



THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E

BLACK SWAN

MARCH 2011...

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

MARCH 2011 Issue 72
www.therexberkhamsted.com

01442 877759
Mon-Sat 10.30-6pm Sun 4.30-5.30pm

Rants and Pants	4-6
March Evenings	11
Coming Soon	23
March Films at a glance	23
March Matinees	25
Rants and Pants	40-43

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BOX OFFICE: 01442 877759
 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)

Some of the girls and boys you see at the Box Office and Bar:

Julia Childs	Liam Parker
Nicola Darvell	Izzi Robinson
Lindsey Davies	Amberly Rose
Karina Gale	Georgia Rose
Rosa Gilbert	Sid Sagar
Katie Golder	Liam Stephenson
Ollie Gower	Tina Thorpe
Beth Hannaway	Beth Wallman
Lucy Hood	James Wallman
Abigail Kellett	Jack Whiting
Amelia Kellett	Olivia Wilson
Simon Messenger	Roz Wilson
Helen Miller	Keymea Yazdanian
Malcolm More	Yalda Yazdanian

Ushers:

Amy, Amy, Annabel, Billie, Ellie, Ellen, Emma, Hannah, Kitty, Luke, Meg

Sally Thorpe In charge

Alun Rees Chief projectionist (Original)

Jon Waugh 1st assistant projectionist

Martin Coffill Part-time assistant projectionist

Anna Part-time assistant projectionist

Jacquie Rose Chief Admin

Oliver Hicks Best Boy

Becca Ross Best Girl

Michael Glasheen Gaffer

Jane Clucas & Lynn Hendry PR/Sales/FoH

Andrew Dixon Resident Artist

Darren Flindall Maintenance

Paul Fullagar, Alan Clooney Advisors and Investors

Ed Mauger Genius

Demiurge Design Design 01442 864904

Lynn Hendry Advertising 01442 877999

James Hannaway CEO 01442 877999

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

The Rex

High Street (Three Close Lane)

Berkhamsted HP4 2FG

www.therexberkhamsted.com

BEST IN MARCH



Still the best. No acting. Exquisite.

Australia/UK 2010.

The King's Speech Tue 1 - Thu 3/Tue 8 - Wed 9

FILMS OF THE MONTH



Javier at his most brilliantly lost.

Mexico/Spain 2010.

Biutiful Mon 21 /Tue 22 7.30



A privileged flake of three lives.

Germany, Netherlands, Turkey 2010

Men on The Bridge Mon 28 7.30



Nobody does it better than Bogey and Bacall.

USA 1946.

The Big Sleep Sun 20 6.00

FORESTS AND RAILS



"Slow down, you move too fast. We've got to make the morning last..."

Well done to that young Cameron chap for having the guts to admit he might be wrong. We can all sleep safely now. The forests are safe now under our brave new coalition.

That they thought it was a good idea in the first place is a little dangerous. However, to give them the benefit of the doubt let's find other things about which they might admit to being wrong. The High Speed Rail link for instance. As reported in February's Rex mag, and to be repeated: The HS2 campaign against the High Speed link in the Chilterns' Tory heartland declares "No business case. No environmental case. No money to pay for it".

If half a million woodland protestors can change the governments mind in a week, surely a quarter of England from Buckinghamshire to Warwickshire can stop a £32billion railway line, over years? Then there are VAT/National Insurance increases twinned with severe cuts. Their determination to make us pay again for the things they have already made us pay for and not delivered, would make Bernie Madoff blush. We've already paid for education, health and national insurance over and over. Kids can't write, hospitals will kill you and that pension you paid for... Ha!

What they haven't squandered on wars, they've gambled up the wall. Perhaps that

They say they wont sell our precious woodlands. Don't believe them.



nice Mr. Cameron will admit he's wrong again.

As for the forests, of the 250,000 hectares no longer for sale, 100s of thousands of acres of woodland are already to be sold off; some from previous Labour deals and others from much earlier strategic town and country planning.

Rex ticket prices stay the same.

To prevent fuss with the new ticketing system, your 50p to £1 anti-VAT donation box will be on the box office from 1st March. And a huge thank you to all those who've already donated in the spirit of rebellion.

BABIES, BOX OFFICE AND BOTTOMS

BABIES... (FROM THE BOOK)

"Came to see matinee Love and Other Drugs saw the film... didn't hear the film due to the fact from arrival, then start to finish 'Babies' crying constantly throughout the film. At the beginning a member of your staff asked mothers to take out babies when crying. This was blatantly ignored. Babies are welcome when quiet, and ignorant mother's that decide to ignore the polite request by staff are NOT welcome." (Ms Love) *Nice name*

"Miserable git! These babies will be funding your future care!" (anon)

We are sorry that babies can be noisy. This is why you are warned that every Tuesday matinee at 12.30, there will be babies (parodying preposterous warning labels with: 'Warning: may contain babies'. The warning is not to hurry you in case huge fat babies take all the seats, but that they might make rather big fat noises. Mother's are requested to take prolonged yelling up to the foyer, with the baby. Others to walk-about, the bar area downstairs, infant on hip, to settle small tears or pacify contented gurgling. Basically there will be babies on Tuesdays, and short of sending Michael in to yell louder, you'll have to learn to like each other.

NEW TICKETS OLD WAYS...

We have installed a new box office system. It is long overdue and took even longer to decide. We chose independent software, with no need for internet or off-site stuff.

It's all ours, aided by a fab little company, who adapted it for us.

We welcome the new but don't embrace it as the though the old has no more value. It is designed to make our old evolved ways easier. There is already jackboot suppression of the urge to say (in nasal sing-song tones) 'Sorry we can't, the new system won't let us'. Yes we can and it will. It'll just take a little time. There should be fewer mistakes than the old hand-written 'system' and it will speed the queues along. It is for our best use. Isn't that right HAL?



The naughty bits are censored to protect the seating.

CINEMA IN THE BUFF

First sent 10th October 2005, found in archive files and worth repeating five years later

Dear Sir/Madame,

My husband and myself have organised "Cinema in the Buff" for the past two years. This is a naturist social event when we have gathered with fellow club members to watch a current mainstream film and also archive footage from the naturist archive collection.

We have met predominantly at The Grand Venue in Ramsey in Cambridgeshire once a month but unfortunately The Grand has now closed. We are therefore looking for alternative locations and wish to enquire if your cinema is available for private hire during off peak times.

If you consider that our group may be accommodated at your venue then please get in touch.

Yours Faithfully TY

Thank you TY, As I remember, shortly afterwards we received a request from a knitting circle (true). At the time, compared to nudity, films about knitting were pretty scarce. We did think of putting you together, in case it got a bit chilly. That aside, you have heard the gags a million times, your letter is among our treasured archive of early gems. Thank you.

