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How to Find Us

Warwick Student Cinema is situated off the science concourse just over the bridge from the library.

General Information

**Membership**

Academic year 2003/04  £2.50

**Tickets**

Single Member  £1.80
Single Guest  £2.80 (only one guest per member per show)
Five-Film Ticket  £7.00 (valid for Autumn 2003 Season only)

Memberships and tickets are available from the sales desk situated on the Science Concourse before any Warwick Student Cinema show. Memberships will also be available at the Trade Fair in Students’ Union South (27-28 September) and at the Societies’ Fayre (beginning of week 2). You can also buy your membership at Union North Reception.

**Societies Federation**

Please note that you need to become a member of Societies Federation before you can join Warwick Student Cinema - you can join Societies Federation at Union North Reception, before any Student Cinema showing, or at Societies Fayre or the Trade Fair.

Rates for Societies Federation membership are as follows:

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There is a £5 discount for Erasmus students taking a year off.

Prices correct at time of going to press and are subject to alteration.
Welcome to Warwick!

Welcome back all University of Warwick veterans, and a warm welcome to all you enthusiastic Freshers, keen to throw away your first year watching films (well, we did!). And, as Barry Norman might have said, why not? For all of you new to Warwick, the Autumn Term is our biggest season of all. With over 40 films in this term’s schedule - from the biggest American blockbusters to the quirkiest of Art films - you can be guaranteed there’s something for everyone!

Anyone who’s not yet a member should look out for our stalls in the Students’ Union Cholo Bar area at the beginning of term during the Trade Fair and during Societies Fayre at the beginning of week 2. The stalls will be manned by some of the friendliest and most outgoing people on campus, helping you to reach into your parents’ wallets for the incredibly small fee of £2.50 for your Warwick Student Cinema membership (Societies Federation membership is a condition of joining WSC, see page 5). Only by joining will you be able to gain entry to the hallowed rows of L3 for the ridiculously low price of £1.80 per film (or £7 for 5!).

Societies’ Fayre can be decidedly difficult, with so many clubs and societies offering you the world in return for your £2.50 - so much so that it’s impossible for you to sign up to everything that interests you! With this in mind, WSC is offering you not one but two FREE movies to help you along with your decision. On Sunday week 1 (28 September) we have the George Clooney heist movie *Ocean’s Eleven* at 6.30pm and 9.30pm and on Monday (29 September) we have the babefest that is *Coyote Ugly* at 7.30pm, so you can come and witness in wonderment the society that is Warwick Student Cinema in all its Big Screen glory and find out why we’re the biggest Society on campus by far!

So, from all of us at WSC, have a great first term!

The WSC Exec.
Sight & Sound

How many times do you go to a cinema, sit back, watch the film and wonder how the picture ends up on the screen? For most of you, the answer is probably never. Well, here at WSC we show exactly the same films using exactly the same kind of equipment as all of the other commercial cinemas that you will be familiar with.

The film is carried on a large horizontal disc, known as a platter, and fed to and from the projector over a series of rollers. WSC is equipped to play films in this manner although we tend to show films in the old fashioned way using two projectors. We play each reel separately, swapping back and forth between the two projectors using visual cues which are printed on the film a few seconds before the end of each reel. It takes great skill to make the show seamless (which is why it sometimes isn't!).

The other vital part of the film experience is the sound. We have a more extensive sound system than most of the commercial cinemas you will have been to elsewhere. Not only do we boast the traditional analogue sound formats (Dolby A and SR, better known as "surround sound"), but we are also equipped to play all three of the current digital sound formats - these being Dolby Digital, DTS and SDDS. We can also play both 4 and 6 track magnetic sound and 70mm DTS. The sound system consists of 6 separate channels with Left, Centre and Right stage speakers (with three sub woofers) and also 8 surround speakers split into two banks to give left and right surround channels. This is all bi-amped to improve the quality further. We have several thousand watts of amplification to drive this little lot!

We project all of the films shown and also maintain and improve the projection and sound systems ourselves. For those who are interested, training to show films takes place both in organised sessions with experienced projectionists and also by showing actual films (under supervision). The technical team are a particularly sociable group within the Society, often going out for meals, bowling, playing pool and of course (yes you guessed) to see even more films!

Running the actual films isn't the only technical activity that you can become involved with at WSC. We also run our own network. The web-site, membership databases and e-mail are all run on a suite of computers running Linux which we maintain and develop ourselves. Significant development is taking place with the WSC IT infrastructure to redesign the web site and databases.

We are also intending to move to a more suitable hardware platform as the current network of computers, although invaluable, is a little antiquated.

Are you interested in becoming more involved in the projection or IT sides of the Society? Are you interested to find out more? If so, please feel free to grab one of the many WSC people who tend to hang around before and after shows or turn up to one of the General Meetings held in L3 every fortnight (Tuesdays, 7.15pm of even weeks).

WSC Technical and IT Teams

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WSC Technical and IT Teams
Special Showings

This term WSC are proud to be showing at least 2 films in association with other Societies.

On Tuesday week 5, we will be showing *The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert* in association with Warwick Pride as part of their awareness week.

On Saturday week 7, we will be showing the disco-dancing classic *Saturday Night Fever*, starring John Travolta, in association with Warwick RAG.

Watch out for other publicity nearer the time regarding these showings!

The All Nighter

As ever on Friday week 6, we will be holding our AllNighter event. This will be 6 films back-to-back starting at about 8pm and finishing sometime around 10 in the morning of Saturday! Watch out for more publicity regarding this event nearer the time - and you have an opportunity to vote for the films that are not decided on yet at www.filmsoc.warwick.ac.uk

Visit the WARWICK STUDENT CINEMA website:

www.filmsoc.warwick.ac.uk

• Reviews of the term’s films
• Suggestions Page for next term’s films
• Social Events Information
• Photo Gallery
• Technical Information
• Contact Details
• Links to other Student Cinemas
• News Archive
• Rotas for Stewards and Duty Managers and Much More!
WARWICK STUDENT CINEMA AUTUMN 2003

WEEK 1

OCEAN’S ELEVEN

Director: Steven Soderbergh
Starring: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts, Matt Damon and Andy Garcia.

Ocean’s Eleven is a remake of the 1960 Rat Pack movie with the same name. Danny Ocean (Clooney), fresh out of prison, sets up a dream robbery: the vaults of three Las Vegas casinos, all in one night. To ensure his success, he enlists the help of no less than ten other criminals, including card magician Rusty Ryan (Pitt), infallible pickpocket Linus Caldwell (Damon) and ingenious pyrotechnician Basher Tarr (Don Cheadle). The rules: no blood, steal only from those who deserve it and act as if you have nothing to lose.

The casinos are far from randomly chosen. Not only do they hold large amounts of money just waiting to be stolen during a much-anticipated boxing match, but they are all run by the ruthless Terry Benedict (Garcia), who also happens to have taken an interest in Ocean’s beautiful ex-wife Tess.

The main actors need little introduction. Clooney delivers a performance just as charming and classy as always. Pitt demonstrates yet again that below his pretty-boy looks, he has some real acting talent, portraying Rusty Ryan with great style and precision. Roberts’ role is fairly small, but that doesn’t prevent her from playing Ocean’s ex-wife to a tee.

Director Steven Soderbergh is behind recent box office hits such as Erin Brockovich and Traffic. Ocean’s Eleven is perhaps not as serious as these, but is no less of a classic. Soderbergh has managed to avoid the usual pitfalls of sex, violence and dull dialogue. The film could easily have hinged on its headlining actors alone, but luckily it doesn’t. Instead, it is filled with unexpected plot twists and plenty of humour and romance.

Fast-paced and effortlessly cool, Ocean’s Eleven is a movie that is both memorable and stylish, and most definitely worth watching.

Martin Aspeli

COYOTE UGLY

Director: David McNally
Starring: Piper Perabo, Adam Garcia, John Goodman

Tonight, they’re calling the shots

Violet ‘Jersey’ Sandford (Perabo) is a shy, retiring girl. Having moved to New York to pursue her dream of becoming a songwriter, she is left with next to nothing after a burglary. She finds work as a barmaid at Coyote Ugly, the city’s newest and hottest bar, where after a while she begins to come out of her shell. Can she conquer her stage fright with the help of new-found friend Kevin Garcia? Can she weather her father’s (Goodman) disapproval to win success? Can you believe how formulaic this film sounds?

