

THE-REX

M A G

LEON

IN NOVEMBER..

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

THE-REX

NOVEMBER 2007 Issue 32
www.therexcinema.com

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

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SEAT PRICES:

Circle	£7.00
Concessions	£5.50
At Table	£9.00
Concessions	£7.50
Royal Box (seats 6)	£11.00
or for the Box	£60.00

BOX OFFICE:

01442 877759

Mon to Sat 10.30 – 6.00

Sun 4.30 – 6.30

(Credit/Debit card booking fee 50p)

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:

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Katie Anderson	Jo Littlejohn
Emily Doyle	Bethany McKay
Christine	Linda Moss
Fressineau	Louise Ormiston
Karina Gale	Julian Paredes
Jemma Gask	Amberly Rose
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Rosa Gilbert	Tina Thorpe
Olivia Glasser	Alex Tucker
Beth Hannaway	Beth Wallman
Oliver Hicks	Olivia Wilson
Sarah Holloway	Keymea Yazdanian

Sally Thorpe In charge

Alun Rees Chief projectionist (Original)

Jon Waugh 1st assistant projectionist

Martin Coffill Part-time assistant projectionist

Jacquie Rose Chief Box Office & Bar

Greg Tomkins Film director

Jane Clucas & Lynn Hendry

PR/Marketing/FoH

Laurence Wiper Bar supervisor

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Resident creative builders

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Michael Glasheen

Artists

Andrew Dixon

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Demiurge Design Designers 01582 791996

Allison Nunn Publisher 07786 540418

James Hannaway CEO 01442 877999

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

The Rex High Street (Three Close Lane)

Berkhamsted HP4 2FG

www.therexcinema.com



THE ADVANCED BOOKING LIST (ABL)

The new ABL starts in December. May I thank all those who have enjoyed this year and before. It grew to nearly 1200. It is too many. However, only a handful asked for their money back. I've grown a little weary of people saying they can't get in. For every Bond and Atonement, there's a Sea Inside, a Snowcave, a Not Here to be Loved and an Everything is illuminated. We hope this change to the advanced booking list will prove itself (1160 names down to 500 only). If you have missed your chance this year, think of it as a saving, while everybody including you, has a better chance of getting to see the big ones. If it works, those big titles will sell more slowly, hopefully up to a week after general release, instead of selling out within hours. If it fails... Thank you for your objections and comments, very entertaining.

BLACK MARKET (MORE BIEGE, IN BERKHAMSTED)

Can't have people selling spare tickets in the foyer anymore. It causes chaos. We sell the tickets. You buy them from us. If some of your party drop out at the last minute, tell us and we'll try and help. If when the allocated raffle seats have gone and there's still a queue, we'll do business.

CHANGE

Please bring your loose change. We don't handle much cash. Most things are by card, so loose change instead notes will be great, and quicker. Come rattling.

NOTES

We leave notes for each other and write the date on them, so we know how long it's been since we forgot to do it. They're not memos or 'official practice' and are frequently written on the back of something else. Late one night I wrote on the side of a list from our cleaners, adding something and scribbling the date. It was 1st October. I thought no more of it until days later, when I heard about the kerfuffle. It turned out they thought I was marking their work and had only given them one out of ten!

Christopher Hampton with
Production Designer Caroline Amies



CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON AT THE REX SUN 16 SEPTEMBER

Christopher Hampton came just weeks before his “Atonement” was to be screened. He came to talk about “Carrington” and much more. The “Q and A” was never going to be long enough to dig deeper into his truly prodigious body of work. At 22 he was the youngest playwright to be celebrated by The Royal Court, with his first play, *Savages*. Since then his work has been applauded, awarded and his plays revived time and again. His screen adaptations are the most sought after in the world. *Carrington* took seventeen years to bring to the screen. He told us of the preposterous hoops you must go through to get a film made. For instance *Carrington* was to be directed by Mike Newell. However, he’d just finished *Four Weddings and A Funeral* and didn’t want to direct another “little British comedy”. So Christopher believing there can’t be that much to it, got out a

book on directing, for which he was awarded the Special Jury Prize at Cannes in 1995 on his first outing as writer/director. Theatre is where he started and remains rooted, but it is for his crystal clear film adaptations he has become a household name. As a fan, I was nervous. Luckily, he was gracious and charming, and went on to captivate the audience.

TERENCE DAVIES AT THE REX SUN 30 SEPTEMBER

TERENCE Davies came here to talk about “Distant Voices – Still Lives”, one of the most important, critically acclaimed and dour British films of the last fifty years. He was ebullient, warm and spontaneously entertaining. Talking freely, he revealed his love of literature and great writing. “At fifteen, I found

classical music, (hated The Cavern and pop music and football in a city that reveres both), T.S.Eliot’s *Four Quartets* and read the whole of Dickens” – and all before his sixteenth birthday. He quoted beautifully from Eliot and Benjamin, and told hilarious stories. One such was about disappearing to the toilet, while casting American actors, hoping they’d be gone when he came out. He told of on set ‘discussions’ with difficult actors, Gillian Anderson’s breaking wind but never into a smile and loved Dan Ackroyd’s cool on-set support and generosity. He closed the interview with a very moving soliloquy. A wonderful man, inspirational and considering the misery he portrays on screen, was very warm, funny and self-deprecating. Nothing could hide his passion. The audience loved him.

Terence Davies





N O V E M B E R E V E N I N G S

Breach

Thu 1 7.30



Intense, riveting and beautifully delivered to the screen by both its writing and performances.

Inspired by true events, *Breach* is a thriller set inside the FBI.

As the USA's 'gatekeeper' guarding the nation's most sensitive and volatile secrets, it is astonishing to learn it uses every 'dirty trick' in and out of the book, to hang on to them. In February 2001, renowned federal agent Robert Hanssen was found guilty of treason. Oscar winning Chris Cooper walks away with it as Hanssen's "worst spy in America's history" (poor loves). Laura Linney (Kate Burroughs) is always perfect. Surprisingly, Ryan Phillippe (O'Neill) excels, as the rookie computer geek desperate to become an agent, sent to 'assist' (spy on) Hanssen. Can he do it...?

"a very accurate portrayal of the FBI culture and the events. They even got the look of the HQ interior down pat" (ex *FBI moll*).

"Billy Ray's film is intelligently made, perceptive and offers a very fine central performance from Cooper." (*Standard*)

We nearly missed getting this brilliant, small film into the Nov Programme, you mustn't.

Director: Billy Ray
Starring: Laura Linney, Chris Cooper
Certificate: I2A
Duration: 111 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Run Fat Boy Run

Fri 2 7.30, Sat 3 7.00

An overweight man leaves his bride at the altar only to realise years later she was the love of his life.

This very silly film reunites the usual suspects of new-wave Brit comedy. When slobby Dennis (Pegg) finally realizes his big mistake, he vows to run a high profile marathon to convince his ex-fiancée (Newton) the rich and handsome man she is about to marry isn't the guy for her. A non-story, *Fat Boy* is only enlivened by the comic interplay between the consistently brilliant Pegg and Dylan Moran as his dour pal. Otherwise, ideal late-nite Channel Fifteen irrelevant tripe.

