

THE-REX

DECEMBER 2020



"velveteen glamour and brilliant programming..." (The Guardian)

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

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

THE-REX

CINEMA BERKHAMSTED

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Films At A Glance 20-21

Obits 32-33

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Mon to Sat 10.30-6.30

Sun 4.30-5.30

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Matinees - Upstairs £5, Downstairs £6.50, Royal Box £10

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The Rex
High Street (Three Close Lane)
Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2FG
www.therexberkhamsted.com

“Unhesitatingly The Rex is the best cinema I have ever..”
(STimes Culture)

CHRISTMAS FILMS OF THE MONTH

The Best The Oldies and The Slush



The (16th) Essential Best Oldie:

It's a Wonderful Life

See page 24

This is not a good time to die. Show me a 'good time' and I'll come with you. (take it both ways).

November is the worst, but for many of the best, it finds them. (obits p 32)

We re-open quietly with a truly great thriller, a chase to beat their 'November', while visiting it on a few nasties along the way. Enough of death, we're coming back to life for Christmas with sumptuous oldies and a couple of new to keep the screen alive too. And we still plan a reduced anniversary celebration (5th) with a near-preview - a masked ball with a smaller ball, more '6' aside than a full pitch. We're still obeying ze orders but we will keep a few seats on the door each evening. Hence the raffle will be tight so keep disappointment under your balaclava. Whatever comes or goes, you will be warmly welcomed as always. So come.



The Oldies:
The Untouchables

See page 18



The Slush:
Love Actually

See page 23



Road to Perdition

What do you do for an encore if you're director Sam Mendes? If ambition, screen craft and a cast to kill for were everything, *Road to Perdition* should have had every Oscar enthusiast trumpeting their way to the ceremony. Mendes is seemingly pretty good at this after all. Spielberg first contacted screenwriter David Self to adapt the story into a feature film but it ended up in the lap of Mendes. Here a mob enforcer's son witnesses a murder, forcing him and his father to take to the road and his father down a path of redemption and revenge. The actors deliver in multiples of excellence. Never once do we think we're watching a familiar Tom Hanks, whose almost sickly appearance aids him in the role of a solemn, guilt-ridden hit man. Family tragedy compels Hanks' Sullivan to seek revenge against his former associates while remaining one step ahead of the freelance assassin they've hired to kill him. America's most trusted man gets a much needed makeover. Mendes seems to have a quality to draw from his performers. Or perhaps draw them to him. Anyone who has seen 1917 will testify to this. (*Research Chris Coetsee*) An outstanding edge-of-seat grip from start to finish. Be enthralled.

Director: Sam Mendes
 Cast: Tom Hanks, Tyler Hoechlin, Paul Newman, Jude Law, Daniel Craig, Jennifer Jason Leigh
 Duration: 117 mins
 Origin: USA 2002
 Certificate: 15
 Company: 20th Century Fox

When...

Thu 3 2.00, 7.30



The Trial Of The Chicago 7

Aaron Sorkin's powerhouse drama puts the past on the stand to eerily reflect the politically turbulent world of the present. Set against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and the political tumult of the 1960s, this is a film thankfully free from typical 60s counterculture clichés. *Chicago 7* instead artfully and urgently recreates the scene of the federal court hearing against a rag-tag band of political activists alleged to have conspired to incite the infamous riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Cutting back and forth between the events of the convention and the subsequent show trial the following year, the raw and unflinching truth behind a shocking abandonment of law and justice is revealed. It's a story full of wonderful characters and performers. The history books provided Sorkin with an abundance of charismatic characters including Jerry Rubin (Jeremy Strong) and Abbie Hoffman (Sacha Baron Cohen) who really were larger-than-life figures determined to make a mockery of the legal system. Aaron Sorkin has long demonstrated his ability to translate political theory into thrilling drama, but here he elevates his game to new heights. (*Chris Coetsee*)

Director: Aaron Sorkin
 Cast: Eddie Redmayne, Alex Sharp, Sacha Baron Cohen, Jeremy Strong, John Carroll Lynch, Mark Rylance
 Duration: 129 min
 Origin: USA 2020
 Certificate: 15
 Company: Netflix International

When...

Fri 4 2.00 Tue 15 7.30



Tenet

The saviour of cinema is here! Well, not quite, but Christopher Nolan's mind bending, timey wimey thriller is certainly engineered for the big screen.

John David Washington is 'the Protagonist', a CIA agent recruited by a secret organisation to stop Russian baddie Sator (Kenneth Brannagh) from detonating a bomb that will eradicate reality as we know it. So far, so James Bond. The twist is that, in order for Washington to thwart Sator's plans, he must alter the flow of time itself. Partnering with Robbert Pattinson's suave super-spy Neil (a less than suave name), they embark in some entropic espionage that will probably leave you utterly perplexed.

There's even a scene where someone tries to explain the film's concept on a literal whiteboard, but you won't get it, you won't get any of it, and maybe that's the point.

What with the cacophonous score pounding and pulsating over the important segments of dialogue, you won't care either; simply sit back and let the incredible set-pieces do their job. As one scientist neatly puts it, "Don't try to understand it. Feel it"; you can't help but think Nolan himself is trying to tell us something. *(Jack Whiting)*

Director: Christopher Nolan
Cast: John David Washington, Robert Pattinson, Elizabeth Debicki, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Kenneth Branagh
Duration: 150 mins
Origin: USA 2020
Certificate: 12A
Company: Warner Bros Entertainment UK Ltd.

When...

Fri 4 7.30 Sun 6 6.00



Wolfwalkers

Prepare to wowed by this uniquely animated Celtic tale of magic, mystery and grace.

In 1650, 11 year-old aspiring huntress Robyn Goodfellowe struggles against the restrictive rules set by her father Bill (Sean Bean) who has brought them from England to rid the forest outside their new Irish city's walls of wolves. As she rebelliously explores the forest with her pet falcon Merlyn, Robyn inadvertently shoots the bird while trying to help a shepherd under attack. Horrified, she watches a wild, red-haired girl take Merlyn, disappearing into a hidden clearing with the wolf pack. Bill doesn't believe her, but Robyn's convinced she has seen the "Wolfwalkers."

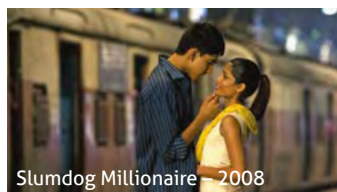
Irish studio Cartoon Saloon, the minds behind the wonderful *Song of the Sea* and *The Breadwinner* are on to yet another winner here; a beautiful story packed full of music and meaning. Every scene shimmers with whirling, circular Celtic designs, playful storytelling and a tale steeped in Celtic imagery and pagan tradition.

A heartfelt, colourful and enjoyable coming of age delight, it's not one to miss. (*Chris Coetsee*)

Directors: Tomm Moore, Ross Stewart
 Cast: Honor Kneafsey, Eva Whittaker, Sean Bean, Tommy Tiernan, Maria Doyle Kennedy
 Duration: 103 mins
 Origin: Ireland/Luxembourg/USA/France 2020
 Certificate: PG
 Company: Wildcard Distribution

When...

Sat 5 2.00



Slumdog Millionaire – 2008



The History Boys – 2006



Three Billboards... – 2017



The King's Speech – 2010



AN ANNIVERSARY 'PREVIEW'

You may have guessed already, due to a couple things out of all control – streaming and some other epidemic pox – our preview this year is more likely to be shop-soiled (but sanitised) than mint condition. It's hard to zig-zag quick enough out of Netflix' sniper's sights. It's new release catalogue shoots and rarely misses the golden nuggets easily picked off before they reach the big cinema screen. Bang Bang!! you're dead – sucker.

