

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E

THE KITE RUNNER

FEBRUARY...

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

THE-REX

FEBRUARY 2008 Issue 35
www.therexcinema.com

01442 877759

Mon-Sat 10.20-6pm Sun 4.30-6.30pm

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SEAT PRICES:

Circle	£7.00
Concessions	£5.50
At Table	£9.00
Concessions	£7.50
Royal Box (seats 6) or for the Box	£11.00 £60.00

BOX OFFICE:

01442 877759

Mon to Sat 10.30 – 6.00

Sun 4.30 – 6.30

(Credit/Debit card booking fee 50p)

Disabled and flat access: through the gate
on High Street (right of apartments)

Some of the girls and boys you see at the Box
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Holly Gilbert	Amberly Rose
Beth Hannaway	Tina Thorpe
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Jo Littlejohn	Keymea Yazdanian
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THE ORIGINAL VISIONARY of The Rex.**The Rex**

High Street (Three Close Lane)

Berkhamsted HP4 2FG

www.therexcinema.com**FEBRUARY...**

Once thought of it as the worst month of the year. On the contrary, days get longer, the first flowers of Spring push through, birdsong fills the sky and it has Valentines Day with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Take a day off – talk to each other or better; spend two hours where you don't have to...

MATINEES MAY CONTAIN BABIES...

This is a parody of health warnings usually to do with nuts. Perhaps we should use both. An irate moment to treasure came when someone claimed it was illegal to let babies (six months and under) 'watch' a 15-certificate! One caller observed: "They are babes-in-arms it can't be good for them." The idea of new mothers and their babies at matinees came from London independents such as The Electric, Portobello. They have 'Scream' screenings or Screaming, where you need a baby to get in!

We tried this early on but there weren't enough to go round. So in sleepy Berkhamsted we decided to invite everybody. A baby is not essential.

Now the audience is fully integrated. I understand most matinee audiences have grown-up children and long finished with babies.

Hence we ask two things: one, like each other and tolerate gurgling.

Secondly, if your baby is criticising the film with loud yelling then please bring them upstairs to the foyer, where it's warm and friendly, until they settle. Simple. Our, matinees will continue to welcome everybody from nought to...

LOOSE CHANGE...

Still a pain for us. You don't spend that much so we don't need that much, but it's swallowed up quicker than you can say diet coke and a cappuccino. I still refuse to buy change. Not mean, it is simply preposterous. How did we ever agree to pay for money when money/coin/note promises to "pay the bearer..." the legal equivalent?

We'll be stupid enough to pay for football and films on TV next!

Just spoil the hang of your trousers – ugh, on second thoughts, bring a woman with a purse...

TAKING THE LEAK...

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

A boy answered.

Thames W: Hello could I have your postcode please?

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

Thames W: Has it already been reported?

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

Thames W: So I'll need your postcode.

Me: It doesn't matter, it's in the middle of the road. My postcode wont help but I can give you the name of the road.

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

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

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

Me: Okay here's my postcode and address

(I knew instinctively this would do it, and sure enough...)

Thames W: Thank you, please hold the line... (minutes later)

Sorry sir no leak has been reported at that postcode or address. Would you like to report one?

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

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

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

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

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

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

I rang again the next day...

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

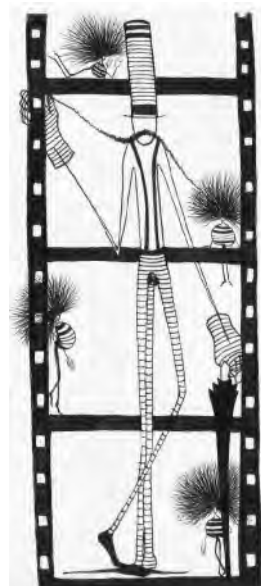
Sure enough a week later a card came through my door...

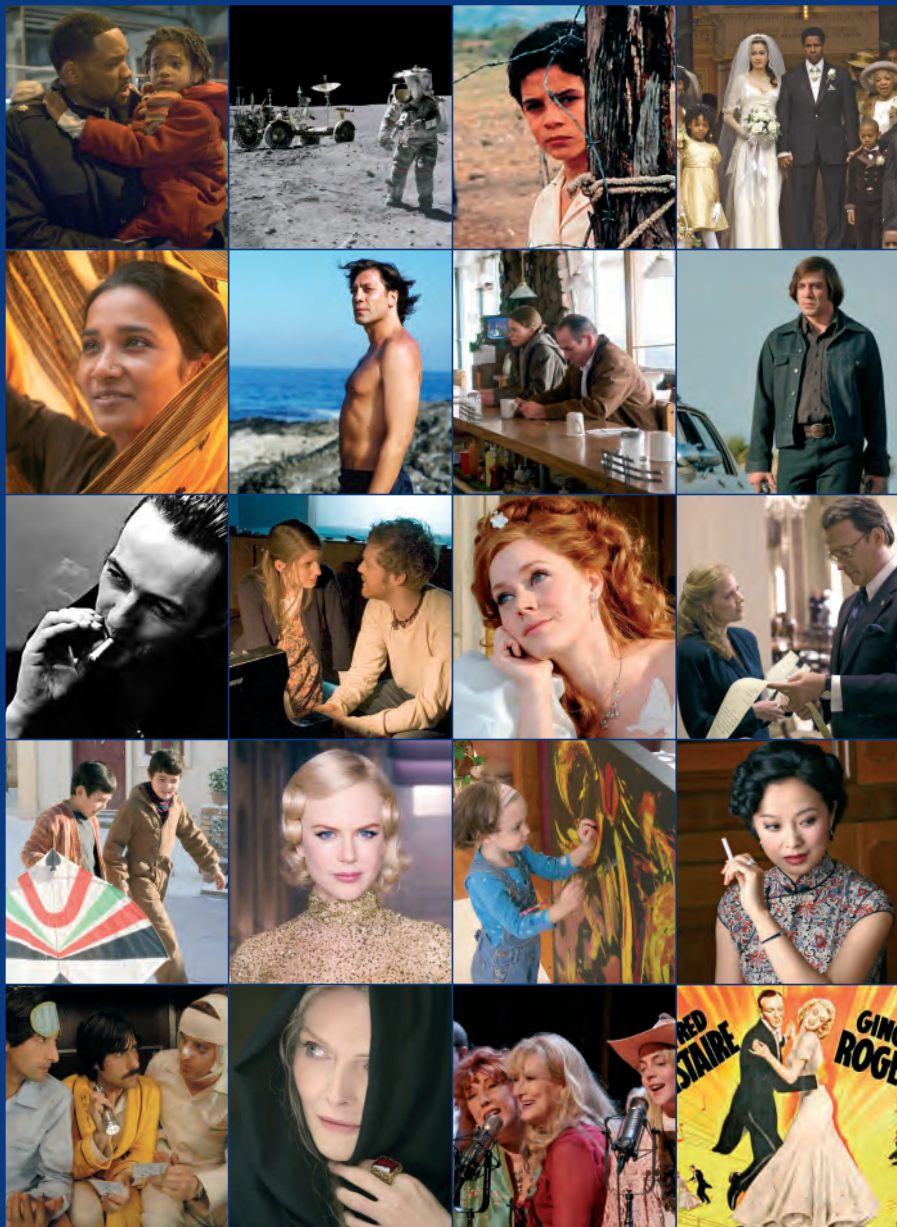
"You have reported a leak at this address. Please contact..... urgently". Most of this is true. But the main truth; it took a further three weeks a dozen phone calls and two gangs of six with four or five lorries to fix it in two stages, not counting the man who came to spray the blue arrows.



