

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E



CHICO & RITA
DECEMBER...

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

DECEMBER 2010 Issue 69
www.therexberkhamsted.com

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

Gallery	4-8
December Evenings	11
Coming Soon	24
December Films at a glance	24
December Matinees	25
Rants and Pants	40-44

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Simon Messenger	Keymea Yazdanian

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Abigail K, Ally, Billie, Charlotte, Ellie, Emma, James, Kitty, Lucy, Luisa, Lydia K, Romy, Roz, Sid

Sally Thorpe In charge

Alun Rees Chief projectionist (Original)

Jon Waugh 1st assistant projectionist

Martin Coffill Part-time assistant projectionist

Jacquie Rose Chief Box Office & Bar

Oliver Hicks Best Boy

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Betty Patterson Company Secretary and THE ORIGINAL VISIONARY of The Rex.

The Rex

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Berkhamsted HP4 2FG
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BEST IN DECEMBER



A very special Rex anniversary preview of very special film. Australia, UK 2010.

The King's Speech Sun 5 6.00

FILMS OF THE MONTH



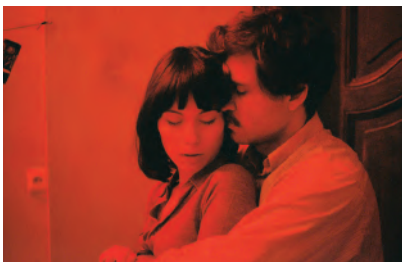
A second special anniversary preview. Not to be missed. Australia 2010.

Animal Kingdom Sat 4 7.00



Love is a song you never forget. Beautiful and seductive. Spain, UK 2010.

Chico & Rita Mon 6 7.30



The shortest two and half hours you'll spend on the edge.. USA 2010

Carlos Sun 19 6.00

BRUSSELS OCTOBER



There was a good reason, but it escapes me.

Let me try. Why did I go? Oh yes: European funding. I believed their encouragement at WE WelcomEurope, that upon attending an EU training course on Oct 25 & 26th entitled "HOW TO GET EUROPEAN FUNDS" with "620 euro OFF on all training session Until October 29th" I would return bulging euros. I should know better by now, that all the second hand car dealers of old, moved to Brussels (or Palookaville) to flog rusty old promises of access to funds.

We still need over £1 million to restore The Odyssey, St Albans. I won't bore you again, but having raised the first £1m to buy the building in April through local funds, it was largely up to me to find the rest. There are literally billions of euros for such





noble enterprises. It is untying them from the shiny shackles of Euro administration. I learned within the first fifteen minutes that our little project stood no chance. Still I got to stay in an alleyway. Which to be fair, once inside the door, was a gorgeously preserved (if shabby) art deco, half star hotel in downtown Brussels, and the people were nice. Not nice enough to stay the full distance. Still, we'll get our money back and I got some pretty snaps.



ADIEU MES AMIS...



Stephanie Warde



Jason Crockett



Many children died this year all across the world, for all kinds of reasons though none of their own; from earthquake, flood, famine, disease and war. No matter how hard it is or how terrible for the rest, the ones you have known and loved and longed for, make all the others fade to nothing.

In the face of someone dying young, the notion that anything else matters is incomprehensible. It is a longing that will burn your eyes and catch your breath, stop you walking another step, or leave you staring into space for hours, not caring about another person in the whole world. For the one lost, never forgetting or letting time heal; always talking, saying their name and telling stories, is the only way to keep them. It is this part that will never die.

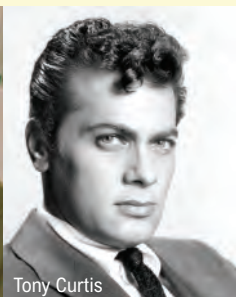
Here are three grown up faces who died this year too. I always thought I'd meet some one as exquisite as Jean Simmons. I wanted Tony Curtis's style and quiff and loved Brian Harris's patience and good humour. Last line to Tony "I'll enjoy a few more spins on the merry-go-round and wait for the music to stop"



Jean Simmons



Brian Harris



Tony Curtis



AUNG SAN SUU KYI...

Grace charm beauty patience courage and strength. All words probably said of her all her life.

She wrote: that in fear there is no freedom. "The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear."

She was released (again) on Friday 13th November 2010 from fifteen out of the last twenty one years in one jail/house or other. She was jailed in one way or another after winning Burma's free election in 1990.

To use this as a mischief she wouldn't like, but amuses me. What if we tried that here? The minute the forked tongues win (or not quite win, but take charge anyway. Mr. Cameron) they would be arrested on sight. It would have been justice indeed if Dubya had been taken into custody after the 'family' rigged his Florida re-count of November 2000.

Perhaps then we might be living in an uneasy peace, where we could keep our shoes on and at airports.

With that ugly moment over, more from the beautiful Suu Kyi. "The education and empowerment of women throughout the world cannot fail to result in a more caring, tolerant, just and peaceful life for all." "It is not power that corrupts, but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it." Here's to her new 'freedom'...

MARK TWAIN

Mark Twain... died 21 April 1910 aged 75.

He left strict instructions his autobiography should not be published "until a hundred years after my death." Hence free and indifferent, so able to speak his whole mind.

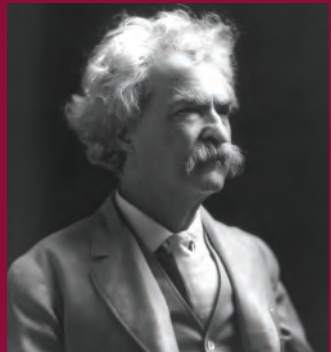
"... When I was younger I could remember everything whether it happened or not.

There was however, one small incident of my boyhood days which touched this matter and must have meant a good deal to me or it would not have stayed in my memory, clear and sharp, vivid and shadowless all these slow and drifting years (his mother's intervention at the impending ill-treatment of a young slave boy).

It was a simple speech and made of small words, but it went home. My mother never used large words, but she had a natural gift for making small ones do effective work.

She lived to reach the neighbourhood of ninety years and was capable with her tongue to the last. Especially when a meanness or an injustice roused her spirit.

She has come in handy to me several times in my books. Where she figures as Tom Sawyers Aunt Polly, I fitted her out with a dialect and tried to find, think up other improvements for her, but did not find any..." (A tiny radio extract 'talking about the thing that interests you for that moment' from his 100 years old autobiography, published this year).



AUTUMN AT ASHRIDGE



How perfect was this autumn. Colours more vivid because of the “harsh winter, followed by drought and a wet Spring.”

It seems now we must fight to keep our woodlands too. When will they ever stop...





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

The Kids Are All Right

Wed 1 7.30, Thu 2 7.30



Julianne Moore and Annette Bening star as Jules and Nic, in this touching, off-beat comedy by Lisa Cholodenko (High Art, Laurel Canyon).

Jules and Nic, as a lesbian couple, have both given birth to children, via the same sperm donor. When the kids are of age, eldest Joni (Mia Wasikowska) asks her mother to contact the sperm bank so her and her brother can meet their biological father, Paul (Mark Ruffalo). In turn, his presence disrupts the unconventional family unit as the kids find themselves drawn to his easygoing style, and to the dismay of Nic, so does Jules... It's a poignant, well crafted film, transcending "kooky" cinematic lesbianism; it's both thoughtful and refreshing. Cholodenko's scripting is effortlessly natural, and whilst the subject matter may not touch exactly on experiences shared by all, the universality of musings on growing up/old are never tiresome when done well.

