

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E



LOOKING FOR ERIC
JULY...

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

JULY 2009 Issue 52
www.therexberkhamsted.com

01442 877759
Mon-Sat 10.30-6pm Sun 4.30-6.30pm

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SEAT PRICES:	
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Mon to Sat	10.30 – 6.00
Sun	4.30 – 6.30

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

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Jon Waugh	1st assistant projectionist
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VISIONARY of The Rex.

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Classic Voight and Hoffman stalk New York. See Dustin (looking better than Ratso here) walking in London on 14th & 15th

FILMS TO WATCH OUT FOR



Classic French New Wave 1965
Pierrot Le Fou Tue 7 July 7.30



Classic lyrical Welsh New Wave 2009
Sleep Furiously Mon 20 July 7.30



A Baseball story with a huge difference
Sugar Wed 29 July 7.30



Graeme Garden, Humphrey Lyttelton,
Barry Cryer & Tim Brooke-Taylor.



Barry Cryer



George Egg

COMEDY NIGHT

Our fourth comedy evening looks like being our first variety music hall! Barry Cryer has a thousand funny showbiz tales to tell and will.

Earl Okin combines juicy lyrics, with a sweet seductive voice, fabulous tunes and witty, clever-clogs guitar.

George Egg comes with a briefcase full of ridiculous props and uses them.

Tommy Cooper lives on?

As always Robin Ince holds it all together beautifully.

Sorry I Haven't a Clue is back on R4 Mon 15th June, minus one lovely face. The Chairman is dead. God help the Chairman...



Earl Okin (with guitar)



Compere: Robin Ince.



Robin Ince and Chris Addison have fun 08.01.09



Will Smith on stage. 08.01.09

Hi-jinx in the box office with Robin and Chris Addison. Chris has played on our stage And screen! He is the hapless Toby in In The Loop or 'that sweary film' as its become known. Will Smith was also in that sweary film, though right at the end and not for long. The rest weren't but were fab in front of the screen.



Robin & Stephen Merchant in foyer. 18.04.09



Natalie Haynes was pleased to see you. 18.04.09



First on our stage:Milton Jones. 14.11.08



Marcus Brigstocke waving off his friends. 14.11.08



J U L Y E V E N I N G S

Angels and Demons

Wed 1 7.30, **Thu 2** 7.30,
Fri 3 7.30, **Sat 4** 7.00

As God (here known as Gawd) only exists in fiction, this is a perfect fiction to go chasing after His purple signs and symbols, goodies and baddies.

This latest cash cow from the unlikely named apostle Dan Brown is, by any other name, The Da Vinci Code 2. Its chosen other name, Angels & Demons, sees Tom Hanks rushing around the Vatican trying to foil a dastardly plot while debating science and religion without upsetting anyone!

"The sensible reaction is to nod off... It has the pulse and intellectual rigour of a pub quiz" (*Times*)

Ludicrous but great fun all the same. You know what you're in for so come for the ride.

I'll leave you with this fabulous B-Movie trailer description (synopsis verbatim) where if you close your eyes while reading, you will hear that deep drawling, hyper-dramatic American voiceover... "When he discovers evidence of The Illuminati - the most powerful ancient secret brotherhood in history - he sees a deadly threat to its most despised enemy - the Catholic Church (cue: single piano dischord, long shadows, Sid James' cackle, distant high pitched scream). "Together with the beautiful and enigmatic Italian scientist Vittoria Vetra, he embarks on a nonstop, action-packed hunt through sealed crypts, dangerous catacombs and deserted cathedrals..."

Oh my Gawd! The blood is up and the cat has just crept into the crypts...



Director:	Ron Howard
Starring:	Tom Hanks, Ewan McGregor, Stellan Skarsgard
Certificate:	12A
Duration:	138 mins
Origin:	USA 2009
By:	Sony Pictures Releasing



Midnight Cowboy

Sun 5 6.00

Director: John Schlesinger
Starring: Jon Voight, Dustin Hoffman
Certificate: 18
Duration: 119 mins
Origin: USA 1969
By: Park Circus Films

Midnight Cowboy: What nuclear power in two words. They could be comical like a Carry On, but somehow you know you won't be laughing.

The disturbing images in this film have stayed with me since I was young.

There is nothing hopeful or uplifting in *Midnight Cowboy*. Apart from Dustin Hoffman, whom I'd seen in *The Graduate* only or so a year earlier, I would have believed every word, face and minute. His face and obvious acting were all I had to cling to.

John Voight's unknown face was perfect casting. He and all the bit-part players feel and look real - all loathsome.

It is about hopelessness and broken dreams. Yet it is as compelling now as it was in 1969.

Redeeming features: "I'm walking here" which I still to shout at such drivers to this day, and that haunting harmonica soundtrack weaving in and out.

This and Harry Nilsson's evocative voice, make it one of the most unforgettable films of all time.



La fille coupée en deux (The Girl Cut in Two)

Mon 6 7.30



French director Claude Chabrol's new film is a chaste tale of modern perversion.

Gabrielle (Sagnier) is a sexy weather girl on local French TV who falls for a much older married man, a celebrated writer (Berléand). Meanwhile a crazy spoilt rich kid, Paul (Magimel), wants Gabrielle for himself. Will it all end in tears? An unspoken past between the two men heightens tensions, and although she's initially certain of her love for one them... Oh dear. Tears it is then? This sharp and darkly seductive film is apparently 'trademark Chabrol': fiendishly entertaining and impossible to shake. Hmmm?

"Chabrol's erotically charged tale takes a mordant and stylish swipe at the pretensions and phoniness of old money, new media and the great man of letters. Though the performances are all first rate, the film is let down by weak characterisation. Still its enjoyable." (*Sunday Times*) 'Still its enjoyable' Now there's a comment worth paying for. Forget them. It is a classic ménage à trois. One the French love to play in front of our faces... knowing we cannot resist... So don't resist, come.

Director: Claude Chabrol
Starring: Benoit Magimel, Ludivine Sagnier, François Berléand
Certificate: 15
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: France, Germany 2008
By: Artificial Eye

Pierrot Le Fou

Tue 7 7.30

Director: Jean Luc Godard
Starring: Jean-Paul Belmondo, Anna Karina
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: France 1965
By: British Film Institute

To mark fifty years since the French new-wave hit British screens, this: **Pierrot le Fou** is its pinnacle comes to **The Rex**. Fired from his job at a TV company, and tired of his home life, Ferdinand Griffon (Jean-Paul Belmondo) decides to leave his wife and children for babysitter Marianne Renoir (Anna Karina) only to find she is on the run, being chased by Algerian gangsters. The couple embark on a crime spree, eventually ending up on the French Riviera but continually watching their backs puts a life threatening strain on their ill-considered relationship...