Hence you may have already seen this year's special Rex 16th anniversary movie event. Nevertheless, it is another potential cracker already whispered out loud in Oscar chatter. Sadly, a bitter sweet occasion, as this will be the first Paul Fullagar will not be here with me after our first fifteen extraordinary packed-out dream-like years.

A reduced audience will make it more necessary to book early, with just a few left for the door. Nor will there be a foyer box office to visit until 2nd Dec. With on-line and limited telephone bookings only

up until then. Forgive this sober note but we'll have a (masked) parted-knees-up on the night, like always. James



When...

Sat 5 7.00



Woman At War

An Icelandic eco-warrior with a difference is the unlikely heroine of this distinctive light/heavy drama about our warring relationship with nature.

Halla (Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir) is known to her friends as a quiet upbeat choir mistress. However, her seemingly unadventurous life covers up a dark secret. Halla is also 'The Mountain Woman'. The environmental activist waging a one-woman war on an international industrial giant to protect her bleak-glorious Icelandic rural landscape. When the chance comes to grasp her family dream, she finds herself with a difficult life-decision. Director Benedikt Erlingsson's first film, *Of Horses and Men*, was one of the most startlingly original, audacious features of the past decade. While *Woman at War* has a different dimension, its breathtaking central wonder woman and rousing theme offer a more focused and driven story. *(research Chris Coetsee)*

After the plastic cartoon antics of *Avengers* and *Captain Marvel*, Halla is morning sunshine, and all in a sensible cardigan. As for the live score - priceless. The very opposite of those soft-as-shit spandexed digital heroes. In her own knitting, this flesh-real woman unstunts unstinting, actually running around Iceland with a bow and arrow, over the hardest terrain. She will be back until you have all seen her - twice.

Director: Benedikt Erlingsson
Cast: Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir, Jóhann Sigurðarson, Juan Camillo Roman Estrada, Jörundur Ragnarsson
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: Iceland 2018 (Subtitled)
Certificate: 12A
Company: Picturehouse Entertainment

When...

Mon 7 2.00, 7.30



The Grand Budapest Hotel

We're still waiting patiently for Wes Anderson's upcoming magnum opus: *The French Dispatch*, but let's jump back into his most elaborate, and accomplished work to date.

Set in a fictional European spa town between the world wars, *The Grand Budapest Hotel* pivots around the character of Monsieur Gustave H (Ralph Fiennes), the hotel concierge who believes that etiquette helps define civilization. Gustave's morals are no match for his manners as he enjoys sexual congress with guests of both sexes. It's a feast of a role, and Fiennes, exuding masterful verbal dexterity, nails every comic and dramatic nuance.

Anderson's frequently imitated, but never bettered, style is on full display; utilising all his tricks, and with an ensemble cast that'll make any filmmaker green with envy. It's a ornamental toy box of a film, so delicious-looking you may want to lick the screen. It is also, in the Anderson manner, shot through with humor, bittersweet heartbreak and a bruised romantic's view of the past. It is also a rollicking caper that mixes theft, murder, a prison break and pastry recipes into a rousing free-for-all that whips by like a dervish. *(Jack Whiting)*

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

When...

Tue 8 2.00 Wed 9 7.30



Eternal Beauty

Actor-turned-filmmaker Craig Roberts juggles quirky humour with hard truths in this darkly comical romantic drama.

After being dumped at the altar, Jane (Sally Hawkins) had a psychological breakdown. Two decades later, she is still unable to make emotional sense of her life, not helped at all by her self-absorbed family; pushy mum Vivian, browbeaten dad Dennis and cruel sister Nicola. At least older sister Alice makes a bit more of an effort, even if her husband sets Jane off. Tired of being heavily medicated by her doctor, Jane stops taking her pills and she soon finds herself connecting to fellow oddball Mike (David Thewlis). Anchoring a terrific cast, Hawkins gives a remarkably textured performance, continually revealing telling elements of Jane's personality. She may seem hopelessly batty, but she's easily the most likeable person in her family, a woman broken by a trauma and finally finding healing on her own terms. Thewlis is charming as the equally offbeat Mike, effortlessly making Jane smile. Films about depression and mental instability are notoriously tricky to pull off. Here Roberts' ambitious balancing act of bleak drama and genuine laughs is an authentic, surprising and rewarding watch. (Chris Coetsee)



Director: Craig Roberts
Cast: David Thewlis, Billie Piper, Sally Hawkins
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: UK 2020
Certificate: 15
Company: Bulldog Film Distribution Ltd

When...

Tue 8 7.30



The Ladykillers

One of the last Ealing comedies of the 1950s, Alexander Mackendrick's deliciously dark crime caper celebrates its 65th birthday.

Mrs. Wilberforce, an old lady living alone in a tumbledown house near King's Cross, decides to take in a lodger. The eccentric Professor Marcus soon arrives and is frequently visited by four sinister friends. Under the pretence of amateur musicians, the group are in fact planning a daring robbery in which Mrs. Wilberforce and her home are to be unwittingly involved. When the stolen money is discovered, the gang are faced with only one option; the old girl's got to go. But as the bumbling crooks wind up double-crossing each other, their numbers slowly reduce one by one.

Alec Guinness delivers a typically mesmerising performance as Professor Marcus alongside the likes of Peter Sellers, Cecil Parker and the superb Katie Johnson.

Wickedly hilarious and a precise balance of situational comedy and stark murderous callousness, it's a treat. If you've seen it before, make sure you see it again on the big screen. And if you've never seen it before, you owe it to yourself to see one of the British film industry's true greats. (*Chris Coetsee*)

Director: Alexander Mackendrick
Cast: Alec Guinness, Peter Sellers, Cecil Parker, Herbert Lom, Danny Green
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: UK 1955
Certificate: U
Company: Optimum Releasing

When...

Wed 9 2.00



Mogul Mowgli

Bassam Tariq's emotionally resonant drama about a young man facing a momentous challenge.

British-Pakistani rapper Zed is finally getting his big break. Before going on tour he heads to London to see his parents and reconnect with his culture, repeatedly facing up to criticism. When he's diagnosed with an auto-immune disease, the illness and its experimental treatment threaten to derail his big chance.

An exploration of identity and legacy, the film has a hallucinatory style that plays on internalised feelings rather than plot details. The title is telling of Zed's struggle between capitalism and identity. Culture and religion also swirl throughout the story, never overly explored but adding texture to characters and relationships.

Riz Ahmed bursts from the screen as the impassioned rapper, and is just as magnetic in Zed's more thoughtful moments. He's so easy to identify with that we feel each step in this journey with him, including his anger, frustration and fear. It's a beautiful, harrowingly raw performance. As his strict father, Khan creates intense moments in clashes that bring out both common ground and bitter differences. Vigorous and stylish, it is a fascinating, intimate 90 minutes of filmmaking. (*Chris Coetsee*)

Director: Bassam Tariq
Cast: Riz Ahmed, Anjana Vasan, Aiysha Hart, Nabhaan Rizwan, Alyy Khan
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: UK 2020
Certificate: 15
Company: BFI Distribution

When...

Thu 10 2.00, 7.30



Aliens

With yet another instalment of the franchise on its way, it's time to revisit James Cameron's (I can do better - Oscar nominated classic from 1986.)