"disarmingly enjoyable" (*Time Out*)
 "Pegg trades on his 'Everylad' appeal, successfully blending physical comedy with deadpan wit. He even manages to be endearing whilst frantically humping a semi-clad mannequin (to soothe a bad case of prickly heat)" (*BBC*)

Simon Pegg manages to stop this kind of Brit com from falling on its face or glooping into self-indulgence. I think it's his face. There are no smug asides. The comedy comes from his playing it straight. It's up to you.

Director: David Schwimmer
Starring: Hank Azaria, Simon Pegg, Thandie Newton, David Schwimmer
Certificate: I2A
Duration: 101 mins
Origin: UK 2007
By: Entertainment Film Distribution



Some Like it Hot

Sun 4 6.00



Inspired casting by Billy Wilder. In this great spoof, Curtis and Lemmon play jazz musicians on the run from Spats Columbo (George Raft) after witnessing the St Valentine's Day massacre. Broke and desperate to escape Chicago, they turn into Daphne and Josephine join Sweet Sue's band... enter Sugar... Interestingly, Wilder deliberately shot it in black and white to avoid the pitfalls of camp or transvestism. Highlights: the Gangland scenes; Pat O'Brian as the world-weary sarcastic cop; Nehemiah Persoff's manic and agitated Little Bonaparte; Tony Curtis' playboy parody of Cary Grant; Jack's Tango with Osgood and the rose; Ms Monroe in that dress; and what is surely one of the best closing exchanges of all time, concluding with Joe E Brown's deadpan 'Nobody's Perfect'. His Osgood Fielding III must be one of cinema's most memorable and best loved characters. Don't miss it on the big screen.

Director: Billy Wilder
Starring: Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon, Joe Brown, George Raft, Pat O'Brien
Certificate: U
Duration: 121 mins
Origin: USA 1959
By: British Film Institute

Not Here To Be Loved

Mon 5 7.30

Director: Stéphane Brizé
Starring: Georges Wilson, Lionel Abelanski, Anne Consigny, Patrick Chesnais
Certificate: 15
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: France 2005
By: Artificial Eye

Jean-Claude (Chesnais) is world-weary. His days are spent as a bailiff evicting and confiscating. He has nothing to say to his son, and even less to say to his father at wretched Sunday visits. His face does not break in to a ready smile. Across the street from his office is a dance studio. There he meets a much younger woman who is learning to dance in preparation for her wedding. Each shares a longing for something more in their lives. A tentative bond develops, but each is cautious. The two bring subtlety and beautifully understated depth to their roles, thus each hesitant nervous step, on and off the dance floor makes your heart skip. "It is a grown-up, intelligent and gorgeous little film with a big heart" (*Standard*). It is a perfect example of French stillness and pace, and heartbreaking truth. With an ever lengthening queue of films to repeat, it is unlikely to come back too soon. Please don't miss.



Atonement

Tue 6 7.30, Wed 7 7.30



Sold out in minutes in October, so squeezed in as many times as November's packed programme would allow.

One summers day in 1935, 13-year-old Briony (Saoirse Ronan) sees her older sister Cecilia (Knightley) strip off and plunge into the garden fountain. Standing waiting for her to surface is Robbie (McAvoy). By nightfall the lives of all three will have changed for ever. Robbie and Cecilia will have crossed that irretrievable kissing line, so become the victims of the younger girl's vengeful jealousy. As she ages (through Romola Garai and later Vanessa Redgrave), her guilt grows. From all accounts this is a stunning film, beautifully shot and played by all, particularly Kiera and young 'kisser' McAvoy. (Kiera has been quoted in one gutter or another that he is the "best kisser ever" – another huge notch. Well done Mr Tumnus). Apparently the 'c' word has a lot to answer for in the film. Because of it some walked out on our opening night. More of this much maligned, vexed and misinterpreted word on page....) Most stayed to the end... It's up to you.

Director: Joe Wright
Starring: James McAvoy, Keira Knightley, Romola Garai
Certificate: 15
Duration: 125 mins
Origin: UK 2007
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Carla's Song

Thu 8 7.30

Director: Ken Loach
Starring: Robert Carlyle, Oyanka Cabezas
Certificate: 15
Duration: 127 mins
Origin: UK, Spain, Germany 1996
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

George (Carlyle), a Glaswegian bus driver, is headstrong and goofy enough to steal his sweet-heart away for an unscheduled diversion around Loch Lomond on his double-decker. The object of his affection, Carla (Cabezas), is a refugee from Nicaragua. Alerted to her suicidal tendencies, George persuades her to return with him to Central America, so she can confront the ghosts of her past, and resolve her relationship with the mysterious Antonio. The year is 1987, and he has no idea what he has let himself in for – among other things, Nicaragua is an unforgiving, bitter war zone. “This is Ken Loach’s most underrated film. It tells of the effects of the war in Nicaragua, through the eyes of a complete innocent. It was re-cut (to this) after its initial release.”

(Standard)

His latest award winning ‘It’s a Free World’ (Venice 07) is only available on digital.

We show Carla’s Song to celebrate him with one of his forgotten films. It is one of his best, so please don’t miss this one chance to see it here.



Shoot ‘Em Up

Fri 9 7.30



In this over-the-top action thriller Clive a gun-toting tough guy, is as unlikely as ever. When he discovers a woman giving birth in the middle of a gunfight, he enters the fray finding himself in charge of the child. He takes the newborn to the closest thing he knows to a mother: prostitute, Dairy Queen (Bellucci), who specialises in mummy-fetish. He ruthlessly protects (the ever fab) Giamatti’s, equally ruthless assassin, while attempting to piece together the mystery of the child.

“The writer/director Michael Davis tries to cut himself a piece of Rodriguez Taranino’s racket with this honestly titled story of Smith’s (Owen) gunslinging loner, a baby and a bunch of killers (led by Giamatti)... The over-the-top action is highly entertaining, partly thanks to a good supply of fresh ideas. It’s a shame, then, that Davis provokes a few wincing with his efforts to give the characters snappy dialogue and offbeat traits. I have no idea what Davis is like in person, but his idea of cool humour has a strong air of geekiness...” (Sunday Times, Culture)

Come it’s okay, but thank the merciful lord for Monica Bellucci...

Director: Michael Davis
Starring: Monica Bellucci, Paul Giamatti, Clive Owen
Certificate: 18
Duration: 87 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Entertainment Film Distribution

Humph's back!

An evening with Humphrey Lyttelton and his Band

Sat 10 7.30

True legends carry their own shoes...

The Country’s greatest man, still standing, is back on our stage. Amid major world shenanigans, wars and rumours of wars, his 85th birthday was front page news in all the quality rags! Grand statesmen and extended royalty don’t get such applause (Albeit, he is not far off major/minor royalty himself). Now Humph is back at the Rex, with his brilliant band of lovely people – well every band has its bass player.

On meeting him, you know you’re in the presence of a legend as he rolls up in his old Volvo, and carries his own stage shoes and suit up the steps. And I have carried his trumpet-case. The Holy Grail doesn’t get much closer. It’s taken us ages to get him back here. He’s giggling non-stop with his band and “I’m Sorry I Haven’t A Clue” (For which we’re are too small, so don’t ask). His repertoire comes through ragtime, jazz and swing. They play spontaneously as if making it up unrehearsed, like his gags! Come for all this and the sheer joy of a rare presence... Bring fourteen year-olds. They need to know.