Directed by Jean Luc Godard at the height of his powers, and starring cinema's coolest double-act, Belmondo and Karina, this film epitomises everything that we love about Godard's output – the jump cuts, the breakneck narrative, the pop art references, and the intense anger at the political and social world - still startlingly relevant today (a water boarding torture sequence foreshadows Guantanamo Bay by some 40 years)

"...some of the most visually exuberant French cinema of the Sixties." – (*The Guardian*)

"...fragmented, luxuriant, chaotic, contradictory... one of the most revolutionary films ever to have been made." – (*Films De France*)

It won't sell out, but those who take the plunge will be generously rewarded. It's a unique, groundbreaking piece of cinema. Don't miss. (*Simon Messenger*)



Pour elle (Anything For Her)

Wed 8 7.30



This French thriller hurtles along with hardly a pause – certainly not long enough for us to question the

innocence of Lisa, who is wrongly arrested for beating her boss to death in a car park... The dangers of being out of your depth in criminal dealings give Fred Cavayé's film plenty of pulse and urgency, but in revealing the truth so early... Lisa (Kruger) and Julien (Lindon) are married and lead a happy, quiet existence. But their lives are turned upside down one morning...

She is sentenced to 20 years. Convinced of her innocence, and having failed to secure her release through legal means, Julien decides to help his wife escape. Just how far will his desire to do anything for her take him? A taut Gallic thriller with overtones of *Tell No One*, *Anything For Her* marks an extremely impressive directorial debut from Cavayé.

"Combining style and substance with a pervading sense of realism, the film will keep you on the edge of your seat right to the daring finale." (*synps*)

Bearing in mind Julien is an innocent teacher who knows nothing about the underworld and prisons, he looks more like a gangster. Luckily for him, us and the film, when he needs to, he acts like one.

Director: Fred Cavaye
Starring: Vincent Lindon, Diane Kruger, Olivier Marchal
Certificate: 15
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: France 2008
By: Metrodome Distributors

COMEDY NIGHT

Thu 9 7.30



Tonight: is Variety Night...

BARRY CRUER is our biggest star so far. Starting life as a crooner in the 1950s, he went on to become one of the greatest influences in post-modern British comedy. He has written for Morecambe and Wise, Kenny Everett, The Two Ronnies and pretty much all the greats of British television. His best part, for most of us, is as the one who crossed spontaneous side-splitting swords with Humphrey Lyttelton on Radio 4's eternal gem: *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*. He has been there since its birth in 1972.

As a big player in the 'old guard' he has a million tales. As such he is revered by new wave gagsters and up and comings alike. (He'll also tell you some top stories about Danny LaRue and Maltese gangsters in Sixties Soho - if you buy him a pint!) In true jazz and comic mafia tradition, as a close friend of Humph's, he is welcome to the Rex stage... Anytime.

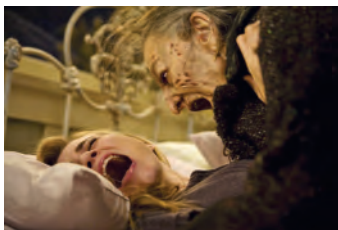
EARL OKIN is the last of the suave on the comedy circuit and one of the few acts in the world to still wear spats on stage. He was support for Paul McCartney's Wings and headlines cabaret clubs around the world. He is popular on the Berlin cabaret scene. Remember the last time Berlin cabaret was popular...? Earl's songs have been recorded by Cilla Black, Helen Shapiro and Georgie Fame and hummed by many more.

GEORGE EGG is actually a man, not an egg. This means it is safe to shove him off a wall, but he'd rather you didn't. He is owner of the world's second largest suitcase. He has toured across the world and, like Earl, is popular on the Germany cabaret circuit. Oh dear, there's bound to be a war soon.

ROBIN INCE has been very busy missing the deadline for his first book, writing a play for Radio 4's *Fact to Fiction*, appearing on *The News Quiz* and playing festivals as diverse as Hay Literary, Cheltenham Science and Glastonbury. His new solo show, *Robin Ince versus the Moral Majority* will run on the Camden Fringe and the Edinburgh Festival in August

Drag me to Hell

Fri 10 7.30, Sat 11 7.00



After the wildly successful Spiderman franchise, Sam Raimi is back where he belongs – helming cultish, witty and surprisingly watchable horror. It's almost 30 years since he directed the first "Evil Dead" - the epitome of 1980s fun-gore. Has he still got the same power to shock and amuse?

Christine Brown (Lohman) is a loan manager at a bank in Pasadena, who makes a grave mistake by refusing a loan to an elderly gypsy woman... Uh oh! Will she be tormented by a whole Sid James' collection of demons for three nights until she goes where the title suggests? Oh yes!

Mumbo-jumbo involving animal sacrifices, séances and cursed buttons come to the rescue, but will they be enough to save Christine's soul...?

"As a parable of unwise decisions, it's as pertinent to hedge-dealers and leaders as it might be to a director coming off increasingly fraught superhero movies. For the rest of us, there's a talking goat, a catfight in an open grave, and the best attacking-an-old-crone-with-a-stapler sequence we'll see all year." (*Telegraph*) If you're a Raimi fan, you're in for a gory treat! If not, come for something that terrifies us most – gypsies. Better still, come for the symbolic pleasure of watching an ambitious banking minion dragged across the Styx for an ill-judged loan decision...

(research: Simon Messenger)

Director:	Sam Raimi
Starring:	Justin Long, Alison Lohman
Certificate:	15
Duration:	99 mins
Origin:	USA 2009
By:	Lionsgate Films UK

North by Northwest

Sun 12 6.00



Cary Grant was 55 when he made this and looks better than today's 30-somethings. All those soft collared white shirts and loose suits...! Am I in the wrong time?

When I'm truly old enough to not care, I won't wear purple, I'll suicide bomb Nike and Adidas, etc and all those cheap manufactures of trainers and football shirts, Macdonalds and all the detritus of today... It'll be a long suicide; foregoing an ankle here and there, but I'll do it. Cary Grant is the epitome of style and alongside Fred Astaire, the master of cool dignity. "This delightful comic-thriller is perhaps Hitchcock's most perfectly realised film. Grant gives one of his finest performances as the self satisfied, suave ad-exec mistaken for a spy.

"They say it is the quintessential chase movie; a catalogue of Hitchcock's cinematic trademarks; ingenious shots, subtle male-female relationships, bright technicolour, witty symbolism, masterly suspense (except for terrible cuts to a studio backdrop in the midst of a tense real location chase. The cropduster and Mount Rushmore scenes are each bugged by terrible editing). Interweaving themes of paranoia, isolation and sexual anxiety with responsibility and redemption it is a bizarre tightrope between sex and repression, nightmarish thriller and urban comedy." (*various synopsis*) 'sexual anxiety- repression' etc, my suicidal ankles. Hitchcock made thrilling, manipulative, commercial pap, lazily shot. That's all.

Director: Alfred Hitchcock
Starring: Yves Saint, Cary Grant
Certificate: PG
Duration: 136 mins
Origin: USA 1959
By: British Film Institute

La Habitacion de Fermat (Fermat's Room)

Mon 13 7.30

Directors: Rodrigo Sopeña, Luis Piedrahita
Starring: Yves Saint, Cary Grant
Certificate: 15
Duration: 88 mins
Origin: Spain 2007
By: Revolver Film Distribution

"Every even integer greater than 2 can be written as the sum of two primes." Goldbach's conjecture is one of the oldest unproven and unsolved problems of mathematics. While it might not seem the sexiest of quests, for some, it is the Holy Grail. This is the lure for four clever-clogs in this masterful Spanish thriller. Invited by the mysterious Fermat to a remote country house, they must solve a series of puzzles in a given time. Each time they fail the room punishes them. Hence they are faced with the ultimate challenge - survival...

