

THE-REX

M A G A

MAGIC MIKE

AUGUST 2012...

"Unhesitatingly The Rex is the best cinema I have ever known..."
(Sunday Times 2012)

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

AUGUST 2012 Issue 89
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
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Alun Rees Chief projectionist (Original)
Jon Waugh 1st assistant projectionist
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The Rex
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BEST IN AUGUST



From infidelity in Caramel, Nadine takes her women to war.

Where Do We Go Now

Mon 6 7.30. Egypt/France/Italy/Lebanon 2012

FILMS OF THE MONTH



Thanks to McConaughey's oily power, it's not all sex, violence & chicken legs.

Killer Joe Fri 3 7.30/Sat 4 7.00 USA 2012



"Like a whole series of The Wire in a single film..."?? Luckily it's French.

Polisse Mon 27 7.30. France 2011



"Stripping, drinking, bantering, carousing and whooping" but brilliant.

Magic Mike Thu 30/Fri 31 7.30. USA 2012

Tony Hawks: PLAYING THE MOLDOVANS AT TENNIS

Tony Hawks brought his film and translator (played by famous Moldovan TV star) Anatol Durbala.

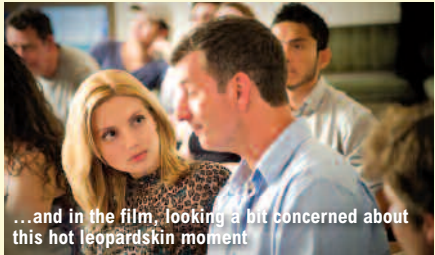
They turned out to be a great spontaneous double act in Q&A after the screening with the well preserved Hawks' wit fully intact. Very funny, informative and moving. His sell-out audience here loved every minute.

On tour throughout Britain, over the summer, Tony chose to start his journey here at the Rex the night after its premiere in London! Great for us and The Hippocrates Children's Centre in Chisinau, where all profits will go, from his book sales and tour.

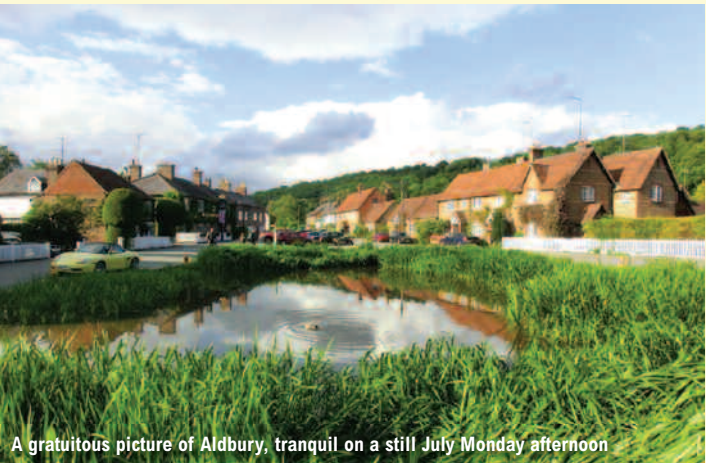
He even tasted the delights of Papa Johns in the High Street and particularly enjoyed the (non Moldovan) foreground music.

A lovely man, welcome here at the Rex anytime. We wish him well with this, and any future silly bets he makes with Arthur Smith.

Tony Hawks at the Rex Fri 22nd June



...and in the film, looking a bit concerned about this hot leopardskin moment



A gratuitous picture of Aldbury, tranquil on a still July Monday afternoon



Dear Sir,
 'Customer Care', a definition:
 "The provision of service
before and after a purchase".
 Thank you for making our evening at
 recent Tony hawks Q&A event quite
 special.
 My wife and I were the 'hottest' we
 had been in the cinema since our
 courting days in the early '70s!!
 We were cooled down by glasses of
 ice cold, still water, served by a
 smiling bartender. Then we were
 seated at the downstairs bar, for the
 climax of the Q&A evening. No fuss
 or frills, customer service in action!
 We were both left with the 'feel-good
 factor' which in the strange world of
 marketing is the real test of customer
 care.
 Regards,
 Malbac and Rosie



The Rex in full bloom
 between rain clouds



AUGUST EVENINGS

Prometheus

Wed 1 7.30



In Ridley Scott's belated sci-fi homecoming, Michael Fassbender's android David poses the question "How far would you go to get your answers?" Once *Prometheus*' credits roll your answer might be "Not very".

Earth 2089 and a pair of archaeologist lovers: religious Elizabeth Shaw (Noomi Rapace, complete with wonky Brit accent) and atheist Charlie Holloway (Logan Marshall-Green) discover a cave painting in Wales? One of many in fact that points to the possible beginnings of our existence. Believing that these maps are an invitation, Shaw is granted a ship and scientific team including Charlize Theron, Idris Elba and film stealing Fassbender, to launch an expedition to meet our makers. This isn't the same location of Scott's 1979 *Alien*; die-hard fans hoping for direct connections to the horror classic will be disappointed to find *Prometheus* sticking to its own guns, mostly.

When the crew arrive after their two year journey (the wonders of hyper-sleep) and set down on the moon's surface the black goo hits the fan, including script, pacing, and character motives that defy logic, yet the extraordinary sets and visual effects mask the narrative cracks. There are plentiful nods to Kubrick's *Space Odyssey*, and of course *Alien*, yet under the conspicuous twaddle of birth, God and the universe is a monster movie on its last visit to our Rex earth. (*JW*)

Director: Ridley Scott
Starring: Idris Elba, Guy Pearce, Charlize Theron, Michael Fassbender, Noomi Rapace
Certificate: 15
Duration: 124 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Rock of Ages

Thu 2 7.30

Director: Adam Shankman
Starring: Tom Cruise, Bryan Cranston, Malin Akerman
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 123 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Warner Brothers

"The irony may not be intentional. It really does go on for ages." (*Guardian*) Sherrie (Hough) and Drew (Boneta) both have their hearts set on rock fame, while Stacey Jaxx (Cruise) is tiring of his. All will rewrite their destiny in a dive bar under threat of bankruptcy and persecution from moral crusader and mayor's wife Patricia Whitmore (Zeta-Jones).

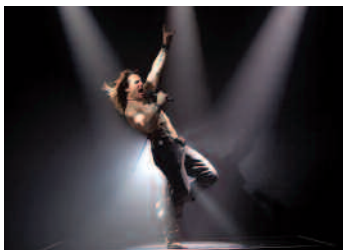
"It belts along at a pace, switching karaoke classics at whiplash speed, while earnest Hough and Boneta work charm into a flabby script and Baldwin and Giamatti (douche-bag manager) provide performance. And then Cruise arrives on-screen and posturing; never intentionally wearing a top. His dirty duet with Rolling Stone journo Malin Ackerman to 'I Wanna Know What Love Is' does send the raunch factor stratospheric!" (*Total Film*) yuk.

"A hugely disliked film of rock music is set in 1987 Los Angeles. Never has LA looked less enticing." (*Observer*)

"Like every one of its songs, it makes a lot of noise about nothing much and cockily straddles awfulness and greatness? It is enormously entertaining nonsense." (*Empire*)

"Disposable, overly long fun best enjoyed with BFFs (think he means knitting?) and a bevvy. Some will win, some will lose, some were born to sing the blues..." (*Total Film*)

You know what you're in for, so come and boogie. (In for a kid's matinee too!)





Director: William Friedkin
Starring: Gina Gershon, Emile Hirsch, Matthew McConaughey
Certificate: 18
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: eOne Films



Killer Joe

Fri 3 7.30, Sat 4 7.00

A family of losers, living in a trailer and in debt to local goons, decide the only way out of it is to have their mother bumped off for the insurance money. A plan they really haven't thought through. Knowing themselves to be incompetent, they bring in a sinister cop who runs a little business on the side. Matthew McConaughey is another of William Friedkin's unquiet spirits, as hitman-cop: Killer Joe. But Killer Joe wants to be paid in advance. As he walks away, the daughter, a dreamy 20-year-old Dottie, catches his eye. So he agrees to take the job if she's given to him as a 'retainer'. From there the situation spirals down into bloody mayhem.