Fashionable pullovers and tank-tops knitted furiously by mothers, aunts and grans to make us look this good - hair by Jemma at Armitage Shanks. Pic: courtesy of Gangsta Rapper inc. (The best caption wins a free lemonade in March) Seen in Oxfam window Jan 08.

Another of Sylvie's witty, understated drawings. Her particular artistic license enjoys a little exaggeration in the umbrella dept. For commissions. E-mail: sylie.c@virgin.net





F E B R U A R Y E V E N I N G S

American Gangster The Golden Compass Sat 2 7.00

Fri 1 7.30



"The loudest (dressed) man in the room is the weakest..."

This is the 'true' tale of a Harlem henchman whose uncompromising loyalty and loathing of 'bling' made him the drug kingpin of the early 70's. Nobody noticed Frank Lucas (Washington), until his underworld boss died.

From nowhere, he sets a new standard. Without blinking, Frank ruthlessly claims his status as Harlem's most dangerous and innovative drug dealer by delivering it pure and cheaper – direct from Vietnam to the treacherous envy of his competitors, family, friends and corrupt cops.

Enter Russell Crowe's dishevelled, philandering, but unbendingly straight cop (Richie Roberts) and Frank's empire begins to rattle from the outside too.

But it is more complex.

Here are two stories with different notions of family but with the same integrity, stubborn egos and extreme loyalty. Each is used to violence and its results.

It is a surprisingly compelling film with much more to it than its non-stop heartbeat from start to finish.

Absolutely not to be missed on the big screen. Probably won't be back again.

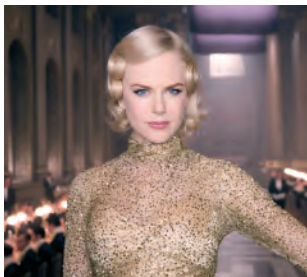
Director: Ridley Scott
Starring: Cuba Jr, Denzel Washington, Russell Crowe, Josh Brolin
Certificate: 18
Duration: 157 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Director: Chris Weitz
Starring: Nicole Kidman, Eva Green, Sam Elliott, Daniel Craig
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 114 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Based on Philip Pullman's award-winning trilogy: **His Dark Materials, The Golden Compass** is a fantasy adventure. In a parallel world where people's souls manifest themselves as small animals, where talking ice-bears fight wars and children mysteriously disappear, 12-year-old Lyra (Dakota Blue Richards – poor kid, 'Linda' would have done, only 'pushies', WAGs or nutters would name a child after a geographical shag) sets out on an extraordinary quest to rescue her friend.

"This beautifully made, spectacularly designed family movie asks serious questions about good and evil, free will and adolescent sexuality" (*Standard*) Hmmmm.

"It's a convoluted, enjoyable, very mad, deeply conservative and, at one moment, horribly violent extravaganza.... Kidman steals the show - pure blonde evil... hear the crackle of her stockings as she sashays threateningly on to the screen - a ridiculous coupling of Darth Vader and Veronica Lake..." (*PB Guardian*) If nothing else, come for 007's school-gates beard. Oddly 12A is a 'provisional certificate'. So bring your provisional twelve year olds (but don't let them read this).



A Prairie Home Companion Sun 3 6.00

For anybody who loved Garrison Keillor's "Lake Wobegon Days" on BBC wireless 10/15 years ago, you'll love this. If you missed it, you'll love it instantly – any age! So too it is a fitting end to Robert Altman's maverick and prolific career (spanning 56 years) that he should join Keillor in this beautifully played whimsical tale of live entertainment on the radio. As always Altman coerces a star-studded ensemble cast - this one last time - to bring Keillor's National Public Radio's long-running programme to full screen life.

It is an intricately woven, and very funny, backstage fable imagining the antics of the last show at the old Fitzgerald before the final curtain falls. On the radio the real 'A Prairie Home Companion' somehow managed to survive the television age to reach a colossal audience every Saturday night live from the stage of the historic Fitzgerald Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"A fittingly affectionate epitaph from a film-maker who took more chances than most, and so often succeeded in making the risk worthwhile" (*Derek Malcolm*)

"A late, minor addition to the Robert Altman collection – but a treasure all the same..." (*New York Times*) Forget the rest of Sunday and leave the children in the bath or bring them. You will love it.

Robert Altman died on 20th November 2006 aged 81. The rest are still alive.

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



Robert Altman on set 2005



Central Station

Mon 4 7.30



The title refers to Rio de Janeiro's teeming central railway station where Dora (Fernanda Montenegro), a dour, disagreeable woman, writes letters for illiterate people. She despises them as poor wretched trash, a couple of rungs down from her. She throws them away. Never written never sent. Enter Josue, a nine-year-old boy left an orphan after his mother is killed by a bus. From nowhere, the two make some kind of sense to each other. They embark on a no-frills journey through a country, hostile in transition, to search for a father Josue has never seen. Their journey ends at an enormous mass housing development on some new Brazilian economic frontier where there might be a better life...?

"Walter Salles has crafted an engrossing, lyrical road trip. It never sentimentalises but builds to a deeply moving if understated, climax."

(Total Film)

"Unsentimental but touching.

An absolute delight from start to finish" (Channel 4)

Salles went on to make The Motorcycle Diaries. This smaller gem touches the same themes of companionship through a journey into the unknown. It will touch you. Come.

Director: Walter Salles

Starring: Fernanda Montenegro, Marilia Pera, Vinicius Oliveira, Soia Lira

Certificate: 15

Duration: 113 mins

Origin: Brazil 1998

By: Park Circus Films

Brick Lane

Tue 5 7.30, Wed 6 7.30

Director: Sarah Gavron

Starring: Satish Kaushik, Christopher Simpson, Tannishtha Chatterjee

Certificate: 15

Duration: 101 mins

Origin: UK 2007

By: Optimum Releasing

This is Sarah Gavron's adaptation of Monica Ali's Booker-nominated first novel.

It is faithful to the book though inevitably, less subtle and wide-ranging. Its characterisations are simpler, but its focus on the struggles of a young Bangladeshi woman saddled with an arranged marriage in a foreign land remains the same. She, Nazneen (Chatterjee) is seventeen and beautiful. He is neither. From a sunny Bangladeshi village childhood to a block of flats in east London with a grown man she has never met.

Pining for her birthplace and her sister, she struggles to make sense of it all. Worse, the terrifying duty to an unknown husband, who sorely tests her compliance. Nazneen submits as she must, devoting her life to raising her family and resisting the demons of discontent. Until Karim, a hot-headed local man, bursts into her life. Against a background of escalating racial tension, they embark on an affair which finally forces Nazneen to take control of her life. There are no heroes and villains, only people... "unfashionably gentle, human, optimistic" (Guardian).



Joe Strummer:

(THE FUTURE IS UNWRITTEN)

Thu 7 7.30

Director: Julien Temple

Starring: Joe Strummer, Don Letts, Mick Jones

Certificate: 15

Duration: 123 mins

Origin: Ireland, UK 2007

By: Vertigo Films

Though it went over my head, Punk was at least a relief from Clapton and Bowie.

It should have killed them stone dead but thirty years on, the oily Cowell and manufactured Girls Aloud, etc have proven factory pop is like the cockroach – you can't wipe it out. Through unearthed recollections from friends and talking-heads in odd locations, a complex Joe Strummer is revealed.