Coyote Ugly sounds like it only narrowly escaped straight-to-video death. The reason it did was because its producer is none other than trash formula king Jerry Bruckheimer. Admittedly, Coyote Ugly’s romantic coming-of-age tale plot does force the film towards that ‘good bad’ category, but Bruckheimer’s slick style rescues it. With a fair bit of help from the eye candy. Eye candy as far as the eye can see.

By now, the guys might be despairing of being dragged off to a soppy romantic tale populated with wholesome Tom Cruise wannabes. Well, yes, there is the delectable Adam Garcia, but did I mention the key feature that makes the Coyote Ugly bar so popular? No? Would you be interested in a film that features women dancing provocatively on bars ... a whole film full of them! The film has more energy than all its bar-dancing bunnies put together, and an enormous dollop of catchy-cheesy tunes for them to bump and grind to.

Yes, Coyote Ugly is silly. Yes, it’s daft. Yes, it’s utterly engaging. And maybe somebody will be inspired to liven up the union bars.

Fletcher Reed

12 WARWICK STUDENT CINEMA AUTUMN 2003
Schmidt Happens

Warren Schmidt (Nicholson) has spent his entire working life with the same company as an actuary (think accountancy without the excitement), before retiring to be hen pecked by his wife who has a near obsessive desire to travel the states in their brand new mobile home. Faced with trying to dissuade his daughter from marriage to a waterbed salesman (hilariously played by Dermot Mulroney), he begins to reflect on his own life and is not entirely comfortable with what he finds.

OK, this is beginning to sound a bit sappy but think again. It’s based on a Stephen King book “The Body” (taken from the same collection of tales as The Shawshank Redemption, probably one of the best films of all time). This is the definitive coming-of-age road movie. It’s a classic, right in there with Labyrinth, The Goonies and Ferris Bueller. It’s one of those films you’ve probably only ever seen on TV, now’s the time to see it on the big screen.

It has some of the finest acting you will see in any film, regardless of the fact that the main stars are all barely scraping into their teens. It’s incredibly well directed and regardless of any of that, it’s a brilliant story which shows that King is not just a horror writer, and just before you wonder about the certificate, it’s almost entirely for bad language and kids smoking, it’s not going to make you scream but it will make you think.

Ben Goddard

Stand By Me is the story of four 12 year old boys, Gordie Lachance (Wheaton), Chris Chambers (Phoenix), Teddy Duchamp (Feldman) and Vern Tessio (O’Connell), who go on an adventure to find the body of another boy about their age. They set out to become heroes, in their town of Castle Rock they are regarded as losers, but on the way discover the true value of their friendships. Along the railway they encounter many adventures and trials, including a run-in with the local gang of bullies who are determined to claim the glory for themselves.

The film establishes the importance of their quest by presenting it in a flashback narrated by the grown-up Gordie reacting to the news that Chris, a local attorney, was killed trying to prevent a robbery at a fast food joint (sadly mirroring the early death of River Phoenix). The older Gordie’s memories of the adventure focus attention on its importance in shaping the direction their two lives would take. For Gordie, what happens with his friends on their trip, and especially its outcome, jolted him into maturity. And for his best friend Chris, what the four confront and overcome gives him the courage to get out of the dead-end rut everybody in Castle Rock is pushing him into.

This is a film about when lives are supposed to be simpler, when you’re young and are supposed to have no worries. While the adults in the film are battling their personal demons, the kids are left to rely on each other.

Schmidt ‘adopts’ a young African boy after seeing a television appeal and sends him regular money and letters detailing his life. This becomes a useful channel for communication of his emotions, as he confides in his young beneficiary thoughts that the audience would never otherwise determine. His naive ignorance of the boy’s circumstances and the self obsessed nature of his letters provide many of the film’s lighter moments.

On first inspection, Nicholson, as the central actor, does very little. Like his character he is understated, repressed (and depressed), showing little emotion. It is...
Phone Booth

Director: Joel Schumacher
Starring: Colin Farrell, Kiefer Sutherland, Forest Whitaker, Radha Mitchell, Katie Holmes

Your life is on the line.

Colin Farrell stars as fast-talking Broadway agent Stuart “Stu” Shepard, in this wonderful thriller about a man trapped by a sniper whilst using the last phone booth in Manhattan to avoid questioning when he has his mobile phone bill scrutinised by his wife, Kelly (Mitchell).

The action starts innocently enough, with Stu picking up the phone ringing in the booth, but what he didn’t envisage was being held hostage by the caller. First he dismisses the threats, believing it to be a prank, but reality quickly sets in when the caller starts to reveal some of Stu’s personal secrets, as well as shooting an innocent bystander. All this drama alerts the police, and soon Stu finds himself trying to keep the caller from pulling the trigger on him, whilst trying desperately to convince the police that he is the victim and not the killer.

It must have been an interesting meeting when this film was pitched to the producers, and strange as the plot sounds, it does carry some degree of believability. The scenario Stu finds himself in is not completely unimaginable in America, what with the various school shootings around the time this movie was originally to go on cinematic release, and more recently the two Washington serial snipers. Whilst this might not make you want to see this film, the performances of Farrell and Sutherland definitely will.

Farrell is full of energy and intensity, proving that he is more than just a pretty face. He displays a wide range of emotions through this relatively short film, much of which has the camera in close. Kiefer Sutherland is solid as the mysterious and twisted caller, his voice dominating the film with its gravelly, twisted urgency. To make viewers sit up and listen takes presence, which Sutherland clearly demonstrates, despite being physically off screen for most of the film.

Filmed in 10 days, on a single set, Phonebooth shows that it is possible for Hollywood to make good films without throwing money at computer wizardry, instead relying on good ol’ fashioned plot twists and excellent performances.

Julie Ngo

Love checks in

Jennifer Lopez sets out to prove that she really is just ‘Jenny from the block’ in this cute and engaging romantic-comedy that is essentially a modern day Cinderella story. Lopez plays Marisa Ventura, a single mother from the Bronx, who works as a maid in a swanky Manhattan hotel. Through her young son’s precocious interest in American politics and a simple twist of fate, Marisa’s life becomes entangled with that of charming senatorial candidate Christopher Marshall (Fiennes), who just happens to be making the hotel his temporary campaign headquarters.

Prince Charming sees her trying on a guest’s designer outfit, and in true Cinderella style, falls for her, oblivious to her true identity - believing instead that she is a rich socialite. Of course one word from Marisa at any moment could resolve this case of mistaken identity - she realises that she cannot keep deceiving him - but she dreads telling him the truth, fearing that a Republican candidate would never knowingly date a Puerto-Rican chambermaid. Inevitably, the truth comes out, and it becomes clear that their lives could not be any more disparate. Will the star-crossed lovers be able to overcome their differences?

Lopez and Fiennes make a stunning, if unlikely, couple, and are assisted in their fairytale by a blend of charismatic personalities that make up a strong supporting cast. The movie attempts at times to address class and race barriers, but works best when sticking to the trusty rom-com formula. This movie doesn’t stimulate intellectually or deliver any plot twists and is rather predictable, by the time it’s over, no-one in the audience would have been surprised - fairytale inevitably end ‘happily ever after’ - but there is absolutely nothing wrong with this. This is a sweet movie that’ll have you hooked from the opening credits.
This film’s title comes from the Columbine High School massacre in which a group of pupils pursued their fellow students through the school buildings, shooting them indiscriminately. Earlier that day they had turned up as usual to the school bowling session, apparently unwilling to miss this before killing themselves and many of their peers.

This forms the focus of Michael Moore’s documentary exploring what he sees as a uniquely American obsession with gun ownership, and its consequences. The film follows Moore as he travels the US asking and forming opinions (from Charlton Heston and Marilyn Manson amongst others), and visiting the sites of numerous shootings.

But this is no dry documentary. In a scene that is an incredible as it is hilarious, Moore goes to a bank to open an account - so that he can claim the free firearm given to new customers as a joining incentive. The guns are issued in the bank by the bank from a rack on the wall. It’s a fully licensed gun shop.

