

# THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E



BENDA BILILI

MAY 2011...

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

MAY 2011 Issue 74  
[www.therexberkhamsted.com](http://www.therexberkhamsted.com)

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

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<b>Nicola Darvell</b>	<b>Liam Parker</b>
<b>Lindsey Davies</b>	<b>Izzi Robinson</b>
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<b>Katie Golder</b>	<b>Sid Sagar</b>
<b>Ollie Gower</b>	<b>Liam Stephenson</b>
<b>Beth Hannaway</b>	<b>Tina Thorpe</b>
<b>Lucy Hood</b>	<b>Beth Wallman</b>
<b>Abigail Kellett</b>	<b>James Wallman</b>
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<b>Helen Miller</b>	<b>Keymea Yazdanian</b>
	<b>Yalda Yazdanian</b>

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**Becca Ross** Best Girl

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**The Rex**

High Street (Three Close Lane)

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## BEST IN MAY



The heartbreaking true story of a lost generation.

UK/Australia 2010 **Oranges and Sunshine**

Mon 8 6.00/Mon 9/Tue 10 7.30

## FILMS OF THE MONTH



From hell: the inspiring musical journey of a lifetime. Democratic Rep. of Congo/France 2010

**Benda Bilili** Mon 16 7.30



Another journey: into hell this time. A tale of desert survival. USA 2011

**Meek's Cutoff** Mon 23 7.30



An unmissable psychodrama of Stalin's last evil days, France 2010

**An Ordinary Execution** Tue 24 7.30

## JOANNA HOGG - ARCHIPELAGO Q&amp;A, SUN 10TH APRIL

**O**n 10th April the truly delightful Joanna Hogg brought *Archipelago*, her second critically acclaimed film to the Rex.

During the Q&A she revealed how she uses actors alongside non-actors (who must not try to act!). Her structure is clear while the script is organic and built with improvisation. For seven weeks the cast of five stayed together in the holiday house (said to be haunted) where it was filmed on the Scilly's windswept Tresco, adding to the claustrophobia of the story.

She promised her next film would not be about a posh family on holiday.



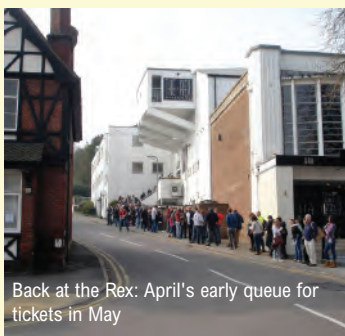


## SPRING HOPES....

St Albans rooftops from the Odyssey rooftop.



**W**ith Spring comes renewed energy and longer daylight. Look out for the front being restored and painted. Watch out too for an open Sunday near the end of May.



Back at the Rex: April's early queue for tickets in May



From the high roof to the deep bowels of the old Odeon



**What do these people have in common and which is the odd one out...?**

CLAUDIA WINKLEMAN  
DERMOT O'LEARY  
RUSSELL BRAND  
JOHNNY VAUGHAN  
SAM TAYLOR-WOOD  
GOK WAN  
ALAN CARR  
JIMMY CARR  
RICKY GERVAIS

The list could go on, but best to stop before bedtime. When you've guessed it or read the answer on page 41, we'd like to hear your suggestions. Send them by post, email or drop them in.

The Rex Cinema, High Street (Three Close Lane) Berkhamsted HP4 2FG  
therexcinema@btconnect.com



M A Y E V E N I N G S

## Morris: A Life With Bells On Sun 1 6.00



**This first came to our attention a few summers ago.** We kept getting asked if it was coming but we didn't know what it was, until we found somebody who was involved and would talk to us, though not for long. Apparently it didn't have a distribution deal (which doesn't bother us – in fact we encourage such screenings) and was only on digital. So that was that. Now it has a deal and we have a digital projector, so Bob's your uncle!

After a phenomenally successful tour of town and village halls across southwest England at the beginning of 2009, the word-of-mouth sensation that is *Morris: A Life With Bells On* finally comes to the Rex; and on May Day too. How clever is that? A heartwarming feature-length comedy about an avant-garde Morris Dancer, Derecq Twist, and his fight to modernise Morris Dancing. From England to America, from tragedy to love, the film is a celebration of life, eccentricity and what it means to be English. But most important of all, it is just plain funny. A film made from the heart, this has all the makings of a cult classic.

Apart from which it is worth seeing, so put down your wassailing sticks, get off the may-pole and come and see. You'll be surprised how much fun it is.

**Director:** Lucy Akhurst  
**Starring:** Charles Thomas Oldham, Derek Jacobi, Harriet Walter, Naomie Harris, Greg Wise  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 101 mins  
**Origin:** UK 2009  
**By:** Twist

## Diamonds Are Forever Mon 2 7.30

**Director:** Guy Hamilton  
**Starring:** Sean Connery, Jill St. John, Charles Gray, Lana Wood, Jimmy Dean  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 120 mins  
**Origin:** UK 1971  
**By:** Park Circus Films

**This is Sean Connery's return after George Lazenby's dire outing.** It was to be his last stab (but would agree one more in 1983 – *Never Say Never Again!*). If I'm not mistaken 'Diamonds' has some of the best one-liners of all Bonds. With bikini totty in the shape of Plenty O'Toole, it isn't hard. There's the bumbling genius Q, the proper Moneypenny, a fab Charles Gray's Blofeld, Bernard Lee's M and a couple of camp assassins, but it's Sean at his smoothiest.

Here especially for the May Bank Holiday, in case you've had enough and fancy a taste of the only true Bond – on our big screen.

You don't need the storyline, but here's a flimsy outline.

His mission is to find out who has been smuggling diamonds. He joins up with Tiffany Case and avoids Mr. Wint and Mr. Kidd. Blofeld is back with a new face but the same old cat. I thought he'd died as Donald Pleasance or was that later? Can Bond finally defeat his ultimate enemy? It cost £7 million in 1971. The flaccid *Quantum of Solace* came in at a mere £230 million in 2008. Happy days. Come for the gags delivered by the Bond master.



## The Secret In Their Eyes Tue 3 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 Espósito's alcoholic sidekick is priceless. Do not miss.

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

## The King's Speech Wed 4 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, the film, performances and screenplay transcend the circus.**

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, the Duke of York, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at Wembley stadium to close the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. It is also a first to be broadcast across the Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio.

Given that the family job is talking, a stammer is not the best of gifts. The Duchess, Elizabeth tires of conventional 'wisdom', so discovers the unorthodox treatment of Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue.

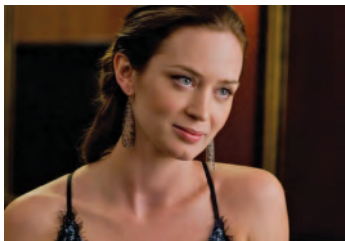
The shy, diffident 'Bertie' could afford to play the royal brother in the shadows while his popular, but flawed, brother David (Edward VIII) remained King. But with Edward's abdication and a war looming, he would have to become George VI with an urgent need to address his people fluently.

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 evolution into trusted friendship is exquisitely drawn by actors whose restraint shows no signs of acting. Still perfect.





