopic of WWII fighter plane designer Jiro Horikoshi (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who created the Mitsubishi Zero plane, a fighter plane used by the Japanese Navy. His inspiration and mentor is the great Italian aircraft designer, Count Gianni Caproni.

Jiro has no particular interest in promoting or preventing the war. He is more concerned with the health of his sickly fiancée; more focused on the wonderful art of flight, and the nuts and bolts of designing planes.

"Jiro's planes were later built at slave labour camps and were used for kamikaze missions. While the film does not mention this, Jiro, for his part, is painted as an innocent, incurious young idealist, who perhaps fails to see his responsibility?" (*Guardian*)

For Miyazaki, this is a soaring swansong; a poignant, slow burning beauty telling a very mature, and intensely personal tale. Here's hoping, in the wake of his retirement, Studio Ghibli can continue to produce captivating stories that push generational boundaries, without compromising story, or talking down to its audience. (*research Jack Whiting*). It's worth following Jiro's story when you get home. He lived to profoundly regret his inventions that had been used for war. Don't miss.

Director: Hayao Miyazaki
Certificate: PG
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: Japan 2014
By: Studiocanal

The Grand Budapest Hotel

Tue 24 7.30, Wed 25 7.30

Director: Wes Anderson
Starring: Ralph Fiennes, Saoirse Ronan, Jude Law
Certificate: 15
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Ralph Fiennes expertly plays eccentric hotel concierge Monsieur Gustave H. accompanied by Zero (touching newcomer Tony Revolori) the new lobby boy at the famous European hotel.

Perched on top of a mountain, in the fictional Republic of Zubrowka, and reached only by an old acute funicular railway. The story begins when a young writer (Jude Law) meets an impressive old man, the hotel's owner, Mr Zero Moustafa (F. Murray Abraham).

The young writer hears the tales of legendary concierge M. Gustave H, who in the pre-war period ran the hotel with impeccable control, style and suavity. Gustave's attentiveness to the rich, old, insecure, vain and needy patrons of the hotel extends to rather more personal services. As he bids farewell to 84-year-old fright Madame D (Tilda Swinton) her shocking murder sets in motion the crazy clockwork of the plot, Wes Anderson style. "Even on a second viewing, you hardly have time enough to take in all its intricate detailing and sumptuous furnishing." (*Standard*)

"Beneath all the jokiness there's a sense of loss, a nostalgia for an age that neither the filmmakers nor all but a few of their audience can ever have known". (*S&S*) Bewilderingly star-studded, come and indulge in this grand film in The Grand Rex Cinema in June (*AS*). Non-stop fabulous, ridiculous, fast-action wit, and crystal clear words. Don't miss.



Fading Gigolo

Thu 26 7.30



Woody Allen plays Murray, a bookseller whose business is faltering when he finds an unusual opportunity to score some money for himself and his one-time employee, Fioravante (John Turturro, who also directs). After a chance encounter at the dermatologist's office, Murray learns there are a couple of ladies looking to score some paid-for-passion, and suggests Turturro might be the man for the job.

Fioravante is initially nervous about the idea, especially since he's never been a gigolo before. One client, the delicate Hasidic widow, Avigal (Vanessa Paradis), has never been truly romanced, and she blooms in Fioravante's gaze, while her neighbourhood patroller (Liev Shreiber, terrific in a tricky part) worries on her behalf, partly out of jealousy. As Fioravante starts to get successful, especially with Dr Parker (Sharon Stone) and Selima (Sofia Vergara), he begins to enjoy this new life. And that's when feelings enter the equation to complicate things.

"Woody Allen shines as the pimp who hires out John Turturro in this strangely successful religious sex comedy." (*Guardian*)

"Aside from his own films, Woody Allen really doesn't act much, so it clearly takes something for a director to score Allen to play one of the leads in a movie." (*Empire*) (research Jane Lucas)

It must have always been odd being Woody Allen, but if you can stand it, he's outstanding in this, as is John Torturro.

Director: John Turturro
Starring: Sofia Vergara, Woody Allen, Sharon Stone
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Curzon Film World

Exhibition Fri 27 7.30

followed by Q&A with Joanna Hogg

Director: Joanna Hogg
Starring: Viv Albertine, Liam Gillick
Certificate: 15
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: UK 2014
By: Curzon Film World

Following the critical success of her first two films, *Unrelated* and *Archipelago*, Joanna Hogg returns with a fascinating new drama, establishing her place at the forefront of new British cinema.

The leads are not actors. Former lead singer of The Slits, Viv Albertine, and the Turner-nominated artist, Liam Gillick, play a childless couple, identified as D and H, both contemporary artists and evidently of considerable private means, able to follow their vocations without worrying about money. They live in a handsome modernist house in London and are reluctantly preparing to move out. (Tom Hiddleston, Hogg's muse, has a fun cameo as an estate agent.)

D is suffering from creative block brought on by some unspecified past trauma. Whatever happened has made her fearful of the outside world, particularly at night, and as she pads around her home we hear the city pressing in on all sides; sirens, shouts and engine noise. Is the lack of children significant, or connected to D's unspoken upset? Hogg withholds the specifics, and lets you decode things for yourself.

"The anxieties of the bohemian classes are put for inspection in this sensual, brilliant film about two dysfunctional artists." (*Guardian*)

"This is work from the forefront of our new national cinema, and it rattles your nerves like stones in a tin." (*Telegraph*)
 "Joanna Hogg is an utterly distinctive figure in contemporary British cinema." (*Independent*) (Jane Lucas)





Director: Hossein Amini
Starring: Kirsten Dunst, Viggo Mortensen, Oscar Isaac
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: France/UK/USA 2014
By: Studiocanal

The Two Faces of January

Sat 28 7.00, Sun 29 6.00

Accaiomed screenwriter Hossein Amini's directorial debut is a stylish suspense thriller, based on the novel of the same name by Patricia Highsmith.