Sometimes you may feel Moore goes too far, as characterised in his pursuit of Charlton Heston. A tragic figure since his affliction with Alzheimer’s disease, he has long been heavily involved with the pro-gun National Rifle Association. As such, Moore sees him as a fair target to take... not guns - that kill people; he notes a similar level of gun ownership but much lower murder rate in neighbouring Canada.

This is no balanced debate but a satirical attack on modern America, more Brass Eye than Panorama, and just as controversial. You’ll laugh, to the point of physical pain, but this is no comedy. Moore’s great triumph is that through his humour he makes you hear and he makes you see; sooner or later he even forces you to think. And after that you’ll realise it’s really not very funny at all.

Stuart Jarvis

WEEK 2

120 min

WEEK 2

148 min

Greg Taylor

Roman Polanski’s recent Oscar triumph appears to suggest that the American film industry is prepared to accept the enfant terrible back into its sweltering bosom. However, if he continues to make films as powerful, insightful and impressive outside of the studio system, then what reason can he have for returning to those who shunned him?

The Pianist is the true story of a Jewish pianist who lived through the Nazi occupation of Warsaw, charting his struggle for survival first in the ghetto, and then on the run, as he flees for his life under threat of extermination. Ostensibly this is a film about a single man, but Polanski’s subtle direction and disturbing transient images make this, for the first hour at least, the story of a people, united in fear and death. Only as the numbers of Jews in Warsaw lessen dramatically and the Final Solution begins, do we focus on the titular pianist, who becomes a symbol of hope for his brethren who have forgotten how to believe in God.

Adrian Brody delivers the performance of his career (thus far, of course) as the principled musician who must watch his family and friends destroyed by the evil that pervades the streets, while the supporting cast convey admirably the unbearable truth that their occupiers have the power of life and death over them, and are not afraid to use it. Perhaps the greatest talent here though, is behind the camera. Polanski experienced first-hand the treatment of the Jews in Poland as a child, and his film reflects admirably the brutality of the regime while never succumbing to cheap sentimentalism. There are no heroes in this film, just ordinary men and women facing extraordinary situations.

The Pianist is an outstanding film made by an outstanding director about an outstanding time in history. It is at once deeply disturbing, heartbreaking, and uplifting, and once again proves to an ambivalent world that there is no horror but that history can show us worse.

Greg Taylor

Director: Michael Moore
Starring: Michael Moore
Charlton Heston
Marilyn Manson

One Nation Under The Gun

Mus...
**Gangs of New York**

**Director:** Martin Scorsese  
**Starring:** Leonardo DiCaprio, Daniel Day-Lewis, Cameron Diaz, Jim Broadbent

In 1846, Priest Vallon (Liam Neeson) of the Dead Rabbits immigrant gang in the New York slum known as Five Points prepares to do battle against the "natives" - the 'true' Americans in the city, led by Bill 'The Butcher' Cutting (Daniel Day-Lewis) and loses. Sixteen years later, Vallon's son, Amsterdam (Leonardo DiCaprio), is released from a reform school and sets out to exact revenge on the man who killed his father by infiltrating Bill's closest circle of friends - though matters are complicated slightly when he meets pickpocket Jenny (Cameron Diaz), whose past threatens to thwart his plan. In addition, alongside the physical battles being fought in the city (culminating in the 1863 Civil War Draft Riots), Scorsese highlights the political battles of the day, intertwining the personal and the political to create a film that is part highbrow exposé and part brutal truth.

A labour of love for director Martin Scorsese - and unashamedly so - Gangs of New York is by no means easy to watch and is as challenging as it is rewarding. This is a motion picture which was thirty years in the making and is almost as epic in its intentions and as violent in its execution as perhaps the very material from which it takes its inspiration. Films with this amount of ambition and grandeur don't often come out of Hollywood, so although the violence quotient will not be to everyone's taste, Gangs of New York is well worth checking out.

Laura Watson

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**The Recruit**

**Director:** Roger Donaldson  
**Starring:** Al Pacino, Colin Farrell, Bridget Moynahan, Gabriel Macht


Colin Farrell stars as James Clayton, an M.I.T Whiz-kid who refuses a big job offer in computing in order to accept the offer of becoming a C.I.A agent from senior instructor and recruiter Walter Burke (Pacino).

Clayton finds himself taken to “The Farm”, a rustic Central Intelligence Agency training facility in the middle of nowhere. Here, he joins a group of other prospects, including the lovely Layla (Moynahan) and former Miami cop, Zack (Macht). They are taught agent skills through a series of lectures and tests, ranging from the psychological to the physical. Throughout, Burke plays the role of mentor to Clayton, giving him encouragement and advice along the way, but what is he shaping him up to be?

After his punishing training, Clayton is given a real mission - to help out a mole within C.I.A. Headquarters. The plot continues where the training ends - twisting and turning between what is real and not, and who is really on whose side.

Colin Farrell is a talented actor, and is certainly tinsel town's favourite flavour at the moment with this film coming shortly after his successes with Minority Report and Phone Booth (which is also being shown at WSC this term). His rugged good looks, on-screen charm and acting ability have certainly ensured his meteoric rise to fame - a far cry from his days in the TV series Ballykissangel. Some are even touting him to be the next James Bond...

You'd be forgiven for thinking that it would be tough to find someone to work effectively alongside such exciting new talent, but the experienced Al Pacino is a real scene-stealer, his on-screen presence heightened by the rough and tough exterior of his character, Burke. His usual style of forcefulness and anger works well for the guise of a senior instructor, and it's obvious that he relishes these opportunities to have some fun.

The Recruit finds itself in the unfortunate position of being in a market saturated with spy/agent films catering for all ages. Children have Agent Cody Banks and the Spy Kids, whilst comedy-lovers have the types of Austin Powers, Charlie’s Angels, and Johnny English to tickle their fancy. All this leaves The Recruit facing the like of Ethan Hunt (Mission:Impossible), Jack Ryan (The Sum Of All Fears), Jason Bourne (The Bourne Identity), Xander Cage (xXx) and last but by no means least, James Bond. With all these do-gooders, surely every possible threat to world peace has been eliminated by now? Nonetheless, it is a really good and remarkably watchable film.

Alex Coe

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**Warwick Student Cinema**  
**Autumn 2003**
**Narc**

Director: Joe Carnahan  
Starring: Jason Patric, Ray Liotta, Dan Leis

Narc is a tough film, with tough scenes, tough acting, and tough direction. It’s a film about men, men who commit crimes, and the men who are committed to bringing them to justice. Narc is also a tender film, with emotional scenes and a surprising focus on family connections and the effects of violence. It’s a film about women and about children, and about the men without whom the family unit would be incomplete. Narc is, in my opinion, something not far short of a masterpiece, one of the most quietly compelling, utterly convincing and thematically wide-ranging cop films to have been released in many a moon.

Although this is a film that can without doubt stand up on its own, if you were looking for comparisons then it mixes the precision pacing and gangster mentality of Goodfellas with the blistering immediacy of Do The Right Thing and the indie cool and structural imagination of Pulp Fiction. None of these comparisons, however, do justice to what is one of the most powerful and impressive films to be released in the UK for some time. It gives us an insight into a world that we never knew existed, and does so with a passionate, kinetic verve that makes it both deeply enjoyable and deeply disturbing. City of God is an absolute must see for anyone who claims that they love the cinema, and a masterpiece in the gangster film genre.

**City of God**

Director: Katia Lund, Fernando Meirelles  
Starring: Alexandre Rodrigues, Leandro Firmino da Hora, Phellipe Haagensen, Douglas Silva

**Fight and you’ll never survive..... Run and you’ll never escape**

About every six months, a foreign-language film pops along that proves to the philistine masses that Hollywood is the centre of the creative universe. We’ve had Amelie from France, and we’ve had Y Tu Mama También from Mexico and now we’ve got the mighty Brazilian City of God, a film of astounding technical flair and emotional depth.

The titular city is a shantytown outside Rio, where the destitute and the criminally inclined are removed from the eye of the tourists. Of course, the place becomes a hive of scum and villainy, and we are invited to observe the rise and fall of a number of individuals who live within the frantic framework of the City of God.

