

# THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E

ELEGY

SEPTEMBER...

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

SEPTEMBER 2008 Issue 42  
[www.therexcinema.com](http://www.therexcinema.com)

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

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**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:

<b>Rosie Abbott</b>	<b>Linda Moss</b>
<b>Henry Beardshaw</b>	<b>Louise Ormiston</b>
<b>Julia Childs</b>	<b>Liz Parkin</b>
<b>Lindsey Davies</b>	<b>Izzi Robinson</b>
<b>Holly Gilbert</b>	<b>Georgia Rose</b>
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<b>Tom Glasser</b>	<b>Miranda Samson</b>
<b>Beth Hannaway</b>	<b>Tina Thorpe</b>
<b>Luke Karmali</b>	<b>Olivia Wilson</b>
<b>Amelia Kellett</b>	<b>Ashley Wood</b>
<b>Jo Littlejohn</b>	<b>Calum Wood</b>
<b>Bethany McKay</b>	<b>Keymea Yazdanian</b>
<b>Malcolm More</b>	

**Sally Thorpe** In charge

**Alun Rees** Chief projectionist (Original)

**Jon Waugh** 1st assistant projectionist

**Martin Coffill** Part-time assistant projectionist

**Jacque Rose** Chief Box Office & Bar

**Oliver Hicks** Best Boy

**Jemma Gask** Key Grip

**Michael Glasheen** Gaffer

**Val & Lisa Williams** Set

**Jane Clucas & Lynn Hendry** PR/Marketing/FoH

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Artists

**Paul Fullagar, Alan Clooney**

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[www.therexcinema.com](http://www.therexcinema.com)



We're asked about our peculiar address... It is just the street where we live. It will have some historical reason. Anyone know ?

**IMPORTANT: THE ADVANCED BOOKING LIST (ABL)**

This expires 30th November. The current ABL year will end with November's film listing.

Please note; it does not extend into December. The new one begins on 1st December. Renewal will not be automatic, so the ABL will not roll-over into the new year (Dec'08 to Nov'09). Instead the ABL will go on sale for everybody on **Saturday 25th October** at 10.30am from the box office. This way, it is hoped everyone has same chance.

The ABL is limited to 500 people and will cost £175.

This year's experimental limit of 500 has successfully ensured, that upon general release, more people than before were able to get tickets for the most popular films.

I hope you agree this has made it easier for everybody to get tickets compared to the early rushes of the first two years.

Only one title (Mamma Mia) sold out on general-release weekend. No other title all year has done this, unlike in 2007 when things were selling out even before general release!

I don't expect this new ABL to sell out on the first weekend (25th Oct) so please take time to consider it. Remember too we hold back a limited number of seats for the nightly raffle on the door.

**NEW PRICE LIST**

Balcony/circle:	£8.00	cons £6.50
At tables:	£10.00	cons £8.50
'Royal box':	£12.00	(no cons)
Whole box (6 seats)	£66.00	
Matinees will stay at	£5.00 balcony. £6.50	
tables.	£10 Box	(no cons).

**NEW TICKET PRICES IN SEPTEMBER.**

From 1st Sept, seat prices will go up by £1:00.

This is only the second increase in four years. It remains a fraction of what it would be if we tried to recoup our VAT on tickets.

From the outset, we have absorbed all costs and extra taxes, suppliers increases, inflation and fuel cost inflation.

We have yet to add the 6p drinks tax imposed in April. You might remember, the same day pub prices went up 20p and more!

Our drinks prices will stay the same until December.



A group came dressed in 1940s period clothes for Les Femmes de l'ombre (Female Agents) in July... and magnificent they looked too.

It seems now even after only a few summers, our mag/programme would not complete without a picture from the balcony – here in full bloom, a basket is caught in a (rare) ray of late July sunshine.







S E P T E M B E R   E V E N I N G S

## Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis (Welcome to the Sticks) with Red Balloon

**Mon 1 7.30**

**Director:** Dany Boon / Albert Lamorisse  
**Starring:** Anne Marvin, Kad Merad, Dany Boon, Zoe Felix / Pascal Lamorisse, Georges Sellier  
**Certificate:** 12A / U  
**Duration:** 106 / 34 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008 / 1956  
**By:** Pathe Distribution / Park Circus

**These two films might not compliment each other. Come and see.**

“**The Red Balloon** (1956) is one of the most beautiful short films ever made. Filmed entirely in the picturesque back streets and narrow parisienne alleys of the Old Menilmotant district, The Red Balloon has been acclaimed throughout the world as an immortal masterpiece of lyrical poetry...”

### Welcome to the Sticks

To general astonishment, this unremarkable little comedy has stormed the box office across France. The jokes are about living north of Lille; The hero is bald and the main the characters are ordinary. Thanks in no small part to clever sub-titles, and their faces, the humour swims the Channel without getting wet.

It is a gem of gems, a joy not be missed.



## In Bruges

**Tue 2 7.30**



**Yet more demand and still... Not to be missed.**

When a job goes wrong, veteran hit man Ken and his rookie partner Ray are sent by Harry to lie low in Bruges and await his call. When it finally comes, their ‘holiday’ becomes a life-and-death struggle of darkly comic proportions. Signalling the emergence of a new filmmaker, whose films might be well worth watching. This is McDonagh’s first feature (his controversial short, Six Shooter won an Oscar 2006).

“In Bruges is packed with rich, edgy humour and dazzling profanity. The film’s real pleasure lies in McDonagh’s verbal felicity - the naturalistic dialogue is a breath of fresh air - and while Farrell struggles to juggle his humorous ‘thick’ persona with romantic pathos, Gleeson excels in his role as the weary gangster pondering the possibilities for his own shot at redemption.”

(*Time Out*)

“A double-act with depth seize upon an invigorating script and defy expectations” (*Channel 4*)

“Olivier-winning playwright Martin McDonagh is like Tarantino with a thesaurus... his dialogue fizzles...”

(*Marie Claire*)

**Director:** Martin McDonagh  
**Starring:** Ciaran Hinds, Colin Farrell, Brendan Gleeson, Ralph Fiennes  
**Certificate:** 18  
**Duration:** 107 mins  
**Origin:** Belgium, UK 2008  
**By:** Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

# Mamma Mia

**Wed 3 7.30, Thu 4 7.30**

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

**The story's fluffy, the music's beige, the actors are irritating.** They're having far too much fun for their age. To add further insult... the sky is blue – the whole time! Come, sing along and dance in the aisles.