THE WAY BACK



HENRYK WIEKSZA: THE WAY BACK

On Sunday 6th February a real hero came to the Rex. Now 87, Henryk Wieksza was only fourteen in 1939 when he was deported from Poland along with his mother and brother to a Siberian labour camp. He never saw them again. He escaped and along with six others endured extreme conditions across Uzbekistan, Kazakstan into Persia, Iraq, through Turkey to North Africa to reach the reformed Polish army in South Africa. They took him to Scotland where he trained as a tank driver and in the Polish 1st Armoured division took place in the invasion of Normandy. In France he was seriously injured and returned to England disabled and still a teenager.

He now lives here in Northchurch near his son and his family.

Two years ago while researching a screenplay based on Rawicz's *The Long Walk*, Peter Wier came to Berkhamsted to find Henryk. Once cast, actor Jim Sturgess also came to visit. Sturgess cites Henryk as his inspiration during filming of *The Way Back*. Many of the things he told them are to be seen in the film; the not knowing each other, the chicken blindness, the way to get ticks out of your clothing.

An amazing survivor is in our midst, and nobody knew. If it is anybody else locally whose life inspired a film. Please tell us. In the meantime thank you Henryk Wieksza. It will be on again in April.

Dear James,
Thank you for your concern when we abruptly left your cinema after about ten minutes of 'The Way Back' on the 6th Feb. I had received a silent phone message that my daughter had gone into labour. She had a little girl Florence and both are doing well.
Will you be showing the film again as it was a very promising beginning?

Yours sincerely
Nick Bugg

*Well done and congratulations to mother, dad and grandparents, and welcome Florence into a world where, should your bad-timing continue, you'll have great fun, while driving everyone around you, nuts.
We'll play the film again one afternoon in April just for your grandparents, and Henryk and his family.
As for you Florence, you're already showing signs of a good usher.
Bring your own torch and don't talk too much.*



M A R C H E V E N I N G S

The King's Speech

Tue 1 7.30, Wed 2 7.30,
Thu 3 7.30



Hyped to the royal hilt, yet for once such hype not only doesn't get in the way. The film, performances and script transcend the circus.

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Which must also reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio. Given that the family job is talking, the Prince's stammer is not the best of gifts. Princess Elizabeth has no luck with conventional wisdom, so eventually discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The shy, diffident 'Bertie' could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. How many names do they need?

But with Edward's abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently.

It is a beautiful study in the subtle, shifting balance of power and respect. So too, as both a piece of lost history and a great screenplay, it is a beautifully written, beautifully staged conversation between two people, whose exquisite restraint shows no signs of acting. Perfect.

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

Brighton Rock

Fri 4 7.30, Sat 5 7.00,
Sun 6 6.00

Based on Grahame Greene's novel of the same name, and previously adapted for the big screen in 1947, "Brighton Rock", directed by Rowan Joffe, is a dark thriller set on the dank, blustery streets of the eponymous seaside town.

Young gangster Pinkie Brown (Sam Riley) has murdered a rival, Fred Hale. Inadvertently, a photographer on the pier snapped one of Pinkie's henchmen menacing Hale just before his death. This crucial piece of evidence lies with young waitress Rose (Andrea Riseborough) who Pinkie must now pursue in a bid to prevent her from revealing the truth... Set in the 1960s, amongst the curious battles between the Mods and Rockers, it's not a straight remake of the 1947 picture. Riley gives Pinkie the same terrifying amorality, but lacks the disconcerting youthfulness of Richard Attenborough in the original.

Riseborough is excellent as Rose, quickly embodying the gangster's moll role with relative aplomb.

"It's an intelligent and creative movie, not a masterpiece..." (*Guardian*)

"A more sensitive, inquiring take on real human relations. Some may find this new 'Brighton Rock' a slower, less energetic experience as a result, but at least there's more room for Joffe to explore the dirty bedsits and towering cliffs of Brighton with some exquisite photography from John Mathieson." (*Time Out*)
(*Simon Messenger*)





Director: Rowan Joffe
Starring: Helen Mirren, John Hurt, Sam Riley, Andrea Riseborough
Certificate: 15
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Optimum Releasing



Barney's Version

Mon 7 7.30



Told, unsurprisingly, entirely from Barney's perspective, the film narrates Barney's life from humble beginnings as a wannabe entrepreneur (flogging olive-oil in Rome) to chief of "Totally Unnecessary Productions" (flogging second-rate soap operas to Eastern Europe). We are also witness to Barney's unsuccessful marriages. Three in total, including one to the love of his life, Miriam (the gorgeous Rosamund Pike). Then there's the strained relationship with his father, amiably played by Dustin Hoffman.

Giamatti is clearly in his comfort zone as Barney, exhibiting the same erratic, shambolic behaviour as he did in sleeper hit, and Rex favourite, *Sideways*.

"There's much to enjoy in the film's often-stylish execution, but as it trundles towards its grimly sentimental ending, it would have us believe that love, of Panofsky's selfish yet obsessive variety, redeems all. I remain to be convinced."

(*Telegraph*)

"All these beautiful women? No. He has none of the wit and charm that usually goes with an attractive loser who drinks too much. It is sometimes funny, occasionally touching, but the whole thing hinges on Giamatti's performance, which luckily, is the film's engine"

(*Times/Mail*) (research Simon Messenger)

Director: Richard J Lewis
Starring: Bruce Greenwood, Scott Speedman, Dustin Hoffman, Paul Giamatti, Minnie Driver, Rachelle Lefevre, Rosamund Pike
Certificate: 15
Duration: 132 mins
Origin: Canada, Italy 2011
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

The King's Speech

Tue 8 7.30, Wed 9 7.30



Hyped to the royal hilt, yet for once such hype not only doesn't get in the way. The film, performances and script transcend the circus.

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Which must also reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio. Given that the family job is talking, the Prince's stammer is not the best of gifts. Princess Elizabeth has no luck with conventional wisdom, so eventually discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The shy, diffident 'Bertie' could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. How many names do they need?

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Starring: Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush, Helena Bonham Carter, Michael Gambon
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: Australia, UK 2010
By: Momentum Pictures

Social Network

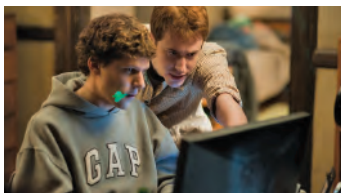
Thu 10 7.30

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

Directed by David Fincher and adapted by Aaron Sorkin from Ben Mezrich's book The Accidental Billionaires, the film tells the story of the dubious beginnings of the phenomenally successful and unerringly irritating Facebook (dubbed here as: FaceArse and vice versa. It continues to live up to its name).

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

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





Director: Darren Aronofsky
Starring: Vincent Cassel, Winona Ryder, Natalie Portman, Mila Kunis
Certificate: 15
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Black Swan

**Fri 11 7.30, Sat 12 7.00,
Sun 13 6.00, Mon 14 7.30**

Well here's a peculiar outcome; a film that is uniquely magnificent yet equally the opposite. Darren Aronofsky's darkly erotic psycho-drama stars Natalie Portman, bending and contorting her way to perfection as Nina, "a delicate, overly mothered dancer with the New York City Ballet who cracks up when she lands Swan Lake's dual roles of the White and Black Swans" (*Time Out*)

Mentored by a predatory Vincent Cassel, who requires her to masturbate as part of her training, alongside other bizarre assignments. With her passion to succeed he believes she has what it takes to play the White Swan but lacks the seduction to pull off its alter-ego.