Our narrator is Rocket, a young boy who grows watching the violence and crime that permeates the environs. There’s the story of Lil’ Ze, the child with the plans and the bloodlust who grows up to run the city. There’s the story of Knockout Ned, a man of honour and principle who gets dragged into the sorry spiral of violence that the City offers its residents. And of course there’s the story of Rocket, a story of the hope of transcending one’s boundaries and living a good life. And around these people, a whole world of other stories occurs – the legion of lives that make up the single story of the City of God. Multiple demons in one, decaying body.

Although this is a film that can without doubt stand up on its own, if you were looking for comparisons then it mixes the precision pacing and gangster mentality of Goodfellas with the blistering immediacy of Do The Right Thing and the indie cool and structural imagination of Pulp Fiction. None of these comparisons, however, do justice to what is one of the most powerful and impressive films to be released in the UK for some time. It gives us an insight into a world that we never knew existed, and does so with a passionate, kinetic verve that makes it both deeply enjoyable and deeply disturbing. City of God is an absolute must see for anyone who claims that they love the cinema, and a masterpiece in the gangster film genre.
Al Capone. He ruled Chicago with absolute power. No one could touch him. No one could stop him. Until Eliot Ness and a small force of men swore they'd bring him down.

This is a classic film, which won Sean Connery a much-deserved Supporting actor Oscar. It is the tale of the eventual capture of Al Capone on the charge of tax evasion, ... who Ness cajoles into helping him catch and imprison Capone. The other members of the group are newly qualified cop George Stone (Garcia) and accountant Oscar Wallace (Martin Smith).

One of the most memorable scenes sees the group on the Canadian border waiting to arrest one of Capone’s men. They have one of the villains in a log cabin and are trying to extract information from him. Mallone goes out of the cabin, grabbing the body of an already dead man, and threatening to shoot him if he won’t talk, so needless to say he shoots the guy, having the desired effect.

This film looks spectacular in 70mm, benefiting from the improved picture and sound quality, along with the unforgettable score from Ennino Morricone complementing the cinematography, and superb acting from the main character and supporting roles.

Kirsty Stokes
Kate Hudson plays Andie Anderson, a columnist for a women’s magazine who wants to break political stories, but is instead compelled to report on make-up and shopping. She is promised the chance to write about the stories she cares about if only she can nail “How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days” - an article about the things women do to alienate the men they love and drive them crazy. To research for her piece, she must find a guy and using ‘classic’ relationship faux pas, get him to dump her in a mere 10 days.

Her subject is Benjamin Barry (McConaughey), an advertising executive who, in an attempt to land a prestigious account at his firm, makes a bet (unknown to her) that he can make Andie fall in love with him in 10 days. She must be able to make Andie fall head over heels? Or will she be able to scare him away? Ben tries to hold on to Andie while she does everything in her power to annoy him. You will find yourself laughing out loud at some of the cringe-making things she does to the poor guy. She is clingy and moves way too fast. She invades his weekly poker game with his buddies, tricks him into taking her to a Celine Dion concert and amongst other highly amusing things, digitally superimposes their faces to make a family photo album, complete with fantasy children. It’s fair to say that in real life, most men would have run a mile as a result of Andie’s efforts after the first day, but given the goofy set-up, Ben is unrealistically understanding. Hudson and McConaughey are well cast as the leads in this

HOw TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS

movie. They have an amazing chemistry and as they begin to really like each other, there are some engagingly sweet and romantic scenes.

The fact that this movie cleaned up at the box-office proves its appeal - it succeeds where most rom-coms fail, managing to be incredibly funny without being too cheesy, as well as being spine-tinglingly romantic. If you’re only going to watch one romantic comedy this year, make sure that it is this one.

INTACTO

The film involves a man named Sam (von Sydow), who survived the Holocaust and now runs a casino at which wealthy patrons bet against his luck, usually losing. So confident is he in his luck that he will remove one bullet from a chamber holding six and then bet that he will not die. His being alive speaks for itself (think Fight Club meets Unbreakable).

Sam believes that he will lose his luck if the wrong person looks him in the face at the wrong time, or takes his photo. To protect himself, he often sits in a closed room with a hood over his face. He has a young man named Federico (Poncél) as his accomplice; who also has good luck, and searches for others who have his gift. When Sam steals his luck, Federico spends seven years looking for someone to cultivate as an instrument of revenge. Some of his candidates are luckless, as their gruesome deaths attest. His saviour literally falls out of the sky: Tomas, a bank-robbing fugitive who is the sole survivor of the aforementioned plane crash.

Intacto is ingenious in its construction and keeps a certain distance between its story and popular entertainment. It’s a Hollywood idea, shot in the world of the art film. The same concept could be remade into straightforward entertainment movie, and maybe it already has been.

In fact the film has apparently been snapped up for a stateside reinterpretation. Don’t wait for the cover version; this one offers transportation to a weird otherworld that will be almost impossible to duplicate.

When you see a film like this, you may learn something you wouldn’t have learned in an entertainment movie. Intacto may be adding the layer of style just for fun, but somewhere within that style there’s a thriller waiting to get out.

Julie Ngo

Percival Tucker
Director: Jon Amiel
Starring: Hilary Swank, Aaron Eckhart, Stanley Tucci

Earth Has A Deadline

Disaster films are nearly always fun. Watching a selection of clichéd Hollywood stock characters getting burned / drowned / crushed / pummelled to death is always a joy. Of course, the miracles of modern film technique have made the pyrotechnic events even more important than the characterisations. Something that particularly crippled Michael Bay’s extraordinarily brash Armageddon. Thankfully, Jon Amiel’s exciting, suspenseful and flashy epic manages to redress the balance, finding impressive drama both in the visual splendour of the effects and, most crucially, in the relationships and idiosyncrasies of the characters.

Across the world, many very bad things are happening to many people. Birds are attacking people for no reason (in a nice little homage to Mr Hitchcock), while elsewhere a group of people randomly collapses in the street dead— all they have in common is that they all wear pacemakers. It takes the obligatory boffins little time to determine that very bad things are happening beneath the Earth’s surface; in fact, the Earth has stopped spinning, and it has to be kick-started again before everyone dies. So a group of disparate individuals is brought together to tunnel through the various strata of the planet and set off explosions that will make the core rock and roll once again. Of course they encounter numerous problems (usually fiery) along the way, and their number decreases as sacrifices have to be made to ensure the salvation of the world.

The plot is, naturally enough, a veritable hokey-pokey, but this doesn’t detract from the pure, unadulterated entertainment that this film brings. It starts off with a selection of arresting set-pieces, then gives its characters room to develop, before sending them hurtling into the unknown and letting loose the fantastic special effects. The phallic rocket penetrating the Earth’s surface may provoke titters, and the human self-sacrifice may provoke sobs, while the effects may well provoke awe— witness the decimation of Rome— but whatever, it’s unlikely you’ll be disappointed by this wonderfully compelling, genuinely exciting roller-coaster ride to The Core.

Greg Taylor
The villains are comically two-dimensional - we are given cursory motives for their evil, but basically they are just bad people. You can boo and hiss every time they appear if you like (although the rest of the audience won’t appreciate it – Ed). The good guys are easily identified too. Even when they seem to be involved with evil you know that it’s just weaknesses in their character showing through, weaknesses that make them real enough to care about and involve you in the story.

The scriptwriters are also willing to kill. Not a positive attribute in the world in general, but in action cinema essential to keep you interested. When a character is faced with a life threatening situation there is some real tension: while an improbable escape is still the odds-on favourite, a much more probable death is at least a possibility.

Unusually, X-Men 2 is better than its prequel, with more laughs (Hugh Jackman’s facial expressions and one liners are truly great), a more involving plot and better special effects (well, they had a lot more money this time). Entertainment? X2.