## The Adjustment Bureau Thu 5 7.30



**“Do we have free will or is our fate controlled by supernatural G-men in raincoats and pork-pie hats?”**

**(Independent)**

Matt Damon flexes his Bourne muscles as David Norris, a New York ‘bad boy’ politician who isn’t seen in the best public light. The turning point is when, by chance, he meets Elise (Blunt). However, before they can head off into the nearest sunset, these budding young lovers are soon intertwined in a grand scheme to keep them apart in order to prevent a world-wide catastrophe!

“The themes of screenwriter George Nolfi’s first feature film as director will delight philosophers. Does free will exist? Where does chance end and design begin? Can we fight fate?” (*Empire*)

George Nolfi, who worked with Damon writing *The Bourne Ultimatum*, is making his debut here as director. Aesthetically speaking he’s not exactly Christopher Nolan but the chase sequences are steady and show good clarity.

“The film’s conceit assumes that the infinite possibilities of human experience can be manipulated to achieve a single purpose, and as such it leaves numerous plot holes in its wake, but the sweet chemistry between Damon and Blunt does at least make credible their romantic (if existence-threatening) love-knot” (*Time Out*) It’s *Inception*-esque but with heart to accompany the conundrum. (*research JW*) Edge of your seat with great twists. Come.

**Director:** George Nolfi  
**Starring:** Matt Damon, Emily Blunt, John Slattery, Terence Stamp  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 106 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2010  
**By:** Universal

## Lincoln Lawyer Fri 6 7.30, Sat 7 7.00

**Director:** Brad Furman  
**Starring:** Matthew McConaughey, Marisa Tomei, Josh Lucas, Ryan Phillippe  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 118 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Entertainment

**Based on the novel by Michael Connelly, “The Lincoln Lawyer” is a robust and entertaining, if predictable, courtroom thriller.**

Mickey Haller (Matthew McConaughey) is an LA-based lawyer who, hence the title, operates out of the back of his Lincoln sedan, chauffeured around by a previous client. The case of a lifetime drops into Haller’s lap – rich playboy and real estate mogul Louis Roulet (Ryan Phillippe) is accused of violently beating a prostitute. It should be straightforward; a simple case of Roulet’s being in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, Haller’s suspicions are aroused when he uncovers some startling similarities to a previous case of his, and begins to suspect Roulet might be withholding something from him...

It’s a pacy drama, with twists aplenty. Refreshing as it is to see Matthew McConaughey in something other than a dreadful rom-com, he plays Haller with every Hollywood lawyer cliché in the book, luckily however strong support from John Leguizamo and William H Macy anchor the piece.

“...[the] smart, savvy script motors along as we see how Haller knows all the angles and how to work the system. It’s a world of cynical lawyers cutting deals, careworn cops and cons brooding over sinister secrets.” (*Guardian*) (*research Simon Messenger*) Sounds okay. Come and see.







**Director:** Jim Loach  
**Starring:** Emily Watson, Hugo Weaving, David Wenham, Tara Morice  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 105 mins  
**Origin:** UK/Australia 2010  
**By:** Icon

## Oranges & Sunshine

**Sun 8 6.00**

Followed by Q&A with Jim Loach

**Mon 9 7.30, Tue 10 7.30**

The debut feature length film of Jim Loach, son of Rex favourite Ken, is the remarkable story of Australia's "lost children".

Emily Watson plays Margaret Humphreys, a Nottingham social worker who, in 1986, uncovered the extent to which children in care from the United Kingdom were forcibly and illegally, deported to Australia and Canada in the Fifties and Sixties. This docu-drama highlights the wrong done to this lost generation, and details the ensuing years which Humphreys spent reuniting the families fractured by these migrations.

Loach's gentle, able, understated direction avoids all trappings of sentimentality.

Watson, and her co-stars Hugo Weaving and David Wenham approach their roles with respectful solemnity, with a perfectly cast Watson excelling in the lead role.

"Like his father, Loach has made a film uncluttered by an obvious director's stamp, peopled by sympathetic characters and driven by a desire to say something about the world without losing sight of human experience." (*Time Out*)

"The film is an intense journey from the discovery of injustice and suffering to a cathartic resolution and fulfilment that will linger in the memory for a long time." (*Guardian*)

This searing film is a stirring tribute to Margaret Humphreys' lifetime work which culminated in an official apology from British and Australian governments. (*research Simon Messenger*)





**Director:** Richard Ayoade  
**Starring:** Craig Roberts, Sally Hawkins, Paddy Considine, Yasmin Paige  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 97 mins  
**Origin:** UK/USA 2010  
**By:** Optimum Releasing



## Submarine

Wed 11 7.30, Thu 12 7.30

The directorial debut of Richard Ayoade, he of “IT Crowd” fame, and based on Joe Dunthorne’s novel, “Submarine” is a bright, witty coming of age tale.

The film concerns the adolescence of fifteen year old Swansea schoolboy Oliver Tate (Craig Roberts) whose principle concerns in life, aside from cultivating his would-be intellectual leanings, are losing his virginity to his knowing, straight talking, pyromaniac girlfriend (Yasmin Paige), and keeping his parents’ failing marriage from dissolving.

It’s both poignant and witty. Ayoade’s directorial style owes more than a little to the 60s New Wave, but it’s a respectful appropriation, rather than a direct lift. Featuring a suitably cool soundtrack from Arctic Monkey Alex Turner, “Submarine” is a sharp, amusing film, and perhaps heralds Ayoade as a new talent in British film making.

“Arguably, it’s a bit too cool for school sometimes, and it is self-conscious. But these are by-products of its undoubted confidence at carrying off a visually distinctive, witty, autobiographical comedy.” (*Guardian*)

“It is only sometimes outright funny, but “Submarine” always maintains a wry, melancholic wit. It’s a very winning debut by Ayoade, who impresses mightily – not just because he’s channelling the greats.” (*Independent*) (*Simon Messenger*) Sounds like it might be worth seeing. Try it.



**Director:** Neil Burger  
**Starring:** Robert De Niro, Abbie Cornish, Bradley Cooper.  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 105 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Paramount International Pictures



## Limitless

Fri 13 7.30, Sat 14 7.00

What would you give to be brilliant, charismatic, dynamic, sexy – the perfect you? That's the question posed by Limitless, an enjoyable 'What If' thriller where a black-market 'smart' pill enables users to access the 80 per cent of their brain usually off limits. Wannabe writer Eddie (Cooper) is heartbroken, broke and blocked, until a friend slips him an experimental smart drug, transforming him from scuzzy loser into retouched genius. Yes, it's Faust for the pharmaceutical age. An uglified Anna Friel pops up as a burned-out former addict and Eddie soon finds himself haunted by blackouts and hunted by bad guys.

"Cooper continues his eerily bland metamorphosis into early-70s Robert Redford in this entertaining Manhattan thriller. And as executive producer and star, he makes sure there is unobstructed close-up views of his lovely chops." (*Guardian*) "If you think this sounds too Twilight Zone, then you're in for a surprise. Based on Alan Glynn's 2001 novel The Dark Fields, it feels no need for wanton moralising.