Hugely indebted to Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None", Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum" and Vincenzo Natali's unique horror "Cube", Fermat's Room is engrossing, entertaining and accessible in precisely the way maths at school never was. It is nailbitingly tense, and at times, incredibly claustrophobic, the way mathematics at school used to be... claustrophobic, never tense.

"This is an ingenious, relentlessly exciting film, a moral fable at once visceral and cerebral." (Guardian)

Come for diabolical double-maths more exciting than it ever was on wet Wednesday afternoons. This style of questioning should be included in the curriculum. Learn your 3Rs or die! Great escapist cinema where there is no escape... Come for the thrill. (*research: Simon Messenger*)



Last Chance Harvey

Tue 14 7.30, Wed 15 7.30

Harvey (a good looking Dustin Hoffman) is a divorced musician (lowly jingle writer) who is in London for his daughter's wedding, only to find himself an outsider in his own family.

He hasn't turned out a memorable tune in some time, and should he fail to come up with something catchy during this trip, his 'career' is curtains. Hence, missing his flight home, his career is curtains. But wait, while drowning his sorrows at an airport bar...

As luck would have it, at the same time, Kate (a delightfully well-preserved Emma Thompson) is on a hopeless date with a younger man... Enter the 'Brief Encounter' moment at Heathrow. Who writes this stuff? You might as well stay home, but wait again... "The film's saving grace is its stars. Hoffman and Thompson make for a hugely appealing, unorthodox couple – he twitchy and self deprecating; she graceful, world-weary and a foot taller (read slowly: foot taller not footballer). These performances, coupled with nimble dialogue, a brace of insightful moments and a slightly chocolate-box view of London (a'la Richard Curtis) lend 'Last Chance Harvey' a warmth and wisdom which outshine the more timeworn elements of the screenplay." (*Time Out*)

NB: in true chauvinist tradition, Dustin is 'good looking' while Emma is merely 'well-preserved'. Come and be delighted.



Director: Joel Hopkins
Starring: Emma Thompson, Dustin Hoffman, Eileen Atkins, James Brolin
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 92 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Momentum Pictures



X-Men Origins: Wolverine Thu 16 7.30

Director: Gavin Hood
Starring: Ryan Reynolds, Danny Huston, Liev Schreiber, Hugh Jackman
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 118 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

“He was always one of the main reasons to watch the X men series, but now fans of Hugh Jackman’s buff brooding Wolverine get the have their (beef) cake and eat it.” (Times)

X Men Origins: Wolverine rewinds several centuries to give us a glimpse of the uncertain parentage of Hugh Jackman’s Clawed hero, and tragedy that sends him on the run with his equally ‘gifted’ brother. It tells the story of Wolverine’s epically violent and romantic past, his complex relationship with Victor Creed and the ominous Weapon X programme. Along the way, Wolverine encounters many mutants, both familiar and new, including surprise appearances by several legends of the X-Men world. “A step in the right direction for the franchise, although Hood (Tsotsi & Rendition) is a little over-fond of shots of stunning scenery.” (*Times Playlist*) Yeah, Its awful showing all that gratuitous stunning scenery...



Looking for Eric Fri 17 7.30, Sat 18 7.00, Sun 19 6.00

Ken Loach tells of being a guest at Old Trafford. Sitting next to the big man, the crowd got wind that Eric was in there midst. The spontaneous roar from the huge crowd was phenomenal... Ooh ahh Cantona. Ken was unable to describe the excitement this giant hero caused 12 years after his last game in 1997. Eric Bishop (Steve Evets) is a postman fanatically obsessed with Manchester United.

His life is descending into crisis – his son is hoarding a gun for a local gangster, and to see his granddaughter brings him into undesired contact with his ex-wife.

At his lowest suicidal ebb, Bishop begins to hallucinate that his idol, footballer and philosopher Eric Cantona (played to great comedic effect by the man himself) is giving him spiritual advice... Correction: “I am not a man. I am Cantona...”

Typical of Loach, the piece has a darker edge, but overall it’s a terrific film for fans and non-fans of football, Cantona and Loach alike.

“This is the nearest he might get to a feel-good movie, and may well become one of his most successful. At Cannes it was received with acclamation... probably because Loach is adored here as a world-class talent not always appreciated on home territory.” (*Standard*)

Come for the fresh Cantona-isms. Our favourite proverb; impossible to articulate in even your best Gallic accent – “he that sows thistles shall reap prickles”. Genius.



Director: Ken Loach
Starring: Eric Cantona, Stephanie Bishop, John Henshaw, Steve Evets
Certificate: 15
Duration: 116 mins
Origin: Belgium, France, Italy, UK 2009
By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd



Sleep Furiously

Mon 20 7.30



Taking its title from Noam Chomsky's grammatically correct, but meaningless sentence, "Colourless green ideas sleep furiously", this charming documentary directed by Gideon Koppel chronicles a year in the life of a remote Welsh farming community, Trefeurig.

With last month's showings of "The Grocer's Son" and "Modern Life", familiar themes are at play here – loss of rural traditions, nostalgia and belonging, a yearning for the past etc; however Koppel's powerful homage to rural Wales is nothing short of moving.

The film, unlike its title, is anything but meaningless. Subtle scenes of ordinary rural life are illustrated as we follow the local mobile library around - choral singing, cow milking, sheepdog training – all become something elegiac and ritualistic in Koppel's hands. His decision to use an ambient soundtrack by Richard D. James (himself born to Welsh parents) pays off, adding to the tranquillity of the whole affair.

"Because of all the rubbish pandering for our attention — as well as our honest pandering for rubbish — we sometimes forget the things cinema can do. It can be magical. It can make poetry. It can bring you into company with the basic things of life...it might not be like your life... but you might be surprised to find something..." (Standard)

Cancel Britain's Got Sheep.
 (research: Simon Messenger)

Director: Gideon Koppel
Certificate: U
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: UK 2008
By: New Wave

Sunshine Cleaning

Tue 21 7.30, Wed 22 7.30

Amy Adams, with her tremulous smile and her beguiling fragility and pluck, is Rose, a single mother, desperate to get her son into a better school, whose life is a daily struggle of disappointment over humiliation. She's still having an affair with Mac (ugly Zahn). She was the high school cheerleader. He was the star quarterback, who married someone else and became a policeman. She is a cleaner. Her sister Norah (Blunt) is still living at home with their dad Joe (Arkin), a salesman with a history of ill-fated get-rich-quick schemes.

Mac persuades Rose, who persuades Norah, to go into the crime-scene cleanup business to make some quick cash. As they climb the ranks in a very dirty job, each of the sisters finds a new sense of self-respect and healing and more...

From one stuck-together moment to the next, *Sunshine Cleaning* sometimes seems better than it is. This is largely thanks to a very good cast. "There is some acid-black humour to accompany the inconsequential journey, while Adams and Blunt soar so far above the material, you only wish they were in a better film". (*Total Film*) "It's the human comedy! It's the human tragedy! Its love and family and sisterhood and second chances and picking yourself up and dusting yourself off and making lemonade out of lemons. All in all, it's a mess" (*NY Times*) Come for the mess, ignore the know-alls.



