

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E



IL DIVO
MAY...

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

MAY 2009 Issue 50
www.therexberkhamsted.com

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

To advertise email therexberkhamsted@hotmail.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

Gallery	4-5
May Evenings	7
Coming Soon	23
May Films at a glance	23
May Matinees	25
Dear Mrs Trellis	38-39

SEAT PRICES:

Circle	£8.00
Concessions	£6.50
At Table	£10.00
Concessions	£8.50
Royal Box (seats 6)	£12.00
or for the Box	£66.00
All matinees	£5, £6.50, £10 (box)

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:
Ushers:

Rosie Abbott	Malcolm More
Julia Childs	Izzi Robinson
Nicola Darvell	Amberly Rose
Lindsey Davies	Georgia Rose
Holly Gilbert	Becca Ross
Beth Hannaway	Diya Sagar
Amelia Kellett	Alice Spooner
Charly Marchant	Liam Stephenson
Bethany McKay	Tina Thorpe
Simon Messenger	Olivia Wilson
Helen Miller	Keymea Yazdanian

Abigail, Abi F, Alexandra, Billie, Charlotte, James, Lydia, Meg, Romy, Sid, Taylor

Sally Thorpe In charge
Alun Rees Chief projectionist (Original)
Jon Waugh 1st assistant projectionist
Martin Coffill Part-time assistant projectionist
Jacquie Rose Chief Box Office & Bar
Oliver Hicks Best Boy
Jemma Gask Key Grip
Michael Glasheen Gaffer

Jane Clucas & Lynn Hendry PR/Marketing/FoH

Ian Muirhead Accountant

Darren Flindall, Michael Glasheen
Resident creative builders

Andrew Dixon, Paul Rowbottom
Artists

Paul Fullagar, Alan Clooney
Advisors and Investors

Ed Mauger Genius

Demiurge Design Designers 01296 632366
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



Julian Fellowes will be here Sat 2nd of May to talk about The Young Victoria

FILMS TO WATCH OUT FOR



American Independent
Cadillac Records Wed 6th May 7.30



From France
The Class Mon 11/Tue 12 May 7.30



Bogart and Bacall
The Big Sleep Thu 14 May 7.30



The Humphrey Lyttelton band came to play for us on March 21st it was more or less the original line up with Tina May singing and Humph somewhere in there amongst them all.





Robin Ince and Stephen Merchant (above)
 The whole gang, Gavin Osborne, Natalie Haynes, Stephen and Robin (top right)
 Swallowed by the proscenium: Gavin's playing is a blur!
 (right) They all came out from London for our third comedy night. They were on top form too. It was a great event. Thanks again to Robin for organising it without fuss.



Royalty at The Rex... Guests of the Walcott family, the gorgeous Barbara Windsor and her husband Scott were here to see 'Meet me in St Louis' on Easter Sunday along with Matt Lucas. They loved being here especially as she was left alone to enjoy the occasion without fuss. So a huge thanks to our audience who clearly knows when to leave people in peace. Lesser royalty and not quite as gorgeous, Matt enjoyed the day out unmolested also. For him it was to see a film rarely shown in Central London.





M A Y E V E N I N G S

Slumdog Millionaire

Fri 1 7.30

Director: Danny Boyle
Starring: Anil Kapoor, Irfan Khan, Freida Pinto, Dev Patel
Certificate: 15
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Pathe Distribution

This is a small film, which turns out to be massive in every way.

Thanks to Pathe and City Screen we were lucky to screen it for The Rex' fourth anniversary in December - five weeks before its UK release and before all the talk!

Those who had no idea then, what the film was about will know what a treasure it is.

By now you will have heard more than you need to know. So come to see it now the hype has died. It is a brutal story with a true beginning, middle and end set in a country we think we know from history, spices and tea. Once so distant, mysterious and noble, it is more commercial, horribly westernised, unforgiving, divided, life-cheap and corrupt than anything the Raj left behind – apart from the railways.

Danny Boyle has made a gem, which long after the prizes have gone from the mantelpiece, will live to tell the tale. It is one of unbearable hardship, loyalty, betrayal, guile, determination and ultimately survival... and love.

One clue: These kids really do know how to run across the worst, most jagged and scalding ground; from horrid mid'ns, cess pits, runways, huge pipes and the tops of trains... in bare feet. No acting.

The terrain and the feet are real.



The Young Victoria

Sat 2 7.00



“Even a palace can be a prison,” muses Britain’s most eligible princess in *The Young Victoria*, recalling her early years cooped up as a Queen-in-waiting.

Royalty is a gilded cage – we know as much, ad nauseam, from our heritage dramas – but this is a somewhat constricting way to look at history, however nice the furniture.” (*Telegraph*) Emily Blunt is steely enough to handle the part of Victoria; what’s rarer in a female-centred period piece is for the male lead to be not just dashing in his tights, but emotionally commanding, and more than her equal. Rupert Friend, as Albert, is the film’s secret weapon – ardent, subtly proud, a little shy, and a man with an intellectual philosophy he intends to preserve. The film glows as it gets to know him, and your resistance, like Victoria’s, melts away. (*Various reviews*)

After a stifling childhood, Victoria must find maturity and independence – not easy with a controlling mother, two scheming uncles and a snake-like prime minister (Paul Bettany). Supported by an instantly recognisable cotery of British acting royalty, it is in for a long run at the Rex. After tonight’s screening, writer and story-teller, Julian Fellowes will be here to talk about the film and answer your questions.

Director: Jean-Marc Vallée
Starring: Emily Blunt, Rupert Friend, Jim Broadbent,
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Momentum Pictures

A Bunch of Amateurs

Sun 3 6.00

Director: Andy Cadiff
Starring: Derek Jacobi, Burt Reynolds, Imelda Staunton, Charles Durning
Certificate: 15
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: UK 2008
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

It sold out within days in April. So before it was even screened it is back by demand!

At the centre of this small British film is a very English village amateur dramatics society who invite a once huge American super-star to play King Lear.

It has real touches of the 1950's Ealing Comedies.

Burt Reynolds is Jefferson Steel, a pampered has-been action star desperate to make a comeback. He accepts an offer to do Shakespeare in Stratford, little knowing that it's not upon Avon, but the fictional Stratford St John in Suffolk.

Naturally, the amateur theatre group is in raptures by the arrival of their LA King Lear, but the man himself is less than enthused about acting alongside pig farmers and staying in a B&B with no ensuite! It's a nice idea with predictable results and a script that has fun with the contrasts between LA and sleepy Suffolk. It hangs on to this one flimsy gag managing to stretch it across the whole film. Nevertheless, it is warm hearted and a real treat to see our Imelda Staunton and Derek Jacobi having such fun, and Burt Reynolds sending himself up. Chosen to make us laugh, so come and laugh.



Marley and Me

Mon 4 7.30



"Perhaps we need to modify the old show-business dictum about never working with animals (or children): It's okay as long as their fur matches your hair." Golden-locked Jennifer Aniston and straw-maned Owen Wilson (the butterscotch stallion!?) seem content to play second banana to a Labrador retriever. Marley & Me strikes a surprisingly delicate balance between wacky humour and a more heartfelt look at how a dog, even a badly behaved one, becomes part of the family." (*Time Out - New York!!!*) I thought Time Out wouldn't go two inches out of London? Being three inches out, The Rex can't get a mention. Perhaps slightly northwest of North West London we might qualify better for the New York edition? Who cares? There's nothing to say about the film so have picked-on the upitself, duplicitous, empire-building Time Out instead.

"Manipulative and sentimental the movie may be, but many viewers will be putty in its paws." (*Total Film*)

"The one redeeming feature is the presence of Alan Arkin, an actor who can do a double-take without moving his head" (*Guardian/Observer*) and is never caught 'acting'.