Instead it bludgeons its victims one by one and leaves a trail of beautiful corpses in its wake. It's scatty and fast paced, and director Burger employs some Gaspar Noé-style, bad-trip CG effects to heighten the mood." (*Time Out*)

"What's fresh about it is how it turns perfect intelligence into a superpower and tries to imagine it." (*Telegraph*)

## The Last Picture Show Sun 15 6.00



Peter Bogdanovich's sparkling monochrome masterpiece from 1971, is taken from (and co-written by) Larry McMurtry's, nostalgic semi-autobiographical novel set in small town Texas at the time of nothing much. The Korean war was a million miles away. The oh so young Timothy Bottoms and Jeff Bridges play Sonny and Duane, two boys who share a coming-of-age lust for the stunning, all knowing, manipulative teenage Jacy, played by first-timer Cybill Shepherd. (weren't all three were first-timers?)

Set in the early 1950s it takes on the never ending themes of frustration and longing, youth and old age, memory and mortality. All understated in such a quiet modesty, its humility becomes extraordinarily affecting. A rarity for any film from any age. The boys are uninspired high-school athletes who loaf about their dusty windblown, one-horse town and wonder about their future. The only fun to be had is in the decrepit pool hall and the old cinema, (not to mention the joys of the swimming baths) both run by the benign, mysterious Sam the Lion (Oscar winning Ben Johnson) whose haunting presence is the film's beating heart. Then there's the kid whose only affirmation of belonging is to have his hat turned round by the bigger boys. I saw it in 1971 and have never forgotten it. It stands up today alongside anything that thinks its better. Don't miss

**Director:** Peter Bogdanovich  
**Starring:** Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 118 mins  
**Origin:** USA 1971  
**By:** Park Circus Films

## Benda Bilili Mon 16 7.30

**Directors:** Renaud Barret, Florent de la Tullaye.  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 86 mins  
**Origin:** Democratic Republic of Congo/France 2010  
**By:** Trinity

**Staff Benda Bilili are a group of Congolese buskers who gather beneath the acacia trees in Kinshasa zoo, where they dream of a mattress to call their own.**

This film shows how they get there, trailing a ramshackle alliance of middle-aged paraplegics and street kids as they wend their way from African slums to European concert halls. Over the past decade they have coalesced into one of central Africa's most highly regarded musical outfits.

If the journey feels a little stage-managed at times, the film's exuberant side-notes more than make amends. The music itself plays is an exuberant blend of blues and African rumba. It's the noise of the discarded: picked up, brushed down and made precious again.

"The band's music ranges across the global spectrum, with a home-built milk-can lute adding an eerie, otherworldly edge. Couple this with some gorgeous, richly textured street-level photography and the result is artful and utterly compelling." (*Time Out*) Renaud Barret and Florent de La Tullaye followed the band for five years as they struggled on the streets of the decrepit city of Kinshasa. The level of poverty astounds, but their music is celebratory and boundless; the antithesis to the world they inhabit.

"Wielding inspiration and uplift in equal measure, this musical odyssey is one of the cinematic journeys of the year." (*Empire*) Don't miss.





## Unknown

Tue 17 7.30



**A surprise sell-out in April, so back in May in case you missed the thrilling chase.**

Since 2008's other surprise hit, *Taken*, Liam Neeson has earned himself a bit of a badass reputation. And he continues his European tour with *Unknown*, a perplexing thriller Luc Besson would happily slap his name over. Dr Martin Harris (Neeson) is an American scientist in Berlin, who, after emerging from a car crash, loses his identity. Suddenly no one, not even his wife, recognises him. On top of this, there are shady assassins hot on his heels. Why is nobody recognising him? Who was the mysterious taxi driver? Why is Liam Neeson so shouty? "So far, so intriguing. But Jaume Collet-Serra's film fumbles Harris' mounting paranoia, preferring to shoehorn in every conceivable thriller cliché as he trudges snowy Berlin attempting to unlock the puzzle." (*Total Film*)

*Unknown*, knowingly cobbles together parts of other amnesia themed thrillers such as Polanski's *Frantic* or the Bourne series but has neither the gravitas nor the trepidation to successfully pull it off. But hey, it's Liam Neeson! And he does his astute best at masking the absurd impossibilities. Throw in fancy car chases, a screen stealing turn from Bruno Ganz (*Downfall*'s Hitler) and you've got yourself a neat little pot-boiler. (review JW)

**Director:** Jaume Collet-Serra  
**Starring:** Liam Neeson, January Jones, Diane Kruger, Frank Langella  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 113 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Optimum Releasing

## Black Swan

Wed 18 7.30

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

**Back for one day only, Darren Aronofsky's darkly erotic psycho-drama has Natalie Portman, bending and contorting her way to perfection as Nina, a delicate, overly mothered dancer with the New York City Ballet who climbs inside herself to swallow Swan Lake's dual roles of white and black swans.**

Mentored and bullied by a predatory Vincent Cassel, her passion to succeed is fused with a longing to please him. He believes she almost has what it takes to play the white swan but lacks the will let go and give herself to the seduction of black and white.

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

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, the film itself takes a grip of shocks and surprises. "Realism barely gets a look in this strange tortuous and savagely bitchy balletic world" (*Times*)

It has polarised our audience, and left those in the middle wondering 'What?' It must be seen on the big screen.



## The Eagle

Thu 19 7.30



Yet another gruelling piece of gritty realism, this time in the freezing Scottish Highland winter. (see comment in Meek's Cut Off) "If you see a shot of someone and the look (F-word) freezing, it'll be better if they are (f-word) freezing" MacDonald (*Time Out*) Creep!

Set in AD140 in Roman Britain, using as his pathfinder a British slave, Esca (Jamie Bell) whose life he spared, Marcus Aquila (Tatum) an ambitious young commander who has accepted a posting to this barbaric place to save his family's honour by retrieving the Ninth Legion's lost golden eagle standard.

Twenty years earlier, 5,000 soldiers had gone missing – presumably slaughtered by the notoriously fierce Celtic tribes on the other side of Hadrian's Wall.

"Kevin Macdonald has made a decent, forthright, if finally uninspired sword'n'sandal drama, based on Rosemary Sutcliff's 1954 children's novel *The Eagle of the Ninth*. The movie runs out of narrative steam a little in its third act, and becomes a faintly ridiculous bromance." (*Guardian*)

"The Eagle is most memorable when it is deranged: when a bunch of tattooed midget punks start springing from trees; when the native Seal People get sloshed on mead (real f-word sloshed Kevin?). Seal prince, Tahar Rahim (A Prophet) is wasted and unrecognisable." (*Telegraph*) "More mud and rain than blood and brains" (*Total Film*)

**Director:** Kevin Macdonald  
**Starring:** Channing Tatum, Jamie Bell, Donald Sutherland, Mark Strong  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 114 mins  
**Origin:** UK 2011  
**By:** Twentieth Century Fox

## Source Code

Fri 20 7.30, Sat 21 7.00,  
 Sun 22 6.00

Duncan Jones returns with his second film, another mind-bending thriller, which perhaps even exceeds the lofty heights reached by his excellent debut "Moon".

Captain Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal) awakens after a helicopter crash in Afghanistan. He finds himself apparently occupying the body of a teacher on a Chicago-bound train. When the train explodes eight minutes later, Stevens again awakens in unfamiliar circumstances, in what appears to be a dilapidated military installation. He is in the Source Code – a futuristic software programme which manipulates reality, allowing users to inhabit the bodies of others, and re-enact periods of time. Stevens learns he is on a mission to gather intelligence concerning the events on board the train, and must re-enact the past eight minutes over and over until he does so...