Director: Christine Jeffs
Starring: Amy Adams, Emily Blunt, Alan Arkin, Steve Zahn
Certificate: 15
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Delanic Films



Star Trek

Thu 23 7.30

Director: JJ Abrams
Starring: Eric Bana, Zoe Saldana, Zachary Quinto, Chris Pine, Leonard Nimoy
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Paramount International Pictures

Space...the final frontier? Perhaps any sense of finality has long since been beamed elsewhere. Star Trek's many bold re-goings have not stopped since 1966! This latest, and by far the best, whisks us back to those heady days when James Tiberius Kirk was a teenage tearaway and Spock was bullied at school. Given what we know, the initial distrust and hostility between them works okay. Essentially it's the story of how the two star fleet cadets muscle their way to the top.

The plot is a fast and furious tussle of good over evil and should thrill jaded blockbuster veterans with its grungy feel. Along the way, we pick up a host of uncannily youthful, yet familiar faces, including Bones, Mr. Sulu, the gorgeous Uhura and Scotty, nicely played by an enthusiastic Simon Pegg.

The film is a great spectacle with extraordinary stunts and special effects but with more to it than just your average sci-fi. It keeps the nuanced and irrational characters who made the original TV series so enjoyable.

"If the greatest romance is with the past, then Trekkies are in for a real treat." (*Times*)

"Despite all previous attempts, this Star Trek boldly goes where no man has gone before and Abrams has reinvented the series without destroying what has gone before!" (*Standard*)



Terminator Salvation: The Future Begins

Fri 24 7.30, Sat 25 7.00



There's a chase scene half way through 'Terminator Salvation' that rivals anything in the series. A breathlessly paced, pulse-pounding desert escape, it lasts about five minutes and single-handedly earns the movie an extra star as sleek robotic motorcycles pursue our heroes, who are fleeing in an armour-plated pickup. Stop yawning. Keep up. This is an important briefing on what to wait for in a film. Not only that, it's the end of the world and Christian Bale is in a very bad, naughty boy, mood. So pay attention.

It's the year 2018 (not far then. Them cybuggers better get a move on) Bale's John Connor, self-prophesied leader of the human resistance against Skynet, the machine (played with panache by Rupert Murdoch in a little off the shoulder number) which rules the planet following a nuclear apocalypse. Sam Worthington plays Marcus Wright, a former Death Row inmate who harbours a dark secret. That's nice to know.

"Terminator Salvation might just pass muster as a temporary, forgettable Friday night distraction. But for fans of the Governor Arnie movies, this is a disappointment of 'Phantom Menace' proportions." (*Time Out*)

Warning: Contains moderate violence and intense action scenes. So wear a stout nappy.

Director: McG
Starring: Christian Bale, Sam Worthington, Anton Yelchin, Bryce Dallas Howard
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 155 mins
Origin: Germany, UK, USA 2009
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Night At The Museum II

Sun 26 6.00



Apparently/allegedly, films by director and producer Shawn Levy are loathed by critics but adored by Hollywood film studio accountants. Sounds familiar. His films make big money! Ah there's the difference. For a moment there I thought Hemel (hospital) and Hollywood had something in common. "Levy true to form has come up with another turkey, albeit one that will no doubt lay another golden egg for those money counters.

He's stuffed it with special effects, star names and big numbers, but it has none of the exuberance needed to lift us out of our seats and take us on a thrilling ride." (*Sunday Times*) Seats – now that's more like it; comforting gloom.

But actually this entertaining rumbustious sequel to the kid's fantasy about walking talking museum exhibits, is pretty fab. Stiller is Larry, the heroic night guard who has since made his fortune as the inventor of the glow-in-the dark torch. But when visiting New York to catch up with his animated museum buddies, he finds them being packed off to the huge Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC. So to the rescue!

"kids will revel in the riot of effects as Larry leads his barmy army against evil villains, ranging from Napoleon to Al Capone! Grown ups will value the sassy script and in-jokes" (*Times*) Hmmm? Come and see.

Director: Shawn Levy
Starring: Ben Stiller, Robin Williams, Ricky Gervais, Owen Wilson
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: Canada, USA 2008
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Rudo Y Cursi

Mon 27 7.30

Director: Carlos Cuarón
Starring: Diego Luna, Gael García Bernal, Dolores Heredia
Certificate: 15
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: Mexico/USA 2009
By: Optimum Releasing

"Soccer provides the backdrop for this rowdy, ramshackle Carlos Cuarón comedy about two brothers Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna. The Y Tu Mamá También boys find themselves (cliché No. 1) opponents on the playing field. Beto (Luna) and Tato (García Bernal) work on a banana plantation in Mexico until sports agent Batuta (Francella) provides (cliché No. 2) a chance at the big time. Beto the goalie is nicknamed Rudo (tough), and Tato, who dreams of making it in music, is Cursi (corny), leading to (cliché No. 3) big problems. More conflict is sparked by hookers, gangsters, drugs and (insert your own cliché No. 4). Luna and García Bernal display the kind of chemistry that makes you overlook the clichés." (*Rolling Stone*)

"There are three reasons alone, why this is being released in America: Gael García Bernal, Diego Luna and Y Tu Mamá También. You keep rooting for this reunion of Mamá's stars to tap into the charisma of that frenzied road-trip movie (co-written by this director). Whereas Mamá brought its characters to a painful emotional brink, this satirical tale, so slight it's hard to even hate it, is too worried about being liked."

(*Time Out NY*)

Sometimes a film wanting to be liked is just what we need. So don't miss.



Slepé Lásky (Blind Loves)

Tue 28 7.30



Five years in the making, this documentary by the Slovakian director Juraj Lehotsky takes us into the unseen world of four blind people in love.

Peter plays his music compositions to his blind wife. Marko, madly in love with his partially sighted girlfriend, faces the prejudice of her parents. Elena is worried about her unborn baby being blind. And boy mad teenager Zuzana spends her time on the internet, searching for love and sending text messages. The film avoids sentimentality, yet there's no denying that we sighted people end up feeling sorry for them- something I don't think they would want.

"Some surprising magic is worked by this careful Slovakian documentary about how blind people manage their personal relationships...there's no special pleading or sermonising here; just a sensitive, poetic feel for the tricky circumstances they find themselves in. There are some moments of despair, for sure, but largely this is a chronicle of determination and hope."

(*Guardian*)

"The complexities of being blind and love are never probed in depth, but its moving, well crafter work. For once, here is a film that should be longer." (*Sunday Times*) If you're in the mood for it, don't miss.

Director: Juraj Lehotský
Starring: Iveta Koprdová, Moro Daniel, Monika Brabcová, Jolana Danielová, Anna Brabcová, Zuzana Pohánková
Certificate: PG
Duration: 77 mins
Origin: Slovakia 2008
By: Institute of Contemporary Arts

Sugar

Wed 29 7.30

Directors: Anna Boden, Ryan Fleck
Starring: Rayniel Rufino
Certificate: 15
Duration: 114 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Axiom Films

Sugar is about being a stranger in a strange land, when that strange land is America. It's about the point where ambition falters and reality kicks in.

And it's about baseball, in that order! At its centre is conflicted yet cocky 19-year-old Miguel 'Sugar' Santos, an ace baseball pitcher from the Dominican Republic who is scouted by a minor league team in Iowa.