One who used his music as a bullhorn against injustice. The film includes typical concert footage alongside tapes of his eccentric BBC World Service radio broadcasts, 'London Calling'. It is all a fitting soundtrack to his short life. "A truthful and poignant tribute to a 'punk rock warlord'."

As for Julian Temple, he never seems to go beyond what he already knows; London's music and fashion. This is clearly a labour of fan-worship and about 33minutes too long. Nevertheless, it leaves Joe plenty of room to tell his own story as a deliberately 'glamourless rock icon'. It's not showing anywhere else, so come for the first time or see it here again.



I am Legend

Fri 8 7.30, Sat 9 7.00, Sun 10 6.00



Director: Francis Lawrence

Starring: Will Smith, Salli Richardson, Alice Braga

Certificate: 15

Duration: 101 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Warner Brothers

It starts off alright. The first half is a haunting portrayal of a man alone trying to stay alive and sane in a desolate, eerily concrete jungle:

New York. Then the zombies show up and turn it into mush. Adapted by Lawrence from Richard Matheson's much copied novelette of the same name, it follows this last man on Earth (Smith) who is inexplicably immune to the highly contagious man-made virus. He also happens to be the brilliant scientist with a cure...

Unfortunately all humanity has crumbled into carnivorous bloodsuckers.

Previously seen in 1964 as *The Last Man On Earth* with the fab Vincent Price and 1971 as *The Omega Man* with the unwatchable Charlton Heston. It also inspired George A. Romero's zombie classic *Night Of The Living Dead*.

So Matheson has a lot to answer for. Who cares that they cleared the streets of Manhattan for a week of rush hours?

So what that Will Smith "delivers a surprisingly moving performance"? (BBC)

Come if you fancy a remake of a terrifying future, where nobody can win. However it is better than expected and the dog steals it.



The Sea Inside

Mon 11 7.30



"When you can't escape and you depend on others so much, you learn to cry by smiling". Based on real events, Ramon has lain in bed paralysed from the neck down for 28 years. He wants to end this non-life but he is loved... An underwater accident as a fit young man has left him languishing into middle age without moving a finger, thus the sea inside. The horror of such imprisonment is unthinkable (for Nelson Mandela it was a mere 27 years). Great faces. Enter Belén Rueda and you start to melt. Everyone touches you without force. Javier is astonishing, Belén is astonishing, the whole film is astonishing and unforgettable...

Like all tales of personal tragedy it is interrupted by bright moments of everyday humour. "This is certain to be one of the finest films of the year..." (2004)

PS... "No matter how close to yours another's steps have grown, in the end there is one dance you'll do alone..." (Jackson Browne) See Bardem in a very 'different mood' in No Country for Old Men (Fri 29th).

Director: Alejandro Amenabar
Starring: Belen Rueda, Celso Bugallo, Clara Segura, Javier Bardem, Lola Duenas, Mabel Rivera
Certificate: PG
Duration: 125 mins
Origin: Spain 2005
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Once

Tue 12 7.30

Director: John Carney
Starring: Markéta Irglová, Gerard Hendrick, Hugh Walsh, Glen Hansard
Certificate: 15
Duration: 87 mins
Origin: Ireland 2007
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

A rock-bottom budget, nil to start but eventually made for £80,000 with no pay for anyone, this Irish charmer stole the heart of the Audience Award at Sundance 2007.

On Grafton Street in Dublin, a careworn busker (Hansard) strikes up a relationship with a sparky young Czech immigrant (Irglová). He is nursing a broken heart and stalled ambitions; she is getting by on cleaning jobs and chutzpah. As their relationship evolves, Hansard's heart searing songs weave themselves into the narrative so naturally you hardly notice you are watching a musical. Anchored by simple narrative, real and lovely faces, easy non-acting and haunting songs this film is so rare - perhaps unique - with a warm but gutsy grace all of its own. No subplots, no narrative twists, and little else.

"Shows what you can do with a decent story."

"A sublime, visual album of unassuming and self-assured eloquence" (*mixed crits*)

It is real rags-to-riches. From a scraggly kid, banging out Dylan covers on the streets of Dublin, to the real Bob calling Glen to support his Australian tour!

We wish them all the best and will show it here 'until everybody has seen it'.



Enchanted

Wed 13 7.30



Classic Disney animation meets contemporary urban chaos when a princess is banished from her magical animated homeland to modern-day New York. Princess Giselle (Adams, an Oscar nominee for Junebug) lives in the blissful cartoon world of Andalasia, where magical beings frolic freely and musical interludes punctuate every interaction. She is engaged to the handsome Prince Edward (Marsden) but her fate takes a turn for the worse when the villainous Queen Narissa (Sarandon) banishes her to the unforgiving metropolis of New York...

"Enchanted embodies the best traditions of Disney - while gently mocking its legacy... She (Adams) can play both toughness and wide-eyed innocence, with finely calibrated timing to make her a great screen comedienne - up there with early-period Goldie Hawn (oh no!). Whether or not, hers is the star-making performance of this year." (*Telegraph*) "The best adult romantic comedy and child's fairy tale we've had for a long time. It's the sheer force of her (Adams) compelling charm that makes Enchanted so enchanting" (*Times*) "It is sentimental, quite silly and determinedly old-style Disney, while maintaining a gentle knowing and ironic touch." (*Standard*)

Director: Kevin Lima
Starring: Patrick Dempsey, Amy Adams, Susan Sarandon, James Marsden
Certificate: PG
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Buena Vista International

Top Hat VALENTINES

Thu 14 7.30



“Can’t act, can’t sing. Can dance a little...” (legend - Fred’s first screen test).

Perhaps the best known of the Astaire-Rogers films, TOP HAT is loved for its wonderful Irving Berlin score and breathtaking dance routines set against stunning white modern sets. “There are two numbers in TOP HAT where the dancing on the screen reaches such perfection... Isn’t This a Lovely Day? and Cheek to Cheek. Astaire believed that movie dance numbers should be shot in unbroken takes. It is artistry through endurance. Where many dancers would be gasping for breath, Astaire and Rogers are smiling. It is watching hard work elevated to effortless joy: He knows they can do no better than this, and nor can anyone else.” (Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun Times). It is also very funny, a little corny and to a twelve year old watching a cracklerly 13 inch early sixties television screen with the whole family... it was the best thing ever!

Director: Mark Sandrich
Starring: Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers
Certificate: U
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 1935
By: British Film Institute

Charlie Wilson’s War

Fri 15 7.30, Sat 16 7.00

This adaptation of George Crile III’s incendiary bestseller tells the remarkable story of the Texas congressman whose efforts to prevent the Red Army from overtaking Afghanistan eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and at the same time fuelling the rise of radical Islam! (well done Charlie from Texas).

In the early 1980s, a hastily assembled army of Afghan ‘freedom fighters’ achieved the remarkable feat of fending off Soviet invaders against overwhelming odds.

Wilson spearheaded an effort to provide hundreds of millions of dollars in weapons and training to the Mujahadeen with more than a little help from suspect CIA man Gust Avrokotos (Hoffman) whose nefarious bunch of CIA outcasts were handpicked to bend Agency rules to breaking point.

“This is intelligent political filmmaking of the highest class.” “Aaron Sorkin’s masterful script combines insight, wit and political nous but never forgets its own underlying seriousness.” (Channel 4) “Hanks and Roberts have fun harnessing their screen personas to these juicy roles; Hoffman’s feverish ranting is yet another glowing testament to his skills at playing charismatic ass-holes” (Time Out) Come and laugh and be very scared.