"Cholodenko has not only made a film about lesbians as ordinary, mainstream people, or a good movie about lesbians, or even a smart movie: she has made a great film." (*Guardian*)

"Writer-director Lisa Cholodenko knows that real life is messier than that, but her empathy and lightness of touch ensure this wonderfully realistic film is both deeply affecting and riotously funny." (*Time Out*) Don't miss. (*research SM*)

Director: Lisa Cholodenko
Starring: Annette Bening, Julianne Moore, Mark Ruffalo,
Certificate: 15
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Made in Dagenham

Fri 3 7.30

Director: Nigel Cole
Starring: Jaime Winstone, Bob Hoskins, Miranda Richardson, Rosamund Pike, Sally Hawkins
Certificate: 15
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

It could have been Calender Girls 2 with attitude, four letter words, tight sweaters and bras. Instead it's a glorious story of the resistance and resilience of a few women who accidentally find themselves at the forefront of a movement.

Outraged by despicably chauvinistic bosses and union reps, Rita O'Grady (Hawkins) sparks a mass walk out at the Ford Dagenham plant in 1968. A media frenzy follows, directly resulting in the groundbreaking Equal Pay Act 1970. It's a gloriously nostalgic wallow in working class 1960s Britain. In the best traditions with its ribald humour, it's been dubbed "Carry on Cortina" by film journalists, complete with Bob Hoskins wiping his furrowed brow and muttering in cockney.

"Politically it's light, but its mission is honest. It highlights an important episode in a style that you imagine would appeal to the same women it honours" (*Time Out*)

"Offhandedly touching and safe as houses, it's the breeziest film you can imagine about risking everything for a fairer slice of the pie." (*Telegraph*)

When producer Stephen Woolley caught an episode of *The Reunion* on Radio 4 about the women who started the strike 30 years earlier, he went to work on perhaps the best, if not the only decent, film he's made. (*research SM*)



ANNIVERSARY PREVIEW

Animal Kingdom

Sat 4 7.00



A very big thank you to Momentum for letting us preview this (and The Kings Speech) in celebration of the Rex' sixth anniversary, so far ahead of general release in 2011.

On going to press here little is known about Animal Kingdom. All the more reason for trying it out ahead of release on our birthday weekend. Then you can tell your friends without giving away the end?

Much of the fascination in The Godfather, Goodfellas and any film with similar aspirations derives from a conflict of loyalty: Is it better to do what's lawful, or is it more "right" to stand by family and friends' no matter what? The Australian drama "Animal Kingdom has the novel idea to explore this dilemma through a character with no personality whatsoever. As it turns out, personality goes a long way."

(Time Out)

Our hero is mainly a fly on the wall, more interested in getting high and mucking around with a pretty but equally strange girlfriend (Wheelwright) than he is in his uncles' affairs. There are wierd twists in this thriller and Guy Pearce is always a great presence, where there is 'weird' to deal with.

Director: David Michôd
Starring: Guy Pearce, Joel Edgerton, James Frecheville,
Certificate: 15
Duration: 112 mins
Origin: Australia 2010
By: Optimum Releasing

ANNIVERSARY PREVIEW

The King's Speech

Sun 5 6.00

Director: Tom Hooper
Starring: Colin Firth, Guy Pearce, Helena Bonham Carter
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: Australia, UK 2010
By: Momentum Pictures

A very big thank you to Momentum for letting us preview this (and Animal Kingdom) in celebration of the Rex' sixth anniversary, so far ahead of general release in 2011.

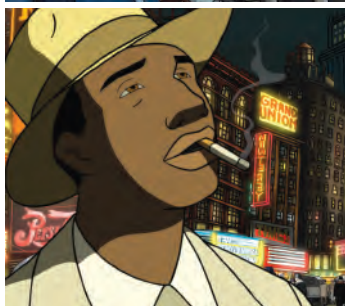
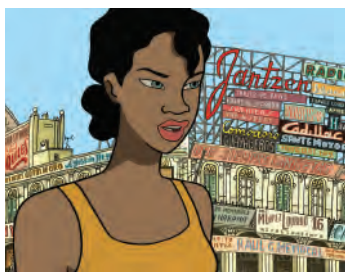
Based on the true story of George VI's battles to overcome a socially crippling stammer, it is well written; running nicely into tearjerker territory, as we submit to courage having many forms.

It opens with a moment of sheer terrifying embarrassment as the then Prince Albert (Firth) and second in line to the throne, attempts to make a speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Not only is he trying to talk to assembled masses, but reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio.

Given that the family job is talking to people, the Prince's stammer is not the best of inflections. Princess Elizabeth (Bonham Carter) tries various treatments but with no luck. Eventually she seeks an alternate and unorthodox therapy offered by Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush).

The shy, diffident Albert could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while Edward VIII remained King. But with Edward's abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently. It is a beautiful study in the subtle, shifting balances of power and respect.





Directors: Fernando Trueba, Javier Mariscal
Certificate: PG
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: Spain, UK 2010
By: Cinemanx

Chico & Rita

Mon 6 7.30

“Chico and Rita, inspired by a 93 year old pianist Bebo Valdes, is a gorgeous, sexy tribute to lost heroes of Cuban music... You cannot walk down a street with Bebo in Spain. People stop him just to kiss his hand” (*Times*)

Director Fernando Trueba (*Belle Epoque*) takes us on a breathless, turbulent journey with a young Cuban couple chasing their dreams. Rita is a sultry singer. Chico is a talented jazz pianist (whose look is based on old photos of Bebo especially his hands at the piano). Their startling song writing partnership, and turbulent love affair, takes them from Havana, to New York and Las Vegas. It's a thrilling ride, and the two are destined to make an impact on the 1950s jazz scene, until Chico is threatened with deportation...

This epic, spellbinding animation, with its vivid Latin hues, is a glory to behold.

Spanish designer Javier Mariscal provides the beautiful, impressionistic backdrops – a bustling pre-revolution Havana; an impossibly glitzy New York City.

The soundtrack is a masterly, life-affirming selection of classics from luminaries like The Lonious Monk, Cole Porter and Dizzy Gillespie.

“A swaying, sexy dream of a movie” (*Observer*)

“Beautiful, seductive and spellbinding” (*Metro*)

It's hopelessly romantic, heart wrenching in places. A rare gem.

‘Love is a song you never forget...’
 Don't miss it (*research SM*)



Made in Dagenham

Tue 7 7.30, Wed 8 7.30



It could have been Calender Girls 2 with attitude, four letter words, tight sweaters and bras. Instead it's a glorious story of the resistance and resilience of a few women who accidentally find themselves at the forefront of a movement.

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Director: Nigel Cole
Starring: Jaime Winstone, Bob Hoskins, Miranda Richardson, Rosamund Pike, Sally Hawkins
Certificate: 15
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

The Social Network

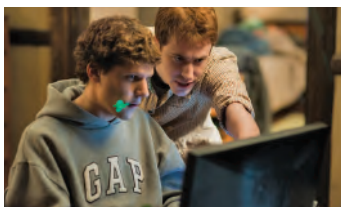
Thu 9 7.30

Director: David Fincher
Starring: Jesse Eisenberg, Justin Timberlake, Andrew Garfield
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Directed by David Fincher (Se7en, Benjamin Button), and adapted by Aaron Sorkin (West Wing, Charlie Wilson's War) from Ben Mezrich's book The Accidental Billionaires, the film tells the story of the dubious beginnings of the phenomenally successful and unerringly irritating Facebook (dubbed in the Box Office: FaceArse and vice versa. It is solely responsible for all double-bookings).