"There are clichés strewn in this film's path like unexploded landmines, but weaving their way past them isn't writer directors Boden and Fleck's only achievement. They dig away honestly at the relationship between effort and success, one that most movies distort in one direction or the other. To try, to fail, to try some more: this never feels like a pre-determined tract about the struggles of a homesick immigrant. Sugar, winningly played by the complete newcomer Algenis Perez Soto, is testy, competitive and driven. The road he follows is modest, but the film is beautiful and searching in letting him find it for himself." (*Telegraph*) Soto's wistful, unselfconscious central performance keeps us rooting for him throughout.

"The machismo, bluster and sentimentality is shelved in favour of fashioning a moving and frank snapshot of the immigrant experience in America." (*Time Out*)

Could be the gem of the year. Don't miss.



Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen

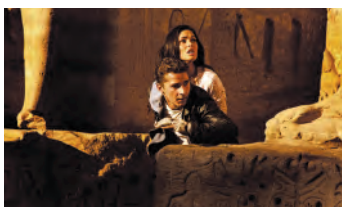
Thu 30 7.30, Fri 31 7.30

Weren't Transformers those dull toys that transformed from one homogenous mass of bolts knobs and wheels, into another carbuncle of unrecognisable giz gogs? Then what? I remember feeling sorry for kids who would show you excitedly how it all works then run around the room with it, miming mayhem to the accompaniment of their own vroom sounds. Then stop, fiddle faddle with the damn thing and off again. The film is exactly the same.

The sequel to 2007's critically acclaimed blockbuster, Transformers: Revenge Of The Fallen successfully ups the ante as the battle for universal supremacy between the Autobots and the Decepticons continues to rage. Decepticon forces return to Earth on a mission to take Sam prisoner, after the young hero learns the truth about the ancient origins of the Transformers. Joining the mission to protect humankind is Optimus Prime... Lost the will to transform yet?

Here's a typically slaving blockbuster fan-blog.

"He's awakened by a couple of bad Decepticons to help out in their battle with those car-lovin' Autobots and those pesky human armies from the first movie. Meanwhile, Sam Witwicky (Shia LaBeouf) is off to college, while his hot-to-trot girlfriend Mikaela (Megan Fox) is grease monkeying it up something hot." (*Internet tosser*)



Director: Michael Bay
Starring: Shia LaBeouf, Megan Fox, Hugo Weaving, John Turturro
Certificate: tbc
Duration: 147 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Paramount International Pictures



COMING SOON

New releases

Public Enemies

Bruno

Ice Age 3

Harry Potter and The Half-Blood Prince

Telstar

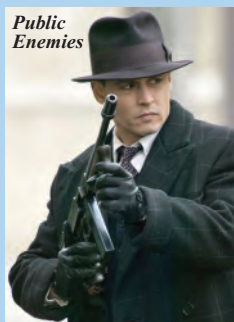
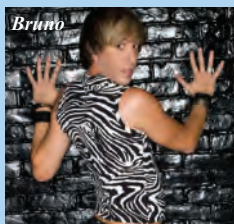
Back by demand

Looking for Eric

Vicky Cristina Barcelona

Everything Is Illuminated

The Sea Inside.



JULY FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	WED	ANGELS AND DEMONS	2.00, 7.30
2	THU	ANGELS AND DEMONS	2.00, 7.30
3	FRI	ANGELS AND DEMONS	7.30
4	SAT	BOLT	2.00
4	SAT	ANGELS AND DEMONS	7.00
5	SUN	MIDNIGHT COWBOY	6.00
6	MON	THE WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN	2.00
6	MON	GIRL CUT IN TWO	7.30
7	TUE	MAMMA MIA	12.30
7	TUE	PIERROT LE FOU	7.30
8	WED	ANYTHING FOR HER	2.00, 7.30
9	THU	STATE OF PLAY	2.00
9	THU	REX COMEDY NIGHT	7.30
10	FRI	DRAG ME TO HELL	7.30
11	SAT	SPACE CHIMPS	2.00
11	SAT	DRAG ME TO HELL	7.00
12	SUN	NORTH BY NORTHWEST	6.00
13	MON	CONVER. WITH MY GARDENER	2.00
13	MON	FERMAT'S ROOM	7.30
14	TUE	LAST CHANCE HARVEY	12.30, 7.30
15	WED	LAST CHANCE HARVEY	2.00, 7.30
16	THU	THE BUCKET LIST	2.00
16	THU	WOLVERINE	7.30
17	FRI	LOOKING FOR ERIC	7.30
18	SAT	WOLVERINE	2.00
18	SAT	LOOKING FOR ERIC	7.00
19	SUN	LOOKING FOR ERIC	6.00
20	MON	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM II	2.00
20	MON	SLEEP FURIOUSLY	7.30
21	TUE	CORALINE	12.30
21	TUE	SUNSHINE CLEANING	7.30
22	WED	STAR TREK	2.00
22	WED	SUNSHINE CLEANING	7.30
23	THU	STAR TREK	2.00, 7.30
24	FRI	TERMINATOR SALVATION	7.30
25	SAT	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM II	2.00
25	SAT	TERMINATOR SALVATION	7.00
26	SUN	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM II	6.00
27	MON	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM II	2.00
27	MON	RUDO Y CURSI	7.30
28	TUE	TRANSFORMERS II	12.30
28	TUE	BLIND LOVES	7.30
29	WED	TRANSFORMERS II	2.00
29	WED	SUGAR	7.30
30	THU	TRANSFORMERS II	2.00
30	THU	TRANSFORMERS II	7.30
31	FRI	TRANSFORMERS II	7.30



J U L Y M A T I N E E S

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

Angels and Demons

Wed 1 2.00, **Thu 2** 2.00

Director: Ron Howard
Starring: Tom Hanks, Ewan McGregor, Stellan Skarsgård
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 138 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

As God (here known as Gawd) only exists in fiction, this is a perfect fiction to go chasing after His purple signs and symbols, goodies and baddies.

This latest cash cow from the unlikely named apostle Dan Brown is, by any other name, The Da Vinci Code 2. Its chosen other name, Angels & Demons, sees Tom Hanks rushing around the Vatican trying to foil a dastardly plot while debating science and religion without upsetting anyone!

"The sensible reaction is to nod off...

It has the pulse and intellectual rigour of a pub quiz" (*Times*)

Ludicrous but great fun all the same.

You know what you're in for so come for the ride.

I'll leave you with this fabulous B-Movie trailer description (synopsis verbatim) where if you close your eyes while reading, you will hear that deep drawling, hyper-dramatic American voiceover...

"When he discovers evidence of The Illuminati - the most powerful ancient secret brotherhood in history - he sees a deadly threat to its most despised enemy - the Catholic Church (cue: single piano dischord, long shadows, Sid James' cackle, distant high pitched scream). "Together with the beautiful and enigmatic Italian scientist Vittoria Vetra, he embarks on a nonstop, action-packed hunt through sealed crypts, dangerous catacombs and deserted cathedrals..."

Oh my Gawd! The blood is up and the cat has just crept into the crypt...



Bolt

Sat 4 2.00



This is one of the best animations on show right now. I laughed out loud a lot from the stairwell.

Bolt (Travolta) is the deluded super-hero star of a hit live-action children's television show, replete with a snazzy lightning logo emblazoned on his flank. When Bolt is accidentally separated from 'his person' (the equally innocent cartoon child-star Penny voiced by Hannah Montana!) he joins an alley-cat (a sassy Susie Essman) and a scene stealing hamster complete with indestructable bubble-wheel, to learn the harsh lesson of being a 'real dog'.