What he's doing here is his own business, but he's the only reason for coming – not to mention he shares his birthday with my brother.

Director: David Frankel
Starring: Alan Arkin, Jennifer Aniston, Owen Wilson
Certificate: PG
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

The Reader

Tue 5 7.30

Director: Stephen Daldry
Starring: Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes, Bruno Ganz, Alexandra Maria Lara
Certificate: 15
Duration: 123 mins
Origin: Germany, USA 2008
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Kate Winslet won the 2009 Oscar for her portrayal of Hanna Schmitz. She is very good. So is the boy Michael Berg as the young David Kross, but the film goes to Lina Olin as Ilana Rose Mather.

Though she has few lines, what she says and how she says it, is enough.

Daldry creates a brilliant, atmospheric tension throughout, where grey is his Technicolor.

Kross is a 15-year-old German boy who in 1958 embarks on an intense relationship with an older woman.

They spend a torrid summer – sex after school followed by reading aloud from favourite books. It is only later, he learns...

"...the point of the film, and the novel is the disjunction between the woman Michael longs for in the bedroom, and the person he discovers in the courtroom...

Is it a transatlantic prestige movie, or the German art-house film it resembles?

The 1960s sequences hint at a definite sparseness captured so perfectly in *The Lives of Others*. So why not just make the film in German, rather than this awkward compromise?... It hooks you with sex to get you to the ethics: only at Oscar time can a film get away with such worthiness." (*Independent*)

Yes, but it is better than that.



Cadillac Records

Wed 6 7.30



"His job is to make money out of you" says 'Howlin' Wolf to Muddy Waters in this biopic about the founder of Chess records.

Adrien Brody is the world's most charming shark. He plays the Polish Leonard Chess as a deranged romantic.

"The cheeky barman plucks the guitarist Muddy Waters off the street, hires a studio, and within minutes both men are driving around Chicago in spanking new Cadillacs. Martin's film doesn't toil over tedious details. This is a 1950s tabloid fairytale about a philanthropic white man who runs the hottest black record label in America as though it were a charity shop. Issues about exploitation and racism are puffed into the story like so much dry ice." (*Times*)

Though Beyonce doesn't quite pull it off, the ever watchable Mos Def does a great cameo as Chuck Berry. "The film's best scenes belong to Columbus Short, who ignites his part as the hot-blooded harmonica player Little Walter in a fierce, self-destructive blaze. You can't take your eyes off him." (*Telegraph*)

The cavalcade of melodrama and conflict is not always persuasive, and writer director Darnell Martins tends to admire rather than investigate the musical phenomenon they produced. It's a good story with great music. The critics sneered but everybody here loved it in April. So come and do the same.

Director: Darnell Martin
Starring: Adrien Brody, Jeffrey Wright, Beyonce Knowles, Mos Def
Certificate: 15
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

Flash of Genius

Thu 7 7.30

This is a gem which gets close to *The World's Fastest Indian* and *Little Miss Sunshine* in its spirit of ordinary people with a mayfly's chance of living another day, daring against all odds to try at all costs not to lose.

Based on a true story of a university professor and part-time inventor, Robert Kearns' (Kinnear) who fights Ford Motors for twenty years to prove they stole his ingenious, intermittent windscreen wiper. He refused their vile offers. Hence a David and Goliath legal battle which would leave him penniless, friendless and in grave danger of losing his family and his mind. "This cautionary tale plays out over the standard biopic template – good over evil, truth against lies, justice over greed, etc" (*Time Out*)

"This real life drama pits one man against a corporate behemoth.

Kearns and his lawyer embark on a long battle to get Ford to admit theft.

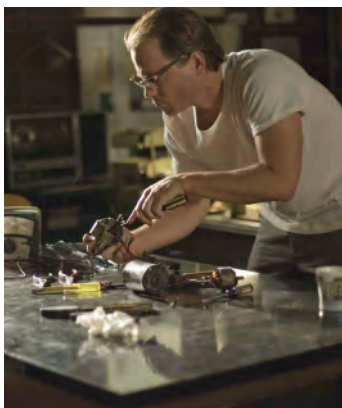
Lacklustre storytelling and turgid pacing means that our sympathy for Kearn is sapped with every passing minute."

(*Times*)

How sweet that critics are the last to get a gagging whiff of their own bilious breath. In the City of Sylvia got orgasmic reviews – and I believed them. Pretentious arseholes. It was the most flacid, look-at-me arty film since *Nine Songs* and *Ten Canoes*. Don't listen and don't miss.



Director:	Marc Abraham
Starring:	Greg Kinnear, Lauren Graham
Certificate:	12A
Duration:	120 mins
Origin:	USA 2008
By:	Optimum Releasing



Duplicity

Fri 8 7.30, **Sat 9** 7.00

Julia Roberts and Clive Owen reunite after their turgid and unwatchable fumble in Closer five years ago. This time as two ex-spies on opposite sides of a dirty corporate war in this slick-ish drama directed by who cares? Former CIA officer Claire Stenwick (Roberts) and ex-MI6 agent Ray Koval (Owen) each work for a multinational firm engaged in a no-holds-barred race to secure the patent for a highly lucrative product.

As the stakes rise, nobody knows who is playing whom and the trickiest secret for Claire and Ray becomes their growing attraction (yuk) as they each try to stay one double-cross ahead ... This is already too much. Try 'singles shopping' instead. It is contrived trash but if you can stand Clive's face and strangled voice, believe for a second Julia might fancy him, then come. She did marry Lyle Lovett for 15 minutes! Not a strong marriage but it must have felt like eternal bliss compared to two months shooting with Clive. Lyle looks odd but at least he's witty and sings fab songs.

That aside, the same critics who orgasmed over *The City of Sylvia* said this is a great script with fast moving banter and romantic tension.

Come and see for yourselves. The knickers scene should do it for you. Bring knitting.



Director:	Tony Gilroy
Starring:	Clive Owen, Julia Roberts, Tom Wilkinson, Paul Giamatti
Certificate:	12A
Duration:	125 mins
Origin:	USA 2009
By:	Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd



The Curious Case Of Benjamin Button

Sun 10 5.00



Anything nominated for eleven or so Oscars before anyone has seen it can't be trusted. Based on a short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, we have avoided this tall-tale during its hype. Curiosity and your requests, got the better of us.

Directed by the hit/miss David Fincher the creator of gems - *Se7en* and *Fight Club* and turkeys like *The Best of Sting: Fields of Gold*, *Benjamin Button* follows Brad Pitt from birth to death. Born with the face of an old man (aren't all babies?), Button lives his life backwards, becoming younger as he 'ages'. Clearly this will have consequences, especially in his upside down lifelong on/off relationship with Daisy. Are all Fitzgerald's invented women called Daisy?

"Remove 'curious' from the title, replace it with 'twee and pointless', and you're close to it. What an incredible shaggy-puppy of a movie, a cobweb-construction patched together with CGI, prosthetics, gibberish and warm tears...the name 'Benjamin Button' does not get any less annoying as the minutes drag into hours." (*Guardian*)

"...the anti-Slumdog Millionaire: a film stately, tasteful and genteelly melancholic rather than fevered, rollicking and euphoric. It's about time that seems almost out of time." (*Telegraph*) Curiously *Slumdog M* won all the predicted B Button Oscars, plus two! Best Picture and Director... so there. But it don't amount to a hill o' beans in the who cares dept.

Director: David Fincher
Starring: Brad Pitt, Tilda Swinton, Cate Blanchett
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 166 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Warner Brothers

The Class

Entre Les Murs, translates as "Between The Walls"

Mon 11 7.30, Tue 12 7.30

Director: Laurent Cantet
Starring: Juliette Demaille, Wei Huang, François Begaudeau, Franck Keita
Certificate: 15
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: France 2009
By: Artificial Eye

Based on the experiences of former teacher François Begaudeau who kind of plays himself as teacher François Marin. Not something we or the yanks could do. A clever piece of social storytelling taking the coveted 2008 Palme d'Or to unprecedented agreement. We are flies on the walls of this cramped, often prison-like classroom.