# Wall-E

**Fri 5 7.30, Sat 6 7.00**



**Another and the latest in the ever growing line of "best yet – ever" feature length cartoons.**

The year is 2700. WALL-E (an acronym for Waste Allocation Load Lifter - Earth-Class), a robot, spends every day doing what he was made for. But soon he will discover what he was truly meant for. From Academy Award®-winning director Andrew Stanton (Finding Nemo), WALL-E is the story of one robot's comic adventures as he chases his dream across the galaxy. This latest animated feature from Pixar is said to be amongst its finest. It is "witty, profound and beautifully realised, with a faint whiff of E.T." So there! It does look amazing, so come and see for yourself. Bring a grown-up to explain it to...

**Director:** Andrew Stanton  
**Starring:** Kathy Najimy, Sigourney Weaver, John Ratzenberger, Fred Willard  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 103 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2008  
**By:** Buena Vista International

# CLASSIC BUSTER KEATON SHORTS

Sun 7 3.30

**T**his is yet another, and long-overdue, excursion into the magic of pioneering filmmaking and the fourth REX collaboration with Bristol's Slapstick Silent Comedy Festival and Bristol Silents. Together we present an afternoon in the genius of Buster Keaton. To keep alive the spirit of Humph at the Rex, I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue panellists and former 'Goodies' Tim Brooke-Taylor and (SIH't a Clue's creator) Graeme Garden will present their favourite Buster Keaton shorts alongside the doo-wop, a capella harmonies of the splendid Matinee Idles. Their gorgeously rich singing is the result of an unlikely and extraordinary line-up. Ex-DARTS members: lead singer Griff Fender, Pikey Butler (who now lives in France and only returns for gigs) and Den Hegarty (now lecturing in Psychology at Exeter University). Together they harmonise alongside actor Paul McGann and ex Mint Julip star Debbie Charles. Their short choral rendition from the side of the stage accompanying the film compilation: 'Silent Clowns' is one the most moving things you are likely to experience on any stage.

**T**im and Graeme reveal how Buster Keaton's remarkable films have influenced their lives and work, accompanied throughout by the 'last of' the silent movie piano maestros: Neil Brand. This promises to be a rare afternoon; a gem of music, laughter and surprise. Drag children from under the television, confiscate their gameboys and comb their hair, for something they will remember for the rest of their lives.

For all things 'Silent' go to -  
[www.bristolssilents.org.uk](http://www.bristolssilents.org.uk)



SLAPSTICK  
2008





## Leonard Cohen

Mon 8 7.30



**Like a bird on a wire, Leonard Cohen is free without trying and unique without caring.** Some of the best songs of the second half of the twentieth century, belong to his voice.

Alongside Dylan's, James Taylor's and Jackson Browne's, his voice remains majestic and uplifting to at least two generations. Like the others, his songs were never pop, will never age and are untouched by fashion.

Received in rapture at Robert Redford's Sundance Film Festival, it's a tribute concert from the Sydney Opera House staged in January 2005.

This might be the films downfall.

However, he "touches us with his perfect mind/body" voice, talking us through a life loved by millions. Something he never courted, and seems largely unaware.

The stage is strewn with pop's egos, eager to be loved. He lets the young pups have their way with his priceless songs. Thus leaves us wishing there was more of him. However, when he does open his mouth to speak or sing, you hang on to every line.

He is on tour in the UK until November. Come and see him on our screen first. Don't miss.

**Director:** Lian Lunson  
**Starring:** Bono, Leonard Cohen, Nick Cave  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 103 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2006  
**By:** Lionsgate Films UK

## Sketches of Frank Gehry

Tue 9 7.30

**Director:** Sydney Pollack  
**Starring:** Sydney Pollack, Julian Schnabel, Frank Gehry  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 84 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2005  
**By:** Artificial Eye

**This is a fitting swansong to Sydney Pollack (died June 2008) about his long-time friend, Frank Gehry.**

Frank G is responsible for some of the most unique, iconic and controversial buildings of modern times: the gorgeous Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao for one!!! The Experience Music Project in Seattle, and closer to home; designs for the proposed King Alfred Leisure Centre in Hove.

Pollack's informal style breathes life into this rare footage of one man's creative thinking. From first sketches, final structures and the man himself, the director misses nothing. It is their easy friendship which makes this documentary clear and beautifully measured.

Pollack balances Gehry's charismatic presence with few talking heads: his therapist (why would one so certain need a therapist???) and Diving Bell director/artist Julian Schnabel.

Perhaps Pollack could have made more of Frank's controversial place in the architectural world. (see: This Property Is Condemned, 1966)

"Come, dance for architecture, and marvel at Gehry's awe-inspiring structures, and a wonderful portrait of a creator - his talent, as vast as the Guggenheim; the man, is as humble as my garden shed." (anon)  
 His 'Pavilion' at The Serpentine will brighten Hyde Park until November. Catch it now before it goes... and this film.





# Paris

with Red Balloon

Wed 10 7.30

If you came for *Paris Je t'aime*, or *Angel-A* or tonight for *The Red Balloon*, this is yours.

**Note:** No trailers. It will start on time with the timeless and evocative *Red Balloon* (1956). See page 12.

"Lives and loves criss-cross in Cedric Klapisch's latest Euro-trotting paean to the City of Lights. In this up-market soap opera, a stellar cast are so watchable we barely notice the film around them is clunky. A *Moulin Rouge* dancer with a fatal heart condition, the smouldering Romain Duris broods in an enviable Montmartre flat, while social-working sibling Binoche dresses down beautifully, and the nearby market provides sundry characters." (*Times, Knowledge*)

As its bold title suggests, the city itself plays a major part. The inevitable Eiffel Tower and Sacré-Coeur make appearances, as do the spooky Catacombs and the wholesale food market at Rungis. The film splinters into a series of city-life vignettes. A university professor is besotted with a student; a casually racist baker takes on a Maghrebi girl...

Although it attempts to cram in one too many slices-of-life, Duris, Binoche and the ensemble cast inhabit their varied roles with the great tenderness.

Don't think twice. Steal the day to be here...



**Director:** Cedric Klapisch / Albert Lamorisse  
**Starring:** Romain Duris, Juliette Binoche, Albert Dupontel / Pascal Lamorisse, Georges Sellier  
**Certificate:** 15 / U  
**Duration:** 130 / 34 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008 / 1956  
**By:** Optimum Releasing / Park Circus



## Jesus is Magic

Thu 11 7.30

**Director:** Liam Lynch  
**Starring:** Sarah Silverman, Brian Posehn, Laura Silverman  
**Certificate:** 18  
**Duration:** 72 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2005  
**By:** Warners Music

To say Silverman is bold is an understatement: religion, AIDS, her own Jewish stuff, the Holocaust, the disabled, the homeless, midgets, etc. And... 9/11 (you won't believe this screening date is entirely coincidental – a joy all the more).