It is perhaps "Groundhog Day" by way of "Inception"; a reality tinkering, loopy, sci-fi thriller which is terrifically entertaining.

"Source Code is absurd, but carries off its absurdity lightly and stylishly. It is a luxuriously enjoyable film. Jones has put himself into the front-rank of Hollywood directors, the kind who can deliver a big studio picture with brains. With twists and turns, and at breathtaking speed, this film runs on rails." (*Guardian*)

Cancel all journeys but don't miss.  
 (research Simon Messenger)



**Director:** Duncan Jones  
**Starring:** Jake Gyllenhaal, Michelle Monaghan, Vera Farmiga, Jeffrey Wright  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 93 mins  
**Origin:** USA/France 2011  
**By:** Optimum Releasing



## Meek's Cutoff

Mon 23 7.30

**Director:** Kelly Reichardt  
**Starring:** Bruce Greenwood, Michelle Williams, Shirley Henderson, Paul Dano  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 103 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Soda Pictures

**Meek's Cutoff is a slow but absorbing epic Western filtered through an independent prism.**

Williams plays Emily, one of a small band of early settlers on a wagon train west, keeping their eyes peeled for Indian raiders. But with supplies dwindling and tough-talking guide Meek (Greenwood) looking increasingly out of his depth after his shortcut leads them into arid, Native American country, the group reluctantly turn to a captured Cayuse warrior (Rondeaux) for guidance.

The period trappings, sparse dialogue and hard-bitten performances feel utterly credible: from the long, wordless opening scene of the settlers lugging their possessions across a shallow river, Meek's Cutoff feels like a sepia-toned snapshot of a bygone era.

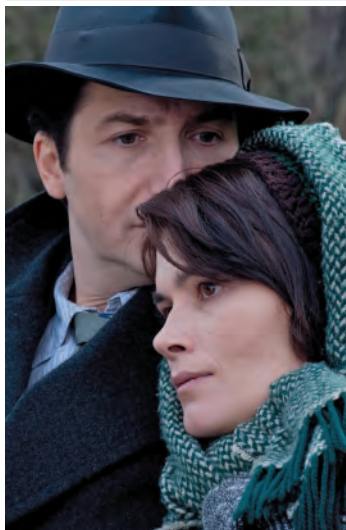
"The result is bold, unrelenting and wilfully oblique, perhaps to a fault: Reichardt's refusal to provide easy solutions may be thematically appropriate, but it can be alienating. Nonetheless, the film is one of 2011's singular cinematic experiences: subtle, simple and devastating." (*Time Out*)

During the long, arduous filming in the remote Cascade Mountains, director Reichardt wouldn't let her actors wash their clothes. When challenged by them that she had chosen actors, she let them wash the insides! Gritty realism is the unbearable, up itself, mantra on the indie circuit. Why not get a bunch of herberts together, make their lives miserable and point a camera at them.





**Director:** Marc Dugain  
**Starring:** Marina Hands, Edouard Baer, André Dussollier  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 105 mins  
**Origin:** France 2010  
**By:** Verve



## An Ordinary Execution

**Tue 24 7.30**

**Back simply because only a few saw it in January. It is one of those gems you shouldn't miss.**

Marc Dugain, whose first world war novel *The Officers' Ward* was made into a film almost a decade ago, here adapts/ directs the first part his own 2007 novel. It is an ambitious, episodic fiction about the nature and history of Russian political power.

The result is a pungently atmospheric chamber piece, set in the paranoid Soviet 1950s of purges and disappearances. It imagines an encounter between Stalin and a young doctor, Anna. Tales of her healing touch have spread and one night she is taken away, not to the infamous Lubyanka prison, but to the Kremlin to attend the ailing Comrade Stalin himself.

Stalin imperiously makes Anna his top-secret personal physician, an intimacy which he decrees is so important that it supersedes and invalidates every other relationship in her life – especially her marriage

This dark French psychodrama is set during the last days of Stalin's reign. Marina Hands (superb) plays the doctor trying to go unnoticed in a society of mutual dread where a neighbour or colleague might "denounce" you to the authorities at any moment.

"Always mesmerising, Dussollier's Stalin is a portrait of a leader whose frailties are matched only by his capacity for evil." (*Empire*) Don't miss.





## True Grit

Wed 25 7.30



The deservedly Oscar nominated, 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, uses the full expression, energy and inflection to fill 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, captures beautifully, the washed out landscape of leafless trees and cold, 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

## Dialogue Avec Mon Jardinier (Conversations with my Gardener)

Thu 26 7.30

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

Not only is this a blissful tale beautifully told, it brings a French summer landscape into an English May evening as it did for the winter in January 2007, when it first came. It is one of those rare, small films. It will lift you. A finely observed gem depicts a poignant friendship between two men who seem to be from different worlds but have simply taken different routes. This becomes clear and remains part of the film's magic to the end. It tells of a respected Parisian painter on the brink of divorce as he returns to his childhood home and employs a gardener to tame the vegetable patch.

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

"Perhaps it's their love of food and wine, but France is one of the few countries where films about the land are still made - about how it sustains and nourishes..." (Critic)

Nothing much happens, except everything. It is beautiful. If you liked '...Marguerite' you'll love it.





**Director:** David Gordon Green  
**Starring:** James Franco, Zooey Deschanel, Natalie Portman  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 102 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2010  
**By:** Entertainment One UK



## Your Highness

**Fri 27 7.30, Sat 28 7.00,  
 Mon 30 7.30**

McBride plays Prince Thadeous, the pussyish younger brother of brave Fabious (Franco) next in line to their daddy king (Dance). Can Thadeous prove himself by helping his bro rescue his bride-to-be (Deschanel) from an evil wizard? Can this bumbler find love with a female warrior (Portman) who fights better than he does and looks more interesting splashing in a thong? "While there's a lot of affection for the films that inspired *Your Highness*, it's really all about teenage titillation: swearing, bosoms (a whole village of nude savage women) and Natalie Portman bathing in a thong. But if like your humour strictly below the waistline, get behind this posse." (*Total Film*) "Your Highness isn't going to enrich the inner lives of its audience, in fact you can almost hear your brain cells groaning as you watch it. But the film's sense of boundless, romping enthusiasm, and the joy it takes in its own wilful stupidity, are so infectious that it's hard not to get swept along. With McBride and Franco trying on knowingly bad Brit accents and the entire cast clearly having a whale of a time, the impression is of the world's daftest, priciest, least self-serious end-of-the-pier panto. And where's the harm in that?" (*Time Out*) Sounds like a right carry on.



## Cave of Forgotten Dreams **Sun 29 6.00**



In 1994 a team of speleologists discovered, in a limestone cliff face in the Ardèche, what would become known as the “Chauvet Cave”. This unique cave contains the earliest known cave paintings, and other remnants of life in the Upper Palaeolithic era.

The general public are not allowed inside, and access to scientists is severely restricted. Last year, filmmaker Werner Herzog and his small team, were granted special access in order to shoot this unique documentary film. Clambering inside the cave, unable to touch the walls, deviate from the tiny path, or suspend lights anywhere, it's a feat of film-making in itself.

