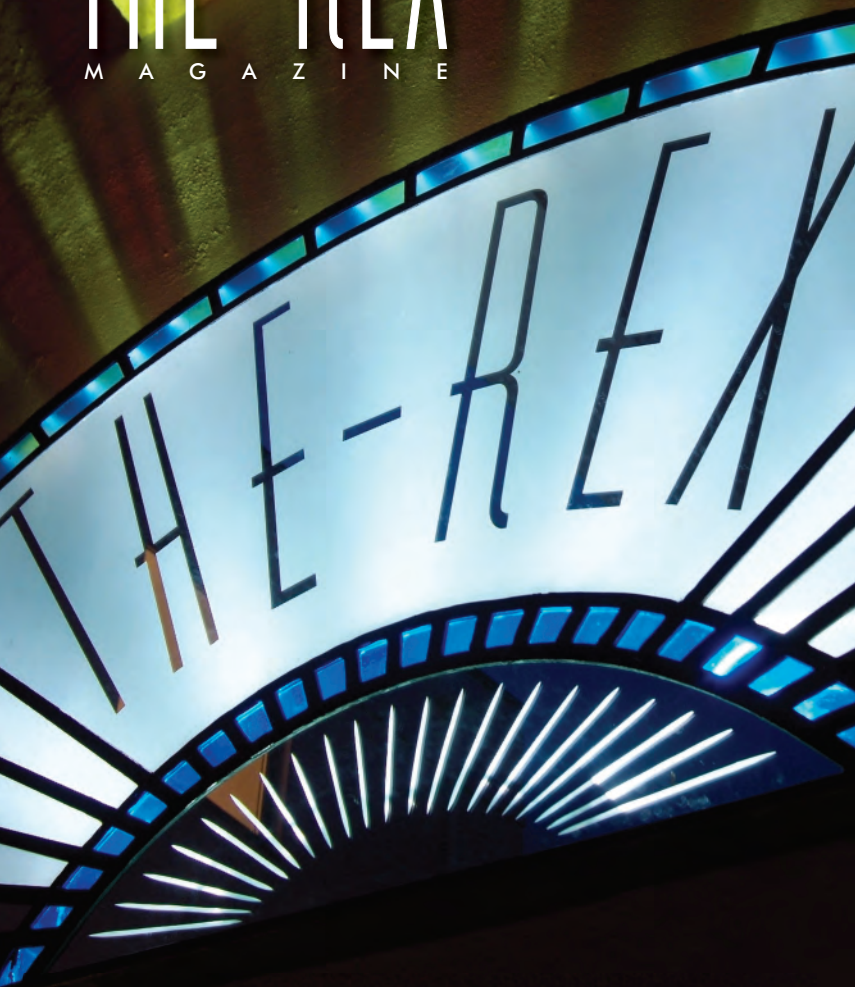


THE REX

M A G A Z I N E



5TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
DECEMBER...

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

DECEMBER 2009 Issue 57
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Gallery	4-7
December Evenings	9
Coming Soon	22
December Films at a glance	22
December Matinees	25
Rants and Pants	38-43

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The Rex

High Street (Three Close Lane)

Berkhamsted HP4 2FG

www.therexberkhamsted.com



Five years... Sometimes feels like five minutes at others 50 years. Either way we're still here and on the whole, if not the best, it has been the latest best five years in all of our lives.

Besides my children and many memorable days, it is hard to remember a better five constant years. Thank you for coming and staying. Here's to the next 55. A very warm and happy Christmas to you from all of us at the Rex.

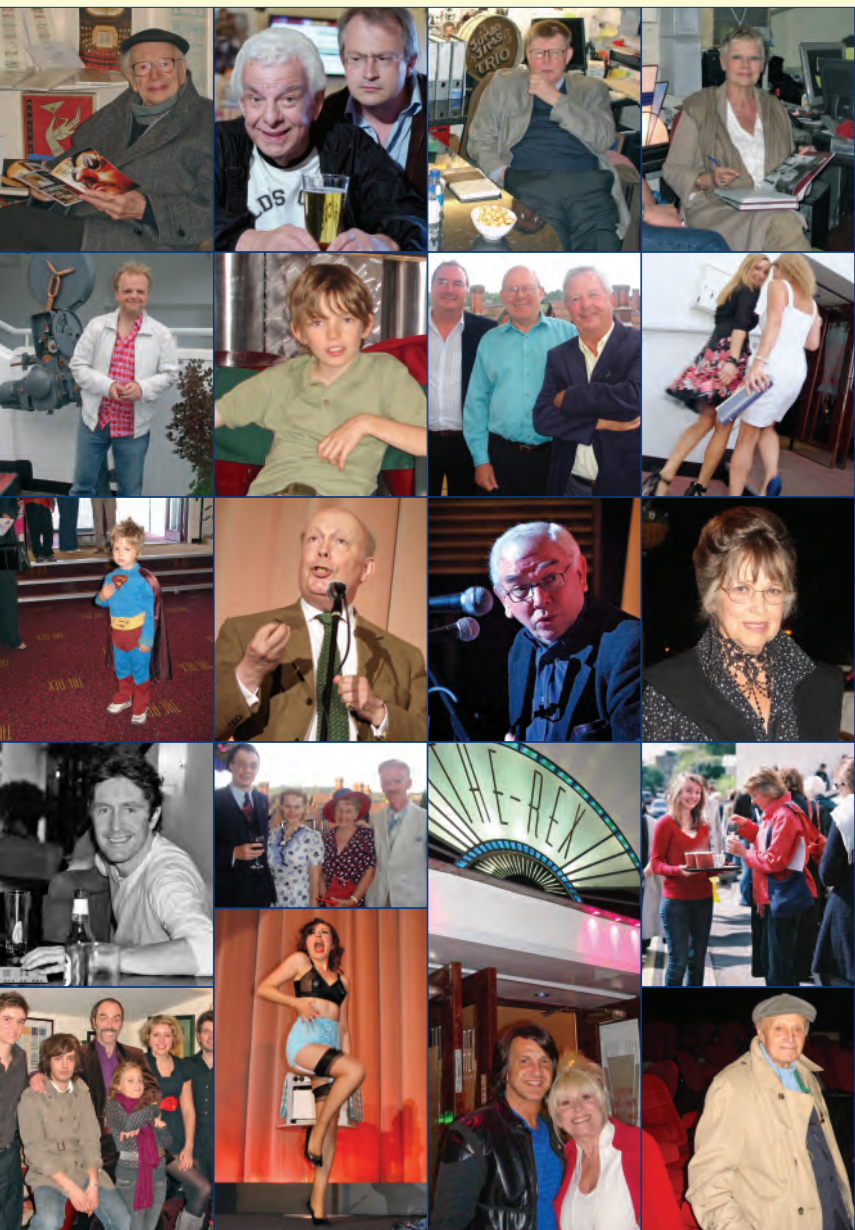
Proscaenium bare, through a building site to glorious brothel-red, gold and black... giving way to a stolen foyer; brightly coloured ceilings, candy and stools; a fat swimmer and someone knitting... All in five years!!!





A FEW OF THE MANY FACES OVER FIVE YEARS... HERE ARE THEIR NAMES, JUMBLED FOR YOU TO WORK OUT:

Judie Dench, Barbara Windsor, Paul McGann, Sex and The City girls, Terence Davies, Christiane Kubrick, Ally with tea, Jack Cardiff, Humphrey Lyttelton, Barry Cryer, Graeme Garden, Tim Brooke-Taylor, Neil Brand, Alan Bennett, Toby Jones, Superman, Robin Ince, Bill Milner, Burlesque, James Nesbitt, Quartet dressed 40's, Julian Fellowes.





D E C E M B E R E V E N I N G S

The Fantastic Mr Fox

Tue 1 7.30



Back in December by huge demand.

Based on Roald Dahl's seminal children's mischief, directed by perennial hipster Wes Anderson (The Darjeeling Limited), and co-written by Noah Baumbach, it tells the story of the Fox family's fight for survival.

After narrowly avoiding an ambush by the farmers from whom Mr. Fox (the fantastic Mr Clooney) steals his meals, he must find a way to get his family and friends out from the foxhole. Taking full responsibility, he happens upon the idea of digging under the farmhouses...

Voiced by an all star, if very American, cast including Meryl Streep, Bill Murray, Willem Dafoe and Adrian Brody, the film is terrific. Beautifully animated in painstaking stop-frame miniature animation, the piece is a joy to behold – Anderson reportedly spent some considerable time in Great Missenden ensuring that Dahl's Chiltern home village was strongly represented in the film. So watch out for familiar street corners.

"In a world where kids' movies are generally presented in hi-tech 3D digital wonderment, Anderson defiantly presents his one in old-school stop-motion animation, making it look like something by Oliver Postgate or Jan Svankmajer... smart and well-written" (*Guardian*) Fantastic indeed. It is entirely hand made, so it will be for children, spoilt by Pixar, to decide. Don't miss. (research Simon Messenger)

Director: Wes Anderson
Starring: Bill Murray, George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Willem Dafoe
Certificate: PG
Duration: 87 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Creation

Wed 2 7.30

Director: Jon Amiel
Starring: Paul Bettany, Jeremy Northam, Jennifer Connelly, Toby Jones
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd

Released in this, the two hundredth anniversary year of Charles Darwin's birth, Jon Amiel's "Creation" is a masterful biopic of the life of the acclaimed naturalist.