"Family dysfunction to make Jeremy Kyle blush, but thanks to McConaughey's oily power and Friedkin's unflinching purpose it's a compelling beast." (*Empire*)

"Friedkin's unflinching trailer-park noir features ugly characters, game performances, degradation and the obscene abuse of a chicken drumstick. Highly recommended then." (*Total Film*)
 "It's a real actor's piece and the central roles have been brilliantly cast. Matthew McConaughey is a stone cold brute as Joe, slow, intelligent and scary." (*Standard*)

In Tarantino's hands this might have been enjoyable if horrid. With Friedkin it lacks sprightliness. It is taken from a claustrophobic play. There are no landscapes.

The Players

Sun 5 6.00



The Players (Les Infidèles) is a series of short vignettes written and directed by a troupe of rising young Gallic filmmakers including, in a violent volte-face from last year's *The Artist*, Jean Dujardin and Michel Hazanavicius.

Each short film deals in one way or another with the subject of marital infidelity. As with any of these ensemble exercises, some work very well whilst others fall flat. From the sublime Dujardin as a lonely exec trying to score during a stupefyingly dull conference; to a fairly ridiculous set-piece finale in Las Vegas. Whilst one of the segments possess a more serious, thoughtful tone than the others, dealing as it does with the effects of infidelity on a marriage, the rest is a fairly standard adult comedy which, perhaps more amusingly, at one point threatened to derail Dujardin and Hazanavicius' charm offensive when *The Artist* hit American shores last year.

"The film's explicit and, some would say, highly continental depiction of sex and marriage may have a tougher time convincing the kind of upmarket viewers who think that movies with subtitles are supposed to be affairs of the intellect." (*Hollywood Reporter*).

"A series of pointless, boorish skits about two unrepentant lotharios." (*Telegraph*)

"The Players may be uneven, but it's difficult not to enjoy" (*Seven: S Telegraph*) (research Simon Messenger) Worth a try.

Directors: Jean Dujardin, Michel Hazanavicius, Gilles Lellouche, Emmanuelle Bercot, Fred Cavayé, Eric Lartigau, Alexandre Courtès
Starring: Jean Dujardin, Gilles Lellouche, Lionel Abelanski
Certificate: 18
Duration: 109 mins
Origin: France 2012
By: Momentum Pictures

Where Do We Go Now?

Mon 6 7.30

Director: Nadine Labaki
Starring: Leyla Hakim, Nadine Labaki
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: Egypt/France/Italy/Lebanon 2012
By: Revolver Film Distribution

Set in a mountain town in an unnamed Middle Eastern country it examines the way its Christian and Muslim inhabitants, at peace for so long, are suddenly at loggerheads once news of conflict arrives from the outside world.

The local women, led by the beautiful widow Amale (Labaki), hire Ukrainian strippers to turn their menfolk away from the path of violent retribution.

The action unfolds in an isolated rural community where Muslims and Christians live in precarious harmony. The key conceit is how women on both sides use their feminine wiles to keep their volatile menfolk from bringing the national conflict into the village.

"It is broad (Ukrainian strippers and hashcakes) but its mixture of whimsy, musical numbers and good heart wins out. A likeable comedy with heart and brains." (*Empire*)

"Balancing sectarian tragedy and earthy humour is never easy, and Labaki crams in too many stereotypes. A romantic song-and-dance sequence suggests her well-intentioned fable would be better as a full-blown musical?" (*Total Film*)

You can't fault Labaki's ambition, or her absolute determination to put the women centre stage, but somehow she neglects the basics of storytelling along the way." (*Time Out*)

"It's machine-tooled to raise smiles, swell hearts, and tickle tear ducts, yet it does so with sufficient cross-cultural cred you don't feel too cheated." (*Guardian*) You decide.



Lay The Favourite

Tue 7 7.30



Lap dancer Beth (Hall) moves to Las Vegas to become a cocktail waitress.

Luck, and her uncanny facility with numbers land her a job with professional gambler Dink (Willis). But the volatility of Dink and his wife Tulip (Zeta-Jones) drive Beth away to make her own way in the world of bets, moving to New York with Jeremy (Joshua Jackson) whom she met in Vegas. Then on she goes to nasty bookie, Rosie (Vince Vaughn)

“Rebecca Hall is manically vivacious as Beth, and Bruce Willis’s Dink shouts a lot. The gambling just isn’t interesting, and there’s not much of a love story either.” (*Guardian*)

“Frears’s strongest hand is a set of colourful characters played with verve. But DeVincentis’s script looks to achieve far too much in a short space of time. The going is good, but ‘Lay the Favourite’ pulls up long before the finish.” (*Time Out*)

“The entire escapade is surprisingly watchable, if increasingly patchy towards the end. Rebecca Hall carries the screen, and somehow remains beautiful throughout. It may be that she has captured Raymer’s nature with uncanny precision, but it is hard to root for a character who would prove endearing only, perhaps, to a man very deep in the throes of a mid-life crisis (*Telegraph*) Come, Ms Hall is always worth a fiver each way...?”

Director: Stephen Frears
Starring: Rebecca Hall, Bruce Willis, Vince Vaughn
Certificate: PG
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: eOne Films

In Your Hands

Wed 8 7.30

Director: Lola Doillon
Starring: Kristin Scott Thomas, Pio Marmai
Certificate: 15
Duration: 81 mins
Origin: France 2012
By: Artificial Eye

In Your Hands (Contre toi) is a brief, intense exploration of isolation and loss directed by Lola Doillon (daughter of Jacques).

Anna (Kristin Scott Thomas) is a surgeon. At the film’s outset she is seen hurrying back to her apartment on the outskirts of Paris, seemingly returning from holiday. However, as becomes clear, something is terribly wrong. As lengthy flashback sequences attest, she had been kidnapped by Yann Ochberg, a handsome, young, broken man (Pio Marmai) who has been torn apart by the death of his wife, for which he blames Anna. As Yann holds her hostage, the two become bound together, and begin to seek solace in each other from the isolation of their ordinary lives. Scott Thomas is excellent in conveying the dual nature of her character, both aloof and cold, yet deeply vulnerable. Although perhaps a little heavy handed, Ochberg was the also the surname of the chap who coined ‘Stockholm syndrome’. It’s an interesting ride, and as the film draws to its conclusion we are left asking which one of the two is indeed the most damaged...

“The film gives Scott Thomas the kind of provocative lead role that Anglophone fare simply isn’t offering a 50-year-old actress these days...they do things differently in France.” (*Variety*) (*research Simon Messenger*)



Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter **Thu 9 7.30**



They say never judge a book by its cover, unless your title happens to be as literal as Seth Grahame-Smith's daft genre bender then by all means, judge away, for you certainly won't find a deeper significance.

This splattershot romp recasts America's 16th president as a heroic Van Helsing figure whose hatred of slavery dovetails neatly with a lust for vengeance upon the bloodsuckers who killed his mother. "Having suffered exactly the kind of early-life traumas required of superheroes (parental loss, financial hardships, injustice witnessed first-hand) poor-boy Abe (Benjamin Walker) goes on to save the nation with a facial hair-and-hat arrangement every bit as distinctive as Batman's cowl or Superman's cape." (*Mark Kermode*)

Russian 'visionary' Timur Bekmambetov (Wanted) adapts Smith's book from his own screenplay and turns an absurd premise into a slow-mo extravaganza. "Bekmambetov directs with gusto, and the forthright absurdity of the story, combined with its weirdly heartfelt self-belief is winning. Only the very solemn could object to this bizarre adventure dreamt up for the 16th president." (*Guardian*) If we're talking franchise potential then might I suggest George Washington: Wooden dentures vampire? Ronald Reagan: Zombie? Tricky Dickie Nixon: ? The possibilities are endless. (*Jack Whiting*) It's in the programme for it's title. We knew little else on booking, but it sounded like fun. Try it.

Director: Timur Bekmambetov
Starring: Benjamin Walker, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Dominic Cooper
Certificate: 15
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Fox Int'l

The Five Year Engagement

**Fri 10 7.30, Sat 11 7.00,
Sun 12 6.00**

Director: Nicholas Stoller
Starring: Rhys Ifans, Jason Segel, Emily Blunt
Certificate: 15
Duration: 124 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

One year after meeting, Tom (Segal) proposes to his girlfriend, Violet (Emily Blunt) but unexpected events keep tripping them up as their wedding is constantly thwarted. While his far-less-organised friend Alex (Chris Pratt) and Violet's ditsy sister Suzie (Alison Brie) meet, get married and have kids before the lovers have even sent out their 'save the date' cards. Their easy chemistry is undeniable, they're real-life friends and it shows on-screen. When their relationship is threatened by an interloper in the shape of Rhys Ifans' slimy Professor Childs, you're genuinely anxious that they may not end up together after all. "Which may not be Apatow funny, but it does feel refreshingly real." (*Total Film*) What is Apatow funny? Ahh yes Knocked Up. So, what is Apatow funny?