The sometimes brilliant, often maddening pupils are caught in their 15 year old hinterland between childhood and adolescence, and the curriculum! "Not even my Grandmother speaks like that!" chimes one as another language lesson dissolves into fracas. One delicious treat – the internal bickering in the staff room, and the dreaded Parents evening... "The young cast, all non-professionals, perform with verve and authenticity (they're not oscar 'acting' so authenticity is easy). "It shows how the real frontlines of class and race don't involve rock-hurling and riot shields, but are played out every day in our city schools as a series of who-can-last-longer encounters." (*Telegraph*) Head teachers turned into automaton administrators compelled to obey orders, rules enthusiasts, anything-but-teach paper-work excusers, meetings lovers, inset whiteboard training day creamers, staff who pray for snow and teachers who have to email the deputy head if the toilet paper runs out – come and see if it's real. We might all learn something – in French?



The Young Victoria

Wed 13 7.30



“Even a palace can be a prison,” muses Britain’s most eligible princess in *The Young Victoria*, recalling her early years cooped up as a Queen-in-waiting.

Royalty is a gilded cage – we know as much, ad nauseam, from our heritage dramas – but this is a somewhat constricting way to look at history, however nice the furniture.” (*Telegraph*) Emily Blunt is steely enough to handle the part of Victoria; what’s rarer in a female-centred period piece is for the male lead to be not just dashing in his tights, but emotionally commanding, and more than her equal. Rupert Friend, as Albert, is the film’s secret weapon – ardent, subtly proud, a little shy, and a man with an intellectual philosophy he intends to preserve. The film glows as it gets to know him, and your resistance, like Victoria’s, melts away. (*Various reviews*)

After a stifling childhood, Victoria must find maturity and independence – not easy with a controlling mother, two scheming uncles and a snake-like prime minister (Paul Bettany). Supported by an instantly recognisable coterie of British acting royalty, it is in for a long run at the Rex. So if you miss it May look out for it in June.

Director: Jean-Marc Vallée
Starring: Emily Blunt, Rupert Friend, Jim Broadbent
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Momentum Pictures

The Big Sleep

Thu 14 7.30

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

This is to celebrate Raymond Chandler who died 50 years ago – 1959. The *Big Sleep* may well be the classiest and wittiest detective thriller ever to come out of Hollywood. One of the finest mainstream noir-thrillers ever made. The story is virtually incomprehensible, but who cares?

Private eye 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: Vickers’s 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. The main kick is to see Bogart as Marlowe and Bacall giving him whistling lessons.

Classic Chandler: “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.



The Damned United

Fri 15 7.30, Sat 16 7.00

The man of a thousand (admittedly quite similar) faces Michael Sheen has a go at one of football history's most narcissistic and controversial managers - Brian Clough.

Adapted from David Peace's much derided bestselling novel, 'The Damned United' is a look at Clough's bruised and bloodied 44 day reign at Leeds United at the start of the 1974 season. Don Revie had left Leeds to manage England and Clough took over intent on ridding Leeds of its "dirty, ugly and cheating style of play." Did it work? Anachronisms aside, it is a compelling, well written film and from all accounts kinder to him than the book and makes him more human and likable than did the TV documentary designed to redress the 'distortions' in the book. Sheen, whilst lacking a real resemblance to Clough, has managed to climb into his skin to great effect; as he did with Blair and Frost. The ever reliable Colm Meaney is spot-on as Don Revie, and looks like him. Timothy Spall, though miscast in height and shape, as the immaculate Peter Taylor, manages his usual turn at 3-D characterisation. "To acclaim it as the best film about football is to ask what would come second — and what self-respecting film wants to be mentioned in the same breath as 'Escape to Victory'? Rest assured The Damned United is in a whole different league from that." (*Times*) "Fresh, intelligent...tremendous watchability and flair." (*Guardian*)



Director:	Tom Hooper
Starring:	Timothy Spall, Michael Sheen, Jim Broadbent
Certificate:	15
Duration:	98 mins
Origin:	UK 2009
By:	Sony Pictures Releasing



Vicky Cristina Barcelona Sun 17 6.00

Director: Woody Allen
Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Penelope Cruz, Javier Bardem, Rebecca Hall, Patricia Clarkson
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: Spain, USA 2008
By: Optimum Releasing

All things considered, these four are absorbing and totally believable. Bardem turns into the greatest seducer of all time. We are left in no doubt he could woo this off that without a second drink.

The film plays security against passion, dependency against whimsical desire. "The performances are vibrant. In the liberated corner, Scarlett breezes by on her unique charm, restlessness and sensuality. In the sensible corner, Allen has channelled his own persona through a female character in Vicky, who is by turns neurotic and open, panicked and longing... and trapped. Rebecca Hall says it all and more." (*Guardian*)

For me, it is her film. "It is the Spanish who are the conquistadors. Bardem imbues his artist with tenderness and vulnerability, with enough charisma to nail the most resolute nun, let alone two yanks." (*Standard*)

Clearly, its biggest flaw is its greatest asset – they are too beautiful! But so were Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman. Beauty doesn't change. It is never in the eye of the beholder. It is always beyond doubt. 100 years of Hollywood (and this tale) would not have happened if they'd looked like us on holiday in Sidmouth.

Moreover, it makes a fair argument that romantic love, for all its complexities and pain, is still worth chasing? Don't miss this chase.



Il Divo Mon 18 7.30



Not to be confused with that Chippendales opera group, this Il Divo ("The God") is the story of Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, who was elected to the Italian Parliament seven times since it was established in 1946!

The film deals with the period from his seventh and final election in 1992 to his eventual trial for purported Mafia collusion. The film is an intricate web of shady deals, complex political intrigue, covert assassinations, Vatican envoys and drab suits – all of which threaten to overwhelm an understated, eerie performance from Toni Servillo as the vampyric Andreotti.

"This is a deeply strange and utterly hypnotic film, almost traumatised with its own information overload and by the frenetic accumulation of data pointing to one conclusion: that Italy's politicians have tainted the country with corruption and secret shame... a macabre masterpiece." (*Guardian*)

"Paolo Sorrentino's skill is to tell his story almost entirely visually. The telling is breathtaking, a showy, musical dance that somehow bombards you with facts but limits dialogue to a minimum. Sorrentino surprises with every new shot, camera move, juxtaposition, snippet of humour and dollop of dread. As character assassination, it's delicious and deadly." (*Time Out*) This will be one of the hidden gems of the year. Cancel vendettas and postpone minor assassinations.

Director: Paolo Sorrentino
Starring: Flavio Bucci, Toni Servillo, Anna Bonaiuto
Certificate: 15
Duration: 118 mins
Origin: France, Italy 2008
By: Artificial Eye

Is Anybody There?

Tue 19 7.30, Wed 20 7.30

“Is Anybody There? Indeed there is! The simplest ideas often make the best films (they make the best Everything).

“Here a morbid 10-year-old boy gets even more morbid when his parents turn their ramshackled house into a retirement home. Crikey! Who is going to want to watch this?” (*British Film Magazine*)

While his mother struggles to keep the house afloat and his father indulges the onset of mid-life crisis, Edward becomes increasingly obsessed with the ghosts and next life of the dying residents. He lurks around the feeblest guests, sometimes hiding a tape recorder under their beds to hear whatever accompanies a soul’s drift into the afterlife. His lonely existence is distracted by the mischief and anarchy accompanying the arrival of a retired magician and grieving widower “The Amazing Clarence”.

As a tentative friendship dodges between these two lost souls, Clarence notices the boy is growing up even more fitfully than he is growing old.