Harvard University, 2003. Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg) is dumped by his girlfriend. As a result, he drunkenly codes a website called "Face Mash" wherein other male students can rate which of two randomly selected college girls is 'hotter'. This site crashes the Harvard network, and his infamy brings Zuckerberg to the attention of wealthy twins Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss (played by Armie Hammer) who ask him to code their 'social networking' site, The Harvard Connection. Unbeknown to them, Zuckerberg is already working on his Facebook prototype; something has to give...

Eisenberg plays Zuckerberg with joyless, passive-aggressive intensity. His character is instantly dislikeable; quite how close this is to the real Zuckerberg (still only 26; the world's youngest billionaire) who cares. "This is an exhilaratingly hyperactive, hyperventilating portrait of an age when Web 2.0 became sexier and more important than politics, art, books – everything. Sorkin and Fincher combine the excitement with a dark, insistent kind of pessimism. Smart work." (*Guardian*) (*research SM*)



Red

Fri 10 7.30



Pensioner suburbanite Frank Moses (Willis) wakes up to a volley of fire from masked hitmen, and as he deals with them one by one, realises his retirement is about to take a detour.

The title stands for 'retired, extremely dangerous', and this knockabout action comedy is a boisterous, getting-the-band-back-together movie as Frank assembles a crew of trigger-happy oldsters to uncover why his distinguished, black-ops past is coming back to haunt him.

It's another geri-actioner in the mould of *The Expendables*. Bruce Willis is the common link, leading retired spooks Freeman, Malkovich and Mirren on one last hurrah. As if that wasn't enough thespian megatonnage, Brian Cox plays their Russian foe-turned-friend and the brilliant Mary-Louise Parker is Willis's love interest. "The script, loosely based on a graphic novel, allows the stars plenty of room to play off each other; so enjoyably, in fact, that it is a disappointment when the joshing stops for yet another bout of bullets, explosions and running pointlessly from place to place." (*Times*)

It's a charming mess, rescued by the knowing gusto of the stars. Beneath its light exterior is not only a neat, if unsubtle, political undercurrent but a rebellious streak.

"It is painting by numbers for people who have trouble with mental arithmetic." (*Guardian*) Sounds like fun. Try it.

Director: Robert Schwentke
Starring: Helen Mirren, Morgan Freeman, Bruce Willis, John Malkovich
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: E1 Films

Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps

Sat 11 7.00

Director: Oliver Stone
Starring: Michael Douglas, Charlie Sheen, Shia LaBeouf, Carey Mulligan
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 133 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Having served his time for insider trading, Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas) was released from prison in 2001, and now, he's making his money writing and lecturing.

His estranged daughter Winnie (Carey Mulligan), is a left-wing blogger; her liberal outlook completely at odds with that of her impossibly capitalist father.

As fate would have it, Winnie is dating an idealistic young Wall Street trader Jake (charisma nil, Shia LaBeouf), who encounters Gekko just as the economy begins to tank. Has Gekko mended his ways behind bars, or is he willing to step over his own daughter for a second shot at the big time...?

Oliver Stone's direction is always more than competent; however his subject matter misses the mark somewhere here. If the film intends to be satirical, it falls short, ending up curiously glorifying speculative trading and its assorted trappings.

"The film offers us the regretful father, the post-crash moralist, and the lizard king with a deadly tongue. Which Gekko should it back?... Stone knows that the devil still has the best tunes, and Douglas looks up for doing his dirty work. But the film's writers have wimped out of giving him his due. Maybe they were having lunch." (*Independent*)

"...As to this sequel's sub-title: well, it may well be true that money never sleeps. But you will." (*Guardian*) (research SM)





Director: Debs Gardner-Paterson
Starring: Roger Nsengiyumva, Sherrie Silver, Eriya Ndayambaje, Yves Dusenge
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 87 mins
Origin: UK/South Africa/Rwanda 2010
By: Warner Brothers



Africa United

Sun 12 6.00

This well-meaning but scrappy British film was shot entirely on location in Rwanda, Burundi and South Africa. It is said to be 'inspired by' (or lifted from) a Hertfordshire writer's award winning play about Africa's obsession with football and the English Premiership. This madly ebullient road movie is a monument to the triumph of hope over experience, and eccentricity over practicality. Five children, mostly from Rwanda, decide to walk 3,000 miles to be at the football World Cup in S.A. Their leader is a terrific character called Dudu (Eriya Ndayambaje). He, his sister and his best friend set off on the wrong bus, start walking and acquire two other strays on their (very picturesque) way through the Dem Rep of Congo, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The acting is patchy but the film is a joy. (*Times*)

Clearly intended as an antidote to the many stories of suffering and recrimination that tend to define the global perception of Africa, Rhidian Brook's screenplay is almost relentlessly upbeat. It's a bit Enid Blyton in their outwitting of the bumbling adult baddies, and it addresses lightly Africa's problems of child soldiers, sex trafficking and HIV, etc. Said to have left grown hardened critics in stifled tears. Essential family outing.



Another Year

**Mon 13 7.30, Tue 14 7.30,
Wed 15 7.30**

Mike Leigh returns, at the top of his game, with another intimate, engaging drama, musing on family, friends, and the nature of contentment.

"Another Year" is set across a single year. Retired couple Tom (Jim Broadbent) and Gerri (Ruth Sheen) tend to their allotment as the seasons pass. Reasonably fulfilled by their careers and their relationship, their steady home attracts family and friends for whom life hasn't been so kind; Tom's friend Ken, an alcoholic; Gerri's NHS colleague - lonely, divorcee Mary (Lesley Manville). As the film progresses with Tom and Gerri's year burdened with the weight of these family friends, the passive-aggression builds...

"Leigh and his cast have created a network of relationships that is more complex than it first appears...perhaps it is that there is a quantum-economy of happiness in any group of people: the happiness of some means unhappiness in others." (*Guardian*)
"Broadbent and Sheen are exquisite in tandem, making Tom and Gerri's brand of coupledness, which is both welcoming and insidiously exclusive, into a blunt fact, something hardened and immutable, like old turf." (*Telegraph*)

"My objective is to make you feel as though you are there, it is really happening and you are inescapably locked in to it." (*Mike Leigh*)

A slow burning, perfectly weighted film. (*research SM*)



Director: Mike Leigh
Starring: Lesley Manville, Jim Broadbent, Ruth Sheen
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 129 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Momentum Pictures



The Ipcress File

Thu 16 7.30



This is one of Michael Caine's best films. Sandwiched as it was between Zulu in 1964 and Alfie in '66 it's the one that brought him to international notice and acclaim.

It still holds up as one of the finest spy-thriller-mysteries of all time, and seems only dated by the cars (and the ease to park in 60's London). The fashion has come full circle.

Plot: A number of leading Western scientists have been kidnapped only to reappear a few days later. Unfortunately, each scientist has been brain washed and is now completely useless. The British send their agent, Harry Palmer, to investigate. Palmer is surprised to be selected for such a mission (considering his past) and believes he has been chosen because he is expendable.

The film was intended as a less extravagant alternative to the James Bond films popular at that time. In contrast to Bond's public school background and playboy lifestyle, Palmer is a Cockney who lives in an East End flat and has to put up with red tape and inter-departmental rivalries. When appointed to the new post, his first question is about a pay rise. I saw it at the pictures first time round. It was brilliant then. I'm hoping it is still. Come and see.