Herzog brings his sense of wonder, and at times, his sense of the absurd, to the documentary. His lingering shots (occasionally too lingering) of the artwork rendered inside the cave take on a near-spiritual element. Amusing interviews with scientists, historians, and a perfumer who likes to sniff the exterior of the cave, combined with Herzog's batty narration, and a near-overpowering score, comprise a film that has to be seen to be experienced.

“In the caves, Herzog notes, ‘Time and space lose their meaning.’ Inevitably bound by both, his film is as close to their beauty as we will ever get.” (*Time Out*) (*Simon Messenger*) Come for the glorious Rex 2-D.

**Director:** Werner Herzog  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 90 mins  
**Origin:** France/Canada/USA/UK/Germany 2010  
**By:** Picturehouse Entertainment

## Little White Lies **Tue 31 7.30**

**Director:** Guillaume Canet  
**Starring:** François Cluzet, Marion Cotillard, Benoît Magimel, Jean Dujardin  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 154 mins  
**Origin:** France 2010  
**By:** Lionsgate

Guillaume Canet's third outing as a director is great big indulgent sprawl of a film about a bunch of friends facing various crises while on holiday together in the southeast coast of France. His last film was the brilliant *Tell No One*. This one might be brilliant too?

All of the characters harbour secrets and insecurities which slowly emerge as the holiday progresses accompanied by a classic score from Bowie to Gladys Knight. Have these self-obsessed friends been telling each other lies for years? “Nothing, but nothing will stand between the French middle classes and their hols, though a bunch of friends do pause for thought when their mate's left in a coma after a motorbike spill... It's slightly glib, very glossy and over-long. But there's an overriding sense that Canet knows this territory, and gets the best out of an excellent cast.” (*Time Out*)

“Populist fare from across the channel that will amply repay those ready to put in the time. Far from being a downbeat affair, however, is a richly funny, deeply compassionate film that celebrates love and friendship without ever shying away from life's myriad complexities. The scenery, meanwhile, makes you want to run to it.” (*Total Film*) Bring a hanky and a strong bladder.



# COMING SOON

## New releases

TT: Closer to the edge  
Extraordinary Adventures  
of Adele Blanc-sec  
The Priest

## Back by demand

Oranges & Sunshine  
Little White Lies  
Everything is Illuminated  
Welcome to The Sticks  
A Prairie home Companion  
Black Swan  
Tall Dark Stranger

Norwegian Wood



The Priest



Pina



War Horse



# MAY FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	Sun	MORRIS:A LIFE WITH BELLS ON	6.00
2	Mon	DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER	7.30
3	Tue	MORRIS:A LIFE WITH BELLS ON	12.30
3	Tue	THE SECRETS IN THEIR EYES	7.30
4	Wed	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00, 7.30
5	Thu	THE KING'S SPEECH	2.00
5	Thu	THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU	7.30
6	Fri	LINCOLN LAWYER	7.30
7	Sat	THE RAILWAY CHILDREN	2.00
7	Sat	LINCOLN LAWYER	7.00
8	Sun	ORANGES & SUNSHINE	6.00
9	Mon	ORANGES & SUNSHINE	2.00, 7.30
10	Tue	LINCOLN LAWYER	12.30
10	Tue	ORANGES & SUNSHINE	7.30
11	Wed	ORANGES & SUNSHINE	2.00
11	Wed	SUBMARINE	7.30
12	Thu	SUBMARINE	2.00, 7.30
13	Fri	LIMITLESS	7.30
14	Sat	WINNIE THE POOH	2.00
14	Sat	LIMITLESS	7.00
15	Sun	THE LAST PICTURE SHOW	6.00
16	Mon	THE LAST PICTURE SHOW	2.00
16	Mon	BENDA BILILI	7.30
17	Tue	UNKNOWN	12.30, 7.30
18	Wed	BLACK SWAN	2.00, 7.30
19	Thu	THE EAGLE	2.00, 7.30
20	Fri	SOURCE CODE	7.30
21	Sat	RIO	2.00
21	Sat	SOURCE CODE	7.00
22	Sun	SOURCE CODE	6.00
23	Mon	SOURCE CODE	2.00
23	Mon	MEEK'S CUTOFF	7.30
24	Tue	SOURCE CODE	12.30
24	Tue	AN ORDINARY EXECUTION	7.30
25	Wed	CAVE OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS	2.00
25	Wed	TRUE GRIT	7.30
26	Thu	CONVERSATIONS WITH MY GARDENER	2.00, 7.30
27	Fri	YOUR HIGHNESS	7.30
28	Sat	HOP	2.00
28	Sat	YOUR HIGHNESS	7.00
29	Sun	CAVE OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS	6.00
30	Mon	YOUR HIGHNESS	7.30
31	Tue	RIO	12.30
31	Tue	LITTLE WHITE LIES	7.30





## 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*

## Morris: A Life With Bells On Tue 3 12.30



**This first came to our attention a few summers ago.** We kept getting asked if it was coming but we didn't know what it was, until we found somebody who was involved and would talk to us, though not for long. Apparently it didn't have a distribution deal (which doesn't bother us – in fact we encourage such screenings) and was only on digital. So that was that. Now it has a deal and we have a digital projector, so Bob's your uncle!

After a phenomenally successful tour of town and village halls across southwest England at the beginning of 2009, the word-of-mouth sensation that is *Morris: A Life With Bells On* finally comes to the Rex; and on May Day too. How clever is that? A heartwarming feature-length comedy about an avant-garde Morris Dancer, Derecq Twist, and his fight to modernise Morris Dancing. From England to America, from tragedy to love, the film is a celebration of life, eccentricity and what it means to be English. But most important of all, it is just plain funny. A film made from the heart, this has all the makings of a cult classic.

Apart from which it is worth seeing, so put down your wassailing sticks, get off the may-pole and come and see. You'll be surprised how much fun it is.

**Director:** Lucy Akhurst  
**Starring:** Charles Thomas Oldham, Derek Jacobi, Harriet Walter, Naomie Harris, Greg Wise  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 101 mins  
**Origin:** UK 2009  
**By:** Twist

## The King's Speech Wed 4 2.00, Thu 5 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, the film, performances and screenplay transcend the circus.**

It opens with a moment of sheer terror for any stutterer. The then Prince Albert, the Duke of York, second in line to the throne, attempts to make his first mass public speech at Wembley stadium to close the 1925 British Empire Exhibition. It is also a first to be broadcast across the Empire through the new fangled miracle of radio.

Given that the family job is talking, a stammer is not the best of gifts.

The Duchess, Elizabeth tires of conventional 'wisdom', so 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. 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 evolution into trusted friendship is exquisitely drawn by actors whose restraint shows no signs of acting. Still perfect.



## The Railway Children

Sat 7 2.00



This welcome return of this beautiful film comes with a huge apology to all who missed it in April. Thanks to circumstances it didn't come in time for 11th matinee.

It perfectly captures the English landscape at a time when children waved at steam trains. It is an innocent tale about innocence, pride and good manners; about hardship, adversity and the once lovely friendships between children and grown-ups. It is a celebration of old-fashioned British fortitude set in an environment of steam engines, buttercups, top hats and smocks. Is it sentimental? Only the hard-hearted could deny the lovability and charm of Lionel Jeffries's tremendous 1970 version of E Nesbit's children's classic *The Railway Children*. It is a chance to choke back a new tear and give new children the chance to be lost in the simple beauty of the original re-released for the big screen. As the father of girls, "Daddy ... my daddy!" when the steam clears the platform, is forever heartbreaking. "Putting aside its fusty look and feel, Jeffries' film remains an enjoyable evocation of the time. Of course, whether today's kids get it is open to debate." (*Time Out*)

There are no explosions and nobody gets a thick ear. Bring your grandparents and don't fidget. Who knows, there might even be buns for tea when you get home...?

