



# SUMMER MOVIE SERIES

## **Sat., May 30: Like Water for Chocolate – Romance, Comedy**

Like Water For Chocolate tells the story of the writer's great-aunt and her tragic but touching love-that-never-was. Combining elements of soft fantasy, comedy, tragedy, drama, action and cooking, this film never leaves you feeling emotionally manipulated. Girls, if you're looking for a great romantic film, but the likes of Notting Hill leave you needing an insulin shot, here - for all the sweetness of the title - is the perfect antidote, and fellas, if you want the perfect date movie (that you yourself may well thoroughly enjoy) look no further. Tita, as the youngest of three daughters, is condemned by family tradition never to marry, but to spend her life caring for her mother. However, Tita has fallen in love with a young man and he with her. When Tita's mother refuses to let them wed, and suggests that he marry her other daughter instead, Tita takes revenge: by allowing her passions to surface through her cooking, she manipulates the emotions of all who eat her food - with some very strange and magical results.

## **Sat., June 6: Big Fish – Fantasy, Romance**

Edward Bloom has always been a teller of tall-tales about his oversized life as a young man, when his wanderlust led him on an unlikely journey from a small-town in Alabama, around the world, and back again. His mythic exploits dart from the delightful to the delirious as he weaves epic tales about giants, blizzards, a witch and conjoined-twin lounge singers. With his larger-than-life stories, Bloom charms almost everyone he encounters except for his estranged son Will. When his mother Sandra tries to reunite them, Will must learn how to separate fact from fiction as he comes to terms with his father's great feats and great failings. Rated PG.

## **Sat., June 13: The Brothers Grimm – Fantasy, Adventure**

Matt Damon (THE BOURNE SUPREMACY, OCEAN'S TWELVE) and Heath Ledger (THE PATRIOT, A KNIGHT'S TALE) team up to bring you one of the year's most fantastic adventures in this magical tale based on the lives of the legendary storytellers. Will and Jake Grimm (Damon and Ledger) dazzle small towns with their imaginative folklore and elaborate illusions, but when the brothers journey into a real enchanted forest they encounter many of the fantastic characters and thrilling situations found in their beloved fairy tales! From the award-winning director of 12 MONKEYS, BRAZIL and MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL, this fabulous motion picture is sure to leave you living happily ever after! PG-13

**Sat., June 20: *Slumdog Millionaire* – Foreign, Drama, Thriller**

Eighteen year old Jamal Malik is having an amazing answering streak on the Indian version of the television game show, "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire". He's only one correct question away from the big prize. However, some, including those associated with the game show, question how someone like Jamal, a self confessed non-genius who grew up in the slums of Mumbai, can be doing so well on the show when others who are brighter, more educated and wealthier than him have failed. Is Jamal cheating? Is it purely luck that they have asked him the questions to which he knows the answers? Seeing Jamal's life journey to this point ultimately answers these questions. His life journey includes being orphaned at an early age; growing up with an older brother, Salim, who was both his guardian/protector and antagonist; and having a relationship since childhood with another orphaned child, a girl named Latika. His motivation for being on the show also may provide some answers to his success. Perhaps it was all just meant to be. *Written by Huggo*. *Rate-R* for some violence, disturbing images and language.

**Sat., June 27: *The Day the Earth Stood Still* – Science Fiction, Black and White**

*Written in 1951* and filmed in black-and-white, this science fiction film tells the story of a humanoid alien visitor who comes to Earth with a warning. The film stars Michael Rennie, Patricia Neal, Sam Jaffe, and Hugh Marlowe, under the direction of Robert Wise. Screenwriter, Edmund H. North was inspired by Harry Bates' short story "Farewell to the Master". The score was composed by Bernard Herrmann and used two Theremin electronic instruments. The film is often considered by movie historians to be one of the classics of the science-fiction genre. Rated G.

**Sat., July 11: *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* – Foreign**

In the United States things have changed a lot, and it's hard to make good small films now. The avaricious studios couldn't care less about good films."--Woody Allen. *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* (2008) is his fourth European movie, and in many ways his most French film yet. Set in Avilés, Barcelona, and Oviedo it tells the story of a fateful lovers' threesome. Shortly after arriving in Barcelona on vacation, two young American women in their 20s, Vicky (Rebecca Hall) and Cristina (Johansson), are invited by a smooth-talking artist, Juan Antonio (Javier Bardem) to spend a weekend in Oviedo, drinking wine and making love with him. Because she is engaged to be married, pragmatic Vicky is reluctant at first. Cristina, however, is open to the seduction. The two women accept Juan Antonio's proposal, and accompany him to Oviedo, where they soon discover the painter has a thing for his beautiful, but emotionally unstable estranged-wife, María Elena (Cruz). Much like a good French film, this brilliant movie ends on a note that is both poignant and sad, with everyone a little wiser in the end. Rated PG-13

