

THE
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THE AWAKENING
DECEMBER 2011...

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

DECEMBER 2011 Issue 81
www.therexberkhamsted.com



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The Rex
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www.therexberkhamsted.com

BEST IN DECEMBER



**Our 7th Anniversary weekend
 two confirmed one to go...**

Special previews 3rd & 5th,
 Motorcycle Diaries 4th

FILMS OF THE MONTH



**Hugely enjoyable, honey-marinated fairytale
 The Help**

Tue 6/Wed 7/Tue 13 7.30. USA 2011



**Enchanting, beautiful and quite believable
 Las Acacias**

Wed 14 7.30. Argentina/Spain 2010



**Plenty to keep incurable romantics happy
 Romantics Anonymous**

Thu 29 7.30. France 2011

SOME FLEETING MEMORIES OF THE YEAR

Another great change for the greater good of all this year was the demise of the postman's bike followed by the closure of the sorting office in the centre of town. Your post is collected from the town pillar-boxes as usual. Instead of being deposited round the corner to be sorted and biked out the next day, it goes to Maylands Ave the other end of Hemel, six miles away. Whereupon it is sorted, then brought back by van to within feet of the post box emptied yesterday, for posting through your door. And the bikes have gone. The dumb, short-sightedness, waste, stupidity and sheer bad manners of the faceless right-thinking accountants at Whitehall and the post office, makes me think fondly of lynch-mobs.



Dear Mr Birtchnell,
We are sorry you closed your polished counters of gabardine and tweed and matching socks. We are sorry you sold it to people who didn't look after it. They let it fall down, in fact, right under the nose of the High Street. Did it jump or was it pushed is a question not only left unanswered but left unasked. It seems nobody in authority has asked a single probing question. Yet we all know a building with floors strong enough to hold corduroy for a 100 years or so is unlikely to fall over in the middle of a mild January night. Funny how things happen. Faithfully JH



When people say ‘welcome to the real world’, it’s a kind of threat, that if our world hasn’t got joll-heads with huge dogs and armed to the teeth with every blade Saltmarsh sells, then our world is somehow unreal. No, that world is a terrible nightmare, and nightmares aren’t real. My street is. The beautiful Alford Arms (above) is real. Thomas Coram’s lovely shiny hall is real. The threat of 1000 new houses near the playground is real. The surreal and unreal is the tiny sign inviting people to comment on the development. As you can see it worked. Nobody came! But the ‘smilers’ ticked their ‘consultation box’. That’s real too, and will bite like an ugly dog if plans are literally bulldozed through. Idyllic is my reality. I have chosen to live in it. Leave it alone.





Three different worlds, each irresistible: The Odyssey wrecked, but packed with very important people longing for it to be beautiful again, which it will. Cannes harbour during the Film Fest in May. Only stayed five magical days, left the boats there and came home on the bus. Thirdly, The Rex bar deep with fragrant beauties and nobody to serve them. Stick around, we'll get it right. Nice sweet peas though.



FAREWELL, AU REVOIR, GOODNIGHT... 2011



Ashley Green village cemetery

Some too young, others old, done their time? Most we'll never see again outside our memories and dreams, others will live forever, immortalised on the screen or record. When it was his turn, Roald Dahl's is said to have told his children. "I'm not scared, just I will miss you all so much."



Anna Massey

The lovely
Claire Olney
from Station Rd
born 1933.
Died November
2011



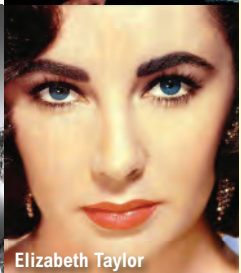
Michael Garrick



Pete Postlethwaite



Jane Russell



Elizabeth Taylor



Steve Jobs



Amy Winehouse



Peter Falk



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

The Ides Of March

Thu 1 7.30, Fri 2 7.30



Man of the moment Ryan Gosling is brilliant in three very different films out now (Drive is missing from Dec). He stars, alongside the film's director George Clooney, in this taut political thriller. Clooney is Mike Morris, a popular governor on the cusp of victory in a major Ohio primary, a victory which would almost guarantee his nomination as Democratic presidential candidate, and bring him within groping distance of the White House. His press secretary Stephen Myers (Gosling) is responsible for keeping the campaign trail on track; all is going swimmingly until Myers accidentally uncovers news which could lay a fatal blow to Morris' chances.

A thrilling question of loyalties carries the film beautifully...

Clooney proves that he's becoming as confident behind the lens as he is in front of it, yet perhaps unexpectedly, Gosling takes the plaudits with his wide-eyed portrayal of a youngster cutting his teeth on the seamier side of politics.

"A political thriller exploring themes of loyalty, ambition and the gap between public ideals and private fallibility, its solid entertainment also engages the brain." (*Telegraph*)

"The points made about politics by *The Ides of March* are valid, if a little obvious: ugly things go on behind the scenes and people in the game are shits. Who would have guessed?" (*Time Out*) (*Simon M*) Don't miss.

Director: George Clooney
Starring: Ryan Gosling, Paul Giamatti, George Clooney, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Evan Rachel Wood, Marisa Tomei
Certificate: 15
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: eOne Films

ANNIVERSARY FILM

The Artist

Sat 3 7.00

At going to press the *Artist* is still to be confirmed, or not. Its distribution and release arrangements are somewhat delicate. So if we do get it, we will owe huge thanks to those who have pushed so hard behind the scenes to get it for us. If not, we thank them anyway, and we'll have it in February. It was a real treat, even a privilege to see it on the red carpet screen at Cannes. You'll love it too. The following gives little away or teases. Michel Hazanavicius and his star Jean Dujardin are well known in France for their affectionate James Bond (Cairo) spoofs, and now they cross to 1920s California for a loving recreation of a Hollywood on the verge of sound. It's a film about cinema that also has a heart: it moves between funny and sad and turns the dawn of the sound age into a personal tragedy. It's lovingly corny, great fun, beautifully observed and respectful. You wouldn't know it's essentially a French enterprise, although Hazanavicius offers a witty nod to the film's provenance in its final scene, reminding us that, yes, so many of the great silent Hollywood movies were the creative vision of Europeans who crossed the Atlantic. If all fails we'll find something fabulous, yet to be talked about! So book anyway.



Motorcycle Diaries

Sun 4 6.00



"This is not a tale of heroic feats. It is about two lives running parallel for a while..."

A moving and life-affirming true story with surprising and understated comic moments.

I defy you not to fall in love with Alberto. Gael Garcia Bernal's Ernesto 'Che' is beautiful, passionate and as earnest as his name but it is Rodrigo De La Serna's Alberto who will steal your heart.

It tells the story of their journey in 1951 from Argentina to Peru on an old 600cc Norton "The Mighty One" and how it changed their lives... and consequently the whole the world ten years later. This remarkable piece of world cinema has had its own momentum. It was in our very first programme in Dec 2004 (produced by Robert Redford). It went on to be screened every month for two years, finally closing in April 2006. Every show sold out; all by word of mouth. Even when it was withdrawn, requests for it didn't stop. Over 9,000 people came to see it here at The Rex.

We boasted to run it until everybody had seen it! Now, so a few more can, here it is back for one more ride to celebrate our seventh anniversary. You will see Alberto Granado right at the end watching Che's aeroplane take off. He died in Cuba on 5th March aged 88. It will be a long ride till the next time, so don't dare miss it now.