"The engagement is not the only thing that drags here. The set-piece gags, which include a heart-to-heart between Violet and her sister in the voices of Sesame Street characters, are laboured, and the supporting cast, from Tom's lewd best friend Alex to Violet's one-joke-apiece colleagues (Mindy Kaling, Randall Park, Kevin Hart), might have been copied and pasted from any other second-rate romcom." (*Telegraph*) "What it lacks in belly laughs it makes up for in heart and soul, successfully exploring the genuine greys of a relationship instead of painting them black and white." (*Tot Film*) You choose.



King Of Devil's Island Mon 13 7.30

Director: Marius Holst
Starring: Stellan Skarsgård, Benjamin Helstad, Kristoffer Joner, Trond Nilssen
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 116 mins
Origin: Norway/France/Sweden/Poland 2010
By: Verve Pictures

Based on real events from 1915, Marius Holst's bleak slow-burner tells the unsettling tale of a group of young delinquents banished to Norway's notorious, remote Bastoy Prison. Under the guise of rehabilitation, the boys' daily regime is dictated by mental and physical abuse at the hands of their wardens. Bastoy has all the familiar cruelties of a school for 'maladjusted young boys'; abuse, lice inspections, solitary confinement and a diet of raw fishheads. The arrival of new boys Erling (Helstad) and Ivar (Magnus Langlete) sparks a chain of events that ultimately ignite rebellion. *King of Devil's Island* explores a sinister moment in Norwegian history that would rather be forgotten.

"Stark, austere and just a touch too reliant on prison movie clichés, *King of Devil's Island* is no one's idea of a fun night out. But it is well-constructed and gripping. A young cast acquits itself well. Robust acting and crisp direction eases the old-rope material through. But the film is rather one-note in its bleakness, and doesn't have a vast amount to say beyond reform-school-sucks." (*Guardian/Time Out*)

"After so much Stieg Larsson and *The Killing* though, it's pleasing to see something from the Nordic countries that doesn't involve police procedure and chunky jumpers." (*Total Film*)
 You decide.



The Last Projectionist

Tue 14 7.30



The history of the Electric Cinema in Birmingham becomes the story of 100 years of film-going habits in the UK, courtesy of a sentimental, self-promoting yet revealing documentary from Electric owner Tom Lawes. Opened in 1909, it started with silents, moved to talkies, and in its time has been news theatre, bijou art-house and a 1970s soft-porn palace.

Elderly gents, meanwhile, discuss the transition from 35mm to digital projection. A timely, and ever-so-slightly heartbreaking documentary about the changing face of cinema in the UK, interweaving the reminiscences of stalwart projectionists (fast becoming an extinct species) with the history of Birmingham's Electric cinema, which

"This film occasionally looks like a sentimental in-house video, but it's an entertaining trip down cinema's memory lane..."

Affectionate and informative, it raises important questions about the role of the multiplex, the inevitable rise of digital, and the life-affirming persistence of independent cinemas offering more than the supermarket experience. Bingo!" (*Guardian*)

Like listening to any old men whining about anything, be it railways or warm beer, this starring bunch is no better, and I'm one of them. Interspersed with tales of 35mm are many in-my-day reminiscences. Essentially an enthusiasts film, but worth seeing, if only for the Rex. If it's not on the cutting room floor, it should be in there somewhere.

Director: Thomas Lawes
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 81 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Electric Flix

Monsieur Lazhar

Wed 15 7.30

Director: Philippe Falardeau
Starring: Mohamed Fellag, Sophie Nélisse
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 95 mins
Origin: Canada 2011
By: Soda Pictures

Some films have an extra dimension, hard to describe. This is one. Selling out in days in June and July, M Lazhar is a quietly, moving French-Canadian drama, rightly nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at this year's Oscars.

A school-teacher is found hanged in a Montreal elementary school, and Algerian immigrant Bachir Lazhar (Mohamed Fellag) is rapidly drafted in as her replacement. Having recently suffered a personal tragedy of his own, the kindly, compassionate Monsieur Lazhar sets about nurturing the children, only to run into trouble with school policy. The delicate nature of his refugee status hangs in the balance...

The story touches on themes of grief, loss, integration, unity, with the onus on the optimism of youth,

"You could almost describe Monsieur Lazhar as a morality tale, but it's more thought-provoking than debate-provoking. Its strength is the realness of the emotions and authenticity of the detail, although there is a gentle insistence here that integration is a two-way street." (*Time Out*)

"Only the most obstreperous delinquent could fail to be charmed by Monsieur Lazhar..." (*Guardian*) "Life affirming" (*Total Film*) 'Life affirming' two of my favourite words, of late. If you loved The Chorus seven years ago, you will love this now. And the kids don't get on your nerves too much.



Seeking A Friend For The End Of The World **Thu 16** 7.30



Written and directed by Lorene Scafaria, this is a light & dark, post-apocalyptic comedy starring Steve Carell and Keira Knightley.

A seventy-mile wide asteroid is three weeks away from obliterating the Earth; the last attempts to destroy it having failed. With his wife having left him in light of the impending doom, Dodge, a mild mannered insurance salesman (Carell) finds himself at home quietly reminiscing about his high-school sweetheart Olivia. Dodge is soon interrupted by his quirky, narcoleptic English neighbour Penny (Knightley) who is inconsolable having missed her last chance to return home to see her family for the final time. As the two talk, a riot breaks out nearby. Spontaneously they decide to get out and see if they can make some sense of their lives before the end of days...

"Though it's clear we're meant to be moved by the big finale, the sight of these two together is so unsettling it's hard not to start rooting for the asteroid." (*Time Out*) "It's as if some Hollywood exec saw Lars Von Trier's apocalypse drama *Melancholia* and said: Yeah, mmmm, give me something like that only much, much more irritating..." (*Guardian*) (research *Simon Messenger*)

Harrowing yes, but there might be something to be said for knowing it's all about to end, whether for you alone, or everybody...? Try it.

Director: Lorene Scafaria
Starring: Keira Knightley, Steve Carell, Gillian Jacobs, Connie Britton
Certificate: 15
Duration: 101 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: StudioCanal

The Amazing Spider-Man **Fri 17** 7.30, **Sat 18** 7.00, **Sun 19** 6.00

Director: Marc Webb
Starring: Andrew Garfield, Rhys Ifans
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 136 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Sony Int'l

You can count the years since Sam Raimi's much loved Spidey trilogy came to a neat close on one hand, yet Hollywood has already called for the dreaded system reboot.

And so the webslinger's origins are again told as refreshingly funny, awkward, nerd outsider Peter Parker (Andrew Garfield) has to balance his homework, love life and, after that radioactive spider bite; super-hero duties.

Director Marc Webb (no relation) had a cracking debut with of (500) Days of Summer and he continues the theme of convincing young love that a thousand Twilights could never hope to capture. "Drawn to the lost pieces of his own jigsaw, Parker tracks down his father's former partner Dr Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans, minus one arm but with his ego deliciously intact) and his risky cross-species experimentation. Urban chaos ensues." (*Telegraph*)

The perfect casting of Garfield (who sent a photo when he was eight in a spiderman outfit, to the casting director) and Emma Stone as the eager love interest helps rise above the old web shooters, alongside a wonderfully sinister Ifans who steals the screen (except when he's that scaly green monster).

Webb's version avoids stepping on Raimi's toes whilst remaining ever faithful to the fans and source material. Happily, this Spider-Man contains enough maturity and emotional clout to put arachnophobes at ease. (*Jack Whiting*)



Annie Hall

Mon 20 7.30



This is Woody Allen's first straight film, after his opening flurry of successful madcap comedies, including *Bananas* and *Sleeper*. This was a total surprise to Hollywood, it won most Oscars in 1978 and ensured a catalogue gems to follow, including *Manhattan* and *Hannah & Her Sisters*.