Heralded by some as one of the finest comedians in the world, Sarah Silverman's first dalliance onto the big screen finds her in the most fearless of moods.

In "Jesus Is Magic" her acclaimed stand-up routine is caught on film, interspersed with flashbacks, duff music vids and comic sketches.

"Her comic persona is that of a clueless and politically incorrect hipster who says terrible things without being aware of their shock value. Sometimes it works...sometimes it doesn't" (*Standard*) Either way, Silverman herself remains blasé - "I don't care if you think I'm racist...I just want you to think I'm thin." If you leave your moral compass in the car with the family dog, windows tight shut, you'll enjoy it more. The spirit of Lenny Bruce is alive in SS and still kicking bottom where it hurts to laugh. We were lucky (or not, depending) to get this in Sept.

So, lick the babysitter's face and cancel prayers... but don't miss.



## Married Life

Fri 12 7.30



"You could call this Ira Sachs film an ironic and star-crossed romance. It is about a husband (Chris Cooper) who plans to murder his wife (Patricia Clarkson) in order to leave home with his younger mistress (Rachel McAdams). His strange idea is that, since he's still very fond of her, he doesn't want her to tell her he's leaving. The story is told through the eyes of the husband's best friends (a louche Pierce Brosnan) who has an eye on the mistress himself. Each character is occupied largely by their own obsessions but still struggles to avoid the inevitable hurt those passions imply. It's a good cast, with Cooper outstanding, but Sachs's direction is stodgy and the screenplay self-conscious. However there is a good story to be told and Sachs's way of telling it may be deliberately old-fashioned, like a familiar Hollywood love story turned inside out." "This 1940s melodrama toys with elements of film noir, but it is more accurately described as a sly, sophisticated comedy."

"...there are four very good actors here giving high-IQ performances." "...old-fashioned film noir with a quality cast and a tasty undercurrent of deceit and betrayal."

(*Standard, Guardian, Telegraph, Times*). Sounds great, come.

**Director:** Ira Sachs  
**Starring:** Patricia Clarkson, Pierce Brosnan, Chris Cooper  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 90 mins  
**Origin:** Canada, USA 2007  
**By:** Verve

## Mamma Mia

Sat 13 7.00, Sun 14 6.00

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

The story's fluffy, the music's beige, the actors are irritating. They're having far too much fun for their age. To add further insult... the sky is blue – the whole time! Come, sing along and dance in the aisles.



## Summer Hours

Mon 15 7.30



This beautifully observed and played drama follows the troubled fate of a priceless private art collection, as family members disagree over its best use. Preserve or sell? Display or protect? With a stunning cast this is an intelligent and tender assessment of the power of memory and the value of objects. "A poignant tale of people dealing with the logistics of bereavement." (*S Times Culture*)

"Assayas's most fully satisfying film for some while, this is a warm, wise drama about the tensions and mysteries of family life.

The whole family gathers for an idyllic lunch to celebrate the seventy fifth birthday of their widowed mother Helene...

While never ignoring the grief death causes, Assayas refuses to sentimentalise it. It's a film of deft nuances, particularly alert to the fact that everyone has his or her reasons for everything.

Perhaps the characters are finally a little too decent but it would be churlish to bemoan the generosity of spirit in a film so beautifully performed, intelligently written and fluently directed." (*Time Out*). Sounds like another not to be missed.

**Director:** Olivier Assayas  
**Starring:** Jeremie Renier, Charles Berling, Juliette Binoche  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 102 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008  
**By:** Artificial Eye

# Man on Wire

**Tue 16 7.30, Wed 17 7.30**

**Marsh presents Petit as a kind of acrobatic Werner Herzog, talented, eccentric and perhaps slightly crazy.**

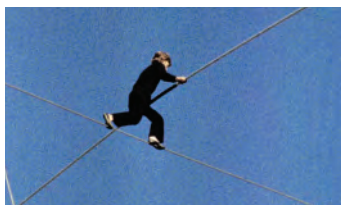
The illegal walk, described by Petit and his group of co-conspirators as the “artistic crime of the century”, is here lovingly recreated through archive material, dramatic reconstructions and most importantly, insightful interviews with those involved.

Their story unfolds in heist film-style, as 450 lbs of steel cable, plus rigging and personnel are smuggled up to the top of the towers over a week! “We had security passes and everything!”

His previous illegal coups were high-wiring between the spires of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and between the giant northern pylons of Sydney Harbour Bridge.

He’s clearly a genius of a sort – but with accomplices who prepared the ground for him surreptitiously and are drawn to tears by the memory of it all.

That 9/11 is never mentioned gives the film weight, and reminds us when they weren’t grim geopolitical symbols or commercial havens, but simply giant foot-rests for a barmy Frenchman.



**Director:** James Marsh  
**Starring:** David Frank, Ardis Campbell, Philippe Petit, David Demato  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 90 mins  
**Origin:** UK 2008  
**By:** Icon Film Distribution Ltd





# Elegy

Thu 18 7.30, Fri 19 7.30

**In this tale of the older man younger women thing, adapted from Phillip Roth's *The Dying Animal*, "Coixet has found a tenderness and vulnerability so deeply buried as to be almost undetectable." (*Independent*)**

Consuela is David's student. He is post middle-age and hitherto proud of his easy, throwaway seduction of starstruck students. Enter Ms Cruz and a ticket to fairyland. (Suppose it could happen, given the current rumour that she is Xavier Bardem's latest hotwater bottle, and of his miraculous resemblance to Sir Ben.)

"There's nothing grandstanding about Kingsley's portrait but the quiet concentration of his playing is as impressive as anything he has given since the quite different *Sexy Beast*." (*DM Standard*)

Although we may dislike his lecturer/lecher, it is easy to see how his studied performance makes his character credibly attractive - albeit he is old, bald, non-too pretty and more than a little creepy.

"Kingsley's complex portrait passes from pathetic insecurity to shocking regret."

And back again. "Beautifully photographed by Jean-Claude Larrieu, Cruz gives her best English-speaking performance yet." (*Independent*)

Don't miss.



<b>Director:</b>	Isabel Coixet
<b>Starring:</b>	Patricia Clarkson, Ben Kingsley, Penelope Cruz, Peter Sarsgaard
<b>Certificate:</b>	15
<b>Duration:</b>	112 mins
<b>Origin:</b>	USA 2008
<b>By:</b>	Entertainment Film Distribution



## Journey to the Centre of the Earth

Sat 20 7.00

**Director:** Brendan McKenna  
**Starring:** Brendan Fraser, Anita Briem, Josh Hutcherson, Eric Brevig  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 95 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2008  
**By:** Entertainment Film Distribution

This is a kind of 2008 movie update of Jules Verne's classic sci-fi/fantasy novel. Using the novel itself as the catalyst for action.