“Two reasons to see this small film about an unlikely friendship: the non-acting from young Bill Milner (our own Son of Rambow) and the brilliant and ever-beguiling Michael Caine.” (*Film International*). There are a hundred more reasons. Choose your own but don’t miss. Q: “Who is going to want to watch this?” A: Everybody... Crikey!



Director:	John Crowley
Starring:	Thelma Barlow, Michael Caine, Linzey Cocker, Anne-Marie Duff, Garrick Hagon
Certificate:	12A
Duration:	92 mins
Origin:	UK 2008
By:	Optimum Releasing



Gran Torino

Thu 21 7.30

Director: Clint Eastwood
Starring: Clint Eastwood, Christopher Carley, Bee Vang
Certificate: 15
Duration: 116 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Warner Brothers

Eastwood doesn't get any nicer as he gets older. The 78 year old director and star of this melting pot comedy-drama is a cantankerous old bastard called Walt who lives in a working class neighbourhood overrun with immigrants and gangs. Walt hates the lot of them. He hates his two fat middle aged sons and their ghastly wives and kids. He hates the young Roman Catholic priest who keeps door-stepping him since his wife died. He hates the Asian Hmong family who live next door. And he's taken to carrying a gun around the house since the kid next door tried to steal his mint-condition 1972 Ford Gran Torino.

It is of course, is about the softening of a hard man who hasn't forgiven the world for sending him as a boy to Korea to kill 'gooks'. He is Dirty Harry as a bitter pensioner, coughing blood and waiting to die.

"The shape of the film is a little too predictable. You cross Walt at your peril. That said, he is still a grumpy pleasure" (*Times*) and often very funny. As always Clint quietly goes against the grain. His subtle performance is as charismatic and effective as ever and as the film proceeds it becomes more complex. He and his storytelling doesn't get any better than this. Cancel dying.



In The Loop

Fri 22 7.30, Sat 23 7.00



"Is this another sitcom dying an embarrassing death on the big screen?"

Far from it - Armando Iannucci has turned his satirical series 'The Thick of It' into a film that sparkles with the same morally empty vessels in the same mundane corridors of power."

Flat camerawork, bad suits and crappy furnishings don't automatically equal documentary style reality but combined with smart performances and a politically astute script, they go a long way to achieving it. It's also a welcome celebration of polished and engaged comic writing which rarely comes across as laboured and always feels it has a serious point to make amid the gags.

"It drags at times, not least when Capaldi is off screen. But mostly Iannucci keeps the pace up with snappy twists and turns, a tone that mixes screwball with precise observation and by keeping an eye on the performances of even minor characters, such as the over achieving, barely legal automatons who pepper the offices of Washington. It's both insanely funny and very frightening" (*Time Out*).

On first reading about the film and Iannucci, it was clear why it works - the writer and main actor are Scottish! Scots seem to see things clearer than the English and in comedy don't seem so vain or cocky. But most importantly, their observations are pin-sharp, there are no dreary in-jokes and they're funnier.

Director: Armando Iannucci
Starring: James Gandolfini, Tom Hollander, Chris Addison, Anna Chlumsky
Certificate: 15
Duration: 106 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Optimum Releasing

Encounters at The End of the World

Sun 24 6.00

Director: Werner Herzog
Certificate: U
Duration: 99 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Revolver Film Distribution

Shot in just seven weeks by Herzog and cinematographer Peter Zeitlinger, with no time to plan a schedule or research interview subjects, this still manages to surpass all expectation. (*synopsis*)

"In his documentary this professional madman and restlessly curious filmmaker travels to the blinding white of the Antarctic, where he meets some of the 1000 melancholic scientists, brooding journeymen and various poets of the soul ensconced in the American HQ, McMurdo Station." (*NYTimes*)

"No stranger to extreme climates or personalities, Herzog zeroes in on Antarctica's ability to attract scientific kooks, social misfits and philosophers." (*Time Out*)

For one world service environmental observer-cum critic the people he meets aren't that interesting. They live in a kind of exploratory environmental squalor. They have turned McMurdo into a slum. She went on; Herzog doesn't go a hundred yards beyond base-camp. He doesn't journey over the mountain. He could have concentrated better on the only uninhabited landmass on earth. Instead he spends time with a no-mark fork lift driver-cum-philosopher. His soundtrack is mushy and sentimental and as far as penguins go; they don't walk to their deaths lonely and lost, they turn round and come back!

Could have been more thought-provoking but all the same, stunningly beautiful in places, idiotic in others. Come for both.



The Boat That Rocked

Mon 25 7.30



"The Ship That Sank would be a more appropriate for writer-director Richard Curtis' latest and most disappointing entertainment.

It's a cripplingly self-conscious and self-satisfied tribute to the roistering last days of offshore British mid-'60s pirate radio before the meanies from the ministry pulled the plugs.

It's also the kind of musical comedy where the actors seem to be having more fun than any audience could ever share.

This overlong, poorly paced and slackly directed ship-bound farrago wastes its treasury of golden oldies" (*WHTime Out*).

"hopelessly crass and also stupefyingly lazy.....There has always been a strong whiff of public-schoolboy humour

detectable in Curtis's work, which worked for the other Four Weddings films – not in this. Whoever acts as script editor these days (if is there one) remember that many of those rebels ended up on Radio 1, playing the same music and polluting the air with their inane, mid-Atlantic twitter.

The Film That Sucked" (*Independent*)

"Be sure to pack a large inflatable lifejacket. This is a listless, sketchy mess." (*Times*)

Well there you have it. But as with like Mamma Mia, audiences will ignore this and turn out in their thousands. Quite right too, but it doesn't stop the twittering crits being right this time. So come for the music and bring a sick bag.

Director: Richard Curtis
Starring: Rhys Ifans, Nick Frost, Bill Nighy, Philip Hoffman
Certificate: 15
Duration: 135 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

50 Dead Men Walking Tue 26 7.30

Director: Kari Skogland
Starring: Ben Kingsley, Jim Sturgess, Kevin Zegers, Nathalie Press
Certificate: 15
Duration: 117 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Metrodome Distributors

“This is a Donnie Brasco-esque thriller about the worst thing anyone can be in a conflict - an informer...” (*Empire*)

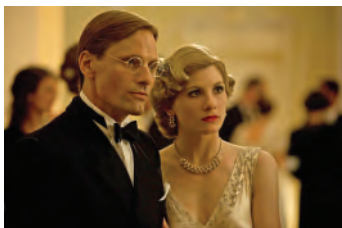
The film is based on the true accounts of Martin McGartland, a small-time street hustler in late-Eighties Belfast who finds his way into the trusted ranks of the IRA and ultimately into the hands of the British. Recruited by a complex, wily intelligence agent (Kingsley), he finds the grip hard to shake and secretly comforting. With every success, the danger posed to him and his family is intensified. In retribution, nobody is left in any doubt, the Provisionals (PIRA) are ruthless. It is a compelling story, squeezing the big questions of reason and simple humanity from the labyrinthine ‘troubles’.

It is made stronger by even stronger performances from Jim Sturgess (McGartland). Ben Kingsley is menacing and Nathalie Press and Rose McGowan are real. Like most decent films, it raises some deep-seated questions, most notably - would you be willing to sacrifice your friends, family and your own life to save 50 people you didn't know?

Inspired by McGartland and Nicholas Davies' book, it captures the character of Northern Ireland in the Eighties with great sensitivity and precision, reflecting the despair, danger and waste of it all. Don't miss.



Good Wed 27 7.30



This could have equally been called Bad. It raises both questions. From all accounts it is more than good. Yet it is gripping, questioning and worth seeing for all those conflicting reasons, and Viggo certainly. Yet again another German film navel gazing the Nazis (the three buses gag) has come out in the same year as *Valkyrie* and *The Reader*. There's a whole kennel of Dog-films out now too. Perhaps film makers all have the same idea at the same time, but daren't tell each other?