Director: Mike Nichols
Starring: Julia Roberts, Amy Adams, Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Tom Hanks
Certificate: 15
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: USA 2007



The Kite Runner

In The Shadow of the Moon

Wed 20 7.30

Sun 17 6.00, Mon 18 7.30, Tue 19 7.30

In a divided country on the verge of war, two childhood friends, Amir and Hassan, are about to be torn apart ...

It is a glorious afternoon in Kabul and the skies are filled with the exhilarating joy of a kite-fighting tournament. But in the aftermath of the day's victory, one boy's fearful act of betrayal will mark their lives forever and set in motion an epic quest for redemption.

After 20 years of living in America, Amir (Abdalla) returns to a perilous Afghanistan under Taliban rule to face the secrets still haunting him and take one last daring chance to set things right.

"When I read *The Kite Runner*, I felt Khaled Hosseini gave a voice to people who have been voiceless and faceless for so long...[Afghan] people felt it was a love letter to Afghanistan... They were so happy a Hollywood movie was not in English, and gave a face other than a villain or terrorist to their part of the world." (uh oh, beware cool-trendy film makers – saying all the right things before they move on to make a Bond!).

See rest page 24



Director: Marc Forster
Starring: Zekeria Ebrahimi, Khalid Abdalla, Ahmad Mahmizada
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 128 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Paramount International Pictures



Dismissing conspiracy theories - that it was all an elaborate hoax set on a vast sound stage somewhere in the Nevada desert - Singleton's elegant and breathtaking documentary lets the surviving crew members of the Apollo space missions tell their own stories accompanied by rare and unseen footage.

In the four remarkable years between 1968 and 1972, of the nine NASA spacecraft to reach the moon, these twelve new-age explorers became the first and only men to set foot on ground beyond the Earth. "Poignant viewing at a time when American power mongers seem to have hit the Destruct Button."

"Buzz Aldrin and Mike Collins are witty and wise... a joy to behold - all of them..." (*Time Out*)

"Many untold stories, ie; not even Aldrin's wife of 19 years knew his pause halfway down the lunar ladder was to take a pee in his space suit." (*Channel 4*)

Watch for the pre-recorded 'sorrowful' announcement by President Nixon in case Apollo 11 never made it back! A sincere Tricky Dickie mouthing a scripted obituary ahead of one's demise is enough to make any self-respecting spaceman wet himself.



Director: David Singleton
Starring: John Young, Jim Lovell, Alan Bean
Certificate: U
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Vertigo Films

The Darjeeling Limited

Thu 21 7.30



Free of the slowly-creaking cogs of his last movie – *The Life Aquatic*, ‘*The Darjeeling Limited*’ is more energetic. It is a road-movie set on a train. Adrien Brody and Jason Schwartzman are brothers cajoled by their domineering older sibling (Owen Wilson) – an unhappy businessman with a bandage around his head – to take a trip to India a year after their father’s death. It’s time for some serious bonding with escapades, snakes, a little romance and a dose of straight-faced tragedy. “It doesn’t matter where Anderson travels; he always brings Americans for company. And often the same Americans, mostly men, usually Bill Murray sometimes Schwartzman, always Wilson...” (*Time Out*) Here are all three with a little Natalie Portman for luck!

“Anderson’s stylish approach divides – you either love his hipster credentials or hate his whimsy. *Darjeeling* looks likely to polarise its audiences just as violently...” (*Knowledge, Times*)

It is here again in case you missed it. True, it is whimsical but there is something special about it. Endearing, surprising and warm with a great sound track and crystal clear photography. Come and see.

Director: Wes Anderson
Starring: Adrien Brody, Amara Karan, Jason Schwartzman, Owen Wilson
Certificate: 15
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Twentieth Century Fox

In The Valley of Elah

Fri 22 7.30, Sat 23 7.00

Director: Paul Haggis
Starring: Tommy Jones, Susan Sarandon, Charlize Theron
Certificate: 15
Duration: 121 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Optimum Releasing

When a model soldier who recently returned to the U.S. from the frontlines of Iraq goes AWOL, his veteran father (Tommy Lee Jones) enlists the police woman in charge (Charlize Theron) to help him find the truth. Director/screenwriter Haggis’s follow-up to the Oscar-winning *Crash*. Inspired by a *Playboy* Magazine article written by Mark Boal. Incidentally, this is a far better film than the over-praised *Crash*, but will win nothing. Haggis’s fictionalised version of real events asks various challenging questions, not least about how humanity is compromised by warfare and the role of women in patriarchal American society. The performances from the two leads are exceptional, and as always Susan Sarandon as the mother permanently scarred by grief, can do no wrong.

“Jones gives the drama a ragged, heartfelt sense of poetry” (*Time Out*). This is one of two Tommy Lee films in Feb – the other ‘*No Country...*’ (Fri 29th).

Neither should be missed. In fact don’t miss anything he is in.



Everything is Illuminated

Sun 24 6.00



Everyone must see this...

Come for Eugene Hutz’s perplexed Ukrainian ‘guide’ and his gorgeous narration. (much of the haunting filmscore is his too, as is the band at the station.)

On its first outing here in February 2006, it made us all sit still.

Now two years later it is probably even better. You must come.

Taken from Jonathan Safran Foer best-seller, it sounds like a true story, beautifully told.

‘Jonfen’ (Elijah) is an obsessive collector, who 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 b&w photograph he begins his search with the unlikely Eugene, his grandfather (the brilliant Leskin) and his “seeing-eye” bitch. While Eugene’s butchery of the English language and passion for all things American, grates on Jonfen, he wins the screen and Jonfen with every word and gesture.

It is heartlifting, heartbreaking, funny and a beautiful surprise - and one of our best films in three years. It will stay with you.

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

My Kid Could Paint That

Mon 25 7.30

Director: Amir Bar-Lev
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 84 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2007
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Most four year olds paintings hang on the refrigerator, but by then Marla Olmstead was on show in New York. Born only seven years ago (2000!!!), Marla first picked up a paintbrush when she was one and copying her father, himself an amateur painter. Soon she was creating large canvases with unexpected skill and enthusiasm. Her 'work' has been shown all over America with pieces fetching as much as \$25,000. Inevitably questions have been raised about talent versus 'pushy mother' parents. Others have 'questioned' reviews comparing her work with Pollock and Picasso!

"A fascinating psychological study of family life, media manipulation, and a shrewd reflection on his own motives as a film-maker..."

With all the horrible fascination of a slow-motion car-crash, Amir Bar-Lev's documentary shows us a painful, even tragic story of family dysfunction and denial..."

(*Guardian*)

"Amir Bar-Lev's thoughtful documentary is at once a fiercely annotated essay on art, and a compassionate portrait of a family caught in the centre of a media storm" (*Channel 4*) You choose...



Lust Caution

Tue 26 7.30, Wed 27 7.30,

This film is being talked about in only one dimension, but you don't win a Golden Lion at Venice for a dirty groping scene, or perhaps you do.

This is the latest from Ang Lee whose repertoire includes such diverse curiosities as *Brokeback Mountain*, and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

This one's a political thriller, a melodrama and a dark tale of obsessive love, set in occupied Shanghai during the Second World War. A young woman, Wang Jiazhi (Tang), is persuaded to join a plot against government minister and Japanese collaborator Mr Yee (Tony Leung), but her mission fails.