**Director:** Lionel Jeffries  
**Starring:** Jenny Agutter, Bernard Cribbins, Dinah Sheridan  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 109 mins  
**Origin:** UK 1970  
**By:** British Film Institute

## Oranges & Sunshine

Mon 9 2.00, Wed 11 2.00

**Director:** Jim Loach  
**Starring:** Emily Watson, Hugo Weaving, David Wenham, Tara Morice  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 105 mins  
**Origin:** UK/Australia 2010  
**By:** Icon

The debut feature length film of Jim Loach, son of Rex favourite Ken, is the remarkable story of Australia's "lost children".

Emily Watson plays Margaret Humphreys, a Nottingham social worker who, in 1986, uncovered the extent to which children in care from the United Kingdom were forcibly and illegally, deported to Australia and Canada in the Fifties and Sixties. This docu-drama highlights the wrong done to this lost generation, and details the ensuing years which Humphreys spent reuniting the families fractured by these migrations. Loach's gentle, able, understated direction avoids all trappings of sentimentality. Watson, and her co-stars Hugo Weaving and David Wenham approach their roles with respectful solemnity, with a perfectly cast Watson excelling in the lead role. "Like his father, Loach has made a film uncluttered by an obvious director's stamp, peopled by sympathetic characters and driven by a desire to say something about the world without losing sight of human experience." (*Time Out*)

"The film is an intense journey from the discovery of injustice and suffering to a cathartic resolution and fulfilment that will linger in the memory for a long time." (*Guardian*)

This searing film is a stirring tribute to Margaret Humphreys' lifetime work which culminated in an official apology from British and Australian governments. (*research Simon Messenger*)



## Lincoln Lawyer

Tue 10 12.30



**Based on the novel by Michael Connelly, “The Lincoln Lawyer” is a robust and entertaining, if predictable, courtroom thriller.**

Mickey Haller (Matthew McConaughey) is an LA-based lawyer who, hence the title, operates out of the back of his Lincoln sedan, chauffeured around by a previous client. The case of a lifetime drops into Haller’s lap – rich playboy and real estate mogul Louis Roulet (Ryan Phillippe) is accused of violently beating a prostitute. It should be straightforward; a simple case of Roulet’s being in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, Haller’s suspicions are aroused when he uncovers some startling similarities to a previous case of his, and begins to suspect Roulet might be withholding something from him...

It’s a pacy drama, with twists aplenty. Refreshing as it is to see Matthew McConaughey in something other than a dreadful rom-com, he plays Haller with every Hollywood lawyer cliché in the book, luckily however strong support from John Leguizamo and William H Macy anchor the piece.

“...[the] smart, savvy script motors along as we see how Haller knows all the angles and how to work the system. It’s a world of cynical lawyers cutting deals, careworn cops and cons brooding over sinister secrets.” (*Guardian*) (research Simon Messenger) Sounds okay. Come and see.

## Submarine

Thu 12 2.00

**The directorial debut of Richard Ayoade, he of “IT Crowd” fame, and based on Joe Dunthorne’s novel, “Submarine” is a bright, witty coming of age tale.**

The film concerns the adolescence of fifteen year old Swansea schoolboy Oliver Tate (Craig Roberts) whose principle concerns in life, aside from cultivating his would-be intellectual leanings, are losing his virginity to his knowing, straight talking, pyromaniac girlfriend (Yasmin Paige), and keeping his parents’ failing marriage from dissolving.

It’s both poignant and witty. Ayoade’s directorial style owes more than a little to the 60s New Wave, but it’s a respectful appropriation, rather than a direct lift. Featuring a suitably cool soundtrack from Arctic Monkey Alex Turner, “Submarine” is a sharp, amusing film, and perhaps heralds Ayode as a new talent in British film making.

“Arguably, it’s a bit too cool for school sometimes, and it is self-conscious. But these are by-products of its undoubted confidence at carrying off a visually distinctive, witty, autobiographical comedy.” (*Guardian*) “It is only sometimes outright funny, but “Submarine” always maintains a wry, melancholic wit. It’s a very winning debut by Ayoade, who impresses mightily – not just because he’s channelling the greats.” (*Independent*) (Simon Messenger) Sounds like it might be worth seeing. Try it.

<b>Director:</b>	Brad Furman
<b>Starring:</b>	Matthew McConaughey, Marisa Tomei, Josh Lucas, Ryan Phillippe
<b>Certificate:</b>	15
<b>Duration:</b>	118 mins
<b>Origin:</b>	USA 2011
<b>By:</b>	Entertainment





**Director:** Richard Ayoade  
**Starring:** Craig Roberts, Sally Hawkins, Paddy Considine, Yasmin Paige  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 97 mins  
**Origin:** UK/USA 2010  
**By:** Optimum Releasing



## Winnie The Pooh

**Sat 14 2.00**

**Directors:** Stephen J. Anderson, Don Hall  
**Voices:** Jim Cummings, Craig Ferguson, John Cleese, Bud Luckey  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 73 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Walt Disney Studio INTL

**Poohsticks (throwing sticks in a river and watching them appear under the other side of a bridge) originally played by Christopher Milne (Christopher Robin) on a footbridge over the River Medway Hundred Acre Wood inspired by Ashdown Forest.**

Instead of repeating the story here are some treasured quotes:

'I am a Bear of Very Little Brain, and long words bother me.'

'It is more fun to talk with someone who doesn't use long, difficult words but rather short, easy words like 'What about lunch?'

'Rivers know this: there is no hurry. We shall get there some day.'

'Well,' said Pooh, 'what I like best' and then he had to stop and think. Because although eating honey was a very good thing to do, there was a moment just before you began to eat it which was better than when you were, but he didn't know what it was called.

'It is hard to be brave,' said Piglet, sniffing slightly, 'when you're only a Very Small Animal.'

Eeyore: A little Consideration, a little thought for others, makes all the difference.

'One can't complain. I have my friends. Someone spoke to me only yesterday.'

The whole film looks beautifully hand drawn by EH Shepard himself.

Don't miss a frame. TTFN: ta ta for now (Tigger).



## The Last Picture Show Mon 16 2.00



**Peter Bogdanovich's sparkling monochrome masterpiece from 1971, is taken from (and co-written by) Larry McMurtry's, nostalgic semi-autobiographical novel set in small town Texas at the time of nothing much.** The Korean war was a million miles away. The oh so young Timothy Bottoms and Jeff Bridges play Sonny and Duane, two boys who share a coming-of-age lust for the stunning, all knowing, manipulative teenage Jacy, played by first-timer Cybill Shepherd. (weren't all three were first-timers?)