"One of the pleasures of 'Bolt' is how, without taking itself too seriously, it combines adventure with ideas and a sympathetic script." (*WH Time Out*) It has fun with the reality/fantasy divide in a way that makes perfect sense to small kids, while still fun for older ones and grown ups who haven't quite made it. Visually, it's clever and stimulating: there are some fabulous eye-level effects and a pair of beautiful 'helicopter' shots. Borrowing a practice from Pixar, it opens with a short film from director Lasseter's (himself a car-dealer's son!) own spin-off from 'Cars'. Don't miss. Bring the whole street, even if they've already seen it.

Director: Chris Williams, Byron Howard
Starring: John Travolta, Miley Cyrus, Mark Walton, Susie Essman
Certificate: PG
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Buena Vista International

The World's Fastest Indian Mon 6 2.00

Director: Roger Donaldson
Starring: Anthony Hopkins, Chris Lawford, Annie Whittle
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: USA 2005
By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd

We couldn't resist bringing this one back. Since we re-opened over four years ago it remains one of our top twenty cinematic treasures. One of the 'happiest' films, it leaves audiences uplifted and smiling, if through a few tears. 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. Hopkins describes it as his best, most enjoyable film in all his endless career! It tells the true story old man's stubborn refusal to give up. It is inspiring. In 1967, after a lifetime perfecting his vintage 'Indian' motor bike, 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. Steal the afternoon and feel better for the rest of the week. It will keep coming back when you least expect it... just like Burt Munro.



Mamma Mia Tue 7 12.30



Okay, one more time... This seems a good moment to replay this all singing, all dancing, sunny, Mediterranean pop-pop to cheer an English summers afternoon.

The story's fluffy, the music's beige, the script is Media Studies grade F and the acting grade K. The three men 'singing' is fun. Julie W saves it more than once. But the sun shines and the sea sparkles Med-blue the whole time.

Everybody leaves unable to stop smiling. Quite ridiculous and painful... but relieved the gloom from August to Christmas last year! So come, laugh, sing along and dance in the aisles, but please find just a little something... you don't like.

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

Pour elle (Anything For Her) **Wed 8** 2.00



This French thriller hurtles along with hardly a pause – certainly not long enough for us to question the innocence of Lisa, who is wrongly arrested for beating her boss to death in a car park...

The dangers of being out of your depth in criminal dealings give Fred Cavayé's film plenty of pulse and urgency, but in revealing the truth so early... Lisa (Kruger) and Julien (Lindon) are married and lead a happy, quiet existence. But their lives are turned upside down one morning...

She is sentenced to 20 years. Convinced of her innocence, and having failed to secure her release through legal means, Julien decides to help his wife escape. Just how far will his desire to do anything for her take him? A taut Gallic thriller with overtones of *Tell No One*, *Anything For Her* marks an extremely impressive directorial debut from Cavayé.

"Combining style and substance with a pervading sense of realism, the film will keep you on the edge of your seat right to the daring finale." (*synps*)

Bearing in mind Julien is an innocent teacher who knows nothing about the underworld and prisons, he looks more like a gangster. Luckily for him, us and the film, when he needs to, he acts like one.

Director: Fred Cavayé
Starring: Vincent Lindon, Diane Kruger, Olivier Marchal
Certificate: 15
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: France 2008
By: Metrodome Distributors

State of Play **Thu 9** 2.00

Director: Kevin Macdonald
Starring: Helen Mirren, Ben Affleck, Russell Crowe
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 132 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Said to be the best thing Affleck and Crowe have done for a long time, this dark, complex, street-smart thriller pitches politics, journalism and big business into a toxic mix. Based on the far superior BBC mini-series of the same name, written by Paul Abbott, this new film from Kevin Macdonald sees Ben as a handsome, unflappable U.S. Congressman, seen as the future of his party, until...

Helen Mirren as a ruthless editor, is tiresome. There's only so much of that 'tough acting' face one can take. What was wrong with Bill Nighy (the original)? Perhaps Hollywood can't have three men in a room unless they are

pounding each other to pulp. Check out *All The Presidents Men*. "The roles verge on stereotype. As do some of the situations. When Cal is hunted by a hitman, it's in an underground car park, etc. Despite its limitations, it's pacy and gripping, with outstanding production values (what does that mean?) and it retains the original's cynicism in the corridors of power while serving as a reminder in these wobbly times of the need for a robust press to expose corporate and government sleaze." (*Total Film*) What? Thank tits for the Sun and more recently the 'pioneering' Telegraph's parliamentary expenses scandal, sans nipples of course.

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Space Chimps

Sat 11 2.00



When a multi-billion dollar Space Agency probe disappears into an intergalactic wormhole, Ham III is recruited to save the day. Ham is the fictional grandson of the first real-life chimpanzee in space? (see quiz below). They send him up into orbit to find it. Accompanied by highly-trained Space Chimp Lieutenant Luna and their by-the-book commander, Titan off he goes on his heroic quest.

However, Ham III is a circus-performing slacker, more interested in showing off than in living up to his heroic heritage. But when the ship crash-lands on a distant planet, Ham, Luna and Titan find that they need to work together in order to save its peaceful inhabitants from Zartog, an evil dictator who is using the stolen billion dollar space probe to enslave the planet... "Space Chimps works surprisingly well, thanks to witty, laugh-out-loud script packed with great one-liners, with enough film references and in-jokes to keep grown ups awake." (*View London*)

KID's prize winning Question: There was a dog sent into space when I was little, but my old memory is woolly in the chimp dept? A big fat surprise prize for the first under 12 to tell us if the chimp story is true. If so when? and what was the chimps name? For an extra bonus prize: what was the dog's name (the first one sent into space) the day, month and year. Extra golden points: What was its gender and nationality (boy or girl and where did it live)???

Director: Kirk Micco
Voices: Jeff Daniels, Stanley Tucci, Cheryl Hines and Andy Samberg
Certificate: U
Duration: 80 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Dialogue avec mon jardinier (Conversations with my Gardener)

Mon 13 2.00

Director: Jean Becker
Starring: Daniel Auteuil, Jean-Pierre Darroussin
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 109 mins
Origin: France 2007
By: Cinefile

Not only is this a blissful tale beautifully told, it brings a French summer landscape into an English summer afternoon as it did from January to April.

It is one of those small films we've been lucky to find year after year.

A finely observed gem depicts a poignant friendship between two men who seem to be from different walks of life but have simply taken different paths. This becomes clear and remains part of the film's magic to the end. It tells of a respected Parisian painter on the brink of divorce as he returns to his childhood home and employs a gardener to tame the vegetable patch.

As the gardener nurtures and the painter daubs, a warm friendship grows between them. Sharing a love of the place, they begin to see things afresh. Naturally, it is the 'dauber' who has most to learn. It is funny, warm and glows with life as it paints a tender portrait of men coping in their own way.

"Perhaps it's their love of food and wine, but France is one of the few countries where films about the land are still made - about how it sustains and nourishes them..." (*Crits*) It is beautiful. Don't miss. You will love it.



Last Chance Harvey

Tue 14 12.30, Wed 15 2.00

Harvey (a good looking Dustin Hoffman) is a divorced musician (lowly jingle writer) who is in London for his daughter's wedding, only to find himself an outsider in his own family.