Years later she gets a second chance... Superbly photographed by Rodrigo Prieto, as he did *Brokeback Mountain*, this is a beautiful tale of repressed passion and its devastating effects.

What is the nature of love and/or desire? He knows how to tell a story in either language.

"In newcomer Tang Wei, he has made a tremendous discovery. Fiercely intelligent and hauntingly beautiful, she gives a passionate, courageous performance that deserves a shelf-full of awards... It is another resounding success for Ang Lee, whose film-making has such mass and substance... His movies are like huge, exciting new buildings for us to gather round and wonder at."

What total bollocks (*Guardian*)
 "You leave the theatre a trifle exhausted but rewarded by a resonance few films possess"

Take a day off Derek (*Standard*)
 It's a long film so if you're coming for the rude bit you'll have to wait till the end.



Director: Ang Lee
Starring: Tony Leung, Joan Chen, Wei Tang
Certificate: 18
Duration: 158 mins
Origin: China, Taiwan, USA 2007
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

L'ivresse de Pouvoir

(The Comedy of Power)

Thu 28 7.30

Director: Claude Chabrol

Starring: Francois Berleand, Isabelle Huppert

Certificate: PG

Duration: 110 mins

Origin: Germany/France 2006

By: Institute of Contemporary Arts

Isabelle Huppert is characteristically captivating in her latest collaboration with veteran director

Claude Chabrol. A Comedy Of Power was inspired by a recent chapter in French history, when an examining magistrate exposed massive fraud and bribery carried out by oil executives. Huppert plays the crusading magistrate, and the engaging narrative shows how she suffers and enjoys the power and attention of the case, and how it affects her personal life.

In French law an examining magistrate has power-absolute, therefore very frightening if you on the receiving end.

"There are two knockout performances here, and the French title, L'Ivresse de Pouvoir, conveys more accurately how power intoxicates its possessor... a smooth, perceptive thriller tinged with suave Gallic cynicism and resigned anger." (*Observer*)

"Huppert who, in her seventh collaboration with Chabrol, manages to embody in a single character all the hunger, cruelty, delusion, isolation and vulnerability that power brings" (*Channel 4*)

A gem from start to finish - a 'true' political thriller. Huppert is always mesmerising and beautiful, Chabrol a visual genius.

Absolutely not to be missed.



No Country for Old Men

Fri 29 7.30

Its 70s something, its small-town Texas. A Vietnam vet stumbles across the bloody aftermath of a drugs deal gone horribly wrong. Business as usual for the Coens.

Moss (Brolin) discovers a bullet-strewn truck surrounded by corpses and finds \$2 million in the boot (uh oh). Enter Javier Bardem's enigmatic almost wordless killer in cold pursuit of the money. In the meantime disillusioned Sheriff Bell (Lee Jones) struggles to contain the escalating violence that seems to be consuming his once-peaceful Lone Star State town.

A distinctly Coen-esque crime story exploring timeless Biblical themes with a welcome return to Blood Simple territory in this brilliantly executed, stripped-down, dark and deadly affair.

"Kelly Macdonald is terrific as Moss's trailer-trash wife with a heart of gold. (To force the Coens to notice her, she turned the inflection and notes of her own Scots accent into a pin-sharp correct regional Texan dialect!)"

"Woody Harrelson delivers an icy cameo as a corrupt private investigator. And Jones is in his element as the sheriff who doesn't miss a trick but fails to grasp the big picture" (*Times*)

"No Country... is beautifully structured... the spectacle of two great directors in total command of their filmmaking" (*Time Out*)

It is Bardem who excels as the totally absorbed hitman. To see how good he is, don't miss his complete opposite in the heartbreaking Sea Inside (11th Feb).



Ethan and Joel



Director: Coen Brothers

Starring: Tommy Jones, Woody Harrelson, Javier Bardem, Josh Brolin

Certificate: 15

Duration: 122 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Paramount International Pictures



FEBRUARY LISTINGS AND COMING SOON

Coming Soon

New releases

Sweeney Todd
The Diving Bell and the
Butterfly
4 Months 3 weeks and 2
days
Before the Devil Knows
you're Dead
There will be Blood
Juno

Back by demand

Away From Her
No Country for Old Men
The Kite Runner



4 months 3 weeks and 2 days



Sweeney Todd



Before the Devil
knows you're Dead



The Diving Bell
and the Butterfly

FEBRUARY FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

FRI	1	AMERICAN GANGSTER	7.30
SAT	2	MR MAGORIUM	2.00
SAT	2	GOLDEN COMPASS	7.00
SUN	3	PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION	6.00
MON	4	CENTRAL STATION	2.00, 7.30
TUE	5	BRICK LANE	12.30, 7.30
WED	6	MRS BROWN	2.00
WED	6	BRICK LANE	7.30
THU	7	STARDUST	2.00
THU	7	JOE STRUMMER	7.30
FRI	8	I AM LEGEND	7.30
SAT	9	ENCHANTED	2.00
SAT	9	I AM LEGEND	7.00
SUN	10	I AM LEGEND	6.00
MON	11	ENCHANTED	2.00
MON	11	THE SEA INSIDE	7.30
TUE	12	GOLDEN COMPASS	12.30
TUE	12	ONCE	7.30
WED	13	ENCHANTED	2.00, 7.30
THU	14	BEE MOVIE	2.00
THU	14	TOP HAT (VALENTINE)	7.30
FRI	15	CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR	7.30
SAT	16	BEE MOVIE	2.00
SAT	16	CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR	7.00
SUN	17	THE KITE RUNNER	6.00
MON	18	CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR	2.00
MON	18	THE KITE RUNNER	7.30
TUE	19	IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOON	12.30
TUE	19	THE KITE RUNNER	7.30
WED	20	THE KITE RUNNER	2.00
WED	20	IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOON	7.30
THU	21	TOP HAT	2.00
THU	21	DARJEELING LIMITED	7.30
FRI	22	IN THE VALLEY OF ELAH	7.30
SAT	23	GOLDEN COMPASS	2.00
SAT	23	IN THE VALLEY OF ELAH	7.00
SUN	24	EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED	6.00
MON	25	EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED	2.00
MON	25	MY KID COULD PAINT THAT	7.30
TUE	26	WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN	12.30
TUE	26	LUST CAUTION	7.30
WED	27	CLOSING THE RING	2.00
WED	27	LUST CAUTION	7.30
THU	28	COMEDY OF POWER	2.00, 7.30
FRI	29	NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN	7.30

Mr Margorium's Wonder Eporium

Sat 2 2.00

Director: Zach Helm

Starring: Dustin Hoffman, Natalie Portman

Certificate: U

Duration: 94 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd

Mr Margorium's Wonder Emporium is the strangest, most wonderful toy store in the world. In fact, it's a magic store and everything in it comes to life, including the store itself.

Natalie Portman plays a clerk in the store who must decide whether she wants to run the store after its current owner Mr Margorium (Dustin Hoffman) passes away.