Stuart Jarvis
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www.accenture.com/decision-support
Finally, a comedy that will change the way you think, the way you feel, and most importantly... the way you dress

Priscilla is the story of Anthony Belrose (Weaving), a drag performer in Sydney under the name Mitzi Del Bra. One day, he gets a phone call from an old friend and lands a gig at a large casino/nightclub in Alice Springs. He recruits fellow performers Adam Whitely (Pearce), aka Felicia Jollygoodfellow, and Bernadette Bassenger (Stamp) a postoperative transsexual who recently lost her lover. They decide to drive to their destination and Adam produces a bus, which he immediately christens 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert'. In the tradition of all good road movies, the trip does not go exactly as planned with off road detours involving groups of Aborigines, a small town mechanic with a rather special mail-order bride, and a bunch of drunken miners, to name but a few.

Throughout the trip, the guys appear in wilder and wilder drag outfits, much to the consternation of the residents of the outback with whom they come in contact. By the time our heroes stand, as queens, on the edge of Kings Canyon, there's nothing to do but laugh with sheer delight at each new eye popping costume.

The film avoids the trap of making the trio freaks (as often happens in movies about gay men, especially the transvestite variety). Instead, we get to know them as humans, for whom drag is a natural expression of who they are. The three central performances are all excellent, especially Terence Stamp as the world weary Bernadette. However, Anthony is the emotional centre of the film and it is his journey of self discovery; as he learns to accept and love himself (and it's possibly the only chance you'll get to see Agent Smith in a dress, unless the Wachowskis have something very strange in store for The Matrix Revolutions).

All in all it's one of the funniest and most successful Australian films of all time, well worth coming to see on the big screen.

Percival Tucker
Director: Carlos Carrera  
Starring: Gael García Bernal  
Sancho Gracia  
Ana Claudia Talancón  
Damián Alcázar  

...leads us not into temptation....

Go on, admit it. When you see the title The Crime of Father Amaro, you automatically assume it's a film about a priest interfering with young boys, don't you? Not carjacking, arson, or even trafficking. We first see the recently ordained Father Amaro (Bernal) as he rides a filthy bus to his first priestly assignment in the tiny Mexican town of Los Reyes. It is immediately established that the 24-year-old is a good guy when, after the bus is hijacked and robbed, Amaro gives all of his remaining pesos to a seatmate, who had previously been talking about a lifelong dream of starting his own business. However, even the most jaded man of the cloth would be shocked upon arrival in Los Reyes.

Amaro's retiring boss, Father Benito (Gracia), is not only helping drug dealers launder money in exchange for a healthy collection plate, he's also sleeping with a local restaurateur named Augustina (Angelica Aragón) and trying to blackmail another area padre (Alcázar) for aiding guerrilla fighters in their war against the powerful drug lords (all with the Bishop's blessing, mind you). Not to be outdone, Amaro quickly develops feelings for Augustina's 16-year-old daughter Amelia (Talancón), who fantasizes about Jesus when she fingers herself in her bedroom. Oh, and Amelia might be Benito's daughter, too.

While it's debatable whether or not the Church is portrayed in a negative light, Crime in no way suggests that any or all of its priests are inherently evil - only human. I think people might be getting worked up over seeing some of the other potentially blasphemous images in Crime, like the crazy old lady feeding her cat the body of Christ, or the mentally retarded girl who carefully listens to the grunts and groans of Amaro and Amelia defrocking each other in the next room.

This film is another chance to catch Bernal, whose first couple of films (Amores Perros and Y Tu Mamá También) turned out to be two of Mexico's biggest hits ever, while his third (Crime) finds him in his second Oscar-nominated feature.

Yes, some of the material might be shocking to the more religiously inclined, but we show this film so you can make up your own minds about it, and because it has a great story to tell.

Percival Tucker

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**Darkness Falls**

Director: Jonathon Liebesman  
Starring: Chaney Kley  
Emma Caulfield  
Lee Cormie  

Evil Rises....

When it comes to the crunch, the Tooth Fairy shouldn’t really be the scariest of creatures – a kindly little flying creature who exchanges shiny pennies for filthy little teeth. A tad on the crazy side, certainly, but not scary. However, Darkness Falls attempts to attack our childish preconceptions, and does so with enough half-crazed vitality and bombastic pomposity to make it one of the most purely enjoyable horror films to have popped out of the birth canal of the American mainstream in some time.

Many years ago, so we are told, Old Granny Tooth (or something like that) was burned to a crizzle by reactionary small-town folk who believed her to be responsible for some kiddie killing. Rightly miffed by the Joan of Arc treatment, she refused to rest in peace, and haunts the town of Darkness Falls, ensuring death to all those who see her as she comes to collect teeth in the dead of night. So, in the present day, a race against time begins to prevent a batch of new murders as the Tooth Fairy takes her revenge upon the town that destroyed her.

Basically, then, Darkness Falls is a fun, fast moving and funky little horror film that makes for a superb evening's viewing, and is the perfect build-up to any Hallowe’en festivities you might have planned. If you’re after a movie that will make you jump, scream (just a little) and give you plenty of chills for your money, then this is the perfect ticket. And it’s an absolute must for couples...

Greg Taylor
**SHANGHAI KNIGHTS**

**Director:** David Dobkin  
**Starring:** Jackie Chan, Owen Wilson, Donnie Yen, Aidan Gillen

*A Royal Kick In The Arse*

The history of Jack the Ripper, the naming of Sherlock Holmes, a beginner’s guide to pillow fighting with a group of prostitutes: just a few of the things this film has to offer.

Shanghai Knights sees the reunion of Roy O’Bannon (Wilson) and Chon Wang (Chan) following on from their successful collaboration in the original Shanghai Noon. They are reunited when Chon’s father, keeper of the seal of the Emperor of China, is murdered, resulting in their chasing the culprit as he flees to England. The script probably described the rest of the plot simply as ‘divers alarms’.

And diverse they certainly are. This is, after all, a Jackie Chan film so it’s no great surprise when his path through London seems to be crossed at every turn with all manner of unexpected dangers leading to his trademark ludicrous but highly entertaining fight scenes.

And so on to Owen Wilson. A quick look at his CV shows a certain flair for playing characters that are just a little eccentric, especially in his numerous comedy roles. But while Jackie Chan’s humour is all action, Wilson’s possesses a more subtle tone and it is his skilful use of irony, both visually and verbally, that complements Chan so effectively and makes the Shanghai series such an enthralling place to visit.

The script may be daft but, combined with the casting, it works. The characters and actors match so well it’s as if these were the roles that Chan and Wilson were born to perform. Your brain may tell you that events on screen are beyond the ludicrous, but the leads look so at home that it’s almost possible to believe that Owen Wilson does indeed spend his spare time dangeling Jackie Chan from oversized clock faces.

**Bruce ALMIGHTY**

**Director:** Tom Shadyac  
**Starring:** Jim Carrey, Morgan Freeman, Jennifer Aniston, Steven Carrell

*He’s Got The Power*

Humorous news reporter Bruce Nolan (Carrey) is chasing the anchorman job at his local television station in small-town Buffalo, Colorado. But when more and more things in his life don’t seem to go his selfish way, he begins to suspect God has something against him and believes he can do better. So, when God decides to take a vacation, Bruce is left in charge.

Although apprehensive at first, Bruce soon starts to relish his powers, using them for his own gain. Having lost the anchorman post to his rival Evan Baxter (Carrell), Bruce ensures through the foul use of his new powers that he is soon the king of reporting. As Bruce is now able to make the news, he develops an uncanny knack of being at the right place at the right time, thus ensuring he gets exclusive coverage. Bruce finds himself rising to fame and ultimately lands the post of studio anchorman at the expense of Baxter, albeit with a little persuasion.

Fine so far, but, as with most films these days, there’s a side-line plot of love in the shape of Bruce’s girlfriend, Grace (Aniston). Having supported Bruce as he tried to make it to the top in his career, she finally snaps when she realises there’s no future for the two of them. Bruce is left with a dilemma which he cannot solve with God’s powers, as he cannot interfere with free-will, and so Bruce has to do some soul-searching to get the love of his life back.

Morgan Freeman, in a genius piece of casting as God, is excellent, showing off his ability with some excellent comic timing and exchanges with Carrey’s Nolan. Jennifer Aniston continues to impress from her performance in *The Good Girl*, showing real emotion at being left behind by Bruce as he finds fame and his anchorman job. But this film is really about Jim Carrey, who makes a welcome return to what he does best in this film - playing the goofy madcap. His energetic performances have not weakened over the years, and can still raise a laugh. B.E.A.utiful!