Director: Sidney J Furie
Starring: Michael Caine, Nigel Green, Guy Doleman
Certificate: PG
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: UK 1965
By: Park Circus Films

Burke and Hare

Fri 17 7.30, Sat 18 7.00

Director: John Landis
Starring: Tom Wilkinson, Christopher Lee, Simon Pegg, Andy Serkis, Stephen Merchant
Certificate: 15
Duration: 95 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

John Landis (An American Werewolf in London, The Blues Brothers) directs this black comedy based on the notorious Edinburgh West Port murders of the 1820s.

Simon Pegg and Andy Serkis play Burke and Hare, two Ulstermen living in Edinburgh, who happen upon a get rich quick scheme; providing cadavers, at 3 bob a go, for dissection by pioneering surgeon Dr. Knox. It's not long before the duo are making a fortune, and attracting the attention of the local militia, headed by Captain McClintock (Ronnie Corbett???) intent on stopping them by any means.

Although it never really ventures beyond pantomime, and the obvious slapstick that bodysnatching entails, there are some amusing moments. It's worth it for the lengthy cameo list including a hilarious Paul Whitehouse, Christopher Lee, Ray Harryhausen, and more surprises

"Landis directs like an old pro, cluttering the screen with intriguing little details (surgical tools, scientific equipment, body parts) and displaying a nice line in absurdist comic asides. The humour may be too broad in places but for the most part, 'Burke and Hare' is well-timed and often funny." (*Time Out*)

"Sid James and Charles Hawtrey robbing graves in Carry On Dissecting would have been funnier and rather cheaper."

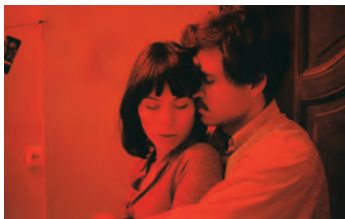
(*Guardian*)

The highlight: Michael Winner being pushed over a cliff. Come just for that. (*research SM*)



Carlos: The Movie

Sun 19 6.00



The Pimpernel of Marxist-Leninist terrorism, the extraordinary and beguiling Carlos is a meticulously researched, but never dull, account of the 30-year terror career of the Venezuelan revolutionary and assassin Ilich Ramírez Sanchez, aka Carlos the Jackal (with a star making turn from Edgar Ramirez. Remembered as the 'Asset' or hitman in The Bourne Ultimatum).

An ideologue with no ideas, left marooned when the tides of history turn against him. The complete version is more than five hours long (there is a shorter version on release) but "with a breakneck pace, rock-laden soundtrack, a fascinating protagonist and full-on action, it's the shortest two and half hours you'll spend in a cinema." (*Times*)

"Covering the period between his joining the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in 1970 and his capture in Sudan in 1994, the film works best when it presents information visually rather than with swathes of ideological discourse." (*Time Out*)

Ramírez plays Carlos as a narcissistic but driven hothead whose deal with the Palestinian liberation movement sours over the years, ultimately cutting him loose as a unwanted exile growing fat in Sudan, and one with an enormous price on his head. Terrorist? Revolutionary? Or just a cynic? This continent-hopping biopic of Carlos the Jackal suggests greed and ego won out over principle. Come and see.

Director: Olivier Assayas
Starring: Édgar Ramírez, Alexander Scheer, Alejandro Arroyo, Ahmad Kaabour
Certificate: 15
Duration: 166 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Optimum Releasing

The Secret in Their Eyes

Mon 20 7.30

Director: Juan Campanella
Starring: Ricardo Darín, Carla Quevedo, Soledad Villamil
Certificate: 18
Duration: 129 mins
Origin: Argentina, Spain 2009
By: Metrodome Distributors

Juan José Campanella's excellent Argentine thriller is genuinely one of the most gripping, absorbing and satisfying films of the year. Well deserving its Oscar over another Rex favourite; A Prophet.

Set in 1999, but told partly in flashbacks to the 1970s, it centres on a retired legal counsellor, Benjamín Espósito (Ricardo Darín), attempting to seek closure on his career, by writing a crime thriller. The basis for his novel is his own entanglement in the case of a young woman's brutal rape and murder, some 25 years before. Enlisting the assistance of his former superior, Irene (Soledad Villamil), from whom Espósito has long hidden his feelings, we are drawn in to the ensuing man-hunt, which includes a tense and superbly executed (if far-fetched) chase sequence inside a football stadium. We become steadily implicated in the grim world of the Junta, and los desaparecidos... The Disappeared.

"Argentina in the 1970s is an inspired setting for a film noir, it's a wonder it hasn't been used more before..."

(*Guardian*)

"Triumphs on two fronts simultaneously, as both a love story and a thriller. Since it's rare enough for a film to succeed even in one such category, this can be considered high praise indeed."

(*Telegraph*) Beside which, it has unexpected twists of humour and his alcoholic friend is priceless. Don't miss.



It's a Wonderful Life

Wed 22 7.30, **Thu 23** 7.30,

Fri 24 6.00



Welcome to our seventh Christmas with the same old irresistible film. (Though it is our 6 year anniversary, it is our 7th 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

Singing In The Rain

Mon 27 6.00

Director: Gene Kelly
Starring: Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor, Gene Kelly
Certificate: U
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: USA 1952
By: British Film Institute

Its 1927, Don Lockwood and Lina Lamont are the darlings of the silent silver screen.

Off screen, Don, aided by his happy-go-lucky friend and piano accompanist, Cosmo Brown (the brilliant Donald O'), has to dodge Lina's romantic overtures, especially when he falls for chorus girl Kathy Selden (sacchrine Debbie Reynolds). With the advent of the 'talkies', Don and Lina's new film will be all singing, dancing and talking! Unfortunately, Lina's voice could scrape a blackboard. Kathy is brought in to secretly dub her voice – seemed like a good idea at the time. Don goes off splashing policemen (one for the gay corner there)... But uh oh when Lina finds out...! Come for her (she's the best thing in it) and of course Gene's big dance, where they had to add milk to the rain so the cameras would pick up the detail of the downpour. Hope it was only one take? Most of all come for the warm innocence of it all and of course, Donald O'Connor's unsurpassed show-biz masterpiece – 'Make em Laugh'. What better thing for all the family on this first Monday of suicide week (day after Boxing day). Don't hesitate – bring the street.



Due Date

Tue 28 7.30



For reasons hardly worth going into, Peter Highman (Robert Downey Jr), a successful, easily irritated architect, is forced to drive from Atlanta, Georgia to Los Angeles, in company with the young, obese Ethan Tremblay (Zach Galifianakis). Peter wants to get home to be with his wife who is about to give birth to their first child. Much like Steve Martin and John Candy in *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*. Ethan is to audition in Hollywood, though Jackass is the only obvious place for his talents.

Peter is dislikable in an understandable way; Ethan is an irredeemable monster of obtuse offensiveness.

Phillips keeps the horrendous journey moving at a decent pace, the scenery is attractive and there are some amusing cameos, most especially from Danny McBride as an angry Iraq war veteran working as a Western Union clerk.

"There are some nice moments, but the comedy mostly doesn't come off and theirs is no double-act." (*Guardian*) Though he thought it "ropey" Mark Kermode liked it more than the *Hangover*, but not that much. But he did say: "Robert D Jnr is the best thing in this, or anything he's in. He alone makes the film worth watching" (*Dr.MK*).

It's 'suicide week. What do you expect? Apologies in advance.

Director: Todd Phillips
Starring: Jamie Foxx, Robert Downey Jr, Michelle Monaghan
Certificate: 15
Duration: 95 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Warner Brothers

The American

Wed 29 7.30

Director: Anton Corbijn
Starring: George Clooney, Bruce Altman, Thekla Reuten
Certificate: 15
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: Italy, USA 2010
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Brilliantly directed by Anton Corbijn (Control) "The American" is a cracking hit-man yarn with a twist, and gorgeous George.