Director: Walter Salles
Starring: Gael Garcia Bernal, Rodrigo De la Serna
Certificate: 15
Duration: 126 mins
Origin: Argentina, UK 2004
By: Pathe Distribution

ANNIVERSARY FILM

Well Diggers Daughter Mon 5 7.30

Director: Daniel Auteuil
Starring: Daniel Auteuil, Sabine Azema, Kad Merad
Certificate: PG
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: France 2011
By: Pathe Distribution

Not due for UK release for another week, It is again a great privilege for the Rex to have a preview of one of the loveliest films of the year, as part of our 7th anniversary pleasure. It is also fitting that it's French and it's Monday. So welcome to both.

Daniel Auteuil's directorial debut sees him waltzing headlong into Marcel Pagnol's Provence of the 1940s with this sun-bleached tale of salty, lionised bumpkins, dastardly shop owners, inexperienced daughters and fighter pilots whose morals are as loose as their flies.

It's tale of love across the class divide, with the beautiful 18-year-old Patricia (the ridiculously pretty Astrid Bergès-Frisbey), the devoted daughter of Provençal well digger Pascal (Auteuil himself), falling for a dashing pilot Jacques (Nicolas Duvauchelle) on the eve of WWII.

An early mixed review: "Hardly what you'd call envelope-pushing for someone who's worked with Michael Haneke, but there's a broad appeal to be gleaned from its antiquated charm, modest focus and a clutch of ripe, old-school character turns" (*Time Out*)

It will appear again in our Jan/February programme for a short run. So if you miss it now, it won't be long.



The Help

Tue 6 7.30, Wed 7 7.30



This hugely enjoyable, honey-marinated adaptation of Kathryn Stockett's novel struck a chord with US audiences although exactly which chord is up for grabs.

Set in 1960s Jackson, Mississippi, the film tells how Skeeter Phelan (Emma Stone), a young, white would-be writer, convinces two black maids, Aibileen and Minny (Viola Davis and Octavia Spencer), to work secretly with her on a book.

Skeeter wants the maids to reveal, anonymously, the hardships routinely inflicted on them by the wealthy families whose food they cook and whose children they raise – thereby winning them a valuable step towards true racial equality and the girl, a big fat publishing deal.

“Let’s clear those caveats out of the way first. The Help is a broad southern melodrama that implicitly frames the push for racial equality as the tale of oppressed African-Americans who are given their voice by a lone white do-gooder.

“While the story takes place at a time of seismic social upheaval, director Tate Taylor’s screenplay niftily sidesteps politics for specific personal injustices. In short, The Help not only has its cake it eats it. This is as brazen an Oscar-baiter as we’re likely to see this year” (*Telegraph*)

“Viewed as an airbrushed, Dettol-heavy fairytale, however, it’s rousingly effective.” (*Guardian*)

“It’s corny, but it mostly works.” (*Empire*)
Watch out for some creamy Oscar speeches.

Director: Tate Taylor
Starring: Bryce Howard, Jessica Chastain, Viola Davis, Emma Stone
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 146 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL

The Awakening

Thu 8 7.30

Director: Nick Murphy
Starring: Rebecca Hall, Dominic West, Imelda Staunton
Certificate: 15
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Optimum Releasing

England, 1921. With the country still wracked with post-War grief, and reeling from the effects of the subsequent influenza epidemic, the Spiritualist movement has swept across the nation, with hoaxers preying on those still yearning for a response from those lost in the trenches.

Florence Cathcart a confirmed rationalist and “de-bunker” of all things spooky is called by schoolmaster Robert Mallory to investigate the mysterious death of a young boy at a remote boarding school, a death apparently caused by a malevolent child-like spirit lurking within the school. Cathcart, naturally sceptical, uses all manner of sophisticated equipment in an attempt to solve the mystery but, inevitably, events take a turn...

“While The Awakening is plotted more like a mystery than a horror film, it’s not short on shivery moments, which include a hackle-raising set piece involving a doll’s house and a coda much subtler than the simple twist ending it initially appears to be.” (*Telegraph*)

“Looks first-class, but relies overmuch on the standard tropes of sudden looming faces and behind-you ambushes.”

(*Independent*) (research Simon M)

There’s something discomfitingly ‘Clive Owen’ about Dominic West, so come for a gorgeously creepy Imelda Staunton and Rebecca Hall whose beauty and presence is extraordinary. They make up for any other flaws.





Director: Bruce Robinson
Starring: Johnny Depp, Amber Heard, Aaron Eckhart, Giovanni Ribisi
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Entertainment Film Distribution



The Rum Diary

Fri 9 7.30, Sat 10 7.00

Based on an old Hunter S. Thompson novel, apparently unearthed by Johnny Depp whilst rooting around the author's basement, "The Rum Diary" is a drunken romp around early 1960s Puerto Rico, directed by Bruce (Withnail&I) Robinson.

Paul Kemp (Depp) an unfulfilled Thompson alter-ego, tired of Eisenhower's America, uproots to the Caribbean island in search of adventure. Taking a job at a small town paper, he befriends a photographer, Sala (Michael Rispoli), and the two embark on a series of substance fuelled trips. Kemp also finds himself drawn to the alluring Chenault (Amber Heard), the girlfriend of Sanderson (Aaron Eckhart), an American property tycoon who has eyes on redeveloping the unspoilt parts of the island. Sanderson enlists Kemp's help to write spin for his development's brochures leaving Kemp to make the choice: take the money and career, or "take the bastards down". Whilst the film is undoubtedly entertaining, it's difficult not to make the obvious comparison with "Fear and Loathing..." Against the ruthless surrealism of Depp's previous outing as Hunter S "The Rum Diary" feels a little meandering. "It's funny as hell in places and touchingly warm. But, like Thompson without gonzo, 'The Rum Diary' is directionless and a little lacking in tone." (*Time Out*) (research Simon M) "The book should have stayed in the basement and Robinson's film, on the shelf" (*CosmoL Times*) You decide.

The Deep Blue Sea

Sun 11 6.00 plus Q&A



A literary adaptation of Terence Rattigan's 1952 play about a middle-class woman, Hester (Rachel Weisz), trapped in a passionless but caring marriage and lost in a self-destructive love affair with a man who will break her heart. Her husband William a High Court Judge (Simon Russell Beale) remains dignified in his sorrow. A rare film outing for the magnificent Russell Beale. The RAF pilot Freddie (Tom Hiddleston) is the cad or is he simply unreliable...?

It is a haunting exploration of the emotional glass ceiling that hung above many in 1950s Britain.

"Weisz is terrific, and Davies' use of low light, soft focus and faded, yellowing sets makes her look positively phosphorescent. Critics complained that Vivien Leigh was too attractive to play Hester in Anatole Litvak's 1955 adaptation. If they were alive to see Rachel Weisz' Hester, they'd probably have a stroke." (*Telegraph*)

"It's sad as a story and a deeply evocative period piece. It takes a tight grip on the heart in the way that the best of Davies's films have." (*Time Out*) We are honoured to have the brilliant Terence Davies back at the Rex to talk about the making of this, his latest beautifully finished film, its ups and downs and whether he really did consider turning it into a musical...? Don't miss

Director: Terence Davies
Starring: Rachel Weisz, Daniel Craig
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Artificial Eye

Wuthering Heights

Mon 12 7.30

Director: Andrea Arnold
Starring: James Howson, Kaya Scodelario, Steve Evets, Oliver Milburn, Nicola Burley, Shannon Beer, Solomon Glave
Certificate: 15
Duration: 129 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Artificial Eye

Andrea Arnold's adaptation of the Emily Brontë classic strips away all the period-drama clichés to create a passionate, elemental drama. Heathcliff, here a black child with slave branding on his back is taken in by the Earnshaws and raised on their wind-torn Yorkshire farm as a sibling to Cathy and her elder brother Hindley. Heathcliff and Cathy grow close, and Arnold shows the pair chasing each other across the moors, grappling in the mud and stuffing food into each other's mouths, with only sparse dialogue and no music. This world is elemental, almost primeval, and the gap between human and beast is narrowed.