American tourists, Chester MacFarland (Viggo Mortensen) and his wife Colette (Kirsten Dunst) are travelling around Greece. Behind Chester's cream linen suits, and apparent everyman charm, he is harbouring a criminal past.

They come across a tour guide and small-time con-artist, Rydal (Oscar Issac), who has been charming young travellers, skimming from the ladies as he exchanges their dollars for drachmas.

At Colette's insistence, the couple hires Rydal for a tour, inviting this potentially dangerous stranger into their inner circle.

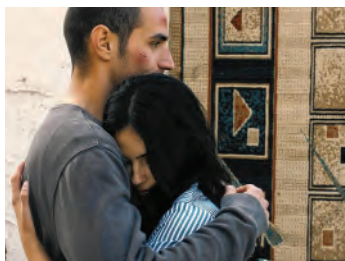
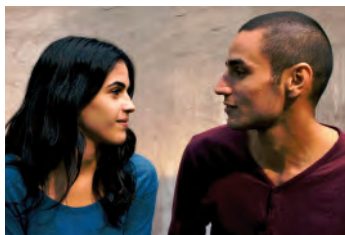
"It's an elegantly pleasurable period thriller, a film of tidy precision and class." (*Telegraph*)

"Amini excels at conveying the subtle, unspoken tensions between characters, selecting a tightrope-risky example with which to make his directorial debut and orchestrating it with aplomb." (*Variety*) Best known for his scripts for *Wings of a Dove* and *Drive*, British-Iranian Amini has turned his hand to directing. Amini has borrowed a cinematographer, Marcel Zyskind, from Michael Winterbottom, and a composer, Alberto Iglesias, from Pedro Almodóvar. Their combined efforts are seductive and expressive. (*Anna Shepherd*) How lovely, Ms Shepherd, thank you. It sounds irresistible. So don't resist.





Director: Hany Abu-Assad
Starring: Adam Bakri, Leem Lubany
Certificate: 15
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: Palestinian Territory 2014
By: Soda Pictures



Omar Mon 30 7.30

A young Palestinian Baker is caught between loyalty to his friends, the girl he loves and freedom.

Directed by Hany Abu-Assad, Omar was one of the five films nominated for the 2014 Foreign Language Oscar (Abu-Hassad's previous film, Paradise Now was also an Oscar nominee). Nothing in this year's Oscar race addressed a contemporary issue with the same degree of immediacy.

Omar (Adam Bakri) lives in the West Bank, under trying conditions. In order to visit his friends Tarek and Amjad, not to mention the beautiful Nadja, with whom he is furtively in love, he must scale the 8 meter concrete barrier that cuts through his community.

In the wake of an Israeli soldier's death, Omar is arrested, tortured, and released on condition that he will inform on his friends.

"By focussing on an everyman, Abu-Assad makes Omar's claustrophobic lifestyle immediately relatable, which tinges his ultimate hardships with palpable dread." eh? (*IndieWire*)

"The Director's finest coup, in a fraught film, is to grant dramatic space and substance to the enemy. An Israeli intelligence agent who becomes Omar's handler, played by Waleed Zuaiter with fierce purpose and a dangerous touch of playfulness." (*NewYorker*)

Once more, a rare and gripping thriller from the Occupied Territories.

(research Anna Shepherd) Already selling surprisingly well, so do get in soon.

COMING SOON

NEW RELEASES

Jimmy's Hall
The Amazing Spider-Man 2
Next Goal Wins
X-Men Days Of Future Past
Godzilla
Grace of Monaco

BACK BY DEMAND

Calvary
Grand Budapest Hotel
Everything Is Illuminated
Tracks



JUNE FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	SUN	TRACKS	6.00
2	MON	TRACKS	2.00, 7.30
3	TUE	TRACKS	12.30, 7.30
4	WED	THE LOVE PUNCH	2.00, 7.30
5	THU	THE LOVE PUNCH	2.00
5	THU	BLUE RUIN	7.30
6	FRI	TRANSCENDENCE	7.30
7	SAT	FROZEN (SINGALONG)	2.00
7	SAT	POMPEII	7.00
8	SUN	THE LOVE PUNCH	6.00
9	MON	ILO ILO	2.00, 7.30
10	TUE	THE OTHER WOMAN	12.30
10	TUE	THE LUNCHBOX	7.30
11	WED	THE LUNCHBOX	2.00
11	WED	CALVARY	7.30
12	THU	CALVARY	2.00, 7.30
13	FRI	CALVARY	7.30
14	SAT	POSTMAN PAT	2.00
14	SAT	A THOUSAND TIMES GOOD NIGHT	7.00
15	SUN	SENNA	6.00
16	MON	ADVANCED STYLE	2.00
16	MON	WE ARE THE BEST	7.30
17	TUE	FUNNY FACE	12.30
17	TUE	IN SECRET	7.30
18	WED	IN SECRET	2.00
18	WED	LOCKE	7.30
19	THU	A THOUSAND TIMES GOOD NIGHT	2.00
19	THU	FRANK	7.30
20	FRI	BAD NEIGHBOURS	7.30
21	SAT	THE WIND RISES	2.00
21	SAT	BAD NEIGHBOURS	7.00
22	SUN	JANE BOWN: LOOKING FOR LIGHT – Q&A	6.00
23	MON	BAD NEIGHBOURS	2.00
23	MON	THE WIND RISES	7.30
24	TUE	ADVANCED STYLE	12.30
24	TUE	GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL	7.30
25	WED	GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL	2.00, 7.30
26	THU	FADING GIGOLO	2.00, 7.30
27	FRI	EXHIBITION WITH Q&A	7.30
28	SAT	CINDERELLA	2.00
28	SAT	TWO FACES OF JANUARY	7.00
29	SUN	TWO FACES OF JANUARY	6.00
30	MON	TWO FACES OF JANUARY	2.00
30	MON	OMAR	7.30



J U N E 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



A GUEST REVIEW

Under The Skin

Jonathan Glazer directs *Under the Skin*, an ambiguous, art for art's sake and very self-indulgent film.