These were the days when Woody was still a comedian who happened to make films, rather than the comic film-maker he became. The film is therefore little more than a series of shrewd but disjointed anecdotes dealing with Allen's usual self-obsessive hang-ups and fashionable metropolitan pastimes: existential dread, masturbation, coke-sniffing, movie-going, psychoanalysis, etc.

"The one-liners are razor-sharp, so too the observations of Manhattanite manners, and the romance extraordinarily touching. If you can forgive the fact that it's a ragbag of half-digested intellectual ideas dressed up, you should have a good laugh." (*Time Out*) "This is the film that beat *Star Wars* to the Oscar. The movie that represented Woody Allen's coming of age as a film-maker. The cultural phenomenon that spurred women all across America to raid charity shops for waistcoats and kipper ties. Many things mark *Annie Hall*'s place in cinema history, but none is the reason you should see this movie. It is the humour, poignancy and acute observation contained in each and every frame." (*Total Film*) So come and love it all over again... here.

Director: Woody Allen
Starring: Sigourney Weaver, Woody Allen, Diane Keaton
Certificate: 15
Duration: 93 mins
Origin: USA 1999
By: Park Circus Films

Women On The 6th Floor

Tue 21 7.30

Director: Philippe Guay
Starring: Fabrice Luchini, Sandrine Kibertain, Natalie Verbeke, Carmen Maura
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: France 2010
By: Cinefile

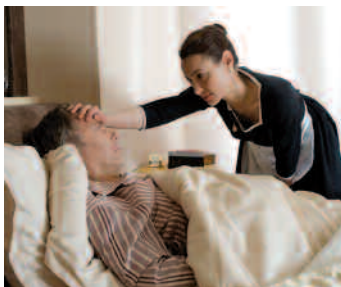
Set in 1960s Paris, Jean-Louis is the uptight owner of a building, which houses a bevy of Spanish maids on the sixth floor. To people like Jean-Louis, these women are only seen as hired help, nothing more. However, after the new recruit Mara gets a job in Jean-Louis's household, he starts to see these women as human beings and even more, as exotic creatures bursting with pious faith, fiery passion, and even perhaps, eventually as friends?

The Spanish immigrants who fled Franco's regime, came to France and found work as maids in the '60s, managed to take solace in each other's company and mutual complaining. Most of their employers simply considered them as cheap foreign labour (how things have changed?)

"Patronising stereotypes and ungallant humour undermine the insights into bourgeois life. Enjoyably satirical and occasionally insightful, it's betrayed by some lazy stereotyping." (*Empire*)

"An amiable film, a breezily executed tale, even if one suspects that, anywhere but in a French film, a middle aged man's soupy romancing of the family maid might be less gratefully received..."

(*S Telegraph: Seven*) Sounds perfect. If you loved 'Gardener' and 'Marguerite', you'll enjoy this. Come.





Director: Lynn Shelton
Starring: Emily Blunt, Rosemarie DeWitt, Mark Duplass
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: StudioCanal



Your Sister's Sister

Wed 22 7.30, Thu 23 7.30

An interesting relationship triangle is presented in this low-key drama, with witty yet emotionally raw detail.

Director Lynn Shelton probes modern relationships, Emily Blunt is Iris, lending her father's log cabin to aid the recovery of her best friend Jack (Mark Duplass) who has been drinking hard since the death of his brother (Iris's ex-boyfriend). Adding to the equation, at the cabin, he finds Iris's half-sister Hannah (Rosemarie DeWitt) already there and not wearing much. After a night of tequila and talk, one thing leads to another... The rude awakening in the morning is the unexpected arrival of Iris. Their secret night together ticks away like a time bomb under the kitchen table. A three-hander ensues, each character guarding, their secrets. "The three leads handle the semi-improvised script with panache, and Blunt and DeWitt really convince as sisters driven by love and latent rivalry." (*Independent*)

"As for Blunt and DeWitt, let's start at 'dynamite'. These two play sisters as if they've lived together for years. Blunt radiates warmth and humour, DeWitt shows the sharp edges Hannah keeps hidden. A trio of superb performances guide a plot that pivots on secrets and lies before they fester. The film works its way into your head until you can't stop thinking about it." (*Rolling Stone*)
Improvisation leads to inevitable mumbling, but worth its 90 minutes.

Angel's Share

Fri 24 7.30



Wheyn th'falm pleyed a'th'Cannes
falm feystahval puckle weeks agay
furehts premeayre shoon, sum French
dobber desidehd t'screen et
w'subtattles coz they didne hink
th'audience wood be able tae kin.
Borllox tae 'at! (SM)

Our anti-hero Robbie (non-actor Paul Brannigan), a frustrated young offender, narrowly misses a custodial sentence for assault, and is instead sentenced to 300 hours community service under the watchful eye of the good natured Harry (John Henshaw). On a visit to a local distillery - along with other ne'er-do-wells Albert (Gary Maitland) Rhino (William Ruane) and Mo (newcomer Jasmin Riggins) Robbie discovers a rare nose for whisky. Desperate to break his circle of crime and poverty, he spies a money-spinning opportunity to bring a rare, expensive malt and an unscrupulous buyer together...

"There is politics underlying every aspect of this brilliant, funny, warm-hearted, deftly plotted film, and we fervently wish for this endearing quartet of toerags to succeed." (*Observer*) Ken Loach is still the only Brit-grit, screen storyteller who gets it right. Meadows, Arnold, Plan B etc, simply haven't listened. Ps We showed it with subtitles too, to mixed response. Some were able to relax into the story, without missing a line or subtle joke. Others said it was patronising. This screening will be without, so good luck and borllox tae 'at! But don't miss.

Director: Ken Loach
Starring: Paul Brannigan, John Henshaw, Gary Maitland
Certificate: 15
Duration: 101 mins
Origin: UK 2012
By: eOne Films

Total Recall

Sat 25 7.00

Director: Paul Verhoeven
Starring: Sharon Stone, Arnold Schwarzenegger
Certificate: 15
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 1990
By: Studiocanal

Arnold Schwarzenegger plays Douglas Quaid, a humble construction worker in the 21st Century who has bad dreams about Mars, where he's never been, and a beautiful woman he's never met. Dropping by a futuristic holiday firm where you can be injected with the memories of a wonderful two-week vacation someone else took for you, Quaid freaks out before he can be given the final injection. From then, it all goes horribly wrong.

I first saw it in an Irish bar in New York's Upper West Side. It was 1990, and technology was in its infancy. Mobile phones were size of a small shed. This bar was showing football, the juke box was playing and at around 6.0pm the place started to fill up with smart chattering NY types. With all of this mixed foreground sound going on, I sat at the end of the bar and watched Total Recall on the latest big TV screen, with a grey screen reflecting the rotating coloured bar lights and the sound turned down! Some years later, while on holiday in Tenerife, I subjected my young children to it as a treat in the hotel lounge, but now with sound. It only multiplied the bewilderment by three. Its look is entirely 1980s, noted only for thoroughbred ugliness, and here now to traumatise your children, ahead of its glossy remake in September.



La Traviata

Sun 26 6.00



“A highlight of the Opera-Australia cinema series is Verdi’s *La Traviata*, performed in the middle of Sydney Harbour, on a floating water-stage. The Harbour Bridge and Opera House provide a magnificent backdrop to this unique production, complete with fireworks a glittering production. This unique production is the perfect in-cinema event for first-time opera-goers and a must-see for the thousands of fans of this well-known title who have never seen it performed quite like this before!” (*My Vue*) Not too over the top? “well-known title” nice Oz touch.

“A must-see opera event with spectacular sets, fireworks and a dazzling nine-metre chandelier has opened on Sydney Harbour to rave reviews. This is Sydney Harbour’s first opera to be held on a tailor-made stage built over the water off the Royal Botanic Gardens. The huge production features brilliant costumes, beautiful classical music and a shimmering stage set against a breathtaking backdrop of the city’s lights, Sydney Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge.” (*Wentworth Courier*) **“The result is a take on Verdi’s masterpiece that is unfussy, achingly stylish and smart.”** (*Telegraph*)

Now that’s better DT, vulgar Australians, what do they know of The Opera? A screen experiment, it sounds fabulous, come and tell us what you think.