Jack (Clooney) is an assassin, on the run, posing as a photographer, hiding out in the rural Abruzzo mountains in Italy. He is approached by mysterious Mathilde (Thekla Reuten) to build a custom-made, designer rifle for her. After a liaison with a gorgeous local prostitute, Clara (Violante Placido: daughter of Simonetta Stefanelli Michael's 'Appolonia' from *The Godfather*), Jack realises his hideout has been discovered. Who is ruthlessly pursuing him? And why? Some pretty sharp shooting is needed if ice cold Jack is to escape unscathed this time...

As a cold blooded assassin, Clooney's natural wit and easy charm are surplus to requirements here, and he does an excellent, unsettling job as killer-for-hire. In fact, Corbijn suppresses his leading man's crowd-pleasing tricks. Clooney never smiles. Indeed he hardly speaks.

A shocking event in the first five minutes confirms him as utterly ruthless. The director's background as a photographer comes to the fore; the film itself nestled in breathtaking scenery.

"Exquisitely shot, with every frame impeccably composed, *The American* is essentially a European art-house film, you almost forget the predictability of its implausible plot." (*Telegraph*)

"Weirdly refreshing - pretentious mostly in an endearing sort of way." (*Time Out*)



Let Me In

Thu 30 7.30



Let Me In, directed by American Matt Reeves (*Cloverfield*; so be warned) is an unnecessary remake of one of the loveliest films of recent years, Tomas Alfredson's *Let the Right One In* (2008). A story about a pale and bullied teenage boy and his relationship with a vampiric girl, it was an exquisite synthesis of atmospherics and frightful incidents, of tenderness and tragedy. On a housing estate, lives a dark-haired outcast named Owen (Kodi Smit-McPhee), who is being tormented at school. Soon, he makes tentative friends with Abby (Chloe Moretz), who has moved into the next-door apartment with her guardian (Richard Jenkins). They form a bond born of estrangement. But she is stranger than him... The boy is 'the boy' from *The Road* and the girl from *Kick Ass*. Worth seeing for them.

However Mark Kermode is spectacularly animated by the whole remake "Who ever made it, understood the original well enough to know why they shouldn't have remade it... There are no special effects so lets put some in. The original was ambiguous, so let's take out the ambiguity. The two very things which made the original stand out as a piece of original film making" (*Dr MK*) "By contrast, this remake smells of boardrooms and calculating machines." (*Independent*) You decide.

Director: Matt Reeves
Starring: Richard Jenkins, Chloe Begon, Kodi Smit-McPhee
Certificate: 15
Duration: 116 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

The Girl Who Kicked The Hornet's Nest

Fri 31 5.00

Director: Daniel Alfredson
Starring: Lena Endre, Michael Nyqvist, Noomi Rapace
Certificate: 15
Duration: 148 mins
Origin: Denmark, Germany, Sweden 2009
By: Momentum Pictures

"Handier with a golf club than Tiger Woods' wife and tougher to kill than an armour-plated cockroach, Stieg Larsson's Lisbeth Salander has been one of this year's most fascinating discoveries." (*Tot Film*)

Starting immediately where *The Girl/Fire* finished, *Hornet's Nest* kicks off with Salander (Noomi Rapace) under police guard in hospital.

Confining its most forceful character to gurning doesn't initially bode well. But once Noomi is restored to her funky, punky glory, the *Hornets' Nest* buzzes with intrigue.

Co-writers Jonas Frykberg and Ulf Ryberg do a decent job condensing Larsson's door-stopper, while Rapace, seen at one point using a nail gun as a lethal weapon, is once again an indelible screen presence.

Though talky and static in places, *The Hornet's Nest* satisfyingly wraps up an engrossing trilogy, setting the bar high for David Fincher's imminent remake(s). As ever, the unique Noomi Rapace and the engrossing Michael Nyqvist are the aces in the pack. So glad we are able to squeeze the third and last into 2010.

It follows into January.



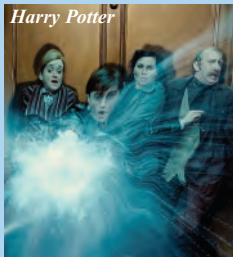
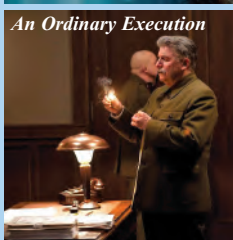
COMING SOON

New releases

An Ordinary Execution
Of Gods and Men
Harry Potter and The
Deathly Hallows
The Tourist

Back by demand

Made in Dagenham
Secret in Their Eyes
The American
The Girl Who Kicked The
Hornet's Nest
The Town

The Tourist*Harry Potter**An Ordinary Execution**Of Gods and Men*

DECEMBER FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	Wed	THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT	2.00, 7.30
2	Thu	THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT	2.00, 7.30
3	Fri	MADE IN DAGENHAM	7.30
4	Sat	ALPHA AND OMEGA	2.00
4	Sat	PREVIEW: ANIMAL KINGDOM	7.00
5	Sun	PREVIEW: THE KING'S SPEECH	6.00
6	Mon	CHICO & RITA	2.00, 7.30
7	Tue	MADE IN DAGENHAM	12.30, 7.30
8	Wed	MADE IN DAGENHAM	2.00, 7.30
9	Thu	RED	2.00
9	Thu	THE SOCIAL NETWORK	7.30
10	Fri	RED	7.30
11	Sat	LEGEND OF THE GUARDIANS	2.00
11	Sat	WALL STREET	7.00
12	Sun	AFRICA UNITED	6.00
13	Mon	ANOTHER YEAR	2.00, 7.30
14	Tue	ANOTHER YEAR.	12.30, 7.30
15	Wed	ANOTHER YEAR	2.00, 7.30
16	Thu	THE IPCRESS FILE	2.00, 7.30
17	Fri	BURKE AND HARE	7.30
18	Sat	MUPPETS CHRISTMAS CAROL	2.00
18	Sat	BURKE AND HARE	7.00
19	Sun	CARLOS	6.00
20	Mon	WHITE CHRISTMAS	2.00
20	Mon	THE SECRET IN THEIR EYES	7.30
21	Tue	A CHRISTMAS CAROL	12.30
21	Tue	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	7.30
22	Wed	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	2.00, 7.30
23	Thu	POLAR EXPRESS	2.00
23	Thu	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	7.30
24	Fri	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	6.00
25	Sat	CINEMA CLOSED	
26	Sun	CINEMA CLOSED	
27	Mon	CINEMA CLOSED	
27	Mon	SINGIN' IN THE RAIN	6.00
28	Tue	THE RED BALLOON AND THE ILLUSIONIST	12.30
28	Tue	DUE DATE	7.30
29	Wed	LEGEND OF THE GUARDIANS	2.00
29	Wed	THE AMERICAN	7.30
30	Thu	MAMMA MIA	2.00
30	Thu	LET ME IN	7.30
31	Fri	THE GIRL WHO KICKED THE HORNET'S NEST	5.00



DECEMBER MATINEES

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

The Kids Are All Right

Wed 1 2.00, Thu 2 2.00



Julianne Moore and Annette Bening star as Jules and Nic, in this touching, off-beat comedy by Lisa Cholodenko (High Art, Laurel Canyon).