The Sound of Music

Sun 11 5.00



Julie swirls, the kids are cute, there is a dirty German in the woodpile (perfect programming for Remembrance Sunday!) and Mother Abbess' throat warbles in a shaft of light.

As if you need reminding... It is a tale set against the glorious backdrop of the Bavarian Alps of the nun from Salzburg who becomes governess to Captain Von Trapp's seven children. She cuts up the curtains and brings music into a household once run on Stalinist principles – quite right too. It is said to be loosely based on a true story, but so is Batman.

It is probably the most successful screen adaptation of a musical ever, and for the rest of the Sixties the decade's longest running film. Climb Every Mountain still wets the eyes even on the wireless. Uncredited, it was sung by Margery McKay (IMDB) and look out for the real Maria Von T – an extra in 'I Have Confidence'. Bring whole families to spot her! You'll love every minute.

Director: Robert Wise
Starring: Julie Andrews
Certificate: U
Duration: 174 mins
Origin: USA 1965
By: Park Circus Films

The Singer

Mon 12 7.30

The Singer tells a deceptively simple and timeless story – there's no fool like an old fool. Fearing the onset of karaoke, middle-aged Alain (Depardieu) pursues his increasingly weary way as crooner of sentimental ballads. As the minor 'big celebrity' at the local dance hall, he is stuck in a routine of regular gigs, crooning for his coterie of fifty-something female fans. He is none too slim, streaks his hair and has reached the end. Enter Marion, a single mother half his age... "Beautifully atmospheric, with genuine chemistry between the two leads..."

"As for Depardieu, he encompasses the part superbly... it is likely to be regarded as one of his finest performances."

"Giannoli's film is as bitter as it is sweet and paints the scene with masterly precision... But it is Depardieu's day, with Cecile De France backing him up very well. When the time comes for him to leave the stage, this will be accounted one of his foremost triumphs..." (*mixed crits*) Hang on, he is only pretending. There's hardly need for 'foremost triumph', but definitely worth cancelling bathtime.

Director: Xavier Giannoli
Starring: Gerard Depardieu, Cecile De France, Mathieu Amalric, Christine Citti
Certificate: 12A
Duration: 112 mins
Origin: France 2006
By: Artificial Eye



A Mighty Heart

Tue 13 7.30



"Angelina is the beating heart of this urgent, unbearably tense dramatic reconstruction of the last days of the American journalist Daniel Pearl." She is also very nearly the thing that derails the whole movie. Aside from casting Jolie, the bravest decision was to shoot in Karachi. The risk pays off with highly evocative location work allowing you to almost smell the crowded city, and all its chaos. No wonder it proved impossible to find Pearl...

"Winterbottom details it all – the denials lies and accusations, at very high level - with a furious energy. So stay sharp or you'll miss things. 'But it's all the better for not being anything like your conventional Hollywood film, even though it might have been easier to watch."

(mixed crits)

Political journalists Marianne and Daniel Pearl were working in Pakistan and awaiting the birth of their first child when he went missing, presumed kidnapped...

(continued p18 Wed 21st)

Director: Michael Winterbottom

Starring: Angelina Jolie, Archie Panjabi, Dan Futterman, Irfan Khan

Certificate: 15

Duration: 108 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Paramount International Pictures

Small Engine Repair

Wed 14 7.30

Director: Niall Heery

Starring: Steven Mackintosh, Stuart Graham, Iain Glen

Certificate: 15

Duration: 102 mins

Origin: Ireland 2006

By: Guerilla Films

Set in a small Irish backwater, Small Engine Repair is a "subtly original" story of a group of men going nowhere. Doug (Glen) thinks he's a country singer, but he's too old and only half-arsed, carrying around a demo he won't let anyone hear. His best friend is a worn-out mechanic (Mackintosh), who is desperate to persuade his son not to leave the family business, the repair shop of the title. Both men become uncomfortable when old friend Burley (Graham) arrives back in town.

"The film revels in an atmosphere of hopeless romanticism... underlined perfectly by the songs Doug sings and the great soundtrack." (Standard)

"Fine performances from Glen and Mackintosh elevate this touching tale of friendship, loyalty and broken dreams" (Channel Four)

"Often underused as a cardboard villain in Hollywood movies such as Tomb Raider, here Glen is a revelation of wounded glances and shuffling... When he sings, it might just move you to tears." (Times)

"A film about far-reaching dreams running under the surface of invisible lives....an understated, elegiac, moving film." (BBC) Come.



Leon

Thu 15 7.30



I watched this one Christmas in the late 90s. You know when you're caught by the first fifteen seconds, you're not going to move... and by the end, the film won't go away.

Besson developed Reno's character from NIKITA into the role of Leon, the deadly 'cleaner' assassin, naive and emotionally bereft of all but one pot-plant.

"Superb action surprises alternate with the development of an intensely moving relationship between the hit man and the orphaned girl he shelters and trains..."

A remarkable début performance from Natalie Portman..

We have tried for nearly three years to get this. It might be a new print, it might just be an old print, freed on licence for limited release. It might even be the uncut copy. Come and see. It is one of those rare gems where you hope the actors will never make another film. I didn't want to see any of them again being anyone else.

Does this make sense? Absolutely not to be missed on the big screen...

Director: Luc Besson

Starring: Jean Reno, Natalie Portman, Gary Oldman

Certificate: 18

Duration: 110 mins

Origin: France 1994

By: Buena Vista International

Michael Clayton

Fri 16 7.30, Sat 17 7.00, Sun 18 6.00, Mon 19 7.30

"Gilroy, who wrote the Bourne series, can't resist moving backwards and forwards in time, and belabours us with a series of smart but sometimes delirious editing which may cause the viewer some confusion. But he has still made an excellent thriller and secured outstanding performances from his cast..."

Clooney has seldom been better as Clayton, a man beginning to feel that his skill is not exactly being put to its best use, while Wilkinson, as the attack-dog lawyer now convinced he's wasting his talent and collapsing under the strain, is as good as ever.

But it is Swinton, as the nervy chief counsel for the chemical company, who trumps them both. To see her faced by Clayton with the enormity of her position is to see a great actress at work in a film that's good enough to keep her at full stretch". (*Evening Standard*)

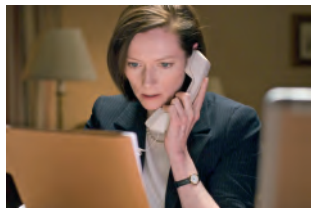
The story: George is Michael Clayton, a debt-ridden fixer for one of New York's biggest law firms. A one-time criminal prosecutor, he has become known as "The Janitor" for his work behind the scenes to clean up high-profile clients' messy indiscretions.

As the loan sharks close in, one of the firm's most brilliant lawyers, Arthur Edens (the ever-brilliant Tom Wilkinson) begins to crack, reviving his Full Monty antics, by stripping at a deposition and placing a multi-million dollar class-action lawsuit in jeopardy. Caught between a long misplaced sense of ethics and the desperate need for cash, Clayton's assignment to Eden is to become the most formidable challenge of his life...