Director: Francesca Zambello
Starring: Emma Matthews, Gianluca Terranova, Jonathan Summers,
Certificate: U
Duration: 150 mins
Origin: Australia 2012
By: Cinemalive Limited

Polisse

Mon 27 7.30

Director: Maiwenn Le Besco
Starring: Maiwenn, Karin Viard, Joey Starr, Marina Foïs
Certificate: 15
Duration: 128 mins
Origin: France 2011
By: Artificial Eye

Written, directed by and starring Maiwenn, “Polisse” is an engaging, slightly disturbing, drama centred on the Parisian police force’s Child Protection Unit; a group of tireless law enforcers-come-social workers assigned to intervening in the city’s cases of child abuse and neglect.

The premise of the film is simple. A photographer, Mélissa (Maiwenn), is instructed to document the gritty day-to-day operations of the CPU. Mélissa (and we the audience) are then privy to the squabbling and personal affairs of the group; recognising the immense pressure and long hours they find themselves working; and exposed to their apparent lack of recognition within the police force as a whole. Mélissa’s presence also has an effect on one male staff member in particular...

“Polisse” works as a drama simply because its subject matter is so gritty, and at times, in cases of child abuse, so deeply unpleasant. Whilst the film is effective at flitting between very shocking sequences and moments of real warmth and humour (particularly in the badinage between the CPU officers) the whole thing has a tendency to feel slightly overcooked. “It’s restless and compelling, ragged and moving.” (*Telegraph*)

You decide... (*research Simon Messenger*)



The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

Tue 28 7.30



The fabulous cast constitutes a dream team of veteran thespians: Judi Dench is a widow emerging from her shell; Tom Wilkinson is a retired judge revisiting his youth; Penelope Wilton and Bill Nighy are navigating an old marriage; Celia Imrie and Ronald Pickup are randy old goats; and Maggie Smith, as a hip-op patient, offers a fabulous working class variant on her sarky, shrewd *Downton Abbey* gameplayer.

O! Parker's screenplay is based on Deborah Moggach's novel *These Foolish Things*.

"The film doesn't quite sink to the dewy eyed clichés of Orientalism derided in the book ('oh the poverty, oh the sunsets') But it still presents a superficial take on contemporary India: beaming kids play cricket, wise old men proffer advice and standard issue star-crossed lovers are saddled with corny lines." (*Guardian*)

"With so many characters to juggle several end up getting short shrift, and the lessons learned are banal in nature and schematic in execution. They are all on enjoyable form but none is really challenged." (*mixed tart crits*)

Anything with Dames Judi and Maggie and the glorious (yet to refuse heraldry) Mr Nighy, and all the other lovely faces, are well worth your time. Refreshing, funny and sad. La la to the critics. Bet they've all got Cliff's greatest hits. Back for the last time this 'summer'

Director: John Madden
Starring: Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Tom Wilkinson, Bill Nighy
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 124 mins
Origin: UK 2012
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Chariots of Fire

Wed 29 7.30

Director: Hugh Hudson
Starring: Hugh Hudson. Starring: Ben Cross, Ian Charleson, Nigel Havers, Nicholas Farrell
Certificate: PG
Duration: 124 mins
Origin: UK 2012
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Our nod to the Olympics, a little late, but never mind. My vote was for 'Munich' but was shouted down.

Based on a true story, the film charts the drives of and challenges for two runners, the devout Scottish missionary, Eric Liddell, and the Jewish Cambridge student, Harold Abrahams, at the 1924 Olympics.

"Smartened up and refurbished, this Oscar winner looks better than it did 31 years ago. We notice now Hugh Hudson's convincing direction." (*Standard*)

Unfortunately, forever spoiled by fat Colin Welland screeching hysterically "The British are coming" at the 1982 Oscars. Such a ridiculous, empty and embarrassing boast. The Brits did win all the sweets with 'Garndi' the next year, then had to wait until 1990 for Daniel Day-Lewis's (*My*) Left Foot. Followed by a smattering of supports until *The English Patient* in 1997 took the two big ones. So no, big Colin, the British didn't come, and judging by the state of today's English handheld, digital, low-life, gritty, estate, gangster tripe, the Brits are going nowhere. (*The King's Speech* was American money, as was Ghandi)

"Some films look better with time and this is definitely one of them, despite that overbearing Vangelis score" (*Standard*) I quite liked the music, that and Nigel Havers are the best parts of the film.





Director: Steven Soderbergh
Starring: Channing Tatum, Matthew McConaughey, Alex Pettyfer
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Lionsgate



Magic Mike

Thu 30 7.30, Fri 31 7.30

The movie takes place in the milieu of male strip-clubs in Tampa, Florida, but its interest is in the lives of these strippers. It's about masculinity as something to sell, something performed, and something that may not last for ever. The title role is played by Channing Tatum, who started his career as a male stripper in Tampa, aged 19. He devised the idea for a film based on those experiences. Tatum has shown promise elsewhere, but it's under Soderbergh's guidance that he feels wholly energised and harnessed. Beyond the role's physical demands, he nails the dramatic ones, too: Mike's dream, and hope for an escape, is to build highly uncomfortable-looking custom furniture out of junk!

"Soderbergh composes the movie with matter-of-fact care, giving us wide views of the choreographed routines without cutting too fast. He's made a classy film on a tacky subject, without dressing it up in any way that betrays the setting, or apologises for what it's about." (Telegraph)

"For all its social insightfulness, this isn't an inward-looking indie movie in a minor-key. Soderbergh is out to give audiences a good time, and he succeeds. Its trajectory may be predictable, but that doesn't stop Magic Mike being the best movie about dudes disrobing since Brokeback Mountain." (Total Film) Sounds like it could be worth the trip.

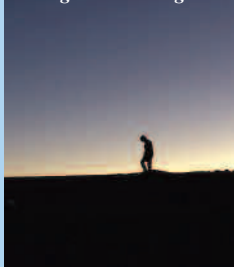
COMING SOON

New releases

The Bourne Legacy
Nostalgia for the Light
Total Recall (II)
Ted
Salute

Back by demand

Magic Mike
Another Woody Allen (tbc)
Singing In The Rain
And other surprise oldies

The Bourne Legacy*Nostalgia For The Light**Total Recall II**Ted*

AUGUST FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	Wed	Snow White and The Huntsman	2.00
1	Wed	Prometheus	7.30
2	Thu	Rock of Ages	2.00, 7.30
3	Fri	Killer Joe	7.30
4	Sat	Snow White and The Huntsman	2.00
4	Sat	Killer Joe	7.00
5	Sun	The Players	6.00
6	Mon	Midnight In Paris	2.00
6	Mon	Where Do We Go Now	7.30
7	Tue	Men In Black	12.30
7	Tue	Lay The Favourite	7.30
8	Wed	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	2.00
8	Wed	In Your Hands	7.30
9	Thu	Men In Black	2.00
9	Thu	Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter	7.30
10	Fri	The Five Year Engagement	7.30
11	Sat	The General	2.00
11	Sat	The Five Year Engagement	7.00
12	Sun	The Five Year Engagement	6.00
13	Mon	Pirates! In An Adventure..	2.00
13	Mon	King Of Devil's Island	7.30
14	Tue	The Five Year Engagement	12.30
14	Tue	The Last Projectionist	7.30
15	Wed	Ping Pong	2.00
15	Wed	Monsieur Lazhar	7.30
16	Thu	The Last Projectionist	2.00
16	Thu	Seeking A Friend For The End Of The World	7.30
17	Fri	The Amazing Spider-Man	7.30
18	Sat	The Amazing Spider-Man	2.00, 7.00
19	Sun	The Amazing Spider-Man	6.00
20	Mon	The Amazing Spider-Man	2.00
20	Mon	Annie Hall	7.30
21	Tue	Your Sisters Sister	12.30
21	Tue	Women On The 6th Floor	7.30
22	Wed	Women On The 6th Floor	2.00
22	Wed	Your Sisters Sister	7.30
23	Thu	Puss In Boots	2.00
23	Thu	Your Sisters Sister	7.30
24	Fri	Angel's Share	7.30
25	Sat	Ice Age 4	2.00
25	Sat	Total Recall	7.00
26	Sun	La Traviata	6.00
27	Mon	Polisse	7.30
28	Tue	Ice Age 4	12.30
28	Tue	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	7.30
29	Wed	Chariots of Fire	2.00, 7.30
30	Thu	Ice Age 4	2.00
30	Thu	Magic Mike	7.30
31	Fri	Magic Mike	7.30



AUGUST MATINEES

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

Snow White & The Huntsman

Wed 1 2.00,
Sat 4 2.00



We've been given two Snow White films in as many months and whilst *Mirror Mirror* happily indulged in its own silliness, and had Julia Roberts swanning around in goofy costumes; *Huntsman* on the other hand is an altogether darker, more Middle Earthy affair.