Darwin (Paul Bettany) has returned from his (in)famous Beagle voyage, and is settling down to married life with his wife Emma (Bettany's real life wife, Jennifer Connelly), to work on his seminal "On The Origin Of The Species".

Devastated by a family tragedy and burdened by his growing disenchantment with his Christian faith, Bettany paints a sympathetic, yet realistic portrait of Darwin – a man torn between love for his devoutly religious wife, and his own scientific curiosity.

"...Paul Bettany and Jennifer Connelly bring an intimacy and chemistry to the screen that is effortlessly powerful... a beautiful film, a tonic to the hysteria of the far side of the Creationist sect and the militant atheists." (*Times*)

Notably, at the time of us going to press, the film has been unable to find a US distributor. This, a country that opened last month's "Antichrist" across a number of screens... Give us depravity, despair and casual mutilation any time over Evolution. "It would be a great shame if those with religious convictions spurned the film out of hand as they will find it even-handed and wise." (Hollywood Reporter) No they won't. (research: Simon Messenger)



An Education

Thu 3 7.30



“This is a charming, funny, provocative coming-of-age movie reflecting a grey post-war Britain on the uncertain brink of a cultural revolution.” (synops)

In the hands of Danish director Lone Scherfig, it is a lively Nick Hornby-scripted adaptation of Lynn Barber's memoir concerning her suburban coming-of-age, where that one big 'crush' engulfs that most awkward rite of passage. The Sixties are just beginning. The 'swinging' mid-decade hasn't begun, but there are hints Barber's schoolgirl alter ego, Jenny (CMulligan, actually 24, so its okay) falls for the glamorous older charmer, who offers her clubs, champagne, drives in the country and sex.

It is well done. The period is spot-on.

So, if nothing else, come for a drive in the country.

Director: Lone Scherfig
Starring: Peter Sarsgard, Emma Thompson, Alfred Molina, Carey Mulligan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: E1 Films

Jennifer's Body

Fri 4 7.30

Director: Karyn Kusama
Starring: Megan Fox, Amanda Seyfried, Johnny Simmons, J.K. Simmons
Certificate: 15
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

‘Hell is a teenage girl’ Needy (Seyfried) the shy and aptly named best friend of Jennifer (Fox) a beautiful high school tease who turns into a vampiric demon.

The pair live in Devil's Claw where Jennifer rules the roost until she flirts with a visiting rock band who calmly sacrifice her to the devil. To get the tone of it, before taking her, the band leader says: 'You don't know how hard it is for an indie band to make it!' This is no ordinary splatter movie, written by Diablo Cody and directed by Karyn Kusama.

They just can't make up their minds if it's about female empowerment or a straight slasher. Probably both, but it doesn't work as either. Which is probably in its favour.

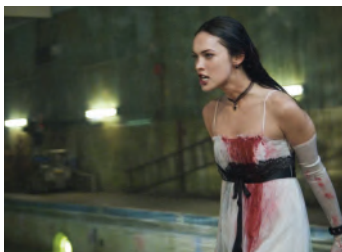
“After the whipping it took in the US, it's high time for a backlash against the backlash. Quirky, fun with a twist and the performances aren't bad either”

(Playlist)

“Writer Diablo Cody's follow up to Juno won't impress horror fans at all, but admirers of her over-hip dialogue and general feel for modern teen life won't be disappointed. Fox is surprisingly good as a hormonal high-school succubus on the rampage. It's silly but not dumb”

(Guardian)

I knew a Jennifer's body once, haven't we all...?



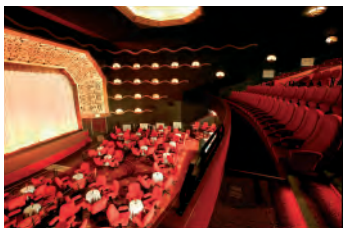
Rex Fifth Anniversary Celebration

Sat 5 7.00 for 7.30



Five years... Sometimes feels like five minutes at others 50 years.

Either way we're still here and on the whole, if not the best, it has been the latest best five years in all of our lives. Besides my children and many memorable days, it is hard to remember a better five constant years. If you have been, thank you for coming and staying. The entertainment tonight will be loose, unmemorable and almost entertaining. Things will run in order or not. There will be films (including a gorgeous premiere Short, with its short gorgeous writer/director) jokes and music but no dancing and nothing loud. So the word 'party' is a lie. There could be a mind reader, but he's not certain. So come and enjoy what we do best: low-key light entertainment you can nod-off to, with occasional sub-titles.



The Godfather

Sun 6 6.00

Director:	Francis Coppola
Starring:	Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan
Certificate:	18
Duration:	175 mins
Origin:	USA 1972
By:	Paramount International Pictures

This is not a gangster movie. It is one of the greatest stories of family ever told. Perhaps, the most complete story ever made into film. "Fredo, you're my brother and I love you, but never take sides against the family again" is the chilliest reminder, among even the warmest moments of dangerous filial affection. This is no ordinary family? On every level, it is a story exquisitely told in the tiniest detail. Apart from keeping up with names and faces, the audience is never left behind from the opening sequence through the evolution of truly believable characters, to the very bitter end.

It silhouettes that period of the twentieth century, just after the war and into the early 1950's when the Don tried to resist the new drugs trade but would be thwarted by progress and ambitious rivalry, soon to be enemies.

As Don Corleone, Brando is truly majestic in this role-of-all-roles to mark one of Hollywood's greatest comebacks. Curiously, Last Tango in Paris was made in the same year. As for Pacino, it was not only a star-making performance, he carries every unanticipated step of Michael's education into the 'family business' with such natural presence and extraordinary ease, we can see and feel every second of his reluctant coming-of-age. Then: the music... Perfect.



Welcome

Mon 7 7.30



Philippe Loiret's film was shot in Calais, where young Kurd, Bilal (Firat Ayverdi) joins the dishevelled mass of bundled, shivering immigrants desperate to reach England. He is trying to reach his girlfriend in London, where she is about to be married off by her father. After being caught on a lorry, he vows to swim the Channel. So he starts his gruelling training at the local baths. The instructor (Lindon), himself already going through a painful divorce, begins to sympathise with the boy and endangers himself to help him. Loiret's painting of the Calais scene is devastatingly real. The two actors play with a quiet skill which emphasises each's predicament.

A friendship transcending age and cultural differences grows between them. The result is a sad tale which tries hard to tell the truth about a situation of which no one should be proud. However, a wonderfully affirming tale is drawn of adversity, redemption, and striving for goals that seem just out of reach. It is a small film not to be missed if only for the faces and the way they never waver into 'acting'. The French seem to do this better than most. So don't miss.

Director: Philippe Loiret
Starring: Audrey Dana, Vincent Lindon, Firat Ayverdi
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: France 2009
By: Cinefile

Amelia

Tue 8 7.30

Director: Mira Nair
Starring: Hilary Swank, Ewan McGregor, Richard Gere, Christopher Eccleston
Certificate: PG
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Hilary Swank stars in this biopic of legendary pilot Amelia Earhart, famed for being the first aviatrix to complete a solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean.

A series of vignettes chronicling Earhart's early life, her interest in aviation, her rocky marriage to publishing tycoon George Putnam (Richard Gere) and subsequent affair with Gene Vidal (Ewan McGregor) lead us to her fateful, perilous round-the-world flight attempt of 1937... Swank bears a startling resemblance to Earhart, and the production of the film visually impressive, but does it have any substance?

"...If you're the kind of person who deplores the modern vogue for debunking historical figures, and who welcomes the opportunity to indulge in heroic feats and lush landscapes similar to those found in *Out Of Africa* or *The English Patient*, then this is the film for you. Everyone else though will likely start nodding off during yet another sleepy performance from Richard Gere..." (*Telegraph*)

"...a handsome, old-fashioned biopic... it tries to cover all the bases – adventurer, lover, celebrity, feminist icon – and misses every one... This film has so much inspiring uplift, it leaves you airsick" (*Times*)

In what is perhaps the ultimate tribute to Earhart, this film will also disappear without trace (or crash and burn?). The crits didn't like it, so probably worth seeing. Come fly in old planes. (*research Simon Messenger*)



Bright Star

Wed 9 7.30, Thu 10 7.30

“Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art...”

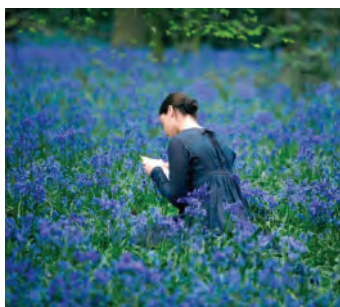
Jane Campion's latest, adapted from Andrew Motion's 1997 biography, chronicles the three year romance between poet John Keats (Ben Whishaw) and Fanny Brawne (Abbie Cornish).