They find a secret code inside the 1864 book which matches volcanic activity numbers in Iceland. So our hero, scientist Trevor Anderson (Brendan Fraser), referring to his missing brother's notes sets out with his nephew Sean (Josh Hutcherson) to Iceland to investigate his brother's theories, enlisting a fellow scientist's daughter, Hannah (Anita Briem), as a guide. Soon the trio's Icelandic mountain trek descends into a cave and, then deeper still to, where else but the center of the earth?

Here dinosaurs and other strange prehistoric creatures still dwell.

After more dangerous encounters with the native flora and fauna, than you could shake Jules Verne at, Trevor, Sean, and Hannah must find a way back to the surface or face being stranded miles below the earth's crust.

Well this sounds action packed alright children... Come for a real old fashioned adventure.



## Cous Cous

Sun 21 5.00pm



Evocative of Ken Loach in its instinctive sense of community, this is an affectionate and intimate portrait of the cultural landscape of 21st century French-North Africans.

From writer-director Kechiche comes this expansive, energetic, good-humoured social tableau. Set amongst a North-African dockside community in the working Mediterranean port of Sète, west of Montpellier, it centres around the opening of a floating restaurant.

Monsieur Beiji wants to realise his long-cherished dream of opening a boat restaurant specialising in fish-and-couscous dishes. But the ship is still to be renovated, and local dignitaries need to be persuaded the venture has a future.

And then there are Beiji's friends and family - including the new woman in his life, his ex-wife and a host of neighbours - who have their own parts to play in the success or failure of his dream.

It's gorgeous tale, a little long in the telling, but shouldn't be missed.

**Director:** Abdel Kechiche  
**Starring:** Leila D'Issernio, Sabrina Ouazani, Méléze Bouzid  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 154 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008  
**By:** Artificial Eye

## Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame

**Mon 22** 7.30

**Director:** Hana Makhmalbaf  
**Starring:** Abbas Alijome, Abdolali Hoseinali, Nikbakht Noruz  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 77 mins  
**Origin:** Iran 2008  
**By:** Slingshot

**Daughter of acclaimed director Mohsen Makhmalbaf, this is Hana's second film.**

Set in Bamain, amidst the rubble of the massive statues of Buddha blown up by the Taliban in 2001, the film is a deeply felt political allegory of the impossible situation facing girls and women in Afghanistan. Intimately told from a child's perspective, including a world of make-believe that is both exhilarating and alarming. The film follows six-year-old Bakhtay, who decides she will go to school at all costs. She sets out on an odyssey that pits this endearingly obstinate girl against numerous, seemingly insurmountable obstacles – including, most ominously, a band of boys pretending to be the Taliban! While we are warned of Islamic 'hate schools', remember children play! It was cowboys and indians once. Playing pretend goodies and baddies is as old as hide-n-seek and for seven year old boys, frightening little girls, is older still. Children have always played pretend-to-be-grown-up games. Those who don't grow out of them become dictators and presidents or own Topshop or Chelsea. Hence, the world is ruled by seven year olds boys. Don't miss.



## Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day

**Tue 23** 7.30, **Wed 24** 7.30



**Can you get a life and discover love, all in one day? Two women are about to find out.**

There is an air of the 'Sound of Music' to this tale as frumpy, penniless English governess Guinevere Pettigrew (Frances McDormand) enters a comically different world. Employed as social secretary for American actress Delysia Lafosse (Amy Adams), her discomfort is immediately apparent.

Sheltered Miss Pettigrew is out of place in a world of Champagne-swilling, bed-hopping socialites partying merrily through the warning signs of war.

But she has no choice but to roll up her sleeves and muck in, providing a welcome anchor for dizzy Delysia, whose principle problem is juggling the three different men she is bedding.

"Lee Pace is miscast as Delysia's true love, but Adams is adorable as the wide-eyed would-be starlet, with McDormand spot-on as the sensible half of the odd couple.

A delightfully frivolous screwball comedy." (*Time Out*)

Definitely one to brighten late September.

**Director:** Bahrat Nalluri  
**Starring:** Shirley Henderson, Ciaran Hinds, Frances McDormand, Amy Adams  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 92 mins  
**Origin:** UK, USA 2008  
**By:** Momentum Pictures

## Tropa de Elite (Elite Squad) Thu 25 7.30

**Director:** José Padilha  
**Starring:** Wagner Moura, André Ramiro, Caio Junqueira  
**Certificate:** 18  
**Duration:** 114 mins  
**Origin:** Brazil 2007  
**By:** Optimum Releasing

**“When this won the Berlin’s Golden Bear earlier this year, there were those who thought the jury were nuts. But the judges were not the only people who liked Tropa de Elite: more than 10 million Brazilians did too!**

Padilha has made an uncomfortable film which some may regard as retrograde, however the Berlin Festival jury, did not. A big prize for a film that simply doesn’t look any better than average cops and robbers thrillers?” (*Standard*)

“It shouldn’t be judged so easily. Focusing on a stressed out special force charged with keeping the capital’s favelas quiet during a visit from the pope in 1997, Elite Squad is an uncomfortable meditation on the role of the law in a morally skewed society.”

(*Guardian Guide*)

It takes an ambivalent stance but plays up the edgy excitement of rough justice administered by men pushed to their limits. They are BOPE, a hard as nails special operations battalion who combat drugs and guns in the favelas (slums) with extreme zero tolerance.

It’s a world rife with corruption. Nobody stays a good guy for long once in contact with Rio’s underworld. Padilha’s previous film, the documentary: Bus 174, makes the point more eloquently. As always, you decide.



## Hell Boy 2 Fri 26 7.30, Sat 27 7.00



**The ever playful master of the supernatural, Guillermo del Toro (Pan’s Labyrinth, The Devil’s Backbone, producer of The Orphanage) is back for this 2004 comic-book sequel Hellboy.**

For the uninitiated, Hellboy (Ron Perlman) is a demon who, as a baby, snuck into our dimension through a portal built by the Nazis in the early 1940s! Now fully grown (and resembling a big, red, angry Tom Waits) Hellboy works for the U.S. Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defence. He also has a sledge-hammer-like right hand made of red stone, which is pretty useful given his line of work.

In this outing Hellboy, his ‘girlfriend’ Selma Blair and his mutant buddies must stop an ancient war between humanity and the mythical (purportedly unstoppable and bent on world destruction) Golden Army.