*Al Ellis*  

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**WEEK 5**

**Warwick Student Cinema Autumn 2003**

**WEEK 6**

**Warwick Student Cinema Autumn 2003**

34 35
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**ANTWONE FISHER**

**Director:** Denzel Washington  
**Starring:** Derek Luke, Malcolm David Kelley, Cory Hodges, Denzel Washington

*Fight fear. Face truth. Embrace life.*

Denzel Washington's directorial debut starts with young Navy man Antwone Fisher (Luke) waking from a strange dream. The hectic activity of the sailors washing and getting ready for battle puts him in a state of confusion. The withering of his sleep is the beginning of the end for Antwone. The Navy psychiatrists (Washington) are the only ones who can help him understand his past. Antwone and they get into a fight. As punishment Antwone is restricted to his ship and ordered to see a Navy psychiatrist. At first Antwone refuses to cooperate with Dr Davenport the psychiatrist (Washington), but he does gradually open-up to him. Through the guidance of the psychiatrist the story of Antwone's life unfolds. One of the men makes a remark to Antwone and they get into a fight. As punishment Antwone is restricted to his ship and ordered to see a Navy psychiatrist.

At first Antwone refuses to cooperate with Dr Davenport the psychiatrist (Washington), but he does gradually open-up to him. Through the guidance of the psychiatrist the story of Antwone's life unfolds. One of the men makes a remark to Antwone and they get into a fight. As punishment Antwone is restricted to his ship and ordered to see a Navy psychiatrist.

For a film about psychiatric and emotional matters there is, thankfully, no psychobabble. The only time any theory is put forward is when Antwone reads a book, given by his therapist, about how to deal with his problems. Although this helps explain why Antwone's foster mother tortured him and called him 'nigger' he does not forgive her.

For a film shot mainly indoors with lots of dialogue it never gets stagey or ponderous. Washington as actor and director believes in this story and uses all his skills to bring it to life. If you missed this one at the cinema, it's the perfect opportunity to catch upon one of the most moving stories of the year.

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**MOSTLY MARTHA**

**Director:** Alfonso Arau  
**Starring:** Marco Leonardi, Lumi Cavazos, Regina Torné, Mario Iván Martínez

*A feast for the senses!*

Distributors must hate getting films like Mostly Martha. They can't just say "This is really good, you should watch it." They have to sell it somehow. If you take Leonardi and turn him into a neurotic chef, you're getting close. The truth is, this film hops out of any pigeon hole you might force it into. Best to just sit back and enjoy Mostly Martha for its unique spark of cinematic warmth.

The story is firmly centred on Martha. She shouldn't deserve our warm regards, this joyless workaholic who rules her kitchen with a thin temper and an iron will. Those who annoy her are likely to have their food dumped in their laps rather than recooked. She is focused, brilliant, and obsessive about food.

The owner of the restaurant makes her attending therapy a condition of continued employment. She dutifully attends sessions, where she prepares meals for her therapist. When he asks why she is in therapy, she professes ignorance and discusses the finer points of gourmet cooking.

Martha's sense of order is about to be disrupted. Two unlikely newcomers enter the temple of her kitchen: another chef and a little girl. To deal with these threats, Martha has to bend a little and focus on something more personal than the food she is used to.

This film carries the label of romantic comedy, and why not? It has some romance, and fine comedy. The comedy mostly originates from Martha's subtle brutality with people. That poor therapist. Those poor customers. The same edge powers the tragedy, where Martha pushes away intimacy through her awkwardness in her personal life.

Mostly Martha is sophisticated without being highbrow. It rewards the effort you put into understanding the characters and represents gourmet cinema.

Bon appetit!

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**WEEK 6**

**Theatre:** Warwick Student Cinema  
**Audience:** Autumn 2003

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**PERCIVAL TUCKER**

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The All Nighter

THE FUGITIVE

EQUILIBRIUM

HULK

Mystery Film

What will it be?
Six men, all Indians, find themselves at the receiving end of a phenomenon that applies to police forces anywhere in the world. Whenever something goes wrong, the police tend to home in on people with past records of related crime - the concept that perhaps someone who once committed a crime may be trying to go straight is alien to police mentality.

From this predicament - and the knowledge that they can never lead straight lives - comes one final, desperate plan. Pull off one gigantic heist, they think, make loads of money, and then never be seen again. But this is not as well guarded as others. I mean, who would want to stir up a hornet's nest by stealing from the police themselves, right?

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**Anger Management**

Director: Peter Segal  
Starring: Adam Sandler, Jack Nicholson, Marisa Tomei, Luis Guzmán

Feel The Love  
Dave Buznik (Sandler) is stuck in a job where he is completely unappreciated. His life seems to be getting him down, and he’s not doing anything to stop it. Linda (Tomei). The question is, does Buddy’s unorthodox style of treatment have a point, or is the man just terrifying?

Essentially, Anger Management is the ultimate showcase for both Jack Nicholson and Adam Sandler, each of whom seems to delight in the company of the other, and each of whom is given ample screen time to display their talents. Sandler does what he does fairly well, but is ultimately overwhelmed by Nicholson, who effectively gives a comic acting master class.

The supporting cast is outstanding, particularly Luis Guzmán and John Turturro as two of Buddy’s anger management patients, and “Ooh look! It’s him again!” actor du jour, John C. Reilly, pops up for a glorious, albeit all too brief moment. If that wasn’t enough, the celeb-spotting continues with an appearance by Woody Harrelson and an uncredited cameo from Heather Graham, both of which add to the madcap fun.

Laura Watson

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**Secretary**

Director: Steven Shainberg  
Starring: James Spader, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Jeremy Davies

Assume The Position  
Domination, masochism and sado-masochism are the topics being tackled in this quirky indie sex drama based on a short story by Mary Gaitskill and starring Maggie Gyllenhaal as Lee Holloway, a self-harming alumnus of a psychiatric institution. Upon her release, she returns to her neurotic family, whiles away the days in the pool and lovingly looks at her instruments of pain.

All of these changes when she takes typing lessons and finds herself a job as a secretary for an eccentric lawyer, Edward Grey (Spader). Whilst Holloway is submissive and lacks self-esteem, Grey is dominant, obsessive and a perfectionist. So, when Holloway falls short of his standards, Grey punishes her. Their relationship blooms, with Grey discovering Holloway’s self-harm and thus devising a range of bizarre games, situations and role-plays so that she need never harm herself again. Soon, their two contrasting personalities become dependent on each other, just like their roles as lawyer and secretary.

Holloway craves attention and turns to deliberately making typing mistakes so that she may be punished, but when Grey starts to lose interest, she starts to plot her way back into the way of office life she had become accustomed to and felt safe in. To this end, she starts to see Peter (Davies), and Grey realises that he may soon lose his agreeable secretary...

Casting for this Sundance Festival winner is excellent - James Spader and Maggie Gyllenhaal both play their characters with extreme conviction, making you really believe in them. Spader has already carved out a niche for himself, acting in quirky sex films, whilst newcomer Gyllenhaal oozes appeal and impresses in a role which could quite easily have become secondary to Spader’s Grey, but she is instead forceful and establishes herself as a necessary element in the film.

Don’t come to see this film expecting laughs-a-plenty - it’s dark, quirky, twisted and can be disturbing at times, but all in a good way. Steven Shainberg extracts humour by closely observing the behaviours and interactions of the two main characters, allowing the viewer to become part of their world. If you liked films such as In The Company Of Men and Happiness, you will love this exploration of office sexual politics.

From the moment you see the permanent sign for a secretary outside Grey’s office, you know you’re heading into a world where something isn’t quite right, but this film, somehow, is just right.

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Laura Watson
The first time you see the three leads together in this film, they are moving Natalie (Diaz) into her new house. They are in the living room. Suddenly, they snap into line and start dancing to MC Hammer’s ‘U Can’t Touch This’. This pretty much sums up the angle the film takes: the three girls are on-screen for about 90% of the time, and they dance, fight, flirt, pose and get through (and out of) a frankly scary amount of costumes. If you are averse to seeing a lot of Miles, Diaz, Liu and Barrymore, this might not be for you.