"Full marks to the film-makers for conjuring that rarest of Christmas treats: a family-oriented, toy-focused Hollywood production that contains virtually nothing in the way of product placement" (*Guardian*)

"Writer-director Zach Helm has pulled off no less than a miracle, conjuring from the air an original story that feels as familiar as an ancient, well-thumbed children's book... This is an hour-and-a-half of joyous awe" (*Channel 4*)

Sorry, a bit late in the Christmas dept, but a great little fantasy all the same. Bring your grandparents



Central Station

Mon 4 2.00



The title refers to Rio de Janeiro's teeming central railway station where Dora (Fernanda Montenegro), a dour, disagreeable woman, writes letters for illiterate people. She despises them as poor wretched trash, a couple of rungs down from her. She throws them away. Never written never sent. Enter Josue, a nine-year-old boy left an orphan after his mother is killed by a bus. From nowhere, the two make some kind of sense to each other. They embark on a no-frills journey through a country, hostile in transition, to search for a father Josue has never seen. Their journey ends at an enormous mass housing development on some new Brazilian economic frontier where there might be a better life...?

"Walter Salles has crafted an engrossing, lyrical road trip. It never sentimentalises but builds to a deeply moving if understated, climax."

(*Total Film*)

"Unsentimental but touching. An absolute delight from start to finish" (*Channel 4*)

Salles went on to make *The Motorcycle Diaries*. This smaller gem touches the same themes of companionship through a journey into the unknown. It will touch you. Come.

Director: Walter Salles

Starring: Fernanda Montenegro, Marília Pera, Vinicius Oliveira, Soia Lira

Certificate: 15

Duration: 113 mins

Origin: Brazil 1998

By: Park Circus Films

Brick Lane

Tue 5 12.30

Director: Sarah Gavron

Starring: Satish Kaushik, Christopher Simpson, Tannishtha Chatterjee

Certificate: 15

Duration: 101 mins

Origin: UK 2007

By: Optimum Releasing

This is Sarah Gavron's adaptation of Monica Ali's Booker-nominated first novel.

It is faithful to the book though inevitably, less subtle and wide-ranging. Its characterisations are simpler, but its focus on the struggles of a young Bangladeshi woman saddled with an arranged marriage in a foreign land remains the same. She, Nazneen (Chatterjee) is seventeen and beautiful. He is neither. From a sunny Bangladeshi village childhood to a block of flats in east London with a grown man she has never met.

Pining for her birthplace and her sister, she struggles to make sense of it all. Worse, the terrifying duty to an unknown husband, who sorely tests her compliance. Nazneen submits as she must, devoting her life to raising her family and resisting the demons of discontent. Until Karim, a hot-headed local man, bursts into her life. Against a background of escalating racial tension, they embark on an affair which finally forces Nazneen to take control of her life. There are no heroes and villains, only people...

"unfashionably gentle, human, optimistic" (*Guardian*).



Mrs Brown

Wed 6 2.00

Wed Matinee Warning: May contain babies



MRS BROWN is a richly detailed drama based on rumours which scandalized polite society and threatened disgrace for the Monarchy in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign. Distraught by the death of her beloved Albert, Ma'am withdraws from public view. Billy Connolly as Albert's loyal hunting guide John Brown is summoned to Windsor to lift the Queen's deep depression, not her skirts. A man of fierce spirit and pride, Brown speaks his mind, refusing to treat the Queen with kid gloves. Despite their social polarity, a friendship grows as Brown becomes the Queen's trusted companion...

A superbly acted, emotionally powerful and beautifully photographed love story.

"Two superlative performances, by Judi Dench and Billy Connolly, elevate this costume yarn above the 'well-mounted' into a tightly focused, emotionally rewarding film" (*Variety*) "Dench is magnificent as Victoria..."

Connolly's Brown is hardly less fine, a cast-iron portrait of a man teetering on the edge of ridicule and disgrace, but never flinching" (*Time Out*)

Above all, from Dame Judi herself, she had a great time... has never laughed so much on set. Watch carefully...

Director: John Madden

Starring: Judi Dench, Billy Connolly, Geoffrey Palmer, Anthony Sher

Certificate: PG

Duration: 104 mins

Origin: UK 1997

By: Buena Vista International

Stardust

Thu 7 2.00

Director: Matthew Vaughn

Starring: Claire Danes, Michelle Pfeiffer, Charlie Cox, Robert De Niro, Ricky Gervais, Mark Strong, Sienna Miller, Peter O'Toole

Certificate: PG

Duration: 128 mins

Origin: UK, USA 2007

By: Paramount International Pictures

Tristan tries to win the heart of the village beauty by promising to bring her a falling star. When he finds the star, he is stunned to discover that it is not a lump of rock, but an angry, injured blonde who has no desire to be dragged across the world as a spoilt girlfriend's dowry. But others are after the star: a dying king's four sons – not to mention the ghosts of their three dead brothers – and three wicked witches...

As Tristan and Yvaine are forced to run he discovers the meaning of true love, but does not realise mortal danger she is in...!

The writing is childish and the starry cast indulgently wasted. Apart from Gervais playing (with) himself, it is very funny. The scenery is breathtaking and the special effects truly fantastical on the big screen. All in all it is great romp and a proper fairytale where everybody gets what they deserve. Ms Pffff, DeNiro and Ashridge are the real treats.



Enchanted

Sat 9 2.00, Mon 11 2.00,
Wed 13 2.00

Wed Matinee Warning: May contain babies



Classic Disney animation meets contemporary urban chaos when a princess is banished from her magical animated homeland to modern-day New York. Princess Giselle (Adams, an Oscar nominee for *Junebug*) lives in the blissful cartoon world of Andalasia, where magical beings frolic freely and musical interludes punctuate every interaction. She is engaged to the handsome Prince Edward (Marsden) but her fate takes a turn for the worse when the villainous Queen Narissa (Sarandon) banishes her to the unforgiving metropolis of New York...

"Enchanted embodies the best traditions of Disney - while gently mocking its legacy... She (Adams) can play both toughness and wide-eyed innocence, with finely calibrated timing to make her a great screen comedienne - up there with early-period Goldie Hawn (oh no!). Whether or not, hers is the star-making performance of this year." (*Telegraph*) "The best adult romantic comedy and child's fairy tale we've had for a long time. It's the sheer force of her (Adams) compelling charm that makes Enchanted so enchanting" (*Times*) "It is sentimental, quite silly and determinedly old-style Disney, while maintaining a gentle knowing and ironic touch." (*Standard*)

Director: Kevin Lima

Starring: Patrick Dempsey, Amy Adams, Susan Sarandon, James Marsden

Certificate: PG

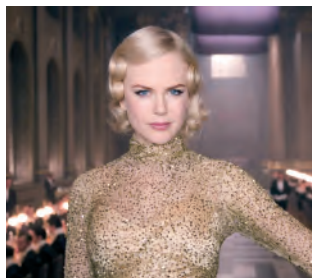
Duration: 108 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Buena Vista International

The Golden Compass

Tue 12 12.30



Based on Philip Pullman's award-winning trilogy: *His Dark Materials*, *The Golden Compass* is a fantasy adventure. In a parallel world where people's souls manifest themselves as small animals, where talking ice-bears fight wars and children mysteriously disappear, 12-year-old Lyra (Dakota Blue Richards – poor kid, 'Linda' would have done, only 'pushies', WAGs or nutters would name a child after a geographical shag) sets out on an extraordinary quest to rescue her friend.

"This beautifully made, spectacularly designed family movie asks serious questions about good and evil, free will and adolescent sexuality" (*Standard*) Hmmm.

"It's a convoluted, enjoyable, very mad, deeply conservative and, at one moment, horribly violent extravaganza.... Kidman steals the show - pure blonde evil... hear the crackle of her stockings as she sashays threateningly on to the screen - a ridiculous coupling of Darth Vader and Veronica Lake..." (*PB Guardian*) If nothing else, come for 007's school-gates beard. Oddly 12A is a 'provisional certificate'. So bring your provisional twelve year olds (but don't let them read this).