Heathcliff is reimagined, not as the vaguely exotic dark-skinned Gypsy, but as simply black, and confronted with overt and brutal racism from those of his new family who resent the outsider, and are determined to treat him like any farm animal.

"For Arnold, landscape and wildlife are substitutes for what she sees as needless Brontë dialogue and exposition." (*Guardian*)

"This *Wuthering Heights*, sponsored by the now defunct UK Film Council, may well please the juries. But it isn't going to give you a good night out. Believe me, writhing in your seat never lies." (*Standard*) If you fancy proper mud, wind, rain, silence, a few eff words with dull monosyllabic dialogue, and worse direction, it's all yours.



The Help

Tue 13 7.30



This hugely enjoyable, honey-marinated adaptation of Kathryn Stockett's novel struck a chord with US audiences although exactly which chord is up for grabs.

Set in 1960s Jackson, Mississippi, the film tells how Skeeter Phelan (Emma Stone), a young, white would-be writer, convinces two black maids, Aibileen and Minny (Viola Davis and Octavia Spencer), to work secretly with her on a book.

Skeeter wants the maids to reveal, anonymously, the hardships routinely inflicted on them by the wealthy families whose food they cook and whose children they raise – thereby winning them a valuable step towards true racial equality and the girl, a big fat publishing deal.

“Let’s clear those caveats out of the way first. The Help is a broad southern melodrama that implicitly frames the push for racial equality as the tale of oppressed African-Americans who are given their voice by a lone white do-gooder.

“While the story takes place at a time of seismic social upheaval, director Tate Taylor’s screenplay niftily sidesteps politics for specific personal injustices. In short, The Help not only has its cake it eats it. This is as brazen an Oscar-baiter as we’re likely to see this year” (*Telegraph*) “Viewed as an airbrushed, Dettol-heavy fairytale, however, it’s rousingly effective.” (*Guardian*)

“It’s corny, but it mostly works.” (*Empire*) Watch out for some creamy Oscar speeches.

Director: Tate Taylor
Starring: Bryce Howard, Jessica Chastain, Viola Davis, Emma Stone
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 146 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL

Las Acacias

Wed 14 7.30

Director: Pablo Giorgelli
Starring: German De Silva, Hebe Duarte, Nayra Calle Mamani
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 85 mins
Origin: Argentina, Spain 2011
By: Verve

First-time writer/director Pablo Giorgelli’s near silent Latin American road movie is charming in its apparent simplicity.

Truck driver Ruben (German De Silva) sets off on a regular journey hauling lumber from provincial Paraguay to metropolitan Argentina. As a favour to his boss, he has also agreed to take illegal immigrant Jacinta (Hebe Duarte) to Buenos Aires to look for work. With her five month old baby in tow, the three embark on a journey punctuated by few words and many stolen glances; an implicit bond ever growing...

Giorgelli has crafted a beautiful, slow-burning character study of two adults allowing a burgeoning emotional engagement to emerge from awkward reticence. De Silva and Duarte’s exquisite use of body language compliments the sparse script and reveals a most beguiling film.

“In its best moments of quiet contemplation and piercing emotion, Las Acacias ultimately earns its place in a humanist tradition that stretches from Renoir to Ray and beyond.” (*Screen Daily*) “It’s all you can do not to yell at the couple to just say something, anything, and not let this small fleeting opportunity for happiness pass them both by. Uplifting, wry and very moving.” (*ICO*) (*Simon Messenger*). It is enchanting, beautiful and quite believable. Either a perfect foil to Christmas, or a perfect Christmas tale. Don’t miss.



Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy

Thu 15 7.30



Based on John LeCarré's 1974 novel and adapted famously for television featuring the majestic Alec Guinness (BBC 1979) *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* is a superb re-telling of a classic Cold War masterpiece.

Gary Oldman is George Smiley, the tale's pale, tired, yet razor sharp super spy. When a Circus (MI6) mission in Budapest goes fatally awry, Smiley and his boss, 'Control' (John Hurt) are already retired. Yet the presence of a Soviet mole (double agent) somewhere deep within the Circus brings Smiley back, in secret and off the record, to flush it out. Narrowed down to the unusual suspects, Smiley must use his guile to identify the mole.

Director Tomas Alfredson (Let the Right One In) renders 1970s London as a grey, oppressive city (No it wasn't. London was full-on Technicolor in the 70s). Alfredson extracts a perfectly executed, understated, 'sexier' Guinness-eque turn from Oldman (Gary's own description of himself in Alec's incomparable cool shoes) who is carried by a strong supporting cast: John Hurt, Toby Jones, Colin Firth, Benedict Cumberbatch, et al.

"Hypnotic as silent snowfall. Prepare to lose yourself in every sense, in a labyrinth of double-agents, deception and damn fine acting from the year's best British line-up. Oldman at least deserves the Oscar nod he's been long denied?" (*Total Film*) I thought he was a bit of a plank. We'll see.

Director: Tomas Alfredson
Starring: Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Ralph Fiennes, Michael Fassbender
Certificate: 15
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Optimum Releasing

The Adventures of Tin Tin

Fri 16 7.30, Sat 17 7.00,
 Sun 18 6.00

Director: Steven Spielberg
Starring: Jamie Bell, Daniel Craig, Simon Pegg, Andy Serkis
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: New Zealand, USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures

Developing a film based on one of the most successful comics of all time was never going to be easy, and it is perhaps little wonder that Steven Spielberg has sat on the rights to it since Hergé's death in 1983!

Tintin (apparently played by Jamie Bell, buried somewhere underneath the animators' rendering) purchases a model of a ship, The Unicorn, from a market stall only to discover that it contains the key to the whereabouts of a sunken galleon's buried treasure. Together with Snowy, the bumbling Thompson twins (Simon Pegg, Nick Frost), and the soused Captain Haddock (Andy Serkis), Tintin must endeavour to retrieve the booty before the nefarious Sakharine (Daniel Craig) beats them to it...

The opening half of the film is a delight, replete with a lavish opening sequence, and enough in-jokes, and sight gags to satisfy the most obsessive Tintinologist. The latter portion then descends into rip-roaring, Indiana J territory. Purists may loathe the dead-eyed animation techniques which Spielberg employs here, but there's enough big-screen action, plot and intrigue to grip throughout.

"Tin Tin is without doubt the finest example of Spielberg's family-friendly fun side since Jurassic Park. It's also the most creative, enjoyable and invigorating blockbuster of the year." (*Time Out*) (research *Simon M*) It looks fabulous but the cartooning of real faces is irritating. Even so it is far less irritating than Jurassic Park! Besides, Spielberg probably wiped the stars faces, so you'd watch the film. So don't look for them, watch the film.



Miss Bala

Mon 19 7.30

Director: Gerardo Naranjo
Starring: Stephanie Sigman, Irene Azuela
Certificate: 15
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: Mexico 2011
By: Metrodome Distributors

Tijuana, Mexico. Willowy local girl Laura (Stephanie Sigman), dreams of winning the Miss Baja California pageant, and perhaps, her ticket out of poverty. After witnessing a massacre in a dingy, underground nightclub, Laura is kidnapped by a group of local bandits. In return for her compliance, drug running and more, they offer her their "help" in the highly corrupt pageant; however it becomes clear that there is nothing less than her very survival at stake... With "Miss Bala" (literally "Miss Bullet"), director Gerardo Naranjo has crafted a thrilling but violent drama, deftly exploring corruption, societal powerlessness, and the intense viciousness of Mexico's underworld.