Luckily, for those willing to put up with their cavorting (put down your FHMs, gents), the film is actually pretty good. Put your brain on hold, because this is non-stop in the truest sense of the word. McG sometimes seems to be directing a music video, so tight is the choreography, music and editing. A disc containing the identities of people on the witness-protection scheme has been stolen and its contents are being used for a murder spree, so the Angels are brought in to save the day. They cross paths with Demi Moore, as a former Angel gone bad, and all kinds of chases, rooftop battles and warehouse confrontations ensue.

The film doesn’t pretend to take itself seriously, and the comedy is almost as important as the action. Bill Murray is sadly missed, but the replacement Bosley (Bernie Mac) is a perfect substitute, and there are great turns from John Cleese, Matt Le Blanc, Luke Wilson, Carrie Fisher, Pink and even Bruce Willis in an uncredited cameo.

Apply here for an evening of simple fun, a damned good soundtrack and one of those rare films where everyone involved looks like they’re really enjoying themselves. As will you.

Pete Kirwan
Hideo Nakata is at it again, doing what he does best - scaring the bejeezus out of people with his finely crafted, genuinely terrifying horror movies. First he gave us Dark Water, another exploration of the familiar themes of loss, death, sacrifice, the plight of the abandoned child. Oh yes, and don't forget the ghost. And the scenes of pant-wetting horror that punctuate this eerie tale. This isn't one for the weak of heart...

Yoshimi is a newly single mother, whose first step into the world is to set herself up in an apartment with her cute little daughter, in an attempt to rebuild her life. But all is most certainly not well within the ramshackle, decaying tenement block. There's the fleeting visions caught in the elevator security camera, and the red bag that keeps popping up in unusual places. And there's the matter of the perpetually leaking ceiling, and exactly where the water is coming from, given that the room above is both deserted and dry as a bone. Slowly the terrifying details emerge, and the presence that haunts the building begins to take a very keen interest in Yoshimi and her daughter.

As with Ring, the fear that permeates Dark Water is, for the most part, imbued in the unsettling ambience and vague feeling of oppressive dread throughout. Nakata is a master of unsettling his audience while keeping his cards close to his chest. Of course, he also delights in paying off his viewers with one hell of a final shock, and in Dark Water he delivers admirably. You remember the ghost in the lift in the Eye? Well trust me; you ain’t seen nothing yet...

In this age of substandard Hollywood tripe like The Haunting and Ghost Ship, it’s an absolute pleasure to still be able to go to the cinema and be scared witless. And the fact that Nakata has the skill and compassion to add moving subtext to his terror film is testament to the man’s position as one of the foremost international purveyors of horror cinema. Dark Water is a superlative ghost story, an outstanding character study, and one of the best films to have been released this year. A must see.

I can heartily recommend this film to anyone who wants to recapture lost youth, and to watch a cinematic classic up on the big screen where it belongs.

Greg Taylor

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Greg Taylor
**ALIEN**

**Director:** Ridley Scott  
**Starring:** Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt

*In space no one can hear you scream*

As the all time classic Sci-Fi horror movie, Alien makes a long overdue return to Warwick. Flight Lieutenant Ripley fights it out alone in the dark with one of the ugliest and meanest monsters ever to hit the big screen, in one of the most chilling suspense thrillers of all time.

The story: a battered commercial starship faraway in space and time on its way back to Earth. Seven tired astronauts, deep in hypersleep waiting to be woken as whose sole purpose for existence is to kill, and we follow their desperate attempts to combat the beast and return to Earth.

Sceptical though you may be, it's worth giving 2 Fast 2 Furious a test drive, although the cliché of turning your brain off and enjoying the experience was perhaps never more pertinent. But if you fancy a film that's exciting, funny and more than a little over-the-top, then you could do a lot worse than coming to see this.

**Greg Taylor**

2 Fast 2 Furious is not going to win any awards for director John Singleton (Boyz In The Hood) but he will be pleased to know that his film comfortably outperformed both the original film and XXX at the box-office, proving that the lure of fast cars and frenetic action sequences is 2 much for people 2 avoid. And there are certainly plenty of both in this amusing caper movie - the opening drag race through the streets of Miami has more camera-shaking, colourful, illegal thrills than a dozen Tomb Raiders.

**2 Cool**

One of the first sequels out of the pits in 2003's ridiculous summer of sequels, not much was expected of this sequel 2 the 2001 sleeper hit which, deprived of its Diesel power, looked set 2 crash and burn. Miraculously, however, 2 Fast 2 Furious has exactly the right amount of overblown racing action, scantily clad ladies and hip-hop street cred 2 make it a ride well worth taking. Although hardly a thinking man's action film, it has enough bravado and kinetic action 2 warrant a viewing, especially if you appreciate the dizzying spectacles of such classics as Top Gun or Point Break.

Paul Walker is back as disgraced ex-LAPD officer Brian O'Connor, who is brought back from banishment 2 work undercover in attempting 2 bring the obligatory smarmy, bigwig crime boss 2 order. As his driving partner, he chooses his childhood buddy Roman Pearce, who is still holding a grudge over a bust that cost him three years in jail. Soon they are bantarng, fighting, race driving and generally causing havoc all over Miami as the Bad Guy (Cole Hauser - they lost one Pitch Black alumnus, so they brought in another) sets them tasks which may be the death of them.

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**Greg Taylor**
Director: Charles Herman-Wurmfield
Starring: Reese Witherspoon
Sally Field
Regina King
Jennifer Coolidge

Bigger. Bolder. Blonder:

The first Legally Blonde was a surprise smash. Despite looking like it was going to be the stupidest film since The Wedding Planner (shudder), it turned out to be a highly amusing feel-good movie, with satire to keep the cynics happy and bubblegum to cheer up all us sappy souls who just wanted to go “aaaaah”.

So, a sequel. Our Elle (Witherspoon), having graduated with flying colours from law school, is a working lawyer, albeit one with a real sense of what the most stylish lawyers are wearing this season! She looks like a blonde airhead with no clue of how the world works, but so far her simple, honest methods have worked well and earned her a lot of respect.

However, while trying to track down her dog’s real mother (don’t ask), she discovers the horrors of animal testing in cosmetic companies (spot the social issue for the day), and so determines to change American law to make testing illegal and have her dog’s mum released from the lab. She heads to Congress with her new bill (pink, with a touch of glitter) and begins her campaign.

It’s a fun hour and a half, with plenty of jokes at the expense of ‘Capital Barbie’ as Elle turns up to work wearing pink and introduces a snaps box into an office full of starchy lawyers. Watching her naïve niceness rubbing off on the serious politicians of Washington is particularly funny, and Witherspoon has so much charm that it’s impossible not to root for her. Some moments are priceless – too, particularly the invasion of the capital by Elle’s sorority gals and the ‘revelations’ about her dog’s sexuality!

Everyone needs a bit of saccharine, and anyone who enjoyed the first film is bound to love this one as well. Just don’t go and watch it with a politics student.

Pete Kirwan

Director: Alexander Sokurov
Starring: Sergei Dontsov
Mariya Kuznetsova
Maksim Sergeyev

Russia. Home of vodka, bears, snowy wastelands and Bond villains, right? Wrong, according to director Alexander Sokurov, the director of the haunting and utterly magnificent Russian Ark. Taking the awe-inspiring Hermitage Museum as his base (the Russian equivalent of the Louvre, but even more impressive) he interweaves over three hundred years of Russian history with alacrity and a staggering depth of vision that leaves the viewer breathless. And, in his exploration of the Russian zeitgeist, Sokurov uncovers a living, breathing past of heart-breaking decadence and destructive desires that may well change your clichéd ideas of Russia and its people.

Two accidental time travellers, the unseen narrator and the opinionated, garrulous Sergei Dreiden, find themselves wandering through the halls of the lavish Hermitage museum, being endlessly transported through time as they continue from room to room – from the great balls of the Romanov dynasty to the desperation of World War Two to the culturally aware moment of the present day. As they move through the building, they encounter various individuals, from Tsars to coffin makers to art students, each of whom becomes a vital piece in an unending Russian jigsaw. As the past thrusts ceaselessly into the present, the narrator, and through him the viewer, begins to comprehend the awesome presence, and power, of history.