"Kristen Stewart plays Snow White, the daughter of a benevolent king who's bumped off by his maniacal man-hating wife, Wicked Queen Ravenna (Charlize Theron, who makes evil beautifully, her own). Fleeing to the Dark Forest, Snow White meets the Huntsman (Thor's Chris Hemsworth), a rough-diamond loner with a dark past and a terrible Scots accent. Pretty average so far. But then the dwarfs turn up, and the true horror begins.

Wait, that's not Bob Hoskins is it? And it can't possibly be... Ray Winstone? But it is – and Toby Jones, Ian McShane, Nick Frost, and Eddie Marsan, too. The cream of British acting talent has been digitally shrunken and saddled with haircuts that make them look like a midget Slade tribute band." (*Time Out*)

The film's saving grace then, is Theron, her malevolent, bitter and deliciously bitchy queen is a welcome antidote to the gallant yet dull nature of our devil-may-care heroes. Fantasy is still enjoying its renaissance thanks to the success of the Rings trilogy, but *Huntsman* isn't going to threaten Peter Jackson. (*JW*)

Director: Rupert Sanders
Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Charlize Theron, Kristen Stewart
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Universal Int'l

Rock of Ages

Thu 2 2.00

Director: Adam Shankman
Starring: Tom Cruise, Bryan Cranston, Malin Akerman
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 123 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Warner Brothers

"The irony may not be intentional. It really does go on for ages." (*Guardian*) Sherrie (Hough) and Drew (Boneta) both have their hearts set on rock fame, while Stacey Jaxx (Cruise) is tiring of his. All will rewrite their destiny in a dive bar under threat of bankruptcy and persecution from moral crusader and mayor's wife Patricia Whitmore (Zeta-Jones).

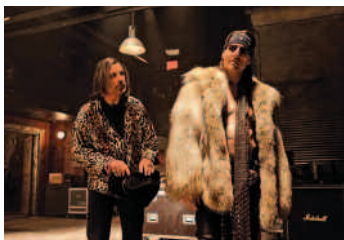
"It belts along at a pace, switching karaoke classics at whiplash speed, while earnest Hough and Boneta work charm into a flabby script and Baldwin and Giamatti (douche-bag manager) provide performance. And then Cruise arrives on-screen and posturing; never intentionally wearing a top. His dirty duet with Rolling Stone journo Malin Ackerman to 'I Wanna Know What Love Is' does send the raunch factor stratospheric!" (*Total Film*) yuk.

"A hugely disliked film of rock music is set in 1987 Los Angeles. Never has LA looked less enticing." (*Observer*)

"Like every one of its songs, it makes a lot of noise about nothing much and cockily straddles awfulness and greatness? It is enormously entertaining nonsense." (*Empire*)

"Disposable, overly long fun best enjoyed with BFFs (think he means knitting?) and a bevvy. Some will win, some will lose, some were born to sing the blues..." (*Total Film*)

You know what you're in for, so come and boogie. (In for a kid's matinee too!)



Midnight In Paris

Mon 6 2.00



Back by deserved demand on the big screen, this has been one of our box office hits of late 2011 and still standing.

Owen Wilson is perfect as Gil, Woody's typically neurotic alter-ego, almost in lip-sync with his early years endearing whine. Michael Sheen is fantastically cringy as Paul's smarmy, pseudo know-all. Allen let's the camera play with Cotillard's and McAdam's, beauty. But it is his clear love of Paris, through Darius Khondji's lens, that will take your heart. Luckily, this (Woody's ultimate fairy story) is warm, assured, and perhaps most reassuringly, funny.

The rest are fun caricatures Dali (Adrian Brody) Scott Fitzgerald (Tom Hiddleston) Corey Stoll's Hemingway always looking for a fight. Picasso, Bunuel, TS Eliott, Man Ray, Josephine Baker, Cole Porter, and even Carla Bruni turn up, and you'll love the music.

"It's all very recognisable but not tired, and the film's lightly-played time-travelling element gives it new boldness. It's fun and most welcome." (*Time Out*) "Look at me, I was a nightclub comedian. I didn't know how to make films." (47 titles later) "It's fun to live for months in a completely artificial world. Paris with all these beautiful, funny, inventive, quick-witted people." (Woody Allen Film Prog R4) The opening music over shots of a sunny rainy Paris, will last longer than any film.

Director: Woody Allen
Starring: Owen Wilson, Rachel McAdams, Marion Cotillard, Kathy Bates, Adrien Brody
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: Spain/USA 2011
By: Warner Brothers

Men In Black 3

Tue 7 12.30, **Thu 9** 2.00

Director: Barry Sonnenfeld
Starring: Will Smith, Tommy Lee Jones, Josh Brolin, Emma Thompson
Certificate: PG
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Sony Int'l

It's been a whole decade since the ET busting secret agents hung up their space guns and now here we are with a third chapter no one really wanted. The good news? It's a galactic step up from the lightweight sequel.

Beardy alien fugitive Boris the Animal (Flight of the Conchords' Jermaine Clement) has a bone to pick with ageing Agent K (T Lee Jones) for a missing arm, which seems to have left him a little bitter. Boris succeeds in erasing K from existence via time travel means, leaving partner Agent J (Smith) to jump back to 1969 to rescue the younger K (Brolin) and of course, save the world to boot.

The perfect casting of Brolin as K's younger self is MiB3's ace in the hole - mimicking Jones right down to the southern drawl, squint and deadpan delivery. Their chemistry gives a much needed jolt to genre trial & error such as this, and it pays off in spades.

"It's like a cross between Looney Tunes and The Naked Lunch, a hallucinogenic popcorn movie you can safely forget a moment later." (*Guardian*)

It's passable fluff, light on sci-fi, big on comedy, heavy on grotesque alien effects (all credit to monster make-up legend Rick Baker) and pretty damn silly in every respect. Great fun...? (*JW*)



The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

Wed 8 2.00



The fabulous cast constitutes a dream team of veteran thespians: Judi Dench is a widow emerging from her shell; Tom Wilkinson is a retired judge revisiting his youth; Penelope Wilton and Bill Nighy are navigating an old marriage; Celia Imrie and Ronald Pickup are randy old goats; and Maggie Smith, as a hip-op patient, offers a fabulous working class variant on her sarky, shrewd Downton Abbey gameplayer. Ol Parker's screenplay is based on Deborah Moggach's novel *These Foolish Things*.

"The film doesn't quite sink to the dewy eyed clichés of Orientalism derided in the book ('oh the poverty, oh the sunsets') But it still presents a superficial take on contemporary India: beaming kids play cricket, wise old men proffer advice and standard issue star-crossed lovers are saddled with corny lines." (*Guardian*)

"With so many characters to juggle several end up getting short shrift, and the lessons learned are banal in nature and schematic in execution. They are all on enjoyable form but none is really challenged." (*mixed tart crits*)

Anything with Dames Judi and Maggie and the glorious (yet to refuse heraldry) Mr Nighy, and all the other lovely faces, are well worth your time. Refreshing, funny and sad. La la to the critics. Bet they've all got Cliff's greatest hits. Back for the last time this 'summer'

Director: John Madden
Starring: Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Tom Wilkinson, Bill Nighy
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 124 mins
Origin: UK 2012
By: Twentieth Century Fox

The General

Sat 11 2.00

Directors: Buster Keaton, Clyde Bruckman
Starring: Buster Keaton
Certificate: U
Duration: 75 mins
Origin: USA 1927
By: Park Circus Films

This is a full length Silent, albeit only 75 minutes long.

It is an amazing feat of endurance and death-defying one-takes. It is startling for its daring. The film-making is secondary. There are no tricks.

What you see is what they really did, in real time with real bones – ready to be broken.

It is said to be Keaton's best, and "arguably the greatest screen comedy ever made".

Set against a "meticulously evoked Civil War background", Buster risks life and limb for love (but literally, for that one take). He chases after his beloved railway engine – with his beloved on board.

It has been hijacked by Northern spies up to no good for the Confederates.