**Sat., July 18: *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* – Comedy**

Love Robin Hood? Well, Mel Brooks has made fun of this timeless story in one of the "best ideas since pay toilets." This excellent and witty film has continued Mel Brooks' legacy of wacky, outrageous films such as *Blazing Saddles*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Spaceballs* and *History of the World Part I*. Rated PG-13

**Sat., July 25: *Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind* – Science Fiction, Romance**

Screenwriters rarely develop a distinctive voice that can be recognized from movie to movie, but the ornate imagination of Charlie Kaufman (*Being John Malkovich*, *Adaptation*)

has made him a unique and much-needed cinematic presence. In *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, a guy decides to have the memories of his ex-girlfriend erased after she's had him erased from her own memory--but midway through the procedure, he changes his mind and struggles to hang on to their experiences together. In other hands, the premise of memory-erasing would become a trashy science-fiction thriller; Kaufman, along with director Michel Gondry, spins this idea into a funny, sad, structurally complex, and simply enthralling love story that juggles morality, identity, and heartbreak with confident skill. The entire cast--Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst, Elijah Wood, Mark Ruffalo, Tom Wilkinson, and more--give superb performances, carefully pitched so that cleverness never trumps feeling. *Rated R*

### **Sat., July 25: *V for Vendetta* - Drama, Action**

"Remember, remember the fifth of November," for on this day, in 2020, the minds of the masses shall be set free. So says code-name V (Hugo Weaving), a man on a mission to shake society out of its blank complacent stares in the film *V for Vendetta*. The world in which V lives is very similar to Orwell's totalitarian dystopia in 1984: after years of various wars, England is now under "big brother" Chancellor Adam Sutler (played by John Hurt, who played Winston Smith in the movie *1984*). who removes minorities and political dissenters from the population along with all cultural references to the past. The people are perpetually sedated through the governmentally controlled media.

Based on the popular graphic novel by Alan Moore, *V for Vendetta's* screenplay was written by the Wachowski brothers (of *The Matrix* fame) and directed by their protégé, James McTeigue. Controversy and criticism followed the film since its inception, from the hyper-stylized use of anarchistic terrorism to overthrow a corrupt government and the blatant jabs at the current U.S. political arena, to graphic novel fans complaining about the reconstruction of Alan Moore's original vision (Moore himself has dismissed the film). Many are valid critiques and opinions, but there's no hiding the message the film is trying to express: Radical and drastic events often need to occur in order to shake people out of their state of indifference in order to bring about real change. Unfortunately, the movie only offers a means with no ends, and those looking for answers may find the film stylish, but a bit empty. --*Rob Bracco* *Rated-R*

### **Sat., Aug 1: *Lars and the Real Girl* - Comedy, Independent**

Sometimes you find love where you'd least expect it. Just ask Lars (Academy Award-Nominee\* Ryan Gosling), a sweet but quirky guy who thinks he's found the girl of his dreams in a life-sized doll named Bianca. To some, *Lars and the Real Girl* will play as comedy; to others, tragedy. Lars, is rumpled Midwesterner who couldn't be more miserable. His brother, Gus and sister-in-law, Karin fall over themselves to cheer him up, but Lars cannot be moved; he's been like that since childhood. Then a porn-addicted co-worker hips him to the lifelike Real Doll. The next thing everyone knows, Lars has a new girlfriend named Bianca. She's from Brazil, she's shy, and she uses a wheelchair. She's also made of silicon. (Because Lars is a devout Christian, hanky-panky is out of the question.) Since he's finally emerging from his shell, his doctor, Dagmar, advises Gus and Karin to play along with the "delusion." Soon the whole town, including Margo, who harbors a not-so-secret crush on her officemate, gets in on the action, forcing Lars to rejoin the human race or crawl deeper into psychosis. Lars is completely content with his artificial girlfriend, but when he develops feelings for Margo, an attractive co-worker, Lars finds himself lost in a

hilariously unique love triangle, hoping to somehow discover the real meaning of true love. Offbeat and endearing, this romantic comedy takes a fresh look at dating and relationships and dares to ask the question: What's so wrong with being happy? Rated PG-13