An alien has taken the form of a woman (Scarlett Johansson) and scours the streets of Glasgow attempting to lure men into her van. The film has a promising start, with some striking other-worldly visuals and the eerie echoes of a voice sounding out the nuances of human speech; a chilling opening sequence to what I hoped would be a thought-provoking sci-fi. 108 minutes later and I was numb. The screenplay is clunky and exhaustingly unclear; perhaps if the nature and motives of the central character were clear to the audience then we could care about her. Or her victims. Or any of it. The film lacks narrative structure and is tediously repetitive. There are endless lingering close-ups on Johansson that make her every blink an arduous ordeal and, as a result of the dragging pace, scenes that Glazer clearly intended to be poignant are rendered hilarious. Highlights include the alien coughing a mouthful of cake everywhere and Miss Johansson frantically fumbling for a light to have a look between her legs, not forgetting a laughably bizarre closing scene.

At one point, our screening was briefly interrupted by a man opening a can of coke. On reflection, I consider it the highlight of the experience.

Catherine Pearson

*A girl who had been at the Mark Kermode gig with her parents, stopped me at the box office one day, to talk about the Rex and St Albans, and ended up writing this review! Catherine Pearson from Aylesbury writes a regular film blog catherineonfilms.com She writes well. Hence her review of *Under The Skin*. Luckily she hated it. That's why it's here. Any young people interested in film's 'back room' (no stars) are welcome to send things in to The Rex Mag.*

Tracks

Mon 2 2.00, Tue 3 12.30

Director: John Curran
Starring: Mia Wasikowska, Adam Driver
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: Australia 2014
By: Entertainment One UK

Tracks tells the incredible true story of Robyn Davidson, (Mia Wasikowska), a young woman who, in April 1977, undertook a perilous solo trek across 1,700 miles of stunning Australian outback, but terrain that is also some of the hardest and hottest in the world.

Abandoning city life, Robyn arrives in Alice Springs and declares her ambition to cross the desert to the Indian Ocean to the amusement of the locals. However, after months of camping out and working on a camel farm, people begin to take her seriously. A chance meeting with National Geographic photographer, Rick Smolan (Adam Driver) provides her with the necessary financing for her expedition under the condition that he be allowed to photograph parts of her journey for the magazine. With only her dog and four unpredictable camels for company, she embarks on an inspiring and life changing journey of self-discovery.

"John Curran's film is less concerned with coming-of-age than simply coming-and-going: this is a simple and beautiful journey undertaken purely for its own sake, and approached in that spirit. Tracks will lead you to a place of quiet wonder." (*Telegraph*)

"The film rests on the ordinary-yet-enigmatic presence of Mia Wasikowska as Davidson." (*Time Out*)

"This is a vivid, heartbreaking and captivating, travel movie, character piece guided by an outstanding Mia Wasikowska." (*Empire*) It will win things next year. Come and see why.





Director: Joel Hopkins
Starring: Celia Imrie, Pierce Brosnan, Timothy Spall, Emma Thompson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: France 2013
By: Entertainment One UK



The Love Punch

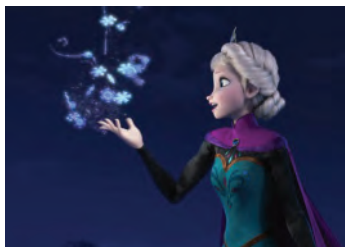
Wed 4 2.00, Thu 5 2.00

Emma Thompson and Pierce Brosnan play a divorced couple, acrimoniously separated after he left her for a younger woman. Both have struggled forming lasting relationships ever since the split but, having bumped into each other at a wedding, their biting banter suggests that the flames of their former relationship have not been fully extinguished.

Brosnan also owns a thriving investment firm – at least it appears to be thriving until it's bankrupted by a dodgy Frenchman (Lauren Lafitte) who cripples their assets and saunters off with their pension money. Not only is their financial future at stake but so is that of their trusting investors, so the bickering pair cross the channel to confront the scoundrel. Joined in the chase by rogueish ex-serviceman, Jerry (Timothy Spall) and his gently nutty wife, Penelope (Celia Imrie), the four of them embark on a daring revenge heist involving the theft of a diamond necklace worth £10m which the villain has given to his bride. "This cast of national institutions make fools of themselves with a lack of vanity that's theoretically fun, but there's playing to the gallery, and then there's clambering up there to wiggle your bits at them." (*Telegraph*) "No-one's expecting Alexander Payne from every film featuring people over 50, but you'd hope for more..." (*Guardian*) Don't, it is silly and fun with great faces and the Mediterranean. Come.