Initially girl-next-door seamstress Brawne is unimpressed with the waif-like Keats's work, and with literature in general, instead preferring to concentrate on her chosen art; but as the months go by, their relationship blossoms despite Keat's financial and physical failings; this impassioned, and ultimately tragic, romance inspired some of the greatest poetry of all time.

“It feels special without being at all precious. Eloquent, too, but not self-consciously lyrical or florid... [Cornish is] terrific here at the centre and as the heartbeat of the film. She avoids both girlishness and the exaggerated mannerisms to which costume-drama performers often resort.” (*Telegraph*)
 “[Campion's] film proceeds at a quiet, measured tempo and with a lucid calm. Another type of film would have supercharged its narrative moments with surging music and the engine-roar of dramatic acceleration, but Campion simply lets each scene unspool evenly... an ecstasy of loss.” (*Guardian*)
 Unmissable. (*Simon Messenger*)



Director: Jane Campion
Starring: Kerry Fox, Paul Schneider, Abbie Cornish, Ben Whishaw
Certificate: PG
Duration: 119 mins
Origin: Australia, France, UK 2009
By: Warner Brothers



The Men Who Stare At Goats

Fri 11 7.30, Sat 12 7.00, Mon 14 7.30



Director: Grant Heslov
Starring: Kevin Spacey, George Clooney, Ewan McGregor, Jeff Bridges
Certificate: 15
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Momentum Pictures



It's often questionable how many "true stories" are in fact based on real events; however it's fairly easy to believe this actually happened given the previous US administration...

"The Men Who Stare At Goats" stars Ewan McGregor as Bob Wilson, a frustrated journalist covering the present Iraq conflict. He happens upon Lyn Cassady (George Clooney), who reveals he once formed part of a small, dedicated band of soldiers – "Jedi warriors" – trained in para-psychological warfare, who honed their mental abilities on a quest for invisibility, intuition, and the ability to walk through walls. Kidnapped by a criminal gang, they're going to need all the help they can get; can Lyn deliver the goods?

"There's plenty to enjoy in the film's outré set-pieces, insouciant tone and playful performances... feels less like a transcendental breakthrough than a bit of conjuring misdirection. Fun trick, though." (*Time Out*)

"With Clooney, Bridges, McGregor and Spacey on board, it's just a big cast standing professionally in place with absolutely no controlling intelligence to guide them: structurally, it's all over the parish... Either someone missed the memo about other people's LSD trips being a colossal drag, or else they fed it to a goat." (*Telegraph*)

Come for the moustaches. (*Simon Messenger*)

5th Anniversary preview of major 2010 release Sun 13 6.00

Last year City Screen got us *Slumdog Millionaire*, five weeks before release. Such a gem may not happen again? The year before, the strange Dylan montage *I'm Not There*. Earlier we had *Goodnight and Good Luck* and *Little Miss Sunshine* (I think). As we go to press we still don't know what this year's will be. This is how it works. On our behalf, City Screen will take our requests for next year's films to see what they can get from willing distributors. Pathe have been good to us (because of *Motorcycle Diaries*) but they've been taken over by Warner. Not that that's bad... but it's not as good. So whatever we show might be a gem or not, but the guarantee will be a title talked about well into next year and long before release. The beauty is we're getting it for one anniversary showing before anybody else even knows how to talk about it...!

So come for that and take the same chance as us.



Taking Woodstock Tue 15 7.30

Director:	Ang Lee
Starring:	Imelda Staunton, Eugene Levy, Henry Goodman, Demetri Martin
Certificate:	15
Duration:	120 mins
Origin:	USA 2009
By:	Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Ang Lee performs a right-on, right turn after “*Brokeback Mountain*” and “*Lust, Caution*” in helming this undemanding, sentimental tale of the legendary musical festival’s creation.

Comedian Demetri Martin plays Eliot Tiber, a young Jewish lad forced to work in his parents’ (Imelda Staunton and Henry Goodman) Catskills motel in upstate New York. Upon hearing that a local music festival is facing opposition against its planned location, Tiber volunteers the motel as a base for the festival’s organisers, inadvertently setting up a generation defining event... “A loving recreation of a time that holds a special place in the hearts of millions of people all across the world. But, pitched at the hypothetical half-way point between *The Graduate* and *Almost Famous*, it’s almost too sweet for its own good, tasteful rather than transcendental, imbued with a nostalgia that Lee doesn’t convince us he truly feels.” (*Telegraph*) “...bland, faintly pointless slice of sentimentality... Not exactly a Hendrix moment for Lee.” (*Guardian*) Lee has brightened up with this, a comic tale of the men behind the world’s first big gig. “After some heavy duty movies, I wanted happiness, innocence... It felt right.” (*Ang Lee*) If nothing else, come for “*Everything Is Illuminated*” director Liev Schreiber’s bone dry performance as a veteran transvestite! (*research Simon Messenger*)



White Christmas

Wed 16 7.30



This stunning restoration from Park Circus is a reminder that amid the (false) gloom that digital is taking over projection boxes, there's a company restoring old film stock into brand new prints.

White Christmas is a treasure trove of Irving Berlin classics: 'Count Your Blessings', 'Sisters', 'Blue Skies', and the evergreen 'White Christmas'. Two song-and-dance men (Crosby and Kaye) team up after the war to become one of the hottest acts in show business. One winter, they join forces with a sister act (Gorgeous George's aunt, Rosemary Clooney... and the stunning Vera Ellen) and travel to Vermont for Christmas. The real 'adventure' starts when the 'boys' discover the run-down Inn belongs to their old army general. The result is the stuff of American dreams. Shmaltzy, and unashamedly sentimental, it is a perennial Christmas favourite with a longevity unlikely to fade. The 1950s was America's boom decade. It must have been a fabulous time to live there: Doris Day, the cars, the romance, the Technicolor, and Sinatra at his best... and every home (in the movies) had a fridge while we were still rationing carrots, finishing Sunday's hotpot on Tuesday and living in black, grey and scrubbed necks... but with some clear blue childhood skies.

Director: Michael Curtiz
Starring: Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, Vera Ellen
Certificate: U
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: USA 1954
By: Park Circus Films

Harry Brown

Thu 17 7.30

Director: Daniel Barber
Starring: Emily Mortimer, Michael Caine
Certificate: 18
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Lionsgate Films UK

It follows Harry Brown (Michael Caine) on a revenge trip through a chaotic world where drugs are the currency and the guns, knives and beatings run the streets.

A modest law-abiding citizen, He is a retired marine and a widower who lives alone on a depressed housing estate. His only company is his old mate Leonard (David Bradley). When Leonard is beaten to death, Harry is compelled to dispense his own brand of justice. As he bids to clean up the sink estate, he is noticed by the police, led by sickly sweet investigating officer DCI Frampton (Emily Mortimer).

"Ex-marine Caine blows the bloody hoodies away in what hopes to be 'Broken Britain's' answer to Gran Torino or worse Death Wish. Nasty" (*Guardian Guide*)

"If you want to scare a British moviegoer, you don't make films about zombies – you cast a hoodie" (*Guardian*)

We first see the bad guys as an amorphous mob of hooded creatures smoking crack in a badly lit tunnel. The making of this clearly moved Caine to despair at the total horror of the place he knew well as a kids in the early fifties. The main nasty hoodie, Jamie, just Jamie, came through that horror background. Good camera work and worthy performances don't make it any less depressing.



Christmas Carol

Fri 18 7.30, **Sat 19** 7.00, **Sun 20** 6.00

From Robert Zemeckis' team behind "Polar Express", a Rex Christmas favourite, comes an impressive and slightly dark, retelling of the famed Victorian morality tale.

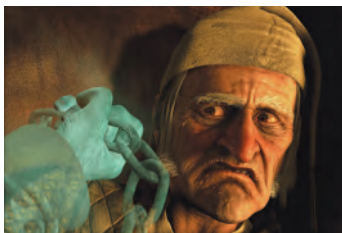
This fantastically rendered version of classic Dickens features Jim Carey, who undergoes digital work to his already rubber face, as the bitter miser Ebenezer Scrooge, in turn who undergoes an overwhelming redemption throughout the course of a dark, sleepless Christmas Eve! Thanks in no small part to the visitation of his former business partner Jacob Marley (Gary Oldman) and other ghostly apparitions (all voiced by Carey).