The result is everything: witty, dramatic, visually stunning, full of subtlety, insight, and broken-leg-dangerous.

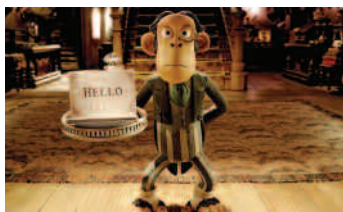
We are really pleased that we just managed to squeeze this into the August programme,

So drag children away from there vid-games, rip their ipods from their ears; draw blood if you have to, but bring them to see something that may change their lives....!!!

A long shot perhaps, but all the action and the stunts are real. No CGI, just people, props, a train and a camera. Cancel breathing, but don't miss.



Pirates! In An Adventure With Scientists **Mon 13** 2.00



It's Ham Nite from everybody's favourite animation studios, Aardman. A brilliant, clever, hilarious tale of swashbuckling adventure.

Hugh Grant is perfectly nuanced as the voice of the Pirate Captain whose ambition lies in beating his bitter rivals to the Pirate of the Year Award. When he and his hapless crew (an all-star barnacle of silly sea dogs: Martin Freeman, Brendan Gleeson, Russell Tovey, and Ashley Jensen) encounter HMS Beagle and Charles Darwin on the high seas, Darwin notices something rather special about (heavy-boned) Polly, the Captain's parrot, leading the crew on a frantic journey to Victorian London...

Technically brilliant and beautifully & faultlessly observed from Peter Lord, David Sproxton and Co (Wallace & Gromit, Chicken Run etc).

"I think you could treble the IQ of any child, or indeed adult, by putting them in front of an Aardman product like this." (*Guardian*)

"Every scene has been embellished with sight gags, funny signs and dizzying amounts of background detail, all enhanced, not obscured, by judicious use of 3D (glorious 2D at The Rex). It would take multiple viewings to drink it all in, but *The Pirates!* more than justifies it." (*Telegraph*) (*SM*) Taking a mere five years to make, it's the funniest, cleverest, wittiest and most heartwarming film you'll see in the next five. Sheer (ham-nite) joy.

Directors: Peter Lord, Jeff Newitt
Voices: Hugh Grant, Salma Hayek, Brendan Gleeson, Lenny Henry
Certificate: U
Duration: 88 mins
Origin: UK 2012
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

The Five Year Engagement **Tue 14** 12.30

Director: Nicholas Stoller
Starring: Rhys Ifans, Jason Segel, Emily Blunt
Certificate: 15
Duration: 124 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

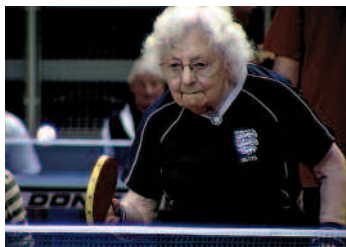
One year after meeting, Tom (Segal) proposes to his girlfriend, Violet (Emily Blunt) but unexpected events keep tripping them up as their wedding is constantly thwarted. While his far-less-organised friend Alex (Chris Pratt) and Violet's ditsy sister Suzie (Alison Brie) meet, get married and have kids before the lovers have even sent out their 'save the date' cards. Their easy chemistry is undeniable, they're real-life friends and it shows on-screen. When their relationship is threatened by an interloper in the shape of Rhys Ifans' slimy Professor Childs, you're genuinely anxious that they may not end up together after all. "Which may not be Apatow funny, but it does feel refreshingly real." (*Total Film*) What is Apatow funny? Ahh yes Knocked Up. So, what is Apatow funny?

"The engagement is not the only thing that drags here. The set-piece gags, which include a heart-to-heart between Violet and her sister in the voices of Sesame Street characters, are laboured, and the supporting cast, from Tom's lewd best friend Alex to Violet's one-joke-apiece colleagues (Mindy Kaling, Randall Park, Kevin Hart), might have been copied and pasted from any other second-rate romcom." (*Telegraph*) "What it lacks in belly laughs it makes up for in heart and soul, successfully exploring the genuine greys of a relationship instead of painting them black and white." (*Tot Film*) You choose.



Ping Pong

Wed 15 2.00



The film, following a handful of octogenarian competitors as they head to China for the Over-80s World Table Tennis Championships, recounts some amazing stories. Lisa, an 85-year-old American, was born in Vienna, fought the Nazis with the French Underground and won the Croix de Guerre, to go with her shelf-loads of tournament medals. She's a mere stripling compared with Dorothy, an object of adoration still playing at 101. Perhaps toughest of all is Terry from Stockport, an 82-year-old with ruined lungs and prostate cancer yet absolutely determined to compete in China.

"Inspirational" hardly covers it. Featuring remarkable men and women whom age cannot wither. They are, in the main, people who have been vigorous sportsmen and sportswomen all their lives, but one woman from Germany only took the sport up in her 80s after ill health and a stroke, and it appears to have re-energised her. Interestingly, the film shows that the over-80s table-tennis scene is much the same as any other sporting event: there is rivalry, egomania and even dirty tricks, like pinching someone else's bat.

"Director Hugh Hartford does not patronise his stars, although perhaps there is something too gently celebratory and obviously feelgood about the film. These dynamic table-tennis stars put the rest of us to shame." (*Guardian*) Bring the kids, and don't miss.

Director: Hugh Hartford
Certificate: PG
Duration: 76 mins
Origin: UK 2012
By: Brit Doc Films

The Last Projectionist

Thu 16 2.00

Director: Thomas Lawes
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 81 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Electric Flix

The history of the Electric Cinema in Birmingham becomes the story of 100 years of film-going habits in the UK, courtesy of a sentimental, self-promoting yet revealing documentary from Electric owner Tom Lawes. Opened in 1909, it started with silents, moved to talkies, and in its time has been news theatre, bijou art-house and a 1970s soft-porn palace.

Elderly gents, meanwhile, discuss the transition from 35mm to digital projection. A timely, and ever-so-slightly heartbreaking documentary about the changing face of cinema in the UK, interweaving the reminiscences of stalwart projectionists (fast becoming an extinct species) with the history of Birmingham's Electric cinema, which

"This film occasionally looks like a sentimental in-house video, but it's an entertaining trip down cinema's memory lane...

Affectionate and informative, it raises important questions about the role of the multiplex, the inevitable rise of digital, and the life-affirming persistence of independent cinemas offering more than the supermarket experience. Bingo!" (*Guardian*)

Like listening to any old men whining about anything, be it railways or warm beer, this starring bunch is no better, and I'm one of them. Interspersed with tales of 35mm are many in-my-day reminiscences. Essentially an enthusiasts film, but worth seeing, if only for the Rex. If it's not on the cutting room floor, it should be in there somewhere.





Director: Marc Webb
Starring: Andrew Garfield, Rhys Ifans
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 136 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: Sony Int'l



The Amazing Spider-Man

Sat 18 2.00, Mon 20 2.00

You can count the years since Sam Raimi's much loved Spidey trilogy came to a neat close on one hand, yet Hollywood has already called for the dreaded system reboot.

And so the webslinger's origins are again told as refreshingly funny, awkward, nerd outsider Peter Parker (Andrew Garfield) has to balance his homework, love life and, after that radioactive spider bite; super-hero duties.

Director Marc Webb (no relation) had a cracking debut with of (500) Days of Summer and he continues the theme of convincing young love that a thousand Twilights could never hope to capture. "Drawn to the lost pieces of his own jigsaw, Parker tracks down his father's former partner Dr Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans, minus one arm but with his ego deliciously intact) and his risky cross-species experimentation. Urban chaos ensues." (*Telegraph*)

The perfect casting of Garfield (who sent a photo when he was eight in a spiderman outfit, to the casting director) and Emma Stone as the eager love interest helps rise above the old web shooters, alongside a wonderfully sinister Ifans who steals the screen (except when he's that scaly green monster).

Webb's version avoids stepping on Raimi's toes whilst remaining ever faithful to the fans and source material. Happily, this Spider-Man contains enough maturity and emotional clout to put arachnophobes at ease. (*Jack Whiting*)



Director: Lynn Shelton
Starring: Emily Blunt, Rosemarie DeWitt, Mark Duplass
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2012
By: StudioCanal



Your Sister's Sister

Tue 21 12.30

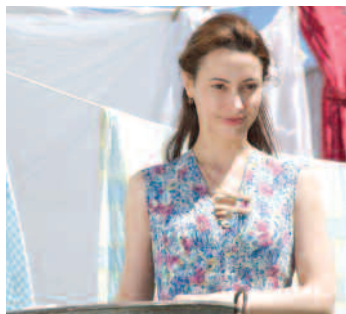
An interesting relationship triangle is presented in this low-key drama, with witty yet emotionally raw detail.