Sigourney Weaver returns as Ripley in the sequel to her turn as the last surviving crew member of the Nostromo, wreaked havoc by an unforgiving alien life form. Aliens is all action, a somewhat bygone example of sci-fi as thriller, where so much sci-fi as drama or, indeed, romance has replaced it in recent years. Alone in space for half a century, the feminist subtext is bolstered by themes of depression and detachment, all expertly played out in a career-defining performance by Sigourney W. When she finally comes into contact with others on the planet where the original alien was found, she predicts disaster. Hardly a surprise. Good to see Bill Paxton immortalised on the screen for the first time since his death in February.

"Action thrillers assail but rarely test us; this is the tautest, most provoking, and altogether most draining example ever made." (*New Yorker*) (research Anthony Lane)

Come be terrified at "the biggest screen and clearest sound in Herts" Not my boast, but it'll do. In the Rex... Everyone can hear you scream.

Director: James Cameron
Cast: Sigourney Weaver, Carrie Henn, Michael Biehn, Lance Henriksen, Paul Reiser, Bill Paxton, William Hope
Duration: 148 mins
Origin: USA 1986
Certificate: 15
Company: Twentieth Century Fox

When...

Fri 11 7.30



Arthur Christmas

Welcome back to Aardman Animations and Sony Pictures Animation teamwork on this whimsical, and fabulous festive tale of the 'Family Christmas'.

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 with a covert army of elves equipped with much high-tech gadgetry. When one present goes astray, youngest son Arthur (James McAvoy) takes it upon himself to ensure that one little girl is not left out on Christmas morning...

Masterfully written by Peter Baynham and Sarah Smith, and fantastically rendered, Arthur Christmas has much to delight the tiniest and the eldest. "It's playful, observant, sentimental without being slushy, and boasts the kind of jokes that will still sound funny when your children 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." (*Independent*).

Watch the elves spring into Mission Impossible stuntmen as a child begins to wake, and note Steve Christmas's 'ridic' festive goatee.

Director: Sarah Smith
Voices: James McAvoy, Jim Broadbent
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: UK/USA 2011
Certificate: U
Company: Park Circus Films

When...

Sat 12 2.00



Director: Terence Young
Cast: Sean Connery, Ursula Andress, Joseph Wiseman, Jack Lord
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: UK 1962
Certificate: PG
Company: Eon Prods Ltd

Dr No

The one that started it all. This is how you debut a beloved book series on film, and Connery hits the ground running as the suave secret agent.

Looking back on Dr. No after 24 films, it appears modest in comparison, with 007 doing his job without the assistance of elaborate ordnance or eye-popping gadgetry. Yet so much of the Bond mythos is already in place the second Dr. No begins: the gunbarrel; the "Bond, James Bond" introduction (this being the perfect iteration - white dinner jacket, cigarette loosely on the lip); the secret lair; and of course, the girls, of which Ursula Andress still holds the crown.

Dr. No himself, an evil genius with metal hands, is about as ludicrous and clichéd as his elaborate stronghold, but there's a quiet intensity to him that is rarely seen in other Bond villains.

Since then there have been bigger Bond moments. More dramatic Bond moments. Funnier Bond moments. Tenser Bond moments. But 60 years on, there is still no cooler Bond moment than his introduction – and there never will be. (*Jack Whiting*)

When...

Sat 12 7.00 Mon 14 2.00



Rebecca

Classical Hollywood studio filmmaking meets scrappy, British indie auteur - Ben Wheatley isn't an obvious choice to take on Daphne du Maurier's gothic romance. Yet for those who aren't into his brand of weird, I'm happy to report that this update is a straightforward affair. Perhaps unsurprisingly so; it's one of those novels where any changes could be considered treason. The setting is Monte Carlo; desperate to escape the clutches of her odious employer, Lily James jumps at the chance to accompany the handsome Maxim DeWinter (Armie Hammer) on several daytime activities. Over a week or two, the pair fall for each other. Even the revelation that DeWinter's wife, the mysterious Rebecca, recently passed away in suspicious circumstances doesn't stop James' naive protagonist from snapping his hand when he proposes. So back to Manderley they go, and it's at this Cornwall estate where the wheels start to come off. Kristin Scott Thomas' delicious performance as the vicious housekeeper Mrs Danvers, is the one element of the modern Rebecca that surpasses Hitchcock's take. Personally, I would have preferred a little more Wheatley bite, but this handsome adaptation is nevertheless sumptuous and sweeping. *(Jack Whiting)*



Director: Ben Wheatley
Cast: Lily James, Armie Hammer, Keely Hawes, Kristin Scott Thomas, Sam Riley, Ann Dowd
Duration: 122 mins
Origin: UK 2020
Certificate: 12A
Company: Netflix

When...

Sun 13 6.00 Tue 15 2.00



The Lives Of Others

A remarkably assured first feature from von Donnersmarck and the film's true star: Ulrich Mühe who died only a year after the film's release. I hope

he got to see his remarkable, compelling portrayal. It paints a dark picture of life under the dying Cold-War Communist regime in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). A grey world inhabited by these extraordinary faces is set mainly in East Berlin during the mid 1980s. It chronicles the Minister of Culture's decision to investigate the lives of a successful playwright and his actress wife. He is, of course that senior Official fat gargoyles, who happens to fancy-slobbering over her.

His power gets his way (never heard of such a thing). Questioning his own ethics, the Stasi officer in charge of prying, becomes profoundly affected by bugging this 'innocent' couple. This film succeeds both as a convincing historical recreation and a compelling tale of individuals trapped in the dying years of evil institutional mistrust. (uh oh...?)

A perfect cast of imperfect faces. Upon release, the film caused an extraordinary stir in the old Eastern Bloc. Here is a glance at today's curious parallel: the newly-masked, fearful 'greater-good' pushing willingly into our own fear bubble. Come see for yourself... but tell no one.

Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck
Cast: Martina Gedeck, Ulrich Mühe, Sebastian Koch, Ulrich Tukur
Duration: 132 mins
Origin: Germany 2007 (Subtitled)
Certificate: 15
Company: Lionsgate

When...

Mon 14 7.30



The Untouchables

There are many, many things to adore about The Untouchables, Brian De Palma's most satisfying of his films.

Few old TV shows have been brought to the big screen with such brio as De Palma's majestic adaptation of the 60s small screen classic (he did it again with Mission: Impossible, no less) Set in Chicago during Prohibition, The Untouchables revolves around Eliot Ness (Kevin Costner), a rookie G-man who assembles a rough-and-ready team of unbribable agents to smash Capone's (Robert De Niro) empire. Under the instruction of veteran Irish cop Jimmy Malone (Sean Connery, career best), Ness is forced to become as ruthless as his quarry, resulting in a series of thrilling action set-pieces and some brilliant banter courtesy of screenwriter David Mamet.

In this age of sprawling, messy comic book adaptations, The Untouchables got it right without even being a graphic novel to begin with. The design is clean, bright and framed by the strict lines of the Chicago streets. The sensibility is outlandish, almost fantasy. Meanwhile, the god-like Ennio Morricone infuses the spirit of the age with a heart-quickenning score that drives the drama like an express train. (Jack Whiting)

Director: Brian De Palma
Cast: Kevin Costner, Sean Connery, Robert De Niro
Duration: 119 mins
Origin: USA 1987
Certificate: 15
Company: Paramount Pictures UK

When...

Wed 16 2.00, 7.30



An Officer And A Gentleman

Hugely popular in its day and appealing to the incurable romantic in all of us, this is a highly manipulative mixture of "boot camp is good for you" and "every girl loves a man in uniform".