"...the backdrop of wintry London town is a Cockney wonderland, a richly detailed box of delights that is as packed with treats as a bulging Christmas stocking. It's department-store grotto kitsch but it works with the manufactured nostalgia of Dickens's writing." (*Times*)

"It's a faithful adaptation, and if you're taking little kids to see it, well, watch out – there are some scary moments, especially the time-honoured shocker when ghostly Marley's lower jaw falls away...but there is a weird lack of passion here... a sense that Scrooge's agonised moral journey into his past is potentially pretty dull, and so Zemeckis is always livening things up by whooshing the old miser excitingly through the night sky between visions" (*Guardian*) True to the original classic with fab 21st C tricks. Don't miss. (*Simon Messenger*)



Director: Robert Zemeckis
Starring: Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Jim Carey, Robin Wright Penn
Certificate: PG
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL



A Christmas Tale

Mon 21 7.30



“So what makes this one magic? Start with director Arnaud Desplechin, who co-wrote the deft script with Emmanuel Bourdieu. Desplechin is a world-class filmmaker, not some studio hack. He can maintain a light touch even in the face of tragedy. He can layer a film so that it’s always springing surprises.” (*Rolling Stone*)

Unfolding over the holiday season in the grey northern French town of Roubaix, this expansive family saga traces the confrontations and recriminations which ensue when the clan’s least favoured son turns out to be...? Deneuve is the family matriarch who greets bad news with calm equanimity. Jean-Paul Roussillon is her wise, tender husband. Amalric plays the black sheep banished from the family by his imperious sister (Anne Consigny). A Christmas Tale is much more than a good ensemble piece by an outstanding cast. In this midwinter night’s dream, unrequited love collides with bitter resentment, nostalgic longing crosses paths with abject fear, and hatred gives way to vivacious affection.

“It has the unheard of quality of being long but doesn’t feel lengthy. The actors feel like a family. Subplots threaten to occupy the foreground. All the while, something is preparing itself beneath the surface.” (*The Chicago Times*)

Cancel Christmas, do not miss.

Director: Arnaud Desplechin
Starring: Catherine Deneuve, Emmanuelle Devos, Chiara Mastroianni, Mathieu Amalric
Certificate: 15
Duration: 152 mins
Origin: France 2008
By: New Wave

It’s a Wonderful Life

Tue 22 7.30, **Wed 23** 7.30,
Thu 24 6.00

Director: Frank Capra
Starring: James Stewart, Donna Reed, Ward Bond, Gloria Grahame, Lionel Barrymore
Certificate: U
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: USA 1946
By: The Works UK Distribution

Welcome to our sixth Christmas with the same old irresistible film. (Though it is our 5 year anniversary, it is our 6th Christmas - and the same old film)

It was a newly re-mastered print in 2008 with no crackles or jumps. Let’s hope it’s the same this year. It was a flop at the box office when it first appeared in 1946.

After the war the US wanted fun, cars and fridges. We had bomb sites and rations.

It became essential TV viewing in the UK during the mid 70’s, when repeated year on year. You couldn’t see it at the pictures until independents flirted with a re-release a few years ago. Now thanks to Park Circus, this beautifully restored print, is here again in the build up to Christmas.

Already, it seems a Rex Christmas wouldn’t be the same without Clarence (angel 2nd class) showing George Bailey how terrible life in Bedford Falls would be had he not been born. The simplest and best of all messages... Without you and them and each other, things would be very different (possibly better!).

As Christmas is the time for sloppy stories, come AGAIN for this, the sloppiest of all.

A very warm and happy Christmas from all of us at the Rex... Go easy.



The Twilight Saga: New Moon

Mon 28 7.30



In this sequel to the box-office phenomenon *Twilight*, also adapted from Stephanie Meyer's hit series of fantasy novels and this time helmed by the director of *The Golden Compass* the romance between mortal and vampire soars to new heights.

(Four overwhelming reasons in the first sentence to steer well clear) Following Bella's (Stewart) ill-fated 18th birthday party, Edward (Pattinson) leaves town in an effort to protect her from the dangers of his world.

As the heartbroken Bella sleepwalks through her senior year at high school, she discovers Edward's image comes to her whenever she puts herself in danger. Her desire to be with him at any cost leads her to take greater and greater risks. New to the series is Dakota Fanning, who joins the cast as a waifish pixie type with an air of menace.

Bella sees action too, when she develops a taste for adrenaline in the hope of catching a glimpse of her plasma-sucking protector. Motorbike rides and deathly dives follow, along with a scenic race to Italy to meet an übervampire (and only highlight, Michael Sheen).

This is a soap opera for those old enough to see it and young enough to shriek at undead buff, topless young studs.

Oh dear.

Director: Chris Weitz
Starring: Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: Australia 2009
By: E1 Films

This is Spinal Tap

Tue 29 7.30

Director: Rob Reiner
Starring: Spinal Tap, Michael McKean, Christopher Guest, Harry Shearer
Certificate: 15
Duration: 82 mins
Origin: USA 1984
By: Optimum Releasing

In 1982 legendary British heavy metal band Spinal Tap attempt an American comeback tour accompanied by a fan who is also a film-maker. The resulting documentary, interspersed with powerful performances of Tap's pivotal music and profound lyrics, candidly follows a rock group heading towards crisis, culminating in the infamous affair of the eighteen-inch-high Stonehenge stage prop.

"Reiner's brilliantly inventive script and smart visuals avoid all the obvious pitfalls, making this one of the funniest ever films about the music business. Most importantly of all, the musical numbers acutely mimic the crashing drums, thudding bass lines, whining lead guitar solos, and juvenile, sexist lyrics of heavy rock." (*TimeOut*)

"What makes it such a seamlessly hilarious ride is the knowing attention to detail: the ball-crushing spandex trousers, the maniacal public school manager, the Yoko-esque disruptive girlfriend, the pompous, preposterous lyrics - and, above all, the all-encompassing fug of self-delusion that compels them to carry on" (*Empire*)

Like all great parody, it takes pains never to overstep the mark. None of the characters are really that much more ridiculous than the absurd bunch of bozos who populated the British and American heavy metal scene throughout the '80s.

"Even if you've seen it an unhealthy number of times, have another go."

(*Total Film*)



Everything is Illuminated

Wed 30 7.30

This deliberately returns in the middle of (The Rex's own coined) 'suicide week'. It tells a tale of hope set against historic despair. It is a surprising and beautifully judged tale about three unmatched characters thrown together on a journey. By the end they will have stolen each other's heart and yours.

Taken from Jonathan Safran Foer best-seller, it reads like a true story.

'Jonfen' (Elijah) journeys from America in search of the woman he believes saved his grandfather during the Nazi massacre of a lost Ukrainian village. With only a creased photograph he sets off with the unlikely Alex (Eugene Hutz), his grandfather (the brilliant Boris Leskin) and his "seeing-eye" bitch.

Alex's passion for the American myth and his butchery of spoken English will win you with every word and gesture.

Come for his perplexed Ukranian 'guide' and his beautifully judged narration.

Much of the glorious music is his too.

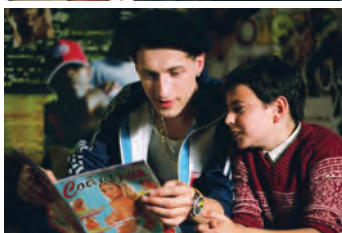
That's his real band playing at the station!

Schreiber's direction is unhurried and priceless – another happy surprise (look him up).

He clearly understands that the best films come when direction lets the story out and frees the actors from acting.

It is haunting, uplifting, heartbreaking and funny all at once, and one of the best films of our first five years. It will stay with you.

A perfect note to lift everybody, the whole family, into this brave new 2010.



Director:	Liev Schreiber
Starring:	Eugene Hutz, Elijah Wood, Boris Leskin
Certificate:	12A
Duration:	105 mins
Origin:	USA 2005
By:	Warner Brothers



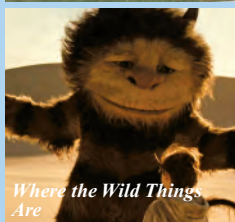
COMING SOON

New releases

Serious Man
The Informant
White Ribbon
Where the Wild Things Are
The Red Shoes
Tales From a Golden Age

Back by demand

Just Another Love Story
Coco before Chanel
Bright Star



DECEMBER FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	TUE	THE FANTASTIC MR FOX	12.30, 7.30
2	WED	CREATION	2.00, 7.30
3	THU	AN EDUCATION	2.00, 7.30
4	FRI	JENNIFER'S BODY	7.30
5	SAT	THE SECRET GARDEN	2.00
5	SAT	REX 5TH ANNIVERSARY	7.00
6	SUN	THE GODFATHER (NEW PRINT)	6.00
7	MON	AMELIA	2.00
7	MON	WELCOME	7.30
8	TUE	BRIGHT STAR	12.30
8	TUE	AMELIA	7.30
9	WED	BRIGHT STAR	2.00, 7.30
10	THU	BRIGHT STAR	2.00, 7.30
11	FRI	THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS	7.30
12	SAT	POLAR EXPRESS	2.00
12	SAT	THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS	7.00
13	SUN	ANNIVERSARY PREVIEW	6.00
14	MON	THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS	2.00, 7.30
15	TUE	TAKING WOODSTOCK	12.30, 7.30
16	WED	WHITE CHRISTMAS	2.00, 7.30
17	THU	HARRY BROWN	2.00, 7.30
18	FRI	CHRISTMAS CAROL	7.30
19	SAT	CHRISTMAS CAROL	2.00, 7.00
20	SUN	CHRISTMAS CAROL	6.00
21	MON	CHRISTMAS CAROL	2.00
21	MON	A CHRISTMAS TALE	7.30
22	TUE	CHRISTMAS CAROL	12.30
22	TUE	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	7.30
23	WED	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	2.00, 7.30
24	THU	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	6.00
25	FRI	CHRISTMAS DAY	
26	SAT	BOXING DAY	
27	SUN	EXTRA DAY	
28	MON	PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION	2.00
28	MON	TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	7.30
29	TUE	TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	12.30
29	TUE	THIS IS SPINAL TAP	7.30
30	WED	UP (2D)	2.00
30	WED	EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED	7.30
31	THU	NEW YEARS EVE	



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

The Fantastic Mr Fox

Tue 1 12.30

Director: Wes Anderson
Starring: Bill Murray, George Clooney, Meryl Streep, Willem Dafoe
Certificate: PG
Duration: 87 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Back in December by huge demand.