Jules and Nic, as a lesbian couple, have both given birth to children, via the same sperm donor. When the kids are of age, eldest Joni (Mia Wasikowska) asks her mother to contact the sperm bank so her and her brother can meet their biological father, Paul (Mark Ruffalo). In turn, his presence disrupts the unconventional family unit as the kids find themselves drawn to his easygoing style, and to the dismay of Nic, so does Jules... It's a poignant, well crafted film, transcending "kooky" cinematic lesbianism; it's both thoughtful and refreshing. Cholodenko's scripting is effortlessly natural, and whilst the subject matter may not touch exactly on experiences shared by all, the universality of musings on growing up/old are never tiresome when done well.

"Cholodenko has not only made a film about lesbians as ordinary, mainstream people, or a good movie about lesbians, or even a smart movie: she has made a great film." (*Guardian*)

"Writer-director Lisa Cholodenko knows that real life is messier than that, but her empathy and lightness of touch ensure this wonderfully realistic film is both deeply affecting and riotously funny." (*Time Out*) Don't miss. (research SM)

Director: Lisa Cholodenko
Starring: Annette Bening, Julianne Moore, Mark Ruffalo,
Certificate: 15
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Alpha and Omega

Sat 4 2.00

Directors: Anthony Bell, Ben Gluck
Starring: Dennis Hopper, Justin Long, Danny Glover
Certificate: U
Duration: 88 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Lionsgate Films UK

An all-star cast provides the vocal talent for this cutesy, coming of age, animated tale (featuring, strangely, Dennis Hopper's last role).

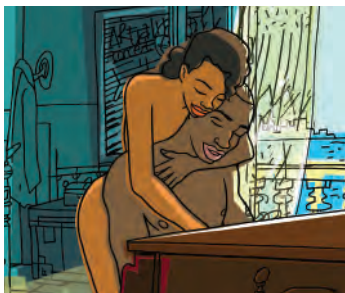
Set in the craggy Canadian Rockies, Kate (Hayden Panettiere) and Humphrey (Justin Long) are two young wolves from very opposite ends of the social order. Kate, daughter of Western pack alpha Winston (Danny Glover) is not destined for a future with Humphrey, an affable, happy go lucky, low ranking Omega wolf, on whom she harbours a secret crush. She must marry Garth (Chris Carmack), son of Eastern pack alpha Tony (Dennis Hopper), to unite the families and end their Montague/Capulet style rivalry. However, when park rangers tranquilise Kate and Humphrey, and re-locate them to a park in rural Idaho, they face an arduous road trip home in a race against time to stop the two packs from going to war and destroying all they hold dear... It's simple stuff, both visually, and in terms of the story, but there's plenty to keep the little ones amused for the duration. Many may recognise one or two direct lifts from "The Lion King" – see the stampede scene – but ultimately it's harmless, if slightly toothless, fun.

"...downhill chases, freight trains, grizzly bears, romance and much howling at the moon move the story at a fine lick." (*Independent*) (Simon Messenger SM)



Chico & Rita

Mon 6 2.00



“Chico and Rita, inspired by a 93 year old pianist Bebo Valdes, is a gorgeous, sexy tribute to lost heroes of Cuban music... You cannot walk down a street with Bebo in Spain. People stop him just to kiss his hand” (Times)

Director Fernando Trueba (Belle Epoque) takes us on a breathless, turbulent journey with a young Cuban couple chasing their dreams. Rita is a sultry singer. Chico is a talented jazz pianist (whose look is based on old photos of Bebo especially his hands at the piano). Their startling song writing partnership, and turbulent love affair, takes them from Havana, to New York and Las Vegas. It's a thrilling ride, and the two are destined to make an impact on the 1950s jazz scene, until Chico is threatened with deportation...

This epic, spellbinding animation, with its vivid Latin hues, is a glory to behold. Spanish designer Javier Mariscal provides the beautiful, impressionistic backdrops – a bustling pre-revolution Havana; an impossibly glitzy New York City. The soundtrack is a masterly, life-affirming selection of classics from luminaries like The Ionious Monk, Cole Porter and Dizzy Gillespie.

“A swaying, sexy dream of a movie” (Observer)

“Beautiful, seductive and spellbinding” (Metro)

It's hopelessly romantic, heart wrenching in places. A rare gem.

‘Love is a song you never forget...’ Don't miss it (research SM)

Directors: Fernando Trueba, Javier Mariscal
Certificate: PG
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: Spain, UK 2010
By: Cinemanx

Made In Dagenham

Tue 7 12.30, **Wed 8** 2.00

Director: Nigel Cole
Starring: Jaime Winstone, Bob Hoskins, Miranda Richardson, Rosamund Pike, Sally Hawkins
Certificate: 15
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

It could have been Calender Girls 2 with attitude, four letter words, tight sweaters and bras. Instead it's a glorious story of the resistance and resilience of a few women who accidentally find themselves at the forefront of a movement.

Outraged by despicably chauvinistic bosses and union reps, Rita O'Grady (Hawkins) sparks a mass walk out at the Ford Dagenham plant in 1968. A media frenzy follows, directly resulting in the groundbreaking Equal Pay Act 1970. It's a gloriously nostalgic wallow in working class 1960s Britain. In the best traditions with its ribald humour, it's been dubbed “Carry on Cortina” by film journalists, complete with Bob Hoskins wiping his furrowed brow and muttering in cockney.

“Politically it's light, but its mission is honest. It highlights an important episode in a style that you imagine would appeal to the same women it honours” (Time Out)

“Offhandedly touching and safe as houses, it's the breeziest film you can imagine about risking everything for a fairer slice of the pie.” (Telegraph)

When producer Stephen Woolley caught an episode of The Reunion on Radio 4 about the women who started the strike 30 years earlier, he went to work on perhaps the best, if not the only decent, film he's made. (research SM)



Red

Thu 9 2.00



Pensioner suburbanite Frank Moses (Willis) wakes up to a volley of fire from masked hitmen, and as he deals with them one by one, realises his retirement is about to take a detour.

The title stands for 'retired, extremely dangerous', and this knockabout action comedy is a boisterous, getting-the-band-back-together movie as Frank assembles a crew of trigger-happy oldsters to uncover why his distinguished, black-ops past is coming back to haunt him.

It's another geri-actioner in the mould of *The Expendables*. Bruce Willis is the common link, leading retired spooks Freeman, Malkovich and Mirren on one last hurrah. As if that wasn't enough thespian megatonnage, Brian Cox plays their Russian foe-turned-friend and the brilliant Mary-Louise Parker is Willis's love interest. "The script, loosely based on a graphic novel, allows the stars plenty of room to play off each other; so enjoyably, in fact, that it is a disappointment when the joshing stops for yet another bout of bullets, explosions and running pointlessly from place to place." (*Times*)

It's a charming mess, rescued by the knowing gusto of the stars. Beneath its light exterior is not only a neat, if unsubtle, political undercurrent but a rebellious streak.

"It is painting by numbers for people who have trouble with mental arithmetic." (*Guardian*) Sounds like fun. Try it.

Director: Robert Schwentke
Starring: Helen Mirren, Morgan Freeman, Bruce Willis, John Malkovich
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: E1 Films

Legend Of The Guardians

Sat 11 2.00, Wed 29 2.00

Director: Zack Snyder
Starring: Emily Barclay, Abbie Cornish, Essie Davis
Certificate: PG
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Warner Brothers

Film executives love one-line pitches that reference other films. Alien was 'Jaws in space'. 'Speed was Die Hard on a bus'. This Legend of the Guardians should have been pitched as 'The Lord of The rings with owls'.

It's just about enough of a twist to breathe life into a second-hand fantasy plot in which a young owllet seeks out the mythical warrior Guardians to save the Owl Kingdom from a baddie who enslaves young owls, build an army of bats and develop a magical super-weapon. There's scarcely an original idea or character, but the real draw is the animation.