Set in the early 1950s it takes on the never ending themes of frustration and longing, youth and old age, memory and mortality. All understated in such a quiet modesty, its humility becomes extraordinarily affecting. A rarity for any film from any age. The boys are uninspired high-school athletes who loaf about their dusty windblown, one-horse town and wonder about their future. The only fun to be had is in the decrepit pool hall and the old cinema, (not to mention the joys of the swimming baths) both run by the benign, mysterious Sam the Lion (Oscar winning Ben Johnson) whose haunting presence is the film's beating heart. Then there's the kid whose only affirmation of belonging is to have his hat turned round by the bigger boys. I saw it in 1971 and have never forgotten it. It stands up today alongside anything that thinks its better. Don't miss

**Director:** Peter Bogdanovich  
**Starring:** Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 118 mins  
**Origin:** USA 1971  
**By:** Park Circus Films

## Unknown Tue 17 12.30

**Director:** Jaume Collet-Serra  
**Starring:** Liam Neeson, January Jones, Diane Kruger, Frank Langella  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 113 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Optimum Releasing

**A surprise sell-out in April, so back in May in case you missed the thrilling chase.**

Since 2008's other surprise hit, Taken, Liam Neeson has earned himself a bit of a badass reputation. And he continues his European tour with Unknown, a perplexing thriller Luc Besson would happily slap his name over. Dr Martin Harris (Neeson) is an American scientist in Berlin, who, after emerging from a car crash, loses his identity. Suddenly no one, not even his wife, recognises him. On top of this, there are shady assassins hot on his heels. Why is nobody recognising him? Who was the mysterious taxi driver? Why is Liam Neeson so shouty?

"So far, so intriguing. But Jaume Collet-Serra's film fumbles Harris' mounting paranoia, preferring to shoehorn in every conceivable thriller cliché as he trudges snowy Berlin attempting to unlock the puzzle." (*Total Film*)

Unknown, knowingly cobbles together parts of other amnesia themed thrillers such as Polanski's *Frantic* or the Bourne series but has neither the gravitas nor the trepidation to successfully pull it off. But hey, it's Liam Neeson! And he does his astute best at masking the absurd impossibilities. Throw in fancy car chases, a screen stealing turn from Bruno Ganz (*Downfall's* Hitler) and you've got yourself a neat little pot-boiler. (*review JW*)



## Black Swan

Wed 18 2.00



**Back for one day only, Darren Aronofsky's darkly erotic psycho-drama has Natalie Portman, bending and contorting her way to perfection as Nina, a delicate, overly mothered dancer with the New York City Ballet who climbs inside herself to swallow Swan Lake's dual roles of white and black swans.**

Mentored and bullied by a predatory Vincent Cassel, her passion to succeed is fused with a longing to please him. He believes she almost has what it takes to play the white swan but lacks the will to let go and give herself to the seduction of black and white.

It's not long before she befriends rival dancer Lily (Kunis). Less experienced yet naturally fluid; confident and dangerously flirtatious, Lily is the free-spirited Yin to Nina's paranoid Yang.

She exposes Nina's wild side but in doing so only fuels her increasingly fractured demeanour.

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, the film itself takes a grip of shocks and surprises. "Realism barely gets a look in this strange tortuous and savagely bitchy balletic world" (*Times*)

It has polarised our audience, and left those in the middle wondering 'What?' It must be seen on the big screen.

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

## The Eagle

Thu 19 2.00

**Director:** Kevin Macdonald  
**Starring:** Channing Tatum, Jamie Bell, Donald Sutherland, Mark Strong  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 114 mins  
**Origin:** UK 2011  
**By:** Twentieth Century Fox

**Yet another gruelling piece of gritty realism, this time in the freezing Scottish Highland winter. (see comment in Meek's Cut Off)** "If you see a shot of someone and the look (F-word) freezing, it'll be better if they are (f-word) freezing" MacDonald (*Time Out*) Creep! Set in AD140 in Roman Britain, using as his pathfinder a British slave, Esca (Jamie Bell) whose life he spared, Marcus Aquila (Tatum) an ambitious young commander who has accepted a posting to this barbaric place to save his family's honour by retrieving the Ninth Legion's lost golden eagle standard.

Twenty years earlier, 5,000 soldiers had gone missing – presumably slaughtered by the notoriously fierce Celtic tribes on the other side of Hadrian's Wall.

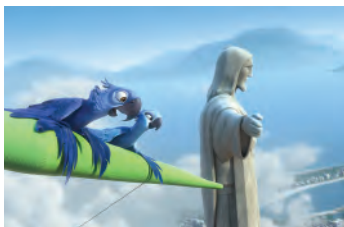
"Kevin Macdonald has made a decent, forthright, if finally uninspired sword'n'sandal drama, based on Rosemary Sutcliff's 1954 children's novel *The Eagle of the Ninth*. The movie runs out of narrative steam a little in its third act, and becomes a faintly ridiculous bromance." (*Guardian*)

"The Eagle is most memorable when it is deranged: when a bunch of tattooed midget punks start springing from trees; when the native Seal People get sloshed on mead (real f-word sloshed Kevin?). Seal prince, Tahar Rahim (*A Prophet*) is wasted and unrecognisable." (*Telegraph*) "More mud and rain than blood and brains" (*Total Film*)



## Rio

Sat 21 2.00, Tue 31 12.30



Jesse Eisenberg plays Blu, a rare blue macaw, kept as a much-loved pet in Minnesota, is taken to his home territory of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil to breed with feisty female Jewel (Anne Hathaway) the last remaining female of the species.

Their shy romance is interrupted when they are kidnapped by criminals hoping to sell them to heartless rich folk.

Carlos Saldanha, director of the Ice Age cartoons, sets the movie in and around his Brazilian home and the scenery could hardly be more accurate and lushly detailed. The city's criminal underworld, for the purposes of this family film, have diverted all their attentions to bird theft.

The director has made a fine fist of capturing the city's landscape with its colourful favelas, lush vegetation, sunny beaches and that most iconic of landmarks, Sugarloaf Mountain.

It's a simple story with a message and breathtaking graphics. So bring the street.

## Source Code

Mon 23 2.00, Tue 24 12.30

**Duncan Jones returns with his second film, another mind-bending thriller, which perhaps even exceeds the lofty heights reached by his excellent debut "Moon".**

Captain Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal) awakens after a helicopter crash in Afghanistan. He finds himself apparently occupying the body of a teacher on a Chicago-bound train. When the train explodes eight minutes later, Stevens again awakens in unfamiliar circumstances, in what appears to be a dilapidated military installation. He is in the Source Code – a futuristic software programme which manipulates reality, allowing users to inhabit the bodies of others, and re-enact periods of time. Stevens learns he is on a mission to gather intelligence concerning the events on board the train, and must re-enact the past eight minutes over and over until he does so...

It is perhaps "Groundhog Day" by way of "Inception"; a reality tinkering, loopy, sci-fi thriller which is terrifically entertaining.

"Source Code is absurd, but carries off its absurdity lightly and stylishly. It is a luxuriously enjoyable film. Jones has put himself into the front-rank of Hollywood directors, the kind who can deliver a big studio picture with brains. With twists and turns, and at breathtaking speed, this film runs on rails." (*Guardian*)

Cancel all journeys but don't miss.