Based on Roald Dahl's seminal children's mischief, directed by perennial hipster Wes Anderson (*The Darjeeling Limited*), and co-written by Noah Baumbach, it tells the story of the Fox family's fight for survival.

After narrowly avoiding an ambush by the farmers from whom Mr. Fox (the fantastic Mr Clooney) steals his meals, he must find a way to get his family and friends out from the foxhole. Taking full responsibility, he happens upon the idea of digging under the farmhouses...

Voiced by an all star, if very American, cast including Meryl Streep, Bill Murray, Willem Dafoe and Adrian Brody, the film is terrific. Beautifully animated in painstaking stop-frame miniature animation, the piece is a joy to behold – Anderson reportedly spent some considerable time in Great Missenden ensuring that Dahl's Chiltern home village was strongly represented in the film. So watch out for familiar street corners.

"In a world where kids' movies are generally presented in hi-tech 3D digital wonderment, Anderson defiantly presents his one in old-school stop-motion animation, making it look like something by Oliver Postgate or Jan Svankmajer... smart and well-written" (*Guardian*) Fantastic indeed. It is entirely hand made, so it will be for children, spoilt by Pixar, to decide. Don't miss. (*research Simon Messenger*)



Creation

Wed 2 2.00



Released in this, the two hundredth anniversary year of Charles Darwin's birth, Jon Amiel's "Creation" is a masterful biopic of the life of the acclaimed naturalist.

Darwin (Paul Bettany) has returned from his (in)famous Beagle voyage, and is settling down to married life with his wife Emma (Bettany's real life wife, Jennifer Connelly), to work on his seminal "On The Origin Of The Species".

Devastated by a family tragedy and burdened by his growing disenchantment with his Christian faith, Bettany paints a sympathetic, yet realistic portrait of Darwin – a man torn between love for his devoutly religious wife, and his own scientific curiosity.

"...Paul Bettany and Jennifer Connelly bring an intimacy and chemistry to the screen that is effortlessly powerful...a beautiful film, a tonic to the hysteria of the far side of the Creationist sect and the militant atheists." (*Times*)

Notably, at the time of us going to press, the film has been unable to find a US distributor. This, a country that opened last month's "Antichrist" across a number of screens... Give us depravity, despair and casual mutilation any time over Evolution. "It would be a great shame if those with religious convictions spurned the film out of hand as they will find it even-handed and wise." (*Hollywood Reporter*) No they won't. (*research: Simon Messenger*)

Director: Jon Amiel
Starring: Paul Bettany, Jeremy Northam, Jennifer Connelly, Toby Jones
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd

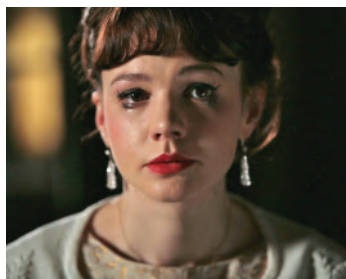
An Education

Thu 3 2.00

Director: Lone Scherfig
Starring: Peter Sarsgard, Emma Thompson, Alfred Molina, Carey Mulligan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: E1 Films

“This is a charming, funny, provocative coming-of-age movie reflecting a grey post-war Britain on the uncertain brink of a cultural revolution.” (synops)

In the hands of Danish director Lone Scherfig, it is a lively Nick Hornby-scripted adaptation of Lynn Barber's memoir concerning her suburban coming-of-age, where that one big 'crush' engulfs that most awkward rite of passage. The Sixties are just beginning. The 'swinging' mid-decade hasn't begun, but there are hints Barber's schoolgirl alter ego, Jenny (CMulligan, actually 24, so its okay) falls for the glamorous older charmer, who offers her clubs, champagne, drives in the country and sex. It is well done. The period is spot-on. So, if nothing else, come for a drive in the country.



The Secret Garden

Sat 5 2.00



This is one of the most enduring and magical childrens stories of all time.

One that carries all its weight into adulthood, with long memories of childhood and all the dreams, wishes and hopes we had and still have for our children.

Orphaned by an earthquake, Mary travels from India to live in her uncle's large Yorkshire house. In the grounds a robin shows her a locked, walled garden which a local boy, Dickon teaches her to cultivate. One night, she discovers a young invalid, her cousin Colin, and visits him secretly.

In spring she and Dickon take him to the garden despite his tantrums. Gradually Colin regains his strength.

They send a message through the ether to his father.

Beware: It's Hollywood and Warner Bros. So hope they get it right. Don't let six year olds miss it. They will remember the story for ever.

Director: Agnieszka Holland
Starring: Maggie Smith, John Lynch
Certificate: U
Duration: 101 mins
Origin: UK 1993
By: Warner Brothers

Amelia

Mon 7 2.00



Hilary Swank stars in this biopic of legendary pilot Amelia Earhart, famed for being the first aviatrix to complete a solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean.

A series of vignettes chronicling Earhart's early life, her interest in aviation, her rocky marriage to publishing tycoon George Putnam (Richard Gere) and subsequent affair with Gene Vidal (Ewan McGregor) lead us to her fateful, perilous round-the-world flight attempt of 1937... Swank bears a startling resemblance to Earhart, and the production of the film visually impressive, but does it have any substance?

"...If you're the kind of person who deplores the modern vogue for debunking historical figures, and who welcomes the opportunity to indulge in heroic feats and lush landscapes similar to those found in *Out Of Africa* or *The English Patient*, then this is the film for you. Everyone else though will likely start nodding off during yet another sleepy performance from Richard Gere..." (*Telegraph*)

"...a handsome, old-fashioned biopic... it tries to cover all the bases – adventurer, lover, celebrity, feminist icon – and misses every one... This film has so much inspiring uplift, it leaves you airsick" (*Times*)

In what is perhaps the ultimate tribute to Earhart, this film will also disappear without trace (or crash and burn?).

The crits didn't like it, so probably worth seeing. Come fly in old planes.

(research *Simon Messenger*)

Director: Mira Nair
Starring: Hilary Swank, Ewan McGregor, Richard Gere, Christopher Eccleston
Certificate: PG
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Bright Star

Tue 8 12.30, **Wed 9** 2.00,
Thu 10 2.00

Director: Jane Campion
Starring: Kerry Fox, Paul Schneider, Abbie Cornish, Ben Whishaw
Certificate: PG
Duration: 119 mins
Origin: Australia, France, UK 2009
By: Warner Brothers

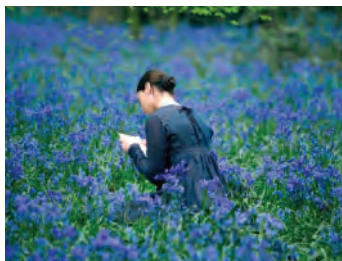
"Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art..."

Jane Campion's latest, adapted from Andrew Motion's 1997 biography, chronicles the three year romance between poet John Keats (Ben Whishaw) and Fanny Brawne (Abbie Cornish). Initially girl-next-door seamstress Brawne is unimpressed with the waif-like Keats's work, and with literature in general, instead preferring to concentrate on her chosen art; but as the months go by, their relationship blossoms despite Keats's financial and physical failings; this impassioned, and ultimately tragic, romance inspired some of the greatest poetry of all time.

"It feels special without being at all precious. Eloquent, too, but not self-consciously lyrical or florid... [Cornish is] terrific here at the centre and as the heartbeat of the film. She avoids both girlishness and the exaggerated mannerisms to which costume-drama performers often resort." (*Telegraph*)

"[Campion's] film proceeds at a quiet, measured tempo and with a lucid calm. Another type of film would have supercharged its narrative moments with surging music and the engine-roar of dramatic acceleration, but Campion simply lets each scene unspool evenly... an ecstasy of loss." (*Guardian*)

Unmissable. (*Simon Messenger*)



Polar Express

Sat 12 2.00



When a doubting young boy takes an extraordinary train ride to the North Pole to discover the reality of Santa Claus, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery... "the wonder of life never fades for those who believe..."

Never mind all that tosh, come for the heartstopping ride to find Father Christmas.

Polar Express, with its eye-popping, animated photo-realism, tells a touching family story, based upon Chris Van Allsburg's best seller. Tom Hanks reunites with his Castaway director to voice (and be) the character of The Conductor – who stays in charge and never betrays trust.

It is a weird, quasi educational, tale about tolerance, discovery and redemption (think American). It is odd and at times a little spooky for little ones. But hold them tight and they'll be alright. You'll need somebody to hold you tight too!