It's not long before she befriends rival dancer Lily (Kunis). Less experienced yet confident and dangerously flirtatious, Lily is the free-spirited Yin to Nina's paranoid Yang. She helps Nina explore her wild side but in doing so only fuels Nina's increasingly fractured demeanour... Uh oh. On one hand you've got a tense, quasi-realistic drama with documentary composition. Then, like the black swan itself, its darker side unravels and the cracks begin to show. As Nina loses grip on reality, *Black Swan* becomes a surprisingly effective slice of schlock-horror. "Realism barely gets a look in as Aronofsky and his team go hell-for-leather at her fractured mental state" (*Times*) (review *Jack Whiting*)

In terms of high-art, think *The Wrestler* with tighter buttocks. Don't miss.



Blue Valentine

Tue 15 7.30



Ryan Gosling and Michelle Williams indulge their indie acting in this bitter, poignant no-budget drama.

Dean a removal man, and Cindy a nurse, are a small-town, blue collar couple whose relationship is on the edge. Part told in flashback, we witness their tender courtship; the cutesy shop doorway tap routine, to the drunken fights in motel rooms, the despair, and the dissolution, all with an air of uncomfortable intimacy. The shuffling narrative allows for sequences that are, in turn, both joyous and aching. The intriguing structure makes for compelling viewing; the context of each scene so deeply informed by the story's inevitability.

"It's a bittersweet, affecting film that screams of smart minds both behind and in front of the camera." (*Time Out*)

"A serious, intelligent film which deserves to be considered in the same light as Sam Mendes's *Revolutionary Road* or even François Ozon's masterpiece *5x2*, *Blue Valentine* strives to paint that shadow of loneliness and fear which drives many to marriage, only to find themselves more lonely and afraid than ever... Blame hangs like a fog" (*Guardian*)

The two leads never falter. You will believe they believe every word. But it is only someone else's notion of what is. Passion begins with a ukulele and ends in a cheap motel. Be warned. (*research SimonM*)

Director: Derek Cianfrance
Starring: Michelle Williams, Ryan Gosling, Faith Wladyka
Certificate: 15
Duration: 112 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Optimum Releasing

Morning Glory

Wed 16 7.30

Director: Roger Michell
Starring: Rachel McAdams, Harrison Ford, Diane Keaton, Patrick Wilson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

Roger Michell (*Enduring Love*, *Notting Hill*) directs this unconvincing comedy-drama charting the fortunes of a breakfast news show.

Aspiring producer Becky Fuller (Rachel McAdams) is given a job on "DayBreak", a failing morning news programme on the IBS (an intentionally unfortunate acronym?) network. She is charged with the unenviable job of bringing veteran anchors Colleen Peck (Diane Keaton) and Mike Pomeroy (Harrison Ford) into line, and improving ratings, whilst juggling her career and her relationship with fellow IBS producer Adam (Patrick Wilson)... "Sometimes it all goes horribly wrong. "Morning Glory" has a terrific cast, an intriguing plot, some decent jokes and a respected director, yet the end result is shrill, annoying and empty." (*Time Out*) "Morning Glory stays firmly on the launchpad, doing increasingly desperate run-ups, but collapsing in a gawky heap whenever it tries to take off." (*Telegraph*) Whilst perhaps it misses an opportunity to truly lambaste the vacuity of breakfast television, it's interesting to note that while the film was almost universally panned by British critics (see above), it was praised across the pond. They get Diane Keaton and Harrison Ford – who do we have? Adrian Chiles?

Is it an IBS producer? You decide... (*Simon Messenger*) Sorry Simon, IBS goes well over my bar. Hope you Rexies get it.



The Secret In Their Eyes

Thu 17 7.30



Back by huge demand, Juan José Campanella's excellent Argentine thriller is genuinely one of the most gripping, absorbing and satisfying films of 2010. Well deserving its Oscar over another Rex favourite last year: A Prophet.

Set in 1999, but told partly in flashbacks to the 1970s, it centres on a retired legal counsellor, Benjamín Espósito (Ricardo Darín), attempting to seek closure on his career, by writing a crime thriller.

The basis for his novel is his own entanglement in the case of a young woman's brutal rape and murder, some 25 years before. Enlisting the assistance of his former superior, Irene (Soledad Villamil), from whom Espósito has long hidden his feelings, we are drawn in to the ensuing man-hunt, which includes a tense and superbly executed (if far-fetched) chase sequence inside a football stadium. We become steadily implicated in the grim world of the Junta, and los desaparecidos: The Disappeared.

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

(Guardian)

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

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

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

The Fighter

Fri 18 7.30, Sat 19 7.00

Director: David O Russell
Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Christian Bale, Amy Adams, Melissa Leo
Certificate: 15
Duration: 116 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

Whalberg plays 'Irish' Mickey Ward, a welterweight slugger from Lowell Massachusetts, whose rough road to sporting stardom in the mid 1990's is both helped and hindered by his ex-boxer brother and crack addict trainer, Dicky (Bale) and his maniacal harridan of a mother, Alice (Leo), unfortunately also his manager.

Micky dreams of becoming a champion. He hasn't got very far. The reasons aren't hard to pin down.

Ironically, Mickey himself is a bit of a softie. He'd do almost anything to keep his family happy, even at his own expense. It takes a new girlfriend, tough-talking barmaid Charlene (Amy Adams), for him to think again.

"The Fighter looks at first as if it is going to be far more interesting than the straightforward and even rather undemanding drama we finally get. Despite all those Oscar nominations, and awards-season excitement, it is no more than the sum of its parts, and actually has a TV-movie feel." (Guardian)

"The most notable thing about it is its extreme and at times off putting diversity of acting styles but it's still a hugely entertaining tale of rags-to-slightly-better-rags." (Time Out)

"Christian Bale blows Mark Whalberg away in their scenes together" (Front Row) Acting at its ugliest. Hope he wins second prize – a year's fat pills.



The Big Sleep

Sun 20 6.00



The Big Sleep may well be the **classiest and wittiest detective thriller; one of the finest mainstream noir-thrillers ever to come out of Hollywood.** The story is virtually incomprehensible, but who cares? "Well, they asked me, and damn it, I didn't know either..." (R Chandler)

Philip Marlowe is hired to find the missing son-in-law of an ailing millionaire, and gets mixed up with his client's daughters, not to mention a dirty book racket, organised crime, blackmail and several murders.