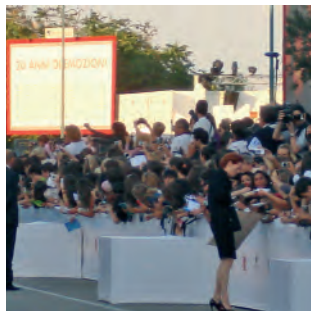
"A dark, engaging drama that asks some difficult moral questions... with yet another in a long line of fine performances from Clooney" (*Channel 4*)

"George Clooney comes unprecedentedly near to playing a damaged man, a weak man, a defeated man. It's an arresting performance...muscular and pain-racked at once." (*PB Guardian*)

From all accounts this is a fantastic and powerful corporate espionage thriller, with everybody on top form. Tilda is outstanding, but so are the others. Come for her and on the way, catch George and Tom at their best.



Director: Tony Gilroy
Starring: George Clooney, Tom Wilkinson, Tilda Swinton, Sydney Pollack
Certificate: 15
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Pathe Distribution



Yella

Tue 20 7.30



This curious German psychological thriller is an exercise in icy atmosphere. When we first meet Yella, played with a spectral simplicity by Nina Hoss, she is hollow-eyed and fearful, running from a very nasty husband.

"A rich, inventive, atmospheric thriller somehow able to reveal the final twist while retaining its mystery." (*Channel 4*)

"But the film is a let down by a deeply unsatisfying final twist." (*Knowledge, Times*)

"It is exquisitely frigid, menacing, disquieting, its storyline keeps you off-balance" (*Guardian*)

"An expertly crafted thriller offering a pessimistic, but deeply rewarding, glimpse of a society haunted by its own past." (*Time Out*)

"Unfortunately, it's a disappointment – a gimmick rendered old hat by countless second-rate spinechillers." (*Sun Times, Culture*)

"Spellbindingly elegant, enlivened by episodes of nimble comedy, and unpredictable to the end, YELLA is a dream of a film." (*Standard*)

Do you think they all saw the same film?

Best of all... "The twist comes in the final reel, but please note; when she climbs out of the river, she still has her high heels on...." Some things must never be taken off, but how would critics know?

Director: Christian Petzold

Starring: Burghart Klaussner, Hinnerk Schönemann, Nina Hoss

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 89 mins

Origin: Germany 2007

By: Artificial Eye

A Mighty Heart

Wed 21 7.30

Director: Michael Winterbottom

Starring: Angelina Jolie, Archie Panjabi, Dan Futterman, Irfan Khan

Certificate: 15

Duration: 108 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Paramount International Pictures

Shot in close-up documentary style, it recounts the frenzied efforts by US and Pakistani authorities to negotiate Daniel Pearl's release.

"Winterbottom's lean direct approach to the story serves it well – there is no time for padding, little opportunity even to draw breath, and the naturalistic performances are utterly convincing. However the global phenomenon that is Jolie, a woman so famous that she can bring entire continents to a standstill, and this little indie film creaks under the weight of all that celebrity. It is not that Jolie's performance is bad – by the end she has won us over with such a forceful display of grief that it leaves you wrung out. It's just that it takes a while to accept her as Marianne Pearl, rather than simply Jolie wearing a wig and a big sign reading 'Oscar'..." (*mixed crits*) "Winterbottom extends an already extraordinary (and very lucky) directing career, while Jolie proves that she never again needs to be judged solely on her remarkable looks..." (bullshit!) Stay lucky Michael.



Bourne Ultimatum

Thu 22 7.30, Fri 23 7.30



Matt Damon grows on you for this 'last' showdown in the Bourne series. Giving the part of the baddie to unerringly sophisticated and brilliant, David Strathairn, means Greengrass hardly has to direct. He is one step behind Bourne throughout. Every triumph and disappointment is immediate, in his face. Having lost his memory and the one person he loved, Jason Bourne is undeterred by cars, bullets, rooftops or a new generation of highly trained killers. His only one objective is to find out who he is from the people who made him what he is! He can't afford any more time. It is crucial he finds out now – there isn't another film... is there? Three books, three films – easy arithmetic, unless there's a trillion dollars in a fourth.

"Damon's amnesiac superspy creates more white-knuckle excitement using a book as a weapon than all the summer's pirate-ships, superheroes and giant robots put together" (*Guardian*)

"The Bourne series is the only action-thriller franchise of the past decade that actually thrills" (*Telegraph*) They're right. It is edge-of-seat from beginning to end.

Director: Paul Greengrass

Starring: Matt Damon, Julia Stiles, Joan Allen, Paddy Considine

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 115 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Death Proof

Sat 24 7.00



"The longer he travels along the bumpy road of a fashionable film-maker, the more Tarantino squanders his once original talent..."

His dialogue usually so adept, is disastrously clunky, the film-making flair-less. Even his love of B-movie schlock, seems ridiculous.

The car chases are up to the mark, and nice boy Q's fetish for well-rounded female bottoms may please some. But it has nothing to say and no new way of saying it."

(mostly Standard)

Kurt Russell's Stuntman Mike, cozies up to a group of chicks in a Texas roadhouse. They should have listened to their mums. In Tennessee he takes on another three... Uh oh!

Made as part of 'Grindhouse' - the "retro genre pastiche" double bill which tanked at the US box office...

The characters talk in treble 'Tarantino' the violence will rub up the sadist and the whole thing is in quotation marks. But some interesting tensions between old and new. The climactic car chase is bona fide old-school ..."

(mostly BW Time Out)

Pulp Fiction? No. Tarantino, most definitely. It sounds awful but if nothing else, come for Rosario Dawson.

Director: Quentin Tarantino

Starring: Rose McGowan, Rosario Dawson, Vanessa Ferlito, Kurt Russell

Certificate: 18

Duration: 114 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Momentum Pictures

As You Like It

Sun 25 6.00

Director: Kenneth Branagh

Starring: Bryce Dallas Howard, Brian Blessed, Romola Garai, David Oyelowo, Kevin Kline, Richard Briers

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 127 mins

Origin: UK, USA 2007

By: BBC Films

"Brian Blessed has two roles, which is enough to unbalance any film..."

With their convoluted plots and complicated verbiage, Shakespeare's lighter entertainments often sit awkwardly on the screen, requiring magical film-making to convince audiences used to having everything fed to them.

Branagh is definitely not a magical film-maker. He's much more of an actor's director who understands the Bard very well but sometimes has difficulty matching the text with imaginative visuals.

"It rarely catches fire as one of Shakespeare's most popular plays should.

There's Richard Briers, an excellent Shakespearean, as an Old Adam, Oliver and Orlando's veteran retainer, Kevin Kline as Jaques, the Duke's sad philosopher and Alfred Molina as a rather peculiar Touchstone with fuzzy hair. Romola Garai makes an attractive and lively Celia, and Janet McTeer's blowsy goatherd is a joy...."

"Branagh's adaptation emphasises that not only the warring brothers but also the Duke and his brother are mirror images of each other and concentrates on the idea that the bluebell-strewn Forest of Arden is a healing force of nature that eventually takes the sting out of all hostilities." *(Standard)*

"More 'Mikado' than Kurosawa with sumo wrestlers." *(Time Out)*



The Counterfeiters

Mon 26 7.30



A devastatingly effective wartime thriller based upon real events, The Counterfeiters crackles with class and intelligence.