One of the most important things (and there are many) about Russian Ark, is that it was filmed in one continuous take. No sneaky Hitchcock-like breaks – it’s all one shot, which is an incredible achievement considering the amount of work and rehearsal that must have gone into getting it exactly right. The camera snakes through the halls, moving on an almost ethereal plane, adding to the elegance of the scenery and people with a respectful, inquisitive and melancholy personality of its own. As a result, there is nothing in the film that is superfluous – from the meditations on art, religion and history to the images of splendid obligation and sumptuous partying. Everything here matters, everything in this film has a bearing on the Russia that stands now in the 21st Century, and Russian Ark is a simply essential movie to see. Heart, brains and spectacle are a combination not often successfully realised on film. Russian Ark has them in spades…

Greg Taylor
IDENTITY

Director: James Mangold
Starring: John Cusack
Ray Liotta
Amanda Peet
John Hawkes

The secret lies within

Identity opens with a nod to Quentin Tarantino’s style in Pulp Fiction, with each of the main characters’ situations played out in a criss-cross fashion. But this soon all fades away into a thrilling whodunit horror murder mystery.

During a storm, a family of three is stopped by a burst tyre caused by a stray stiletto which blew out of the luggage of a hooker, Paris (Peet), on her way to Florida to start a new life.

Whilst the father George (John C McGinley) tries to change it, his wife Alice (Leila Kenzle) plays with their son Timmy (Bret Loehr) and is consequently hit by a limousine driven by former cop Ed (Cusack), carrying Prima Donna movie star Caroline (Rebecca DeMornay). Much to Caroline’s disgust, Ed insists on dropping her off and seeking help for Alice, but with the surrounding area completely flooded, there’s no way out. Having stranded his car, he finds newlywed couple Ginny (Clea DuVall) and Lou (William Lee Scott), who give him a ride. Also affected by the flood is cop Rhodes (Liotta), who is transferring prisoner Maine (Jake Busey)...

And so it comes to pass that on one dark and stormy night in Nevada, a group of strangers find themselves seeking refuge at a run-down motel, staffed by the weird manager Larry (Hawkes). No sooner has everyone has been allocated a room, and they try to settle in for the night, than one-by-one, the guests die...

Cusack and Liotta do well to shine from a quality ensemble cast. Everybody gives their character a story that is not only believable, but also enough to make you suspect that they carried out the murders. Add to this the claustrophobic space of a creepy motel surrounded by storm and flood, and a manager creepier than Norman Bates from Psycho, and you know you’re going to be in for a thrilling journey!

Alex Coe

TERMINATOR 3

Rise of the Machines

Director: Joel Schumacher
Starring: Arnold Schwarzenegger
Nick Stahl
Clare Danes
Kristanna Loken

The Machines Will Rise

So, Arnie’s running for Governor of California, evidently hoping to work good deeds and be remembered as something more than a leather-clad, firearm wielding, ass-kicking, part-metal killing machine. Good luck to him, because to most of us he will always be The Terminator.

Terminator 3 sees everyone’s favourite T-101 once more being sent back in time to protect the future leader of the human resistance, John Connor. Arnie may have a few more wrinkles, but you soon stop caring as soon as you see his response to “Talk to the hand”!

You’re not going to come and see this to appreciate the art, the high dialogue or the moral message. You’re seeing it for big guns, non-stop action and possibly the last chance to see Schwarzenegger in the role that made him. And the 9·30 screening? Oh, you’ll be back...

Pete Kirwan
**Rules of Attraction**

Director: Roger Avery  
Starring: James Van Der Beek, Shannyn Sossamon, Jessica Biel, Eric Stoltz

*There Are No Rules...*

From the sick bastards who brought you *Pulp Fiction* and *American Psycho* (the hard-as-nails book, not the anodyne movie), *Rules of Attraction* is the absolute zenith of... of the most subversively hilarious films of the year, although it might well make you want to have a long shower afterwards.

The movie charts the misadventures of a succession of youths at a liberal American college, who alternately screw, shoot-up, argue, rape, fiend and all round bad egg. Seriously, this guy makes his brother Patrick seem like a guy you’d like to have dinner with.

Tolkien purists have been unimpressed, and the film isn’t perfect. Aragorn’s protracted dream sequence with Arwen (Liv Tyler) after Jackson inexplicably has him thrown off a cliff serves no purpose other than to irritate the viewer. This clumsy addition to Tolkien’s story presumably exists to justify hiring a star such as Tyler for such a tiny role; it has no apparent narrative worth. But surely one mistake can be permitted in a nine hour trilogy?

All in all this is a satisfying filling in the *LOTR* sandwich: your viewing experience is more likely to be spoiled by Tolkien obsessions muttering angrily at the back of the cinema than by Jackson’s limited meddling.

Peter Jackson faced a number of problems in directing this trilogy. Firstly, the three books do not divide neatly into three films: they may look the same size but the third printed volume, *The Return of the King*, is packed full of appendices at the end. Secondly, Tolkien was meticulous in his description of Middle Earth. This attention to detail means that the story is utterly consistent - unlike most complex fictions - but also means that, in places, the books are just plain dull.

Jackson therefore has had to rearrange the content, and cut out the tedious bits. He did this pretty well in the first film, while leaving in enough scene-setting for those who hadn’t read the books. In this film he was free to assume that the viewer knew the basic premise of the story - to destroy a powerful ring to prevent it being used for evil. The result is a slicker, more urgent film with some truly awesome scenes. It also gives the computer generated Gollum (voiced by Andy Serkis) a real chance to shine, exhibiting all the elements of vindictiveness, deceit and above all fragility that Tolkien so successfully wove into his character.

**A new power is rising**

The Two Towers (referring to the Saruman’s Isengard and Sarauron’s Mordor - Tolkien’s axis of evil), follows on from the dissolution of the Fellowship of the Ring at the end of the first film. Frodo and Sam set off to Mordor, soon to be accompanied by Gollum. Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas defend Helms Deep from the orc armies of Saruman while Merry and Pippin continue their misadventures before eventually playing their part in the counterattack on Isengard. But then, you must know this already?

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One of the most impressively constructed films of the year, *Rules of Attraction* takes *Bret Easton Ellis*’s controversial novel and runs with it, creating an inherently cinematic experience which is one of the most vibrant, disturbing and stimulating films of the year. The easily offended, however, might do well to stay clear – the Americans saw fit to cut down the most uncomfortable sequences as a favour to the public. We’re showing the full, uncut version...

Greg Taylor
**Dreamcatcher**

**Director:** Lawrence Kasdan  
**Starring:** Morgan Freeman, Thomas Jane, Jason Lee, Damian Lewis

*Evil Slips Through*

Dreamcatcher is one of those films that is exceedingly tough to review without giving something away. This is a movie that is best seen when you know absolutely nothing about it.

Based on a Stephen King novel, the plot revolves around 4 lifelong friends who share some unusual gifts. The four of them take a hunting trip and are hit by a blizzard, but the snow turns out to be the least of their problems out in the woods. This doesn't really do the story justice, but that's really all you want to know going into the movie. Trust me on this one.

Morgan Freeman is the biggest star in Dreamcatcher. It's a bit tough to accept him in the role he plays even with the humongous eyebrow toupee they put on him to try to make him look meaner. The remaining characters are well cast. Jason Lee in particular steals a number of scenes as the foul mouthed Beaver.

This movie is not for everyone. If you're a fan of Stephen King, you'll probably enjoy Dreamcatcher. I say "probably" because although there are classic King elements in the story, it goes in some directions we do not normally expect from him.

The movie has some very original and unusual elements. The film is enjoyable, and it is very worthy of being seen on the big screen. The movie almost goes a bit too far at points; some of the things you're going to see are really, umm, different. But if you're in the mood for something truly different and enjoy horror and thrillers, go and see it. And if it wasn't pushing the boundaries in some way, it wouldn't be a true Stephen King experience, would it?

Percival Tucker

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The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Warwick Student Cinema

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