The best is, it is an extraordinarily, fantastic adventure from start to finish, unbelievably spectacular on the big screen, with a very happy ending. In five short years it has become an essential part of the Rex Christmas programme.

Director: Robert Zemeckis
Starring: Tom Hanks, Andrew Ableson
Certificate: U
Duration: 99 mins
Origin: USA 2004
By: Warner Brothers

The Men Who Stare At Goats Mon 14 2.00

Director: Grant Heslov
Starring: Kevin Spacey, George Clooney, Ewan McGregor, Jeff Bridges
Certificate: 15
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Momentum Pictures

It's often questionable how many "true stories" are in fact based on real events; however it's fairly easy to believe this actually happened given the previous US administration...

"The Men Who Stare At Goats" stars Ewan McGregor as Bob Wilson, a frustrated journalist covering the present Iraq conflict. He happens upon Lyn Cassady (George Clooney), who reveals he once formed part of a small, dedicated band of soldiers – "Jedi warriors" – trained in para-psychological warfare, who honed their mental abilities on a quest for invisibility, intuition, and the ability to walk through walls. Kidnapped by a criminal gang, they're going to need all the help they can get; can Lyn deliver the goods?

"There's plenty to enjoy in the film's outré set-pieces, insouciant tone and playful performances... feels less like a transcendental breakthrough than a bit of conjuring misdirection. Fun trick, though." (*Time Out*)

"With Clooney, Bridges, McGregor and Spacey on board, it's just a big cast standing professionally in place with absolutely no controlling intelligence to guide them: structurally, it's all over the parish... Either someone missed the memo about other people's LSD trips being a colossal drag, or else they fed it to a goat." (*Telegraph*)

Come for the moustaches. (*Simon Messenger*)



Taking Woodstock

Tue 15 12.30

Ang Lee performs a right-on, right turn after “Brokeback Mountain” and “Lust, Caution” in helming this undemanding, sentimental tale of the legendary musical festival’s creation.

Comedian Demetri Martin plays Eliot Tiber, a young Jewish lad forced to work in his parents’ (Imelda Staunton and Henry Goodman) Catskills motel in upstate New York. Upon hearing that a local music festival is facing opposition against its planned location, Tiber volunteers the motel as a base for the festival’s organisers, inadvertently setting up a generation defining event...

“A loving recreation of a time that holds a special place in the hearts of millions of people all across the world. But, pitched at the hypothetical half-way point between *The Graduate* and *Almost Famous*, it’s almost too sweet for its own good, tasteful rather than transcendental, imbued with a nostalgia that Lee doesn’t convince us he truly feels.” (*Telegraph*) “...bland, faintly pointless slice of sentimentality... Not exactly a Hendrix moment for Lee.” (*Guardian*)

Lee has brightened up with this, a comic tale of the men behind the world’s first big gig. “After some heavy duty movies, I wanted happiness, innocence... It felt right.” (*Ang Lee*)

If nothing else, come for “Everything Is Illuminated” director Liev Schreiber’s bone dry performance as a veteran transvestite! (*research Simon Messenger*)



Director:	Ang Lee
Starring:	Imelda Staunton, Eugene Levy, Henry Goodman, Demetri Martin
Certificate:	15
Duration:	120 mins
Origin:	USA 2009
By:	Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd



Matinee Warning: May contain babies

White Christmas

Wed 16 2.00



This stunning restoration from Park Circus is a reminder that amid the (false) gloom that digital is taking over projection boxes, there's a company restoring old film stock into brand new prints.

White Christmas is a treasure trove of Irving Berlin classics: 'Count Your Blessings', 'Sisters', 'Blue Skies', and the evergreen 'White Christmas'. Two song-and-dance men (Crosby and Kaye) team up after the war to become one of the hottest acts in show business. One winter, they join forces with a sister act (Gorgeous George's aunt, Rosemary Clooney... and the stunning Vera Ellen) and travel to Vermont for Christmas. The real 'adventure' starts when the 'boys' discover the run-down Inn belongs to their old army general. The result is the stuff of American dreams. Shmaltzy, and unashamedly sentimental, it is a perennial Christmas favourite with a longevity unlikely to fade. The 1950s was America's boom decade. It must have been a fabulous time to live there: Doris Day, the cars, the romance, the Technicolor, and Sinatra at his best... and every home (in the movies) had a fridge while we were still rationing carrots, finishing Sunday's hotpot on Tuesday and living in black, grey and scrubbed necks... but with some clear blue childhood skies.

Director: Michael Curtiz
Starring: Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, Vera Ellen
Certificate: U
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: USA 1954
By: Park Circus Films

Harry Brown

Thu 17 2.00

Director: Daniel Barber
Starring: Emily Mortimer, Michael Caine
Certificate: 18
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Lionsgate Films UK

It follows Harry Brown (Michael Caine) on a revenge trip through a chaotic world where drugs are the currency and the guns, knives and beatings run the streets.

A modest law-abiding citizen, He is a retired marine and a widower who lives alone on a depressed housing estate. His only company is his old mate Leonard (David Bradley). When Leonard is beaten to death, Harry is compelled to dispense his own brand of justice. As he bids to clean up the sink estate, he is noticed by the police, led by sickly sweet investigating officer DCI Frampton (Emily Mortimer).

"Ex-marine Caine blows the bloody hoodies away in what hopes to be 'Broken Britain's' answer to Gran Torino or worse Death Wish. Nasty" (*Guardian Guide*)

"If you want to scare a British moviegoer, you don't make films about zombies – you cast a hoodie" (*Guardian*)

We first see the bad guys as an amorphous mob of hooded creatures smoking crack in a badly lit tunnel. The making of this clearly moved Caine to despair at the total horror of the place he knew well as a kids in the early fifties. The main nasty hoodie, Jamie, just Jamie, came through that horror background. Good camera work and worthy performances don't make it any less depressing.



Christmas Carol

Sat 19 2.00, **Mon 21** 2.00, **Tue 22** 12.30

From Robert Zemeckis' team behind "Polar Express", a Rex Christmas favourite, comes an impressive and slightly dark, retelling of the famed Victorian morality tale.

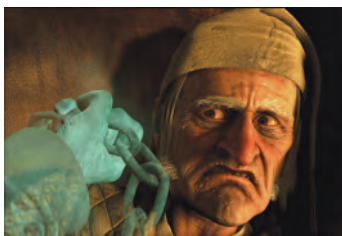
This fantastically rendered version of classic Dickens features Jim Carey, who undergoes digital work to his already rubber face, as the bitter miser Ebenezer Scrooge, in turn who undergoes an overwhelming redemption throughout the course of a dark, sleepless Christmas Eve! Thanks in no small part to the visitation of his former business partner Jacob Marley (Gary Oldman) and other ghostly apparitions (all voiced by Carey).

"...the backdrop of wintry London town is a Cockney wonderland, a richly detailed box of delights that is as packed with treats as a bulging Christmas stocking. It's department-store grotto kitsch but it works with the manufactured nostalgia of Dickens's writing." (*Times*)

"It's a faithful adaptation, and if you're taking little kids to see it, well, watch out – there are some scary moments, especially the time-honoured shocker when ghostly Marley's lower jaw falls away...but there is a weird lack of passion here... a sense that Scrooge's agonised moral journey into his past is potentially pretty dull, and so Zemeckis is always livening things up by whooshing the old miser excitingly through the night sky between visions" (*Guardian*) True to the original classic with fab 21st C tricks. Don't miss. (*Simon Messenger*)



Director: Robert Zemeckis
Starring: Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Jim Carrey, Robin Wright Penn
Certificate: PG
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL



It's a Wonderful Life

Wed 23 2.00



Welcome to our sixth Christmas with the same old irresistible film. (Though it is our 5 year anniversary, it is our 6th Christmas - and the same old film)

It was a newly re-mastered print in 2008 with no crackles or jumps. Let's hope it's the same this year. It was a flop at the box office when it first appeared in 1946.

After the war the US wanted fun, cars and fridges. We had bomb sites and rations.

It became essential TV viewing in the UK during the mid 70's, when repeated year on year. You couldn't see it at the pictures until independents flirted with a re-release a few years ago. Now thanks to Park Circus, this beautifully restored print, is here again in the build up to Christmas.

Already, it seems a Rex Christmas wouldn't be the same without Clarence (angel 2nd class) showing George Bailey how terrible life in Bedford Falls would be had he not been born. The simplest and best of all messages... Without you and them and each other, things would be very different (possibly better!).

As Christmas is the time for sloppy stories, come AGAIN for this, the sloppiest of all.

A very warm and happy Christmas from all of us at the Rex... Go easy.

Director: Frank Capra
Starring: James Stewart, Donna Reed, Ward Bond, Gloria Grahame, Lionel Barrymore
Certificate: U
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: USA 1946
By: The Works UK Distribution

Prairie Home

Companion Mon 28 2.00

Director: Robert Altman
Starring: Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, Woody Harrelson, Lily Tomlin, John C. Reilly, Virginia Madsen, Lindsay Lohan
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: USA 2006
By: The Works UK Distribution

This beautifully played whimsical tale of live entertainment on the last night of a closing radio theatre, is a fitting end to Robert Altman's maverick and prolific career spanning 56 years. He knew he was dying when he was making it. It's in the film! He died 20.11.06 aged 81.