In 1936, the Nazis established the largest counterfeiting operation in history, with the intention of flooding the British and American economies with fake currency. 'Enlisted' were any concentration camp inmates with skills in the right department - among them master forger, gambler, libertine and charismatic rogue Salomon 'Sally' Sorowitsch (brought vividly to life by Karl Markovics' gaunt, haunting face), who is at first energised by his new task. But as the war grinds on, the moral frailty of Sorowitsch's position becomes more and more apparent, and he must choose which side he is on.

An incredible true story, written by a camp survivor, clearly told and beautifully shot. Don't miss. Could only get it for one showing in November. It will be back.

Director: Stefan Ruzowitzky

Starring: Martin Brambach, August Diehl, Karl Markovics, David Sriesow

Certificate: 15

Duration: 99 mins

Origin: Austria, Germany 2006

By: Metrodome Distributors

Syndromes and a Century

Tue 27 7.30

Director: Apichatpong Weerasethakul
Starring: Arkanee Cherkam, Jaruchai Iamaram, Sakda Kaewbuadee
Certificate: 15
Duration: 105 mins
Origin: Austria, France, Thailand
 2006

Pathbreaking Thai artist and filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul amazes us (again) with a radiant, illuminated meditation on young doctors in love. It is based upon his memories of his own parents (both doctors) and growing up in a hospital environment. Eschewing traditional narrative in favour of an impressionistic montage of seemingly trivial but often poignant images – things overlooked, misplaced, forgotten – the film offers no beginning or end, but a hypnotic and tender meditation which becomes both absurd and moving, intensely pleasurable – and ultimately transcendent. Partly commissioned by the ‘New Crowned Hope Festival’. If *Into Great Silence* did it for you, and I guess *The Weeping Camel*, then you are likely to love this. It is said to be very beautiful, slow and calming. Come and drift.



Control

Wed 28, Thu 29 7.30



Photographer and first-time director Anton Corbijn, celebrates the troubled life of post-punk ‘legend’ Ian Curtis.

He focuses hard on Curtis’s failing marriage and the uncontrollable nihilistic emotions he “displaced into his art”. A story of 1970s northern England, it is a nice counterpoint to the high-jinks of Winterbottom’s 24-Hour Party People (where ironically, Riley played Ian’s not-so-good-friend: Mark E Smith). Corbijn was the band’s photographer for many years, thus this high-contrast black-and-white. Sam Riley is astonishing as Curtis. He was working in a shoe-lace factory or somewhere, when plucked to play the part. It would be nice if it doesn’t turn him into that faux-moody, fame hungry star he too once craved, with all its dull excesses and dumb headlines... Fat chance. “... best film of the year: tender, bleakly funny and superbly acted... Samantha Morton’s career-best ... I thought it might depress me. Instead I left the cinema walking on air.” (*PB Guardian*)
 Beware, Corbijn is a fan and with all that quasi-religious zeal engendered by Joy Division, later New Order and that whole Manchester hysteria, it might have been better shot in lurid colour.

Director: Anton Corbijn
Starring: Samantha Morton, Alexandra Maria Lara, Sam Riley, Toby Kebbell
Certificate: 15
Duration: 122 mins
Origin: UK, USA 2007
By: Momentum Pictures

Don’t Look Now

Fri 30 7.30

Director: Nicholas Roeg
Starring: Donald Sutherland, Hilary Mason, Clelia Matania, Julie Christie
Certificate: 18
Duration: 110 mins
Origin: UK 1973
By: British Film Institute

It is said to have been the first ‘they-ARE-really-doing-it’ sex scene in mainstream cinema.

We all gasped in 1973 – the women, at how skinny Julie Christie was - the men at Donald Sutherland’s silly pineapple hair and terrifying moustache. Both looked out for his todger. The scene was a crude (both senses) device used by Roeg to show a grieving couple still in love, full of desire for each other. Even then we knew ‘different’, wow and all. Today it is embarrassing.

The Baxters are helpless to save their daughter from drowning. She is wearing a bright red mac. It is one of the most gripping opening scenes, ever. Cut to Venice, where he is in charge of restoring a crumbling church. Enter the freaky psychic sisters you wouldn’t touch with a gondola pole. From here on you want to slap Julie Christie and shake Sutherland into getting her the hell out of there.

“Roeg’s thriller has an aura of menace throughout and a sexual honesty that is startling even today.” (*circa 1974*) Menace; absolute genius. Sexual honesty? Contrived, pretentious, gratuitous, bollocks. Spot the oxymoron.



Coming Soon

New releases

When Did You Last See
Your Father
Ratatouille
Eastern Promises
Once

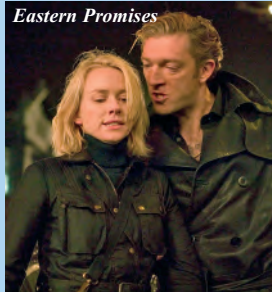
Back by demand

Joe Strummer
Pan's Labyrinth
Bombon
The Sea Inside

Ratatouille



Eastern Promises



Once

*When did
you last see
your father?*



NOVEMBER FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

THU	1	ATONEMENT	2.00
THU	1	BREACH	7.30
FRI	2	RUN FAT BOY RUN	7.30
SAT	3	TRANSFORMERS	2.00
SAT	3	RUN FAT BOY RUN	7.00
SUN	4	SOME LIKE IT HOT	6.00
MON	5	ATONEMENT	2.00
MON	5	NOT HERE TO BE LOVED	7.30
TUE	6	ATONEMENT	12.30, 7.30
WED	7	ATONEMENT	2.00, 7.30
THU	8	GOSFORD PARK	2.00
THU	8	CARLA'S SONG	7.30
FRI	9	SHOOT' EM UP	7.30
SAT	10	HAIRSPRAY	2.00
SAT	10	HUMPH'S BAND	7.30
SUN	11	THE SOUND OF MUSIC	5.00
MON	12	THE SINGER	2.00, 7.30
TUE	13	PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION	12.30
TUE	13	A MIGHTY HEART	7.30
WED	14	SMALL ENGINE REPAIR	2.00, 7.30
THU	15	SNOWCAKE	2.00
THU	15	LEON	7.30
FRI	16	MICHAEL CLAYTON	7.30
SAT	17	THE SIMPSONS	2.00
SAT	17	MICHAEL CLAYTON	7.00
SUN	18	MICHAEL CLAYTON	6.00
MON	19	MICHAEL CLAYTON	2.00, 7.30
TUE	20	MICHAEL CLAYTON	12.30
TUE	20	YELLA	7.30
WED	21	A MIGHTY HEART	2.00, 7.30
THU	22	BOURNE ULTIMATUM	2.00, 7.30
FRI	23	BOURNE ULTIMATUM	7.30
SAT	24	ALADDIN	2.00
SAT	24	DEATH PROOF	7.00
SUN	25	AS YOU LIKE IT	6.00
MON	26	THE COUNTERFEITERS	2.00, 7.30
TUE	27	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	12.30
TUE	27	SYNDROMES AND A CENTURY	7.30
WED	28	DON'T LOOK NOW	2.00
WED	28	CONTROL	7.30
THU	29	EVERYTHING IS ILLUMINATED	2.00
THU	29	CONTROL	7.30
FRI	30	DON'T LOOK NOW	7.30



N O V 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

Atonement

Thu 1 2.00 **Mon 5** 2.00
Tue 6 12.30 **Wed 7** 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



Director: Joe Wright **Starring:** James McAvoy, Keira Knightley, Romola Garai
Certificate: 15 **Duration:** 125 mins **Origin:** UK 2007
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Sold out in minutes in October, so squeezed in as many times as November's packed programme would allow.