It remains a classic, deploying Chandler's large and picturesque supporting cast to great effect: Martha Vickers' rich tramp is one of the great movie sluts, trying to sit on Marlowe's lap while he's standing up; Charles Waldron sits pickled in alcohol in his oppressively hot greenhouse amid the orchids he loathes, reminiscing about his wild life; Elisha Cook Jr delivers the definitive loser weasel role and Dorothy Malone pops up as a gorgeous, fantasy librarian who offers Marlowe clues about a rare editions and an afternoon's delight. Then there's Moose!

The main kick is to see Bogart with Bacall giving him whistling lessons. (but not here, it's the other one: *To Have &...*) Classic Raymond C line: "From 30 feet away she looked like a lotta class. From ten feet away she looked like something made up to be seen from 30 feet away..." Don't miss.

Director:	Howard Hawks
Starring:	Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, John Ridgely, Martha Vickers
Certificate:	PG
Duration:	114 mins
Origin:	USA 1946
By:	British Film Institute

Biutiful

Mon 21 7.30, Tue 22 7.30

Alejandro González Iñárritu (Amores Perros, Babel) returns with a disquieting meditation on death and dying.

Set on the baked Barcelona streets, Xavier Bardem (*No Country for Old Men*, *The Sea Inside*) is Uxbal, a 40-something street hustler, and fixer for African and Chinese immigrant labour. Estranged from his alcoholic, bi-polar wife, and the mother of his children, Uxbal carves out a meagre existence, supplementing his income using an eerie ability to communicate with the dead. Having been diagnosed with inoperable cancer, another catastrophe befalls Uxbal, and he feels compelled to right any number of wrongs before it is too late... The film echoes with an otherworldly loneliness; the inevitability of death never leaves Uxbal. Bardem is excellent; able to convey a deep unpleasantness, coupled with enormous vulnerability in his weathered, equine face. It is flawed; at times verging on the preposterous, but it must truly be seen to be experienced.

"Oppressively bleak, intermittently powerful, a loud lunge at themes better quietly pondered, it's a heavyweight dramatic experience in good ways and bad." (*Telegraph*)

"The fluency and confidence of Iñárritu's cinematic language are really spectacular. It may not convert, or convince, but it is certainly arresting..." (*Guardian*) (*Simon Messenger*) However bleak and tough, don't miss Javier's subtle gravity at its best. Come.





Director: Alejandro Inarritu
Starring: Javier Bardem
Certificate: 15
Duration: 148 mins
Origin: Mexico, Spain 2010
By: Optimum Releasing



The King's Speech

Wed 23 7.30

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

Hyped to the royal hilt, yet for once such hype not only doesn't get in the way. The film, performances and script transcend the circus.

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Which must also reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio. Given that the family job is talking, the Prince's stammer is not the best of gifts. Princess Elizabeth has no luck with conventional wisdom, so eventually discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The shy, diffident 'Bertie' could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. How many names do they need? But with Edward's abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently.

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Rabbit Hole

Thu 24 7.30



Nicole Kidman produces and stars as Becca, the mother of an only child who has been killed in a car accident before the action begins and whose marriage has entered a no-man's-land of isolation.

She is having second thoughts about the group therapy sessions and has in any case conceived a weird sub-American Beauty obsession with a local teenage boy.

"Everything about her, including her grief, looks as if it comes from some elegant designer store." (*Guardian*)

Making the most of her inherent, imposing frostiness, Nicole's Becca is a blank page, utterly disconnected from the world, particularly husband Howie (Eckhart). While she imprisons herself in icy solitude, Howie tries to find a way out. Counselling sessions, hard work, soft drugs and a fleeting flirtation with the ever-sexy Sandra Oh.

"Nicole Kidman gives her best performance since *Birth* (2004) hence it's not far off her very best." (*Telegraph*)

"Grief is a difficult emotion to portray on film: the result almost always ends up being either shamelessly manipulative or coldly impenetrable. Occasional moments of humour or tension are simply unable to puncture the overriding sense of sadness. Our feelings towards them are constantly upended. However much we understand them, we never come to like them." (*Time Out*)

The sheer excruciating, stultifying good taste of this movie is almost unbearable." (*Guardian*)

Director: John Mitchell
Starring: Nicole Kidman, Aaron Eckhart, Sandra Oh, Dianne Wiest
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 91 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Metrodome Distributors

True Grit

Fri 25 7.30, Sat 26 7.00,
 Sun 27 6.00, Tue 29 7.30

Hailee Steinfeld plays a plucky young girl who hires an ageing US Marshall to avenge the death of her father.

Bridges plays that Marshall: the nearly incomprehensible Rooster Cogburn.

His mumbling doesn't matter. It's her lines that tell the story, but it's Jeff's face that defines the Wild West in all that we've ever expected it to be.

Ethan Cohen admitted: "We were aware if the kid doesn't work, there's no movie." They got her right. The kid works in screen-loads.

The Presbyterian/puritanical language of the time wins on every level. It's brilliant delivery by all of them, uses expression and inflection to take the place of happily absent four-letter words.

The cowboys are gritty and dirty and spit as they articulate through bad teeth.

They are as unwashed as Roger Deakins' lens, as he captures beautifully, the washed out landscape of leafless trees and grey scrubland.

Watch out for Barry Pepper as Lucky Ned Pepper and see if you can count how many times you've seen him as the out and out baddy or menacing psycho cop. The disappointment, often the sin of the Coens, comes at the end. While the faces are brilliant, the film is not worth all the noise, though not to be missed either.





Director: Coen Brothers
Starring: Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon, Hailee Steinfeld, Josh Brolin
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures



Men On The Bridge

Mon 28 7.30

Director: Asli Özge
Starring: Cemile Ilker, Umut Ilker, Fikret Portakal
Certificate: 15
Duration: 90 mins
Origin: Germany, Netherlands, Turkey 2010
By: Verve

Men on the Bridge, is a drama, which was originally conceived as a documentary.

It follows the day to day existence of three men, whose varied lives are brought together by one distinct feature; the vast Bosphorus Bridge in the heart of Istanbul, which links Asia to Europe.

We unobtrusively, intimately, observe Fikret, a rose seller, Umut, a taxi driver, and Murat, a traffic officer, all going about their business, as we are privileged to a flake of their lives.

Both Fikret and Umut play themselves. The improvised, uncompromising realism of the director's vision is fascinating to behold. An obscure Turkish law prevents police officers acting, so Murat is played by his brother!

"Like most Turkish films that reach this country, it is truthful and sad." (*Guardian*)
 "Put together with great charm, sensitivity and an immaculate sense of timing, this multi-strand portrait of the search for some kind of grace in this teeming, gateway city, deservedly won Istanbul's Golden Tulip" (*Sight and Sound*)

"A remarkable film, combining the striking photography of a (first) feature with the immediacy and honesty of a documentary" (*Times Playlist*)

A rare glimpse into the lives of others, disconnected from our own by a continent, but with the same doubts, fears and aspirations of our own. Don't miss (*research Simon Messenger*)





Director: Mark Romanek
Starring: Keira Knightley, Carey Mulligan, Andrew Garfield
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2010
By: Twentieth Century Fox



Never Let Me Go

Wed 30 7.30, Thu 31 7.30

Based on Kazuo Ishiguro's 'masterly' novel, *Never Let Me Go* is director Mark Romanek's third feature film after *Static* and *One Hour Photo*??