(research Simon Messenger)

**Director:** Carlos Saldanha  
**Voices:** Jesse Eisenberg, Anne Hathaway, Leslie Mann, Jamie Foxx  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 96 mins  
**Origin:** Brazil/Canada/USA 2011  
**By:** Paramount International Pictures





**Director:** Duncan Jones  
**Starring:** Jake Gyllenhaal, Michelle Monaghan, Vera Farmiga, Jeffrey Wright  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 93 mins  
**Origin:** USA/France 2011  
**By:** Optimum Releasing



## Cave of Forgotten Dreams **Wed 25** 2.00

**Director:** Werner Herzog  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 90 mins  
**Origin:** France/Canada/USA/UK/Germany 2010  
**By:** Picturehouse Entertainment

**In 1994 a team of speleologists discovered, in a limestone cliff face in the Ardèche, what would become known as the “Chauvet Cave”.** This unique cave contains the earliest known cave paintings, and other remnants of life in the Upper Palaeolithic era. The general public are not allowed inside, and access to scientists is severely restricted. Last year, filmmaker Werner Herzog and his small team, were granted special access in order to shoot this unique documentary film. Clambering inside the cave, unable to touch the walls, deviate from the tiny path, or suspend lights anywhere, it's a feat of film-making in itself.

Herzog brings his sense of wonder, and at times, his sense of the absurd, to the documentary. His lingering shots (occasionally too lingering) of the artwork rendered inside the cave take on a near-spiritual element. Amusing interviews with scientists, historians, and a perfumer who likes to sniff the exterior of the cave, combined with Herzog's batty narration, and a near-overpowering score, comprise a film that has to be seen to be experienced.

“In the caves, Herzog notes, ‘Time and space lose their meaning.’ Inevitably bound by both, his film is as close to their beauty as we will ever get.” (*Time Out*) (*Simon Messenger*) Come for the glorious Rex 2-D.



## Dialogue Avec Mon Jardinier (Conversations with my Gardener)

Thu 26 2.00



Not only is this a blissful tale beautifully told, it brings a French summer landscape into an English May evening as it did for the winter in January 2007, when it first came. It is one of those rare, small films. It will lift you. A finely observed gem depicts a poignant friendship between two men who seem to be from different worlds but have simply taken different routes. This becomes clear and remains part of the film's magic to the end. It tells of a respected Parisian painter on the brink of divorce as he returns to his childhood home and employs a gardener to tame the vegetable patch.

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

"Perhaps it's their love of food and wine, but France is one of the few countries where films about the land are still made - about how it sustains and nourishes..." (Critic)

Nothing much happens, except everything. It is beautiful. If you liked '...Marguerite' you'll love it.

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

## Hop

Sat 28 2.00

**Director:** Tim Hill  
**Voices:** Russell Brand, James Marsden, Elizabeth Perkins, Kaley Cuoco  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 95 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2011  
**By:** Universal

**Hop mixes animation with live action and it's a soulless and depressing film, with plasticky production design.** The idea is that Fred, an aimless young guy played by James Marsden, is exasperating his father by still living at home with the folks. An idea that might have worked if he was in his teens or early 20s. Marsden is 37. Meanwhile, the cartoon Easter Bunny's kid EB, voiced by the terminally obnoxious Russell Brand, yearns to be a rock'n'roll drummer, and becomes a buddy of Fred. "There's some dodgy subliminal advertising for a certain confectionery company in one early scene. Equally dodgy is a kids' film giving a mention to Hugh Hefner's Playboy bunny empire." (*Guardian*) "Brand continues to cosy up to US audiences, providing the voice of a rebellious novice Easter Bunny who hides out with a human layabout (James Marsden, grinning and bearing it). The lack of any comparable reality check will make this one an endurance test for most kids over five." (*Telegraph*)



## BROTHEL & TWITTER – NOT A NEW ESTATE AGENTS BUT A "POSITIVELY SHOCKING" TRUTH...



This happy face with a dollar stuffed bosom is from a "Brothel in Alaska" web pic. It shows why the police needed all that body armour.

I was told Twitter was now essential, as the whole media world and serious people were on it. So I sent four tweets in as many weeks, if sending is the right word. The first one some time ago to see where it went, and three more recently. Each was about some gripe or other and all equally up themselves.

However the first, which was about The UK Film Council (now defunct-ish) gifting Harvey Weinstein over £1million for The King's Speech, was to my surprise, 'followed' by a fair few names. The fairest of all came from New York's own Sandra Wood. Her reply was "Sex relieves tension, love causes it". Wow! What a moist response to such a dry tweet. Is this for me I thought? Luckily the moment past – Sandra hadn't fallen madly in love, across oceans, with my wit and vision. No, it was a sex tweet from a torso with no head but managing black cascading hair over one shoulder, pants half off and fabulous tits, but I didn't study it carefully. Quite uncalled for I thought. So much for those 'serious' tweeters. On the other hand should you fancy being tweeted by a fetching torso, Sandra's bi-line was 'sexy sweet secret'

at [www.hornyknittedtrunks.com](http://www.hornyknittedtrunks.com).

Fantastic! It doesn't matter what you do on "t'internet", someone somewhere, gloriously dirty, will find you. Which slides us neatly into the Gazette's report on the brothel in Charles Street. "I'm shocked, positively shocked" was one real quote.

The headline "Brothel busted in police swoop" was followed by "Police in body armour, armed with dogs and equipped with shields swooped on an upmarket street following a tip-off from eagle-eyed neighbours" "We'd never seen the police like that with so many officers and dogs." You couldn't script this stuff. Nevertheless, with body armour, shields and dogs; it's good to know we're in safe hands in case of "irregular occurrences". Moreover, that our police are well protected when out swooping. What did they think they might catch? Besides, isn't 'swooping' all part of the 'service'? Another priceless Gazette quote to finish: "Children shouldn't be exposed to what adults get up to" especially "in a very decent area..."

PS Me, Sandra and a couple of decent police dogs are now an armour-plated item, or should that be items?

## COMMENTS &amp; LETTERS



This is David Woollacott's sign sculpture, commissioned by Dacorum BC in 1994. Hand carved at his Durrants Lane workshop, it still stands proudly at the entrance to Tring. More pictures of his work as the summer goes on.

## NO TRAIN.. NO PAIN

Even Thomas the Tank Engine knows how silly Gordon (the fast engine?) can be when he goes too fast. "You'll never reach Birmingham that way." said Thomas. "He will, with a hundred miles of beautiful countryside destroyed, £33billion and a following Tory wind." replied the Fat Controller.



## PERCY'S...NO NEWS TOO OLD.

Who or what is Sorbonne? Yes, it is that famous Paris university.

It also happens to be the name of the company representing the planning application to rebuild Percy Birtchnell's shop.

The question of 'did it fall or was it pushed' seems to have had little public profile considering the very public and dangerous collapse of such a solid High Street landmark.

Therefore until somebody (official) does investigate, you should all resist planning applications that propose anything but a carbon-copy of Percy's shop inside and out, to the last walnut/oak panel, using each of its stock bricks; palletted and relocated during demolition. Then when it's complete, we can open the betting on how long it takes before it falls down again?

McDonalds - a great April-fool spoof. Well done whoever you are. Let's talk.



## ANSWERS (FROM PAGE 5)

**IN COMMON:** Not an ounce of talent between them

**ODD ONE OUT:** Sam Taylor Wood.

Whilst equally bypassed in the talent dept, she is the only one whose lack of it has never been foisted on hapless thousands/millions on regular radio or television slots, or in stand-up.