"So it's not a political film, nor is it one that peddles a liberal news agenda about Mexico's ongoing drug war. It does, however, allow us to take an objective look at various legal power structures, and it helps us to understand that whoever wins this battle, we lose."

(Time Out)

"Well made, and conceived as something different from the self-conscious pastiche-homage of Rodriguez or Tarantino. It is trying pretty hard for its effects."

(Guardian) (Simon Messenger) Little Miss Sunshine it is not. Like all film's coming out of South America, it tells it raw and pulls few punches. However, like all well made films it hinges this mad backdrop of hopelessness to a good solid story. Beware but don't miss.



Midnight In Paris

Tue 20 7.30



The weight of expectation on Woody Allen's newest films is often unbearable.

Each new offering has to live up to his well observed writing of the 1970/80s. Happily, this is his best since Vicky Cristina Barcelona, and returns to the wit of those earlier decades.

Owen Wilson is perfect as Gil, Woody's typically neurotic alter-ego. Michael Sheen is fantastically cringy as Paul's smarmy, pseudo know-all. Allen let's the camera play with Cotillard's and McAdam's, beauty.

But it is his clear love of Paris, through Darius Khondji's lens, that will take your heart. Luckily, this (Woody's ultimate fairy story) too is warm, assured, and perhaps most reassuringly, funny.

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

"It's all very recognisable but not tired, and the film's lightly-played time-travelling element gives it a hint of boldness. It's fun and most welcome." (*Time Out*) (research SM)

"Look at me, I was a nightclub comedian. I didn't know how to make films." (47 titles later) "It's fun to live for months in a completely artificial world. Paris with all these beautiful, funny, inventive, quick-witted people." (*Woody Allen Film Prog R4*) Come for the love Paris and the music.

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

Arthur Christmas

Wed 21 7.30

Director: Sarah Smith
Certificate: U
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: UK/USA 2011
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Aardman Animations and Sony Pictures Animation team up to present this whimsical, and suitably festive CGI feature.

It's the night before Christmas, and the logistical complexity of Father Christmas' (Jim Broadbent) annual trek is laid bare. How DOES he get all those presents to all those children all over the world?

Ah ha... His eldest son, technocrat Steve (Hugh Lawrie), runs the entire operation with military precision and a covert team of thousands of elves equipped with much high-tech gadgetry. When, lost in this colossal operation, one present goes astray, youngest son Arthur (James McAvoy) takes it upon himself to ensure that one little girl won't be left empty-handed on Christmas morning...

Masterfully written by Peter Baynham and Sarah Smith, and fantastically rendered, Arthur Christmas has much to delight audiences young, and older. "It's playful, observant, sentimental without being slushy, and boasts the kind of jokes that will still sound funny when your children or younger relatives quote them in April." (*Telegraph*)

"Aardman films' yuletide offering is both a heartwarmer and a sly dig at the gospel of family togetherness, a witty wonder of invention. Should keep the whole family chuckling from now to New Year." (*Independent*) (research Simon M).

It is rare for us to get a seasonal release in time for that season. This is an absolute gem, so don't miss.



It's a Wonderful Life

Thu 22 7.30, Fri 23 7.30,
Sat 24 5.00



Welcome to our eighth Christmas with the same old irresistible film. (7th anniversary, our 8th Christmas).

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, it became a new part of Christmas folklore. You couldn't see it at the pictures until independents flirted with a re-release fifteen years ago. Now thanks to Park Circus, this beautifully restored print, is here again in the build up.

Already, it seems a Rex Christmas wouldn't be the same without Clarence (angel 2nd class) showing George Bailey how terrible life would be in Bedford Falls, had he not been born.

The simplest and best of all messages...

Without you and each other, the world would be a very different place (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: Park Circus Films

Twilight: Breaking Dawn

Thu 27 7.30

Director: Bill Condon
Starring: Kristen Stewart, Dakota Fanning, Anna Kendrick, Robert Pattinson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Entertainment One UK

The Twilight Saga draws to its inevitably protracted conclusion as, a la Harry Potter, the final instalment is split into two parts – with the latter released next Autumn.

The Bill Condon (Kinsey, Dream Girls) directed first part chronicles the culmination of Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart) and glittery vampire Edward Cullen's (Robert Pattinson) romance. After their picturesque woodland wedding, the two depart for a honeymoon in Rio de Janeiro where Bella finally abandons her "no sex please, you're a vampire" mantra. After falling pregnant and also becoming a vampire herself, Bella, and husband Edward find that the presence of their daughter Renesmee poses an existential threat to them and their allies, the Volturi, the vampires' council of leaders. The werewolves, led by the lupine chap who doesn't like wearing a shirt (Taylor Lautner) don't much like it either. "An emotionally fraught, dramatically leaden tale, the movie again proves the experiential sweet spot of the franchise, that of surging adolescent feelings trumping rational thought, and in this case lucid plotting...largely soapy and melodramatic" (*Screen Daily*) (research Simon M)

There was not much talk about this film before we went to press. Then afterall, what is there to say about pretty goody-two-shoes vampires who scowl and pose in that irritating callow, pop teenage way?



An American In Paris

Wed 28 7.30



Gene Kelly is Jerry Mulligan, a former GI who stayed on in Paris after the Liberation to be an artist of the most quaintly chocolate-boxy sort: he finds himself taken up by an infatuated sugar-mummy patron (Nina Foch) at the same time as he falls for a beautiful gamine (Leslie Caron) considerably his junior. But that's okay. It is early 1950's Hollywood!

It is a little sugary and theatrical and perhaps it has dated less well than other classic Hollywood musicals. But there is charm and a kind of willed American innocence.

The most distinctive things about the film are possibly Caron's personae-montage at the beginning, which showcases her virtuoso dance moves, and the final fantasy sequence, which resolves (a little hurriedly) the emotional obstacles to their tryst.

"Vincente Minnelli's Technicolor musical, re-released in a gorgeous restoration, is fresher than ever. As vibrant as an Impressionist painting. The 17-minute ballet climax reheats stereotypes about bohemian Paris but the reckless energy of both director and star invigorates the sequence." (*Independent*)

"Paris is like love, or art or faith, it can't be explained, only felt." (says Gene Kelly from an MGM lot!)

Again, this is programmed into that limbo week to raise your spirits with gorgeous Gershwin, Caron and Kelly.

Dancers/musical lovers should not miss.

Director: Vincente Minnelli
Starring: Leslie Caron, Gene Kelly, Oscar Levant
Certificate: U
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: USA 1951
By: British Film Institute

Romantics

Anonymous Thu 29 7.30

Director: Jean-Pierre Améris
Starring: Benoît Poelvoorde, Isabelle Carré, Lorella Cravotta
Certificate: U
Duration: 80 mins
Origin: France 2011
By: Picturehouse Entertainment

The French love a good romance, and this new film from director Jean-Pierre Améris looks like it should hit the spot. Belgian actor Benoît Poelvoorde ('Man Bites Dog', 'Coco Before Chanel') plays Jean-René, CEO of a small chocolate company, who falls in love with his newest employee, Angelique (Isabelle Carré). However, since both parties are chronically shy, the courtship promises to be a more hesitant affair than the usual brash Hollywood rom-com. Like a good piece of dark chocolate, Améris's movie is tasty enough, but with just that right amount of bitterness.

Isabelle and Benoît are beautifully matched as this fumbling pair.