This one has more substance than the other two (German not dog), but apparently doesn't make the most of it. It is based on the acclaimed play by C. P. Taylor, and stars Mortensen as a good, decent individual. A literature professor in the 1930s, he explores his personal circumstances in a novel advocating compassionate euthanasia.

When the book is unexpectedly enlisted in support of Nazi propaganda, he finds his career rising in an optimistic current of nationalism and prosperity. Yet with his change in fortune, his seemingly inconsequential decision jeopardises all those close to him with devastating consequences.

You might not want to cancel eating, but it's worth more than they are saying, so come and see. The accents are impeccable.

Director: Vicente Amorim
Starring: Viggo Mortensen, Jason Isaacs, Jodie Whittaker, Gemma Jones
Certificate: 15
Duration: 96 mins
Origin: Germany, UK 2008
By: Lionsgate Films UK

Let The Right One In

Thu 28 7.30

Blackenberg suburb, Stockholm, Sweden, 1982. A bullied schoolboy, Oskar, befriends a peculiar, pretty, pale girl, Eli, who has moved into the apartment next-door. A series of horrific murders in the local area ensue as Oskar and Eli's friendship blossoms. But why does she only appear after sunset? And what connection may she have to these strange events?

A horror film that is not a horror film; a coming of age tale which isn't a coming of age tale, "Let The Right One In", is a thoughtful and beautifully executed take on the vampire genre.

Directed masterfully by Tomas Alfredson, the monochrome urban snowscapes of his native Stockholm are stunning, as are the tender performances by his two young leading actors, the sweet-natured Kåre Hedebrant (Oskar) and mysterious Lina Leandersson (Eli). Even the sound – every breath, blink or bloody dribble – is precise and well calculated.

"It's everything 'Twilight' wanted to be but wasn't: beautiful to gaze at, achingly romantic, emotionally involving, unexpectedly terrifying... Swedish people are unable and unwilling to draw a line between beauty and melancholy. 'Let The Right One In' will make you swoon with sadness and sigh with happiness."

(Telegraph)

An inevitably dire Hollywood remake is in production, so please see this; the original.

(by Simon Messenger)



Director:	Tomas Alfredson
Starring:	Lina Leandersson, Kåre Hedebrant, Per Ragnar, Henrik Dahl
Certificate:	15
Duration:	114 mins
Origin:	Sweden 2008
By:	Momentum Pictures



State of Play

Fri 29 7.30, Sat 30 7.00

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 the toxic mix. Based on the BBC mini-series of the same name, this new film from Kevin Macdonald ('Touching the Void') sees Ben stars as a handsome, unflappable U.S. Congressman, seen as the future of his party, until... "Crime reporter Cal McCaffrey (Crowe) and the Congressman are old college pals, now at loggerheads over a mysterious death.

Once you get over the unlikelihood of Affleck and Crowe as buddies, State Of Play stands as a sterling thriller, benefiting from an arguable return to form by both." (*Empire*)

The casting of Helen Mirren as ruthless editor, Cameron is tiresome. That 'tough' acting face is hard to watch.

"The roles do 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, and it retains the original's healthily cynical take on 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." – Thank tits for the Sun! (*Total Film*)



A Day At The Races

Sun 31 6.00



The plot revolves around Hugo Z. Hackenbush (Groucho), who is a vet illegally employed as the medical director of the Standish Sanitarium, which is owned by Judy Standish .

One of things they have to do to save the sanitarium from developers is to keep Mrs. Upjohn as a patient. She, of course, insists on being treated only by Dr. Hackenbush. To try to expose Groucho as a fraud, the bad guys call in Dr. Steinberg, played by Siegfried Rumann (also known as Sig Ruman), who was also Groucho's nemesis in *Nights at the Opera* and *Casablanca*. Exterior sequences were filmed at Santa Anita Park.

"The Brothers' second film for MGM should be retitled 'A Week at the Races' at least: it's overlong, overweight, overplotted. Even the comedy scenes are often played to excess, with too much raucous slapstick (like Harpo's destruction of Chico's piano). The plot formula from 'Opera' is repeated. Worth seeing for its good stretches." Or... "The Marx brothers are on top of their game here, when the film isn't detoured into an extended musical ballet numbers or endless sing-songs. The Brothers trademark anarchism throughout is priceless, as ever." (*mixed crits*) Don't listen. Bring the kids. Show them how it was done pre-television pap.

Director: Sam Wood
Starring: Marx Bros
Certificate: U
Duration: 108 mins
Origin: USA 1937
By: British Film Institute

COMING SOON

New releases

Cheri

Star Trek

Sleep Furiously

Modern Life

Back by demand

I've Loved You So Long

The Damned United

A Very Long Engagement

In The Loop

The Boat That Rocked
(unfortunately)

Sleep Furiously



Cheri



Star Trek



Modern Life



MAY FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	FRI	SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE	7.30
2	SAT	MARLEY AND ME	2.00
2	SAT	THE YOUNG VICTORIA WITH JULIAN FELLOWES Q&A	7.00
3	SUN	A BUNCH OF AMATEURS	6.00
4	MON	MARLEY AND ME	2.00, 7.30
5	TUE	THE READER	12.30, 7.30
6	WED	A BUNCH OF AMATEURS	2.00
6	WED	CADILLAC RECORDS	7.30
7	THU	FLASH OF GENIUS	2.00, 7.30
8	FRI	DUPLICITY	7.30
9	SAT	BEDTIME STORIES	2.00
9	SAT	DUPLICITY	7.00
10	SUN	THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	5.00
11	MON	THE CLASS	2.00, 7.30
12	TUE	THE YOUNG VICTORIA	12.30
12	TUE	THE CLASS	7.30
13	WED	THE YOUNG VICTORIA	2.00, 7.30
14	THU	THE DAMNED UNITED	2.00
14	THU	THE BIG SLEEP	7.30
15	FRI	THE DAMNED UNITED	7.30
16	SAT	LOONY TUNES CARTOONS & THE RED BALLOON	2.00
16	SAT	THE DAMNED UNITED	7.00
17	SUN	VICKY CRISTINA BARCELONA	6.00
18	MON	IS ANYBODY THERE?	2.00
18	MON	IL DIVO	7.30
19	TUE	THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	12.30
19	TUE	IS ANYBODY THERE?	7.30
20	WED	IS ANYBODY THERE?	2.00, 7.30
21	THU	GRAN TORINO	2.00, 7.30
22	FRI	IN THE LOOP	7.30
23	SAT	MONSTERS V ALIENS	2.00
23	SAT	IN THE LOOP	7.00
24	SUN	ENCOUNTERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD	6.00
25	MON	THE BOAT THAT ROCKED	7.30
26	TUE	RACE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN	12.30
26	TUE	50 DEAD MEN WALKING	7.30
27	WED	MONSTERS V ALIENS	2.00
27	WED	GOOD	7.30
28	THU	MONSTERS V ALIENS	2.00
28	THU	LET THE RIGHT ONE IN	7.30
29	FRI	STATE OF PLAY	7.30
30	SAT	RACE TO WITCH MOUNTAIN	2.00
30	SAT	STATE OF PLAY	7.00
31	SUN	A DAY AT THE RACES – THE MARX BROTHERS CLASSIC	6.00



M A 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

Marley and Me

Sat 2 2.00, Mon 4 2.00

Director: David Frankel
Starring: Alan Arkin, Jennifer Aniston, Owen Wilson
Certificate: PG
Duration: 115 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Twentieth Century Fox

“Perhaps we need to modify the old show-business dictum about never working with animals (or children): It’s okay as long as their fur matches your hair. Golden-locked Jennifer Aniston and straw-maned Owen Wilson (the butterscotch stallion!?) seem content to play second banana to a Labrador retriever. Marley & Me strikes a surprisingly delicate balance between wacky humour and a more heartfelt look at how a dog, even a badly behaved one, becomes part of the family.” (*Time Out - New York!!!*) I thought Time Out wouldn’t go two inches out of London? Being three inches out, The Rex can’t get a mention. Perhaps slightly northwest of North West London we might qualify better for the New York edition? Who cares? There’s nothing to say about the film so have picked-on the upitself, duplicitous, empire-building Time Out instead. “Manipulative and sentimental the movie may be, but many viewers will be putty in its paws.” (*Total Film*)

“The one redeeming feature is the presence of Alan Arkin, an actor who can do a double-take without moving his head” (*Guardian/Observer*) and is never caught ‘acting’.