As ever del Toro’s universe is highly stylised, peppered with fantastic creatures and astonishing visuals complimenting the sharp script and Perlman’s dryly comic portrayal of this ridiculous hardman.

Engaging for both adults and children. Curiously there’s nothing scary about del Toro’s monsters, if anything they’re quite comical. This is one of 2008’s smarter, sharper and more fun, fantasy films. Come, and be amazed at something where the very title puts you off.

**Director:** Guillermo Toro  
**Starring:** Luke Goss, Selma Blair, Doug Jones, Ron Perlman  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 120 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2008  
**By:** Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd



# X-Files

Sun 28 6.00

**Chris Carter re-opens the X-Files once more, six years after the final episode and a long decade after the first awful X-Files film.**

Helpfully set in the present, we find Mulder (Duchovny) and Scully (Anderson) married (yuk) and trailing the abductor of several young women.

Naturally the plot thickens when they run into former priest and visionary Father Joseph Fitzpatrick Crissman (Billy Connolly on top form!) on the snow-covered fields of West Virginia.

He believes God is sending him visions of the kidnappings. "Without giving too much away we're treated to typical X-Files severed limbs, organ transplants and other unheimlich." (*synops*)

It might be unfair to say this is "one for the fans", but if you spent the mid-90s cowering behind your settee (anybody remember the Flukeman monster? Go on children - Google him), and are looking for closure on Mulder and Scully's relationship then...?

Yes. It's not much more than an extended monster of the week episode and Yes, they're not getting any younger, but come and pay your last respects to this greatest of sci-fi series.

The best gag comes when the X-alien theme plays over portraits of George Dubya and frock dresser J Edgar H.



<b>Director:</b>	Chris Carter
<b>Starring:</b>	David Duchovny, Gillian Anderson
<b>Certificate:</b>	15
<b>Duration:</b>	104 mins
<b>Origin:</b>	Canada, USA 2008
<b>By:</b>	Twentieth Century Fox



# Before the Rains

Mon 29 7.30

**Director:** Santosh Sivan  
**Starring:** Linus Roache, Leopold Benedict, Rahul Bose  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 98 mins  
**Origin:** India, UK, USA 2008  
**By:** Metrodome Distributors

**Forbidden romance, empire, and culture clash all lie at the heart of this drama.** In 1930s India, Britain's reign is beginning to lose its hold on the region. Santosh Sivan is the formidably talented Indian cinematographer and director who made *The Terrorist* in 1999, starring Ayesha Dharker as a suicide bomber. Since then, he has dabbled in commercial Bollywood. Here he has produced a movie in the picturesque "Raj" vein, presented in association with Merchant-Ivory. Linus Roache stars as Henry Moores, an ambitious sahib in Kerala who has borrowed heavily to finance the building of a private road for the fantastically lucrative spice trade. He has formed a close, but painfully unequal relationship with an Indian, TK Neelan (Rahul Bose) and despite being a married man whose wife and young son are about to join him from England, Moores is conducting a "dangerous, thrillingly erotic affair with Sajani (Nandita Das), his beautiful Indian maid." (I say!)

The film is fervently acted and well shot, and Das provides a powerful, emotional force, but there is something a little clanky about the whole project, a persistent made-for-television feel." (*Guardian*) Worse, there seems to be more than a bit of boddice ripping Mills & Boon here.



# Neil Young - Deja Vu

Tue 30 7.30



**Déjà Vu is taken from the title of Young's own shared seminal classic 1970 Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young (CSNY) album.** This is directed by him and follows the (surprisingly still living and once dark haired and skinny) group across America on their 2006 "Freedom of Speech" tour. Having dealt with Vietnam 40 years ago, he jumps between then and today's Iraqi conflict. This clearly divides concertgoers between those breaking down, and those walking out. Hence their concert in 'good-old-boy' Atlanta, Georgia is perhaps the film's most memorable. "The onstage footage is much of a muchness, but the inter-gig bits are very interesting: Stephen Stills campaigning for local candidates, Young jamming with a war-vet protest singer, the howling rage of affronted concertgoers after they launch into 'Let's Impeach the President'..." (*Guardian*) Much more than concert film, it has more to do with The Dixie Chicks' "Shut Up and Sing" (which we'll show again in Nov). It's a powerful reminder of how little America's political landscape has changed in four decades. As their music, though some harmonies are better remembered on record. Once the most hip quartet ever... come for that.

**Director:** Neil Young  
**Starring:** David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash, Neil Young  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 96 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2008  
**By:** Metrodome Distributors

## COMING SOON

### New releases

Somers Town  
El Bano del Papa  
Kubrick Fest  
The 3 colours Trilogy  
Righteous Kill  
The Duchess  
Rock n Rolla

### Back by demand

Welcome to the Sticks  
Everything is Illuminated  
The Band's Visit  
Mamma Mia  
In Bruges

*Kubrick Fest*



*The Duchess*

*El Bano del Papa*



*Righteous Kill*

## SEPTEMBER FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

1	MON	WALL-E	2.00
1	MON	WELCOME TO THE STICKS/ THE RED BALLOON	7.30
2	TUE	WALL-E	12.30
2	TUE	IN BRUGES	7.30
3	WED	WELCOME TO THE STICKS	2.00
3	WED	MAMMA MIA	7.30
4	THU	MAMMA-MIA	2.00, 7.30
5	FRI	WALL-E	7.30
6	SAT	WALL-E	2.00, 7.00
7	SUN	BUSTER KEATON SHORTS	3.30
8	MON	MAMMA-MIA	2.00
8	MON	LEONARD COHEN / I'M YOUR MAN	7.30
9	TUE	MAMMA-MIA	12.30
9	TUE	SKETCHES OF FRANK GEHRY	7.30
10	WED	MAMMA-MIA	2.00
10	WED	PARIS / THE RED BALLOON	7.30
11	THU	IN BRUGES	2.00
11	THU	JESUS IS MAGIC	7.30
12	FRI	MARRIED LIFE	7.30
13	SAT	MAMMA-MIA	2.00, 7.00
14	SUN	MAMMA MIA	6.00
15	MON	SUMMER HOURS	2.00, 7.30
16	TUE	MAMMA-MIA	12.30
16	TUE	MAN ON WIRE	7.30
17	WED	MAN ON WIRE	2.00, 7.30
18	THU	ELEGY	2.00, 7.30
19	FRI	ELEGY	7.30
20	SAT	JOURNEY TO CENTRE OF EARTH	2.00, 7.00
21	SUN	COUS COUS	5.00
22	MON	COUS COUS	2.00
22	MON	BUDDHA COLLAPSED OUT OF SHAME	7.30
23	TUE	MISS PETTIGREW...	12.30, 7.30
24	WED	MISS PETTIGREW...	2.00, 7.30
25	THU	THE FOX AND THE CHILD	2.00
25	THU	TROPA DE ELITE	7.30
26	FRI	HELL BOY 2	7.30
27	SAT	THE FOX AND THE CHILD	2.00
27	SAT	HELL BOY 2	7.00
28	SUN	X-FILES	6.00
29	MON	BEFORE THE RAINS	2.00, 7.30
30	TUE	BON VOYAGE	12.30
30	TUE	NEIL YOUNG / DÉJÀ VU	7.30