"Améris seems to be on a mission to produce the most French-sounding movies ever (he's already directed a film called 'C'est la vie' and a TV show called 'La joie de vivre'), so expect this to be as wildly Gallic as an accordion player eating a Boursin baguette on the banks of the Seine." (*Time Out*)

"Charming but uneven, director Améris's film doesn't know whether to make us laugh or cry, and ends up doing neither. Still, a smart script offers plenty to keep incurable romantics happy." (*Empire*) Bet it does.

It is deliberately placed in 'suicide week' to take the warmth of Christmas into the week renowned for wishing it was all over. Don't miss and bring the street.



Everything Is Illuminated **Fri 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 from too many true stories.

'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 gorgeous Boris Leskin) and his "seeing-eye" bitch, 'Sammy Davis Jr-jr'.

Alex's perplexed Ukrainian 'guide' and his butchery of spoken English set the tone for his beautifully judged narration. Much of the 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 the story is let out and the actors are free from acting.

It is haunting, uplifting, heartbreaking and funny, and one of the best and tiny films from our first seven years. It will stay with you.

A perfect note to lift everybody, the whole family and even people you don't like, into a brave new 2012.

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

Footloose: A very Happy & Brave New Year to all our Rexies **Sat 31 5.00**

Director: Craig Brewer
Starring: Dennis Quaid, Kenny Wormald, Julianne Hough
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures

The setting is now the deep south but the basics are the same: city newcomer (Kenny Wormald) defies dance-hating rural preacher (Dennis Quaid) and romances his daughter. The dancing has come on though, in both quality and variety. It's the same movie in a different pair of jeans, still skinny, not stone-washed and minus a very young Kevin Bacon. The leads grow on you, particularly Wormald, who has the face of a pouting shark, and just the right touch of pretty-and-knows-it arrogance.

The movie's highlights are a bracing parking-lot drunk jam and a gymnastic solo to the White Stripes, though you also get country rehashes of Kenny Loggins and dare I say – some line dancing!

What's most intriguing about Footloose is its message of community activism rather than youth rebellion. Instead of dropping out and forming a biker gang, our clean-living hero petitions the town council with a well-constructed argument. A rebel with a cause, and prepared to go through the proper channels to justify it. (We could do with him in St Albans)

"Star-crossed lovers Wormald & Hough can't match Bacon and Lori Singer, but feet will tap and the Glee crowd will mime along." (*Total Film*)

It's our small way of getting you warmed up for a New Years Eve knees-up...



COMING SOON

New releases

50/50

My Week with Marilyn

Moneyball

Resistance

Back by demand

George Harrison

We Need To Talk About

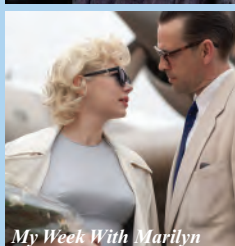
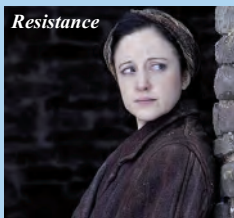
Kevin

The Guard

The Deep Blue Sea

Tin Tin

Resistance



My Week With Marilyn

50/50



Moneyball



DECEMBER FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	Thur	THE IDES OF MARCH	2.00, 7.30
2	Fri	THE IDES OF MARCH	7.30
3	Sat	ARRIETTY	2.00
3	Sat	THE ARTIST	7.00
4	Sun	THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES	6.00
5	Mon	THE HELP	2.00
5	Mon	WELL DIGGERS DAUGHTER	7.30
6	Tue	THE HELP	12.30, 7.30
7	Wed	THE HELP	2.00, 7.30
8	Thur	THE AWAKENING	2.00, 7.30
9	Fri	THE RUM DIARY	7.30
10	Sat	ELF	2.00
10	Sat	THE RUM DIARY	7.00
11	Sun	THE DEEP BLUE SEA: & Q&A	6.00
12	Mon	THE AWAKENING	2.00
12	Mon	WUTHERING HEIGHTS	7.30
13	Tue	THE RUM DIARY	12.30
13	Tue	THE HELP	7.30
14	Wed	THE HELP	2.00
14	Wed	LAS ACACIAS	7.30
15	Thur	TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY	2.00, 7.30
16	Fri	THE ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN	7.30
17	Sat	POLAR EXPRESS	2.00
17	Sat	THE ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN	7.00
18	Sun	THE ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN	6.00
19	Mon	THE ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN	2.00
19	Mon	MISS BALA	7.30
20	Tue	POLAR EXPRESS	12.30
20	Tue	MIDNIGHT IN PARIS	7.30
21	Wed	ARTHUR CHRISTMAS	2.00, 7.30
22	Thur	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	2.00, 7.30
23	Fri	ARTHUR CHRISTMAS	2.00
23	Fri	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	7.30
24	Sat	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	5.00
25	Sun	CHRISTMAS DAY	
26	Mon	BOXING DAY	
27	Tue	TWILIGHT: BREAKING DAWN	12.30, 7.30
28	Wed	THE ADVENTURES OF TIN TIN	2.00
28	Wed	AN AMERICAN IN PARIS	7.30
29	Thur	THE THREE MUSKETEERS	2.00
29	Thur	ROMANTICS ANONYMOUS	7.30
30	Fri	TWILIGHT: BREAKING DAWN	2.00
30	Fri	EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED	7.30
31	Sat	FOOTLOOSE	5.00



D E C E M B E R M A T I N E E S

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

The Ides of March

Thu 1 2.00



Man of the moment Ryan Gosling is brilliant in three very different films out now (*Drive* is missing from Dec). He stars, alongside the film's director George Clooney, in this taut political thriller. Clooney is Mike Morris, a popular governor on the cusp of victory in a major Ohio primary, a victory which would almost guarantee his nomination as Democratic presidential candidate, and bring him within groping distance of the White House. His press secretary Stephen Myers (Gosling) is responsible for keeping the campaign trail on track; all is going swimmingly until Myers accidentally uncovers news which could lay a fatal blow to Morris' chances.

A thrilling question of loyalties carries the film beautifully...

Clooney proves that he's becoming as confident behind the lens as he is in front of it, yet perhaps unexpectedly, Gosling takes the plaudits with his wide-eyed portrayal of a youngster cutting his teeth on the seamier side of politics.

"A political thriller exploring themes of loyalty, ambition and the gap between public ideals and private fallibility, its solid entertainment also engages the brain." (*Telegraph*)

"The points made about politics by *The Ides of March* are valid, if a little obvious: ugly things go on behind the scenes and people in the game are shits. Who would have guessed?" (*Time Out*) (*Simon M*) Don't miss.

Director: George Clooney
Starring: Ryan Gosling, Paul Giamatti, George Clooney
Certificate: 15
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: eOne Films

Arrietty

Sat 3 2.00

Director: Nick Moore
Starring: David Henrie, Will Arnett, Amy Poehler
Certificate: U
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: Japan 2010
By: Optimum Releasing

This is a Japanese animated fantasy based on *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton. Re-created here by Studio Ghibli co-founder and genius, Hayao Miyazaki. It makes a change from Disney kids films where female protagonists are princesses, peddling the corporate mould of heroines throughout its catalogue. Neither does it shy away from difficult subjects, where Disney might gloss-up versions of traditional fairytales.

Miyazaki films depart from traditional visions of heroism. Many are led by strong, intelligent, independent-minded girls. Exciting, fantastical, and beautifully animated, with the hero a girl, forsaking all macho qualities.