Frozen Sing-A-Long

Sat 7 2.00



Disney's *Frozen*, an animated fairy tale musical inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's *Snow Queen* takes place in the kingdom of Arendelle, where the young princess Elsa was born with the ability to magically create ice and snow using her bare hands. When Elsa slips up and nearly kills her sister Ana, by accident. Fearing Elsa might cause serious harm, the panicking king and queen decide to isolate both daughters from the outside world! (Weird)

Several years later, following some tragic events, grown-up Elsa (Idina Menzel) and Ana (Kristen Bee) no longer share the close bond they once had. However, upon Elsa's coronation day, people from all over the kingdom flock to meet the new queen and Ana meets and falls for the handsomely goofy Prince Hans (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..."

(*ST Culture*). One not to miss, plus the chance to singalong with an audience of overexcited girls. (is that still allowed...?)

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

Ilo Ilo Mon 9 2.00

Director: Anthony Chen
Starring: Chen Tianwen, Yeo Yann Yann, Angeli Bayani
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 99 mins
Origin: Singapore 2014
By: Soda Pictures

Anthony Chen's portrait of a middle-class Singaporean family's struggle with financial, domestic and personal things during the economic crisis of the late 90s picked up well-deserved awards for best debut feature at festivals in Cannes and London.

The story is a domestic drama, with an addictive hint of soap, avowedly autobiographical and based on the director's own childhood experiences of being cared for (along with two siblings) by a maidservant from the Philippines: the title is a Mandarin phrase meaning 'mum and dad not at home'.

Angeli Bayani excels as the Filipino maid/nanny whose presence becomes the focal point of tensions within the family. While the father, Teck (Tian Wen Chen), hides both his redundancy and his smoking from his pregnant wife, Hwee (Yann Yann), troublesome son, Jiale (Koh Jia Ler), finds growing solace in the presence of 'auntie', a bond that threatens his increasingly frustrated mother.

"Shot with extraordinary intimacy and naturalism, and boasting superbly unaffected performances from the core cast, this sympathetic and engaging drama is deceptively gentle in its insight – compassionate yet unsentimental."

(*Observer*)

"Low on feel-good pizzazz but absolutely brimming with love and respect."

(*Standard*)

"Not all magically benevolent nannies fly on talking umbrellas, as we learn in this beautifully formed little heart-tugger."

(*Empire*) Sounds a bit teary, but well worth the heartstrings.



The Other Woman

Tue 10 12.30



After discovering her boyfriend (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau – *Game of Thrones/ Headhunters*) is married, a woman (Cameron Diaz) tries to get her ruined life back on track. But when she accidentally meets the wife he's been cheating on (Leslie Mann – *Knocked Up*), she realises they have much in common, and her sworn enemy becomes her greatest friend. Rather than get into a *Dynasty*-like cat fight, the women put their heads together for some alcohol-fuelled revenge planning. When yet another affair is discovered (Kate Upton: 'the boobs') all three team up to wreak vengeance on their cheating, lying, three-timing son-of-a-bitch. Directed by Nick Cassavetes (son of John Cassavetes and Gena Rowlands), who has delivered such classics as *The Notebook* and *My Sisters Keeper*, *The Other Woman* also sees the film debut of Nicki Minaj – singer, rapper and fragrance launcher.

'He (Cassavetes) had the talent and the star power necessary to create the quintessential infidelity comedy, but instead we get what looks like a PG-13 version of an unfinished Judd Apatow script.' (*Cinemablend*)
'Hands down, the best part of the film is Leslie Mann who injects what altogether fleeting life she can into this utterly deflated corpse of toilet humour and vivacious estrogen.' (*Moviepilot*) My arse! Do crits ever get off at the same stop as the rest of us? It is fun, come for that and theirs...

Director: Nick Cassavetes
Starring: Cameron Diaz, Leslie Mann, Kate Upton, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 109 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Twentieth Century Fox

The Lunchbox

Wed 11 2.00

Director: Ritesh Batra
Starring: Irrfan Khan, Nimrat Kaur, Nawazuddin Siddiqui
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: France/Germany/India/USA 2014
By: Curzon Film World

A mix-up in Mumbai's famous 'dabbawalla' lunchbox delivery system leads to an exchange of heart-felt letters.

Middle class housewife, Ila (Nimrat Kaur), is trying once again to add some spice to her marriage, this time through her cooking. Desperately hoping that this new recipe will finally arouse some kind of reaction from her neglectful husband. Irrfan Khan (*Life of Pi*), plays Saajan, a grouchy, widowed claims adjuster who discovers that his lunch has accidentally been switched with a co-workers. Curious about the lack of reaction from her husband, Ila puts a little note in the following day's lunchbox. This begins a series of notes between Saajan and Ila. Gradually their notes become little confessions about their loneliness, memories, regrets, fears and even small joys.

The sense of place – bustling, teeming modern Mumbai – is superbly realised in this enormously likeable, Indian romantic comedy-drama.

"A wistful, elegant love story played out across the streets of Mumbai, an unexpectedly aromatic charmer from first-time film-maker Ritesh Batra." (*Screen International*)

"Batra deftly unfolds a wonderfully observed range of subtle emotions, supported by a lightly paces and often humorous script." (BFI)

A veritable feast for the eyes. (*Anna Shepherd*)



Calvary Thu 12 2.00



Set along the rocky cliffs of County Sligo, Irish Catholic priest Father James (the magnificent Brendan Gleeson) is told by a mystery man during Confession that he is going to be killed in precisely one week. His would-be

assassin explains that his death is revenge for abuse as a child - and it would be better to murder a 'good priest'. Father James appears to have recognized the voice, and while he seeks counsel from the Bishop (David McSavage), he declines to name his prospective murderer, even in the face of his early demise.