What he’s doing here is his own business, but he’s the only reason for coming – not to mention he shares his birthday with my brother.



The Reader

Tue 5 12.30



Kate Winslet won the 2009 Oscar for her portrayal of Hanna Schmitz. She is very good. So is the boy Michael Berg as the young David Kross, but the film goes to Lina Olin as Ilana Rose Mather. Though she has few lines, what she says and how she says it, is enough. Daldry creates a brilliant, atmospheric tension throughout, where grey is his Technicolor.

Kross is a 15-year-old German boy who in 1958 embarks on an intense relationship with an older woman. They spend a torrid summer – sex after school followed by reading aloud from favourite books. It is only later, he learns...

“...the point of the film, and the novel is the disjunction between the woman Michael longs for in the bedroom, and the person he discovers in the courtroom...”

Is it a transatlantic prestige movie, or the German art-house film it resembles? The 1960s sequences hint at a definite sparseness captured so perfectly in The Lives of Others. So why not just make the film in German, rather than this awkward compromise?... It hooks you with sex to get you to the ethics: only at Oscar time can a film get away with such worthiness.” (*Independent*)

Yes, but it is better than that.

Director: Stephen Daldry
Starring: Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes, Bruno Ganz, Alexandra Maria Lara
Certificate: 15
Duration: 123 mins
Origin: Germany, USA 2008
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

A Bunch of Amateurs

Wed 6 2.00

Director: Andy Cadiff
Starring: Derek Jacobi, Burt Reynolds, Imelda Staunton, Charles Durning
Certificate: 15
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: UK 2008
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

It sold out within days in April. So before it was even screened it is back by demand!

At the centre of this small British film is a very English village amateur dramatics society who invite a once huge American super-star to play King Lear.

It has real touches of the 1950's Ealing Comedies.

Burt Reynolds is Jefferson Steel, a pampered has-been action star desperate to make a comeback. He accepts an offer to do Shakespeare in Stratford, little knowing that it's not upon Avon, but the fictional Stratford St John in Suffolk. Naturally, the amateur theatre group is in raptures by the arrival of their LA King Lear, but the man himself is less than enthused about acting alongside pig farmers and staying in a B&B with no ensuite! It's a nice idea with predictable results and a script that has fun with the contrasts between LA and sleepy Suffolk. It hangs on to this one flimsy gag managing to stretch it across the whole film. Nevertheless, it is warm hearted and a real treat to see our Imelda Staunton and Derek Jacobi having such fun, and Burt Reynolds sending himself up. Chosen to make us laugh, so come and laugh.



Flash of Genius

Thu 7 2.00



This is a gem which gets close to The World's Fastest Indian and Little Miss Sunshine in its spirit of ordinary people with a mayfly's chance of living another day, daring against all odds to try at all costs not to lose.

Based on a true story of a university professor and part-time inventor, Robert Kearns' (Kinnear) who fights Ford Motors for twenty years to prove they stole his ingenious, intermittent windscreen wiper. He refused their vile offers. Hence a David and Goliath legal battle which would leave him penniless, friendless and in grave danger of losing his family and his mind. "This cautionary tale plays out over the standard biopic template – good over evil, truth against lies, justice over greed, etc" (*Time Out*)

"This real life drama pits one man against a corporate behemoth.

Kearns and his lawyer embark on a long battle to get Ford to admit theft.

Lacklustre storytelling and turgid pacing means that our sympathy for Kearn is sapped with every passing minute."

(*Times*)

How sweet that critics are the last to get a gagging whiff of their own bilious breath. In the City of Sylvia got orgasmic reviews – and I believed them. Pretentious arseholes. It was the most flacid, look-at-me arty film since *Nine Songs* and *Ten Canoes*. Don't listen and don't miss.

Director: Marc Abraham
Starring: Greg Kinnear, Lauren Graham
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Optimum Releasing

Bedtime Stories

Sat 9 2.00



Recent weeks have brought family films about dogs or the art of storytelling itself.

In the latest, Adam Sandler discovers bedtime stories do the trick. When hotel handyman Skeeter Bronson (Sandler) is asked by his sister (Cox) to look after his niece and nephew, he has no idea what he's getting into. Without warning, the fantastic bedtime stories he tells begin to come true the next day. Skeeter decides to try to take advantage of the circumstances by incorporating his own wishes into the tall tales, but his niece and nephew's fanciful additions end up turning his life upside down. It's the bits the kids add to these dismal slapstick tales - starring their uncle, variously, as a medieval peasant, a chariot driver, a humble farmhand, etc - that magically shape the future...

"Adam Shankman's idea of directing a Walt Disney film is to pump toxic quantities of schmaltz into every available hole." (*Times*)

"Often excruciating, *Bedtime Stories* doesn't know what it is or what it wants to say." (*Film Journ Int*)

Or a charming family fantasy from the director of *Hairspray*. You choose, but remember its got Adam Sandler and Russell Brand. Both unbearable show-offs one of whom should have his oxygen cut off. But Sandler grows on you. Don't believe any of us. Come and see for yourself.

Director: Adam Shankman
Starring: Guy Pearce, Courtney Cox, Adam Sandler
Certificate: PG
Duration: 99 mins
Origin: USA 2008
By: Buena Vista International

The Class

Entre Les Murs, translates as "Between The Walls"

Mon 11 2.00

Director: Laurent Cantet
Starring: Juliette Demaille, Wei Huang, François Begaudeau, Franck Keita
Certificate: 15
Duration: 130 mins
Origin: France 2009
By: Artificial Eye

Based on the experiences of former teacher François Begaudeau who kind of plays himself as teacher François Marin.

Not something we or the yanks could do. A clever piece of social storytelling taking the coveted 2008 Palme d'Or to unprecedented agreement.

We are flies on the walls of this cramped, often prison-like classroom.

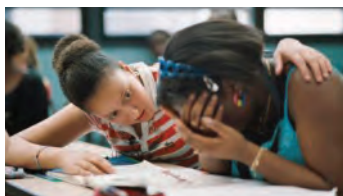
The sometimes brilliant, often maddening pupils are caught in their 15 year old hinterland between childhood and adolescence, and the curriculum!

"Not even my Grandmother speaks like that!" chimes one as another language lesson dissolves into fracas. One delicious treat - the internal bickering in the staff room, and the dreaded Parents evening...

"The young cast, all non-professionals, perform with verve and authenticity (they're not oscar 'acting' so authenticity is easy). "It shows how the real frontlines of class and race don't involve rock-hurling and riot shields, but are played out every day in our city schools as a series of who-can-last-longer encounters."

(*Telegraph*)

Head teachers turned into automaton administrators compelled to obey orders, rules enthusiasts, anything-but-teach paper-work excusers, meetings lovers, inset whiteboard training day creamers, staff who pray for snow and teachers who have to email the deputy head if the toilet paper runs out - come and see if it's real. We might all learn something - in French?



The Young Victoria

Tue 12 12.30, Wed 13 2.00



“Even a palace can be a prison,” muses Britain’s most eligible princess in *The Young Victoria*, recalling her early years cooped up as a Queen-in-waiting.