Director: Chris Weitz

Starring: Nicole Kidman, Eva Green, Sam Elliott, Daniel Craig

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 114 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Bee Movie

Thu 14 2.00, Sat 16 2.00

Directors: Steve Hickner, Simon Smith

Starring: Matthew Broderick, Renee Zellweger, John Goodman, Jerry Seinfeld

Certificate: U

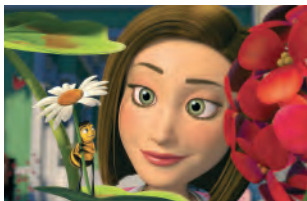
Duration: 108 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Paramount International Pictures



Barry B. Benson (Seinfeld) is your average honeybee who is fed-up with humans stealing their honey, so he does something about it....



Charlie Wilson's War

Mon 18 2.00



This adaptation of George Crile III's incendiary bestseller tells the remarkable story of the Texas congressman whose efforts to prevent the Red Army from overtaking Afghanistan eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and at the same time fuelling the rise of radical Islam! (well done Charlie from Texas).

In the early 1980s, a hastily assembled army of Afghan 'freedom fighters' achieved the remarkable feat of fending off Soviet invaders against overwhelming odds.

Wilson spearheaded an effort to provide hundreds of millions of dollars in weapons and training to the Mujahadeen with more than a little help from suspect CIA man Gust Avrokotos (Hoffman) whose nefarious bunch of CIA outcasts were handpicked to bend Agency rules to breaking point.

"This is intelligent political filmmaking of the highest class." "Aaron Sorkin's masterful script combines insight, wit and political nous but never forgets its own underlying seriousness." (*Channel 4*) "Hanks and Roberts have fun harnessing their screen personas to these juicy roles; Hoffman's feverish ranting is yet another glowing testament to his skills at playing charismatic ass-holes" (*Time Out*) Come and laugh and be very scared.

Director: Mike Nichols

Starring: Julia Roberts, Amy Adams, Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Tom Hanks

Certificate: 15

Duration: 102 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

In The Shadow Of The Moon

Tue 19 12.30

Director: David Singleton
Starring: John Young, Jim Lovell, Alan Bean
Certificate: U
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Vertigo Films

Dismissing conspiracy theories - that it was all an elaborate hoax set on a vast sound stage somewhere in the Nevada desert - Singleton's elegant and breathtaking documentary lets the surviving crew members of the Apollo space missions tell their own stories accompanied by rare and unseen footage.

In the four remarkable years between 1968 and 1972, of the nine NASA spacecraft to reach the moon, these twelve new-age explorers became the first and only men to set foot on ground beyond the Earth. "Poignant viewing at a time when American power mongers seem to have hit the Destruct Button."

"Buzz Aldrin and Mike Collins are witty and wise... a joy to behold - all of them..." (*Time Out*)

"Many untold stories, ie; not even Aldrin's wife of 19 years knew his pause halfway down the lunar ladder was to take a pee in his space suit." (*Channel 4*)

Watch for the pre-recorded 'sorrowful' announcement by President Nixon in case Apollo 11 never made it back! A sincere Tricky Dickie mouthing a scripted obituary ahead of one's demise is enough to make any self-respecting spaceman wet himself.



The Kite Runner

Wed 20 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



From page 15

Marc Forster fought with DreamWorks to use the Dari dialect instead of English. "Luckily, the studio realised the book - eight million copies sold - is the star." (Marc Forster interview Screen Intl Jan 08).

Patronising ass? He is a film director after all. He will walk red carpets with the new Bond movie while his young actors are in exile (where are their parents? Is Paramount looking after them?)

They are running from dangerous men (it is never women!!!) for making a film about life before the brainwashed bastards told them they (too) dare not think without permission.

These dangerous men have never read the Koran properly. Like Bush's Republican 'End-timers' who believe all this current shite is their god's will (the Bible's book of Revelation 'predicts' this global chaos.

They embrace it as 'gospel truth', so aid it on its way).

The only thing separating them is the 'wrong god'. Isn't there supposed to be only One?

It is best, though not safe, to despise them all. "still a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest" (*The Boxer: Simon & Garfunkel*)

Director: Marc Forster
Starring: Zekeria Ebrahimi, Khalid Abdalla, Ahmad Mahmudzada
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 128 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Paramount International Pictures

Top Hat

Thu 21 2.00

Director: Mark Sandrich
Starring: Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers
Certificate: U
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 1933
By: British Film Institute

"Can't act, can't sing. Can dance a little..." (legend - Fred's first screen test).

Perhaps the best known of the Astaire-Rogers films, TOP HAT is loved for its wonderful Irving Berlin score and breathtaking dance routines set against stunning white modern sets. "There are two numbers in TOP HAT where the dancing on the screen reaches such perfection... Isn't This a Lovely Day? and Cheek to Cheek. Astaire believed that movie dance numbers should be shot in unbroken takes. It is artistry through endurance. Where many dancers would be gasping for breath, Astaire and Rogers are smiling. It is watching hard work elevated to effortless joy: He knows they can do no better than this, and nor can anyone else." (Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun Times). It is also very funny, a little corny and to a twelve year old watching a crackerly 13 inch early sixties television screen with the whole family... it was the best thing ever!



The Golden Compass **Tue 12** 12.30



Based on Philip Pullman's award-winning trilogy: His Dark Materials, The Golden Compass is a fantasy adventure. In a parallel world where people's souls manifest themselves as small animals, where talking ice-bears fight wars and children mysteriously disappear, 12-year-old Lyra (Dakota Blue Richards – poor kid, 'Linda' would have done, only 'pushies', WAGs or nutters would name a child after a geographical shag) sets out on an extraordinary quest to rescue her friend.

"This beautifully made, spectacularly designed family movie asks serious questions about good and evil, free will and adolescent sexuality" (*Standard*) Hmmm.

"It's a convoluted, enjoyable, very mad, deeply conservative and, at one moment, horribly violent extravaganza.... Kidman steals the show - pure blonde evil... hear the crackle of her stockings as she sashays threateningly on to the screen - a ridiculous coupling of Darth Vader and Veronica Lake..." (*PB Guardian*) If nothing else, come for 007's school-gates beard. Oddly 12A is a 'provisional certificate'. So bring your provisional twelve year olds (but don't let them read this).

Director: Chris Weitz

Starring: Nicole Kidman, Eva Green, Sam Elliott, Daniel Craig

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 114 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Everything is Illuminated **Mon 25** 2.00

Director: Liev Schreiber

Starring: Eugene Hutz, Elijah Wood, Boris Leskin

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 105 mins

Origin: USA 2005

By: Warner Brothers

Everyone must see this...

Come for Eugene Hutz's perplexed Ukranian 'guide' and his gorgeous narration. (much of the haunting filmscore is his too, as is the band at the station.)

On its first outing here in February 2006, it made us all sit still.

Now two years later it is probably even better. You must come.

Taken from Jonathan Safran Foer best-seller, it sounds like a true story, beautifully told.

'Jonfen' (Elijah) is an obsessive collector, who 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 b&w photograph he begins his search with the unlikely Eugene, his grandfather (the brilliant Leskin) and his "seeing-eye" bitch.