Instead, in what amounts to an anticipatory whodunit that's equal parts Agatha Christie and a post-modern Cluedo, he makes his regular parish rounds. For the next seven days he is forced to soak up vicious abuse from his parishioners, including supercilious squire Dylan Moran and his wife-beating butcher Chris O'Dowd, as his appointment with fate looms.

'John McDonagh's follow-up to *The Guard* is a rich, ripe and altogether delicious whodunit with a difference.' (*Guardian*) 'It's puckish and playful, mercurial and clever, rattling with gallows laughter as it paints a portrait of an Irish community that is at once intimate and alienated.' (*Observer*)

'The mighty Brendan Gleeson - a man built like a wardrobe, with a face like he's been left on a cliff-edge, battered by north winds.' (*Time Out*) Don't miss at any cost.

Director: John Michael McDonagh
Starring: Brendan Gleeson, Chris O'Dowd, Kelly Reilly
Certificate: 15
Duration: 101 mins
Origin: Ireland/UK 2014
By: Entertainment One UK

Postman Pat: The Movie Sat 14 2.00

Director: Mike Disa
Starring: Stephen Mangan, Rupert Grint, Jim Broadbent
Certificate: U
Duration: 87 mins
Origin: UK 2014
By: Lionsgate Films UK

It's not one anybody has been waiting for (except, maybe die hard Pat fans and Mr Hannaway) but here it is anyway, the feature film debut of the chirpy postman.

In *Postman Pat The Movie*, Pat's fully-computer-animated egggy head, voiced by Stephen Mangan, bobbles around the screen for a full 87 minutes, singing and dancing his way through a TV talent show called 'You're The One' hosted by the acid-tongued Simon Cowbell.

Pat is taking part in the show because his employer, the Special Delivery Service (SDS), isn't giving him a bonus, and he wants to take his wife on holiday.

(Pat didn't have such a ridiculous thing as a wife, he had Jess, his black n'white cat). The SDS is also sneakily replacing Pat with an army of slightly scary (at least for avid fans) mechanised robots.

'The filmmakers thought this was a smart, down-with-the-kids movie; if so, that's a serious mistake.' (*Guardian*).

The idea of Postman Pat branching out from his usual day to day challenges, rescuing stranded tractors, delivering urgent parcels for Mrs Goggins and watching over the countryside, is unthinkable. And a full length feature film, may take him out of his comfort zone. However, killer robots...?

(research Jack Whiting)

Sounds like they've let ambitious, tabloid-film twerps tamper with Pat. Sacrilege. Let's hope for the best.



Advanced Style

Mon 16 2.00, Tue 24 12.30



This documentary originated in a blog created by fashion photographer, Ari Seth Cohen, about the sense of style and daily lives of older New York women. They are between "50 and death", as one of his muses puts it. The camera loves them too. They are witty, flamboyant and creative but, way above the frailty of their advanced years.

Director, Lina Pliplyte wins her subject's trust to the point where she is allowed to film them cooking, doing yoga, putting on make-up or even being catty about each other. She also follows a group of these feisty women as they head to Culver City to appear on the Ricki Lake TV show, sparking flashbulbs and tabloid headlines wherever they go. "Fashion docs are often shallow in the extreme but this one is as much about fighting back against the ravages of time as it is about air kissing, and is all the stronger as a result." (*Independent*) "Although the film doesn't dig very deep, it allows plenty of space for each of its divas to flaunt their unique style, which ranges from classic elegance to colourful adventure. Most of them have more life than people half their age; what a brilliantly rejuvenating double bill this would make with Anson and Hugh Hartford's brilliant Ping Pong." (*Mark Kermode*) No it wouldn't.

Director: Lina Pliplyte
Certificate: PG
Duration: 75 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Dogwoof Pictures

Funny Face Tue 17 12.30

Director: Stanley Donen
Starring: Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire
Certificate: U
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: USA 1956

Audrey Hepburn plays Jo, a shy American intellectual-turned-supermodel, discovered by Fashion Photographer, Dick Avery (Fred Astaire), in her Greenwich Village bookstore.

Jo prefers literary salons and hard philosophy to shopping and idle pleasure. However, when Dick offers her the opportunity to visit Paris - to be the "new face" of Quality magazine - she jumps at the chance.

Dick whisks the wide-eyed girl off and transforms her into the fashion world's hottest model.

Along the way, he falls in love with her, and has to work overtime to wean her away from phony intellectuals in smoke-filled Paris Cafes.

What's startling is the eye-popping colour and visual effects, the dance sequences and the witty and ingenious use of locations - played out on the real, monument-littered streets of Paris.

The Gershwin tunes include "How Long Has This Been Going On" and "He Loves and She Loves", among newer numbers is "Think Pink".

"One of Hollywood's funniest, most stylish musicals, this breezy satire from 1957 thrives on the pairing of Fred Astaire and Audrey Hepburn." (*Total Film*)

"A timeless musical treat and the most fun you can have with really elegant clothes on." (*Empire*)

S'wonderful! S'marvelous!

A matinee to stir the heart. Don't miss (*Anna Shepherd*)



In Secret **Wed 18** 2.00



Based on Emile Zola's scandalous novel, *Therese Raquin*, *In Secret* is a tale of obsessive love, adultery and revenge set in the lower depths of 1860s Paris.

Therese (Elizabeth Olsen of *Martha Marcy May Marlene*), a sexually repressed beautiful young woman, is trapped into a loveless marriage to her sickly cousin, Camille (Tom Felton from *Harry Potter*) by her domineering aunt, Madame Raquin (Jessica Lange).