One summers day in 1935, 13-year-old Briony (Saoirse Ronan) sees her older sister Cecilia (Knightley) strip off and plunge into the garden fountain. Standing waiting for her to surface is Robbie (McAvoy). By nightfall the lives of all three will have changed for ever. Robbie and Cecilia will have crossed that irretrievable kissing line, so become the victims of the younger girl's vengeful jealousy. As she ages (through Romola Garai and later Vanessa Redgrave), her guilt grows.

From all accounts this is a stunning film, beautifully shot and played by all, particularly Kiera and young 'kisser' McAvoy. (Kiera has been quoted in one gutter or another that he is the "best kisser ever" – another huge notch. Well done Mr Tumnus).

Apparently the 'c' word has a lot to answer for in the film. Because of it some walked out on our opening night. More of this much maligned, vexed and misinterpreted word on page 29) Most stayed to the end... It's up to you.

Transformers

Sat 3 2.00



Director: Michael Bay **Starring:** Tyrese Gibson, Jon Voight, Josh Duhamel, John Turturro **Certificate:** 12A **Duration:** 143 mins **Origin:** USA 2007
By: Paramount International Pictures

Autobots are slugging it out for control of a magic Rubik's Cube; caught in the middle is high-school kid Sam (Shia LaBeouf), who inadvertently picks up a battered Autobot at a secondhand car lot and develops an even bigger crush on it than he has on the girl from history class. Absolute nonsense but very exciting. Leave your brain at home. You wont be transformed.

Gosford Park

Thu 8 2.00



Director: Robert Altman **Starring:** Stephen Daldry, Helen Mirren, Kristin Scott, Richard E Grant, Emily Watson **Certificate:** 15 **Duration:** 137 mins
Origin: USA 2001 **By:** Entertainment Film Distribution

Three words should fill the house with the patter of sensible shoes – Dame Maggie Smith.

Set between the wars when Britain's social class system was at a critical time of change, Altman uses the stellar cast of 48 actors to full effect in this witty comedy of manners which develops into a sly pastiche of an Agatha Christie-style murder mystery. Dame Maggie bags all the best lines. "Altman's characteristically skillful interweaving of 15 different storylines is a delight to behold".

Hairspray

Sat 10 2.00



Director: Adam Shankman **Starring:** Nikki Blonsky, John Travolta, Michele Pfeiffer, Christopher Walken **Certificate:** PG **Duration:** 116 mins
Origin: USA 2007 **By:** Entertainment Film Distribution

Fat girl dances, makes good and gets the boy in this remake of John Waters' 1988 sparky, dirty and edgy original. This is not edgy in the slightest but sparky it is, albeit at the other end of the spark but always dirty Waters. Taken more from the hit musical than his original screenplay, it zings from start to finish, with only one dull preachy bit in the middle. They're all fabulous, Nikki Blonsky wins on points but doesn't steal it from Travolta in chunky-drag, Walken's unrivalled weirdness and the ever gorgeous Ms Pfff. Drop the ironing and leave the kids with a stranger...

The Singer

Mon 12 2.00



Director: Xavier Giannoli **Starring:** Gerard Depardieu, Cecile De France, Mathieu Amalric, Christine Citti **Certificate:** 12A **Duration:** 112 mins
Origin: France 2006 **By:** Artificial Eye

The Singer tells a deceptively simple and timeless story – there's no fool like an old fool. Fearing the onset of karaoke, middle-aged Alain (Depardieu) pursues his increasingly weary way as crooner of sentimental ballads. As the minor 'big celebrity' at the local dance hall, he is stuck in a routine of regular gigs, crooning for his coterie of fifty-something female fans. He is none too slim, streaks his hair and has reached the end. Enter Marion, a single mother half his age... "Beautifully atmospheric, with genuine chemistry between the two leads..."

A Prairie Home Companion

Tue 13 12.30



Directors: Robert Altman **Starring:** Lindsay Lohan, Kevin Kline, Meryl Streep **Certificate:** PG **Duration:** 105 mins **Origin:** USA 2006
By: The Works UK Distribution

Robert Altman died on 20th November 2006 aged 81. This was his last film. It returns along with Gosford Park (Thurs 8th) to mark his anniversary. For anybody who loved Garrison Keillor's "Lake Wobegon Days" on the wireless – this is a must. I remember staring at the radio in case I missed something. On the other hand and with respect, I didn't get Altman's starry ensemble pieces. Though The Player was brilliant and Mash a masterpiece, Nashville left me cold.

However, this is a fitting end to his maverick and prolific career spanning 56 years! As always, a star-studded cast brings National Public Radio stalwart, Keillor's long-running programme to vivid life. It is an intricately woven, and very funny, backstage fable about the 'final performance' of his variety show. It somehow managed to survive the television age to reach a colossal audience every Saturday night, live from the stage of the historic Fitzgerald Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"A fittingly affectionate epitaph from a film-maker who took more chances than most, and so often succeeded in making the risk worthwhile" (*Derek Malcolm*)

"A late, minor addition to the Robert Altman collection – but a treasure all the same..." (*New York Times*) Cancel the afternoon.

Small Engine Repair

Wed 14 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



Director: Niall Heery **Starring:** Steven Mackintosh, Stuart Graham, Iain Glen
Certificate: 15 **Duration:** 102 mins **Origin:** Ireland 2006 **By:** Guerilla Films

“Fine performances from Glen and Mackintosh elevate this touching tale of friendship, loyalty and broken dreams” (Channel Four)

“Often underused as a cardboard villain in Hollywood movies such as Tomb Raider, here Glen is a revelation of wounded glances and shuffling...”

When he sings, it might just move you to tears.” (Times)

“A film about far-reaching dreams running under the surface of invisible lives....an understated, elegiac, moving film.” (BBC) Come.

Snowcake

Thu 15 2.00



Director: Marc Evans **Starring:** Alan Rickman, Sigourney Weaver, Carrie-Anne Moss
Certificate: 15 **Duration:** 111 mins **Origin:** UK/Canada 2006
By: Momentum Pictures

A taciturn Englishman (Rickman), just released from prison, reluctantly agrees to give a vivacious 19-year-old hitchhiker a lift – not realising that this small decision will transform his life irrevocably. Sigourney Weaver (in one of her finest roles) as Linda, a high-functioning autistic woman, and Carrie-Anne Moss, play this drama for all it’s worth.

The Simpsons

Sat 17 2.00



Director: David Silverman **Starring:** Julie Kavner, Dan Castellaneta, Yeardley Smith, Nancy Cartwright
Certificate: PG **Duration:** 87 mins
Origin: USA 2007 **By:** Twentieth Century Fox

Some critics have asked... “Does Matt Groening’s zeitgeisty, irreverent show deliver a knock-out punch on the big screen? Or does it fall flat on its yellow belly before the bell has even rung? The truth lies somewhere in-between”.