Zack Mayo (Richard Gere), a new member of the U.S. Navy, has a bad attitude. When he signs up for the Aviation Academy, he is met with the strict leadership of Sgt. Emil Foley (Louis Gossett Jr.). Through Foley's guidance - and an unexpected romance with Paula (Debra Winger), an outsider who hangs around the naval base - Zack learns some tough lessons and discovers what he truly wants out of life. *An Officer and a Gentleman* is both a thoroughly rousing crowd-pleaser and a shamelessly manipulative banner-waver, a homage to the never-practiced ethics of a non-existent era. Gere looks a treat in his pristine white togs, and gives a performance more wooden than a wardrobe, but who cares! Not even the combined talents of Winger and Gossett Jr can turn this one into a "great" film, but if you're in the mood for a wallow, it hits the spot. (*Jack Whiting*)

Director: Taylor Hackford
 Cast: Richard Gere, Debra Winger, David Keith, Robert Loggia, Lisa Blount
 Duration: 119 mins
 Origin: USA 1982
 Certificate: 15
 Company: Paramount

When...

Thu 17 2.00, 7.30



Elf

One Christmas Eve a small baby at an orphanage crawls into Santa's bag of toys... only to be accidentally carried back to Santa's workshop at the North Pole. Although he is raised to be an elf, as he grows to be ten times bigger than everyone else it becomes clear that Buddy (Ferrell) will never truly fit into the elf world. One Christmas, Buddy finally decides to find his real family, and sets off for New York City to track down his roots, but soon finds himself as much an outsider there as back at the North Pole. In fact, everyone in New York seems to have forgotten the true spirit of Christmas. So Buddy takes it upon himself to win over his family, realise his destiny, and save Christmas.

Another family delight with Will Ferrell gangling in every direction to make the whole film into fabulous chaos. Very silly and very funny, somehow his antics get funnier every year.

Don't dare miss this fabulously silly Christmas treat in this stop-start year on a huge elfin screen - that lives on, while all around it... the grown-up corporate gainsayers, fall apart. Not gloating just green.

Director: Jon Favreau
 Cast: Will Ferrell, James Caan
 Duration: 97 mins
 Origin: USA 2003
 Certificate: PG
 Company: Entertainment Film Distributors

When...

Fri 18 2.00

COMING SOON TO THE ODYSSEY

BACK BY DEMAND

REBECCA

THE TRIAL OF THE CHICAGO 7

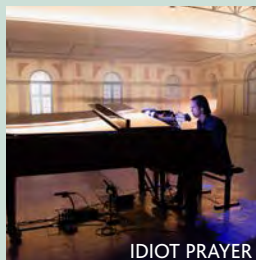
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BACK BY DEMAND

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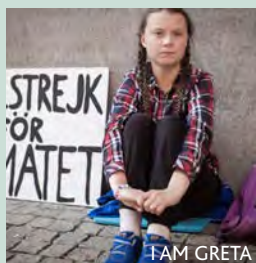
MEMORIES OF MURDER



IDIOT PRAYER



WONDER WOMAN 1984



FAM GRETA



ST MAUD



THE ODYSSEY

C I N E M A S T A L B A N S

BOX OFFICE: 01727 453088

DECEMBER	FILM	TIME
THU 3	23 WALKS	1.00
THU 3	PIXIE	7.15
FRI 4	THE SECRET GARDEN	1.00
FRI 4	TENET	7.00
SAT 5	THE SECRET GARDEN	1.00
SAT 5	FINDING JACK CHARLTON (+I)	7.15
SUN 6	WOLFALKERS	1.00
SUN 6	MANK	7.15
MON 7	REBECCA	1.00
MON 7	MANK	7.15
TUE 8	FINDING JACK CHARLTON	12.30
TUE 8	23 WALKS	7.15
WED 9	PIXIE	12.30
WED 9	KAJILLIONAIRE	7.15
THU 10	MANK	1.00
THU 10	A CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM BOB	7.15
FRI 11	ELF	1.00
FRI 11	TENET	7.00
SAT 12	ELF	1.00
SAT 12	REBECCA	7.15
SUN 13	MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET	1.00
SUN 13	THE LIVES OF OTHERS (S) (+I)	7.15
MON 14	THE LADYKILLERS (1955)	1.00
MON 14	MOGUL MOWGLI	7.15
TUE 15	THE GRINCH (2018)	12.30
TUE 15	LOVE ACTUALLY	7.15
WED 16	LAST CHRISTMAS	12.30, 7.15
THU 17	THE SECRET GARDEN	1.00
THU 17	GOLDFINGER	7.15
FRI 18	A CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM BOB	1.00
FRI 18	DIE HARD	7.15
SAT 19	THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL	1.00
SAT 19	ELF	7.00
SUN 20	HOME ALONE	1.00
SUN 20	A CHRISTMAS CAROL (2020)	7.00
MON 21	A CHRISTMAS CAROL (2020)	1.00
MON 21	THE HOLIDAY	7.15
TUE 22	ELF	12.30
TUE 22	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	7.15
WED 23	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	12.30, 7.15
THU 24	ELF	12.00
THU 24	A CHRISTMAS CAROL (2020)	5.00
FRI 25	CLOSED - SEASONS GREETINGS!	
SAT 26	CLOSED - BOXING DAY	
SUN 27	OVER THE MOON	1.00
SUN 27	THE PROM	7.15
MON 28	THE ELFKINS	1.00
MON 28	MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM	7.15
TUE 29	THE SECRET GARDEN	12.30
TUE 29	THE LADYKILLERS (1955)	7.15
WED 30	MARY POPPINS (1964)	12.30
WED 30	AKIRA (1988) (S)	7.15
THU 31	THE APARTMENT (1960)	12.00
THU 31	O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?	5.15

(S) SUBTITLED (+I) INTRO

THE-REX

BERKHAMSTED

BOX OFFICE:

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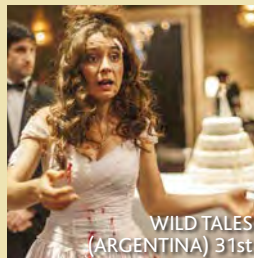
DECEMBER	FILM	TIME	PAGE
3 THU	ROAD TO PERDITION	2.00, 7.30	8
4 FRI	THE TRIAL OF THE CHICAGO 7	2.00	8
4 FRI	TENET	7.30	9
5 SAT	WOLFALKERS	2.00	10
5 SAT	REX 16TH ANNIVERSARY	7.00	11
6 SUN	TENET	6.00	9
7 MON	WOMAN AT WAR (S)	2.00, 7.30	12
8 TUE	THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL	2.00	12
8 TUE	ETERNAL BEAUTY	7.30	13
9 WED	THE LADYKILLERS	2.00	14
9 WED	THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL	7.30	12
10 THU	MOGUL MOWGLI	2.00, 7.30	14
11 FRI	ALIENS	7.30	15
12 SAT	ARTHUR CHRISTMAS	2.00	15
12 SAT	DR. NO	7.00	16
13 SUN	REBECCA	6.00	17
14 MON	DR. NO	2.00	16
14 MON	THE LIVES OF OTHERS (S)	7.30	18
15 TUE	REBECCA	2.00	17
15 TUE	THE TRIAL OF THE CHICAGO 7	7.30	8
16 WED	THE UNTOUCHABLES	2.00, 7.30	18
17 THU	AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN	2.00, 7.30	19
18 FRI	ELF	2.00	19
18 FRI	A CHRISTMAS CAROL	7.30	22
19 SAT	MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET	2.00	23
19 SAT	LOVE ACTUALLY	7.00	23
20 SUN	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	6.00	24
21 MON	A CHRISTMAS CAROL	2.00	22
21 MON	WHITE CHRISTMAS	7.30	25
22 TUE	THE GRINCH	2.00	25
22 TUE	THE HOLIDAY	7.30	26
23 WED	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	2.00, 7.30	24
24 THU	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	5.00	24
25 FRI	CLOSED - SEASONS GREETINGS!		
26 SAT	CLOSED - BOXING DAY		
27 SUN	BABY DRIVER	6.00	27
28 MON	OVER THE MOON	2.00	27
28 MON	UNTOUCHABLE (S)	7.30	28
29 TUE	THE CALL OF THE WILD	2.00	28
29 TUE	GOLDFINGER	7.30	29
30 WED	THE SECRET GARDEN	2.00	30
30 WED	A STAR IS BORN	7.30	30
31 THU	WILD TALES (S)	6.00	31

(S) SUBTITLED

DEC '20:

A SELECTION
FOR A YEAR IN
FRAGMENTS

(best from any Rex year)



COMING SOON

Who knows, who cares.
We'll find them between
'intervals'.