It is set in (the now preposterously fashionable) 1970s England (a decade not even fashionable then). Keira, Carey and Andrew play Ruth, Kathy and Tommy, a complex love triangle of pupils (or inmates?) at a strange boarding school. What happens to students of Hailsham if they leave the school's grounds? Why do some only study art and poetry, and are kept apart from other pupils...?

Sadly these questions are answered early on. Hence we are left with a sustained sense of doom, and wanton sentimentality. It's beautiful to look at, as are the three protagonists, and it has a pleasingly tatty Englishness about it, but...

"The film withholds the explicit fear and passion that another kind of treatment might have aimed for, but it works as a cogent, subdued parable of mortality." (*Guardian*)

"The Hailsham scenes are wonderfully designed and photographed: the lawns, ponds, dormitory, ancient wooden floors and images of dried-up roses evoke a lost England... but as glum and dead as a flounder on a fishmonger's slab." (*Independent*)

Oh dear. Come for their faces. Recognisable, but rarely so compelling in a new British film. (*research Simon M*)



COMING SOON

New releases

Inside Job
The Animal Kingdom
Paul
Morris: A Life with Bells On
Howl
The Portuguese Nun

Back by demand

The King's Speech
True Grit
Black Swan
The Fighter

The Portuguese Nun*Howl**Paul**Inside Job*

MARCH FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	Tue	THE KING'S SPEECH	12.30, 7.30
2	Wed	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00, 7.30
3	Thu	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00, 7.30
4	Fri	BRIGHTON ROCK	7.30
5	Sat	BACK TO THE FUTURE	2.00
5	Sat	BRIGHTON ROCK	7.00
6	Sun	BRIGHTON ROCK	6.00
7	Mon	BRIGHTON ROCK	2.00
7	Mon	BARNEY'S VERSION	7.30
8	Tue	THE KING'S SPEECH	12.30, 7.30
9	Wed	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00, 7.30
10	Thu	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00
10	Thu	SOCIAL NETWORK	7.30
11	Fri	BLACK SWAN	7.30
12	Sat	WALKABOUT	2.00
12	Sat	BLACK SWAN	7.00
13	Sun	BLACK SWAN	6.00
14	Mon	BLACK SWAN	2.00
14	Mon	BLACK SWAN	7.30
15	Tue	BLACK SWAN	12.30
15	Tue	BLUE VALENTINE	7.30
16	Wed	MORNING GLORY	2.00, 7.30
17	Thu	THE SECRETS IN THEIR EYES	2.00, 7.30
18	Fri	THE FIGHTER	7.30
19	Sat	TANGLED	2.00
19	Sat	THE FIGHTER	7.00
20	Sun	THE BIG SLEEP	6.00
21	Mon	THE BIG SLEEP	2.00
21	Mon	BIUTIFUL	7.30
22	Tue	BIUTIFUL	12.30, 7.30
23	Wed	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00, 7.30
24	Thu	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00
24	Thu	RABBIT HOLE	7.30
25	Fri	TRUE GRIT	7.30
26	Sat	GNOMEO AND JULIET	2.00
26	Sat	TRUE GRIT	7.00
27	Sun	TRUE GRIT	6.00
28	Mon	TRUE GRIT	2.00
28	Mon	MEN ON THE BRIDGE	7.30
29	Tue	TRUE GRIT	12.30, 7.30
30	Wed	NEVER LET ME GO	2.00, 7.30
31	Thu	NEVER LET ME GO	2.00, 7.30



M A R C H M A T I N E E S

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

The King's Speech

Tue 1 12.30, **Wed 2** 2.00,
Thu 3 2.00



Hyped to the royal hilt, yet for once such hype not only doesn't get in the way. The film, performances and script transcend the circus.

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Which must also reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio. Given that the family job is talking, the Prince's stammer is not the best of gifts. Princess Elizabeth has no luck with conventional wisdom, so eventually discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The shy, diffident 'Bertie' could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. How many names do they need?

But with Edward's abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently.

It is a beautiful study in the subtle, shifting balance of power and respect. So too, as both a piece of lost history and a great screenplay, it is a beautifully written, beautifully staged conversation between two people, whose exquisite restraint shows no signs of acting. Perfect.

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

Back to the Future

Sat 5 2.00

Director: Robert Zemeckis
Starring: Michael J Fox
Certificate: PG
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: USA 1985
By: Universal

Effects heavy blockbusters of recent times are making big box office, but you can't argue that good honest charm and wit is sorely missing.

Thankfully this 25th Anniversary re-release of Back to the Future reminds us how it's done. Robert Zemeckis' timeless classic combines perfect pacing with forever remembered performances, by Fox and Lloyd

Teenager Marty McFly gets stuck in 1955 thanks to a time-travelling DeLorean. It's eccentric inventor Doc Brown (the immortal Christopher Lloyd) must find away to get Marty back to the future.

The golden rule is never to interact with anyone, or the consequences could be – Marty was never born!

"Marty's on a mission: make his dad George McFly (Glover) man up, avoid shagging his own mum and invent rock 'n' roll. And it's just as good as it was in 1985." (*Total Film*)

The fable's emotional hook stems from something most of us would have pondered at some point. What were our parents like in their youth? BTTF injects this with sci-fi fantasy and humour, forging a rollicking yarn. "Despite all the denim, the film hasn't dated that badly because it gazes lovingly backwards, to the era when America was the World's innocent good-guy." (*Tot Film*) Oh yeah...?

Old fans and first-timers over 12 will love it... (*review Jack Whiting*)





Director: Rowan Joffe
Starring: Helen Mirren, John Hurt, Sam Riley, Andrea Riseborough
Certificate: 15
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: UK 2011
By: Optimum Releasing



Brighton Rock

Mon 7 2.00

Based on Grahame Greene's novel of the same name, and previously adapted for the big screen in 1947, "Brighton Rock", directed by Rowan Joffe, is a dark thriller set on the dank, blustery streets of the eponymous seaside town. Young gangster Pinkie Brown (Sam Riley) has murdered a rival, Fred Hale. Inadvertently, a photographer on the pier snapped one of Pinkie's henchmen menacing Hale just before his death. This crucial piece of evidence lies with young waitress Rose (Andrea Riseborough) who Pinkie must now pursue in a bid to prevent her from revealing the truth...

Set in the 1960s, amongst the curious battles between the Mods and Rockers, it's not a straight remake of the 1947 picture. Riley gives Pinkie the same terrifying amorality, but lacks the disconcerting youthfulness of Richard Attenborough in the original. Riseborough is excellent as Rose, quickly embodying the gangster's moll role with relative aplomb.