The trio abandon rural French life to move to Paris where Camille has secured an unglamorous but steady office job, while his mother opens a fabric shop. Therese gets used to her dull life, helping out in the store (located in a dark corner of an alley off a main thoroughfare) while her evenings are spent watching Madame play dominos with an eclectic group. Then one day, Lauren (the suddenly in everything, Oscar Isaac) comes strolling into her life. Therese and Laurent are soon in the throes of a passionate affair and carnal pleasure soon turns into a relationship, declarations of love and a deadly plan is enacted so they can be together forever. Uh oh!

"Sensitive performances from a willing cast bring Zola's novel to life on the big screen." (*Empire*)

"A stylish, nervy film, one that captures the manners and mores of its 19th century setting while making the emotions it deals with utterly contemporary." (*NY Times*)

Director: Charlie Stratton
Starring: Ashley Olsen, Oscar Isaac, Jessica Lange
Certificate: 15
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

A Thousand Times Goodnight **Thu 19** 2.00

Director: Erik Poppe
Starring: Juliette Binoche, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Maria Kennedy
Certificate: 15
Duration: 117 mins
Origin: Norway/Ireland/Sweden 2014
By: Arrow Films

A well-travelled thriller that Susan Bier could have passed off in her sleep, *A Thousand Times Goodnight* follows a traumatized war photographer as she tries to re-adjust to her life at home.

"Binoche plays Rebecca, a passionate and talented photo journalist who clashes with stay-at-home husband Marcus (*Game of Thrones'* Nikolaj Coster-Waldau) over her attitude towards work versus maternal responsibilities. Were it Marcus choosing to put his profession first, there wouldn't be much of a film here.

As it is, Rebecca's obsessive and endless pursuit of excellence in her field raises a pertinent social conundrum. In recasting his own semi-autobiographical story with the gender roles reversed, Norwegian director Erik Poppe gives his film broader significance.

"The film distinguishes itself from Hollywood made photojournalist actioners where the movie pivots around the hero questioning his neutrality in the face of political injustice. Thanks to Binoche, you become so totally invested in the heroine's compulsion to record what she witnesses that, paradoxically, the action itself seems less subjectively coloured." (*Variety*) eh?

Poppe had first-hand experience as a photo journalist and imbues this inverted autobiographical doppelganger with a raw authenticity. It's sad to see the film play its best hand early on, perhaps leaving less to enjoy, but Juliette Binoche shines as always. (*Jack Whiting*) Apart from being smart-arse, Jack is 'action-boy' at heart, so ignore and come.



The Wind Rises

Sat 21 2.00



The master of exquisite storytelling, Hayao Miyazaki (considered the Walt Disney of Japan: an unfair comparison?) has entered legend with this his allegedly final film.

Beautifully crafted, *The Wind Rises* is a fictionalised biopic of WWII fighter plane designer Jiro Horikoshi (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who created the Mitsubishi Zero plane, a fighter plane used by the Japanese Navy. His inspiration and mentor is the great Italian aircraft designer, Count Gianni Caproni.

Jiro has no particular interest in promoting or preventing the war. He is more concerned with the health of his sickly fiancée; more focused on the wonderful art of flight, and the nuts and bolts of designing planes.

"Jiro's planes were later built at slave labour camps and were used for kamikaze missions. While the film does not mention this, Jiro, for his part, is painted as an innocent, incurious young idealist, who perhaps fails to see his responsibility?" (*Guardian*)

For Miyazaki, this is a soaring swansong; a poignant, slow burning beauty telling a very mature, and intensely personal tale. Here's hoping, in the wake of his retirement, Studio Ghibli can continue to produce captivating stories that push generational boundaries, without compromising story, or talking down to its audience. (*research Jack Whiting*). It's worth following Jiro's story when you get home. He lived to profoundly regret his inventions that had been used for war. Don't miss.

Director: Hayao Miyazaki
Certificate: PG
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: Japan 2014
By: Studiocanal

Bad Neighbours

Mon 23 2.00

Director: Nicholas Stoller
Starring: Seth Rogen, Rose Byrne, Zac Efron
Certificate: 15
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Animal House is back baby! But there's a role switcheroo; the grownups are now the heroes, and the mischievous students embrace their villainous side.

Seth Rogen and Rose Byrne play Mac and Kelly, a happily married couple with the most adorable film baby you've ever seen (yuk, that's very gay Jack). When the new neighbours turn out to be a fun-crazed fraternity, hell bent on honouring their forefathers by inventing the most outrageous party games, as yet untried by student kind, becoming friends is no option.

This frat house, led by the psychotic Teddy, a fantastically maniacal Zac Efron, chiselled to perfection [that too] is at first a curiosity for the couple.

Not wanting to be spoilsports, they suggest a shaky truce to the kids to 'just keep it down'. The noise level doesn't stay that way for long, and soon neighbourhood war is declared.

"After a shaky start, *Bad Neighbours* blossoms, with inspired visual gags in excellent poor taste. That it never feels too dark is largely down to the sweetness of Rogen and Byrne." (*Time Out*)

The battle plays out in a series of crass skits. These increasingly bonkers one-upmanships push the boundaries of taste, yet there is nary a dull moment. So switch off sense and leave your dignity at the door. This is a low-brow treat. (*research Jack Whiting*)

Low indeed Jack.



The Grand Budapest Hotel Wed 25 2.00



Ralph Fiennes expertly plays eccentric hotel concierge Monsieur Gustave H. accompanied by Zero (touching newcomer Tony Revolori) the new lobby boy at the famous European hotel.

Perched on top of a mountain, in the fictional Republic of Zubrowka, and reached only by an old acute funicular railway. The story begins when a young writer (Jude Law) meets an impressive old man, the hotel's owner, Mr Zero Moustafa (F. Murray Abraham).