Directors: Jacqui Morris, David Morris
 Voices: Carey Mulligan, Martin Freeman, Andy Serkis
 Duration: 90 mins
 Origin: UK 2020
 Certificate: PG
 Company: Munro Film Services

A Christmas Carol

It's always a delight to see different interpretations of A Christmas Carol on screen, and this enchanting adaptation takes a haunting, yet beautiful approach.

The film seeks both to exhume the original story's gritty commentary on social inequality and the corrupting influence of greed, and to breathe new life into the lyricism of the original text by setting its scenes to modern dance.

Carey Mulligan, Martin Freeman, Daniel Kaluuya, and Andy Serkis provide voice work, while a slew of professional dancers bring these characters to life. The film opens on a Victorian family preparing a toy theatre for their annual performance of Charles Dickens' tale. As the family's grandmother narrates the story and her grandchildren change the scenery, we enter the imagination of one of the children in the audience and watch as the cardboard stage, and the story with it, transforms into a darkly fantastical otherworld.

A Christmas Carol offers an immersive experience for fans of both cinema and the stage; offering the perfect substitute to an unfortunate lack of theatre this year. (*Jack Whiting*)

When...

Fri 18 7.30 Mon 21 2.00



Miracle on 34th Street

This is the film 25 to 30 somethings, long to see at Christmas. Perhaps as little kids they watched it on telly and were lucky enough to be wrapped in warm snuggly jim-jams and tucked into each other.

Here at the Rex today you are transported back to that one moment when the whole world stopped for a tiny euphoric hour or so. Enough to catch your breath in that precious joy of a child's Christmas. You might not come in your onesies but you are welcome to snuggle up together (at a distance of course!?).

Loyal to the original 1947 classic with few changes, it is transplanted to 1990s 34th Street.

Dorey Walker (Elizabeth Perkins) is chief executive of New York's world famous Macy's. Neither her nor her petulant daughter Susan (Mara Wilson) believe this Christmas nonsense. That is until the store hires Kriss Kringle as Santa (Richard Attenborough as the most Father Christmas of all Santas. My daughters, remain convinced if there is a Father Christmas, IT IS Richard Attenborough! And in his brother Sir David, that fantasy has perhaps come true. This film does have enough spirit of its own to suggest there might well be a Santaborough afterall... x

Director: Les Mayfield
Cast: Richard Attenborough, Elizabeth Perkins, Dylan McDermott
Duration: 114 mins
Origin: USA 1994
Certificate: U
Company: Twentieth Century Fox

When...

Sat 19 2.00



Love Actually

This silly tale is requested every year. So here it is; one more needle on the Christmas tree. Don't call the Samaritans yet. If this film doesn't tip you over the edge, you'll be safe for another year.

Richard Curtis has talked his old pals, plus a few new faces, into this award winning farce.

Hugh (Boris) Grant would never be a Prime Minister!? in Harold Wilson's day. Here, Hugh is in love with No10's tea lady, while Harold allegedly preferred the designer of his mac. I'm with Harold. Any eastender can make tea, but a woman who knows her Ganex from her Burberry gets my button! With a cast of near Spartacus proportions, this flimsy tale boasts intrigue, 'embroiled in various overlapping tales of love and woe'. With the emphasis on Lurve, not the Actually, and with a hint of woe to inject hope. But no hope it remains, a sloppy nonsense without a trace of smut, just in time for Christmas. Escape the family or make them suffer; bring them with you.

Highlight: alongside Colin, is Rickman's Achilles: Heike Makatsch as Mia the stunning, irresistible flirting distraction from the weighty Stars and even thicker-than-porridge 'plotlines'. No need for 'Come'. You're already here.

Director: Richard Curtis
Cast: Alan Rickman, Emma Thompson, Hugh Grant, Bill Nighy
Duration: 128 mins
Origin: UK 2003
Certificate: 15
Company: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

When...

Sat 19 7.00



It's A Wonderful Life

Welcome to our 16th anniversary Christmas, with the same old irresistible film that opened our first Christmas and has been faithfully seeing it in ever since. (December 2004)

It was a flop at the box office when it first appeared in 1946. A Post-war USA celebrated the brave new world with fashion, cars and fridges. We had bomb-sites, functional clothes, cold water, rations, war debts and a grey 1950's. But with fabulous, magical old City trams in every corner of Britain.

Accidentally, *Wonderful Life* became essential TV viewing in the UK during the mid 70s, hence a new part of Christmas from the ghosts of the old. You couldn't see it at cinemas until independents got it re-released in 1999. Now thanks to the BFI, this beautifully restored copy, is here again at the hand-restored Rex (and Odyssey StA) for Christmas 2020. Our cinematic Christmas would now not be the same without Clarence (angel 2nd class) showing George Bailey how terrible life would be in Bedford Falls, had he not existed. The simplest universal message: without that kind-one in your life, our world is diminished.

Happy Christmas. Have fun, go easy and raise a glass to a world where a George Bailey might re-emerge for our future's children.

Director: Frank Capra
 Cast: James Stewart, Donna Reed, Gloria Grahame, Lionel Barrymore, Thomas Mitchell, Ward Bond and Clarence (angel 2nd class).
 Duration: 130 mins
 Origin: USA 1946
 Certificate: U
 Company: Park Circus Films

When...

Sun 20 6.00 Wed 23 7.30
Wed 23 2.00 Thu 24 5.00



White Christmas

The BFI's meticulously restored *White Christmas* is a treasure trove of Irving Berlin classics: 'Sisters', 'Blue Skies', and of course...

Two song-and-dance men (Crosby and Kaye, actually only one, Bing can't dance) team up after the war to become one of the hottest acts in show-biz. One winter, after joining forces with a sister act (Gorgeous George's aunt, Rosemary Clooney and stunning Vera Ellen) they hit the road. The real 'adventure' starts at a gig in Vermont. The run-down Inn belongs to their old army General. The result is unabashed sentimental slush, an immortal, perennial Christmas favourite unlikely to fade. 1950s: America's boom decade. Was it a fabulous time there? Bogart, Brando and Doris Day; the cars, the romance, the Technicolor, with Ella and Sinatra in their prime. At the Pictures every home had a piano and a fridge while we were still rationing carrots and living in forty shades of grey (without a trace of smut) enjoying scrubbed necks, goose grease, darned socks, nits and the unforgiving one-pair of shoes worn too long for growing toes. But somehow Christmas always brought the annuals: Beano and Dandy and that single precious Mars bar. No television! There-there now... 'The Past is another Country'. *White Christmas* remains a borderless fantasy passport.