Director Lynn Shelton probes modern relationships, Emily Blunt is Iris, lending her father's log cabin to aid the recovery of her best friend Jack (Mark Duplass) who has been drinking hard since the death of his brother (Iris's ex-boyfriend). Adding to the equation, at the cabin, he finds Iris's half-sister Hannah (Rosemarie DeWitt) already there and not wearing much. After a night of tequila and talk, one thing leads to another... The rude awakening in the morning is the unexpected arrival of Iris. Their secret night together ticks away like a time bomb under the kitchen table. A three-hander ensues, each character guarding, their secrets. "The three leads handle the semi-improvised script with panache, and Blunt and DeWitt really convince as sisters driven by love and latent rivalry." (*Independent*)

"As for Blunt and DeWitt, let's start at 'dynamite'. These two play sisters as if they've lived together for years. Blunt radiates warmth and humour, DeWitt shows the sharp edges Hannah keeps hidden. A trio of superb performances guide a plot that pivots on secrets and lies before they fester. The film works its way into your head until you can't stop thinking about it." (*Rolling Stone*) Improvisation leads to inevitable mumbling, but worth its 90 minutes.

Women On The 6th Floor

Wed 22 2.00



Set in 1960s Paris, Jean-Louis is the uptight owner of a building, which houses a bevy of Spanish maids on the sixth floor. To people like Jean-Louis, these women are only seen as hired help, nothing more. However, after the new recruit Mara gets a job in Jean-Louis's household, he starts to see these women as human beings and even more, as exotic creatures bursting with pious faith, fiery passion, and even perhaps, eventually as friends?

The Spanish immigrants who fled Franco's regime, came to France and found work as maids in the '60s, managed to take solace in each other's company and mutual complaining. Most of their employers simply considered them as cheap foreign labour (how things have changed?)

"Patronising stereotypes and ungallant humour undermine the insights into bourgeois life. Enjoyably satirical and occasionally insightful, it's betrayed by some lazy stereotyping." (*Empire*) "An amiable film, a breezily executed tale, even if one suspects that, anywhere but in a French film, a middle aged man's soupy romancing of the family maid might be less gratefully received..." (*S Telegraph: Seven*) Sounds perfect. If you loved 'Gardener and 'Margueritte', you'll enjoy this. Come.

Director: Philippe Guay
Starring: Fabrice Luchini, Sandrine Kiberlain, Natalie Verbeke, Carmen Maura
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: France 2010
By: Cinefile

Puss In Boots

Thu 23 2.00

Director: Chris Miller
Starring: Antonio Banderas, Zach Galifianakis, Salma Hayek
Certificate: U
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures

No Shrek or Donkey here, but loved earlier in the year. This spin-off starring the likeable swashbuckling cat (voiced by Antonio Banderas), follows his origins through Mexico and beyond in a kid-friendly, Rango meets Zorro yarn.

Puss in Boots is on the hunt for a pouch of magic beans, with help of standard-issue Girl Power sidekick, Kitty Softpaws (Salma Hayek), and his childhood friend Humpty Dumpty (Zach Galifianakis). These beans are currently in the possession of Jack and Jill, whom for no immediate reason are a pair of fat, ugly, middle-aged outlaws!

"What unfolds is a mad dash through spectacularly mounted set-pieces, taking in vogue-ishy cute feline hilarity, oater pastiche, and the comedy brilliance of an egg with an identity crisis." (*Little White Lies*)

The narrative moves at a pleasant pace, despite what is essentially a ninety minute string of sketches. Jokes are light and inoffensive and DreamWorks have sharpened their animation to a point that makes you want to reach into the film and strangle the cat!

Whereas Puss in Boots lacks the astute pop-culture beatings of its mostly lovable parent franchise, it does its honest best to charm and delight, maybe relying on one too many feline jokes in the process. Not for dog lovers (*JW*)



Ice Age 4

Sat 25 2.00, Tue 28 12.30,
Thu 30 2.00



Manny, Diego and Sid have come a long way. Over 10 years, the mammoth/tiger/sloth trio have saved a baby, survived a flood and fought off dinosaurs. Leaving the stripped-back loony toons of the first movie behind, the gang's latest adventure piles on more characters, action, animal pirates, giant whales, sea monsters and an army of Ewok chipmunks.

The story picks up roughly where Ice Age 3 left off. Manny is still overanxious, trying to keep teenage daughter Peaches from mixing with the wrong type of mammoth. Peaches is desperate to impress the cool kids (voiced by Drake and Nicki Minaj) but blind to the affections of her nervous mole friend Louis.

Sid has been lumbered with granny-sitting his sassy nan, and Diego is still trying to avoid everyone. Separated from their families by a sudden earthquake, caused, of course, by Scrut sticking his nut where it doesn't belong, the old gang are on their own again, trying to get home.

The new cast might feel a bit out of place in the old-fashioned Ice Age world, but silent star Scrut is still there to steal the show (yet again).

Directors: Steve Martino, Mike Thurmeier
Voices: Ray Romano, Denis Leary, Jennifer Lopez, Wanda Sykes

Certificate: U

Duration: 93 mins

Origin: USA 2012

By: Twentieth Century Fox

Chariots Of Fire

Wed 29 2.00

Director: Hugh Hudson
Starring: Hugh Hudson. Starring: Ben Cross, Ian Charleson, Nigel Havers, Nicholas Farrell

Certificate: PG

Duration: 124 mins

Origin: UK 2012

By: Twentieth Century Fox

Our nod to the Olympics, a little late, but never mind. My vote was for 'Munich' but was shouted down.

Based on a true story, the film charts the drives of and challenges for two runners, the devout Scottish missionary, Eric Liddell, and the Jewish Cambridge student, Harold Abrahams, at the 1924 Olympics.

"Smartened up and refurbished, this Oscar winner looks better than it did 31 years ago. We notice now Hugh Hudson's convincing direction." (*Standard*) Unfortunately, forever spoiled by fat Colin Welland screeching hysterically "The British are coming" at the 1982 Oscars. Such a ridiculous, empty and embarrassing boast. The Brits did win all the sweets with 'Garndi' the next year, then had to wait until 1990 for Daniel Day-Lewis's (My) Left Foot. Followed by a smattering of supports until The English Patient in 1997 took the two big ones. So no, big Colin, the British didn't come, and judging by the state of today's English handheld, digital, low-life, gritty, estate, gangster tripe, the Brits are going nowhere. (The King's Speech was American money, as was Ghandi) "Some films look better with time and this is definitely one of them, despite that overbearing Vangelis score" (*Standard*) I quite liked the music, that and Nigel Havers are the best parts of the film.



THE ODYSSEY & SIGNS OF THE GOOD TIMES...

Blurred, but you can read the signs.
Note the litter point is hidden behind the exit door.
Nobody has empty wrappers going in...!



With the Odyssey's investors and an Angel bank loan in place, work has already begun on vital contracts and tendering stages. With a big thanks to those friendly architects who came forward, we have gone as far as we can with the dream of doing it all ourselves. Hence, we have now appointed Robert Martell & Partners to form our project management team and appoint a main contractor to begin the first phase. This first phase will be to secure the fabric and structure of the building, from the roof, foundations and walls, to the

installation of essential services: electricity, water and drainage etc. Post tendering and with agreements in place, you will start to see real repair and restoration work beginning in the Autumn. It has been a long two long years at the hands of dithering banks. The Odyssey dream is now on its way, thanks to the people of St Albans and a handful of committed individuals. If there was an Olympic event for bank lending (their other shenanigans aside) it would be catching the javelin in your teeth, strapped to a missile on the roof of a block of flats.

Inside the loft with clear gangways and a no nonsense sign.





Darren & Kalvin take in the magnificent St Albans skyline from the roof



SOULFISH ODYSSEY FUNDRAISER:
The Alban Arena, Fri 14th Sept 8pm
(and getting closer – so hurry)
Tickets: £15
Box office 01727 844488
www.alban-arena.co.uk