# S E P T E M B E R 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



## Wall-E

**Mon 1** 2.00, **Tue 2** 12.30,  
**Sat 6** 2.00

**Director:** Andrew Stanton  
**Starring:** Kathy Najimy, Sigourney Weaver,  
John Ratzenberger, Fred Willard  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 103 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2008  
**By:** Buena Vista International

**Another and the latest in the ever growing line of “best yet – ever” feature length cartoons.**

The year is 2700. WALL-E (an acronym for Waste Allocation Load Lifter - Earth-Class), a robot, spends every day doing what he was made for. But soon he will discover what he was truly meant for. From Academy Award®-winning director Andrew Stanton (Finding Nemo), WALL-E is the story of one robot's comic adventures as he chases his dream across the galaxy. This latest animated feature from Pixar is said to be amongst its finest. It is “witty, profound and beautifully realised, with a faint whiff of E.T.” So there! It does look amazing, so come and see for yourself. Bring a grown-up to explain it to...



## Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis (Welcome to the Sticks)

**Wed 3** 2.00



**To general astonishment, this unremarkable little comedy has stormed the box office across France.**

The jokes are about living north of Lille; The hero is bald and the main the characters are ordinary. Thanks in no small part to miraculous sub-titles, and the actors' faces, the humour reaches immediately across the channel. It is an absolute gem of gems, a real joy and must not be missed.

**Director:** Dany Boon  
**Starring:** Anne Marvin, Kad Merad, Dany Boon, Zoe Felix  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 106 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008  
**By:** Pathe Distribution

## Mamma Mia

**Thu 4** 2.00, **Mon 8** 2.00,  
**Tue 9** 12.30, **Wed 10** 2.00,  
**Sat 13** 2.00, **Tue 16** 12.30

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

**The story's fluffy, the music's beige, the actors are irritating.** They're having far too much fun for their age. To add further insult... the sky is blue – the whole time! Come, sing along and dance in the aisles.



## In Bruges

**Thu 11** 2.00



**Yet more demand and still... Not to be missed.**

When a job goes wrong, veteran hit man Ken and his rookie partner Ray are sent by Harry to lie low in Bruges and await his call. When it finally comes, their 'holiday' becomes a life-and-death struggle of darkly comic proportions. Signalling the emergence of a new filmmaker, whose films might be well worth watching. This is McDonagh's first feature (his controversial short, Six Shooter won an Oscar 2006).

"In Bruges is packed with rich, edgy humour and dazzling profanity. The film's real pleasure lies in McDonagh's verbal felicity - the naturalistic dialogue is a breath of fresh air - and while Farrell struggles to juggle his humorous 'thick' persona with romantic pathos, Gleeson excels in his role as the weary gangster pondering the possibilities for his own shot at redemption."

(*Time Out*)

"A double-act with depth seize upon an invigorating script and defy expectations" (*Channel 4*)

"Olivier-winning playwright Martin McDonagh is like Tarantino with a thesaurus... his dialogue fizzles..."

(*Marie Claire*)

**Director:** Martin McDonagh  
**Starring:** Ciaran Hinds, Colin Farrell,  
Brendan Gleeson, Ralph Fiennes  
**Certificate:** 18  
**Duration:** 107 mins  
**Origin:** Belgium, UK 2008  
**By:** Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

## Summer Hours

**Mon 15** 2.00

**Director:** Olivier Assayas  
**Starring:** Jeremie Renier, Charles Berling, Juliette Binoche  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 102 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008  
**By:** Artificial Eye

**This beautifully observed and played drama follows the troubled fate of a priceless private art collection, as family members disagree over its best use.** Preserve or sell? Display or protect? With a stunning cast this is an intelligent and tender assessment of the power of memory and the value of objects.

“A poignant tale of people dealing with the logistics of bereavement.” (*S Times Culture*)

“Assayas’s most fully satisfying film for some while, this is a warm, wise drama about the tensions and mysteries of family life.

The whole family gathers for an idyllic lunch to celebrate the seventy fifth birthday of their widowed mother Helene...

While never ignoring the grief death causes, Assayas refuses to sentimentalise it. It’s a film of deft nuances, particularly alert to the fact that everyone has his or her reasons for everything.

Perhaps the characters are finally a little too decent but it would be churlish to bemoan the generosity of spirit in a film so beautifully performed, intelligently written and fluently directed.” (*Time Out*). Sounds like another not to be missed.



## Man on Wire

**Wed 17** 2.00



**Marsh presents Petit as a kind of acrobatic Werner Herzog, talented, eccentric and perhaps slightly crazy.**

The illegal walk, described by Petit and his group of co-conspirators as the “artistic crime of the century”, is here lovingly recreated through archive material, dramatic reconstructions and most importantly, insightful interviews with those involved.

Their story unfolds in heist film-style, as 450 lbs of steel cable, plus rigging and personnel are smuggled up to the top of the towers over a week! “We had security passes and everything!”

His previous illegal coups were high-wiring between the spires of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and between the giant northern pylons of Sydney Harbour Bridge.

He’s clearly a genius of a sort – but with accomplices who prepared the ground for him surreptitiously and are drawn to tears by the memory of it all.

That 9/11 is never mentioned gives the film weight, and reminds us when they weren’t grim geopolitical symbols or commercial havens, but simply giant foot-rests for a barmy Frenchman.

**Director:** James Marsh  
**Starring:** David Frank, Ardis Campbell, Philippe Petit, David Demato  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 95 mins  
**Origin:** UK 2008  
**By:** Icon Film Distribution Ltd

# Elegy

Thu 18 2.00

In this tale of the older man younger women thing, adapted from Phillip Roth's *The Dying Animal*, "Coixet has found a tenderness and vulnerability so deeply buried as to be almost undetectable." (*Independent*)

Consuela is David's student. He is post middle-age and hitherto proud of his easy, throwaway seduction of starstruck students. Enter Ms Cruz and a ticket to fairyland. (Suppose it could happen, given the current rumour that she is Xavier Bardem's latest hotwater bottle, and of his miraculous resemblance to Sir Ben.)