While Eugene's butchery of the English language and passion for all things American, grates on Jonfen, he wins the screen and Jonfen with every word and gesture.

It is heartlifting, heartbreaking, funny and a beautiful surprise - and one of our best films in three years. It will stay with you.



The World's Fastest Indian **Tue 26** 12.30



Since we re-opened four Christmases ago this along with Little Miss Sunshine has seen the 'happiest' audiences leave; smiling through a few tears.

It is a true gem. Everyone who has seen it, young, old and children; easy-going or the chronically miserable, have loved it. It is almost faultless, it even sidesteps oily sentimentality. It had an unscheduled screening last year when the Pink Panther print was too damaged to show. Everyone agreed it was fab. Lucky we had this and not St Trinians! Hopkins describes it as his best, most enjoyable part. It is an inspiring, real-life drama about an old man's stubborn refusal to give up. In 1967, after a lifetime perfecting his vintage 'Indian', New Zealander Burt Munro works his passage to Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats to attempt a new world land-speed record. He charms everybody in his way.

Old-age, a healthy contempt for too many safety standards, a 'dickie ticker', and even the failure to register for the competition, can't beat him.

Come, it is not about motorbikes or speed. It is about hope, love, gentleness, undying optimism and all things in between.

Director: Roger Donaldson

Starring: Anthony Hopkins, Chris Lawford, Annie Whittle

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 127 mins

Origin: USA 2005

By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd

Closing the Ring

We 27 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies

Academy Award-winning director, actor and all-round national treasure Attenborough brings a wealth of experience to this warm-hearted epic romance spanning 50 years and two continents.

In a story of love, loss and reconciliation, MacLaine plays Ethel Ann, a woman whose first beloved husband, Teddy, was a casualty of war. Before his death Teddy had made a pact with his friend Chuck that he would look after Ethel Ann should anything happen to Teddy. Ethel Ann duly married Chuck, burying her heartache, until a chance discovery thousands of miles away forces her long-hidden secrets out into the open.

An unashamedly romantic film that serves as a timely reminder that war and conflict can cost the human heart.

"Closing the Ring is well-acted throughout and it has a romantic appeal that is not to be sneered at" (*Derek Malcolm*)

It sounds delightful; even perfect for a Wednesday afternoon in late February.

Director: Richard Attenborough
Starring: Christopher Plummer, Shirley Maclaine, Mischa Barton
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 118 mins
Origin: Canada, UK, USA 2007
By: The Works UK Distribution

L'Ivresse de Pouvoir

(The Comedy of Power) Thu 28 2.00

Isabelle Huppert is characteristically captivating in her latest collaboration with veteran director Claude Chabrol. A Comedy Of Power was inspired by a recent chapter in French history, when an examining magistrate exposed massive fraud and bribery carried out by oil executives.

Huppert plays the crusading magistrate, and the engaging narrative shows how she suffers and enjoys the power and attention of the case, and how it affects her personal life.

In French law an examining magistrate has power-absolute, therefore very frightening if you're on the receiving end.

"There are two knockout performances here, and the French title, *L'Ivresse de Pouvoir*, conveys more accurately how power intoxicates its possessor... a smooth, perceptive thriller tinged with suave Gallic cynicism and resigned anger." (*Observer*)

"Huppert who, in her seventh collaboration with Chabrol, manages to embody in a single character all the hunger, cruelty, delusion, isolation and vulnerability that power brings" (*Channel 4*)

A gem from start to finish - a 'true' political thriller. Huppert is always mesmerising and beautiful, Chabrol a visual genius.

Absolutely not to be missed.

Director: Claude Chabrol
Starring: Francois Berleand, Isabelle Huppert
Certificate: PG
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: Germany/France 2006
By: Institute of Contemporary Arts



RANTS AND PANTS

Phil Sobell – 31st December 2007 – to all the lovely staff (and that funny fellow you let speak before the films) thanks for a great year!

Sue Dyson – 18th December 2007 – I love the way you care for us, but am I alone in finding it a tad too warm?! Perhaps it's the red wine...

Thanks Phil (who saw over ninety films here in 2007!). There are a few we don't like to start without, he and his dad are two of them... as is Sue. Yes it does get warm... but it is the wine.

SEATING PLANS...

I seem to miss the best moments. Early in January a man demanded the box office for a seating plan. On learning he couldn't have one to take home he became cross,

bordering on irate. Apparently as his anger became enflamed by his own voice the encounter went something like this:

"In London theatres I have no problems getting one" regaling his friends with our professional inadequacies ever more loudly for even the auditorium to hear. "I am a 'professional' in the business... you would be mocked in London for such ineptitude..." and so on.

I love being accused of unprofessional, non professional or just anything to do with the word.

If "patriotism is the last bastion of the scoundrel", then 'professional' is its colleague. The only professionals I understood and respected were Stanley Matthews and Rocky Marciano... and the lovely Rita down the road.

This is not a profession, it's a job and luckily one I can do. Ironically no 'profession' would ever have employed me. In the world of business and commerce I would have been a joke at 55, with no comprehension of strategies, expansion or 'going forward'. In the arts, though I have a Masters in Arts Administration (City Univ 1988), I would have had to be 28 to 35, black, female with a waxed toe due to an abused childhood, or gay with a lilo for a brain.

We restored The Rex with fag packet drawings to make every seat the best.

Clearly there are favourites but we don't care. For friends and people we like, we will try. Shout and you shout into the wind. With 294 luxury sell-out seats, there is currently no space or time to be picky. So no we don't give out seating plans.

THIS, OUR FIRST SOUNDTRACKS CD, IS NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES OR THOSE SPECIAL NIGHTS ALONE WITH VALIUM, CIDER AND A RAZOR... THEY ARE (NOT QUITE) REX SOUNDTRACKS – BUT ORIGINAL IN SPIRIT WITH A GREAT SLEEVE.

That special gift for that special someone you hope you will never see again...

OBITUARY

KAY SNEL...

A historic snapshot... Here Kay cashes up for the last time at the end of the very last show on 28 February 1988. Can you see her kiosk is now where our side box office window sits? From the long foyer shot, you can see it on the left at the far end. Visiting the site with Mr Rees during the last months of building work, she had a word or two to say about the 'reconstruction' of her little tuck shop!

Kay was usher, box office and front-of-house, usually all at once, from the mid-70s until the end. Alun Rees tells of eleven weeks of queuing around the block for ET in 1982 – eleven weeks for one film! From time to time cries of 'get to the back' and 'there's a queue here yer know' as Kay and Alun had to push their way through to unlock the front doors and let them in.

At her lovely funeral service at St Mary's Northchurch on 4th January, her son Jamie spoke of how, when they were kids, his mum would sneak him and his brother and their friends into the stalls. And how she was so popular in the town, they would dread the three hours it would take to walk along the High Street to Tescos and back!

Her partner of over twenty years, Alun Rees was chief Projectionist when the Rex closed in 1988 and remains in charge of the 'new' projection box to this day. Sadly Kay passed away in the early hours of 16th December 2007.

Our best wishes go to Mr Rees, her family and many friends.



THOSE MEADOWS GIRLS HAVE BEEN USING BIG WORDS AGAIN...

I think that the Rex is a lovely place. I am very impressed that it is improved from my last visit last year. Faye age 8

The Rex is just how I last remembered it: clean organised and beautiful. The engravings on the wall are very impressive and I thoroughly enjoyed myself!

Ellen age 11

Thank you girls. Don't leave it so long next time.