Arrietty is a miniature 14 year old who lives under the floorboards in a rural Japanese home. She yearns for adventures beyond the four walls, whilst her parents, Pod and Homily Clock, try to temper her sense of adventure. One of the most visually inventive aspects of the *Borrowers* tale, used here too, is its use of everyday household items; a pin becomes her sword, and cotton thread, a heavy rope. The Clock family are supposed to keep themselves out of sight of the humans, but *Arrietty* is spotted and strikes up a relationship with the human boy. Could this jeopardise their way of life...?

"The animation is enchanting, it all makes *Cars 2* look very primitive" (*Guardian*) Don't miss (*Rosa Gilbert*)





Director: Tate Taylor
Starring: Bryce Howard, Jessica Chastain, Viola Davis, Emma Stone
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 146 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL



The Help Mon 5 2.00, Tue 6 12.30, Wed 7 2.00

This hugely enjoyable, honey-marinated adaptation of Kathryn Stockett's novel struck a chord with US audiences although exactly which chord is up for grabs.

Set in 1960s Jackson, Mississippi, the film tells how Skeeter Phelan (Emma Stone), a young, white would-be writer, convinces two black maids, Aibileen and Minny (Viola Davis and Octavia Spencer), to work secretly with her on a book.

Skeeter wants the maids to reveal, anonymously, the hardships routinely inflicted on them by the wealthy families whose food they cook and whose children they raise – thereby winning them a valuable step towards true racial equality and the girl, a big fat publishing deal.

“Let’s clear those caveats out of the way first. The Help is a broad southern melodrama that implicitly frames the push for racial equality as the tale of oppressed African-Americans who are given their voice by a lone white do-gooder.

“While the story takes place at a time of seismic social upheaval, director Tate Taylor’s screenplay niftily sidesteps politics for specific personal injustices.

In short, The Help not only has its cake it eats it. This is as brazen an Oscar-baiter as we’re likely to see this year” (*Telegraph*)

“Viewed as an airbrushed, Dettol-heavy fairytale, however, it’s rousing effective.” (*Guardian*)

“It’s corny, but it mostly works.” (*Empire*)
 Watch out for some creamy Oscar speeches.

The Awakening

Thu 8 2.00, Mon 12 2.00



England, 1921. With the country still wracked with post-War grief, and reeling from the effects of the subsequent influenza epidemic, the Spiritualist movement has swept across the nation, with hoaxers preying on those still yearning for a response from those lost in the trenches.

Florence Cathcart a confirmed rationalist and “de-bunker” of all things spooky is called by schoolmaster Robert Mallory to investigate the mysterious death of a young boy at a remote boarding school, a death apparently caused by a malevolent child-like spirit lurking within the school. Cathcart, naturally sceptical, uses all manner of sophisticated equipment in an attempt to solve the mystery but, inevitably, events take a turn...

“While *The Awakening* is plotted more like a mystery than a horror film, it’s not short on shivery moments, which include a hackle-raising set piece involving a doll’s house and a coda much subtler than the simple twist ending it initially appears to be.” (*Telegraph*)

“Looks first-class, but relies overmuch on the standard tropes of sudden looming faces and behind-you ambushes.”

(*Independent*) (research Simon M)

There’s something uncomfortably ‘Clive Owen’ about Dominic West, so come for a gorgeously creepy Imelda Staunton and Rebecca Hall whose beauty and presence is extraordinary. They make up for any other flaws.

Director: Nick Murphy
Starring: Rebecca Hall, Dominic West, Imelda Staunton
Certificate: 15
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Optimum Releasing

Elf

Sat 10 2.00

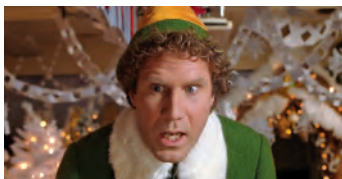
Director: Jon Favreau
Starring: Will Ferrell, James Caan, Zooey Deschanel, Mary Steenburgen, Daniel Tay, Edward Asner, Bob Newhart
Certificate: PG
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: USA 2003
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

A human raised by elves and put to work in Santa’s toy shop, Ferrell gets to play the innocent abroad when his gullible, havoc-wreaking oaf sets off to New York to find his biological father (James Caan).

He gets a family, a girlfriend (Zooey Deschanel), a great job and arch rivals into the bargain.

The sentiment gets a little sticky towards the end, but many will consider this the perfect antidote to traditional Christmas fare – especially those with a fondness for Ferrell’s antics and the madcap humour he creates. Director John Favreau delivers the cornball sentiments with an adept balance of irony and sincerity, sprinkling a little okay sweetness in the margins.

“Some humour might sail over the heads of the very young, but there’s a higher chuckle rate for the grown-ups than much more dreaded ‘family’ fare.” (*Time Out*) *Elf* is as fabulous as it is ridiculous. So perfect for Christmas. And here by demand, so bring your Dad, he’ll love it (probably more than you if you’re still a little short of five?) Naw, forget it. Come, you’ll love the silly bits, and there’s plenty of those.



The Rum Diary

Tue 13 12.30



Based on an old Hunter S. Thompson novel, apparently unearthed by Johnny Depp whilst rooting around the author's basement, "The Rum Diary" is a drunken romp around early 1960s Puerto Rico, directed by Bruce (Withnail&I) Robinson.

Paul Kemp (Depp) an unfulfilled Thompson alter-ego, tired of Eisenhower's America, uproots to the Caribbean island in search of adventure. Taking a job at a small town paper, he befriends a photographer, Sala (Michael Rispoli), and the two embark on a series of substance fuelled trips. Kemp also finds himself drawn to the alluring Chenault (Amber Heard), the girlfriend of Sanderson (Aaron Eckhart), an American property tycoon who has eyes on redeveloping the unspoiled parts of the island. Sanderson enlists Kemp's help to write spin for his development's brochures leaving Kemp to make the choice: take the money and career, or "take the bastards down".

Whilst the film is undoubtedly entertaining, it's difficult not to make the obvious comparison with "Fear and Loathing..." Against the ruthless surreality of Depp's previous outing as Hunter S "The Rum Diary" feels a little meandering. "It's funny as hell in places and touchingly warm. But, like Thompson without gonzo, 'The Rum Diary' is directionless and a little lacking in tone." (*Time Out*) (research Simon M) "The book should have stayed in the basement and Robinson's film, on the shelf" (*CosmoL Times*) You decide.

Director: Bruce Robinson
Starring: Johnny Depp, Amber Heard, Aaron Eckhart, Giovanni Ribisi
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

The Help

Wed 14 2.00

Director: Tate Taylor
Starring: Bryce Howard, Jessica Chastain, Viola Davis, Emma Stone
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 146 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL

This hugely enjoyable, honey-marinated adaptation of Kathryn Stockett's novel struck a chord with US audiences although exactly which chord is up for grabs.

Set in 1960s Jackson, Mississippi, the film tells how Skeeter Phelan (Emma Stone), a young, white would-be writer, convinces two black maids, Aibileen and Minny (Viola Davis and Octavia Spencer), to work secretly with her on a book. Skeeter wants the maids to reveal, anonymously, the hardships routinely inflicted on them by the wealthy families whose food they cook and whose children they raise – thereby winning them a valuable step towards true racial equality and the girl, a big fat publishing deal.

"Let's clear those caveats out of the way first. The Help is a broad southern melodrama that implicitly frames the push for racial equality as the tale of oppressed African-Americans who are given their voice by a lone white do-gooder.