### Sat., Aug 8: *Australia*

In this old-fashioned, 165-minute hymn to his native continent, Baz Luhrmann travels back to the late 1930s/early '40s, for a scenario that would not have been out of place at MGM in that era. Straight-laced Lady Sarah Ashley (Nicole Kidman) journeys Down Under and is put under the protection of--crikey--a rugged cattle driver known only as the Drover (Hugh Jackman). When the two are forced to team up (along with a motley crew of misfits) to take a herd of cattle through the hostile landscape, their way is challenged by the dastardly plans of the local beef baron (Bryan Brown) and his elaborately evil lieutenant (David Wenham). At some point you realize that this film's main commodity is not cattle, but corn: Luhrmann piles on the melodrama and the old-school climaxes with his usual frantic glee. Employing "When You Wish Upon a Star" and the Japanese air force to make his case is not beyond Luhrmann, and he reaches big here. Those with a taste for un-ironic silliness might just go for this stuff, but even fans of the Baz will have their patience tested by the broad comedy and the absence of discernable chemistry between Kidman and Jackman. *Australia* does manage to skewer the culture's prejudices against the Aboriginal people, but in this context such a victory comes across as rather tinny. --Robert Horton Rated PG-13

### Sat., Aug 15: *Children of Men*

In 2027 as humankind faces the likelihood of its own extinction a disillusioned government agent agrees to help transport and protect a miraculously pregnant woman to a sanctuary at sea where her child's birth may help scientists to save the future of mankind. Presenting a bleak, harrowing, and yet ultimately hopeful vision of humankind's not-too-distant future, *Children of Men* is a riveting cautionary tale of potential things to come. Set in the crisis-ravaged future of 2027, and based on the atypical [1993 novel](#) by British mystery writer P.D. James, the anxiety-inducing, action-packed story is set in a dystopian England where humanity has become infertile (the last baby was born in 2009), immigration is a crime, refugees (or "fugees") are caged like animals, and the world has been torn apart by nuclear fallout, rampant terrorism, and political rebellion. In this seemingly hopeless landscape of hardscrabble survival, a jaded bureaucrat named Theo (Clive Owen) is drawn into a desperate struggle to deliver Kee (Clare-Hope Ashitey), the world's only pregnant woman, as they carefully navigate between the battling forces of military police and a pro-immigration insurgency, Theo, Kee, and their secretive allies endure a death-defying ordeal of urban warfare, and director Alfonso Cuarón (with cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki) capture the action with you-are-there intensity. There's just enough humor to balance the film's darker content (much of it coming from Michael Caine, as Theo's aging hippie cohort), and although *Children of Men* glosses over many of the specifics about its sociopolitical worst-case scenario (which includes Julianne Moore in a brief but pivotal role), it's still an immensely satisfying, pulse-pounding vision of a future that represents a frightening extrapolation of early 21st-century history. --Jeff Shannon Rating: R

**Sat., Aug 22: Into the Wild – Independent, Adventure, Drama**

This is the true story of Christopher McCandless (Emile Hirsch). Freshly graduated from college with a promising future ahead, McCandless instead walked out of his privileged life and into the wild in search of adventure. What happened to him on the way transformed this young wanderer into an enduring symbol for countless people -- a fearless risk-taker who wrestled with the precarious balance between man and nature. He certainly doesn't do it halfway: after donating his substantial savings account to charity and literally torching the rest of his cash, McCandless changes his name (to "Alexander Supertramp"), abandons his family (William Hurt and Marcia Gay Harden as his bickering, clueless parents and Jena Malone as his baffled but loving sister, who relates much of the backstory in voice-over), and hits the road, bound for the Alaskan bush and determined not to be found. For the next two years he lives the life of a vagabond, working a few odd jobs, kayaking through the Grand Canyon into Mexico, landing on L.A.'s Skid Row, and turning his back on everyone who tried to befriend him (including Catherine Keener and Brian Dierker as two kindly, middle-aged hippies and Hal Holbrook in a deeply affecting performance as an old widower who tries to take "Alex" under his wing). Shawn Penn, who directed and wrote the screenplay, alternates these interludes with scenes depicting McCandless' Alaskan idyll-- which soon turns out to be not so idyllic after all. Settling into an abandoned school bus, he manages to sustain himself for a while, shooting small game (and one very large moose), reading, and recording his existential musings on paper. But when the harsh realities of life in the wilderness set in, our boy finds himself well out of his depth, not just ill-prepared for the rigors of day to day survival but realizing the importance of the very thing he wanted to escape--namely, human relationships. It'd be easy to either idealize McCandless as a genuinely free spirit, unencumbered by the societal strictures that tie the rest of us down, or else dismiss him as a hopelessly callow naïf, a fool whose disdain for practical realities ultimately doomed him. *Into the Wild* does neither, for the most part telling the tale with an admirable lack of cheap sentiment and leaving us to decide for ourselves. --*Sam Graham*  
*Rated-R*