We first showed then. Afterwards to ever growing audiences. As a celebration of a living theatre it fits perfectly with the Rex' fifth anniversary, caught in time.

As always Altman coerces a star-studded ensemble to play for him; one last time.

It is an intricately woven, backstage fable imagining the antics of a last show before the final curtain falls. Here playing his laconic, shambling self, Garrison Keillor's real 'A Prairie Home Companion' somehow managed to survive the television age to reach a colossal audience every Saturday night, live from the stage of the historic Fitzgerald Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Come for him, a non-irritating Meryl Streep, a fabulous Woody Harrelson/John C Reilly double act and for Lindsay Lohan managing to transcend her drowning-at-birth was too good for her persona; just.

Worth it alone for Kevin Kline's description of the girl in the Mount Rushmore T-shirt. Come and laugh out loud with the whole cold-turkey family. You'll all be glad of it.



The Twilight Saga: New Moon **Tue 29** 12.30



In this sequel to the box-office phenomenon *Twilight*, also adapted from Stephanie Meyer's hit series of fantasy novels and this time helmed by the director of *The Golden Compass* the romance between mortal and vampire soars to new heights.

(Four overwhelming reasons in the first sentence to steer well clear) Following Bella's (Stewart) ill-fated 18th birthday party, Edward (Pattinson) leaves town in an effort to protect her from the dangers of his world.

As the heartbroken Bella sleepwalks through her senior year at high school, she discovers Edward's image comes to her whenever she puts herself in danger. Her desire to be with him at any cost leads her to take greater and greater risks. New to the series is Dakota Fanning, who joins the cast as a waifish pixie type with an air of menace.

Bella sees action too, when she develops a taste for adrenaline in the hope of catching a glimpse of her plasma-sucking protector. Motorbike rides and deathly dives follow, along with a scenic race to Italy to meet an über vampire (and only highlight, Michael Sheen).

This is a soap opera for those old enough to see it and young enough to shriek at undead buff, topless young studs.

Oh dear.

Director: Chris Weitz
Starring: Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: Australia 2009
By: E1 Films

Up **Wed 30** 2.00

Directors: Peter Docter, Bob Peterson
Starring: Christopher Plummer, Edward Asner
Certificate: U
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Buena Vista International

From Disney Pixar, behind *Toy Story*, *Monster's Inc.* and *Wall-E*, comes this fabulous masterpiece of animation and storytelling.

In an attempt to evade greedy property developers, construction workers, and the nursing home, 78 year old widower Carl decides it's time to move house – quite literally. Tying thousands of balloons to the roof, Carl, accompanied by eight year old stowaway Russell, flies off in search of adventure...

"Utterly delightful, certain to appeal to audiences young, old and all points in between. The film, in its aerial beauty and its melancholic undertow, recalls Albert Lamorisse's *The Red Balloon* and Hiya Miyazaki's *Howl's Moving Castle*... delicious sound design, and the emotional punch it packs makes this one of Pixar's finest achievements." (*Telegraph*)

"This short, sharp and sweet fantasy still manages to reaffirm its makers as world leaders in the kind of popular animation that embraces ideas and the real world alongside fun and fantasy." (*Time Out*) A marvellous film. Bring everyone you know. If our local conservation areas are going to be systematically swallowed by greedy, faceless developers, let's take a leaf from Carl's book and float the new ugly profitable part of their dollar-vision of Berkhamsted to their, dirty land agents, lawyers, architects and their own back gardens... Find out where they live.

We'll get the balloons. (*Simon Messenger*)



FAREWELL



Mick Beddall 1948-2009



Ken Cowe 1924-2009

Maureen Hannaway
1949-2009

Too many of our friends died this year. Here are some of them...

Mick Beddall not only looked after our cars, he looked after us to drive them.

As chairman, Ken Cowe looked after me at Boxmoor Arts Centre, saying Yes to hairbrained schemes & dreams when he knew No was the safer answer.

The lovely Maureen, was my sister-in-law and mother to my favourite nephew. Dying old is always too young. Dying young ends worlds.



Barry Love 1934-2009

Barry Love lit up the foyer, just walking in. He and Linda came to everything weird and obscure. So they were here a lot.

Lisa Wolf-Phillips
1932-2009

Lisa was my favourite. I say the same to everyone, but she knew. Everything Is Illuminated was Her favourite. It is on 30th Dec for her, before the year is out.

THE ODEON LONDON RD ST ALBANS

Finally after almost 15 years The Odeon can become a living, thriving cinema once more.

The campaign begins now, right away – to raise awareness of the project and the money needed to make it work.

For the dream to come true from purchase to restoration it will cost in the region of £3m.

We have ten weeks from mid-November to Exchange.

COME to a meeting at the Rex Berkhamsted on SUNDAY 29th NOVEMBER at 12:30pm.

It will only last an hour.

We'll tell you all we know.

Try to answer all your questions
And make clear what we need to do next.

The meeting is at the Rex so you can see what can be achieved in St Albans.

Our management team of seven has already invested time and money over the past three years and The Rex has put



up the £10,000 security to get us through to Exchange.

It seems ridiculous to raise so much in such a short time, but the dream is in your hands now.

If I didn't think it could be done I wouldn't have come this far.

I will do everything I can, despite the bad-timing of Christmas, to make sure it has every chance of coming true.

I hope you still want it as badly as you have said – EVERY DAY at the Rex, for FIVE years!

If you can't come to the meeting. Please Email us with your contact details at: therexberkhamsted@hotmail.co.uk

THE FIRST RANTS AND PANTS JULY 2005

Dear Mrs Trellis... We have had a few letters over the months. Rude though it may seem, we have not replied to all. Our excuse; letters written in anger or excitement are often better left as they are – as something which needed to be said but needs no answer. However it occurred to us others might feel the same, so here's some to think about. In fun, they are divided into two categories, 'ranting' (complaints) and 'panting' (sweet). Clearly, the authors remain anonymous.

RANTING

"....We recently booked a table for 4 people to see Oceans Twelve on Thursday 7 April... The film was due to start at 7.00pm. On arrival at 7.05pm, because I could not get parked anywhere close by, we were met by Mr Hannaway who informed us that we were to share our table with 2 others. I was taken aback to say the least but Mr Hannaway just wandered off to collect the two 'guests' with whom we had to share our table. Further, he suggested that I sit with my back to the screen so that when the film began, I could not set my glass of wine on the table or in anyway engage with the members of my family, quite defeating the whole point of having a table. I feel I must tell you that it completely spoiled the entire evening for all of us. I was extremely disappointed to be treated in such a way and assume that it was done in order to make a few more quid... I hope you accept this criticism and would urge you to make sure such a thing is not repeated. Don't let all that effort and achievement be spoiled by being a little too greedy!"

Thank you. I don't remember too much about the incident. Do accept my apologies (even now in 2009) However "...but Mr Hannaway just wandered off..." has a familiar ring.

"As I am coming to see 'The Downfall' on Monday May 16th I decided to read your write up in the May edition of the Rex magazine. Now I understand from your regular reminders prior to film

showings that the publication has a few 'howlers' but I was particularly amazed to read in answer to Hitler being tagged 'this most destructive of historical figures' your aside "yes if you don't include Stalin, Pol Pot, Thatcher, Johnson, Nixon and a couple of Bush's". Whilst some of the figures that you include can certainly be compared to Hitler, I have to say that to include Thatcher is controversial to say the least. Love her or loathe her, surely nothing that she has ever done can be compared to the holocaust. I am of Jewish descent and my family tree is littered with those who lost their lives to this maniac. I take great exception to your cheap political shot and would like to know whether you really stand by the opinion you have expressed or whether this additional 'howler' will be receiving a mention prior to Monday night's showing of 'the Downfall'".

"No such thing as society?" for instance?

"My wife is a member but she and I are confused as to what the arrangements are for members. When we first visited the cinema to book for Ladies In Lavender, we were invited to go and have a look in order to choose which seats we would like and we were told that we could sit anywhere, so we settled for C8&9. I went into the box office today to book for two films, asked for C8&9 to be told that I could not have them because they were seats for members and not available for me to purchase in order to see a film. The ensuing conversation went something as follows:-

"But, my wife is a member"

"But these seats are owned by members"

"What do you mean – owned?"

"They belong to members and cannot be used by anyone else. Those sort of seats are marked with a star on the seating plan shown here"

"Right, I'll have these two unstarred"

"Sorry they are not available"

"Why not"

"Well, they are owned, but the seating plan is not up to date"

In the end, I agreed to pay for two seats which apparently were for sale. I do hope we shall be able to sit in them on the night. As I say, my wife is a member but she is as mystified by this

conversation as I was since she knows nothing about any arrangement to “buy” seats.... Did I perhaps misinterpret what was being said to me? And I must add that the way in which things were being said was not very helpful. I should be grateful for a clear explanation of what is going on”.

Priceless...