"While the story takes place at a time of seismic social upheaval, director Tate Taylor's screenplay niftily sidesteps politics for specific personal injustices. In short, The Help not only has its cake it eats it. This is as far from an Oscar-baiter as we're likely to see this year" (*Telegraph*) "Viewed as an airbrushed, Dettol-heavy fairytale, however, it's rousingly effective." (*Guardian*)

"It's corny, but it mostly works." (*Empire*) Watch out for some creamy Oscar speeches.



Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy

Thu 15 2.00



Based on John LeCarré's 1974 novel and adapted famously for television featuring the majestic Alec Guinness (BBC 1979) *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* is a superb re-telling of a classic Cold War masterpiece.

Gary Oldman is George Smiley, the tale's pale, tired, yet razor sharp super spy. When a Circus (MI6) mission in Budapest goes fatally awry, Smiley and his boss, 'Control' (John Hurt) are already retired. Yet the presence of a Soviet mole (double agent) somewhere deep within the Circus brings Smiley back, in secret and off the record, to flush it out. Narrowed down to the unusual suspects, Smiley must use his guile to identify the mole.

Director Tomas Alfredson (*Let the Right One In*) renders 1970s London as a grey, oppressive city (No it wasn't. London was full-on Technicolor in the 70s). Alfredson extracts a perfectly executed, understated, 'sexier' Guinness-eque turn from Oldman (Gary's own description of himself in Alec's incomparable cool shoes) who is carried by a strong supporting cast: John Hurt, Toby Jones, Colin Firth, Benedict Cumberbatch, et al.

"Hypnotic as silent snowfall. Prepare to lose yourself in every sense, in a labyrinth of double-agents, deception and damn fine acting from the year's best British line-up. Oldman at least deserves the Oscar nod he's been long denied?" (*Total Film*) I thought he was a bit of a plank. We'll see.

Director: Tomas Alfredson
Starring: Gary Oldman, Colin Firth, Ralph Fiennes, Michael Fassbender
Certificate: 15
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Optimum Releasing

Polar Express

Sat 17 2.00, Tue 20 12.30

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 seven short years it too has become an essential part of our Christmas programme. Don't miss it as a family, but beware, tiny ones (under 7s) will be thrilled but a little frightened.



The Adventures Of Tin Tin Mon 19 2.00



Developing a film based on one of the most successful comics of all time was never going to be easy, and it is perhaps little wonder that Steven Spielberg has sat on the rights to it since Hergé's death in 1983!

Tintin (apparently played by Jamie Bell, buried somewhere underneath the animators' rendering) purchases a model of a ship, The Unicorn, from a market stall only to discover that it contains the key to the whereabouts of a sunken galleon's buried treasure. Together with Snowy, the bumbling Thompson twins (Simon Pegg, Nick Frost), and the soused Captain Haddock (Andy Serkis), Tintin must endeavour to retrieve the booty before the nefarious Sakharine (Daniel Craig) beats them to it...

The opening half of the film is a delight, replete with a lavish opening sequence, and enough in-jokes, and sight gags to satisfy the most obsessive Tintinologist. The latter portion then descends into rip-roaring, Indiana J territory. Purists may loathe the dead-eyed animation techniques which Spielberg employs here, but there's enough big-screen action, plot and intrigue to grip throughout.

"Tin Tin is without doubt the finest example of Spielberg's family-friendly fun side since Jurassic Park. It's also the most creative, enjoyable and invigorating blockbuster of the year." (*Time Out*) (research Simon M) It looks fabulous but the cartooning of real faces is irritating.

Director: Steven Spielberg
Starring: Jamie Bell, Daniel Craig, Simon Pegg, Andy Serkis
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: New Zealand, USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures

Arthur Christmas Wed 21 2.00, Fri 23 2.00

Director: Sarah Smith
Certificate: U
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: UK/USA 2011
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Aardman Animations and Sony Pictures Animation team up to present this whimsical, and suitably festive CGI feature.

It's the night before Christmas, and the logistical complexity of Father Christmas' (Jim Broadbent) annual trek is laid bare. How DOES he get all those presents to all those children all over the world?

Ah ha... His eldest son, technocrat Steve (Hugh Lawrie), runs the entire operation with military precision and a covert team of thousands of elves equipped with much high-tech gadgetry. When, lost in this colossal operation, one present goes astray, youngest son Arthur (James McAvoy) takes it upon himself to ensure that one little girl won't be left empty-handed on Christmas morning...

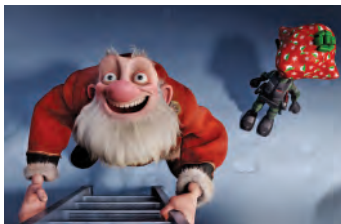
Masterfully written by Peter Baynham and Sarah Smith, and fantastically rendered, Arthur Christmas has much to delight audiences young, and older.

"It's playful, observant, sentimental without being slushy, and boasts the kind of jokes that will still sound funny when your children or younger relatives quote them in April." (*Telegraph*)

"Aardman films' yuletide offering is both a heartwarmer and a sly dig at the gospel of family togetherness, a witty wonder of invention. Should keep the whole family chuckling from now to New Year."

(*Independent*) (research Simon M).

It is rare for us to get a seasonal release in time for that season. This is an absolute gem, so don't miss.



It's A Wonderful Life

Thu 22 2.00



Welcome to our eighth Christmas with the same old irresistible film. (7th anniversary, our 8th Christmas).

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, it became a new part of Christmas folklore. You couldn't see it at the pictures until independents flirted with a re-release fifteen years ago. Now thanks to Park Circus, this beautifully restored print, is here again in the build up.

Already, it seems a Rex Christmas wouldn't be the same without Clarence (angel 2nd class) showing George Bailey how terrible life would be in Bedford Falls, had he not been born.

The simplest and best of all messages... Without you and each other, the world would be a very different place (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

Twilight: Breaking Dawn

Tue 27 12.30,

Fri 30 2.00

Director: Bill Condon
Starring: Kristen Stewart, Dakota Fanning, Anna Kendrick, Robert Pattinson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Entertainment One UK

The Twilight Saga draws to its inevitably protracted conclusion as, a la Harry Potter, the final instalment is split into two parts – with the latter released next Autumn.

The Bill Condon (Kinsey, Dream Girls) directed first part chronicles the culmination of Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart) and glittery vampire Edward Cullen's (Robert Pattinson) romance. After their picturesque woodland wedding, the two depart for a honeymoon in Rio de Janeiro where Bella finally abandons her "no sex please, you're a vampire" mantra. After falling pregnant and also becoming a vampire herself, Bella, and husband Edward find that the presence of their daughter Renesmee poses an existential threat to them and their allies, the Volturi, the vampires' council of leaders. The werewolves, led by the lupine chap who doesn't like wearing a shirt (Taylor Lautner) don't much like it either.

"An emotionally fraught, dramatically leaden tale, the movie again proves the experiential sweet spot of the franchise, that of surging adolescent feelings trumping rational thought, and in this case lucid plotting...largely soapy and melodramatic" (*Screen Daily*) (*research Simon M*)

There was not much talk about this film before we went to press. Then afterall, what is there to say about pretty goody-two-shoes vampires who scowl and pose in that irritating callow, pop teenage way?



The Adventures Of Tin Tin Wed 28 2.00



Developing a film based on one of the most successful comics of all time was never going to be easy, and it is perhaps little wonder that Steven Spielberg has sat on the rights to it since Hergé's death in 1983!

Tintin (apparently played by Jamie Bell, buried somewhere underneath the animators' rendering) purchases a model of a ship, The Unicorn, from a market stall only to discover that it contains the key to the whereabouts of a sunken galleon's buried treasure. Together with Snowy, the bumbling Thompson twins (Simon Pegg, Nick Frost), and the soused Captain Haddock (Andy Serkis), Tintin must endeavour to retrieve the booty before the nefarious Sakharine (Daniel Craig) beats them to it...