“There are probably one or two people in the world who have never watched an episode of The Simpsons. At its worst, it panders to them.” (I’m one of them). (mixed crits)

Be warned: (Contains mild language, innuendo and comic violence)

This could be the funniest line.

Michael Clayton

Mon 19 2.00, Tue 20 12.30



Director: Tony Gilroy **Starring:** George Clooney, Tom Wilkinson, Tilda Swinton, Sydney Pollack
Certificate: 15 **Duration:** 120 mins **Origin:** USA 2007
By: Pathe Distribution

“A dark, engaging drama that asks some difficult moral questions... with yet another in a long line of fine performances from Clooney” (Channel 4)

“George Clooney comes unprecedentedly near to playing a damaged man, a weak man, a defeated man. It’s an arresting performance...muscular and pain-racked at once.” (PB Guardian)

From all accounts this is a fantastic and powerful corporate espionage thriller, with everybody on top form. Tilda is outstanding, but so are the others. Come for her and on the way, catch George and Tom at their best.

A Mighty Heart

Wed 21 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



Director: Michael Winterbottom **Starring:** Angelina Jolie, Archie Panjabi, Dan Futterman, Irfan Khan **Certificate:** 15 **Duration:** 108 mins **Origin:** USA 2007 **By:** Paramount International Pictures

Angelina is the beating heart of this urgent, unbearably tense dramatic reconstruction of the last days of the American journalist Daniel Pearl. Aside from casting Jolie, the bravest decision was to shoot largely in Karachi. You can almost smell the crowded city and all its chaos. No wonder it proved impossible to find Pearl... "Winterbottom details it all – the denials lies and accusations, at very high level - with a furious energy.

Bourne Ultimatum

Thu 22 2.00



Director: Paul Greengrass **Starring:** Matt Damon, Julia Stiles, Joan Allen, Paddy Considine **Certificate:** 12A **Duration:** 115 mins **Origin:** USA 2007 **By:** Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

"Damon's amnesiac superspy creates more white-knuckle excitement using a book as a weapon than all the summer's pirate-ships, superheroes and giant robots put together" (*Guardian*)
"The Bourne series is the only action-thriller franchise of the past decade that actually thrills" (*Telegraph*)
They're right. It is edge-of-seat from beginning to end.

Aladdin

Sat 24 2.00



Director: Ron Clements, John Musker **Starring:** Robin Williams **Certificate:** U **Duration:** 90 mins **Origin:** USA 1992 **By:** Buena Vista International

ALADDIN is one of the most loved of recent Disney animated features, bringing the classic story of Prince Ali Baba to the screen with fantastic early nineties animation. It won an Oscar for its songs and released a barrage of gags from Robin Williams as the very silly Blue Genie. An infectious sense of fun throughout. Bring your Grandparents.

The Counterfeiters

Mon 26 2.00



Director: Stefan Ruzowitzky **Starring:** Martin Brambach, August Diehl, Karl Markovics, David Striesow **Certificate:** 15 **Duration:** 99 mins **Origin:** Austria, Germany 2006 **By:** Metrodome Distributors

A devastatingly effective wartime thriller based upon real events, *The Counterfeiters* crackles with class and intelligence. In 1936, the Nazis established the largest counterfeiting operation in history, with the intention of flooding the British and American economies with fake currency. 'Enlisted' were any concentration camp inmates with skills in the right department - among them master forger, gambler, libertine and charismatic rogue Salomon 'Sally' Sorowitsch...

Phantom of the Opera

Tue 27 12.30



Director: Joel Schumacher **Starring:** Gerard Butler, Ciaran Hinds, Patrick Wilson, Minnie Driver, Miranda Richardson, Simon Callow, Emmy Rossum

Certificate: 12A **Duration:** 143 mins **Origin:** USA 2004

By: Entertainment Film Distribution

I swore Andrew Lloyd-Webber would never darken this door. So much for swearing. OpAmDram groups and lovers of musical theatre will love this even more on the big screen. Then two unknown leads – Butler has gone on to show his torso and gums in 300 (that Spartan semi-cartoon epic depicting beefy men with their curtains open) As for Emmy Rossum, don't know. Sumptuous sets. Vast chorus line stuff, a few good songs, fabcamera work and it's a Tuesday. Worth it for all that. (*first shown here 24 Feb 05*)

Don't Look Now

Wed 28 2.00



Director: Nicholas Roeg **Starring:** Donald Sutherland, Hilary Mason, Clelia Matania, Julie Christie **Certificate:** 18 **Duration:** 110 mins **Origin:** UK 1973
By: British Film Institute

It is said to have been the first 'they-ARE-really-doing-it' sex scene in mainstream cinema.

We all gasped in 1973 – the women, at how skinny Julie Christie was - the men at Donald Sutherland's silly pineapple hair and terrifying moustache. Both looked out for his todger. The scene was a crude (both senses) devise used by Roeg to show a grieving couple still in love, full of desire for each other. Even then we knew 'different', wow and all. Today it is embarrassing. The Baxters are helpless to save their daughter from drowning. She is wearing a bright red mac. It is one of the most gripping opening scenes, ever. Cut to Venice, where he is in charge of restoring a crumbling church. Enter the freaky psychic sisters you wouldn't touch with a gondola pole. From here on you want to slap Julie Christie and shake Sutherland into getting her the hell out of there.

"Roeg's thriller has an aura of menace throughout and a sexual honesty that is startling even today." (*circa 1974*) Menace; absolute genius. Sexual honesty? Contrived, pretentious, gratuitous, bollocks. Spot the oxymoron.

Everything is Illuminated

Thu 29 2.00



Director: Liev Schreiber **Starring:** Eugene Hutz, Elijah Wood, Boris Leskin **Certificate:** 12A **Duration:** 105 mins **Origin:** USA 2005 **By:** Warner Brothers

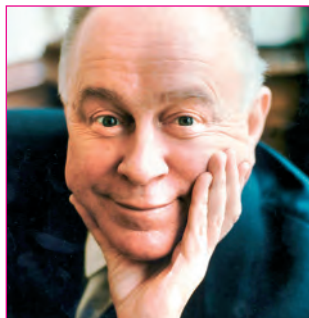
Everybody must see this...

Come for Eugene Hutz's perplexed Ukranian 'guide' and his gorgeous narration. (much of the haunting film score is his, played by his band 'Gogol Bordello')

On its first outing here in February 2006, this extraordinary film made us all sit still. Since, it has sold out everytime. Taken from Jonathan Safran Foer best-seller, it sounds like a true story, beautifully told... 'Jonfen' (Elijah) is an obsessive collector, who journeys from America in search of the woman he believes saved his grandfather during the Nazi massacre of a lost Ukrainian village. With only a dog-eared photograph he begins his search with the unlikely Eugene, his grandad and his "seeing-eye" dog.

While Eugene's butchery of the English language and passion for all things American, grates on Jonfen, he wins the screen with every word and gesture. The film is a heartlifting, heartbreaking, surprise. It will stay with you long after you leave.

RANTS AND PANTS



We loved him. One of those rare men you hoped would live forever. He was always on our guest list but never quite made it. I'm guessing Ned would approve of being on this page... "Good taste should be left to interior decorators..." (Ned Sherrin died on Mon 1st October aged 76)

A CELEBRATION OF AN OLD WORD...