He hasn't turned out a memorable tune in some time, and should he fail to come up with something catchy during this trip, his 'career' is curtains. Hence, missing his flight home, his career is curtains.

But wait, while drowning his sorrows at an airport bar...

As luck would have it, at the same time, Kate (a delightfully well-preserved Emma Thompson) is on a hopeless date with a younger man... Enter the 'Brief Encounter' moment at Heathrow. Who writes this stuff? You might as well stay home, but wait again... "The film's saving grace is its stars. Hoffman and Thompson make for a hugely appealing, unorthodox couple – he twitchy and self deprecating; she graceful, world-weary and a foot taller (read slowly: foot taller not footballer). These performances, coupled with nimble dialogue, a brace of insightful moments and a slightly chocolate-box view of London (a'la Richard Curtis) lend 'Last Chance Harvey' a warmth and wisdom which outshine the more timeworn elements of the screenplay." (*Time Out*)

NB: in true chauvinist tradition, Dustin is 'good looking' while Emma is merely 'well-preserved'. Come and be delighted.



Director: Joel Hopkins
Starring: Emma Thompson, Dustin Hoffman, Eileen Atkins, James Brolin
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 92 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Momentum Pictures



The Bucket List

Thu 16 2.00



Back to brighten a summers

afternoon... It is about two old men playing, rather than dicing, with death. I wanted to like it, thought I'd hate it, but loved it.

Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman star as terminally ill cancer patients who decide to break out and live their last days to the fullest in this 'serio-comic' road movie. Billionaire Edward (Nicholson) and mechanic Carter (Freeman) are sharing a hospital room. Though initially they seem to have nothing in common, conversation gradually reveals they both have things to do before they 'kick the bucket'. When they make a break for it with the list: gambling in Monte Carlo, women, fast cars, exploring the world they've so far missed, etc "the two men also forge a truly remarkable friendship." It is an all-expenses-paid Jack Nicholson romp with fabulous locations, girls (on & off-set) and a few drinks... Come just for these and laugh and cry as much as it makes you. It takes the sadness of it all and plays with it. It is corny, buddy and sentimental... but these two are too clever not get the balance right. Come for Morgan beating Jack at his own game – stealing great chunks of the screen.

Director: Rob Reiner
Starring: Jack Nicholson, Morgan Freeman
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Warner Brothers

X-Men Origins: Wolverine

Sat 18 2.00

Director: Gavin Hood
Starring: Ryan Reynolds, Danny Huston, Liev Schreiber, Hugh Jackman
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 118 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

"He was always one of the main reasons to watch the X men series, but now fans of Hugh Jackman's buff brooding Wolverine get the have their (beef) cake and eat it." (Times)

X Men Origins: Wolverine rewinds several centuries to give us a glimpse of the uncertain parentage of Hugh Jackman's Clawed hero, and tragedy that sends him on the run with his equally 'gifted' brother. It tells the story of Wolverine's epically violent and romantic past, his complex relationship with Victor Creed and the ominous Weapon X programme. Along the way, Wolverine encounters many mutants, both familiar and new, including surprise appearances by several legends of the X-Men world. "A step in the right direction for the franchise, although Hood (Tsotsi & Rendition) is a little over-fond of shots of stunning scenery." (*Times Playlist*) Yeah, Its awful showing all that gratuitous stunning scenery...



Night At The Museum II

Mon 20 2.00,
Sat 25 2.00, **Mon 27** 2.00



Apparently/allegedly, films by director and producer Shawn Levy are loathed by critics but adored by Hollywood film studio accountants. Sounds familiar. His films make big money! Ah there's the difference. For a moment there I thought Hemel (hospital) and Hollywood had something in common. "Levy true to form has come up with another turkey, albeit one that will no doubt lay another golden egg for those money counters.

He's stuffed it with special effects, star names and big numbers, but it has none of the exuberance needed to lift us out of our seats and take us on a thrilling ride." (*Sunday Times*) Seats – now that's more like it; comforting gloom.

But actually this entertaining rumbustious sequel to the kid's fantasy about walking talking museum exhibits, is pretty fab. Stiller is Larry, the heroic night guard who has since made his fortune as the inventor of the glow-in-the dark torch. But when visiting New York to catch up with his animated museum buddies, he finds them being packed off to the huge Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC. So to the rescue!

"kids will revel in the riot of effects as Larry leads his barmy army against evil villains, ranging from Napoleon to Al Capone! Grown ups will value the sassy script and in-jokes" (*Times*) Hmmm? Come and see.

Director: Shawn Levy
Starring: Ben Stiller, Robin Williams, Ricky Gervais, Owen Wilson
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: Canada, USA 2008
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Coraline

Tue 21 12.30

Director: Henry Selick
Starring: Dakota Fanning, Teri Hatcher, Ian McShane, Dawn French
Certificate: PG
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

When inquisitive pre-teen Coraline discovers a secret door in her family home, she stumbles into universe of apparent perfection but with underlying danger.

The film is made painstakingly with real puppets on real sets. There are no computers. It is called stop-motion animation. It means you move the puppet, take a picture, move it again, take another and keep going until it really is talking, running, falling, climbing, etc. Ask Wallace and Grommit. "A uniquely terrifying villain. This dark edge will be the biggest test of the film as a commercial prospect: it may be too terrifying for the target audience. But for the braver kids and parents this is a ride." (*Time Out*) Be warned: it is visually fabulous but under 9s will have nightmares, as will many over 39s!



Star Trek

Wed 22 2.00, Thu 23 2.00



Space...the final frontier? Perhaps any sense of finality has long since been beamed elsewhere. Star Trek's many bold re-goings have not stopped since 1966! This latest, and by far the best, whisks us back to those heady days when James Tiberius Kirk was a teenage tearaway and Spock was bullied at school. Given what we know, the initial distrust and hostility between them works okay.

Essentially it's the story of how the two star fleet cadets muscle their way to the top.

The plot is a fast and furious tussle of good over evil and should thrill jaded blockbuster veterans with its grungy feel. Along the way, we pick up a host of uncannily youthful, yet familiar faces, including Bones, Mr. Sulu, the gorgeous Uhura and Scotty, nicely played by an enthusiastic Simon Pegg.

The film is a great spectacle with extraordinary stunts and special effects but with more to it than just your average sci-fi. It keeps the nuanced and irrational characters who made the original TV series so enjoyable.

"If the greatest romance is with the past, then Trekkies are in for a real treat."

(Times)

"Despite all previous attempts, this Star Trek boldly goes where no man has gone before and Abrams has reinvented the series without destroying what has gone before!" (Standard)

Director: JJ Abrams
Starring: Eric Bana, Zoe Saldana, Zachary Quinto, Chris Pine, Leonard Nimoy
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Paramount International Pictures

Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen

Tue 28 12.30, Wed 29 2.00, Thu 30 2.00

Director: Michael Bay
Starring: Shia LaBeouf, Megan Fox, Hugo Weaving, John Turturro
Certificate: tbc
Duration: 147 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Paramount International Pictures

Weren't Transformers those dull toys that transformed from one homogenous mass of bolts knobs and wheels, into another carbuncle of unrecognisable giz gogs? Then what? I remember feeling sorry for kids who would show you excitedly how it all works then run around the room with it, miming mayhem to the accompaniment of their own vroom sounds. Then stop, fiddle fiddle with the damn thing and off again. The film is exactly the same.