From the makers of *Happy Feet*, and with the director Zack Snyder of *300* and *Watchmen* fame bringing his trademark slow motion to the action scenes, the film looks stunning. You're transfixed by every ruffled feather, and the many flight scenes are thrillingly vertiginous. "The battles may be a little scary for your smallest hatchlings, as well as the sub-plot in which the owl's older brother joins the Dark side, but it makes a fine family film that even young teens will enjoy – my word, it must be good." (*Times*)

A must see family film for the beginning and end of December. For little ones, there's always the distraction of a well-timed chocolate button.





Another Year

Mon 13 2.00, **Tue 14** 12.30,
Wed 15 2.00

Mike Leigh returns, at the top of his game, with another intimate, engaging drama, musing on family, friends, and the nature of contentment.

"Another Year" is set across a single year. Retired couple Tom (Jim Broadbent) and Gerri (Ruth Sheen) tend to their allotment as the seasons pass. Reasonably fulfilled by their careers and their relationship, their steady home attracts family and friends for whom life hasn't been so kind; Tom's friend Ken, an alcoholic; Gerri's NHS colleague - lonely, divorcee Mary (Lesley Manville). As the film progresses with Tom and Gerri's year burdened with the weight of these family friends, the passive-aggression builds...

"Leigh and his cast have created a network of relationships that is more complex than it first appears...perhaps it is that there is a quantum-economy of happiness in any group of people: the happiness of some means unhappiness in others." (*Guardian*)
"Broadbent and Sheen are exquisite in tandem, making Tom and Gerri's brand of coupledom, which is both welcoming and insidiously exclusive, into a blunt fact, something hardened and immutable, like old turf." (*Telegraph*)

"My objective is to make you feel as though you are there, it is really happening and you are inescapably locked in to it." (*Mike Leigh*)

A slow burning, perfectly weighted film. (*research SM*)



Director: Mike Leigh
Starring: Lesley Manville, Jim Broadbent, Ruth Sheen
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 129 mins
Origin: UK 2010
By: Momentum Pictures



The Ipcress File

Thu 16 2.00



This is one of Michael Caine's best films. Sandwiched as it was between Zulu in 1964 and Alfie in '66 it's the one that brought him to international notice and acclaim.

It still holds up as one of the finest spy-thriller-mysteries of all time, and seems only dated by the cars (and the ease to park in 60's London). The fashion has come full circle.

Plot: A number of leading Western scientists have been kidnapped only to reappear a few days later. Unfortunately, each scientist has been brain washed and is now completely useless. The British send their agent, Harry Palmer, to investigate. Palmer is surprised to be selected for such a mission (considering his past) and believes he has been chosen because he is expendable.

The film was intended as a less extravagant alternative to the James Bond films popular at that time. In contrast to Bond's public school background and playboy lifestyle, Palmer is a Cockney who lives in an East End flat and has to put up with red tape and inter-departmental rivalries. When appointed to the new post, his first question is about a pay rise. I saw it at the pictures first time round. It was brilliant then. I'm hoping it is still. Come and see.

Director: Sidney J Furie
Starring: Michael Caine, Nigel Green, Guy Doleman
Certificate: PG
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: UK 1965
By: Park Circus Films

Muppets Christmas

Carol Sat 18 2.00

Director: Brian Henson
Starring: Michael Caine, Kermit Frog, Miss Piggy
Certificate: U
Duration: 85 mins
Origin: USA 1992
By: Park Circus Films

"Bah humbug", storms Michael Caine as he takes on the part of miserable old miser Ebenezer Scrooge in "The Muppet Christmas Carol".

It's a role he tackles with admirable grimness, despite being surrounded by hordes of Muppets for the duration. Based on the Dickens novel "A Christmas Carol", this is a liberal but fun adaptation of a classic. The beak-nosed Gonzo takes on the role of Dickens and narrates the tale, along with the help of Rizzo the Rat. They take us on a journey through a dank London, filled with all your favourite Muppets and a lot of talking vegetables!

Important components of the Dickens story remain, with Scrooge presiding over the destinies of those who cannot meet their debts. Not only is he unmerciful in the light of Christmas, but he won't even allow his fuzzy employees an extra piece of coal for the fire.

It all turns out to be quite touching as Muppet movies go. the first produced after the death creator Jim Henson. You'll be busy looking out for the assorted Muppets. They're all there if you look hard enough. There's a (in-joke) shop called Micklewhite. Great fun and our first Christmas matinee this year.



White Christmas

Mon 20 2.00



This stunning restoration from Park Circus is a reminder that amid the certain gloom that digital is taking over projection boxes, there's a company restoring old film stock to make 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, after joining forces with a sister act (Gorgeous George's aunt, Rosemary Clooney and the stunning Vera Ellen) they 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 be 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 and grey with scrubbed necks. Don't miss.

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

A Christmas Carol

Tue 21 12.30

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

An equally disturbing, if spectacular, retelling of the original Dickens' morality fable, this fantastically, semi-animated, tale remains true to the original Dickens classic.

It has an unrecognisable Jim Carey, with digital wobbling to his already rubber face, as the miser of all miserable misers, Ebenezer Scrooge enduring one single, sleepless and terrifying 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) it stays true to the Dickens almost word for word. It is a shame Dickens missed it on the big screen He may have loved the scale in a medium he could never have imagined 130 years ago.

"The backdrop of wintry London town is a richly detailed box of delights packed with treats as a bulging Christmas stocking." (*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*)

Don't miss.



It's A Wonderful Life

Wed 22 2.00



Welcome to our seventh Christmas with the same old irresistible film. (Though it is our 6 year anniversary, it is our 7th 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

Polar Express

Thu 23 2.00

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

When a doubting boy takes an extraordinary train ride to the North Pole to find Father Christmas, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery.

"The wonder of life never fades for those who believe..." Never mind that, come

for the heart stopping ride to find Santa. Polar Express, with its eye-popping, animated photo-realism, tells a touching family story, based upon Chris Van Allsburg's best seller. Tom Hanks is the voice (and the unfortunate, stern face) of The Conductor, who stays in charge, knows everything, but lets the children make up their own minds about each other. It is a weird, quasi-educational tale of 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 too!

At its best, it is a heart-in-the-mouth, fantastical adventure from start to finish; spectacular on the big screen, with a very happy ending. In six short years it has become an essential part of the Rex Christmas programme. Don't miss it as a family, but beware, tiny ones (under 7s) will be thrilled but a little frightened.



The Illusionist with Red Balloon

Tue 28 12.30



Chomet's film captures and sustains a beautifully mournful tone. It also brings to life the most detailed and geographically precise hand-drawn landscapes, standing up to Studio Ghibli's finest works. Dialogue is virtually non-existent. Chomet includes the occasional monosyllabic grunt or exclamation in French or English but there are no expository scenes where the characters explain their motivations. "This, of course, is utterly in keeping with the spirit of Jacques Tati, whose comedy was based around gesture, music and sound editing, not lengthy speeches." (Independent) It is beautiful, mesmerising and a little heartbreaking. It will be loved by the whole family. Don't miss.

The Red Balloon (1956) is one of the most beautiful short films ever made. Filmed entirely in the picturesque back streets and narrow parisienne alleys of the Old Menilmotant district, The Red Balloon has been acclaimed throughout the world as an immortal masterpiece.