Royalty is a gilded cage – we know as much, ad nauseam, from our heritage dramas – but this is a somewhat constricting way to look at history, however nice the furniture.” (*Telegraph*) Emily Blunt is steely enough to handle the part of Victoria; what’s rarer in a female-centred period piece is for the male lead to be not just dashing in his tights, but emotionally commanding, and more than her equal. Rupert Friend, as Albert, is the film’s secret weapon – ardent, subtly proud, a little shy, and a man with an intellectual philosophy he intends to preserve. The film glows as it gets to know him, and your resistance, like Victoria’s, melts away. (*Various reviews*)

After a stifling childhood, Victoria must find maturity and independence – not easy with a controlling mother, two scheming uncles and a snake-like prime minister (Paul Bettany). Supported by an instantly recognisable coterie of British acting royalty, it is in for a long run at the Rex. So if you miss it May look out for it in June.

Director: Jean-Marc Vallée
Starring: Emily Blunt, Rupert Friend, Jim Broadbent,
Certificate: PG
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2008
By: Momentum Pictures

The Damned United

Thu 14 2.00

Director: Tom Hooper
Starring: Timothy Spall, Michael Sheen, Jim Broadbent
Certificate: 15
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: UK 2009
By: Sony Pictures Releasing

The man of a thousand (admittedly quite similar) faces Michael Sheen has a go at one of football history’s most narcissistic and controversial managers - Brian Clough.

Adapted from David Peace’s much derided bestselling novel, ‘*The Damned United*’ is a look at Clough’s bruised and bloodied 44 day reign at Leeds United at the start of the 1974 season. Don Revie had left Leeds to manage England and Clough took over intent on ridding Leeds of its “dirty, ugly and cheating style of play.” Did it work? Anachronisms aside, it is a compelling, well written film and from all accounts kinder to him than the book and makes him more human and likable than did the TV documentary designed to redress the ‘distortions’ in the book. Sheen, whilst lacking a real resemblance to Clough, has managed to climb into his skin to great effect; as he did with Blair and Frost. The ever reliable Colm Meaney is spot-on as Don Revie, and looks like him. Timothy Spall, though miscast in height and shape, as the immaculate Peter Taylor, manages his usual turn at 3-D characterisation. “To acclaim it as the best film about football is to ask what would come second — and what self-respecting film wants to be mentioned in the same breath as ‘*Escape to Victory*’? Rest assured *The Damned United* is in a whole different league from that.” (*Times*) “Fresh, intelligent...tremendous watchability and flair.” (*Guardian*)



Looney Tunes Cartoons and The Red Balloon

Sat 16 2.00



These are proper cartoons shown between the trailer and the main feature (or B movie) throughout the 1950's and most of the 60's. They are all handmade, stop frame animation - like the stick drawings you must have made at the bottom right hand corner of each page of your note pad, so when you drrrrr them with your thumb, the stick man moves... Don't tell me you've never done it!!!. These are timeless four minute cartoons you let your children see for the first time on the big screen.

To finish is the most beautiful short film ever made. It's about a child and a red balloon and that all you need to know. Don't miss this perfect matinee afternoon. Get in quickly, you'll be fighting with grown-up-children for seats...



Director: Albert Lamorisse
Starring: Pascal Lamorisse, Georges Sellier
Certificate: U
Duration: 34 mins
Origin: France 1956
By: Park Circus

Is Anybody There?

Mon 18 2.00, Wed 20 2.00

Director: John Crowley
Starring: Thelma Barlow, Michael Caine, Linzey Cocker, Anne-Marie Duff, Garrick Hagon
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 92 mins
Origin: UK 2008
By: Optimum Releasing

"Is Anybody There? Indeed there is! The simplest ideas often make the best films (they make the best Everything).

"Here a morbid 10-year-old boy gets even more morbid when his parents turn their ramshacked house into a retirement home. Crikey! Who is going to want to watch this?" (*British Film Magazine*) While his mother struggles to keep the house afloat and his father indulges the onset of mid-life crisis, Edward becomes increasingly obsessed with the ghosts and next life of the dying residents. He lurks around the feeblest guests, sometimes hiding a tape recorder under their beds to hear whatever accompanies a soul's drift into the afterlife. His lonely existence is distracted by the mischief and anarchy accompanying the arrival of a retired magician and grieving widower "The Amazing Clarence".

As a tentative friendship dodges between these two lost souls, Clarence notices the boy is growing up even more fitfully than he is growing old.

"Two reasons to see this small film about an unlikely friendship: the non-acting from young Bill Milner (our own Son of Rambow) and the brilliant and ever-beguiling Michael Caine." (*Film International*). There are a hundred more reasons. Choose your own but don't miss. Q: "Who is going to want to watch this?" A: Everybody... Crikey!



The Curious Case Of Benjamin Button

Tue 19 12.30



Anything nominated for eleven or so Oscars before anyone has seen it can't be trusted. Based on a short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, we have avoided this tall-tale during its hype. Curiosity and your requests, got the better of us.

Directed by the hit/miss David Fincher the creator of gems - *Se7en* and *Fight Club* and turkeys like *The Best of Sting: Fields of Gold*, *Benjamin Button* follows Brad Pitt from birth to death. Born with the face of an old man (aren't all babies?), Button lives his life backwards, becoming younger as he 'ages'. Clearly this will have consequences, especially in his upside down lifelong on/off relationship with Daisy. Are all Fitzgerald's invented women called Daisy?

"Remove 'curious' from the title, replace it with 'twee and pointless', and you're close to it. What an incredible shaggy-puppy of a movie, a cobweb-construction patched together with CGI, prosthetics, gibberish and warm tears...the name 'Benjamin Button' does not get any less annoying as the minutes drag into hours." (*Guardian*)

"...the anti-Slumdog Millionaire: a film stately, tasteful and genteelly melancholic rather than fevered, rollicking and euphoric. It's about time that seems almost out of time." (*Telegraph*)

Curiously *Slumdog M* won all the predicted *B Button* Oscars, plus two! Best Picture and Director... so there. But it don't amount to a hill o' beans in the who cares dept.

Director: David Fincher
Starring: Brad Pitt, Tilda Swinton, Cate Blanchett
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 166 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Warner Brothers

Gran Torino

Thu 21 2.00

Director: Clint Eastwood
Starring: Clint Eastwood, Christopher Carley, Bee Vang
Certificate: 15
Duration: 116 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Warner Brothers

Eastwood doesn't get any nicer as he gets older. The 78 year old director and star of this melting pot comedy-drama is a cantankerous old bastard called Walt who lives in a working class neighbourhood overrun with immigrants and gangs. Walt hates the lot of them. He hates his two fat middle aged sons and their ghastly wives and kids. He hates the young Roman Catholic priest who keeps door-stepping him since his wife died. He hates the Asian Hmong family who live next door. And he's taken to carrying a gun around the house since the kid next door tried to steal his mint-condition 1972 Ford Gran Torino.

It is of course, is about the softening of a hard man who hasn't forgiven the world for sending him as a boy to Korea to kill 'gooks'. He is Dirty Harry as a bitter pensioner, coughing blood and waiting to die.

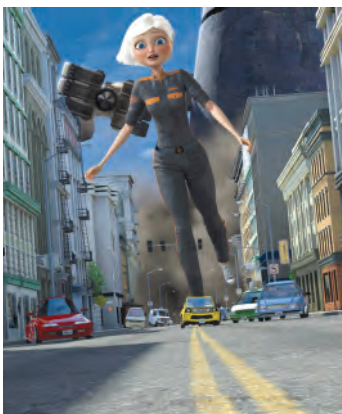
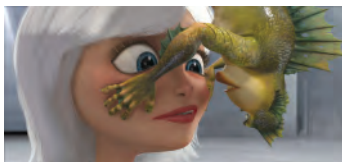
"The shape of the film is a little too predictable. You cross Walt at your peril. That said, he is still a grumpy pleasure" (*Times*) and often very funny. As always Clint quietly goes against the grain. His subtle performance is as charismatic and effective as ever and as the film proceeds it becomes more complex. He and his storytelling doesn't get any better than this. Cancel dying.