The young writer hears the tales of legendary concierge M. Gustave H, who in the pre-war period ran the hotel with impeccable control, style and suavity. Gustave's attentiveness to the rich, old, insecure, vain and needy patrons of the hotel extends to rather more personal services. As he bids farewell to 84-year-old fright Madame D (Tilda Swinton) her shocking murder sets in motion the crazy clockwork of the plot, Wes Anderson style. "Even on a second viewing, you hardly have time enough to take in all its intricate detailing and sumptuous furnishing." (*Standard*)

"Beneath all the jokiness there's a sense of loss, a nostalgia for an age that neither the filmmakers nor all but a few of their audience can ever have known". (*S&S*) Bewilderingly star-studded, come and indulge in this grand film in The Grand Rex Cinema in June (*AS*). Non-stop fabulous, ridiculous, fast-action wit, and crystal clear words. Don't miss.

Director: Wes Anderson
Starring: Ralph Fiennes, Saoirse Ronan
Certificate: 15
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Fading Gigolo Thu 26 2.00

Director: John Turturro
Starring: Sofia Vergara, Woody Allen, Sharon Stone
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2014
By: Curzon Film World

Woody Allen plays Murray, a bookseller whose business is faltering when he finds an unusual opportunity to score some money for himself and his one-time employee, Fioravante (John Turturro, who also directs). After a chance encounter at the dermatologist's office, Murray learns there are a couple of ladies looking to score some paid-for-passion, and suggests Turturro might be the man for the job.

Fioravante is initially nervous about the idea, especially since he's never been a gigolo before. One client, the delicate Hasidic widow, Avigal (Vanessa Paradis), has never been truly romanced, and she blooms in Fioravante's gaze, while her neighbourhood patroller (Liev Shreiber, terrific in a tricky part) worries on her behalf, partly out of jealousy. As Fioravante starts to get successful, especially with Dr Parker (Sharon Stone) and Selima (Sofia Vergara), he begins to enjoy this new life. And that's when feelings enter the equation to complicate things.

"Woody Allen shines as the pimp who hires out John Turturro in this strangely successful religious sex comedy." (*Guardian*)

"Aside from his own films, Woody Allen really doesn't act much, so it clearly takes something for a director to score Allen to play one of the leads in a movie." (*Empire*) (*research Jane Clucas*)

It must have always been odd being Woody Allen, but if you can stand it, he's outstanding in this, as is John Torturro.



Cinderella Sat 28 2.00



When Cinderella's cruel stepmother prevents her from attending the Royal Ball, she gets some unexpected help from the lovable mice Gus and Jaques, and from her Fairy Godmother.

A combination of superb animation (in beautifully soft Technicolor) and the perfect voice talents bring this story to life with a radiance that endures to this day.

Rediscover the timeless story beloved by generations (Originally released in 1950), the memorable music and unforgettable characters of Disney's Cinderella.

Cinderella has faith her dreams of a better life will come true. With help from her loyal mice friends and a wave of her Fairy Godmother's wand, Cinderella's rags are magically turned into a glorious gown and off she goes to the Royal Ball to meet her Prince. But when the clock strikes midnight, the spell is broken, leaving only a single glass slipper... the only key to the ultimate fairy-tale ending! "When those little mice bust a gut trying to drag that key up hundreds of stairs in order to free Cinderella, I don't care how many Kubrick pictures you've seen, it's still exciting." (*RogerEbert*)

"Considering the army of craftsmen who work on a Disney cartoon film, it is hard to give individual credits, for the memorable qualities." (*NYTimes*)

Bring your Frozen Sing-a-long Princesses and Princes along for an afternoon of Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo.

(research Anna Shepherd)

Directors: Hamilton Luske, Wilfred Jackson
Certificate: U
Duration: 74 mins
Origin: USA 1950
By: Park Circus Films

The Two Faces of January Mon 30 2.00

Director: Hossein Amini
Starring: Kirsten Dunst, Viggo Mortensen, Oscar Isaac
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: France/UK/USA 2014
By: Studiocanal

Accclaimed screenwriter Hossein Amini's directorial debut is a stylish suspense thriller, based on the novel of the same name by Patricia Highsmith.

American tourists, Chester MacFarland (Viggo Mortensen) and his wife Colette (Kirsten Dunst) are travelling around Greece. Behind Chester's cream linen suits, and apparent everyman charm, he is harbouring a criminal past.

They come across a tour guide and small-time con-artist, Rydal (Oscar Issac), who has been charming young travellers, skimming from the ladies as he exchanges their dollars for drachmas.

At Colette's insistence, the couple hires Rydal for a tour, inviting this potentially dangerous stranger into their inner circle. "It's an elegantly pleasurable period thriller, a film of tidy precision and class." (*Telegraph*)

"Amini excels at conveying the subtle, unspoken tensions between characters, selecting a tightrope-risky example with which to make his directorial debut and orchestrating it with aplomb." (*Variety*) Best known for his scripts for *Wings of a Dove* and *Drive*, British-Iranian Amini has turned his hand to directing. Amini has borrowed a cinematographer, Marcel Zyskind, from Michael Winterbottom, and a composer, Alberto Iglesias, from Pedro Almodóvar. Their combined efforts are seductive and expressive. (*Anna Shepherd*) How lovely, Ms Shepherd, thank you. It sounds irresistible. So don't resist.



THE BIG SQUEEZE...