"There's nothing grandstanding about Kingsley's portrait but the quiet concentration of his playing is as impressive as anything he has given since the quite different *Sexy Beast*." (*DM Standard*)

Although we may dislike his lecturer/lecher, it is easy to see how his studied performance makes his character credibly attractive - albeit he is old, bald, non-too pretty and more than a little creepy.

"Kingsley's complex portrait passes from pathetic insecurity to shocking regret."

And back again. "Beautifully photographed by Jean-Claude Larrieu, Cruz gives her best English-speaking performance yet." (*Independent*)

Don't miss.



<b>Director:</b>	Isabel Coixet
<b>Starring:</b>	Patricia Clarkson, Ben Kingsley, Penelope Cruz, Peter Sarsgaard
<b>Certificate:</b>	15
<b>Duration:</b>	111 mins
<b>Origin:</b>	USA 2008
<b>By:</b>	Entertainment Film Distribution





## Journey to the Centre of the Earth

Sat 20 2.00

**Director:** Brendan McKenna  
**Starring:** Brendan Fraser, Anita Briem, Josh Hutcherson, Eric Brevig  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 95 mins  
**Origin:** USA 2008  
**By:** Entertainment Film Distribution

**This is a kind of 2008 movie update of Jules Verne's classic sci-fi/fantasy novel. Using the novel itself as the catalyst for action.**

They find a secret code inside the 1864 book which matches volcanic activity numbers in Iceland. So our hero, scientist Trevor Anderson (Brendan Fraser), referring to his missing brother's notes sets out with his nephew Sean (Josh Hutcherson) to Iceland to investigate his brother's theories, enlisting a fellow scientist's daughter, Hannah (Anita Briem), as a guide. Soon the trio's Icelandic mountain trek descends into a cave and, then deeper still to, where else but the center of the earth?

Here dinosaurs and other strange prehistoric creatures still dwell.

After more dangerous encounters with the native flora and fauna, than you could shake Jules Verne at, Trevor, Sean, and Hannah must find a way back to the surface or face being stranded miles below the earth's crust.

Well this sounds action packed alright children... Come for a real old fashioned adventure.



## Cous Cous

Mon 22 2.00



**Evocative of Ken Loach in its instinctive sense of community, this is an affectionate and intimate portrait of the cultural landscape of 21st century French-North Africans.**

From writer-director Kechiche comes this expansive, energetic, good-humoured social tableau. Set amongst a North-African dockside community in the working Mediterranean port of Sète, west of Montpellier, it centres around the opening of a floating restaurant.

Monsieur Beiji wants to realise his long-cherished dream of opening a boat restaurant specialising in fish-and-couscous dishes. But the ship is still to be renovated, and local dignitaries need to be persuaded the venture has a future.

And then there are Beiji's friends and family - including the new woman in his life, his ex-wife and a host of neighbours - who have their own parts to play in the success or failure of his dream.

It's gorgeous tale, a little long in the telling, but shouldn't be missed.

**Director:** Abdel Kechiche  
**Starring:** Leïla D'Issernio, Sabrina Ouazani, Mélèze Bouzid  
**Certificate:** 15  
**Duration:** 154 mins  
**Origin:** France 2008  
**By:** Artificial Eye

# Miss Pettigrew Lives For a Day

**Tue 23** 12.30, **Wed 24** 2.00

**Director:** Bahrat Nalluri  
**Starring:** Shirley Henderson, Ciaran Hinds, Frances McDormand, Amy Adams  
**Certificate:** PG  
**Duration:** 92 mins  
**Origin:** UK, USA 2008  
**By:** Momentum Pictures

**Can you get a life and discover love, all in one day? Two women are about to find out.**

There is an air of the 'Sound of Music' to this tale as frumpy, penniless English governess Guinevere Pettigrew (Frances McDormand) enters a comically different world. Employed as social secretary for American actress Delysia Lafosse (Amy Adams), her discomfort is immediately apparent.

Sheltered Miss Pettigrew is out of place in a world of Champagne-swilling, bed-hopping socialites partying merrily through the warning signs of war.

But she has no choice but to roll up her sleeves and muck in, providing a welcome anchor for dizzy Delysia, whose principle problem is juggling the three different men she is bedding.

"Lee Pace is miscast as Delysia's true love, but Adams is adorable as the wide-eyed would-be starlet, with McDormand spot-on as the sensible half of the odd couple.

A delightfully frivolous screwball comedy." (*Time Out*)

Definitely one to brighten late September.

# The Fox and the Child

**Thu 25** 2.00, **Sat 27** 2.00



**This French film from Luc Jacquet, narrated by Kate Winslet in its English version, is set on the mountainsides of Ain.** Like *March of the Penguins*, the director's first feature-length film, it is ravishingly shot.

It tells a simple tale about a little girl who makes friends with a fox but finally realized that to love doesn't necessarily mean to possess. Children will undoubtedly adore the film, and the local tourist board will probably have to take its phones off the hook.

"The Alpine scenery steals the picture as we go through the season before concentrating on a gloriously-hued autumn. I hope it wasn't tarted up with CG effects – it doesn't look like it." (*Standard*)

It sounds too good to miss, so bring all the children in your street.



**Director:** Luc Jacquet  
**Starring:** Isabelle Carré, Thomas Laliberté, Bertille Noël-Bruneau  
**Certificate:** U  
**Duration:** 92 mins  
**Origin:** France 2007  
**By:** Pathe Distribution

## Before the Rains

**Mon 29** 2.00

**Director:** Santosh Sivan  
**Starring:** Linus Roache, Leopold Benedict, Rahul Bose  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 98 mins  
**Origin:** India, UK, USA 2008  
**By:** Metrodome Distributors

**Forbidden romance, empire, and culture clash all lie at the heart of this drama.** In 1930s India, Britain's reign is beginning to lose its hold on the region. Santosh Sivan is the formidably talented Indian cinematographer and director who made *The Terrorist* in 1999, starring Ayesha Dharker as a suicide bomber. Since then, he has dabbled in commercial Bollywood. Here he has produced a movie in the picturesque "Raj" vein, presented in association with Merchant-Ivory. Linus Roache stars as Henry Moores, an ambitious sahib in Kerala who has borrowed heavily to finance the building of a private road for the fantastically lucrative spice trade. He has formed a close, but painfully unequal relationship with an Indian, TK Neelan (Rahul Bose) and despite being a married man whose wife and young son are about to join him from England, Moores is conducting a "dangerous, thrillingly erotic affair with Sajani (Nandita Das), his beautiful Indian maid." (I say!)