Monsters Vs Aliens

Sat 23 2.00, **Wed 27** 2.00,
Thu 28 2.00

“Some stuff works – I liked the dim President greeting Earth’s visitors by playing the five notes from *Close Encounters* on a synth. A wobbly one-eyed blob called B.O.B. has a stream of random gags about being thick and falling in love with a plate of jelly.” (Why call the 50-foot-woman ‘Ginormica’, when they could have stuck with the original 1958 scary name: Susan?) “The movie never grows a heart, which doesn’t stop it trying to tattoo one onto its chest. By the whizz-bang climax... I was fidgeting like a four-year-old at *Così fan tutte*.” (*Telegraph*) This the first big saviour-film of the digital CGI blockbuster revival in big 3-D. The Rex probably won’t have a 3-D print. It would be fun with the cardboard glasses and all, but I think they are playing a new techno game none of us will grasp until they have stopped playing, ‘meeting’ and panicking about box-office money. We are not part of that game yet. So this will be the fun print where the film has to work all by itself. Anyway, you don’t come here for the film only. You come to be Here... As you know, you are welcome at The Rex. Bring your grandparents and people you love to laugh at/with this silly film.



Director: Rob Letterman, Conrad Vernon
Starring: Hugh Laurie, Reese Witherspoon, Seth Rogen
Certificate: PG
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Paramount International Pictures



Race to Witch Mountain

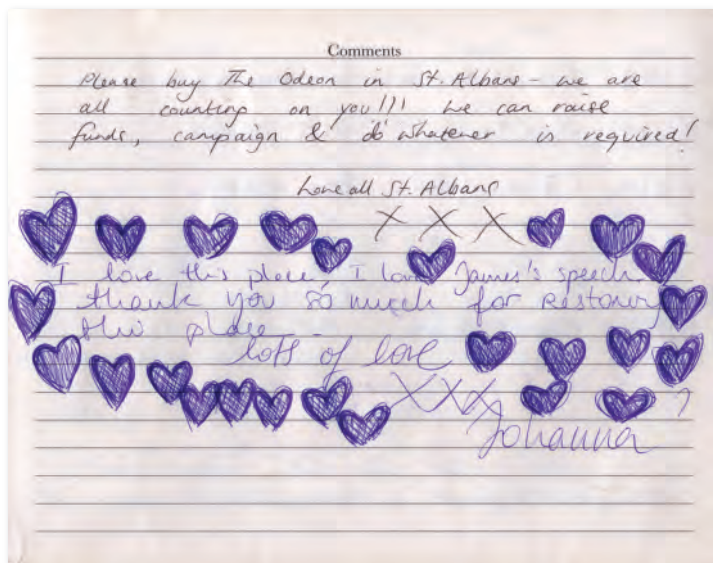
Tue 26 12.30, Sat 30 2.00



Director: Andy Fickman
Starring: Dwayne Johnson, Carla Gugino, Ciaran Hinds
Certificate: PG
Duration: 98 mins
Origin: USA 2009
By: Walt Disney Studio INTL



Its got everything - aliens, nasty government spooks, the Vegas mob, a flesh-eating predator, spaceships (which look like they're assembled from flatpaks) and Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson who is predictably stoney. Nevertheless, it's a fab Saturday matinee adventure where none of the special effects will frighten the horses.



These gems are copied straight from the comments book. Typing could not describe them well enough.

FROM THE MESSAGE/COMMENTS/ REQUESTS BOOK IN THE Foyer...

"At Last! After days of phoning...well worth the wait – have tried since September 2008 to be here!"

"I love this place, thank you so much for restoring this place" Johanna Johnston, New York (with lots of kisses. See pic above)

"What bliss to be back at the Rex after a rare outing to a multiplex to see 'Slumdog'. We'd forgotten how horrible they are and we have been very spoilt."

Serves you right for not waiting to see it here! Thanks too, but you're not spoilt. The Rex is how every public building should be. Holier than thou perhaps, or just that we have got so used to poor standards, we think the Rex is exceptional when it should be usual.

HUMPH'S QUOTES. (IN SPIRIT)

Random radio gaffes caught in time:

"The M25 will be closed anticlockwise between junctions 9 and 10 until police have removed Debra from the road" (traffic report, late night Radio 2 post

news bulletin Feb 09. He corrected himself – Debbie then finally debris)

"three survivors have been pulled out alive..." (R5Live News 11pm 7.4.09 re:Italian earthquake)

"Amidst this haze of sex, drugs and rock n'roll, Amy Wineglass has just been released on bail" (Jon Snow's Freudian slip on Ch4 News sometime last year)

Celeb quote:

"Theatre actors look down on film actors, who look down on television actors, Thank God for reality shows or we wouldn't have anybody to look down on..." (George Clooney, film & TV star, 2008)

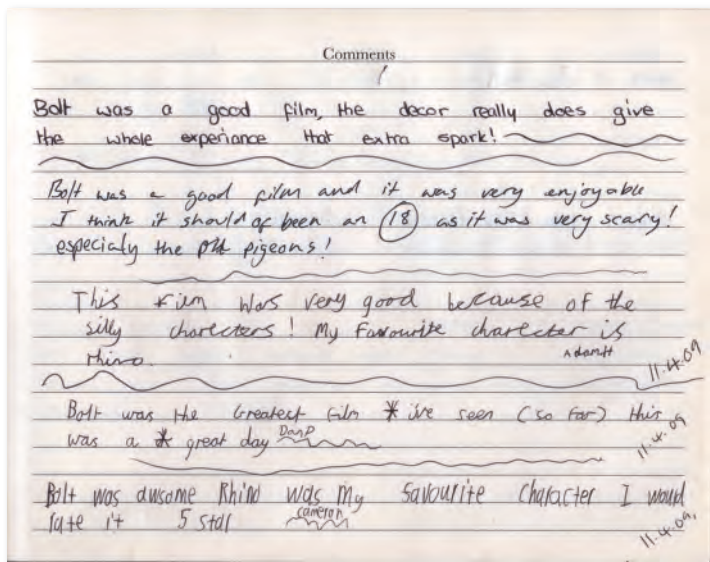
And from the box office...

A phone call from a very polite woman on ABL release day...

Woman: Oh! Thank goodness I have been trying to get through all day, I have been wondering and wanted to know if you sit downstairs - can you watch the film?

Box office: Yes of course. All seats swivel to face the screen. Is there anything you'd like to book?

Woman: No no, it's just a burning question I have been meaning to ask. Thank you so much. Goodbye!



Dear James

My friend and I have been to your very comfy cinema many times, and oh what a joy! In these 'couldn't care less' days, especially towards us more mature ones, it is so nice to have your team take such good care of us. Nothing is too much trouble, from being shown to our seats, our coffee's carried for us, to the Box office we are treated with such care and courtesy, a word, alas that can be seldom used these days and they make our visit perfect. The films are pretty good too! We just wanted you to know that you are all much appreciated and to say thank you. With best wishes, Two Oldish Biddies - Penny Etherington & Anne Duvell

This is a complete letter as written and posted.

Thank you ladies, from all the Rex children and one miserable old sod, truly vexed by the rest of the world, but for whom it has been an unexpected pleasure to look after biddies, oldish and youngish...



YOU CAN NOW ADVERTISE ON
THE REX WEBSITE VISIT
WWW.THEREXBERKHAMSTED.COM
OR CALL 01442 877999