"It's an intelligent and creative movie, not a masterpiece..." (*Guardian*)

"A more sensitive, inquiring take on real human relations. Some may find this new 'Brighton Rock' a slower, less energetic experience as a result, but at least there's more room for Joffe to explore the dirty bedsits and towering cliffs of Brighton with some exquisite photography from John Mathieson." (*Time Out*) (*Simon Messenger*)

The King's Speech

Tue 8 12.30, **Wed 9** 2.00,
Thu 10 2.00



Hyped to the royal hilt, yet for once such hype not only doesn't get in the way. The film, performances and script transcend the circus.

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Which must also reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio. Given that the family job is talking, the Prince's stammer is not the best of gifts. Princess Elizabeth has no luck with conventional wisdom, so eventually discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The shy, diffident 'Bertie' could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. How many names do they need? But with Edward's abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently.

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

Walkabout

Sat 12 2.00

Director: Nicolas Roeg
Starring: Jenny Agutter, David Gulpilil, Luc Roeg
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: UK 1971
By: British Film Institute

A schoolgirl (Jenny Agutter) and her much younger brother (Roeg's son Luc) walk home across the urban landscape of Sydney, Australia.

Their geologist father drives them far into the outback, where they stop for a picnic. Without warning, he begins shooting at them. When they escape behind rocks, he sets the car on fire and kills himself. The girl conceals what has happened from her brother. After she has salvaged what she can, the pair head out into the desert.

By dawn the next day, they are weak from exposure, and the boy can barely walk. Discovering a small pool with a fruiting tree, they spend the day playing, bathing, and resting. Next morning, the pool has dried up. A young Aboriginal boy (David Gulpilil) appears. The boy mimes their need for water, and young Australian shows them how to draw water from a dry pool.

The three travel together for several days, with the Aborigine sharing food he has hunted. The boys learn to communicate, using words and mime. The young Australian boy and the girl begin to notice each other...

A remarkable, largely silent film, played here forty years later, for those who remember being moved by it and older kids who might be too.





Director: Darren Aronofsky
Starring: Vincent Cassel, Winona Ryder, Natalie Portman, Mila Kunis
Certificate: 15
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Black Swan

Mon 14 2.00, Tue 15 12.30

Well here's a peculiar outcome; a film that is uniquely magnificent yet equally the opposite. Darren Aronofsky's darkly erotic psycho-drama stars Natalie Portman, bending and contorting her way to perfection as Nina, "a delicate, overly mothered dancer with the New York City Ballet who cracks up when she lands Swan Lake's dual roles of the White and Black Swans" (*Time Out*)

Mentored by a predatory Vincent Cassel, who requires her to masturbate as part of her training, alongside other bizarre assignments. With her passion to succeed he believes she has what it takes to play the White Swan but lacks the seduction to pull off its alter-ego.

It's not long before she befriends rival dancer Lily (Kunis). Less experienced yet confident and dangerously flirtatious, Lily is the free-spirited Yin to Nina's paranoid Yang. She helps Nina explore her wild side but in doing so only fuels Nina's increasingly fractured demeanour... Uh oh.

On one hand you've got a tense, quasi-realistic drama with documentary composition. Then, like the black swan itself, its darker side unravels and the cracks begin to show. As Nina loses grip on reality, *Black Swan* becomes a surprisingly effective slice of schlock-horror. "Realism barely gets a look in as Aronofsky and his team go hell-for-leather at her fractured mental state" (*Times*) (review *Jack Whiting*)

In terms of high-art, think *The Wrestler* with tighter buttocks. Don't miss.



Morning Glory

Wed 16 2.00



Roger Michell (*Enduring Love*, *Notting Hill*) directs this unconvincing comedy-drama charting the fortunes of a breakfast news show.

Aspiring producer Becky Fuller (Rachel McAdams) is given a job on “DayBreak”, a failing morning news programme on the IBS (an intentionally unfortunate acronym?) network. She is charged with the unenviable job of bringing veteran anchors Colleen Peck (Diane Keaton) and Mike Pomeroy (Harrison Ford) into line, and improving ratings, whilst juggling her career and her relationship with fellow IBS producer Adam (Patrick Wilson)... “Sometimes it all goes horribly wrong. “Morning Glory” has a terrific cast, an intriguing plot, some decent jokes and a respected director, yet the end result is shrill, annoying and empty.” (*Time Out*) “Morning Glory stays firmly on the launchpad, doing increasingly desperate run-ups, but collapsing in a gawky heap whenever it tries to take off.” (*Telegraph*) Whilst perhaps it misses an opportunity to truly lambaste the vacuity of breakfast television, it’s interesting to note that while the film was almost universally panned by British critics (see above), it was praised across the pond. They get Diane Keaton and Harrison Ford – who do we have? Adrian Chiles?

Is it an IBS producer? You decide... (*Simon Messenger*) Sorry Simon, IBS goes well over my bar. Hope you Rexies get it.

Director: Roger Michell
Starring: Rachel McAdams, Harrison Ford, Diane Keaton, Patrick Wilson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 107 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Paramount International Pictures

The Secret In Their Eyes

Thu 17 2.00

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

Back by huge demand, Juan José Campanella’s excellent Argentine thriller is genuinely one of the most gripping, absorbing and satisfying films of 2010. Well deserving its Oscar over another Rex favourite last year: *A Prophet*.

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

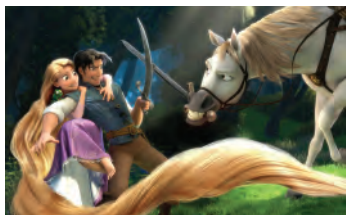
“Argentina in the 1970s is an inspired setting for a film noir, it’s a wonder it hasn’t been used more before...” (*Guardian*)

“Triumphs on two fronts simultaneously, as both a love story and a thriller. Since it’s rare for a film to succeed even in one, this can be considered high praise indeed.” (*Telegraph*) Beside which, it has unexpected twists of humour and his alcoholic sidekick is priceless. Don’t miss.



Tangled

Sat 19 2.00



“Despite the title, Rapunzel’s hair stays as lustrous and untroubled as something from a shampoo ad; extreme girliness is of course the order of the day” (*Guardian*)

Disney has been leaning a little too hard on Pixar’s shoulders over the last decade or so, but with *Tangled*, the classic Rapunzel tale, as with *The Princess and the Frog* in 2010, the studio is taking audacious steps to reclaim the torch it once proudly shone. The quality of story telling isn’t quite up to *Toy Story* standards but it moves along with bravado.

Erstwhile popstrel Mandy Moore voices Rapunzel, whose lonely existence imprisoned in a tall tower with only a cheeky chameleon for company is enlivened when she meets brash outlaw Flynn Rider (Levi), and sets out to discover her true identity.

Tangled adopts a humour palette akin to *Shrek*; combining fluid and captivating animation (the colossal \$160 million budget helps) with ironic jokes to keep kids mesmerized and adults in on it. thankfully a generous helping of sing-alongs keep everything breezy.