The film is fervently acted and well shot, and Das provides a powerful, emotional force, but there is something a little clanky about the whole project, a persistent made-for-television feel." (*Guardian*) Worse, there seems to be more than a bit of boddice ripping Mills & Boon here.



## Bon Voyage

**Tue 30** 12.30



**I was told you, our audience, would love this by our little French imp – Eva, who worked in the bar last year and still flits in and out from time to time.**

An homage to 40s Hollywood classics, *Bon Voyage* weaves a web of farcical chaos. At the start of World War II, the fate of the free world hangs in the balance at the Hotel Splendid in Bordeaux. Cabinet members, journalists, physicists and spies of all persuasions gather in order to escape the Nazi occupation of Paris. High society socialites hobnob with jailbirds. Murderous intrigues, scientific secrets and love affairs flourish.

Elaborate personal schemes and political plots escalate, intersect and fly off in all directions, as a young man must choose between a beautiful diva and an impassioned student, between politicians and hoodlums, carefree youth and adulthood. Nominated for 11 Cesar awards, *Bon Voyage* was Rappeneau's triumphant return to form... Come and see if Eva's right.

**Director:** Jean-Paul Rappeneau  
**Starring:** Gerard Depardieu, Isabelle Adjani, Virginie Ledoyen, Yvan Attai  
**Certificate:** 12A  
**Duration:** 114 mins  
**Origin:** France 2003  
**By:** Optimum Releasing

## POPCORN: THE MAKING OF NORWICH AND HAMPSTEAD...?

On a slack news weekend early in August there was chatter about popcorn and how the new revolution was about to make cinema history by removing it from its foyers. I was even interviewed twice, with the threat of a third. A number of cinema luminaries were interviewed, first by The Observer (9th Aug) then quoted over the next two days by various national papers looking for a story.

It was all nonsense of course set off by some diligent PR at the Picturehouse (Norwich) and/or Hampstead (Everyman) camps to show off their 'experimental courage' by removing popcorn from their cinemas. The Everyman has only just acquired a chain and is flexing its posh, exclusive "de-popcorning" muscles. The Picturehouse group has over twenty long established cinemas stretching from Brighton to Aberystwith.

Each has chosen this time to speak out against popcorn. The Picturehouse is pioneering Norwich as popcorn free, but only on Tuesdays, or is that the Everyman? Or is that Wednesdays? Why pick on popcorn? Is it suddenly unfashionable? If you can't sell arthouse and style in Hampstead, Belsize Park and Islington without making grand public gestures like "de-popcorning", then various scatological observations come to mind – not including walking and chewing at the same.

We at The Rex didn't ban or "depopcorn"; we didn't sell it in the first place. We are by no means the first. A number of discerning independents started without popcorn, but the Rex is the only one in Britain to consistently sell out five nights, often six, sometimes all seven, week in week out, sometimes matinees too. Not a boast, a fact that might be relevant later.

## THE SIMPLE STORY:

Popcorn came with the multi-plexes. The 'plexes' were/are an American contrivance. Like shopping malls, they were built out of town only reachable by car. I think the Wycombe Six was the first around here - mid 1980s?

Before the late 70s early 80s the 'cinema snack experience' was ice cream served by that glorious woman standing in the aisle with a lit-up tray laden with freezing Kiora and Lyonsmaid, choc-ices and vanilla tubs with spatulas that couldn't break the solid surface until twenty minutes in to the second half. We still sell them, and the melt-time is still the same.

In the scheme of things – the long history of cinema-going, over a hundred years, popcorn is an infant. It is not part of going to the pictures in Britain. It has merely been sold as part of going to the pictures. Now everyone believes it.

It costs a fraction of a penny to make and sells for up to £7.00 a bucket.

It was/is aimed at young audiences to maximize profit on the first Friday-cum-weekend-release of Hollywood Blockbusters. Their target was blatantly 18 to 25 year olds

While we may not be the first to ignore this rule and do the complete opposite – no

popcorn, no blockbuster weekends – we are from all accounts the most successful. It has taken a while to sink in that the 'industry' knows about the Rex and has watched its progress with interest. They have watched us sell out night after night since January 2005. Hence they are bound to prick up their ears.

Well to whom it may concern, here's how you do it.

Care about the whole thing, from clean steps to a lost property box. Its not clever, there is no formula or business model. There is no strategy and no meetings. Our tickets are hand-written, no on-line bookings, single screen, best projection and sound, repertory programming (different film almost every night), snacks and sweets in bowls, cushions for kids and no popcorn.

This list of course is ridiculous.

The detail comes with the original thought. Without one, detail is useless. De-popcorning is a detail, a trivial act, and in this case, a cheap publicity stunt pretending there are real changes being made.

If you have a real brave new idea, like let's say - a different profit scheme to that





The Attic will host its third post film evening on Sat 13th Sept after Mamma Mia. You'll need something good after that, so book now...

of the old full fat maximum, then try it. You'll be surprised how captive audiences appreciate it.

If you haven't, stick to what you know.

her circumstances, which are evidently stressful, for one reason or another.

Yours sincerely

Michael Adams

## WRONG NUMBER...?

10th July 2008

Dear Sir,

Not really one for your Rants and Pants, always a giggle to read but you may care to note that I had some trouble when telephoning the box office on 01442877759. There was a small gurgling noise to begin with on the end of the line and then a sharp female voice asked; "Yes?"

"Is that the box office?" I enquired.

"What do YOU think?... Go Away" came the reply (*but using the more familiar and unequivocal form of that muscular two word invitation to 'go away'*)

Not quite the box office reception I had come to expect! All my fault, I might add. My phone display showed that I had missed one of the "sevens" in the number, inadvertently dialling 0144287???

Evidently there is somebody rather unhappy on the end of that line!

It hasn't put me off the cinema, you'll be pleased to note, and perhaps the woman concerned would benefit from acquainting herself with a film or two and away from

Thank you Michael for taking full blame and informing us of the frustration clearly felt by this innocent woman who shares some of the digits in our phone number. We wouldn't begin to presume her 'circumstances' but sympathise with the hell she must get from those (even most politely angry) who finally get through. I must apologise to her, and thank her for taking some of the flak we would rather not have (Mr Adams excluded, of course). Short of putting her on the box office payroll, we would like to invite her to any films (subject to availability, of course). Providing, in return, she continues to field our calls. At the risk of short shrift, we will try her number tomorrow with a list of names we'd be happy for her to deal with in her own words.

HUMPH'S CLOSING LINE...

"... And so as the chill wind of time blows up the kilt of destiny and the short-sighted octopus of fate tries to mount the bagpipes of eternity... I notice it's the end of the show..."

(Glasgow 7th Dec 1998)