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

When...

Mon 21 7.30



The Grinch

Benedict Cumberbatch is the last person I'd expect to voice this classic character, but he does an impressive job embodying the surly, sour, but ultimately wounded soul.

The Grinch lives on a mountain high above the town of Whoville, where festive goodwill is spreading like an epidemic. Like Scrooge, there's an explanation for his shrivelled heart that's rooted in the Grinch's backstory: he grew up unloved in an orphanage where Christmas came not even once a year.

To destroy the fun for everyone else, the Grinch is impersonating Santa to steal the town's presents. At the same time, cute-as-a-button poppet Cindy Lou cracks a plan to trap Santa as he comes down the chimney to be doubly sure her Christmas wishes come true.

While this is a much safer iteration of the Dr. Zeus creation; far more so than the admittedly terrifying, Jim Carrey horror show from nearly two decades ago, and though its ambition remains rather low, the visual gags and charm will warm over any cold critic. (*Jack Whiting*). It looks and sounds like great fun. Nobody here will be nit-picking. Bring the street. Or to keep a safe distance, perhaps the next street along...

Directors: Yarrow Cheney, Scott Mosier
Cast: Benedict Cumberbatch, Cameron Seely, Rashida Jones, Pharrell Williams
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: USA 2018
Certificate: U
Company: Universal

When...

Tue 22 2.00



The Holiday

Rivalling Love Actually for the ultimate seasonal guilty pleasure; this glutinous, Christmas pudding of a film is coated in a kind of buttery, golden glow of sickly sweet romance.

Cameron Diaz - her beaming, hyperactive face almost entirely devoid of ordinary human emotion - plays Amanda, a movie trailer editor who has come to England on a cute "house swap" holiday with a stressed English journalist called Iris (Kate Winslet). Iris has had her heart broken and strikes various Bridget Jonesy poses of snuffly, tissuey, jumper-wearing despair around the house, before snapping up the house-swap offer and zipping over to live in Amanda's spiffy Los Angeles home for Christmas, leaving behind her roguish brother, Graham. This is the impossibly handsome Jude Law, a book editor with whom Amanda has raunchy sex with her bra on. Back in LA, Kate Winslet finds herself drawn to quirky, vulnerable musician Miles (Jack Black) - chubby, yet clearly hubby material.

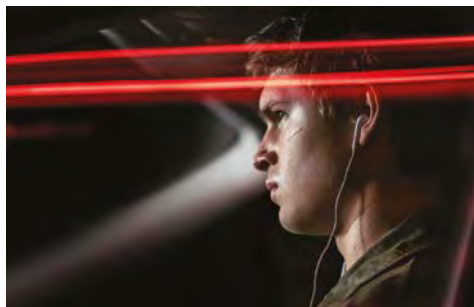
Winslet and Black come off better as the more engaging, loveable pairing; I kept hoping we would stay in LA, only to keep away from the, frankly, creepy Graham. You're better than that Amanda!
(Jack Whiting)

Director: Nancy Meyers
Cast: Kate Winslet, Cameron Diaz, Jude Law, Jack Black
Duration: 136 mins
Origin: USA 2006
Certificate: 12A
Company: Universal Pictures Int (UK)

When...

Tue 22 7.30





Baby Driver

To miss this thrill-ride on our screen is to miss adrenalin fuelled film-making at its most enthralling and irreverent. Uniquely observed by a soundtrack starring as its very own character. Edgar Wright, one of the few true, and the only British, auteurs in cinema, has fine-tuned his passion project to within an inch of its lense. Every edit, every stunt, every rhythmically timed sequence is meticulously planned and executed. His visual flair is his trademark and his eschewing digital to shoot on 35/70mm film stock is his weapon of choice. Baby-faced Ansel Elgort is behind the wheel as Baby, the getaway driver working for Kevin Spacey. His struggle with tinnitus means he's plugged into his iPod 24/7. For him that means chauffeuring crooks (including Jon Hamm and Jamie Foxx) to and from banks to hi-octane backdrop of classic pop. For us this means car chases and shootouts to the beat of the music. It's a unique big screen experience indeed.

Wright has taken 1978's *The Driver*, *Blues Brothers* and even *La La Land* and put them in the grinder.

This slick motor is the result. (JW)

Welcome back to the unsung big screen ride 'of-all-time'. Doubt it...? Betchya!! Come and lose...

Boom-u-shang-a-lang.

Director: Edgar Wright
Cast: Ansel Elgort, Lily James, Kevin Spacey
Duration: 113 mins
Origin: USA 2017
Certificate: 15
Company: Sony Pictures Releasing

When...

Sun 27 6.00



Over The Moon

Animation superstar Glen Keane celebrates Chinese legends and the power of love in this dazzling musical adventure.

From *Bambi* to *The Lion King*, the death of a loved one is a topic the animated genre has often touched upon. Here, still processing the death of her mother, Fei Fei (Cathy Ang) struggles when her father (John Cho) expresses a romantic interest in fellow single parent Mrs Zhong (Sandra Oh). To prove to him that her mother isn't really gone, Fei Fei plots to blast off to the stars to meet Chang'e (Phillipa Soo), the moon goddess she always told stories about.

A veteran of Disney animation, Keane was the man responsible for designing numerous iconic characters during Disney's renaissance period of the late 80s and early 90s, including Ariel, Beast, Aladdin to name just a few. His talent and love for his craft is again on show here. A gorgeously animated and incredibly entertaining delight, this is a film which bursts to life with original songs, charming characters and a familiar, yet heartwarming family story that knows exactly how to play with your heartstrings. (*Chris Coetsee*)

Director: Glen Keane, John Kahrs
Cast: Ken Jeong, Sandra Oh, Kimiko Glenn
Duration: 95 mins
Origin: China 2020
Certificate: U
Company: Netflix International

When...

Mon 28 2.00



Untouchable

What more to be said of this fabulous heartwarming gallic spark? A huge true-story hit around the world, no moreso than at here the Rex where it has/ will run and run.

The film chronicles the unlikely burgeoning friendship between Philippe (Cluzet) a wealthy and cultured quadriplegic, and Driss (Omar Sy) a young banlieue (slum-'projects') dwelling French West African hired to be his reluctant carer. This routine 'odd-couple' story works on some other level, simultaneously wry, tender and hard-hitting. Perhaps inevitably, Philippe and Driss find their cosmic differences reveal more about... Philippe's reluctant romantic involvement with a pen-friend; Driss with his flirtatious, mischievous ways and his deep rooted immigrant poverty and consequent daily family earthquakes.

"Untouchable's moral is conservative optimism: give a man responsibility and he will act responsibly? Might charm, but wont change the world..." (Oh yeah? Telegraph) It will move yours. From its opening ambiguity, it draws you in, teasing an uncertain tension, before you fall in love. Only the French seem to understand how to tell a fundamental human tale to touch us all across barriers of language and... borders. At the closing of a bad year, come: be uplifted by a European Country's effortless art of screen story telling; perhaps France's greatest export gift...

Directors: Eric Toledano, Olivier Nakache
Cast: François Cluzet, Omar Sy
Duration: 112 mins
Origin: France 2011 (Subtitled)
Certificate: 15
Company: Entertainment Film Distribution

When...

Mon 28 7.30



The Call Of The Wild

Man meets dog in this classic adventure yarn.