A 13th Century word caused people to walk out of a film in October...

As a kid it was the worst name you could call or be called. So it remains. When I was about seven I saw the C-word scrawled on a wall. I asked my Dad what it meant. He told me very calmly and gently "It's a very bad word lad, you should never use it..." That is how it was left to this day. "A very bad word lad". Unfortunately I confess to disobeying my father. When you've been called it you are left in no doubt of its absence of affection. However, like all language wasted on misinterpretation and change, its origin has nothing to do with any part of the human anatomy. It is a bad swear word, good and proper with a value of its own. Earliest known use is 1230. The Ox Eng Dictionary tells us where and how it was used without saying what it means:

"it is incorporated into the colloquial and technical speech of nautical and other occupational traditions..."

"Generally, it is considered an obscene word, and therefore greatly offensive". "sometimes used as a nonspecific derogatory epithet in referring to either

sex, specifically male. (OED)

The Oz Macquarie Dictionary (circa 1890) defines it as "a despicable man"...

"Its usage as a vulgar term of abuse of a woman is relatively recent. The earliest citation dating from 1929 in Frederic Manning's 'The Middle Parts of Fortune'..."

In the end it doesn't matter. Hatefully, language changes faster than yesterday's text-speak. So too old words which once described things instantly, like deaf, blind and crippled are taboo; while nuts, fit and gay have been robbed from original use for ever, not to mention footballing's own: 'stud, dribble and score'.

As part of common usage, the Celebrated word has remained stable as "a bad word" for eight centuries. It deserves respect not condemnation. Fear, control and prohibition have no respect.

To excite their prose, even DH Lawrence, Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, Patrick Marber and many other modernists have found it irresistible to mythologise this reliable 13th Century monastic swear word into high-art fanny. Peter Cook and Dudley Moore's Derek and Clive tapes got it right.

A bad word is used for swearing. They proved it can be funny when used against those who spout it in perpetual motion. Celebrating the word is not to congratulate the user. On the contrary, it is safe to despise user (from a safe distance).

I have been on the receiving end of its Celebration particularly during the ten year restoration of the Rex – and at other times, now reserved for nightmares. From time to time, in that split second before all hell breaks loose, it too has passed my lips.

It comes to mind involuntarily and without conscience when no better description will do. The list is long between Madonna and Bush.

Ironically and happily, sniggering jokes used against women always turns the teller in to one. Whereas that delicious punchline describing some musician 'from Preston', remains priceless.

If (circa) 1230 is reliable, the C word is 777 years old. It is not obscene. It has nothing to do with woman, but everything to do with man. It has historic credibility. It is a bad word. It is a fabulous bad word. It comes to the rescue of 'NO' as the last single word in the old English language which leaves him in no doubt. Let's hope the film does it justice.

DAULIGHT ROBBERY IN PARIS

Last week (early October) I was heartened by a late night BBC World Service report.

As a news round-up, it followed the late shipping forecast. (roughly remembered) "Earlier today thieves stole jewellery worth (zillions) in broad daylight from a fashionable jewellers in the centre of Paris..." It went on that nobody was hurt as thieves got away with thousands/ millions/trillions worth of 'precious stones' from a swanky shop on the Champs-Élysées.

How wonderful, I thought. Pause... Forty five years ago, just outside Tring, the Great Train Robbery took place. It was world news. Now this terrorist obsessed, computer-aged child-porn stuff has happily distracted the forces of law-and-order to the limit, taking the easiest catch. So, while nobody's looking, somebody steals jewels. It was reported deep into the middle of the night on the World Service, with only me, and a few Lebanese fishermen listening. How heartening is that? It doesn't get any better.

'Police operatives' sit at laptops spying on smutty middle-aged men. Community Police Officers watch a kid drown because they're not covered by Health and Safety. Kids stab each other willy-nilly in South London where the Police beg community workers for help. Flabby, heavily armed Policemen/women with bad haircuts and fluffy chinless chins, stalk Heathrow looking like Millwall supporters with guns. Meanwhile in the real meanstreets, traffic wardens cream over double-yellow lines.



Lovely Emily Doyle left us at end of Sept after being here from the start. She smiles (because she's leaving) with Olivia (in red) on the balcony on her last day. Gone to find adventure in the big wide world...

Doesn't it make you feel warm inside?

Given all this, isn't it even more heartening that a few people with their wits about them, can still rob diamonds on a sunny afternoon? It's Butch and Sundance. It is fantastic. It gives me hope where there is none... and it is Paris. How much more romantic does it have to be before you wet yourself? Even better, these guys were able to plan a proper daylight-robbery while everybody was looking the other way...! Perfect. Nobody died, or was even smudged.

And who can say it is robbery when those miserable diamonds were stolen in the first place from the 3,000 kaffirs trapped four miles down, by their dirty-laundered, all powerful, multi-national, white/asian/latino /chinese/americano gangster 'employers'.

Go on, cast the first stone. These Parisienne thieves and a few genius hackers, should be running the Country with half a dozen counterfeiterers, and one decent safe-cracker as parliamentary advisors.

RANTS AND PANTS

SHERRUBABU (cert 15): First night, a number of people walked out. They were unhappy about the language, its raw theme of sex, drugs, low-life. I missed them leaving and have yet to reply.

Second night, as everyone was

leaving, a young man, with his girlfriend, both beaming, walked up the steps towards me. "A great film... and we got to see Maggie Gyllenhall's tits... fantastic... thanks" (19/20th Sept)

Same film, two opinions, clearly poles apart. At the risk of defending film as art, isn't this what art is supposed to do/be?

Different days, different people, different thoughts. Even on the same day in the same room, watching the same thing, there are 294, times a million, thoughts. Its hard to map or guess.

A question on the phone to the box office: "Is there a concession for being fat?" (early Oct)

So... the phones do work and people do get through... Perhaps you should think of a 'good' question while it's ringing. If you hear our sweet message, you know all the lines are busy; and you will not be answered. It is there to tell you not to waste any more of your time. If you live close by,

come in or ring later. There is no call-waiting queue and no robots.

Intergalactic sales forces try it on, not to mention those casually-aggressive women (mostly, though mouthy men too, used to getting their own way - NOW) advise us how better we could run things to suit them.

We know there's a big, fast, 'smart' techno world out there. Here, there is none.

Isn't this why you come? Perhaps this is the real world after all. The rest - the one they call the 'real world' followed by 'get a life' - has become a room full of toys, long abandoned. It is old-fashioned. So is courtesy as you arrive, and on the phone, when you eventually get through.

We're not going to change. Your tickets will be hand-written, the phones will be answered when they become free.

Please, take a deep breath with us and we'll do all we can to help. You may even get what you want (or not quite). If you shout, the courtesy will remain the same but you stand no chance. Try the 'fat' trick, it seems to work. Better still, slow down and keep up with us.

The legendary Jack Cardiff (96) dropped in to see us on 8th Oct. An impromptu visit with his son Johnny (pictured). On seeing the Rex again, he stood in the auditorium panning 360 degrees and said "Wonderful... I'll take it..." Such a lovely surprise to have the world's greatest Lighting Cameraman 'popping in' to see us. Anytime, Jack.