The sequel to 2007's critically acclaimed blockbuster, Transformers: Revenge Of The Fallen successfully ups the ante as the battle for universal supremacy between the Autobots and the Decepticons continues to rage. Decepticon forces return to Earth on a mission to take Sam prisoner, after the young hero learns the truth about the ancient origins of the Transformers. Joining the mission to protect humankind is Optimus Prime... Lost the will to transform yet?

Here's a typically slaving blockbuster fan-blog.

"He's awakened by a couple of bad Decepticons to help out in their battle with those car-lovin' Autobots and those pesky human armies from the first movie. Meanwhile, Sam Witwicky (Shia LaBeouf) is off to college, while his hot-to-trot girlfriend Mikaela (Megan Fox) is grease monkeying it up something hot." (Internet tosser)



ST. ALBANS...

I am being pressed more and more to say something about The Rex's intentions in St Albans.

It has gone on for such a long time; four years for us and at least thirteen since the Odeon closed. Until planning permission was finally granted last year to demolish the historic building on London Road, I had been open about our wishes to either restore it as a viable cinema or find a new site. Talks and negotiations over the past eight months have been slow but hopeful.

While talks continue, albeit slower, the pressure to say something has prompted this statement.

Every day somebody at the Rex or in the street or by email or phone asks about St Albans. At least twenty people from St Albans, Harpenden and nearby come to The Rex every night. The latest excitement was caused when fifteen year old, Alexandra Heal wrote to the press with great passion.

Singlehandedly she has refreshed the groundswell of support and demand for a cinema in St Albans.

The Civic Society, entrepreneurs, developers and concerned people ring me every week, and some weeks, every day, offering ideas and cash. Nothing

can be accepted until there is real hope that a cinema will be returned to St Albans.

We have inspected the building a number of times. It is bigger than the Rex and because of its complicated conversion from one screen to four in the 1970s, is less straightforward, therefore more costly. Based on our restoration in Berkhamsted, it would cost around £2 million to restore and refurbish the site as it stands today. It is a solid building. The walls are strong and though derelict and in a bad state, there is little evidence of weather damage or rot to the interior. Planning permission to demolish and build fourteen apartments with underground car parking was granted last year. In January The Rex made a substantial offer to its owners, Wattsdown Developments Ltd and entered into talks. They are currently in talks with a higher bidder.

Our aspirations in St Albans remain the same – by increasing local demand, we are being urged to build or restore a space in St Albans City Centre to provide a cinema, operating along the lines of the Rex in Berkhamsted.

To remind you of those lines: The Rex is independent of chains, distributors,



The Odeon London Rd St Albans. Today



The Rex. 1998



The Rex. Today

all other major players and imposed programming. We are not in the hands of corporations, investors, boards of directors or banks. We have a firm financial and advisory partnership based on friendship and trust, much of which is unwritten.

The audience is not held to ransom. We refuse to overprice for the luxury of legroom. There is no noise, popcorn or hotdogs. Instead, there are flowers and your feet don't stick to the carpet. We run a repertory programme of the best films on release from across the world. Many return month after month by demand.

This can work with more than one screen but no more than two. No cinema needs more than two screens. Multiplexes were imported from the USA in the mid-seventies; primarily to show blockbusters and sell popcorn to 18 to 25 year olds on the first weekend of release.

Programmed properly, two huge screens will provide all you need - the big releases on one, the smaller gems on the other. The plexes now show the same big sell-outs simultaneously on two or three of their multi-screens, thus reducing choice and removing the purpose of 'multi'.

From the outset and against advice from seasoned professionals, we removed screen-choice. Paradoxically, with one screen and a different film most nights and matinees, there is more choice.

The Rex has consistently sold out five nights out of seven, every week since it re-opened in December 2004.

Our intention in St Albans remains clear: to open a similar cinema in the City Centre, offering the same courtesy, experience and advantages of the Rex. We have not wavered from this but circumstances have stalled speedy progress. Hence the heightened frustration and renewed resolve within St Alban's to see something happen now. We are behind them and ready join them when everything is in place and the time is right.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOOK (MAY & JUNE) ALWAYS A TREAT.

"Vicky Cristina Barcelona - what vacuous utter shite"

"The best bit in 'Il Divo' was the music. The bad bit was SEAT 17 Back Row (i). Try it sometime! It should be deemed 'NO CHARGE' in the interests of Health and Safety".

(What difference would no charge make to seat 17's interest in health or safety?)

"Fab place. We were going to move to Devon but we've changed our minds!"
Love the enthusiastic lashings and lashings of optimism in the last one.
Contrasts nicely with the other two, don't you think.

This is copied verbatim from a notice tied to several lampposts along Castle Street in May. For a change there are no typographical errors and every bracket, capital letter and comma is copied exactly as it is in the notice.

It is not just the language (which is fabulous if you give it time) that puts people off reading such notices. It is that most of us could do without being caught staring at a lamppost, let alone photographing it! All it tells you is that there has been a typing error somewhere in the bowels of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Due to which nothing will change. This nothing will change 'comes into effect on 18th May 2009'

At first glance it is easy to ridicule this Dickensian legalese, but reading closely, there is something heartening about the care taken to tell us nothing has changed. There is something quaint and comforting. You can't imagine too much water-boarding goes on behind its closed doors. It is not the sinister small print, the kind designed to trap and ensnare you. That legal small print is the domain of the nasty. It is in all documents, where you have to sign your life away, or where you can't actually get your deposit back, or where it only includes parts after three weeks.

On the contrary, this public notice small print is lovingly prepared by dusty old chaps, gently watching over every bracket, i and t that nobody will read.

THE BOROUGH OF DACORUM (CASTLE SREET, BERKHAMSTED) (CONSOLIDATION) ORDER 2009

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL, pursuant to the arrangements made under Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2000 with The Hertfordshire County Council in exercise of their powers under Sections 1,2 and 3 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (which said Act of 1984 is hereinafter referred to as "The Act of 1984"), and of all other enabling powers and after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 of the Act of 1984, in order to correct a typographical error in schedule 5 of The Dacorum Borough Council (Berkhamsted) Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting (Consolidation) Order 2003, have made the above mentioned order, this order comes into effect on 18th May 2009:

This order corrects a typographical error in schedule 5 of The Dacorum Borough Council (Berkhamsted) Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting (Consolidation) Order 2003 and makes no material changes to the waiting restrictions as indicated by the lines and signs currently in place.

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A copy of the Order including Schedule 1, showing the proposals for the length of road concerned and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined at The Parking Centre, 81 Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1LF between 13th May 2009 and 26th June 2009, 9.00am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays and at The Civic Centre, 161 High Street, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire HP4 3HD between 13th May 2009 and 26th June 2009, 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am to 4.50pm on Fridays.

If you have any queries about the proposed waiting restrictions please contact: Parking Development Manager, Dacorum Borough Council, Civic Centre, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 1HF.
parking@dacorum.gov.uk

Any person wishing to question the validity of the orders or of any of their provisions on the grounds that they are not within the powers of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 or that any of the requirements thereof or of any relevant regulations made thereunder have not been complied with in relation to the orders may, within six weeks from the date on which the orders were made, make application for the purpose to the High Court.

Steven Barnes
Parking Development Manager
Dacorum Borough Council,
Civic Centre
Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire
HP1 1HF

Dated the 13th day of May 2009