Adapting Jack London's 1903 literary classic, The Call of the Wild follows the life of Buck, a domesticated St. Bernard/Scotch Collie. Stolen from his comfortable Californian home and sold to freight haulers for the Yukon. Buck's life is turned upside down. Driven by a demand for dogs to pull sleds during the 1890s icy American Gold Rush. Buck is forced to join a mail delivery dog sled team. After a series of hardships, he falls to John Thornton (Harrison Ford) who becomes his new master.

Both trying to find their place in the world among the frozen Alaskan Klondike, Harrison Ford said his character "has an opportunity to gain humanity in Buck's eyes. Through their growing close bonding, he gets the courage from Buck to face parts of his life he didn't have the courage to face prior to this man-and-dog relationship." Exploring the deep bond that a dog can have with man and their fight for survival in dangerous terrain, this is a heartfelt adaptation of Jack London's timeless novel.

(research Rachel Williams) A sell-out on every Rex return. Send your dog to tell six others only, from every (distant) street.

Director: Chris Sanders
Cast: Harrison Ford, Karen Gillan, Cara Gee, Dan Stevens
Duration: 100 min
Origin: USA 2020
Certificate: PG
Company: Walt Disney Studios

When...

Tue 29 2.00



Goldfinger

**The last in our Sean Connery trilogy in December.
The perfect month for old Bonds.**

This was the first Bond to really hit home. It was the third, so had to become iconic or lose its grip on that part of the vital mid-sixties. With Sean just coming into his own and making Bond unmistakably his own, it hit iconic with such force, nothing would stop it (until Daniel C turned it into po-faced pc Mission Impossible stuff). Thanks to Sean it is still running. Goldfinger created a hit song that even now, 58 years later, won't lie down and die.

Oddjob is immortalised with his lethal, frisbee bowler, Gert Frobe had only to deliver the best line properly: "No Mr Bond, I expect you die" to steal the film. Shirley Eaton died naked in gold and the gorgeous Honor Blackman will be forever 'Poosy'. A finest hour all round. Now we have a brand new print to show on our big screen without a crackle or blemish. Come now. Next time, after it's done the rounds, it might be full of bullet holes. So let's raise a scotch to big-man Sean - that rare mega star who seemed never to be shaken or stirred. Come.



Director:	Guy Hamilton
Cast:	Sean Connery, Honor Blackman, Gert Frobe, Harold Sakata
Duration:	112 mins
Origin:	UK 1964
Certificate:	PG
Company:	Park Circus Films

When...

Tue 29 7.30



The Secret Garden

In a year defined by surprise, the predictability of *The Secret Garden* – a new film adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's beloved 1911 novel – proves a breath of fresh air.

Here the Edwardian setting is swapped for the 1940s. Opening with a prologue in India, we meet 10-year-old Mary Lennox (Dixie Egerickx), who is found abandoned and newly orphaned following the death of her wealthy parents in the cholera epidemic. Sent away to live with her reclusive uncle Archibald Craven (Colin Firth) in the Yorkshire Moors, Mary must adapt to a new life in the Gothic mansion, clashing instantly with stern housekeeper Mrs. Medlock (Julie Walters). Warned not to poke about, the young adventurer does exactly that, and eventually uncovers the secret garden on the estate. With the wizardry afforded by today's technology, the garden now feels more fantastical than before, with twisting vines and plants that change colour with the wind. Just as before, though, the hidden place ignites the children's imagination, helping them to deal with loneliness, loss and self-discovery. They learn what is cared for and tended to, can be rejuvenated. *The Secret Garden* is worth uncovering all over again. (Jack Whiting)

Director: Marc Munden
 Cast: Dixie Egerickx, Colin Firth, Julie Walters, Edan Hayhurst, Isis Davis, Maeve Dermody
 Duration: 100 mins
 Origin: UK 2020
 Certificate: PG
 Company: StudioCanal

When...

Wed 30 2.00



A Star Is Born

A sweeping bittersweet love story first time around, now worth the big screen once again.

'Luminous, thrilling and believable.'

It's the fourth remake (title only) and an impressive, not-too-ego directorial debut by Bradley Cooper. His own lead as Jackson Maine is authentic.

A legendary singer-songwriter, we join him after a gig, trawling town for another drink. The only bar open: a drag bar. The night's spotlight is Ally (Lady Gaga) giving heart to 'La Vie en Rose'. Lady G, known as a shapeshifter, here shifts into a new shape, refreshingly natural all of her own: herself. They 'connect' and take us with them. Their chemistry is immediate, their harmony irresistible. Their spontaneity takes you with them every step. This movie is born to be a star. Drawn spontaneously to each other, the music they make folds into easy unforced, heartaching harmony. So rare on screen, it is almost impossible to watch these two 'naturals' falling in love, and not fall with them. Breathtaking. Everything is live on-stage, no mime, no overdub. It even has that best of glorious Rn'R moustaches: Sam Elliott holding its spine, and a first time, extraordinary real woman at its heart. Back only once. Don't miss. Come.

Director: Bradley Cooper
 Cast: Lady Gaga, Bradley Cooper, Sam Elliott, Andrew Dice Clay, Dave Chappelle
 Duration: 136 mins
 Origin: USA 2018
 Certificate: 15
 Company: Warner Bros Entertainment UK Ltd.

When...

Wed 30 7.30



Wild Tales

Wild Tales, put simply, is an ingenious collection of nightmarish stories. Damián Szifron's dark mind is on full display in a black-comedy masterclass quite unlike anything we've seen before.

A satire of survival in a corrupt and cynical Argentina, each of the short accounts on display here chronicle all walks of life; a parking fine, a furious bride, a bout of in-flight paranoia. This is just a teaser in what to expect from a rabbit-hole of confusion and violent hilarity.

Frantic from the off, the pre-credits short sets the bench-mark so high, it takes an entire film to match it. The visuals are stunning, a real pleasure, and the bizarre soundtrack screams with you.

"Barmy, brilliant, never banal, this twisted comedy is a treat for the mind... wickedly dark." (*Empire*)

"If everyone behaved the way they do here, civilisation would crumble. But the real take-away lesson here is how easy it might be for any of us, swept up in a moment of bloodlust, to consider pure raging hostility as fair trade." (*Chicago Sun Times*)

Perhaps a way out is to make fun of rage, frustration, conflict and retaliation?

You won't be able to help laughing when you know you shouldn't. Happy New Year...

Director: Damián Szifron
 Cast: Ricardo Darín, Oscar Martínez,
 Leonardo Sbaraglia, Érica Rivas,
 Rita Cortese
 Duration: 122 mins
 Origin: Argentina/Spain 2015
 Certificate: 15
 Company: Artificial Eye

When...

Thu 31 6.00



Obituaries

Geoffrey Palmer

Geoffrey Palmer along with his family and friends were regular visitors to the Rex from Wendover.

Then during the height of the despised HS2 plans a few years ago, which saw homes and beloved swathes of beloved countryside compulsorily 'confiscated' and left derelict in the path of that fast train to nowhere, the Palmers moved to Berkhamsted close to the Rex. He missed the tranquility of the immediate Chiltern countryside surrounding the house they left, but were content to be a short walk from the Rex.



JUNE 1927 – NOV 2020

He indulged me in my disdain for indulgent 'acting'.

I was happy that an esteemed actor with years of experience in

camera close-ups, while remaining in character, and without over doing it. A master of 'less-is-more'. He too didn't care for the performer taking over from the character.

A great sense of mischievous humour and always in good spirits in the foyer, he greeted us warmly and never made a fuss.

While he will be seen as AWOL rather than missing in action, he will always be sadly missed.

We welcome his family and friends to carry on walking up to the top of the street, crossing the road and taking their seats.