PANTING

“I just wanted to let you know how much we enjoyed visiting your cinema last night – it was an absolute treat. After 30 years of marriage I’ve actually found a cinema that my husband is willing to visit frequently.... he says it’s the only “civilised” cinema he knows!”

How lovely. After 30 years of marriage, welcome to civilisation.

“I must write and say what a lovely time in the newly refurbished Rex Cinema on Saturday 25th February we had.

To arrive and see the lovely fittings and have really comfortable seats, made seeing not just the film, but the feeling really special in the “theatre”. Please keep things as they are if you can, your forward thinking and obvious enthusiasm really shows. It is lovely. Thank you.”

Very nice, thank you. The things that work well will stay as they are. We’re plotting and thinking constantly. Still not happy with the wine list. The bar in the foyer is next to be transformed into a fabulous art deco parlour where you can have delicious wholesome dishes, pre-show.

“Although you may scoff at this somewhat ‘creepy’ letter, I felt I just had to write anyway. Congratulations on a truly amazing accomplishment, the resurrection of the Rex. There were many who said it couldn’t be done. Thank goodness you were not deterred. Your vision, determination and sheer hard work have been awe inspiring. And what a result! The cinema looks wonderful. I understand some have complained about the teething troubles with booking, phones etc. Don’t pay those remarks any attention – the friendly informality is a bonus in the eyes of most of us... We feel really

proud to have such a beautiful, independent facility on our doorstep and are busy introducing our friends to it...The difference such places as the Rex make to our quality of life is enormous.... Anyway, enough! Except to say a heartfelt ‘thank you’ to you and your team.”

Keep gushing, we love it... Could you write to us every week?

“Dear James

Thank you so much for treating me to supper on Valentines Day. It was really kind of you, and I had such a lovely evening.

Best regards

Tristan Hugh-Jones”

Feb 2005

Finally my dream date - an oyster fisherman! Must teach him to write a less incriminating letter of thanks.

Tristan was a contact through a friend.

He answered my call in a force nine gale, while battling a storm off the West of Ireland. Then without any sense of any proper deal, he cycled, flew and trained it to Rex with a box of five dozen oysters under his arm. Hungry and still wet, he dived in, opening and presenting the oysters at the bar all Valentines Night, with a smile as big as himself – fantastic. So Tristan is our oyster man. If you want him to be yours, call us.

Welcome Marcus Brigstock



HIGHLIGHTS AND GOOD TIMES...

Humph & me May June 05



Gorgeous Nancy 1st lights turn-on. Nov 02

Terry Jones & Greg



Toby Jones & Adrian S



Charles & Judi Dec 05



Robin & Stephen Merchant



Chris Addison

SOME COMMENTS FROM THE BOOK AND OVERHEARDS...

Row D (July 2006 - waiting for the film to begin)

- 1st kid: "He was on TV wasn't he?"
 2nd kid: "Who?"
 1st kid: "That man who was on the stage"
 2nd kid: "Is he famous?"
 1st kid: "Dunno, but I think he's rich."
 2nd kid: "He doesn't look very rich."

Row E (Sept 2006)

- 1st pensioner: "What a wonderful cinema, and what a warm welcome from that polite gentleman. These seats are so comfortable, I could go to sleep here."
 2nd pensioner: (minutes later) zzzzzz

"Sorry, sorry, sorry about destroying visitors book with my red wine BUT THANKYOU, THANK YOU for inviting me to the most beautiful cinema I've ever been to..."

Matthew MacFadyen (star)

The definitive Mr Darcy. February 2006

April 2006

Dear Mr Hannaway,
 I was actually thinking of coming to see a film or two at The Rex. Quite a distance to travel for a movie, but I thought it might be worth it. Then I read your latest magazine with its tired, lazy opinion-mongering about the US administration (contrasting rankly with the gooey sentimentalization of 'The Motorcycle Diaries' and its hero, the blundering murderer and totalitarian Che Guevara), and changed my mind.

Why don't you ask your reviewer to leave his views in the 4th form debating society where they belong, and concentrate instead on raising the level of his reviews? God only knows they need it. Just a little tip: the next time he hands in his copy and asks "Will this do?" the answer is "No - not even for 'The Rex Magazine'."

R. White

Quite right Mr White. Thank you so much for such warm opinions and sound advice.

He was sacked on the spot, then shot.

May 2006

Dear James,
 You've had your (not very) fair share of rants recently, and I'm afraid I would like to have a little rant of my own.

Three or four times a month I make the 35 mile round trip to your beautiful cinema. I do this for a number of reasons, one being the often-mentioned beauty, charm and comfort of the surroundings, another being the more considerate audience who don't talk to each other or text throughout the screening, (this accompanied by a glorious lack of popcorn and other rustley things that drive me to distraction at the multiplexes.) The main reason I travel so far is because of the friendly, helpful and courteous staff - which brings me to my rant - The otherwise considerate audience seem to think that they have a right to criticise the people that make the place what it is.

Having phoned the Vue cinema to buy tickets last year, I have to say I would much rather keep pressing re-dial for an hour, in order to speak to a friendly voice, than have to shout the name of a town at a computerised one that keeps repeating 'I'm sorry, I didn't understand, please repeat the name of the cinema you would like to visit'

You have clearly made a huge effort to be fairer with the booking system and I can't believe how ungrateful these people are being. If they don't like it they should try watching a film like Finding Neverland at a multiplex, like I did, in a dingy room where a gang of 14 year olds were chucking popcorn around and shouting out new and creative uses of anglo saxon words - because, strangely enough, I had no problem booking that...

Also, I'm not one for chucking money around, but what sort of tight-arse won't spend £1 to find out about something they are really interested in?

What I really want to say is - I love the Rex and I do sometimes find it frustrating while waiting to get through to order tickets, but I can't be upset that other people love the place as much as me. To me, getting tickets for a film at The Rex is the same as getting tickets for a band I want to see, I'm glad when I get them and don't blame Wembley Stadium if they have sold out before I can get through. If people want to complain, why

can't they be constructive and complain to St Albans council, then there may be hope for a cinema nearly as beautiful as the Rex in St Albans and the demand for tickets could be met.

Keep up the good work.

Kirsty Rowan

Luton

December 2006

Caller: "Can I have four seats for Little Miss Sunshine in row F, facing the screen please?"

May 2009

Dear James

My friend and I have been to your very comfy cinema many times, and oh what a joy! In these 'couldn't care less' days, especially towards us more mature ones, it is so nice to have your team take such good care of us.

Nothing is too much trouble, from being shown to our seats, our coffee's carried for us, to the Box office we are treated with such care and courtesy, a word, alas that can be seldom used these days and they make our visit perfect.

The films are pretty good too!

We just wanted you to know that you are all much appreciated and to say thank you.

With best wishes, Two Oldish Biddies - Penny Etherington & Anne Duve

This is a complete letter as written and posted.

Feb 08

TAKING THE LEAK...

There was a burst water main in the road near where I live. I left it a week or two - too long. It was gushing from the road, wasting gallons a second. Reception at Hemel Dacorum Civic Centre very efficiently put me through to Thames Water. They answered surprisingly quickly. That was the last time the word 'quickly' was involved. A boy answered.

Thames W: Hello could I have your postcode please?

Me: Well yeah but I want to report a burst water main in the road... Its been gushing for weeks.

Thames W: Has it already been reported?

Me: I don't know but I'm sure it has.

Thames W: So I'll need your postcode.

Me: It doesn't matter, it's in the middle of

the road. My postcode won't help but I can give you the name of the road.

Thames W: Sorry sir I need a postcode to progress. We need a name, a house number and a postcode.

Me: I can give you my name (told him... 'how do you spell that sir?') but where I live has nothing to do with the leak. It is in the middle of a side road on busy crossroads of ... street and lane

Thames W: Sorry sir I can't register a leak without a postcode.

Me: Okay here's my postcode and address (I knew instinctively this would do it, and sure enough...)

Thames W: Thank you, please hold the line... (minutes later) Sorry sir no leak has been reported at that postcode or address. Would you like to report one?

Me: With the greatest respect, I told you my postcode would be no use. I'm standing here on a mobile phone ankle deep in water in the middle of the effing road. It is nowhere near my house. There is no leak at my effing postcode. It is in the middle of the road miles away from any effing post...

Thames W: ...If you use that kind of language again sir... these calls are recorded for...

Me: ...I'm sorry, it's not you, but please listen... There has been thousands of gallons of water from a burst water main, not a house - it's in the middle of the road.

Thames W: I understand but we need a postcode to register the job.

Me: It doesn't matter. I've given you the name of every street corner. I could have been passing through from North Wales, but that would be outside your area... Please use mine... but it won't do you any good.

Thames W: Okay sir... Well erm what is the nearest street address to the leak with a postcode if you have it...

I rang again the next day...

Thames W: New voice: Morning, could I have your postcode...?

Sure enough a week later a card came through my door... "You have reported a leak at this address. Please contact.... urgently".

Most of this is true. But the main truth; it took a further three weeks a dozen phone calls and two gangs of six with four or five lorries to fix it in two stages, not counting the man who came to spray the blue arrows.