“At least it will keep the riff-raff out of Waitrose” was the apparent line published in the Daily Mail. Surely not? All this fuss over the swinehund LIDL. A pirate ship at full sail for wide open treasure. If they’re a penny shop, why don’t they

go where the pennies are, employ local penny slave labour. Doesn’t it seem silly for Long John Lidl to come hobbling all the way over here, just to pick a Berkhamsted pocket or two? They should stay with the pennies, if that’s what they’re good at and continue exploiting the weaknesses of the many.



Stack it high sell it cheap; cue, huge international trade approval. Let's forget the big nasty pirate for a moment. Other more 'friendly' local pirates have been digging for extra pieces of eight. Waitrose hasn't done too badly, turning the front of its shop into a garden sales shed right in front of Woods, the original in-town garden centre, decades old.

Still they are "never knowingly undersold". Weasel words parade well, never quite making complete sense. Woods is a well established, caring, garden haven, with lovely people to answer all your soily questions. Waitrose has only 50 yards to walk to check how well it is underselling. 'Roll-up roll-up two-faux-one!' Lastly, for now, This Love Food with all its quirky sweetness and light, all mirrored toilet tiles and homemade, good-for-you stuff. Why? There used be a petshop, Saltmarshes, a few trials and errors. Lower Kings Road was never exactly vibrant, but it had colour. Now it's all monochrome, and hard-surface din. Bijou cafes in such good taste and all chasing that same Berkhamsted pound Lidl is after.

Okay Berkhamsted, don't pick on Lidl if you failed to stand up for decent fair rents and rates.

Saltmarshes (whose screws, glue, nuts and a few bolts built the Rex) and the pet shop would still be here.



The clever thing about Lidl, is they know there is no loyalty. We watch as Percy Birtchnell's is 'accidentally' demolished in the middle of the night, see charity shops grow like their own cancer etc, and we do nothing. How come the Chamber Of Commerce doesn't put pressure on landlords. They will know who they are? How come Dacorum Town Planning is so weak, they take no care about fair rents or control what shops come or go. As for Costa, they have accosted every square inch of available coffee sipping space. Don't go near the ugly plastic places.

The best we can do is not spend a penny in any of them, but we will. Bring on the Russians and let's have done with it. The Rex is still the best coffee in town at the best price, so why should I care. Come on you Oli-Gargoyles.



ST ALBANS...



The Telegraph

Is this town Britain's answer to Hollywood?

How do you start a film festival in a town that doesn't even have a cinema?

Last weekend, St Albans held its second-ever film festival. It was already a huge success even in its first year, with thousands of locals turning up to screenings and people travelling from huge distances to showcase their own films.



misteron · 15 days ago

Presumably Charlotte Runcie is related to Robert Runcie? Moving on though, I'm not sure I agree with the touchy feely, warm and fuzzies regarding the Odyssey. James Hannaway is a property developer who makes a profit from these cinema conversions. FWIW I'd rather that St Albans had a cinema and I'm pleased that Hannaway does what he does but the whole "community" thing is a bit of a smokescreen.

2



Reply · Share



Sean Meager · misteron · 11 days ago

I have been wondering this, though not looked in to. He is receiving donations from people.. but it's a purely profit making entity?

1



Reply · Share

Dear misteron, in the absense of a real name, I will call you nothing (lower case of course). So nothing, you state very clearly in a public response to a National newspaper that: *"James Hannaway is a property developer who makes a profit from these cinema conversions. FWIW..."*

Well, for what it's worth, nothing... you have just libelled yourself.

While getting the Rex up I was called many names from fool, to loser, liar, thief, headcase and worse etc... you can make up your own.

Oh yes, I had also run off to the Bahamas with Lynn & Jane taking all the loose change we could carry from the market stall. I cared little what loudmouths had to say, but things seem to have changed.

I have no complaints, but you sweetface nothing (just getting familiar – nice isn't it?) crossed the line with 'is' in a national paper. The Rex was a mixture of euphoria, frustration and stubbornness with deep lows when it seemed hopeless. It still sells to capacity now ten years on, because I have made it work like a non-business. It is for people not the dollar. The first principle of a true 'charity' I guess?

How can a cinema be a charity? It shows movies for entertainment. There are no starving babies, or magnificent ideals, no third world victims to rescue with a sponsored bike ride.

St Albans came to me to help save its derelict cinema. I wanted nothing to do with it. Reluctantly, I got to know the people involved, and what they were trying to do. Eight long years later, the thing I could have done without, is near completion.

The Rex has put over £200,000 in and I have personally lost much, I didn't have to lose.

The community thing, nothing, is all I had to start with, and the only reason I'm still here.

I've been trying to raise the last £500,000 from the outset. "A snip" in estate agents parlance. Don't they set that as a standard increase in 'market value' every morning?

Estate agents are having the time of their lives, using the Odyssey as a big reason for living in St Albans at the top price. However, I state here for the first time: estate agents do not have company permission to use The Odyssey name under any circumstances, to sell their 'properties'. Or any associated words, like cinema etc, or any part of what I am doing in St Albans. How's that, nothing, for a property developer?

I won't live to see any profit. I do hope it makes one, because unlike a registered charity, nothing is wasted in a limited company. It has to make its own way and lean on nobody. The banks have been useless. For a full three years nobody would touch us. Heavyweight entrepreneurs have left meetings flabbergasted we wouldn't take their money. I have taken money from nobody who talked of personal profit or power.

As for community, that will be the forty or so adults and kids who'll have a job, be trained and encouraged in the film/cinema/audience business.

Now nothing, if there's nothing else, thanks for rattling my cage. In wishing you well and sending you off with all your FWIWs, I leave you with one word from one of the best films of any year. AFY... argofuckyourself.