Sean Connery

We saw his first 007 outing in Dr No in Sept/October? 1962, the same months we caught the Beatles for the first time at lunchtime sessions at the Cavern. Some Autumn - that was.

Who could know, both icons would come with us for the rest of our lives, and two of them (and one of us) would have used theirs up already. George went 19 years ago on 21st Nov 2001, John, 21 years before.

Now it's Sean's turn, and Goldfinger finally gets his wish. Connery's James Bond was as instant a revolution as were the Beatles. An extraordinary and spontaneous coming-of-age. We love a villain, often more than the hero. In Sean's Bond he was never shaken.

So his following was assured and has never evaporated. Zardos aside, he managed to avoid turkeys, though I wouldn't rush to watch all his diverse catalogue. But as much as he grew to shrug off the label, he made Bond entirely his own, both compelling and ridiculous (that little towelling'number'?). He could light a cigarette as coolly as dispatching baddies and kissing all the girls. Which is why every actor who followed him, has followed him. What else could they do. Roger exaggerated the mischief, Daniel self consciously swaggers and pouts, and Pierce played it straight - but they all followed. For sheer style, he left them standing with nothing better to do than practice "the name's Bond - James Bond" and miss. In spite of the things 'they'

will find to drag up about him, he steered clear of the limelight, was rarely interviewed and like a true hero villain, went off to play golf between gigs. I hope he hated being 90. Our glasses are for ever raised to you Mr Bond.



AUG 1930 – OCT 2020

Paul Fullagar

It all began one sunny weekday at the end of the millennium summer of 2000 in the garden of the Old Swan at Swan Bottom.

We met to discuss further, this crazy idea of rescuing the old derelict Rex in Berkhamsted. To start the ball rolling, at the end of our sober drinks and without ceremony or fuss, he handed me a cheque for £5000 'seedcorn'. It was 'the beginning of a beautiful partnership' based on loans, without interference. He left me to it from that day on. And the seedcorn was free, a gesture which I will never forget.

We had met years before at the many Chiltern country gigs during the summers of 1987/8/89 at the Buckinghamshire hamlets of Ballinger and The Lee. We would run into each other on Sunday afternoon 'lock-ins' at the Old Swan, and became great friends amongst an entertaining bunch of well-heeled mid-40s County reprobates.

Jumping ahead to keep it short, Paul remains at the top of a very short list of most beloved and trusted friends alongside Alan Clooney, and later Ed Mauger, (the genius pairing who hand-built the whole cine infrastructure into the Rex you see today and still alive last time I looked). Where you are walking, sitting, raising glasses in wide open comfort; watching & listening to immaculate sound and vision, is all down to these three, together with the other fantastic handful of trusted artisans and grafters.

So with Paul's never-ending cash flow and their expertise we finally opened in December 2004 without need for pro-builders, nor a penny wasted on experts or 'consultants'. We have remained close ever since, he welcoming me into the heart of his loving family. He never talked of the money (repaid as the Rex grew in success).

Clearly, he is already much missed, and this years 16th anniversary will be the first time his chair will be empty.

The whole fanciful tale is coming, albeit slowly. Each chapter is named after the principal characters, thus tying the whole yarn together.

Even while still scribbled in pencil, it is dedicated to Paul. Now I wish I'd kept them sharp while he was still here to read it. So this inadequate flake of his life will have to do as my seedcorn to him.

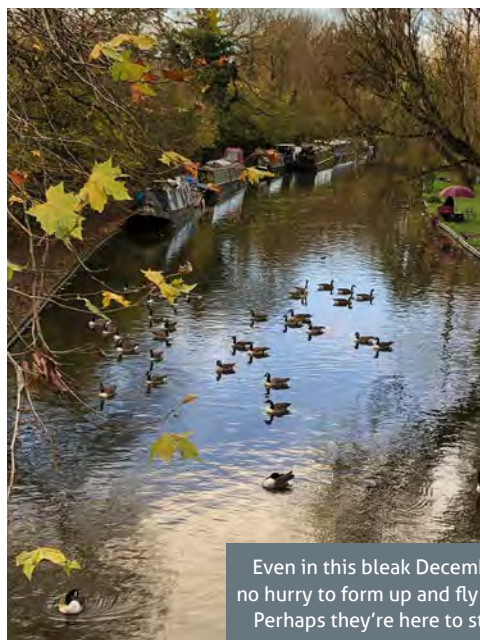


Lipstick traces...

On the last night (2nd lockdown) someone left this sweet lipstick-note, for us to find in the morning. Nice the taps were gleaming...!



Everlasting Sunnyside allotments - unlocked



Even in this bleak December, the Canada geese are in no hurry to form up and fly the brown water, dusk or day. Perhaps they're here to stay, enjoying legs to bark at.

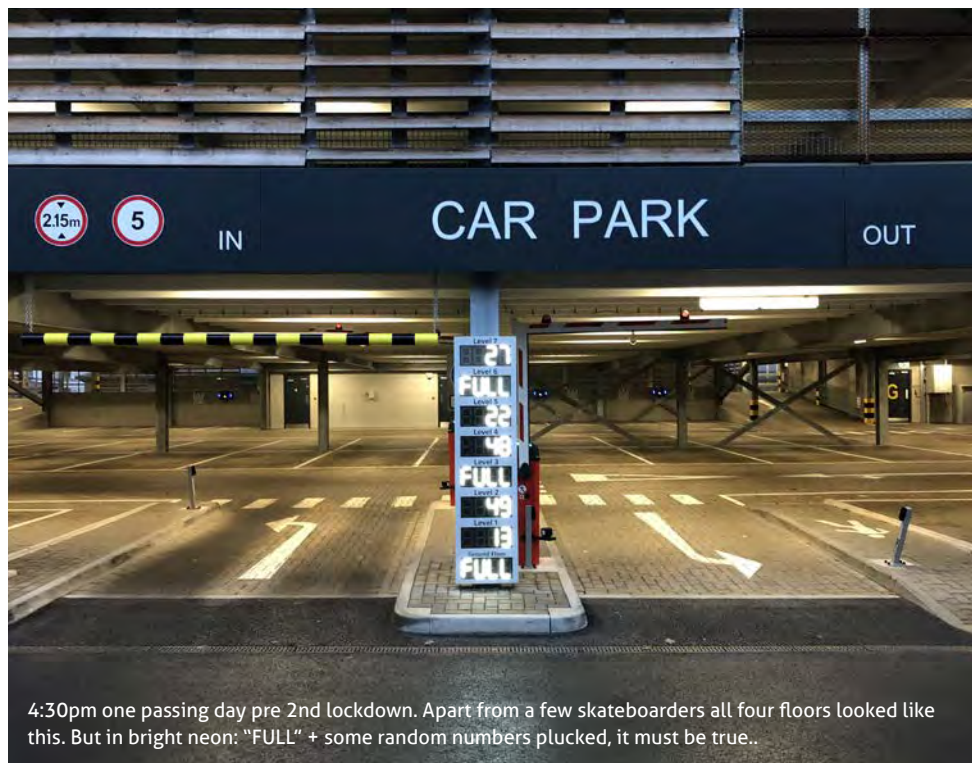
Fantasy Town planning meeting with Intalink:

"How do we 'close' an unsheltered street post George...?"

"Dunno, have you tried turning it upside down...?"



For a rainbow to shine bright, its gods drain all interfering colour from sky and street (apart from bright red).



4:30pm one passing day pre 2nd lockdown. Apart from a few skateboarders all four floors looked like this. But in bright neon: "FULL" + some random numbers plucked, it must be true..



Thanks Mary - Mary

www.marycassenley.com