Director: Neil Burger / Albert Lamorisse
Starring: Red Balloon - Pascal Lamorisse, Georges Sellier
Certificate: PG / U
Duration: 80 / 34 mins
Origin: France 2010 / 1956
By: Warner Brothers / Park Circus

Mamma Mia

Thu 30 2.00

Director: Phyllida Lloyd
Starring: Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan, Colin Firth, Christine Baranski, Julie Walters
Certificate: PG
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

A must to tip you into 'suicide week'. The story's fluffy and the music's beige, but the actors go for it and throw themselves at the terrible script, making the whole a marginally less irritating affair. They're having far too much fun for their age. To add further insult... the sky is blue the whole time! Come, sing along and dance in the aisles.



CHILTERN HIGH SPEED RAILINK PROTEST



What a great event the rally against the High Speed Railway turned out to be. On a cold, bright November Sunday huge crowds filled the meadow behind Gt Missenden High Street. I knew from the flyer, there would be speakers and a school play.

I was curious to see how it would work, how many would come, and what might happen.

I was hoping to miss the school play, expecting some terrible dumb-show. How else could it work in an open field? I wasn't looking forward to politicians either, but hoped somebody with great authority would stand up and tell me everything I needed to know, with more than a hint of how to hinder and stop it. This great authority turned out to be the children in that school play and they were on first!

I'd forgotten about radio-microphones and easy to read banners. Luckily too, it was mercifully short, but said it all. Needless to say I was able to skip the politicians.

Here follows a reduced transcript, but all their own words. As performed by children from Great Missenden Combined School. 7th November 2010

SAM: "This is the 10 o'clock news. The Government has made an important announcement. The new high-speed railway line from London to Birmingham is going to be built through the Chilterns. It will cut through some of the most beautiful countryside in Britain. Local residents are extremely angry. They say that their homes are being destroyed for a railway we can't afford and don't need. Let's go over to our local reporter."



JESS: "Well, here I am in the beautiful Chilterns village of Great Missenden. Why are you here today, sir?"

ROBERT: "We're here to let people know that we don't want HS2 to be built."

JESS: "Why? Surely the country needs it?"

FELIX: "It's going to cost 33 billion pounds. Yet we may have to sack teachers, dinner ladies and rubbish collectors because of the budget cuts."

FREDDIE: "And the government still hasn't published its environmental impact report. HS2 Ltd's own figures say the railway won't make a difference to the environment."

JESS: "And what do you think?"

MATTHEW: "My house is going to be knocked down. There's going to be a new flyover. The roads around my home are going to go."

WILLIAM & MAX: "There's going to be a train every two minutes, with speeds of 250 kilometres an hour. They'll be unbelievably loud. 95 decibels."

JASMINE: "This is an area of outstanding natural beauty. Great

Missenden is surrounded by ancient woodland. The trees are growing in soil that's never been disturbed by man. It's a really important habitat for lots of plants and animals and, once it's gone, it's gone forever."

SAM: "Here in the studio with me is the Minister for Transport. Minister, can you tell us why Britain needs this new railway?"

JO: "Well, you'll be able to get from London to Birmingham really, really quickly. We want to get more people and more freight travelling by rail not road. This is good for business. This is the 'green' choice for the future."

SAM: "How much greener is this option?"

JO: "Er. Well. We haven't actually worked that out yet."

SAM: "Well, thank you, minister. We'll leave you now so you can go back to playing with your train set. Oops! I mean planning your new railway."

The grown-ups turn next month. They might not be half as useful, but if we are to stop it, this campaign must keep up with the speed they will go to push it through. Don't miss a trick. There will be many.

Don't think for a moment the track will look like this. There'll be 250 mtr clearance on both sides of two tracks with all the concrete banking needed to make it 'safe'.



SIGN OF THE TIMES



Manor Street. Okay we have known for ages the old HCC day-centre site was to be turned into 14 houses “with associated parking”. So let me draw your attention to the statutory notices for any planning application. You’ll notice, compared to the rather regal and instantly trustworthy developers board in serious black & white, the council notices are a little feeble. Not only are they shabby but they’re tiny. Why? Why aren’t they at least as big as WE Black’s phone number? Filthy little orange signs have never been good enough. What’s wrong with neon three feet high? If it wasn’t so cowardly it would be laughable, but it is, so it’s not.

UK FILM COUNCIL

Here follows a couple of clauses from the United Kingdom Film Council's (UKFC) contract for digital projection, which we have finally agreed to be installed at the Rex in early December.

Clause 1.3 Interpretation

1.3.3 "words denoting the singular shall include the plural and vice versa, words denoting gender shall include every gender, and words denoting persons shall include corporations and vice versa..."

Copied verbatim above and below, these contract clauses might give you some idea of why the Film Council has pulled its own curtains. Among other reasons for its demise might be its embarrassing initials: a nauseating copy of the snide, campaign acronym used by French Connection throughout the 1990s. Which you might remember saturated every tee-shirt and bag on every high and low street across the world. If such a solid institution as the Film Council is so bereft of imagination that it must copy a commercial slogan, then it deserves fair criticism. The grant-aid hoops through which any film project has had to jump, would cause more than enough reason to re-arrange the letters. The latest Anglo-American blockbuster: The Kings Speech is said to be the UK Film Council's swan song. Has it really financed this massive Harvey Weinstein production? Yes it has. Yet another good

reason for its demise; ie poor judgement. Perhaps it might now consider selling off its redundant initials to the England football team. Maybe pay off a few redundancies?

Sorry if this sounds bitter, especially in the light of it providing us with digital projection in its final throes. But it and its Lottery partner has been little use to us so far. This is only biting the hand that has thrown a few last crumbs.

Clause 5 Undertakings

5.3 "If at any time during the Term, there is an Update (which would increase the Call-off Charges or adversely affect the functionality of the Call-off Equipment and/or the Call-off Services) and which UKFC and the Contractor agree in accordance with (a) the Call-off Contract and (b) the Change Control Procedure in the Framework Agreement (a copy of which is set out in the Call-off Contract), then the Approved Cinema must either accept or reject such Update within 20 Business Days of being notified of it (and the impact on the Call-Off Charges, Call-off Equipment or the Call-off Services) by UKFC do not receive such notification then the Approved Cinema will be deemed to have accepted such Update."

The box office witches say:

"These clauses make more sense than any of your write-ups in the programme."



HAPPY CHRISTMAS
from all of us at

THE-REX

AN ABL (ADVANCED BOOKING LIST) IS NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS...

It lasts the whole of 2011 (about eleven months longer than the dog). Just a thought. There are a few spaces left. If you're at a loose end, buy a loved one an ABL (or even somebody you don't like) to ensure you either get the advantage too or be happy to see them go on their own...?

Please ask for details on the admin line:
01442 877999.

It's not as silly as it seems and might make a really special present.

WATCH YOUR STEP...



The Odyssey cinema has been granted a stall on the historic St Albans market. So come and find us on the market square, starting Saturdays, early December.

Mind the step. What step? Oh that step which used to be a step but now it's a barrier.

A temporary and ugly, 'temporary-barrier' at that. Just above the nicely maintained First world war sandbags, the sign on the fetching cow-pat green barrier, reads Hertfordshire County Council. It's like an old IRA warning, but without the warning. Herts CC just planted their device months ago, named themselves, and have never been seen since. Pity it didn't go off. At a guess, it might be something to do with the pavement drop on the other side.

If it is thought to be a hazard, what's wrong with painting it black and white like a zebra crossing? Haven't they noticed the new hazard created between the device and the lamppost, ie that tight gap? It's trivial in the general scheme of things. It's not a cholera infested swamp, after all. Herts CC get off your arse, and don't blame the cuts. They haven't hit yet.