“Hero Flynn is cut-out but Broadway star Donna Murphy’s vain, villainous fake-matriarch is marvelous – catch her rendition of *Mother Knows Best*.” (*Telegraph*)

It isn’t vintage Disney yet, but in a golden age where Pixar and Dreamworks dominate, it has found a foothold. (*review Jack Whiting*) It’s fab. Don’t miss.

Directors: Byron Howard, Nathan Greno
Starring: Mandy Moore
Certificate: PG
Duration: 100 mins
Origin: USA 2010
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL

The Big Sleep

Mon 21 2.00

Director: Howard Hawks
Starring: Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, John Ridgely, Martha Vickers
Certificate: PG
Duration: 114 mins
Origin: USA 1946
By: British Film Institute

The Big Sleep may well be the classiest and wittiest detective thriller; one of the finest mainstream noir-thrillers ever to come out of Hollywood. The story is virtually incomprehensible, but who cares? “Well, they asked me, and damn it, I didn’t know either...” (R Chandler)

Philip Marlowe is hired to find the missing son-in-law of an ailing millionaire, and gets mixed up with his client’s daughters, not to mention a dirty book racket, organised crime, blackmail and several murders.

It remains a classic, deploying Chandler’s large and picturesque supporting cast to great effect: Martha Vickers’ rich tramp is one of the great movie sluts, trying to sit on Marlowe’s lap while he’s standing up; Charles Waldron sits pickled in alcohol in his oppressively hot greenhouse amid the orchids he loathes, reminiscing about his wild life; Elisha Cook Jr delivers the definitive loser weasel role and Dorothy Malone pops up as a gorgeous, fantasy librarian who offers Marlowe clues about a rare editions and an afternoon’s delight. Then there’s Moose!

The main kick is to see Bogart with Bacall giving him whistling lessons. (but not here, it’s the other one: *To Have &...*) Classic Raymond C line: “From 30 feet away she looked like a lotta class. From ten feet away she looked like something made up to be seen from 30 feet away...” Don’t miss.



Biutiful

Tue 22 12.30



Alejandro González Iñárritu (*Amores Perros*, *Babel*) returns with a disquieting meditation on death and dying.

Set on the baked Barcelona streets, Xavier Bardem (*No Country for Old Men*, *The Sea Inside*) is Uxbal, a 40-something street hustler, and fixer for African and Chinese immigrant labour. Estranged from his alcoholic, bi-polar wife, and the mother of his children, Uxbal carves out a meagre existence, supplementing his income using an eerie ability to communicate with the dead. Having been diagnosed with inoperable cancer, another catastrophe befalls Uxbal, and he feels compelled to right any number of wrongs before it is too late...

The film echoes with an otherworldly loneliness; the inevitability of death never leaves Uxbal. Bardem is excellent; able to convey a deep unpleasantness, coupled with enormous vulnerability in his weathered, equine face. It is flawed; at times verging on the preposterous, but it must truly be seen to be experienced.

“Oppressively bleak, intermittently powerful, a loud lunge at themes better quietly pondered, it’s a heavyweight dramatic experience in good ways and bad.” (*Telegraph*)

“The fluency and confidence of Iñárritu’s cinematic language are really spectacular. It may not convert, or convince, but it is certainly arresting...” (*Guardian*) (*Simon Messenger*) However bleak and tough, don’t miss Javier’s subtle gravity at its

Director: Alejandro Inarritu
Starring: Javier Bardem
Certificate: 15
Duration: 148 mins
Origin: Mexico, Spain 2010
By: Optimum Releasing

The King’s Speech

Wed 23 2.00, **Thu 24** 2.00

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

Hyped to the royal hilt, yet for once such hype not only doesn’t get in the way. The film, performances and script transcend the circus.

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. Which must also reach the whole British Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio. Given that the family job is talking, the Prince’s stammer is not the best of gifts. Princess Elizabeth has no luck with conventional wisdom, so eventually discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue. The shy, diffident ‘Bertie’ could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. How many names do they need? But with Edward’s abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently.

It is a beautiful study in the subtle, shifting balance of power and respect. So too, as both a piece of lost history and a great screenplay, it is a beautifully written, beautifully staged conversation between two people, whose exquisite restraint shows no signs of acting. Perfect.



Gnomeo and Juliet

Sat 26 2.00



Gnomeo (McAvoy) and Juliet (Blunt) have as many obstacles to overcome as their quasi namesakes when they are caught up in a feud between neighbours. But with plastic pink flamingos and lawnmower races in the mix, can these twofind lasting happiness?

A very lose reading of the Bard's tragic tale, with garden gnomes and Elton John's schmaltzy soundtrack. What can go wrong? "Kelly Asbury's plucky little film is an easy target but even if it doesn't quite gel, it's admirable that a film made of such weird ingredients is even vaguely palatable." (*Time Out*) Yeah yeah yawn.

An Elton John and David Furnish vanity production (now they have child(ren), of course it's only natural to make a film for the little buggers). Blue and red Montague and Capulet gnomes fight it out in the adjoining gardens of a London suburban terrace. Casting ranges from Jason Statham as Tybalt to Patrick Stewart as Shakespeare (in his case a statue). "Much thought, love and hard work (on the part of the animators) has gone into this. It even has a happy ending, though what Shakespeare himself sees, to his evident pleasure, is an atomic mushroom in the far distance."

(*Guardian*) but soft, what tripe from yonder window breaks?

Director: Kelly Asbury
Voices: James McAvoy, Emily Blunt, Jason Statham, Michael Caine, Maggie Smith, Julie Walters.
Certificate: U
Duration: 84 mins
Origin: UK/USA 2011
By: Entertainment One UK

True Grit

Mon 28 2.00, Tue 29 12.30

Director: Coen Brothers
Starring: Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon, Hailee Steinfeld, Josh Brolin
Certificate: 15
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: USA 2011
By: Paramount International Pictures

Hailee Steinfeld plays a plucky young girl who hires an ageing US Marshall to avenge the death of her father.

Bridges plays that Marshall: the nearly incomprehensible Rooster Cogburn. His mumbling doesn't matter. It's her lines that tell the story, but it's Jeff's face that defines the Wild West in all that we've ever expected it to be.

Ethan Cohen admitted: "We were aware if the kid doesn't work, there's no movie." They got her right. The kid works in screen-loads.

The Presbyterian/puritanical language of the time wins on every level. It's brilliant delivery by all of them, uses expression and inflection to take the place of happily absent four-letter words.

The cowboys are gritty and dirty and spit as they articulate through bad teeth. They are as unwashed as Roger Deakins' lens, as he captures beautifully, the washed out landscape of leafless trees and grey scrubland.

Watch out for Barry Pepper as Lucky Ned Pepper and see if you can count how many times you've seen him as the out and out baddy or menacing psycho cop. The disappointment, often the sin of the Coens, comes at the end. While the faces are brilliant, the film is not worth all the noise, though not to be missed either.