The opening half of the film is a delight, replete with a lavish opening sequence, and enough in-jokes, and sight gags to satisfy the most obsessive Tintinologist. The latter portion then descends into rip-roaring, Indiana J territory. Purists may loathe the dead-eyed animation techniques which Spielberg employs here, but there's enough big-screen action, plot and intrigue to grip throughout.

"Tin Tin is without doubt the finest example of Spielberg's family-friendly fun side since Jurassic Park. It's also the most creative, enjoyable and invigorating blockbuster of the year." (*Time Out*) (research Simon M) It looks fabulous but the cartooning of real faces is irritating.

Director: Steven Spielberg
Starring: Jamie Bell, Daniel Craig, Simon Pegg, Andy Serkis
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: New Zealand, USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures

The Three Musketeers Thu 29 2.00

Director: Paul W.S. Anderson
Starring: Logan Lerman, Christoph Waltz, Matthew MacFadyen
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Entertainment One UK

This particular outing for our intrepid, swashbuckling heroes chucks in everything: from armed CGI blimps to outrageous accents, pantomime villains to Orlando Bloom's hairdo. Yet amidst the slapdash spectacle remains a surprisingly faithful story.

A young D'Artagnan seeks his fortune in the court of young and inexperienced King Louis and his bride Queen Anne. En route, he crosses paths with Porthos, Athos and Aramis and demonstrates his talents with a sword by challenging Rochefort, the head of the guards. With the help of M'Lady, D'Artagnan and the Musketeers learn of a plot masterminded by Cardinal Richelieu to send France to war against the British. The basis of Alexandre Dumas' novel acts as a springboard for one ludicrous set piece after another. Director Paul WS Anderson, infamous for his much maligned computer game adapts, has caught the attention of Brit faves Matthew McFayden, Ray Stevenson and Luke Evans, all whom are up against an unusual mix of international stars including Christoph Waltz, Milla Jovovich and even Mads Mikkelsen

It's as though a teenager re-wrote Dumas' novel for their school play after an all-night Michael Bay marathon. It's lavish, superficial, dumb and bursting with b-movie flavour. It defines the term guilty pleasure (*Jack Whiting*) Ignore Jack, come for the sheer pleasure of something fun and massive on our massive screen. Don't miss.



HS2. IS THAT ALL THERE IS...?

The HS2 debate is all over bar the shouting. In fact the shouting is all over too. They have already voted ahead of the December decision, two or three to one in favour of the fast train to nowhere.

Don't you just love having a say as though you really have a chance to say it and your say stands a chance of being heard. It is your Right of course. However, 'they' (those democratically elected to fight for your say) haven't listened to a word. They've smiled and paid lipservice to your objections, then clubbed together to vote for what is 'good for Britain'. And it's always the complete opposite. Beeching's 1960's Railway cuts, decimating a fantastic railway network which took 200 years to build and reached every small town, and village in England. They uprooted the tram systems, invaluable to every major city's movement of people. They demolished whole communities, again built over 200 years across industrial Britain, to split families and resettle them in hateful grey estates, poorly designed and badly built on green belt or inner city brown-field land, with poor transport, no natural shops, treacherous lifts and dark walkways and horrid flat roofed schools. All begging to become ghettos. We tut

when the Israeli's bulldoze homes and resettle Palestinians who have lived there for thousands of years. Yet we let true democracy do it to us without lifting a finger. They've closed hospitals and centralised health and death into factory hospitals the size of small cities and introduced MRSA and other things to kill you while you're trying to get better. They privatised the essentials, which only ever needed efficient management: water, gas, electricity and railways. They have turned free education into no education and charged you for it.

They gave us Iraq and Afghanistan, because it was 'good for Britain'. They wear their poppies to pretend they care about the millions they've had killed. They never do what we ask – never. They don't even do as they want. They do as they are told, not by us who voted for them, but by those they have appointed to the highest position of least competence. They're all second hand car dealers who "know the value of nothing". But we knew that. Never mind, be proud that this shower gave us a fast train to get "the unspeakable in pursuit of the uneatable" from one end of the country to the other 25 minutes earlier, while destroying it on the way. Here's looking at the first delays and cancellations.



Ginnor Steam Railway

ST. ALBANS...



The banks have dried up, H&S has done its worst in line with its best. But I am more buoyant than ever.

We don't have to wait for the banks to keep us hanging on before they eventually say no, as we have for the last twelve months. We are free to raise the last half million while getting on with the work with every penny that comes in from you. It has meant a new surge in creative thinking to find the money elsewhere, which we will, without compromising those of you who have already supported us to the tune of £1.1million.

To assure you there is no going back, no what-if, and no plan-B, our accountant reminded me last week that The Rex has contributed £100,000 in cash already. If

we were to add two years fees and pay to advisors and professionals who continue to work free and without deferred charges, our contribution would stand nearer to £400,000.

We only need to match this in the next four months to get the main infrastructure in and done (most of the groundwork, roof, gas, electrics, water, drains, bar-points, toilets etc). The rest the banks have pledged to see it finished with carpets, seats and screen. I am more impatient than ever to just get on with it. There is no stopping now. So buy anything and everything we merchandise, however tacky. You can always give it to someone you don't like... It is Christmas after all.



ALUN REES – (MANAGER & CHIEF PROJECTIONIST)



Alun Rees (Mr Rees as he is addressed at the Rex) came here on his motorbike from Stroud in 1977 to take up management, then two screens and bingo. This meant he did everything, including projection. In Feb 1988 he saw the last film out and closed up for good, or so he thought. In 2004, aged 73, he was invited to return as chief projectionist to train the novices. “Splendid” he said and opened the new Rex 5th Dec 2004 with *The Third Man*. With the introduction of digital this year he decided it was time. So on his 80th birthday (pictured) he laced up (what he thinks is) his last film, cut the cake and bid us all adieu. Thank you, the splendid Mr Rees.



CAPTAIN FAWCETT'S GENTLEMAN'S STIFFENER

THE 'GENTLEMAN'S STIFFENER'

Keeping a Stiff Upper Lip, regardless...

1905: THE CONGO. THE DARK CONTINENT. Captain Prebodo Fawcett, the intrepid and consistent Edwardian explorer, disappears whilst attempting to reach the source of the Livingstone, a major tributary of the Congo river. No trace was ever found of his seemingly doomed expedition

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BOOKING A 'SUNDAY' ROAD SIGN

I know it's hard to keep up with the exciting changes we have enjoyed this year. One I particularly wet myself over was the introduction of weekend charges to car parks and the High Street. Saturday is bad enough, but Sunday...! Jesus would turn in his tomb if he hadn't already left, at the very thought of His day being desecrated by badly dressed SS guards roaming the streets rounding up infidel's cars for the greater good of the nation. Pity there's not a fatwa on all traffic wardens and their jackbooted masters. (Apologies for the jackboot reference. They'll be ugly council-issue trainers of course).

Capt Fawcett's Gentleman's Stiffener boasts: 'tested on humans. Made from only the finest ingredients.' As indeed has been proven by our own Simon Messenger (inset). You'll see his name on many of our programme's synopses. He says he discovered Capt Fawcett at the barbers, bringing a whole new adventure to: "and something for the weekend sir?" Fed up being asked if the magnificent handlebar was for 'charadee' he shaved it off, having no truck with this Mo-vember business, declaring a moustache is not just for November. It is for discovering the source of African rivers, of course. And with it, brings to a close our romp through the year in pictures.