Director: Mark Romanek
Starring: Keira Knightley, Carey Mulligan, Andrew Garfield
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 103 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2010
By: Twentieth Century Fox



Never Let Me Go

Wed 30 2.00, Thu 31 2.00

Based on Kazuo Ishiguro's 'masterly' novel, *Never Let Me Go* is director Mark Romanek's third feature film after *Static* and *One Hour Photo*??

It is set in (the now preposterously fashionable) 1970s England (a decade not even fashionable then). Keira, Carey and Andrew play Ruth, Kathy and Tommy, a complex love triangle of pupils (or inmates?) at a strange boarding school. What happens to students of Hailsham if they leave the school's grounds? Why do some only study art and poetry, and are kept apart from other pupils...?

Sadly these questions are answered early on. Hence we are left with a sustained sense of doom, and wanton sentimentality. It's beautiful to look at, as are the three protagonists, and it has a pleasingly tatty Englishness about it, but...

"The film withholds the explicit fear and passion that another kind of treatment might have aimed for, but it works as a cogent, subdued parable of mortality." (*Guardian*)

"The Hailsham scenes are wonderfully designed and photographed: the lawns, ponds, dormitory, ancient wooden floors and images of dried-up roses evoke a lost England... but as glum and dead as a flounder on a fishmonger's slab." (*Independent*)

Oh dear. Come for their faces.

Recognisable, but rarely so compelling in a new British film. (research Simon M)



PERCY'S DEMISE



Thanks to Alison Clayton for this shot taken on the very day it fell down, whoa! Can't you feel a grassy-knoll moment coming on?



The next day...

I see Percy's gone Jack... Aye, Percy's gone alright.

There was banal chatter and blue light on repeat. Otherwise it was silent. A few poorly dressed policemen had a hastily cordoned-off the street. It was the middle of the night.

Percy Birtchnell's lay in the street, bricks scattered across the road like a drunk's spit. The old listed building looked like it had been blown into the street from the

inside. (see first pic taken at 1.35am. "Just passing Officer... Actually Watson, it was a dastardly tip-off"). Silently on a still, icy January night, that beautiful 120 years old corner sat blown in to the street, dead but for the idle chatter of young police officers, passing the time with juicy tit-bits from the Police Gazette. Speaking of which, our very own local Gazette would later report: "It is believed a structural fault in the



The night before...



The beginning of the end...

building caused the collapse of the building which was currently in the process of being renovated.” That’ll be it then. Well done Gazette. We can all go home.

The new owners must be devastated, poor lambs. “Oh dear what a terrible accident. I’m sorry officer, do come in. Hope nobody was hurt. I was at home all evening with the wife wasn’t I dear?” “Oh yes dear”. Yes it’s true there was an air about that terrible night. Everybody was speaking as if it was 1957. Sun 30 January a small ‘crowd’ gathered throughout the day to see the demise of Percy’s glorious little corner. There were some overheard treasures. “It wasn’t enough to close it ‘they’ had to knock it down.” Moving past two elderly chaps: “Well... it was an old building.” “Hmm, tall too” Then “Do you reckon it was an accident?” “It was no bloody accident... Old buildings like that don’t fall down. They were built to last... new one’s might”

Apart from all the rumours and gossip, there’ll be a serious attempt to discover what actually happened in May’s programme. For the moment the gossip and opinion are more fun. And in the end, it is likely to be all we get.

A favourite story from the evening was told by young Kitty C who was walking home with friends around 12.15 when the

building collapsed ahead of them.

Suddenly a girl dressed as a chicken appeared from nowhere, clucked a bit, flapped and waddled off. It’s something from a Frank Zappa sleeve?

So to a selection of rumours and opinion to colour the event and remember Percy fondly:

One had something to do with gallons of milk in the cellar. Another cited flooding of the cellar. “It’ll be them Indians” was one. Then came the catalogue of disbelief “Insurance scams and planning dodges.” “It was the wind...” alongside ancient tales of witchcraft and knitting “Not bad timing eh? Past midnight on a Saturday night, into Sunday Morning? It would only catch a couple of drunks at most, and they wouldn’t feel anything. Give them credit for avoiding the school run... That place was built to withstand the Russians...”

“Bygone Birchnells: a bit of a let down in the trouser department”. Robin McM, Facebook.

My favourite so far suggests it was only the underwear, vests and men’s tweeds, holding the building up. “There’s a strong suspicion that the removal of stock, particularly from the gentleman’s support undergarments dept, which was clearly holding up more than it was designed for, might well be to blame.” (More next month)

ST ALBANS – ODYSSEY



Above: Abi and Ally on the market stall - every Saturday

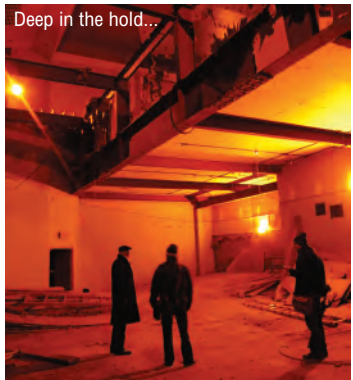


Foyer: clear and shiny - until we get cracking again

The market stall is up and running every Saturday. You'll find us behind the bike stall! Where you can sponsor seats, projectors, screen and more; invest in the project of a lifetime, and soon you can buy Odyssey stuff and souvenirs. Come and say hello.



"Every Ladies loo needs a fancy lampshade"



Deep in the hold...

FAREWELL...

IMOGEN



On a bright cold crisp, beautiful January day, Imogen Abbott was laid to rest. St Leonards church on the edge of the Chilterns was packed to bursting, and into the marquee attached to the church door. It was only when I saw John standing at the gate that I knew whose funeral it was. He had left messages at the box office, to ring him. I knew it was something important, but didn't realize how important until I stood at the back of that marquee. Imogen, John and Moira would come to the most obscure matinees, not usually late – always late, often missing the vital beginning of something incomprehensible from Patagonia. They would stay and talk about the film and all kinds. Imogen's serene smile would ride over my teasing for not having a watch, or one with 2 o'clock missing. Her missing presence is a terrible loss to our afternoons and at 49, no age to die. Our warmest wishes go to Imogen's family and to all who love and remember her.



JOHN BARRY

He was responsible for many of the big Bond Themes: From Russia with Love, Goldfinger, Diamonds are Forever, You Only Live Twice etc. Not to mention, the haunting Midnight Cowboy harmonica groove or the evocative Ipcress File soundtrack. Then there was Born Free, which stands alone. But it his James Bond Theme for which he must be blamed. It was November 1962; we were 15yr old apprentices. We had seen The Beatles at lunchtime Cavern sessions from the August, then came Dr No and that theme tune. Each has followed us ever since. From that unique and liberating year, they have travelled with us non-stop. Two Beatles have gone, now at 77 the king Bond theme man. It must be something in the martinis; all the old 007s remain unshaken. Long live the old Bonds.

MARIA SCHNEIDER

It was 1972. She was 19 when picked to play with Brando in Bertolucci's Last Tango in Paris. He was a little older and had just finished The Godfather. She was hardly heard of again. Sadly, Maria died in Paris on 3rd February aged 58.

